# THE NEW OXFORD ANNOTATED BIBLE

*New Revised Standard Version*

# *The New Oxford Annotated*

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# BIBLE

*containing the*
*Old and New Testaments*

*Edited by*

BRUCE M. METZGER

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NEW REVISED
STANDARD VERSION

*New York*
OXFORD UNIVERSITY PRESS

OXFORD UNIVERSITY PRESS

Oxford New York Toronto
Delhi Bombay Calcutta Madras Karachi
Petaling Jaya Singapore Hong Kong Tokyo
Nairobi Dar es Salaam Cape Town
Melbourne Auckland

and associated companies in
Berlin Ibadan

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in the United States of America

8 10 9

Printed in the United States of America

# *Contents*

The Editors' Preface v
Acknowledgments vii
To the Reader ix
How to Use this Study Bible Profitably xv
The Number and Sequence of the Books of the Bible xxi
Alphabetical Listing of the Books of the Bible xxiii
Names and Order of the Books of the Old and New Testaments xxv
Abbreviations xxvii

THE HEBREW SCRIPTURES

Introduction to the Old Testament xxxi
The Pentateuch xxxv
The Historical Books 267 OT
Chronological Tables of Rulers: The United Monarchy and the Divided Monarchy 338 OT
The Poetical Books or "Writings" 623 OT
The Prophetical Books 862 OT

THE NEW TESTAMENT

Introduction to the New Testament iii
Chronological Tables of Rulers during New Testament Times vii
The Narrative Books—Gospels and Acts viii
Letters/Epistles in the New Testament 204 NT
Apocalyptic Literature 362 NT

GENERAL ARTICLES AND REFERENCE MATERIALS

Modern Approaches to Biblical Study 388
Characteristics of Hebrew Poetry 392

Literary Forms in the Gospels 397
English Versions of the Bible 400
Survey of Geography, History, Archaeology 407
Measures and Weights 424

Index to Annotations 426
A Concordance to the NRSV 433
Maps following page 500

*Note:* In accordance with traditional practice, the pages of the separate Testaments are numbered independently; thus, the Introductions to Genesis and to Matthew are respectively the first page of the Hebrew Scriptures and the first page of the New Testament. As an aid to the reader, the page numbers in each case are distinguished by the abbreviations OT and NT. The reference materials at the back of the book continue the numbering of the pages of the New Testament, but without the distinguishing letters.

# *The Editors' Preface*

The recent publication of the New Revised Standard Version of the Bible makes it opportune not only to adjust the annotations to the wording of the new version, but also to introduce many other changes and improvements as well. Besides the preface to the New Revised Standard Version entitled "To the Reader," the reader will find two introductory articles, one on the number and sequence of the books of the Bible, and the other on how to make the fullest use of the present annotated edition. These were drawn up by Bruce Metzger.

All of the general articles, as well as the introductions to and annotations on the several books of the Bible and of the Apocryphal/Deuterocanonical Books, have been reviewed, either by the original contributor or, in most instances, by another scholar. In some cases relatively few changes were called for; in others, where many advances have occurred since the publication of the original Oxford Annotated Bible in 1962 (for example, in the realm of the archaeology of Bible lands), an entirely new article has been prepared.

In the following list of contributors the name of the original writer is followed by the name of the reviewer; when the reviewer was also the original writer, the name occurs only once. It is understood that the editors have also introduced a certain number of modifications throughout.

## THE OLD TESTAMENT

Genesis through Deuteronomy, BERNHARD W. ANDERSON; Joshua through Ruth, ROBERT C. DENTAN/ LESLIE J. HOPPE; 1 Samuel through 2 Chronicles, WILLIAM F. STINESPRING/ BURKE O. LONG; Ezra and Nehemiah, †ARTHUR JEFFERY/ JOHN J. COLLINS; Esther, †ARTHUR JEFFERY/ CAREY A. MOORE; Job, SAMUEL TERRIEN/ ROLAND E. MURPHY; Psalms, ROBERT C. DENTAN; Proverbs through Song of Solomon, †R. B. Y. SCOTT/ ROLAND E. MURPHY; Isaiah and Jeremiah, VICTOR R. GOLD/WILLIAM L. HOLLADAY; Lamentations, †R. B. Y. SCOTT/ ROLAND E. MURPHY; Ezekiel, VICTOR R. GOLD/ WILLIAM L. HOLLADAY; Daniel, †ARTHUR JEFFERY/ JOHN J. COLLINS; and Hosea through Malachi, R. LANSING HICKS/ WALTER BRUEGGEMANN.

## THE NEW TESTAMENT

Matthew through Luke, ELWYN E. TILDEN/ BRUCE M. METZGER; John, DONALD G. MILLER/ BRUCE M. METZGER; Acts, SHERMAN E. JOHNSON/ BRUCE M. METZGER;

Romans through 2 Corinthians, †JOHN KNOX/ JOHN REUMANN; Galatians, BRUCE M. METZGER/ JOHN REUMANN; Ephesians and Colossians, BRUCE M. METZGER/ WILLIAM A. BEARDSLEE; 1 Thessalonians through Philemon, †WARREN A. QUANBECK/ WILLIAM A. BEARDSLEE; Hebrews, BRUCE M. METZGER/ PHEME PERKINS; James through 2 Peter, †WARREN A. QUANBECK/ PHEME PERKINS; 1 John through 3 John, DONALD G. MILLER/ PHEME PERKINS; Jude, †WARREN A. QUANBECK/ PHEME PERKINS; and Revelation, BRUCE M. METZGER.

## GENERAL AND SPECIAL ARTICLES

The several articles that appear throughout the volume were written by the following contributors: "Introduction to the Old Testament," †HERBERT G. MAY/ ROLAND E. MURPHY; "The Pentateuch," BERNHARD W. ANDERSON; "The Historical Books," BURKE O. LONG; "The Poetical Books or 'Writings,' " ROLAND E. MURPHY; "The Prophetical Books," WALTER BRUEGGEMANN; "Introduction to the New Testament," "The Narrative Books—Gospels and Acts," and "Letters/Epistles in the New Testament," BRUCE M. METZGER; "Apocalyptic Literature," BRUCE M. METZGER and JOHN J. COLLINS; "Modern Approaches to Biblical Study," ROLAND E. MURPHY; "Characteristics of Hebrew Poetry," GEORGE W. ANDERSON; "Literary Forms in the Gospels," BRUCE M. METZGER; "Survey of Geography, History, and Archaeology of the Bible Lands," †GEORGES A. BARROIS/ PHILIP J. KING; and "English Versions of the Bible," † LUTHER A. WEIGLE/ BRUCE M. METZGER.

The editors express their gratitude to all who are mentioned above, as well as to the staff and artisans of the Oxford University Press, who, under the careful guidance of Donald Kraus, have assisted in producing this annotated edition of the Holy Scriptures. May its varied helps continue to prove useful in leading readers to a deeper understanding of the meaning of the Word of God.

BRUCE M. METZGER
ROLAND E. MURPHY

# *Acknowledgments*

Many people contributed to this volume. Among them were: Herbert J. Addison, Elizabeth M. Edman, Kelly Gallagher, June Gunden, Deborah Jenks, Susan Kraus, Estella Pate, Leslie Phillips, Lynn Stanley, Mildred and Frederick Tripp. The publisher expresses thanks to these and all others who had a part in bringing this work to completion.

# *To the Reader*

This preface is addressed to you by the Committee of translators, who wish to explain, as briefly as possible, the origin and character of our work. The publication of our revision is yet another step in the long, continual process of making the Bible available in the form of the English language that is most widely current in our day. To summarize in a single sentence: the New Revised Standard Version of the Bible is an authorized revision of the Revised Standard Version, published in 1952, which was a revision of the American Standard Version, published in 1901, which, in turn, embodied earlier revisions of the King James Version, published in 1611.

In the course of time, the King James Version came to be regarded as "the Authorized Version." With good reason it has been termed "the noblest monument of English prose," and it has entered, as no other book has, into the making of the personal character and the public institutions of the English-speaking peoples. We owe to it an incalculable debt.

Yet the King James Version has serious defects. By the middle of the nineteenth century, the development of biblical studies and the discovery of many biblical manuscripts more ancient than those on which the King James Version was based made it apparent that these defects were so many as to call for revision. The task was begun, by authority of the Church of England, in 1870. The (British) Revised Version of the Bible was published in 1881–1885; and the American Standard Version, its variant embodying the preferences of the American scholars associated with the work, was published, as was mentioned above, in 1901. In 1928 the copyright of the latter was acquired by the International Council of Religious Education and thus passed into the ownership of the churches of the United States and Canada that were associated in this Council through their boards of education and publication.

The Council appointed a committee of scholars to have charge of the text of the American Standard Version and to undertake inquiry concerning the need for further revision. After studying the questions whether or not revision should be undertaken, and if so, what its nature and extent should be, in 1937 the Council authorized a revision. The scholars who served as members of the Committee worked in two sections, one dealing with the Old Testament and one with the New Testament. In 1946 the Revised Standard Version of the New Testament was published. The publication of the Revised Standard Version of the Bible, containing the Old and New Testaments, took place on September 30, 1952. A translation

of the Apocryphal/Deuterocanonical Books of the Old Testament followed in 1957. In 1977 this collection was issued in an expanded edition, containing three additional texts received by Eastern Orthodox communions (3 and 4 Maccabees and Psalm 151). Thereafter the Revised Standard Version gained the distinction of being officially authorized for use by all major Christian churches: Protestant, Anglican, Roman Catholic, and Eastern Orthodox.

The Revised Standard Version Bible Committee is a continuing body, comprising about thirty members, both men and women. Ecumenical in representation, it includes scholars affiliated with various Protestant denominations, as well as several Roman Catholic members, an Eastern Orthodox member, and a Jewish member who serves in the Old Testament section. For a period of time the Committee included several members from Canada and from England.

Because no translation of the Bible is perfect or is acceptable to all groups of readers, and because discoveries of older manuscripts and further investigation of linguistic features of the text continue to become available, renderings of the Bible have proliferated. During the years following the publication of the Revised Standard Version, twenty-six other English translations and revisions of the Bible were produced by committees and by individual scholars—not to mention twenty-five other translations and revisions of the New Testament alone. One of the latter was the second edition of the RSV New Testament, issued in 1971, twenty-five years after its initial publication.

Following the publication of the RSV Old Testament in 1952, significant advances were made in the discovery and interpretation of documents in Semitic languages related to Hebrew. In addition to the information that had become available in the late 1940s from the Dead Sea texts of Isaiah and Habakkuk, subsequent acquisitions from the same area brought to light many other early copies of all the books of the Hebrew Scriptures (except Esther), though most of these copies are fragmentary. During the same period early Greek manuscript copies of books of the New Testament also became available.

In order to take these discoveries into account, along with recent studies of documents in Semitic languages related to Hebrew, in 1974 the Policies Committee of the Revised Standard Version, which is a standing committee of the National Council of the Churches of Christ in the U.S.A., authorized the preparation of a revision of the entire RSV Bible.

For the Old Testament the Committee has made use of the *Biblia Hebraica Stuttgartensia* (1977; ed. sec. emendata, 1983). This is an edition of the Hebrew and Aramaic text as current early in the Christian era and fixed by Jewish scholars (the "Masoretes") of the sixth to the ninth centuries. The vowel signs, which were added by the Masoretes, are accepted in the main, but where a more probable and convincing reading can be obtained by assuming different vowels, this has been done. No notes are given in such cases, because the vowel points are less ancient and reliable than the consonants. When an alternative reading given by the Masoretes is translated in a footnote, this is identified by the words "Another reading is."

Departures from the consonantal text of the best manuscripts have been made only where it seems clear that errors in copying had been made before the text

was standardized. Most of the corrections adopted are based on the ancient versions (translations into Greek, Aramaic, Syriac, and Latin), which were made prior to the time of the work of the Masoretes and which therefore may reflect earlier forms of the Hebrew text. In such instances a footnote specifies the version or versions from which the correction has been derived and also gives a translation of the Masoretic Text. Where it was deemed appropriate to do so, information is supplied in footnotes from subsidiary Jewish traditions concerning other textual readings (the *Tiqqune Sopherim,* "emendations of the scribes"). These are identified in the footnotes as "Ancient Heb tradition."

Occasionally it is evident that the text has suffered in transmission and that none of the versions provides a satisfactory restoration. Here we can only follow the best judgment of competent scholars as to the most probable reconstruction of the original text. Such reconstructions are indicated in footnotes by the abbreviation Cn ("Correction"), and a translation of the Masoretic Text is added.

For the New Testament the Committee has based its work on the most recent edition of *The Greek New Testament,* prepared by an interconfessional and international committee and published by the United Bible Societies (1966; 3rd ed. corrected, 1983; information concerning changes to be introduced into the critical apparatus of the forthcoming 4th edition was available to the Committee). As in that edition, double brackets are used to enclose a few passages that are generally regarded to be later additions to the text, but which we have retained because of their evident antiquity and their importance in the textual tradition. Only in very rare instances have we replaced the text or the punctuation of the Bible Societies' edition by an alternative that seemed to us to be superior. Here and there in the footnotes the phrase, "Other ancient authorites read," identifies alternative readings preserved by Greek manuscripts and early versions. In both Testaments, alternative renderings of the text are indicated by the word "Or."

As for the style of English adopted for the present revision, among the mandates given to the Committee in 1980 by the Division of Education and Ministry of the National Council of Churches of Christ (which now holds the copyright of the RSV Bible) was the directive to continue in the tradition of the King James Bible, but to introduce such changes as are warranted on the basis of accuracy, clarity, euphony, and current English usage. Within the constraints set by the original texts and by the mandates of the Division, the Committee has followed the maxim, "As literal as possible, as free as necessary." As a consequence, the New Revised Standard Version (NRSV) remains essentially a literal translation. Paraphrastic renderings have been adopted only sparingly, and then chiefly to compensate for a deficiency in the English language—the lack of a common gender third person singular pronoun.

During the almost half a century since the publication of the RSV, many in the churches have become sensitive to the danger of linguistic sexism arising from the inherent bias of the English language towards the masculine gender, a bias that in the case of the Bible has often restricted or obscured the meaning of the original text. The mandates from the Division specified that, in references to men and women, masculine-oriented language should be eliminated as far as this can be done without altering passages that reflect the historical situation of ancient patriar-

chal culture. As can be appreciated, more than once the Committee found that the several mandates stood in tension and even in conflict. The various concerns had to be balanced case by case in order to provide a faithful and acceptable rendering without using contrived English. Only very occasionally has the pronoun "he" or "him" been retained in passages where the reference may have been to a woman as well as to a man; for example, in several legal texts in Leviticus and Deuteronomy. In such instances of formal, legal language, the options of either putting the passage in the plural or of introducing additional nouns to avoid masculine pronouns in English seemed to the Committee to obscure the historic structure and literary character of the original. In the vast majority of cases, however, inclusiveness has been attained by simple rephrasing or by introducing plural forms when this does not distort the meaning of the passage. Of course, in narrative and in parable no attempt was made to generalize the sex of individual persons.

Another aspect of style will be detected by readers who compare the more stately English rendering of the Old Testament with the less formal rendering adopted for the New Testament. For example, the traditional distinction between *shall* and *will* in English has been retained in the Old Testament as appropriate in rendering a document that embodies what may be termed the classic form of Hebrew, while in the New Testament the abandonment of such distinctions in the usage of the future tense in English reflects the more colloquial nature of the koine Greek used by most New Testament authors except when they are quoting the Old Testament.

Careful readers will notice that here and there in the Old Testament the word LORD (or in certain cases GOD) is printed in capital letters. This represents the traditional manner in English versions of rendering the Divine Name, the "Tetragrammaton" (see the notes on Exodus 3.14, 15), following the precedent of the ancient Greek and Latin translators and the long established practice in the reading of the Hebrew Scriptures in the synagogue. While it is almost if not quite certain that the Name was originally pronounced "Yahweh," this pronunciation was not indicated when the Masoretes added vowel sounds to the consonantal Hebrew text. To the four consonants YHWH of the Name, which had come to be regarded as too sacred to be pronounced, they attached vowel signs indicating that in its place should be read the Hebrew word *Adonai* meaning "Lord" (or *Elohim* meaning "God"). Ancient Greek translators employed the word *Kyrios* ("Lord") for the Name. The Vulgate likewise used the Latin word *Dominus* ("Lord"). The form "Jehovah" is of late medieval origin; it is a combination of the consonants of the Divine Name and the vowels attached to it by the Masoretes but belonging to an entirely different word. Although the American Standard Version (1901) had used "Jehovah" to render the Tetragrammaton (the sound of Y being represented by J and the sound of W by V, as in Latin), for two reasons the Committees that produced the RSV and the NRSV returned to the more familiar usage of the King James Version. (1) The word "Jehovah" does not accurately represent any form of the Name ever used in Hebrew. (2) The use of any proper name for the one and only God, as though there were other gods from whom the true God had to be distinguished, began to be discontinued in Judaism before the Christian era and is inappropriate for the universal faith of the Christian Church.

It will be seen that in the Psalms and in other prayers addressed to God the archaic second person singular pronouns *(thee, thou, thine)* and verb forms *(art, hast, hadst)* are no longer used. Although some readers may regret this change, it should be pointed out that in the original languages neither the Old Testament nor the New makes any linguistic distinction between addressing a human being and addressing the Deity. Furthermore, in the tradition of the King James Version one will not expect to find the use of capital letters for pronouns that refer to the Deity—such capitalization is an unnecessary innovation that has only recently been introduced into a few English translations of the Bible. Finally, we have left to the discretion of the licensed publishers such matters as section headings, cross-references, and clues to the pronunciation of proper names.

This new version seeks to preserve all that is best in the English Bible as it has been known and used through the years. It is intended for use in public reading and congregational worship, as well as in private study, instruction, and meditation. We have resisted the temptation to introduce terms and phrases that merely reflect current moods, and have tried to put the message of the Scriptures in simple, enduring words and expressions that are worthy to stand in the great tradition of the King James Bible and its predecessors.

In traditional Judaism and Christianity, the Bible has been more than a historical document to be preserved or a classic of literature to be cherished and admired; it is recognized as the unique record of God's dealings with people over the ages. The Old Testament sets forth the call of a special people to enter into covenant relation with the God of justice and steadfast love and to bring God's law to the nations. The New Testament records the life and work of Jesus Christ, the one in whom "the Word became flesh," as well as describes the rise and spread of the early Christian Church. The Bible carries its full message, not to those who regard it simply as a noble literary heritage of the past or who wish to use it to enhance political purposes and advance otherwise desirable goals, but to all persons and communities who read it so that they may discern and understand what God is saying to them. That message must not be disguised in phrases that are no longer clear, or hidden under words that have changed or lost their meaning; it must be presented in language that is direct and plain and meaningful to people today. It is the hope and prayer of the translators that this version of the Bible may continue to hold a large place in congregational life and to speak to all readers, young and old alike, helping them to understand and believe and respond to its message.

For the Committee,
BRUCE M. METZGER

# *How to Use This Study Bible Profitably*


I. Kinds of Helps in this Edition
  1. General Introductions and Articles
  2. Introductions to Individual Books
  3. Annotations
  4. Translators' Footnotes
  5. Parallels in Synoptic Gospels
  6. Maps
II. Finding What the Text Says
  1. Variant Readings and Alternative Renderings
  2. Typographical Clues
  3. Source and Context
  4. What Is Not Said
III. Finding What the Text Means
  1. Intended Meaning
  2. Cultural Context
  3. Literary Genres
  4. Visions and Symbols
  5. Natural Meaning
IV. How to Look Up References
V. Other Explanations
  1. The Divine Name
  2. Typographical Distinctions
  3. Calendar Designations


The following comments are chiefly arranged under the headings: "Kinds of Helps in this Edition," "Finding What the Text Says," and "Finding What the Text Means." Under the first heading are listed the several kinds of helps bearing on the major divisions of Scripture and the smaller collections within those divisions; helps bearing on individual books; and helps bearing on particular passages. Under the other two headings are mentioned practical hints as to interpreting any piece of ancient literature. Following these general comments are two further sections, "How to Look up References" and "Other Explanations."

## I. KINDS OF HELPS IN THIS EDITION

### *1. General Introductions and Articles*

At some stage, and preferably sooner rather than later, the student should read the "Introduction to the Old Testament" (p. xxxi OT), and/or the "Introduction to the New Testament" (p. iii NT). These give general information about the contents, original language(s), manuscripts, and canon of each Testament.

More specialized information about the literary form of the several parts of the Bible is provided by the articles in the Old Testament on "The Pentateuch" (p. xxxv OT), "The Historical Books" (p. 267 OT), "The Poetical Books or 'Writings' " (p. 623 OT), and "The Prophetical Books" (p. 862 OT), and in the New Testament by "The Narrative Books—Gospels and Acts" (p. viii NT), "Letters/Epistles in the New Testament" (p. 204 NT), and "Apocalyptic Literature" (p. 362 NT). A variety of other helps follow the close of the New Testament. These are essays on "Mod-

ern Approaches to Biblical Study" (p. 388), "Characteristics of Hebrew Poetry" (p. 392), "Literary Forms in the Gospels" (p. 397), "English Versions of the Bible" (p. 400), and "Survey of the Geography, History, and Archaeology of the Bible Lands" (p. 407).

Tables of Measures and Weights in the Bible, Chronological Tables of Rulers (now located at places in the text where they are most useful), an Index to the Annotations, and a set of Maps of Bible Lands (with an index to the maps) round out the wide variety of supplementary helps.

*2. Introductions to Individual Books*

For the study of a given book of the Bible, one should begin with the Introduction to that book. This provides necessary information about its author, themes, date (when known), and major sections. A more detailed consecutive outline of the book is provided by the boldface annotations at the foot of each page. By glancing through these one can obtain an idea of the overall structure and content.

The boldface headings are also useful in another way. When looking up an unfamiliar verse, attention given to such headings will alert the reader to the general drift of the passage and the larger unit of which it is a part, and thus provide guidance in understanding the verse in relation to the wider context.

*3. Annotations*

When examining individual paragraphs or shorter sections, help in understanding the passage will be found in the separate annotations. Annotations on a passage as a whole precede those on individual verses within the passage. Here italics designate words that are quoted verbatim from the biblical text.

*4. Translators' Footnotes*

The notes that belong to the New Revised Standard Version (designated by an italic letter and printed in smaller type at the foot of the second column of the biblical text) provide basically two kinds of information: divergent readings and alternative renderings. Here the phrase "Other ancient authorities read" means that the reading (i.e. wording) of the passage is different in various manuscripts and early versions, while the word "Or" signifies that the Hebrew or Greek text permits an alternative rendering besides the one given in the text.

*5. Parallels in Synoptic Gospels*

In the annotations on the Synoptic Gospels (Matthew, Mark, and Luke) the cross-references to parallel passages stand in parentheses immediately after the boldface heading of a new paragraph. For example, at the account of Jesus' transfiguration in Mk 9.2–8 the references to Mt 17.1–8 and Lk 9.28–36 indicate where the Synoptic parallels are to be found; similar information is given at the passages in Matthew and Luke. A careful comparison of such parallel texts will reveal the special emphases of each Synoptic account.

The best commentary on the Bible is often some other passage in the Bible; therefore it cannot be too strongly urged that, for the fullest comprehension of any one passage, all of the cross-references should be consulted. Particular atten-

tion should be given to the cross-references that end with "n." (as, for example, "see 5.24 n."); these involve biblical text along with annotation.

*6. Maps*

The hasty reader often overlooks the help that maps can provide. The set of specially prepared maps, with an index, found at the close of the volume should be consulted not only in connection with the general article on the geography of the Bible lands (pp. 407–410), but also in order to obtain more specific orientation concerning countries, cities, towns, and places mentioned in the biblical text.

## II. FINDING WHAT THE TEXT SAYS

*1. Variant Readings and Alternative Renderings*

First one should notice whether the passage involves a variant reading and/or an alternative rendering (for the distinction, see above at I.4). For example, in Rev. 13.18 the footnote of the NRSV informs the reader that some Greek manuscripts give 616 rather than 666 as the number of the beast, while in the Lord's Prayer "Give us our bread for tomorrow" is an alternative rendering of the Greek text of Mt 6.11. Following 1 Sam 10.27 a footnote indicates that one of the Dead Sea Scrolls from Qumran provides the text of an additional paragraph, as given in the English translation.

*2. Typographical Clues*

Attention should be paid to the typography of the NRSV. Not only is the text arranged in paragraphs, but also one finds here and there a white line (a blank space); this indicates a still greater break in connection between two paragraphs than one normally expects.

Another typographical device, the strophic arrangement of the text, will alert the reader to the presence of semi-poetic or rhythmic material standing within a passage of prose (see the opening chapters of Genesis, or parts of the prophetical books). In the New Testament some passages (such as Phil 2.6–11; 1 Tim 2.5–6; 3.16; 2 Tim 2.11–13) may have been adapted from early Christian hymnody.

Likewise, not only are New Testament quotations and echoes from the Old Testament set off within quotation marks (see, for example, Heb 7.1–3), but also here and there in 1 Corinthians the presence of quotation marks helps to identify what seem to be questions and statements previously made by members of the church at Corinth, to which Paul now responds (as in 1 Cor 7.1; 8.1,4,8; 10.23).

*3. Source and Context*

One must pay attention not only to what is said, but also by whom it is said, to whom it is said, at what time, under what circumstances, what precedes, and what follows. There is the thoughtless habit of quoting all parts of the Bible as of equal value, whether they are the words of the Lord or the words of Bildad the Shuhite and Zophar the Naamathite in the book of Job, who are afterwards represented as condemned and contradicted by God. In other words, not everything contained in the Bible is affirmed by the Bible. For example, the behavior of some persons in

Scripture is positively disgraceful; accounts of such behavior are recorded as a warning, not as an example (e.g. David with Uriah's wife, Bathsheba). Again, some statements are included in the biblical text not as truth to be believed, but as error to be rejected (e.g. "There is no God" in Pss 14.1 and 53.1).

*4. What Is Not Said*

Occasionally it is appropriate to consider not only what the text says, but also what it does not say. For example, 1 Jn 1.5 does not say that God is *a* light, as though one light among several other lights. Nor does it say that God is *the* light, as standing in relation to created beings. But it says simply, "God is light." Again, one should not read Jesus' denunciations against the scribes and Pharisees in Matthew ch 23 as though directed against *all* scribes and Pharisees, but only against those who are further identified in one or another particular.

## III. FINDING WHAT THE TEXT MEANS

*1. Intended Meaning*

One should begin with the common-sense view that a text means what the author meant. For example, when one reads in 2 Tim 3.16, "All scripture is inspired by God," for the author "all scripture" denoted the Jewish scriptures—what we call the Old Testament. It was only subsequently that the expression "scripture" came to be applied also to writings of the New Testament (2 Pet 3.15–16).

*2. Cultural Context*

No word of the Bible was spoken or written in a cultural vacuum; every part of it was culturally conditioned. Thomas Aquinas wrote concerning the Bible, *Omnia ex Deo, omnia ex hominibus* ("All is from God, all is from human authors"). In other words, the mystery of Scripture is that the word of God is transmitted in words of human authors who were culturally conditioned. Therefore in order to ascertain the meaning of a passage one must take into account the background and thought-patterns of ancient Near Eastern culture. For example, ancient Hebrew psychology sometimes located the seat of the innermost emotions in the kidneys, translated "reins" in King James English (as in Ps 16.7, "My reins instruct me in the night watches"); here contemporary English translations substitute "heart" as more comprehensible to modern readers.

*3. Literary Genres*

One must also take into account the presence and intent of specific literary genres and forms. The recognition of different formats of different books, and of passages within a book, will assist one to understand them accordingly; prose is prose, poetry is poetry, proverb is proverb, story is story, parable is parable. (See also "Literary Forms in the Gospels," p. 397.)

*4. Visions and Symbols*

If a passage is identified as a visionary experience, one must seek the meaning behind what is said. In Ezekiel's vision of the valley of dry bones (Ezek 37) and in

many parts of the book of Revelation (for example, the Four Horsemen of the Apocalypse, 6.1–8), the descriptions are not descriptions of real occurrences, but of symbols of real occurrences.

*5. Natural Meaning*

What might be called "the principle of simplicity" in interpreting the Bible is aptly set forth by Calvin in a comment on Gal 4.22 about allegorizing. "Let us know," he writes, "that the true meaning of Scripture is the natural and obvious meaning. . . . Let us not only neglect as doubtful, but boldly set aside as deadly corruptions, those pretended expositions that lead us away from the natural meaning." It is significant that Calvin uses the adjective "natural" rather than "literal," for the natural meaning of a text is sometimes figurative rather than literal. As Luther once cautioned, one should not conclude from the psalmist's statement, "Under his [God's] wings you will find refuge," that God has feathers!

## IV. HOW TO LOOK UP REFERENCES

| | |
|---|---|
| Jn 3.16 | means the Gospel according to John, chapter 3, verse 16. |
| Isa 9.1,6 | means Isaiah, chapter 9, verse 1 and verse 6. |
| Rev 22.1–5 | means Revelation, chapter 22, verses 1 to 5 inclusive. |
| Acts 8.4; 11.19 | means Acts, chapter 8, verse 4; and chapter 11, verse 19 (of the same book). |
| See Heb 3.2n. | means there is an annotation on Hebrews, chapter 3, verse 2. Both the Scripture passage and the annotation should be consulted. |
| v. 4a; v. 7b | means the first part of verse 4; the second part of verse 7. |

When a book of the Bible is referred to within an annotation on that book, the name of the book is not repeated. For example, a reference to Ps 23.1 among the annotations elsewhere in the book of Psalms is written 23.1, not Ps. 23.1.

The best commentary on the Bible is often some other text in the Bible; it therefore cannot be too strongly urged that, for the fullest comprehension of any one passage, all of the cross-references should be looked up.

## V. OTHER EXPLANATIONS

*1. The Divine Name*

In the translation of that part of the Old Testament that is the Hebrew Scriptures, the words LORD and GOD (printed in capital and small capital letters) represent the Divine name, YHWH (conventionally vocalized "Yahweh"). For further information, see p. xii OT.

*2. Typographical Distinctions*

In the annotations, transliterated Hebrew, Aramaic, or Greek words are enclosed within quotation marks; italics are used to designate the words that are quoted verbatim from the translated Scripture text. In the footnotes belonging to the New Revised Standard Version (designated by italic superscript letters, and standing at

the foot of the second column of the Scripture text on any given page) alternative readings and renderings (for the distinction see I.4 above) are printed in italics.

*3. Calendar Designations*

For dates given in the present edition, the editors have decided to retain the designations B.C. ("before Christ") and A.D. (*anno domini*, "in the year of the Lord"), in preference to the designations B.C.E. ("before the common era") and C.E. ("common era"). These latter designations have not yet attained wide recognition among readers and would require frequent explanation in order to avoid confusion. The use of B.C. and A.D. is in the interest of ease of understanding, and is not meant to convey a theological position or preference.

# *The Number and Sequence of the Books of the Bible*

## THE OLD TESTAMENT

According to Jewish usage the twenty-four books of the Hebrew Scriptures fall into three divisions: the Law, the Prophets, and the Writings. The Prophets are divided into the Former Prophets and the Latter Prophets (the terms "former" and "latter" refer to their position in the list, and have no reference to date of composition). The books of Samuel, Kings, Chronicles, Ezra-Nehemiah were not divided by the Jews until the close of the Middle Ages. The twelve Minor Prophets are treated as one book. The two subdivisions of the Prophets therefore contain four books each. In most editions of the Hebrew Bible the sequence of the books is as follows:

The Law (five books):
Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, Deuteronomy.

The Prophets (eight books):
Former Prophets: Joshua, Judges, Samuel (1 and 2), Kings (1 and 2).
Latter Prophets: Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, the Twelve (=Hosea, Joel, Amos, Obadiah, Jonah, Micah, Nahum, Habakkuk, Zephaniah, Haggai, Zechariah, Malachi).

The Writings (eleven books):
Psalms, Proverbs, Job, Song of Solomon, Ruth, Lamentations, Ecclesiastes, Esther, Daniel, Ezra-Nehemiah, Chronicles (1 and 2).

In Protestant editions of the Bible the Old Testament follows the Hebrew text as regards content, but the books in the second and third divisions are rearranged in sequence and several are divided, making a total of thirty-nine.

In the Roman Catholic Church, and in the various Orthodox Churches, the Old Testament includes a variety of other books that are not in the Hebrew canon but were present in the early Greek translation known as the Septuagint. A full explanation of the nature of these books and of the different status they hold among different churches, along with the full New Revised Standard Version translation of them, fully introduced and annotated, is available in *The New Oxford Annotated Apocrypha*. This is also bound with the Hebrew Scriptures and the New Testament in *The New Oxford Annotated Bible with the Apocrypha*.

## THE NEW TESTAMENT

The number and the sequence of the twenty-seven books of the New Testament are the same in Protestant, Roman Catholic, and Eastern Orthodox Bibles.

A comparison of the extant manuscripts of the New Testament discloses that the early Church was accustomed to arrange them in four groups: (1) the Gospels, (2) the Acts and the General, or Catholic, Letters (that is, the seven letters which bear the names of James, Peter, John, and Jude), (3) the Pauline Letters, (4) the Apocalypse (as in the fifth-century codex Alexandrinus and many other manuscripts). Sometimes the Pauline Letters precede the Acts and General Letters, thus placing first the books which had earliest obtained canonical authority (as in the fourth-century codex Sinaiticus and the sixth-century codex Fuldensis).

Within each of the four groups there was a great variety of order. In the early Western Church the Gospel sequence most commonly followed was that of Matthew, John, Luke, Mark—namely, the Gospels attributed to apostles preceding those attributed to disciples of the apostles. The Letter to the Hebrews had no fixed place; sometimes it stood at the end of the Pauline Letters, sometimes between Paul's Letters to churches and those to individuals (that is, between 2 Thessalonians and 1 Timothy), and occasionally after Romans (as in the third-century Chester Beatty Papyrus) or after Galatians (as in an ancestor of the fourth-century codex Vaticanus, as is disclosed by the section numbers in Vaticanus). In the West the Letters of Peter were frequently placed first among the General Letters.

The current order of the Pauline and the General Letters seems to have been drawn up roughly in accord with length, the longest one in each group (Paul to churches, Paul to individuals, and General Letters) standing first and the shortest one, last.

# *Alphabetical Listing of the Books of the Bible*

OT = Old Testament NT = New Testament

| | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| The Acts | 160 NT | James | 331 NT | Numbers | 163 OT |
| Amos | 1170 OT | Jeremiah | 960 OT | Obadiah | 1183 OT |
| 1 Chronicles | 503 OT | Job | 625 OT | 1 Peter | 337 NT |
| 2 Chronicles | 538 OT | Joel | 1163 OT | 2 Peter | 344 NT |
| Colossians | 285 NT | John | 124 NT | Philemon | 314 NT |
| 1 Corinthians | 229 NT | 1 John | 349 NT | Philippians | 279 NT |
| 2 Corinthians | 249 NT | 2 John | 355 NT | Proverbs | 802 OT |
| Daniel | 1126 OT | 3 John | 357 NT | Psalms | 674 OT |
| Deuteronomy | 217 OT | Jonah | 1186 OT | Revelation | 364 NT |
| Ecclesiastes | 841 OT | Joshua | 270 OT | Romans | 208 NT |
| Ephesians | 272 NT | Jude | 359 NT | Ruth | 332 OT |
| Esther | 612 OT | Judges | 300 OT | 1 Samuel | 340 OT |
| Exodus | 69 OT | 1 Kings | 423 OT | 2 Samuel | 384 OT |
| Ezekiel | 1057 OT | 2 Kings | 463 OT | Song of Solomon | 853 OT |
| Ezra | 581 OT | Lamentations | 1047 OT | | |
| Galatians | 263 NT | Leviticus | 125 OT | 1 Thessalonians | 291 NT |
| Genesis | 1 OT | Luke | 76 NT | 2 Thessalonians | 296 NT |
| Habakkuk | 1205 OT | Malachi | 1233 OT | 1 Timothy | 300 NT |
| Haggai | 1217 OT | Mark | 47 NT | 2 Timothy | 306 NT |
| Hebrews | 316 NT | Matthew | 1 NT | Titus | 311 NT |
| Hosea | 1148 OT | Micah | 1190 OT | Zechariah | 1220 OT |
| Isaiah | 866 OT | Nahum | 1200 OT | Zephaniah | 1211 OT |
| | | Nehemiah | 594 OT | | |

# *Names and Order of the Books of the Old and New Testaments*

THE HEBREW SCRIPTURES

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Genesis | 1 OT | |
| Exodus | 69 OT | |
| Leviticus | 125 OT | |
| Numbers | 163 OT | |
| Deuteronomy | 217 OT | |
| Joshua | 270 OT | |
| Judges | 300 OT | |
| Ruth | 332 OT | |
| 1 Samuel (1 Kingdoms in Greek) | | 340 OT |
| 2 Samuel (2 Kingdoms in Greek) | | 384 OT |
| 1 Kings (3 Kingdoms in Greek) | | 423 OT |
| 2 Kings (4 Kingdoms in Greek) | | 463 OT |
| 1 Chronicles (1 Paralipomenon in Greek) | | 503 OT |
| 2 Chronicles (2 Paralipomenon in Greek) | | 538 OT |
| Ezra } (=2 Esdras in Greek) | | 581 OT |
| Nehemiah } | | 594 OT |
| Esther | 612 OT | |
| Job | 625 OT | |
| Psalms | 674 OT | |
| Proverbs | 802 OT | |
| Ecclesiastes | 841 OT | |
| Song of Solomon | 853 OT | |
| Isaiah | 866 OT | |
| Jeremiah | 960 OT | |
| Lamentations | 1047 OT | |
| Ezekiel | 1057 OT | |
| Daniel | 1126 OT | |
| Hosea | 1148 OT | |
| Joel | 1163 OT | |

| | |
|---|---|
| Amos | 1170 OT |
| Obadiah | 1183 OT |
| Jonah | 1186 OT |
| Micah | 1190 OT |
| Nahum | 1200 OT |
| Habakkuk | 1205 OT |
| Zephaniah | 1211 OT |
| Haggai | 1217 OT |
| Zechariah | 1220 OT |
| Malachi | 1233 OT |


THE NEW TESTAMENT


| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Matthew | 1 NT | 2 Thessalonians | 296 NT |
| Mark | 47 NT | 1 Timothy | 300 NT |
| Luke | 76 NT | 2 Timothy | 306 NT |
| John | 124 NT | Titus | 311 NT |
| Acts of the Apostles | 160 NT | Philemon | 314 NT |
| Romans | 208 NT | Hebrews | 316 NT |
| 1 Corinthians | 229 NT | James | 331 NT |
| 2 Corinthians | 249 NT | 1 Peter | 337 NT |
| Galatians | 263 NT | 2 Peter | 344 NT |
| Ephesians | 272 NT | 1 John | 349 NT |
| Philippians | 279 NT | 2 John | 355 NT |
| Colossians | 285 NT | 3 John | 357 NT |
| 1 Thessalonians | 291 NT | Jude | 359 NT |
| | Revelation | 364 NT | |

# *Abbreviations*

The following abbreviations are used for the books of the Bible:

OLD TESTAMENT

| | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Gen | Genesis | 2 Chr | 2 Chronicles | Dan | Daniel |
| Ex | Exodus | Ezra | Ezra | Hos | Hosea |
| Lev | Leviticus | Neh | Nehemiah | Joel | Joel |
| Num | Numbers | Esth | Esther | Am | Amos |
| Deut | Deuteronomy | Job | Job | Ob | Obadiah |
| Josh | Joshua | Ps | Psalms | Jon | Jonah |
| Judg | Judges | Prov | Proverbs | Mic | Micah |
| Ruth | Ruth | Eccl | Ecclesiastes | Nah | Nahum |
| 1 Sam | 1 Samuel | Song | Song of Solomon | Hab | Habakkuk |
| 2 Sam | 2 Samuel | Isa | Isaiah | Zeph | Zephaniah |
| 1 Kings | 1 Kings | Jer | Jeremiah | Hag | Haggai |
| 2 Kings | 2 Kings | Lam | Lamentations | Zech | Zechariah |
| 1 Chr | 1 Chronicles | Ezek | Ezekiel | Mal | Malachi |

NEW TESTAMENT

| | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Mt | Matthew | Gal | Galatians | Heb | Hebrews |
| Mk | Mark | Eph | Ephesians | Jas | James |
| Lk | Luke | Phil | Philippians | 1 Pet | 1 Peter |
| Jn | John | Col | Colossians | 2 Pet | 2 Peter |
| Acts | Acts of the | 1 Thess | 1 Thessalonians | 1 Jn | 1 John |
| | Apostles | 2 Thess | 2 Thessalonians | 2 Jn | 2 John |
| Rom | Romans | 1 Tim | 1 Timothy | 3 Jn | 3 John |
| 1 Cor | 1 Corinthians | 2 Tim | 2 Timothy | Jude | Jude |
| 2 Cor | 2 Corinthians | Titus | Titus | Rev | Revelation |
| | | Philem | Philemon | | |

In the NRSV notes to the books of the Old Testament the following abbreviations are used:

| | |
|---|---|
| *Ant.* | Josephus, *Antiquities of the Jews* |
| Aram | Aramaic |
| Ch, chs | Chapter, chapters |

| | |
|---|---|
| Cn | Correction; made where the text has suffered in transmission and the versions provide no satisfactory restoration but where the Standard Bible Committee agrees with the judgment of competent scholars as to the most probable reconstruction of the original text. |
| Gk | Septuagint, Greek version of the Old Testament |
| Heb | Hebrew of the consonantal Masoretic Text of the Old Testament |
| Josephus | Flavius Josephus (Jewish historian, about A.D. 37 to about 95) |
| Macc | The book(s) of the Maccabees |
| Ms(s) | Manuscript(s) |
| MT | The Hebrew of the pointed Masoretic Text of the Old Testament |
| OL | Old Latin |
| Q Ms(s) | Manuscript(s) found at Qumran by the Dead Sea |
| Sam | Samaritan Hebrew text of the Old Testament |
| Syr | Syriac Version of the Old Testament |
| Syr H | Syriac Version of Origen's Hexapla |
| Tg | Targum |
| Vg | Vulgate, Latin Version of the Old Testament |

# THE HEBREW SCRIPTURES COMMONLY CALLED THE OLD TESTAMENT

*New Revised Standard Version*

# *Introduction to the Old Testament*

Since the time of the early theologians of the church, Christians have adopted, for the Hebrew Scriptures and some additional Jewish writings, the phrase "Old Testament," in opposition to the "New Testament" (see Jer 31.31; Heb 8.8), which was itself not completed until the second century. The New Testament designation of the sacred books of the Jews was *graphē*, the Writing, either in the singular or plural form. At the time of Christ (see the Prologue to Sirach, already in the second century B.C., and also Luke 24.44), the Hebrew Scriptures seem to have been recognized as three-stepped: the Law, the Prophets, and the Writings (or Hagiographa). This threefold division is often referred to today by the acronym *TaNaK* (*Torah, Nebi'im* and *Kethubim,* the Hebrew words for the three groups). The traditional Christian division into historical, prophetical, and poetic derives from the Greek translation (the Septuagint) and tradition of the sacred books.

That the Bible was not written originally in English is a fact not always appreciated, and there are even those who are unaware of it. What we use is the translated Bible (see "English Versions of the Bible," pp. 400–406). The New Testament was written in Greek and the Old Testament in Hebrew, with the exception of parts of Daniel (2.4b–7.28) and Ezra (4.8–6.18; 7.12–26) and one verse in Jeremiah (10.11), which are in Aramaic. The translation of Hebrew and Aramaic presents distinctive and often difficult problems; they belong to the Semitic family of languages, to which Arabic, Assyrian and Babylonian, and Canaanite also belong, in contrast to Greek and English, which are Indo-European.

The Hebrew text of the Old Testament, like the Greek of the New (see "Introduction to the New Testament," pp. iii–vi NT), has suffered from copyist's errors and scribal emendations, some of which can be corrected in the light of the ancient versions (Greek, Latin, Syriac, and other early translations and collections). The notes in the New Revised Standard Version give examples of such corrections. The translators must also decide among variant readings preserved in the Hebrew manuscripts themselves, a task complicated by the recent discovery of much earlier manuscripts of the Hebrew Scriptures than had previously been known. Before about A.D. 100, there did not exist a single standard text of the various books of Scripture regarded as possessing sole authority (a *textus receptus*). Rather, as the ancient versions and the Dead Sea (Qumran) Scrolls afford evidence, there were variant recensions, or texts, of the same Old Testament book. It is true that there was already in existence a form of the Hebrew text that was to be edited later by the Jewish scholars known as Masoretes (from about A.D. 600 to the 10th century) and that is the standard text used today, but there were also variant forms of the text. In contrast to this evidence of early variant textual recensions, the biblical manuscripts found in the Wilderness of Judea at Wadi Murabba'at and belonging to the early part of the second century A.D. are strictly Masoretic (proto-Masoretic) in character, showing that by this time the

standard text had been adopted. Although there are variants among the preserved manuscripts of the Masoretic Text, due largely to simple scribal errors, the Masoretic Text has been transmitted with remarkable accuracy. (See also "To the Reader," pp. ix–xiv.)

The books accepted as authoritative Scripture are spoken of as belonging to the "canon" (see "Introduction to the New Testament," pp. iii–vi NT) of Scripture. If by "canonical" one means that a book must be regarded as having a special authority, that it is holy and inspired, that it is one of a strictly limited number of books, and that there is a single, standard text, then one cannot speak of a canon of Old Testament Scripture before A.D. 100. Long before this, however, the Jews had their Scriptures.

The process by which the Jews became "the people of the Book" was gradual, and the development is shrouded in the mists of history and tradition. One might designate as their earliest Scripture "the book of the law" that was found in the temple at Jerusalem in 621 B.C. and used as the basis for King Josiah's reform (2 Kings chs 22–23). It is generally agreed that this "book of the law" is now incorporated within the present book of Deuteronomy (chs 5–26 [or perhaps 12–26] and ch 28). Another landmark is "the book of the law of Moses" brought by Ezra from Babylonia in 458 (398 ?) B.C. (Ezra 7.6–10, 14; Neh chs 8–10). This has been variously identified by scholars as the prototype or earlier form of that legislation that became the P Code in the Pentateuch, or the P Code itself, or the completed Pentateuch (see the Introduction to the Pentateuch, pp. xxxv–xxxvi OT). The date of the final compilation of the Pentateuch or Law, which was the first corpus or larger body of literature that came to be regarded as authoritative Scripture, is uncertain, but some have conservatively dated it to the time of the Exile in the sixth century. Although the story line goes from Genesis through Joshua (when the promise of the land is accomplished), those responsible for the final form of the Pentateuch highlighted the role of Moses as founding father and legislator. Genesis to Deuteronomy came to be regarded as Mosaic in origin, and the Law was limited to the Pentateuch (see Ex 19–40; Leviticus; Num 1–9). Certainly before the middle of the third century B.C., when according to tradition the Pentateuch was first translated into Greek, it had achieved a primary status as the Scripture of the Jews. It was to retain this primary position even after the body of Scripture had been enlarged to include the Prophets and the Writings. When in the second century B.C. the Samaritans finally separated from Judaism, they retained the Pentateuch as their sole Scripture, preserving it in a script derived from the old Hebrew script, which was revived in the Maccabean period.

Before the adoption of the Pentateuch as the Law of Moses, there had been compiled and edited in the spirit and diction of the Deuteronomic "school" the group of books consisting of Deuteronomy, Joshua, Judges, Samuel, and Kings (often called the Deuteronomistic History; see "The Historical Books," pp. 267–269 OT). This compilation, which was partly built up from earlier writings, may have occurred in two stages, i.e. shortly before the death of Josiah in 609 B.C. and during the Exile in the middle of the sixth century. Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, and the book of the Twelve (or minor prophets) were edited and compiled during the post-exilic period. The process of compiling and editing these works is illustrated by the addition of chs 40–66 to the book of Isaiah and chs 9–14 to the prophecies of Zechariah, by the superscriptions giving information about the person and time of a given prophet, and by certain additions and changes here and there that are mentioned in the annotations in this volume. The editing was both an adaptation of the books of the prophets to the needs of the post-exilic period and a recognition of the relevance of the prophetic messages for contemporary as well as historic Israel.

Just when the prophetical books came to be regarded as a definitely limited body of Scripture is not clear. Ben Sira, the Jewish author of the apocryphal book of Ecclesiasticus, writing around

180 B.C., seems to have regarded his work as a continuation of the Prophets and the books of Wisdom. The grandson of Ben Sira refers in his Prologue to Ecclesiasticus to the threefold division of Scripture as the Law, the Prophets, and the other or rest of the books, though he does not necessarily imply a closed canon. The Prophets came to be divided into the Former Prophets (Joshua, Judges, Samuel, and Kings) and the Latter Prophets (Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, and the book of the Twelve). Perhaps the association of the two divisions was based on allusions in the Former Prophets to prophetic figures and because of a tradition that they were composed largely by prophets. Such a tradition is suggested in 1 Chr 29.29; 2 Chr 9.29; 12.15; 13.22; 20.34; 26.22; 32.32.

In contrast to the Law and the Prophets, the books of the Writings contain less homogeneous materials. They were not edited in groups or combined as in the case of the other books, but circulated separately. This should be qualified by the recognition that 1 and 2 Chronicles, Ezra, and Nehemiah are a connected history, which some even regard as the work of a single author ("the Chronicler"; see "The Historical Books," pp. 267–269 OT). It was not until the time of the Christian era that the authority of the disputed books among the Writings (in particular, the Song of Songs and Ecclesiastes) was definitively settled among the Jews themselves. Later in the Christian era the five shortest of the Writings came to form a group called the "Scrolls" (*megilloth*): Song of Songs, Ruth, Lamentations, Ecclesiastes, and Esther. They were associated with certain Jewish festivals, when they were read publicly, such as the Song of Songs at Passover.

Among writings not included in the Hebrew canon are the so-called Apocrypha. These were transmitted mainly in the Greek Septuagint tradition, and most of them were composed in the "intertestamental" era, the last two centuries B.C. They were not accepted in the Jewish tradition, in part because of the current conviction that the Old Testament canon was closed at the time of Ezra when prophetic revelation was supposed to have ceased (the book of Daniel is of course an exception to this). Later Christian groups accepted several of the apocrypha into their official Scriptures. (Concerning the Apocryphal/Deuterocanonical Books, see the last paragraph on p. xxi above.)

# *The Pentateuch*

The so-called "Five Books of Moses" are often designated as the Pentateuch, a Greek term referring to a work divided into "five scrolls." In Jewish circles these books are known by the Hebrew word Torah, a term that is frequently translated "law." For instance, the New Testament makes reference to "the law" or "the prophets," two major parts of the Hebrew Bible (Mt 5.17; Lk 24.44; Jn 1.45). This rendering is proper in the sense that the Torah includes many legal matters; for instance, the book of Leviticus is exclusively "law." The translation is too restrictive, however, to do full justice to the meaning of the Hebrew word. In its larger sense the Hebrew word *torah* refers to the "teaching" or even the "revelation" that God gives the people.

The Pentateuch or Torah is presented in the form of a narrative extending from the creation of the universe to the eve of Israel's entrance into "the promised land." The comprehensive account has six major movements: the story of primeval times (Gen 1–11), of Israel's ancestors (Gen 12–50), of the Exodus from Egypt (Ex 1–18), of the sojourn at Sinai (Ex 19 through Leviticus to Num 10.11), of the wandering in the wilderness (the remainder of Numbers), and of the entrance into the land of Canaan. The latter story, however, is only anticipated in the book of Deuteronomy. With the death of Moses at the end of Deuteronomy the narrative breaks off, only to be continued in the book of Joshua and subsequent books of the Hebrew Bible.

At various points along the way, the Torah story relates to what we would call "history." This is especially the case in the book of Exodus, where the drama is enacted in the context of the imperial politics of ancient Egypt, probably at the beginning of the Nineteenth Dynasty (thirteenth century B.C.). The purpose of the narrators, however, is not to present a straightforward historical account but to confess faith in God. They do so by telling the story of how the Holy God, Creator of heaven and earth, chooses to become involved in the life of a small Hebrew people who were known in the ancient world as Israel. Storytelling or poetry is indispensable for confessing the faith of this "people of the LORD" (Judg 5.11, 13).

The heart of the story of the Pentateuch is found in the book of Exodus, which deals with the exodus from Egypt and the sojourn at Mount Sinai. All Jewish tradition reaches back to these "root experiences," which constitute the people's basic understanding of their own identity and of the identity and character of God. At first these crucial experiences were related in story, song, and proverb, but in the course of time, as the tradition was handed on in various circles and reinterpreted for new situations, the Torah expanded and took written form. During the monarchy it circulated in Old Epic literature; indeed, some scholars detect southern ("J" or Judean) and northern ("E" or Ephraimitic) literary versions. (These letters, derived originally from the terms for God used in the different sources—"J" for *Jahveh* or *Yahweh*, "E" for *'elohim*—are conventionally used as titles for these two strands of the tradition, as "P" and "D" are used for the other two sources.) Eventually the old Israelite epic was edited by Priestly writers ("P"),

perhaps during the Babylonian Exile. Finally the book of Deuteronomy ("D"), which belongs with the Deuteronomistic History extending from Joshua through Second Kings, was inserted just after the conclusion of the Priestly version of the Torah, because it purports to be Moses' farewell address to the people.

Thus the Pentateuch in its manifold richness took shape over a long period of time. It preserves not only the tones that reverberated in the Mosaic period, but the overtones of meaning perceived by subsequent generations during Israel's historical pilgrimage. In tribute to his seminal influence, the whole Torah was ascribed to Moses (2 Chr 30.16; Lk 24.44), the leader to whom, Israel believed, God had spoken as to no other person (Deut 34.10–12).

Even though the Pentateuchal tradition evolved over a long period of time, it displays a striking overall unity in the midst of its great diversity. The leading theme is struck at a turning point, where the primeval history (Gen 1–11) moves into the story of Israel's ancestors (Gen 12–50). To the people represented by Abraham and Sarah, God makes a promise that has a threefold dimension: a numerous progeny, a land, and a relationship with God that will benefit other human families (Gen 12.1–3). At times the promise is put to the test, at times it is not even mentioned, at times events seem to negate it. In the book of Exodus, the promise is threatened by Pharaoh's mad design to destroy his own slave market. In the book of Leviticus, attention shifts to matters pertaining to cultic life. In the book of Numbers, the people are on the move again, though murmuring in doubt and disbelief. Finally, in the book of Deuteronomy, Moses preaches to the people about God's faithfulness to the covenant despite their infidelity, and about the people's obligations in response to God's acts of "steadfast love." When the book of Deuteronomy concludes, at the death of Moses, the promise is still on the way toward fulfillment. Thus the Torah is open-ended; it concludes with the people moving toward the horizon of God's future.

The priestly editors have enriched the whole Torah story by placing it in the scheme of the history of God's covenants. The first covenant is a covenant of creation, made with Noah and, through him, with all humanity, the non-human creatures, and the earth itself (Gen 9.1–17). The second, made with Abraham and Sarah, guarantees to the people of Israel the promises of land, posterity, and relationship with God (Gen 17.1–21). The third covenant, the one mediated by Moses at Mount Sinai (Ex 19–24), is regarded as a ratification and extension of the covenant with the ancestors (Ex 2.24). In the priestly view, which now dominates the whole Pentateuch, these are "everlasting covenants" that cannot be abrogated. Regardless of human weakness or failure, the covenant relationship with human beings universally and with Israel in particular endures, for it is grounded firmly in God's covenant loyalty (Hebrew *ḥesed*) or, in the appropriate NRSV rendering, God's "steadfast love."

# *Genesis*

Genesis, meaning "origin," covers the time from creation to the Israelite sojourn in Egypt. The book falls naturally into two main sections. The primeval history (chs 1–11), which is universal in scope, tells how the blessing of God enabled humanity to multiply, diversify, and disperse on the face of the earth. The ancestral history (chs 12–50), on the other hand, deals with the limited family history of Israel's ancestors: Abraham and Sarah (chs 12–25), Isaac and Rebekah and their twin sons Esau and Jacob (chs 26–46), and Jacob's family, the chief member of which was Joseph (chs 37–50).

The primeval history reflects a "prehistorical" or mythical view of the movement from creation to the return of chaos in a catastrophic flood and the new beginning afterwards, while the ancestral history can be read, at least to some degree, in the context of the history of the Near East in the latter part of the second millennium (1500–1200 B.C.). The primary purpose of the book, however, is not to present straightforward history but to tell the dramatic story of God's dealings with the world and, in particular, to interpret Israel's special role in God's purpose.

Thus the migration of Abram and Abraham's family in response to God's promise (12.1–3) is the turning point in the unfolding story. God's creation had been marred by human violence that, under the judgment of God, threatened the earth with a return to pre-creation chaos. Out of this fallible human material, however, God gradually separated one family line, promising that the descendants of Abraham and Sarah would increase in number, receive a land, and have a relationship with God that would benefit other peoples (12.1–3). The promise in its threefold aspect is threatened by various experiences, such as Sarah's barrenness or Jacob's having to flee from the land of Canaan. Despite trials and tribulations, however, the people move toward the horizon of God's future, and when the book ends, in the time of Joseph's wise and benevolent administration of Egypt, the promise is pressing toward realization.

1 In the beginning when God created[a] the heavens and the earth, 2the earth was a formless void and darkness covered the face of the deep, while a wind from God[b] swept over the face of the waters. 3Then God said, "Let there be light"; and there was light. 4And God saw that the light was good; and God separated the light from the darkness. 5God called the light Day, and the darkness he called Night. And there was evening and there was morning, the first day.

6 And God said, "Let there be a dome in the midst of the waters, and let it separate the waters from the waters." 7So God made the dome and separated the waters that were under the dome from the waters that were above the dome. And it was so. 8God called the dome Sky. And there was evening and there was morning, the second day.

9 And God said, "Let the waters under the sky be gathered together into one place, and let the dry land appear." And it was so. 10God called the dry land Earth, and the waters that were gathered together he called Seas. And God saw that it was good. 11Then God said, "Let the earth put forth vegetation: plants yielding seed, and fruit trees of every kind on earth that bear fruit with the seed in it." And it was so. 12The earth brought forth vegetation: plants yielding seed of every kind, and trees of every kind bearing fruit with the seed in it. And God saw that it was good. 13And there was evening and there was morning, the third day.

14 And God said, "Let there be lights in the dome of the sky to separate the day from the night; and let them be for signs and for seasons and for days and years, 15and let them be lights in the dome of the sky to give light upon the earth." And it was so. 16God made the two great lights—the greater light to rule the day and the lesser light to rule the night—and the stars. 17God set them in the dome of the sky to give light upon the earth, 18to rule over the day and over the night, and to separate the light from the darkness. And God saw that it was good. 19And there was evening and there was morning, the fourth day.

20 And God said, "Let the waters bring forth swarms of living creatures, and let birds fly above the earth across

*a* Or *when God began to create* or *In the beginning God created* *b* Or *while the spirit of God* or *while a mighty wind*

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**1.1–2.3: The story of creation.** Out of original chaos God created an orderly world, assigning a preeminent place to human beings. **1:** The traditional translation as an independent sentence, following the Greek Bible (Septuagint) of the 3rd cent. B.C., is defensible, in which case 1.1 is a thematic sentence, corresponding to the climactic summary of 2.1. Many, however, favor *When God began to create* (note *a*) . . . , taking the verse to be introductory to v. 2 (as above) or possibly to the first act of creation in v. 3 (compare 2.4b–7). The ancients believed the world originated from and was founded upon a watery abyss (*the deep;* compare Ps 24.2; 104.6), portrayed as a sea-monster in various myths (Isa 51.9). **3–5:** Creation by the word of God (Ps 33.6) expresses God's absolute sovereignty and anticipates the doctrine of creation out of nothing (2 Macc 7.28). *Light* burst forth first (2 Cor 4.6), even before the creation of the sun (vv. 14–18), and was *separated* from *night,* a remnant of uncreated darkness (v. 2). Since the Jewish day began with sundown, the order is *evening* and *morning.*

**1.6–8:** *A dome,* the sky was understood to be a solid expanse capable of separating the upper from the lower waters (Ex 20.4; Ps 148.4). See 7.11 n.

**1.9–10:** The *Seas,* remnants of the watery chaos, were assigned boundaries at the edge of the earth (Ps 139.9; Prov 8.29), where they continue to menace God's creation (Ps 104.7–9). **11–12:** *Vegetation* was created only indirectly by God, whose creative command empowered mother earth to become fertile. **14–19:** The sun, moon, and stars are not divine powers that control human destiny, as was believed in antiquity, but are only *lights.* Implicitly, worship of the heavenly host is forbidden (Deut 4.19; Zeph 1.5).

**1.20–23:** The creation of birds and fishes marks the first appearance of life on the earth. *Sea monsters,* Pss 74.13; 104.25–26. **24–25:** God's command for the earth to *bring forth* (a maternal verb, compare v. 20) suggests that

the dome of the sky." 21So God created the great sea monsters and every living creature that moves, of every kind, with which the waters swarm, and every winged bird of every kind. And God saw that it was good. 22God blessed them, saying, "Be fruitful and multiply and fill the waters in the seas, and let birds multiply on the earth." 23And there was evening and there was morning, the fifth day.

24 And God said, "Let the earth bring forth living creatures of every kind: cattle and creeping things and wild animals of the earth of every kind." And it was so. 25God made the wild animals of the earth of every kind, and the cattle of every kind, and everything that creeps upon the ground of every kind. And God saw that it was good.

26 Then God said, "Let us make humankind[c] in our image, according to our likeness; and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the birds of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the wild animals of the earth,[d] and over every creeping thing that creeps upon the earth."

27 So God created humankind[c] in his image,
in the image of God he created them;[e]
male and female he created them.

28God blessed them, and God said to them, "Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the earth and subdue it; and have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the air and over every living thing that moves upon the earth." 29God said, "See, I have given you every plant yielding seed that is upon the face of all the earth, and every tree with seed in its fruit; you shall have them for food. 30And to every beast of the earth, and to every bird of the air, and to everything that creeps on the earth, everything that has the breath of life, I have given every green plant for food." And it was so. 31God saw everything that he had made, and indeed, it was very good. And there was evening and there was morning, the sixth day.

2 Thus the heavens and the earth were finished, and all their multitude. 2And on the seventh day God finished the work that he had done, and he rested on the seventh day from all the work that he had done. 3So God blessed the seventh day and hallowed it, because on it God rested from all the work that he had done in creation.

4 These are the generations of the heavens and the earth when they were created.

*c* Heb *adam* *d* Syr: Heb *and over all the earth*
*e* Heb *him*

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the animals are immediately bound to *the ground* and only indirectly related to God, in contrast to human beings. **26–27**: The solemn divine declaration emphasizes humanity's supreme place at the climax of God's creative work.

**1.26**: The plural *us, our* (3.22; 11.7; Isa 6.8) probably refers to the divine beings who compose God's heavenly court (1 Kings 22.19; Job 1.6). *Image, likeness,* refer not to physical appearance but to relationship and activity. *Humankind* is commissioned to manifest God's rule on earth, on the analogy of a child who represents a parent (see 5.3). **27–28**: *Them,* literally "him" or "it" (see note *e*), referring to humankind; however, humanity is differentiated sexually, and to "them," *male and female,* God gives power to reproduce their kind and to exercise *dominion* over the earth. Together men and women, made in the image of God, share the task of being God's stewards on earth (Ps 8.6–8). **29–30**: Human dominion is limited, as shown by the vegetarian requirement; in fact, there is to be no killing, a command that was relaxed in Noah's time (9.2–3). Human dominion, corresponding to God's rule, is to be benevolent and peaceful (compare Isa 11.6–8). **31**: *Very good* (vv. 4, 10, 12, etc.), corresponding perfectly to God's creative intention.

**2.1–3**: The verb *rested* (Hebrew "shabat") is the basis of the noun sabbath (Ex 31.12–17).

**2.4a**: Not the conclusion of the priestly creation story, but a separate caption introducing the following material, as elsewhere in Gen (e.g. 5.1; 6.9; 10.1).

**2.4b–25**: **The creation of man and**

In the day that the LORD God made the earth and the heavens, 5when no plant of the field was yet in the earth and no herb of the field had yet sprung up—for the LORD God had not caused it to rain upon the earth, and there was no one to till the ground; 6but a stream would rise from the earth, and water the whole face of the ground— 7then the LORD God formed man from the dust of the ground,[f] and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and the man became a living being. 8And the LORD God planted a garden in Eden, in the east; and there he put the man whom he had formed. 9Out of the ground the LORD God made to grow every tree that is pleasant to the sight and good for food, the tree of life also in the midst of the garden, and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil.

10 A river flows out of Eden to water the garden, and from there it divides and becomes four branches. 11The name of the first is Pishon; it is the one that flows around the whole land of Havilah, where there is gold; 12and the gold of that land is good; bdellium and onyx stone are there. 13The name of the second river is Gihon; it is the one that flows around the whole land of Cush. 14The name of the third river is Tigris, which flows east of Assyria. And the fourth river is the Euphrates.

15 The LORD God took the man and put him in the garden of Eden to till it and keep it. 16And the LORD God commanded the man, "You may freely eat of every tree of the garden; 17but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat of it you shall die."

18 Then the LORD God said, "It is not good that the man should be alone; I will make him a helper as his partner." 19So out of the ground the LORD God formed every animal of the field and every bird of the air, and brought them to the man to see what he would call them; and whatever the man called every living creature, that was its name. 20The man gave names to all cattle, and to the birds of the air, and to every animal of the field; but for the man[g] there was not found a helper as his partner. 21So the LORD God caused a deep sleep to fall upon the man, and he slept; then he took one of his ribs and closed up its place

*f* Or *formed a man* (Heb *adam*) *of dust from the ground* (Heb *adamah*) *g* Or *for Adam*

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**woman.** This is a different tradition from 1.1–2.3 as evidenced by the flowing style and the different order of events of creation. **6**: *Stream* probably refers to the moisture that welled up from the subterranean ocean, the source of fertility (49.25). **7**: The word-play on "'adam" (human being; here translated *man*) and "'adamah" (ground, soil) introduces a motif characteristic of this early tradition: the relation of humankind to the soil from which it was *formed,* as a potter molds clay (Jer 18.6). Human nature is not a duality of body and soul; rather God's *breath* animates the dust and it becomes *a living being* or psychophysical self (Ps 104.29; Job 34.14–15). **8–9**: *Eden,* meaning "delight," is a "garden of God" (Isa 51.3; Ezek 31.8–9; Joel 2.3). **9**: Ancients believed that the *tree of life* confers eternal life (3.22; see Prov 3.18; Rev 22.2, 14, 19), as *the tree of the knowledge of good and evil* confers wisdom (see 2 Sam 14.17; Isa 7.15).

**2.10–14**: The rivers, springing from the subterranean ocean (v. 6), flowed out to the four corners of the known historical world, particularly the valley of the *Tigris* and *Euphrates* (Mesopotamia). **15–17**: *The man,* here, and often in the story, "'adam" is ambiguous. God put *him,* apparently a masculine being, in the garden to cultivate and take care of it; yet the prohibition against eating the forbidden fruit applies to the man and the woman inclusively (3.3). Gender distinction is not emphasized until vv. 21–25 where a different word is used to distinguish man ("'ish") from woman ("'ishah").

**2.18–21**: To be fully human one needs to be in relation to others who correspond to oneself. *Helper,* not in a relationship of subordination but of mutuality and interdependence (see 1.27–28 n.). **21–23**: Creation from the man's rib shows an affinity between man and woman such as is not possible between humans and animals. The affinity is expressed poetically in the jubilant cry of v. 23, with its word play on "man" ("'ish") and "woman" ("'ishah"). **24–25**: Sex is not regarded as evil but as a God-given impulse that draws a man and a woman together so that *they become one*

with flesh. 22And the rib that the LORD God had taken from the man he made into a woman and brought her to the man. 23Then the man said,

"This at last is bone of my bones
and flesh of my flesh;
this one shall be called Woman,[h]
for out of Man[i] this one was
taken."

24Therefore a man leaves his father and his mother and clings to his wife, and they become one flesh. 25And the man and his wife were both naked, and were not ashamed.

3 Now the serpent was more crafty than any other wild animal that the LORD God had made. He said to the woman, "Did God say, 'You shall not eat from any tree in the garden'?" 2The woman said to the serpent, "We may eat of the fruit of the trees in the garden; 3but God said, 'You shall not eat of the fruit of the tree that is in the middle of the garden, nor shall you touch it, or you shall die.'" 4But the serpent said to the woman, "You will not die; 5for God knows that when you eat of it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God,[j] knowing good and evil." 6So when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was a delight to the eyes, and that the tree was to be desired to make one wise, she took of its fruit and ate; and she also gave some to her husband, who was with her, and he ate. 7Then the eyes of both were opened, and they knew that they were naked; and they sewed fig leaves together and made loincloths for themselves.

8 They heard the sound of the LORD God walking in the garden at the time of the evening breeze, and the man and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the LORD God among the trees of the garden. 9But the LORD God called to the man, and said to him, "Where are you?" 10He said, "I heard the sound of you in the garden, and I was afraid, because I was naked; and I hid myself." 11He said, "Who told you that you were naked? Have you eaten from the tree of which I commanded you not to eat?" 12The man said, "The woman whom you gave to be with me, she gave me fruit from the tree, and I ate." 13Then the LORD God said to the woman, "What is this that you have done?" The woman said, "The serpent tricked me, and I ate." 14The LORD God said to the serpent,

"Because you have done this,
cursed are you among all
animals
and among all wild creatures;
upon your belly you shall go,
and dust you shall eat
all the days of your life.
15 I will put enmity between you and
the woman,
and between your offspring and
hers;
he will strike your head,
and you will strike his heel."

16To the woman he said,

"I will greatly increase your pangs
in childbearing;

*h* Heb *ishshah* *i* Heb *ish* *j* Or *gods*

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*flesh*. The two were unashamedly naked, a symbol of their guiltless relation to God and to one another.

**3.1–24: The temptation story. 3.1–7:** The temptation begins with an insinuation of doubt (vv. 1–3), increases as suspicion is cast upon God's motive (vv. 4–5), and becomes irresistible when the couple sense the possibilities of freedom (v. 6). **1**: *The serpent,* one of the wild creatures, distinguished by uncanny wisdom (Mt 10.16); there is a hint of an evil power, hostile to God, out in the world. **5**: *Like God,* perhaps "like gods" (Septuagint), the divine beings of the heavenly court (v. 22; 1.26 n.). *Knowing good and evil,* the entirety of knowledge; see 2.9 n. **7**: Bodily shame (2.25) symbolizes loss of an innocent, trusting relationship with God.

**3.8–13**: Guilt and anxiety prompt an attempt to hide from God (Ps 139.7–12), who is here picturesquely portrayed as strolling in the garden to enjoy the cool evening breeze. **14–15**: The curse contains an old explanation of why the serpent crawls rather than walks and why people are instinctively hostile to it. **16**: This divine judgment contains an old explanation of woman's pain in childbirth, her sexual *desire* for her husband (i.e. her motherly

in pain you shall bring forth children,
yet your desire shall be for your husband,
and he shall rule over you."
17 And to the man[k] he said,
"Because you have listened to the voice of your wife,
and have eaten of the tree about which I commanded you,
'You shall not eat of it,'
cursed is the ground because of you;
in toil you shall eat of it all the days of your life;
18 thorns and thistles it shall bring forth for you;
and you shall eat the plants of the field.
19 By the sweat of your face
you shall eat bread
until you return to the ground,
for out of it you were taken;
you are dust,
and to dust you shall return."

20 The man named his wife Eve,[l] because she was the mother of all living. 21 And the LORD God made garments of skins for the man[m] and for his wife, and clothed them.

22 Then the LORD God said, "See, the man has become like one of us, knowing good and evil; and now, he might reach out his hand and take also from the tree of life, and eat, and live forever"— 23 therefore the LORD God sent him forth from the garden of Eden, to till the ground from which he was taken. 24 He drove out the man; and at the east of the garden of Eden he placed the cherubim, and a sword flaming and turning to guard the way to the tree of life.

4 Now the man knew his wife Eve, and she conceived and bore Cain, saying, "I have produced[n] a man with the help of the LORD." 2 Next she bore his brother Abel. Now Abel was a keeper of sheep, and Cain a tiller of the ground. 3 In the course of time Cain brought to the LORD an offering of the fruit of the ground, 4 and Abel for his part brought of the firstlings of his flock, their fat portions. And the LORD had regard for Abel and his offering, 5 but for Cain and his offering he had no regard. So Cain was very angry, and his countenance fell. 6 The LORD said to Cain, "Why are you angry, and why has your countenance fallen? 7 If you do well, will you not be

*k* Or *to Adam* *l* In Heb *Eve* resembles the word for *living* *m* Or *for Adam*
*n* The verb in Heb resembles the word for *Cain*

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impulse, compare 30.1), and her subordinate position to man in ancient society, in contrast with the ideal equality of creation (see 1.27–28 n.; 2.18–21 n.).

**3.17–19**: An explanation of why people ("'adam") have to struggle to eke out an existence from the ground ("'adamah"). Work is not intrinsically evil (2.15) but it becomes *toil* when relationship with the Creator is broken. In v. 17 and elsewhere (2.20; 3.21) later editors took the Hebrew word "'adam" to be a personal name (see note *k*), as in the genealogy of 5.1ff. The mortal nature of humanity was implicit in the circumstances of its origin from dust (2.7); because of human disobedience, God now makes death an inevitable fate that haunts human beings throughout life until they *return to the ground* ("'adamah"). **21**: *Garments of skins,* a sign of God's protective care even in the time of judgment (4.15).

**3.22**: *Like one of us,* see 3.5 n. *The tree of life* (2.9) does not figure in the temptation story, which explicitly speaks of only one tree in the center of the garden (3.3–6, 11–12, 17). **24**: *The cherubim,* guardians of sacred areas (1 Kings 8.6–7), were represented as winged creatures like the Sphinx of Egypt, half-human and half-lion (Ezek 41.18–19). A divine *sword* (compare Jer 47.6) was placed near the cherubim to warn banished human beings of the impossibility of overstepping their creaturely bounds (compare Ezek 28.13–16).

**4.1–26**: **Cain, Abel, and Seth.** **1**: The verb translated *produced* (or "brought into being," "created") is a play on the name of Cain. There is a suggestion that Eve's conception of her first child was something marvellous: God took part in her act of creation. **2–5**: The story reflects the tension between farmers and semi-nomads, two different ways of life that are symbolized in the two types of offerings. No reason is given for the acceptance of Abel's offering (compare Ex 33.19). **7**: Perhaps the meaning is that Cain himself will be *accepted,* even though his offering is not, if his deed springs from the right motive. Sin is

accepted? And if you do not do well, sin is lurking at the door; its desire is for you, but you must master it."

8 Cain said to his brother Abel, "Let us go out to the field."[o] And when they were in the field, Cain rose up against his brother Abel, and killed him. 9Then the LORD said to Cain, "Where is your brother Abel?" He said, "I do not know; am I my brother's keeper?" 10And the LORD said, "What have you done? Listen; your brother's blood is crying out to me from the ground! 11And now you are cursed from the ground, which has opened its mouth to receive your brother's blood from your hand. 12When you till the ground, it will no longer yield to you its strength; you will be a fugitive and a wanderer on the earth." 13Cain said to the LORD, "My punishment is greater than I can bear! 14Today you have driven me away from the soil, and I shall be hidden from your face; I shall be a fugitive and a wanderer on the earth, and anyone who meets me may kill me." 15Then the LORD said to him, "Not so![p] Whoever kills Cain will suffer a sevenfold vengeance." And the LORD put a mark on Cain, so that no one who came upon him would kill him. 16Then Cain went away from the presence of the LORD, and settled in the land of Nod,[q] east of Eden.

17 Cain knew his wife, and she conceived and bore Enoch; and he built a city, and named it Enoch after his son Enoch. 18To Enoch was born Irad; and Irad was the father of Mehujael, and Mehujael the father of Methushael, and Methushael the father of Lamech. 19Lamech took two wives; the name of the one was Adah, and the name of the other Zillah. 20Adah bore Jabal; he was the ancestor of those who live in tents and have livestock. 21His brother's name was Jubal; he was the ancestor of all those who play the lyre and pipe. 22Zillah bore Tubal-cain, who made all kinds of bronze and iron tools. The sister of Tubal-cain was Naamah.

23 Lamech said to his wives:
"Adah and Zillah, hear my voice;
you wives of Lamech, listen to what I say:
I have killed a man for wounding me,
a young man for striking me.
24 If Cain is avenged sevenfold,
truly Lamech seventy-sevenfold."

25 Adam knew his wife again, and she bore a son and named him Seth, for she said, "God has appointed[r] for me another child instead of Abel, because Cain killed him." 26To Seth also a son was born, and he named him Enosh. At that time people began to invoke the name of the LORD.

5 This is the list of the descendants of Adam. When God created human-

*o* Sam Gk Syr Compare Vg: MT lacks *Let us go out to the field* *p* Gk Syr Vg: Heb *Therefore* *q* That is *Wandering* *r* The verb in Heb resembles the word for *Seth*

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pictured as a predatory animal, *lurking at the door.*

**4.10–11**: Blood is sacred to God, for it is the seat of life (Deut 12.23) and cries *from the ground* for vindication. **13–14**: Cain concludes that exile from the farmland is also exile from the LORD's *face,* i.e. protective presence, exposing him to blood revenge. **15**: The "mark of Cain" was a protective mark, perhaps a tattoo, signifying divine mercy.

**4.17**: Here Cain is not the ancestor of nomadic tribesmen (vv. 11–16) but the founder of sedentary culture. **19–22**: Cultural advance is evidenced by the three occupations of Lamech's sons: shepherds, musicians, and smiths. **23–24**: An ancient song, probably once sung in praise of Lamech, is here quoted to illustrate the increase of violence from murder to measureless blood revenge. **25–26**: From Cain's genealogy the narrator returns to the sequel of Cain's banishment (vv. 11–16) and introduces the new line of Seth. **26b**: This tradition traces the worship of the LORD (Yahweh) back to the time of Adam's grandson (5.3), in contrast to other traditions which claim that the sacred name was introduced in Moses' time (Ex 3.13–15; 6.2–3).

**5.1–32**: **The generations from Adam to Noah.** This priestly tradition bridges the time from creation to the flood. **1**: *The list of descendants,* lit. "the book of generations,"

kind,[s] he made them[t] in the likeness of God. 2Male and female he created them, and he blessed them and named them "Humankind"[s] when they were created.

3 When Adam had lived one hundred thirty years, he became the father of a son in his likeness, according to his image, and named him Seth. 4The days of Adam after he became the father of Seth were eight hundred years; and he had other sons and daughters. 5Thus all the days that Adam lived were nine hundred thirty years; and he died.

6 When Seth had lived one hundred five years, he became the father of Enosh. 7Seth lived after the birth of Enosh eight hundred seven years, and had other sons and daughters. 8Thus all the days of Seth were nine hundred twelve years; and he died.

9 When Enosh had lived ninety years, he became the father of Kenan. 10Enosh lived after the birth of Kenan eight hundred fifteen years, and had other sons and daughters. 11Thus all the days of Enosh were nine hundred five years; and he died.

12 When Kenan had lived seventy years, he became the father of Mahalalel. 13Kenan lived after the birth of Mahalalel eight hundred and forty years, and had other sons and daughters. 14Thus all the days of Kenan were nine hundred and ten years; and he died.

15 When Mahalalel had lived sixty-five years, he became the father of Jared. 16Mahalalel lived after the birth of Jared eight hundred thirty years, and had other sons and daughters. 17Thus all the days of Mahalalel were eight hundred ninety-five years; and he died.

18 When Jared had lived one hundred sixty-two years he became the father of Enoch. 19Jared lived after the birth of Enoch eight hundred years, and had other sons and daughters. 20Thus all the days of Jared were nine hundred sixty-two years; and he died.

21 When Enoch had lived sixty-five years, he became the father of Methuselah. 22Enoch walked with God after the birth of Methuselah three hundred years, and had other sons and daughters. 23Thus all the days of Enoch were three hundred sixty-five years. 24Enoch walked with God; then he was no more, because God took him.

25 When Methuselah had lived one hundred eighty-seven years, he became the father of Lamech. 26Methuselah lived after the birth of Lamech seven hundred eighty-two years, and had other sons and daughters. 27Thus all the days of Methuselah were nine hundred sixty-nine years; and he died.

28 When Lamech had lived one hundred eighty-two years, he became the father of a son; 29he named him Noah, saying, "Out of the ground that the LORD has cursed this one shall bring us relief from our work and from the toil of our hands." 30Lamech lived after the birth of Noah five hundred ninety-five years, and had other sons and daughters. 31Thus all the days of Lamech were seven

*s* Heb *adam* *t* Heb *him*

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was evidently a separate source from which the writer drew genealogical data (6.9; 10.2; 11.10, 27; etc.). **1b–2**: Ambiguously the Hebrew word "'adam" refers to *humankind* inclusively, as in 1.26–28, and to a male individual, Adam, as in the succeeding genealogy (see 2.17 n.). **3**: The divine *likeness* (v. 1; see 1.26 n.) was continued in Adam's son Seth, born *in his likeness,* and thus was transmitted to succeeding generations without effacement (9.6). **4–32**: Ancient Babylonian tradition also reckons ten heroes before the flood but ascribes fantastically higher ages. In Hebrew tradition the ages decrease from 900–1000 (Adam to Noah) to 200–600 (Noah to Abraham), to 100–200 (Israel's ancestors), to the normal lifetime of 70 years (Ps 90.10). This list is somehow related to the genealogy of Cain (4.17–21) as shown by the resemblance of some of the names.

**5.24**: Babylonian tradition also reports that Enmeduranki, the seventh hero prior to the flood, was taken by God, i.e. translated (2 Kings 2.11). **29**: This verse, the only connection with the old epic traditions of Eden (3.17–19) and Cain and Abel, anticipates the new age inaugurated with Noah (9.20).

**6.1–4**: **The birth of the Nephilim** is re-

hundred seventy-seven years; and he died.

32 After Noah was five hundred years old, Noah became the father of Shem, Ham, and Japheth.

6 When people began to multiply on the face of the ground, and daughters were born to them, 2the sons of God saw that they were fair; and they took wives for themselves of all that they chose. 3Then the LORD said, "My spirit shall not abide[u] in mortals forever, for they are flesh; their days shall be one hundred twenty years." 4The Nephilim were on the earth in those days—and also afterward—when the sons of God went in to the daughters of humans, who bore children to them. These were the heroes that were of old, warriors of renown.

5 The LORD saw that the wickedness of humankind was great in the earth, and that every inclination of the thoughts of their hearts was only evil continually. 6And the LORD was sorry that he had made humankind on the earth, and it grieved him to his heart. 7So the LORD said, "I will blot out from the earth the human beings I have created—people together with animals and creeping things and birds of the air, for I am sorry that I have made them." 8But Noah found favor in the sight of the LORD.

9 These are the descendants of Noah. Noah was a righteous man, blameless in his generation; Noah walked with God. 10And Noah had three sons, Shem, Ham, and Japheth.

11 Now the earth was corrupt in God's sight, and the earth was filled with violence. 12And God saw that the earth was corrupt; for all flesh had corrupted its ways upon the earth. 13And God said to Noah, "I have determined to make an end of all flesh, for the earth is filled with violence because of them; now I am going to destroy them along with the earth. 14Make yourself an ark of cypress[u] wood; make rooms in the ark, and cover it inside and out with pitch. 15This is how you are to make it: the length of the ark three hundred cubits, its width fifty cubits, and its height thirty cubits. 16Make a roof[v] for the ark, and finish it to a cubit above; and put the door of the ark in its side; make it with lower, second, and third decks. 17For my part, I am going to bring a flood of waters on the earth, to destroy from under heaven all

*u* Meaning of Heb uncertain *v* Or *window*

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lated to show the increase of violence (see 6.11), in this instance through the breaching of the boundaries separating heaven and earth. This old fragment of mythology connects immediately with chs 2–4. **1**: The narrator resumes the motif of the connection of *people* or human beings ("'adam") to the soil ("'adamah"), introduced in 2.4b–9. **2**: *The sons of God,* divine beings who belonged to the heavenly court (1.26 n.). **3**: Despite the lustful intrusion of divine beings into the human sphere, human beings did not become semi-divine (compare 3.22–24) but remained mortal creatures in whom the LORD's *spirit* dwells temporarily (see 2.7 n.). **4**: Originally the story accounted for the *Nephilim* (Num 13.33; Deut 2.10–11), people of gigantic stature whose superhuman power was thought to result from divine-human marriage.

**6.5–8.22**: **The great flood.** God's judgment took the form of a destructive flood and God's mercy was shown in saving a remnant, the seed of a new historical beginning. **5–8**: An introduction, belonging to the old literary tradition found in 2.4b–3.24; 4.1–26; 6.1–4. **5**: The *heart* includes the will and reason, as evidenced by human capacity to decide between good and evil. **7**: The biblical account is superficially similar to the Babylonian Gilgamesh Epic, which also relates the story of a great flood. The biblical perspective, however, is basically different, for the flood was not the expression of polytheistic caprice but of God's judgment upon *the wickedness of humankind.* **9**: Noah was *a righteous man,* one who stood in right relationship to God (15.6).

**6.11–22**: A parallel version. Apparently an earlier and a later (priestly) tradition have been combined editorially, resulting in some duplications and discrepancies. **11–12**: The keynote of the dominant priestly version of the story: the earth, once described as "good" (1.31), is seen to be *corrupt* owing to human *violence* or willful, lawless deeds, beginning with rebellion in the garden. **14–16**: In the Babylonian epic too, the hero is commanded to build a houseboat, sealing it with pitch. **15**: The dimensions: about 450 × 75 × 45 feet.

flesh in which is the breath of life; everything that is on the earth shall die. 18 But I will establish my covenant with you; and you shall come into the ark, you, your sons, your wife, and your sons' wives with you. 19 And of every living thing, of all flesh, you shall bring two of every kind into the ark, to keep them alive with you; they shall be male and female. 20 Of the birds according to their kinds, and of the animals according to their kinds, of every creeping thing of the ground according to its kind, two of every kind shall come in to you, to keep them alive. 21 Also take with you every kind of food that is eaten, and store it up; and it shall serve as food for you and for them." 22 Noah did this; he did all that God commanded him.

7 Then the LORD said to Noah, "Go into the ark, you and all your household, for I have seen that you alone are righteous before me in this generation. 2 Take with you seven pairs of all clean animals, the male and its mate; and a pair of the animals that are not clean, the male and its mate; 3 and seven pairs of the birds of the air also, male and female, to keep their kind alive on the face of all the earth. 4 For in seven days I will send rain on the earth for forty days and forty nights; and every living thing that I have made I will blot out from the face of the ground." 5 And Noah did all that the LORD had commanded him.

6 Noah was six hundred years old when the flood of waters came on the earth. 7 And Noah with his sons and his wife and his sons' wives went into the ark to escape the waters of the flood. 8 Of clean animals, and of animals that are not clean, and of birds, and of everything that creeps on the ground, 9 two and two, male and female, went into the ark with Noah, as God had commanded Noah. 10 And after seven days the waters of the flood came on the earth.

11 In the six hundredth year of Noah's life, in the second month, on the seventeenth day of the month, on that day all the fountains of the great deep burst forth, and the windows of the heavens were opened. 12 The rain fell on the earth forty days and forty nights. 13 On the very same day Noah with his sons, Shem and Ham and Japheth, and Noah's wife and the three wives of his sons entered the ark, 14 they and every wild animal of every kind, and all domestic animals of every kind, and every creeping thing that creeps on the earth, and every bird of every kind—every bird, every winged creature. 15 They went into the ark with Noah, two and two of all flesh in which there was the breath of life. 16 And those that entered, male and female of all flesh, went in as God had commanded him; and the LORD shut him in.

17 The flood continued forty days on the earth; and the waters increased, and bore up the ark, and it rose high above the earth. 18 The waters swelled and increased greatly on the earth; and the ark floated on the face of the waters. 19 The waters swelled so mightily on the earth that all the high mountains under the whole heaven were covered; 20 the waters swelled above the mountains, covering them fifteen cubits deep. 21 And all flesh

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**7.1–10**: Essentially a continuation of the early tradition (6.5–8). **2–3**: On clean and unclean animals, see Lev ch 11. (The priestly version mentions two animals of every sort [v. 9; 6.19], presuming that the clean-unclean distinction was introduced at Sinai.) **4**: The flood was caused by heavy rainfall, lasting *forty days and forty nights* (v. 12; compare the difference in the priestly version, v. 24). **11–24**: Largely from priestly tradition. **11**: Here the flood was not caused by a rain storm but is a cosmic catastrophe resulting from opening the *windows of the heavens* (fixed in the firmament) and the upsurging of *the fountains of the great deep* (or the subterranean watery chaos; see 1.6–8 n.). Thus the earth was threatened with a return to pre-creation chaos (1.2). **15**: The animals went in *two and two* (6.19; see 7.2 n.).

**7.18–20**: The waters covered *all the high mountains*, threatening a confluence of the upper and lower waters (1.6). Archaeological evidence suggests that traditions of a prehistoric flood covering the whole earth are heightened versions of local inundations, e.g. in the Tigris-Euphrates basin.

died that moved on the earth, birds, domestic animals, wild animals, all swarming creatures that swarm on the earth, and all human beings; 22everything on dry land in whose nostrils was the breath of life died. 23He blotted out every living thing that was on the face of the ground, human beings and animals and creeping things and birds of the air; they were blotted out from the earth. Only Noah was left, and those that were with him in the ark. 24And the waters swelled on the earth for one hundred fifty days.

8 But God remembered Noah and all the wild animals and all the domestic animals that were with him in the ark. And God made a wind blow over the earth, and the waters subsided; 2the fountains of the deep and the windows of the heavens were closed, the rain from the heavens was restrained, 3and the waters gradually receded from the earth. At the end of one hundred fifty days the waters had abated; 4and in the seventh month, on the seventeenth day of the month, the ark came to rest on the mountains of Ararat. 5The waters continued to abate until the tenth month; in the tenth month, on the first day of the month, the tops of the mountains appeared.

6 At the end of forty days Noah opened the window of the ark that he had made 7and sent out the raven; and it went to and fro until the waters were dried up from the earth. 8Then he sent out the dove from him, to see if the waters had subsided from the face of the ground; 9but the dove found no place to set its foot, and it returned to him to the ark, for the waters were still on the face of the whole earth. So he put out his hand and took it and brought it into the ark with him. 10He waited another seven days, and again he sent out the dove from the ark; 11and the dove came back to him in the evening, and there in its beak was a freshly plucked olive leaf; so Noah knew that the waters had subsided from the earth. 12Then he waited another seven days, and sent out the dove; and it did not return to him any more.

13 In the six hundred first year, in the first month, on the first day of the month, the waters were dried up from the earth; and Noah removed the covering of the ark, and looked, and saw that the face of the ground was drying. 14In the second month, on the twenty-seventh day of the month, the earth was dry. 15Then God said to Noah, 16"Go out of the ark, you and your wife, and your sons and your sons' wives with you. 17Bring out with you every living thing that is with you of all flesh—birds and animals and every creeping thing that creeps on the earth—so that they may abound on the earth, and be fruitful and multiply on the earth." 18So Noah went out with his sons and his wife and his sons' wives. 19And every animal, every creeping thing, and every bird, everything that moves on the earth, went out of the ark by families.

20 Then Noah built an altar to the LORD, and took of every clean animal and of every clean bird, and offered

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**8.1–5**: In the main a continuation of the dominant priestly tradition. **1**: The dramatic turning point of the story: *God remembered Noah* and the remnant of humans and animals with him. The waters of chaos, which have peaked, are driven back by a wind (compare the *wind from God* of 1.2) sent by God. **4**: In the Babylonian epic the boat also rested on a mountain. *Ararat* (2 Kings 19.37; Jer 51.27) is the name of a region in Armenia.

**8.6–12**: Essentially from the early tradition. In the Babylonian epic the hero sent out two birds, a dove and a swallow, each of which came back; the third, a raven, did not return.

**8.13–19**: A continuation of the priestly account with its theme of the greening of the earth (1.11–12). A new creation begins in which, as at the first, non-human creatures have their proper place (1.20–24).

**8.20–22**: The early tradition relates that Noah sacrificed *burnt offerings* (Lev ch 1) of clean animals (see 7.2–3 n.). In the Babylonian epic the hero offered sacrifices and "the gods smelled [compare v. 21] the goodly savor." For the curse, compare 3.17. Despite the *evil inclination of the human heart* (6.5), God's covenant faithfulness will be expressed in the regularities of nature, *seedtime and harvest*, etc.

burnt offerings on the altar. 21 And when the LORD smelled the pleasing odor, the LORD said in his heart, "I will never again curse the ground because of humankind, for the inclination of the human heart is evil from youth; nor will I ever again destroy every living creature as I have done.

22 As long as the earth endures,
seedtime and harvest, cold and heat,
summer and winter, day and night,
shall not cease."

9 God blessed Noah and his sons, and said to them, "Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the earth. 2 The fear and dread of you shall rest on every animal of the earth, and on every bird of the air, on everything that creeps on the ground, and on all the fish of the sea; into your hand they are delivered. 3 Every moving thing that lives shall be food for you; and just as I gave you the green plants, I give you everything. 4 Only, you shall not eat flesh with its life, that is, its blood. 5 For your own lifeblood I will surely require a reckoning: from every animal I will require it and from human beings, each one for the blood of another, I will require a reckoning for human life.

6 Whoever sheds the blood of a human,
by a human shall that person's blood be shed;
for in his own image
God made humankind.

7 And you, be fruitful and multiply, abound on the earth and multiply in it."

8 Then God said to Noah and to his sons with him, 9 "As for me, I am establishing my covenant with you and your descendants after you, 10 and with every living creature that is with you, the birds, the domestic animals, and every animal of the earth with you, as many as came out of the ark.[w] 11 I establish my covenant with you, that never again shall all flesh be cut off by the waters of a flood, and never again shall there be a flood to destroy the earth." 12 God said, "This is the sign of the covenant that I make between me and you and every living creature that is with you, for all future generations: 13 I have set my bow in the clouds, and it shall be a sign of the covenant between me and the earth. 14 When I bring clouds over the earth and the bow is seen in the clouds, 15 I will remember my covenant that is between me and you and every living creature of all flesh; and the waters shall never again become a flood to destroy all flesh. 16 When the bow is in the clouds, I will see it and remember the everlasting covenant between God and every living creature of all flesh that is on the earth." 17 God said to Noah, "This is the sign of the covenant that I have established between me and all flesh that is on the earth."

*w* Gk: Heb adds *every animal of the earth*

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**9.1–17**: **God's covenant with Noah** includes all human and non-human creatures under divine promise and law. **1**: The new age opens with a renewal of the blessing given to human beings, as well as non-human creatures (8.17), at creation (1.22, 28). **3–6**: The command to exercise dominion (1.28–30) is qualified by permission to eat animal flesh, but not with *its life*, i.e. *its blood* (see 4.10–11 n.). The principle is reverence for life, God's gift, symbolized by blood (Lev 17.11). **6**: The violence that had corrupted the earth (6.11) is restrained by a very old law against murder, the validity of which is grounded in the creation: human beings are made in God's *image* (1.26–27). The laws given to Noah are binding not only on Israel but on all humanity (Acts 15.20; 21.25).

**9.8–11**: The preservation of the natural order from the powers of chaos is guaranteed by a *covenant* (see 17.2 n.). Unlike later covenants (ch 17; Ex ch 24), the covenant with Noah is universal in scope, for Noah's three sons (6.10; 9.18–19) are regarded as the ancestors of all the nations (see ch 10). This is also an ecological covenant, for it is made with *every living creature*, including birds and animals (vv. 10, 12, 15), and with *the earth* itself (v. 13). **13**: Ancients imagined the rainbow as the weapon (bow) of the Divine Warrior from which the lightnings of arrows were shot (Ps 7.12–13; Hab 3.9–11). The place-

18 The sons of Noah who went out of the ark were Shem, Ham, and Japheth. Ham was the father of Canaan. 19 These three were the sons of Noah; and from these the whole earth was peopled.

20 Noah, a man of the soil, was the first to plant a vineyard. 21 He drank some of the wine and became drunk, and he lay uncovered in his tent. 22 And Ham, the father of Canaan, saw the nakedness of his father, and told his two brothers outside. 23 Then Shem and Japheth took a garment, laid it on both their shoulders, and walked backward and covered the nakedness of their father; their faces were turned away, and they did not see their father's nakedness. 24 When Noah awoke from his wine and knew what his youngest son had done to him, 25 he said,

"Cursed be Canaan;
lowest of slaves shall he be to his brothers."

26 He also said,

"Blessed by the LORD my God be Shem;
and let Canaan be his slave.
27 May God make space for[x] Japheth,
and let him live in the tents of Shem;
and let Canaan be his slave."

28 After the flood Noah lived three hundred fifty years. 29 All the days of Noah were nine hundred fifty years; and he died.

10 These are the descendants of Noah's sons, Shem, Ham, and Japheth; children were born to them after the flood.

2 The descendants of Japheth: Gomer, Magog, Madai, Javan, Tubal, Meshech, and Tiras. 3 The descendants of Gomer: Ashkenaz, Riphath, and Togarmah. 4 The descendants of Javan: Elishah, Tarshish, Kittim, and Rodanim.[y] 5 From these the coastland peoples spread. These are the descendants of Japheth[z] in their lands, with their own language, by their families, in their nations.

6 The descendants of Ham: Cush, Egypt, Put, and Canaan. 7 The descendants of Cush: Seba, Havilah, Sabtah, Raamah, and Sabteca. The descendants of Raamah: Sheba and Dedan. 8 Cush became the father of Nimrod; he was the first on earth to become a mighty warrior. 9 He was a mighty hunter before the LORD; therefore it is said, "Like Nimrod a mighty hunter before the LORD." 10 The beginning of his kingdom was Babel, Erech, and Accad, all of them in the land of Shinar. 11 From that land he went into

*x* Heb *yapht*, a play on *Japheth* *y* Heb Mss Sam Gk See 1 Chr 1.7: MT *Dodanim*
*z* Compare verses 20, 31. Heb lacks *These are the descendants of Japheth*

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ment of this weapon in the heavens is a *sign*, or visible token, that God's wrath has abated.

**9.18–27: Noah's curse upon Canaan. 20**: In the new age, Noah was the first to engage in agriculture. His success fulfilled the prophecy made at his birth (5.29). **22**: Since the curse was later put on Canaan rather than on Ham (v. 25), it is likely that Canaan was the actor originally. **24**: Here Noah's *youngest son* is clearly Canaan, not Ham as in v. 22. **25**: The curse implies that Canaan's subjugation to Israel was the result of Canaanite sexual practices (Lev 18.24–30). **26**: *Shem*, 10.21. **27**: *Japheth*, 10.2–5. The verse may refer to the Philistines, one of the sea-peoples who dwelt *in the tents of Shem*, i.e. conquered the coast of Canaan.

**9.28–29**: The remainder of Noah's life and his death.

**10.1–32: The table of the nations** provides a background of world history for the call of Abraham (ch 12). **1**: This list, which connects with 5.32, was probably drawn from "the book of generations" (5.1). The original unity of humanity is represented by the view that all the nations originated from Noah's three sons (9.19). Although the various "families" were separated by language and land (vv. 5, 20, 31), the present list is arranged primarily on the basis of political rather than ethnic considerations. **2–5**: *The descendants of Japheth* (9.27) had their political center in Asia Minor, the former territory of the Hittites (Heth, v. 15). The spread of the *coastland peoples*, including the Philistines (see 9.27 n.), reflects population movements in the Aegean area about 1200 B.C.

**10.6–20**: *The descendants of Ham* lived in the Egyptian orbit. *Canaan* is included because it was nominally under Egyptian control from 1500–1200 B.C. **8–12**: An old fragment of tradition relates how Nimrod, a

Assyria, and built Nineveh, Rehoboth-ir, Calah, and 12Resen between Nineveh and Calah; that is the great city. 13Egypt became the father of Ludim, Anamim, Lehabim, Naphtuhim, 14Pathrusim, Casluhim, and Caphtorim, from which the Philistines come.[a]

15 Canaan became the father of Sidon his firstborn, and Heth, 16and the Jebusites, the Amorites, the Girgashites, 17the Hivites, the Arkites, the Sinites, 18the Arvadites, the Zemarites, and the Hamathites. Afterward the families of the Canaanites spread abroad. 19And the territory of the Canaanites extended from Sidon, in the direction of Gerar, as far as Gaza, and in the direction of Sodom, Gomorrah, Admah, and Zeboiim, as far as Lasha. 20These are the descendants of Ham, by their families, their languages, their lands, and their nations.

21 To Shem also, the father of all the children of Eber, the elder brother of Japheth, children were born. 22The descendants of Shem: Elam, Asshur, Arpachshad, Lud, and Aram. 23The descendants of Aram: Uz, Hul, Gether, and Mash. 24Arpachshad became the father of Shelah; and Shelah became the father of Eber. 25To Eber were born two sons: the name of the one was Peleg,[b] for in his days the earth was divided, and his brother's name was Joktan. 26Joktan became the father of Almodad, Sheleph, Hazarmaveth, Jerah, 27Hadoram, Uzal, Diklah, 28Obal, Abimael, Sheba, 29Ophir, Havilah, and Jobab; all these were the descendants of Joktan. 30The territory in which they lived extended from Mesha in the direction of Sephar, the hill country of the east. 31These are the descendants of Shem, by their families, their languages, their lands, and their nations.

32 These are the families of Noah's sons, according to their genealogies, in their nations; and from these the nations spread abroad on the earth after the flood.

11 Now the whole earth had one language and the same words. 2And as they migrated from the east,[c] they came upon a plain in the land of Shinar and settled there. 3And they said to one another, "Come, let us make bricks, and burn them thoroughly." And they had brick for stone, and bitumen for mortar. 4Then they said, "Come, let us build ourselves a city, and a tower with its top in the heavens, and let us make a name for ourselves; otherwise we shall be scattered abroad upon the face of the whole earth." 5The LORD came down to

*a* Cn: Heb *Casluhim, from which the Philistines come, and Caphtorim* *b* That is *Division*
*c* Or *migrated eastward*

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successful warrior, built a kingdom in *Shinar* (Babylonia) and Assyria.

**10.15–20**: *Heth* (the Hittites), who once established a powerful empire in Asia Minor, disappeared as a world power in the twelfth century B.C. Here they are mentioned along with other Canaanite peoples; e.g. the *Jebusites* (located around Jerusalem), the *Amorites* (natives of the Palestinian hill country), the *Hivites* (perhaps Horites or Hurrians; see 34.2).

**10.21–31**: *Shem* is the father of Semitic peoples, *the children of Eber,* that is, all "Hebrews," including those Hebrews who later became Israel. During 1500–1200 B.C. waves of Hebrews came into Syria-Palestine and eventually established states, such as *Aram* or Syria (v. 23), Moab, Edom, and Israel.

**11.1–9**: **The tower of Babel.** God frustrated another attempt to overreach human limitations (compare 3.22–24) by scattering the peoples and confusing their tongues. **1**: *One language,* compare 10.5, 20, 31. Clearly this tradition is independent of, and parallel to, the table of nations. **2**: *Shinar,* 10.10. The *plain* is the Tigris-Euphrates basin. **4**: In the eyes of nomads Mesopotamian city culture was characterized by the ziggurat, a pyramidal temple tower whose summit was believed to be the gateway to heaven, the realm of the gods. **6**: 3.22. **7**: *Let us,* see 1.26 n. **8**: Motivated by a Promethean desire for unity, fame, and security (v. 4), the enterprise ended in misunderstanding and thus arose the various language groups. **9**: *Babel,* meaning "Gate of God," is here interpreted by the Hebrew verb "confuse" (see note *d*). The story, now told to portray divine judgment upon the continuing sin of humanity, once explained the origin of languages and the cultural glory

see the city and the tower, which mortals had built. 6And the LORD said, "Look, they are one people, and they have all one language; and this is only the beginning of what they will do; nothing that they propose to do will now be impossible for them. 7Come, let us go down, and confuse their language there, so that they will not understand one another's speech." 8So the LORD scattered them abroad from there over the face of all the earth, and they left off building the city. 9Therefore it was called Babel, because there the LORD confused[d] the language of all the earth; and from there the LORD scattered them abroad over the face of all the earth.

10 These are the descendants of Shem. When Shem was one hundred years old, he became the father of Arpachshad two years after the flood; 11and Shem lived after the birth of Arpachshad five hundred years, and had other sons and daughters.

12 When Arpachshad had lived thirty-five years, he became the father of Shelah; 13and Arpachshad lived after the birth of Shelah four hundred three years, and had other sons and daughters.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

27 Now these are the descendants of Terah. Terah was the father of Abram, Nahor, and Haran; and Haran was the father of Lot. 28Haran died before his father Terah in the land of his birth, in Ur of the Chaldeans. 29Abram and Nahor took wives; the name of Abram's wife was Sarai, and the name of Nahor's wife was Milcah. She was the daughter of Haran the father of Milcah and Iscah. 30Now Sarai was barren; she had no child.

31 Terah took his son Abram and his grandson Lot son of Haran, and his daughter-in-law Sarai, his son Abram's wife, and they went out together from Ur of the Chaldeans to go into the land of Canaan; but when they came to Ha-

*d* Heb *balal*, meaning *to confuse*

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of Babylon, the center of Hammurabi's empire.

**11.10–32: Genealogies to Abraham.** The line of Shem (10.21–31) leads to Terah's three sons (v. 26) and narrows down to Abraham, showing how God chose Abraham and his seed from all the families of the earth. **10:** Here begin further quotations from the book of genealogies (5.1).

**11.27:** *Abram,* see 17.5 n. **30:** *Sarai,* see 17.15 n. **31:** *Haran,* in northwest Mesopotamia, was Abraham's ancestral home according to 24.10 (compare 29.4). Extra-biblical sources show that several of the names in the genealogy, e.g. Peleg (v. 16), Serug (v. 20), Terah and Nahor (v. 24), were place-names in this region, variously called Paddan-aram or Aram-naharaim. The migration from Mesopotamia into Canaan may be part of population movements in the second millennium B.C.

ran, they settled there. 32The days of Terah were two hundred five years; and Terah died in Haran.

12 Now the LORD said to Abram, "Go from your country and your kindred and your father's house to the land that I will show you. 2I will make of you a great nation, and I will bless you, and make your name great, so that you will be a blessing. 3I will bless those who bless you, and the one who curses you I will curse; and in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed."[e]

4 So Abram went, as the LORD had told him; and Lot went with him. Abram was seventy-five years old when he departed from Haran. 5Abram took his wife Sarai and his brother's son Lot, and all the possessions that they had gathered, and the persons whom they had acquired in Haran; and they set forth to go to the land of Canaan. When they had come to the land of Canaan, 6Abram passed through the land to the place at Shechem, to the oak[f] of Moreh. At that time the Canaanites were in the land. 7Then the LORD appeared to Abram, and said, "To your offspring[g] I will give this land." So he built there an altar to the LORD, who had appeared to him. 8From there he moved on to the hill country on the east of Bethel, and pitched his tent, with Bethel on the west and Ai on the east; and there he built an altar to the LORD and invoked the name of the LORD. 9And Abram journeyed on by stages toward the Negeb.

10 Now there was a famine in the land. So Abram went down to Egypt to reside there as an alien, for the famine was severe in the land. 11When he was about to enter Egypt, he said to his wife Sarai, "I know well that you are a woman beautiful in appearance; 12and when the Egyptians see you, they will say, 'This is his wife'; then they will kill me, but they will let you live. 13Say you are my sister, so that it may go well with me because of you, and that my life may be spared on your account." 14When Abram entered Egypt the Egyptians saw that the woman was very beautiful. 15When the officials of Pharaoh saw her, they praised her to Pharaoh. And the woman was taken into Pharaoh's house. 16And for her sake he dealt well with Abram; and he had sheep, oxen, male donkeys, male and female slaves, female donkeys, and camels.

17 But the LORD afflicted Pharaoh and his house with great plagues because of Sarai, Abram's wife. 18So Pharaoh called Abram, and said, "What is this you have done to me? Why did you not tell me that she was your wife? 19Why did you say, 'She is my sister,' so that I took her for my wife? Now then, here is your wife, take her, and be gone." 20And Pharaoh gave his men orders concerning him; and they set him on the way, with his wife and all that he had.

*e* Or *by you all the families of the earth shall bless themselves* *f* Or *terebinth* *g* Heb *seed*

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**12.1–9: God's call of Abraham** is sketched against the background of a broken, divided humanity. **1–3**: Israel, represented by Abraham and Sarah, is chosen to play a decisive role in God's historical purpose (Isa 19.24; 51.2; 49.6; Rom 4.13). The promise includes receiving a land, becoming a numerous people, and having a relationship with God that will benefit other human families. **1**: *Your country,* see 11.31 n. **2**: The language—*great nation* instead of "people"—reflects the national consciousness of the early monarchy, when the story was retold. **3**: By breaking ties of land and kindred (v. 1) and responding to God's summons into a new world, Abraham typifies the person of faith (Heb 11.8). **6**: *Shechem,* located at the commercial crossroads of Canaan in the pass between Mount Ebal and Mount Gerizim, was a flourishing Canaanite city in the second millennium B.C. (Judg ch 9). Nearby was *the oak of Moreh* ("oracle giver"), a sacred tree (35.4; Deut 11.30; Josh 24.26; Judg 9.37).

**12.10–13.1: Sarah in jeopardy.** God's promise of a posterity was temporarily eclipsed in Egypt where Sarah, the ancestress of Israel, was almost taken into Pharaoh's harem. **13**: Sarah was Abraham's *sister,* i.e. half-sister, according to 20.12. The narrative does not moralize about the white lie but rather portrays the LORD's rescue of Sarah from the jeopardy into which Abraham's self-

***Abram and Lot separate***

13 So Abram went up from Egypt, he and his wife, and all that he had, and Lot with him, into the Negeb.
2 Now Abram was very rich in livestock, in silver, and in gold. 3He journeyed on by stages from the Negeb as far as Bethel, to the place where his tent had been at the beginning, between Bethel and Ai, 4to the place where he had made an altar at the first; and there Abram called on the name of the LORD. 5Now Lot, who went with Abram, also had flocks and herds and tents, 6so that the land could not support both of them living together; for their possessions were so great that they could not live together, 7and there was strife between the herders of Abram's livestock and the herders of Lot's livestock. At that time the Canaanites and the Perizzites lived in the land.
8 Then Abram said to Lot, "Let there be no strife between you and me, and between your herders and my herders; for we are kindred. 9Is not the whole land before you? Separate yourself from me. If you take the left hand, then I will go to the right; or if you take the right hand, then I will go to the left." 10Lot looked about him, and saw that the plain of the Jordan was well watered everywhere like the garden of the LORD, like the land of Egypt, in the direction of Zoar; this was before the LORD had destroyed Sodom and Gomorrah. 11So Lot chose for himself all the plain of the Jordan, and Lot journeyed eastward; thus they separated from each other. 12Abram settled in the land of Canaan, while Lot settled among the cities of the Plain and moved his tent as far as Sodom. 13Now the people of Sodom were wicked, great sinners against the LORD.
14 The LORD said to Abram, after Lot had separated from him, "Raise your eyes now, and look from the place where you are, northward and southward and eastward and westward; 15for all the land that you see I will give to you and to your offspring[h] forever. 16I will make your offspring like the dust of the earth; so that if one can count the dust of the earth, your offspring also can be counted. 17Rise up, walk through the length and the breadth of the land, for I will give it to you." 18So Abram moved his tent, and came and settled by the oaks[i] of Mamre, which are at Hebron; and there he built an altar to the LORD.
14 In the days of King Amraphel of Shinar, King Arioch of Ellasar, King Chedorlaomer of Elam, and King Tidal of Goiim, 2these kings made war with King Bera of Sodom, King Birsha of Gomorrah, King Shinab of Admah, King Shemeber of Zeboiim, and the king of Bela (that is, Zoar). 3All these joined forces in the Valley of Siddim (that is, the Dead Sea).[j] 4Twelve years they had served Chedorlaomer, but in the thirteenth year they rebelled. 5In the fourteenth year Chedorlaomer and the kings

*h* Heb *seed* *i* Or *terebinths* *j* Heb *Salt Sea*

interest had placed her (compare ch 20; 26.1–11).

**13.2–18**: **Abraham and Lot.** The LORD's promise of the land hung in the balance of a decision, but providentially Lot, the ancestor of Moab, chose the region around Sodom. **5–7**: Israel's ancestors are represented as living a semi-nomadic life in the midst of the Canaanites; thus adequate pasture land was vital to the *herders*.

**13.10**: The fertility of the *plain of the Jordan* is compared to *the garden of the LORD* (2.8–10) and the Nile valley. *Zoar*, 19.20–22. *Sodom and Gomorrah*, 19.1–29. **11**: Lot thus became the ancestor of Moab and Ammon (19.30–38). **14–17**: The promise of 12.7 is renewed. **18**: *Mamre* was an ancient sacred place, slightly north of Hebron, with which Abraham was associated.

**14.1–24**: **An alliance of four eastern kings** was defeated by Abraham's small forces. This independent tradition, which pictures Abraham as a military hero in the field of world politics, deviates from the usual portrayal of Israel's ancestors as peaceful semi-nomads. **1**: None of the kings can be identified with certainty. *Shinar*, 10.10. *Ellasar*, i.e. Larsa. **2–4**: The rebellious city-kings held sway in the region of the Dead Sea before its lower basin was covered with water. **5–7**: The object of the invasion may have been to secure the trade routes to Egypt and southern Arabia.

who were with him came and subdued the Rephaim in Ashteroth-karnaim, the Zuzim in Ham, the Emim in Shaveh-kiriathaim, [6]and the Horites in the hill country of Seir as far as El-paran on the edge of the wilderness; [7]then they turned back and came to En-mishpat (that is, Kadesh), and subdued all the country of the Amalekites, and also the Amorites who lived in Hazazon-tamar. [8]Then the king of Sodom, the king of Gomorrah, the king of Admah, the king of Zeboiim, and the king of Bela (that is, Zoar) went out, and they joined battle in the Valley of Siddim [9]with King Chedorlaomer of Elam, King Tidal of Goiim, King Amraphel of Shinar, and King Arioch of Ellasar, four kings against five. [10]Now the Valley of Siddim was full of bitumen pits; and as the kings of Sodom and Gomorrah fled, some fell into them, and the rest fled to the hill country. [11]So the enemy took all the goods of Sodom and Gomorrah, and all their provisions, and went their way; [12]they also took Lot, the son of Abram's brother, who lived in Sodom, and his goods, and departed.

13 Then one who had escaped came and told Abram the Hebrew, who was living by the oaks[k] of Mamre the Amorite, brother of Eshcol and of Aner; these were allies of Abram. [14]When Abram heard that his nephew had been taken captive, he led forth his trained men, born in his house, three hundred eighteen of them, and went in pursuit as far as Dan. [15]He divided his forces against them by night, he and his servants, and routed them and pursued them to Hobah, north of Damascus. [16]Then he brought back all the goods, and also brought back his nephew Lot with his goods, and the women and the people.

17 After his return from the defeat of Chedorlaomer and the kings who were with him, the king of Sodom went out to meet him at the Valley of Shaveh (that is, the King's Valley). [18]And King Melchizedek of Salem brought out bread and wine; he was priest of God Most High.[l] [19]He blessed him and said,

"Blessed be Abram by God Most High,[l]
maker of heaven and earth;
[20] and blessed be God Most High,[l]
who has delivered your enemies into your hand!"

And Abram gave him one-tenth of everything. [21]Then the king of Sodom said to Abram, "Give me the persons, but take the goods for yourself." [22]But Abram said to the king of Sodom, "I have sworn to the LORD, God Most High,[l] maker of heaven and earth, [23]that I would not take a thread or a sandal-thong or anything that is yours, so that you might not say, 'I have made Abram rich.' [24]I will take nothing but what the young men have eaten, and the share of the men who went with me—Aner, Eshcol, and Mamre. Let them take their share."

15 After these things the word of the LORD came to Abram in a vision, "Do not be afraid, Abram, I am your shield; your reward shall be very great."

*k* Or *terebinths* *l* Heb *El Elyon*

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**14.13**: *Mamre* here is the name of a person (compare 13.18). **14**: *Dan* was known as Laish in the early period (Judg 18.29). **17**: *The King's Valley,* near Jerusalem (2 Sam 18.18). **18**: *Salem* is a name for Jerusalem (Ps 76.2), where in pre-Israelite times *God Most High* (El Elyon) was worshiped as the high god of the pantheon. **19–20**: Melchizedek, the priest of the Canaanite cult, blesses Abraham in the name of his god, *maker of heaven and earth.* **22**: Here *God Most High* is identified with the LORD, the God of Israel (Num 24.16; Ps 46.4). The mysterious Melchizedek was later interpreted messianically (Ps 110.4; Heb 7.1–17).

**15.1–21**: **The covenant with Abraham and Sarah.** Even though Abraham as yet had no heir, God reaffirmed the promise. **1**: *Your shield,* i.e. divine protector (Ps 28.7; 33.20). Abraham's reward (compare 14.21–24) will be his numerous posterity (13.14–17). This verse may reflect an ancient custom that allowed a slave to be adopted as heir in case of childlessness. **6**: *He believed,* i.e. put his trust in the divine promise even when there was no concrete evidence to support it. *Righteousness,* a right relationship with God (6.9; 7.1).

2But Abram said, "O Lord GOD, what will you give me, for I continue childless, and the heir of my house is Eliezer of Damascus?"[m] 3And Abram said, "You have given me no offspring, and so a slave born in my house is to be my heir." 4But the word of the LORD came to him, "This man shall not be your heir; no one but your very own issue shall be your heir." 5He brought him outside and said, "Look toward heaven and count the stars, if you are able to count them." Then he said to him, "So shall your descendants be." 6And he believed the LORD; and the LORD[n] reckoned it to him as righteousness.

7 Then he said to him, "I am the LORD who brought you from Ur of the Chaldeans, to give you this land to possess." 8But he said, "O Lord GOD, how am I to know that I shall possess it?" 9He said to him, "Bring me a heifer three years old, a female goat three years old, a ram three years old, a turtledove, and a young pigeon." 10He brought him all these and cut them in two, laying each half over against the other; but he did not cut the birds in two. 11And when birds of prey came down on the carcasses, Abram drove them away.

12 As the sun was going down, a deep sleep fell upon Abram, and a deep and terrifying darkness descended upon him. 13Then the LORD[n] said to Abram, "Know this for certain, that your offspring shall be aliens in a land that is not theirs, and shall be slaves there, and they shall be oppressed for four hundred years; 14but I will bring judgment on the nation that they serve, and afterward they shall come out with great possessions. 15As for yourself, you shall go to your ancestors in peace; you shall be buried in a good old age. 16And they shall come back here in the fourth generation; for the iniquity of the Amorites is not yet complete."

17 When the sun had gone down and it was dark, a smoking fire pot and a flaming torch passed between these pieces. 18On that day the LORD made a covenant with Abram, saying, "To your descendants I give this land, from the river of Egypt to the great river, the river Euphrates, 19the land of the Kenites, the Kenizzites, the Kadmonites, 20the Hittites, the Perizzites, the Rephaim, 21the Amorites, the Canaanites, the Girgashites, and the Jebusites."

16 Now Sarai, Abram's wife, bore him no children. She had an Egyptian slave-girl whose name was Hagar, 2and Sarai said to Abram, "You see that the LORD has prevented me from bearing children; go in to my slave-girl; it may be that I shall obtain children by her." And Abram listened to the voice of Sarai. 3So, after Abram had lived ten years in the land of Canaan, Sarai, Abram's wife, took Hagar the Egyptian, her slave-girl, and gave her to her husband Abram as a wife. 4He went in to

*m* Meaning of Heb uncertain *n* Heb *he*

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**15.7–12**: The covenant ceremony described in these verses and vv. 17–18 comes from early tradition, as evidenced by the archaic ritual of making a covenant by cutting animals in two (Jer 34.17) and passing between the parts. The meaning is no longer clear; according to one view the parties invoke dismemberment if they fail to keep the covenant oath. **12**: Abraham fell into *a deep sleep* (compare 2.21), in which he received the revelation (Job 4.13; 33.15). **13–16**: An inserted tradition explains the delay in the fulfillment of the promise, referring to the Egyptian oppression for 400 years (Ex 12.40) and the victorious Exodus. *The iniquity of the Amorites* (10.16), i.e. Canaanites, was the sexual corruption that led to their downfall (see 9.25 n.).

**15.17–18**: Continuation of vv. 7–12. The presence of God as a covenant party is symbolized by fire (see Ex 3.2 n.) passing between the pieces. *A covenant*, see 17.2 n. The ideal boundaries of the promised land, from the *river of Egypt* to the *Euphrates*, were those of David's empire (Deut 11.24; 2 Sam 8.3; compare 1 Kings 4.21; 8.65).

**16.1–16**: **The birth of Ishmael. 2**: In antiquity both barrenness and fertility were traced to God (20.17–18; 30.2; 33.5; 1 Sam 1.6). According to ancient custom, a wife could give her maid to her husband and claim the child as her own (30.3, 9). **4–6**: Though

Hagar, and she conceived; and when she saw that she had conceived, she looked with contempt on her mistress. 5Then Sarai said to Abram, "May the wrong done to me be on you! I gave my slave-girl to your embrace, and when she saw that she had conceived, she looked on me with contempt. May the LORD judge between you and me!" 6But Abram said to Sarai, "Your slave-girl is in your power; do to her as you please." Then Sarai dealt harshly with her, and she ran away from her.

7 The angel of the LORD found her by a spring of water in the wilderness, the spring on the way to Shur. 8And he said, "Hagar, slave-girl of Sarai, where have you come from and where are you going?" She said, "I am running away from my mistress Sarai." 9The angel of the LORD said to her, "Return to your mistress, and submit to her." 10The angel of the LORD also said to her, "I will so greatly multiply your offspring that they cannot be counted for multitude." 11And the angel of the LORD said to her,

"Now you have conceived and
shall bear a son;
you shall call him Ishmael,[o]
for the LORD has given heed to
your affliction.

12 He shall be a wild ass of a man,
with his hand against everyone,
and everyone's hand against
him;
and he shall live at odds with all
his kin."

13So she named the LORD who spoke to her, "You are El-roi";[p] for she said, "Have I really seen God and remained alive after seeing him?"[q] 14Therefore the well was called Beer-lahai-roi;[r] it lies between Kadesh and Bered.

15 Hagar bore Abram a son; and Abram named his son, whom Hagar bore, Ishmael. 16Abram was eighty-six years old when Hagar bore him[s] Ishmael.

17 When Abram was ninety-nine years old, the LORD appeared to Abram, and said to him, "I am God Almighty;[t] walk before me, and be blameless. 2And I will make my covenant between me and you, and will make you exceedingly numerous." 3Then Abram fell on his face; and God said to him, 4"As for me, this is my covenant with

*o* That is *God hears* *p* Perhaps *God of seeing* or *God who sees* *q* Meaning of Heb uncertain *r* That is *the Well of the Living One who sees me* *s* Heb *Abram* *t* Traditional rendering of Heb *El Shaddai*

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socially inferior, Hagar felt superior to Sarai and threatened to take her mistress's place (Prov 30.23) as the ancestress of Israel.

**16.7**: Here *the angel of the* LORD is not a heavenly being subordinate to God but the LORD (Yahweh) in earthly manifestation, as is clear from v. 13 (compare 21.17, 19; Ex 14.19). **12**: *A wild ass of a man* describes the bedouin freedom of the Ishmaelites in the southern wilderness (25.16–18). **13**: *God of seeing* (see note *p*) was the name of the deity of the sacred place, now identified with Israel's God. On Hagar's question, compare Ex 33.20; Judg 6.22–23; 13.22.

**17.1–27**: **The everlasting covenant.** This account from the priestly tradition is a parallel version of the Abrahamic covenant given in the early tradition (15.7–21). **1**: *God Almighty* (El Shaddai), meaning "God, the One of the Mountains," was a divine name current in the pre-Mosaic period (Ex 6.2–3), perhaps brought from Mesopotamia into Palestine. **2**: *Covenant* is a term of relationship between a superior and an inferior party, the former "making" or "establishing" (v. 7) the bond. God's covenant guarantees an *exceedingly numerous* posterity, one of the divine promises (12.2; see below vv. 7–8). **5**: A new name signifies a new relationship or status (see 32.28). *Abraham,* a dialectical variant of *Abram,* means "the [divine] ancestor is exalted"; here the name is explained by its similarity to the Hebrew for *ancestor of a multitude,* referring to the nations whose ancestry was traced to Abraham (v. 16; 28.3; 35.11; 48.4), e.g. Edomites and Ishmaelites. **7**: Like the covenant with Noah (9.8–17), this is *an everlasting covenant* (vv. 13, 19), one that lasts in perpetuity because it is grounded in the sovereign will of God, not in human behavior. **7–8**: *To be God to you,* this covenant not only assures a new relationship with God, to be realized fully in the Exodus and the Sinai revelation (Ex 6.2–8), but unconditionally guarantees the promise of the land of Canaan as *a perpetual holding.*

you: You shall be the ancestor of a multitude of nations. 5No longer shall your name be Abram,[u] but your name shall be Abraham;[v] for I have made you the ancestor of a multitude of nations. 6I will make you exceedingly fruitful; and I will make nations of you, and kings shall come from you. 7I will establish my covenant between me and you, and your offspring after you throughout their generations, for an everlasting covenant, to be God to you and to your offspring[w] after you. 8And I will give to you, and to your offspring after you, the land where you are now an alien, all the land of Canaan, for a perpetual holding; and I will be their God."

9 God said to Abraham, "As for you, you shall keep my covenant, you and your offspring after you throughout their generations. 10This is my covenant, which you shall keep, between me and you and your offspring after you: Every male among you shall be circumcised. 11You shall circumcise the flesh of your foreskins, and it shall be a sign of the covenant between me and you. 12Throughout your generations every male among you shall be circumcised when he is eight days old, including the slave born in your house and the one bought with your money from any foreigner who is not of your offspring. 13Both the slave born in your house and the one bought with your money must be circumcised. So shall my covenant be in your flesh an everlasting covenant. 14Any uncircumcised male who is not circumcised in the flesh of his foreskin shall be cut off from his people; he has broken my covenant."

15 God said to Abraham, "As for Sarai your wife, you shall not call her Sarai, but Sarah shall be her name. 16I will bless her, and moreover I will give you a son by her. I will bless her, and she shall give rise to nations; kings of peoples shall come from her." 17Then Abraham fell on his face and laughed, and said to himself, "Can a child be born to a man who is a hundred years old? Can Sarah, who is ninety years old, bear a child?" 18And Abraham said to God, "O that Ishmael might live in your sight!" 19God said, "No, but your wife Sarah shall bear you a son, and you shall name him Isaac.[x] I will establish my covenant with him as an everlasting covenant for his offspring after him. 20As for Ishmael, I have heard you; I will bless him and make him fruitful and exceedingly numerous; he shall be the father of twelve princes, and I will make him a great nation. 21But my covenant I will establish with Isaac, whom Sarah shall bear to you at this season next year." 22And when he had finished talking with him, God went up from Abraham.

23 Then Abraham took his son Ishmael and all the slaves born in his house or bought with his money, every male among the men of Abraham's house, and he circumcised the flesh of their foreskins that very day, as God had said to him. 24Abraham was ninety-nine years old when he was circumcised in the flesh of his foreskin. 25And his son Ishmael was thirteen years old when he was circumcised in the flesh of his foreskin. 26That very day Abraham and his son Ishmael were circumcised; 27and all the men of his house, slaves born in the house and those bought with money from a foreigner, were circumcised with him.

*u* That is *exalted ancestor* mean *ancestor of a multitude*
*v* Here taken to
*w* Heb *seed*
*x* That is *he laughs*

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**17.9–14**: To *keep* the covenant involves the practice of circumcision, an ancient rite that was practiced by some of Israel's neighbors and whose origin is explained by various traditions (Ex 4.24–26; Josh 5.2–9). Binding only on males, circumcision is an external *sign* (v. 11) of membership in the covenant community. Unlike the universal Noachic covenant (see 9.1–19 n.), this *everlasting covenant* pertains only to the descendants of Abraham and Sarah.

**17.15**: *Sarah*, meaning "princess," is a variant of *Sarai*. See v. 5 n. **17**: 18.11–15. **18–20**: 16.10–12.

18 The LORD appeared to Abraham[y] by the oaks[z] of Mamre, as he sat at the entrance of his tent in the heat of the day. 2He looked up and saw three men standing near him. When he saw them, he ran from the tent entrance to meet them, and bowed down to the ground. 3He said, "My lord, if I find favor with you, do not pass by your servant. 4Let a little water be brought, and wash your feet, and rest yourselves under the tree. 5Let me bring a little bread, that you may refresh yourselves, and after that you may pass on—since you have come to your servant." So they said, "Do as you have said." 6And Abraham hastened into the tent to Sarah, and said, "Make ready quickly three measures[a] of choice flour, knead it, and make cakes." 7Abraham ran to the herd, and took a calf, tender and good, and gave it to the servant, who hastened to prepare it. 8Then he took curds and milk and the calf that he had prepared, and set it before them; and he stood by them under the tree while they ate.

9 They said to him, "Where is your wife Sarah?" And he said, "There, in the tent." 10Then one said, "I will surely return to you in due season, and your wife Sarah shall have a son." And Sarah was listening at the tent entrance behind him. 11Now Abraham and Sarah were old, advanced in age; it had ceased to be with Sarah after the manner of women. 12So Sarah laughed to herself, saying, "After I have grown old, and my husband is old, shall I have pleasure?" 13The LORD said to Abraham, "Why did Sarah laugh, and say, 'Shall I indeed bear a child, now that I am old?' 14Is anything too wonderful for the LORD? At the set time I will return to you, in due season, and Sarah shall have a son." 15But Sarah denied, saying, "I did not laugh"; for she was afraid. He said, "Oh yes, you did laugh."

16 Then the men set out from there, and they looked toward Sodom; and Abraham went with them to set them on their way. 17The LORD said, "Shall I hide from Abraham what I am about to do, 18seeing that Abraham shall become a great and mighty nation, and all the nations of the earth shall be blessed in him?[b] 19No, for I have chosen[c] him, that he may charge his children and his household after him to keep the way of the LORD by doing righteousness and justice; so that the LORD may bring about for Abraham what he has promised him." 20Then the LORD said, "How great is the outcry against Sodom and Gomorrah and how very grave their sin! 21I must go down and see whether they have done altogether according to the outcry that has come to me; and if not, I will know."

22 So the men turned from there, and went toward Sodom, while Abraham remained standing before the LORD.[d] 23Then Abraham came near and said,

*y* Heb *him* *z* Or *terebinths* *a* Heb *seahs* *b* Or *and all the nations of the earth shall bless themselves by him* *c* Heb *known* *d* Another ancient tradition reads *while the* LORD *remained standing before Abraham*

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**18.1–15: The LORD's visit to Abraham and Sarah. 1:** The oaks of *Mamre,* see 13.18 n. **2–8:** A fine description of oriental courtesy and hospitality. When the visitors appeared at the noontime siesta, Abraham did not recognize them as divine beings (Heb 13.2). The relation of the three visitors to the LORD or Yahweh (v. 1) is difficult. All three *angels* (19.1) may represent the LORD (see 16.7 n.); thus the plurality becomes a single person in vv. 10, 13. On the other hand, v. 22 and 19.1 suggest that the LORD is one of the three, the other two being attendants.

**18.9–15:** The narrator stresses the incredibility of God's promise. **12:** Sarah's laughter arises from the absurd disproportion between the divine promise and the human possibilities. Other traditions also play upon the name of Isaac, meaning "he laughs" (compare 17.17–19; 21.6).

**18.16–33: Abraham's intercession for Sodom and Gomorrah. 17–19:** Because Abraham is chosen for a special role (12.13), he is taken into the LORD's counsel, for Sodom will become an example to future generations (Isa 1.9).

**18.23–33:** Abraham diplomatically questions the justice of God in allowing innocent people to be punished with the guilty. The first example in the Bible of expostulation

"Will you indeed sweep away the righteous with the wicked? 24Suppose there are fifty righteous within the city; will you then sweep away the place and not forgive it for the fifty righteous who are in it? 25Far be it from you to do such a thing, to slay the righteous with the wicked, so that the righteous fare as the wicked! Far be that from you! Shall not the Judge of all the earth do what is just?" 26And the LORD said, "If I find at Sodom fifty righteous in the city, I will forgive the whole place for their sake." 27Abraham answered, "Let me take it upon myself to speak to the Lord, I who am but dust and ashes. 28Suppose five of the fifty righteous are lacking? Will you destroy the whole city for lack of five?" And he said, "I will not destroy it if I find forty-five there." 29Again he spoke to him, "Suppose forty are found there." He answered, "For the sake of forty I will not do it." 30Then he said, "Oh do not let the Lord be angry if I speak. Suppose thirty are found there." He answered, "I will not do it, if I find thirty there." 31He said, "Let me take it upon myself to speak to the Lord. Suppose twenty are found there." He answered, "For the sake of twenty I will not destroy it." 32Then he said, "Oh do not let the Lord be angry if I speak just once more. Suppose ten are found there." He answered, "For the sake of ten I will not destroy it." 33And the LORD went his way, when he had finished speaking to Abraham; and Abraham returned to his place.

19 The two angels came to Sodom in the evening, and Lot was sitting in the gateway of Sodom. When Lot saw them, he rose to meet them, and bowed down with his face to the ground. 2He said, "Please, my lords, turn aside to your servant's house and spend the night, and wash your feet; then you can rise early and go on your way." They said, "No; we will spend the night in the square." 3But he urged them strongly; so they turned aside to him and entered his house; and he made them a feast, and baked unleavened bread, and they ate. 4But before they lay down, the men of the city, the men of Sodom, both young and old, all the people to the last man, surrounded the house; 5and they called to Lot, "Where are the men who came to you tonight? Bring them out to us, so that we may know them." 6Lot went out of the door to the men, shut the door after him, 7and said, "I beg you, my brothers, do not act so wickedly. 8Look, I have two daughters who have not known a man; let me bring them out to you, and do to them as you please; only do nothing to these men, for they have come under the shelter of my roof." 9But they replied, "Stand back!" And they said, "This fellow came here as an alien, and he would play the judge! Now we will deal worse with you than with them." Then they pressed hard against the man Lot, and came near the door to break it down. 10But the men inside reached out their hands and brought Lot into the house with them, and shut the door. 11And they struck with blindness the men who were at the door of the house, both small and great, so that they were unable to find the door.

12 Then the men said to Lot, "Have you anyone else here? Sons-in-law, sons, daughters, or anyone you have in the city—bring them out of the place. 13For we are about to destroy this place, because the outcry against its people has become great before the LORD, and the

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with God; see also Jeremiah's "confessions," the prophecy of Habakkuk, the book of Job.

**19.1–38: The destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah** impressed itself deeply upon later generations as an example of God's total judgment upon appalling wickedness (Deut 29.23; Isa 1.9; Jer 49.18; Am 4.11). **1:** *Two angels,* see 18.2–8 n. **4–11:** Compare the crime of Gibeah (Judg 19.22–30). The episode is told to illustrate the sexual excesses of Canaanites. **5:** *Know* refers to sexual relations (v. 8), here homosexual ("sodomy"). **8:** Once guests had eaten in his house, Lot felt he had to obey the law of oriental hospitality which guaranteed protection. Thus his proposal to hand over his daughters showed his determination to put first his obligation as a host.

LORD has sent us to destroy it." 14So Lot went out and said to his sons-in-law, who were to marry his daughters, "Up, get out of this place; for the LORD is about to destroy the city." But he seemed to his sons-in-law to be jesting.

15 When morning dawned, the angels urged Lot, saying, "Get up, take your wife and your two daughters who are here, or else you will be consumed in the punishment of the city." 16But he lingered; so the men seized him and his wife and his two daughters by the hand, the LORD being merciful to him, and they brought him out and left him outside the city. 17When they had brought them outside, they[e] said, "Flee for your life; do not look back or stop anywhere in the Plain; flee to the hills, or else you will be consumed." 18And Lot said to them, "Oh, no, my lords; 19your servant has found favor with you, and you have shown me great kindness in saving my life; but I cannot flee to the hills, for fear the disaster will overtake me and I die. 20Look, that city is near enough to flee to, and it is a little one. Let me escape there—is it not a little one?—and my life will be saved!" 21He said to him, "Very well, I grant you this favor too, and will not overthrow the city of which you have spoken. 22Hurry, escape there, for I can do nothing until you arrive there." Therefore the city was called Zoar.[f] 23The sun had risen on the earth when Lot came to Zoar.

24 Then the LORD rained on Sodom and Gomorrah sulfur and fire from the LORD out of heaven; 25and he overthrew those cities, and all the Plain, and all the inhabitants of the cities, and what grew on the ground. 26But Lot's wife, behind him, looked back, and she became a pillar of salt.

27 Abraham went early in the morning to the place where he had stood before the LORD; 28and he looked down toward Sodom and Gomorrah and toward all the land of the Plain and saw the smoke of the land going up like the smoke of a furnace.

29 So it was that, when God destroyed the cities of the Plain, God remembered Abraham, and sent Lot out of the midst of the overthrow, when he overthrew the cities in which Lot had settled.

30 Now Lot went up out of Zoar and settled in the hills with his two daughters, for he was afraid to stay in Zoar; so he lived in a cave with his two daughters. 31And the firstborn said to the younger, "Our father is old, and there is not a man on earth to come in to us after the manner of all the world. 32Come, let us make our father drink wine, and we will lie with him, so that we may preserve offspring through our father." 33So they made their father drink wine that night; and the firstborn went in, and lay with her father; he did not know when she lay down or when she rose. 34On the next day, the firstborn said to the younger, "Look, I lay last night with my father; let us make him drink wine tonight also; then you go in and lie with him, so that we may preserve offspring through our father." 35So they made their father drink wine that night also; and the younger rose, and lay with him; and he did not know when she lay down or when she rose. 36Thus both the daughters of Lot became pregnant by their father. 37The firstborn bore a son, and named him Moab; he is the ancestor of the Moabites to this day. 38The younger also bore a son and named him Ben-

*e* Gk Syr Vg: Heb *he* *f* That is *Little*

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**19.20–22:** *Zoar,* meaning "small," was a town at the southern end of the Dead Sea which survived the calamity. **24:** *Sulfur and fire,* a memory of a catastrophe in remote times when seismic activity and the explosion of subterranean gases changed the face of the area, which was formerly fertile (13.10). **26:** An old tradition to account for bizarre salt formations in the area such as may be seen today on Jebel Usdum.

**19.30–38:** A story which explains the origin of the Moabites and Ammonites, neighbors of Israel.

ammi; he is the ancestor of the Ammonites to this day.

20 From there Abraham journeyed toward the region of the Negeb, and settled between Kadesh and Shur. While residing in Gerar as an alien, 2Abraham said of his wife Sarah, "She is my sister." And King Abimelech of Gerar sent and took Sarah. 3But God came to Abimelech in a dream by night, and said to him, "You are about to die because of the woman whom you have taken; for she is a married woman." 4Now Abimelech had not approached her; so he said, "Lord, will you destroy an innocent people? 5Did he not himself say to me, 'She is my sister'? And she herself said, 'He is my brother.' I did this in the integrity of my heart and the innocence of my hands." 6Then God said to him in the dream, "Yes, I know that you did this in the integrity of your heart; furthermore it was I who kept you from sinning against me. Therefore I did not let you touch her. 7Now then, return the man's wife; for he is a prophet, and he will pray for you and you shall live. But if you do not restore her, know that you shall surely die, you and all that are yours."

8 So Abimelech rose early in the morning, and called all his servants and told them all these things; and the men were very much afraid. 9Then Abimelech called Abraham, and said to him, "What have you done to us? How have I sinned against you, that you have brought such great guilt on me and my kingdom? You have done things to me that ought not to be done." 10And Abimelech said to Abraham, "What were you thinking of, that you did this thing?" 11Abraham said, "I did it because I thought, There is no fear of God at all in this place, and they will kill me because of my wife. 12Besides, she is indeed my sister, the daughter of my father but not the daughter of my mother; and she became my wife. 13And when God caused me to wander from my father's house, I said to her, 'This is the kindness you must do me: at every place to which we come, say of me, He is my brother.'" 14Then Abimelech took sheep and oxen, and male and female slaves, and gave them to Abraham, and restored his wife Sarah to him. 15Abimelech said, "My land is before you; settle where it pleases you." 16To Sarah he said, "Look, I have given your brother a thousand pieces of silver; it is your exoneration before all who are with you; you are completely vindicated." 17Then Abraham prayed to God; and God healed Abimelech, and also healed his wife and female slaves so that they bore children. 18For the LORD had closed fast all the wombs of the house of Abimelech because of Sarah, Abraham's wife.

21 The LORD dealt with Sarah as he had said, and the LORD did for Sarah as he had promised. 2Sarah conceived and bore Abraham a son in his old age, at the time of which God had spoken to him. 3Abraham gave the name Isaac to his son whom Sarah bore him. 4And Abraham circumcised his son Isaac when he was eight days old, as God had commanded him. 5Abraham was a hundred years old when his son Isaac was born to him. 6Now Sarah said, "God has brought laughter for me; everyone who hears will laugh with me." 7And she

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**20.1–18: Abraham and Sarah in Gerar.** This story parallels that of 12.10–20 (compare 26.6–11). Here, however, the narrator is more concerned with the ethical problems involved. **1**: *From there,* i.e. Mamre (18.1). **2**: Compare 12.11–13. **3–7**: Ethically sensitive, the narrator insists that Abimelech was innocent, for he did not go near Sarah. **7**: To Abraham is attributed the intercessory role of *a prophet* (18.22–33; compare Num 12.13; 21.7; 1 Sam 12.19–23).

**20.11–12**: Abraham's excuses. Marriage with a half-sister was permitted in ancient times (2 Sam 13.13) but later was forbidden (Lev 18.9, 11; 20.17). **16**: *Exoneration,* i.e. a gift to induce everyone to overlook the injury done to Sarah.

**21.1–21: Isaac and Ishmael.** Although Isaac was designated to continue Abraham's line, Ishmael too was promised a great future. **4**: On circumcision, see 17.9–14 n. **6**: See 18.9–15 n.

said, "Who would ever have said to Abraham that Sarah would nurse children? Yet I have borne him a son in his old age."

8 The child grew, and was weaned; and Abraham made a great feast on the day that Isaac was weaned. 9But Sarah saw the son of Hagar the Egyptian, whom she had borne to Abraham, playing with her son Isaac.[g] 10So she said to Abraham, "Cast out this slave woman with her son; for the son of this slave woman shall not inherit along with my son Isaac." 11The matter was very distressing to Abraham on account of his son. 12But God said to Abraham, "Do not be distressed because of the boy and because of your slave woman; whatever Sarah says to you, do as she tells you, for it is through Isaac that offspring shall be named for you. 13As for the son of the slave woman, I will make a nation of him also, because he is your offspring." 14So Abraham rose early in the morning, and took bread and a skin of water, and gave it to Hagar, putting it on her shoulder, along with the child, and sent her away. And she departed, and wandered about in the wilderness of Beer-sheba.

15 When the water in the skin was gone, she cast the child under one of the bushes. 16Then she went and sat down opposite him a good way off, about the distance of a bowshot; for she said, "Do not let me look on the death of the child." And as she sat opposite him, she lifted up her voice and wept. 17And God heard the voice of the boy; and the angel of God called to Hagar from heaven, and said to her, "What troubles you, Hagar? Do not be afraid; for God has heard the voice of the boy where he is. 18Come, lift up the boy and hold him fast with your hand, for I will make a great nation of him." 19Then God opened her eyes and she saw a well of water. She went, and filled the skin with water, and gave the boy a drink.

20 God was with the boy, and he grew up; he lived in the wilderness, and became an expert with the bow. 21He lived in the wilderness of Paran; and his mother got a wife for him from the land of Egypt.

22 At that time Abimelech, with Phicol the commander of his army, said to Abraham, "God is with you in all that you do; 23now therefore swear to me here by God that you will not deal falsely with me or with my offspring or with my posterity, but as I have dealt loyally with you, you will deal with me and with the land where you have resided as an alien." 24And Abraham said, "I swear it."

25 When Abraham complained to Abimelech about a well of water that Abimelech's servants had seized, 26Abimelech said, "I do not know who has done this; you did not tell me, and I have not heard of it until today." 27So Abraham took sheep and oxen and gave

*g* Gk Vg: Heb lacks *with her son Isaac*

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**21.9–10**: The jealous mother could not stand seeing the two boys on the same level, even at play. **11–14**: Compare Abraham's different attitude in the parallel story (ch 16). **14**: *Beer-sheba* is the locale of the Isaac stories, just as Abraham is associated primarily with Mamre or Hebron (see 13.18 n.).

**21.17**: *The angel of God,* see 16.7 n. *God has heard,* a play on the name Ishmael, meaning "God hears" (16.11). **20**: Although Ishmael was not the heir of the promise, *God was with the boy,* destining him to be the ancestor of bedouin tribes of the southern wilderness (16.12). Muslims trace their ancestry to Abraham through Ishmael.

**21.22–34: Abraham's dispute with Abimelech.** This story contains two traditional explanations of the name Beer-sheba. According to one, Abimelech guaranteed Abraham's loyalty by an oath. Hence Beer-sheba means "Well of the oath" (v. 31). According to the other (vv. 25–26, 28–30), a dispute over a well resulted in a covenant, seven ewe-lambs being taken in witness. Thus the alternate meaning, "Well of seven." **33**: *The Everlasting God* ("El Olam") is an ancient divine name, once associated with the pre-Israelite sanctuary of Beer-sheba, which Israel adopted as a title for the LORD (Isa 40.28). **34**: *The land of the Philistines* is an anachronism, for the Philistines came into Canaan after 1200 B.C. (see 10.2–5 n.).

them to Abimelech, and the two men made a covenant. 28 Abraham set apart seven ewe lambs of the flock. 29 And Abimelech said to Abraham, "What is the meaning of these seven ewe lambs that you have set apart?" 30 He said, "These seven ewe lambs you shall accept from my hand, in order that you may be a witness for me that I dug this well." 31 Therefore that place was called Beer-sheba;[h] because there both of them swore an oath. 32 When they had made a covenant at Beer-sheba, Abimelech, with Phicol the commander of his army, left and returned to the land of the Philistines. 33 Abraham[i] planted a tamarisk tree in Beer-sheba, and called there on the name of the LORD, the Everlasting God.[j] 34 And Abraham resided as an alien many days in the land of the Philistines.

22 After these things God tested Abraham. He said to him, "Abraham!" And he said, "Here I am." 2 He said, "Take your son, your only son Isaac, whom you love, and go to the land of Moriah, and offer him there as a burnt offering on one of the mountains that I shall show you." 3 So Abraham rose early in the morning, saddled his donkey, and took two of his young men with him, and his son Isaac; he cut the wood for the burnt offering, and set out and went to the place in the distance that God had shown him. 4 On the third day Abraham looked up and saw the place far away. 5 Then Abraham said to his young men, "Stay here with the donkey; the boy and I will go over there; we will worship, and then we will come back to you." 6 Abraham took the wood of the burnt offering and laid it on his son Isaac, and he himself carried the fire and the knife. So the two of them walked on together. 7 Isaac said to his father Abraham, "Father!" And he said, "Here I am, my son." He said, "The fire and the wood are here, but where is the lamb for a burnt offering?" 8 Abraham said, "God himself will provide the lamb for a burnt offering, my son." So the two of them walked on together.

9 When they came to the place that God had shown him, Abraham built an altar there and laid the wood in order. He bound his son Isaac, and laid him on the altar, on top of the wood. 10 Then Abraham reached out his hand and took the knife to kill[k] his son. 11 But the angel of the LORD called to him from heaven, and said, "Abraham, Abraham!" And he said, "Here I am." 12 He said, "Do not lay your hand on the boy or do anything to him; for now I know that you fear God, since you have not withheld your son, your only son, from me." 13 And Abraham looked up and saw a ram, caught in a thicket by its horns. Abraham went and took the ram and offered it up as a burnt offering instead of his son. 14 So Abraham called that place "The LORD will provide";[l] as it is said to this day, "On the mount of the LORD it shall be provided."[m]

15 The angel of the LORD called to Abraham a second time from heaven, 16 and said, "By myself I have sworn, says the LORD: Because you have done this, and have not withheld your son,

*h* That is *Well of seven* or *Well of the oath*
*i* Heb *He* *j* Or *the* LORD, *El Olam* *k* Or *to slaughter* *l* Or *will see*; Heb traditionally transliterated *Jehovah Jireh* *m* Or *he shall be seen*

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**22.1–19: The testing of Abraham.** In its oldest form this story was told to show that the Deity surrendered a claim upon the life of the firstborn and provided an animal for a substitute (Ex 13.2, 11–16; 22.29; 34.19–20). In its present context the story portrays another threat to the divine promise: God asks Abraham to sacrifice his only heir, the child of the promise, in whom the people's future would be realized. **1**: *Tested,* i.e. put under trial to see whether he would obey in faith (12.4; compare Heb 11.17–19). **2**: The mountain in *the land of Moriah* is unknown. In 2 Chr 3.1 it is identified with Jerusalem. Samaritan tradition locates the scene on Mount Gerizim (Shechem; compare 12.6), three days' journey (22.4) from Beer-sheba (v. 19; 21.33).

**22.14**: *Provide,* see v. 8. **15–18**: Since Abraham survives the test, God renews the promise to him and his descendants (see 12.1–3).

your only son, 17I will indeed bless you, and I will make your offspring as numerous as the stars of heaven and as the sand that is on the seashore. And your offspring shall possess the gate of their enemies, 18and by your offspring shall all the nations of the earth gain blessing for themselves, because you have obeyed my voice." 19So Abraham returned to his young men, and they arose and went together to Beer-sheba; and Abraham lived at Beer-sheba.

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

23 Sarah lived one hundred twenty-seven years; this was the length of Sarah's life. 2And Sarah died at Kiriath-arba (that is, Hebron) in the land of Canaan; and Abraham went in to mourn for Sarah and to weep for her. 3Abraham rose up from beside his dead, and said to the Hittites, 4"I am a stranger and an alien residing among you; give me property among you for a burying place, so that I may bury my dead out of my sight." 5The Hittites answered Abraham, 6"Hear us, my lord; you are a mighty prince among us. Bury your dead in the choicest of our burial places; none of us will withhold from you any burial ground for burying your dead." 7Abraham rose and bowed to the Hittites, the people of the land. 8He said to them, "If you are willing that I should bury my dead out of my sight, hear me, and entreat for me Ephron son of Zohar, 9so that he may give me the cave of Machpelah, which he owns; it is at the end of his field. For the full price let him give it to me in your presence as a possession for a burying place." 10Now Ephron was sitting among the Hittites; and Ephron the Hittite answered Abraham in the hearing of the Hittites, of all who went in at the gate of his city, 11"No, my lord, hear me; I give you the field, and I give you the cave that is in it; in the presence of my people I give it to you; bury your dead." 12Then Abraham bowed down before the people of the land. 13He said to Ephron in the hearing of the people of the land, "If you only will listen to me! I will give the price of the field; accept it from me, so that I may bury my dead there." 14Ephron answered Abraham, 15"My lord, listen to me; a piece of land worth four hundred shekels of silver—what is that between you and me? Bury your dead." 16Abraham agreed with Ephron; and Abraham weighed out for Ephron the silver that he had named in the hearing of the Hittites, four hundred shekels of silver, according to the weights current among the merchants.

17 So the field of Ephron in Machpelah, which was to the east of Mamre, the field with the cave that was in it and all the trees that were in the field, throughout its whole area, passed 18to Abraham as a possession in the presence of the Hittites, in the presence of all who went in at the gate of his city. 19After this, Abraham buried Sarah his wife in the cave of the field of Machpelah facing Mamre (that is, Hebron) in the land of Canaan. 20The field and the cave that is in it passed from the Hittites into Abraham's possession as a burying place.

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**22.20–24: The descendants of Abraham's brother Nahor.** See ch 24.

**23.1–20: Abraham's purchase of a family burial place. 2**: *Kiriath-arba,* the older name of Hebron (Josh 14.15; 15.13; Judg 1.10). **3**: *The Hittites* belonged at that time to the pre-Israelite population, *the people of the land* (v. 7; see 10.15 n.). **4–16**: Legal transactions were handled by elders at the city gate (v. 10). **9**: Abraham insists on payment of *the full price* in order to obtain legal title to the land.

**23.19**: The cave of Machpelah was the tomb of Abraham and Sarah (25.9–10), Isaac (35.27–29) and Rebekah (49.31), Jacob (50.13) and Leah (49.31).

***Rebekah at the well***

24 Now Abraham was old, well advanced in years; and the LORD had blessed Abraham in all things. 2Abraham said to his servant, the oldest of his house, who had charge of all that he had, "Put your hand under my thigh 3and I will make you swear by the LORD, the God of heaven and earth, that you will not get a wife for my son from the daughters of the Canaanites, among whom I live, 4but will go to my country and to my kindred and get a wife for my son Isaac." 5The servant said to him, "Perhaps the woman may not be willing to follow me to this land; must I then take your son back to the land from which you came?" 6Abraham said to him, "See to it that you do not take my son back there. 7The LORD, the God of heaven, who took me from my father's house and from the land of my birth, and who spoke to me and swore to me, 'To your offspring I will give this land,' he will send his angel before you, and you shall take a wife for my son from there. 8But if the woman is not willing to follow you, then you will be free from this oath of mine; only you must not take my son back there." 9So the servant put his hand under the thigh of Abraham his master and swore to him concerning this matter.

10 Then the servant took ten of his master's camels and departed, taking all kinds of choice gifts from his master; and he set out and went to Aram-naharaim, to the city of Nahor. 11He made the camels kneel down outside the city by the well of water; it was toward evening, the time when women go out to draw water. 12And he said, "O LORD, God of my master Abraham, please grant me success today and show steadfast love to my master Abraham. 13I am standing here by the spring of water, and the daughters of the townspeople are coming out to draw water. 14Let the girl to whom I shall say, 'Please offer your jar that I may drink,' and who shall say, 'Drink, and I will water your camels'—let her be the one whom you have appointed for your servant Isaac. By this I shall know that you have shown steadfast love to my master."

15 Before he had finished speaking, there was Rebekah, who was born to Bethuel son of Milcah, the wife of Nahor, Abraham's brother, coming out with her water jar on her shoulder. 16The girl was very fair to look upon, a virgin, whom no man had known. She went down to the spring, filled her jar, and came up. 17Then the servant ran to meet her and said, "Please let me sip a little water from your jar." 18"Drink, my lord," she said, and quickly lowered her jar upon her hand and gave him a drink. 19When she had finished giving him a drink, she said, "I will draw for your camels also, until they have finished drinking." 20So she quickly emptied her jar into the trough and ran again to the well to draw, and she drew for all his camels. 21The man gazed at her in silence to learn whether or not the LORD had made his journey successful.

22 When the camels had finished drinking, the man took a gold nose-ring weighing a half shekel, and two bracelets for her arms weighing ten gold shekels,

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**24.1–67: Finding a wife for Isaac** among kinfolk in Haran. **2:** The servant was perhaps Abraham's major-domo, Eliezer (15.2). Putting the hand under the thigh, an old form of oath taking (47.29), reflected the view that the fountain of reproductivity was sacred to the Deity (see 16.2 n.). **3:** Aloofness from the Canaanites was based upon fear of the corrupting influence of Canaanite culture (Ex 34.15–16; Deut 7.3–4). **7:** *His angel,* see 16.7 n.

**24.10:** *The city of Nahor,* near Haran (see 11.31 n.). **12:** *Steadfast love:* NRSV's translation of a Hebrew term ("ḥesed") that signifies the loyalty arising from a relationship (e.g. friendship; see 1 Sam 20.8), which motivates the stronger party to show favor or give help to the weaker. Applied to God's covenant with human beings, it means benevolent action, loyalty manifest in deeds, gracious favor. **14:** The story assumes that the young woman had been *appointed* by the LORD to be Isaac's wife; therefore events unfold according to divine providence (see vv. 21, 26–27, 50, 56). **15:** 22.20–23.

23 and said, "Tell me whose daughter you
are. Is there room in your father's house
for us to spend the night?" 24 She said to
him, "I am the daughter of Bethuel son
of Milcah, whom she bore to Nahor."
25 She added, "We have plenty of straw
and fodder and a place to spend the
night." 26 The man bowed his head and
worshiped the LORD 27 and said, "Blessed
be the LORD, the God of my master
Abraham, who has not forsaken his
steadfast love and his faithfulness toward
my master. As for me, the LORD has led
me on the way to the house of my mas-
ter's kin."

28 Then the girl ran and told her
mother's household about these things.
29 Rebekah had a brother whose name
was Laban; and Laban ran out to the
man, to the spring. 30 As soon as he had
seen the nose-ring, and the bracelets on
his sister's arms, and when he heard the
words of his sister Rebekah, "Thus the
man spoke to me," he went to the man;
and there he was, standing by the camels
at the spring. 31 He said, "Come in,
O blessed of the LORD. Why do you
stand outside when I have prepared the
house and a place for the camels?" 32 So
the man came into the house; and Laban
unloaded the camels, and gave him straw
and fodder for the camels, and water to
wash his feet and the feet of the men who
were with him. 33 Then food was set be-
fore him to eat; but he said, "I will not eat
until I have told my errand." He said,
"Speak on."

34 So he said, "I am Abraham's ser-
vant. 35 The LORD has greatly blessed my
master, and he has become wealthy; he
has given him flocks and herds, silver
and gold, male and female slaves, camels
and donkeys. 36 And Sarah my master's
wife bore a son to my master when she
was old; and he has given him all that he
has. 37 My master made me swear, say-
ing, 'You shall not take a wife for my son
from the daughters of the Canaanites, in
whose land I live; 38 but you shall go to
my father's house, to my kindred, and
get a wife for my son.' 39 I said to my
master, 'Perhaps the woman will not fol-
low me.' 40 But he said to me, 'The LORD,
before whom I walk, will send his angel
with you and make your way successful.
You shall get a wife for my son from my
kindred, from my father's house. 41 Then
you will be free from my oath, when you
come to my kindred; even if they will not
give her to you, you will be free from my
oath.'

42 "I came today to the spring, and
said, 'O LORD, the God of my master
Abraham, if now you will only make
successful the way I am going! 43 I am
standing here by the spring of water; let
the young woman who comes out to
draw, to whom I shall say, "Please give
me a little water from your jar to drink,"
44 and who will say to me, "Drink, and I
will draw for your camels also"—let her
be the woman whom the LORD has ap-
pointed for my master's son.'

45 "Before I had finished speaking in
my heart, there was Rebekah coming out
with her water jar on her shoulder; and
she went down to the spring, and drew.
I said to her, 'Please let me drink.' 46 She
quickly let down her jar from her shoul-
der, and said, 'Drink, and I will also wa-
ter your camels.' So I drank, and she also
watered the camels. 47 Then I asked her,
'Whose daughter are you?' She said, 'The
daughter of Bethuel, Nahor's son,
whom Milcah bore to him.' So I put the
ring on her nose, and the bracelets on her
arms. 48 Then I bowed my head and wor-
shiped the LORD, and blessed the LORD,
the God of my master Abraham, who
had led me by the right way to obtain the
daughter of my master's kinsman for his
son. 49 Now then, if you will deal loyally
and truly with my master, tell me; and if
not, tell me, so that I may turn either to
the right hand or to the left."

50 Then Laban and Bethuel an-
swered, "The thing comes from the
LORD; we cannot speak to you anything
bad or good. 51 Look, Rebekah is before
you, take her and go, and let her be the
wife of your master's son, as the LORD
has spoken."

52 When Abraham's servant heard
their words, he bowed himself to the
ground before the LORD. 53 And the ser-
vant brought out jewelry of silver and of

gold, and garments, and gave them to Rebekah; he also gave to her brother and to her mother costly ornaments. 54Then he and the men who were with him ate and drank, and they spent the night there. When they rose in the morning, he said, "Send me back to my master." 55Her brother and her mother said, "Let the girl remain with us a while, at least ten days; after that she may go." 56But he said to them, "Do not delay me, since the LORD has made my journey successful; let me go that I may go to my master." 57They said, "We will call the girl, and ask her." 58And they called Rebekah, and said to her, "Will you go with this man?" She said, "I will." 59So they sent away their sister Rebekah and her nurse along with Abraham's servant and his men. 60And they blessed Rebekah and said to her,

"May you, our sister, become
thousands of myriads;
may your offspring gain
possession
of the gates of their foes."

61Then Rebekah and her maids rose up, mounted the camels, and followed the man; thus the servant took Rebekah, and went his way.

62 Now Isaac had come from[n] Beer-lahai-roi, and was settled in the Negeb. 63Isaac went out in the evening to walk[o] in the field; and looking up, he saw camels coming. 64And Rebekah looked up, and when she saw Isaac, she slipped quickly from the camel, 65and said to the servant, "Who is the man over there, walking in the field to meet us?" The servant said, "It is my master." So she took her veil and covered herself. 66And the servant told Isaac all the things that he had done. 67Then Isaac brought her into his mother Sarah's tent. He took Rebekah, and she became his wife; and he loved her. So Isaac was comforted after his mother's death.

25 Abraham took another wife, whose name was Keturah. 2She bore him Zimran, Jokshan, Medan, Midian, Ishbak, and Shuah. 3Jokshan was the father of Sheba and Dedan. The sons of Dedan were Asshurim, Letushim, and Leummim. 4The sons of Midian were Ephah, Epher, Hanoch, Abida, and Eldaah. All these were the children of Keturah. 5Abraham gave all he had to Isaac. 6But to the sons of his concubines Abraham gave gifts, while he was still living, and he sent them away from his son Isaac, eastward to the east country.

7 This is the length of Abraham's life, one hundred seventy-five years. 8Abraham breathed his last and died in a good old age, an old man and full of years, and was gathered to his people. 9His sons Isaac and Ishmael buried him in the cave of Machpelah, in the field of Ephron son of Zohar the Hittite, east of Mamre, 10the field that Abraham purchased from the Hittites. There Abraham was buried, with his wife Sarah. 11After the death of Abraham God blessed his son Isaac. And Isaac settled at Beer-lahai-roi.

12 These are the descendants of Ishmael, Abraham's son, whom Hagar the Egyptian, Sarah's slave-girl, bore to Abraham. 13These are the names of the sons of Ishmael, named in the order of their birth: Nebaioth, the firstborn of Ishmael; and Kedar, Adbeel, Mibsam, 14Mishma, Dumah, Massa, 15Hadad, Tema, Jetur, Naphish, and Kedemah. 16These are the sons of Ishmael and these are their names, by their villages and by their encampments, twelve princes according to their tribes. 17(This is the length of the life of Ishmael, one hundred thirty-seven years; he breathed his last and died, and was gathered to his people.) 18They settled from Havilah to

*n* Syr Tg: Heb *from coming to* *o* Meaning of Heb word is uncertain

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**24.62**: *Beer-lahai-roi*, 16.14.

**25.1–18**: **The death of Abraham. 1–6**: The ancestry of Arabic tribes, including Midian (Ex 2.15b–22; 18.1), is traced to Abraham through his other wife, Keturah. **9**: See ch 23.

**25.12–18**: An excerpt from the book of generations (5.1). **16**: Like later Israel, the Ishmaelites were organized into twelve tribes, each with a tribal prince. **18**: 16.7, 14.

Shur, which is opposite Egypt in the direction of Assyria; he settled down[r] alongside of[q] all his people.

19 These are the descendants of Isaac, Abraham's son: Abraham was the father of Isaac, 20 and Isaac was forty years old when he married Rebekah, daughter of Bethuel the Aramean of Paddan-aram, sister of Laban the Aramean. 21 Isaac prayed to the LORD for his wife, because she was barren; and the LORD granted his prayer, and his wife Rebekah conceived. 22 The children struggled together within her; and she said, "If it is to be this way, why do I live?"[r] So she went to inquire of the LORD. 23 And the LORD said to her,

"Two nations are in your womb,
and two peoples born of you
shall be divided;
the one shall be stronger than the other,
the elder shall serve the younger."

24 When her time to give birth was at hand, there were twins in her womb. 25 The first came out red, all his body like a hairy mantle; so they named him Esau. 26 Afterward his brother came out, with his hand gripping Esau's heel; so he was named Jacob.[s] Isaac was sixty years old when she bore them.

27 When the boys grew up, Esau was a skillful hunter, a man of the field, while Jacob was a quiet man, living in tents. 28 Isaac loved Esau, because he was fond of game; but Rebekah loved Jacob.

29 Once when Jacob was cooking a stew, Esau came in from the field, and he was famished. 30 Esau said to Jacob, "Let me eat some of that red stuff, for I am famished!" (Therefore he was called Edom.[t]) 31 Jacob said, "First sell me your birthright." 32 Esau said, "I am about to die; of what use is a birthright to me?" 33 Jacob said, "Swear to me first."[u] So he swore to him, and sold his birthright to Jacob. 34 Then Jacob gave Esau bread and lentil stew, and he ate and drank, and rose and went his way. Thus Esau despised his birthright.

26 Now there was a famine in the land, besides the former famine that had occurred in the days of Abraham. And Isaac went to Gerar, to King Abimelech of the Philistines. 2 The LORD appeared to Isaac[v] and said, "Do not go down to Egypt; settle in the land that I shall show you. 3 Reside in this land as an alien, and I will be with you, and will bless you; for to you and to your descendants I will give all these lands, and I will fulfill the oath that I swore to your father Abraham. 4 I will make your offspring as numerous as the stars of heaven, and will give to your offspring all these lands; and all the nations of the earth shall gain blessing for themselves through your offspring, 5 because Abraham obeyed my voice and kept my charge, my commandments, my statutes, and my laws."

6 So Isaac settled in Gerar. 7 When the men of the place asked him about his

*p* Heb *he fell* *q* Or *down in opposition to* *r* Syr: Meaning of Heb uncertain *s* That is *He takes by the heel* or *He supplants* *t* That is *Red* *u* Heb *today* *v* Heb *him*

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**25.19–34: The rivalry of Jacob (Israel) and Esau (Edom).** **20**: *Paddan-aram,* see 11.31 n. **21**: See 16.2 n. **22–23**: Rebekah went to a sanctuary *to inquire of the LORD* and received the oracular answer in v. 23. **25**: The Hebrew word *red* ("'admoni") is a play on the word Edom ("'edom"; v. 30); *hairy* ("se'ar") is a play on Seir, the region of the Edomites (32.3). **26**: *Jacob* is interpreted by a play on the Hebrew word for "heel," i.e. "he takes by the heel" or "he supplants" (Hos 12.3; Jer 9.4).

**25.27–28**: The two boys typify the hunter and the shepherd, two rival ways of life (4.2). **31–34**: The *birthright* refers to the rights of the eldest son: leadership of the family and a double share of the inheritance (Deut 21.15–17). The caricature of Esau as a dull person, easily outwitted on an empty stomach, is intended to explain why Israel gained ascendancy over Edom (2 Sam 8.12–14; 2 Chr 25.11–24) even though the latter became a nation first (36.31–39).

**26.1–34: Stories about Isaac.** **1**: *The former famine,* 12.10. *The Philistines,* see 21.34 n.

wife, he said, "She is my sister"; for he was afraid to say, "My wife," thinking, "or else the men of the place might kill me for the sake of Rebekah, because she is attractive in appearance." 8When Isaac had been there a long time, King Abimelech of the Philistines looked out of a window and saw him fondling his wife Rebekah. 9So Abimelech called for Isaac, and said, "So she is your wife! Why then did you say, 'She is my sister'?" Isaac said to him, "Because I thought I might die because of her." 10Abimelech said, "What is this you have done to us? One of the people might easily have lain with your wife, and you would have brought guilt upon us." 11So Abimelech warned all the people, saying, "Whoever touches this man or his wife shall be put to death."

12 Isaac sowed seed in that land, and in the same year reaped a hundredfold. The LORD blessed him, 13and the man became rich; he prospered more and more until he became very wealthy. 14He had possessions of flocks and herds, and a great household, so that the Philistines envied him. 15(Now the Philistines had stopped up and filled with earth all the wells that his father's servants had dug in the days of his father Abraham.) 16And Abimelech said to Isaac, "Go away from us; you have become too powerful for us."

17 So Isaac departed from there and camped in the valley of Gerar and settled there. 18Isaac dug again the wells of water that had been dug in the days of his father Abraham; for the Philistines had stopped them up after the death of Abraham; and he gave them the names that his father had given them. 19But when Isaac's servants dug in the valley and found there a well of spring water, 20the herders of Gerar quarreled with Isaac's herders, saying, "The water is ours." So he called the well Esek,[w] because they contended with him. 21Then they dug another well, and they quarreled over that one also; so he called it Sitnah.[x] 22He moved from there and dug another well, and they did not quarrel over it; so he called it Rehoboth,[y] saying, "Now the LORD has made room for us, and we shall be fruitful in the land."

23 From there he went up to Beer-sheba. 24And that very night the LORD appeared to him and said, "I am the God of your father Abraham; do not be afraid, for I am with you and will bless you and make your offspring numerous for my servant Abraham's sake." 25So he built an altar there, called on the name of the LORD, and pitched his tent there. And there Isaac's servants dug a well.

26 Then Abimelech went to him from Gerar, with Ahuzzath his adviser and Phicol the commander of his army. 27Isaac said to them, "Why have you come to me, seeing that you hate me and have sent me away from you?" 28They said, "We see plainly that the LORD has been with you; so we say, let there be an oath between you and us, and let us make a covenant with you 29so that you will do us no harm, just as we have not touched you and have done to you nothing but good and have sent you away in peace. You are now the blessed of the LORD." 30So he made them a feast, and they ate and drank. 31In the morning they rose early and exchanged oaths; and Isaac set them on their way, and they departed from him in peace. 32That same day Isaac's servants came and told him about the well that they had dug, and said to him, "We have found water!" 33He

*w* That is *Contention* *x* That is *Enmity*
*y* That is *Broad places* or *Room*

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**3–5**: The promise, first given to Abraham (12.2–3, 7), is reaffirmed to Isaac. **7–11**: 12.10–20 and ch 20.

**26.12–33**: Isaac is portrayed as a seminomad who settled down long enough to raise crops (v. 12) but also moved about to find pasturage and water for his flocks.

**26.24**: *The God of your father Abraham,* the God of the ancestors is not known in general or abstract terms but by concrete, historical relations to particular persons (Ex 3.6). **28–30**: Compare 21.22–24. **32–33**: *Shibah,* another explanation of the name of Isaac's shrine, Beer-sheba (see 21.22–34 n.).

called it Shibah;[z] therefore the name of the city is Beer-sheba[a] to this day.

34 When Esau was forty years old, he married Judith daughter of Beeri the Hittite, and Basemath daughter of Elon the Hittite; 35and they made life bitter for Isaac and Rebekah.

27 When Isaac was old and his eyes were dim so that he could not see, he called his elder son Esau and said to him, "My son"; and he answered, "Here I am." 2He said, "See, I am old; I do not know the day of my death. 3Now then, take your weapons, your quiver and your bow, and go out to the field, and hunt game for me. 4Then prepare for me savory food, such as I like, and bring it to me to eat, so that I may bless you before I die."

5 Now Rebekah was listening when Isaac spoke to his son Esau. So when Esau went to the field to hunt for game and bring it, 6Rebekah said to her son Jacob, "I heard your father say to your brother Esau, 7'Bring me game, and prepare for me savory food to eat, that I may bless you before the LORD before I die.' 8Now therefore, my son, obey my word as I command you. 9Go to the flock, and get me two choice kids, so that I may prepare from them savory food for your father, such as he likes; 10and you shall take it to your father to eat, so that he may bless you before he dies." 11But Jacob said to his mother Rebekah, "Look, my brother Esau is a hairy man, and I am a man of smooth skin. 12Perhaps my father will feel me, and I shall seem to be mocking him, and bring a curse on myself and not a blessing." 13His mother said to him, "Let your curse be on me, my son; only obey my word, and go, get them for me." 14So he went and got them and brought them to his mother; and his mother prepared savory food, such as his father loved. 15Then Rebekah took the best garments of her elder son Esau, which were with her in the house, and put them on her younger son Jacob; 16and she put the skins of the kids on his hands and on the smooth part of his neck. 17Then she handed the savory food, and the bread that she had prepared, to her son Jacob.

18 So he went in to his father, and said, "My father"; and he said, "Here I am; who are you, my son?" 19Jacob said to his father, "I am Esau your firstborn. I have done as you told me; now sit up and eat of my game, so that you may bless me." 20But Isaac said to his son, "How is it that you have found it so quickly, my son?" He answered, "Because the LORD your God granted me success." 21Then Isaac said to Jacob, "Come near, that I may feel you, my son, to know whether you are really my son Esau or not." 22So Jacob went up to his father Isaac, who felt him and said, "The voice is Jacob's voice, but the hands are the hands of Esau." 23He did not recognize him, because his hands were hairy like his brother Esau's hands; so he blessed him. 24He said, "Are you really my son Esau?" He answered, "I am." 25Then he said, "Bring it to me, that I may eat of my son's game and bless you." So he brought it to him, and he ate; and he brought him wine, and he drank. 26Then his father Isaac said to him, "Come near and kiss me, my son." 27So he came near and kissed him; and he smelled the smell of his garments, and blessed him, and said,

"Ah, the smell of my son
is like the smell of a field that
the LORD has blessed.

*z* A word resembling the word for *oath*
*a* That is *Well of the oath* or *Well of seven*

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**27.1–45: Jacob cheats Esau out of the blessing.** Here begins a cycle of stories about Jacob, the founder of the sanctuary of Bethel. **3**: For Esau as a hunter, see 25.27–34, an episode to which Jacob makes no reference. **4**: Death-bed blessings were important in the life and literature of ancient peoples (48.8–20; 49.1–28; Deut ch 33; Josh ch 23). It was believed that the blessing, like the curse (v. 12), released a power that effectively determined the character and destiny of the recipient (Num ch 22–24).

**27.5–29**: The elements of deceit and even outright lying (v. 20) mark this as a popular

28 May God give you of the dew of heaven,
and of the fatness of the earth,
and plenty of grain and wine.
29 Let peoples serve you,
and nations bow down to you.
Be lord over your brothers,
and may your mother's sons bow down to you.
Cursed be everyone who curses you,
and blessed be everyone who blesses you!"

30 As soon as Isaac had finished blessing Jacob, when Jacob had scarcely gone out from the presence of his father Isaac, his brother Esau came in from his hunting. 31 He also prepared savory food, and brought it to his father. And he said to his father, "Let my father sit up and eat of his son's game, so that you may bless me." 32 His father Isaac said to him, "Who are you?" He answered, "I am your firstborn son, Esau." 33 Then Isaac trembled violently, and said, "Who was it then that hunted game and brought it to me, and I ate it all[b] before you came, and I have blessed him?—yes, and blessed he shall be!" 34 When Esau heard his father's words, he cried out with an exceedingly great and bitter cry, and said to his father, "Bless me, me also, father!" 35 But he said, "Your brother came deceitfully, and he has taken away your blessing." 36 Esau said, "Is he not rightly named Jacob?[c] For he has supplanted me these two times. He took away my birthright; and look, now he has taken away my blessing." Then he said, "Have you not reserved a blessing for me?" 37 Isaac answered Esau, "I have already made him your lord, and I have given him all his brothers as servants, and with grain and wine I have sustained him. What then can I do for you, my son?" 38 Esau said to his father, "Have you only one blessing, father? Bless me, me also, father!" And Esau lifted up his voice and wept.

39 Then his father Isaac answered him:

"See, away from[d] the fatness of the earth shall your home be,
and away from[e] the dew of heaven on high.
40 By your sword you shall live,
and you shall serve your brother;
but when you break loose,[f]
you shall break his yoke from your neck."

41 Now Esau hated Jacob because of the blessing with which his father had blessed him, and Esau said to himself, "The days of mourning for my father are approaching; then I will kill my brother Jacob." 42 But the words of her elder son Esau were told to Rebekah; so she sent and called her younger son Jacob and said to him, "Your brother Esau is consoling himself by planning to kill you. 43 Now therefore, my son, obey my voice; flee at once to my brother Laban in Haran, 44 and stay with him a while, until your brother's fury turns away— 45 until your brother's anger against you turns away, and he forgets what you have done to him; then I will send, and bring you back from there. Why should I lose both of you in one day?"

46 Then Rebekah said to Isaac, "I am weary of my life because of the Hittite women. If Jacob marries one of the Hit-

*b* Cn: Heb *of all* *c* That is *He supplants* or *He takes by the heel* *d* Or *See, of* *e* Or *and of* *f* Meaning of Heb uncertain

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story; the sequel shows that later Jacob reaped the consequences of his action.

**27.34**: To appreciate the pathos of the scene it must be remembered that the spoken blessing, like an arrow shot toward its goal, was believed to release a power which could not be retracted (see v. 33). **36**: *He has supplanted me*, see 25.26 n. **39**: This blessing inverts the meaning of the same words in v. 28, for the land of Edom was not fertile. **40**: In David's time Edom was subjugated (2 Sam 8.12–14) but it revolted under Solomon (1 Kings 11.14–22, 25; compare 2 Kings 8.20–22).

**27.46–28.22: Jacob's departure for Aram and his dream at Bethel.**

**27.46**: *Hittite women*, i.e. Canaanites (see 23.3 n. and 24.3 n.).

tite women such as these, one of the women of the land, what good will my life be to me?"

28 Then Isaac called Jacob and blessed him, and charged him, "You shall not marry one of the Canaanite women. 2Go at once to Paddan-aram to the house of Bethuel, your mother's father; and take as wife from there one of the daughters of Laban, your mother's brother. 3May God Almighty[g] bless you and make you fruitful and numerous, that you may become a company of peoples. 4May he give to you the blessing of Abraham, to you and to your offspring with you, so that you may take possession of the land where you now live as an alien—land that God gave to Abraham." 5Thus Isaac sent Jacob away; and he went to Paddan-aram, to Laban son of Bethuel the Aramean, the brother of Rebekah, Jacob's and Esau's mother.

6 Now Esau saw that Isaac had blessed Jacob and sent him away to Paddan-aram to take a wife from there, and that as he blessed him he charged him, "You shall not marry one of the Canaanite women," 7and that Jacob had obeyed his father and his mother and gone to Paddan-aram. 8So when Esau saw that the Canaanite women did not please his father Isaac, 9Esau went to Ishmael and took Mahalath daughter of Abraham's son Ishmael, and sister of Nebaioth, to be his wife in addition to the wives he had.

10 Jacob left Beer-sheba and went toward Haran. 11He came to a certain place and stayed there for the night, because the sun had set. Taking one of the stones of the place, he put it under his head and lay down in that place. 12And he dreamed that there was a ladder[h] set up on the earth, the top of it reaching to heaven; and the angels of God were ascending and descending on it. 13And the LORD stood beside him[i] and said, "I am the LORD, the God of Abraham your father and the God of Isaac; the land on which you lie I will give to you and to your offspring; 14and your offspring shall be like the dust of the earth, and you shall spread abroad to the west and to the east and to the north and to the south; and all the families of the earth shall be blessed[j] in you and in your offspring. 15Know that I am with you and will keep you wherever you go, and will bring you back to this land; for I will not leave you until I have done what I have promised you." 16Then Jacob woke from his sleep and said, "Surely the LORD is in this place—and I did not know it!" 17And he was afraid, and said, "How awesome is this place! This is none other than the house of God, and this is the gate of heaven."

18 So Jacob rose early in the morning, and he took the stone that he had put under his head and set it up for a pillar and poured oil on the top of it. 19He called that place Bethel;[k] but the name of the city was Luz at the first. 20Then Jacob

*g* Traditional rendering of Heb *El Shaddai*
*h* Or *stairway* or *ramp* *i* Or *stood above it*
*j* Or *shall bless themselves*
*k* That is *House of God*

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**28.2**: *Paddan-aram,* see 11.31 n. **3**: *God Almighty,* see 17.1 n. **11**: Bethel was at this time unsettled. According to ancient belief, oracles could be received by sleeping in a holy place (1 Sam ch 3).

**28.12**: Angels in a company are mentioned here and in 32.1–2 (compare 16.7; 21.17), suggesting the view of a retinue surrounding the heavenly King. **13–15**: The Deity, identified as *the God of Abraham* and *the God of Isaac* (see 26.24 n.), renews the promise (12.2–3, 7). **17**: An explanation of the name of Beth-el (*house of God*). *The gate of heaven* suggests the ancient view that a sanctuary was a place where God came down to meet the people, like Babel or "gate of God" (11.1–9).

**28.18**: The *pillar* was a sacred stone, often found at ancient sanctuaries (Josh 24.26). Anointing the stone made it holy, that is, set it apart for the Deity (v. 22). **21**: The personal relationship with God indicated in the expression *my God,* is characteristic of the religion of Israel's ancestors. The family leader chooses God in response to a personal revelation. **22**: The story explains the origin of the northern sanctuary at Bethel which flour-

made a vow, saying, "If God will be with me, and will keep me in this way that I go, and will give me bread to eat and clothing to wear, [21]so that I come again to my father's house in peace, then the LORD shall be my God, [22]and this stone, which I have set up for a pillar, shall be God's house; and of all that you give me I will surely give one-tenth to you."

29 Then Jacob went on his journey, and came to the land of the people of the east. [2]As he looked, he saw a well in the field and three flocks of sheep lying there beside it; for out of that well the flocks were watered. The stone on the well's mouth was large, [3]and when all the flocks were gathered there, the shepherds would roll the stone from the mouth of the well, and water the sheep, and put the stone back in its place on the mouth of the well.

4 Jacob said to them, "My brothers, where do you come from?" They said, "We are from Haran." [5]He said to them, "Do you know Laban son of Nahor?" They said, "We do." [6]He said to them, "Is it well with him?" "Yes," they replied, "and here is his daughter Rachel, coming with the sheep." [7]He said, "Look, it is still broad daylight; it is not time for the animals to be gathered together. Water the sheep, and go, pasture them." [8]But they said, "We cannot until all the flocks are gathered together, and the stone is rolled from the mouth of the well; then we water the sheep."

9 While he was still speaking with them, Rachel came with her father's sheep; for she kept them. [10]Now when Jacob saw Rachel, the daughter of his mother's brother Laban, and the sheep of his mother's brother Laban, Jacob went up and rolled the stone from the well's mouth, and watered the flock of his mother's brother Laban. [11]Then Jacob kissed Rachel, and wept aloud. [12]And Jacob told Rachel that he was her father's kinsman, and that he was Rebekah's son; and she ran and told her father.

13 When Laban heard the news about his sister's son Jacob, he ran to meet him; he embraced him and kissed him, and brought him to his house. Jacob[l] told Laban all these things, [14]and Laban said to him, "Surely you are my bone and my flesh!" And he stayed with him a month.

15 Then Laban said to Jacob, "Because you are my kinsman, should you therefore serve me for nothing? Tell me, what shall your wages be?" [16]Now Laban had two daughters; the name of the elder was Leah, and the name of the younger was Rachel. [17]Leah's eyes were lovely,[m] and Rachel was graceful and beautiful. [18]Jacob loved Rachel; so he said, "I will serve you seven years for your younger daughter Rachel." [19]Laban said, "It is better that I give her to you than that I should give her to any other man; stay with me." [20]So Jacob served seven years for Rachel, and they seemed to him but a few days because of the love he had for her.

21 Then Jacob said to Laban, "Give me my wife that I may go in to her, for my time is completed." [22]So Laban gathered together all the people of the place, and made a feast. [23]But in the evening he took his daughter Leah and brought her to Jacob; and he went in to her. [24](Laban gave his maid Zilpah to his daughter Leah to be her maid.) [25]When morning came, it was Leah! And Jacob said to Laban, "What is this you have done to me? Did I not serve with you for Rachel? Why then have you deceived me?" [26]La-

*l* Heb *He* *m* Meaning of Heb uncertain

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ished from the time of Jeroboam I (1 Kings 12.26–29) to its destruction by Josiah (2 Kings 23.15).

**29.1–31.55: Jacob's success in Haran.**

**29.1**: *The people of the east,* a general expression (11.2), is applied here to the Arameans. **8**: Local custom prevented use of the well until all rightful parties could be there to get their fair share; thus the stone covering was bigger than one person could lift (vv. 2–3).

**29.18**: Jacob asks for Rachel as a reward for service (compare Josh 15.16–17; 1 Sam 17.25; 18.17) instead of paying the usual marriage price (Ex 22.16–17; Deut 22.29). **23–25**: The exchange could be made because the bride was brought veiled to the bridegroom

ban said, "This is not done in our country—giving the younger before the firstborn. 27Complete the week of this one, and we will give you the other also in return for serving me another seven years." 28Jacob did so, and completed her week; then Laban gave him his daughter Rachel as a wife. 29(Laban gave his maid Bilhah to his daughter Rachel to be her maid.) 30So Jacob went in to Rachel also, and he loved Rachel more than Leah. He served Laban[n] for another seven years.

31 When the LORD saw that Leah was unloved, he opened her womb; but Rachel was barren. 32Leah conceived and bore a son, and she named him Reuben;[o] for she said, "Because the LORD has looked on my affliction; surely now my husband will love me." 33She conceived again and bore a son, and said, "Because the LORD has heard[p] that I am hated, he has given me this son also"; and she named him Simeon. 34Again she conceived and bore a son, and said, "Now this time my husband will be joined[q] to me, because I have borne him three sons"; therefore he was named Levi. 35She conceived again and bore a son, and said, "This time I will praise[r] the LORD"; therefore she named him Judah; then she ceased bearing.

30 When Rachel saw that she bore Jacob no children, she envied her sister; and she said to Jacob, "Give me children, or I shall die!" 2Jacob became very angry with Rachel and said, "Am I in the place of God, who has withheld from you the fruit of the womb?" 3Then she said, "Here is my maid Bilhah; go in to her, that she may bear upon my knees and that I too may have children through her." 4So she gave him her maid Bilhah as a wife; and Jacob went in to her. 5And Bilhah conceived and bore Jacob a son. 6Then Rachel said, "God has judged me, and has also heard my voice and given me a son"; therefore she named him Dan.[s] 7Rachel's maid Bilhah conceived again and bore Jacob a second son. 8Then Rachel said, "With mighty wrestlings I have wrestled[t] with my sister, and have prevailed"; so she named him Naphtali.

9 When Leah saw that she had ceased bearing children, she took her maid Zilpah and gave her to Jacob as a wife. 10Then Leah's maid Zilpah bore Jacob a son. 11And Leah said, "Good fortune!" so she named him Gad.[u] 12Leah's maid Zilpah bore Jacob a second son. 13And Leah said, "Happy am I! For the women will call me happy"; so she named him Asher.[v]

14 In the days of wheat harvest Reuben went and found mandrakes in the field, and brought them to his mother Leah. Then Rachel said to Leah, "Please give me some of your son's mandrakes." 15But she said to her, "Is it a small matter that you have taken away my husband? Would you take away my son's mandrakes also?" Rachel said, "Then he may lie with you tonight for your son's mandrakes." 16When Jacob came from the field in the evening, Leah went out to meet him, and said, "You must come in to me; for I have hired you with my son's mandrakes." So he lay with her that night. 17And God heeded Leah, and she conceived and bore Jacob a fifth son. 18Leah said, "God has given me my hire[w] because I gave my maid to my husband"; so she named him Issachar. 19And Leah conceived again, and she bore Jacob a sixth son. 20Then Leah said, "God has endowed me with a good dowry; now

*n* Heb *him* *o* That is *See, a son* *p* Heb *shama* *q* Heb *lawah* *r* Heb *hodah* *s* That is *He judged* *t* Heb *niphtal* *u* That is *Fortune* *v* That is *Happy* *w* Heb *sakar*

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(24.65). **27**: *The week* refers to the week of marriage festivity (Judg 14.12).

**29.31–30.24**: Jacob's eleven sons (for Benjamin's birth, see 35.16–18). The fanciful name-explanations, based on Hebrew wordplays (see notes *o* to *y*), reflect the rivalry of the two wives for Jacob's affection. The story assumes the traditional twelve-tribe pattern of the Israelite confederacy.

**30.2–3**: See 16.2 n. **6**: *God has judged me,* i.e. has gotten justice for me.

**30.14**: In antiquity *mandrakes,* roots of a

my husband will honor[x] me, because I have borne him six sons"; so she named him Zebulun. 21 Afterwards she bore a daughter, and named her Dinah.

22 Then God remembered Rachel, and God heeded her and opened her womb. 23 She conceived and bore a son, and said, "God has taken away my reproach"; 24 and she named him Joseph,[y] saying, "May the LORD add to me another son!"

25 When Rachel had borne Joseph, Jacob said to Laban, "Send me away, that I may go to my own home and country. 26 Give me my wives and my children for whom I have served you, and let me go; for you know very well the service I have given you." 27 But Laban said to him, "If you will allow me to say so, I have learned by divination that the LORD has blessed me because of you; 28 name your wages, and I will give it." 29 Jacob said to him, "You yourself know how I have served you, and how your cattle have fared with me. 30 For you had little before I came, and it has increased abundantly; and the LORD has blessed you wherever I turned. But now when shall I provide for my own household also?" 31 He said, "What shall I give you?" Jacob said, "You shall not give me anything; if you will do this for me, I will again feed your flock and keep it: 32 let me pass through all your flock today, removing from it every speckled and spotted sheep and every black lamb, and the spotted and speckled among the goats; and such shall be my wages. 33 So my honesty will answer for me later, when you come to look into my wages with you. Every one that is not speckled and spotted among the goats and black among the lambs, if found with me, shall be counted stolen." 34 Laban said, "Good! Let it be as you have said." 35 But that day Laban removed the male goats that were striped and spotted, and all the female goats that were speckled and spotted, every one that had white on it, and every lamb that was black, and put them in charge of his sons; 36 and he set a distance of three days' journey between himself and Jacob, while Jacob was pasturing the rest of Laban's flock.

37 Then Jacob took fresh rods of poplar and almond and plane, and peeled white streaks in them, exposing the white of the rods. 38 He set the rods that he had peeled in front of the flocks in the troughs, that is, the watering places, where the flocks came to drink. And since they bred when they came to drink, 39 the flocks bred in front of the rods, and so the flocks produced young that were striped, speckled, and spotted. 40 Jacob separated the lambs, and set the faces of the flocks toward the striped and the completely black animals in the flock of Laban; and he put his own droves apart, and did not put them with Laban's flock. 41 Whenever the stronger of the flock were breeding, Jacob laid the rods in the troughs before the eyes of the flock, that they might breed among the rods, 42 but for the feebler of the flock he did not lay them there; so the feebler were Laban's, and the stronger Jacob's. 43 Thus the man grew exceedingly rich, and had large flocks, and male and female slaves, and camels and donkeys.

31 Now Jacob heard that the sons of Laban were saying, "Jacob has taken all that was our father's; he has gained all this wealth from what belonged to our father." 2 And Jacob saw that Laban did not regard him as favorably as he did before. 3 Then the LORD said to Jacob, "Return to the land of your

*x* Heb *zabal* *y* That is *He adds*

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potato-like plant, were thought to have aphrodisiac properties that stimulated conception.

**30.32–36**: Since striped or speckled coloration was unusual, Laban seemingly had nothing to lose. **37–40**: Ancient cattle-breeders believed that the female, at the time of conception, was influenced by visual impressions which affect the color of the offspring. Jacob produced striped animals by putting striped sticks before the females' eyes while they were breeding.

ancestors and to your kindred, and I will be with you." 4So Jacob sent and called Rachel and Leah into the field where his flock was, 5and said to them, "I see that your father does not regard me as favorably as he did before. But the God of my father has been with me. 6You know that I have served your father with all my strength; 7yet your father has cheated me and changed my wages ten times, but God did not permit him to harm me. 8If he said, 'The speckled shall be your wages,' then all the flock bore speckled; and if he said, 'The striped shall be your wages,' then all the flock bore striped. 9Thus God has taken away the livestock of your father, and given them to me.

10 During the mating of the flock I once had a dream in which I looked up and saw that the male goats that leaped upon the flock were striped, speckled, and mottled. 11Then the angel of God said to me in the dream, 'Jacob,' and I said, 'Here I am!' 12And he said, 'Look up and see that all the goats that leap on the flock are striped, speckled, and mottled; for I have seen all that Laban is doing to you. 13I am the God of Bethel,[z] where you anointed a pillar and made a vow to me. Now leave this land at once and return to the land of your birth.'" 14Then Rachel and Leah answered him, "Is there any portion or inheritance left to us in our father's house? 15Are we not regarded by him as foreigners? For he has sold us, and he has been using up the money given for us. 16All the property that God has taken away from our father belongs to us and to our children; now then, do whatever God has said to you."

17 So Jacob arose, and set his children and his wives on camels; 18and he drove away all his livestock, all the property that he had gained, the livestock in his possession that he had acquired in Paddan-aram, to go to his father Isaac in the land of Canaan.

19 Now Laban had gone to shear his sheep, and Rachel stole her father's household gods. 20And Jacob deceived Laban the Aramean, in that he did not tell him that he intended to flee. 21So he fled with all that he had; starting out he crossed the Euphrates,[a] and set his face toward the hill country of Gilead.

22 On the third day Laban was told that Jacob had fled. 23So he took his kinsfolk with him and pursued him for seven days until he caught up with him in the hill country of Gilead. 24But God came to Laban the Aramean in a dream by night, and said to him, "Take heed that you say not a word to Jacob, either good or bad."

25 Laban overtook Jacob. Now Jacob had pitched his tent in the hill country, and Laban with his kinsfolk camped in the hill country of Gilead. 26Laban said to Jacob, "What have you done? You have deceived me, and carried away my daughters like captives of the sword. 27Why did you flee secretly and deceive me and not tell me? I would have sent you away with mirth and songs, with tambourine and lyre. 28And why did you not permit me to kiss my sons and my daughters farewell? What you have done is foolish. 29It is in my power to do you harm; but the God of your father spoke to me last night, saying, 'Take heed that you speak to Jacob neither good nor bad.' 30Even though you had to go because you longed greatly for your father's house, why did you steal my gods?" 31Jacob answered Laban, "Because I was afraid, for I thought that you would take your daughters from me by force. 32But anyone with whom you find your gods shall not live. In the presence of our kinsfolk, point out what I have that is yours, and take it." Now Jacob did

*z* Cn: Meaning of Heb uncertain *a* Heb *the river*

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**31.4–16:** Jacob discusses the situation with his wives because in ancient society they legally belonged to their *father's house* (v. 14), and were part of the property (Ruth 4.5, 10).

**31.19:** Possession of the *household gods* (1 Sam 19.13–17), according to ancient custom, insured leadership of the family and legitimated any claim on the property.

not know that Rachel had stolen the gods.[b]

33 So Laban went into Jacob's tent, and into Leah's tent, and into the tent of the two maids, but he did not find them. And he went out of Leah's tent, and entered Rachel's. 34 Now Rachel had taken the household gods and put them in the camel's saddle, and sat on them. Laban felt all about in the tent, but did not find them. 35 And she said to her father, "Let not my lord be angry that I cannot rise before you, for the way of women is upon me." So he searched, but did not find the household gods.

36 Then Jacob became angry, and upbraided Laban. Jacob said to Laban, "What is my offense? What is my sin, that you have hotly pursued me? 37 Although you have felt about through all my goods, what have you found of all your household goods? Set it here before my kinsfolk and your kinsfolk, so that they may decide between us two. 38 These twenty years I have been with you; your ewes and your female goats have not miscarried, and I have not eaten the rams of your flocks. 39 That which was torn by wild beasts I did not bring to you; I bore the loss of it myself; of my hand you required it, whether stolen by day or stolen by night. 40 It was like this with me: by day the heat consumed me, and the cold by night, and my sleep fled from my eyes. 41 These twenty years I have been in your house; I served you fourteen years for your two daughters, and six years for your flock, and you have changed my wages ten times. 42 If the God of my father, the God of Abraham and the Fear[c] of Isaac, had not been on my side, surely now you would have sent me away empty-handed. God saw my affliction and the labor of my hands, and rebuked you last night."

43 Then Laban answered and said to Jacob, "The daughters are my daughters, the children are my children, the flocks are my flocks, and all that you see is mine. But what can I do today about these daughters of mine, or about their children whom they have borne? 44 Come now, let us make a covenant, you and I; and let it be a witness between you and me." 45 So Jacob took a stone, and set it up as a pillar. 46 And Jacob said to his kinsfolk, "Gather stones," and they took stones, and made a heap; and they ate there by the heap. 47 Laban called it Jegar-sahadutha:[d] but Jacob called it Galeed.[e] 48 Laban said, "This heap is a witness between you and me today." Therefore he called it Galeed, 49 and the pillar[f] Mizpah,[g] for he said, "The LORD watch between you and me, when we are absent one from the other. 50 If you ill-treat my daughters, or if you take wives in addition to my daughters, though no one else is with us, remember that God is witness between you and me."

51 Then Laban said to Jacob, "See this heap and see the pillar, which I have set between you and me. 52 This heap is a witness, and the pillar is a witness, that I will not pass beyond this heap to you, and you will not pass beyond this heap

*b* Heb *them* *c* Meaning of Heb uncertain *d* In Aramaic *The heap of witness* *e* In Hebrew *The heap of witness* *f* Compare Sam: MT lacks *the pillar* *g* That is *Watchpost*

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**31.35**: The narrator ridicules the idols upon which Rachel sat in her time of "uncleanness" (Lev 15.19–23). **42**: *The Fear of Isaac* (perhaps, the "Kinsman" of Isaac), an old epithet for the God of the ancestors that was appropriated as a title for Israel's God.

**31.43**: Laban's argument presupposes the legality of a type of marriage in which the wife stays in her father's household and the husband must leave his family (Judg 14.2–3; 15.1). **44**: The story reflects a boundary covenant between Arameans and Israelites, both of whom laid claim to the area in Transjordan (v. 52). **46**: *They ate there,* a reference to the covenant meal (v. 54) at which, it was believed, the Deity was present. **47**: The stone-heap is given two names (see notes *d* and *e*), one in Laban's language (Aramaic) and one in Jacob's (Hebrew). **49**: The "Mizpah benediction" is a prayer that the Deity would oversee the treaty (since neither Jacob nor Laban could trust each other) and guarantee that both parties live up to the contract.

and this pillar to me, for harm. 53 May the God of Abraham and the God of Nahor"—the God of their father—"judge between us." So Jacob swore by the Fear[h] of his father Isaac, 54 and Jacob offered a sacrifice on the height and called his kinsfolk to eat bread; and they ate bread and tarried all night in the hill country.

55[i] Early in the morning Laban rose up, and kissed his grandchildren and his daughters and blessed them; then he departed and returned home.

32 Jacob went on his way and the angels of God met him; 2 and when Jacob saw them he said, "This is God's camp!" So he called that place Mahanaim.[j]

3 Jacob sent messengers before him to his brother Esau in the land of Seir, the country of Edom, 4 instructing them, "Thus you shall say to my lord Esau: Thus says your servant Jacob, 'I have lived with Laban as an alien, and stayed until now; 5 and I have oxen, donkeys, flocks, male and female slaves; and I have sent to tell my lord, in order that I may find favor in your sight.' "

6 The messengers returned to Jacob, saying, "We came to your brother Esau, and he is coming to meet you, and four hundred men are with him." 7 Then Jacob was greatly afraid and distressed; and he divided the people that were with him, and the flocks and herds and camels, into two companies, 8 thinking, "If Esau comes to the one company and destroys it, then the company that is left will escape."

9 And Jacob said, "O God of my father Abraham and God of my father Isaac, O LORD who said to me, 'Return to your country and to your kindred, and I will do you good,' 10 I am not worthy of the least of all the steadfast love and all the faithfulness that you have shown to your servant, for with only my staff I crossed this Jordan; and now I have become two companies. 11 Deliver me, please, from the hand of my brother, from the hand of Esau, for I am afraid of him; he may come and kill us all, the mothers with the children. 12 Yet you have said, 'I will surely do you good, and make your offspring as the sand of the sea, which cannot be counted because of their number.' "

13 So he spent that night there, and from what he had with him he took a present for his brother Esau, 14 two hundred female goats and twenty male goats, two hundred ewes and twenty rams, 15 thirty milch camels and their colts, forty cows and ten bulls, twenty female donkeys and ten male donkeys. 16 These he delivered into the hand of his servants, every drove by itself, and said to his servants, "Pass on ahead of me, and put a space between drove and drove." 17 He instructed the foremost, "When Esau my brother meets you, and asks you, 'To whom do you belong? Where are you going? And whose are these ahead of you?' 18 then you shall say, 'They belong to your servant Jacob; they are a present sent to my lord Esau; and moreover he is behind us.' " 19 He likewise instructed the second and the third and all who followed the droves, "You shall say the same thing to Esau when you meet him, 20 and you shall say, 'Moreover your servant Jacob is behind us.' " For he thought, "I may appease him with the present that goes ahead of me, and afterwards I shall see his face; perhaps he will accept me." 21 So the present passed on ahead of him; and he himself spent that night in the camp.

22 The same night he got up and took

*h* Meaning of Heb uncertain *i* Ch 32.1 in Heb *j* Here taken to mean *Two camps*

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**32.1–33.20: Jacob's reconciliation with Esau.** Before re-entering the promised land, Jacob underwent a struggle which chastened his self-confidence and prepared him for a new relation with Esau.

**32.1–2:** *Angels,* see 28.12 n. *Mahanaim,* here explained by a wordplay (*God's camp*), was important in later Israelite history (2 Sam 2.8–9; 17.24–29; 1 Kings 4.14). **3:** *Seir,* the region of Edom in which apparently Esau had already settled (see 25.25 n.; 36.8). **3–21:** Although uncertain how his brother felt toward

his two wives, his two maids, and his eleven children, and crossed the ford of the Jabbok. 23He took them and sent them across the stream, and likewise everything that he had. 24Jacob was left alone; and a man wrestled with him until daybreak. 25When the man saw that he did not prevail against Jacob, he struck him on the hip socket; and Jacob's hip was put out of joint as he wrestled with him. 26Then he said, "Let me go, for the day is breaking." But Jacob said, "I will not let you go, unless you bless me." 27So he said to him, "What is your name?" And he said, "Jacob." 28Then the man[k] said, "You shall no longer be called Jacob, but Israel,[l] for you have striven with God and with humans,[m] and have prevailed." 29Then Jacob asked him, "Please tell me your name." But he said, "Why is it that you ask my name?" And there he blessed him. 30So Jacob called the place Peniel,[n] saying, "For I have seen God face to face, and yet my life is preserved." 31The sun rose upon him as he passed Penuel, limping because of his hip. 32Therefore to this day the Israelites do not eat the thigh muscle that is on the hip socket, because he struck Jacob on the hip socket at the thigh muscle.

33 Now Jacob looked up and saw Esau coming, and four hundred men with him. So he divided the children among Leah and Rachel and the two maids. 2He put the maids with their children in front, then Leah with her children, and Rachel and Joseph last of all. 3He himself went on ahead of them, bowing himself to the ground seven times, until he came near his brother.

4 But Esau ran to meet him, and embraced him, and fell on his neck and kissed him, and they wept. 5When Esau looked up and saw the women and children, he said, "Who are these with you?" Jacob said, "The children whom God has graciously given your servant." 6Then the maids drew near, they and their children, and bowed down; 7Leah likewise and her children drew near and bowed down; and finally Joseph and Rachel drew near, and they bowed down. 8Esau said, "What do you mean by all this company that I met?" Jacob answered, "To find favor with my lord." 9But Esau said, "I have enough, my brother; keep what you have for yourself." 10Jacob said, "No, please; if I find favor with you, then accept my present from my hand; for truly to see your face is like seeing the face of God—since you have received me with such favor. 11Please accept my gift that is brought to you, because God has dealt graciously with me, and because I have everything I want." So he urged him, and he took it.

12 Then Esau said, "Let us journey on our way, and I will go alongside you." 13But Jacob said to him, "My lord knows that the children are frail and that the flocks and herds, which are nursing, are

*k* Heb *he* *l* That is *The one who strives with God* or *God strives* *m* Or *with divine and human beings* *n* That is *The face of God*

him after twenty years, the resourceful Jacob believed that he could get the situation into hand, either by saving half of his camp (vv. 6–8) or by winning Esau over with impressive gifts (vv. 13–21).

**32.25:** Owing to his Herculean strength (29.10; compare 28.18), Jacob was winning the contest until his opponent sprained Jacob's hip. **26:** The divine being had to vanish before sunrise—a mark of the antiquity of the tradition. **27:** In antiquity it was believed that selfhood was expressed in the name given a person (compare v. 29). **28:** Jacob's new name signified a new self: no longer was he the Supplanter (25.26; 27.36) but *Israel* (35.10), which probably means "God rules." This name, which later designated the tribal confederacy (see 33.20 n.), is interpreted to mean "The one who strives with God" (Hos 12.3–4). *And with humans* refers to Jacob's strife with Esau and Laban. **29:** The divine being refuses lest Jacob, by possessing the name, gain power over him (compare Ex 3.13–14; Judg 13.17). **30:** Jacob had feared to see Esau's face (v. 20; 33.10), but instead he saw God *face to face* and was allowed to live (16.13; Ex 33.20). **32:** An explanation of the Israelite taboo against eating the corresponding muscle of an animal.

**33.10:** *Like seeing the face of God,* who at

a care to me; and if they are overdriven for one day, all the flocks will die. 14Let my lord pass on ahead of his servant, and I will lead on slowly, according to the pace of the cattle that are before me and according to the pace of the children, until I come to my lord in Seir."

15 So Esau said, "Let me leave with you some of the people who are with me." But he said, "Why should my lord be so kind to me?" 16So Esau returned that day on his way to Seir. 17But Jacob journeyed to Succoth,[o] and built himself a house, and made booths for his cattle; therefore the place is called Succoth.

18 Jacob came safely to the city of Shechem, which is in the land of Canaan, on his way from Paddan-aram; and he camped before the city. 19And from the sons of Hamor, Shechem's father, he bought for one hundred pieces of money[p] the plot of land on which he had pitched his tent. 20There he erected an altar and called it El-Elohe-Israel.[q]

**34** Now Dinah the daughter of Leah, whom she had borne to Jacob, went out to visit the women of the region. 2When Shechem son of Hamor the Hivite, prince of the region, saw her, he seized her and lay with her by force. 3And his soul was drawn to Dinah daughter of Jacob; he loved the girl, and spoke tenderly to her. 4So Shechem spoke to his father Hamor, saying, "Get me this girl to be my wife."

5 Now Jacob heard that Shechem[r] had defiled his daughter Dinah; but his sons were with his cattle in the field, so Jacob held his peace until they came. 6And Hamor the father of Shechem went out to Jacob to speak with him, 7just as the sons of Jacob came in from the field. When they heard of it, the men were indignant and very angry, because he had committed an outrage in Israel by lying with Jacob's daughter, for such a thing ought not to be done.

8 But Hamor spoke with them, saying, "The heart of my son Shechem longs for your daughter; please give her to him in marriage. 9Make marriages with us; give your daughters to us, and take our daughters for yourselves. 10You shall live with us; and the land shall be open to you; live and trade in it, and get property in it." 11Shechem also said to her father and to her brothers, "Let me find favor with you, and whatever you say to me I will give. 12Put the marriage present and gift as high as you like, and I will give whatever you ask me; only give me the girl to be my wife."

13 The sons of Jacob answered Shechem and his father Hamor deceitfully, because he had defiled their sister Dinah. 14They said to them, "We cannot do this thing, to give our sister to one who is uncircumcised, for that would be a disgrace to us. 15Only on this condition will we consent to you: that you will become as we are and every male among you be circumcised. 16Then we will give our daughters to you, and we will take your daughters for ourselves, and we will live

*o* That is *Booths* *p* Heb *one hundred qesitah*
*q* That is *God, the God of Israel* *r* Heb *he*

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Penuel (or Peniel) also proved to be gracious (32.30,31). **18:** *Shechem,* see 12.6 n. **19:** *The sons of Hamor* were the ruling clan of the city (Judg 9.28), of Hivite (perhaps Horite or Hurrian) extraction (see 36.20 n.). *The plot of land* later became the traditional burial place of Joseph (Josh 24.32). **20:** The worship of *El-Elohe-Israel* (see note *q*) apparently preceded the later establishment of an Israelite tribal confederacy, presumably at Shechem (Josh ch 24), when El (the Semitic word for "God") was succeeded by the LORD (Yahweh), the God of Israel.

**34.1–31: Shechem's violation of Dinah** and its consequences. **1:** Dinah is mentioned elsewhere only in 30.21 and 46.15. *The women of the region,* i.e. Canaanite women. **2:** Here *Shechem* is the name of a person (33.19). The story portrays, in the guise of individuals, relations between the Canaanite city and early Hebrew tribes. *The son of Hamor,* see 33.19 n. **7:** *Committed an outrage in Israel* is an old expression for a crime affecting the whole tribal community of Israel (Deut 22.21; Josh 7.15; Judg 19.23–24; 20.6, 10). **12:** *Marriage present,* Ex 22.16–17; Deut 22.29.

**34.14–15:** Circumcision, see 17.9–14 n. **19:** The fact that Shechem *was most honored of all his family* and *the prince of the region* (v. 2)

among you and become one people. 17But if you will not listen to us and be circumcised, then we will take our daughter and be gone."

18 Their words pleased Hamor and Hamor's son Shechem. 19And the young man did not delay to do the thing, because he was delighted with Jacob's daughter. Now he was the most honored of all his family. 20So Hamor and his son Shechem came to the gate of their city and spoke to the men of their city, saying, 21"These people are friendly with us; let them live in the land and trade in it, for the land is large enough for them; let us take their daughters in marriage, and let us give them our daughters. 22Only on this condition will they agree to live among us, to become one people: that every male among us be circumcised as they are circumcised. 23Will not their livestock, their property, and all their animals be ours? Only let us agree with them, and they will live among us." 24And all who went out of the city gate heeded Hamor and his son Shechem; and every male was circumcised, all who went out of the gate of his city.

25 On the third day, when they were still in pain, two of the sons of Jacob, Simeon and Levi, Dinah's brothers, took their swords and came against the city unawares, and killed all the males. 26They killed Hamor and his son Shechem with the sword, and took Dinah out of Shechem's house, and went away. 27And the other sons of Jacob came upon the slain, and plundered the city, because their sister had been defiled. 28They took their flocks and their herds, their donkeys, and whatever was in the city and in the field. 29All their wealth, all their little ones and their wives, all that was in the houses, they captured and made their prey. 30Then Jacob said to Simeon and Levi, "You have brought trouble on me by making me odious to the inhabitants of the land, the Canaanites and the Perizzites; my numbers are few, and if they gather themselves against me and attack me, I shall be destroyed, both I and my household." 31But they said, "Should our sister be treated like a whore?"

35 God said to Jacob, "Arise, go up to Bethel, and settle there. Make an altar there to the God who appeared to you when you fled from your brother Esau." 2So Jacob said to his household and to all who were with him, "Put away the foreign gods that are among you, and purify yourselves, and change your clothes; 3then come, let us go up to Bethel, that I may make an altar there to the God who answered me in the day of my distress and has been with me wherever I have gone." 4So they gave to Jacob all the foreign gods that they had, and the rings that were in their ears; and Jacob hid them under the oak that was near Shechem.

5 As they journeyed, a terror from God fell upon the cities all around them, so that no one pursued them. 6Jacob came to Luz (that is, Bethel), which is in the land of Canaan, he and all the people who were with him, 7and there he built

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shows the ascendancy of this Canaanite city in the pre-Israelite period. **22–23**: *One people,* i.e. a kindred-group in which the Shechemites would have the leadership.

**34.25–26**: Simeon and Levi took the initiative because they were full brothers of Dinah. **30**: The violent action, which threatened the good relations of Jacob's family with the Canaanites, reflects events that forced Simeon and Levi out of the area and led to their decline in power (49.5–7).

**35.1–29**: **Jacob's journey from Shechem to Mamre. 1**: *Bethel,* 28.19–22. Verses 1–4 may reflect the custom of making a pilgrimage to the Bethel sanctuary (compare Judg 20.26–27). **2**: The worshipers had to undergo ceremonial purification, which involved changing garments and ablutions (Ex 19.10; Josh 7.13), and to renounce *foreign gods* (Josh 24.14–18, 23), including the household gods (31.19). **4**: The earrings and other magical amulets belonged to foreign idolatry (Ex 32.2–3; Judg 8.24). *The oak,* i.e. of Moreh (12.6). **5**: *A terror from God,* an expression derived from ancient holy war (Ex 23.27; Josh 10.10), was a mysterious panic that paralyzed the enemy. **6–7**: 28.18–22.

an altar and called the place El-bethel,[s] because it was there that God had revealed himself to him when he fled from his brother. 8And Deborah, Rebekah's nurse, died, and she was buried under an oak below Bethel. So it was called Allon-bacuth.[t]

9 God appeared to Jacob again when he came from Paddan-aram, and he blessed him. 10God said to him, "Your name is Jacob; no longer shall you be called Jacob, but Israel shall be your name." So he was called Israel. 11God said to him, "I am God Almighty:[u] be fruitful and multiply; a nation and a company of nations shall come from you, and kings shall spring from you. 12The land that I gave to Abraham and Isaac I will give to you, and I will give the land to your offspring after you." 13Then God went up from him at the place where he had spoken with him. 14Jacob set up a pillar in the place where he had spoken with him, a pillar of stone; and he poured out a drink offering on it, and poured oil on it. 15So Jacob called the place where God had spoken with him Bethel.

16 Then they journeyed from Bethel; and when they were still some distance from Ephrath, Rachel was in childbirth, and she had hard labor. 17When she was in her hard labor, the midwife said to her, "Do not be afraid; for now you will have another son." 18As her soul was departing (for she died), she named him Ben-oni;[v] but his father called him Benjamin.[w] 19So Rachel died, and she was buried on the way to Ephrath (that is, Bethlehem), 20and Jacob set up a pillar at her grave; it is the pillar of Rachel's tomb, which is there to this day. 21Israel journeyed on, and pitched his tent beyond the tower of Eder.

22 While Israel lived in that land, Reuben went and lay with Bilhah his father's concubine; and Israel heard of it.

Now the sons of Jacob were twelve. 23The sons of Leah: Reuben (Jacob's firstborn), Simeon, Levi, Judah, Issachar, and Zebulun. 24The sons of Rachel: Joseph and Benjamin. 25The sons of Bilhah, Rachel's maid: Dan and Naphtali. 26The sons of Zilpah, Leah's maid: Gad and Asher. These were the sons of Jacob who were born to him in Paddan-aram.

27 Jacob came to his father Isaac at Mamre, or Kiriath-arba (that is, Hebron), where Abraham and Isaac had resided as aliens. 28Now the days of Isaac were one hundred eighty years. 29And Isaac breathed his last; he died and was gathered to his people, old and full of days; and his sons Esau and Jacob buried him.

**36** These are the descendants of Esau (that is, Edom). 2Esau took his wives from the Canaanites: Adah daughter of Elon the Hittite, Oholibamah daughter of Anah son[x] of Zibeon the Hivite, 3and Basemath, Ishmael's daughter, sister of Nebaioth. 4Adah bore Eliphaz to Esau; Basemath bore Reuel;

*s* That is *God of Bethel* *t* That is *Oak of weeping* *u* Traditional rendering of Heb *El Shaddai* *v* That is *Son of my sorrow*
*w* That is *Son of the right hand* or *Son of the South*
*x* Sam Gk Syr: Heb *daughter*

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**35.9–13**: Another account of Jacob's receiving a new name (compare 32.24–30) and God's promise to him (28.13–15). **11**: *God Almighty,* see 17.1 n. **14–15**: A tradition parallel to 28.18–22.

**35.16**: *Ephrath,* see v. 19 n. **18**: Dying in childbirth, Rachel gave an ominous name (see note *v*) to the child (see 1 Sam 4.21), though Jacob changed the name to a propitious one. *Benjamin* (see note *w*) refers either to the right hand as a symbol of power and fortune or to the tribe's position south of Ephraim. **19**: Here and in 48.7 (Ruth 4.11; Mic 5.2) Ephrath is identified with Bethlehem. Another tradition located Rachel's grave in Benjaminite territory north of Jerusalem (1 Sam 10.2; Jer 31.15). **21–22**: This fragmentary account apparently related an incident that resulted in Reuben's loss of prestige as the firstborn son (49.3–4). **21**: From this point onward the name *Israel* is often used to refer to Jacob (32.28).

**36.1–43**: **Edomite lists.** Some of this material (vv. 1–8, 9–14, 15–19, 40–43) was apparently drawn from the book of generations (5.1). **1**: *Esau* (*Edom*), 25.21–28. **2–3**: Esau's wives, see 26.34; 28.8–9. **8**: *Seir,* or Edom (see 25.25 n.; 27.39–40).

5 and Oholibamah bore Jeush, Jalam, and Korah. These are the sons of Esau who were born to him in the land of Canaan.

6 Then Esau took his wives, his sons, his daughters, and all the members of his household, his cattle, all his livestock, and all the property he had acquired in the land of Canaan; and he moved to a land some distance from his brother Jacob. 7 For their possessions were too great for them to live together; the land where they were staying could not support them because of their livestock. 8 So Esau settled in the hill country of Seir; Esau is Edom.

9 These are the descendants of Esau, ancestor of the Edomites, in the hill country of Seir. 10 These are the names of Esau's sons: Eliphaz son of Adah the wife of Esau; Reuel, the son of Esau's wife Basemath. 11 The sons of Eliphaz were Teman, Omar, Zepho, Gatam, and Kenaz. 12 (Timna was a concubine of Eliphaz, Esau's son; she bore Amalek to Eliphaz.) These were the sons of Adah, Esau's wife. 13 These were the sons of Reuel: Nahath, Zerah, Shammah, and Mizzah. These were the sons of Esau's wife, Basemath. 14 These were the sons of Esau's wife Oholibamah, daughter of Anah son[y] of Zibeon: she bore to Esau Jeush, Jalam, and Korah.

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

20 These are the sons of Seir the Horite, the inhabitants of the land: Lotan, Shobal, Zibeon, Anah, 21 Dishon, Ezer, and Dishan; these are the clans[z] of the Horites, the sons of Seir in the land of Edom. 22 The sons of Lotan were Hori and Heman; and Lotan's sister was Timna. 23 These are the sons of Shobal: Alvan, Manahath, Ebal, Shepho, and Onam. 24 These are the sons of Zibeon: Aiah and Anah; he is the Anah who found the springs[a] in the wilderness, as he pastured the donkeys of his father Zibeon. 25 These are the children of Anah: Dishon and Oholibamah daughter of Anah. 26 These are the sons of Dishon: Hemdan, Eshban, Ithran, and Cheran. 27 These are the sons of Ezer: Bilhan, Zaavan, and Akan. 28 These are the sons of Dishan: Uz and Aran. 29 These are the clans[z] of the Horites: the clans[z] Lotan, Shobal, Zibeon, Anah, 30 Dishon, Ezer, and Dishan; these are the clans[z] of the Horites, clan by clan[b] in the land of Seir.

31 These are the kings who reigned in the land of Edom, before any king reigned over the Israelites. 32 Bela son of Beor reigned in Edom, the name of his city being Dinhabah. 33 Bela died, and Jobab son of Zerah of Bozrah succeeded him as king. 34 Jobab died, and Husham of the land of the Temanites succeeded him as king. 35 Husham died, and Hadad son of Bedad, who defeated Midian in the country of Moab, succeeded him as king, the name of his city being Avith. 36 Hadad died, and Samlah of Masrekah succeeded him as king. 37 Samlah died, and Shaul of Rehoboth on the Euphrates succeeded him as king. 38 Shaul died, and Baal-hanan son of Achbor succeeded

*y* Gk Syr: Heb *daughter* *z* Or *chiefs*
*a* Meaning of Heb uncertain *b* Or *chief by chief*

**36.20**: *Horite* refers to the Hurrians, a non-Semitic people who migrated into Mesopotamia about 2000 B.C. and later formed an important element of the Canaanite population.

**36.31–39**: Edom became a monarchy long (perhaps 150 years) before Israel did (Num 20.14), a circumstance reflected in the tradition that Esau was the older brother although Jacob gained the ascendancy.

him as king. 39 Baal-hanan son of Achbor died, and Hadar succeeded him as king, the name of his city being Pau; his wife's name was Mehetabel, the daughter of Matred, daughter of Me-zahab.

40 These are the names of the clans[c] of Esau, according to their families and their localities by their names: the clans[c] Timna, Alvah, Jetheth, 41 Oholibamah, Elah, Pinon, 42 Kenaz, Teman, Mibzar, 43 Magdiel, and Iram; these are the clans[c] of Edom (that is, Esau, the father of Edom), according to their settlements in the land that they held.

37 Jacob settled in the land where his father had lived as an alien, the land of Canaan. 2 This is the story of the family of Jacob.

Joseph, being seventeen years old, was shepherding the flock with his brothers; he was a helper to the sons of Bilhah and Zilpah, his father's wives; and Joseph brought a bad report of them to their father. 3 Now Israel loved Joseph more than any other of his children, because he was the son of his old age; and he had made him a long robe with sleeves.[d] 4 But when his brothers saw that their father loved him more than all his brothers, they hated him, and could not speak peaceably to him.

5 Once Joseph had a dream, and when he told it to his brothers, they hated him even more. 6 He said to them, "Listen to this dream that I dreamed. 7 There we were, binding sheaves in the field. Suddenly my sheaf rose and stood upright; then your sheaves gathered around it, and bowed down to my sheaf." 8 His brothers said to him, "Are you indeed to reign over us? Are you indeed to have dominion over us?" So they hated him even more because of his dreams and his words.

9 He had another dream, and told it to his brothers, saying, "Look, I have had another dream: the sun, the moon, and eleven stars were bowing down to me." 10 But when he told it to his father and to his brothers, his father rebuked him, and said to him, "What kind of dream is this that you have had? Shall we indeed come, I and your mother and your brothers, and bow to the ground before you?" 11 So his brothers were jealous of him, but his father kept the matter in mind.

12 Now his brothers went to pasture their father's flock near Shechem. 13 And Israel said to Joseph, "Are not your brothers pasturing the flock at Shechem? Come, I will send you to them." He answered, "Here I am." 14 So he said to him, "Go now, see if it is well with your brothers and with the flock; and bring word back to me." So he sent him from the valley of Hebron.

He came to Shechem, 15 and a man found him wandering in the fields; the man asked him, "What are you seeking?" 16 "I am seeking my brothers," he said; "tell me, please, where they are pasturing the flock." 17 The man said, "They have gone away, for I heard them say, 'Let us go to Dothan.' " So Joseph went after his brothers, and found them at Dothan. 18 They saw him from a distance, and before he came near to them, they conspired to kill him. 19 They said to one

*c* Or *chiefs* *d* Traditional rendering (compare Gk): *a coat of many colors*; Meaning of Heb uncertain

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**37.1–36: Joseph is sold into slavery.** The narratives about Joseph, found in chs 37; 39–47; and 50, constitute a single literary form or short story. **2**: The Joseph story is regarded as part of the history of Jacob, who died at the end of the saga (49.33). *The sons of Bilhah and Zilpah,* 30.1–13. **3**: *A long robe with sleeves* was a luxurious robe (2 Sam 13.18–19), different from the ordinary sleeveless tunic that reached to the knees. It would be impossible to undertake any manual labor while wearing it. The garment may also symbolize a royal claim.

**37.5–11**: Joseph's two dreams were prophetic of his future elevation in Egypt (42.6; 50.18). **9**: *Eleven stars,* apparently the eleven constellations that ancients pictured in animal form.

**37.12**: The previous scene is laid in Hebron (35.27), several days' journey from Jacob's pasture land *near Shechem* (33.18–20). **20**: *The pits* were open cisterns for storing rain water

another, "Here comes this dreamer. 20Come now, let us kill him and throw him into one of the pits; then we shall say that a wild animal has devoured him, and we shall see what will become of his dreams." 21But when Reuben heard it, he delivered him out of their hands, saying, "Let us not take his life." 22Reuben said to them, "Shed no blood; throw him into this pit here in the wilderness, but lay no hand on him"—that he might rescue him out of their hand and restore him to his father. 23So when Joseph came to his brothers, they stripped him of his robe, the long robe with sleeves[e] that he wore; 24and they took him and threw him into a pit. The pit was empty; there was no water in it.

25 Then they sat down to eat; and looking up they saw a caravan of Ishmaelites coming from Gilead, with their camels carrying gum, balm, and resin, on their way to carry it down to Egypt. 26Then Judah said to his brothers, "What profit is it if we kill our brother and conceal his blood? 27Come, let us sell him to the Ishmaelites, and not lay our hands on him, for he is our brother, our own flesh." And his brothers agreed. 28When some Midianite traders passed by, they drew Joseph up, lifting him out of the pit, and sold him to the Ishmaelites for twenty pieces of silver. And they took Joseph to Egypt.

29 When Reuben returned to the pit and saw that Joseph was not in the pit, he tore his clothes. 30He returned to his brothers, and said, "The boy is gone; and I, where can I turn?" 31Then they took Joseph's robe, slaughtered a goat, and dipped the robe in the blood. 32They had the long robe with sleeves[e] taken to their father, and they said, "This we have found; see now whether it is your son's robe or not." 33He recognized it, and said, "It is my son's robe! A wild animal has devoured him; Joseph is without doubt torn to pieces." 34Then Jacob tore his garments, and put sackcloth on his loins, and mourned for his son many days. 35All his sons and all his daughters sought to comfort him; but he refused to be comforted, and said, "No, I shall go down to Sheol to my son, mourning." Thus his father bewailed him. 36Meanwhile the Midianites had sold him in Egypt to Potiphar, one of Pharaoh's officials, the captain of the guard.

38 It happened at that time that Judah went down from his brothers and settled near a certain Adullamite whose name was Hirah. 2There Judah saw the daughter of a certain Canaanite whose name was Shua; he married her and went in to her. 3She conceived and bore a son; and he named him Er. 4Again she conceived and bore a son whom she named Onan. 5Yet again she bore a son, and she named him Shelah. She[f] was in Chezib when she bore him. 6Judah took a wife for Er his firstborn; her name was Tamar. 7But Er, Judah's firstborn, was

*e* See note on 37.3 *f* Gk: Heb *He*

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(Jer 38.6). **21**: *Reuben* may be a scribal mistake for Judah, Joseph's advocate in v. 26. **22**: The advice of Reuben and Judah reflects the ancient belief that blood cannot be "concealed" (v. 26) but cries out for requital (see 4.10–11 n.).

**37.25–28**: Apparently, two traditions have been combined: according to one, Joseph was sold to *Ishmaelites;* according to the other, he was kidnapped by *Midianite traders.* Dothan (a few miles north of Shechem), where Joseph found his brothers (v. 17), lay on the trade route from Syria to Egypt.

**37.35**: *Sheol,* the underworld to which, it was believed, a person's shade went at death (2 Sam 12.23; Ps 115.17). Since this after-life was a shadowy existence, Jacob's going to his son there was not a comforting expectation. **36**: *Potiphar* is a form of Potiphera, the name of the Egyptian priest of 41.45 and 46.20. It has been thought they may be the same person, one tradition designating him as captain of the guard, and another as a priest.

**38.1–30**: **Judah and Tamar.** This chapter, an interlude in the Joseph story, deals with a woman's part in the LORD's promise that Abraham will have a great posterity. **1**: *Adullamite,* a resident of Adullam near Bethlehem. **2**: The marriage with Shuah's daughter reflects territorial expansion of the tribe of Judah and the consequent intermarriage with Canaanites. **7**: The early and childless death of

wicked in the sight of the LORD, and the LORD put him to death. 8Then Judah said to Onan, "Go in to your brother's wife and perform the duty of a brother-in-law to her; raise up offspring for your brother." 9But since Onan knew that the offspring would not be his, he spilled his semen on the ground whenever he went in to his brother's wife, so that he would not give offspring to his brother. 10What he did was displeasing in the sight of the LORD, and he put him to death also. 11Then Judah said to his daughter-in-law Tamar, "Remain a widow in your father's house until my son Shelah grows up"—for he feared that he too would die, like his brothers. So Tamar went to live in her father's house.

12 In course of time the wife of Judah, Shua's daughter, died; when Judah's time of mourning was over,[g] he went up to Timnah to his sheepshearers, he and his friend Hirah the Adullamite. 13When Tamar was told, "Your father-in-law is going up to Timnah to shear his sheep," 14she put off her widow's garments, put on a veil, wrapped herself up, and sat down at the entrance to Enaim, which is on the road to Timnah. She saw that Shelah was grown up, yet she had not been given to him in marriage. 15When Judah saw her, he thought her to be a prostitute, for she had covered her face. 16He went over to her at the roadside, and said, "Come, let me come in to you," for he did not know that she was his daughter-in-law. She said, "What will you give me, that you may come in to me?" 17He answered, "I will send you a kid from the flock." And she said, "Only if you give me a pledge, until you send it." 18He said, "What pledge shall I give you?" She replied, "Your signet and your cord, and the staff that is in your hand." So he gave them to her, and went in to her, and she conceived by him. 19Then she got up and went away, and taking off her veil she put on the garments of her widowhood.

20 When Judah sent the kid by his friend the Adullamite, to recover the pledge from the woman, he could not find her. 21He asked the townspeople, "Where is the temple prostitute who was at Enaim by the wayside?" But they said, "No prostitute has been here." 22So he returned to Judah, and said, "I have not found her; moreover the townspeople said, 'No prostitute has been here.'" 23Judah replied, "Let her keep the things as her own, otherwise we will be laughed at; you see, I sent this kid, and you could not find her."

24 About three months later Judah was told, "Your daughter-in-law Tamar has played the whore; moreover she is pregnant as a result of whoredom." And Judah said, "Bring her out, and let her be burned." 25As she was being brought out, she sent word to her father-in-law, "It was the owner of these who made me pregnant." And she said, "Take note, please, whose these are, the signet and the cord and the staff." 26Then Judah ac-

*g* Heb *when Judah was comforted*

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Er is attributed to a divine act, almost demonic in character. **8**: According to the ancient widespread custom of levirate marriage (Deut 25.5–10; compare Ruth 4.1–12), *the duty of a brother-in-law* was to raise up a male descendant for his deceased brother and thus perpetuate his name and inheritance. **11**: Judah apparently feared that the death of his two sons resulted from Tamar's sinister power. A widow was supposed to return to her *father's house* (Ruth 1.8–9; Lev 22.13).

**38.14**: Suspecting that Judah's promise (v. 11) was insincere, Tamar took steps to make him perform the levirate duty. **15**: Tamar was taken to be a cult prostitute, a devotee of the mother-goddess Ishtar. Prostitution was connected with the worship of the nature gods of fertility (Deut 23.18; 1 Kings 14.24; 2 Kings 23.7; Hos 4.13; Am 2.7). **18**: The signet was a ring or cylinder, often suspended around the neck by a cord and used to stamp one's "signature."

**38.24**: In Israel stoning was the usual punishment for adultery (Deut 22.23–24; compare Jn 8.5), although burning was prescribed for exceptional cases (Lev 21.9). **26**: Tamar is singled out for approval, for judged by the levirate obligation, she was *more in the right* (see 6.9 n.) than Judah. Within the limitations of patriarchal society, she acted boldly to

knowledged them and said, "She is more in the right than I, since I did not give her to my son Shelah." And he did not lie with her again.

27 When the time of her delivery came, there were twins in her womb. 28 While she was in labor, one put out a hand; and the midwife took and bound on his hand a crimson thread, saying, "This one came out first." 29 But just then he drew back his hand, and out came his brother; and she said, "What a breach you have made for yourself!" Therefore he was named Perez.[h] 30 Afterward his brother came out with the crimson thread on his hand; and he was named Zerah.[i]

39 Now Joseph was taken down to Egypt, and Potiphar, an officer of Pharaoh, the captain of the guard, an Egyptian, bought him from the Ishmaelites who had brought him down there. 2 The LORD was with Joseph, and he became a successful man; he was in the house of his Egyptian master. 3 His master saw that the LORD was with him, and that the LORD caused all that he did to prosper in his hands. 4 So Joseph found favor in his sight and attended him; he made him overseer of his house and put him in charge of all that he had. 5 From the time that he made him overseer in his house and over all that he had, the LORD blessed the Egyptian's house for Joseph's sake; the blessing of the LORD was on all that he had, in house and field. 6 So he left all that he had in Joseph's charge; and, with him there, he had no concern for anything but the food that he ate.

Now Joseph was handsome and good-looking. 7 And after a time his master's wife cast her eyes on Joseph and said, "Lie with me." 8 But he refused and said to his master's wife, "Look, with me here, my master has no concern about anything in the house, and he has put everything that he has in my hand. 9 He is not greater in this house than I am, nor has he kept back anything from me except yourself, because you are his wife. How then could I do this great wickedness, and sin against God?" 10 And although she spoke to Joseph day after day, he would not consent to lie beside her or to be with her. 11 One day, however, when he went into the house to do his work, and while no one else was in the house, 12 she caught hold of his garment, saying, "Lie with me!" But he left his garment in her hand, and fled and ran outside. 13 When she saw that he had left his garment in her hand and had fled outside, 14 she called out to the members of her household and said to them, "See, my husband[j] has brought among us a Hebrew to insult us! He came in to me to lie with me, and I cried out with a loud voice; 15 and when he heard me raise my voice and cry out, he left his garment beside me, and fled outside." 16 Then she kept his garment by her until his master came home, 17 and she told him the same story, saying, "The Hebrew servant, whom you have brought among us, came in to me to insult me; 18 but as soon as I raised my voice and cried out, he left his garment beside me, and fled outside."

19 When his master heard the words that his wife spoke to him, saying, "This is the way your servant treated me," he became enraged. 20 And Joseph's master took him and put him into the prison, the

*h* That is *A breach* *i* That is *Brightness*; perhaps alluding to the crimson thread
*j* Heb *he*

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achieve justice. **27–30**: The birth of the twins (25.21–26) portrays the rivalry of Perez and Zerah, two clans of Judah (Num 26.19–22) who were partially Canaanite. Perez, the firstborn, was an ancestor of David (Ruth 4.18–22).

**39.1–23**: **Joseph's success, temptation, and imprisonment. 1**: This story continues from ch 37, and follows the tradition about the Ishmaelites (37.25). **5**: 30.27–30. **6**: For ritual reasons Potiphar took charge of his own food (43.32).

**39.7–20**: The Egyptian "Tale of Two Brothers" also tells how a man rejected the advances of his brother's wife, who then laid false accusations against him and almost brought about his death at the hands of his brother.

place where the king's prisoners were confined; he remained there in prison. 21But the LORD was with Joseph and showed him steadfast love; he gave him favor in the sight of the chief jailer. 22The chief jailer committed to Joseph's care all the prisoners who were in the prison, and whatever was done there, he was the one who did it. 23The chief jailer paid no heed to anything that was in Joseph's care, because the LORD was with him; and whatever he did, the LORD made it prosper.

40 Some time after this, the cupbearer of the king of Egypt and his baker offended their lord the king of Egypt. 2Pharaoh was angry with his two officers, the chief cupbearer and the chief baker, 3and he put them in custody in the house of the captain of the guard, in the prison where Joseph was confined. 4The captain of the guard charged Joseph with them, and he waited on them; and they continued for some time in custody. 5One night they both dreamed—the cupbearer and the baker of the king of Egypt, who were confined in the prison—each his own dream, and each dream with its own meaning. 6When Joseph came to them in the morning, he saw that they were troubled. 7So he asked Pharaoh's officers, who were with him in custody in his master's house, "Why are your faces downcast today?" 8They said to him, "We have had dreams, and there is no one to interpret them." And Joseph said to them, "Do not interpretations belong to God? Please tell them to me."

9 So the chief cupbearer told his dream to Joseph, and said to him, "In my dream there was a vine before me, 10and on the vine there were three branches. As soon as it budded, its blossoms came out and the clusters ripened into grapes. 11Pharaoh's cup was in my hand; and I took the grapes and pressed them into Pharaoh's cup, and placed the cup in Pharaoh's hand." 12Then Joseph said to him, "This is its interpretation: the three branches are three days; 13within three days Pharaoh will lift up your head and restore you to your office; and you shall place Pharaoh's cup in his hand, just as you used to do when you were his cupbearer. 14But remember me when it is well with you; please do me the kindness to make mention of me to Pharaoh, and so get me out of this place. 15For in fact I was stolen out of the land of the Hebrews; and here also I have done nothing that they should have put me into the dungeon."

16 When the chief baker saw that the interpretation was favorable, he said to Joseph, "I also had a dream: there were three cake baskets on my head, 17and in the uppermost basket there were all sorts of baked food for Pharaoh, but the birds were eating it out of the basket on my head." 18And Joseph answered, "This is its interpretation: the three baskets are three days; 19within three days Pharaoh will lift up your head—from you!—and hang you on a pole; and the birds will eat the flesh from you."

20 On the third day, which was Pharaoh's birthday, he made a feast for all his servants, and lifted up the head of the chief cupbearer and the head of the chief baker among his servants. 21He restored the chief cupbearer to his cupbearing, and he placed the cup in Pharaoh's hand; 22but the chief baker he hanged, just as

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**39.21**: Strangely Joseph, a slave, was not executed for alleged adultery, for *the LORD was with . . . him,* not only in success (v. 2) but also in adversity.

**40.1–23: Joseph, the interpreter of dreams. 5**: Since, according to ancient belief, dreams were a channel of divine communication (1 Sam 28.6), the wise interpreter of dreams could discern the course of the future (37.5–10; Dan 2.26–28). **6–8**: Professional interpreters of dreams were unnecessary (41.16), for *interpretations belong to God* who knows and controls the events of the future.

**40.13**: *Lift up your head,* i.e. graciously free you from prison (2 Kings 25.27). The same phrase, with extreme irony, is applied to the baker's fate in v. 19. **15**: *Stolen,* 37.28.

**41.1–57: Joseph's elevation** as a result of

Joseph had interpreted to them. 23 Yet the chief cupbearer did not remember Joseph, but forgot him.

41 After two whole years, Pharaoh dreamed that he was standing by the Nile, 2 and there came up out of the Nile seven sleek and fat cows, and they grazed in the reed grass. 3 Then seven other cows, ugly and thin, came up out of the Nile after them, and stood by the other cows on the bank of the Nile. 4 The ugly and thin cows ate up the seven sleek and fat cows. And Pharaoh awoke. 5 Then he fell asleep and dreamed a second time; seven ears of grain, plump and good, were growing on one stalk. 6 Then seven ears, thin and blighted by the east wind, sprouted after them. 7 The thin ears swallowed up the seven plump and full ears. Pharaoh awoke, and it was a dream. 8 In the morning his spirit was troubled; so he sent and called for all the magicians of Egypt and all its wise men. Pharaoh told them his dreams, but there was no one who could interpret them to Pharaoh.

9 Then the chief cupbearer said to Pharaoh, "I remember my faults today. 10 Once Pharaoh was angry with his servants, and put me and the chief baker in custody in the house of the captain of the guard. 11 We dreamed on the same night, he and I, each having a dream with its own meaning. 12 A young Hebrew was there with us, a servant of the captain of the guard. When we told him, he interpreted our dreams to us, giving an interpretation to each according to his dream. 13 As he interpreted to us, so it turned out; I was restored to my office, and the baker was hanged."

14 Then Pharaoh sent for Joseph, and he was hurriedly brought out of the dungeon. When he had shaved himself and changed his clothes, he came in before Pharaoh. 15 And Pharaoh said to Joseph, "I have had a dream, and there is no one who can interpret it. I have heard it said of you that when you hear a dream you can interpret it." 16 Joseph answered Pharaoh, "It is not I; God will give Pharaoh a favorable answer." 17 Then Pharaoh said to Joseph, "In my dream I was standing on the banks of the Nile; 18 and seven cows, fat and sleek, came up out of the Nile and fed in the reed grass. 19 Then seven other cows came up after them, poor, very ugly, and thin. Never had I seen such ugly ones in all the land of Egypt. 20 The thin and ugly cows ate up the first seven fat cows, 21 but when they had eaten them no one would have known that they had done so, for they were still as ugly as before. Then I awoke. 22 I fell asleep a second time[k] and I saw in my dream seven ears of grain, full and good, growing on one stalk, 23 and seven ears, withered, thin, and blighted by the east wind, sprouting after them; 24 and the thin ears swallowed up the seven good ears. But when I told it to the magicians, there was no one who could explain it to me."

25 Then Joseph said to Pharaoh, "Pharaoh's dreams are one and the same; God has revealed to Pharaoh what he is about to do. 26 The seven good cows are seven years, and the seven good ears are seven years; the dreams are one. 27 The seven lean and ugly cows that came up after them are seven years, as are the seven empty ears blighted by the east wind. They are seven years of famine. 28 It is as I told Pharaoh; God has shown to Pharaoh what he is about to do. 29 There will come seven years of great plenty throughout all the land of Egypt. 30 After them there will arise seven years of fam-

*k* Gk Syr Vg: Heb lacks *I fell asleep a second time*

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his successful interpretation of Pharaoh's dreams. **1–2:** Egypt's fertility, symbolized by the sacred cows, was dependent upon the Nile. **6:** *The east wind,* the sirocco, a burning wind from the desert which withers vegetation (Hos 13.15). **8:** The narrator intends to demonstrate the superiority of Israel's God over heathen magic and wisdom (Ex 8.18–19; 9.11; Dan 2.2–19; 5.8, 15–28).

**41.16:** Joseph denies having any occult art and ascribes his skill solely to God (see 40.6–8 n.).

ine, and all the plenty will be forgotten in the land of Egypt; the famine will consume the land. 31 The plenty will no longer be known in the land because of the famine that will follow, for it will be very grievous. 32 And the doubling of Pharaoh's dream means that the thing is fixed by God, and God will shortly bring it about. 33 Now therefore let Pharaoh select a man who is discerning and wise, and set him over the land of Egypt. 34 Let Pharaoh proceed to appoint overseers over the land, and take one-fifth of the produce of the land of Egypt during the seven plenteous years. 35 Let them gather all the food of these good years that are coming, and lay up grain under the authority of Pharaoh for food in the cities, and let them keep it. 36 That food shall be a reserve for the land against the seven years of famine that are to befall the land of Egypt, so that the land may not perish through the famine."

37 The proposal pleased Pharaoh and all his servants. 38 Pharaoh said to his servants, "Can we find anyone else like this—one in whom is the spirit of God?" 39 So Pharaoh said to Joseph, "Since God has shown you all this, there is no one so discerning and wise as you. 40 You shall be over my house, and all my people shall order themselves as you command; only with regard to the throne will I be greater than you." 41 And Pharaoh said to Joseph, "See, I have set you over all the land of Egypt." 42 Removing his signet ring from his hand, Pharaoh put it on Joseph's hand; he arrayed him in garments of fine linen, and put a gold chain around his neck. 43 He had him ride in the chariot of his second-in-command; and they cried out in front of him, "Bow the knee!"[l] Thus he set him over all the land of Egypt. 44 Moreover Pharaoh said to Joseph, "I am Pharaoh, and without your consent no one shall lift up hand or foot in all the land of Egypt." 45 Pharaoh gave Joseph the name Zaphenath-paneah; and he gave him Asenath daughter of Potiphera, priest of On, as his wife. Thus Joseph gained authority over the land of Egypt.

46 Joseph was thirty years old when he entered the service of Pharaoh king of Egypt. And Joseph went out from the presence of Pharaoh, and went through all the land of Egypt. 47 During the seven plenteous years the earth produced abundantly. 48 He gathered up all the food of the seven years when there was plenty[m] in the land of Egypt, and stored up food in the cities; he stored up in every city the food from the fields around it. 49 So Joseph stored up grain in such abundance—like the sand of the sea—that he stopped measuring it; it was beyond measure.

50 Before the years of famine came, Joseph had two sons, whom Asenath daughter of Potiphera, priest of On, bore to him. 51 Joseph named the firstborn Manasseh,[n] "For," he said, "God has made me forget all my hardship and all my father's house." 52 The second he

*l Abrek*, apparently an Egyptian word similar in sound to the Hebrew word meaning *to kneel*
*m* Sam Gk: MT *the seven years that were*
*n* That is *Making to forget*

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**41.32**: Two dreams with the same meaning (v. 25) show that the event is *fixed* or predestined by God. Note that this sense of God's overruling sovereignty does not evoke a fatalistic resignation but a practical plan of action (vv. 33–36).

**41.38**: *The spirit of God,* the source of extraordinary powers (Ex 31.3; Num 27.18; Dan 5.11, 14). **39–41**: Joseph was made prime minister, second only to Pharaoh in authority. Possibly the story reflects the period of Hyksos ascendancy in Egypt (about 1720–1550 B.C.), when the land was under pro-Semitic rule. At that time conditions would have been favorable for a Hebrew to rise to such a position of leadership. **42**: *His signet ring* (see 38.18 n.) empowered Joseph to act as Pharaoh's representative (compare Esth 3.10; 8.2). **45**: The installation rites, typically Egyptian, culminated with the bestowal of an Egyptian name. Joseph's adoption into the Egyptian court is further indicated by his marriage into the leading priesthood of *On* or Heliopolis. *Potiphera,* see 37.36 n.

**41.46**: Joseph's slavery and imprisonment lasted thirteen years (37.2–3).

named Ephraim,[o] "For God has made me fruitful in the land of my misfortunes."

53 The seven years of plenty that prevailed in the land of Egypt came to an end; [54]and the seven years of famine began to come, just as Joseph had said. There was famine in every country, but throughout the land of Egypt there was bread. [55]When all the land of Egypt was famished, the people cried to Pharaoh for bread. Pharaoh said to all the Egyptians, "Go to Joseph; what he says to you, do." [56]And since the famine had spread over all the land, Joseph opened all the storehouses,[p] and sold to the Egyptians, for the famine was severe in the land of Egypt. [57]Moreover, all the world came to Joseph in Egypt to buy grain, because the famine became severe throughout the world.

**42** When Jacob learned that there was grain in Egypt, he said to his sons, "Why do you keep looking at one another? [2]I have heard," he said, "that there is grain in Egypt; go down and buy grain for us there, that we may live and not die." [3]So ten of Joseph's brothers went down to buy grain in Egypt. [4]But Jacob did not send Joseph's brother Benjamin with his brothers, for he feared that harm might come to him. [5]Thus the sons of Israel were among the other people who came to buy grain, for the famine had reached the land of Canaan.

6 Now Joseph was governor over the land; it was he who sold to all the people of the land. And Joseph's brothers came and bowed themselves before him with their faces to the ground. [7]When Joseph saw his brothers, he recognized them, but he treated them like strangers and spoke harshly to them. "Where do you come from?" he said. They said, "From the land of Canaan, to buy food." [8]Although Joseph had recognized his brothers, they did not recognize him. [9]Joseph also remembered the dreams that he had dreamed about them. He said to them, "You are spies; you have come to see the nakedness of the land!" [10]They said to him, "No, my lord; your servants have come to buy food. [11]We are all sons of one man; we are honest men; your servants have never been spies." [12]But he said to them, "No, you have come to see the nakedness of the land!" [13]They said, "We, your servants, are twelve brothers, the sons of a certain man in the land of Canaan; the youngest, however, is now with our father, and one is no more." [14]But Joseph said to them, "It is just as I have said to you; you are spies! [15]Here is how you shall be tested: as Pharaoh lives, you shall not leave this place unless your youngest brother comes here! [16]Let one of you go and bring your brother, while the rest of you remain in prison, in order that your words may be tested, whether there is truth in you; or else, as Pharaoh lives, surely you are spies." [17]And he put them all together in prison for three days.

18 On the third day Joseph said to them, "Do this and you will live, for I fear God: [19]if you are honest men, let one of your brothers stay here where you are imprisoned. The rest of you shall go and carry grain for the famine of your households, [20]and bring your youngest brother to me. Thus your words will be verified, and you shall not die." And they agreed to do so. [21]They said to one another, "Alas, we are paying the penalty for what we did to our brother; we saw

*o* From a Hebrew word meaning *to be fruitful*
*p* Gk Vg Compare Syr: Heb *opened all that was in* (or, *among*) *them*

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**42.1–38: Joseph's brothers journey to Egypt during the famine. 5**: See 12.10. **6**: *Bowed themselves before him,* thereby unwittingly fulfilling the prediction of Joseph's dream (v. 9; see 37.5–11 n.).

**42.9–14**: The charge of espionage was natural, for Egypt's frontier, facing Canaan, was vulnerable to attack (Ex 1.10). **15–17**: The "testing" involved not only the verification of the brothers' words but also a discipline of suffering which would purge the evil of their hearts (compare v. 21). *As Pharaoh lives,* an oath in the name of Pharaoh, who was revered as divine in Egypt.

**42.21–22**: Once again the brothers have to announce to their father that misfortune has

his anguish when he pleaded with us, but we would not listen. That is why this anguish has come upon us." 22Then Reuben answered them, "Did I not tell you not to wrong the boy? But you would not listen. So now there comes a reckoning for his blood." 23They did not know that Joseph understood them, since he spoke with them through an interpreter. 24He turned away from them and wept; then he returned and spoke to them. And he picked out Simeon and had him bound before their eyes. 25Joseph then gave orders to fill their bags with grain, to return every man's money to his sack, and to give them provisions for their journey. This was done for them.

26 They loaded their donkeys with their grain, and departed. 27When one of them opened his sack to give his donkey fodder at the lodging place, he saw his money at the top of the sack. 28He said to his brothers, "My money has been put back; here it is in my sack!" At this they lost heart and turned trembling to one another, saying, "What is this that God has done to us?"

29 When they came to their father Jacob in the land of Canaan, they told him all that had happened to them, saying, 30"The man, the lord of the land, spoke harshly to us, and charged us with spying on the land. 31But we said to him, 'We are honest men, we are not spies. 32We are twelve brothers, sons of our father; one is no more, and the youngest is now with our father in the land of Canaan.' 33Then the man, the lord of the land, said to us, 'By this I shall know that you are honest men: leave one of your brothers with me, take grain for the famine of your households, and go your way. 34Bring your youngest brother to me, and I shall know that you are not spies but honest men. Then I will release your brother to you, and you may trade in the land.' "

35 As they were emptying their sacks, there in each one's sack was his bag of money. When they and their father saw their bundles of money, they were dismayed. 36And their father Jacob said to them, "I am the one you have bereaved of children: Joseph is no more, and Simeon is no more, and now you would take Benjamin. All this has happened to me!" 37Then Reuben said to his father, "You may kill my two sons if I do not bring him back to you. Put him in my hands, and I will bring him back to you." 38But he said, "My son shall not go down with you, for his brother is dead, and he alone is left. If harm should come to him on the journey that you are to make, you would bring down my gray hairs with sorrow to Sheol."

43 Now the famine was severe in the land. 2And when they had eaten up the grain that they had brought from Egypt, their father said to them, "Go again, buy us a little more food." 3But Judah said to him, "The man solemnly warned us, saying, 'You shall not see my face unless your brother is with you.' 4If you will send our brother with us, we will go down and buy you food; 5but if you will not send him, we will not go down, for the man said to us, 'You shall not see my face, unless your brother is with you.' " 6Israel said, "Why did you treat me so badly as to tell the man that you had another brother?" 7They replied, "The man questioned us carefully about ourselves and our kindred, saying, 'Is your father still alive? Have you another brother?' What we told him was in answer to these questions. Could we in any way know that he would say, 'Bring your brother down'?" 8Then Judah said to his father Israel, "Send the boy with me, and let us be on our way, so that we may live and not die—you and we and also our little ones. 9I myself will be surety for him; you can hold me accountable

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befallen one of his sons (compare ch 37). Though they do not yet recognize Joseph, the similarity of the two situations evokes a feeling of guilt for their former behavior. **28**: They sense that divine retribution is behind the mysterious events.

**42.38**: *Sheol,* see 37.35 n.; Eccl 9.10; Ps 6.5.

for him. If I do not bring him back to you and set him before you, then let me bear the blame forever. 10If we had not delayed, we would now have returned twice."

11 Then their father Israel said to them, "If it must be so, then do this: take some of the choice fruits of the land in your bags, and carry them down as a present to the man—a little balm and a little honey, gum, resin, pistachio nuts, and almonds. 12Take double the money with you. Carry back with you the money that was returned in the top of your sacks; perhaps it was an oversight. 13Take your brother also, and be on your way again to the man; 14may God Almighty[q] grant you mercy before the man, so that he may send back your other brother and Benjamin. As for me, if I am bereaved of my children, I am bereaved." 15So the men took the present, and they took double the money with them, as well as Benjamin. Then they went on their way down to Egypt, and stood before Joseph.

16 When Joseph saw Benjamin with them, he said to the steward of his house, "Bring the men into the house, and slaughter an animal and make ready, for the men are to dine with me at noon." 17The man did as Joseph said, and brought the men to Joseph's house. 18Now the men were afraid because they were brought to Joseph's house, and they said, "It is because of the money, replaced in our sacks the first time, that we have been brought in, so that he may have an opportunity to fall upon us, to make slaves of us and take our donkeys." 19So they went up to the steward of Joseph's house and spoke with him at the entrance to the house. 20They said, "Oh, my lord, we came down the first time to buy food; 21and when we came to the lodging place we opened our sacks, and there was each one's money in the top of his sack, our money in full weight. So we have brought it back with us. 22Moreover we have brought down with us additional money to buy food. We do not know who put our money in our sacks." 23He replied, "Rest assured, do not be afraid; your God and the God of your father must have put treasure in your sacks for you; I received your money." Then he brought Simeon out to them. 24When the steward[r] had brought the men into Joseph's house, and given them water, and they had washed their feet, and when he had given their donkeys fodder, 25they made the present ready for Joseph's coming at noon, for they had heard that they would dine there.

26 When Joseph came home, they brought him the present that they had carried into the house, and bowed to the ground before him. 27He inquired about their welfare, and said, "Is your father well, the old man of whom you spoke? Is he still alive?" 28They said, "Your servant our father is well; he is still alive." And they bowed their heads and did obeisance. 29Then he looked up and saw his brother Benjamin, his mother's son, and said, "Is this your youngest brother, of whom you spoke to me? God be gracious to you, my son!" 30With that, Joseph hurried out, because he was overcome with affection for his brother, and he was about to weep. So he went into a private room and wept there. 31Then he washed his face and came out; and controlling himself he said, "Serve the meal." 32They served him by himself, and them by themselves, and the Egyptians who ate with him by themselves,

*q* Traditional rendering of Heb *El Shaddai*
*r* Heb *the man*

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**43.1–34: The second journey to Egypt.** **1–2**: Simeon, left as a hostage in Egypt (vv. 14, 23), is apparently forgotten, for the brothers return only when more grain is needed. **3–7**: 42.29–34.

**43.14**: *God Almighty*, see 17.1 n. **23**: The steward's words again stress the fundamental motif of the story: the working of divine providence.

**43.29–30**: Joseph *was overcome with affection* for Benjamin, his only full brother through Rachel. **32**: Laws of ritual purity required that Egyptians eat apart from foreigners.

because the Egyptians could not eat with the Hebrews, for that is an abomination to the Egyptians. 33When they were seated before him, the firstborn according to his birthright and the youngest according to his youth, the men looked at one another in amazement. 34Portions were taken to them from Joseph's table, but Benjamin's portion was five times as much as any of theirs. So they drank and were merry with him.

44 Then he commanded the steward of his house, "Fill the men's sacks with food, as much as they can carry, and put each man's money in the top of his sack. 2Put my cup, the silver cup, in the top of the sack of the youngest, with his money for the grain." And he did as Joseph told him. 3As soon as the morning was light, the men were sent away with their donkeys. 4When they had gone only a short distance from the city, Joseph said to his steward, "Go, follow after the men; and when you overtake them, say to them, 'Why have you returned evil for good? Why have you stolen my silver cup?[s] 5Is it not from this that my lord drinks? Does he not indeed use it for divination? You have done wrong in doing this.' "

6 When he overtook them, he repeated these words to them. 7They said to him, "Why does my lord speak such words as these? Far be it from your servants that they should do such a thing! 8Look, the money that we found at the top of our sacks, we brought back to you from the land of Canaan; why then would we steal silver or gold from your lord's house? 9Should it be found with any one of your servants, let him die; moreover the rest of us will become my lord's slaves." 10He said, "Even so; in accordance with your words, let it be: he with whom it is found shall become my slave, but the rest of you shall go free." 11Then each one quickly lowered his sack to the ground, and each opened his sack. 12He searched, beginning with the eldest and ending with the youngest; and the cup was found in Benjamin's sack. 13At this they tore their clothes. Then each one loaded his donkey, and they returned to the city.

14 Judah and his brothers came to Joseph's house while he was still there; and they fell to the ground before him. 15Joseph said to them, "What deed is this that you have done? Do you not know that one such as I can practice divination?" 16And Judah said, "What can we say to my lord? What can we speak? How can we clear ourselves? God has found out the guilt of your servants; here we are then, my lord's slaves, both we and also the one in whose possession the cup has been found." 17But he said, "Far be it from me that I should do so! Only the one in whose possession the cup was found shall be my slave; but as for you, go up in peace to your father."

18 Then Judah stepped up to him and said, "O my lord, let your servant please speak a word in my lord's ears, and do not be angry with your servant; for you are like Pharaoh himself. 19My lord asked his servants, saying, 'Have you a

*s* Gk Compare Vg: Heb lacks *Why have you stolen my silver cup?*

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**44.1–34: Joseph puts his brothers to a final test. 1–2:** The reference to the money harks back to the same motif in 42.25–28; here the real object of interest is Joseph's cup (v. 5). **5:** The cup was a sacred vessel used for divination, i.e. for magical prediction by observing the effects created when objects were thrown into the water contained therein.

**44.15:** Having been initiated into Egyptian wisdom, Joseph can claim to practice divination, by which means the theft was discovered. **16:** Since the brothers acknowledge their collective guilt, Judah's words may refer not only to the theft but to their treatment of Joseph in his youth. **17:** Joseph tests his brothers to see whether, as in his case once, they will let Benjamin go into slavery and return to their father to justify the loss of another of his sons.

**44.18–34:** Judah's speech, one of the finest prose pieces from Israel's early tradition, summarizes and epitomizes the whole sequence of events. **20:** The tragedy of Joseph's supposed death heightens the pathos; for of

father or a brother?' 20And we said to my lord, 'We have a father, an old man, and a young brother, the child of his old age. His brother is dead; he alone is left of his mother's children, and his father loves him.' 21Then you said to your servants, 'Bring him down to me, so that I may set my eyes on him.' 22We said to my lord, 'The boy cannot leave his father, for if he should leave his father, his father would die.' 23Then you said to your servants, 'Unless your youngest brother comes down with you, you shall see my face no more.' 24When we went back to your servant my father we told him the words of my lord. 25And when our father said, 'Go again, buy us a little food,' 26we said, 'We cannot go down. Only if our youngest brother goes with us, will we go down; for we cannot see the man's face unless our youngest brother is with us.' 27Then your servant my father said to us, 'You know that my wife bore me two sons; 28one left me, and I said, Surely he has been torn to pieces; and I have never seen him since. 29If you take this one also from me, and harm comes to him, you will bring down my gray hairs in sorrow to Sheol.' 30Now therefore, when I come to your servant my father and the boy is not with us, then, as his life is bound up in the boy's life, 31when he sees that the boy is not with us, he will die; and your servants will bring down the gray hairs of your servant our father with sorrow to Sheol. 32For your servant became surety for the boy to my father, saying, 'If I do not bring him back to you, then I will bear the blame in the sight of my father all my life.' 33Now therefore, please let your servant remain as a slave to my lord in place of the boy; and let the boy go back with his brothers. 34For how can I go back to my father if the boy is not with me? I fear to see the suffering that would come upon my father."

45 Then Joseph could no longer control himself before all those who stood by him, and he cried out, "Send everyone away from me." So no one stayed with him when Joseph made himself known to his brothers. 2And he wept so loudly that the Egyptians heard it, and the household of Pharaoh heard it. 3Joseph said to his brothers, "I am Joseph. Is my father still alive?" But his brothers could not answer him, so dismayed were they at his presence.

4 Then Joseph said to his brothers, "Come closer to me." And they came closer. He said, "I am your brother, Joseph, whom you sold into Egypt. 5And now do not be distressed, or angry with yourselves, because you sold me here; for God sent me before you to preserve life. 6For the famine has been in the land these two years; and there are five more years in which there will be neither plowing nor harvest. 7God sent me before you to preserve for you a remnant on earth, and to keep alive for you many survivors. 8So it was not you who sent me here, but God; he has made me a father to Pharaoh, and lord of all his house and ruler over all the land of Egypt. 9Hurry and go up to my father and say to him, 'Thus says your son Joseph, God has made me lord of all Egypt; come down to me, do not delay. 10You shall settle in the land of Goshen, and you

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Jacob's two sons by Rachel, only Benjamin is left and Jacob's *life is bound up in the boy's life* (v. 30).

**45.1–28: Joseph makes himself known to his brothers. 7–8:** This passage sets forth the central theme of the Joseph story: in a hidden manner, events were directed in accordance with divine, not human, purpose. God graciously contrives to bring good out of evil; for the brothers, in selling Joseph into slavery, had unwittingly carried out God's will. **7:** Through Joseph God acted *to preserve life* (v. 5; 50.20), not only the life of famine-stricken Egyptians but also that of *a remnant,* that is, the family which is the bearer of the promise given to Abraham (12.2–3; 50.24). **8:** *A father to Pharaoh,* a title of the chief minister (Isa 22.21; compare 1 Macc 11.32). **10:** *The land of Goshen,* the present Wadi Tumilat, a narrow strip of grazing land in the Delta. Since the settlers would be *near* Joseph, the assumption is that Pharaoh's capital was in the Delta region, which was the case during the Hyksos period (see 41.39–41 n.).

shall be near me, you and your children and your children's children, as well as your flocks, your herds, and all that you have. 11I will provide for you there—since there are five more years of famine to come—so that you and your household, and all that you have, will not come to poverty.' 12And now your eyes and the eyes of my brother Benjamin see that it is my own mouth that speaks to you. 13You must tell my father how greatly I am honored in Egypt, and all that you have seen. Hurry and bring my father down here." 14Then he fell upon his brother Benjamin's neck and wept, while Benjamin wept upon his neck. 15And he kissed all his brothers and wept upon them; and after that his brothers talked with him.

16 When the report was heard in Pharaoh's house, "Joseph's brothers have come," Pharaoh and his servants were pleased. 17Pharaoh said to Joseph, "Say to your brothers, 'Do this: load your animals and go back to the land of Canaan. 18Take your father and your households and come to me, so that I may give you the best of the land of Egypt, and you may enjoy the fat of the land.' 19You are further charged to say, 'Do this: take wagons from the land of Egypt for your little ones and for your wives, and bring your father, and come. 20Give no thought to your possessions, for the best of all the land of Egypt is yours.' "

21 The sons of Israel did so. Joseph gave them wagons according to the instruction of Pharaoh, and he gave them provisions for the journey. 22To each one of them he gave a set of garments; but to Benjamin he gave three hundred pieces of silver and five sets of garments. 23To his father he sent the following: ten donkeys loaded with the good things of Egypt, and ten female donkeys loaded with grain, bread, and provision for his father on the journey. 24Then he sent his brothers on their way, and as they were leaving he said to them, "Do not quarrel[t] along the way."

25 So they went up out of Egypt and came to their father Jacob in the land of Canaan. 26And they told him, "Joseph is still alive! He is even ruler over all the land of Egypt." He was stunned; he could not believe them. 27But when they told him all the words of Joseph that he had said to them, and when he saw the wagons that Joseph had sent to carry him, the spirit of their father Jacob revived. 28Israel said, "Enough! My son Joseph is still alive. I must go and see him before I die."

**46** When Israel set out on his journey with all that he had and came to Beer-sheba, he offered sacrifices to the God of his father Isaac. 2God spoke to Israel in visions of the night, and said, "Jacob, Jacob." And he said, "Here I am." 3Then he said, "I am God,[u] the God of your father; do not be afraid to go down to Egypt, for I will make of you a great nation there. 4I myself will go down with you to Egypt, and I will also bring you up again; and Joseph's own hand shall close your eyes."

5 Then Jacob set out from Beer-sheba; and the sons of Israel carried their father Jacob, their little ones, and their

*t* Or *be agitated* *u* Heb *the God*

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**45.16–20**: According to Egyptian sources, it was not unusual for Pharaoh to permit Asiatics to settle in his country in time of famine.

**46.1–27**: **Jacob's migration to Egypt. 1**: From Hebron (37.14) Jacob went first to *Beer-sheba,* the shrine associated with Isaac (26.23–25; 28.10). *The God of your father,* see 26.24 n. **2–4**: The descent into Egypt, which was to have decisive significance for Israel's history, was prompted not merely by Jacob's desire to see his long-lost son (45.28) but by divine revelation *in visions of the night.* **3**: As on a previous occasion (28.13–15), before Jacob left the land of the promise to go to a foreign land, God renewed the promise to make him *a great nation* (see 12.2 n.; 18.18) in Egypt (Ex 1.7). **4**: Only Jacob's corpse was returned from Egypt (50.4–14). However, according to Hebraic corporate thinking, the words *bring you up again* were fulfilled, for the father lived on in the person of his sons.

wives, in the wagons that Pharaoh had sent to carry him. 6They also took their livestock and the goods that they had acquired in the land of Canaan, and they came into Egypt, Jacob and all his offspring with him, 7his sons, and his sons' sons with him, his daughters, and his sons' daughters; all his offspring he brought with him into Egypt.

8 Now these are the names of the Israelites, Jacob and his offspring, who came to Egypt. Reuben, Jacob's firstborn, 9and the children of Reuben: Hanoch, Pallu, Hezron, and Carmi. 10The children of Simeon: Jemuel, Jamin, Ohad, Jachin, Zohar, and Shaul,[v] the son of a Canaanite woman. 11The children of Levi: Gershon, Kohath, and Merari. 12The children of Judah: Er, Onan, Shelah, Perez, and Zerah (but Er and Onan died in the land of Canaan); and the children of Perez were Hezron and Hamul. 13The children of Issachar: Tola, Puvah, Jashub,[w] and Shimron. 14The children of Zebulun: Sered, Elon, and Jahleel 15(these are the sons of Leah, whom she bore to Jacob in Paddan-aram, together with his daughter Dinah; in all his sons and his daughters numbered thirty-three). 16The children of Gad: Ziphion, Haggi, Shuni, Ezbon, Eri, Arodi, and Areli. 17The children of Asher: Imnah, Ishvah, Ishvi, Beriah, and their sister Serah. The children of Beriah: Heber and Malchiel 18(these are the children of Zilpah, whom Laban gave to his daughter Leah; and these she bore to Jacob—sixteen persons). 19The children of Jacob's wife Rachel: Joseph and Benjamin. 20To Joseph in the land of Egypt were born Manasseh and Ephraim, whom Asenath daughter of Potiphera, priest of On, bore to him. 21The children of Benjamin: Bela, Becher, Ashbel, Gera, Naaman, Ehi, Rosh, Muppim, Huppim, and Ard 22(these are the children of Rachel, who were born to Jacob—fourteen persons in all). 23The children of Dan: Hashum.[x] 24The children of Naphtali: Jahzeel, Guni, Jezer, and Shillem 25(these are the children of Bilhah, whom Laban gave to his daughter Rachel, and these she bore to Jacob—seven persons in all). 26All the persons belonging to Jacob who came into Egypt, who were his own offspring, not including the wives of his sons, were sixty-six persons in all. 27The children of Joseph, who were born to him in Egypt, were two; all the persons of the house of Jacob who came into Egypt were seventy.

28 Israel[y] sent Judah ahead to Joseph to lead the way before him into Goshen. When they came to the land of Goshen, 29Joseph made ready his chariot and went up to meet his father Israel in Goshen. He presented himself to him, fell on his neck, and wept on his neck a good while. 30Israel said to Joseph, "I can die now, having seen for myself that you are still alive." 31Joseph said to his brothers and to his father's household, "I will go up and tell Pharaoh, and will say to him, 'My brothers and my father's household, who were in the land of Canaan, have come to me. 32The men are shepherds, for they have been keepers of livestock; and they have brought their flocks, and their herds, and all that they have.' 33When Pharaoh calls you, and says, 'What is your occupation?' 34you shall

*v* Or *Saul* *w* Compare Sam Gk Num 26.24; 1 Chr 7.1: MT *Iob* *x* Gk: Heb *Hushim*
*y* Heb *He*

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**46.8–27**: This section, from a separate priestly tradition, contains a list of Jacob's descendants, based on the traditional number seventy (v. 27; Ex 1.5; Deut 10.22). Most of the names of the ancestral clan leaders are found in the priestly list in Num ch 26. **27**: *Seventy,* the author includes Joseph and his two sons born in Egypt, as well as Jacob himself.

**46.28–47.12: Jacob and his sons settle in Egypt.**

**46.28**: Judah is sent ahead because he is the chief spokesperson (37.26; 43.3–10; 44.18–34). *Goshen,* see 45.10 n. **31–34**: Desiring to have his relatives near him in the Delta, Joseph advised his brothers to testify that they were shepherds; since this occupation was abominable to Egyptians in the interior

say, 'Your servants have been keepers of livestock from our youth even until now, both we and our ancestors'—in order that you may settle in the land of Goshen, because all shepherds are abhorrent to the Egyptians."

47 So Joseph went and told Pharaoh, "My father and my brothers, with their flocks and herds and all that they possess, have come from the land of Canaan; they are now in the land of Goshen." 2From among his brothers he took five men and presented them to Pharaoh. 3Pharaoh said to his brothers, "What is your occupation?" And they said to Pharaoh, "Your servants are shepherds, as our ancestors were." 4They said to Pharaoh, "We have come to reside as aliens in the land; for there is no pasture for your servants' flocks because the famine is severe in the land of Canaan. Now, we ask you, let your servants settle in the land of Goshen." 5Then Pharaoh said to Joseph, "Your father and your brothers have come to you. 6The land of Egypt is before you; settle your father and your brothers in the best part of the land; let them live in the land of Goshen; and if you know that there are capable men among them, put them in charge of my livestock."

7 Then Joseph brought in his father Jacob, and presented him before Pharaoh, and Jacob blessed Pharaoh. 8Pharaoh said to Jacob, "How many are the years of your life?" 9Jacob said to Pharaoh, "The years of my earthly sojourn are one hundred thirty; few and hard have been the years of my life. They do not compare with the years of the life of my ancestors during their long sojourn." 10Then Jacob blessed Pharaoh, and went out from the presence of Pharaoh. 11Joseph settled his father and his brothers, and granted them a holding in the land of Egypt, in the best part of the land, in the land of Rameses, as Pharaoh had instructed. 12And Joseph provided his father, his brothers, and all his father's household with food, according to the number of their dependents.

13 Now there was no food in all the land, for the famine was very severe. The land of Egypt and the land of Canaan languished because of the famine. 14Joseph collected all the money to be found in the land of Egypt and in the land of Canaan, in exchange for the grain that they bought; and Joseph brought the money into Pharaoh's house. 15When the money from the land of Egypt and from the land of Canaan was spent, all the Egyptians came to Joseph, and said, "Give us food! Why should we die before your eyes? For our money is gone." 16And Joseph answered, "Give me your livestock, and I will give you food in exchange for your livestock, if your money is gone." 17So they brought their livestock to Joseph; and Joseph gave them food in exchange for the horses, the flocks, the herds, and the donkeys. That year he supplied them with food in exchange for all their livestock. 18When that year was ended, they came to him the following year, and said to him, "We can not hide from my lord that our money is all spent; and the herds of cattle are my lord's. There is nothing left in the sight of my lord but our bodies and our lands. 19Shall we die before your eyes, both we and our land? Buy us and our

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(v. 34), Pharaoh would see the wisdom of setting them apart in the land of Goshen.

**47.1–6:** Egyptian sources testify that pharaohs possessed large herds and gave much attention to cattle-breeding.

**47.7–12:** According to this priestly tradition, *Jacob blessed Pharaoh,* presumably with the blessing of welfare and long life. **9:** Jacob's statement that his years had been *few and hard* reflects the view that there was an increasing shortening and troubling of human life (see 5.4–32 n.). **11:** *The land of Rameses* (= Goshen), was named after Rameses II (see Ex 1.8, 11 n.).

**47.13–26: Joseph's agrarian program,** involving a change in the Egyptian system of land-tenure. **14:** First, the people spent all their money for grain (compare 41.56). **15–17:** Next, in their desperation they exchanged all their cattle for food. **18–19:** Finally, they offered themselves and their lands to Pharaoh.

land in exchange for food. We with our land will become slaves to Pharaoh; just give us seed, so that we may live and not die, and that the land may not become desolate."

20 So Joseph bought all the land of Egypt for Pharaoh. All the Egyptians sold their fields, because the famine was severe upon them; and the land became Pharaoh's. 21 As for the people, he made slaves of them[z] from one end of Egypt to the other. 22 Only the land of the priests he did not buy; for the priests had a fixed allowance from Pharaoh, and lived on the allowance that Pharaoh gave them; therefore they did not sell their land. 23 Then Joseph said to the people, "Now that I have this day bought you and your land for Pharaoh, here is seed for you; sow the land. 24 And at the harvests you shall give one-fifth to Pharaoh, and four-fifths shall be your own, as seed for the field and as food for yourselves and your households, and as food for your little ones." 25 They said, "You have saved our lives; may it please my lord, we will be slaves to Pharaoh." 26 So Joseph made it a statute concerning the land of Egypt, and it stands to this day, that Pharaoh should have the fifth. The land of the priests alone did not become Pharaoh's.

27 Thus Israel settled in the land of Egypt, in the region of Goshen; and they gained possessions in it, and were fruitful and multiplied exceedingly. 28 Jacob lived in the land of Egypt seventeen years; so the days of Jacob, the years of his life, were one hundred forty-seven years.

29 When the time of Israel's death drew near, he called his son Joseph and said to him, "If I have found favor with you, put your hand under my thigh and promise to deal loyally and truly with me. Do not bury me in Egypt. 30 When I lie down with my ancestors, carry me out of Egypt and bury me in their burial place." He answered, "I will do as you have said." 31 And he said, "Swear to me"; and he swore to him. Then Israel bowed himself on the head of his bed.

48 After this Joseph was told, "Your father is ill." So he took with him his two sons, Manasseh and Ephraim. 2 When Jacob was told, "Your son Joseph has come to you," he[a] summoned his strength and sat up in bed. 3 And Jacob said to Joseph, "God Almighty[b] appeared to me at Luz in the land of Canaan, and he blessed me, 4 and said to me, 'I am going to make you fruitful and increase your numbers; I will make of you a company of peoples, and will give this land to your offspring after you for a perpetual holding.' 5 Therefore your two sons, who were born to you in the land of Egypt before I came to you in Egypt, are now mine; Ephraim and Manasseh shall be mine, just as Reuben and Simeon are. 6 As for the offspring born to you after them, they shall be yours. They shall be recorded under the names of their brothers with regard to their inheritance. 7 For when I came from Paddan, Rachel, alas, died in the land of Canaan

*z* Sam Gk Compare Vg: MT *He removed them to the cities* *a* Heb *Israel* *b* Traditional rendering of Heb *El Shaddai*

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**47.20–26**: The result was that former land-owners became tenants of Pharaoh, farming the land for him and paying him one-fifth of the produce as tax (v. 24). Temple lands were excepted (v. 22). **25**: The narrator does not intend to sanction absolutism but only to praise Joseph for his wisdom in delivering the people.

**47.27–48.22: Jacob's adoption and blessing of Ephraim and Manasseh.**

**47.29**: *Put your hand under my thigh,* see 24.2 n. **30–31**: Joseph binds himself by oath to bury Jacob in his ancestors' *burial place,* i.e. Machpelah (ch 23; 49.29–30; 50.12–13). *Israel* [i.e. Jacob, see 35.21 n.] *bowed himself on the head of his bed* (compare Heb 11.21), a gesture of reverence or gratitude (1 Kings 1.47).

**48.3–4**: Jacob's adoption and blessing of Joseph's two sons are based on the divine promise given at Luz, or Bethel (35.9–13). **5–6**: By adopting his grandsons, Jacob gives them status equal to his eldest sons, Reuben and Simeon. The narrative accounts for the circumstance that "the house of Joseph" (Josh 17.17; 18.5; Judg 1.23, 35) came to be divided into two tribes, Manasseh and Ephraim, each

on the way, while there was still some distance to go to Ephrath; and I buried her there on the way to Ephrath" (that is, Bethlehem).

8 When Israel saw Joseph's sons, he said, "Who are these?" 9Joseph said to his father, "They are my sons, whom God has given me here." And he said, "Bring them to me, please, that I may bless them." 10Now the eyes of Israel were dim with age, and he could not see well. So Joseph brought them near him; and he kissed them and embraced them. 11Israel said to Joseph, "I did not expect to see your face; and here God has let me see your children also." 12Then Joseph removed them from his father's knees,[c] and he bowed himself with his face to the earth. 13Joseph took them both, Ephraim in his right hand toward Israel's left, and Manasseh in his left hand toward Israel's right, and brought them near him. 14But Israel stretched out his right hand and laid it on the head of Ephraim, who was the younger, and his left hand on the head of Manasseh, crossing his hands, for Manasseh was the firstborn. 15He blessed Joseph, and said,

"The God before whom my
ancestors Abraham and
Isaac walked,
the God who has been my
shepherd all my life to this
day,
16 the angel who has redeemed me
from all harm, bless the
boys;
and in them let my name be
perpetuated, and the name
of my ancestors Abraham
and Isaac;
and let them grow into a
multitude on the earth."

17 When Joseph saw that his father laid his right hand on the head of Ephraim, it displeased him; so he took his father's hand, to remove it from Ephraim's head to Manasseh's head. 18Joseph said to his father, "Not so, my father! Since this one is the firstborn, put your right hand on his head." 19But his father refused, and said, "I know, my son, I know; he also shall become a people, and he also shall be great. Nevertheless his younger brother shall be greater than he, and his offspring shall become a multitude of nations." 20So he blessed them that day, saying,

"By you[d] Israel will invoke
blessings, saying,
'God make you[e] like Ephraim and
like Manasseh.' "

So he put Ephraim ahead of Manasseh. 21Then Israel said to Joseph, "I am about to die, but God will be with you and will

*c* Heb *from his knees* *d* *you* here is singular in Heb *e* *you* here is singular in Heb

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claiming full rank with the other tribes (49.22–26). **7**: 35.16–20. *Paddan*(-aram), see 11.31 n.

**48.12**: An adoption ceremony may be suggested by the boys' having been between or on Jacob's knees. **13–14**: Joseph brings Manasseh, his firstborn, for the blessing of the right hand, but Jacob crosses his hands and puts his right hand on Ephraim, thereby giving him precedence. The narrator appeals to the ancient belief in the efficacy of the deathbed blessing (see 27.4 n.) to account for two facts: (1) Manasseh and Ephraim, located in the central hill country, were powerful tribes in early Israelite history; (2) the latter, during the period of the Judges and the early monarchy, gained pre-eminence over the "firstborn" tribe that once ranked first in leadership. **15–16**: Jacob invokes God by a threefold description: the God before whom his ancestors *walked* (17.1; 24.40), who *has been* his *shepherd* (Ps 23.1) throughout his life, who *redeemed* him from evil (Isa 48.20). *The angel,* see 16.7 n. According to ancient belief, *the name,* that is, the psychic life of the father, was to be perpetuated in the two boys.

**48.20**: Another version of the blessing (compare vv. 15–16). *Israel* here refers not to Jacob but to the people (34.7). *Like Ephraim and like Manasseh,* i.e. as fruitful with offspring as these tribes. **21**: Joseph died in Egypt and his bones were brought back to Canaan (see 46.4 n.). **22**: In Hebrew *one portion* (or "shoulder") is a play on the name Shechem, the important city which lay in the territory of Joseph (see 12.6 n.). *With my sword and with my bow* reflects a different tradition from that in 33.19–20, which reports Jacob's peaceful

bring you again to the land of your ancestors. 22I now give to you one portion[f] more than to your brothers, the portion[f] that I took from the hand of the Amorites with my sword and with my bow."

**49** Then Jacob called his sons, and said: "Gather around, that I may tell you what will happen to you in days to come.

2 Assemble and hear, O sons of Jacob;
listen to Israel your father.

3 Reuben, you are my firstborn,
my might and the first fruits of my vigor,
excelling in rank and excelling in power.
4 Unstable as water, you shall no longer excel
because you went up onto your father's bed;
then you defiled it—you[g] went up onto my couch!

5 Simeon and Levi are brothers;
weapons of violence are their swords.
6 May I never come into their council;
may I not be joined to their company—
for in their anger they killed men,
and at their whim they hamstrung oxen.
7 Cursed be their anger, for it is fierce,
and their wrath, for it is cruel!
I will divide them in Jacob,
and scatter them in Israel.

8 Judah, your brothers shall praise you;
your hand shall be on the neck of your enemies;
your father's sons shall bow down before you.
9 Judah is a lion's whelp;
from the prey, my son, you have gone up.
He crouches down, he stretches out like a lion,
like a lioness—who dares rouse him up?
10 The scepter shall not depart from Judah,
nor the ruler's staff from between his feet,
until tribute comes to him;[h]

*f* Or *mountain slope* (Heb *shekem*, a play on the name of the town and district of Shechem)
*g* Gk Syr Tg: Heb *he*
*h* Or *until Shiloh comes* or *until he comes to Shiloh* or (with Syr) *until he comes to whom it belongs*

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coming to Shechem, and ch 34, which describes his protest against his sons' attack upon the city (34.25–30). *Amorites,* see 10.15–20 n.

**49.1–28: Jacob's blessing on his twelve sons.** This poem, apparently dating from the time of David (see vv. 8–12), portrays the character of the tribes in the person of their ancestor (Deut ch 33). Although regarded as Jacob's death-bed blessing (v. 28), this is not an altogether adequate description, for the poet sometimes speaks words of censure or even curse (e.g. v. 7). On death-bed blessings, see 27.4 n. **1–2**: The language in the future tense, *what shall happen to you in days to come,* is relevant to the Judah oracle (vv. 8–12); the other oracles, however, describe chiefly past events or present circumstances. **3–4**: Reuben, the firstborn, whose territory lay east of the Dead Sea, was once a leading tribe but in early times was overcome by the Moabites (Judg 5.15–16; Deut 33.6). **4**: *Your father's bed,* a reference to the ancestor's act of immorality (35.22), which typifies the tribe's moral weakness and instability. **5–7**: Simeon and Levi are considered together, for they led in the attack against Shechem with *weapons of violence* (34.25–30). Levi, once a full tribe, came to be a priestly class (Ex 32.26–29; Deut 10.8–9). Simeon was eventually absorbed into the tribe of Judah.

**49.8–12**: This oracle reflects a situation, like that in David's time, when Judah had pre-eminence over the tribes. **10**: The first part of the verse portrays Judah as a sovereign; the second part, however, is very obscure (see note *h*). The verse has been interpreted to mean that after the kingdom of Judah has lasted an indefinite time there will arise a messianic ruler who will command *the*

and the obedience of the peoples
is his.
11 Binding his foal to the vine
and his donkey's colt to the
choice vine,
he washes his garments in wine
and his robe in the blood of
grapes;
12 his eyes are darker than wine,
and his teeth whiter than milk.

13 Zebulun shall settle at the shore of
the sea;
he shall be a haven for ships,
and his border shall be at Sidon.

14 Issachar is a strong donkey,
lying down between the
sheepfolds;
15 he saw that a resting place was
good,
and that the land was pleasant;
so he bowed his shoulder to the
burden,
and became a slave at forced
labor.

16 Dan shall judge his people
as one of the tribes of Israel.
17 Dan shall be a snake by the
roadside,
a viper along the path,
that bites the horse's heels
so that its rider falls backward.

18 I wait for your salvation, O LORD.

19 Gad shall be raided by raiders,
but he shall raid at their heels.

20 Asher's[i] food shall be rich,
and he shall provide royal
delicacies.

21 Naphtali is a doe let loose
that bears lovely fawns.[j]

22 Joseph is a fruitful bough,
a fruitful bough by a spring;
his branches run over the wall.[k]
23 The archers fiercely attacked him;
they shot at him and pressed
him hard.
24 Yet his bow remained taut,
and his arms[l] were made agile
by the hands of the Mighty One
of Jacob,
by the name of the Shepherd,
the Rock of Israel,
25 by the God of your father, who
will help you,
by the Almighty[m] who will
bless you
with blessings of heaven above,
blessings of the deep that lies
beneath,
blessings of the breasts and of
the womb.

*i* Gk Vg Syr: Heb *From Asher* *j* Or *that gives beautiful words* *k* Meaning of Heb uncertain
*l* Heb *the arms of his hands*
*m* Traditional rendering of Heb *Shaddai*

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*obedience of the peoples* (Num 24.17; Isa 11.1–9). **11–12**: A picture of the marvelous fertility that will ensue. **13**: Zebulun will have a favorable position, no longer shut up in the interior (Josh 19.10–16) but with access to the Mediterranean Sea. Expansion into Asher's territory is assumed.

**49.14–15**: Issachar is compared to a domesticated beast of burden, contented with a comfortable land and willing to surrender political independence in subservience to the Canaanites. **16–18**: Dan will rise to full tribal prestige by judging (i.e. getting justice for) his people. The Hebrew verb "judge" involves a play on the word Dan. The comparison with *a snake by the roadside* portrays the insidious warfare of a small tribe in its rise to power. **19**: Gad, settled east of the Jordan just above Reuben, is cited for bravery in repelling Ammonite and desert marauders (Judg ch 11). **20**: Asher's land, situated on the coastal strip between Mount Carmel and Phoenicia, was so rich that it yielded *royal delicacies* (Deut 33.24). **21**: The comparison of Naphtali to *a doe let loose* suggests the idea of freedom, agility, and vitality (compare Deut 33.23).

**49.22–26**: A picture of the prosperity and strength of the populous tribe of Joseph, apparently harking back to a time before "the house of Joseph" was divided into the tribes of Manasseh and Ephraim, as in Deut 33.13–17 (see Gen ch 48). **24**: *The Mighty One of Jacob,* a title of "the God of the ancestors" (v. 25a; Isa 1.24; 49.26). **25**: *The Almighty,* see

26 The blessings of your father
are stronger than the blessings
of the eternal mountains,
the bounties[n] of the everlasting
hills;
may they be on the head of
Joseph,
on the brow of him who was
set apart from his brothers.

27 Benjamin is a ravenous wolf,
in the morning devouring the
prey,
and at evening dividing the
spoil."

28 All these are the twelve tribes of Israel, and this is what their father said to them when he blessed them, blessing each one of them with a suitable blessing.

29 Then he charged them, saying to them, "I am about to be gathered to my people. Bury me with my ancestors—in the cave in the field of Ephron the Hittite, 30in the cave in the field at Machpelah, near Mamre, in the land of Canaan, in the field that Abraham bought from Ephron the Hittite as a burial site. 31There Abraham and his wife Sarah were buried; there Isaac and his wife Rebekah were buried; and there I buried Leah— 32the field and the cave that is in it were purchased from the Hittites." 33When Jacob ended his charge to his sons, he drew up his feet into the bed, breathed his last, and was gathered to his people.

50 Then Joseph threw himself on his father's face and wept over him and kissed him. 2Joseph commanded the physicians in his service to embalm his father. So the physicians embalmed Israel; 3they spent forty days in doing this, for that is the time required for embalming. And the Egyptians wept for him seventy days.

4 When the days of weeping for him were past, Joseph addressed the household of Pharaoh, "If now I have found favor with you, please speak to Pharaoh as follows: 5My father made me swear an oath; he said, 'I am about to die. In the tomb that I hewed out for myself in the land of Canaan, there you shall bury me.' Now therefore let me go up, so that I may bury my father; then I will return." 6Pharaoh answered, "Go up, and bury your father, as he made you swear to do."

7 So Joseph went up to bury his father. With him went up all the servants of Pharaoh, the elders of his household, and all the elders of the land of Egypt, 8as well as all the household of Joseph, his brothers, and his father's household. Only their children, their flocks, and their herds were left in the land of Goshen. 9Both chariots and charioteers went up with him. It was a very great company. 10When they came to the threshing floor of Atad, which is beyond the Jordan, they held there a very great and sorrowful lamentation; and he observed a time of mourning for his father seven days. 11When the Canaanite inhabitants of the land saw the mourning on the threshing floor of Atad, they said, "This is a grievous mourning on the part of the Egyptians." Therefore the place was named Abel-mizraim;[o] it is beyond the Jordan. 12Thus his sons did for him

*n* Cn Compare Gk: Heb *of my progenitors to the boundaries* *o* That is *mourning* (or *meadow*) *of Egypt*

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17.1 n. *Blessings of heaven,* i.e. rain, dew, sun. *The deep that lies beneath* (Deut 33.13), an allusion to the subterranean ocean (see 1.2, 6), believed to be the source of fertility (see 2.6 n.). **26:** The ancestral blessing surpasses even the majesty and fertility of the hills of Ephraim. *Set apart* by prestige and position.

**49.29–50.26: The death of Jacob and the final days of Joseph.**

**49.30–32:** *Machpelah,* see ch 23.

**50.2–3:** Embalming, an ancient Egyptian custom, was necessary if Jacob's body was to be carried back to Canaan. Egyptians are said to have mourned for a monarch seventy-two days; thus, out of respect for Joseph, Jacob was given a royal funeral. **5:** According to this fragment of tradition, Jacob had hewed out a tomb for himself east of the Jordan (v. 10) and was buried there rather than at Machpelah (vv. 12–13). This explains why the funeral

as he had instructed them. 13 They carried him to the land of Canaan and buried him in the cave of the field at Machpelah, the field near Mamre, which Abraham bought as a burial site from Ephron the Hittite. 14 After he had buried his father, Joseph returned to Egypt with his brothers and all who had gone up with him to bury his father.

15 Realizing that their father was dead, Joseph's brothers said, "What if Joseph still bears a grudge against us and pays us back in full for all the wrong that we did to him?" 16 So they approached[p] Joseph, saying, "Your father gave this instruction before he died, 17 'Say to Joseph: I beg you, forgive the crime of your brothers and the wrong they did in harming you.' Now therefore please forgive the crime of the servants of the God of your father." Joseph wept when they spoke to him. 18 Then his brothers also wept,[q] fell down before him, and said, "We are here as your slaves." 19 But Joseph said to them, "Do not be afraid! Am I in the place of God? 20 Even though you intended to do harm to me, God intended it for good, in order to preserve a numerous people, as he is doing today. 21 So have no fear; I myself will provide for you and your little ones." In this way he reassured them, speaking kindly to them.

22 So Joseph remained in Egypt, he and his father's household; and Joseph lived one hundred ten years. 23 Joseph saw Ephraim's children of the third generation; the children of Machir son of Manasseh were also born on Joseph's knees.

24 Then Joseph said to his brothers, "I am about to die; but God will surely come to you, and bring you up out of this land to the land that he swore to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob." 25 So Joseph made the Israelites swear, saying, "When God comes to you, you shall carry up my bones from here." 26 And Joseph died, being one hundred ten years old; he was embalmed and placed in a coffin in Egypt.

*p* Gk Syr: Heb *they commanded* *q* Cn: Heb *also came*

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cortege detoured to Transjordan (vv. 10–11), though a main road from Egypt led along the coast to Beer-sheba.

**50.18**: A recapitulation of the motif introduced at the beginning of the Joseph story (see 37.5–11 n.). **19–20**: The heart and climax of the Joseph story: Joseph asserts that only God can forgive and heal human guilt, and he testifies to God's overruling providence that has already turned evil purposes to a good end (45.4–7). **23**: The children of *Machir,* Joseph's grandson, were *born on Joseph's knees,* i.e. adopted as his descendants. Machir was the ancestor of a warlike clan of Manasseh that laid claim to Gilead (Num 32.39–40; Deut 3.15; Judg 5.14). **24**: An anticipation of the Exodus, based on the promise to Israel's ancestors. **25–26**: See Ex 13.19. According to tradition, Joseph was buried in Shechem (Josh 24.32; compare Gen 33.19; Acts 7.16).

# *Exodus*

In this history of Israel's religious traditions, the two crucial "root experiences" were the exodus from Egypt and the revelation at Mount Sinai. The book of Exodus bears witness to the meaning of these seminal experiences: God's action to liberate a band of slaves from bondage and to make them a community, bound in covenant with their liberating God.

Although Egyptian records make no reference to the border incident of the flight of slaves into the Sinaitic wilderness, there can be little doubt that the story rests upon actual historical occurrences. Various lines of evidence point to the period of the 19th Dynasty (about 1350–1200 B.C.) as the most probable historical setting (see Ex 1.8 n.). The story unfolds against the background of Egyptian imperialism that motivated ambitious pharaohs to use Hebrew slaves as pawns in their scheme of world politics.

The book of Exodus discloses an editorial interweaving of traditions (Old Epic and Priestly) which preserve both the original Mosaic tradition and the interpretations of subsequent generations (see introduction to "The Pentateuch," pp. xxxv–xxxvi OT). The dramatic presentation falls into two major sections: (1) Israel's deliverance from Egyptian bondage and the pilgrimage to Sinai (chs 1–18) and (2) Israel's sojourn at Sinai, where the covenant was made and laws governing life and worship were promulgated (chs 19–40).

At the center of these memorable experiences stood Moses, in whose name the final edition of the whole account was issued. He was called to be the prophetic interpreter of God's liberating action and the priestly mediator of the covenant between God and people. Across the whole evolving tradition falls his massive shadow. Indeed, it was Moses who laid down the spiritual foundations upon which later generations built. Great religious reforms, such as those that occurred in the time of Elijah (1 Kings 19) or of King Josiah (2 Kings 22–23), were regarded as a return to the Mosaic source of Israel's faith.

1 These are the names of the sons of Israel who came to Egypt with Jacob, each with his household: 2Reuben, Simeon, Levi, and Judah, 3Issachar, Zebulun, and Benjamin, 4Dan and Naphtali, Gad and Asher. 5The total number of people born to Jacob was seventy. Joseph was already in Egypt. 6Then Joseph died, and all his brothers, and that whole generation. 7But the Israelites were fruitful and prolific; they multiplied and grew exceedingly strong, so that the land was filled with them.

8 Now a new king arose over Egypt, who did not know Joseph. 9He said to his people, "Look, the Israelite people are more numerous and more powerful than we. 10Come, let us deal shrewdly with them, or they will increase and, in the event of war, join our enemies and fight against us and escape from the land." 11Therefore they set taskmasters over them to oppress them with forced labor. They built supply cities, Pithom and Rameses, for Pharaoh. 12But the more they were oppressed, the more they multiplied and spread, so that the Egyptians came to dread the Israelites. 13The Egyptians became ruthless in imposing tasks on the Israelites, 14and made their lives bitter with hard service in mortar and brick and in every kind of field labor. They were ruthless in all the tasks that they imposed on them.

15 The king of Egypt said to the Hebrew midwives, one of whom was named Shiphrah and the other Puah, 16"When you act as midwives to the Hebrew women, and see them on the birthstool, if it is a boy, kill him; but if it is a girl, she shall live." 17But the midwives feared God; they did not do as the king of Egypt commanded them, but they let the boys live. 18So the king of Egypt summoned the midwives and said to them, "Why have you done this, and allowed the boys to live?" 19The midwives said to Pharaoh, "Because the Hebrew women are not like the Egyptian women; for they are vigorous and give birth before the midwife comes to them." 20So God dealt well with the midwives; and the people multiplied and became very strong. 21And because the midwives feared God, he gave them families. 22Then Pharaoh commanded all his people, "Every boy that is born to the Hebrews[a] you shall throw into the Nile, but you shall let every girl live."

2 Now a man from the house of Levi went and married a Levite woman. 2The woman conceived and bore a son;

*a* Sam Gk Tg: Heb lacks *to the Hebrews*

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**1.1–22: Israel's bondage in Egypt.** In spite of oppression, Abraham and Sarah's descendants multiplied and prospered, in fulfillment of the divine promise (Gen 12.2; 15.5). **1–7:** Gen 35.23–26; 50.26. **5:** *Total number of people . . . was seventy,* Gen 46.8–27; Deut 10.22. The book of Exodus reflects the memory of decisive events with which Israel as a people identified itself in faith. The tribal confederacy was formed later and embraced tribes that had not been in Egypt (Josh ch 24). **6:** Over four centuries elapsed since Joseph's death (12.40; compare Gen 15.13). **7:** The promise concerning Abraham's numerous posterity was being fulfilled (Gen 17.1–8; see Ex 12.37 n.). *The land,* see Gen 45.10 n.; 47.11 n.

**1.8:** Probably the allusion is to the new regime at the beginning of the 19th Dynasty under Seti I (1308–1290 B.C.) and Rameses II (1290–1224 B.C.). Hoping to regain Egypt's lost Asiatic empire, the pharaohs moved their capital from Thebes, where it had been during the 18th Dynasty, to the Delta. **9–10:** The presence of the Hebrews on Egypt's frontier was regarded as a security risk. **11:** *Supply cities,* an allusion to the fortification of the area. The new capital, *Rameses* (Zoan; Ps 78.12), was the former Hyksos capital (Avaris or Tanis) of Joseph's time (see Gen 45.10 n.; Num 13.22). As in the case of the pyramids, the work was carried out with the corvée, or forced labor gangs (compare 1 Kings 5.13).

**1.15:** *Hebrew,* an older and broader term than Israelite (see Gen 10.21–31 n.), was often used when foreigners spoke to or about Abraham's people (Gen 39.14, 17; 40.15). **19:** See vv. 7, 12.

**2.1–22: The infancy and early career of Moses. 1:** It was probably the Joseph tribes that took part in the Exodus, although elements of the tribe of Levi were also in Egypt. **2–10:** Aspects of this story are paralleled in

and when she saw that he was a fine baby, she hid him three months. 3When she could hide him no longer she got a papyrus basket for him, and plastered it with bitumen and pitch; she put the child in it and placed it among the reeds on the bank of the river. 4His sister stood at a distance, to see what would happen to him.

5 The daughter of Pharaoh came down to bathe at the river, while her attendants walked beside the river. She saw the basket among the reeds and sent her maid to bring it. 6When she opened it, she saw the child. He was crying, and she took pity on him. "This must be one of the Hebrews' children," she said. 7Then his sister said to Pharaoh's daughter, "Shall I go and get you a nurse from the Hebrew women to nurse the child for you?" 8Pharaoh's daughter said to her, "Yes." So the girl went and called the child's mother. 9Pharaoh's daughter said to her, "Take this child and nurse it for me, and I will give you your wages." So the woman took the child and nursed it. 10When the child grew up, she brought him to Pharaoh's daughter, and she took him as her son. She named him Moses,[b] "because," she said, "I drew him out[c] of the water."

11 One day, after Moses had grown up, he went out to his people and saw their forced labor. He saw an Egyptian beating a Hebrew, one of his kinsfolk. 12He looked this way and that, and seeing no one he killed the Egyptian and hid him in the sand. 13When he went out the next day, he saw two Hebrews fighting; and he said to the one who was in the wrong, "Why do you strike your fellow Hebrew?" 14He answered, "Who made you a ruler and judge over us? Do you mean to kill me as you killed the Egyptian?" Then Moses was afraid and thought, "Surely the thing is known." 15When Pharaoh heard of it, he sought to kill Moses.

But Moses fled from Pharaoh. He settled in the land of Midian, and sat down by a well. 16The priest of Midian had seven daughters. They came to draw water, and filled the troughs to water their father's flock. 17But some shepherds came and drove them away. Moses got up and came to their defense and watered their flock. 18When they returned to their father Reuel, he said, "How is it that you have come back so soon today?" 19They said, "An Egyptian helped us against the shepherds; he even drew water for us and watered the flock." 20He said to his daughters, "Where is he? Why did you leave the man? Invite him to break bread." 21Moses agreed to stay with the man, and he gave Moses his daughter Zipporah in marriage. 22She bore a son, and he named him Gershom; for he said, "I have been an alien[d] residing in a foreign land."

23 After a long time the king of Egypt died. The Israelites groaned under their

*b* Heb *Mosheh* *c* Heb *mashah* *d* Heb *ger*

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the legends of other national heroes, e.g. Sargon of Agade (about 2600 B.C.) who in infancy was saved from danger by being put in a basket of rushes sealed with pitch and floated on the river. **4**: Moses' sister was Miriam (15.20; Num 26.59). **10**: The name *Moses,* from an Egyptian word meaning "to beget a child" and perhaps once joined with the name of an Egyptian deity (compare the name Thut-mose), is here explained by a Hebrew verb meaning "to draw out." The narrator sees divine providence at work, causing the evil design of Pharaoh to serve God's purpose.

**2.11–14**: In spite of his Egyptian upbringing Moses identified himself with his people (Heb 11.24–25). **15**: The Midianites (or Kenites, Judg 1.16) were distant blood relatives of Israel (Gen 25.2). **18**: "The priest of Midian" (v. 16) is usually called either Jethro (3.1; 4.18; 18.1) or Hobab (Num 10.29; Judg 4.11). *Reuel* was apparently his father (Num 10.29).

**2.23–4.17**: **The call of Moses.** In Midian the God of Israel's ancestors appeared to Moses and summoned him to take the lead in delivering Israel.

**2.23**: *The king* was probably Seti I (see 1.8 n.). The Israelites hoped that their condition would improve under the new regime, but Rameses II continued the oppressive

slavery, and cried out. Out of the slavery their cry for help rose up to God. 24God heard their groaning, and God remembered his covenant with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. 25God looked upon the Israelites, and God took notice of them.

3 Moses was keeping the flock of his father-in-law Jethro, the priest of Midian; he led his flock beyond the wilderness, and came to Horeb, the mountain of God. 2There the angel of the LORD appeared to him in a flame of fire out of a bush; he looked, and the bush was blazing, yet it was not consumed. 3Then Moses said, "I must turn aside and look at this great sight, and see why the bush is not burned up." 4When the LORD saw that he had turned aside to see, God called to him out of the bush, "Moses, Moses!" And he said, "Here I am." 5Then he said, "Come no closer! Remove the sandals from your feet, for the place on which you are standing is holy ground." 6He said further, "I am the God of your father, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob." And Moses hid his face, for he was afraid to look at God.

7 Then the LORD said, "I have observed the misery of my people who are in Egypt; I have heard their cry on account of their taskmasters. Indeed, I know their sufferings, 8and I have come down to deliver them from the Egyptians, and to bring them up out of that land to a good and broad land, a land flowing with milk and honey, to the country of the Canaanites, the Hittites, the Amorites, the Perizzites, the Hivites, and the Jebusites. 9The cry of the Israelites has now come to me; I have also seen how the Egyptians oppress them. 10So come, I will send you to Pharaoh to bring my people, the Israelites, out of Egypt." 11But Moses said to God, "Who am I that I should go to Pharaoh, and bring the Israelites out of Egypt?" 12He said, "I will be with you; and this shall be the sign for you that it is I who sent you: when you have brought the people out of Egypt, you shall worship God on this mountain."

13 But Moses said to God, "If I come to the Israelites and say to them, 'The God of your ancestors has sent me to you,' and they ask me, 'What is his name?' what shall I say to them?" 14God

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building program. **24**: Concerning the covenant with Israel's ancestors, see Gen 12.1–3; 17.1–14; 26.2–5.

**3.1–6**: The theophany of the bush. **1**: *The mountain of God,* called both Horeb and Sinai, was probably a Midianite sacred place (see v. 5 n.). Its location is unknown, but tradition places it in the eastern part of the Sinaitic Peninsula. **2**: *The angel of the* LORD, see Gen 16.7 n. *Fire* was conceived to be the form of the divine appearance (Gen 15.17; Ex 19.18; Ps 104.3–4; Ezek 1.27). **5**: Moses unexpectedly found himself in a holy place (see v. 1 n.; Gen 28.16–17). The removal of sandals before entering a holy place was an ancient custom (Josh 5.15). **6**: *The God of your father,* see Gen 26.24 n. The vision of God veiled in fire aroused dread (33.20), for divine holiness was experienced as a mysterious power that threatened human existence (19.10–13).

**3.7–12**: The divine commission. **8**: Canaan was *a land flowing with milk and honey,* foods that made it a paradise in the eyes of semi-nomads. On the pre-Israelite peoples, see Gen 10.15–20; Num 13.29. **11–12**: The first of Moses' four objections (v. 13; 4.1, 10). God's word will be confirmed by a *sign* (compare Isa 7.10–17), i.e. the return of Israel to Sinai for worship. A sign may be an extraordinary wonder (4.1–9) or an ordinary phenomenon. What makes it significant, and therefore miraculous, is that God's presence and power are disclosed to the eyes of faith.

**3.13–15**: Moses' second question assumes a polytheistic environment; thus he must know the identity of the God who is dealing with him. On the *name,* see Gen 32.27 n. **14**: I AM WHO I AM is an etymology of the cultic name for the God of Israel, YHWH, probably pronounced Yahweh. (The NRSV, following ancient synagogue practice, substitutes "the LORD"; see To the Reader, p. xiii). YHWH is treated as a verbal form derived from "to be" and formulated in the first person because God is the speaker. Actually YHWH is a third person form and may mean "He causes to be." The name does not indicate God's eternal being but God's action and presence in historical affairs. **15**: The name is here introduced for the first time (6.2–3;

said to Moses, "I AM WHO I AM."[e] He said further, "Thus you shall say to the Israelites, 'I AM has sent me to you.' "
15God also said to Moses, "Thus you shall say to the Israelites, 'The LORD,[f] the God of your ancestors, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob, has sent me to you':

This is my name forever,
and this my title for all
generations.

16Go and assemble the elders of Israel, and say to them, 'The LORD, the God of your ancestors, the God of Abraham, of Isaac, and of Jacob, has appeared to me, saying: I have given heed to you and to what has been done to you in Egypt. 17I declare that I will bring you up out of the misery of Egypt, to the land of the Canaanites, the Hittites, the Amorites, the Perizzites, the Hivites, and the Jebusites, a land flowing with milk and honey.' 18They will listen to your voice; and you and the elders of Israel shall go to the king of Egypt and say to him, 'The LORD, the God of the Hebrews, has met with us; let us now go a three days' journey into the wilderness, so that we may sacrifice to the LORD our God.' 19I know, however, that the king of Egypt will not let you go unless compelled by a mighty hand.[g] 20So I will stretch out my hand and strike Egypt with all my wonders that I will perform in it; after that he will let you go. 21I will bring this people into such favor with the Egyptians that, when you go, you will not go empty-handed; 22each woman shall ask her neighbor and any woman living in the neighbor's house for jewelry of silver and of gold, and clothing, and you shall put them on your sons and on your daughters; and so you shall plunder the Egyptians."

4 Then Moses answered, "But suppose they do not believe me or listen to me, but say, 'The LORD did not appear to you.' " 2The LORD said to him, "What is that in your hand?" He said, "A staff." 3And he said, "Throw it on the ground." So he threw the staff on the ground, and it became a snake; and Moses drew back from it. 4Then the LORD said to Moses, "Reach out your hand, and seize it by the tail"—so he reached out his hand and grasped it, and it became a staff in his hand— 5"so that they may believe that the LORD, the God of their ancestors, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob, has appeared to you."

6 Again, the LORD said to him, "Put your hand inside your cloak." He put his hand into his cloak; and when he took it out, his hand was leprous,[h] as white as snow. 7Then God said, "Put your hand back into your cloak"—so he put his hand back into his cloak, and when he took it out, it was restored like the rest of his body— 8"If they will not believe you or heed the first sign, they may believe the second sign. 9If they will not believe even these two signs or heed you, you shall take some water from the Nile and pour it on the dry ground; and the water that you shall take from the Nile will become blood on the dry ground."

10 But Moses said to the LORD, "O my Lord, I have never been eloquent, neither in the past nor even now that you have spoken to your servant; but I am slow of speech and slow of tongue." 11Then the LORD said to him, "Who gives speech to mortals? Who makes them mute or deaf, seeing or

*e* Or *I AM WHAT I AM* or *I WILL BE WHAT I WILL BE*
*f* The word "LORD" when spelled with capital letters stands for the divine name, *YHWH*, which is here connected with the verb *hayah*, "to be"
*g* Gk Vg: Heb *no, not by a mighty hand*
*h* A term for several skin diseases; precise meaning uncertain

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compare Gen 4.26b n.). **21–22**: See 11.2–3; 12.35–36.

**4.1–9**: This narrative reflects superstitious magic which flourished in Egypt and claims that Moses was given power to excel in these "secret arts" (7.11; 8.18–19; 9.11). **3**: 7.8–12. Serpent magic was practiced in Egypt from ancient times. The sign was the reverse of a trick whereby a snake is made rigid by hypnotism, so that it can be picked up by the tail.

**4.10–17**: Aaron is designated as Moses' aide. **11**: Jer 1.6. In Hebraic thought human

blind? Is it not I, the LORD? 12Now go, and I will be with your mouth and teach you what you are to speak." 13But he said, "O my Lord, please send someone else." 14Then the anger of the LORD was kindled against Moses and he said, "What of your brother Aaron the Levite? I know that he can speak fluently; even now he is coming out to meet you, and when he sees you his heart will be glad. 15You shall speak to him and put the words in his mouth; and I will be with your mouth and with his mouth, and will teach you what you shall do. 16He indeed shall speak for you to the people; he shall serve as a mouth for you, and you shall serve as God for him. 17Take in your hand this staff, with which you shall perform the signs."

18 Moses went back to his father-in-law Jethro and said to him, "Please let me go back to my kindred in Egypt and see whether they are still living." And Jethro said to Moses, "Go in peace." 19The LORD said to Moses in Midian, "Go back to Egypt; for all those who were seeking your life are dead." 20So Moses took his wife and his sons, put them on a donkey, and went back to the land of Egypt; and Moses carried the staff of God in his hand.

21 And the LORD said to Moses, "When you go back to Egypt, see that you perform before Pharaoh all the wonders that I have put in your power; but I will harden his heart, so that he will not let the people go. 22Then you shall say to Pharaoh, 'Thus says the LORD: Israel is my firstborn son. 23I said to you, "Let my son go that he may worship me." But you refused to let him go; now I will kill your firstborn son.' "

24 On the way, at a place where they spent the night, the LORD met him and tried to kill him. 25But Zipporah took a flint and cut off her son's foreskin, and touched Moses'[i] feet with it, and said, "Truly you are a bridegroom of blood to me!" 26So he let him alone. It was then she said, "A bridegroom of blood by circumcision."

27 The LORD said to Aaron, "Go into the wilderness to meet Moses." So he went; and he met him at the mountain of God and kissed him. 28Moses told Aaron all the words of the LORD with which he had sent him, and all the signs with which he had charged him. 29Then Moses and Aaron went and assembled all the elders of the Israelites. 30Aaron spoke all the words that the LORD had spoken to Moses, and performed the signs in the sight of the people. 31The people believed; and when they heard that the LORD had given heed to the Israelites and that he had seen their misery, they bowed down and worshiped.

5 Afterward Moses and Aaron went to Pharaoh and said, "Thus says the

*i* Heb *his*

conditions were not ascribed to secondary causes but to God whose will is sovereign in all things (Deut 32.39). **16**: The relation between God and God's prophetic spokesperson is analogous to the relation between Moses and Aaron (7.1; compare 16.9).

**4.18–31**: **Moses returns to Egypt to arouse the faith of his people. 20**: Only one of Moses' sons has been mentioned so far (2.22); see 18.3–4. **21**: Even Pharaoh's stubbornness, which paradoxically was the expression of his own free will (8.15, 32; 9.34), was foreknown (3.19) and foreordained by God, thus indicating divine sovereignty in historical affairs (compare Isa 6.10). **22**: *Israel* (the people) is the LORD's *firstborn son* among the nations, a pre-eminent rank based upon divine adoption or election (Jer 31.9; Hos 11.1). **23**: 11.5; 12.29–34. **24–26**: An archaic tradition that traces the origin of circumcision (compare Gen 17.9–14) to the Midianite wife of Moses.

**4.24**: This verse reflects ancient belief in demonic attack (see Gen 38.7 n.), warded off by the timely performance of the rite. Originally circumcision was a puberty or marriage rite; *bridegroom of blood* (v. 26) is perhaps an old expression for a young man who was circumcised before marriage. **25**: Here it is assumed that the circumcision of the infant son was efficacious for Moses, who was evidently uncircumcised. *Feet*, a euphemism for the genitals (Isa 7.20). **27**: *The mountain of God* (3.1), which Moses had already left (4.20).

**5.1–6.1**: **The first audience with Pharaoh fails. 1**: The petition is for a leave of absence to make a pilgrimage to the sacred mountain (v. 3; 3.18). **2**: The contemptuous

LORD, the God of Israel, 'Let my people go, so that they may celebrate a festival to me in the wilderness.' " 2But Pharaoh said, "Who is the LORD, that I should heed him and let Israel go? I do not know the LORD, and I will not let Israel go." 3Then they said, "The God of the Hebrews has revealed himself to us; let us go a three days' journey into the wilderness to sacrifice to the LORD our God, or he will fall upon us with pestilence or sword." 4But the king of Egypt said to them, "Moses and Aaron, why are you taking the people away from their work? Get to your labors!" 5Pharaoh continued, "Now they are more numerous than the people of the land[j] and yet you want them to stop working!" 6That same day Pharaoh commanded the taskmasters of the people, as well as their supervisors, 7"You shall no longer give the people straw to make bricks, as before; let them go and gather straw for themselves. 8But you shall require of them the same quantity of bricks as they have made previously; do not diminish it, for they are lazy; that is why they cry, 'Let us go and offer sacrifice to our God.' 9Let heavier work be laid on them; then they will labor at it and pay no attention to deceptive words."

10 So the taskmasters and the supervisors of the people went out and said to the people, "Thus says Pharaoh, 'I will not give you straw. 11Go and get straw yourselves, wherever you can find it; but your work will not be lessened in the least.' " 12So the people scattered throughout the land of Egypt, to gather stubble for straw. 13The taskmasters were urgent, saying, "Complete your work, the same daily assignment as when you were given straw." 14And the supervisors of the Israelites, whom Pharaoh's taskmasters had set over them, were beaten, and were asked, "Why did you not finish the required quantity of bricks yesterday and today, as you did before?"

15 Then the Israelite supervisors came to Pharaoh and cried, "Why do you treat your servants like this? 16No straw is given to your servants, yet they say to us, 'Make bricks!' Look how your servants are beaten! You are unjust to your own people."[k] 17He said, "You are lazy, lazy; that is why you say, 'Let us go and sacrifice to the LORD.' 18Go now, and work; for no straw shall be given you, but you shall still deliver the same number of bricks." 19The Israelite supervisors saw that they were in trouble when they were told, "You shall not lessen your daily number of bricks." 20As they left Pharaoh, they came upon Moses and Aaron who were waiting to meet them. 21They said to them, "The LORD look upon you and judge! You have brought us into bad odor with Pharaoh and his officials, and have put a sword in their hand to kill us."

22 Then Moses turned again to the LORD and said, "O LORD, why have you mistreated this people? Why did you ever send me? 23Since I first came to Pharaoh to speak in your name, he has mistreated this people, and you have done nothing at all to deliver your people."

6 Then the LORD said to Moses, "Now you shall see what I will do to Pharaoh: Indeed, by a mighty hand he will let them go; by a mighty hand he will drive them out of his land."

2 God also spoke to Moses and said to him: "I am the LORD. 3I appeared to

*j* Sam: Heb *The people of the land are now many*
*k* Gk Compare Syr Vg: Heb *beaten, and the sin of your people*

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Pharaoh, whose absolute power was enforced by his deification in Egyptian religion, knew many gods; but the LORD (YHWH) was unheard of and a request made in the name of this deity carried no authority. **9**: Compare 1 Kings 12.1–11. Pharaoh treats the request for a three-day journey as *deceptive words*, i.e. a ruse to leave the country permanently.

**5.16**: The supervisors diplomatically suggest that the fault lies with Pharaoh's subordinates, i.e. *your own people*. **21**: *The LORD . . . judge*, i.e. give Moses and Aaron due justice for worsening their plight.

**6.2–7.7**: **The call of Moses and the appointment of Aaron** are recapitulated in a priestly version (compare 3.1–4.17).

Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob as God Almighty,[l] but by my name 'The LORD'[m] I did not make myself known to them. 4I also established my covenant with them, to give them the land of Canaan, the land in which they resided as aliens. 5I have also heard the groaning of the Israelites whom the Egyptians are holding as slaves, and I have remembered my covenant. 6Say therefore to the Israelites, 'I am the LORD, and I will free you from the burdens of the Egyptians and deliver you from slavery to them. I will redeem you with an outstretched arm and with mighty acts of judgment. 7I will take you as my people, and I will be your God. You shall know that I am the LORD your God, who has freed you from the burdens of the Egyptians. 8I will bring you into the land that I swore to give to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob; I will give it to you for a possession. I am the LORD.' " 9Moses told this to the Israelites; but they would not listen to Moses, because of their broken spirit and their cruel slavery.

10 Then the LORD spoke to Moses, 11"Go and tell Pharaoh king of Egypt to let the Israelites go out of his land." 12But Moses spoke to the LORD, "The Israelites have not listened to me; how then shall Pharaoh listen to me, poor speaker that I am?"[n] 13Thus the LORD spoke to Moses and Aaron, and gave them orders regarding the Israelites and Pharaoh king of Egypt, charging them to free the Israelites from the land of Egypt.

14 The following are the heads of their ancestral houses: the sons of Reuben, the firstborn of Israel: Hanoch, Pallu, Hezron, and Carmi; these are the families of Reuben. 15The sons of Simeon: Jemuel, Jamin, Ohad, Jachin, Zohar, and Shaul,[o] the son of a Canaanite woman; these are the families of Simeon. 16The following are the names of the sons of Levi according to their genealogies: Gershon,[p] Kohath, and Merari, and the length of Levi's life was one hundred thirty-seven years. 17The sons of Gershon:[p] Libni and Shimei, by their families. 18The sons of Kohath: Amram, Izhar, Hebron, and Uzziel, and the length of Kohath's life was one hundred thirty-three years. 19The sons of Merari: Mahli and Mushi. These are the families of the Levites according to their genealogies. 20Amram married Jochebed his father's sister and she bore him Aaron and Moses, and the length of Amram's life was one hundred thirty-seven years. 21The sons of Izhar: Korah, Nepheg, and Zichri. 22The sons of Uzziel: Mishael, Elzaphan, and Sithri. 23Aaron married Elisheba, daughter of Amminadab and sister of Nahshon, and she bore him Nadab, Abihu, Eleazar, and Ithamar. 24The sons of Korah: Assir, Elkanah, and Abiasaph; these are the families of the Korahites. 25Aaron's son Eleazar married one of the daughters of Putiel, and she bore him Phinehas. These are the heads of the ancestral houses of the Levites by their families.

26 It was this same Aaron and Moses to whom the LORD said, "Bring the Israelites out of the land of Egypt, company by company." 27It was they who spoke to Pharaoh king of Egypt to bring the Israelites out of Egypt, the same Moses and Aaron.

28 On the day when the LORD spoke to Moses in the land of Egypt, 29he said to him, "I am the LORD; tell Pharaoh king of Egypt all that I am speaking to you."

*l* Traditional rendering of Heb *El Shaddai*
*m* Heb *YHWH*; see note at 3.15 *n* Heb *me? I am uncircumcised of lips* *o* Or *Saul* *p* Also spelled *Gershom*; see 2.22

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**6.2–3**: See 3.14 n. The LORD (YHWH), the same God who led Israel's ancestors, was formerly known by another name, El Shaddai (see Gen 17.1 n.). **4**: The *covenant* is the Abrahamic covenant (Gen ch 17), which guaranteed possession of the land of Canaan (v. 8). **7**: *My people . . . your God,* a succinct statement of the meaning of the covenant relation (Hos 2.23; Jer 31.33).

**6.12**: See 4.10–16. The answer to Moses' question, interrupted by vv. 14–27, is found in v. 28 to 7.2.

30 But Moses said in the LORD's presence, "Since I am a poor speaker,[q] why would Pharaoh listen to me?"

7 The LORD said to Moses, "See, I have made you like God to Pharaoh, and your brother Aaron shall be your prophet. 2 You shall speak all that I command you, and your brother Aaron shall tell Pharaoh to let the Israelites go out of his land. 3 But I will harden Pharaoh's heart, and I will multiply my signs and wonders in the land of Egypt. 4 When Pharaoh does not listen to you, I will lay my hand upon Egypt and bring my people the Israelites, company by company, out of the land of Egypt by great acts of judgment. 5 The Egyptians shall know that I am the LORD, when I stretch out my hand against Egypt and bring the Israelites out from among them." 6 Moses and Aaron did so; they did just as the LORD commanded them. 7 Moses was eighty years old and Aaron eighty-three when they spoke to Pharaoh.

8 The LORD said to Moses and Aaron, 9 "When Pharaoh says to you, 'Perform a wonder,' then you shall say to Aaron, 'Take your staff and throw it down before Pharaoh, and it will become a snake.' " 10 So Moses and Aaron went to Pharaoh and did as the LORD had commanded; Aaron threw down his staff before Pharaoh and his officials, and it became a snake. 11 Then Pharaoh summoned the wise men and the sorcerers; and they also, the magicians of Egypt, did the same by their secret arts. 12 Each one threw down his staff, and they became snakes; but Aaron's staff swallowed up theirs. 13 Still Pharaoh's heart was hardened, and he would not listen to them, as the LORD had said.

14 Then the LORD said to Moses, "Pharaoh's heart is hardened; he refuses to let the people go. 15 Go to Pharaoh in the morning, as he is going out to the water; stand by at the river bank to meet him, and take in your hand the staff that was turned into a snake. 16 Say to him, 'The LORD, the God of the Hebrews, sent me to you to say, "Let my people go, so that they may worship me in the wilderness." But until now you have not listened. 17 Thus says the LORD, "By this you shall know that I am the LORD." See, with the staff that is in my hand I will strike the water that is in the Nile, and it shall be turned to blood. 18 The fish in the river shall die, the river itself shall stink, and the Egyptians shall be unable to drink water from the Nile.' " 19 The LORD said to Moses, "Say to Aaron, 'Take your staff and stretch out your hand over the waters of Egypt—over its rivers, its canals, and its ponds, and all its pools of water—so that they may become blood; and there shall be blood throughout the whole land of Egypt, even in vessels of wood and in vessels of stone.' "

20 Moses and Aaron did just as the LORD commanded. In the sight of Phar-

*q* Heb *am uncircumcised of lips*; see 6.12

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**6.14–27**: The purpose of the genealogy of Aaron and Moses is to trace priestly lineage from Levi, Jacob's son, to Aaron and through Aaron's third son, Eleazar, to Phinehas (Num ch 3). **14–16**: Gen 46.8–11. *Ancestral houses,* see Num 1.2–4 n. **28–30**: Continuation from v. 12.

**7.1**: See 4.16 n. **2**: See 5.1 where both Moses and Aaron are to speak to the king; here the role of Aaron, the priest, is stressed. **3–4**: See 4.21 n. The *mighty acts of judgment* (6.6) are the signs and wonders.

**7.8–11.10**: **The ten plagues** (Pss 78.44–51; 105.28–36).

**7.8–13**: The preface to the contest with Pharaoh is drawn from priestly tradition (compare 4.1–5). Here Aaron is the chief actor and his rod—not Moses'—is turned into a snake.

**7.14–24**: **First plague:** the pollution of the Nile. **15**: Moses was to meet Pharaoh *at the river bank* with a challenge to Egyptian existence; for the Nile, believed to have its source in the subterranean ocean (see Gen 2.6 n.), was the source of life and fertility. **17–18**: The plague of blood apparently reflects a natural phenomenon of Egypt: namely, the reddish color of the Nile at its height in the summer owing to red particles of earth or perhaps minute organisms. **19**: The tendency to enhance the tradition is seen in the facts that here the rod is Aaron's (see 4.14; 7.2) and that all

aoh and of his officials he lifted up the staff and struck the water in the river, and all the water in the river was turned into blood, [21] and the fish in the river died. The river stank so that the Egyptians could not drink its water, and there was blood throughout the whole land of Egypt. [22] But the magicians of Egypt did the same by their secret arts; so Pharaoh's heart remained hardened, and he would not listen to them, as the LORD had said. [23] Pharaoh turned and went into his house, and he did not take even this to heart. [24] And all the Egyptians had to dig along the Nile for water to drink, for they could not drink the water of the river.

25 Seven days passed after the LORD had struck the Nile.

8 [r] Then the LORD said to Moses, "Go to Pharaoh and say to him, 'Thus says the LORD: Let my people go, so that they may worship me. [2] If you refuse to let them go, I will plague your whole country with frogs. [3] The river shall swarm with frogs; they shall come up into your palace, into your bedchamber and your bed, and into the houses of your officials and of your people, [s] and into your ovens and your kneading bowls. [4] The frogs shall come up on you and on your people and on all your officials.' " [5] [t] And the LORD said to Moses, "Say to Aaron, 'Stretch out your hand with your staff over the rivers, the canals, and the pools, and make frogs come up on the land of Egypt.' " [6] So Aaron stretched out his hand over the waters of Egypt; and the frogs came up and covered the land of Egypt. [7] But the magicians did the same by their secret arts, and brought frogs up on the land of Egypt.

8 Then Pharaoh called Moses and Aaron, and said, "Pray to the LORD to take away the frogs from me and my people, and I will let the people go to sacrifice to the LORD." [9] Moses said to Pharaoh, "Kindly tell me when I am to pray for you and for your officials and for your people, that the frogs may be removed from you and your houses and be left only in the Nile." [10] And he said, "Tomorrow." Moses said, "As you say! So that you may know that there is no one like the LORD our God, [11] the frogs shall leave you and your houses and your officials and your people; they shall be left only in the Nile." [12] Then Moses and Aaron went out from Pharaoh; and Moses cried out to the LORD concerning the frogs that he had brought upon Pharaoh. [u] [13] And the LORD did as Moses requested: the frogs died in the houses, the courtyards, and the fields. [14] And they gathered them together in heaps, and the land stank. [15] But when Pharaoh saw that there was a respite, he hardened his heart, and would not listen to them, just as the LORD had said.

16 Then the LORD said to Moses, "Say to Aaron, 'Stretch out your staff and strike the dust of the earth, so that it may become gnats throughout the whole land of Egypt.' " [17] And they did so; Aaron stretched out his hand with his staff and struck the dust of the earth, and gnats came on humans and animals alike;

*r* Ch 7.26 in Heb
*s* Gk: Heb *upon your people*
*t* Ch 8.1 in Heb
*u* Or *frogs, as he had agreed with Pharaoh*

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the water of Egypt is said to have been polluted. **22**: See v. 11.

**7.25–8.15**: **Second plague:** frogs.

**8.3**: The mud of the Nile, after the seasonal overflowing, was a natural place for frogs to generate. Egypt has been spared more frequent occurrence of this pestilence by the frog-eating bird, the ibis. **5–7**: Another unit of tradition that extols Aaron the priest (7.19).

**8.8**: *Pray to the LORD,* for the first time Pharaoh momentarily recognizes Israel's God. **9–11**: To enhance the wonder, Moses promises to pray that the scourge cease at a designated time.

**8.16–32**: **Third and fourth plagues:** gnats and flies. **16**: From ancient times stinging gnats or mosquitoes have plagued Egypt, especially in the autumn. The Nile, receding from its overflow, leaves stagnant pools of water in which the insects breed. On Aaron's rod, see 7.19; 8.5–7. **19**: This time the magi-

all the dust of the earth turned into gnats throughout the whole land of Egypt. 18The magicians tried to produce gnats by their secret arts, but they could not. There were gnats on both humans and animals. 19And the magicians said to Pharaoh, "This is the finger of God!" But Pharaoh's heart was hardened, and he would not listen to them, just as the LORD had said.

20 Then the LORD said to Moses, "Rise early in the morning and present yourself before Pharaoh, as he goes out to the water, and say to him, 'Thus says the LORD: Let my people go, so that they may worship me. 21For if you will not let my people go, I will send swarms of flies on you, your officials, and your people, and into your houses; and the houses of the Egyptians shall be filled with swarms of flies; so also the land where they live. 22But on that day I will set apart the land of Goshen, where my people live, so that no swarms of flies shall be there, that you may know that I the LORD am in this land. 23Thus I will make a distinction[v] between my people and your people. This sign shall appear tomorrow.'" 24The LORD did so, and great swarms of flies came into the house of Pharaoh and into his officials' houses; in all of Egypt the land was ruined because of the flies.

25 Then Pharaoh summoned Moses and Aaron, and said, "Go, sacrifice to your God within the land." 26But Moses said, "It would not be right to do so; for the sacrifices that we offer to the LORD our God are offensive to the Egyptians. If we offer in the sight of the Egyptians sacrifices that are offensive to them, will they not stone us? 27We must go a three days' journey into the wilderness and sacrifice to the LORD our God as he commands us." 28So Pharaoh said, "I will let you go to sacrifice to the LORD your God in the wilderness, provided you do not go very far away. Pray for me." 29Then Moses said, "As soon as I leave you, I will pray to the LORD that the swarms of flies may depart tomorrow from Pharaoh, from his officials, and from his people; only do not let Pharaoh again deal falsely by not letting the people go to sacrifice to the LORD."

30 So Moses went out from Pharaoh and prayed to the LORD. 31And the LORD did as Moses asked: he removed the swarms of flies from Pharaoh, from his officials, and from his people; not one remained. 32But Pharaoh hardened his heart this time also, and would not let the people go.

9 Then the LORD said to Moses, "Go to Pharaoh, and say to him, 'Thus says the LORD, the God of the Hebrews: Let my people go, so that they may worship me. 2For if you refuse to let them go and still hold them, 3the hand of the LORD will strike with a deadly pestilence your livestock in the field: the horses, the donkeys, the camels, the herds, and the flocks. 4But the LORD will make a distinction between the livestock of Israel and the livestock of Egypt, so that nothing shall die of all that belongs to the Israelites.'" 5The LORD set a time, saying, "Tomorrow the LORD will do this thing in the land." 6And on the next day the LORD did so; all the livestock of the Egyptians died, but of the livestock of the Israelites not one died. 7Pharaoh inquired and found that not one of the live-

*v* Gk Vg: Heb *will set redemption*

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cians are unable to match the feat and confess that *this is the finger of God* (31.18; Ps 8.3; Lk 11.20).

**8.20–32:** The fourth plague is probably a variant of vv. 16–19. **22–23:** The sign was not just the coming of myriads of flies but the isolation of Goshen so that the scourge did not affect the Hebrews. **26:** Egypt had strong taboos against the religious practices of foreigners (Gen 43.32). **28:** Pharaoh's further concession—permission to go just beyond the border—reflects his suspicion of Moses' intention (5.9).

**9.1–12:** **Fifth and sixth plagues:** cattle plague and boils. **3:** This plague, perhaps anthrax, seems to have resulted from conditions created by former plagues: disease spread by mosquitoes or flies. **4:** See 8.22–23 n. **5:** This time Pharaoh was given twenty-four hours' notice.

stock of the Israelites was dead. But the heart of Pharaoh was hardened, and he would not let the people go.

8 Then the LORD said to Moses and Aaron, "Take handfuls of soot from the kiln, and let Moses throw it in the air in the sight of Pharaoh. 9It shall become fine dust all over the land of Egypt, and shall cause festering boils on humans and animals throughout the whole land of Egypt." 10So they took soot from the kiln, and stood before Pharaoh, and Moses threw it in the air, and it caused festering boils on humans and animals. 11The magicians could not stand before Moses because of the boils, for the boils afflicted the magicians as well as all the Egyptians. 12But the LORD hardened the heart of Pharaoh, and he would not listen to them, just as the LORD had spoken to Moses.

13 Then the LORD said to Moses, "Rise up early in the morning and present yourself before Pharaoh, and say to him, 'Thus says the LORD, the God of the Hebrews: Let my people go, so that they may worship me. 14For this time I will send all my plagues upon you yourself, and upon your officials, and upon your people, so that you may know that there is no one like me in all the earth. 15For by now I could have stretched out my hand and struck you and your people with pestilence, and you would have been cut off from the earth. 16But this is why I have let you live: to show you my power, and to make my name resound through all the earth. 17You are still exalting yourself against my people, and will not let them go. 18Tomorrow at this time I will cause the heaviest hail to fall that has ever fallen in Egypt from the day it was founded until now. 19Send, therefore, and have your livestock and everything that you have in the open field brought to a secure place; every human or animal that is in the open field and is not brought under shelter will die when the hail comes down upon them.'" 20Those officials of Pharaoh who feared the word of the LORD hurried their slaves and livestock off to a secure place. 21Those who did not regard the word of the LORD left their slaves and livestock in the open field.

22 The LORD said to Moses, "Stretch out your hand toward heaven so that hail may fall on the whole land of Egypt, on humans and animals and all the plants of the field in the land of Egypt." 23Then Moses stretched out his staff toward heaven, and the LORD sent thunder and hail, and fire came down on the earth. And the LORD rained hail on the land of Egypt; 24there was hail with fire flashing continually in the midst of it, such heavy hail as had never fallen in all the land of Egypt since it became a nation. 25The hail struck down everything that was in the open field throughout all the land of Egypt, both human and animal; the hail also struck down all the plants of the field, and shattered every tree in the field. 26Only in the land of Goshen, where the Israelites were, there was no hail.

27 Then Pharaoh summoned Moses and Aaron, and said to them, "This time I have sinned; the LORD is in the right, and I and my people are in the wrong. 28Pray to the LORD! Enough of God's

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**9.8–12**: The sixth plague, boils or a similar skin outbreak (Deut 28.27), is parallel to the previous one, so far as the cattle are concerned.

**9.13–35**: **Seventh plague:** hail and thunderstorm. **14**: *All my plagues upon you yourself* is not clear but may refer to unleashing the full fury of heaven: thunder, hail, rain, and lightning (vv. 23, 33). **15–16**: It is explained that the ineffectiveness of the plagues up to this point is not due to the LORD's weakness but to patient determination to demonstrate divine sovereignty (compare Rom 9.17). **26**: See vv. 6–7; 8.22–23 n.

**9.27**: For the first time Pharaoh confesses that he is beaten, hoping to appease the foreign deity without making further concessions. **29**: The plagues bear witness to the fact that *the earth is the LORD's* (19.5; Ps 24.1), for the powers of nature serve God's purpose. **31–32**: This parenthetical remark explains why there were still plants for the locusts to eat during the next plague and, incidentally, dates the seventh plague around the middle of

thunder and hail! I will let you go; you need stay no longer." 29Moses said to him, "As soon as I have gone out of the city, I will stretch out my hands to the LORD; the thunder will cease, and there will be no more hail, so that you may know that the earth is the LORD's. 30But as for you and your officials, I know that you do not yet fear the LORD God." 31(Now the flax and the barley were ruined, for the barley was in the ear and the flax was in bud. 32But the wheat and the spelt were not ruined, for they are late in coming up.) 33So Moses left Pharaoh, went out of the city, and stretched out his hands to the LORD; then the thunder and the hail ceased, and the rain no longer poured down on the earth. 34But when Pharaoh saw that the rain and the hail and the thunder had ceased, he sinned once more and hardened his heart, he and his officials. 35So the heart of Pharaoh was hardened, and he would not let the Israelites go, just as the LORD had spoken through Moses.

10 Then the LORD said to Moses, "Go to Pharaoh; for I have hardened his heart and the heart of his officials, in order that I may show these signs of mine among them, 2and that you may tell your children and grandchildren how I have made fools of the Egyptians and what signs I have done among them—so that you may know that I am the LORD."

3 So Moses and Aaron went to Pharaoh, and said to him, "Thus says the LORD, the God of the Hebrews, 'How long will you refuse to humble yourself before me? Let my people go, so that they may worship me. 4For if you refuse to let my people go, tomorrow I will bring locusts into your country. 5They shall cover the surface of the land, so that no one will be able to see the land. They shall devour the last remnant left you after the hail, and they shall devour every tree of yours that grows in the field. 6They shall fill your houses, and the houses of all your officials and of all the Egyptians—something that neither your parents nor your grandparents have seen, from the day they came on earth to this day.' " Then he turned and went out from Pharaoh.

7 Pharaoh's officials said to him, "How long shall this fellow be a snare to us? Let the people go, so that they may worship the LORD their God; do you not yet understand that Egypt is ruined?" 8So Moses and Aaron were brought back to Pharaoh, and he said to them, "Go, worship the LORD your God! But which ones are to go?" 9Moses said, "We will go with our young and our old; we will go with our sons and daughters and with our flocks and herds, because we have the LORD's festival to celebrate." 10He said to them, "The LORD indeed will be with you, if ever I let your little ones go with you! Plainly, you have some evil purpose in mind. 11No, never! Your men may go and worship the LORD, for that is what you are asking." And they were driven out from Pharaoh's presence.

12 Then the LORD said to Moses, "Stretch out your hand over the land of Egypt, so that the locusts may come upon it and eat every plant in the land, all that the hail has left." 13So Moses stretched out his staff over the land of Egypt, and the LORD brought an east wind upon the land all that day and all that night; when morning came, the east wind had brought the locusts. 14The locusts came upon all the land of Egypt and settled on the whole country of Egypt, such a dense swarm of locusts as had

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January, when the crops begin to mature.

**10.1–20: Eighth plague:** locusts. **4–6:** Clouds of locusts were a familiar pestilence to farmers in the ancient Near East (see Joel).

**10.7–11:** At the insistence of his impressed courtiers, Pharaoh attempts to negotiate before the twenty-four hour deadline (9.5); he offers to let only the men go, since adult males took part in the religious rites (23.17; 34.23; Deut 16.16). **13:** The miracle rests upon a natural phenomenon (14.21; Num 11.31); an *east wind* brought the locusts and, when the wind shifted, a *west wind* drove them into the Red Sea (v. 19).

never been before, nor ever shall be again. 15They covered the surface of the whole land, so that the land was black; and they ate all the plants in the land and all the fruit of the trees that the hail had left; nothing green was left, no tree, no plant in the field, in all the land of Egypt. 16Pharaoh hurriedly summoned Moses and Aaron and said, "I have sinned against the LORD your God, and against you. 17Do forgive my sin just this once, and pray to the LORD your God that at the least he remove this deadly thing from me." 18So he went out from Pharaoh and prayed to the LORD. 19The LORD changed the wind into a very strong west wind, which lifted the locusts and drove them into the Red Sea;[w] not a single locust was left in all the country of Egypt. 20But the LORD hardened Pharaoh's heart, and he would not let the Israelites go.

21 Then the LORD said to Moses, "Stretch out your hand toward heaven so that there may be darkness over the land of Egypt, a darkness that can be felt." 22So Moses stretched out his hand toward heaven, and there was dense darkness in all the land of Egypt for three days. 23People could not see one another, and for three days they could not move from where they were; but all the Israelites had light where they lived. 24Then Pharaoh summoned Moses, and said, "Go, worship the LORD. Only your flocks and your herds shall remain behind. Even your children may go with you." 25But Moses said, "You must also let us have sacrifices and burnt offerings to sacrifice to the LORD our God. 26Our livestock also must go with us; not a hoof shall be left behind, for we must choose some of them for the worship of the LORD our God, and we will not know what to use to worship the LORD until we arrive there." 27But the LORD hardened Pharaoh's heart, and he was unwilling to let them go. 28Then Pharaoh said to him, "Get away from me! Take care that you do not see my face again, for on the day you see my face you shall die." 29Moses said, "Just as you say! I will never see your face again."

11 The LORD said to Moses, "I will bring one more plague upon Pharaoh and upon Egypt; afterwards he will let you go from here; indeed, when he lets you go, he will drive you away. 2Tell the people that every man is to ask his neighbor and every woman is to ask her neighbor for objects of silver and gold." 3The LORD gave the people favor in the sight of the Egyptians. Moreover, Moses himself was a man of great importance in the land of Egypt, in the sight of Pharaoh's officials and in the sight of the people.

4 Moses said, "Thus says the LORD: About midnight I will go out through Egypt. 5Every firstborn in the land of Egypt shall die, from the firstborn of Pharaoh who sits on his throne to the firstborn of the female slave who is behind the handmill, and all the firstborn of the livestock. 6Then there will be a loud cry throughout the whole land of Egypt, such as has never been or will ever be again. 7But not a dog shall growl at any of the Israelites—not at people, not at animals—so that you may know that the LORD makes a distinction between Egypt and Israel. 8Then all these officials of yours shall come down to me, and bow low to me, saying, 'Leave us, you and all the people who follow you.' After that I will leave." And in hot anger he left Pharaoh.

9 The LORD said to Moses, "Pharaoh

*w* Or *Sea of Reeds*

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**10.21–29**: **Ninth plague:** dense darkness. **21**: *A darkness that can be felt* aptly describes conditions created by the hot wind, the "khamsin," which blows in from the desert during the spring (March-May), bringing with it so much dust and sand that the air is darkened and breathing becomes difficult. **23b**: Compare 8.22–23; 9.6–7, 26.

**11.1–10**: **The announcement of the final plague,** the death of the firstborn (concluded in 12.29–32). **2–3**: The "spoliation of the Egyptians" (3.21–22; 12.35–36) is explained as evidence of the favor which Moses and the Israelites had gained in Egypt.

will not listen to you, in order that my wonders may be multiplied in the land of Egypt." 10Moses and Aaron performed all these wonders before Pharaoh; but the LORD hardened Pharaoh's heart, and he did not let the people of Israel go out of his land.

12 The LORD said to Moses and Aaron in the land of Egypt: 2This month shall mark for you the beginning of months; it shall be the first month of the year for you. 3Tell the whole congregation of Israel that on the tenth of this month they are to take a lamb for each family, a lamb for each household. 4If a household is too small for a whole lamb, it shall join its closest neighbor in obtaining one; the lamb shall be divided in proportion to the number of people who eat of it. 5Your lamb shall be without blemish, a year-old male; you may take it from the sheep or from the goats. 6You shall keep it until the fourteenth day of this month; then the whole assembled congregation of Israel shall slaughter it at twilight. 7They shall take some of the blood and put it on the two doorposts and the lintel of the houses in which they eat it. 8They shall eat the lamb that same night; they shall eat it roasted over the fire with unleavened bread and bitter herbs. 9Do not eat any of it raw or boiled in water, but roasted over the fire, with its head, legs, and inner organs. 10You shall let none of it remain until the morning; anything that remains until the morning you shall burn. 11This is how you shall eat it: your loins girded, your sandals on your feet, and your staff in your hand; and you shall eat it hurriedly. It is the passover of the LORD. 12For I will pass through the land of Egypt that night, and I will strike down every firstborn in the land of Egypt, both human beings and animals; on all the gods of Egypt I will execute judgments: I am the LORD. 13The blood shall be a sign for you on the houses where you live: when I see the blood, I will pass over you, and no plague shall destroy you when I strike the land of Egypt.

14 This day shall be a day of remembrance for you. You shall celebrate it as a festival to the LORD; throughout your generations you shall observe it as a perpetual ordinance. 15Seven days you shall eat unleavened bread; on the first day you shall remove leaven from your houses, for whoever eats leavened bread from the first day until the seventh day shall be cut off from Israel. 16On the first day you shall hold a solemn assembly, and on the seventh day a solemn assembly; no work shall be done on those days;

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**12.1–28: The festivals of passover and unleavened bread. 1–13** (and vv. 43–49): This is priestly tradition concerning the passover, an ancient nomadic spring festival which Israel reinterpreted as a memorial of the LORD's deliverance of the people from Egypt (Deut 16.1–8; Num 9.1–14; Ezek 45.21–25). **2:** *This month* refers to Nisan (March-April) which in the post-exilic ecclesiastical calendar was *the beginning of months* (see Lev 23.5, 23–25 n.). According to the older agricultural calendar, the new year began in the autumn (Ex 23.16; 34.22). **3–4:** Priestly tradition assumes that Israel in Egypt was already an organized *congregation* under the leadership of tribal princes (16.22). *Household,* see Num 1.2–4 n. The passover was a nocturnal festival, celebrated during full moon (v. 8; see Isa 30.29). **7:** Blood, regarded as the Deity's portion of the sacrifice (Lev 1.5), was smeared on the doorposts and the lintel, the holy places of the house (21.6; Deut 6.9), as a protection against the destroyer (vv. 22–23; see 4.24 n.). **11:** The feast must be eaten in readiness for the march, in commemoration of Israel's hasty exodus. **11–13:** Here *passover* is interpreted from a verb meaning "to pass over," referring to the LORD's passing over Israelite houses during the plague of the firstborn (vv. 24–27).

**12.14–20:** The festival of unleavened bread, originally an agricultural festival held at the time of barley harvest, was also converted into an historical commemoration and came to be closely connected with the passover (Deut 16.1–8; Ezek 45.21–25). **14:** The passover was celebrated on the 14th of Nisan (v. 6); *this day* refers to the 15th (Lev 23.6; Num 28.17). The seven day festival is regarded as a continuation of the passover. **15:** The absence of leaven (yeast) is interpreted as due to hasty preparations for flight (vv. 34, 39; Deut 16.3). Originally leaven, owing to its fermenting or corrupting power (23.18; Mt 16.6; 1 Cor 5.7), was regarded as a ritually

only what everyone must eat, that alone may be prepared by you. 17You shall observe the festival of unleavened bread, for on this very day I brought your companies out of the land of Egypt: you shall observe this day throughout your generations as a perpetual ordinance. 18In the first month, from the evening of the fourteenth day until the evening of the twenty-first day, you shall eat unleavened bread. 19For seven days no leaven shall be found in your houses; for whoever eats what is leavened shall be cut off from the congregation of Israel, whether an alien or a native of the land. 20You shall eat nothing leavened; in all your settlements you shall eat unleavened bread.

21 Then Moses called all the elders of Israel and said to them, "Go, select lambs for your families, and slaughter the passover lamb. 22Take a bunch of hyssop, dip it in the blood that is in the basin, and touch the lintel and the two doorposts with the blood in the basin. None of you shall go outside the door of your house until morning. 23For the LORD will pass through to strike down the Egyptians; when he sees the blood on the lintel and on the two doorposts, the LORD will pass over that door and will not allow the destroyer to enter your houses to strike you down. 24You shall observe this rite as a perpetual ordinance for you and your children. 25When you come to the land that the LORD will give you, as he has promised, you shall keep this observance. 26And when your children ask you, 'What do you mean by this observance?' 27you shall say, 'It is the passover sacrifice to the LORD, for he passed over the houses of the Israelites in Egypt, when he struck down the Egyptians but spared our houses.' " And the people bowed down and worshiped.

28 The Israelites went and did just as the LORD had commanded Moses and Aaron.

29 At midnight the LORD struck down all the firstborn in the land of Egypt, from the firstborn of Pharaoh who sat on his throne to the firstborn of the prisoner who was in the dungeon, and all the firstborn of the livestock. 30Pharaoh arose in the night, he and all his officials and all the Egyptians; and there was a loud cry in Egypt, for there was not a house without someone dead. 31Then he summoned Moses and Aaron in the night, and said, "Rise up, go away from my people, both you and the Israelites! Go, worship the LORD, as you said. 32Take your flocks and your herds, as you said, and be gone. And bring a blessing on me too!"

33 The Egyptians urged the people to hasten their departure from the land, for they said, "We shall all be dead." 34So the people took their dough before it was leavened, with their kneading bowls wrapped up in their cloaks on their shoulders. 35The Israelites had done as Moses told them; they had asked the Egyptians for jewelry of silver and gold, and for clothing, 36and the LORD had given the people favor in the sight of the Egyptians, so that they let them have what they asked. And so they plundered the Egyptians.

37 The Israelites journeyed from Rameses to Succoth, about six hundred thousand men on foot, besides children. 38A mixed crowd also went up with them, and livestock in great numbers, both flocks and herds. 39They baked unleavened cakes of the dough that they

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unclean substance (compare Lev 2.11) which could contaminate the whole harvest. **18**: So closely is the festival combined with the passover that it is said to begin on the evening of the 14th, i.e. the night of the passover (see v. 14).

**12.21–28**: An older tradition concerning the passover. **22**: See v. 7 n. *Hyssop,* the foliage of an aromatic plant. Because of its presumed magical powers, it was used for ritual purposes (Lev 14.4; Num 19.6, 18; Ps 51.7). **23**: *The destroyer,* or the angel of death (2 Sam 24.16; Isa 37.36), was regarded as a manifestation of the LORD's power.

**12.29–51**: **Israel's departure from Egypt. 29–32**: The conclusion of the tenth

had brought out of Egypt; it was not leavened, because they were driven out of Egypt and could not wait, nor had they prepared any provisions for themselves.

40 The time that the Israelites had lived in Egypt was four hundred thirty years. 41 At the end of four hundred thirty years, on that very day, all the companies of the LORD went out from the land of Egypt. 42 That was for the LORD a night of vigil, to bring them out of the land of Egypt. That same night is a vigil to be kept for the LORD by all the Israelites throughout their generations.

43 The LORD said to Moses and Aaron: This is the ordinance for the passover: no foreigner shall eat of it, 44 but any slave who has been purchased may eat of it after he has been circumcised; 45 no bound or hired servant may eat of it. 46 It shall be eaten in one house; you shall not take any of the animal outside the house, and you shall not break any of its bones. 47 The whole congregation of Israel shall celebrate it. 48 If an alien who resides with you wants to celebrate the passover to the LORD, all his males shall be circumcised; then he may draw near to celebrate it; he shall be regarded as a native of the land. But no uncircumcised person shall eat of it; 49 there shall be one law for the native and for the alien who resides among you.

50 All the Israelites did just as the LORD had commanded Moses and Aaron. 51 That very day the LORD brought the Israelites out of the land of Egypt, company by company.

13 The LORD said to Moses: 2 Consecrate to me all the firstborn; whatever is the first to open the womb among the Israelites, of human beings and animals, is mine.

3 Moses said to the people, "Remember this day on which you came out of Egypt, out of the house of slavery, because the LORD brought you out from there by strength of hand; no leavened bread shall be eaten. 4 Today, in the month of Abib, you are going out. 5 When the LORD brings you into the land of the Canaanites, the Hittites, the Amorites, the Hivites, and the Jebusites, which he swore to your ancestors to give you, a land flowing with milk and honey, you shall keep this observance in this month. 6 Seven days you shall eat unleavened bread, and on the seventh day there shall be a festival to the LORD. 7 Unleavened bread shall be eaten for seven days; no leavened bread shall be seen in your possession, and no leaven shall be seen among you in all your territory. 8 You

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plague (11.1–10). **33–34**: See v. 15 n. **35–36**: See 3.21–22 and 11.2–3.

**12.37**: Rameses (1.11) and Succoth (13.20) were the starting places on Israel's itinerary (Num 33.5). *Six hundred thousand men on foot* (Num 11.21), in addition to women and children, is an exaggeration, for neither the land of Goshen nor the southern Palestinian wilderness could have supported so large a population (at least two and a half million). The number apparently reflects the census list in Num 1.17–46. **38**: The *mixed crowd* (Num 11.4) included other "Hebrews" (see 1.15 n.) or rootless people. **40**: If the four hundred and thirty years (see Gen 15.13; Acts 7.6 n.; Gal 3.17 n.) covers the total time of the Egyptian sojourn, then the descent into Egypt would have coincided with the Hyksos invasion (about 1720 B.C.; see Gen 45.10 n.) and the Exodus occurred during the reign of Rameses II, about 1290 B.C. (see 1.8 n.). **42**: The *night of vigil* refers to the passover.

**12.43–49**: A supplement to the priestly tradition about the passover (12.1–13). A *foreigner* (v. 43), a *bound or hired servant* (v. 45) are excluded on the ground that they are related to other gods; however, the purchased slave who becomes a part of the family (v. 44) and the alien who resides permanently within Israel may eat the passover, if the *one law* of circumcision is kept (Gen 17.9–14).

**13.1–16: The consecration of the firstborn. 2**: According to ancient belief, the devotion of the firstborn of humans and of beasts to God, the giver of fertility, was necessary for continuing increase and well-being (22.29b–30; Lev 27.26–27; Num 3.13; 8.17–18; 18.15). **3–10**: Old tradition about the festival of unleavened bread (compare the parallel priestly version, 12.14–20). **4**: *Abib*, the older name for the month of the Exodus (23.15; see 12.2 n.). **5**: See 3.8. **8**: In later times people could tell *what the LORD did for me when I came out of Egypt*, for in worship the redemptive

shall tell your child on that day, 'It is because of what the LORD did for me when I came out of Egypt.' [9]It shall serve for you as a sign on your hand and as a reminder on your forehead, so that the teaching of the LORD may be on your lips; for with a strong hand the LORD brought you out of Egypt. [10]You shall keep this ordinance at its proper time from year to year.

11 "When the LORD has brought you into the land of the Canaanites, as he swore to you and your ancestors, and has given it to you, [12]you shall set apart to the LORD all that first opens the womb. All the firstborn of your livestock that are males shall be the LORD's. [13]But every firstborn donkey you shall redeem with a sheep; if you do not redeem it, you must break its neck. Every firstborn male among your children you shall redeem. [14]When in the future your child asks you, 'What does this mean?' you shall answer, 'By strength of hand the LORD brought us out of Egypt, from the house of slavery. [15]When Pharaoh stubbornly refused to let us go, the LORD killed all the firstborn in the land of Egypt, from human firstborn to the firstborn of animals. Therefore I sacrifice to the LORD every male that first opens the womb, but every firstborn of my sons I redeem.' [16]It shall serve as a sign on your hand and as an emblem[x] on your forehead that by strength of hand the LORD brought us out of Egypt."

17 When Pharaoh let the people go, God did not lead them by way of the land of the Philistines, although that was nearer; for God thought, "If the people face war, they may change their minds and return to Egypt." [18]So God led the people by the roundabout way of the wilderness toward the Red Sea.[y] The Israelites went up out of the land of Egypt prepared for battle. [19]And Moses took with him the bones of Joseph who had required a solemn oath of the Israelites, saying, "God will surely take notice of you, and then you must carry my bones with you from here." [20]They set out from Succoth, and camped at Etham, on the edge of the wilderness. [21]The LORD went in front of them in a pillar of cloud by day, to lead them along the way, and in a pillar of fire by night, to give them light, so that they might travel by day and by night. [22]Neither the pillar of cloud by day nor the pillar of fire by night left its place in front of the people.

14 Then the LORD said to Moses: [2]Tell the Israelites to turn back and camp in front of Pi-hahiroth, between Migdol and the sea, in front of Baal-zephon; you shall camp opposite it,

*x* Or *as a frontlet*; Meaning of Heb uncertain
*y* Or *Sea of Reeds*

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event was made present (12.26–27; see Deut 5.2–3 n.). **9**: See Deut 6.8.

**13.11–16**: An old tradition about the consecration of the firstborn. **13**: Unclean animals, of which the donkey is typical (Lev ch 11; Deut ch 14), may be redeemed by substituting a lamb. In early times the custom arose of substituting an animal for the human firstborn (34.19–20; compare Gen 22.13), although pagan human sacrifice persisted (1 Kings 16.34; 2 Kings 16.3; Ezek 20.26; Mic 6.7). **14–15**: The practice, rooted in ancient fertility beliefs, is here reinterpreted in the light of the Exodus.

**13.17–14.31**: **Israel's deliverance.**

**13.17–18**: *Philistines*, see Gen 21.34 n. The route mentioned was the main military road into Canaan. To avoid attack, the people were providentially led *by the roundabout way of the wilderness*. On the *Red Sea*, see 14.2 n. **19**: See Gen 50.25–26 n. **21–22**: The *pillar of cloud* and the *pillar of fire* may reflect the ancient custom of carrying a burning brazier at the head of a marching army or caravan to indicate the line of march by day and night. Whatever the nature of the phenomenon originally, cloud and fire have become traditional ways of expressing God's presence and guidance (see 3.2 n.; 19.9; 33.9; 40.34–38; 1 Kings 8.10–11).

**14.2**: The places mentioned, like Etham (13.20), were probably Egyptian frontier fortresses. Apparently the Israelites were unable to break through and had to *turn back*, with the result that they were trapped (v. 3) between the water barrier and the Egyptian forces. *The sea*, known in Hebrew as the "Sea of Reeds," was not the Red Sea itself but a

by the sea. 3Pharaoh will say of the Israelites, "They are wandering aimlessly in the land; the wilderness has closed in on them." 4I will harden Pharaoh's heart, and he will pursue them, so that I will gain glory for myself over Pharaoh and all his army; and the Egyptians shall know that I am the LORD. And they did so.

5 When the king of Egypt was told that the people had fled, the minds of Pharaoh and his officials were changed toward the people, and they said, "What have we done, letting Israel leave our service?" 6So he had his chariot made ready, and took his army with him; 7he took six hundred picked chariots and all the other chariots of Egypt with officers over all of them. 8The LORD hardened the heart of Pharaoh king of Egypt and he pursued the Israelites, who were going out boldly. 9The Egyptians pursued them, all Pharaoh's horses and chariots, his chariot drivers and his army; they overtook them camped by the sea, by Pi-hahiroth, in front of Baal-zephon.

10 As Pharaoh drew near, the Israelites looked back, and there were the Egyptians advancing on them. In great fear the Israelites cried out to the LORD. 11They said to Moses, "Was it because there were no graves in Egypt that you have taken us away to die in the wilderness? What have you done to us, bringing us out of Egypt? 12Is this not the very thing we told you in Egypt, 'Let us alone and let us serve the Egyptians'? For it would have been better for us to serve the Egyptians than to die in the wilderness." 13But Moses said to the people, "Do not be afraid, stand firm, and see the deliverance that the LORD will accomplish for you today; for the Egyptians whom you see today you shall never see again. 14The LORD will fight for you, and you have only to keep still."

15 Then the LORD said to Moses, "Why do you cry out to me? Tell the Israelites to go forward. 16But you lift up your staff, and stretch out your hand over the sea and divide it, that the Israelites may go into the sea on dry ground. 17Then I will harden the hearts of the Egyptians so that they will go in after them; and so I will gain glory for myself over Pharaoh and all his army, his chariots, and his chariot drivers. 18And the Egyptians shall know that I am the LORD, when I have gained glory for myself over Pharaoh, his chariots, and his chariot drivers."

19 The angel of God who was going before the Israelite army moved and went behind them; and the pillar of cloud moved from in front of them and took its place behind them. 20It came between the army of Egypt and the army of Israel. And so the cloud was there with the darkness, and it lit up the night; one did not come near the other all night.

21 Then Moses stretched out his hand over the sea. The LORD drove the sea back by a strong east wind all night, and turned the sea into dry land; and the waters were divided. 22The Israelites went into the sea on dry ground, the waters forming a wall for them on their right and on their left. 23The Egyptians pursued, and went into the sea after them, all of Pharaoh's horses, chariots, and chariot drivers. 24At the morning watch the LORD in the pillar of fire and cloud looked down upon the Egyptian army, and threw the Egyptian army into panic.

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shallow body of water farther north, perhaps in the area of Lake Timsah.

**14.11–12**: See 15.24 n. **13–14**: Viewed in faith, the victory was a mighty act of the LORD who was fighting for the people in a contest with the powerful Pharaoh (v. 25). *Deliverance,* see Gen 49.18.

**14.19–20**: One tradition expresses the divine presence as *the angel of God* (see Gen 16.7 n.), another as the shining pillar of cloud (v. 24; see 13.21–22 n.). **21–29**: The divine victory was rooted in a natural phenomenon: during a storm the shallow waters were driven back by *a strong east wind* (v. 21), making it possible for the Israelites to cross on foot. Egyptian chariots, however, were mired in the mud and engulfed by the returning waters. Tradition heightened the miracle by at-

25 He clogged[z] their chariot wheels so that they turned with difficulty. The Egyptians said, "Let us flee from the Israelites, for the LORD is fighting for them against Egypt."

26 Then the LORD said to Moses, "Stretch out your hand over the sea, so that the water may come back upon the Egyptians, upon their chariots and chariot drivers." 27 So Moses stretched out his hand over the sea, and at dawn the sea returned to its normal depth. As the Egyptians fled before it, the LORD tossed the Egyptians into the sea. 28 The waters returned and covered the chariots and the chariot drivers, the entire army of Pharaoh that had followed them into the sea; not one of them remained. 29 But the Israelites walked on dry ground through the sea, the waters forming a wall for them on their right and on their left.

30 Thus the LORD saved Israel that day from the Egyptians; and Israel saw the Egyptians dead on the seashore. 31 Israel saw the great work that the LORD did against the Egyptians. So the people feared the LORD and believed in the LORD and in his servant Moses.

15 Then Moses and the Israelites sang this song to the LORD:

"I will sing to the LORD, for he
has triumphed gloriously;
horse and rider he has thrown
into the sea.

2 The LORD is my strength and my
might,[a]
and he has become my
salvation;
this is my God, and I will praise
him,
my father's God, and I will
exalt him.

3 The LORD is a warrior;
the LORD is his name.

4 "Pharaoh's chariots and his army
he cast into the sea;
his picked officers were sunk in
the Red Sea.[b]

5 The floods covered them;
they went down into the depths
like a stone.

6 Your right hand, O LORD,
glorious in power—
your right hand, O LORD,
shattered the enemy.

7 In the greatness of your majesty
you overthrew your
adversaries;
you sent out your fury, it
consumed them like
stubble.

8 At the blast of your nostrils the
waters piled up,
the floods stood up in a heap;
the deeps congealed in the heart
of the sea.

9 The enemy said, 'I will pursue, I
will overtake,
I will divide the spoil, my desire
shall have its fill of them.
I will draw my sword, my hand
shall destroy them.'

10 You blew with your wind, the sea
covered them;
they sank like lead in the
mighty waters.

11 "Who is like you, O LORD, among
the gods?
Who is like you, majestic in
holiness,
awesome in splendor, doing
wonders?

*z* Sam Gk Syr: MT *removed* *a* Or *song*
*b* Or *Sea of Reeds*

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tributing it to Moses' wonder-working rod (vv. 16, 21a, 26–27) and by saying that the waters stood up like walls (vv. 22b, 29b).

**15.1–21: Two songs of praise** which celebrate the LORD's deliverance of the people. **1**: The song of Moses (vv. 1–18) is introduced by quoting the ancient song of Miriam (v. 21). **2**: See 14.12–14 n. *My father's God* refers to "the God of the ancestors" (3.6). **3**: In this and the following verses, the poet uses the ancient Near Eastern metaphor of the Divine Warrior (Ps 24.8) to portray the LORD's saving action in behalf of Israel (14.14, 25). **4–10**: Recital of the Divine Warrior's victory at the Sea (Ps 78.12–13). **8–10**: The language is influenced by the ancient myth of a

12 You stretched out your right hand,
the earth swallowed them.

13 "In your steadfast love you led the people whom you redeemed;
you guided them by your strength to your holy abode.
14 The peoples heard, they trembled;
pangs seized the inhabitants of Philistia.
15 Then the chiefs of Edom were dismayed;
trembling seized the leaders of Moab;
all the inhabitants of Canaan melted away.
16 Terror and dread fell upon them;
by the might of your arm, they became still as a stone
until your people, O LORD, passed by,
until the people whom you acquired passed by.
17 You brought them in and planted them on the mountain of your own possession,
the place, O LORD, that you made your abode,
the sanctuary, O LORD, that your hands have established.
18 The LORD will reign forever and ever."

19 When the horses of Pharaoh with his chariots and his chariot drivers went into the sea, the LORD brought back the waters of the sea upon them; but the Israelites walked through the sea on dry ground.

20 Then the prophet Miriam, Aaron's sister, took a tambourine in her hand; and all the women went out after her with tambourines and with dancing. 21 And Miriam sang to them:

"Sing to the LORD, for he has triumphed gloriously;
horse and rider he has thrown into the sea."

22 Then Moses ordered Israel to set out from the Red Sea,[c] and they went into the wilderness of Shur. They went three days in the wilderness and found no water. 23 When they came to Marah, they could not drink the water of Marah because it was bitter. That is why it was called Marah.[d] 24 And the people complained against Moses, saying, "What shall we drink?" 25 He cried out to the LORD; and the LORD showed him a piece of wood;[e] he threw it into the water, and the water became sweet.

There the LORD[f] made for them a stat-

*c* Or *Sea of Reeds* *d* That is *Bitterness*
*e* Or *a tree* *f* Heb *he*

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divine battle against Sea, the chaotic power hostile to God's rule (see Ps 77.16–19; 114.3–6; Hab 3.8 note *l*).

**15.11**: Another motif of ancient hymns: the incomparability of the LORD *among the gods* who compose the heavenly council (Pss 86.8·89.7–8; Gen 1.26 n.). **13–17**: The guidance into the land of Canaan. **13**: *Your holy abode,* a mountain in Canaan (Ps 78.54). **14**: *Philistia* was settled by the Philistines (Gen 21.32 n.) about 1175 B.C.; hence the poem was written afterwards, though probably before the monarchy. **15**: See Num 20.18–21; 21.13. **16**: *Acquired,* perhaps "created" (see Gen 4.1). **17**: Canaan is described as the mythical cosmic mountain, Zaphon, the location of God's *abode* and *sanctuary* (see Ps 48.1–3 n.).

**15.19–21**: In song and dance, Miriam and her companions lead the people in praising God for deliverance. Miriam (Num 26.59; Mic 6.4), doubtless a dominant figure in early tradition, is called a *prophet* because of her ecstatic rousing of devotion to the LORD (compare Judg 4.4). **21**: The Song of Miriam, one of the oldest poetic couplets in the Old Testament, may have been composed by an eyewitness of the event.

**15.22–16.36: Crises in the wilderness.** In times of need, when faith was put to the test, Israel perceived signs of the LORD's care and protection.

**15.22**: *The wilderness of Shur,* identified with the wilderness of Etham in Num 33.8, was on the border of Egypt. **24**: Israel's continual complaining in the wilderness is a dominant theme of the tradition (16.2–3; 17.3; 32.1–4, 25; Num 11.4–6; 12.1–2; 14.2–3; 16.13–14; 20.2–13; 21.4–5). **25**: It was be-

ute and an ordinance and there he put them to the test. 26He said, "If you will listen carefully to the voice of the LORD your God, and do what is right in his sight, and give heed to his commandments and keep all his statutes, I will not bring upon you any of the diseases that I brought upon the Egyptians; for I am the LORD who heals you."

27 Then they came to Elim, where there were twelve springs of water and seventy palm trees; and they camped there by the water.

16 The whole congregation of the Israelites set out from Elim; and Israel came to the wilderness of Sin, which is between Elim and Sinai, on the fifteenth day of the second month after they had departed from the land of Egypt. 2The whole congregation of the Israelites complained against Moses and Aaron in the wilderness. 3The Israelites said to them, "If only we had died by the hand of the LORD in the land of Egypt, when we sat by the fleshpots and ate our fill of bread; for you have brought us out into this wilderness to kill this whole assembly with hunger."

4 Then the LORD said to Moses, "I am going to rain bread from heaven for you, and each day the people shall go out and gather enough for that day. In that way I will test them, whether they will follow my instruction or not. 5On the sixth day, when they prepare what they bring in, it will be twice as much as they gather on other days." 6So Moses and Aaron said to all the Israelites, "In the evening you shall know that it was the LORD who brought you out of the land of Egypt, 7and in the morning you shall see the glory of the LORD, because he has heard your complaining against the LORD. For what are we, that you complain against us?" 8And Moses said, "When the LORD gives you meat to eat in the evening and your fill of bread in the morning, because the LORD has heard the complaining that you utter against him—what are we? Your complaining is not against us but against the LORD."

9 Then Moses said to Aaron, "Say to the whole congregation of the Israelites, 'Draw near to the LORD, for he has heard your complaining.' " 10And as Aaron spoke to the whole congregation of the Israelites, they looked toward the wilderness, and the glory of the LORD appeared in the cloud. 11The LORD spoke to Moses and said, 12"I have heard the complaining of the Israelites; say to them, 'At twilight you shall eat meat, and in the morning you shall have your fill of bread; then you shall know that I am the LORD your God.' "

13 In the evening quails came up and covered the camp; and in the morning there was a layer of dew around the camp. 14When the layer of dew lifted, there on the surface of the wilderness was a fine flaky substance, as fine as frost on the ground. 15When the Israelites saw it, they said to one another, "What is it?"[g] For they did not know what it was. Mo-

[g] Or *"It is manna"* (Heb *man hu*, see verse 31)

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lieved that the leaves or bark of certain trees had magical properties for sweetening or "healing" water (2 Kings 2.21). **26:** *Diseases*, i.e. the Egyptian plagues. *Who heals you*, Num 21.4–9; Deut 7.15; Ps 103.3.

**16.1–36:** The provision of food in the wilderness. **1:** *The wilderness of Sin* (17.1; Num 33.11–12), probably on the Sinaitic Peninsula. **3:** The murmuring wanderers preferred the seasoned food of *the fleshpots* of Egypt to the precarious freedom of the wilderness. **4:** *Test* their faith by providing only a portion sufficient for one day (see Deut 8.3, 16; Mt 6.11). **5:** See vv. 22–30. **6–7:** *In the evening* when the quails come; *in the morning* when the manna is found (vv. 8, 12). In the priestly view, *the glory of the LORD* was an envelope of light (associated with the pillar of cloud and fire; see 13.21–22 n.) which veiled God's being. Though human beings could not see the Deity they could behold the glory that signified God's presence (40.34; Num 14.10b, 22; 16.19; Ezek 11.23).

**16.9–10:** *Draw near to the LORD*, see vv. 33–34 n. **13–21:** An early tradition concerning the provision of bread (v. 15). **13:** On the quails, see Num 11.1–35. **14:** The description here (see also v. 31 and Num 11.7–9) corresponds fairly closely to the "honey-dew" excretion of two scale-insects that feed on the twigs of the

ses said to them, "It is the bread that the LORD has given you to eat. 16This is what the LORD has commanded: 'Gather as much of it as each of you needs, an omer to a person according to the number of persons, all providing for those in their own tents.' " 17The Israelites did so, some gathering more, some less. 18But when they measured it with an omer, those who gathered much had nothing over, and those who gathered little had no shortage; they gathered as much as each of them needed. 19And Moses said to them, "Let no one leave any of it over until morning." 20But they did not listen to Moses; some left part of it until morning, and it bred worms and became foul. And Moses was angry with them. 21Morning by morning they gathered it, as much as each needed; but when the sun grew hot, it melted.

22 On the sixth day they gathered twice as much food, two omers apiece. When all the leaders of the congregation came and told Moses, 23he said to them, "This is what the LORD has commanded: 'Tomorrow is a day of solemn rest, a holy sabbath to the LORD; bake what you want to bake and boil what you want to boil, and all that is left over put aside to be kept until morning.' " 24So they put it aside until morning, as Moses commanded them; and it did not become foul, and there were no worms in it. 25Moses said, "Eat it today, for today is a sabbath to the LORD; today you will not find it in the field. 26Six days you shall gather it; but on the seventh day, which is a sabbath, there will be none."

27 On the seventh day some of the people went out to gather, and they found none. 28The LORD said to Moses, "How long will you refuse to keep my commandments and instructions? 29See! The LORD has given you the sabbath, therefore on the sixth day he gives you food for two days; each of you stay where you are; do not leave your place on the seventh day." 30So the people rested on the seventh day.

31 The house of Israel called it manna; it was like coriander seed, white, and the taste of it was like wafers made with honey. 32Moses said, "This is what the LORD has commanded: 'Let an omer of it be kept throughout your generations, in order that they may see the food with which I fed you in the wilderness, when I brought you out of the land of Egypt.' " 33And Moses said to Aaron, "Take a jar, and put an omer of manna in it, and place it before the LORD, to be kept throughout your generations." 34As the LORD commanded Moses, so Aaron placed it before the covenant,[h] for safekeeping. 35The Israelites ate manna forty years, until they came to a habitable land; they ate manna, until they came to the border of the land of Canaan. 36An omer is a tenth of an ephah.

17 From the wilderness of Sin the whole congregation of the Israelites journeyed by stages, as the LORD commanded. They camped at Rephidim, but there was no water for the people to drink. 2The people quarreled with Moses, and said, "Give us water to drink." Moses said to them, "Why do you quarrel with me? Why do you test the LORD?" 3But the people thirsted there for water; and the people complained against Moses and said, "Why did you bring us out of Egypt, to kill us and our children and livestock with thirst?" 4So Moses cried out to the LORD, "What shall I do with this people? They are almost

*h* Or *treaty* or *testimony*; Heb *eduth*

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tamarisk tree. **15**: The name *manna* (v. 31), is explained by an expression meaning "What is it?" For persons of faith the answer was that the natural phenomenon was *bread that the LORD has given*. **22–36**: The provision of manna is the occasion for the insertion of priestly teaching on the sabbath, *a day of solemn rest* (31.15; 35.2). **33–34**: *Before the LORD*, i.e. before the ark, sometimes designated in priestly tradition by its chief contents, *the covenant* as represented by the tablets of law (27.21; Lev 16.13; Num 17.4).

**17.1–16: Other trying experiences in the wilderness. 1–7**: Israel's thirst was quenched with water from the rock (compare Num 20.2–13). **1**: *By stages*, see Num 33.1–49. **2–3**: See 15.24 n. *Test the LORD*, i.e. demand proof that God was in their midst

ready to stone me." 5The LORD said to Moses, "Go on ahead of the people, and take some of the elders of Israel with you; take in your hand the staff with which you struck the Nile, and go. 6I will be standing there in front of you on the rock at Horeb. Strike the rock, and water will come out of it, so that the people may drink." Moses did so, in the sight of the elders of Israel. 7He called the place Massah[i] and Meribah,[j] because the Israelites quarreled and tested the LORD, saying, "Is the LORD among us or not?"

8 Then Amalek came and fought with Israel at Rephidim. 9Moses said to Joshua, "Choose some men for us and go out, fight with Amalek. Tomorrow I will stand on the top of the hill with the staff of God in my hand." 10So Joshua did as Moses told him, and fought with Amalek, while Moses, Aaron, and Hur went up to the top of the hill. 11Whenever Moses held up his hand, Israel prevailed; and whenever he lowered his hand, Amalek prevailed. 12But Moses' hands grew weary; so they took a stone and put it under him, and he sat on it. Aaron and Hur held up his hands, one on one side, and the other on the other side; so his hands were steady until the sun set. 13And Joshua defeated Amalek and his people with the sword.

14 Then the LORD said to Moses, "Write this as a reminder in a book and recite it in the hearing of Joshua: I will utterly blot out the remembrance of Amalek from under heaven." 15And Moses built an altar and called it, The LORD is my banner. 16He said, "A hand upon the banner of the LORD![k] The LORD will have war with Amalek from generation to generation."

18 Jethro, the priest of Midian, Moses' father-in-law, heard of all that God had done for Moses and for his people Israel, how the LORD had brought Israel out of Egypt. 2After Moses had sent away his wife Zipporah, his father-in-law Jethro took her back, 3along with her two sons. The name of the one was Gershom (for he said, "I have been an alien[l] in a foreign land"), 4and the name of the other, Eliezer[m] (for he said, "The God of my father was my help, and delivered me from the sword of Pharaoh"). 5Jethro, Moses' father-in-law, came into the wilderness where Moses was encamped at the mountain of God, bringing Moses' sons and wife to him. 6He sent word to Moses, "I, your father-in-

*i* That is *Test* *j* That is *Quarrel*
*k* Cn: Meaning of Heb uncertain *l* Heb *ger*
*m* Heb *Eli*, my God; *ezer*, help

(v. 7b). **6**: Water lies below the limestone surface in the region of Sinai. **7**: The place is named both *Massah* from the Hebrew verb "test" and *Meribah* from the verb "find fault" — names that became memorials of Israel's faithlessness (Deut 6.16; 9.22; 33.8; Ps 95.8). Meribah was one of the springs at Kadesh (Num 20.13; 27.14; Deut 32.51). Marah (15.23) and Massah were evidently springs at the same oasis. Some traditions in 15.23–18.27 come from this oasis south of Beersheba (see Num 13.26 n.).

**17.8–15**: The battle with the Amalekites. **8**: The Amalekites, a fierce desert tribe, claimed control of the wilderness in the region of Kadesh (Gen 14.7; Num 13.29; 14.25). **9–13**: *Choose some men for us* implies holy war (v. 16) with a select group (compare Judg ch 7). The young warrior, Joshua, here mentioned for the first time, was at the head of the Israelite army. Moses, however, led the battle from a hilltop and ensured victory by the power of his rod and outstretched arms and perhaps by the power of the curse (Num 22.4–6). **10**: *Hur*, elsewhere mentioned only in 24.14. **14**: *Utterly blot out*, i.e. the foe will be subjected to the sacrificial ban, a practice of holy war. **16**: The bitter feud with Amalek persisted (Num 24.20; Deut 25.17–19; 1 Sam 15.7–8; 27.8; ch 30) until the foe was exterminated during the reign of Hezekiah (1 Chr 4.41–43).

**18.1–27**: **Jethro's visit.** The priest of Midian celebrated a sacred meal and counseled Moses about the administration of law. **1**: *Jethro*, see 2.18 n. **2–4**: Zipporah and her sons (2.21–22) apparently had been sent back from Egypt to Midian. **5**: The narrative is out of order, for Israel reached *the mountain of God* later (19.2). **9–12**: This passage may imply that the priest of Midian was already a worshiper of the LORD (see 3.1 n.). As the priest of the cult, Jethro came to rejoice in the LORD's great deeds and to officiate at a cultic

law Jethro, am coming to you, with your wife and her two sons." 7Moses went out to meet his father-in-law; he bowed down and kissed him; each asked after the other's welfare, and they went into the tent. 8Then Moses told his father-in-law all that the LORD had done to Pharaoh and to the Egyptians for Israel's sake, all the hardship that had beset them on the way, and how the LORD had delivered them. 9Jethro rejoiced for all the good that the LORD had done to Israel, in delivering them from the Egyptians.

10 Jethro said, "Blessed be the LORD, who has delivered you from the Egyptians and from Pharaoh. 11Now I know that the LORD is greater than all gods, because he delivered the people from the Egyptians,[n] when they dealt arrogantly with them." 12And Jethro, Moses' father-in-law, brought a burnt offering and sacrifices to God; and Aaron came with all the elders of Israel to eat bread with Moses' father-in-law in the presence of God.

13 The next day Moses sat as judge for the people, while the people stood around him from morning until evening. 14When Moses' father-in-law saw all that he was doing for the people, he said, "What is this that you are doing for the people? Why do you sit alone, while all the people stand around you from morning until evening?" 15Moses said to his father-in-law, "Because the people come to me to inquire of God. 16When they have a dispute, they come to me and I decide between one person and another, and I make known to them the statutes and instructions of God." 17Moses' father-in-law said to him, "What you are doing is not good. 18You will surely wear yourself out, both you and these people with you. For the task is too heavy for you; you cannot do it alone. 19Now listen to me. I will give you counsel, and God be with you! You should represent the people before God, and you should bring their cases before God; 20teach them the statutes and instructions and make known to them the way they are to go and the things they are to do. 21You should also look for able men among all the people, men who fear God, are trustworthy, and hate dishonest gain; set such men over them as officers over thousands, hundreds, fifties and tens. 22Let them sit as judges for the people at all times; let them bring every important case to you, but decide every minor case themselves. So it will be easier for you, and they will bear the burden with you. 23If you do this, and God so commands you, then you will be able to endure, and all these people will go to their home in peace."

24 So Moses listened to his father-in-law and did all that he had said. 25Moses chose able men from all Israel and appointed them as heads over the people, as officers over thousands, hundreds, fifties, and tens. 26And they judged the people at all times; hard cases they brought to Moses, but any minor case they decided themselves. 27Then Moses let his father-in-law depart, and he went off to his own country.

19 On the third new moon after the Israelites had gone out of the land of Egypt, on that very day, they came into the wilderness of Sinai. 2They had

*n* The clause *because . . . Egyptians* has been transposed from verse 10

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celebration. **12**: *Eat bread,* an allusion to a sacred meal *in the presence of God* (24.9–11). Moses was not invited, perhaps because he had already been initiated into the cult (3.1–6).

**18.13–27**: Jethro's plan for the reorganization of legal administration (compare Deut 1.9–18). **13**: Like a bedouin chief, Moses acted as judge in the people's disputes (2 Sam 15.1–6). **15–16**: *Inquire of God,* i.e. seek a verdict by oracle (Judg 4.4–5). **21–22**: Moses was to deal with cases without legal precedent which required a special oracle (compare Deut 17.8–13); ordinary cases were to be handled by lay leaders (Num 11.16–17, 24–25) or appointed judges (compare Deut 16.18–20). *Officers over thousands,* see Num 1.17–46 n.

**19.1–25**: **The theophany at Sinai** (20.18–21). At the sacred mountain the LORD offered to make a covenant with Israel. **2**: Sinai, see

journeyed from Rephidim, entered the wilderness of Sinai, and camped in the wilderness; Israel camped there in front of the mountain. 3Then Moses went up to God; the LORD called to him from the mountain, saying, "Thus you shall say to the house of Jacob, and tell the Israelites: 4You have seen what I did to the Egyptians, and how I bore you on eagles' wings and brought you to myself. 5Now therefore, if you obey my voice and keep my covenant, you shall be my treasured possession out of all the peoples. Indeed, the whole earth is mine, 6but you shall be for me a priestly kingdom and a holy nation. These are the words that you shall speak to the Israelites."

7 So Moses came, summoned the elders of the people, and set before them all these words that the LORD had commanded him. 8The people all answered as one: "Everything that the LORD has spoken we will do." Moses reported the words of the people to the LORD. 9Then the LORD said to Moses, "I am going to come to you in a dense cloud, in order that the people may hear when I speak with you and so trust you ever after."

When Moses had told the words of the people to the LORD, 10the LORD said to Moses: "Go to the people and consecrate them today and tomorrow. Have them wash their clothes 11and prepare for the third day, because on the third day the LORD will come down upon Mount Sinai in the sight of all the people. 12You shall set limits for the people all around, saying, 'Be careful not to go up the mountain or to touch the edge of it. Any who touch the mountain shall be put to death. 13No hand shall touch them, but they shall be stoned or shot with arrows;[o] whether animal or human being, they shall not live.' When the trumpet sounds a long blast, they may go up on the mountain." 14So Moses went down from the mountain to the people. He consecrated the people, and they washed their clothes. 15And he said to the people, "Prepare for the third day; do not go near a woman."

16 On the morning of the third day there was thunder and lightning, as well as a thick cloud on the mountain, and a blast of a trumpet so loud that all the people who were in the camp trembled. 17Moses brought the people out of the camp to meet God. They took their stand at the foot of the mountain. 18Now Mount Sinai was wrapped in smoke, because the LORD had descended upon it in

*o* Heb lacks *with arrows*

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3.1 n. **3**: The account assumes that the LORD's dwelling-place is in heaven, from which God "descended" to the mountain top for meeting with the people and their representatives (24.9–11). Compare the similar view reflected in the Babylonian temple-tower (Gen 11.1–9). **4–6**: The "eagles' wings" passage is formulated in liturgical style and employs the metaphor of an eagle carrying its young on its powerful wings (Deut 32.11–12). **5**: On Israel's side, the covenant rests upon a condition, *if you obey my voice*—an allusion to the covenant laws to be given. *My treasured possession:* a metaphor for God's special claim upon Israel. The God to whom all the earth belongs (Ex 9.29b; Ps 24.1) chose Israel for a special role as "the people of God" (Deut 7.6; 14.2; 26.18). **6**: That which is holy is set apart as belonging to the holy God; thus Israel is to be *a priestly kingdom,* consecrated for service to God (see Isa 61.6; 1 Pet 2.5, 9).

**19.7–8**: Compare 24.7. **9**: This tradition stresses Moses' role as the covenant mediator who represents God to the people and the people before God (20.19; 24.1–2, 9–11; Deut 5.2–27). **10–15**: In this tradition all the people are to prepare to take part in the covenant ceremony (24.3–8). **12**: The setting of bounds so that the people do not come near the mountain (v. 21) reflects the ancient view of holiness as a mysterious, threatening power with which the mountain is charged (see 3.6 n.; 2 Sam 6.6–9). No hand may touch the offender who has become affected with the contagion of holiness (Lev 6.27–28). **14–15**: Washing or changing of garments (Gen 35.2) and sexual abstinence (1 Sam 21.4–6) were forms of ceremonial purification.

**19.16–19**: The theophany is portrayed primarily in the imagery of a violent thunderstorm (Judg 5.4–5; Pss 18.7–15; 29.3–9; etc.). This traditional language—"earthquake, wind, and fire" (1 Kings 19.11–13)—depicts the wonder and majesty of God's revelation. **16**: The trumpet (v. 13) was sounded on cultic occasions (2 Sam 6.15).

fire; the smoke went up like the smoke of a kiln, while the whole mountain shook violently. 19 As the blast of the trumpet grew louder and louder, Moses would speak and God would answer him in thunder. 20 When the LORD descended upon Mount Sinai, to the top of the mountain, the LORD summoned Moses to the top of the mountain, and Moses went up. 21 Then the LORD said to Moses, "Go down and warn the people not to break through to the LORD to look; otherwise many of them will perish. 22 Even the priests who approach the LORD must consecrate themselves or the LORD will break out against them." 23 Moses said to the LORD, "The people are not permitted to come up to Mount Sinai; for you yourself warned us, saying, 'Set limits around the mountain and keep it holy.'" 24 The LORD said to him, "Go down, and come up bringing Aaron with you; but do not let either the priests or the people break through to come up to the LORD; otherwise he will break out against them." 25 So Moses went down to the people and told them.

20 Then God spoke all these words:
2 I am the LORD your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of slavery; 3 you shall have no other gods before[p] me.

4 You shall not make for yourself an idol, whether in the form of anything that is in heaven above, or that is on the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth. 5 You shall not bow down to them or worship them; for I the LORD your God am a jealous God, punishing children for the iniquity of parents, to the third and the fourth generation of those who reject me, 6 but showing steadfast love to the thousandth generation[q] of those who love me and keep my commandments.

7 You shall not make wrongful use of the name of the LORD your God, for the LORD will not acquit anyone who misuses his name.

8 Remember the sabbath day, and keep it holy. 9 Six days you shall labor and do all your work. 10 But the seventh day is a sabbath to the LORD your God; you shall not do any work—you, your son or your daughter, your male or female slave, your livestock, or the alien resident in your towns. 11 For in six days the LORD made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that is in them, but rested the seventh day; therefore the LORD blessed the sabbath day and consecrated it.

12 Honor your father and your mother, so that your days may be long in the land that the LORD your God is giving you.

13 You shall not murder.[r]

14 You shall not commit adultery.

15 You shall not steal.

*p* Or *besides* *q* Or *to thousands* *r* Or *kill*

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**20.1–17: The Ten Commandments,** the epitome of duties toward God and neighbor. **1**: *These words,* i.e. "the ten words" or the Decalogue (34.28; Deut 4.13; 10.4). Originally each commandment was a short utterance (see vv. 13, 14, 15), lacking the explanatory comments found, e.g., in vv. 5, 6, 9–11. **2**: Jewish tradition considers this to be the first commandment. Actually it is a preface that summarizes the meaning of the Exodus, thus setting law within the context of God's redemptive action. **3**: The first commandment asserts that for Israel there shall be no other gods, because the LORD is *a jealous God* (v. 5; 34.14) who will tolerate no rivals for the people's devotion.

**20.4–6**: Imageless worship of the LORD made Israel's faith unique in the ancient world where natural powers were personified and statues of them (animal or human) were worshiped. Some interpreters consider vv. 3–6 as one commandment and divide v. 17 into two commandments. **7**: The third commandment prohibits the misuse of the LORD's name in magic, divination, or false swearing (Lev 19.12). It reflects the ancient view that knowledge of the name could be used to exert magical control (see Gen 32.27, 29 n.).

**20.8–11**: Keeping the sabbath *holy* means to observe it as a day separated from others, a segment of time belonging especially to God. **10**: 16.22–30. **11**: Compare Deut 5.15. **12**: 21.15, 17; Deut 27.16. **13**: This commandment forbids murder (see Gen 9.5, 6 n.), not

16 You shall not bear false witness against your neighbor.

17 You shall not covet your neighbor's house; you shall not covet your neighbor's wife, or male or female slave, or ox, or donkey, or anything that belongs to your neighbor.

18 When all the people witnessed the thunder and lightning, the sound of the trumpet, and the mountain smoking, they were afraid[s] and trembled and stood at a distance, 19and said to Moses, "You speak to us, and we will listen; but do not let God speak to us, or we will die." 20Moses said to the people, "Do not be afraid; for God has come only to test you and to put the fear of him upon you so that you do not sin." 21Then the people stood at a distance, while Moses drew near to the thick darkness where God was.

22 The LORD said to Moses: Thus you shall say to the Israelites: "You have seen for yourselves that I spoke with you from heaven. 23You shall not make gods of silver alongside me, nor shall you make for yourselves gods of gold. 24You need make for me only an altar of earth and sacrifice on it your burnt offerings and your offerings of well-being, your sheep and your oxen; in every place where I cause my name to be remembered I will come to you and bless you. 25But if you make for me an altar of stone, do not build it of hewn stones; for if you use a chisel upon it you profane it. 26You shall not go up by steps to my altar, so that your nakedness may not be exposed on it."

**21** These are the ordinances that you shall set before them:

2 When you buy a male Hebrew slave, he shall serve six years, but in the seventh he shall go out a free person, without debt. 3If he comes in single, he shall go out single; if he comes in married, then his wife shall go out with him. 4If his master gives him a wife and she bears him sons or daughters, the wife and her children shall be her master's and he shall go out alone. 5But if the slave declares, "I love my master, my wife, and my children; I will not go out a free person," 6then his master shall bring him before God.[t] He shall be brought to the door or the doorpost; and his master shall pierce his ear with an awl; and he shall serve him for life.

7 When a man sells his daughter as a slave, she shall not go out as the male slaves do. 8If she does not please her mas-

*s* Sam Gk Syr Vg: MT *they saw*
*t* Or *to the judges*

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the forms of killing authorized for Israel, e.g. war or capital punishment. **16**: This law demands telling the truth in a lawsuit involving the neighbor (23.1; Deut 19.15–21; 1 Kings 21.8–14).

**20.17**: Some regard the first sentence as a separate commandment; however, *neighbor's house* probably includes what is enumerated in the second part of the verse: wife, male or female slave, etc.

**20.18–21: The conclusion to the theophany scene** (ch 19). The people request that Moses be the covenant mediator (see 19.9 n.) so that they need not hear God's law directly (compare Deut 5.4–5).

**20.22–23.33: The Covenant Code.** These laws are largely neutral in regard to Israelite faith and presuppose a settled agricultural society. They reflect a situation after Israel's settlement in Canaan, when prevailing laws were borrowed and adapted to the covenant tradition.

**20.22–26**: Cultic regulations. **23**: See 20.4–6 n. **24–26**: The Israelite altar, in contrast to pagan models, is to be the simplest kind and is to be built wherever the LORD causes his *name to be remembered*, i.e. chooses to be manifest. Contrast the reform demanded in Deut 12.5–14.

**21.1–11**: The rights of a slave (compare Deut 15.12–18). **1**: *Ordinances* refers to laws formulated (usually in the third person) to deal with various cases, in contrast to the apodictic or unconditional law of the Israelite theocracy (e.g. the Decalogue). These case laws, though displaying Israel's peculiar humanitarian concern, reflect the agricultural way of life in Canaan (e.g. 22.5–6) and are similar in style and content to other legal codes of the ancient Near East. **2**: *Hebrew*, see Ex 1.15 n. An Israelite could go into servitude because of debts (Ex 22.1; Lev 25.39; 2 Kings 4.1). **6**: *Before God*, i.e. the legal act had to be performed at the sacred doorpost of the house (see 12.7 n.). **7–11**: The rights of a female slave or concubine (compare Deut 15.12, 17).

ter, who designated her for himself, then he shall let her be redeemed; he shall have no right to sell her to a foreign people, since he has dealt unfairly with her. 9If he designates her for his son, he shall deal with her as with a daughter. 10If he takes another wife to himself, he shall not diminish the food, clothing, or marital rights of the first wife. [u] 11And if he does not do these three things for her, she shall go out without debt, without payment of money.

12 Whoever strikes a person mortally shall be put to death. 13If it was not premeditated, but came about by an act of God, then I will appoint for you a place to which the killer may flee. 14But if someone willfully attacks and kills another by treachery, you shall take the killer from my altar for execution.

15 Whoever strikes father or mother shall be put to death.

16 Whoever kidnaps a person, whether that person has been sold or is still held in possession, shall be put to death.

17 Whoever curses father or mother shall be put to death.

18 When individuals quarrel and one strikes the other with a stone or fist so that the injured party, though not dead, is confined to bed, 19but recovers and walks around outside with the help of a staff, then the assailant shall be free of liability, except to pay for the loss of time, and to arrange for full recovery.

20 When a slaveowner strikes a male or female slave with a rod and the slave dies immediately, the owner shall be punished. 21But if the slave survives a day or two, there is no punishment; for the slave is the owner's property.

22 When people who are fighting injure a pregnant woman so that there is a miscarriage, and yet no further harm follows, the one responsible shall be fined what the woman's husband demands, paying as much as the judges determine. 23If any harm follows, then you shall give life for life, 24eye for eye, tooth for tooth, hand for hand, foot for foot, 25burn for burn, wound for wound, stripe for stripe.

26 When a slaveowner strikes the eye of a male or female slave, destroying it, the owner shall let the slave go, a free person, to compensate for the eye. 27If the owner knocks out a tooth of a male or female slave, the slave shall be let go, a free person, to compensate for the tooth.

28 When an ox gores a man or a woman to death, the ox shall be stoned, and its flesh shall not be eaten; but the owner of the ox shall not be liable. 29If the ox has been accustomed to gore in the past, and its owner has been warned but has not restrained it, and it kills a man or a woman, the ox shall be stoned, and its owner also shall be put to death. 30If a ransom is imposed on the owner, then the owner shall pay whatever is imposed for the redemption of the victim's life. 31If it gores a boy or a girl, the owner shall be dealt with according to this same rule. 32If the ox gores a male or female slave, the owner shall pay to the slaveowner thirty shekels of silver, and the ox shall be stoned.

33 If someone leaves a pit open, or digs a pit and does not cover it, and an ox or a donkey falls into it, 34the owner of

[u] Heb *of her*

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**8**: *Redeemed,* i.e. by a relative or another buyer who pays the purchase price.

**21.12–32: Laws protecting human beings. 12–14**: A distinction is drawn between intentional and unintentional murder. As protection from the swift justice of the blood-avenger, the killer is guaranteed asylum (Num 35.12; Deut 4.41–43; 19.1–13; Josh ch 20), so that the case may be adjudicated soberly by legal authorities. The asylum in ancient times was at the altar (1 Kings 2.28–34).

**21.17**: The curse, according to ancient belief, released an inexorable power (Num 22.6), thus making it as serious to curse parents as to strike them. **22–25**: This "lex talionis," or "law of retaliation," (see Lev 24.20) was not a warrant for unrestrained vengeance but a limitation upon measureless revenge.

the pit shall make restitution, giving money to its owner, but keeping the dead animal.

35 If someone's ox hurts the ox of another, so that it dies, then they shall sell the live ox and divide the price of it; and the dead animal they shall also divide. 36 But if it was known that the ox was accustomed to gore in the past, and its owner has not restrained it, the owner shall restore ox for ox, but keep the dead animal.

22 [v] When someone steals an ox or a sheep, and slaughters it or sells it, the thief shall pay five oxen for an ox, and four sheep for a sheep. [w] The thief shall make restitution, but if unable to do so, shall be sold for the theft. 4 When the animal, whether ox or donkey or sheep, is found alive in the thief's possession, the thief shall pay double.

2 [x] If a thief is found breaking in, and is beaten to death, no bloodguilt is incurred; 3 but if it happens after sunrise, bloodguilt is incurred.

5 When someone causes a field or vineyard to be grazed over, or lets livestock loose to graze in someone else's field, restitution shall be made from the best in the owner's field or vineyard.

6 When fire breaks out and catches in thorns so that the stacked grain or the standing grain or the field is consumed, the one who started the fire shall make full restitution.

7 When someone delivers to a neighbor money or goods for safekeeping, and they are stolen from the neighbor's house, then the thief, if caught, shall pay double. 8 If the thief is not caught, the owner of the house shall be brought before God, [y] to determine whether or not the owner had laid hands on the neighbor's goods.

9 In any case of disputed ownership involving ox, donkey, sheep, clothing, or any other loss, of which one party says, "This is mine," the case of both parties shall come before God; [y] the one whom God condemns [z] shall pay double to the other.

10 When someone delivers to another a donkey, ox, sheep, or any other animal for safekeeping, and it dies or is injured or is carried off, without anyone seeing it, 11 an oath before the LORD shall decide between the two of them that the one has not laid hands on the property of the other; the owner shall accept the oath, and no restitution shall be made. 12 But if it was stolen, restitution shall be made to its owner. 13 If it was mangled by beasts, let it be brought as evidence; restitution shall not be made for the mangled remains.

14 When someone borrows an animal from another and it is injured or dies, the owner not being present, full restitution shall be made. 15 If the owner was present, there shall be no restitution; if it was hired, only the hiring fee is due.

16 When a man seduces a virgin who is not engaged to be married, and lies with her, he shall give the bride-price for her and make her his wife. 17 But if her father refuses to give her to him, he shall pay an amount equal to the bride-price for virgins.

*v* Ch 21.37 in Heb *w* Verses 2, 3, and 4 rearranged thus: 3b, 4, 2, 3a *x* Ch 22.1 in Heb *y* Or *before the judges* *z* Or *the judges condemn*

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**21.33–22.17: Laws dealing with property.**

**21.33–36**: These laws establish responsibility in cases of carelessness.

**22.1–4**: Case laws regulating stealing. **2–3**: These verses may mean that if caught in the act (at night), the invader may be slain with impunity, but if slain in broad daylight, there is blood guilt. **5–6**: Cases of neglect.

**22.7–15**: Cases involving trusteeship. **9**: *Before God* (v. 8), i.e. to the sanctuary (possibly to the doorpost; 21.6) for an oracular decision or the sacred oath (v. 11; 1 Kings 8.31–32).

**22.16–17**: This law is included here because it deals with a financial matter, the *bride-price* (Deut 22.29). Laws concerning sexual relations are found in Deut 22.13–30.

18 You shall not permit a female sorcerer to live.

19 Whoever lies with an animal shall be put to death.

20 Whoever sacrifices to any god, other than the LORD alone, shall be devoted to destruction.

21 You shall not wrong or oppress a resident alien, for you were aliens in the land of Egypt. 22 You shall not abuse any widow or orphan. 23 If you do abuse them, when they cry out to me, I will surely heed their cry; 24 my wrath will burn, and I will kill you with the sword, and your wives shall become widows and your children orphans.

25 If you lend money to my people, to the poor among you, you shall not deal with them as a creditor; you shall not exact interest from them. 26 If you take your neighbor's cloak in pawn, you shall restore it before the sun goes down; 27 for it may be your neighbor's only clothing to use as cover; in what else shall that person sleep? And if your neighbor cries out to me, I will listen, for I am compassionate.

28 You shall not revile God, or curse a leader of your people.

29 You shall not delay to make offerings from the fullness of your harvest and from the outflow of your presses. [a]

The firstborn of your sons you shall give to me. 30 You shall do the same with your oxen and with your sheep: seven days it shall remain with its mother; on the eighth day you shall give it to me.

31 You shall be people consecrated to me; therefore you shall not eat any meat that is mangled by beasts in the field; you shall throw it to the dogs.

23 You shall not spread a false report. You shall not join hands with the wicked to act as a malicious witness. 2 You shall not follow a majority in wrongdoing; when you bear witness in a lawsuit, you shall not side with the majority so as to pervert justice; 3 nor shall you be partial to the poor in a lawsuit.

4 When you come upon your enemy's ox or donkey going astray, you shall bring it back.

5 When you see the donkey of one who hates you lying under its burden and you would hold back from setting it free, you must help to set it free. [a]

6 You shall not pervert the justice due to your poor in their lawsuits. 7 Keep far from a false charge, and do not kill the innocent and those in the right, for I will not acquit the guilty. 8 You shall take no bribe, for a bribe blinds the officials, and subverts the cause of those who are in the right.

9 You shall not oppress a resident alien; you know the heart of an alien, for you were aliens in the land of Egypt.

10 For six years you shall sow your land and gather in its yield; 11 but the seventh year you shall let it rest and lie fallow, so that the poor of your people may eat; and what they leave the wild animals may eat. You shall do the same with your vineyard, and with your olive orchard.

*a* Meaning of Heb uncertain

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**22.18–23.9: Miscellaneous social and cultic laws.**

**22.18–20:** The laws of vv. 18–20 (compare 21.12, 15–17) are in the unconditional style of the Decalogue. **20:** Compare 20.3; Deut 13.12–18. **21–27:** Israel's God is the protector of the legally defenseless: the resident alien (sojourner), orphan, widow, and poor. **25:** Being a farming people, Israel frowned upon the mercantile way of life (Hos 12.7–8) and specifically upon the exaction of interest from another Israelite (Lev 25.35–38). **26:** A loan with a garment as security could only be for the day, lest one of the poor suffer (Deut 24.12–13; Am 2.8).

**22.28:** Lev 24.15–16; 2 Sam 16.9; 1 Kings 2.8–9; 21.10. **29–30:** See 13.2 n. **31:** Flesh torn by beasts was regarded as unclean because it was not properly drained of blood (Lev 7.24; 17.15).

**23.1–9:** Laws expounding Israel's sense of justice. **4–5:** Justice extends even to helping *your enemy* (Deut 22.1–4).

**23.10–19: A cultic calendar** (34.18–26; Lev 23.1–44; Deut 16.1–17). **10–11:** See Lev 25.2–7. **12:** Here the observance of the sab-

12 Six days you shall do your work, but on the seventh day you shall rest, so that your ox and your donkey may have relief, and your homeborn slave and the resident alien may be refreshed. 13 Be attentive to all that I have said to you. Do not invoke the names of other gods; do not let them be heard on your lips.

14 Three times in the year you shall hold a festival for me. 15 You shall observe the festival of unleavened bread; as I commanded you, you shall eat unleavened bread for seven days at the appointed time in the month of Abib, for in it you came out of Egypt.

No one shall appear before me empty-handed.

16 You shall observe the festival of harvest, of the first fruits of your labor, of what you sow in the field. You shall observe the festival of ingathering at the end of the year, when you gather in from the field the fruit of your labor. 17 Three times in the year all your males shall appear before the Lord GOD.

18 You shall not offer the blood of my sacrifice with anything leavened, or let the fat of my festival remain until the morning.

19 The choicest of the first fruits of your ground you shall bring into the house of the LORD your God.

You shall not boil a kid in its mother's milk.

20 I am going to send an angel in front of you, to guard you on the way and to bring you to the place that I have prepared. 21 Be attentive to him and listen to his voice; do not rebel against him, for he will not pardon your transgression; for my name is in him.

22 But if you listen attentively to his voice and do all that I say, then I will be an enemy to your enemies and a foe to your foes.

23 When my angel goes in front of you, and brings you to the Amorites, the Hittites, the Perizzites, the Canaanites, the Hivites, and the Jebusites, and I blot them out, 24 you shall not bow down to their gods, or worship them, or follow their practices, but you shall utterly demolish them and break their pillars in pieces. 25 You shall worship the LORD your God, and I[b] will bless your bread and your water; and I will take sickness away from among you. 26 No one shall miscarry or be barren in your land; I will fulfill the number of your days. 27 I will send my terror in front of you, and will throw into confusion all the people against whom you shall come, and I will make all your enemies turn their backs to you. 28 And I will send the pestilence[c] in front of you, which shall drive out the Hivites, the Canaanites, and the Hittites from before you. 29 I will not drive them out from before you in one year, or the land would become desolate and the wild animals would multiply against you. 30 Little by little I will drive them out from before you, until you have increased and possess the land. 31 I will set your borders from the Red Sea[d] to the sea of the Philistines, and from the wilderness to the Euphrates; for I will hand over to you the inhabitants of the land, and you shall drive them out before you. 32 You shall make no covenant with them

*b* Gk Vg: Heb *he* *c* Or *hornets*: Meaning of Heb uncertain *d* Or *Sea of Reeds*

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bath is based upon humanitarian concern (compare 20.11). **14–17**: This law reflects the practice of making a pilgrimage to the central sanctuary of the tribal confederacy (1 Sam 1.3, 21). **15**: *Empty-handed,* i.e. without a gift of the first fruits of the barley harvest. **16**: The *festival of harvest,* i.e. the festival of weeks (or pentecost, see Lev 23.15–21 n.) which was celebrated at the time of the wheat harvest (June). The third festival, *the festival of ingathering,* or festival of booths, was celebrated *at the end of the year* (autumn), according to the old agricultural calendar (see 12.2 n.), when fruit, grapes, and olives were harvested. **17**: According to ancient practice, men were the chief participants in the cult (34.23; see 10.7–11 n.). **18–19**: 34.25–26. The prohibition against boiling a kid in its mother's milk (Deut 14.21) seems to be a protest against a Canaanite method of preparing a sacrifice.

**23.20–33: The conclusion to the Covenant Code** (beginning 20.22). **20–21**: The

and their gods. 33They shall not live in your land, or they will make you sin against me; for if you worship their gods, it will surely be a snare to you.

24 Then he said to Moses, "Come up to the LORD, you and Aaron, Nadab, and Abihu, and seventy of the elders of Israel, and worship at a distance. 2Moses alone shall come near the LORD; but the others shall not come near, and the people shall not come up with him."

3 Moses came and told the people all the words of the LORD and all the ordinances; and all the people answered with one voice, and said, "All the words that the LORD has spoken we will do." 4And Moses wrote down all the words of the LORD. He rose early in the morning, and built an altar at the foot of the mountain, and set up twelve pillars, corresponding to the twelve tribes of Israel. 5He sent young men of the people of Israel, who offered burnt offerings and sacrificed oxen as offerings of well-being to the LORD. 6Moses took half of the blood and put it in basins, and half of the blood he dashed against the altar. 7Then he took the book of the covenant, and read it in the hearing of the people; and they said, "All that the LORD has spoken we will do, and we will be obedient." 8Moses took the blood and dashed it on the people, and said, "See the blood of the covenant that the LORD has made with you in accordance with all these words."

9 Then Moses and Aaron, Nadab, and Abihu, and seventy of the elders of Israel went up, 10and they saw the God of Israel. Under his feet there was something like a pavement of sapphire stone, like the very heaven for clearness. 11God[e] did not lay his hand on the chief men of the people of Israel; also they beheld God, and they ate and drank.

12 The LORD said to Moses, "Come up to me on the mountain, and wait there; and I will give you the tablets of stone, with the law and the commandment, which I have written for their instruction." 13So Moses set out with his assistant Joshua, and Moses went up into the mountain of God. 14To the elders he had said, "Wait here for us, until we come to you again; for Aaron and Hur are with you; whoever has a dispute may go to them."

*e* Heb *He*

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*angel* is the LORD in person (14.19; see Gen 16.7 n.). On *the name,* see Gen 32.27 n. **27–28**: Here the language of "holy war" is used. *Terror,* Gen 35.5 n. *Pestilence* apparently refers to the panic aroused in holy war (Deut 7.20; Josh 24.12 n.).

**24.1–18**: **The ceremony of covenant ratification. 1–2**: This tradition is continued in vv. 9–11. *Moses alone,* an indication of Moses' special role as covenant mediator (19.9; 20.19). **3–8**: The first version of the covenant ceremony stresses the people's participation (19.10–15). **3**: *The words,* i.e. the Decalogue; *the ordinances,* i.e. the laws of the Covenant Code (see 21.1 n.). **4**: The participation of all the people is symbolized by *twelve pillars,* one for each tribe. **5**: On the types of sacrifice, see Lev chs 1 and 3. **6–8**: The ritual dramatizes the uniting of the two parties: the LORD, whose presence is represented by the altar, and the people. Compare the ancient covenant ceremony found in Gen ch 15. **7**: *The book of the covenant* (Josh 24.25–26) apparently contained the covenant laws, and here is tacitly identified with *the words* and *the ordinances* (v. 3). **8**: *The blood of the covenant* (compare Mt 26.28; 1 Cor 11.25) reflects the ancient view that blood was efficacious in establishing community between God and human beings (see Lev 1.5 n.).

**24.9–11**: The second version of the covenant ceremony (continuing vv. 1–2). **9**: The people did not take part but were represented by the seventy *elders* or *chief men.* Moses, the covenant mediator, was accompanied by the priestly family, Aaron, Nadab, and Abihu (6.14–25; Lev 10.1–3). **10**: The leaders did not see God directly; they saw only the lower part of the heavenly throne-room—the sapphire pavement (the firmament) above which the LORD was enthroned (compare Isa 6.1; Ezek 1.1, 26–28). **11**: Unharmed by divine holiness (see 3.6 n.), the leaders partook of the covenant meal (18.12).

**24.12–14**: A separate tradition about the gift of *the tablets of stone* on which the Decalogue was written (32.15; 34.28; Deut 9.9, 11, 15). **14**: 18.16. This verse sets the stage for the

15 Then Moses went up on the mountain, and the cloud covered the mountain. 16 The glory of the LORD settled on Mount Sinai, and the cloud covered it for six days; on the seventh day he called to Moses out of the cloud. 17 Now the appearance of the glory of the LORD was like a devouring fire on the top of the mountain in the sight of the people of Israel. 18 Moses entered the cloud, and went up on the mountain. Moses was on the mountain for forty days and forty nights.

25 The LORD said to Moses: 2 Tell the Israelites to take for me an offering; from all whose hearts prompt them to give you shall receive the offering for me. 3 This is the offering that you shall receive from them: gold, silver, and bronze, 4 blue, purple, and crimson yarns and fine linen, goats' hair, 5 tanned rams' skins, fine leather,[f] acacia wood, 6 oil for the lamps, spices for the anointing oil and for the fragrant incense, 7 onyx stones and gems to be set in the ephod and for the breastpiece. 8 And have them make me a sanctuary, so that I may dwell among them. 9 In accordance with all that I show you concerning the pattern of the tabernacle and of all its furniture, so you shall make it.

10 They shall make an ark of acacia wood; it shall be two and a half cubits long, a cubit and a half wide, and a cubit and a half high. 11 You shall overlay it with pure gold, inside and outside you shall overlay it, and you shall make a molding of gold upon it all around. 12 You shall cast four rings of gold for it and put them on its four feet, two rings on the one side of it, and two rings on the other side. 13 You shall make poles of acacia wood, and overlay them with gold. 14 And you shall put the poles into the rings on the sides of the ark, by which to carry the ark. 15 The poles shall remain in the rings of the ark; they shall not be taken from it. 16 You shall put into the ark the covenant[g] that I shall give you.

17 Then you shall make a mercy seat[h] of pure gold; two cubits and a half shall be its length, and a cubit and a half its width. 18 You shall make two cherubim of gold; you shall make them of hammered work, at the two ends of the mercy seat.[i] 19 Make one cherub at the one end, and one cherub at the other; of one piece with the mercy seat[i] you shall make the cherubim at its two ends. 20 The cherubim shall spread out their wings above, overshadowing the mercy seat[i] with their wings. They shall face one to another; the faces of the cherubim shall be turned toward the mercy seat.[i] 21 You shall put the mercy seat[i] on the top of the ark; and in the ark you shall put the

*f* Meaning of Heb uncertain *g* Or *treaty*, or *testimony*; Heb *eduth* *h* Or *a cover* *i* Or *the cover*

episode of ch 32. *Hur,* see 17.10 n. **15–18:** This theophany introduces the priestly material of chs 25–31, which may have replaced the early tradition about Moses making the ark and putting the tablets of law in it (Deut 10.1–5). *The glory,* see 16.6–7 n.

**25.1–40: The ark, the table, and the lampstand. 1–9:** The request for a free-will offering for making the tabernacle and its equipment (35.4–29). **7:** *The ephod* and *the breastpiece,* 28.6–12, 13–30. **8:** *A sanctuary,* i.e. a tabernacle, will be the sign that God, the heavenly LORD, is present among the people.

**25.10–22:** Specifications for the ark. In the following sections, the priestly account moves from the center to the periphery; i.e. it begins with the most important item, the ark, and moves outward to the court. Comparable to ancient Arabic palladia, the ark was a portable wooden chest that served to guide Israel in wandering (Num 10.33), to lead in war (Num 10.35–36), and to be a medium for oracles (1 Sam ch 3). It was regarded as a throne-seat above which the LORD was invisibly enthroned (1 Sam 4.4; 2 Sam 6.2; 2 Kings 19.15). In contrast to the tent of meeting (33.7–11), it signified the divine nearness. Constructed by Moses himself, according to tradition (Deut 10.3), it was stationed at Shiloh during the days of the tribal confederacy (1 Sam chs 3–6) and was eventually brought by David to Jerusalem (2 Sam ch 6). **10:** The dimensions are about 45 × 27 × 27 inches. **16:** *The covenant,* i.e. the tablets of law (24.12). Hence the chest is called "the ark of the covenant" (v. 22) in view of its chief contents. **17:** The *mercy seat* (Lev 16.2, 13–15) was the cover of the ark. As the footstool of the LORD's

covenant[j] that I shall give you. 22 There I will meet with you, and from above the mercy seat,[k] from between the two cherubim that are on the ark of the covenant,[j] I will deliver to you all my commands for the Israelites.

23 You shall make a table of acacia wood, two cubits long, one cubit wide, and a cubit and a half high. 24 You shall overlay it with pure gold, and make a molding of gold around it. 25 You shall make around it a rim a handbreadth wide, and a molding of gold around the rim. 26 You shall make for it four rings of gold, and fasten the rings to the four corners at its four legs. 27 The rings that hold the poles used for carrying the table shall be close to the rim. 28 You shall make the poles of acacia wood, and overlay them with gold, and the table shall be carried with these. 29 You shall make its plates and dishes for incense, and its flagons and bowls with which to pour drink offerings; you shall make them of pure gold. 30 And you shall set the bread of the Presence on the table before me always.

31 You shall make a lampstand of pure gold. The base and the shaft of the lampstand shall be made of hammered work; its cups, its calyxes, and its petals shall be of one piece with it; 32 and there shall be six branches going out of its sides, three branches of the lampstand out of one side of it and three branches of the lampstand out of the other side of it; 33 three cups shaped like almond blossoms, each with calyx and petals, on one branch, and three cups shaped like almond blossoms, each with calyx and petals, on the other branch—so for the six branches going out of the lampstand. 34 On the lampstand itself there shall be four cups shaped like almond blossoms, each with its calyxes and petals. 35 There shall be a calyx of one piece with it under the first pair of branches, a calyx of one piece with it under the next pair of branches, and a calyx of one piece with it under the last pair of branches—so for the six branches that go out of the lampstand. 36 Their calyxes and their branches shall be of one piece with it, the whole of it one hammered piece of pure gold. 37 You shall make the seven lamps for it; and the lamps shall be set up so as to give light on the space in front of it. 38 Its snuffers and trays shall be of pure gold. 39 It, and all these utensils, shall be made from a talent of pure gold. 40 And see that you make them according to the pattern for them, which is being shown you on the mountain.

26 Moreover you shall make the tabernacle with ten curtains of fine twisted linen, and blue, purple, and crimson yarns; you shall make them with cherubim skillfully worked into them. 2 The length of each curtain shall be twenty-eight cubits, and the width of each curtain four cubits; all the curtains shall be of the same size. 3 Five curtains shall be joined to one another; and the other five curtains shall be joined to one another. 4 You shall make loops of blue on the edge of the outermost curtain in the first set; and likewise you shall make loops on the edge of the outermost cur-

*j* Or *treaty*, or *testimony*; Heb *eduth* *k* Or *the cover*

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throne (1 Chr 28.2; Ps 132.7), it was regarded as the place where God meets the priestly representative of the people (v. 22). **18–20**: In antiquity cherubim (see Gen 3.24 n.) were adornments of a throne.

**25.23–30**: The table for the holy bread and the sacred vessels (1 Kings 7.48). **30**: The *bread of the Presence* or "holy bread" (1 Sam 21.4, 6) was bread placed before God as a sacrificial offering (Num 4.7; Lev 24.5–9; 1 Chr 9.32; Mt 12.4).

**25.31–40**: The seven-branched golden candlestick was to illumine the interior of the holy place (30.7–8; 1 Kings 7.49). **40**: Ancients believed that earthly temples and their cultic equipment were made according to the *pattern* or prototype of heavenly models (v. 9; 26.30; 27.8).

**26.1–37**: **The pattern of the tabernacle.** This account blends the ancient tradition of the tent of meeting (33.7–11; Num 11.16–17, 24–30) and the later view of the structure and adornments of Solomon's temple (1 Kings ch 6; Ezek chs 40–43). Hence it is called "the tabernacle of the tent of meeting" (39.32; 40.6, 29). **1–6**: The interior was to consist

tain in the second set. 5You shall make fifty loops on the one curtain, and you shall make fifty loops on the edge of the curtain that is in the second set; the loops shall be opposite one another. 6You shall make fifty clasps of gold, and join the curtains to one another with the clasps, so that the tabernacle may be one whole.

7 You shall also make curtains of goats' hair for a tent over the tabernacle; you shall make eleven curtains. 8The length of each curtain shall be thirty cubits, and the width of each curtain four cubits; the eleven curtains shall be of the same size. 9You shall join five curtains by themselves, and six curtains by themselves, and the sixth curtain you shall double over at the front of the tent. 10You shall make fifty loops on the edge of the curtain that is outermost in one set, and fifty loops on the edge of the curtain that is outermost in the second set.

11 You shall make fifty clasps of bronze, and put the clasps into the loops, and join the tent together, so that it may be one whole. 12The part that remains of the curtains of the tent, the half curtain that remains, shall hang over the back of the tabernacle. 13The cubit on the one side, and the cubit on the other side, of what remains in the length of the curtains of the tent, shall hang over the sides of the tabernacle, on this side and that side, to cover it. 14You shall make for the tent a covering of tanned rams' skins and an outer covering of fine leather. *l*

15 You shall make upright frames of acacia wood for the tabernacle. 16Ten cubits shall be the length of a frame, and a cubit and a half the width of each frame. 17There shall be two pegs in each frame to fit the frames together; you shall make these for all the frames of the tabernacle. 18You shall make the frames for the tabernacle: twenty frames for the south side; 19and you shall make forty bases of silver under the twenty frames, two bases under the first frame for its two pegs, and two bases under the next frame for its two pegs; 20and for the second side of the tabernacle, on the north side twenty frames, 21and their forty bases of silver, two bases under the first frame, and two bases under the next frame; 22and for the rear of the tabernacle westward you shall make six frames. 23You shall make two frames for corners of the tabernacle in the rear; 24they shall be separate beneath, but joined at the top, at the first ring; it shall be the same with both of them; they shall form the two corners. 25And so there shall be eight frames, with their bases of silver, sixteen bases; two bases under the first frame, and two bases under the next frame.

26 You shall make bars of acacia wood, five for the frames of the one side of the tabernacle, 27and five bars for the frames of the other side of the tabernacle, and five bars for the frames of the side of the tabernacle at the rear westward. 28The middle bar, halfway up the frames, shall pass through from end to end. 29You shall overlay the frames with gold, and shall make their rings of gold to hold the bars; and you shall overlay the bars with gold. 30Then you shall erect the tabernacle according to the plan for it that you were shown on the mountain.

31 You shall make a curtain of blue, purple, and crimson yarns, and of fine twisted linen; it shall be made with cherubim skillfully worked into it. 32You shall hang it on four pillars of acacia overlaid with gold, which have hooks of

*l* Meaning of Heb uncertain

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of ten richly decorated curtains (compare 1 Kings 6.29).

**26.7–14**: The oldest phase of the priestly tradition recalls the tent made of goat's hair (v. 7) and reddened ram's skins (v. 14), like the ancient, Arabic red-leather shrines which were also supported on desert acacia wood. The ancient tradition concerning the tent is combined with the design of Solomon's temple, with the result that the tent is conceived as a covering for the tabernacle, i.e. *a tent over the tabernacle* (v. 7; 39.33; 40.19).

**26.15–30**: The wooden framework is about 45 × 15 × 15 feet (1 Kings 6.2).

**26.31–34**: The *most holy place* (Holy of Holies) was to be separated from the *holy place*

gold and rest on four bases of silver. 33 You shall hang the curtain under the clasps, and bring the ark of the covenant [m] in there, within the curtain; and the curtain shall separate for you the holy place from the most holy. 34 You shall put the mercy seat [n] on the ark of the covenant [m] in the most holy place. 35 You shall set the table outside the curtain, and the lampstand on the south side of the tabernacle opposite the table; and you shall put the table on the north side.

36 You shall make a screen for the entrance of the tent, of blue, purple, and crimson yarns, and of fine twisted linen, embroidered with needlework. 37 You shall make for the screen five pillars of acacia, and overlay them with gold; their hooks shall be of gold, and you shall cast five bases of bronze for them.

27 You shall make the altar of acacia wood, five cubits long and five cubits wide; the altar shall be square, and it shall be three cubits high. 2 You shall make horns for it on its four corners; its horns shall be of one piece with it, and you shall overlay it with bronze. 3 You shall make pots for it to receive its ashes, and shovels and basins and forks and firepans; you shall make all its utensils of bronze. 4 You shall also make for it a grating, a network of bronze; and on the net you shall make four bronze rings at its four corners. 5 You shall set it under the ledge of the altar so that the net shall extend halfway down the altar. 6 You shall make poles for the altar, poles of acacia wood, and overlay them with bronze; 7 the poles shall be put through the rings, so that the poles shall be on the two sides of the altar when it is carried. 8 You shall make it hollow, with boards. They shall be made just as you were shown on the mountain.

9 You shall make the court of the tabernacle. On the south side the court shall have hangings of fine twisted linen one hundred cubits long for that side; 10 its twenty pillars and their twenty bases shall be of bronze, but the hooks of the pillars and their bands shall be of silver. 11 Likewise for its length on the north side there shall be hangings one hundred cubits long, their pillars twenty and their bases twenty, of bronze, but the hooks of the pillars and their bands shall be of silver. 12 For the width of the court on the west side there shall be fifty cubits of hangings, with ten pillars and ten bases. 13 The width of the court on the front to the east shall be fifty cubits. 14 There shall be fifteen cubits of hangings on the one side, with three pillars and three bases. 15 There shall be fifteen cubits of hangings on the other side, with three pillars and three bases. 16 For the gate of the court there shall be a screen twenty cubits long, of blue, purple, and crimson yarns, and of fine twisted linen, embroidered with needlework; it shall have four pillars and with them four bases. 17 All the pillars around the court shall be banded with silver; their hooks shall be of silver, and their bases of bronze. 18 The length of the court shall be one hundred cubits, the width fifty, and the height five cubits, with hangings of fine twisted linen and bases of bronze. 19 All the utensils of the tabernacle for every use, and all its pegs and all the pegs of the court, shall be of bronze.

20 You shall further command the Israelites to bring you pure oil of beaten olives for the light, so that a lamp may be set up to burn regularly. 21 In the tent of

*m* Or *treaty*, or *testimony*; Heb *eduth* *n* Or *the cover*

(sanctuary) by a rich curtain, as in Solomon's temple.

**27.1–21**: **The altar and the court.** From the tabernacle, the writer turns to the surrounding sacred area. **1–8**: The central object in the court was the altar of burnt offering, where the main sacrificial services took place. In comparison with the crude altar of 20.25, this altar, overlaid with bronze (1 Kings 8.64), indicates a considerable amount of Canaanite influence.

**27.9–19**: *The court of the tabernacle* was a sacred enclosure (150 × 75 feet), a common feature of ancient temple plans. **20–21**: The lamp (25.31–37; Lev 24.1–3) was to burn continually as a sign of God's presence. *The covenant*, see 16.33–34 n.

meeting, outside the curtain that is before the covenant,[o] Aaron and his sons shall tend it from evening to morning before the LORD. It shall be a perpetual ordinance to be observed throughout their generations by the Israelites.

28 Then bring near to you your brother Aaron, and his sons with him, from among the Israelites, to serve me as priests—Aaron and Aaron's sons, Nadab and Abihu, Eleazar and Ithamar. 2 You shall make sacred vestments for the glorious adornment of your brother Aaron. 3 And you shall speak to all who have ability, whom I have endowed with skill, that they make Aaron's vestments to consecrate him for my priesthood. 4 These are the vestments that they shall make: a breastpiece, an ephod, a robe, a checkered tunic, a turban, and a sash. When they make these sacred vestments for your brother Aaron and his sons to serve me as priests, 5 they shall use gold, blue, purple, and crimson yarns, and fine linen.

6 They shall make the ephod of gold, of blue, purple, and crimson yarns, and of fine twisted linen, skillfully worked. 7 It shall have two shoulder-pieces attached to its two edges, so that it may be joined together. 8 The decorated band on it shall be of the same workmanship and materials, of gold, of blue, purple, and crimson yarns, and of fine twisted linen. 9 You shall take two onyx stones, and engrave on them the names of the sons of Israel, 10 six of their names on the one stone, and the names of the remaining six on the other stone, in the order of their birth. 11 As a gem-cutter engraves signets, so you shall engrave the two stones with the names of the sons of Israel; you shall mount them in settings of gold filigree. 12 You shall set the two stones on the shoulder-pieces of the ephod, as stones of remembrance for the sons of Israel; and Aaron shall bear their names before the LORD on his two shoulders for remembrance. 13 You shall make settings of gold filigree, 14 and two chains of pure gold, twisted like cords; and you shall attach the corded chains to the settings.

15 You shall make a breastpiece of judgment, in skilled work; you shall make it in the style of the ephod; of gold, of blue and purple and crimson yarns, and of fine twisted linen you shall make it. 16 It shall be square and doubled, a span in length and a span in width. 17 You shall set in it four rows of stones. A row of carnelian,[p] chrysolite, and emerald shall be the first row; 18 and the second row a turquoise, a sapphire[q] and a moonstone; 19 and the third row a jacinth, an agate, and an amethyst; 20 and the fourth row a beryl, an onyx, and a jasper; they shall be set in gold filigree. 21 There shall be twelve stones with names corresponding to the names of the sons of Israel; they shall be like signets, each engraved with its name, for the twelve tribes. 22 You shall make for the breastpiece chains of pure gold, twisted like cords; 23 and you shall make for the breastpiece two rings of gold, and put the two rings on the two edges of the breastpiece. 24 You shall put

*o* Or *treaty*, or *testimony*; Heb *eduth*
*p* The identity of several of these stones is uncertain *q* Or *lapis lazuli*

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**28.1–43: Priestly vestments. 1–5**: Early in Israelite history the tribe of Levi became a priestly class (Gen 49.5–7; Num 1.47–54). Apparently Levites first exercised their priestly office at Kadesh (Deut 33.8–10). Those of Aaron's line (Ex 6.14–25; compare Num 8.5–26; Deut 18.1 n.) are here designated to officiate at the altar of the central shrine (i.e. the tabernacle and later the Jerusalem temple).

**28.6–12**: The *ephod* harks back to early cultic practice at the central sanctuary of Shiloh (1 Sam 2.18–19, 28; 14.3). Sometimes scorned as an idolatrous object, perhaps a garment for an idol (Judg 8.27; 17.5; 18.4), it is usually thought of as a linen apron worn by a priest (2 Sam 6.14–15) and used in connection with the sacred lot (see v. 30). The engraved stones on each shoulder-piece (vv. 9–12) symbolize the priest's intercessory function on behalf of the twelve tribes (v. 29).

**28.15–30**: Hanging from the shoulder-pieces was *the breastpiece of judgment*, a pouch which contained the sacred lots, *Urim and Thummim* (v. 30). The priestly lot was used to

the two cords of gold in the two rings at the edges of the breastpiece; 25 the two ends of the two cords you shall attach to the two settings, and so attach it in front to the shoulder-pieces of the ephod. 26 You shall make two rings of gold, and put them at the two ends of the breastpiece, on its inside edge next to the ephod. 27 You shall make two rings of gold, and attach them in front to the lower part of the two shoulder-pieces of the ephod, at its joining above the decorated band of the ephod. 28 The breastpiece shall be bound by its rings to the rings of the ephod with a blue cord, so that it may lie on the decorated band of the ephod, and so that the breastpiece shall not come loose from the ephod. 29 So Aaron shall bear the names of the sons of Israel in the breastpiece of judgment on his heart when he goes into the holy place, for a continual remembrance before the LORD. 30 In the breastpiece of judgment you shall put the Urim and the Thummim, and they shall be on Aaron's heart when he goes in before the LORD; thus Aaron shall bear the judgment of the Israelites on his heart before the LORD continually.

31 You shall make the robe of the ephod all of blue. 32 It shall have an opening for the head in the middle of it, with a woven binding around the opening, like the opening in a coat of mail,[r] so that it may not be torn. 33 On its lower hem you shall make pomegranates of blue, purple, and crimson yarns, all around the lower hem, with bells of gold between them all around—34 a golden bell and a pomegranate alternating all around the lower hem of the robe. 35 Aaron shall wear it when he ministers, and its sound shall be heard when he goes into the holy place before the LORD, and when he comes out, so that he may not die.

36 You shall make a rosette of pure gold, and engrave on it, like the engraving of a signet, "Holy to the LORD." 37 You shall fasten it on the turban with a blue cord; it shall be on the front of the turban. 38 It shall be on Aaron's forehead, and Aaron shall take on himself any guilt incurred in the holy offering that the Israelites consecrate as their sacred donations; it shall always be on his forehead, in order that they may find favor before the LORD.

39 You shall make the checkered tunic of fine linen, and you shall make a turban of fine linen, and you shall make a sash embroidered with needlework.

40 For Aaron's sons you shall make tunics and sashes and headdresses; you shall make them for their glorious adornment. 41 You shall put them on your brother Aaron, and on his sons with him, and shall anoint them and ordain them and consecrate them, so that they may serve me as priests. 42 You shall make for them linen undergarments to cover their naked flesh; they shall reach from the hips to the thighs; 43 Aaron and his sons shall wear them when they go into the tent of meeting, or when they come near the altar to minister in the holy place; or they will bring guilt on themselves and die. This shall be a perpetual ordinance for him and for his descendants after him.

29 Now this is what you shall do to them to consecrate them, so that

r Meaning of Heb uncertain

obtain an oracular decision (Lev 8.8; Num 27.21; Deut 33.8; 1 Sam 14.41–42; 23.6–13).

**28.31–34**: A short garment, the blue *robe of the ephod,* was worn under the ephod. The bells were once thought to protect the priest from demonic attack, *so that he may not die* when he enters the holy place (v. 35). **36–38**: The head piece, *a rosette of pure gold* fastened to a turban, symbolizes the regal splendor of the priest (Ezek 21.26; Zech 3.5). **39**: Underneath the blue robe the priest wore a coat or long tunic with sleeves, gathered at the waist with a sash.

**29.1–46**: **The service for the ordination of the priests.** See Lev ch 8 where these directions are carried out. **1–9**: The anointing of the high priest (Lev 16.32; Ps 133.2) follows the ancient rite of anointing the king's head with oil, thus making him "the LORD's anointed" (1 Sam 24.6; Ps 2.2). Priestly tradition traces the line of the high priesthood from Aaron, to whom the priestly office be-

they may serve me as priests. Take one young bull and two rams without blemish, 2and unleavened bread, unleavened cakes mixed with oil, and unleavened wafers spread with oil. You shall make them of choice wheat flour. 3You shall put them in one basket and bring them in the basket, and bring the bull and the two rams. 4You shall bring Aaron and his sons to the entrance of the tent of meeting, and wash them with water. 5Then you shall take the vestments, and put on Aaron the tunic and the robe of the ephod, and the ephod, and the breastpiece, and gird him with the decorated band of the ephod; 6and you shall set the turban on his head, and put the holy diadem on the turban. 7You shall take the anointing oil, and pour it on his head and anoint him. 8Then you shall bring his sons, and put tunics on them, 9and you shall gird them with sashes[s] and tie headdresses on them; and the priesthood shall be theirs by a perpetual ordinance. You shall then ordain Aaron and his sons.

10 You shall bring the bull in front of the tent of meeting. Aaron and his sons shall lay their hands on the head of the bull, 11and you shall slaughter the bull before the LORD, at the entrance of the tent of meeting, 12and shall take some of the blood of the bull and put it on the horns of the altar with your finger, and all the rest of the blood you shall pour out at the base of the altar. 13You shall take all the fat that covers the entrails, and the appendage of the liver, and the two kidneys with the fat that is on them, and turn them into smoke on the altar. 14But the flesh of the bull, and its skin, and its dung, you shall burn with fire outside the camp; it is a sin offering.

15 Then you shall take one of the rams, and Aaron and his sons shall lay their hands on the head of the ram, 16and you shall slaughter the ram, and shall take its blood and dash it against all sides of the altar. 17Then you shall cut the ram into its parts, and wash its entrails and its legs, and put them with its parts and its head, 18and turn the whole ram into smoke on the altar; it is a burnt offering to the LORD; it is a pleasing odor, an offering by fire to the LORD.

19 You shall take the other ram; and Aaron and his sons shall lay their hands on the head of the ram, 20and you shall slaughter the ram, and take some of its blood and put it on the lobe of Aaron's right ear and on the lobes of the right ears of his sons, and on the thumbs of their right hands, and on the big toes of their right feet, and dash the rest of the blood against all sides of the altar. 21Then you shall take some of the blood that is on the altar, and some of the anointing oil, and sprinkle it on Aaron and his vestments and on his sons and his sons' vestments with him; then he and his vestments shall be holy, as well as his sons and his sons' vestments.

22 You shall also take the fat of the ram, the fat tail, the fat that covers the entrails, the appendage of the liver, the two kidneys with the fat that is on them, and the right thigh (for it is a ram of

*s* Gk: Heb *sashes, Aaron and his sons*

longs *by a perpetual ordinance* (v. 9b). **10–14**: The sin offering for the priests (Lev 4.1–12).

**29.10**: The laying on of hands signifies identification with the sacrificial victim. **12**: The horns of the altar (27.2) were its most sacred parts (1 Kings 1.50; Am 3.14). On the efficacy of blood for the expiation of sin, see Lev 1.5 n. **15–18**: One of the rams (v. 1), as distinguished from the ram of ordination (v. 22), was for *burnt offering* (Lev ch 1). *Pleasing odor,* see Lev 1.9 n. **19–34**: The installation sacrifice was essentially an offering of well-being (Lev ch 3). **20**: Touching the blood upon the ears, hands, and feet consecrates the whole person for the office. **24**: Putting these things in the hands of the priests signified that they were authorized to receive their portions of the offerings (1 Sam 2.12–17). To "fill the hands" (literal Hebrew) was an old expression for investment with priestly prerogatives (Judg 17.5; 1 Kings 13.33). The *elevation offering* (vv. 26–28; Lev 7.29–36) refers to the act of moving the sacrifice toward and away from the altar, to symbolize presenting the gift to God and receiving it back as a portion. **31–34**: Further instructions for the ordination

ordination), 23 and one loaf of bread, one cake of bread made with oil, and one wafer, out of the basket of unleavened bread that is before the LORD; 24 and you shall place all these on the palms of Aaron and on the palms of his sons, and raise them as an elevation offering before the LORD. 25 Then you shall take them from their hands, and turn them into smoke on the altar on top of the burnt offering of pleasing odor before the LORD; it is an offering by fire to the LORD.

26 You shall take the breast of the ram of Aaron's ordination and raise it as an elevation offering before the LORD; and it shall be your portion. 27 You shall consecrate the breast that was raised as an elevation offering and the thigh that was raised as an elevation offering from the ram of ordination, from that which belonged to Aaron and his sons. 28 These things shall be a perpetual ordinance for Aaron and his sons from the Israelites, for this is an offering; and it shall be an offering by the Israelites from their sacrifice of offerings of well-being, their offering to the LORD.

29 The sacred vestments of Aaron shall be passed on to his sons after him; they shall be anointed in them and ordained in them. 30 The son who is priest in his place shall wear them seven days, when he comes into the tent of meeting to minister in the holy place.

31 You shall take the ram of ordination, and boil its flesh in a holy place; 32 and Aaron and his sons shall eat the flesh of the ram and the bread that is in the basket, at the entrance of the tent of meeting. 33 They themselves shall eat the food by which atonement is made, to ordain and consecrate them, but no one else shall eat of them, because they are holy. 34 If any of the flesh for the ordination, or of the bread, remains until the morning, then you shall burn the remainder with fire; it shall not be eaten, because it is holy.

35 Thus you shall do to Aaron and to his sons, just as I have commanded you; through seven days you shall ordain them. 36 Also every day you shall offer a bull as a sin offering for atonement. Also you shall offer a sin offering for the altar, when you make atonement for it, and shall anoint it, to consecrate it. 37 Seven days you shall make atonement for the altar, and consecrate it, and the altar shall be most holy; whatever touches the altar shall become holy.

38 Now this is what you shall offer on the altar: two lambs a year old regularly each day. 39 One lamb you shall offer in the morning, and the other lamb you shall offer in the evening; 40 and with the first lamb one-tenth of a measure of choice flour mixed with one-fourth of a hin of beaten oil, and one-fourth of a hin of wine for a drink offering. 41 And the other lamb you shall offer in the evening, and shall offer with it a grain offering and its drink offering, as in the morning, for a pleasing odor, an offering by fire to the LORD. 42 It shall be a regular burnt offering throughout your generations at the entrance of the tent of meeting before the LORD, where I will meet with you, to speak to you there. 43 I will meet with the Israelites there, and it shall be sanctified by my glory; 44 I will consecrate the tent of meeting and the altar; Aaron also and his sons I will consecrate, to serve me as priests. 45 I will dwell among the Israelites, and I will be their God. 46 And they shall know that I am the LORD their God, who brought them out of the land of Egypt that I might dwell among them; I am the LORD their God.

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offering of well-being. *No one else,* i.e. no layperson.

**29.35–37**: The seven day ordination ceremony. Owing to the efficacy of blood (v. 12), the sin offering is for *atonement,* i.e. it produces a "covering" for sin and sanctifies the priest. The offering is also said to make atonement for the altar, i.e. to cleanse and consecrate it with blood (Ezek 43.18–27). In a deeper sense atonement actualizes divine forgiveness and reconciliation (32.30–32).

**29.38–42**: The daily burnt offering, compare Num 28.3–8; Ezek 46.13–15. *One tenth of a measure,* a tenth of an ephah, see Num 15.2–10. **43–46**: God's meeting with the people. **43**: *It,* the door of the tent of meeting (v. 42). *Glory,* see 16.7 n. **45**: See 6.7 n.; 25.8; 40.34.

30 You shall make an altar on which to offer incense; you shall make it of acacia wood. 2It shall be one cubit long, and one cubit wide; it shall be square, and shall be two cubits high; its horns shall be of one piece with it. 3You shall overlay it with pure gold, its top, and its sides all around and its horns; and you shall make for it a molding of gold all around. 4And you shall make two golden rings for it; under its molding on two opposite sides of it you shall make them, and they shall hold the poles with which to carry it. 5You shall make the poles of acacia wood, and overlay them with gold. 6You shall place it in front of the curtain that is above the ark of the covenant,[t] in front of the mercy seat[u] that is over the covenant,[t] where I will meet with you. 7Aaron shall offer fragrant incense on it; every morning when he dresses the lamps he shall offer it, 8and when Aaron sets up the lamps in the evening, he shall offer it, a regular incense offering before the LORD throughout your generations. 9You shall not offer unholy incense on it, or a burnt offering, or a grain offering; and you shall not pour a drink offering on it. 10Once a year Aaron shall perform the rite of atonement on its horns. Throughout your generations he shall perform the atonement for it once a year with the blood of the atoning sin offering. It is most holy to the LORD.

11 The LORD spoke to Moses: 12When you take a census of the Israelites to register them, at registration all of them shall give a ransom for their lives to the LORD, so that no plague may come upon them for being registered. 13This is what each one who is registered shall give: half a shekel according to the shekel of the sanctuary (the shekel is twenty gerahs), half a shekel as an offering to the LORD. 14Each one who is registered, from twenty years old and upward, shall give the LORD's offering. 15The rich shall not give more, and the poor shall not give less, than the half shekel, when you bring this offering to the LORD to make atonement for your lives. 16You shall take the atonement money from the Israelites and shall designate it for the service of the tent of meeting; before the LORD it will be a reminder to the Israelites of the ransom given for your lives.

17 The LORD spoke to Moses: 18You shall make a bronze basin with a bronze stand for washing. You shall put it between the tent of meeting and the altar, and you shall put water in it; 19with the water[v] Aaron and his sons shall wash their hands and their feet. 20When they go into the tent of meeting, or when they come near the altar to minister, to make an offering by fire to the LORD, they shall wash with water, so that they may not die. 21They shall wash their hands and their feet, so that they may not die: it shall be a perpetual ordinance for them, for him and for his descendants throughout their generations.

22 The LORD spoke to Moses: 23Take the finest spices: of liquid myrrh five hundred shekels, and of sweet-smelling cinnamon half as much, that is, two hundred fifty, and two hundred fifty of aromatic cane, 24and five hundred of cassia—measured by the sanctuary shekel—and a hin of olive oil; 25and you shall make of these a sacred anointing oil blended as by the perfumer; it shall be a

*t* Or *treaty*, or *testimony*; Heb *eduth* *u* Or *the cover* *v* Heb *it*

**30.1–31.18: Other priestly matters.**

**30.1–10:** The offering of incense was an ancient cultic practice (Isa 1.13), probably taken over from the Canaanites. **10:** On atonement for the altar see 29.36–37. *Once a year,* i.e. on the day of atonement (Lev ch 16).

**30.11–16:** The tax for the support of the sanctuary. **11–12:** The census, reported in Num ch 1, was originally for military purposes. Fearing that God's wrath would be manifested against a census (2 Sam ch 24), the people paid a fee (compare 2 Chr 24.6, 9; Mt 17.24–27) as a *ransom* or *atonement* (v. 16). **13:** *The shekel of the sanctuary* (Lev 5.15; 27.25; Num 3.47; 18.16; Ezek 45.12) based on the older Phoenician or Hebrew measurement, was heavier than the Babylonian shekel used in post-exilic times. Here it is explained that

holy anointing oil. 26 With it you shall anoint the tent of meeting and the ark of the covenant,[w] 27 and the table and all its utensils, and the lampstand and its utensils, and the altar of incense, 28 and the altar of burnt offering with all its utensils, and the basin with its stand; 29 you shall consecrate them, so that they may be most holy; whatever touches them will become holy. 30 You shall anoint Aaron and his sons, and consecrate them, in order that they may serve me as priests. 31 You shall say to the Israelites, "This shall be my holy anointing oil throughout your generations. 32 It shall not be used in any ordinary anointing of the body, and you shall make no other like it in composition; it is holy, and it shall be holy to you. 33 Whoever compounds any like it or whoever puts any of it on an unqualified person shall be cut off from the people."

34 The LORD said to Moses: Take sweet spices, stacte, and onycha, and galbanum, sweet spices with pure frankincense (an equal part of each), 35 and make an incense blended as by the perfumer, seasoned with salt, pure and holy; 36 and you shall beat some of it into powder, and put part of it before the covenant[w] in the tent of meeting where I shall meet with you; it shall be for you most holy. 37 When you make incense according to this composition, you shall not make it for yourselves; it shall be regarded by you as holy to the LORD. 38 Whoever makes any like it to use as perfume shall be cut off from the people.

31 The LORD spoke to Moses: 2 See, I have called by name Bezalel son of Uri son of Hur, of the tribe of Judah: 3 and I have filled him with divine spirit,[x] with ability, intelligence, and knowledge in every kind of craft, 4 to devise artistic designs, to work in gold, silver, and bronze, 5 in cutting stones for setting, and in carving wood, in every kind of craft. 6 Moreover, I have appointed with him Oholiab son of Ahisamach, of the tribe of Dan; and I have given skill to all the skillful, so that they may make all that I have commanded you: 7 the tent of meeting, and the ark of the covenant,[w] and the mercy seat[y] that is on it, and all the furnishings of the tent, 8 the table and its utensils, and the pure lampstand with all its utensils, and the altar of incense, 9 and the altar of burnt offering with all its utensils, and the basin with its stand, 10 and the finely worked vestments, the holy vestments for the priest Aaron and the vestments of his sons, for their service as priests, 11 and the anointing oil and the fragrant incense for the holy place. They shall do just as I have commanded you.

12 The LORD said to Moses: 13 You yourself are to speak to the Israelites: "You shall keep my sabbaths, for this is a sign between me and you throughout your generations, given in order that you may know that I, the LORD, sanctify you. 14 You shall keep the sabbath, because it is holy for you; everyone who profanes it shall be put to death; whoever does any work on it shall be cut off from among the people. 15 Six days shall work be done, but the seventh day is a sabbath of solemn rest, holy to the LORD; whoever does any work on the sabbath day shall be put to death. 16 Therefore the Israelites shall keep the sabbath, observing the sabbath throughout their generations, as a perpetual covenant. 17 It is a sign forever between me and the people of Israel that

*w* Or *treaty*, or *testimony*; Heb *eduth*
*x* Or *with the spirit of God* *y* Or *the cover*

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the sanctuary tax is to be paid in the older weight. **17–21**: The *bronze basin* (1 Kings 7.38) was for ritual ablutions.

**30.34–38**: The formula for the incense, as for the holy oil (vv. 22–25), was a priestly secret. *Stacte*, an oil of myrrh. *Onycha*, a spice from a mollusk found in the Red Sea. *Galbanum*, an aromatic resin from Asiatic plants. *Frankincense*, a fragrant gum resin from certain trees.

**31.1–11**: The appointment of craftsmen. *Bezalel*, 1 Chr 2.18–20. *Oholiab* is otherwise unknown.

**31.12–17**: The sabbath, anticipated by priestly tradition in 16.22–30, is here formally instituted at Sinai. **18**: A transitional verse

in six days the LORD made heaven and earth, and on the seventh day he rested, and was refreshed."

18 When God[z] finished speaking with Moses on Mount Sinai, he gave him the two tablets of the covenant,[a] tablets of stone, written with the finger of God.

**32** When the people saw that Moses delayed to come down from the mountain, the people gathered around Aaron, and said to him, "Come, make gods for us, who shall go before us; as for this Moses, the man who brought us up out of the land of Egypt, we do not know what has become of him." 2 Aaron said to them, "Take off the gold rings that are on the ears of your wives, your sons, and your daughters, and bring them to me." 3 So all the people took off the gold rings from their ears, and brought them to Aaron. 4 He took the gold from them, formed it in a mold,[b] and cast an image of a calf; and they said, "These are your gods, O Israel, who brought you up out of the land of Egypt!" 5 When Aaron saw this, he built an altar before it; and Aaron made proclamation and said, "Tomorrow shall be a festival to the LORD." 6 They rose early the next day, and offered burnt offerings and brought sacrifices of well-being; and the people sat down to eat and drink, and rose up to revel.

7 The LORD said to Moses, "Go down at once! Your people, whom you brought up out of the land of Egypt, have acted perversely; 8 they have been quick to turn aside from the way that I commanded them; they have cast for themselves an image of a calf, and have worshiped it and sacrificed to it, and said, 'These are your gods, O Israel, who brought you up out of the land of Egypt!' " 9 The LORD said to Moses, "I have seen this people, how stiff-necked they are. 10 Now let me alone, so that my wrath may burn hot against them and I may consume them; and of you I will make a great nation."

11 But Moses implored the LORD his God, and said, "O LORD, why does your wrath burn hot against your people, whom you brought out of the land of Egypt with great power and with a mighty hand? 12 Why should the Egyptians say, 'It was with evil intent that he brought them out to kill them in the mountains, and to consume them from the face of the earth'? Turn from your fierce wrath; change your mind and do not bring disaster on your people. 13 Remember Abraham, Isaac, and Israel, your servants, how you swore to them by your own self, saying to them, 'I will multiply your descendants like the stars of heaven, and all this land that I have promised I will give to your descendants, and they shall inherit it forever.' " 14 And the LORD changed his mind about the disaster that he planned to bring on his people.

15 Then Moses turned and went

*z* Heb *he* *a* Or *treaty*, or *testimony*; Heb *eduth*
*b* Or *fashioned it with a graving tool*; Meaning of Heb uncertain

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which resumes the narrative from 24.18. The inserted block of priestly tradition (chs 25–31) was supposedly delivered to Moses on Mount Sinai.

**32.1–35: The breaking of the covenant.** During Moses' absence the rebellious people chose Aaron as their leader and worshiped a golden bull. **1**: Moses stayed on the mountain top forty days and forty nights, a round number for an indefinitely long time (1 Kings 19.8; Mt 4.2). *Gods who shall go before us*, i.e. visible symbols of the divine presence as in pagan idolatry (see 20.4–6 n.). **2–3**: On the golden earrings, see Gen 35.4 n. The *calf*, or young bull, was a symbol of fertility in the nature-religions of the ancient Near East (compare 1 Kings 12.28; Hos 8.5). **6**: The eating and drinking accompanied *a festival to the LORD*, a dedication of the new cultic symbol (2 Sam 6.17–19).

**32.7–14**: Moses' first intercession (Num 14.13–19). **14**: *The LORD changed his mind*: God is not bound inflexibly to an announced plan but is free to change a course of action in a manner consistent with the divine purpose (Gen 6.5–6; Am 7.3, 6).

**32.15**: *Tablets of the covenant*, see 25.16 n. **19**: The breaking of the tablets symbolized that the covenant relationship had been broken. **20**: Moses subjected the people to a trial

down from the mountain, carrying the two tablets of the covenant[c] in his hands, tablets that were written on both sides, written on the front and on the back. 16 The tablets were the work of God, and the writing was the writing of God, engraved upon the tablets. 17 When Joshua heard the noise of the people as they shouted, he said to Moses, "There is a noise of war in the camp." 18 But he said,

"It is not the sound made by
victors,
or the sound made by losers;
it is the sound of revelers that I
hear."

19 As soon as he came near the camp and saw the calf and the dancing, Moses' anger burned hot, and he threw the tablets from his hands and broke them at the foot of the mountain. 20 He took the calf that they had made, burned it with fire, ground it to powder, scattered it on the water, and made the Israelites drink it.

21 Moses said to Aaron, "What did this people do to you that you have brought so great a sin upon them?" 22 And Aaron said, "Do not let the anger of my lord burn hot; you know the people, that they are bent on evil. 23 They said to me, 'Make us gods, who shall go before us; as for this Moses, the man who brought us up out of the land of Egypt, we do not know what has become of him.' 24 So I said to them, 'Whoever has gold, take it off'; so they gave it to me, and I threw it into the fire, and out came this calf!"

25 When Moses saw that the people were running wild (for Aaron had let them run wild, to the derision of their enemies), 26 then Moses stood in the gate of the camp, and said, "Who is on the LORD's side? Come to me!" And all the sons of Levi gathered around him. 27 He said to them, "Thus says the LORD, the God of Israel, 'Put your sword on your side, each of you! Go back and forth from gate to gate throughout the camp, and each of you kill your brother, your friend, and your neighbor.' " 28 The sons of Levi did as Moses commanded, and about three thousand of the people fell on that day. 29 Moses said, "Today you have ordained yourselves[d] for the service of the LORD, each one at the cost of a son or a brother, and so have brought a blessing on yourselves this day."

30 On the next day Moses said to the people, "You have sinned a great sin. But now I will go up to the LORD; perhaps I can make atonement for your sin." 31 So Moses returned to the LORD and said, "Alas, this people has sinned a great sin; they have made for themselves gods of gold. 32 But now, if you will only forgive their sin—but if not, blot me out of the book that you have written." 33 But the LORD said to Moses, "Whoever has sinned against me I will blot out of my book. 34 But now go, lead the people to the place about which I have spoken to you; see, my angel shall go in front of you. Nevertheless, when the day comes for punishment, I will punish them for their sin."

35 Then the LORD sent a plague on the

*c* Or *treaty*, or *testimony*; Heb *eduth* *d* Gk Vg Compare Tg: Heb *Today ordain yourselves*

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by ordeal (Num 5.16–28). Those who suffered ill effects from drinking the water and pulverized metal were regarded as guilty and fell in a plague (v. 35). **21–24**: The rebuke of Aaron (see Num ch 12) stands in contrast to his priestly prestige and intercessory role as described in chs 25–31. **24**: Aaron feebly disclaims responsibility by saying that he did not make the calf: it emerged from the fire by itself.

**32.25–29**: A separate tradition about how the Levites (see 28.1–5 n.) were consecrated to the priesthood (compare Num 25.10–13). Instead of being consecrated by a ritual ceremony (ch 29), the Levites *ordained* themselves by their zeal, that is, their passionate loyalty to the LORD (1 Kings 19.10; 2 Kings 10.16) despite social or family bonds. **30–35**: Moses' second intercession. **30**: *Make atonement*, i.e. obtain forgiveness (v. 32). **32**: *The book* is the register of the members of the theocratic community (Ps 69.28; Isa 4.3; Dan 12.1; Mal 3.16). **34**: On the *angel*, see Gen 16.7 n.; Ex 23.20.

people, because they made the calf—the one that Aaron made.

33 The LORD said to Moses, "Go, leave this place, you and the people whom you have brought up out of the land of Egypt, and go to the land of which I swore to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, saying, 'To your descendants I will give it.' 2I will send an angel before you, and I will drive out the Canaanites, the Amorites, the Hittites, the Perizzites, the Hivites, and the Jebusites. 3Go up to a land flowing with milk and honey; but I will not go up among you, or I would consume you on the way, for you are a stiff-necked people."

4 When the people heard these harsh words, they mourned, and no one put on ornaments. 5For the LORD had said to Moses, "Say to the Israelites, 'You are a stiff-necked people; if for a single moment I should go up among you, I would consume you. So now take off your ornaments, and I will decide what to do to you.' " 6Therefore the Israelites stripped themselves of their ornaments, from Mount Horeb onward.

7 Now Moses used to take the tent and pitch it outside the camp, far off from the camp; he called it the tent of meeting. And everyone who sought the LORD would go out to the tent of meeting, which was outside the camp. 8Whenever Moses went out to the tent, all the people would rise and stand, each of them, at the entrance of their tents and watch Moses until he had gone into the tent. 9When Moses entered the tent, the pillar of cloud would descend and stand at the entrance of the tent, and the LORD would speak with Moses. 10When all the people saw the pillar of cloud standing at the entrance of the tent, all the people would rise and bow down, all of them, at the entrance of their tent. 11Thus the LORD used to speak to Moses face to face, as one speaks to a friend. Then he would return to the camp; but his young assistant, Joshua son of Nun, would not leave the tent.

12 Moses said to the LORD, "See, you have said to me, 'Bring up this people'; but you have not let me know whom you will send with me. Yet you have

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**33.1–23: The LORD's guidance.** Moses seeks assurance that God will accompany the people, despite their folly and sin. **1–6**: The accompanying angel is the LORD's representative or alter ego (32.34), showing that the people will not be God-forsaken. The LORD will not, however, accompany the sinful people directly, lest divine holiness consume them. **4–6**: The people removed their ornaments as a sign of contrition. **7–11**: An old tradition about the tent of meeting.

**33.7**: *The tent* was portable, like ancient Arabic tent-shrines (see 26.7–14 n.). Unlike the priestly tabernacle, which was centrally located (25.8; Num 2.2), the tent was pitched *far off from the camp*. Originally perhaps the tent was a place of tribal assembly and an oracle-place, both ideas being implied in the term *meeting*. It was, however, chiefly a tent of revelation to Moses (Num 11.16–17, 24–40; 12.1–8; Deut 31.14–15; compare Ex 29.42–46). *Sought the LORD*, i.e. for oracular decisions (18.15–16). **8–9**: While the ark symbolized the nearness and presence of the LORD (see 25.10–22 n.), the tent signified divine distance and transcendence; hence the LORD used to *descend* from time to time to meet with Moses. In priestly tradition the two views are combined by saying that the ark was placed within the "tent of covenant" (30.36; Num 9.15; 17.7–8). **11**: Moses' mediatorial role (19.9; 20.19) is indicated by the fact that the LORD used to speak to him *face to face, as one speaks to a friend* (Num 12.7–8; Deut 34.10–12). Here Joshua, rather than Aaron the priest, is the custodian of the tent.

**33.12–16**: Moses' intercession. **14**: *My presence* (literally, "face"), perhaps a reference to the ark. Enthroned on the ark, the LORD goes before the people and gives them *rest* (Num 10.33). **16**: Israel is a unique people because it undertakes a special historical pilgrimage with the LORD leading them into the future (Num 23.9). **17–23**: These verses anticipate the theophany of 34.5–9. **18**: Having asked for a display of God's *ways* (v. 13) or manner of action in the world, Moses now asks for more: for a manifestation of God's *glory*, i.e. the visible radiance and majesty of the Godhead (see 16.7 n.). **19**: The proclamation of the divine name, the LORD (Yahweh; see 3.14 n.), was tantamount to a disclosure of the character or identity of God (see Gen 32.27 n.). Divine freedom is emphasized. God is free to act according to God's will, unbound by external hindrance or necessity

said, 'I know you by name, and you have also found favor in my sight.' 13Now if I have found favor in your sight, show me your ways, so that I may know you and find favor in your sight. Consider too that this nation is your people." 14He said, "My presence will go with you, and I will give you rest." 15And he said to him, "If your presence will not go, do not carry us up from here. 16For how shall it be known that I have found favor in your sight, I and your people, unless you go with us? In this way, we shall be distinct, I and your people, from every people on the face of the earth."

17 The LORD said to Moses, "I will do the very thing that you have asked; for you have found favor in my sight, and I know you by name." 18Moses said, "Show me your glory, I pray." 19And he said, "I will make all my goodness pass before you, and will proclaim before you the name, 'The LORD';[e] and I will be gracious to whom I will be gracious, and will show mercy on whom I will show mercy. 20But," he said, "you cannot see my face; for no one shall see me and live." 21And the LORD continued, "See, there is a place by me where you shall stand on the rock; 22and while my glory passes by I will put you in a cleft of the rock, and I will cover you with my hand until I have passed by; 23then I will take away my hand, and you shall see my back; but my face shall not be seen."

**34** The LORD said to Moses, "Cut two tablets of stone like the former ones, and I will write on the tablets the words that were on the former tablets, which you broke. 2Be ready in the morning, and come up in the morning to Mount Sinai and present yourself there to me, on the top of the mountain. 3No one shall come up with you, and do not let anyone be seen throughout all the mountain; and do not let flocks or herds graze in front of that mountain." 4So Moses cut two tablets of stone like the former ones; and he rose early in the morning and went up on Mount Sinai, as the LORD had commanded him, and took in his hand the two tablets of stone. 5The LORD descended in the cloud and stood with him there, and proclaimed the name, "The LORD."[e] 6The LORD passed before him, and proclaimed,

"The LORD, the LORD,
a God merciful and gracious,
slow to anger,
and abounding in steadfast love
and faithfulness,
7 keeping steadfast love for the
thousandth generation,[f]
forgiving iniquity and
transgression and sin,
yet by no means clearing the
guilty,
but visiting the iniquity of the
parents
upon the children
and the children's children,
to the third and the fourth
generation."

8And Moses quickly bowed his head toward the earth, and worshiped. 9He said,

*e* Heb *YHWH*; see note at 3.15 *f* Or *for thousands*

(compare Rom 9.15); God's action is not capricious, however, but is the expression of divine *goodness* (34.6–7; see 32.14 n.). **22**: On the cave or *cleft of the rock*, see 1 Kings 19.9–18. **23**: Although employing bold anthropomorphisms (the LORD's *hand* and *back*), the narrator stresses that God remains hidden (v. 20), even when most palpably present.

**34.1–35: The renewal of the covenant,** symbolized by the rewriting of the commandments. **1–4**: The second *tablets* were to contain *the words that were on the former tablets* (24.12–14; compare Deut 10.1–5). Their reissue, however, provides an opportunity for the editor to introduce a cultic set of laws (vv. 12–16). **5–9**: The theophany is anticipated in 33.17–23. **6–7**: While the LORD *passed before* him (see 33.22 n.; compare 1 Kings 19.11–12), Moses heard the self-disclosure of the LORD's identity: Yahweh is above all the God of *steadfast love* (see Gen 24.12 n.), though covenant loyalty does not exclude divine judgment upon sin. This summary, echoed in various places in the Old Testament (Num 14.18; Neh 9.17, 31; Ps 103.8; Jer 32.18; Jon 4.2), is probably an old cultic confession.

"If now I have found favor in your sight, O Lord, I pray, let the Lord go with us. Although this is a stiff-necked people, pardon our iniquity and our sin, and take us for your inheritance."

10 He said: I hereby make a covenant. Before all your people I will perform marvels, such as have not been performed in all the earth or in any nation; and all the people among whom you live shall see the work of the LORD; for it is an awesome thing that I will do with you.

11 Observe what I command you today. See, I will drive out before you the Amorites, the Canaanites, the Hittites, the Perizzites, the Hivites, and the Jebusites. 12 Take care not to make a covenant with the inhabitants of the land to which you are going, or it will become a snare among you. 13 You shall tear down their altars, break their pillars, and cut down their sacred poles[g] 14 (for you shall worship no other god, because the LORD, whose name is Jealous, is a jealous God). 15 You shall not make a covenant with the inhabitants of the land, for when they prostitute themselves to their gods and sacrifice to their gods, someone among them will invite you, and you will eat of the sacrifice. 16 And you will take wives from among their daughters for your sons, and their daughters who prostitute themselves to their gods will make your sons also prostitute themselves to their gods.

17 You shall not make cast idols.

18 You shall keep the festival of unleavened bread. Seven days you shall eat unleavened bread, as I commanded you, at the time appointed in the month of Abib; for in the month of Abib you came out from Egypt.

19 All that first opens the womb is mine, all your male[h] livestock, the firstborn of cow and sheep. 20 The firstborn of a donkey you shall redeem with a lamb, or if you will not redeem it you shall break its neck. All the firstborn of your sons you shall redeem.

No one shall appear before me empty-handed.

21 Six days you shall work, but on the seventh day you shall rest; even in plowing time and in harvest time you shall rest. 22 You shall observe the festival of weeks, the first fruits of wheat harvest, and the festival of ingathering at the turn of the year. 23 Three times in the year all your males shall appear before the LORD God, the God of Israel. 24 For I will cast out nations before you, and enlarge your borders; no one shall covet your land when you go up to appear before the LORD your God three times in the year.

25 You shall not offer the blood of my sacrifice with leaven, and the sacrifice of the festival of the passover shall not be left until the morning.

*g* Heb *Asherim* *h* Gk Theodotion Vg Tg: Meaning of Heb uncertain

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**34.10–28:** This may be another tradition about the making of a covenant (v. 10), parallel to that of chs 19–24. In the present context, however, it is understood as a renewal of the covenant after it was broken by the people (ch 32). **11–16:** Intolerance of pagan forms of worship was motivated by fear of the seductive power of idolatry (see 23.24). **13:** The *pillars* were upright stones which stood near Baal shrines; the *sacred poles* (or "Asherim") symbolized Asherah, the mother goddess of Canaanite religion (Judg 2.13). **14:** Religious exclusivism is derived from the fundamental conviction of Mosaic faith; the total claim of Israel's God upon the people's loyalty (20.3). The LORD's *name* (or character) is *Jealous*, i.e. the LORD will tolerate no rivals for Israel's devotion (20.5; Deut 4.24).

**34.18–24:** A cultic calendar. The laws concerning the three annual festivals (vv. 18, 22–23) are paralleled in 23.14–17. On the redemption of the firstborn (vv. 19–20), see 13.13 n. **24:** The property will be protected while the pilgrims are on their way to the central sanctuary.

**34.25–26:** 23.18–19. **27–28:** Moses' special role as covenant mediator (see 19.9 n.) is shown by the fact that the covenant is made with him and, through him, with Israel. *These words*, a reference to the preceding cultic laws. Some have attempted to arrange these into a decalogue (compare v. 28b).

26 The best of the first fruits of your ground you shall bring to the house of the LORD your God.

You shall not boil a kid in its mother's milk.

27 The LORD said to Moses: Write these words; in accordance with these words I have made a covenant with you and with Israel. 28 He was there with the LORD forty days and forty nights; he neither ate bread nor drank water. And he wrote on the tablets the words of the covenant, the ten commandments. *i*

29 Moses came down from Mount Sinai. As he came down from the mountain with the two tablets of the covenant *j* in his hand, Moses did not know that the skin of his face shone because he had been talking with God. 30 When Aaron and all the Israelites saw Moses, the skin of his face was shining, and they were afraid to come near him. 31 But Moses called to them; and Aaron and all the leaders of the congregation returned to him, and Moses spoke with them. 32 Afterward all the Israelites came near, and he gave them in commandment all that the LORD had spoken with him on Mount Sinai. 33 When Moses had finished speaking with them, he put a veil on his face; 34 but whenever Moses went in before the LORD to speak with him, he would take the veil off, until he came out; and when he came out, and told the Israelites what he had been commanded, 35 the Israelites would see the face of Moses, that the skin of his face was shining; and Moses would put the veil on his face again, until he went in to speak with him.

35 Moses assembled all the congregation of the Israelites and said to them: These are the things that the LORD has commanded you to do:

2 Six days shall work be done, but on the seventh day you shall have a holy sabbath of solemn rest to the LORD; whoever does any work on it shall be put to death. 3 You shall kindle no fire in all your dwellings on the sabbath day.

4 Moses said to all the congregation of the Israelites: This is the thing that the LORD has commanded: 5 Take from among you an offering to the LORD; let whoever is of a generous heart bring the LORD's offering: gold, silver, and bronze; 6 blue, purple, and crimson yarns, and fine linen; goats' hair, 7 tanned rams' skins, and fine leather; *k* acacia wood, 8 oil for the light, spices for the anointing oil and for the fragrant incense, 9 and onyx stones and gems to be set in the ephod and the breastpiece.

10 All who are skillful among you shall come and make all that the LORD has commanded: the tabernacle, 11 its tent and its covering, its clasps and its frames, its bars, its pillars, and its bases; 12 the ark with its poles, the mercy seat, *l* and the curtain for the screen; 13 the table with its poles and all its utensils, and the bread of the Presence; 14 the lampstand also for the light, with its utensils and its lamps, and the oil for the light; 15 and the altar of incense, with its poles, and the anointing oil and the fragrant incense, and the screen for the entrance, the entrance of the tabernacle; 16 the altar of burnt offering, with its grating of bronze, its poles, and all its utensils, the basin with its stand; 17 the hangings of the court, its pillars and its bases, and the screen for the gate of the court; 18 the pegs of the tabernacle and the pegs of the court, and their

*i* Heb *words* *j* Or *treaty*, or *testimony*; Heb *eduth* *k* Meaning of Heb uncertain
*l* Or *the cover*

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Probably, however, the editor has blended two covenant traditions: one based on the decalogue and the other on this set of ritual laws. **29–35**: According to priestly tradition, the radiant glory of the LORD so transfigured Moses' face (compare Mt 17.1–7) that he had to wear a veil (2 Cor 3.7–18).

**Chapters 35–40: The establishment of the cult.** This priestly section shows how the instructions given to Moses in chs 25–31 were carried out.

**35.1–3**: See 31.12–17. The sabbath law is placed first so as to restrict work on the tabernacle. **4–29**: An expansion of 25.1–9.

cords; [19]the finely worked vestments for ministering in the holy place, the holy vestments for the priest Aaron, and the vestments of his sons, for their service as priests.

20 Then all the congregation of the Israelites withdrew from the presence of Moses. [21]And they came, everyone whose heart was stirred, and everyone whose spirit was willing, and brought the LORD's offering to be used for the tent of meeting, and for all its service, and for the sacred vestments. [22]So they came, both men and women; all who were of a willing heart brought brooches and earrings and signet rings and pendants, all sorts of gold objects, everyone bringing an offering of gold to the LORD. [23]And everyone who possessed blue or purple or crimson yarn or fine linen or goats' hair or tanned rams' skins or fine leather,[m] brought them. [24]Everyone who could make an offering of silver or bronze brought it as the LORD's offering; and everyone who possessed acacia wood of any use in the work, brought it. [25]All the skillful women spun with their hands, and brought what they had spun in blue and purple and crimson yarns and fine linen; [26]all the women whose hearts moved them to use their skill spun the goats' hair. [27]And the leaders brought onyx stones and gems to be set in the ephod and the breastpiece, [28]and spices and oil for the light, and for the anointing oil, and for the fragrant incense. [29]All the Israelite men and women whose hearts made them willing to bring anything for the work that the LORD had commanded by Moses to be done, brought it as a freewill offering to the LORD.

30 Then Moses said to the Israelites: See, the LORD has called by name Bezalel son of Uri son of Hur, of the tribe of Judah; [31]he has filled him with divine spirit,[n] with skill, intelligence, and knowledge in every kind of craft, [32]to devise artistic designs, to work in gold, silver, and bronze, [33]in cutting stones for setting, and in carving wood, in every kind of craft. [34]And he has inspired him to teach, both him and Oholiab son of Ahisamach, of the tribe of Dan. [35]He has filled them with skill to do every kind of work done by an artisan or by a designer or by an embroiderer in blue, purple, and crimson yarns, and in fine linen, or by a weaver—by any sort of artisan or skilled designer.

36 Bezalel and Oholiab and every skillful one to whom the LORD has given skill and understanding to know how to do any work in the construction of the sanctuary shall work in accordance with all that the LORD has commanded.

2 Moses then called Bezalel and Oholiab and every skillful one to whom the LORD had given skill, everyone whose heart was stirred to come to do the work; [3]and they received from Moses all the freewill offerings that the Israelites had brought for doing the work on the sanctuary. They still kept bringing him freewill offerings every morning, [4]so that all the artisans who were doing every sort of task on the sanctuary came, each from the task being performed, [5]and said to Moses, "The people are bringing much more than enough for doing the work that the LORD has commanded us to do." [6]So Moses gave command, and word was proclaimed throughout the camp: "No man or woman is to make anything else as an offering for the sanctuary." So the people were restrained from bringing; [7]for what they had already brought was more than enough to do all the work.

8 All those with skill among the workers made the tabernacle with ten curtains; they were made of fine twisted linen, and blue, purple, and crimson yarns, with cherubim skillfully worked into them. [9]The length of each curtain was twenty-eight cubits, and the width of each curtain four cubits; all the curtains were of the same size.

*m* Meaning of Heb uncertain *n* Or *the spirit of God*

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**35.30–36.7**: See 31.1–11.

**36.8–38**: See 26.1–37.

10 He joined five curtains to one another, and the other five curtains he joined to one another. 11 He made loops of blue on the edge of the outermost curtain of the first set; likewise he made them on the edge of the outermost curtain of the second set; 12 he made fifty loops on the one curtain, and he made fifty loops on the edge of the curtain that was in the second set; the loops were opposite one another. 13 And he made fifty clasps of gold, and joined the curtains one to the other with clasps; so the tabernacle was one whole.

14 He also made curtains of goats' hair for a tent over the tabernacle; he made eleven curtains. 15 The length of each curtain was thirty cubits, and the width of each curtain four cubits; the eleven curtains were of the same size. 16 He joined five curtains by themselves, and six curtains by themselves. 17 He made fifty loops on the edge of the outermost curtain of the one set, and fifty loops on the edge of the other connecting curtain. 18 He made fifty clasps of bronze to join the tent together so that it might be one whole. 19 And he made for the tent a covering of tanned rams' skins and an outer covering of fine leather. *o*

20 Then he made the upright frames for the tabernacle of acacia wood. 21 Ten cubits was the length of a frame, and a cubit and a half the width of each frame. 22 Each frame had two pegs for fitting together; he did this for all the frames of the tabernacle. 23 The frames for the tabernacle he made in this way: twenty frames for the south side; 24 and he made forty bases of silver under the twenty frames, two bases under the first frame for its two pegs, and two bases under the next frame for its two pegs. 25 For the second side of the tabernacle, on the north side, he made twenty frames 26 and their forty bases of silver, two bases under the first frame and two bases under the next frame. 27 For the rear of the tabernacle westward he made six frames. 28 He made two frames for corners of the tabernacle in the rear. 29 They were separate beneath, but joined at the top, at the first ring; he made two of them in this way, for the two corners. 30 There were eight frames with their bases of silver: sixteen bases, under every frame two bases.

31 He made bars of acacia wood, five for the frames of the one side of the tabernacle, 32 and five bars for the frames of the other side of the tabernacle, and five bars for the frames of the tabernacle at the rear westward. 33 He made the middle bar to pass through from end to end halfway up the frames. 34 And he overlaid the frames with gold, and made rings of gold for them to hold the bars, and overlaid the bars with gold.

35 He made the curtain of blue, purple, and crimson yarns, and fine twisted linen, with cherubim skillfully worked into it. 36 For it he made four pillars of acacia, and overlaid them with gold; their hooks were of gold, and he cast for them four bases of silver. 37 He also made a screen for the entrance to the tent, of blue, purple, and crimson yarns, and fine twisted linen, embroidered with needlework; 38 and its five pillars with their hooks. He overlaid their capitals and their bases with gold, but their five bases were of bronze.

37 Bezalel made the ark of acacia wood; it was two and a half cubits long, a cubit and a half wide, and a cubit and a half high. 2 He overlaid it with pure gold inside and outside, and made a molding of gold around it. 3 He cast for it four rings of gold for its four feet, two rings on its one side and two rings on its other side. 4 He made poles of acacia wood, and overlaid them with gold, 5 and put the poles into the rings on the sides of the ark, to carry the ark. 6 He made a mercy seat *p* of pure gold; two cubits and a half was its length, and a cubit and a half its width. 7 He made two cherubim of hammered gold; at the two

*o* Meaning of Heb uncertain *p* Or *a cover*

**37.1–9**: See 25.10–22.

ends of the mercy seat[q] he made them, 8one cherub at the one end, and one cherub at the other end; of one piece with the mercy seat[q] he made the cherubim at its two ends. 9The cherubim spread out their wings above, overshadowing the mercy seat[q] with their wings. They faced one another; the faces of the cherubim were turned toward the mercy seat.[q]

10 He also made the table of acacia wood, two cubits long, one cubit wide, and a cubit and a half high. 11He overlaid it with pure gold, and made a molding of gold around it. 12He made around it a rim a handbreadth wide, and made a molding of gold around the rim. 13He cast for it four rings of gold, and fastened the rings to the four corners at its four legs. 14The rings that held the poles used for carrying the table were close to the rim. 15He made the poles of acacia wood to carry the table, and overlaid them with gold. 16And he made the vessels of pure gold that were to be on the table, its plates and dishes for incense, and its bowls and flagons with which to pour drink offerings.

17 He also made the lampstand of pure gold. The base and the shaft of the lampstand were made of hammered work; its cups, its calyxes, and its petals were of one piece with it. 18There were six branches going out of its sides, three branches of the lampstand out of one side of it and three branches of the lampstand out of the other side of it; 19three cups shaped like almond blossoms, each with calyx and petals, on one branch, and three cups shaped like almond blossoms, each with calyx and petals, on the other branch—so for the six branches going out of the lampstand. 20On the lampstand itself there were four cups shaped like almond blossoms, each with its calyxes and petals. 21There was a calyx of one piece with it under the first pair of branches, a calyx of one piece with it under the next pair of branches, and a calyx of one piece with it under the last pair of branches. 22Their calyxes and their branches were of one piece with it, the whole of it one hammered piece of pure gold. 23He made its seven lamps and its snuffers and its trays of pure gold. 24He made it and all its utensils of a talent of pure gold.

25 He made the altar of incense of acacia wood, one cubit long, and one cubit wide; it was square, and was two cubits high; its horns were of one piece with it. 26He overlaid it with pure gold, its top, and its sides all around, and its horns; and he made for it a molding of gold all around, 27and made two golden rings for it under its molding, on two opposite sides of it, to hold the poles with which to carry it. 28And he made the poles of acacia wood, and overlaid them with gold.

29 He made the holy anointing oil also, and the pure fragrant incense, blended as by the perfumer.

38 He made the altar of burnt offering also of acacia wood; it was five cubits long, and five cubits wide; it was square, and three cubits high. 2He made horns for it on its four corners; its horns were of one piece with it, and he overlaid it with bronze. 3He made all the utensils of the altar, the pots, the shovels, the basins, the forks, and the firepans: all its utensils he made of bronze. 4He made for the altar a grating, a network of bronze, under its ledge, extending halfway down. 5He cast four rings on the four corners of the bronze grating to hold the poles; 6he made the poles of acacia wood, and overlaid them with bronze. 7And he put the poles through the rings on the sides of the altar, to carry it with them; he made it hollow, with boards.

8 He made the basin of bronze with its stand of bronze, from the mirrors of

*q* Or *the cover*

**37.10–16**: See 25.23–30.
**37.17–24**: See 25.31–40.
**37.25–28**: See 30.1–10. **29**: See 30.22–38.
**38.1–7**: See 27.1–8. **8**: See 30.17–21.

the women who served at the entrance to the tent of meeting.

9 He made the court; for the south side the hangings of the court were of fine twisted linen, one hundred cubits long; 10 its twenty pillars and their twenty bases were of bronze, but the hooks of the pillars and their bands were of silver. 11 For the north side there were hangings one hundred cubits long; its twenty pillars and their twenty bases were of bronze, but the hooks of the pillars and their bands were of silver. 12 For the west side there were hangings fifty cubits long, with ten pillars and ten bases; the hooks of the pillars and their bands were of silver. 13 And for the front to the east, fifty cubits. 14 The hangings for one side of the gate were fifteen cubits, with three pillars and three bases. 15 And so for the other side; on each side of the gate of the court were hangings of fifteen cubits, with three pillars and three bases. 16 All the hangings around the court were of fine twisted linen. 17 The bases for the pillars were of bronze, but the hooks of the pillars and their bands were of silver; the overlaying of their capitals was also of silver, and all the pillars of the court were banded with silver. 18 The screen for the entrance to the court was embroidered with needlework in blue, purple, and crimson yarns and fine twisted linen. It was twenty cubits long and, along the width of it, five cubits high, corresponding to the hangings of the court. 19 There were four pillars; their four bases were of bronze, their hooks of silver, and the overlaying of their capitals and their bands of silver. 20 All the pegs for the tabernacle and for the court all around were of bronze.

21 These are the records of the tabernacle, the tabernacle of the covenant,[r] which were drawn up at the commandment of Moses, the work of the Levites being under the direction of Ithamar son of the priest Aaron. 22 Bezalel son of Uri son of Hur, of the tribe of Judah, made all that the LORD commanded Moses; 23 and with him was Oholiab son of Ahisamach, of the tribe of Dan, engraver, designer, and embroiderer in blue, purple, and crimson yarns, and in fine linen.

24 All the gold that was used for the work, in all the construction of the sanctuary, the gold from the offering, was twenty-nine talents and seven hundred thirty shekels, measured by the sanctuary shekel. 25 The silver from those of the congregation who were counted was one hundred talents and one thousand seven hundred seventy-five shekels, measured by the sanctuary shekel; 26 a beka a head (that is, half a shekel, measured by the sanctuary shekel), for everyone who was counted in the census, from twenty years old and upward, for six hundred three thousand, five hundred fifty men. 27 The hundred talents of silver were for casting the bases of the sanctuary, and the bases of the curtain; one hundred bases for the hundred talents, a talent for a base. 28 Of the thousand seven hundred seventy-five shekels he made hooks for the pillars, and overlaid their capitals and made bands for them. 29 The bronze that was contributed was seventy talents, and two thousand four hundred shekels; 30 with it he made the bases for the entrance of the tent of meeting, the bronze altar and the bronze grating for it and all the utensils of the altar, 31 the bases all around the court, and the bases of the gate of the court, all the pegs of the tabernacle, and all the pegs around the court.

39 Of the blue, purple, and crimson yarns they made finely worked vestments, for ministering in the holy

*r* Or *treaty*, or *testimony*; Heb *eduth*

**38.9–20**: See 27.9–19.

**38.21–31**: This is a supplement which presupposes the appointment of Ithamar as head of the Levites (Num ch 3; 4.33) and the Israelite census (Num ch 1). **21**: *The tabernacle of the covenant,* a phrase indicating that the sanctuary contained the ark and ten commandments. **24–26**: The silver tax is computed at the rate set forth in 30.11–16 and with the figures of the later census in mind (see Num 1.17–46 n.), the result being that the figures are highly exaggerated.

place; they made the sacred vestments for Aaron; as the LORD had commanded Moses.

2 He made the ephod of gold, of blue, purple, and crimson yarns, and of fine twisted linen. 3Gold leaf was hammered out and cut into threads to work into the blue, purple, and crimson yarns and into the fine twisted linen, in skilled design. 4They made for the ephod shoulder-pieces, joined to it at its two edges. 5The decorated band on it was of the same materials and workmanship, of gold, of blue, purple, and crimson yarns, and of fine twisted linen; as the LORD had commanded Moses.

6 The onyx stones were prepared, enclosed in settings of gold filigree and engraved like the engravings of a signet, according to the names of the sons of Israel. 7He set them on the shoulder-pieces of the ephod, to be stones of remembrance for the sons of Israel; as the LORD had commanded Moses.

8 He made the breastpiece, in skilled work, like the work of the ephod, of gold, of blue, purple, and crimson yarns, and of fine twisted linen. 9It was square; the breastpiece was made double, a span in length and a span in width when doubled. 10They set in it four rows of stones. A row of carnelian,[s] chrysolite, and emerald was the first row; 11and the second row, a turquoise, a sapphire,[t] and a moonstone; 12and the third row, a jacinth, an agate, and an amethyst; 13and the fourth row, a beryl, an onyx, and a jasper; they were enclosed in settings of gold filigree. 14There were twelve stones with names corresponding to the names of the sons of Israel; they were like signets, each engraved with its name, for the twelve tribes. 15They made on the breastpiece chains of pure gold, twisted like cords; 16and they made two settings of gold filigree and two gold rings, and put the two rings on the two edges of the breastpiece; 17and they put the two cords of gold in the two rings at the edges of the breastpiece. 18Two ends of the two cords they had attached to the two settings of filigree; in this way they attached it in front to the shoulder-pieces of the ephod. 19Then they made two rings of gold, and put them at the two ends of the breastpiece, on its inside edge next to the ephod. 20They made two rings of gold, and attached them in front to the lower part of the two shoulder-pieces of the ephod, at its joining above the decorated band of the ephod. 21They bound the breastpiece by its rings to the rings of the ephod with a blue cord, so that it should lie on the decorated band of the ephod, and that the breastpiece should not come loose from the ephod; as the LORD had commanded Moses.

22 He also made the robe of the ephod woven all of blue yarn; 23and the opening of the robe in the middle of it was like the opening in a coat of mail,[u] with a binding around the opening, so that it might not be torn. 24On the lower hem of the robe they made pomegranates of blue, purple, and crimson yarns, and of fine twisted linen. 25They also made bells of pure gold, and put the bells between the pomegranates on the lower hem of the robe all around, between the pomegranates; 26a bell and a pomegranate, a bell and a pomegranate all around on the lower hem of the robe for ministering; as the LORD had commanded Moses.

27 They also made the tunics, woven of fine linen, for Aaron and his sons, 28and the turban of fine linen, and the headdresses of fine linen, and the linen undergarments of fine twisted linen, 29and the sash of fine twisted linen, and of blue, purple, and crimson yarns, embroidered with needlework; as the LORD had commanded Moses.

30 They made the rosette of the holy diadem of pure gold, and wrote on it an inscription, like the engraving of a signet, "Holy to the LORD." 31They tied to it a blue cord, to fasten it on the turban

*s* The identification of several of these stones is uncertain *t* Or *lapis lazuli* *u* Meaning of Heb uncertain

**39.1–31:** See 28.1–43.

above; as the LORD had commanded Moses.

32 In this way all the work of the tabernacle of the tent of meeting was finished; the Israelites had done everything just as the LORD had commanded Moses. 33Then they brought the tabernacle to Moses, the tent and all its utensils, its hooks, its frames, its bars, its pillars, and its bases; 34the covering of tanned rams' skins and the covering of fine leather,[v] and the curtain for the screen; 35the ark of the covenant[w] with its poles and the mercy seat;[x] 36the table with all its utensils, and the bread of the Presence; 37the pure lampstand with its lamps set on it and all its utensils, and the oil for the light; 38the golden altar, the anointing oil and the fragrant incense, and the screen for the entrance of the tent; 39the bronze altar, and its grating of bronze, its poles, and all its utensils; the basin with its stand; 40the hangings of the court, its pillars, and its bases, and the screen for the gate of the court, its cords, and its pegs; and all the utensils for the service of the tabernacle, for the tent of meeting; 41the finely worked vestments for ministering in the holy place, the sacred vestments for the priest Aaron, and the vestments of his sons to serve as priests. 42The Israelites had done all of the work just as the LORD had commanded Moses. 43When Moses saw that they had done all the work just as the LORD had commanded, he blessed them.

40 The LORD spoke to Moses: 2On the first day of the first month you shall set up the tabernacle of the tent of meeting. 3You shall put in it the ark of the covenant,[w] and you shall screen the ark with the curtain. 4You shall bring in the table, and arrange its setting; and you shall bring in the lampstand, and set up its lamps. 5You shall put the golden altar for incense before the ark of the covenant,[w] and set up the screen for the entrance of the tabernacle. 6You shall set the altar of burnt offering before the entrance of the tabernacle of the tent of meeting, 7and place the basin between the tent of meeting and the altar, and put water in it. 8You shall set up the court all around, and hang up the screen for the gate of the court. 9Then you shall take the anointing oil, and anoint the tabernacle and all that is in it, and consecrate it and all its furniture, so that it shall become holy. 10You shall also anoint the altar of burnt offering and all its utensils, and consecrate the altar, so that the altar shall be most holy. 11You shall also anoint the basin with its stand, and consecrate it. 12Then you shall bring Aaron and his sons to the entrance of the tent of meeting, and shall wash them with water, 13and put on Aaron the sacred vestments, and you shall anoint him and consecrate him, so that he may serve me as priest. 14You shall bring his sons also and put tunics on them, 15and anoint them, as you anointed their father, that they may serve me as priests: and their anointing shall admit them to a perpetual priesthood throughout all generations to come.

16 Moses did everything just as the LORD had commanded him. 17In the first month in the second year, on the first day of the month, the tabernacle was set up. 18Moses set up the tabernacle; he laid its bases, and set up its frames, and put in its poles, and raised up its pillars; 19and he spread the tent over the tabernacle, and put the covering of the tent over it; as the LORD had commanded Moses. 20He took the covenant[w] and put it into the ark, and put the poles on the ark, and set the mercy seat[x] above the ark; 21and he brought

*v* Meaning of Heb uncertain *w* Or *treaty*, or *testimony*; Heb *eduth* *x* Or *the cover*

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**39.32–43**: Completion of the work of *the tabernacle of the tent of meeting*. On the blending of the tabernacle and tent traditions (vv. 33, 40), compare 26.7–14.

**40.1–33**: The erection and furnishing of the tabernacle according to previous instructions. **9–15**: See 30.26–30. **17**: According to priestly chronology, the workers erected the tabernacle nine months after the arrival at Sinai (19.1).

the ark into the tabernacle, and set up the curtain for screening, and screened the ark of the covenant;[y] as the LORD had commanded Moses. 22He put the table in the tent of meeting, on the north side of the tabernacle, outside the curtain, 23and set the bread in order on it before the LORD; as the LORD had commanded Moses. 24He put the lampstand in the tent of meeting, opposite the table on the south side of the tabernacle, 25and set up the lamps before the LORD; as the LORD had commanded Moses. 26He put the golden altar in the tent of meeting before the curtain, 27and offered fragrant incense on it; as the LORD had commanded Moses. 28He also put in place the screen for the entrance of the tabernacle. 29He set the altar of burnt offering at the entrance of the tabernacle of the tent of meeting, and offered on it the burnt offering and the grain offering as the LORD had commanded Moses. 30He set the basin between the tent of meeting and the altar, and put water in it for washing, 31with which Moses and Aaron and his sons washed their hands and their feet. 32When they went into the tent of meeting, and when they approached the altar, they washed; as the LORD had commanded Moses. 33He set up the court around the tabernacle and the altar, and put up the screen at the gate of the court. So Moses finished the work.

34 Then the cloud covered the tent of meeting, and the glory of the LORD filled the tabernacle. 35Moses was not able to enter the tent of meeting because the cloud settled upon it, and the glory of the LORD filled the tabernacle. 36Whenever the cloud was taken up from the tabernacle, the Israelites would set out on each stage of their journey; 37but if the cloud was not taken up, then they did not set out until the day that it was taken up. 38For the cloud of the LORD was on the tabernacle by day, and fire was in the cloud[z] by night, before the eyes of all the house of Israel at each stage of their journey.

*y* Or *treaty*, or *testimony*; Heb *eduth* *z* Heb *it*

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**40.34–38:** These concluding verses hark back to 25.8 (see 29.43–46). *The cloud* and *the glory* are signs of God's tabernacling presence (see 16.6–7 n.). **35:** 1 Kings 8.10–11; Isa 6.3, 4. **36–38:** The ancient symbols of the pillar of cloud by day and the pillar of fire by night (13.21–22) are connected with the tabernacle on the view that it was a portable sanctuary that accompanied Israel on its journey (see Num 9.15–23).

# *Leviticus*

Leviticus is pre-eminently a book of worship. The English title, derived from the Greek and Latin versions of the Hebrew Bible, refers to the Levitical priests who were set apart to minister at the sanctuary. In early rabbinic tradition the book is called "the Priests' Manual." It falls into six parts: (1) laws dealing with sacrifices (chs 1–7); (2) the consecration of the priests to their office (chs 8–10); (3) laws setting forth the distinction between clean and unclean (chs 11–15); (4) the ceremony for the annual day of atonement (ch 16); (5) laws to govern Israel's life as a holy people (chs 17–26); (6) an appendix on religious vows (ch 27).

Although this section of the Pentateuch has become a separate book, actually it is a continuation of the priestly tradition at the end of the book of Exodus (chs 25–31; 35–40). Moreover, the same tradition extends without interruption through the first ten chapters of Numbers. It is generally agreed that this priestly material in its present form comes from a relatively late period (see introduction to "The Pentateuch," pp. xxxv–xxxvi OT). The compiler, however, has relied upon independent source materials, such as the so-called Holiness Code (chs 17–26), and upon numerous traditions that reach back to ancient times.

Through the various rituals and laws there breathes the conviction that the holy God "tabernacles" in the midst of the people during their historical pilgrimage (Ex 40.34–38). The nearness of God not only accentuates the people's sense of sin but prompts them to seek God in sacrificial services of worship. For, according to the priestly witness, God has provided the means of grace whereby the people, forgiven and restored, may live in the presence of the holy God, avoiding those things that contaminate their health and well-being, and doing those things that make them a holy people, separated for a divine service in the world.

1 The LORD summoned Moses and spoke to him from the tent of meeting, saying: 2Speak to the people of Israel and say to them: When any of you bring an offering of livestock to the LORD, you shall bring your offering from the herd or from the flock.

3 If the offering is a burnt offering from the herd, you shall offer a male without blemish; you shall bring it to the entrance of the tent of meeting, for acceptance in your behalf before the LORD. 4You shall lay your hand on the head of the burnt offering, and it shall be acceptable in your behalf as atonement for you. 5The bull shall be slaughtered before the LORD; and Aaron's sons the priests shall offer the blood, dashing the blood against all sides of the altar that is at the entrance of the tent of meeting. 6The burnt offering shall be flayed and cut up into its parts. 7The sons of the priest Aaron shall put fire on the altar and arrange wood on the fire. 8Aaron's sons the priests shall arrange the parts, with the head and the suet, on the wood that is on the fire on the altar; 9but its entrails and its legs shall be washed with water. Then the priest shall turn the whole into smoke on the altar as a burnt offering, an offering by fire of pleasing odor to the LORD.

10 If your gift for a burnt offering is from the flock, from the sheep or goats, your offering shall be a male without blemish. 11It shall be slaughtered on the north side of the altar before the LORD, and Aaron's sons the priests shall dash its blood against all sides of the altar. 12It shall be cut up into its parts, with its head and its suet, and the priest shall arrange them on the wood that is on the fire on the altar; 13but the entrails and the legs shall be washed with water. Then the priest shall offer the whole and turn it into smoke on the altar; it is a burnt offering, an offering by fire of pleasing odor to the LORD.

14 If your offering to the LORD is a burnt offering of birds, you shall choose your offering from turtledoves or pigeons. 15The priest shall bring it to the altar and wring off its head, and turn it into smoke on the altar; and its blood shall be drained out against the side of the altar. 16He shall remove its crop with its contents[a] and throw it at the east side of the altar, in the place for ashes. 17He shall tear it open by its wings without severing it. Then the priest shall turn it into smoke on the altar, on the wood that is on the fire; it is a burnt offering, an offering by fire of pleasing odor to the LORD.

2 When anyone presents a grain offering to the LORD, the offering shall be of choice flour; the worshiper shall pour

*a* Meaning of Heb uncertain

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**1.1–17**: **Burnt offerings. 1**: In the priestly view the laws of Leviticus were delivered to Moses from *the tent of meeting* or tabernacle (Ex 25.22; 26.1–37) during the wilderness sojourn (7.37–38; Ex 40.16–38). **2**: The sacrifices dealt with in this chapter are regarded as offerings or gifts to God out of the worshiper's substance. **3–9**: A sacrifice from the herd. **3**: The burnt offering, the chief daily offering (6.9), was one in which the whole animal was burnt on the altar as an act of praise and adoration. *To the entrance,* i.e. at the great altar in the court (Ex ch 38; 40.6). **4**: The worshiper symbolically identifies with the sacrifice presented (see Ex 29.10 n.). According to the ancient notion of substitutionary sacrifice, the animal sacrifice makes *atonement* for, or "puts a cover" over, the sin of the worshiper (see Ex 29.35–37 n.). **5**: Blood, the seat of the mystery of life (17.11; Deut 12.23; Gen 9.4), was held to be peculiarly sacred to God. Therefore, on the principle of the sacrifice of life for life, the shedding of blood was efficacious in forgiving sin and reconciling persons to God. The act of throwing the blood against the altar symbolizes God's participation in the atonement ceremony (see Ex 24.6–8 n.). On *Aaron's sons the priests,* see Ex 28.1–5 n. **9**: *A pleasing odor,* a traditional expression for an offering acceptable to God (see Gen 8.20–22 n.; compare Eph 5.2).

**1.10–13**: A sacrifice from the flock. **14–17**: The offering to be made by poor people who cannot afford a sacrifice from the herd or flock.

**2.1–16**: **Grain offerings. 1**: As Abel's offering was from the flock, so Cain's was a typical grain offering from "the fruit of the ground" (Gen 4.3–5). Both types were expressions of gratitude and praise. Grain offer-

oil on it, and put frankincense on it, 2and bring it to Aaron's sons the priests. After taking from it a handful of the choice flour and oil, with all its frankincense, the priest shall turn this token portion into smoke on the altar, an offering by fire of pleasing odor to the LORD. 3And what is left of the grain offering shall be for Aaron and his sons, a most holy part of the offerings by fire to the LORD.

4 When you present a grain offering baked in the oven, it shall be of choice flour: unleavened cakes mixed with oil, or unleavened wafers spread with oil. 5If your offering is grain prepared on a griddle, it shall be of choice flour mixed with oil, unleavened; 6break it in pieces, and pour oil on it; it is a grain offering. 7If your offering is grain prepared in a pan, it shall be made of choice flour in oil. 8You shall bring to the LORD the grain offering that is prepared in any of these ways; and when it is presented to the priest, he shall take it to the altar. 9The priest shall remove from the grain offering its token portion and turn this into smoke on the altar, an offering by fire of pleasing odor to the LORD. 10And what is left of the grain offering shall be for Aaron and his sons; it is a most holy part of the offerings by fire to the LORD.

11 No grain offering that you bring to the LORD shall be made with leaven, for you must not turn any leaven or honey into smoke as an offering by fire to the LORD. 12You may bring them to the LORD as an offering of choice products, but they shall not be offered on the altar for a pleasing odor. 13You shall not omit from your grain offerings the salt of the covenant with your God; with all your offerings you shall offer salt.

14 If you bring a grain offering of first fruits to the LORD, you shall bring as the grain offering of your first fruits coarse new grain from fresh ears, parched with fire. 15You shall add oil to it and lay frankincense on it; it is a grain offering. 16And the priest shall turn a token portion of it into smoke—some of the coarse grain and oil with all its frankincense; it is an offering by fire to the LORD.

3 If the offering is a sacrifice of well-being, if you offer an animal of the herd, whether male or female, you shall offer one without blemish before the LORD. 2You shall lay your hand on the head of the offering and slaughter it at the entrance of the tent of meeting; and Aaron's sons the priests shall dash the blood against all sides of the altar. 3You shall offer from the sacrifice of well-being, as an offering by fire to the LORD, the fat that covers the entrails and all the fat that is around the entrails; 4the two kidneys with the fat that is on them at the loins, and the appendage of the liver, which he shall remove with the kidneys. 5Then Aaron's sons shall turn these into smoke on the altar, with the burnt offering that

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ings often accompanied an animal sacrifice (7.11–14; 8.26; 9.4; Num 15.1–10). *Oil,* i.e. olive oil. *Frankincense,* Ex 30.34. **2–3**: Part of the offering is a *token portion,* i.e. it memorializes the worshiper before God. The unburned remainder is *most holy* because, being consecrated to God, only the priests could eat it. In Israel it was not believed that sacrifices satisfied the physical needs of the Deity (compare Ps 50.9–13). Rather, sacrifice supported the priests (see Ex 29.24 n.; 1 Sam 2.13–17), who, in eating their portion, identified themselves with worshipers in their approach to God.

**2.11**: Honey was forbidden because, like leaven (see Ex 12.15 n.), it was associated with foods that ferment. **12**: *Choice products,* or "first fruits" (vv. 14–16; see Ex 23.19; 34.26). **13**: *Salt of the covenant* (Num 18.19; 2 Chr 13.5) reflects the oriental practice of making a covenant by eating a meal seasoned with salt. Here salt symbolizes the covenant relation upon which the whole sacrificial system rests.

**3.1–17**: **Offerings of well-being.** While the burnt offering was a sacrifice of praise (ch 1), the offering of well-being, also an ancient type of sacrifice (Ex 24.5; Deut 12.7, 18; 1 Sam 9.11–14, 22–24), was a covenant meal in which the worshiper was sacramentally related to the LORD and to the community of Israelites. **1–5**: Sacrifice from the herd (1.3–9). In this case only certain parts (suet, kidneys) are burned; the rest is consumed by priests and people in a communion meal.

is on the wood on the fire, as an offering by fire of pleasing odor to the LORD.

6 If your offering for a sacrifice of well-being to the LORD is from the flock, male or female, you shall offer one without blemish. 7If you present a sheep as your offering, you shall bring it before the LORD 8and lay your hand on the head of the offering. It shall be slaughtered before the tent of meeting, and Aaron's sons shall dash its blood against all sides of the altar. 9You shall present its fat from the sacrifice of well-being, as an offering by fire to the LORD: the whole broad tail, which shall be removed close to the backbone, the fat that covers the entrails, and all the fat that is around the entrails; 10the two kidneys with the fat that is on them at the loins, and the appendage of the liver, which you shall remove with the kidneys. 11Then the priest shall turn these into smoke on the altar as a food offering by fire to the LORD.

12 If your offering is a goat, you shall bring it before the LORD 13and lay your hand on its head; it shall be slaughtered before the tent of meeting; and the sons of Aaron shall dash its blood against all sides of the altar. 14You shall present as your offering from it, as an offering by fire to the LORD, the fat that covers the entrails, and all the fat that is around the entrails; 15the two kidneys with the fat that is on them at the loins, and the appendage of the liver, which you shall remove with the kidneys. 16Then the priest shall turn these into smoke on the altar as a food offering by fire for a pleasing odor.

All fat is the LORD's. 17It shall be a perpetual statute throughout your generations, in all your settlements: you must not eat any fat or any blood.

4 The LORD spoke to Moses, saying, 2Speak to the people of Israel, saying: When anyone sins unintentionally in any of the LORD's commandments about things not to be done, and does any one of them:

3 If it is the anointed priest who sins, thus bringing guilt on the people, he shall offer for the sin that he has committed a bull of the herd without blemish as a sin offering to the LORD. 4He shall bring the bull to the entrance of the tent of meeting before the LORD and lay his hand on the head of the bull; the bull shall be slaughtered before the LORD. 5The anointed priest shall take some of the blood of the bull and bring it into the tent of meeting. 6The priest shall dip his finger in the blood and sprinkle some of the blood seven times before the LORD in front of the curtain of the sanctuary. 7The priest shall put some of the blood on the horns of the altar of fragrant incense that is in the tent of meeting before the LORD; and the rest of the blood of the bull he shall pour out at the base of the altar of burnt offering, which is at the entrance of the tent of meeting. 8He shall remove all the fat from the bull of sin offering: the fat that covers the entrails and all the fat that is around the entrails; 9the two kidneys with the fat that is on them at the loins; and the appendage of the liver, which he shall remove with the kidneys, 10just as these are removed from the ox of the sacrifice of well-being. The priest shall turn them into

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**3.6–17**: Sacrifice from the flock (compare 1.10–13). **16**: Fat, like blood, was held to be God's portion of the sacrifice (7.22–27; Ex 23.18).

**4.1–5.13**: **The sin offering.** This is a sacrifice of repentance for sin that has broken one's relation to God and has endangered the welfare of the community.

**4.2**: The sacrifice is efficacious only for one who sins *unintentionally*, i.e. who inadvertently offends God's holiness. The sacrifice must be accompanied by confession (5.5). Priestly tradition provides no expiation for sin committed deliberately (see Num 15.30 n.; Heb 5.2 n.). **3–12**: Offering for the high priest (compare Ex 29.10–14). **4**: Compare 1.3–4. **6**: *The curtain of the sanctuary*, see Ex 26.31–33 n. **7**: *The altar of fragrant incense* was inside the tabernacle (Ex 30.1–10). **8–12**: Only the sacred, vital parts are to be sacrificed; the remainder, being contaminated by the sin of the offerer who presented it (v. 4), must be burned outside the camp.

smoke upon the altar of burnt offering. 11 But the skin of the bull and all its flesh, as well as its head, its legs, its entrails, and its dung— 12 all the rest of the bull— he shall carry out to a clean place outside the camp, to the ash heap, and shall burn it on a wood fire; at the ash heap it shall be burned.

13 If the whole congregation of Israel errs unintentionally and the matter escapes the notice of the assembly, and they do any one of the things that by the LORD's commandments ought not to be done and incur guilt; 14 when the sin that they have committed becomes known, the assembly shall offer a bull of the herd for a sin offering and bring it before the tent of meeting. 15 The elders of the congregation shall lay their hands on the head of the bull before the LORD, and the bull shall be slaughtered before the LORD. 16 The anointed priest shall bring some of the blood of the bull into the tent of meeting, 17 and the priest shall dip his finger in the blood and sprinkle it seven times before the LORD, in front of the curtain. 18 He shall put some of the blood on the horns of the altar that is before the LORD in the tent of meeting; and the rest of the blood he shall pour out at the base of the altar of burnt offering that is at the entrance of the tent of meeting. 19 He shall remove all its fat and turn it into smoke on the altar. 20 He shall do with the bull just as is done with the bull of sin offering; he shall do the same with this. The priest shall make atonement for them, and they shall be forgiven. 21 He shall carry the bull outside the camp, and burn it as he burned the first bull; it is the sin offering for the assembly.

22 When a ruler sins, doing unintentionally any one of all the things that by commandments of the LORD his God ought not to be done and incurs guilt, 23 once the sin that he has committed is made known to him, he shall bring as his offering a male goat without blemish. 24 He shall lay his hand on the head of the goat; it shall be slaughtered at the spot where the burnt offering is slaughtered before the LORD; it is a sin offering. 25 The priest shall take some of the blood of the sin offering with his finger and put it on the horns of the altar of burnt offering, and pour out the rest of its blood at the base of the altar of burnt offering. 26 All its fat he shall turn into smoke on the altar, like the fat of the sacrifice of well-being. Thus the priest shall make atonement on his behalf for his sin, and he shall be forgiven.

27 If anyone of the ordinary people among you sins unintentionally in doing any one of the things that by the LORD's commandments ought not to be done and incurs guilt, 28 when the sin that you have committed is made known to you, you shall bring a female goat without blemish as your offering, for the sin that you have committed. 29 You shall lay your hand on the head of the sin offering; and the sin offering shall be slaughtered at the place of the burnt offering. 30 The priest shall take some of its blood with his finger and put it on the horns of the altar of burnt offering, and he shall pour out the rest of its blood at the base of the altar. 31 He shall remove all its fat, as the fat is removed from the offering of well-being, and the priest shall turn it into smoke on the altar for a pleasing odor to the LORD. Thus the priest shall make atonement on your behalf, and you shall be forgiven.

32 If the offering you bring as a sin offering is a sheep, you shall bring a female without blemish. 33 You shall lay your hand on the head of the sin offering; and it shall be slaughtered as a sin offering at the spot where the burnt offering is slaughtered. 34 The priest shall take some of the blood of the sin offering with his finger and put it on the horns of the altar of burnt offering, and pour out the rest of its blood at the base of the altar.

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**4.13–21**: Offering for the whole congregation (compare Num 15.22–26). **15**: *The elders* are the representatives of the people. **20**: *Make atonement* (vv. 26, 31, 35), see 1.4 n.

**4.22–26**: Offering for a ruler. **27–35**: Offering for an ordinary person.

35 You shall remove all its fat, as the fat of the sheep is removed from the sacrifice of well-being, and the priest shall turn it into smoke on the altar, with the offerings by fire to the LORD. Thus the priest shall make atonement on your behalf for the sin that you have committed, and you shall be forgiven.

5 When any of you sin in that you have heard a public adjuration to testify and—though able to testify as one who has seen or learned of the matter—do not speak up, you are subject to punishment. 2 Or when any of you touch any unclean thing—whether the carcass of an unclean beast or the carcass of unclean livestock or the carcass of an unclean swarming thing—and are unaware of it, you have become unclean, and are guilty. 3 Or when you touch human uncleanness—any uncleanness by which one can become unclean—and are unaware of it, when you come to know it, you shall be guilty. 4 Or when any of you utter aloud a rash oath for a bad or a good purpose, whatever people utter in an oath, and are unaware of it, when you come to know it, you shall in any of these be guilty. 5 When you realize your guilt in any of these, you shall confess the sin that you have committed. 6 And you shall bring to the LORD, as your penalty for the sin that you have committed, a female from the flock, a sheep or a goat, as a sin offering; and the priest shall make atonement on your behalf for your sin.

7 But if you cannot afford a sheep, you shall bring to the LORD, as your penalty for the sin that you have committed, two turtledoves or two pigeons, one for a sin offering and the other for a burnt offering. 8 You shall bring them to the priest, who shall offer first the one for the sin offering, wringing its head at the nape without severing it. 9 He shall sprinkle some of the blood of the sin offering on the side of the altar, while the rest of the blood shall be drained out at the base of the altar; it is a sin offering. 10 And the second he shall offer for a burnt offering according to the regulation. Thus the priest shall make atonement on your behalf for the sin that you have committed, and you shall be forgiven.

11 But if you cannot afford two turtledoves or two pigeons, you shall bring as your offering for the sin that you have committed one-tenth of an ephah of choice flour for a sin offering; you shall not put oil on it or lay frankincense on it, for it is a sin offering. 12 You shall bring it to the priest, and the priest shall scoop up a handful of it as its memorial portion, and turn this into smoke on the altar, with the offerings by fire to the LORD; it is a sin offering. 13 Thus the priest shall make atonement on your behalf for whichever of these sins you have committed, and you shall be forgiven. Like the grain offering, the rest shall be for the priest.

14 The LORD spoke to Moses, saying: 15 When any of you commit a trespass and sin unintentionally in any of the holy things of the LORD, you shall bring, as your guilt offering to the LORD, a ram without blemish from the flock, convertible into silver by the sanctuary shekel; it is a guilt offering. 16 And you shall make restitution for the holy thing in which you were remiss, and shall add one-fifth to it and give it to the priest.

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**5.1–4**: Cases which require a sin offering. **1**: The refusal to testify as a witness could lead to a miscarriage of justice. **2–3**: For laws about uncleanness, see chs 11–15; Num 19.11–13. **5**: Confession of sin must precede the rite, for sacrifice is not a magical means of atonement.

**5.7–13**: A supplement to 4.27–35, which covers the case of a poor person who cannot afford a more costly animal (compare 1.14–15).

**5.14–6.7**: **The guilt offering.** This type of offering is prescribed for offenses against God and the community that require that restitution accompany the sacrifice.

**5.15–16**: These verses deal with the withholding of the LORD's *holy things,* i.e. the offerings and tithes that are due God. On *the sanctuary shekel,* see Ex 30.13 n. **17–19**: The case of unwitting disobedience is similar to cases requiring a sin offering (4.27–35; compare 7.7).

The priest shall make atonement on your behalf with the ram of the guilt offering, and you shall be forgiven.

17 If any of you sin without knowing it, doing any of the things that by the LORD's commandments ought not to be done, you have incurred guilt, and are subject to punishment. 18 You shall bring to the priest a ram without blemish from the flock, or the equivalent, as a guilt offering; and the priest shall make atonement on your behalf for the error that you committed unintentionally, and you shall be forgiven. 19 It is a guilt offering; you have incurred guilt before the LORD.

6 [b] The LORD spoke to Moses, saying: 2 When any of you sin and commit a trespass against the LORD by deceiving a neighbor in a matter of a deposit or a pledge, or by robbery, or if you have defrauded a neighbor, 3 or have found something lost and lied about it—if you swear falsely regarding any of the various things that one may do and sin thereby— 4 when you have sinned and realize your guilt, and would restore what you took by robbery or by fraud or the deposit that was committed to you, or the lost thing that you found, 5 or anything else about which you have sworn falsely, you shall repay the principal amount and shall add one-fifth to it. You shall pay it to its owner when you realize your guilt. 6 And you shall bring to the priest, as your guilt offering to the LORD, a ram without blemish from the flock, or its equivalent, for a guilt offering. 7 The priest shall make atonement on your behalf before the LORD, and you shall be forgiven for any of the things that one may do and incur guilt thereby.

8 [c] The LORD spoke to Moses, saying: 9 Command Aaron and his sons, saying: This is the ritual of the burnt offering. The burnt offering itself shall remain on the hearth upon the altar all night until the morning, while the fire on the altar shall be kept burning. 10 The priest shall put on his linen vestments after putting on his linen undergarments next to his body; and he shall take up the ashes to which the fire has reduced the burnt offering on the altar, and place them beside the altar. 11 Then he shall take off his vestments and put on other garments, and carry the ashes out to a clean place outside the camp. 12 The fire on the altar shall be kept burning; it shall not go out. Every morning the priest shall add wood to it, lay out the burnt offering on it, and turn into smoke the fat pieces of the offerings of well-being. 13 A perpetual fire shall be kept burning on the altar; it shall not go out.

14 This is the ritual of the grain offering: The sons of Aaron shall offer it before the LORD, in front of the altar. 15 They shall take from it a handful of the choice flour and oil of the grain offering, with all the frankincense that is on the offering, and they shall turn its memorial portion into smoke on the altar as a pleasing odor to the LORD. 16 Aaron and his sons shall eat what is left of it; it shall be eaten as unleavened cakes in a holy place; in the court of the tent of meeting they shall eat it. 17 It shall not be baked with leaven. I have given it as their portion of my offerings by fire; it is most holy, like the sin offering and the guilt offering. 18 Every male among the descendants of Aaron shall eat of it, as their perpetual due throughout your generations, from

[b] Ch 5.20 in Heb [c] Ch 6.1 in Heb

**6.1–7**: Cases involving damage against another person (compare Ex 22.7–15). This law is supplemented by the legislation in Num 5.5–10.

**6.8–7.38**: **Instructions to priests concerning sacrifices.**

**6.9–13**: A supplement to 1.3–17. **9**: The ever-burning fire on the altar (vv. 12–13) symbolizes Israel's perpetual service of the LORD. The burnt offering was sacrificed in the morning and evening according to Ex 29.38–42; Num 28.3–8 (but compare the preexilic practice reflected in 2 Kings 16.15). **10**: For the priestly dress, see Ex 28.40–43. **14–18**: Supplement to ch 2. **17**: *It is most holy,* see 5.15–16 n. **18**: Since the priests eat their portion in the holy place in a state of ritual purity (v. 16), holiness can be transferred to anyone who touches them (see Ex 19.12 n.).

the LORD's offerings by fire; anything that touches them shall become holy.

19 The LORD spoke to Moses, saying: 20This is the offering that Aaron and his sons shall offer to the LORD on the day when he is anointed: one-tenth of an ephah of choice flour as a regular offering, half of it in the morning and half in the evening. 21It shall be made with oil on a griddle; you shall bring it well soaked, as a grain offering of baked[d] pieces, and you shall present it as a pleasing odor to the LORD. 22And so the priest, anointed from among Aaron's descendants as a successor, shall prepare it; it is the LORD's—a perpetual due—to be turned entirely into smoke. 23Every grain offering of a priest shall be wholly burned; it shall not be eaten.

24 The LORD spoke to Moses, saying: 25Speak to Aaron and his sons, saying: This is the ritual of the sin offering. The sin offering shall be slaughtered before the LORD at the spot where the burnt offering is slaughtered; it is most holy. 26The priest who offers it as a sin offering shall eat of it; it shall be eaten in a holy place, in the court of the tent of meeting. 27Whatever touches its flesh shall become holy; and when any of its blood is spattered on a garment, you shall wash the bespattered part in a holy place. 28An earthen vessel in which it was boiled shall be broken; but if it is boiled in a bronze vessel, that shall be scoured and rinsed in water. 29Every male among the priests shall eat of it; it is most holy. 30But no sin offering shall be eaten from which any blood is brought into the tent of meeting for atonement in the holy place; it shall be burned with fire.

7 This is the ritual of the guilt offering. It is most holy; 2at the spot where the burnt offering is slaughtered, they shall slaughter the guilt offering, and its blood shall be dashed against all sides of the altar. 3All its fat shall be offered: the broad tail, the fat that covers the entrails, 4the two kidneys with the fat that is on them at the loins, and the appendage of the liver, which shall be removed with the kidneys. 5The priest shall turn them into smoke on the altar as an offering by fire to the LORD; it is a guilt offering. 6Every male among the priests shall eat of it; it shall be eaten in a holy place; it is most holy.

7 The guilt offering is like the sin offering, there is the same ritual for them; the priest who makes atonement with it shall have it. 8So, too, the priest who offers anyone's burnt offering shall keep the skin of the burnt offering that he has offered. 9And every grain offering baked in the oven, and all that is prepared in a pan or on a griddle, shall belong to the priest who offers it. 10But every other grain offering, mixed with oil or dry, shall belong to all the sons of Aaron equally.

11 This is the ritual of the sacrifice of the offering of well-being that one may offer to the LORD. 12If you offer it for thanksgiving, you shall offer with the thank offering unleavened cakes mixed with oil, unleavened wafers spread with oil, and cakes of choice flour well soaked in oil. 13With your thanksgiving sacrifice of well-being you shall bring your offering with cakes of leavened bread. 14From this you shall offer one cake from each offering, as a gift to the LORD; it shall belong to the priest who dashes the blood of the offering of well-being. 15And the flesh of your thanksgiving sacrifice of well-being shall be eaten on the day it is offered; you shall not leave any of it until morning. 16But if the sacrifice you offer is a votive offering or a freewill offering, it shall be eaten on the day that

*d* Meaning of Heb uncertain

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**6.19–23**: Supplement to the law concerning the ordination of priests (Ex ch 29). **24–30**: Supplement to 4.1–5.13. **27–28**: These verses reflect the ancient view of holiness as something transferable by contact (v. 18). Holiness can be scoured off a bronze vessel; but an earthen vessel, because it is absorbent, must be destroyed.

**7.1–10**: Supplement to 5.14–6.7.

**7.11–36**: Supplement to 3.1–17. **12–14**:

you offer your sacrifice, and what is left of it shall be eaten the next day; 17but what is left of the flesh of the sacrifice shall be burned up on the third day. 18If any of the flesh of your sacrifice of well-being is eaten on the third day, it shall not be acceptable, nor shall it be credited to the one who offers it; it shall be an abomination, and the one who eats of it shall incur guilt.

19 Flesh that touches any unclean thing shall not be eaten; it shall be burned up. As for other flesh, all who are clean may eat such flesh. 20But those who eat flesh from the LORD's sacrifice of well-being while in a state of uncleanness shall be cut off from their kin. 21When any one of you touches any unclean thing—human uncleanness or an unclean animal or any unclean creature—and then eats flesh from the LORD's sacrifice of well-being, you shall be cut off from your kin.

22 The LORD spoke to Moses, saying: 23Speak to the people of Israel, saying: You shall eat no fat of ox or sheep or goat. 24The fat of an animal that died or was torn by wild animals may be put to any other use, but you must not eat it. 25If any one of you eats the fat from an animal of which an offering by fire may be made to the LORD, you who eat it shall be cut off from your kin. 26You must not eat any blood whatever, either of bird or of animal, in any of your settlements. 27Any one of you who eats any blood shall be cut off from your kin.

28 The LORD spoke to Moses, saying: 29Speak to the people of Israel, saying: Any one of you who would offer to the Lord your sacrifice of well-being must yourself bring to the LORD your offering from your sacrifice of well-being. 30Your own hands shall bring the LORD's offering by fire; you shall bring the fat with the breast, so that the breast may be raised as an elevation offering before the LORD. 31The priest shall turn the fat into smoke on the altar, but the breast shall belong to Aaron and his sons. 32And the right thigh from your sacrifices of well-being you shall give to the priest as an offering; 33the one among the sons of Aaron who offers the blood and fat of the offering of well-being shall have the right thigh for a portion. 34For I have taken the breast of the elevation offering, and the thigh that is offered, from the people of Israel, from their sacrifices of well-being, and have given them to Aaron the priest and to his sons, as a perpetual due from the people of Israel. 35This is the portion allotted to Aaron and to his sons from the offerings made by fire to the LORD, once they have been brought forward to serve the LORD as priests; 36these the LORD commanded to be given them, when he anointed them, as a perpetual due from the people of Israel throughout their generations.

37 This is the ritual of the burnt offering, the grain offering, the sin offering, the guilt offering, the offering of ordination, and the sacrifice of well-being, 38which the LORD commanded Moses on Mount Sinai, when he commanded the people of Israel to bring their offerings to the LORD, in the wilderness of Sinai.

8 The LORD spoke to Moses, saying: 2Take Aaron and his sons with him, the vestments, the anointing oil, the bull of sin offering, the two rams, and the basket of unleavened bread; 3and assemble the whole congregation at the entrance of the tent of meeting. 4And Mo-

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The offering of well-being may be accompanied by a grain offering (see 2.1 n.) for a thanksgiving. **16**: *Votive offering,* see ch 27.

**7.19**: *Any unclean thing,* see ch 11. **20**: Conditions of personal uncleanness are described in chs 12–15. *Cut off from their kin,* a reference to the death penalty. **23**: 3.16. **24**: See Ex 22.31 n. **26–27**: On this prohibition, see 1.5 n. **28–36**: The priests' portion of the offering of well-being. **30**: On the *elevation offering,* see Ex 29.24 n. **34**: *A perpetual due,* see 2.2–3 n.

**8.1–10.20**: **Investiture and induction of priests.** These chapters are intended to follow Ex 25–40, which deal with the erection of the tabernacle and making of vestments for priestly service in the sanctuary.

**8.1–36**: **The ordination of the priests** (based on Ex ch 29). **2**: On the relation of the Aaronic order to the Levites as a whole, see

ses did as the LORD commanded him. When the congregation was assembled at the entrance of the tent of meeting, 5 Moses said to the congregation, "This is what the LORD has commanded to be done."

6 Then Moses brought Aaron and his sons forward, and washed them with water. 7 He put the tunic on him, fastened the sash around him, clothed him with the robe, and put the ephod on him. He then put the decorated band of the ephod around him, tying the ephod to him with it. 8 He placed the breastpiece on him, and in the breastpiece he put the Urim and the Thummim. 9 And he set the turban on his head, and on the turban, in front, he set the golden ornament, the holy crown, as the LORD commanded Moses.

10 Then Moses took the anointing oil and anointed the tabernacle and all that was in it, and consecrated them. 11 He sprinkled some of it on the altar seven times, and anointed the altar and all its utensils, and the basin and its base, to consecrate them. 12 He poured some of the anointing oil on Aaron's head and anointed him, to consecrate him. 13 And Moses brought forward Aaron's sons, and clothed them with tunics, and fastened sashes around them, and tied headdresses on them, as the LORD commanded Moses.

14 He led forward the bull of sin offering; and Aaron and his sons laid their hands upon the head of the bull of sin offering, 15 and it was slaughtered. Moses took the blood and with his finger put some on each of the horns of the altar, purifying the altar; then he poured out the blood at the base of the altar. Thus he consecrated it, to make atonement for it. 16 Moses took all the fat that was around the entrails, and the appendage of the liver, and the two kidneys with their fat, and turned them into smoke on the altar. 17 But the bull itself, its skin and flesh and its dung, he burned with fire outside the camp, as the LORD commanded Moses.

18 Then he brought forward the ram of burnt offering. Aaron and his sons laid their hands on the head of the ram, 19 and it was slaughtered. Moses dashed the blood against all sides of the altar. 20 The ram was cut into its parts, and Moses turned into smoke the head and the parts and the suet. 21 And after the entrails and the legs were washed with water, Moses turned into smoke the whole ram on the altar; it was a burnt offering for a pleasing odor, an offering by fire to the LORD, as the LORD commanded Moses.

22 Then he brought forward the second ram, the ram of ordination. Aaron and his sons laid their hands on the head of the ram, 23 and it was slaughtered. Moses took some of its blood and put it on the lobe of Aaron's right ear and on the thumb of his right hand and on the big toe of his right foot. 24 After Aaron's sons were brought forward, Moses put some of the blood on the lobes of their right ears and on the thumbs of their right hands and on the big toes of their right feet; and Moses dashed the rest of the blood against all sides of the altar. 25 He took the fat—the broad tail, all the fat that was around the entrails, the appendage of the liver, and the two kidneys with their fat—and the right thigh. 26 From the basket of unleavened bread that was before the LORD, he took one cake of unleavened bread, one cake of bread with oil, and one wafer, and placed

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Num 3.5–10 n. **5–9**: Ex 29.4–6. The priestly regalia is described in Ex ch 28.

**8.10–13**: The ceremony of anointment (Ex 29.7–9). On the anointing of tabernacle and furnishings, see Ex 30.26–30; 40.9–15. **14–17**: Compare Ex 29.10–14; the ceremony began with a special sin offering for the priests (4.1–12). **15**: On atonement for the altar, see Ex 29.35–37 n. **18–21**: The second ordination sacrifice was a burnt offering (1.10–13; Ex 29.15–17). **22–35**: Compare Ex 29.19–37. The climax of the service was the sacrifice of *the ram of ordination*, i.e. an offering of well-being or communion meal (vv. 31–35). **26**: The offering of well-being was accompanied by a grain offering (7.12–14). **27–28**: In this

them on the fat and on the right thigh. 27He placed all these on the palms of Aaron and on the palms of his sons, and raised them as an elevation offering before the LORD. 28Then Moses took them from their hands and turned them into smoke on the altar with the burnt offering. This was an ordination offering for a pleasing odor, an offering by fire to the LORD. 29Moses took the breast and raised it as an elevation offering before the LORD; it was Moses' portion of the ram of ordination, as the LORD commanded Moses.

30 Then Moses took some of the anointing oil and some of the blood that was on the altar and sprinkled them on Aaron and his vestments, and also on his sons and their vestments. Thus he consecrated Aaron and his vestments, and also his sons and their vestments.

31 And Moses said to Aaron and his sons, "Boil the flesh at the entrance of the tent of meeting, and eat it there with the bread that is in the basket of ordination offerings, as I was commanded, 'Aaron and his sons shall eat it'; 32and what remains of the flesh and the bread you shall burn with fire. 33You shall not go outside the entrance of the tent of meeting for seven days, until the day when your period of ordination is completed. For it will take seven days to ordain you; 34as has been done today, the LORD has commanded to be done to make atonement for you. 35You shall remain at the entrance of the tent of meeting day and night for seven days, keeping the LORD's charge so that you do not die; for so I am commanded." 36Aaron and his sons did all the things that the LORD commanded through Moses.

9 On the eighth day Moses summoned Aaron and his sons and the elders of Israel. 2He said to Aaron, "Take a bull calf for a sin offering and a ram for a burnt offering, without blemish, and offer them before the LORD. 3And say to the people of Israel, 'Take a male goat for a sin offering; a calf and a lamb, yearlings without blemish, for a burnt offering; 4and an ox and a ram for an offering of well-being to sacrifice before the LORD; and a grain offering mixed with oil. For today the LORD will appear to you.'" 5They brought what Moses commanded to the front of the tent of meeting; and the whole congregation drew near and stood before the LORD. 6And Moses said, "This is the thing that the LORD commanded you to do, so that the glory of the LORD may appear to you." 7Then Moses said to Aaron, "Draw near to the altar and sacrifice your sin offering and your burnt offering, and make atonement for yourself and for the people; and sacrifice the offering of the people, and make atonement for them; as the LORD has commanded."

8 Aaron drew near to the altar, and slaughtered the calf of the sin offering, which was for himself. 9The sons of Aaron presented the blood to him, and he dipped his finger in the blood and put it on the horns of the altar; and the rest of the blood he poured out at the base of the altar. 10But the fat, the kidneys, and the appendage of the liver from the sin offering he turned into smoke on the altar, as the LORD commanded Moses; 11and the flesh and the skin he burned with fire outside the camp.

12 Then he slaughtered the burnt offering. Aaron's sons brought him the blood, and he dashed it against all sides of the altar. 13And they brought him the burnt offering piece by piece, and the head, which he turned into smoke on the altar. 14He washed the entrails and the legs and, with the burnt offering, turned them into smoke on the altar.

15 Next he presented the people's of-

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case the *elevation offering* (see Ex 29.24 n.) did not go to the priests as, in the usual offering of well-being (7.28–36), but to Moses the officiating priest.

**9.1–24: The commencement of Aaron's high priesthood. 1**: *The eighth day*, i.e. at the end of the seven day ordination ceremony (8.33). **2–7**: Preparations for an assembly of the whole congregation for worship.

**9.8–14**: Aaron offered a sin offering (4.1–12) and a burnt offering (1.3–13) to make atonement for himself.

fering. He took the goat of the sin offering that was for the people, and slaughtered it, and presented it as a sin offering like the first one. 16He presented the burnt offering, and sacrificed it according to regulation. 17He presented the grain offering, and, taking a handful of it, he turned it into smoke on the altar, in addition to the burnt offering of the morning.

18 He slaughtered the ox and the ram as a sacrifice of well-being for the people. Aaron's sons brought him the blood, which he dashed against all sides of the altar, 19and the fat of the ox and of the ram—the broad tail, the fat that covers the entrails, the two kidneys and the fat on them,[e] and the appendage of the liver. 20They first laid the fat on the breasts, and the fat was turned into smoke on the altar; 21and the breasts and the right thigh Aaron raised as an elevation offering before the LORD, as Moses had commanded.

22 Aaron lifted his hands toward the people and blessed them; and he came down after sacrificing the sin offering, the burnt offering, and the offering of well-being. 23Moses and Aaron entered the tent of meeting, and then came out and blessed the people; and the glory of the LORD appeared to all the people. 24Fire came out from the LORD and consumed the burnt offering and the fat on the altar; and when all the people saw it, they shouted and fell on their faces.

10 Now Aaron's sons, Nadab and Abihu, each took his censer, put fire in it, and laid incense on it; and they offered unholy fire before the LORD, such as he had not commanded them. 2And fire came out from the presence of the LORD and consumed them, and they died before the LORD. 3Then Moses said to Aaron, "This is what the LORD meant when he said,

'Through those who are near me
I will show myself holy,
and before all the people
I will be glorified.' "

And Aaron was silent.

4 Moses summoned Mishael and Elzaphan, sons of Uzziel the uncle of Aaron, and said to them, "Come forward, and carry your kinsmen away from the front of the sanctuary to a place outside the camp." 5They came forward and carried them by their tunics out of the camp, as Moses had ordered. 6And Moses said to Aaron and to his sons Eleazar and Ithamar, "Do not dishevel your hair, and do not tear your vestments, or you will die and wrath will strike all the congregation; but your kindred, the whole house of Israel, may mourn the burning that the LORD has sent. 7You shall not go outside the entrance of the tent of meeting, or you will die; for the anointing oil of the LORD is on you." And they did as Moses had ordered.

8 And the LORD spoke to Aaron: 9Drink no wine or strong drink, neither you nor your sons, when you enter the tent of meeting, that you may not die; it is a statute forever throughout your generations. 10You are to distinguish be-

*e* Gk: Heb *the broad tail, and that which covers, and the kidneys*

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**9.15–21**: The people's sin offering, burnt and grain offering, and offering of well-being were presented according to the ordinances of chs 1–7. **22**: On the Aaronic blessing, see Num 6.24–26 n. *He came down,* i.e. from the steps leading up to the great altar (Ezek 43.17). **24**: Judg 6.21.

**10.1–20**: **The fate of Nadab and Abihu.** Two of Aaron's sons were destroyed for their sin in making an unauthorized offering before the LORD. **1**: *Unholy fire* refers to incense which was offered in presumptuous defiance of the rules of the theocratic community (Ex 30.34–38; Num ch 16). **2**: See 9.24 n. **3**: *Those who are near me,* i.e. the priests who have access to the holy place. The story explains why the priestly line was traced through Aaron's third son, Eleazar (Ex 6.23–25). **4**: *Mishael* and *Elzaphan,* cousins of Moses (Ex 6.22). **5**: *Their tunics,* i.e. priestly garments (Ex 28.4, 39–40). **6**: Aaron and his sons must abstain from signs of mourning, i.e. rending the garments and letting the hair hang loose. The reason is that they are still in a state of ritual purity (v. 7; see 21.10–12). **9**: Ezek 44.21. **10–11**: See chs 11–15.

tween the holy and the common, and between the unclean and the clean; 11 and you are to teach the people of Israel all the statutes that the LORD has spoken to them through Moses.

12 Moses spoke to Aaron and to his remaining sons, Eleazar and Ithamar: Take the grain offering that is left from the LORD's offerings by fire, and eat it unleavened beside the altar, for it is most holy; 13 you shall eat it in a holy place, because it is your due and your sons' due, from the offerings by fire to the LORD; for so I am commanded. 14 But the breast that is elevated and the thigh that is raised, you and your sons and daughters as well may eat in any clean place; for they have been assigned to you and your children from the sacrifices of the offerings of well-being of the people of Israel. 15 The thigh that is raised and the breast that is elevated they shall bring, together with the offerings by fire of the fat, to raise for an elevation offering before the LORD; they are to be your due and that of your children forever, as the LORD has commanded.

16 Then Moses made inquiry about the goat of the sin offering, and—it had already been burned! He was angry with Eleazar and Ithamar, Aaron's remaining sons, and said, 17 "Why did you not eat the sin offering in the sacred area? For it is most holy, and God[f] has given it to you that you may remove the guilt of the congregation, to make atonement on their behalf before the LORD. 18 Its blood was not brought into the inner part of the sanctuary. You should certainly have eaten it in the sanctuary, as I commanded." 19 And Aaron spoke to Moses, "See, today they offered their sin offering and their burnt offering before the LORD; and yet such things as these have befallen me! If I had eaten the sin offering today, would it have been agreeable to the LORD?" 20 And when Moses heard that, he agreed.

11 The LORD spoke to Moses and Aaron, saying to them: 2 Speak to the people of Israel, saying:

From among all the land animals, these are the creatures that you may eat. 3 Any animal that has divided hoofs and is cleft-footed and chews the cud—such you may eat. 4 But among those that chew the cud or have divided hoofs, you shall not eat the following: the camel, for even though it chews the cud, it does not have divided hoofs; it is unclean for you. 5 The rock badger, for even though it chews the cud, it does not have divided hoofs; it is unclean for you. 6 The hare, for even though it chews the cud, it does not have divided hoofs; it is unclean for you. 7 The pig, for even though it has divided hoofs and is cleft-footed, it does not chew the cud; it is unclean for you. 8 Of their flesh you shall not eat, and their carcasses you shall not touch; they are unclean for you.

9 These you may eat, of all that are in the waters. Everything in the waters that has fins and scales, whether in the seas or in the streams—such you may eat. 10 But anything in the seas or the streams that does not have fins and scales, of the swarming creatures in the waters and among all the other living creatures that

*f* Heb *he*

**10.12–15**: 7.28–36. The grain offering (v. 12) accompanied the offering of well-being (7.11–14). **16–20**: When Aaron and his sons offered their first sin offering after Nadab and Abihu were struck down during the performance of their priestly duties, they failed to eat their rightful portion (see 2.2–3 n.; 6.26), fearing that the LORD was not disposed to accept their atonement for the people.

**11.1–47**: **Clean and unclean animals** (Deut 14.3–20). The laws of chs 11–15 come after the ordination tradition (chs 8–10) because one of the tasks of the priests was to make a distinction between clean and unclean (10.10). This distinction is not based merely on sanitary or hygienic considerations, in the modern sense that "cleanliness is next to godliness." That which is unclean is ritually impure and therefore the opposite of holy. **5–6**: Strictly, these animals do not chew the cud but only appear to. **7**: *The pig* came to be regarded as the animal that was particularly unclean (1 Macc 1.47).

are in the waters—they are detestable to you [11] and detestable they shall remain. Of their flesh you shall not eat, and their carcasses you shall regard as detestable. [12] Everything in the waters that does not have fins and scales is detestable to you.

13 These you shall regard as detestable among the birds. They shall not be eaten; they are an abomination: the eagle, the vulture, the osprey, [14] the buzzard, the kite of any kind; [15] every raven of any kind; [16] the ostrich, the nighthawk, the sea gull, the hawk of any kind; [17] the little owl, the cormorant, the great owl, [18] the water hen, the desert owl,[g] the carrion vulture, [19] the stork, the heron of any kind, the hoopoe, and the bat.[h]

20 All winged insects that walk upon all fours are detestable to you. [21] But among the winged insects that walk on all fours you may eat those that have jointed legs above their feet, with which to leap on the ground. [22] Of them you may eat: the locust according to its kind, the bald locust according to its kind, the cricket according to its kind, and the grasshopper according to its kind. [23] But all other winged insects that have four feet are detestable to you.

24 By these you shall become unclean; whoever touches the carcass of any of them shall be unclean until the evening, [25] and whoever carries any part of the carcass of any of them shall wash his clothes and be unclean until the evening. [26] Every animal that has divided hoofs but is not cleft-footed or does not chew the cud is unclean for you; everyone who touches one of them shall be unclean. [27] All that walk on their paws, among the animals that walk on all fours, are unclean for you; whoever touches the carcass of any of them shall be unclean until the evening, [28] and the one who carries the carcass shall wash his clothes and be unclean until the evening; they are unclean for you.

29 These are unclean for you among the creatures that swarm upon the earth: the weasel, the mouse, the great lizard according to its kind, [30] the gecko, the land crocodile, the lizard, the sand lizard, and the chameleon. [31] These are unclean for you among all that swarm; whoever touches one of them when they are dead shall be unclean until the evening. [32] And anything upon which any of them falls when they are dead shall be unclean, whether an article of wood or cloth or skin or sacking, any article that is used for any purpose; it shall be dipped into water, and it shall be unclean until the evening, and then it shall be clean. [33] And if any of them falls into any earthen vessel, all that is in it shall be unclean, and you shall break the vessel. [34] Any food that could be eaten shall be unclean if water from any such vessel comes upon it; and any liquid that could be drunk shall be unclean if it was in any such vessel. [35] Everything on which any part of the carcass falls shall be unclean; whether an oven or stove, it shall be broken in pieces; they are unclean, and shall remain unclean for you. [36] But a spring or a cistern holding water shall be clean, while whatever touches the carcass in it shall be unclean. [37] If any part of their carcass falls upon any seed set aside for sowing, it is clean; [38] but if water is put on the seed and any part of their carcass falls on it, it is unclean for you.

39 If an animal of which you may eat dies, anyone who touches its carcass shall be unclean until the evening. [40] Those who eat of its carcass shall wash their clothes and be unclean until the evening; and those who carry the carcass shall wash their clothes and be unclean until the evening.

41 All creatures that swarm upon the earth are detestable; they shall not be eaten. [42] Whatever moves on its belly, and whatever moves on all fours, or whatev-

*g* Or *pelican* *h* Identification of several of the birds in verses 13-19 is uncertain

**11.24–38**: An unclean animal, when dead, transmits uncleanness at the touch but it may be safely handled while alive. Further, the contagion of uncleanness, like that of its opposite, holiness (6.27–28), affects objects, vessels, etc.

er has many feet, all the creatures that swarm upon the earth, you shall not eat; for they are detestable. 43You shall not make yourselves detestable with any creature that swarms; you shall not defile yourselves with them, and so become unclean. 44For I am the LORD your God; sanctify yourselves therefore, and be holy, for I am holy. You shall not defile yourselves with any swarming creature that moves on the earth. 45For I am the LORD who brought you up from the land of Egypt, to be your God; you shall be holy, for I am holy.

46 This is the law pertaining to land animal and bird and every living creature that moves through the waters and every creature that swarms upon the earth, 47to make a distinction between the unclean and the clean, and between the living creature that may be eaten and the living creature that may not be eaten.

12 The LORD spoke to Moses, saying: 2Speak to the people of Israel, saying:

If a woman conceives and bears a male child, she shall be ceremonially unclean seven days; as at the time of her menstruation, she shall be unclean. 3On the eighth day the flesh of his foreskin shall be circumcised. 4Her time of blood purification shall be thirty-three days; she shall not touch any holy thing, or come into the sanctuary, until the days of her purification are completed. 5If she bears a female child, she shall be unclean two weeks, as in her menstruation; her time of blood purification shall be sixty-six days.

6 When the days of her purification are completed, whether for a son or for a daughter, she shall bring to the priest at the entrance of the tent of meeting a lamb in its first year for a burnt offering, and a pigeon or a turtledove for a sin offering. 7He shall offer it before the LORD, and make atonement on her behalf; then she shall be clean from her flow of blood. This is the law for her who bears a child, male or female. 8If she cannot afford a sheep, she shall take two turtledoves or two pigeons, one for a burnt offering and the other for a sin offering; and the priest shall make atonement on her behalf, and she shall be clean.

13 The LORD spoke to Moses and Aaron, saying:

2 When a person has on the skin of his body a swelling or an eruption or a spot, and it turns into a leprous[i] disease on the skin of his body, he shall be brought to Aaron the priest or to one of his sons the priests. 3The priest shall examine the disease on the skin of his body, and if the hair in the diseased area has turned white and the disease appears to be deeper than the skin of his body, it is a leprous[i] disease; after the priest has examined him he shall pronounce him ceremonially unclean. 4But if the spot is white in the skin of his body, and appears no deeper than the skin, and the hair in it has not turned white, the priest shall confine the diseased person for seven days. 5The priest

*i* A term for several skin diseases; precise meaning uncertain

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**11.44–45**: The basis for these laws is not irrational taboo but the covenant relationship, which sets Israel apart for the service of God (Ex 19.3–6). As a holy and consecrated people (Ex 22.31), Israelites must avoid all impurity in order that the holy God may tabernacle in their midst (15.31; 18.1–5; 20.22–26; 26.11–12).

**12.1–8**: **Purification of a woman after childbirth. 2**: This law does not imply that sex is evil—a view completely foreign to Israel's thought; rather, the woman becomes unclean because of her bodily discharge (v. 7; see 15.16–18 n.). **6**: The *sin offering* is prescribed for inadvertent sin (4.27–35). **8**: See 5.7–13 n.; Lk 2.24.

**13.1–59**: **The diagnosis of leprosy.** In this chapter and the next, the word translated "leprosy" is a generic term that includes various skin diseases (including what is called leprosy today), as well as blemishes affecting garments and buildings. **1–8**: A suspicious skin eruption. Tubercular leprosy begins with reddish patches and progresses into nodules and deformities; anesthetic leprosy paralyzes the nerves so that the limbs are numb and eventually lifeless. Whatever type is in mind, the law emphasizes the need for

shall examine him on the seventh day, and if he sees that the disease is checked and the disease has not spread in the skin, then the priest shall confine him seven days more. 6The priest shall examine him again on the seventh day, and if the disease has abated and the disease has not spread in the skin, the priest shall pronounce him clean; it is only an eruption; and he shall wash his clothes, and be clean. 7But if the eruption spreads in the skin after he has shown himself to the priest for his cleansing, he shall appear again before the priest. 8The priest shall make an examination, and if the eruption has spread in the skin, the priest shall pronounce him unclean; it is a leprous[j] disease.

9 When a person contracts a leprous[j] disease, he shall be brought to the priest. 10The priest shall make an examination, and if there is a white swelling in the skin that has turned the hair white, and there is quick raw flesh in the swelling, 11it is a chronic leprous[j] disease in the skin of his body. The priest shall pronounce him unclean; he shall not confine him, for he is unclean. 12But if the disease breaks out in the skin, so that it covers all the skin of the diseased person from head to foot, so far as the priest can see, 13then the priest shall make an examination, and if the disease has covered all his body, he shall pronounce him clean of the disease; since it has all turned white, he is clean. 14But if raw flesh ever appears on him, he shall be unclean; 15the priest shall examine the raw flesh and pronounce him unclean. Raw flesh is unclean, for it is a leprous[j] disease. 16But if the raw flesh again turns white, he shall come to the priest; 17the priest shall examine him, and if the disease has turned white, the priest shall pronounce the diseased person clean. He is clean.

18 When there is on the skin of one's body a boil that has healed, 19and in the place of the boil there appears a white swelling or a reddish-white spot, it shall be shown to the priest. 20The priest shall make an examination, and if it appears deeper than the skin and its hair has turned white, the priest shall pronounce him unclean; this is a leprous[j] disease, broken out in the boil. 21But if the priest examines it and the hair on it is not white, nor is it deeper than the skin but has abated, the priest shall confine him seven days. 22If it spreads in the skin, the priest shall pronounce him unclean; it is diseased. 23But if the spot remains in one place and does not spread, it is the scar of the boil; the priest shall pronounce him clean.

24 Or, when the body has a burn on the skin and the raw flesh of the burn becomes a spot, reddish-white or white, 25the priest shall examine it. If the hair in the spot has turned white and it appears deeper than the skin, it is a leprous[j] disease; it has broken out in the burn, and the priest shall pronounce him unclean. This is a leprous[j] disease. 26But if the priest examines it and the hair in the spot is not white, and it is no deeper than the skin but has abated, the priest shall confine him seven days. 27The priest shall examine him the seventh day; if it is spreading in the skin, the priest shall pronounce him unclean. This is a leprous[j] disease. 28But if the spot remains in one place and does not spread in the skin but has abated, it is a swelling from the burn, and the priest shall pronounce him clean; for it is the scar of the burn.

29 When a man or woman has a disease on the head or in the beard, 30the priest shall examine the disease. If it appears deeper than the skin and the hair in it is yellow and thin, the priest shall pro-

*j* A term for several skin diseases; precise meaning uncertain

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observation so that the disease may be detected in its early stages.

**13.9–17**: In the case of *chronic leprous disease,* quarantine for further examination (v. 11) is pointless.

**13.18–23**: A boil in which leprosy may break out. **24–28**: A burn that may be infected with leprosy.

**13.29–37**: An itching disease, perhaps ringworm.

nounce him unclean; it is an itch, a leprous[k] disease of the head or the beard. 31If the priest examines the itching disease, and it appears no deeper than the skin and there is no black hair in it, the priest shall confine the person with the itching disease for seven days. 32On the seventh day the priest shall examine the itch; if the itch has not spread, and there is no yellow hair in it, and the itch appears to be no deeper than the skin, 33he shall shave, but the itch he shall not shave. The priest shall confine the person with the itch for seven days more. 34On the seventh day the priest shall examine the itch; if the itch has not spread in the skin and it appears to be no deeper than the skin, the priest shall pronounce him clean. He shall wash his clothes and be clean. 35But if the itch spreads in the skin after he was pronounced clean, 36the priest shall examine him. If the itch has spread in the skin, the priest need not seek for the yellow hair; he is unclean. 37But if in his eyes the itch is checked, and black hair has grown in it, the itch is healed, he is clean; and the priest shall pronounce him clean.

38 When a man or a woman has spots on the skin of the body, white spots, 39the priest shall make an examination, and if the spots on the skin of the body are of a dull white, it is a rash that has broken out on the skin; he is clean.

40 If anyone loses the hair from his head, he is bald but he is clean. 41If he loses the hair from his forehead and temples, he has baldness of the forehead but he is clean. 42But if there is on the bald head or the bald forehead a reddish-white diseased spot, it is a leprous[k] disease breaking out on his bald head or his bald forehead. 43The priest shall examine him; if the diseased swelling is reddish-white on his bald head or on his bald forehead, which resembles a leprous[k] disease in the skin of the body, 44he is leprous,[k] he is unclean. The priest shall pronounce him unclean; the disease is on his head.

45 The person who has the leprous[k] disease shall wear torn clothes and let the hair of his head be disheveled; and he shall cover his upper lip and cry out, "Unclean, unclean." 46He shall remain unclean as long as he has the disease; he is unclean. He shall live alone; his dwelling shall be outside the camp.

47 Concerning clothing: when a leprous[k] disease appears in it, in woolen or linen cloth, 48in warp or woof of linen or wool, or in a skin or in anything made of skin, 49if the disease shows greenish or reddish in the garment, whether in warp or woof or in skin or in anything made of skin, it is a leprous[k] disease and shall be shown to the priest. 50The priest shall examine the disease, and put the diseased article aside for seven days. 51He shall examine the disease on the seventh day. If the disease has spread in the cloth, in warp or woof, or in the skin, whatever be the use of the skin, this is a spreading leprous[k] disease; it is unclean. 52He shall burn the clothing, whether diseased in warp or woof, woolen or linen, or anything of skin, for it is a spreading leprous[k] disease; it shall be burned in fire.

53 If the priest makes an examination, and the disease has not spread in the clothing, in warp or woof or in anything of skin, 54the priest shall command them to wash the article in which the disease appears, and he shall put it aside seven days more. 55The priest shall examine the diseased article after it has been washed. If the diseased spot has not changed color, though the disease has not spread, it is unclean; you shall burn

*k* A term for several skin diseases; precise meaning uncertain

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**13:38–39**: A vesicular skin disease. **40–44**: Falling hair, unless accompanied by other symptoms, is not necessarily a sign of leprosy. **45–46**: If truly a leper, the individual must appear like a mourner (10.6) and must go into isolation (Job 2.7–8). The judgment of being *unclean* is based upon the belief that when one is ritually impure (see ch 11 n.) defilement could be transmitted to others. Even after being cured, a leper was not "clean" until ritually purified (ch 14). **47–59**: *Leprous disease* in cloth refers to mold or mildew.

it in fire, whether the leprous[l] spot is on the inside or on the outside.

56 If the priest makes an examination, and the disease has abated after it is washed, he shall tear the spot out of the cloth, in warp or woof, or out of skin. 57 If it appears again in the garment, in warp or woof, or in anything of skin, it is spreading; you shall burn with fire that in which the disease appears. 58 But the cloth, warp or woof, or anything of skin from which the disease disappears when you have washed it, shall then be washed a second time, and it shall be clean.

59 This is the ritual for a leprous[l] disease in a cloth of wool or linen, either in warp or woof, or in anything of skin, to decide whether it is clean or unclean.

**14** The LORD spoke to Moses, saying: 2 This shall be the ritual for the leprous[l] person at the time of his cleansing:

He shall be brought to the priest; 3 the priest shall go out of the camp, and the priest shall make an examination. If the disease is healed in the leprous[l] person, 4 the priest shall command that two living clean birds and cedarwood and crimson yarn and hyssop be brought for the one who is to be cleansed. 5 The priest shall command that one of the birds be slaughtered over fresh water in an earthen vessel. 6 He shall take the living bird with the cedarwood and the crimson yarn and the hyssop, and dip them and the living bird in the blood of the bird that was slaughtered over the fresh water. 7 He shall sprinkle it seven times upon the one who is to be cleansed of the leprous[l] disease; then he shall pronounce him clean, and he shall let the living bird go into the open field. 8 The one who is to be cleansed shall wash his clothes, and shave off all his hair, and bathe himself in water, and he shall be clean. After that he shall come into the camp, but shall live outside his tent seven days. 9 On the seventh day he shall shave all his hair: of head, beard, eyebrows; he shall shave all his hair. Then he shall wash his clothes, and bathe his body in water, and he shall be clean.

10 On the eighth day he shall take two male lambs without blemish, and one ewe lamb in its first year without blemish, and a grain offering of three-tenths of an ephah of choice flour mixed with oil, and one log[m] of oil. 11 The priest who cleanses shall set the person to be cleansed, along with these things, before the LORD, at the entrance of the tent of meeting. 12 The priest shall take one of the lambs, and offer it as a guilt offering, along with the log[m] of oil, and raise them as an elevation offering before the LORD. 13 He shall slaughter the lamb in the place where the sin offering and the burnt offering are slaughtered in the holy place; for the guilt offering, like the sin offering, belongs to the priest: it is most holy. 14 The priest shall take some of the blood of the guilt offering and put it on the lobe of the right ear of the one to be cleansed, and on the thumb of the right hand, and on the big toe of the right foot. 15 The priest shall take some of the log[m] of oil and pour it into the palm of his own left hand, 16 and dip his right finger in the oil that is in his left hand and sprinkle some oil with his finger seven times before the LORD. 17 Some of the oil that remains in his hand the priest shall put on the lobe of the right ear of the one to be cleansed, and on the thumb of the right hand, and on the big toe of the right foot, on top of the blood of the guilt offering. 18 The rest of the oil that is in the priest's hand he shall put on the head of the one to be cleansed. Then the priest shall make atonement on his behalf before the LORD: 19 the priest shall offer the sin offering, to

*l* A term for several skin diseases; precise meaning uncertain  *m* A liquid measure

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**14.1–57: The cleansing of leprosy. 2:** Mk 1.44. **4–8:** This ceremony has archaic elements that elude explanation. **4:** *Hyssop,* see Ex 12.22 n. **7:** Perhaps the freeing of the living bird symbolizes the carrying away of the leper's uncleanness. **8:** On the ritual washing of garments, see 16.23–24; Ex 19.10.

**14.10–20:** The offering of appropriate sac-

make atonement for the one to be cleansed from his uncleanness. Afterward he shall slaughter the burnt offering; 20and the priest shall offer the burnt offering and the grain offering on the altar. Thus the priest shall make atonement on his behalf and he shall be clean.

21 But if he is poor and cannot afford so much, he shall take one male lamb for a guilt offering to be elevated, to make atonement on his behalf, and one-tenth of an ephah of choice flour mixed with oil for a grain offering and a log[n] of oil; 22also two turtledoves or two pigeons, such as he can afford, one for a sin offering and the other for a burnt offering. 23On the eighth day he shall bring them for his cleansing to the priest, to the entrance of the tent of meeting, before the LORD; 24and the priest shall take the lamb of the guilt offering and the log[n] of oil, and the priest shall raise them as an elevation offering before the LORD. 25The priest shall slaughter the lamb of the guilt offering and shall take some of the blood of the guilt offering, and put it on the lobe of the right ear of the one to be cleansed, and on the thumb of the right hand, and on the big toe of the right foot. 26The priest shall pour some of the oil into the palm of his own left hand, 27and shall sprinkle with his right finger some of the oil that is in his left hand seven times before the LORD. 28The priest shall put some of the oil that is in his hand on the lobe of the right ear of the one to be cleansed, and on the thumb of the right hand, and the big toe of the right foot, where the blood of the guilt offering was placed. 29The rest of the oil that is in the priest's hand he shall put on the head of the one to be cleansed, to make atonement on his behalf before the LORD. 30And he shall offer, of the turtledoves or pigeons such as he can afford, 31one[o] for a sin offering and the other for a burnt offering, along with a grain offering; and the priest shall make atonement before the LORD on behalf of the one being cleansed. 32This is the ritual for the one who has a leprous[p] disease, who cannot afford the offerings for his cleansing.

33 The LORD spoke to Moses and Aaron, saying:

34 When you come into the land of Canaan, which I give you for a possession, and I put a leprous[p] disease in a house in the land of your possession, 35the owner of the house shall come and tell the priest, saying, "There seems to me to be some sort of disease in my house." 36The priest shall command that they empty the house before the priest goes to examine the disease, or all that is in the house will become unclean; and afterward the priest shall go in to inspect the house. 37He shall examine the disease; if the disease is in the walls of the house with greenish or reddish spots, and if it appears to be deeper than the surface, 38the priest shall go outside to the door of the house and shut up the house seven days. 39The priest shall come again on the seventh day and make an inspection; if the disease has spread in the walls of the house, 40the priest shall command that the stones in which the disease appears be taken out and thrown into an unclean place outside the city. 41He shall have the inside of the house scraped thoroughly, and the plaster that is scraped off shall be dumped in an unclean place outside the city. 42They shall take other stones and put them in the place of those stones, and take other plaster and plaster the house.

43 If the disease breaks out again in the house, after he has taken out the stones and scraped the house and plastered it, 44the priest shall go and make inspection; if the disease has spread in the house, it is a spreading leprous[p] disease

*n* A liquid measure *o* Gk Syr: Heb *afford, 31such as he can afford, one* *p* A term for several skin diseases; precise meaning uncertain

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rifices. **12**: In this case the guilt offering, like the sin offering (v. 19; 5.1–6), is prescribed for an inadvertent offence. *Elevation offering,* see Ex 29.24 n. **21–32**: See 5.7–13 n. **33–57**: Leprosy in houses. The "disease" appears to be mold or rot.

in the house; it is unclean. 45He shall have the house torn down, its stones and timber and all the plaster of the house, and taken outside the city to an unclean place. 46All who enter the house while it is shut up shall be unclean until the evening; 47and all who sleep in the house shall wash their clothes; and all who eat in the house shall wash their clothes.

48 If the priest comes and makes an inspection, and the disease has not spread in the house after the house was plastered, the priest shall pronounce the house clean; the disease is healed. 49For the cleansing of the house he shall take two birds, with cedarwood and crimson yarn and hyssop, 50and shall slaughter one of the birds over fresh water in an earthen vessel, 51and shall take the cedarwood and the hyssop and the crimson yarn, along with the living bird, and dip them in the blood of the slaughtered bird and the fresh water, and sprinkle the house seven times. 52Thus he shall cleanse the house with the blood of the bird, and with the fresh water, and with the living bird, and with the cedarwood and hyssop and crimson yarn; 53and he shall let the living bird go out of the city into the open field; so he shall make atonement for the house, and it shall be clean.

54 This is the ritual for any leprous[q] disease: for an itch, 55for leprous[q] diseases in clothing and houses, 56and for a swelling or an eruption or a spot, 57to determine when it is unclean and when it is clean. This is the ritual for leprous[q] diseases.

15 The LORD spoke to Moses and Aaron, saying: 2Speak to the people of Israel and say to them:

When any man has a discharge from his member,[r] his discharge makes him ceremonially unclean. 3The uncleanness of his discharge is this: whether his member[r] flows with his discharge, or his member[r] is stopped from discharging, it is uncleanness for him. 4Every bed on which the one with the discharge lies shall be unclean; and everything on which he sits shall be unclean. 5Anyone who touches his bed shall wash his clothes, and bathe in water, and be unclean until the evening. 6All who sit on anything on which the one with the discharge has sat shall wash their clothes, and bathe in water, and be unclean until the evening. 7All who touch the body of the one with the discharge shall wash their clothes, and bathe in water, and be unclean until the evening. 8If the one with the discharge spits on persons who are clean, then they shall wash their clothes, and bathe in water, and be unclean until the evening. 9Any saddle on which the one with the discharge rides shall be unclean. 10All who touch anything that was under him shall be unclean until the evening, and all who carry such a thing shall wash their clothes, and bathe in water, and be unclean until the evening. 11All those whom the one with the discharge touches without his having rinsed his hands in water shall wash their clothes, and bathe in water, and be unclean until the evening. 12Any earthen vessel that the one with the discharge touches shall be broken; and every vessel of wood shall be rinsed in water.

13 When the one with a discharge is cleansed of his discharge, he shall count seven days for his cleansing; he shall wash his clothes and bathe his body in fresh water, and he shall be clean. 14On the eighth day he shall take two turtledoves or two pigeons and come before the LORD to the entrance of the tent of meeting and give them to the priest. 15The priest shall offer them, one for a sin offering and the other for a burnt

*q* A term for several skin diseases; precise meaning uncertain *r* Heb *flesh*

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**15.1–32: Bodily discharges.** Various bodily emissions, it was believed, produced ritual uncleanness that defiled the holy tabernacle in the midst of the people (v. 31). **3–12:** Unclean persons contaminate anything or anyone they touch (11.24–38).

**15.13–15:** The prescribed sacrifices to make atonement for uncleanness. On the sin

offering; and the priest shall make atonement on his behalf before the LORD for his discharge.

16 If a man has an emission of semen, he shall bathe his whole body in water, and be unclean until the evening. 17 Everything made of cloth or of skin on which the semen falls shall be washed with water, and be unclean until the evening. 18 If a man lies with a woman and has an emission of semen, both of them shall bathe in water, and be unclean until the evening.

19 When a woman has a discharge of blood that is her regular discharge from her body, she shall be in her impurity for seven days, and whoever touches her shall be unclean until the evening. 20 Everything upon which she lies during her impurity shall be unclean; everything also upon which she sits shall be unclean. 21 Whoever touches her bed shall wash his clothes, and bathe in water, and be unclean until the evening. 22 Whoever touches anything upon which she sits shall wash his clothes, and bathe in water, and be unclean until the evening; 23 whether it is the bed or anything upon which she sits, when he touches it he shall be unclean until the evening. 24 If any man lies with her, and her impurity falls on him, he shall be unclean seven days; and every bed on which he lies shall be unclean.

25 If a woman has a discharge of blood for many days, not at the time of her impurity, or if she has a discharge beyond the time of her impurity, all the days of the discharge she shall continue in uncleanness; as in the days of her impurity, she shall be unclean. 26 Every bed on which she lies during all the days of her discharge shall be treated as the bed of her impurity; and everything on which she sits shall be unclean, as in the uncleanness of her impurity. 27 Whoever touches these things shall be unclean, and shall wash his clothes, and bathe in water, and be unclean until the evening. 28 If she is cleansed of her discharge, she shall count seven days, and after that she shall be clean. 29 On the eighth day she shall take two turtledoves or two pigeons and bring them to the priest at the entrance of the tent of meeting. 30 The priest shall offer one for a sin offering and the other for a burnt offering; and the priest shall make atonement on her behalf before the LORD for her unclean discharge.

31 Thus you shall keep the people of Israel separate from their uncleanness, so that they do not die in their uncleanness by defiling my tabernacle that is in their midst.

32 This is the ritual for those who have a discharge: for him who has an emission of semen, becoming unclean thereby, 33 for her who is in the infirmity of her period, for anyone, male or female, who has a discharge, and for the man who lies with a woman who is unclean.

16 The LORD spoke to Moses after the death of the two sons of Aaron, when they drew near before the LORD and died. 2 The LORD said to Moses:

Tell your brother Aaron not to come

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offering, see 4.2 n. **16–18**: It is not suggested that such secretions are evil or that sex is taboo. On holy occasions, such as worship (Ex 19.15) or the conduct of holy war (1 Sam 21.4–6), sexual abstinence was required.

**15.19–30**: See ch 12. **31**: The people of Israel must be holy, for the LORD, whose tabernacle is in their midst, is holy (compare 19.2; see 11.44–45 n.).

**16.1–34**: **The ritual for the day of atonement.** Priestly tradition has preserved an ancient ritual, which has been elaborated during years of cultic usage, as shown by the composite character of this chapter. **1–5**: Preparatory instructions. **1**: After the block of laws on uncleanness (chs 11–15), the account resumes from ch 10. **2**: The high priest is to go into *the sanctuary inside the curtain* (Ex 26.31–35) only once a year to make atonement for priests and people (vv. 30, 34). *The mercy seat,* see Ex 25.17 n. *The cloud,* see Ex 40.34–38 n. **4**: Compare Ex ch 28. **6–10**: A short version of the ritual for the day of atonement. Two goats are chosen to bear symbolically the sins of the people. The one chosen *for the* LORD is to be sacrificed as a sin offering

just at any time into the sanctuary inside the curtain before the mercy seat[s] that is upon the ark, or he will die; for I appear in the cloud upon the mercy seat.[s] 3Thus shall Aaron come into the holy place: with a young bull for a sin offering and a ram for a burnt offering. 4He shall put on the holy linen tunic, and shall have the linen undergarments next to his body, fasten the linen sash, and wear the linen turban; these are the holy vestments. He shall bathe his body in water, and then put them on. 5He shall take from the congregation of the people of Israel two male goats for a sin offering, and one ram for a burnt offering.

6 Aaron shall offer the bull as a sin offering for himself, and shall make atonement for himself and for his house. 7He shall take the two goats and set them before the LORD at the entrance of the tent of meeting; 8and Aaron shall cast lots on the two goats, one lot for the LORD and the other lot for Azazel.[t] 9Aaron shall present the goat on which the lot fell for the LORD, and offer it as a sin offering; 10but the goat on which the lot fell for Azazel[t] shall be presented alive before the LORD to make atonement over it, that it may be sent away into the wilderness to Azazel.[t]

11 Aaron shall present the bull as a sin offering for himself, and shall make atonement for himself and for his house; he shall slaughter the bull as a sin offering for himself. 12He shall take a censer full of coals of fire from the altar before the LORD, and two handfuls of crushed sweet incense, and he shall bring it inside the curtain 13and put the incense on the fire before the LORD, that the cloud of the incense may cover the mercy seat[s] that is upon the covenant,[u] or he will die. 14He shall take some of the blood of the bull, and sprinkle it with his finger on the front of the mercy seat,[s] and before the mercy seat[s] he shall sprinkle the blood with his finger seven times.

15 He shall slaughter the goat of the sin offering that is for the people and bring its blood inside the curtain, and do with its blood as he did with the blood of the bull, sprinkling it upon the mercy seat[s] and before the mercy seat.[s] 16Thus he shall make atonement for the sanctuary, because of the uncleannesses of the people of Israel, and because of their transgressions, all their sins; and so he shall do for the tent of meeting, which remains with them in the midst of their uncleannesses. 17No one shall be in the tent of meeting from the time he enters to make atonement in the sanctuary until he comes out and has made atonement for himself and for his house and for all the assembly of Israel. 18Then he shall go out to the altar that is before the LORD and make atonement on its behalf, and shall take some of the blood of the bull and of the blood of the goat, and put it on each of the horns of the altar. 19He shall sprinkle some of the blood on it with his finger seven times, and cleanse it and hallow it from the uncleannesses of the people of Israel.

20 When he has finished atoning for the holy place and the tent of meeting and the altar, he shall present the live goat. 21Then Aaron shall lay both his hands on the head of the live goat, and confess over it all the iniquities of the people of Israel, and all their transgressions, all their sins, putting them on the head of the goat, and sending it away into the wilderness by means of someone

*s* Or *the cover* *t* Traditionally rendered *a scapegoat* *u* Or *treaty*, or *testament*; Heb *eduth*

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(v. 15); the other is to be driven into the wilderness *to Azazel*, an evil spirit or desert demon (10.4; compare Lev 17.7; Isa 34.14).

**16.11–28**: A more elaborate version of the ritual. The high priest enters the Holy of Holies once to make atonement for the priests (vv. 11–14) and once for the people (vv. 15–22). **13**: The cloud of incense is to cover the mercy seat in order to protect the priest from beholding God (Ex 33.20). **16–19**: The high priest is to make atonement for the tabernacle and altar (Ex 29.35–37) because of the people's sins and uncleannesses. Priestly theology is deeply concerned about the presence of the holy God in the midst of a sinful people. **20–22**: This ritual symbolizes the transfer of

designated for the task.[v] 22The goat shall bear on itself all their iniquities to a barren region; and the goat shall be set free in the wilderness.

23 Then Aaron shall enter the tent of meeting, and shall take off the linen vestments that he put on when he went into the holy place, and shall leave them there. 24He shall bathe his body in water in a holy place, and put on his vestments; then he shall come out and offer his burnt offering and the burnt offering of the people, making atonement for himself and for the people. 25The fat of the sin offering he shall turn into smoke on the altar. 26The one who sets the goat free for Azazel[w] shall wash his clothes and bathe his body in water, and afterward may come into the camp. 27The bull of the sin offering and the goat of the sin offering, whose blood was brought in to make atonement in the holy place, shall be taken outside the camp; their skin and their flesh and their dung shall be consumed in fire. 28The one who burns them shall wash his clothes and bathe his body in water, and afterward may come into the camp.

29 This shall be a statute to you forever: In the seventh month, on the tenth day of the month, you shall deny yourselves,[x] and shall do no work, neither the citizen nor the alien who resides among you. 30For on this day atonement shall be made for you, to cleanse you; from all your sins you shall be clean before the LORD. 31It is a sabbath of complete rest to you, and you shall deny yourselves;[x] it is a statute forever. 32The priest who is anointed and consecrated as priest in his father's place shall make atonement, wearing the linen vestments, the holy vestments. 33He shall make atonement for the sanctuary, and he shall make atonement for the tent of meeting and for the altar, and he shall make atonement for the priests and for all the people of the assembly. 34This shall be an everlasting statute for you, to make atonement for the people of Israel once in the year for all their sins. And Moses did as the LORD had commanded him.

17 The LORD spoke to Moses:
2 Speak to Aaron and his sons and to all the people of Israel and say to them: This is what the LORD has commanded. 3If anyone of the house of Israel slaughters an ox or a lamb or a goat in the camp, or slaughters it outside the camp, 4and does not bring it to the entrance of the tent of meeting, to present it as an offering to the LORD before the tabernacle of the LORD, he shall be held guilty of bloodshed; he has shed blood, and he shall be cut off from the people. 5This is in order that the people of Israel may bring their sacrifices that they offer in the open field, that they may bring them to the LORD, to the priest at the entrance of the tent of meeting, and offer them as sacrifices of well-being to the LORD. 6The priest shall dash the blood against the altar of the LORD at the entrance of the tent of meeting, and turn the fat into smoke as a pleasing odor to the LORD, 7so that they may no longer offer their sacrifices for goat-demons, to whom

*v* Meaning of Heb uncertain *w* Traditionally rendered *a scapegoat* *x* Or *shall fast*

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the people's sins to the animal which then carries the sins off into the wilderness (see Heb 9.1–10.18 n.).

**16.23–28**: Contact with holiness, like contact with its opposite, uncleanness, requires ceremonial change of garments and ritual ablutions. The ceremony concludes with a burnt offering for priest and people. **29–34**: A statutory requirement that the day of atonement shall be observed annually as *a sabbath of complete rest*.

**Chapters 17–26: The Holiness Code.** These chapters constitute a corpus of laws often called the Holiness Code because of the dominant theme: Israel must be holy as God is holy.

**17.1–16: Restrictions upon the slaughter of animals. 3–7**: The former practice of sacrifice at every legitimate place where the LORD was worshiped (Ex 20.24–25) is modified by this old tradition that requires that animals for food be sacrificed at the central sanctuary (Deut 12.15–28) as an offering of well-being (ch 3). **4**: The reason given in v. 7 is that sacrifices in the open fields had been offered to *goat-demons* or "satyrs" (Isa 34.14;

they prostitute themselves. This shall be a statute forever to them throughout their generations.

8 And say to them further: Anyone of the house of Israel or of the aliens who reside among them who offers a burnt offering or sacrifice, 9and does not bring it to the entrance of the tent of meeting, to sacrifice it to the LORD, shall be cut off from the people.

10 If anyone of the house of Israel or of the aliens who reside among them eats any blood, I will set my face against that person who eats blood, and will cut that person off from the people. 11For the life of the flesh is in the blood; and I have given it to you for making atonement for your lives on the altar; for, as life, it is the blood that makes atonement. 12Therefore I have said to the people of Israel: No person among you shall eat blood, nor shall any alien who resides among you eat blood. 13And anyone of the people of Israel, or of the aliens who reside among them, who hunts down an animal or bird that may be eaten shall pour out its blood and cover it with earth.

14 For the life of every creature—its blood is its life; therefore I have said to the people of Israel: You shall not eat the blood of any creature, for the life of every creature is its blood; whoever eats it shall be cut off. 15All persons, citizens or aliens, who eat what dies of itself or what has been torn by wild animals, shall wash their clothes, and bathe themselves in water, and be unclean until the evening; then they shall be clean. 16But if they do not wash themselves or bathe their body, they shall bear their guilt.

18 The LORD spoke to Moses, saying:

2 Speak to the people of Israel and say to them: I am the LORD your God. 3You shall not do as they do in the land of Egypt, where you lived, and you shall not do as they do in the land of Canaan, to which I am bringing you. You shall not follow their statutes. 4My ordinances you shall observe and my statutes you shall keep, following them: I am the LORD your God. 5You shall keep my statutes and my ordinances; by doing so one shall live: I am the LORD.

6 None of you shall approach anyone near of kin to uncover nakedness: I am the LORD. 7You shall not uncover the nakedness of your father, which is the nakedness of your mother; she is your mother, you shall not uncover her nakedness. 8You shall not uncover the nakedness of your father's wife; it is the nakedness of your father. 9You shall not uncover the nakedness of your sister, your father's daughter or your mother's daughter, whether born at home or born abroad. 10You shall not uncover the nakedness of your son's daughter or of your daughter's daughter, for their nakedness is your own nakedness. 11You shall not uncover the nakedness of your father's wife's daughter, begotten by your father, since she is your sister. 12You shall not uncover the nakedness of your father's sister; she is your father's flesh. 13You shall not uncover the nakedness of your mother's sister, for she is your mother's flesh. 14You shall not uncover the nakedness of your father's brother, that is, you shall not approach his wife; she is your aunt. 15You shall not uncover the nakedness of your daughter-in-law: she is your son's wife; you shall not uncover her nakedness. 16You shall not uncover the nakedness of your brother's wife; it is your brother's nakedness. 17You shall not uncover the nakedness of a woman and her daughter, and

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Deut 32.17; 2 Chr 11.15). **9**: *Cut off* (v. 4), see 7.20 n.

**17.10–14**: Prohibition against eating blood. **11**: The basis of the priestly sacrificial system (see 1.5 n.). **15**: See Ex 22.31 n.

**18.1–30**: **Forbidden sexual relations. 1–5**: As a holy people, set apart for special relation to the LORD, Israel must not imitate the practices of other peoples (vv. 24–29; 11.44–45 n.).

**18.6–18**: An old list of twelve sexual prohibitions (compare the twelve curses in Deut ch 27). **16**: The levirate marriage was an exception to this rule (see Gen 38.8 n.). **21**:

you shall not take[y] her son's daughter or her daughter's daughter to uncover her nakedness; they are your[z] flesh; it is depravity. 18 And you shall not take[y] a woman as a rival to her sister, uncovering her nakedness while her sister is still alive.

19 You shall not approach a woman to uncover her nakedness while she is in her menstrual uncleanness. 20 You shall not have sexual relations with your kinsman's wife, and defile yourself with her. 21 You shall not give any of your offspring to sacrifice them[a] to Molech, and so profane the name of your God: I am the LORD. 22 You shall not lie with a male as with a woman; it is an abomination. 23 You shall not have sexual relations with any animal and defile yourself with it, nor shall any woman give herself to an animal to have sexual relations with it: it is perversion.

24 Do not defile yourselves in any of these ways, for by all these practices the nations I am casting out before you have defiled themselves. 25 Thus the land became defiled; and I punished it for its iniquity, and the land vomited out its inhabitants. 26 But you shall keep my statutes and my ordinances and commit none of these abominations, either the citizen or the alien who resides among you 27 (for the inhabitants of the land, who were before you, committed all of these abominations, and the land became defiled); 28 otherwise the land will vomit you out for defiling it, as it vomited out the nation that was before you. 29 For whoever commits any of these abominations shall be cut off from their people. 30 So keep my charge not to commit any of these abominations that were done before you, and not to defile yourselves by them: I am the LORD your God.

19 The LORD spoke to Moses, saying:

2 Speak to all the congregation of the people of Israel and say to them: You shall be holy, for I the LORD your God am holy. 3 You shall each revere your mother and father, and you shall keep my sabbaths: I am the LORD your God. 4 Do not turn to idols or make cast images for yourselves: I am the LORD your God.

5 When you offer a sacrifice of well-being to the LORD, offer it in such a way that it is acceptable in your behalf. 6 It shall be eaten on the same day you offer it, or on the next day; and anything left over until the third day shall be consumed in fire. 7 If it is eaten at all on the third day, it is an abomination; it will not be acceptable. 8 All who eat it shall be subject to punishment, because they have profaned what is holy to the LORD; and any such person shall be cut off from the people.

9 When you reap the harvest of your land, you shall not reap to the very edges of your field, or gather the gleanings of your harvest. 10 You shall not strip your vineyard bare, or gather the fallen grapes of your vineyard; you shall leave them for the poor and the alien: I am the LORD your God.

11 You shall not steal; you shall not deal falsely; and you shall not lie to one another. 12 And you shall not swear falsely by my name, profaning the name of your God: I am the LORD.

*y* Or *marry* *z* Gk: Heb lacks *your*
*a* Heb *to pass them over*

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On the pagan rite of child sacrifice to *Molech*, the Ammonite deity (1 Kings 11.7), see Deut 18.10 n.

**18.26–28:** Although the laws of Leviticus are placed in the ancient setting of Mount Sinai, this passage clearly presupposes a time after the occupation of Canaan (vv. 25, 27).

**19.1–37: The life of holiness.** This chapter represents a fine blending of cultic requirements and ethical obligations, as expressed classically in the Ten Commandments (see vv. 9–10, 13–16). **2:** The keynote of the chapter and of the whole Holiness Code (chs 17–26). The people of Israel have been separated for a special covenant relationship with the God who liberated them from Egypt (v. 36). Israel's holiness, therefore, is derived from relationship to the holy God; it is not an intrinsic quality of their own life. **5–8:** See ch 3.

13 You shall not defraud your neighbor; you shall not steal; and you shall not keep for yourself the wages of a laborer until morning. 14 You shall not revile the deaf or put a stumbling block before the blind; you shall fear your God: I am the LORD.

15 You shall not render an unjust judgment; you shall not be partial to the poor or defer to the great: with justice you shall judge your neighbor. 16 You shall not go around as a slanderer[b] among your people, and you shall not profit by the blood[c] of your neighbor: I am the LORD.

17 You shall not hate in your heart anyone of your kin; you shall reprove your neighbor, or you will incur guilt yourself. 18 You shall not take vengeance or bear a grudge against any of your people, but you shall love your neighbor as yourself: I am the LORD.

19 You shall keep my statutes. You shall not let your animals breed with a different kind; you shall not sow your field with two kinds of seed; nor shall you put on a garment made of two different materials.

20 If a man has sexual relations with a woman who is a slave, designated for another man but not ransomed or given her freedom, an inquiry shall be held. They shall not be put to death, since she has not been freed; 21 but he shall bring a guilt offering for himself to the LORD, at the entrance of the tent of meeting, a ram as guilt offering. 22 And the priest shall make atonement for him with the ram of guilt offering before the LORD for his sin that he committed; and the sin he committed shall be forgiven him.

23 When you come into the land and plant all kinds of trees for food, then you shall regard their fruit as forbidden;[d] three years it shall be forbidden[e] to you, it must not be eaten. 24 In the fourth year all their fruit shall be set apart for rejoicing in the LORD. 25 But in the fifth year you may eat of their fruit, that their yield may be increased for you: I am the LORD your God.

26 You shall not eat anything with its blood. You shall not practice augury or witchcraft. 27 You shall not round off the hair on your temples or mar the edges of your beard. 28 You shall not make any gashes in your flesh for the dead or tattoo any marks upon you: I am the LORD.

29 Do not profane your daughter by making her a prostitute, that the land not become prostituted and full of depravity. 30 You shall keep my sabbaths and reverence my sanctuary: I am the LORD.

31 Do not turn to mediums or wizards; do not seek them out, to be defiled by them: I am the LORD your God.

32 You shall rise before the aged, and defer to the old; and you shall fear your God: I am the LORD.

33 When an alien resides with you in your land, you shall not oppress the alien. 34 The alien who resides with you shall be to you as the citizen among you; you shall love the alien as yourself, for you were aliens in the land of Egypt: I am the LORD your God.

35 You shall not cheat in measuring length, weight, or quantity. 36 You shall have honest balances, honest weights, an honest ephah, and an honest hin: I am the LORD your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt. 37 You shall keep all my statutes and all my ordinances, and observe them: I am the LORD.

*b* Meaning of Heb uncertain *c* Heb *stand against the blood* *d* Heb *as their uncircumcision* *e* Heb *uncircumcision*

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**19.17–18**: Previous ethical injunctions come to a climax in this law, the source of the "second" commandment quoted in the New Testament (Mk 12.31). *Neighbor* here means a fellow-Israelite (see Deut 15.3 n.); however, the law to *love your neighbor as yourself* is extended to include the resident alien in vv. 33–34. **19**: See Deut 22.9–11 n. **20–22**: The reason for this legal clemency is that the slave-woman is regarded as another man's property, i.e. his concubine (Ex 21.7–11). **23–25**: This law may reflect the ancient custom of propitiating the fertility powers of the soil, though here the practice is redefined in terms of Israel's faith.

**19.26–31**: Most of the laws in this section

20 The LORD spoke to Moses, saying: 2Say further to the people of Israel:

Any of the people of Israel, or of the aliens who reside in Israel, who give any of their offspring to Molech shall be put to death; the people of the land shall stone them to death. 3I myself will set my face against them, and will cut them off from the people, because they have given of their offspring to Molech, defiling my sanctuary and profaning my holy name. 4And if the people of the land should ever close their eyes to them, when they give of their offspring to Molech, and do not put them to death, 5I myself will set my face against them and against their family, and will cut them off from among their people, them and all who follow them in prostituting themselves to Molech.

6 If any turn to mediums and wizards, prostituting themselves to them, I will set my face against them, and will cut them off from the people. 7Consecrate yourselves therefore, and be holy; for I am the LORD your God. 8Keep my statutes, and observe them; I am the LORD; I sanctify you. 9All who curse father or mother shall be put to death; having cursed father or mother, their blood is upon them.

10 If a man commits adultery with the wife of[f] his neighbor, both the adulterer and the adulteress shall be put to death. 11The man who lies with his father's wife has uncovered his father's nakedness; both of them shall be put to death; their blood is upon them. 12If a man lies with his daughter-in-law, both of them shall be put to death; they have committed perversion, their blood is upon them. 13If a man lies with a male as with a woman, both of them have committed an abomination; they shall be put to death; their blood is upon them. 14If a man takes a wife and her mother also, it is depravity; they shall be burned to death, both he and they, that there may be no depravity among you. 15If a man has sexual relations with an animal, he shall be put to death; and you shall kill the animal. 16If a woman approaches any animal and has sexual relations with it, you shall kill the woman and the animal; they shall be put to death, their blood is upon them.

17 If a man takes his sister, a daughter of his father or a daughter of his mother, and sees her nakedness, and she sees his nakedness, it is a disgrace, and they shall be cut off in the sight of their people; he has uncovered his sister's nakedness, he shall be subject to punishment. 18If a man lies with a woman having her sickness and uncovers her nakedness, he has laid bare her flow and she has laid bare her flow of blood; both of them shall be cut off from their people. 19You shall not uncover the nakedness of your mother's sister or of your father's sister, for that is to lay bare one's own flesh; they shall be subject to punishment. 20If a man lies with his uncle's wife, he has uncovered his uncle's nakedness; they shall be subject to punishment; they shall die childless. 21If a man takes his brother's wife, it is impurity; he has uncovered his brother's nakedness; they shall be childless.

22 You shall keep all my statutes and all my ordinances, and observe them, so that the land to which I bring you to settle in may not vomit you out. 23You shall not follow the practices of the nation that I am driving out before you.

*f* Heb repeats *if a man commits adultery with the wife of*

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are protests against the practices of other peoples: magic and witchcraft (v. 26), heathen mourning customs (vv. 27–28; see 21.5 n.), sacred prostitution (v. 29), and necromancy (v. 31; 1 Sam ch 28; 2 Kings 21.6; 23.24).

**20.1–27: Penalties for violating the rules of the theocratic community.** The severity of punishment is based on the conviction that Israel is to be a holy people, separated from others by its manner of life and worship (vv. 7–8, 22–26). **2–5**: On Molech worship, see 18.21 n. **9**: See Ex 21.17 n.

**20.10–21**: The death penalty is prescribed for the sexual offenses dealt with in ch 18.

**20.22–24**: This appeal is similar to the conclusion of the Covenant Code (Ex 23.23–

Because they did all these things, I abhorred them. 24But I have said to you: You shall inherit their land, and I will give it to you to possess, a land flowing with milk and honey. I am the LORD your God; I have separated you from the peoples. 25You shall therefore make a distinction between the clean animal and the unclean, and between the unclean bird and the clean; you shall not bring abomination on yourselves by animal or by bird or by anything with which the ground teems, which I have set apart for you to hold unclean. 26You shall be holy to me; for I the LORD am holy, and I have separated you from the other peoples to be mine.

27 A man or a woman who is a medium or a wizard shall be put to death; they shall be stoned to death, their blood is upon them.

21 The LORD said to Moses: Speak to the priests, the sons of Aaron, and say to them:

No one shall defile himself for a dead person among his relatives, 2except for his nearest kin: his mother, his father, his son, his daughter, his brother; 3likewise, for a virgin sister, close to him because she has had no husband, he may defile himself for her. 4But he shall not defile himself as a husband among his people and so profane himself. 5They shall not make bald spots upon their heads, or shave off the edges of their beards, or make any gashes in their flesh. 6They shall be holy to their God, and not profane the name of their God; for they offer the LORD's offerings by fire, the food of their God; therefore they shall be holy. 7They shall not marry a prostitute or a woman who has been defiled; neither shall they marry a woman divorced from her husband. For they are holy to their God, 8and you shall treat them as holy, since they offer the food of your God; they shall be holy to you, for I the LORD, I who sanctify you, am holy. 9When the daughter of a priest profanes herself through prostitution, she profanes her father; she shall be burned to death.

10 The priest who is exalted above his fellows, on whose head the anointing oil has been poured and who has been consecrated to wear the vestments, shall not dishevel his hair, nor tear his vestments. 11He shall not go where there is a dead body; he shall not defile himself even for his father or mother. 12He shall not go outside the sanctuary and thus profane the sanctuary of his God; for the consecration of the anointing oil of his God is upon him: I am the LORD. 13He shall marry only a woman who is a virgin. 14A widow, or a divorced woman, or a woman who has been defiled, a prostitute, these he shall not marry. He shall marry a virgin of his own kin, 15that he may not profane his offspring among his kin; for I am the LORD; I sanctify him.

16 The LORD spoke to Moses, saying: 17Speak to Aaron and say: No one of your offspring throughout their generations who has a blemish may approach to offer the food of his God. 18For no one who has a blemish shall draw near, one who is blind or lame, or one who has a mutilated face or a limb too long, 19or

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33) and to the exhortations of Deuteronomy. **25**: See ch 11. **26**: See 19.2 n. Much of the material in this chapter duplicates laws found elsewhere in the Holiness Code (e.g. chs 18 and 19), indicating that the editor has compiled various independent traditions. **27**: See 19.31. *Put to death,* compare 1 Sam 28.9.

**21.1–24: Instructions to the priests.** Behavior of the priests is governed by the fact that they have a special status: they are *holy to their God* (v. 6), i.e. separated for a special divine service. **1–15**: Rules concerning mourning and marriage. **1–3**: Mourning rites were believed to be ritually defiling, owing to association with a dead body (10.6; Ezek 24.15–18). **5**: 19.27–28. Shaving the head and bodily mutilation were common mourning customs in antiquity (Deut 14.1; Am 8.10; Isa 22.12; Jer 16.6; Mic 1.16). **6**: *The food of their God* faintly echoes the ancient notion of sacrifice as the offering of food for the deity (see 2.2–3 n.); here the language is merely traditional. **10–12**: See 10.6 n.

**21.16–23**: Just as the sacrificial offering must be unblemished (22.17–25), so the priest who offers it must be without bodily

one who has a broken foot or a broken hand, 20or a hunchback, or a dwarf, or a man with a blemish in his eyes or an itching disease or scabs or crushed testicles. 21No descendant of Aaron the priest who has a blemish shall come near to offer the LORD's offerings by fire; since he has a blemish, he shall not come near to offer the food of his God. 22He may eat the food of his God, of the most holy as well as of the holy. 23But he shall not come near the curtain or approach the altar, because he has a blemish, that he may not profane my sanctuaries; for I am the LORD; I sanctify them. 24Thus Moses spoke to Aaron and to his sons and to all the people of Israel.

22 The LORD spoke to Moses, saying: 2Direct Aaron and his sons to deal carefully with the sacred donations of the people of Israel, which they dedicate to me, so that they may not profane my holy name; I am the LORD. 3Say to them: If anyone among all your offspring throughout your generations comes near the sacred donations, which the people of Israel dedicate to the LORD, while he is in a state of uncleanness, that person shall be cut off from my presence: I am the LORD. 4No one of Aaron's offspring who has a leprous[g] disease or suffers a discharge may eat of the sacred donations until he is clean. Whoever touches anything made unclean by a corpse or a man who has had an emission of semen, 5and whoever touches any swarming thing by which he may be made unclean or any human being by whom he may be made unclean—whatever his uncleanness may be— 6the person who touches any such shall be unclean until evening and shall not eat of the sacred donations unless he has washed his body in water. 7When the sun sets he shall be clean; and afterward he may eat of the sacred donations, for they are his food. 8That which died or was torn by wild animals he shall not eat, becoming unclean by it: I am the LORD. 9They shall keep my charge, so that they may not incur guilt and die in the sanctuary[h] for having profaned it: I am the LORD; I sanctify them.

10 No lay person shall eat of the sacred donations. No bound or hired servant of the priest shall eat of the sacred donations; 11but if a priest acquires anyone by purchase, the person may eat of them; and those that are born in his house may eat of his food. 12If a priest's daughter marries a layman, she shall not eat of the offering of the sacred donations; 13but if a priest's daughter is widowed or divorced, without offspring, and returns to her father's house, as in her youth, she may eat of her father's food. No lay person shall eat of it. 14If a man eats of the sacred donation unintentionally, he shall add one-fifth of its value to it, and give the sacred donation to the priest. 15No one shall profane the sacred donations of the people of Israel, which they offer to the LORD, 16causing them to bear guilt requiring a guilt offering, by eating their sacred donations: for I am the LORD; I sanctify them.

17 The LORD spoke to Moses, saying: 18Speak to Aaron and his sons and all the people of Israel and say to them: When anyone of the house of Israel or of the aliens residing in Israel presents an offering, whether in payment of a vow or as a freewill offering that is offered to the LORD as a burnt offering, 19to be accept-

*g* A term for several skin diseases; precise meaning uncertain *h* Vg: Heb *incur guilt for it and die in it*

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defect. Unnatural deformity or disfigurement is frowned upon, for human beings are God's creation, made in the divine image (Gen 5.1–3).

**22.1–9**: Priests may not partake of *the sacred donations*, i.e. the consecrated portion of the sacrifice which is their due (see 2.2–3 n.), while in a state of ritual uncleanness as defined in the laws of chs 11–15. **10–16**: Further definition of who may eat the consecrated portions. *No lay person*, i.e. nobody outside the priest's immediate household (which included his slaves; see Ex 12.43–49 n.). **17–25**: Directions about acceptable sacrifices.

able in your behalf it shall be a male without blemish, of the cattle or the sheep or the goats. 20 You shall not offer anything that has a blemish, for it will not be acceptable in your behalf.

21 When anyone offers a sacrifice of well-being to the LORD, in fulfillment of a vow or as a freewill offering, from the herd or from the flock, to be acceptable it must be perfect; there shall be no blemish in it. 22 Anything blind, or injured, or maimed, or having a discharge or an itch or scabs—these you shall not offer to the LORD or put any of them on the altar as offerings by fire to the LORD. 23 An ox or a lamb that has a limb too long or too short you may present for a freewill offering; but it will not be accepted for a vow. 24 Any animal that has its testicles bruised or crushed or torn or cut, you shall not offer to the LORD; such you shall not do within your land, 25 nor shall you accept any such animals from a foreigner to offer as food to your God; since they are mutilated, with a blemish in them, they shall not be accepted in your behalf.

26 The LORD spoke to Moses, saying: 27 When an ox or a sheep or a goat is born, it shall remain seven days with its mother, and from the eighth day on it shall be acceptable as the LORD's offering by fire. 28 But you shall not slaughter, from the herd or the flock, an animal with its young on the same day. 29 When you sacrifice a thanksgiving offering to the LORD, you shall sacrifice it so that it may be acceptable in your behalf. 30 It shall be eaten on the same day; you shall not leave any of it until morning: I am the LORD.

31 Thus you shall keep my commandments and observe them: I am the LORD. 32 You shall not profane my holy name, that I may be sanctified among the people of Israel: I am the LORD; I sanctify you, 33 I who brought you out of the land of Egypt to be your God: I am the LORD.

**23** The LORD spoke to Moses, saying: 2 Speak to the people of Israel and say to them: These are the appointed festivals of the LORD that you shall proclaim as holy convocations, my appointed festivals.

3 Six days shall work be done; but the seventh day is a sabbath of complete rest, a holy convocation; you shall do no work: it is a sabbath to the LORD throughout your settlements.

4 These are the appointed festivals of the LORD, the holy convocations, which you shall celebrate at the time appointed for them. 5 In the first month, on the fourteenth day of the month, at twilight,[i] there shall be a passover offering to the LORD, 6 and on the fifteenth day of the same month is the festival of unleavened bread to the LORD; seven days you shall eat unleavened bread. 7 On the first day you shall have a holy convocation; you shall not work at your occupations. 8 For seven days you shall present the LORD's offerings by fire; on the seventh day there shall be a holy convocation: you shall not work at your occupations.

9 The LORD spoke to Moses: 10 Speak to the people of Israel and say to them: When you enter the land that I am giving you and you reap its harvest, you shall bring the sheaf of the first fruits of your harvest to the priest. 11 He shall raise the sheaf before the LORD, that you may find acceptance; on the day after the sabbath the priest shall raise it. 12 On the day when you raise the sheaf, you shall offer a lamb a year old, without blemish, as a burnt offering to the LORD. 13 And the grain offering with it shall be two-tenths of an ephah of choice flour mixed with

*i* Heb *between the two evenings*

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**23.1–44: The sacred calendar. 2**: There shall be a proclamation by trumpets (Num 10.10) to announce the appointed festivals. **3**: Ex 16.23. **4**: The calendar of sacred festivals is paralleled in Ex 23.14–17; 34.18–24; Deut 16.1–17. **5–8**: Passover and the festival of unleavened bread are treated here (as in other calendars) as two phases of one celebration (see Ex 12.14–20 n.). *The first month,* see Ex 12.2 n.

**23.9–14**: The offering of the first fruits (Deut 26.5–10) took place the day after the concluding sabbath of the festival of unleavened

oil, an offering by fire of pleasing odor to the LORD; and the drink offering with it shall be of wine, one-fourth of a hin. 14 You shall eat no bread or parched grain or fresh ears until that very day, until you have brought the offering of your God: it is a statute forever throughout your generations in all your settlements.

15 And from the day after the sabbath, from the day on which you bring the sheaf of the elevation offering, you shall count off seven weeks; they shall be complete. 16 You shall count until the day after the seventh sabbath, fifty days; then you shall present an offering of new grain to the LORD. 17 You shall bring from your settlements two loaves of bread as an elevation offering, each made of two-tenths of an ephah; they shall be of choice flour, baked with leaven, as first fruits to the LORD. 18 You shall present with the bread seven lambs a year old without blemish, one young bull, and two rams; they shall be a burnt offering to the LORD, along with their grain offering and their drink offerings, an offering by fire of pleasing odor to the LORD. 19 You shall also offer one male goat for a sin offering, and two male lambs a year old as a sacrifice of well-being. 20 The priest shall raise them with the bread of the first fruits as an elevation offering before the LORD, together with the two lambs; they shall be holy to the LORD for the priest. 21 On that same day you shall make proclamation; you shall hold a holy convocation; you shall not work at your occupations. This is a statute forever in all your settlements throughout your generations.

22 When you reap the harvest of your land, you shall not reap to the very edges of your field, or gather the gleanings of your harvest; you shall leave them for the poor and for the alien: I am the LORD your God.

23 The LORD spoke to Moses, saying: 24 Speak to the people of Israel, saying: In the seventh month, on the first day of the month, you shall observe a day of complete rest, a holy convocation commemorated with trumpet blasts. 25 You shall not work at your occupations; and you shall present the LORD's offering by fire.

26 The LORD spoke to Moses, saying: 27 Now, the tenth day of this seventh month is the day of atonement; it shall be a holy convocation for you: you shall deny yourselves[j] and present the LORD's offering by fire; 28 and you shall do no work during that entire day; for it is a day of atonement, to make atonement on your behalf before the LORD your God. 29 For anyone who does not practice self-denial[k] during that entire day shall be cut off from the people. 30 And anyone who does any work during that entire day, such a one I will destroy from the midst of the people. 31 You shall do no work: it is a statute forever throughout your generations in all your settlements. 32 It shall be to you a sabbath of complete rest, and you shall deny yourselves;[j] on the ninth day of the month at evening, from evening to evening you shall keep your sabbath.

33 The LORD spoke to Moses, saying: 34 Speak to the people of Israel, saying: On the fifteenth day of this seventh month, and lasting seven days, there shall be the festival of booths[l] to the LORD. 35 The first day shall be a holy convocation; you shall not work at your occupations. 36 Seven days you shall present the LORD's offerings by fire; on the

*j* Or *shall fast* *k* Or *does not fast*
*l* Or *tabernacles*: Heb *succoth*

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bread (v. 11; compare vv. 7–8), i.e. at the beginning of the barley harvest in April. **11**: *Raise the sheaf,* see Ex 29.24 n.

**23.15–21**: Since the festival of weeks, celebrated at the time of the wheat harvest, was held fifty days after the festival of unleavened bread, it came to be called Pentecost (based on a Greek word meaning "fifty"). **23–25**: The festival of trumpets or New Year. This falls at the beginning of *the seventh month* (September-October), according to the ecclesiastical calendar (see Ex 12.2 n.).

**23.26–32**: The day of atonement (ch 16) occurs during the same month. **33–36** (sup-

eighth day you shall observe a holy convocation and present the LORD's offerings by fire; it is a solemn assembly; you shall not work at your occupations.

37 These are the appointed festivals of the LORD, which you shall celebrate as times of holy convocation, for presenting to the LORD offerings by fire—burnt offerings and grain offerings, sacrifices and drink offerings, each on its proper day— 38apart from the sabbaths of the LORD, and apart from your gifts, and apart from all your votive offerings, and apart from all your freewill offerings, which you give to the LORD.

39 Now, the fifteenth day of the seventh month, when you have gathered in the produce of the land, you shall keep the festival of the LORD, lasting seven days; a complete rest on the first day, and a complete rest on the eighth day. 40On the first day you shall take the fruit of majestic[m] trees, branches of palm trees, boughs of leafy trees, and willows of the brook; and you shall rejoice before the LORD your God for seven days. 41You shall keep it as a festival to the LORD seven days in the year; you shall keep it in the seventh month as a statute forever throughout your generations. 42You shall live in booths for seven days; all that are citizens in Israel shall live in booths, 43so that your generations may know that I made the people of Israel live in booths when I brought them out of the land of Egypt: I am the LORD your God.

44 Thus Moses declared to the people of Israel the appointed festivals of the LORD.

24 The LORD spoke to Moses, saying: 2Command the people of Israel to bring you pure oil of beaten olives for the lamp, that a light may be kept burning regularly. 3Aaron shall set it up in the tent of meeting, outside the curtain of the covenant,[n] to burn from evening to morning before the LORD regularly; it shall be a statute forever throughout your generations. 4He shall set up the lamps on the lampstand of pure gold[o] before the LORD regularly.

5 You shall take choice flour, and bake twelve loaves of it; two-tenths of an ephah shall be in each loaf. 6You shall place them in two rows, six in a row, on the table of pure gold.[p] 7You shall put pure frankincense with each row, to be a token offering for the bread, as an offering by fire to the LORD. 8Every sabbath day Aaron shall set them in order before the LORD regularly as a commitment of the people of Israel, as a covenant forever. 9They shall be for Aaron and his descendants, who shall eat them in a holy place, for they are most holy portions for him from the offerings by fire to the LORD, a perpetual due.

10 A man whose mother was an Israelite and whose father was an Egyptian came out among the people of Israel; and the Israelite woman's son and a certain Israelite began fighting in the camp. 11The Israelite woman's son blasphemed the Name in a curse. And they brought him to Moses—now his mother's name was Shelomith, daughter of Dibri, of the tribe of Dan— 12and they put him in custody, until the decision of the LORD should be made clear to them.

13 The LORD said to Moses, saying: 14Take the blasphemer outside the camp; and let all who were within hearing lay their hands on his head, and let the whole congregation stone him. 15And speak to the people of Israel, saying: Anyone who curses God shall bear the sin. 16One who

*m* Meaning of Heb uncertain *n* Or *treaty*, or *testament*; Heb *eduth* *o* Heb *pure lampstand* *p* Heb *pure table*

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plemented in vv. 39–43): The festival of booths or thanksgiving was held at the time of the autumn ingathering.

**23.37–38:** See further Num chs 28 and 29 for the sacrifices to be offered at the holy convocations.

**24.1–23: Various priestly laws. 1–4:** Oil for the sanctuary lamp (Ex 27.20–21). **5–9:** The bread of the Presence, see Ex 25.23–30.

**24.10–14:** This incident serves as a setting for the laws that follow (see v. 23). *The Name*, a substitute for the sacred name of Israel's

blasphemes the name of the LORD shall be put to death; the whole congregation shall stone the blasphemer. Aliens as well as citizens, when they blaspheme the Name, shall be put to death. 17 Anyone who kills a human being shall be put to death. 18 Anyone who kills an animal shall make restitution for it, life for life. 19 Anyone who maims another shall suffer the same injury in return: 20 fracture for fracture, eye for eye, tooth for tooth; the injury inflicted is the injury to be suffered. 21 One who kills an animal shall make restitution for it; but one who kills a human being shall be put to death. 22 You shall have one law for the alien and for the citizen: for I am the LORD your God. 23 Moses spoke thus to the people of Israel; and they took the blasphemer outside the camp, and stoned him to death. The people of Israel did as the LORD had commanded Moses.

25 The LORD spoke to Moses on Mount Sinai, saying: 2 Speak to the people of Israel and say to them: When you enter the land that I am giving you, the land shall observe a sabbath for the LORD. 3 Six years you shall sow your field, and six years you shall prune your vineyard, and gather in their yield; 4 but in the seventh year there shall be a sabbath of complete rest for the land, a sabbath for the LORD: you shall not sow your field or prune your vineyard. 5 You shall not reap the aftergrowth of your harvest or gather the grapes of your unpruned vine: it shall be a year of complete rest for the land. 6 You may eat what the land yields during its sabbath—you, your male and female slaves, your hired and your bound laborers who live with you; 7 for your livestock also, and for the wild animals in your land all its yield shall be for food.

8 You shall count off seven weeks[q] of years, seven times seven years, so that the period of seven weeks of years gives forty-nine years. 9 Then you shall have the trumpet sounded loud; on the tenth day of the seventh month—on the day of atonement—you shall have the trumpet sounded throughout all your land. 10 And you shall hallow the fiftieth year and you shall proclaim liberty throughout the land to all its inhabitants. It shall be a jubilee for you: you shall return, every one of you, to your property and every one of you to your family. 11 That fiftieth year shall be a jubilee for you: you shall not sow, or reap the aftergrowth, or harvest the unpruned vines. 12 For it is a jubilee; it shall be holy to you: you shall eat only what the field itself produces.

13 In this year of jubilee you shall return, every one of you, to your property. 14 When you make a sale to your neighbor or buy from your neighbor, you shall not cheat one another. 15 When you

*q* Or *sabbaths*

God (see Ex 3.14 n.). On cursing God, see Ex 20.7; 22.28. **12**: Compare Num 15.32–36. **13**: It is held that blasphemy pollutes the community. Stoning, a communal mode of execution, is the means of purifying the evil from the midst of the people (Deut 17.2–7; 21.18–21). **15–22**: An independent set of laws. **20**: For the "lex talionis" or "law of retaliation" (the law of "an eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth"), see Ex 21.22–25 n.

**25.1–55**: **The sabbatical year and the year of jubilee.** These laws attempt to prevent economic exploitation by stressing that the ownership of the land is vested in God, rather than human beings. **2–7**: On the seventh year *the land shall observe a sabbath*, i.e. lie fallow (Ex 23.10–11). Although this custom may be rooted ultimately in appeasement of the powers of the soil (see 19.23–25 n.), here it signifies that the LORD owns the land and gives it to the people of Israel for stewardship (v. 2). **6–7**: These verses appear to modify the law by saying that, although there shall be no reaping or storing (v. 5), the crop that grows of itself can be taken (compare v. 12). Evidently it was difficult to enforce the law (see 26.34–35). It was enforced, however, in the Maccabean period (1 Macc 6.49, 53).

**25.8–24**: After seven sabbatical years, i.e. on the fiftieth year, comes the year of jubilee, named after the Hebrew word "yobhel" (ram's horn) which was blown in proclamation. **10**: Leases are to expire and all persons are to return to their ancestral estate. **13–17**: Although Israelites shall not sell their property in perpetuity (v. 23), they may lease it for farming. **14**: *Neighbor*, see 19.17–18 n. **15–16**: The rent is to be reckoned at the approximat-

buy from your neighbor, you shall pay only for the number of years since the jubilee; the seller shall charge you only for the remaining crop years. 16 If the years are more, you shall increase the price, and if the years are fewer, you shall diminish the price; for it is a certain number of harvests that are being sold to you. 17 You shall not cheat one another, but you shall fear your God; for I am the LORD your God.

18 You shall observe my statutes and faithfully keep my ordinances, so that you may live on the land securely. 19 The land will yield its fruit, and you will eat your fill and live on it securely. 20 Should you ask, "What shall we eat in the seventh year, if we may not sow or gather in our crop?" 21 I will order my blessing for you in the sixth year, so that it will yield a crop for three years. 22 When you sow in the eighth year, you will be eating from the old crop; until the ninth year, when its produce comes in, you shall eat the old. 23 The land shall not be sold in perpetuity, for the land is mine; with me you are but aliens and tenants. 24 Throughout the land that you hold, you shall provide for the redemption of the land.

25 If anyone of your kin falls into difficulty and sells a piece of property, then the next of kin shall come and redeem what the relative has sold. 26 If the person has no one to redeem it, but then prospers and finds sufficient means to do so, 27 the years since its sale shall be computed and the difference shall be refunded to the person to whom it was sold, and the property shall be returned. 28 But if there are not sufficient means to recover it, what was sold shall remain with the purchaser until the year of jubilee; in the jubilee it shall be released, and the property shall be returned.

29 If anyone sells a dwelling house in a walled city, it may be redeemed until a year has elapsed since its sale; the right of redemption shall be one year. 30 If it is not redeemed before a full year has elapsed, a house that is in a walled city shall pass in perpetuity to the purchaser, throughout the generations; it shall not be released in the jubilee. 31 But houses in villages that have no walls around them shall be classed as open country; they may be redeemed, and they shall be released in the jubilee. 32 As for the cities of the Levites, the Levites shall forever have the right of redemption of the houses in the cities belonging to them. 33 Such property as may be redeemed from the Levites—houses sold in a city belonging to them—shall be released in the jubilee; because the houses in the cities of the Levites are their possession among the people of Israel. 34 But the open land around their cities may not be sold; for that is their possession for all time.

35 If any of your kin fall into difficulty and become dependent on you,[r] you shall support them; they shall live with you as though resident aliens. 36 Do not take interest in advance or otherwise make a profit from them, but fear your God; let them live with you. 37 You shall not lend them your money at interest taken in advance, or provide them food at a profit. 38 I am the LORD your God,

[r] Meaning of Heb uncertain

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ed value of the crops in the remaining years of the jubilee period. **20–22**: A law dealing with the sabbatical years that fall during the jubilee period. **23**: A statement of the theological premise of the program: Israelites are *aliens and tenants* on land that does not belong to them by right but that the LORD has given them as an inheritance. Thus the land is not private property, to be bought and sold speculatively. Although there is no evidence that the jubilee program was ever carried out, the law opposes foreign conceptions of property that resulted in the swallowing up of ancestral holdings (1 Kings 21.3; Isa 5.8).

**25.25–55**: Laws dealing with property and its redemption. **25–28**: Even before the year of jubilee the land may be redeemed. **25**: The *next of kin* (lit., "redeemer") is the relative who upholds the rights of a family member, e.g. by blood revenge (Num 35.12) or the redemption of property (Ruth ch 4). **29–34**: An exception to cover the case of urban houses as distinguished from houses in villages. **32–34**: Num 35.1–8.

who brought you out of the land of Egypt, to give you the land of Canaan, to be your God.

39 If any who are dependent on you become so impoverished that they sell themselves to you, you shall not make them serve as slaves. 40They shall remain with you as hired or bound laborers. They shall serve with you until the year of the jubilee. 41Then they and their children with them shall be free from your authority; they shall go back to their own family and return to their ancestral property. 42For they are my servants, whom I brought out of the land of Egypt; they shall not be sold as slaves are sold. 43You shall not rule over them with harshness, but shall fear your God. 44As for the male and female slaves whom you may have, it is from the nations around you that you may acquire male and female slaves. 45You may also acquire them from among the aliens residing with you, and from their families that are with you, who have been born in your land; and they may be your property. 46You may keep them as a possession for your children after you, for them to inherit as property. These you may treat as slaves, but as for your fellow Israelites, no one shall rule over the other with harshness.

47 If resident aliens among you prosper, and if any of your kin fall into difficulty with one of them and sell themselves to an alien, or to a branch of the alien's family, 48after they have sold themselves they shall have the right of redemption; one of their brothers may redeem them, 49or their uncle or their uncle's son may redeem them, or anyone of their family who is of their own flesh may redeem them; or if they prosper they may redeem themselves. 50They shall compute with the purchaser the total from the year when they sold themselves to the alien until the jubilee year; the price of the sale shall be applied to the number of years: the time they were with the owner shall be rated as the time of a hired laborer. 51If many years remain, they shall pay for their redemption in proportion to the purchase price; 52and if few years remain until the jubilee year, they shall compute thus: according to the years involved they shall make payment for their redemption. 53As a laborer hired by the year they shall be under the alien's authority, who shall not, however, rule with harshness over them in your sight. 54And if they have not been redeemed in any of these ways, they and their children with them shall go free in the jubilee year. 55For to me the people of Israel are servants; they are my servants whom I brought out from the land of Egypt: I am the LORD your God.

26 You shall make for yourselves no idols and erect no carved images or pillars, and you shall not place figured stones in your land, to worship at them; for I am the LORD your God. 2You shall keep my sabbaths and reverence my sanctuary: I am the LORD.

3 If you follow my statutes and keep my commandments and observe them faithfully, 4I will give you your rains in their season, and the land shall yield its produce, and the trees of the field shall yield their fruit. 5Your threshing shall overtake the vintage, and the vintage shall overtake the sowing; you shall eat your bread to the full, and live securely in your land. 6And I will grant peace in the land, and you shall lie down, and no one shall make you afraid; I will remove dangerous animals from the land, and no

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**25.35–38**: See Ex 22.25 n. **39–55**: Israelites may sell themselves as hired servants but shall never become slaves. **40**: Compare Ex 21.1–6; Deut 15.12–18. **44–46**: It is permissible, however, to make slaves of non-Israelites, since, according to the ancient way of thinking, they are outside the boundaries of the covenant community.

**25.48–49**: See v. 25 n. **55**: This verse gives the theological basis for the prohibition against enslaving Israelites (vv. 42–43).

**26.1–46**: **The two ways.** The Holiness Code (chs 17–26), conceived as the LORD's address to the people through Moses (17.1–2), concludes with divine warnings and promises. See also the concluding addresses in Ex 23.20–33 and Deut ch 28. **1**: A prohibition against the cultic objects of Canaanite

sword shall go through your land. 7You shall give chase to your enemies, and they shall fall before you by the sword. 8Five of you shall give chase to a hundred, and a hundred of you shall give chase to ten thousand; your enemies shall fall before you by the sword. 9I will look with favor upon you and make you fruitful and multiply you; and I will maintain my covenant with you. 10You shall eat old grain long stored, and you shall have to clear out the old to make way for the new. 11I will place my dwelling in your midst, and I shall not abhor you. 12And I will walk among you, and will be your God, and you shall be my people. 13I am the LORD your God who brought you out of the land of Egypt, to be their slaves no more; I have broken the bars of your yoke and made you walk erect.

14 But if you will not obey me, and do not observe all these commandments, 15if you spurn my statutes, and abhor my ordinances, so that you will not observe all my commandments, and you break my covenant, 16I in turn will do this to you: I will bring terror on you; consumption and fever that waste the eyes and cause life to pine away. You shall sow your seed in vain, for your enemies shall eat it. 17I will set my face against you, and you shall be struck down by your enemies; your foes shall rule over you, and you shall flee though no one pursues you. 18And if in spite of this you will not obey me, I will continue to punish you sevenfold for your sins. 19I will break your proud glory, and I will make your sky like iron and your earth like copper. 20Your strength shall be spent to no purpose: your land shall not yield its produce, and the trees of the land shall not yield their fruit.

21 If you continue hostile to me, and will not obey me, I will continue to plague you sevenfold for your sins. 22I will let loose wild animals against you, and they shall bereave you of your children and destroy your livestock; they shall make you few in number, and your roads shall be deserted.

23 If in spite of these punishments you have not turned back to me, but continue hostile to me, 24then I too will continue hostile to you: I myself will strike you sevenfold for your sins. 25I will bring the sword against you, executing vengeance for the covenant; and if you withdraw within your cities, I will send pestilence among you, and you shall be delivered into enemy hands. 26When I break your staff of bread, ten women shall bake your bread in a single oven, and they shall dole out your bread by weight; and though you eat, you shall not be satisfied.

27 But if, despite this, you disobey me, and continue hostile to me, 28I will continue hostile to you in fury; I in turn will punish you myself sevenfold for your sins. 29You shall eat the flesh of your sons, and you shall eat the flesh of your daughters. 30I will destroy your high places and cut down your incense altars; I will heap your carcasses on the carcasses of your idols. I will abhor you. 31I will lay your cities waste, will make your sanctuaries desolate, and I will not smell your pleasing odors. 32I will devastate the land, so that your enemies who come to settle in it shall be appalled at it. 33And you I will scatter among the nations, and I will unsheathe the sword against you; your land shall be a desolation, and your cities a waste.

34 Then the land shall enjoy[s] its sabbath years as long as it lies desolate, while you are in the land of your enemies; then

[s] Or *make up for*

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religion (see Ex 34.13 n.). **11–13**: The fundamental theme of the Holiness Code: the holy God has come to dwell in the midst of a sinful people. **12**: Ex 6.7.

**26.26**: In the time of scarcity ten women will have to bake in one oven, rather than each in her own house. **29**: Deut 28.53–57. **32–33**: These and following verses indicate familiarity with the policy of deporting conquered peoples, a policy used effectively by the Assyrians (2 Kings ch 17), and anticipate the conquest of Judah and the exile of the people into Babylonia in 597–587 B.C. (vv. 34, 38, 39, 41, 43–44).

the land shall rest, and enjoy[t] its sabbath years. 35 As long as it lies desolate, it shall have the rest it did not have on your sabbaths when you were living on it. 36 And as for those of you who survive, I will send faintness into their hearts in the lands of their enemies; the sound of a driven leaf shall put them to flight, and they shall flee as one flees from the sword, and they shall fall though no one pursues. 37 They shall stumble over one another, as if to escape a sword, though no one pursues; and you shall have no power to stand against your enemies. 38 You shall perish among the nations, and the land of your enemies shall devour you. 39 And those of you who survive shall languish in the land of your enemies because of their iniquities; also they shall languish because of the iniquities of their ancestors.

40 But if they confess their iniquity and the iniquity of their ancestors, in that they committed treachery against me and, moreover, that they continued hostile to me— 41 so that I, in turn, continued hostile to them and brought them into the land of their enemies; if then their uncircumcised heart is humbled and they make amends for their iniquity, 42 then will I remember my covenant with Jacob; I will remember also my covenant with Isaac and also my covenant with Abraham, and I will remember the land. 43 For the land shall be deserted by them, and enjoy[t] its sabbath years by lying desolate without them, while they shall make amends for their iniquity, because they dared to spurn my ordinances, and they abhorred my statutes. 44 Yet for all that, when they are in the land of their enemies, I will not spurn them, or abhor them so as to destroy them utterly and break my covenant with them; for I am the LORD their God; 45 but I will remember in their favor the covenant with their ancestors whom I brought out of the land of Egypt in the sight of the nations, to be their God: I am the LORD.

46 These are the statutes and ordinances and laws that the LORD established between himself and the people of Israel on Mount Sinai through Moses.

27 The LORD spoke to Moses, saying: 2 Speak to the people of Israel and say to them: When a person makes an explicit vow to the LORD concerning the equivalent for a human being, 3 the equivalent for a male shall be: from twenty to sixty years of age the equivalent shall be fifty shekels of silver by the sanctuary shekel. 4 If the person is a female, the equivalent is thirty shekels. 5 If the age is from five to twenty years of age, the equivalent is twenty shekels for a male and ten shekels for a female. 6 If the age is from one month to five years, the equivalent for a male is five shekels of silver, and for a female the equivalent is three shekels of silver. 7 And if the person is sixty years old or over, then the equivalent for a male is fifteen shekels, and for a female ten shekels. 8 If any cannot afford the equivalent, they shall be brought before the priest and the priest shall assess them; the priest shall assess them according to what each one making a vow can afford.

9 If it concerns an animal that may be brought as an offering to the LORD, any such that may be given to the LORD shall be holy. 10 Another shall not be exchanged or substituted for it, either good for bad or bad for good; and if one animal is substituted for another, both that one and its substitute shall be holy. 11 If it concerns any unclean animal that may

*t* Or *make up for*

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**26.34–35:** See 25.6–7 n. **41:** *Uncircumcised heart,* a heart that is sealed or unresponsive to the LORD's will (Jer 4.4).

**27.1–34:** **An appendix dealing with religious vows** (compare Pss 56.12; 116.14). See further Num ch 30. **1–8:** Persons dedicated to the LORD's service (compare 1 Sam 1.11) may be freed from the vow by the payment of a monetary substitute. **3:** *The sanctuary shekel,* see Ex 30.13 n. **9–13:** If an animal appropriate for sacrifice is vowed, it cannot be redeemed.

not be brought as an offering to the LORD, the animal shall be presented before the priest. 12 The priest shall assess it: whether good or bad, according to the assessment of the priest, so it shall be. 13 But if it is to be redeemed, one-fifth must be added to the assessment.

14 If a person consecrates a house to the LORD, the priest shall assess it: whether good or bad, as the priest assesses it, so it shall stand. 15 And if the one who consecrates the house wishes to redeem it, one-fifth shall be added to its assessed value, and it shall revert to the original owner.

16 If a person consecrates to the LORD any inherited landholding, its assessment shall be in accordance with its seed requirements: fifty shekels of silver to a homer of barley seed. 17 If the person consecrates the field as of the year of jubilee, that assessment shall stand; 18 but if the field is consecrated after the jubilee, the priest shall compute the price for it according to the years that remain until the year of jubilee, and the assessment shall be reduced. 19 And if the one who consecrates the field wishes to redeem it, then one-fifth shall be added to its assessed value, and it shall revert to the original owner; 20 but if the field is not redeemed, or if it has been sold to someone else, it shall no longer be redeemable. 21 But when the field is released in the jubilee, it shall be holy to the LORD as a devoted field; it becomes the priest's holding. 22 If someone consecrates to the LORD a field that has been purchased, which is not a part of the inherited landholding, 23 the priest shall compute for it the proportionate assessment up to the year of jubilee, and the assessment shall be paid as of that day, a sacred donation to the LORD. 24 In the year of jubilee the field shall return to the one from whom it was bought, whose holding the land is. 25 All assessments shall be by the sanctuary shekel: twenty gerahs shall make a shekel.

26 A firstling of animals, however, which as a firstling belongs to the LORD, cannot be consecrated by anyone; whether ox or sheep, it is the LORD's. 27 If it is an unclean animal, it shall be ransomed at its assessment, with one-fifth added; if it is not redeemed, it shall be sold at its assessment.

28 Nothing that a person owns that has been devoted to destruction for the LORD, be it human or animal, or inherited landholding, may be sold or redeemed; every devoted thing is most holy to the LORD. 29 No human beings who have been devoted to destruction can be ransomed; they shall be put to death.

30 All tithes from the land, whether the seed from the ground or the fruit from the tree, are the LORD's; they are holy to the LORD. 31 If persons wish to redeem any of their tithes, they must add one-fifth to them. 32 All tithes of herd and flock, every tenth one that passes under the shepherd's staff, shall be holy to the LORD. 33 Let no one inquire whether it is good or bad, or make substitution for it; if one makes substitution for it, then both it and the substitute shall be holy and cannot be redeemed.

34 These are the commandments that the LORD gave to Moses for the people of Israel on Mount Sinai.

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**27.14–25**: Houses and lands vowed to the LORD are redeemable. **17–18**: On this manner of valuation, see 25.15–16. **21**: *Devoted,* i.e. set apart as belonging to the LORD. Booty taken in holy war was devoted and could not be appropriated for common use (Josh 6.19).

**27.26**: Firstlings of clean animals cannot be dedicated since they already belong to the LORD (see Ex 13.2 n.). **28**: *Devoted thing,* see v. 21 n. **29**: Compare 1 Sam ch 15. **30–33**: On tithes (Mal 3.8–10). **32–33**: The words *pass under the shepherd's staff* refer to the manner of counting animals (Jer 33.13).

# *Numbers*

The English title "Numbers," derived from the Greek (*Arithmoi*) and Latin (*Numeri*) translations, is based primarily on the numbering or census of the people related in chs 1–4 and again in ch 26. If one follows this lead, the book falls into two main divisions: (1) chs 1–25 relate how the entire first Exodus generation, which murmured against God in the wilderness and refused to take the land, died off, except for Moses and the two faithful spies, Joshua and Caleb; (2) chs 26–36, beginning with another census, deal with the new generation that God led toward the promised land under Moses' leadership.

The narratives portray a people who found that, in the strange providence of God, the journey from promise to fulfillment led round about by way of the wilderness. In the Hebrew Bible the book is appropriately called "In the Wilderness," referring to the long period, traditionally forty years (33.38; Am 5.25), spent in the wilderness. Much of the time the people apparently stayed at an oasis known as Kadesh-barnea, where they arrived after the march from Sinai (see 10.11 and 20.1). The story is told in such a way as to reflect later struggles during the time of the monarchy, the Babylonian exile, and even later.

These narratives do not idealize the wilderness period. Again and again the people complained, sensing the contrast between the relative security of slavery in Egypt and the precarious insecurity of freedom in the wilderness. There were power struggles among the leaders, raising the question as to who speaks for God. There were crises that threatened faith in God's presence in their midst and God's guidance into the future. Yet these narratives are infused with the conviction that, despite the people's blindness and rebelliousness, God was faithful to promises made to Israel's ancestors. In the wilderness the people were being disciplined so that they might know their utter dependence upon the God who liberated them from bondage and thus be strengthened for the challenges of life in a new land.

*The first census of Israel*

1 The LORD spoke to Moses in the wilderness of Sinai, in the tent of meeting, on the first day of the second month, in the second year after they had come out of the land of Egypt, saying:
2 Take a census of the whole congregation of Israelites, in their clans, by ancestral houses, according to the number of names, every male individually; 3 from twenty years old and upward, everyone in Israel able to go to war. You and Aaron shall enroll them, company by company. 4 A man from each tribe shall be with you, each man the head of his ancestral house. 5 These are the names of the men who shall assist you:

From Reuben, Elizur son of Shedeur.
6 From Simeon, Shelumiel son of Zurishaddai.
7 From Judah, Nahshon son of Amminadab.
8 From Issachar, Nethanel son of Zuar.
9 From Zebulun, Eliab son of Helon.
10 From the sons of Joseph:
from Ephraim, Elishama son of Ammihud;
from Manasseh, Gamaliel son of Pedahzur.
11 From Benjamin, Abidan son of Gideoni.
12 From Dan, Ahiezer son of Ammishaddai.
13 From Asher, Pagiel son of Ochran.
14 From Gad, Eliasaph son of Deuel.
15 From Naphtali, Ahira son of Enan.

16 These were the ones chosen from the congregation, the leaders of their ancestral tribes, the heads of the divisions of Israel.

17 Moses and Aaron took these men who had been designated by name, 18 and on the first day of the second month they assembled the whole congregation together. They registered themselves in their clans, by their ancestral houses, according to the number of names from twenty years old and upward, individually, 19 as the LORD commanded Moses. So he enrolled them in the wilderness of Sinai.

20 The descendants of Reuben, Israel's firstborn, their lineage, in their clans, by their ancestral houses, according to the number of names, individually, every male from twenty years old and upward, everyone able to go to war: 21 those enrolled of the tribe of Reuben were forty-six thousand five hundred.

22 The descendants of Simeon, their lineage, in their clans, by their ancestral houses, those of them that were numbered, according to the number of names, individually, every male from twenty years old and upward, everyone able to go to war: 23 those enrolled of the tribe of Simeon were fifty-nine thousand three hundred.

24 The descendants of Gad, their lineage, in their clans, by their ancestral houses, according to the number of the names, from twenty years old and upward, everyone able to go to war: 25 those enrolled of the tribe of Gad were forty-five thousand six hundred fifty.

26 The descendants of Judah, their

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**1.1–54: Census of the tribes.** Moses is commanded to number all Israelites, making an exception of the tribe of Levi. **1**: One month had elapsed since the construction of the tabernacle (Ex 40.2, 17). **2–4**: See Ex 30.11–12 n. Military service was one of the chief duties involved in membership in the tribal assembly (ch 32). Strictly, a tribe included a number of *clans,* and a clan included several *ancestral houses* or family groups. **5–15**: The twelvefold structure of the tribal league, reflected in this old name-list, possibly goes back to Joshua's time (Josh ch 24); probably, however, this notion reflects social organization known in the time of David or may even be an ideal scheme. No longer a landed tribe, Levi is not mentioned here (see Ex 28.1–5 n.), but is later assigned a priestly role (vv. 47–54). The twelvefold pattern is maintained by counting the "house of Joseph" as two tribes: Manasseh and Ephraim. On the mention of Ephraim before Manasseh, see Gen 48.13–14 n. and contrast 26.28; 34.23–24.

**1.17–46**: The census total of 603,550 (compare the slightly lower figure in 26.51) is extremely high (see Ex 12.37 n.). It has been

lineage, in their clans, by their ancestral houses, according to the number of names, from twenty years old and upward, everyone able to go to war: 27 those enrolled of the tribe of Judah were seventy-four thousand six hundred.

28 The descendants of Issachar, their lineage, in their clans, by their ancestral houses, according to the number of names, from twenty years old and upward, everyone able to go to war: 29 those enrolled of the tribe of Issachar were fifty-four thousand four hundred.

30 The descendants of Zebulun, their lineage, in their clans, by their ancestral houses, according to the number of names, from twenty years old and upward, everyone able to go to war: 31 those enrolled of the tribe of Zebulun were fifty-seven thousand four hundred.

32 The descendants of Joseph, namely, the descendants of Ephraim, their lineage, in their clans, by their ancestral houses, according to the number of names, from twenty years old and upward, everyone able to go to war: 33 those enrolled of the tribe of Ephraim were forty thousand five hundred.

34 The descendants of Manasseh, their lineage, in their clans, by their ancestral houses, according to the number of names, from twenty years old and upward, everyone able to go to war: 35 those enrolled of the tribe of Manasseh were thirty-two thousand two hundred.

36 The descendants of Benjamin, their lineage, in their clans, by their ancestral houses, according to the number of names, from twenty years old and upward, everyone able to go to war: 37 those enrolled of the tribe of Benjamin were thirty-five thousand four hundred.

38 The descendants of Dan, their lineage, in their clans, by their ancestral houses, according to the number of names, from twenty years old and upward, everyone able to go to war: 39 those enrolled of the tribe of Dan were sixty-two thousand seven hundred.

40 The descendants of Asher, their lineage, in their clans, by their ancestral houses, according to the number of names, from twenty years old and upward, everyone able to go to war: 41 those enrolled of the tribe of Asher were forty-one thousand five hundred.

42 The descendants of Naphtali, their lineage, in their clans, by their ancestral houses, according to the number of names, from twenty years old and upward, everyone able to go to war: 43 those enrolled of the tribe of Naphtali were fifty-three thousand four hundred.

44 These are those who were enrolled, whom Moses and Aaron enrolled with the help of the leaders of Israel, twelve men, each representing his ancestral house. 45 So the whole number of the Israelites, by their ancestral houses, from twenty years old and upward, everyone able to go to war in Israel— 46 their whole number was six hundred three thousand five hundred fifty. 47 The Levites, however, were not numbered by their ancestral tribe along with them.

48 The LORD had said to Moses: 49 Only the tribe of Levi you shall not enroll, and you shall not take a census of them with the other Israelites. 50 Rather you shall appoint the Levites over the

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suggested that the Hebrew word translated "thousand" (vv. 21, 23, etc.) is an old term for a subsection of a tribe (31.14), based on the procedures for military muster employed by other ancient peoples, and that the original number follows "thousand" in each case, e.g. Reuben had forty-six tribal subsections with a total of five hundred men (v. 21). This reduces the total to 5,550. It is alleged that the present impossibly high figures were read back from the time of the monarchy when the military unit actually included one thousand soldiers. In any case, priestly tradition about the numerous population (see 11.21 n.) is based on the belief that the LORD marvelously increased Abraham's descendants (see Ex 1.7 n.) and miraculously supported this great people in the wilderness.

**1.47–54**: See 3.5–10 n. **50**: *Covenant,* see Ex 16.33–34 n.

tabernacle of the covenant,[a] and over all its equipment, and over all that belongs to it; they are to carry the tabernacle and all its equipment, and they shall tend it, and shall camp around the tabernacle. 51When the tabernacle is to set out, the Levites shall take it down; and when the tabernacle is to be pitched, the Levites shall set it up. And any outsider who comes near shall be put to death. 52The other Israelites shall camp in their respective regimental camps, by companies; 53but the Levites shall camp around the tabernacle of the covenant,[a] that there may be no wrath on the congregation of the Israelites; and the Levites shall perform the guard duty of the tabernacle of the covenant.[a] 54The Israelites did so; they did just as the LORD commanded Moses.

2 The LORD spoke to Moses and Aaron, saying: 2The Israelites shall camp each in their respective regiments, under ensigns by their ancestral houses; they shall camp facing the tent of meeting on every side. 3Those to camp on the east side toward the sunrise shall be of the regimental encampment of Judah by companies. The leader of the people of Judah shall be Nahshon son of Amminadab, 4with a company as enrolled of seventy-four thousand six hundred. 5Those to camp next to him shall be the tribe of Issachar. The leader of the Issacharites shall be Nethanel son of Zuar, 6with a company as enrolled of fifty-four thousand four hundred. 7Then the tribe of Zebulun: The leader of the Zebulunites shall be Eliab son of Helon, 8with a company as enrolled of fifty-seven thousand four hundred. 9The total enrollment of the camp of Judah, by companies, is one hundred eighty-six thousand four hundred. They shall set out first on the march.

10 On the south side shall be the regimental encampment of Reuben by companies. The leader of the Reubenites shall be Elizur son of Shedeur, 11with a company as enrolled of forty-six thousand five hundred. 12And those to camp next to him shall be the tribe of Simeon. The leader of the Simeonites shall be Shelumiel son of Zurishaddai, 13with a company as enrolled of fifty-nine thousand three hundred. 14Then the tribe of Gad: The leader of the Gadites shall be Eliasaph son of Reuel, 15with a company as enrolled of forty-five thousand six hundred fifty. 16The total enrollment of the camp of Reuben, by companies, is one hundred fifty-one thousand four hundred fifty. They shall set out second.

17 The tent of meeting, with the camp of the Levites, shall set out in the center of the camps; they shall set out just as they camp, each in position, by their regiments.

18 On the west side shall be the regimental encampment of Ephraim by companies. The leader of the people of Ephraim shall be Elishama son of Ammihud, 19with a company as enrolled of forty thousand five hundred. 20Next to him shall be the tribe of Manasseh. The leader of the people of Manasseh shall be Gamaliel son of Pedahzur, 21with a company as enrolled of thirty-two thousand two hundred. 22Then the tribe of Benjamin: The leader of the Benjaminites shall be Abidan son of Gideoni, 23with a company as enrolled of thirty-five thousand

*a* Or *treaty*, or *testimony*; Heb *eduth*

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**2.1–34: The arrangement of the tribes while encamped or on the march** (compare 10.13–28). **2:** Perhaps with the festival of tabernacles in mind (Lev 23.33–36), the priestly writer conceives the congregation as arranged symmetrically around the tent of meeting. In the oldest tradition, the tent was not in the center but on the outside of the camp (Ex 33.7–11). **3–31:** The Levites are to encamp immediately around the tabernacle court (Ex 27.9–19), to protect and transport the sacred shrine (v. 17; 1.47–54). Farther out the twelve tribes are to encamp, three on each side. The arrangement expresses the idea of the tabernacling presence of the LORD in the midst of his people (Ex 25.8). **3–4:** Judah is assigned the favored position, on the east of the camp. **9:** Each division marches in assigned order, with Judah in the lead. **17:** During the march, the Levites are to be flanked by two

four hundred. 24The total enrollment of the camp of Ephraim, by companies, is one hundred eight thousand one hundred. They shall set out third on the march.

25 On the north side shall be the regimental encampment of Dan by companies. The leader of the Danites shall be Ahiezer son of Ammishaddai, 26with a company as enrolled of sixty-two thousand seven hundred. 27Those to camp next to him shall be the tribe of Asher. The leader of the Asherites shall be Pagiel son of Ochran, 28with a company as enrolled of forty-one thousand five hundred. 29Then the tribe of Naphtali: The leader of the Naphtalites shall be Ahira son of Enan, 30with a company as enrolled of fifty-three thousand four hundred. 31The total enrollment of the camp of Dan is one hundred fifty-seven thousand six hundred. They shall set out last, by companies. *b*

32 This was the enrollment of the Israelites by their ancestral houses; the total enrollment in the camps by their companies was six hundred three thousand five hundred fifty. 33Just as the LORD had commanded Moses, the Levites were not enrolled among the other Israelites.

34 The Israelites did just as the LORD had commanded Moses: They camped by regiments, and they set out the same way, everyone by clans, according to ancestral houses.

3 This is the lineage of Aaron and Moses at the time when the LORD spoke with Moses on Mount Sinai. 2These are the names of the sons of Aaron: Nadab the firstborn, and Abihu, Eleazar, and Ithamar; 3these are the names of the sons of Aaron, the anointed priests, whom he ordained to minister as priests. 4Nadab and Abihu died before the LORD when they offered unholy fire before the LORD in the wilderness of Sinai, and they had no children. Eleazar and Ithamar served as priests in the lifetime of their father Aaron.

5 Then the LORD spoke to Moses, saying: 6Bring the tribe of Levi near, and set them before Aaron the priest, so that they may assist him. 7They shall perform duties for him and for the whole congregation in front of the tent of meeting, doing service at the tabernacle; 8they shall be in charge of all the furnishings of the tent of meeting, and attend to the duties for the Israelites as they do service at the tabernacle. 9You shall give the Levites to Aaron and his descendants; they are unreservedly given to him from among the Israelites. 10But you shall make a register of Aaron and his descendants; it is they who shall attend to the priesthood, and any outsider who comes near shall be put to death.

11 Then the LORD spoke to Moses, saying: 12I hereby accept the Levites from among the Israelites as substitutes for all the firstborn that open the womb among the Israelites. The Levites shall be mine, 13for all the firstborn are mine; when I killed all the firstborn in the land of Egypt, I consecrated for my own all the firstborn in Israel, both human and animal; they shall be mine. I am the LORD.

14 Then the LORD spoke to Moses in the wilderness of Sinai, saying: 15Enroll the Levites by ancestral houses and by

*b* Compare verses 9, 16, 24: Heb *by their regiments*

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divisions on both the front and the rear. **18–24**: On Ephraim's position of leadership, see 1.5–15 n.

**3.1–51**: **The Levites are set apart for special service.** **1–3**: Ex 6.23–25. **4**: Lev ch 10. **5–10**: Moses and Aaron both belong to the tribe of Levi. Within the larger circle of Levites, however, a distinction is made between *Aaron and his descendants* and other Levites (see Ex 28.1–5 n.). Aaron's descendants exercise the chief priestly functions in the sanctuary, while the other Levites are given to the Aaronic order as priestly assistants.

**3.11–13**: A reinterpretation of the ancient law found in Ex 13.2; 22.29b–30; 34.19–20. Instead of having to go into lifelong religious service, the firstborn are redeemed by a "sacrifice" (see Ex 13.13 n.), for the LORD claims the Levites in their stead (Num 8.15–19). **14–39**: 1.47–54; ch 4. **15**: The Levitical census is

clans. You shall enroll every male from a month old and upward. 16So Moses enrolled them according to the word of the LORD, as he was commanded. 17The following were the sons of Levi, by their names: Gershon, Kohath, and Merari. 18These are the names of the sons of Gershon by their clans: Libni and Shimei. 19The sons of Kohath by their clans: Amram, Izhar, Hebron, and Uzziel. 20The sons of Merari by their clans: Mahli and Mushi. These are the clans of the Levites, by their ancestral houses.

21 To Gershon belonged the clan of the Libnites and the clan of the Shimeites; these were the clans of the Gershonites. 22Their enrollment, counting all the males from a month old and upward, was seven thousand five hundred. 23The clans of the Gershonites were to camp behind the tabernacle on the west, 24with Eliasaph son of Lael as head of the ancestral house of the Gershonites. 25The responsibility of the sons of Gershon in the tent of meeting was to be the tabernacle, the tent with its covering, the screen for the entrance of the tent of meeting, 26the hangings of the court, the screen for the entrance of the court that is around the tabernacle and the altar, and its cords—all the service pertaining to these.

27 To Kohath belonged the clan of the Amramites, the clan of the Izharites, the clan of the Hebronites, and the clan of the Uzzielites; these are the clans of the Kohathites. 28Counting all the males, from a month old and upward, there were eight thousand six hundred, attending to the duties of the sanctuary. 29The clans of the Kohathites were to camp on the south side of the tabernacle, 30with Elizaphan son of Uzziel as head of the ancestral house of the clans of the Kohathites. 31Their responsibility was to be the ark, the table, the lampstand, the altars, the vessels of the sanctuary with which the priests minister, and the screen—all the service pertaining to these. 32Eleazar son of Aaron the priest was to be chief over the leaders of the Levites, and to have oversight of those who had charge of the sanctuary.

33 To Merari belonged the clan of the Mahlites and the clan of the Mushites: these are the clans of Merari. 34Their enrollment, counting all the males from a month old and upward, was six thousand two hundred. 35The head of the ancestral house of the clans of Merari was Zuriel son of Abihail; they were to camp on the north side of the tabernacle. 36The responsibility assigned to the sons of Merari was to be the frames of the tabernacle, the bars, the pillars, the bases, and all their accessories—all the service pertaining to these; 37also the pillars of the court all around, with their bases and pegs and cords.

38 Those who were to camp in front of the tabernacle on the east—in front of

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not for military purposes (compare 1.2–3) but is associated with the firstborn who are redeemable from the age of *a month* (vv. 40–51). **17–20**: For *the clans of the Levites,* see Ex 6.16–19.

**3.25–26**: 4.21–28. The Gershonites have custody over the tent covering (Ex 26.7–14), the screen for the entrance to the tent (Ex 26.36), the hangings of the court (Ex 27.9), and the screen for the gate of the court (Ex 27.16). **31–32**: 4.4–15. The Kohathites have charge of the most holy objects (4.4–20), i.e. the ark, *the table* of the bread of the Presence, *the lampstand* (Ex ch 25), the bronze and gold *altars* (Ex 27.1–8; 30.1–10), the sacred *vessels* (Ex 30.17–21; 31.7–11), and *the screen* (Num 4.5; Ex 26.31–35). *Eleazar,* Aaron's oldest surviving son.

**3.36–37**: 4.29–33. The Merarites are responsible for the tabernacle framework (Ex 26.15–30) and the supports for the court (Ex 27.9–19). **38**: Aaron and his sons encamp on the east, the favored location (see 2.3–4 n.), symbolizing their priestly pre-eminence. *Any outsider* (3.10), i.e. a layperson. **39**: The numbers given in ch 3 actually total 22,300. **40–51**: Another Israelite census is taken to determine the number of firstborn males, in contrast to men of military age (1.2–3). **41**: See 3.11–13 n. The substitution of Levites' cattle for the people's firstlings of cattle modifies the law of the firstborn even further. **43**: A tally disclosed an excess of 273 Israelite firstborn over the number of Levites (but see v. 39 n.). **46–48**: Since the Levites were a ransom for Israelite males on a one to one basis,

the tent of meeting toward the east—were Moses and Aaron and Aaron's sons, having charge of the rites within the sanctuary, whatever had to be done for the Israelites; and any outsider who came near was to be put to death. 39The total enrollment of the Levites whom Moses and Aaron enrolled at the commandment of the LORD, by their clans, all the males from a month old and upward, was twenty-two thousand.

40 Then the LORD said to Moses: Enroll all the firstborn males of the Israelites, from a month old and upward, and count their names. 41But you shall accept the Levites for me—I am the LORD—as substitutes for all the firstborn among the Israelites, and the livestock of the Levites as substitutes for all the firstborn among the livestock of the Israelites. 42So Moses enrolled all the firstborn among the Israelites, as the LORD commanded him. 43The total enrollment, all the firstborn males from a month old and upward, counting the number of names, was twenty-two thousand two hundred seventy-three.

44 Then the LORD spoke to Moses, saying: 45Accept the Levites as substitutes for all the firstborn among the Israelites, and the livestock of the Levites as substitutes for their livestock; and the Levites shall be mine. I am the LORD. 46As the price of redemption of the two hundred seventy-three of the firstborn of the Israelites, over and above the number of the Levites, 47you shall accept five shekels apiece, reckoning by the shekel of the sanctuary, a shekel of twenty gerahs. 48Give to Aaron and his sons the money by which the excess number of them is redeemed. 49So Moses took the redemption money from those who were over and above those redeemed by the Levites; 50from the firstborn of the Israelites he took the money, one thousand three hundred sixty-five shekels, reckoned by the shekel of the sanctuary; 51and Moses gave the redemption money to Aaron and his sons, according to the word of the LORD, as the LORD had commanded Moses.

4 The LORD spoke to Moses and Aaron, saying: 2Take a census of the Kohathites separate from the other Levites, by their clans and their ancestral houses, 3from thirty years old up to fifty years old, all who qualify to do work relating to the tent of meeting. 4The service of the Kohathites relating to the tent of meeting concerns the most holy things.

5 When the camp is to set out, Aaron and his sons shall go in and take down the screening curtain, and cover the ark of the covenant[c] with it; 6then they shall put on it a covering of fine leather,[d] and spread over that a cloth all of blue, and shall put its poles in place. 7Over the table of the bread of the Presence they shall spread a blue cloth, and put on it the plates, the dishes for incense, the bowls, and the flagons for the drink offering; the regular bread also shall be on it; 8then they shall spread over them a crimson cloth, and cover it with a covering of fine leather,[d] and shall put its poles in place. 9They shall take a blue cloth, and cover the lampstand for the light, with its lamps, its snuffers, its trays, and all the vessels for oil with which it is supplied; 10and they shall put it with all its utensils in a covering of fine leather,[d] and put it on the carrying frame. 11Over the golden altar they shall spread a blue cloth, and

*c* Or *treaty*, or *testimony*; Heb *eduth*
*d* Meaning of Heb uncertain

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the additional males had to be redeemed by monetary payment. *The shekel of the sanctuary*, see Ex 30.13 n.

**4.1–49: Another Levitical census. 2–3:** This census, in contrast with 3.15, is to determine the number of Levites of the age required for the priestly duties (compare 8.23–25) that are defined in vv. 4–33. **4–20:** The Kohathites have a special distinction among the Levites, for they have charge of *the most holy things* and are therefore under the immediate supervision of Eleazar (see 3.31–32 n.). **5:** *The screening curtain*, Ex 26.31–35. **7:** *The regular bread*, i.e. the bread of the Presence that is continually on the table (Ex 25.30).

cover it with a covering of fine leather,[e] and shall put its poles in place; 12 and they shall take all the utensils of the service that are used in the sanctuary, and put them in a blue cloth, and cover them with a covering of fine leather,[e] and put them on the carrying frame. 13 They shall take away the ashes from the altar, and spread a purple cloth over it; 14 and they shall put on it all the utensils of the altar, which are used for the service there, the firepans, the forks, the shovels, and the basins, all the utensils of the altar; and they shall spread on it a covering of fine leather,[e] and shall put its poles in place. 15 When Aaron and his sons have finished covering the sanctuary and all the furnishings of the sanctuary, as the camp sets out, after that the Kohathites shall come to carry these, but they must not touch the holy things, or they will die. These are the things of the tent of meeting that the Kohathites are to carry.

16 Eleazar son of Aaron the priest shall have charge of the oil for the light, the fragrant incense, the regular grain offering, and the anointing oil, the oversight of all the tabernacle and all that is in it, in the sanctuary and in its utensils.

17 Then the LORD spoke to Moses and Aaron, saying: 18 You must not let the tribe of the clans of the Kohathites be destroyed from among the Levites. 19 This is how you must deal with them in order that they may live and not die when they come near to the most holy things: Aaron and his sons shall go in and assign each to a particular task or burden. 20 But the Kohathites[f] must not go in to look on the holy things even for a moment; otherwise they will die.

21 Then the LORD spoke to Moses, saying: 22 Take a census of the Gershonites also, by their ancestral houses and by their clans; 23 from thirty years old up to fifty years old you shall enroll them, all who qualify to do work in the tent of meeting. 24 This is the service of the clans of the Gershonites, in serving and bearing burdens: 25 They shall carry the curtains of the tabernacle, and the tent of meeting with its covering, and the outer covering of fine leather[e] that is on top of it, and the screen for the entrance of the tent of meeting, 26 and the hangings of the court, and the screen for the entrance of the gate of the court that is around the tabernacle and the altar, and their cords, and all the equipment for their service; and they shall do all that needs to be done with regard to them. 27 All the service of the Gershonites shall be at the command of Aaron and his sons, in all that they are to carry, and in all that they have to do; and you shall assign to their charge all that they are to carry. 28 This is the service of the clans of the Gershonites relating to the tent of meeting, and their responsibilities are to be under the oversight of Ithamar son of Aaron the priest.

29 As for the Merarites, you shall enroll them by their clans and their ancestral houses; 30 from thirty years old up to fifty years old you shall enroll them, everyone who qualifies to do the work of the tent of meeting. 31 This is what they are charged to carry, as the whole of their service in the tent of meeting: the frames of the tabernacle, with its bars, pillars, and bases, 32 and the pillars of the court all around with their bases, pegs, and cords, with all their equipment and all their related service; and you shall assign by name the objects that they are required to carry. 33 This is the service of the clans of the Merarites, the whole of their service relating to the tent of meeting, under the hand of Ithamar son of Aaron the priest.

34 So Moses and Aaron and the leaders of the congregation enrolled the Kohathites, by their clans and their ancestral

*e* Meaning of Heb uncertain *f* Heb *they*

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**4.15–20:** The precautions taken by Aaron and his sons are explained on the assumption that the Kohathites must not see or touch the holy objects, lest divine holiness destroy them (compare 1 Sam ch 5–6; 2 Sam 6.6–11).

**4.21–28:** For the responsibility of the Ger-

houses, 35 from thirty years old up to fifty years old, everyone who qualified for work relating to the tent of meeting; 36 and their enrollment by clans was two thousand seven hundred fifty. 37 This was the enrollment of the clans of the Kohathites, all who served at the tent of meeting, whom Moses and Aaron enrolled according to the commandment of the LORD by Moses.

38 The enrollment of the Gershonites, by their clans and their ancestral houses, 39 from thirty years old up to fifty years old, everyone who qualified for work relating to the tent of meeting— 40 their enrollment by their clans and their ancestral houses was two thousand six hundred thirty. 41 This was the enrollment of the clans of the Gershonites, all who served at the tent of meeting, whom Moses and Aaron enrolled according to the commandment of the LORD.

42 The enrollment of the clans of the Merarites, by their clans and their ancestral houses, 43 from thirty years old up to fifty years old, everyone who qualified for work relating to the tent of meeting— 44 their enrollment by their clans was three thousand two hundred. 45 This is the enrollment of the clans of the Merarites, whom Moses and Aaron enrolled according to the commandment of the LORD by Moses.

46 All those who were enrolled of the Levites, whom Moses and Aaron and the leaders of Israel enrolled, by their clans and their ancestral houses, 47 from thirty years old up to fifty years old, everyone who qualified to do the work of service and the work of bearing burdens relating to the tent of meeting, 48 their enrollment was eight thousand five hundred eighty. 49 According to the commandment of the LORD through Moses they were appointed to their several tasks of serving or carrying; thus they were enrolled by him, as the LORD commanded Moses.

5 The LORD spoke to Moses, saying: 2 Command the Israelites to put out of the camp everyone who is leprous,[g] or has a discharge, and everyone who is unclean through contact with a corpse; 3 you shall put out both male and female, putting them outside the camp; they must not defile their camp, where I dwell among them. 4 The Israelites did so, putting them outside the camp; as the LORD had spoken to Moses, so the Israelites did.

5 The LORD spoke to Moses, saying: 6 Speak to the Israelites: When a man or a woman wrongs another, breaking faith with the LORD, that person incurs guilt 7 and shall confess the sin that has been committed. The person shall make full restitution for the wrong, adding one-fifth to it, and giving it to the one who was wronged. 8 If the injured party has no next of kin to whom restitution may be made for the wrong, the restitution for wrong shall go to the LORD for the priest, in addition to the ram of atonement with which atonement is made for the guilty party. 9 Among all the sacred donations of the Israelites, every gift that they bring to the priest shall be his. 10 The sacred donations of all are their own; whatever anyone gives to the priest shall be his.

11 The LORD spoke to Moses, saying: 12 Speak to the Israelites and say to them: If any man's wife goes astray and is unfaithful to him, 13 if a man has had intercourse with her but it is hidden from her

*g* A term for several skin diseases; precise meaning uncertain

shonites, see 3.25–26. **29–33**: 3.36–37. **48**: Compare the number of male Levites in 3.39.

**5.1–6.21**: **Various instructions to the people.**

**5.1–4**: The sanctity of the tabernacle is the reason for excluding unclean people, such as lepers (Lev 13.46), those having a bodily discharge (Lev ch 15), or those defiled by contact with the dead (Lev 21.1–12). **5–10**: This case law, supplemental to Lev 6.1–7 (Ex 22.7–15), deals with a situation in which there is no *next of kin* (see Lev 25.25 n.).

**5.11–31**: Another case law, dealing with a woman suspected of adultery. **13–14**: This old law deals with a case not covered elsewhere (e.g. Lev 20.10): no witness can testify *since*

husband, so that she is undetected though she has defiled herself, and there is no witness against her since she was not caught in the act; [14]if a spirit of jealousy comes on him, and he is jealous of his wife who has defiled herself; or if a spirit of jealousy comes on him, and he is jealous of his wife, though she has not defiled herself; [15]then the man shall bring his wife to the priest. And he shall bring the offering required for her, one-tenth of an ephah of barley flour. He shall pour no oil on it and put no frankincense on it, for it is a grain offering of jealousy, a grain offering of remembrance, bringing iniquity to remembrance.

16 Then the priest shall bring her near, and set her before the LORD; [17]the priest shall take holy water in an earthen vessel, and take some of the dust that is on the floor of the tabernacle and put it into the water. [18]The priest shall set the woman before the LORD, dishevel the woman's hair, and place in her hands the grain offering of remembrance, which is the grain offering of jealousy. In his own hand the priest shall have the water of bitterness that brings the curse. [19]Then the priest shall make her take an oath, saying, "If no man has lain with you, if you have not turned aside to uncleanness while under your husband's authority, be immune to this water of bitterness that brings the curse. [20]But if you have gone astray while under your husband's authority, if you have defiled yourself and some man other than your husband has had intercourse with you," [21]—let the priest make the woman take the oath of the curse and say to the woman—"the LORD make you an execration and an oath among your people, when the LORD makes your uterus drop, your womb discharge; [22]now may this water that brings the curse enter your bowels and make your womb discharge, your uterus drop!" And the woman shall say, "Amen. Amen."

23 Then the priest shall put these curses in writing, and wash them off into the water of bitterness. [24]He shall make the woman drink the water of bitterness that brings the curse, and the water that brings the curse shall enter her and cause bitter pain. [25]The priest shall take the grain offering of jealousy out of the woman's hand, and shall elevate the grain offering before the LORD and bring it to the altar; [26]and the priest shall take a handful of the grain offering, as its memorial portion, and turn it into smoke on the altar, and afterward shall make the woman drink the water. [27]When he has made her drink the water, then, if she has defiled herself and has been unfaithful to her husband, the water that brings the curse shall enter into her and cause bitter pain, and her womb shall discharge, her uterus drop, and the woman shall become an execration among her people. [28]But if the woman has not defiled herself and is clean, then she shall be immune and be able to conceive children.

29 This is the law in cases of jealousy, when a wife, while under her husband's authority, goes astray and defiles herself, [30]or when a spirit of jealousy comes on a man and he is jealous of his wife; then he shall set the woman before the LORD, and the priest shall apply this entire law to her. [31]The man shall be free from iniquity, but the woman shall bear her iniquity.

6 The LORD spoke to Moses, saying: [2]Speak to the Israelites and say to them: When either men or women make

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*she was not caught in the act.* **15:** The *grain offering* (Lev ch 2) *of jealousy* is intended to bring the case directly to God.

**5.16–28:** A trial by ordeal, a common practice among ancient peoples. **16:** *Before the LORD,* i.e. to the sanctuary (Ex 22.9). **19–22:** The oath of execration, compare Ex 22.10–11.

**5.23–28:** The oath is followed by the drinking of *the water that brings the curse* (v. 18). It was believed that if a person were guilty this potion would have effects which would signify the LORD's verdict of judgment (Ex 32.20, 35). **26:** *Memorial portion,* see Lev 2.2–3 n.

**6.1–21:** The vow of a nazirite. **2:** Nazirites are holy persons who have taken the vow to *separate themselves to the LORD* (Judg 13.5;

a special vow, the vow of a nazirite,[h] to separate themselves to the LORD, 3they shall separate themselves from wine and strong drink; they shall drink no wine vinegar or other vinegar, and shall not drink any grape juice or eat grapes, fresh or dried. 4All their days as nazirites[i] they shall eat nothing that is produced by the grapevine, not even the seeds or the skins.

5 All the days of their nazirite vow no razor shall come upon the head; until the time is completed for which they separate themselves to the LORD, they shall be holy; they shall let the locks of the head grow long.

6 All the days that they separate themselves to the LORD they shall not go near a corpse. 7Even if their father or mother, brother or sister, should die, they may not defile themselves; because their consecration to God is upon the head. 8All their days as nazirites[i] they are holy to the LORD.

9 If someone dies very suddenly nearby, defiling the consecrated head, then they shall shave the head on the day of their cleansing; on the seventh day they shall shave it. 10On the eighth day they shall bring two turtledoves or two young pigeons to the priest at the entrance of the tent of meeting, 11and the priest shall offer one as a sin offering and the other as a burnt offering, and make atonement for them, because they incurred guilt by reason of the corpse. They shall sanctify the head that same day, 12and separate themselves to the LORD for their days as nazirites,[i] and bring a male lamb a year old as a guilt offering. The former time shall be void, because the consecrated head was defiled.

13 This is the law for the nazirites[i] when the time of their consecration has been completed: they shall be brought to the entrance of the tent of meeting, 14and they shall offer their gift to the LORD, one male lamb a year old without blemish as a burnt offering, one ewe lamb a year old without blemish as a sin offering, one ram without blemish as an offering of well-being, 15and a basket of unleavened bread, cakes of choice flour mixed with oil and unleavened wafers spread with oil, with their grain offering and their drink offerings. 16The priest shall present them before the LORD and offer their sin offering and burnt offering, 17and shall offer the ram as a sacrifice of well-being to the LORD, with the basket of unleavened bread; the priest also shall make the accompanying grain offering and drink offering. 18Then the nazirites[i] shall shave the consecrated head at the entrance of the tent of meeting, and shall take the hair from the consecrated head and put it on the fire under the sacrifice of well-being. 19The priest shall take the shoulder of the ram, when it is boiled, and one unleavened cake out of the basket, and one unleavened wafer, and shall put them in the palms of the nazirites,[i] after they have shaved the consecrated head. 20Then the priest shall elevate them as an elevation offering before the LORD; they are a holy portion for the priest, together with the breast that is elevated and the thigh that is offered. After that the nazirites[i] may drink wine.

21 This is the law for the nazirites[i] who take a vow. Their offering to the LORD must be in accordance with the nazirite[h] vow, apart from what else they

*h* That is *one separated* or *one consecrated*
*i* That is *those separated* or *those consecrated*

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1 Sam 1.11; Am 2.11–12). **3–5:** Abstinence from the fruit of the vine (Jer ch 35; compare Lk 1.15), as well as from vinegar made from soured intoxicants, dramatizes Israel's separation from Canaanite culture (compare Gen 9.21). For this restriction, as well as the law that *no razor shall come upon the head,* see the Samson story (especially Judg 13.4–5). **6–7:** Compare Lev 21.1–12.

**6.9–12:** Accidental contact with a corpse defiles the *consecrated head,* i.e. the long locks which evidence one's holy separation (v. 7b) so that the vow must be initiated again.

**6.13–20:** The law for terminating the vow. **14–17:** For the kinds of sacrifice, see Lev chs 1–7. **18:** Hair offerings were not uncommon in ancient religion. **20:** *Elevation offering,* see Ex 29.24 n.

can afford. In accordance with whatever vow they take, so they shall do, following the law for their consecration.

22 The LORD spoke to Moses, saying:
23 Speak to Aaron and his sons, saying, Thus you shall bless the Israelites: You shall say to them,

24 The LORD bless you and keep you;
25 the LORD make his face to shine
upon you, and be gracious
to you;
26 the LORD lift up his countenance
upon you, and give you
peace.

27 So they shall put my name on the Israelites, and I will bless them.

7 On the day when Moses had finished setting up the tabernacle, and had anointed and consecrated it with all its furnishings, and had anointed and consecrated the altar with all its utensils, 2 the leaders of Israel, heads of their ancestral houses, the leaders of the tribes, who were over those who were enrolled, made offerings. 3 They brought their offerings before the LORD, six covered wagons and twelve oxen, a wagon for every two of the leaders, and for each one an ox; they presented them before the tabernacle. 4 Then the LORD said to Moses: 5 Accept these from them, that they may be used in doing the service of the tent of meeting, and give them to the Levites, to each according to his service. 6 So Moses took the wagons and the oxen, and gave them to the Levites. 7 Two wagons and four oxen he gave to the Gershonites, according to their service; 8 and four wagons and eight oxen he gave to the Merarites, according to their service, under the direction of Ithamar son of Aaron the priest. 9 But to the Kohathites he gave none, because they were charged with the care of the holy things that had to be carried on the shoulders.

10 The leaders also presented offerings for the dedication of the altar at the time when it was anointed; the leaders presented their offering before the altar. 11 The LORD said to Moses: They shall present their offerings, one leader each day, for the dedication of the altar.

12 The one who presented his offering the first day was Nahshon son of Amminadab, of the tribe of Judah; 13 his offering was one silver plate weighing one hundred thirty shekels, one silver basin weighing seventy shekels, according to the shekel of the sanctuary, both of them full of choice flour mixed with oil for a grain offering; 14 one golden dish weighing ten shekels, full of incense; 15 one young bull, one ram, one male lamb a year old, for a burnt offering; 16 one male goat for a sin offering; 17 and for the sacrifice of well-being, two oxen, five rams, five male goats, and five male lambs a year old. This was the offering of Nahshon son of Amminadab.

18 On the second day Nethanel son of Zuar, the leader of Issachar, presented an offering; 19 he presented for his offering one silver plate weighing one hundred thirty shekels, one silver basin weighing seventy shekels, according to the shekel of the sanctuary, both of them full of choice flour mixed with oil for a grain offering; 20 one golden dish weighing ten

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**6.22–27: The Aaronic benediction.** This blessing, whose wording is very ancient, was undoubtedly used in the Jerusalem temple, usually at the conclusion of a service of worship (see Lev 9.22). **25–26**: The shining *face* (or "presence"; see Ex 33.14 n.) signifies that the holy God graciously turns toward the people in concern and favor (Pss 4.6; 31.16; 80.3); the expression *lift up his countenance* also signifies divine favor (Pss 44.3; 89.15). *Peace,* i.e. well-being, welfare, both material and spiritual. **27**: On the meaning of the *name,* see Gen 32.27 n.; Ex 3.13–15.

**7.1–89: Offerings from the tribal leaders** for the service of the tabernacle and the dedication of the altar. **1**: The date suddenly shifts back to Ex 40.17 (compare Num 1.1), showing that a new block of tradition begins here. **2–9**: The leaders present wagons for transporting the tabernacle equipment, though the Kohathites, for the sake of precaution, had to carry the *holy things* on the shoulder (4.1–15).

**7.12–83**: The tribal names are taken from the old list found in 1.5–15 (compare 10.14–27). The dedication offering presented on successive days was the same.

shekels, full of incense; 21 one young bull, one ram, one male lamb a year old, as a burnt offering; 22 one male goat as a sin offering; 23 and for the sacrifice of well-being, two oxen, five rams, five male goats, and five male lambs a year old. This was the offering of Nethanel son of Zuar.

24 On the third day Eliab son of Helon, the leader of the Zebulunites: 25 his offering was one silver plate weighing one hundred thirty shekels, one silver basin weighing seventy shekels, according to the shekel of the sanctuary, both of them full of choice flour mixed with oil for a grain offering; 26 one golden dish weighing ten shekels, full of incense; 27 one young bull, one ram, one male lamb a year old, for a burnt offering; 28 one male goat for a sin offering; 29 and for the sacrifice of well-being, two oxen, five rams, five male goats, and five male lambs a year old. This was the offering of Eliab son of Helon.

30 On the fourth day Elizur son of Shedeur, the leader of the Reubenites: 31 his offering was one silver plate weighing one hundred thirty shekels, one silver basin weighing seventy shekels, according to the shekel of the sanctuary, both of them full of choice flour mixed with oil for a grain offering; 32 one golden dish weighing ten shekels, full of incense; 33 one young bull, one ram, one male lamb a year old, for a burnt offering; 34 one male goat for a sin offering; 35 and for the sacrifice of well-being, two oxen, five rams, five male goats, and five male lambs a year old. This was the offering of Elizur son of Shedeur.

36 On the fifth day Shelumiel son of Zurishaddai, the leader of the Simeonites: 37 his offering was one silver plate weighing one hundred thirty shekels, one silver basin weighing seventy shekels, according to the shekel of the sanctuary, both of them full of choice flour mixed with oil for a grain offering; 38 one golden dish weighing ten shekels, full of incense; 39 one young bull, one ram, one male lamb a year old, for a burnt offering; 40 one male goat for a sin offering; 41 and for the sacrifice of well-being, two oxen, five rams, five male goats, and five male lambs a year old. This was the offering of Shelumiel son of Zurishaddai.

42 On the sixth day Eliasaph son of Deuel, the leader of the Gadites: 43 his offering was one silver plate weighing one hundred thirty shekels, one silver basin weighing seventy shekels, according to the shekel of the sanctuary, both of them full of choice flour mixed with oil for a grain offering; 44 one golden dish weighing ten shekels, full of incense; 45 one young bull, one ram, one male lamb a year old, for a burnt offering; 46 one male goat for a sin offering; 47 and for the sacrifice of well-being, two oxen, five rams, five male goats, and five male lambs a year old. This was the offering of Eliasaph son of Deuel.

48 On the seventh day Elishama son of Ammihud, the leader of the Ephraimites: 49 his offering was one silver plate weighing one hundred thirty shekels, one silver basin weighing seventy shekels, according to the shekel of the sanctuary, both of them full of choice flour mixed with oil for a grain offering; 50 one golden dish weighing ten shekels, full of incense; 51 one young bull, one ram, one male lamb a year old, for a burnt offering; 52 one male goat for a sin offering; 53 and for the sacrifice of well-being, two oxen, five rams, five male goats, and five male lambs a year old. This was the offering of Elishama son of Ammihud.

54 On the eighth day Gamaliel son of Pedahzur, the leader of the Manassites: 55 his offering was one silver plate weighing one hundred thirty shekels, one silver basin weighing seventy shekels, according to the shekel of the sanctuary, both of them full of choice flour mixed with oil for a grain offering; 56 one golden dish weighing ten shekels, full of incense; 57 one young bull, one ram, one male lamb a year old, for a burnt offering; 58 one male goat for a sin offering; 59 and for the sacrifice of well-being, two oxen, five rams, five male goats, and five male lambs a year old. This was the offering of Gamaliel son of Pedahzur.

60 On the ninth day Abidan son of Gideoni, the leader of the Benjaminites:

61 his offering was one silver plate weighing one hundred thirty shekels, one silver basin weighing seventy shekels, according to the shekel of the sanctuary, both of them full of choice flour mixed with oil for a grain offering; 62 one golden dish weighing ten shekels, full of incense; 63 one young bull, one ram, one male lamb a year old, for a burnt offering; 64 one male goat for a sin offering; 65 and for the sacrifice of well-being, two oxen, five rams, five male goats, and five male lambs a year old. This was the offering of Abidan son of Gideoni.

66 On the tenth day Ahiezer son of Ammishaddai, the leader of the Danites: 67 his offering was one silver plate weighing one hundred thirty shekels, one silver basin weighing seventy shekels, according to the shekel of the sanctuary, both of them full of choice flour mixed with oil for a grain offering; 68 one golden dish weighing ten shekels, full of incense; 69 one young bull, one ram, one male lamb a year old, for a burnt offering; 70 one male goat for a sin offering; 71 and for the sacrifice of well-being, two oxen, five rams, five male goats, and five male lambs a year old. This was the offering of Ahiezer son of Ammishaddai.

72 On the eleventh day Pagiel son of Ochran, the leader of the Asherites: 73 his offering was one silver plate weighing one hundred thirty shekels, one silver basin weighing seventy shekels, according to the shekel of the sanctuary, both of them full of choice flour mixed with oil for a grain offering; 74 one golden dish weighing ten shekels, full of incense; 75 one young bull, one ram, one male lamb a year old, for a burnt offering; 76 one male goat for a sin offering; 77 and for the sacrifice of well-being, two oxen, five rams, five male goats, and five male lambs a year old. This was the offering of Pagiel son of Ochran.

78 On the twelfth day Ahira son of Enan, the leader of the Naphtalites: 79 his offering was one silver plate weighing one hundred thirty shekels, one silver basin weighing seventy shekels, according to the shekel of the sanctuary, both of them full of choice flour mixed with oil for a grain offering; 80 one golden dish weighing ten shekels, full of incense; 81 one young bull, one ram, one male lamb a year old, for a burnt offering; 82 one male goat for a sin offering; 83 and for the sacrifice of well-being, two oxen, five rams, five male goats, and five male lambs a year old. This was the offering of Ahira son of Enan.

84 This was the dedication offering for the altar, at the time when it was anointed, from the leaders of Israel: twelve silver plates, twelve silver basins, twelve golden dishes, 85 each silver plate weighing one hundred thirty shekels and each basin seventy, all the silver of the vessels two thousand four hundred shekels according to the shekel of the sanctuary, 86 the twelve golden dishes, full of incense, weighing ten shekels apiece according to the shekel of the sanctuary, all the gold of the dishes being one hundred twenty shekels; 87 all the livestock for the burnt offering twelve bulls, twelve rams, twelve male lambs a year old, with their grain offering; and twelve male goats for a sin offering; 88 and all the livestock for the sacrifice of well-being twenty-four bulls, the rams sixty, the male goats sixty, the male lambs a year old sixty. This was the dedication offering for the altar, after it was anointed.

89 When Moses went into the tent of meeting to speak with the LORD,[j] he would hear the voice speaking to him from above the mercy seat[k] that was on the ark of the covenant[l] from between the two cherubim; thus it spoke to him.

8 The LORD spoke to Moses, saying: 2 Speak to Aaron and say to him:

*j* Heb *him* *k* Or *the cover* *l* Or *treaty*, or *testimony*; Heb *eduth*

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**7.85**: *The shekel of the sanctuary,* see Ex 30.13 n. **89**: Ex 25.22.

**8.1–26**: **The consecration of the Levites. 1–4**: Ex 25.31–40; 27.20–21; Lev 24.2–

When you set up the lamps, the seven lamps shall give light in front of the lampstand. 3Aaron did so; he set up its lamps to give light in front of the lampstand, as the LORD had commanded Moses. 4Now this was how the lampstand was made, out of hammered work of gold. From its base to its flowers, it was hammered work; according to the pattern that the LORD had shown Moses, so he made the lampstand.

5 The LORD spoke to Moses, saying: 6Take the Levites from among the Israelites and cleanse them. 7Thus you shall do to them, to cleanse them: sprinkle the water of purification on them, have them shave their whole body with a razor and wash their clothes, and so cleanse themselves. 8Then let them take a young bull and its grain offering of choice flour mixed with oil, and you shall take another young bull for a sin offering. 9You shall bring the Levites before the tent of meeting, and assemble the whole congregation of the Israelites. 10When you bring the Levites before the LORD, the Israelites shall lay their hands on the Levites, 11and Aaron shall present the Levites before the LORD as an elevation offering from the Israelites, that they may do the service of the LORD. 12The Levites shall lay their hands on the heads of the bulls, and he shall offer the one for a sin offering and the other for a burnt offering to the LORD, to make atonement for the Levites. 13Then you shall have the Levites stand before Aaron and his sons, and you shall present them as an elevation offering to the LORD.

14 Thus you shall separate the Levites from among the other Israelites, and the Levites shall be mine. 15Thereafter the Levites may go in to do service at the tent of meeting, once you have cleansed them and presented them as an elevation offering. 16For they are unreservedly given to me from among the Israelites; I have taken them for myself, in place of all that open the womb, the firstborn of all the Israelites. 17For all the firstborn among the Israelites are mine, both human and animal. On the day that I struck down all the firstborn in the land of Egypt I consecrated them for myself, 18but I have taken the Levites in place of all the firstborn among the Israelites. 19Moreover, I have given the Levites as a gift to Aaron and his sons from among the Israelites, to do the service for the Israelites at the tent of meeting, and to make atonement for the Israelites, in order that there may be no plague among the Israelites for coming too close to the sanctuary.

20 Moses and Aaron and the whole congregation of the Israelites did with the Levites accordingly; the Israelites did with the Levites just as the LORD had commanded Moses concerning them. 21The Levites purified themselves from sin and washed their clothes; then Aaron presented them as an elevation offering before the LORD, and Aaron made atonement for them to cleanse them. 22Thereafter the Levites went in to do their service in the tent of meeting in attendance on Aaron and his sons. As the LORD had commanded Moses concerning the Levites, so they did with them.

23 The LORD spoke to Moses, saying: 24This applies to the Levites: from twenty-five years old and upward they shall begin to do duty in the service of the

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4. The lighting of the lamps is the prerogative of the Aaronic priests. **4**: *The pattern,* see Ex 25.9.

**8.5–22**: The Levites are to be consecrated for their office by a special purification ceremony (compare the ordination of the Aaronic priests, Lev ch 8). **7**: *The water of purification* (compare Ezek 36.25) refers to ceremonial cleansing. Shaving the hair and washing garments were rites of purification. **10–11**: By the laying on of hands (Lev 1.4) the people identify themselves with the Levites who are "sacrificed" instead of their firstborn (vv. 16–17; 3.13). *Elevation offering* is used symbolically to indicate that the Levites belong to Aaron and his sons just as the elevation sacrifice belongs to the priests (see Ex 29.24 n.). **12**: *Make atonement,* see Ex 29.35–37 n.

**8.16–19**: 3.5–13. The Levites, by their position in the camp (1.52–53; 3.38), shielded the people from the dreadful effects of holiness, which could cause a *plague* or other calamity (1 Sam chs 5–6). **24**: 4.3.

tent of meeting; [25]and from the age of fifty years they shall retire from the duty of the service and serve no more. [26]They may assist their brothers in the tent of meeting in carrying out their duties, but they shall perform no service. Thus you shall do with the Levites in assigning their duties.

9 The LORD spoke to Moses in the wilderness of Sinai, in the first month of the second year after they had come out of the land of Egypt, saying: [2]Let the Israelites keep the passover at its appointed time. [3]On the fourteenth day of this month, at twilight,[m] you shall keep it at its appointed time; according to all its statutes and all its regulations you shall keep it. [4]So Moses told the Israelites that they should keep the passover. [5]They kept the passover in the first month, on the fourteenth day of the month, at twilight,[m] in the wilderness of Sinai. Just as the LORD had commanded Moses, so the Israelites did. [6]Now there were certain people who were unclean through touching a corpse, so that they could not keep the passover on that day. They came before Moses and Aaron on that day, [7]and said to him, "Although we are unclean through touching a corpse, why must we be kept from presenting the LORD's offering at its appointed time among the Israelites?" [8]Moses spoke to them, "Wait, so that I may hear what the LORD will command concerning you."

9 The LORD spoke to Moses, saying: [10]Speak to the Israelites, saying: Anyone of you or your descendants who is unclean through touching a corpse, or is away on a journey, shall still keep the passover to the LORD. [11]In the second month on the fourteenth day, at twilight,[m] they shall keep it; they shall eat it with unleavened bread and bitter herbs. [12]They shall leave none of it until morning, nor break a bone of it; according to all the statute for the passover they shall keep it. [13]But anyone who is clean and is not on a journey, and yet refrains from keeping the passover, shall be cut off from the people for not presenting the LORD's offering at its appointed time; such a one shall bear the consequences for the sin. [14]Any alien residing among you who wishes to keep the passover to the LORD shall do so according to the statute of the passover and according to its regulation; you shall have one statute for both the resident alien and the native.

15 On the day the tabernacle was set up, the cloud covered the tabernacle, the tent of the covenant;[n] and from evening until morning it was over the tabernacle, having the appearance of fire. [16]It was always so: the cloud covered it by day[o] and the appearance of fire by night. [17]Whenever the cloud lifted from over the tent, then the Israelites would set out; and in the place where the cloud settled down, there the Israelites would camp. [18]At the command of the LORD the Israelites would set out, and at the command of the LORD they would camp. As long as the cloud rested over the tabernacle, they would remain in camp. [19]Even when the cloud continued over the tabernacle many days, the Israelites would keep the charge of the LORD, and would not set out. [20]Sometimes the cloud

*m* Heb *between the two evenings* *n* Or *treaty*, or *testimony*; Heb *eduth* *o* Gk Syr Vg: Heb lacks *by day*

**9.1–10.10: Other events and instructions. 1–14:** Supplement to the laws concerning the passover. **1:** Here, as in 7.1, the month is that of Ex 40.17 rather than the date assumed for chs 1–6. **2–4:** Ex 12.1–13, 21–27. **6–7:** On uncleanness through touching a corpse, see Lev 21.1–12. **8:** This verse shows that Israel's law was not fixed and unchangeable, but developed as the people faced new situations (15.23).

**9.10:** The case of one who is *away on a journey* apparently presupposes settlement in Canaan and goes beyond the case at hand (v. 7). **11:** In these cases, the passover may be kept one month late. **13:** *Cut off*, see Lev 7.20 n.

**9.15–23:** On the fiery cloud, see Ex 14.24; 40.34–38 n. These verses (compare 14.14) presuppose Israel's march, rather than the sojourn at Sinai and thus anticipate 10.11–13. **15:** Ex 40.34–38.

would remain a few days over the tabernacle, and according to the command of the LORD they would remain in camp; then according to the command of the LORD they would set out. 21 Sometimes the cloud would remain from evening until morning; and when the cloud lifted in the morning, they would set out, or if it continued for a day and a night, when the cloud lifted they would set out. 22 Whether it was two days, or a month, or a longer time, that the cloud continued over the tabernacle, resting upon it, the Israelites would remain in camp and would not set out; but when it lifted they would set out. 23 At the command of the LORD they would camp, and at the command of the LORD they would set out. They kept the charge of the LORD, at the command of the LORD by Moses.

10 The LORD spoke to Moses, saying: 2 Make two silver trumpets; you shall make them of hammered work; and you shall use them for summoning the congregation, and for breaking camp. 3 When both are blown, the whole congregation shall assemble before you at the entrance of the tent of meeting. 4 But if only one is blown, then the leaders, the heads of the tribes of Israel, shall assemble before you. 5 When you blow an alarm, the camps on the east side shall set out; 6 when you blow a second alarm, the camps on the south side shall set out. An alarm is to be blown whenever they are to set out. 7 But when the assembly is to be gathered, you shall blow, but you shall not sound an alarm. 8 The sons of Aaron, the priests, shall blow the trumpets; this shall be a perpetual institution for you throughout your generations. 9 When you go to war in your land against the adversary who oppresses you, you shall sound an alarm with the trumpets, so that you may be remembered before the LORD your God and be saved from your enemies. 10 Also on your days of rejoicing, at your appointed festivals, and at the beginnings of your months, you shall blow the trumpets over your burnt offerings and over your sacrifices of well-being; they shall serve as a reminder on your behalf before the LORD your God: I am the LORD your God.

11 In the second year, in the second month, on the twentieth day of the month, the cloud lifted from over the tabernacle of the covenant.[p] 12 Then the Israelites set out by stages from the wilderness of Sinai, and the cloud settled down in the wilderness of Paran. 13 They set out for the first time at the command of the LORD by Moses. 14 The standard of the camp of Judah set out first, company by company, and over the whole company was Nahshon son of Amminadab. 15 Over the company of the tribe of Issachar was Nethanel son of Zuar; 16 and over the company of the tribe of Zebulun was Eliab son of Helon.

17 Then the tabernacle was taken down, and the Gershonites and the Merarites, who carried the tabernacle, set out. 18 Next the standard of the camp of Reuben set out, company by company; and over the whole company was Elizur son of Shedeur. 19 Over the company of the tribe of Simeon was Shelumiel son of Zurishaddai, 20 and over the company of the tribe of Gad was Eliasaph son of Deuel.

21 Then the Kohathites, who carried the holy things, set out; and the tabernacle was set up before their arrival. 22 Next the standard of the Ephraimite camp set out, company by company, and over the whole company was Elishama son of

p Or *treaty*, or *testimony*; Heb *eduth*

**10.1–10**: Sounding the trumpets. **5–7**: An *alarm* was a military call (v. 9; Am 3.6), as distinguished from the trumpet that proclaims assembly (Lev ch 23, especially v. 24). **10**: *The beginnings of your months,* see 28.11–15 n.

**10.11–36**: **Israel on the march.** The people departed from Sinai with signs of the LORD's accompanying presence. **11**: The date was eleven months after the arrival at Sinai (Ex 19.1) or nineteen days after the census (Num 1.1). **12**: *By stages,* see ch 33. **13–28**: On the order of march and Levitical tasks, see chs 2–3.

Ammihud. 23Over the company of the tribe of Manasseh was Gamaliel son of Pedahzur, 24and over the company of the tribe of Benjamin was Abidan son of Gideoni.

25 Then the standard of the camp of Dan, acting as the rear guard of all the camps, set out, company by company, and over the whole company was Ahiezer son of Ammishaddai. 26Over the company of the tribe of Asher was Pagiel son of Ochran, 27and over the company of the tribe of Naphtali was Ahira son of Enan. 28This was the order of march of the Israelites, company by company, when they set out.

29 Moses said to Hobab son of Reuel the Midianite, Moses' father-in-law, "We are setting out for the place of which the LORD said, 'I will give it to you'; come with us, and we will treat you well; for the LORD has promised good to Israel." 30But he said to him, "I will not go, but I will go back to my own land and to my kindred." 31He said, "Do not leave us, for you know where we should camp in the wilderness, and you will serve as eyes for us. 32Moreover, if you go with us, whatever good the LORD does for us, the same we will do for you."

33 So they set out from the mount of the LORD three days' journey with the ark of the covenant of the LORD going before them three days' journey, to seek out a resting place for them, 34the cloud of the LORD being over them by day when they set out from the camp.

35 Whenever the ark set out, Moses would say,

"Arise, O LORD, let your enemies
be scattered,
and your foes flee before you."

36And whenever it came to rest, he would say,

"Return, O LORD of the ten
thousand thousands of
Israel."[q]

11 Now when the people complained in the hearing of the LORD about their misfortunes, the LORD heard it and his anger was kindled. Then the fire of the LORD burned against them, and consumed some outlying parts of the camp. 2But the people cried out to Moses; and Moses prayed to the LORD, and the fire abated. 3So that place was called Taberah,[r] because the fire of the LORD burned against them.

4 The rabble among them had a strong craving; and the Israelites also wept again, and said, "If only we had meat to eat! 5We remember the fish we used to eat in Egypt for nothing, the cucumbers, the melons, the leeks, the onions, and the garlic; 6but now our strength is dried up, and there is nothing at all but this manna to look at."

7 Now the manna was like coriander seed, and its color was like the color of gum resin. 8The people went around and gathered it, ground it in mills or beat it in mortars, then boiled it in pots and made cakes of it; and the taste of it was like the taste of cakes baked with oil. 9When the dew fell on the camp in the night, the manna would fall with it.

*q* Meaning of Heb uncertain *r* That is *Burning*

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**10.29–36**: Here old epic traditions reappear after a long, unbroken sequence of priestly material (Ex chs 35–40; Lev; Num 1.1–10.28). **29**: *Hobab,* otherwise known as Jethro (Ex 2.18 n.), was leader of the Kenites, a Midianite clan who were allies during Israel's early history (Ex ch 18; Judg 1.16; 4.11; 5.24).

**10.33–36**: Ancient tradition about the ark (see Ex 25.10–22 n.). **33**: This verse should not be interpreted to mean that the ark went ahead *three days' journey;* rather, it went *before* them (compare v. 21) during this time of travel from Sinai. **35–36**: The "song to the ark," a very ancient piece of poetry, reflects the view that the ark was a throne upon which the LORD, the Divine Warrior, was seated invisibly while waging holy war (Josh chs 3–4; 1 Sam 4.3–22; compare Ps 24.7–10).

**11.1–35: Israel's complaining in the wilderness. 1**: See Ex 15.24 n. The *fire of the LORD* may refer to some natural phenomenon like lightning that was interpreted as God's consuming holiness (compare Lev 10.2). **4–15**: Not satisfied with the manna, the people craved seasoned meat dishes such as they once

***The people crave meat***

10 Moses heard the people weeping throughout their families, all at the entrances of their tents. Then the LORD became very angry, and Moses was displeased. 11 So Moses said to the LORD, "Why have you treated your servant so badly? Why have I not found favor in your sight, that you lay the burden of all this people on me? 12 Did I conceive all this people? Did I give birth to them, that you should say to me, 'Carry them in your bosom, as a nurse carries a sucking child,' to the land that you promised on oath to their ancestors? 13 Where am I to get meat to give to all this people? For they come weeping to me and say, 'Give us meat to eat!' 14 I am not able to carry all this people alone, for they are too heavy for me. 15 If this is the way you are going to treat me, put me to death at once—if I have found favor in your sight—and do not let me see my misery."

16 So the LORD said to Moses, "Gather for me seventy of the elders of Israel, whom you know to be the elders of the people and officers over them; bring them to the tent of meeting, and have them take their place there with you. 17 I will come down and talk with you there; and I will take some of the spirit that is on you and put it on them; and they shall bear the burden of the people along with you so that you will not bear it all by yourself. 18 And say to the people: Consecrate yourselves for tomorrow, and you shall eat meat; for you have wailed in the hearing of the LORD, saying, 'If only we had meat to eat! Surely it was better for us in Egypt.' Therefore the LORD will give you meat, and you shall eat. 19 You shall eat not only one day, or two days, or five days, or ten days, or twenty days, 20 but for a whole month—until it comes out of your nostrils and becomes loathsome to you—because you have rejected the LORD who is among you, and have wailed before him, saying, 'Why did we ever leave Egypt?' " 21 But Moses said, "The people I am with number six hundred thousand on foot; and you say, 'I will give them meat, that they may eat for a whole month'! 22 Are there enough flocks and herds to slaughter for them? Are there enough fish in the sea to catch for them?" 23 The LORD said to Moses, "Is the LORD's power limited?[s] Now you shall see whether my word will come true for you or not."

24 So Moses went out and told the people the words of the LORD; and he gathered seventy elders of the people, and placed them all around the tent. 25 Then the LORD came down in the cloud and spoke to him, and took some of the spirit that was on him and put it on the seventy elders; and when the spirit rested upon them, they prophesied. But they did not do so again.

26 Two men remained in the camp,

[s] Heb *LORD's hand too short?*

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enjoyed in Egypt (Ex 16.3). **4**: *Rabble,* see Ex 12.38 n. *Wept again,* see Ex 16.2–3. **7–9**: *The manna,* see Ex 16.14–21, 31.

**11.11–15**: In this chapter two motifs have been woven together: one deals with the miraculous provision of wilderness food, the other with Moses' heavy responsibilities as leader (vv. 11–12, 14–17, 24–30). **11–12**: On Moses' impatience, see Ex 17.2–4. **14**: On the *too heavy* burden, see Ex 18.17–18.

**11.16–17** (also **24–25**): Moses' burden was lightened by investing seventy elders with power to assist him (Ex 18.21–23; see Deut 1.9–18). This account presupposes the old tradition about the *tent of meeting* (Ex 33.7–11). **17**: Moses is regarded as a charismatic leader, endowed with the divine spirit (compare 24.2; Judg 11.29). The transfer of a portion of the spirit to the elders (2 Kings 2.9–10) indicates that the latter are subordinate to Moses, who stands in a close relation to God (Ex 33.11). **18–23**: Continuation of the food tradition. **21**: Ex 12.37. The story stresses the LORD's miraculous power to support an extremely large population in the wilderness. **25**: *They prophesied,* because the divine spirit was put upon them. Such ecstatic prophecy, familiar in Israel's early prophetic movement (1 Sam 10.6, 10–13; 1 Kings 22.6, 10–12), probably shows Canaanite influence.

**11.26–30**: Two other elders received the gift of prophecy even though they stayed in the camp. **26**: Here it is assumed that the tent of meeting was outside the camp (Ex 33.7; see

one named Eldad, and the other named Medad, and the spirit rested on them; they were among those registered, but they had not gone out to the tent, and so they prophesied in the camp. 27And a young man ran and told Moses, "Eldad and Medad are prophesying in the camp." 28And Joshua son of Nun, the assistant of Moses, one of his chosen men,[t] said, "My lord Moses, stop them!" 29But Moses said to him, "Are you jealous for my sake? Would that all the LORD's people were prophets, and that the LORD would put his spirit on them!" 30And Moses and the elders of Israel returned to the camp.

31 Then a wind went out from the LORD, and it brought quails from the sea and let them fall beside the camp, about a day's journey on this side and a day's journey on the other side, all around the camp, about two cubits deep on the ground. 32So the people worked all that day and night and all the next day, gathering the quails; the least anyone gathered was ten homers; and they spread them out for themselves all around the camp. 33But while the meat was still between their teeth, before it was consumed, the anger of the LORD was kindled against the people, and the LORD struck the people with a very great plague. 34So that place was called Kibroth-hattaavah,[u] because there they buried the people who had the craving. 35From Kibroth-hattaavah the people journeyed to Hazeroth.

*Aaron and Miriam jealous of Moses*

12 While they were at Hazeroth, Miriam and Aaron spoke against Moses because of the Cushite woman whom he had married (for he had indeed married a Cushite woman); 2and they said, "Has the LORD spoken only through Moses? Has he not spoken through us also?" And the LORD heard it. 3Now the man Moses was very humble,[v] more so than anyone else on the face of the earth. 4Suddenly the LORD said to Moses, Aaron, and Miriam, "Come out, you three, to the tent of meeting." So the three of them came out. 5Then the LORD came down in a pillar of cloud, and stood at the entrance of the tent, and called Aaron and Miriam; and they both came forward. 6And he said, "Hear my words:

When there are prophets among you,
I the LORD make myself known to them in visions;
I speak to them in dreams.
7 Not so with my servant Moses;
he is entrusted with all my house.
8 With him I speak face to face—clearly, not in riddles;
and he beholds the form of the LORD.

Why then were you not afraid to speak against my servant Moses?" 9And the an-

*t* Or *of Moses from his youth* *u* That is *Graves of craving* *v* Or *devout*

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Num 2.2 n.). *Registered,* i.e. enrolled as representatives of the community.

**11.31–35:** Continuation of vv. 18–23. **31–35:** Like the manna, the quails (Ex 16.13) are a natural phenomenon of the desert. They migrate over the region in great numbers and, when exhausted, are easily caught. **31:** *A wind,* sent by God (compare Ex 14.21), brought the quails from *the sea,* the Gulf of Aqaba. **33:** A sickness which resulted from eating quails is interpreted as divine judgment upon the people's faithlessness. A *plague* was an act of God; see Lev 26.21; Deut 28.27; 1 Sam 4.8.

**12.1–16: A dispute over Moses' authority as leader. 1:** Miriam, mentioned here and in 20.1 and 26.59 was undoubtedly a major leader in ancient Israel (see Ex 15.19–21 n.; Mic 6.4). Together Miriam and Aaron criticized Moses for marrying *the Cushite woman,* a reference to Zipporah, a Midianite (Ex 2.21). The term Cushite apparently includes Midianites and other Arabic peoples (Hab 3.7). The story reflects a power struggle in the community, perhaps during the monarchy. **2:** The question is directed against Moses' position as covenant mediator and leader of the people (Ex 19.9; 33.11). **3:** *Humble,* i.e. before God (Ex 3.11); see note *v.* This verse is an age-old stumbling block to the belief that Moses wrote the whole Pentateuch. **4:** See 11.26 n. **6–8:** Normally the LORD com-

ger of the LORD was kindled against them, and he departed.

10 When the cloud went away from over the tent, Miriam had become leprous,[w] as white as snow. And Aaron turned towards Miriam and saw that she was leprous. 11 Then Aaron said to Moses, "Oh, my lord, do not punish us[x] for a sin that we have so foolishly committed. 12 Do not let her be like one stillborn, whose flesh is half consumed when it comes out of its mother's womb." 13 And Moses cried to the LORD, "O God, please heal her." 14 But the LORD said to Moses, "If her father had but spit in her face, would she not bear her shame for seven days? Let her be shut out of the camp for seven days, and after that she may be brought in again." 15 So Miriam was shut out of the camp for seven days; and the people did not set out on the march until Miriam had been brought in again. 16 After that the people set out from Hazeroth, and camped in the wilderness of Paran.

13 The LORD said to Moses, 2 "Send men to spy out the land of Canaan, which I am giving to the Israelites; from each of their ancestral tribes you shall send a man, every one a leader among them." 3 So Moses sent them from the wilderness of Paran, according to the command of the LORD, all of them leading men among the Israelites. 4 These were their names: From the tribe of Reuben, Shammua son of Zaccur; 5 from the tribe of Simeon, Shaphat son of Hori; 6 from the tribe of Judah, Caleb son of Jephunneh; 7 from the tribe of Issachar, Igal son of Joseph; 8 from the tribe of Ephraim, Hoshea son of Nun; 9 from the tribe of Benjamin, Palti son of Raphu; 10 from the tribe of Zebulun, Gaddiel son of Sodi; 11 from the tribe of Joseph (that is, from the tribe of Manasseh), Gaddi son of Susi; 12 from the tribe of Dan, Ammiel son of Gemalli; 13 from the tribe of Asher, Sethur son of Michael; 14 from the tribe of Naphtali, Nahbi son of Vophsi; 15 from the tribe of Gad, Geuel son of Machi. 16 These were the names of the men whom Moses sent to spy out the land. And Moses changed the name of Hoshea son of Nun to Joshua.

17 Moses sent them to spy out the land of Canaan, and said to them, "Go up there into the Negeb, and go up into the hill country, 18 and see what the land is like, and whether the people who live in it are strong or weak, whether they are few or many, 19 and whether the land they live in is good or bad, and whether the towns that they live in are unwalled or fortified, 20 and whether the land is rich or poor, and whether there are trees in it or not. Be bold, and bring some of the fruit of the land." Now it was the season of the first ripe grapes.

21 So they went up and spied out the land from the wilderness of Zin to Re-

*w* A term for several skin diseases; precise meaning uncertain *x* Heb *do not lay sin upon us*

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municates with prophets indirectly through dreams or visions (see Deut 13.1 n.), but to Moses God speaks directly (see Ex 33.11 n.); he even *beholds the form of the* LORD (compare Ex 33.17–23).

**12.10**: *Leprous,* probably not leprosy but a skin disease of some sort (see Lev 13.1–8; Deut 24.8–9). **11–13**: Strangely, no explanation is given for the punishment falling only upon Miriam, even though Aaron and Moses show concern for her. **14**: The punishment is severe: the defilement of being spat upon by her father, the sign of a curse (Deut 25.9). Since Miriam was known to be a prophet (Ex 15.20), the story may reflect fear of a challenge to Moses' prophetic leadership (see 11.16–29) or tension between charismatic freedom and priestly order. **16**: The early traditions in 10.29–12.15 assume that Israel had not yet reached Paran (10.12).

**13.1–33**: **The reconnaissance of the land.** Twelve scouts brought back a majority report that formidable obstacles stood in the way of taking Canaan. **1–16**: Priestly tradition gives the names of the spies. The leaders are not the same as those of 1.5–15. **8**: *Hoshea,* an alternate form of Joshua (v. 16).

**13.21**: This priestly comment supposes that the spies surveyed the whole of Canaan from the area of Kadesh (see v. 26 n.) to Rehob (2 Sam 10.6) near Laish or Dan. *Lebo-hamath,* see 34.1–12 n. **22**: The mixed population of

hob, near Lebo-hamath. 22 They went up into the Negeb, and came to Hebron; and Ahiman, Sheshai, and Talmai, the Anakites, were there. (Hebron was built seven years before Zoan in Egypt.) 23 And they came to the Wadi Eshcol, and cut down from there a branch with a single cluster of grapes, and they carried it on a pole between two of them. They also brought some pomegranates and figs. 24 That place was called the Wadi Eshcol, [y] because of the cluster that the Israelites cut down from there.

25 At the end of forty days they returned from spying out the land. 26 And they came to Moses and Aaron and to all the congregation of the Israelites in the wilderness of Paran, at Kadesh; they brought back word to them and to all the congregation, and showed them the fruit of the land. 27 And they told him, "We came to the land to which you sent us; it flows with milk and honey, and this is its fruit. 28 Yet the people who live in the land are strong, and the towns are fortified and very large; and besides, we saw the descendants of Anak there. 29 The Amalekites live in the land of the Negeb; the Hittites, the Jebusites, and the Amorites live in the hill country; and the Canaanites live by the sea, and along the Jordan."

30 But Caleb quieted the people before Moses, and said, "Let us go up at once and occupy it, for we are well able to overcome it." 31 Then the men who had gone up with him said, "We are not able to go up against this people, for they are stronger than we." 32 So they brought to the Israelites an unfavorable report of the land that they had spied out, saying, "The land that we have gone through as spies is a land that devours its inhabitants; and all the people that we saw in it are of great size. 33 There we saw the Nephilim (the Anakites come from the Nephilim); and to ourselves we seemed like grasshoppers, and so we seemed to them."

14 Then all the congregation raised a loud cry, and the people wept that night. 2 And all the Israelites complained against Moses and Aaron; the whole congregation said to them, "Would that we had died in the land of Egypt! Or would that we had died in this wilderness! 3 Why is the LORD bringing us into this land to fall by the sword? Our wives and our little ones will become booty; would it not be better for us to go back to Egypt?" 4 So they said to one another, "Let us choose a captain, and go back to Egypt."

5 Then Moses and Aaron fell on their faces before all the assembly of the congregation of the Israelites. 6 And Joshua son of Nun and Caleb son of Jephunneh, who were among those who had spied out the land, tore their clothes 7 and said to all the congregation of the Israelites, "The land that we went through as spies is an exceedingly good land. 8 If the LORD is pleased with us, he will bring us into this land and give it to us, a land that flows with milk and honey. 9 Only, do not rebel against the LORD; and do not fear the people of the land, for they are no more than bread for us; their protec-

*y* That is *Cluster*

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Canaan included the tribes descended from Anak, regarded as an unusually tall people (vv. 32–33). An archaeological comment dates the history of Hebron in relation to the founding of Zoan or Tanis, rebuilt as the Hyksos capital about 1700 B.C. (see Ex 1.11 n.). **23:** *The Wadi Eshcol* was in the vicinity of Hebron, a famous grape-producing area. **26:** *Kadesh* (-barnea), an oasis on the border between the wilderness of Paran and the wilderness of Zin. The traditions found in 10.11–21.3 deal with this oasis (see Ex 17.7 n.), where Israel spent most of the forty year sojourn in the wilderness (see Introduction). **27:** *Milk and honey,* see Ex 3.8 n. **29:** *Amalekites,* see Ex 17.8 n. For the pre-Israelite inhabitants, see Ex 3.8. **33:** *Nephilim,* see Gen 6.4 n.

**14.1–45: Decision to attack.** The Israelites attempted a foolhardy attack on Canaan from the south and were repulsed. **1–4:** See Ex 16.3 n.

**14.5–6:** According to priestly tradition, Joshua sided with Caleb in appraising the situation (compare 13.30). **10:** On the LORD's *glory,* see Ex 16.6–7 n. **11:** The *signs* (see Ex

tion is removed from them, and the LORD is with us; do not fear them." [10]But the whole congregation threatened to stone them.

Then the glory of the LORD appeared at the tent of meeting to all the Israelites. [11]And the LORD said to Moses, "How long will this people despise me? And how long will they refuse to believe in me, in spite of all the signs that I have done among them? [12]I will strike them with pestilence and disinherit them, and I will make of you a nation greater and mightier than they."

13 But Moses said to the LORD, "Then the Egyptians will hear of it, for in your might you brought up this people from among them, [14]and they will tell the inhabitants of this land. They have heard that you, O LORD, are in the midst of this people; for you, O LORD, are seen face to face, and your cloud stands over them and you go in front of them, in a pillar of cloud by day and in a pillar of fire by night. [15]Now if you kill this people all at one time, then the nations who have heard about you will say, [16]'It is because the LORD was not able to bring this people into the land he swore to give them that he has slaughtered them in the wilderness.' [17]And now, therefore, let the power of the LORD be great in the way that you promised when you spoke, saying,

[18] 'The LORD is slow to anger,
and abounding in steadfast love,
forgiving iniquity and
transgression,
but by no means clearing the
guilty,
visiting the iniquity of the parents
upon the children
to the third and the fourth
generation.'

[19]Forgive the iniquity of this people according to the greatness of your steadfast love, just as you have pardoned this people, from Egypt even until now."

20 Then the LORD said, "I do forgive, just as you have asked; [21]nevertheless— as I live, and as all the earth shall be filled with the glory of the LORD— [22]none of the people who have seen my glory and the signs that I did in Egypt and in the wilderness, and yet have tested me these ten times and have not obeyed my voice, [23]shall see the land that I swore to give to their ancestors; none of those who despised me shall see it. [24]But my servant Caleb, because he has a different spirit and has followed me wholeheartedly, I will bring into the land into which he went, and his descendants shall possess it. [25]Now, since the Amalekites and the Canaanites live in the valleys, turn tomorrow and set out for the wilderness by the way to the Red Sea."[z]

26 And the LORD spoke to Moses and to Aaron, saying: [27]How long shall this wicked congregation complain against me? I have heard the complaints of the Israelites, which they complain against me. [28]Say to them, "As I live," says the LORD, "I will do to you the very things I heard you say: [29]your dead bodies shall fall in this very wilderness; and of all your number, included in the census, from twenty years old and upward, who have complained against me, [30]not one of you shall come into the land in which

[z] Or *Sea of Reeds*

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3.11–12 n.) were ambiguous evidences, not proofs of God's presence. **12**: Ex 32.9–10.

**14.13–19**: In his intercession, Moses again appeals to the LORD's honor and gracious ways (Ex 32.11–13). **15–16**: Other nations, owing to limitations of understanding, will conclude that the LORD does not have the power of deity (Deut 32.26–27), i.e. the power to deliver the people (1 Kings 18.20–40). **18**: A quotation from an old liturgical summary (see Ex 34.5–8). **20**: On the LORD's change of mind, see Ex 32.14 n. **22–23**: Since divine mercy does not exclude divine judgment (v. 18b), the verdict is that none of the present rebellious generation will enter Canaan. **24**: Caleb is expected in view of 13.30. Joshua is not mentioned because the account of his siding with Caleb (vv. 5–6, 26–38) comes from another tradition.

**14.26–38**: This priestly tradition interprets the forty years in the wilderness as a time of divine judgment. **29**: *Twenty years,* the age for beginning military service (1.3).

I swore to settle you, except Caleb son of Jephunneh and Joshua son of Nun. 31 But your little ones, who you said would become booty, I will bring in, and they shall know the land that you have despised. 32 But as for you, your dead bodies shall fall in this wilderness. 33 And your children shall be shepherds in the wilderness for forty years, and shall suffer for your faithlessness, until the last of your dead bodies lies in the wilderness. 34 According to the number of the days in which you spied out the land, forty days, for every day a year, you shall bear your iniquity, forty years, and you shall know my displeasure." 35 I the LORD have spoken; surely I will do thus to all this wicked congregation gathered together against me: in this wilderness they shall come to a full end, and there they shall die.

36 And the men whom Moses sent to spy out the land, who returned and made all the congregation complain against him by bringing a bad report about the land— 37 the men who brought an unfavorable report about the land died by a plague before the LORD. 38 But Joshua son of Nun and Caleb son of Jephunneh alone remained alive, of those men who went to spy out the land.

39 When Moses told these words to all the Israelites, the people mourned greatly. 40 They rose early in the morning and went up to the heights of the hill country, saying, "Here we are. We will go up to the place that the LORD has promised, for we have sinned." 41 But Moses said, "Why do you continue to transgress the command of the LORD? That will not succeed. 42 Do not go up, for the LORD is not with you; do not let yourselves be struck down before your enemies. 43 For the Amalekites and the Canaanites will confront you there, and you shall fall by the sword; because you have turned back from following the LORD, the LORD will not be with you." 44 But they presumed to go up to the heights of the hill country, even though the ark of the covenant of the LORD, and Moses, had not left the camp. 45 Then the Amalekites and the Canaanites who lived in that hill country came down and defeated them, pursuing them as far as Hormah.

15 The LORD spoke to Moses, saying: 2 Speak to the Israelites and say to them: When you come into the land you are to inhabit, which I am giving you, 3 and you make an offering by fire to the LORD from the herd or from the flock—whether a burnt offering or a sacrifice, to fulfill a vow or as a freewill offering or at your appointed festivals—to make a pleasing odor for the LORD, 4 then whoever presents such an offering to the LORD shall present also a grain offering, one-tenth of an ephah of choice flour, mixed with one-fourth of a hin of oil. 5 Moreover, you shall offer one-fourth of a hin of wine as a drink offering with the burnt offering or the sacrifice, for each lamb. 6 For a ram, you shall offer a grain offering, two-tenths of an ephah of choice flour mixed with one-third of a hin of oil; 7 and as a drink offering you shall offer one-third of a hin of wine, a pleasing odor to the LORD. 8 When you offer a bull as a burnt offering or a sacrifice, to fulfill a vow or as an offering of well-being to the LORD, 9 then you shall present with the bull a grain offering, three-tenths of an ephah of choice flour, mixed with half a hin of oil, 10 and you shall present as a drink offering half a hin

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**14.39–45**: These verses preserve the memory of an abortive attempt to penetrate Canaan from the south. **42**: The failure is interpreted by the words *the LORD is not with you,* i.e. the ark did not go with them into battle (v. 44). **45**: The bitterness of this and other battles is the basis of the ancient vow against the Amalekites (Ex 17.8–16).

**15.1–41**: **Cultic regulations.** The narrative is interrupted to introduce priestly matters (chs 15–19) and thereby to continue the main line of priestly tradition (see 10.29–36 n.). **1–16**: This law supplements the legislation of Leviticus by prescribing the grain (Lev ch 2) and drink offerings that are to accompany a burnt offering (Lev ch 1) or offering of well-being (Lev ch 3). **3**: *A pleasing odor,* see Lev 1.9 n. **16**: See Ex 12.43–49 n.

of wine, as an offering by fire, a pleasing odor to the LORD.

11 Thus it shall be done for each ox or ram, or for each of the male lambs or the kids. 12 According to the number that you offer, so you shall do with each and every one. 13 Every native Israelite shall do these things in this way, in presenting an offering by fire, a pleasing odor to the LORD. 14 An alien who lives with you, or who takes up permanent residence among you, and wishes to offer an offering by fire, a pleasing odor to the LORD, shall do as you do. 15 As for the assembly, there shall be for both you and the resident alien a single statute, a perpetual statute throughout your generations; you and the alien shall be alike before the LORD. 16 You and the alien who resides with you shall have the same law and the same ordinance.

17 The LORD spoke to Moses, saying: 18 Speak to the Israelites and say to them: After you come into the land to which I am bringing you, 19 whenever you eat of the bread of the land, you shall present a donation to the LORD. 20 From your first batch of dough you shall present a loaf as a donation; you shall present it just as you present a donation from the threshing floor. 21 Throughout your generations you shall give to the LORD a donation from the first of your batch of dough.

22 But if you unintentionally fail to observe all these commandments that the LORD has spoken to Moses— 23 everything that the LORD has commanded you by Moses, from the day the LORD gave commandment and thereafter, throughout your generations— 24 then if it was done unintentionally without the knowledge of the congregation, the whole congregation shall offer one young bull for a burnt offering, a pleasing odor to the LORD, together with its grain offering and its drink offering, according to the ordinance, and one male goat for a sin offering. 25 The priest shall make atonement for all the congregation of the Israelites, and they shall be forgiven; it was unintentional, and they have brought their offering, an offering by fire to the LORD, and their sin offering before the LORD, for their error. 26 All the congregation of the Israelites shall be forgiven, as well as the aliens residing among them, because the whole people was involved in the error

27 An individual who sins unintentionally shall present a female goat a year old for a sin offering. 28 And the priest shall make atonement before the LORD for the one who commits an error, when it is unintentional, to make atonement for the person, who then shall be forgiven. 29 For both the native among the Israelites and the alien residing among them—you shall have the same law for anyone who acts in error. 30 But whoever acts high-handedly, whether a native or an alien, affronts the LORD, and shall be cut off from among the people. 31 Because of having despised the word of the LORD and broken his commandment, such a person shall be utterly cut off and bear the guilt.

32 When the Israelites were in the wilderness, they found a man gathering sticks on the sabbath day. 33 Those who found him gathering sticks brought him to Moses, Aaron, and to the whole congregation. 34 They put him in custody, because it was not clear what should be

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**15.17–21**: An offering of the first fruits (Lev 23.9–14). **22–31**: A supplement to Lev ch 4. **23**: Mosaic law includes the original commandments and supplementary laws, thus indicating the development of law as new situations were faced (see 9.8 n.). **25**: *Make atonement,* see Lev 1.4 n. **30**: Sin committed *high-handedly,* in contrast to sin committed inadvertently or in ignorance (vv. 25, 26, 27), is that which is done deliberately or defiantly (Ps 19.12–13). For such sin there is no atonement in priestly legislation. *Cut off,* see Lev 7.20 n.

**15.32–36**: The death penalty had already been prescribed for violating the sabbath (Ex 31.14–15; 35.2). The man was put in custody until, by divine oracle, it was determined whether his action actually came under the

done to him. 35Then the LORD said to Moses, "The man shall be put to death; all the congregation shall stone him outside the camp." 36The whole congregation brought him outside the camp and stoned him to death, just as the LORD had commanded Moses.

37 The LORD said to Moses: 38Speak to the Israelites, and tell them to make fringes on the corners of their garments throughout their generations and to put a blue cord on the fringe at each corner. 39You have the fringe so that, when you see it, you will remember all the commandments of the LORD and do them, and not follow the lust of your own heart and your own eyes. 40So you shall remember and do all my commandments, and you shall be holy to your God. 41I am the LORD your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, to be your God: I am the LORD your God.

16 Now Korah son of Izhar son of Kohath son of Levi, along with Dathan and Abiram sons of Eliab, and On son of Peleth—descendants of Reuben—took 2two hundred fifty Israelite men, leaders of the congregation, chosen from the assembly, well-known men,[a] and they confronted Moses. 3They assembled against Moses and against Aaron, and said to them, "You have gone too far! All the congregation are holy, every one of them, and the LORD is among them. So why then do you exalt yourselves above the assembly of the LORD?" 4When Moses heard it, he fell on his face. 5Then he said to Korah and all his company, "In the morning the LORD will make known who is his, and who is holy, and who will be allowed to approach him; the one whom he will choose he will allow to approach him. 6Do this: take censers, Korah and all your[b] company, 7and tomorrow put fire in them, and lay incense on them before the LORD; and the man whom the LORD chooses shall be the holy one. You Levites have gone too far!" 8Then Moses said to Korah, "Hear now, you Levites! 9Is it too little for you that the God of Israel has separated you from the congregation of Israel, to allow you to approach him in order to perform the duties of the LORD's tabernacle, and to stand before the congregation and serve them? 10He has allowed you to approach him, and all your brother Levites with you; yet you seek the priesthood as well! 11Therefore you and all your company have gathered together against the LORD. What is Aaron that you rail against him?"

12 Moses sent for Dathan and Abiram sons of Eliab; but they said, "We will not come! 13Is it too little that you have brought us up out of a land flowing with milk and honey to kill us in the wilderness, that you must also lord it over us? 14It is clear you have not brought us into a land flowing with milk and honey, or given us an inheritance of fields and vineyards. Would you put out the eyes of these men? We will not come!"

15 Moses was very angry and said to the LORD, "Pay no attention to their offering. I have not taken one donkey from them, and I have not harmed any one of them." 16And Moses said to Korah, "As for you and all your company, be present tomorrow before the LORD, you and

*a* Cn: Heb *and they confronted Moses, and two hundred fifty men . . . well-known men* *b* Heb *his*

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law (see Lev 24.12). **37–41**: The ancient custom of wearing *fringes* is reinterpreted as a reminder of God's law.

**16.1–50**: **Revolts against Moses.** These stories recall struggles that threatened the community during the sojourn at Kadesh, overlaid with the memory of later conflicts in the history of the priesthood. **3–11**: The rebellion led by Korah, of Levitical descent (v. 1a; Ex 6.21). Supported by other Levites (vv. 7, 8, 10), he challenged the subordination of some Levites to the Aaronite order (3.5–10; 8.5–22) and sought full priestly status (vv. 9–10, 40). **5**: A divine sign will determine who will be *allowed to approach* the LORD, i.e. the altar. **6–7**: Compare Lev 10.1–3.

**16.12–15**: According to an older literary tradition, a civil revolt was led by members of the tribe of Reuben who were dissatisfied with Moses' leadership (vv. 1b–2). **13**: Here

they and Aaron; 17and let each one of you take his censer, and put incense on it, and each one of you present his censer before the LORD, two hundred fifty censers; you also, and Aaron, each his censer." 18So each man took his censer, and they put fire in the censers and laid incense on them, and they stood at the entrance of the tent of meeting with Moses and Aaron. 19Then Korah assembled the whole congregation against them at the entrance of the tent of meeting. And the glory of the LORD appeared to the whole congregation.

20 Then the LORD spoke to Moses and to Aaron, saying: 21Separate yourselves from this congregation, so that I may consume them in a moment. 22They fell on their faces, and said, "O God, the God of the spirits of all flesh, shall one person sin and you become angry with the whole congregation?"

23 And the LORD spoke to Moses, saying: 24Say to the congregation: Get away from the dwellings of Korah, Dathan, and Abiram. 25So Moses got up and went to Dathan and Abiram; the elders of Israel followed him. 26He said to the congregation, "Turn away from the tents of these wicked men, and touch nothing of theirs, or you will be swept away for all their sins." 27So they got away from the dwellings of Korah, Dathan, and Abiram; and Dathan and Abiram came out and stood at the entrance of their tents, together with their wives, their children, and their little ones. 28And Moses said, "This is how you shall know that the LORD has sent me to do all these works; it has not been of my own accord: 29If these people die a natural death, or if a natural fate comes on them, then the LORD has not sent me. 30But if the LORD creates something new, and the ground opens its mouth and swallows them up, with all that belongs to them, and they go down alive into Sheol, then you shall know that these men have despised the LORD."

31 As soon as he finished speaking all these words, the ground under them was split apart. 32The earth opened its mouth and swallowed them up, along with their households—everyone who belonged to Korah and all their goods. 33So they with all that belonged to them went down alive into Sheol; the earth closed over them, and they perished from the midst of the assembly. 34All Israel around them fled at their outcry, for they said, "The earth will swallow us too!" 35And fire came out from the LORD and consumed the two hundred fifty men offering the incense.

36[c] Then the LORD spoke to Moses, saying: 37Tell Eleazar son of Aaron the priest to take the censers out of the blaze; then scatter the fire far and wide. 38For the censers of these sinners have become holy at the cost of their lives. Make them into hammered plates as a covering for the altar, for they presented them before the LORD and they became holy. Thus they shall be a sign to the Israelites. 39So Eleazar the priest took the bronze censers that had been presented by those who were burned; and they were hammered out as a covering for the altar— 40a reminder to the Israelites that no outsider, who is not of the descendants of Aaron, shall approach to offer incense before the

[c] Ch 17.1 in Heb

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Egypt, in contrast to the wilderness, is *a land flowing with milk and honey* (see Ex 3.8 n.). **14**: *Put out the eyes,* i.e. blind with deceit.

**16.16–24**: Continuation of the Korah story (vv. 3–11). **19**: Apparently the Levites' revolt had popular support. **24**: An editorial revision which combines the two revolts.

**16.25–34**: A continuation of the story of the civil revolt (vv. 12–15). **27a**: See v. 24 n. **30**: *Sheol,* see Gen 37.35 n. **31–33**: These verses express the ancient conception of corporate guilt which involves a person's whole family (Josh 7.22–26). **32**: *Everyone who belonged to Korah,* see v. 24 n.

**16.35–40**: Continuation of the Korah story (vv. 16–24). **35**: The two hundred and fifty men were Levites, sons of Korah (vv. 2b, 17). **37–38**: On the bronze covering for the altar, see Ex 27.2. **40**: This verse states the purpose of the Korah story: to uphold the preroga-

LORD, so as not to become like Korah and his company—just as the LORD had said to him through Moses.

41 On the next day, however, the whole congregation of the Israelites rebelled against Moses and against Aaron, saying, "You have killed the people of the LORD." 42 And when the congregation had assembled against them, Moses and Aaron turned toward the tent of meeting; the cloud had covered it and the glory of the LORD appeared. 43 Then Moses and Aaron came to the front of the tent of meeting, 44 and the LORD spoke to Moses, saying, 45 "Get away from this congregation, so that I may consume them in a moment." And they fell on their faces. 46 Moses said to Aaron, "Take your censer, put fire on it from the altar and lay incense on it, and carry it quickly to the congregation and make atonement for them. For wrath has gone out from the LORD; the plague has begun." 47 So Aaron took it as Moses had ordered, and ran into the middle of the assembly, where the plague had already begun among the people. He put on the incense, and made atonement for the people. 48 He stood between the dead and the living; and the plague was stopped. 49 Those who died by the plague were fourteen thousand seven hundred, besides those who died in the affair of Korah. 50 When the plague was stopped, Aaron returned to Moses at the entrance of the tent of meeting.

17 [d] The LORD spoke to Moses, saying: 2 Speak to the Israelites, and get twelve staffs from them, one for each ancestral house, from all the leaders of their ancestral houses. Write each man's name on his staff, 3 and write Aaron's name on the staff of Levi. For there shall be one staff for the head of each ancestral house. 4 Place them in the tent of meeting before the covenant, [e] where I meet with you. 5 And the staff of the man whom I choose shall sprout; thus I will put a stop to the complaints of the Israelites that they continually make against you. 6 Moses spoke to the Israelites; and all their leaders gave him staffs, one for each leader, according to their ancestral houses, twelve staffs; and the staff of Aaron was among theirs. 7 So Moses placed the staffs before the LORD in the tent of the covenant. [e]

8 When Moses went into the tent of the covenant [e] on the next day, the staff of Aaron for the house of Levi had sprouted. It put forth buds, produced blossoms, and bore ripe almonds. 9 Then Moses brought out all the staffs from before the LORD to all the Israelites; and they looked, and each man took his staff. 10 And the LORD said to Moses, "Put back the staff of Aaron before the covenant, [e] to be kept as a warning to rebels, so that you may make an end of their complaints against me, or else they will die." 11 Moses did so; just as the LORD commanded him, so he did.

12 The Israelites said to Moses, "We are perishing; we are lost, all of us are lost! 13 Everyone who approaches the tabernacle of the LORD will die. Are we all to perish?"

18 The LORD said to Aaron: You and your sons and your ancestral house with you shall bear responsibility

*d* Ch 17.16 in Heb *e* Or *treaty*, or *testimony*; Heb *eduth*

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tives of the Aaronite priesthood. **42**: *Cloud . . . glory*, see Ex 40.34–38 n.

**17.1–13**: **Aaron's budding rod** demonstrates the special status of the tribe of Levi, of which he is the leader. **2**: *Ancestral house*, here means "tribe" (see 1.2–4 n.). The rod or staff was a symbol of tribal authority. **3**: On Aaron's Levitical descent, see Ex 6.14–25. **4**: *The covenant*, see Ex 16.33–34 n. **5**: The people's complaints, related in 16.41–50.

**17.8**: Folk traditions of other peoples contain stories of blossoming rods, clubs, or spears. The sign signifies the LORD's choice of Aaron (v. 5) as leader of the whole priestly tribe of Levi. **10**: See Ex 25.16 n.

**18.1–32**: **The responsibility of Aaronic priests and other Levites.** This chapter comes naturally after the preceding one and gives the answer to the people's question in 17.13. **1**: *Bear responsibility*, i.e. bear the consequences for any cultic impropriety (Ex 28.38). All Levites are responsible for the

for offenses connected with the sanctuary, while you and your sons alone shall bear responsibility for offenses connected with the priesthood. 2So bring with you also your brothers of the tribe of Levi, your ancestral tribe, in order that they may be joined to you, and serve you while you and your sons with you are in front of the tent of the covenant.[f] 3They shall perform duties for you and for the whole tent. But they must not approach either the utensils of the sanctuary or the altar, otherwise both they and you will die. 4They are attached to you in order to perform the duties of the tent of meeting, for all the service of the tent; no outsider shall approach you. 5You yourselves shall perform the duties of the sanctuary and the duties of the altar, so that wrath may never again come upon the Israelites. 6It is I who now take your brother Levites from among the Israelites; they are now yours as a gift, dedicated to the LORD, to perform the service of the tent of meeting. 7But you and your sons with you shall diligently perform your priestly duties in all that concerns the altar and the area behind the curtain. I give your priesthood as a gift;[g] any outsider who approaches shall be put to death.

8 The LORD spoke to Aaron: I have given you charge of the offerings made to me, all the holy gifts of the Israelites; I have given them to you and your sons as a priestly portion due you in perpetuity. 9This shall be yours from the most holy things, reserved from the fire: every offering of theirs that they render to me as a most holy thing, whether grain offering, sin offering, or guilt offering, shall belong to you and your sons. 10As a most holy thing you shall eat it; every male may eat it; it shall be holy to you.

11This also is yours: I have given to you, together with your sons and daughters, as a perpetual due, whatever is set aside from the gifts of all the elevation offerings of the Israelites; everyone who is clean in your house may eat them. 12All the best of the oil and all the best of the wine and of the grain, the choice produce that they give to the LORD, I have given to you. 13The first fruits of all that is in their land, which they bring to the LORD, shall be yours; everyone who is clean in your house may eat of it. 14Every devoted thing in Israel shall be yours. 15The first issue of the womb of all creatures, human and animal, which is offered to the LORD, shall be yours; but the firstborn of human beings you shall redeem, and the firstborn of unclean animals you shall redeem. 16Their redemption price, reckoned from one month of age, you shall fix at five shekels of silver, according to the shekel of the sanctuary (that is, twenty gerahs). 17But the firstborn of a cow, or the firstborn of a sheep, or the firstborn of a goat, you shall not redeem; they are holy. You shall dash their blood on the altar, and shall turn their fat into smoke as an offering by fire for a pleasing odor to the LORD; 18but their flesh shall be yours, just as the breast that is elevated and as the right thigh are yours. 19All the holy offerings that the Israelites present to the LORD I have given to you, together with your sons and daughters, as a perpetual due; it is a covenant of salt forever before the LORD for you and your descendants as well. 20Then the LORD said to Aaron: You shall have no allotment in their land, nor shall you have any share

*f* Or *treaty*, or *testimony*; Heb *eduth* *g* Heb *as a service of gift*

sanctuary; only Aaron's sons are responsible for the priesthood (v. 7), because they minister at the altar and guard the purity of the sanctuary. **2–6**: Other Levites are assistants to the Aaronic order (3.5–10; 8.5–22). **7**: *Area behind the curtain*, or in the Holy of Holies.

**18.8–20**: Since the tribe of Levi has no land inheritance, the Aaronic priests are to be supported from the offerings (v. 20; see Lev 2.2–3 n.). **9–10**: A definition of *the most holy things* which belong only to the Aaronic priests. For the types of sacrifice, see Lev chs 1–7. **11–19**: The priest and his family may eat the *holy things*, i.e. the *elevation offerings* (e.g. of offerings of well-being, Lev 7.28–36), offerings of the *first fruits* (Num 15.17–21), or every *devoted thing*, such as the firstborn of clean animals (Lev 27.26–27). **14–18**: Ex 13.11–13; 34.19–20. **19**: *A covenant of salt*, see Lev 2.13 n.

among them; I am your share and your possession among the Israelites.

21 To the Levites I have given every tithe in Israel for a possession in return for the service that they perform, the service in the tent of meeting. 22From now on the Israelites shall no longer approach the tent of meeting, or else they will incur guilt and die. 23But the Levites shall perform the service of the tent of meeting, and they shall bear responsibility for their own offenses; it shall be a perpetual statute throughout your generations. But among the Israelites they shall have no allotment, 24because I have given to the Levites as their portion the tithe of the Israelites, which they set apart as an offering to the LORD. Therefore I have said of them that they shall have no allotment among the Israelites.

25 Then the LORD spoke to Moses, saying: 26You shall speak to the Levites, saying: When you receive from the Israelites the tithe that I have given you from them for your portion, you shall set apart an offering from it to the LORD, a tithe of the tithe. 27It shall be reckoned to you as your gift, the same as the grain of the threshing floor and the fullness of the wine press. 28Thus you also shall set apart an offering to the LORD from all the tithes that you receive from the Israelites; and from them you shall give the LORD's offering to the priest Aaron. 29Out of all the gifts to you, you shall set apart every offering due to the LORD; the best of all of them is the part to be consecrated. 30Say also to them: When you have set apart the best of it, then the rest shall be reckoned to the Levites as produce of the threshing floor, and as produce of the wine press. 31You may eat it in any place, you and your households; for it is your payment for your service in the tent of meeting. 32You shall incur no guilt by reason of it, when you have offered the best of it. But you shall not profane the holy gifts of the Israelites, on pain of death.

19 The LORD spoke to Moses and Aaron, saying: 2This is a statute of the law that the LORD has commanded: Tell the Israelites to bring you a red heifer without defect, in which there is no blemish and on which no yoke has been laid. 3You shall give it to the priest Eleazar, and it shall be taken outside the camp and slaughtered in his presence. 4The priest Eleazar shall take some of its blood with his finger and sprinkle it seven times towards the front of the tent of meeting. 5Then the heifer shall be burned in his sight; its skin, its flesh, and its blood, with its dung, shall be burned. 6The priest shall take cedarwood, hyssop, and crimson material, and throw them into the fire in which the heifer is burning. 7Then the priest shall wash his clothes and bathe his body in water, and afterwards he may come into the camp; but the priest shall remain unclean until evening. 8The one who burns the heifer[h] shall wash his clothes in water and bathe his body in water; he shall remain unclean until evening. 9Then someone who is clean shall gather up the ashes of the heifer, and deposit them outside the camp in a clean place; and they shall be kept for the congregation of the Israelites for the water for cleansing. It is a purification offering. 10The one who gathers the ashes of the heifer shall wash his clothes and be unclean until evening.

This shall be a perpetual statute for the Israelites and for the alien residing among them. 11Those who touch the

*h* Heb *it*

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**18.21–24**: The rest of the Levites receive all tithes as their due (Lev 27.30–33). **25–32**: The assistant Levites are to pay a *tithe of the tithe* to the Aaronic priests.

**19.1–22**: **Rites for purifying a person who is defiled by a corpse. 1–10**: The purpose of this ancient rite is to prepare ceremonially the ashes used in the *water for cleansing* (vv. 9, 12–13). **4**: The sacred number, the sacred blood, and the sacred tent of meeting combine to make the rite efficacious. **6**: Compare Lev 14.4.

**19.11–22**: The ceremonial cleansing. **11**: On defilement by the dead, see Lev 21.1–12. **12**: *The water,* referred to in v. 9. **13**: The defilement was not only dangerous to the individu-

dead body of any human being shall be unclean seven days. 12 They shall purify themselves with the water on the third day and on the seventh day, and so be clean; but if they do not purify themselves on the third day and on the seventh day, they will not become clean. 13 All who touch a corpse, the body of a human being who has died, and do not purify themselves, defile the tabernacle of the LORD; such persons shall be cut off from Israel. Since water for cleansing was not dashed on them, they remain unclean; their uncleanness is still on them.

14 This is the law when someone dies in a tent: everyone who comes into the tent, and everyone who is in the tent, shall be unclean seven days. 15 And every open vessel with no cover fastened on it is unclean. 16 Whoever in the open field touches one who has been killed by a sword, or who has died naturally,[i] or a human bone, or a grave, shall be unclean seven days. 17 For the unclean they shall take some ashes of the burnt purification offering, and running water shall be added in a vessel; 18 then a clean person shall take hyssop, dip it in the water, and sprinkle it on the tent, on all the furnishings, on the persons who were there, and on whoever touched the bone, the slain, the corpse, or the grave. 19 The clean person shall sprinkle the unclean ones on the third day and on the seventh day, thus purifying them on the seventh day. Then they shall wash their clothes and bathe themselves in water, and at evening they shall be clean. 20 Any who are unclean but do not purify themselves, those persons shall be cut off from the assembly, for they have defiled the sanctuary of the LORD. Since the water for cleansing has not been dashed on them, they are unclean.

21 It shall be a perpetual statute for them. The one who sprinkles the water for cleansing shall wash his clothes, and whoever touches the water for cleansing shall be unclean until evening. 22 Whatever the unclean person touches shall be unclean, and anyone who touches it shall be unclean until evening.

20 The Israelites, the whole congregation, came into the wilderness of Zin in the first month, and the people stayed in Kadesh. Miriam died there, and was buried there.

2 Now there was no water for the congregation; so they gathered together against Moses and against Aaron. 3 The people quarreled with Moses and said, "Would that we had died when our kindred died before the LORD! 4 Why have you brought the assembly of the LORD into this wilderness for us and our livestock to die here? 5 Why have you brought us up out of Egypt, to bring us to this wretched place? It is no place for grain, or figs, or vines, or pomegranates; and there is no water to drink." 6 Then Moses and Aaron went away from the assembly to the entrance of the tent of meeting; they fell on their faces, and the glory of the LORD appeared to them. 7 The LORD spoke to Moses, saying: 8 Take the staff, and assemble the congregation, you and your brother Aaron, and command the rock before their eyes to yield its water. Thus you shall bring water out of the rock for them; thus you shall provide drink for the congregation and their livestock.

9 So Moses took the staff from before the LORD, as he had commanded him. 10 Moses and Aaron gathered the assem-

*i* Heb lacks *naturally*

al but to the community, owing to the holiness of the tabernacle. **14–16**: Uncleanness, like the stench of death, could contaminate a tent or even enter an open vessel. **17**: *Some ashes,* see v. 9. *Hyssop,* see Ex 12.22 n.

**20.1–29: Departure from Kadesh.** Having failed to enter Canaan from the south (chs 13–14), Israel planned to detour through Transjordan in order to attack Canaan from the east. **1**: A summary that condenses Israel's long sojourn at Kadesh (see 13.26 n.). The year of *the first month* has dropped out. The whole generation, condemned to wander in the wilderness for about forty years (14.20–35), passed away. On the role of Miriam see comments on 12.1–16. **2–13**: The Meribah incident is paralleled in Ex 17.1–7. **3**: *Our kindred,* i.e. Dathan and Abiram (ch 16).

bly together before the rock, and he said to them, "Listen, you rebels, shall we bring water for you out of this rock?" 11Then Moses lifted up his hand and struck the rock twice with his staff; water came out abundantly, and the congregation and their livestock drank. 12But the LORD said to Moses and Aaron, "Because you did not trust in me, to show my holiness before the eyes of the Israelites, therefore you shall not bring this assembly into the land that I have given them." 13These are the waters of Meribah,[j] where the people of Israel quarreled with the LORD, and by which he showed his holiness.

14 Moses sent messengers from Kadesh to the king of Edom, "Thus says your brother Israel: You know all the adversity that has befallen us: 15how our ancestors went down to Egypt, and we lived in Egypt a long time; and the Egyptians oppressed us and our ancestors; 16and when we cried to the LORD, he heard our voice, and sent an angel and brought us out of Egypt; and here we are in Kadesh, a town on the edge of your territory. 17Now let us pass through your land. We will not pass through field or vineyard, or drink water from any well; we will go along the King's Highway, not turning aside to the right hand or to the left until we have passed through your territory."

18 But Edom said to him, "You shall not pass through, or we will come out with the sword against you." 19The Israelites said to him, "We will stay on the highway; and if we drink of your water, we and our livestock, then we will pay for it. It is only a small matter; just let us pass through on foot." 20But he said, "You shall not pass through." And Edom came out against them with a large force, heavily armed. 21Thus Edom refused to give Israel passage through their territory; so Israel turned away from them.

22 They set out from Kadesh, and the Israelites, the whole congregation, came to Mount Hor. 23Then the LORD said to Moses and Aaron at Mount Hor, on the border of the land of Edom, 24"Let Aaron be gathered to his people. For he shall not enter the land that I have given to the Israelites, because you rebelled against my command at the waters of Meribah. 25Take Aaron and his son Eleazar, and bring them up Mount Hor; 26strip Aaron of his vestments, and put them on his son Eleazar. But Aaron shall be gathered to his people,[k] and shall die there." 27Moses did as the LORD had commanded; they went up Mount Hor in the sight of the whole congregation. 28Moses stripped Aaron of his vestments, and put them on his son Eleazar; and Aaron died there on the top of the mountain. Moses and Eleazar came down from the mountain. 29When all the congregation saw that Aaron had died, all the house of Israel mourned for Aaron thirty days.

21 When the Canaanite, the king of Arad, who lived in the Negeb, heard that Israel was coming by the way of Atharim, he fought against Israel and

*j* That is *Quarrel* *k* Heb lacks *to his people*

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**20.12**: Although the preceding narrative is silent about Moses' disbelief, it is implied that he failed to interpret the giving of water as a sign from the LORD (Deut 32.50–52). **13**: See Ex 17.7 n. **14–21**: The request for passage through Edom. **14**: *Your brother,* Gen 25.24–26. By the thirteenth century B.C. Edom, one of the "Hebrew" groups (see Gen 10.21–31 n.), had developed a non-hereditary monarchy (Gen 36.31–39). **16**: *Angel,* see Ex 23.20–21 n. **17**: *The King's Highway* was the main Transjordanian route from Ezion-geber on the Gulf of Aqaba to Syria.

**20.22–29**: The death of Aaron. **24**: See 20.12 n. *Gathered to his people,* Gen 25.8. **26**: *Vestments,* i.e. of the high priest (Ex ch 28; Lev 8.7–9).

**21.1–35**: **Events along the way. 1–3**: Another account of the battle of Hormah (14.39–45; compare Judg 1.16–17). **1**: *The way of Atharim,* probably the name of a pass. **2–3**: A vow to wage holy war (see Ex 17.14 n.). This is apparently another tradition of an attempt to penetrate Canaan from the south; note that the people marched north from Kadesh. **4–9**: The serpent scourge. **4**: Leaving Mount Hor

took some of them captive. 2Then Israel made a vow to the LORD and said, "If you will indeed give this people into our hands, then we will utterly destroy their towns." 3The LORD listened to the voice of Israel, and handed over the Canaanites; and they utterly destroyed them and their towns; so the place was called Hormah.[l]

4 From Mount Hor they set out by the way to the Red Sea,[m] to go around the land of Edom; but the people became impatient on the way. 5The people spoke against God and against Moses, "Why have you brought us up out of Egypt to die in the wilderness? For there is no food and no water, and we detest this miserable food." 6Then the LORD sent poisonous[n] serpents among the people, and they bit the people, so that many Israelites died. 7The people came to Moses and said, "We have sinned by speaking against the LORD and against you; pray to the LORD to take away the serpents from us." So Moses prayed for the people. 8And the LORD said to Moses, "Make a poisonous[o] serpent, and set it on a pole; and everyone who is bitten shall look at it and live." 9So Moses made a serpent of bronze, and put it upon a pole; and whenever a serpent bit someone, that person would look at the serpent of bronze and live.

10 The Israelites set out, and camped in Oboth. 11They set out from Oboth, and camped at Iye-abarim, in the wilderness bordering Moab toward the sunrise. 12From there they set out, and camped in the Wadi Zered. 13From there they set out, and camped on the other side of the Arnon, in[p] the wilderness that extends from the boundary of the Amorites; for the Arnon is the boundary of Moab, between Moab and the Amorites. 14Wherefore it is said in the Book of the Wars of the LORD,

"Waheb in Suphah and the wadis.
The Arnon 15and the slopes of the wadis
that extend to the seat of Ar,
and lie along the border of Moab."[q]

16 From there they continued to Beer;[r] that is the well of which the LORD said to Moses, "Gather the people together, and I will give them water." 17Then Israel sang this song:

"Spring up, O well!—Sing to it!—
18 the well that the leaders sank,
that the nobles of the people dug,
with the scepter, with the staff."

From the wilderness to Mattanah, 19from Mattanah to Nahaliel, from Nahaliel to Bamoth, 20and from Bamoth to the valley lying in the region of Moab by the top of Pisgah that overlooks the wasteland.[s]

21 Then Israel sent messengers to King Sihon of the Amorites, saying, 22"Let me pass through your land; we will not turn aside into field or vineyard; we will not drink the water of any well; we will go by the King's Highway until we have passed through your territory." 23But Sihon would not allow Israel to pass through his territory. Sihon gath-

*l* Heb *Destruction* *m* Or *Sea of Reeds* *n* Or *fiery*; Heb *seraphim* *o* Or *fiery*; Heb *seraph* *p* Gk: Heb *which is in* *q* Meaning of Heb uncertain *r* That is *Well* *s* Or *Jeshimon*

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(20.27), the people turned south toward the Red Sea (Gulf of Aqaba), i.e. toward Eziongeber (33.35; Deut 2.1–8). **5**: See Ex 16.3 n. **6**: An attack by *poisonous serpents* was interpreted as divine judgment upon the people's rebellion. **8–9**: These verses echo serpent magic, as practiced e.g. in ancient Egypt. The *serpent of bronze* (Nehushtan) was an object of popular worship during the Israelite monarchy (2 Kings 18.4).

**21.10–20**: The itinerary of the march (see ch 33; Deut ch 2). **14–15**: A quotation from an ancient poetic collection, *the Book of the Wars of the LORD* (compare Josh 10.13; 2 Sam 1.18). Ar, a chief city of Moab (v. 28). **16–18**: The "Song of the Well," another ancient poetic fragment, is quoted here because water was miraculously provided along the way.

**21.21–32**: The defeat of the petty kingdom of the Amorites just north of Moab. **22**: The

ered all his people together, and went out against Israel to the wilderness; he came to Jahaz, and fought against Israel. 24 Israel put him to the sword, and took possession of his land from the Arnon to the Jabbok, as far as to the Ammonites; for the boundary of the Ammonites was strong. 25 Israel took all these towns, and Israel settled in all the towns of the Amorites, in Heshbon, and in all its villages. 26 For Heshbon was the city of King Sihon of the Amorites, who had fought against the former king of Moab and captured all his land as far as the Arnon. 27 Therefore the ballad singers say,

"Come to Heshbon, let it be built;
let the city of Sihon be established.
28 For fire came out from Heshbon,
flame from the city of Sihon.
It devoured Ar of Moab,
and swallowed up[t] the heights of the Arnon.
29 Woe to you, O Moab!
You are undone, O people of Chemosh!
He has made his sons fugitives,
and his daughters captives,
to an Amorite king, Sihon.
30 So their posterity perished
from Heshbon[u] to Dibon,
and we laid waste until fire
spread to Medeba."[v]

31 Thus Israel settled in the land of the Amorites. 32 Moses sent to spy out Jazer; and they captured its villages, and dispossessed the Amorites who were there.

33 Then they turned and went up the road to Bashan; and King Og of Bashan came out against them, he and all his people, to battle at Edrei. 34 But the LORD said to Moses, "Do not be afraid of him; for I have given him into your hand, with all his people, and all his land. You shall do to him as you did to King Sihon of the Amorites, who ruled in Heshbon." 35 So they killed him, his sons, and all his people, until there was no survivor left; and they took possession of his land.

22 The Israelites set out, and camped in the plains of Moab across the Jordan from Jericho. 2 Now Balak son of Zippor saw all that Israel had done to the Amorites. 3 Moab was in great dread of the people, because they were so numerous; Moab was overcome with fear of the people of Israel. 4 And Moab said to the elders of Midian, "This horde will now lick up all that is around us, as an ox licks up the grass of the field." Now Balak son of Zippor was king of Moab at that time. 5 He sent messengers to Balaam son of Beor at Pethor, which is on the Euphrates, in the land of Amaw,[w] to summon him, saying, "A people has come out of Egypt; they have spread over the face of the earth, and they have settled next to me. 6 Come now, curse this people for me, since they are stronger than I; perhaps I shall be able to defeat them and drive them from the land; for I know that whomever you bless is blessed, and whomever you curse is cursed."

*t* Gk: Heb *and the lords of* *u* Gk: Heb *we have shot at them; Heshbon has perished* *v* Compare Sam Gk: Meaning of MT uncertain
*w* Or *land of his kinsfolk*

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request (compare 20.14–21) was made at the boundary river, Arnon (v. 13). **27**: An ancient taunt song, quoted to show that Sihon had captured former Moabite territory, including the city of Heshbon. **29**: *Chemosh,* god of the Moabites.

**21.33–35**: *Bashan,* a petty kingdom north of the Jabbok river. *Og,* Deut 3.1–7.

**22.1–40**: **Balak and Balaam.** Fearful of the triumphant Israelites, the Moabite king invited a Mesopotamian diviner to put a curse on the invaders. **4**: On Moab's league with Midian, see ch 31.

**22.5–20**: Balak's two missions to obtain the services of Balaam who was in *Pethor,* located south of Carchemish *which is on the Euphrates.* In antiquity Babylonia was famed for the art of divination. **6**: In antiquity it was believed that the curse—the opposite of the blessing (see Gen 27.4 n.)—releases a negative power that shapes future events. **8**: Throughout chs 22–24 the conviction is expressed that a foreign priest-diviner, though not a member of the covenant community, was obedient to the LORD's will and that nothing could prevent the fulfillment of the

7 So the elders of Moab and the elders of Midian departed with the fees for divination in their hand; and they came to Balaam, and gave him Balak's message. 8He said to them, "Stay here tonight, and I will bring back word to you, just as the LORD speaks to me"; so the officials of Moab stayed with Balaam. 9God came to Balaam and said, "Who are these men with you?" 10Balaam said to God, "King Balak son of Zippor of Moab, has sent me this message: 11'A people has come out of Egypt and has spread over the face of the earth; now come, curse them for me; perhaps I shall be able to fight against them and drive them out.'" 12God said to Balaam, "You shall not go with them; you shall not curse the people, for they are blessed." 13So Balaam rose in the morning, and said to the officials of Balak, "Go to your own land, for the LORD has refused to let me go with you." 14So the officials of Moab rose and went to Balak, and said, "Balaam refuses to come with us."

15 Once again Balak sent officials, more numerous and more distinguished than these. 16They came to Balaam and said to him, "Thus says Balak son of Zippor: 'Do not let anything hinder you from coming to me; 17for I will surely do you great honor, and whatever you say to me I will do; come, curse this people for me.'" 18But Balaam replied to the servants of Balak, "Although Balak were to give me his house full of silver and gold, I could not go beyond the command of the LORD my God, to do less or more. 19You remain here, as the others did, so that I may learn what more the LORD may say to me." 20That night God came to Balaam and said to him, "If the men have come to summon you, get up and go with them; but do only what I tell you to do." 21So Balaam got up in the morning, saddled his donkey, and went with the officials of Moab.

22 God's anger was kindled because he was going, and the angel of the LORD took his stand in the road as his adversary. Now he was riding on the donkey, and his two servants were with him. 23The donkey saw the angel of the LORD standing in the road, with a drawn sword in his hand; so the donkey turned off the road, and went into the field; and Balaam struck the donkey, to turn it back onto the road. 24Then the angel of the LORD stood in a narrow path between the vineyards, with a wall on either side. 25When the donkey saw the angel of the LORD, it scraped against the wall, and scraped Balaam's foot against the wall; so he struck it again. 26Then the angel of the LORD went ahead, and stood in a narrow place, where there was no way to turn either to the right or to the left. 27When the donkey saw the angel of the LORD, it lay down under Balaam; and Balaam's anger was kindled, and he struck the donkey with his staff. 28Then the LORD opened the mouth of the donkey, and it said to Balaam, "What have I done to you, that you have struck me these three times?" 29Balaam said to the donkey, "Because you have made a fool of me! I wish I had a sword in my hand! I would kill you right now!" 30But the donkey said to Balaam, "Am I not your donkey, which you have ridden all your life to this day? Have I been in the habit of treating you this way?" And he said, "No."

31 Then the LORD opened the eyes of Balaam, and he saw the angel of the LORD standing in the road, with his drawn sword in his hand; and he bowed down, falling on his face. 32The angel of the LORD said to him, "Why have you struck your donkey these three times? I have come out as an adversary, because

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divine purpose for Israel. **13**: It is implied that the LORD spoke to him in a dream (vv. 8, 19–20).

**22.21–35**: The folk-story of Balaam's donkey, with its miraculously talking animal and unsophisticated, humorous irony, is apparently another tradition. **22**: Note the contrast between this verse and the previous permission for Balaam to go (vv. 15–20). *The angel of the LORD*, see Gen 16.7 n. **23**: Josh 5.13.

your way is perverse[x] before me. 33The donkey saw me, and turned away from me these three times. If it had not turned away from me, surely just now I would have killed you and let it live." 34Then Balaam said to the angel of the LORD, "I have sinned, for I did not know that you were standing in the road to oppose me. Now therefore, if it is displeasing to you, I will return home." 35The angel of the LORD said to Balaam, "Go with the men; but speak only what I tell you to speak." So Balaam went on with the officials of Balak.

36 When Balak heard that Balaam had come, he went out to meet him at Ir-moab, on the boundary formed by the Arnon, at the farthest point of the boundary. 37Balak said to Balaam, "Did I not send to summon you? Why did you not come to me? Am I not able to honor you?" 38Balaam said to Balak, "I have come to you now, but do I have power to say just anything? The word God puts in my mouth, that is what I must say." 39Then Balaam went with Balak, and they came to Kiriath-huzoth. 40Balak sacrificed oxen and sheep, and sent them to Balaam and to the officials who were with him.

41 On the next day Balak took Balaam and brought him up to Bamoth-baal; and from there he could see part of the people of Israel.[y]

**23** 1Then Balaam said to Balak, "Build me seven altars here, and prepare seven bulls and seven rams for me." 2Balak did as Balaam had said; and Balak and Balaam offered a bull and a ram on each altar. 3Then Balaam said to Balak, "Stay here beside your burnt offerings while I go aside. Perhaps the LORD will come to meet me. Whatever he shows me I will tell you." And he went to a bare height.

4 Then God met Balaam; and Balaam said to him, "I have arranged the seven altars, and have offered a bull and a ram on each altar." 5The LORD put a word in Balaam's mouth, and said, "Return to Balak, and this is what you must say." 6So he returned to Balak,[z] who was standing beside his burnt offerings with all the officials of Moab. 7Then Balaam[a] uttered his oracle, saying:

"Balak has brought me from Aram,
the king of Moab from the eastern mountains:
'Come, curse Jacob for me;
Come, denounce Israel!'
8 How can I curse whom God has not cursed?
How can I denounce those whom the LORD has not denounced?
9 For from the top of the crags I see him,
from the hills I behold him;
Here is a people living alone,
and not reckoning itself among the nations!
10 Who can count the dust of Jacob,
or number the dust-cloud[b] of Israel?
Let me die the death of the upright,
and let my end be like his!"

11 Then Balak said to Balaam, "What have you done to me? I brought you to curse my enemies, but now you have

*x* Meaning of Heb uncertain *y* Heb lacks *of Israel* *z* Heb *him* *a* Heb *he* *b* Or *fourth part*

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**22.34–35**: The incident serves to remind Balaam that he must speak only what the LORD bids him (compare 1 Kings 22.14), regardless of gifts or honors (v. 38).

**22.41–24.25**: **The four oracles of Balaam,** probably dating in their present form from the early Israelite monarchy (24.17–19).

**23.1–6**: Babylonian diviners resorted to this kind of sacrificial ceremony to obtain an omen. **7–10**: The first oracle. **7**: *Aram,* i.e. "Aram of the Two Rivers" or Mesopotamia (Gen 24.10). **9**: Israel is not a nation like other nations (compare 1 Sam 8.4–22) but a people set apart for a special destiny. **10**: Balaam prays that, by not cursing God's people, he may come to the end of his days as a righteous man.

**23.11–12**: See 22.20. The narrative is written with a touch of humor. **13**: Not wishing to defy God, Balak supposes that the oracle

done nothing but bless them." 12He answered, "Must I not take care to say what the LORD puts into my mouth?"

13 So Balak said to him, "Come with me to another place from which you may see them; you shall see only part of them, and shall not see them all; then curse them for me from there." 14So he took him to the field of Zophim, to the top of Pisgah. He built seven altars, and offered a bull and a ram on each altar. 15Balaam said to Balak, "Stand here beside your burnt offerings, while I meet the LORD over there." 16The LORD met Balaam, put a word into his mouth, and said, "Return to Balak, and this is what you shall say." 17When he came to him, he was standing beside his burnt offerings with the officials of Moab. Balak said to him, "What has the LORD said?" 18Then Balaam uttered his oracle, saying:

"Rise, Balak, and hear;
listen to me, O son of Zippor:
19 God is not a human being, that he should lie,
or a mortal, that he should change his mind.
Has he promised, and will he not do it?
Has he spoken, and will he not fulfill it?
20 See, I received a command to bless;
he has blessed, and I cannot revoke it.
21 He has not beheld misfortune in Jacob;
nor has he seen trouble in Israel.
The LORD their God is with them,
acclaimed as a king among them.
22 God, who brings them out of Egypt,
is like the horns of a wild ox for them.
23 Surely there is no enchantment against Jacob,
no divination against Israel;
now it shall be said of Jacob and Israel,
'See what God has done!'
24 Look, a people rising up like a lioness,
and rousing itself like a lion!
It does not lie down until it has eaten the prey
and drunk the blood of the slain."

25 Then Balak said to Balaam, "Do not curse them at all, and do not bless them at all." 26But Balaam answered Balak, "Did I not tell you, 'Whatever the LORD says, that is what I must do'?"

27 So Balak said to Balaam, "Come now, I will take you to another place; perhaps it will please God that you may curse them for me from there." 28So Balak took Balaam to the top of Peor, which overlooks the wasteland.[c] 29Balaam said to Balak, "Build me seven altars here, and prepare seven bulls and seven rams for me." 30So Balak did as Balaam had said, and offered a bull and a ram on each altar.

24 Now Balaam saw that it pleased the LORD to bless Israel, so he did not go, as at other times, to look for omens, but set his face toward the wilderness. 2Balaam looked up and saw Israel camping tribe by tribe. Then the spirit of God came upon him, 3and he uttered his oracle, saying:

"The oracle of Balaam son of Beor,

*c* Or *overlooks Jeshimon*

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may be different if Balaam views the people from another perspective. **14**: *Pisgah,* see Deut 34.1 n.

**23.18–24**: The second oracle. **19**: God's change of mind displays consistency of purpose, unlike human beings who manifest deceit and caprice (see Ex 32.14 n.). **21**: The LORD's kingship is an ancient poetic motif (Ex 15.18). **22**: *The horns of a wild ox,* a symbol of brute strength. **23**: Since Israel's God cannot be coerced by magical techniques, divination is ineffective in altering Israel's destiny. **28**: *Peor,* see 25.3 n.

**24.1**: Balaam begins to abandon his technique of divination. **3–9**: The third oracle. **3–4**: These verses portray the ecstasy during

the oracle of the man whose eye is clear,[d]
4 the oracle of one who hears the words of God,
who sees the vision of the Almighty,[e]
who falls down, but with eyes uncovered:
5 how fair are your tents, O Jacob,
your encampments, O Israel!
6 Like palm groves that stretch far away,
like gardens beside a river,
like aloes that the LORD has planted,
like cedar trees beside the waters.
7 Water shall flow from his buckets,
and his seed shall have abundant water,
his king shall be higher than Agag,
and his kingdom shall be exalted.
8 God who brings him out of Egypt,
is like the horns of a wild ox for him;
he shall devour the nations that are his foes
and break their bones.
He shall strike with his arrows.[f]
9 He crouched, he lay down like a lion,
and like a lioness; who will rouse him up?
Blessed is everyone who blesses you,
and cursed is everyone who curses you."

10 Then Balak's anger was kindled against Balaam, and he struck his hands together. Balak said to Balaam, "I summoned you to curse my enemies, but instead you have blessed them these three times. 11 Now be off with you! Go home! I said, 'I will reward you richly,' but the LORD has denied you any reward." 12 And Balaam said to Balak, "Did I not tell your messengers whom you sent to me, 13 'If Balak should give me his house full of silver and gold, I would not be able to go beyond the word of the LORD, to do either good or bad of my own will; what the LORD says, that is what I will say'? 14 So now, I am going to my people; let me advise you what this people will do to your people in days to come."

15 So he uttered his oracle, saying:
"The oracle of Balaam son of Beor,
the oracle of the man whose eye is clear,[d]
16 the oracle of one who hears the words of God,
and knows the knowledge of the Most High,[g]
who sees the vision of the Almighty,[e]
who falls down, but with his eyes uncovered:
17 I see him, but not now;
I behold him, but not near—
a star shall come out of Jacob,
and a scepter shall rise out of Israel;
it shall crush the borderlands[h] of Moab,
and the territory[i] of all the Shethites.

*d* Or *closed* or *open* *e* Traditional rendering of Heb *Shaddai* *f* Meaning of Heb uncertain *g* Or *of Elyon* *h* Or *forehead* *i* Some Mss read *skull*

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which the oracle was received. *The Almighty*, see Gen 17.1 n. **7**: If *Agag* refers to the Amalekite king of Saul's time (1 Sam 15.8), the poem must have been composed in the early monarchy. **9b**: Gen 12.3.

**24.10**: Striking the hands together was a gesture of anger and reproach (Job 27.23). **14**: Balaam not only defies Balak's command to get out but gives his last oracle without the preparatory rites of divination (23.1–6; 24.1 n.). **15–19**: The fourth oracle. *The Most High*, see Gen 14.18 n. **17–19**: What he sees is *not now* but in the future: Israel will be victorious over Moab and Edom, a prophecy that was realized in the time of David (2 Sam 8.2, 13–14). *A star, a scepter*, these royal symbols

18 Edom will become a possession,
Seir a possession of its enemies,[j]
while Israel does valiantly.
19 One out of Jacob shall rule,
and destroy the survivors of Ir."
20 Then he looked on Amalek, and uttered his oracle, saying:
"First among the nations was Amalek,
but its end is to perish forever."
21 Then he looked on the Kenite, and uttered his oracle, saying:
"Enduring is your dwelling place,
and your nest is set in the rock;
22 yet Kain is destined for burning.
How long shall Asshur take you away captive?"
23 Again he uttered his oracle, saying:
"Alas, who shall live when God does this?
24 But ships shall come from Kittim
and shall afflict Asshur and Eber;
and he also shall perish forever."
25 Then Balaam got up and went back to his place, and Balak also went his way.

25 While Israel was staying at Shittim, the people began to have sexual relations with the women of Moab. 2These invited the people to the sacrifices of their gods, and the people ate and bowed down to their gods. 3Thus Israel yoked itself to the Baal of Peor, and the LORD's anger was kindled against Israel. 4The LORD said to Moses, "Take all the chiefs of the people, and impale them in the sun before the LORD, in order that the fierce anger of the LORD may turn away from Israel." 5And Moses said to the judges of Israel, "Each of you shall kill any of your people who have yoked themselves to the Baal of Peor."

6 Just then one of the Israelites came and brought a Midianite woman into his family, in the sight of Moses and in the sight of the whole congregation of the Israelites, while they were weeping at the entrance of the tent of meeting. 7When Phinehas son of Eleazar, son of Aaron the priest, saw it, he got up and left the congregation. Taking a spear in his hand, 8he went after the Israelite man into the tent, and pierced the two of them, the Israelite and the woman, through the belly. So the plague was stopped among the people of Israel. 9Nevertheless those that died by the plague were twenty-four thousand.

10 The LORD spoke to Moses, saying: 11"Phinehas son of Eleazar, son of Aaron the priest, has turned back my wrath from the Israelites by manifesting such zeal among them on my behalf that in my jealousy I did not consume the Israelites. 12Therefore say, 'I hereby grant him my covenant of peace. 13It shall be for him and for his descendants after him a

*j* Heb *Seir, its enemies, a possession*

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fit a leader like David whose empire embraced the promised land (see Gen 49.10 n.). **18**: *Seir,* a synonym for Edom.

**24.20–24**: Supplementary oracles. **20**: Ex 17.14–16. **21–24**: The meaning of these verses is obscure, owing to the uncertainty of the names.

**25.1–18**: **Incidents of apostasy in Moab.** The protest against intermarriage with foreign peoples was based on the fear of the corruption of Israel's faith (Deut 7.1–5). **1**: *Shittim* (Abel-shittim), opposite Jericho. **2**: The Moabite women lured Israelites into idolatrous rites. *Ate,* a reference to a sacred meal in connection with the sacrifices (compare Ex 32.6). **3**: *Baal,* the Canaanite god of storm and fertility who was worshiped at the cult center of Peor or Beth-peor (23.28; Deut 3.29). **4**: The execution of the *chiefs* was an expiation for the people, according to the ancient conception of corporate guilt (compare 2 Sam 21.1–6). **5**: *Judges,* Ex 18.25–26. **6–18**: Phinehas' zeal, compare Ex 32.25–29. **6**: The story assumes an attempt to seduce Israelites into intermarriage with Midianites, with the result that divine judgment came in the form of a plague (v. 9). In 31.16 Balaam is blamed for this incident.

**25.11**: *Zealous,* or jealous, see Ex 34.14 n.; 1 Kings 19.10. **12**: A *covenant of peace* (Ezek 34.25; 37.26) is one of welfare and well-being, based on right relation with God and harmonious relations in the community. **13**: The Aaronic line, traced through Phinehas

covenant of perpetual priesthood, because he was zealous for his God, and made atonement for the Israelites.' "

14 The name of the slain Israelite man, who was killed with the Midianite woman, was Zimri son of Salu, head of an ancestral house belonging to the Simeonites. 15 The name of the Midianite woman who was killed was Cozbi daughter of Zur, who was the head of a clan, an ancestral house in Midian.

16 The LORD said to Moses, 17 "Harass the Midianites, and defeat them; 18 for they have harassed you by the trickery with which they deceived you in the affair of Peor, and in the affair of Cozbi, the daughter of a leader of Midian, their sister; she was killed on the day of the plague that resulted from Peor."

**26** After the plague the LORD said to Moses and to Eleazar son of Aaron the priest, 2 "Take a census of the whole congregation of the Israelites, from twenty years old and upward, by their ancestral houses, everyone in Israel able to go to war." 3 Moses and Eleazar the priest spoke with them in the plains of Moab by the Jordan opposite Jericho, saying, 4 "Take a census of the people,[k] from twenty years old and upward," as the LORD commanded Moses.

The Israelites, who came out of the land of Egypt, were:

5 Reuben, the firstborn of Israel. The descendants of Reuben: of Hanoch, the clan of the Hanochites; of Pallu, the clan of the Palluites; 6 of Hezron, the clan of the Hezronites; of Carmi, the clan of the Carmites. 7 These are the clans of the Reubenites; the number of those enrolled was forty-three thousand seven hundred thirty. 8 And the descendants of Pallu: Eliab. 9 The descendants of Eliab: Nemuel, Dathan, and Abiram. These are the same Dathan and Abiram, chosen from the congregation, who rebelled against Moses and Aaron in the company of Korah, when they rebelled against the LORD, 10 and the earth opened its mouth and swallowed them up along with Korah, when that company died, when the fire devoured two hundred fifty men; and they became a warning. 11 Notwithstanding, the sons of Korah did not die.

12 The descendants of Simeon by their clans: of Nemuel, the clan of the Nemuelites; of Jamin, the clan of the Jaminites; of Jachin, the clan of the Jachinites; 13 of Zerah, the clan of the Zerahites; of Shaul, the clan of the Shaulites.[l] 14 These are the clans of the Simeonites, twenty-two thousand two hundred.

15 The children of Gad by their clans: of Zephon, the clan of the Zephonites; of Haggi, the clan of the Haggites; of Shuni, the clan of the Shunites; 16 of Ozni, the clan of the Oznites; of Eri, the clan of the Erites; 17 of Arod, the clan of the Arodites; of Areli, the clan of the Arelites. 18 These are the clans of the Gadites: the number of those enrolled was forty thousand five hundred.

19 The sons of Judah: Er and Onan; Er and Onan died in the land of Canaan. 20 The descendants of Judah by their clans were: of Shelah, the clan of the Shelanites; of Perez, the clan of the Perezites; of Zerah, the clan of the Zerahites. 21 The descendants of Perez were: of Hezron, the clan of the Hezronites; of Hamul, the clan of the Hamulites. 22 These are the clans of Judah: the number of those enrolled was seventy-six thousand five hundred.

23 The descendants of Issachar by their clans: of Tola, the clan of the Tolaites; of Puvah, the clan of the Punites; 24 of Jashub, the clan of the Jashubites; of Shimron, the clan of the Shimronites. 25 These are the clans of Issachar: sixty-four thousand three hundred enrolled.

26 The descendants of Zebulun by their clans: of Sered, the clan of the Seredites; of Elon, the clan of the Elonites; of Jahleel, the clan of the Jahleelites.

*k* Heb lacks *take a census of the people*: Compare verse 2 *l* Or *Saul . . . Saulites*

(Ex 6.25), is guaranteed *a perpetual priesthood*, i.e. one that continues in perpetuity. **16–18**: See ch 31.

**26.1–65**: **A second census** is taken to ascertain the strength of the tribes and to allot the land. **5–50**: See 1.5–15 n. **9–11**: See ch 16.

27 These are the clans of the Zebulunites; the number of those enrolled was sixty thousand five hundred.

28 The sons of Joseph by their clans: Manasseh and Ephraim. 29 The descendants of Manasseh: of Machir, the clan of the Machirites; and Machir was the father of Gilead; of Gilead, the clan of the Gileadites. 30 These are the descendants of Gilead: of Iezer, the clan of the Iezerites; of Helek, the clan of the Helekites; 31 and of Asriel, the clan of the Asrielites; and of Shechem, the clan of the Shechemites; 32 and of Shemida, the clan of the Shemidaites; and of Hepher, the clan of the Hepherites. 33 Now Zelophehad son of Hepher had no sons, but daughters: and the names of the daughters of Zelophehad were Mahlah, Noah, Hoglah, Milcah, and Tirzah. 34 These are the clans of Manasseh; the number of those enrolled was fifty-two thousand seven hundred.

35 These are the descendants of Ephraim according to their clans: of Shuthelah, the clan of the Shuthelahites; of Becher, the clan of the Becherites; of Tahan, the clan of the Tahanites. 36 And these are the descendants of Shuthelah: of Eran, the clan of the Eranites. 37 These are the clans of the Ephraimites: the number of those enrolled was thirty-two thousand five hundred. These are the descendants of Joseph by their clans.

38 The descendants of Benjamin by their clans: of Bela, the clan of the Belaites; of Ashbel, the clan of the Ashbelites; of Ahiram, the clan of the Ahiramites; 39 of Shephupham, the clan of the Shuphamites; of Hupham, the clan of the Huphamites. 40 And the sons of Bela were Ard and Naaman: of Ard, the clan of the Ardites; of Naaman, the clan of the Naamites. 41 These are the descendants of Benjamin by their clans; the number of those enrolled was forty-five thousand six hundred.

42 These are the descendants of Dan by their clans: of Shuham, the clan of the Shuhamites. These are the clans of Dan by their clans. 43 All the clans of the Shuhamites: sixty-four thousand four hundred enrolled.

44 The descendants of Asher by their families: of Imnah, the clan of the Imnites; of Ishvi, the clan of the Ishvites; of Beriah, the clan of the Beriites. 45 Of the descendants of Beriah: of Heber, the clan of the Heberites; of Malchiel, the clan of the Malchielites. 46 And the name of the daughter of Asher was Serah. 47 These are the clans of the Asherites: the number of those enrolled was fifty-three thousand four hundred.

48 The descendants of Naphtali by their clans: of Jahzeel, the clan of the Jahzeelites; of Guni, the clan of the Gunites; 49 of Jezer, the clan of the Jezerites; of Shillem, the clan of the Shillemites. 50 These are the Naphtalites[m] by their clans: the number of those enrolled was forty-five thousand four hundred.

51 This was the number of the Israelites enrolled: six hundred and one thousand seven hundred thirty.

52 The LORD spoke to Moses, saying: 53 To these the land shall be apportioned for inheritance according to the number of names. 54 To a large tribe you shall give a large inheritance, and to a small tribe you shall give a small inheritance; every tribe shall be given its inheritance according to its enrollment. 55 But the land shall be apportioned by lot; according to the names of their ancestral tribes they shall inherit. 56 Their inheritance shall be apportioned according to lot between the larger and the smaller.

*m* Heb *clans of Naphtali*

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**26.12–14**: Simeon suffered the greatest loss during the wilderness sojourn (compare 1.23; see Gen 49.5–7 n.).

**26.28**: Manasseh's priority over Ephraim (compare 1.10) points to a very old historical situation (Gen 48.13–22) and suggests that this list is older than that of ch 1.

**26.51**: See 1.17–46 n. The priestly writer emphasizes God's marvelous power to sustain the people despite the almost complete change of population (vv. 63–65). **52–56**: The census provided a basis for allotting land

57 This is the enrollment of the Levites by their clans: of Gershon, the clan of the Gershonites; of Kohath, the clan of the Kohathites; of Merari, the clan of the Merarites. 58These are the clans of Levi: the clan of the Libnites, the clan of the Hebronites, the clan of the Mahlites, the clan of the Mushites, the clan of the Korahites. Now Kohath was the father of Amram. 59The name of Amram's wife was Jochebed daughter of Levi, who was born to Levi in Egypt; and she bore to Amram: Aaron, Moses, and their sister Miriam. 60To Aaron were born Nadab, Abihu, Eleazar, and Ithamar. 61But Nadab and Abihu died when they offered unholy fire before the LORD. 62The number of those enrolled was twenty-three thousand, every male one month old and upward; for they were not enrolled among the Israelites because there was no allotment given to them among the Israelites.

63 These were those enrolled by Moses and Eleazar the priest, who enrolled the Israelites in the plains of Moab by the Jordan opposite Jericho. 64Among these there was not one of those enrolled by Moses and Aaron the priest, who had enrolled the Israelites in the wilderness of Sinai. 65For the LORD had said of them, "They shall die in the wilderness." Not one of them was left, except Caleb son of Jephunneh and Joshua son of Nun.

27 Then the daughters of Zelophehad came forward. Zelophehad was son of Hepher son of Gilead son of Machir son of Manasseh son of Joseph, a member of the Manassite clans. The names of his daughters were: Mahlah, Noah, Hoglah, Milcah, and Tirzah. 2They stood before Moses, Eleazar the priest, the leaders, and all the congregation, at the entrance of the tent of meeting, and they said, 3"Our father died in the wilderness; he was not among the company of those who gathered themselves together against the LORD in the company of Korah, but died for his own sin; and he had no sons. 4Why should the name of our father be taken away from his clan because he had no son? Give to us a possession among our father's brothers."

5 Moses brought their case before the LORD. 6And the LORD spoke to Moses, saying: 7The daughters of Zelophehad are right in what they are saying; you shall indeed let them possess an inheritance among their father's brothers and pass the inheritance of their father on to them. 8You shall also say to the Israelites, "If a man dies, and has no son, then you shall pass his inheritance on to his daughter. 9If he has no daughter, then you shall give his inheritance to his brothers. 10If he has no brothers, then you shall give his inheritance to his father's brothers. 11And if his father has no brothers, then you shall give his inheritance to the nearest kinsman of his clan, and he shall possess it. It shall be for the Israelites a statute and ordinance, as the LORD commanded Moses."

12 The LORD said to Moses, "Go up this mountain of the Abarim range, and see the land that I have given to the Israelites. 13When you have seen it, you also shall be gathered to your people, as your brother Aaron was, 14because you rebelled against my word in the wilderness of Zin when the congregation quarreled with me.[n] You did not show my holi-

*n* Heb lacks *with me*

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after the conquest. **57–62**: The Levites, the landless tribe, are numbered separately. **61**: See Lev ch 10.

**27.1–11**: **Inheritance of property by women.** **1**: 26.33. **2–4**: In Israel a family inheritance was to remain in the family (36.7; 1 Kings 21.3), thereby perpetuating the ancestral name. The request of the daughters of Zelophehad was unusual in that, according to ancient law, normally women did not inherit property. **5–11**: Another example of how law developed as unprecedented situations were faced (see 9.8 n.). Compare also ch 36.

**27.12–23**: **Joshua commissioned to succeed Moses** (Deut 31.14–15, 23). **12**: *Abarim,* a hilly region in which Mount Nebo, the scene of Moses' death, was located (Deut ch 34). **13**: 20.22–29. **14**: 20.12–13. *Meribath-kadesh,* see Ex 17.7 n. **18–20**: Like Moses, Joshua was held to be a charismatic leader,

ness before their eyes at the waters." (These are the waters of Meribath-kadesh in the wilderness of Zin.) 15Moses spoke to the LORD, saying, 16"Let the LORD, the God of the spirits of all flesh, appoint someone over the congregation 17who shall go out before them and come in before them, who shall lead them out and bring them in, so that the congregation of the LORD may not be like sheep without a shepherd." 18So the LORD said to Moses, "Take Joshua son of Nun, a man in whom is the spirit, and lay your hand upon him; 19have him stand before Eleazar the priest and all the congregation, and commission him in their sight. 20You shall give him some of your authority, so that all the congregation of the Israelites may obey. 21But he shall stand before Eleazar the priest, who shall inquire for him by the decision of the Urim before the LORD; at his word they shall go out, and at his word they shall come in, both he and all the Israelites with him, the whole congregation." 22So Moses did as the LORD commanded him. He took Joshua and had him stand before Eleazar the priest and the whole congregation; 23he laid his hands on him and commissioned him—as the LORD had directed through Moses.

28 The LORD spoke to Moses, saying: 2Command the Israelites, and say to them: My offering, the food for my offerings by fire, my pleasing odor, you shall take care to offer to me at its appointed time. 3And you shall say to them, This is the offering by fire that you shall offer to the LORD: two male lambs a year old without blemish, daily, as a regular offering. 4One lamb you shall offer in the morning, and the other lamb you shall offer at twilight;[o] 5also one-tenth of an ephah of choice flour for a grain offering, mixed with one-fourth of a hin of beaten oil. 6It is a regular burnt offering, ordained at Mount Sinai for a pleasing odor, an offering by fire to the LORD. 7Its drink offering shall be one-fourth of a hin for each lamb; in the sanctuary you shall pour out a drink offering of strong drink to the LORD. 8The other lamb you shall offer at twilight[o] with a grain offering and a drink offering like the one in the morning; you shall offer it as an offering by fire, a pleasing odor to the LORD.

9 On the sabbath day: two male lambs a year old without blemish, and two-tenths of an ephah of choice flour for a grain offering, mixed with oil, and its drink offering— 10this is the burnt offering for every sabbath, in addition to the regular burnt offering and its drink offering.

11 At the beginnings of your months you shall offer a burnt offering to the LORD: two young bulls, one ram, seven male lambs a year old without blemish; 12also three-tenths of an ephah of choice flour for a grain offering, mixed with oil, for each bull; and two-tenths of choice flour for a grain offering, mixed with oil, for the one ram; 13and one-tenth of choice flour mixed with oil as a grain offering for every lamb—a burnt offering of pleasing odor, an offering by fire to the LORD. 14Their drink offerings shall be half a hin of wine for a bull, one-third of a hin for a ram, and one-fourth of a hin for a lamb. This is the burnt offering of every month throughout the months of the year. 15And there shall be one male goat for a sin offering to the LORD; it shall be offered in addition to the regular burnt offering and its drink offering.

16 On the fourteenth day of the first

*o* Heb *between the two evenings*

*a man in whom is the spirit* (11.17; 24.2). **21**: *Urim*, see Ex 28.15–30 n. At Joshua's word, given in obedience to the sacred oracle, the people shall *go out* to battle and *come in* the camp (v. 17; Deut 3.28).

**28.1–29.40: Offerings for various occasions.**

**28.2**: *The food . . . my pleasing odor*, see Lev 1.9 n. and 21.6 n. **3–8**: The daily sacrifice (Ex 29.38–42). **9–10**: The sabbath offering is mentioned only here in the Pentateuch.

**28.11–15**: Since the year was based on a lunar calendar, a festival was held at each new moon (10.10; 1 Sam 20.5; Isa 1.14; Am 8.5).

**28.16–25**: Unleavened bread (Ex 12.1–27; Lev 23.5–8).

*month there shall be a passover offering* to the LORD. 17 And on the fifteenth day of this month is a festival; seven days shall unleavened bread be eaten. 18 On the first day there shall be a holy convocation. You shall not work at your occupations. 19 You shall offer an offering by fire, a burnt offering to the LORD: two young bulls, one ram, and seven male lambs a year old; see that they are without blemish. 20 Their grain offering shall be of choice flour mixed with oil: three-tenths of an ephah shall you offer for a bull, and two-tenths for a ram; 21 one-tenth shall you offer for each of the seven lambs; 22 also one male goat for a sin offering, to make atonement for you. 23 You shall offer these in addition to the burnt offering of the morning, which belongs to the regular burnt offering. 24 In the same way you shall offer daily, for seven days, the food of an offering by fire, a pleasing odor to the LORD; it shall be offered in addition to the regular burnt offering and its drink offering. 25 And on the seventh day you shall have a holy convocation; you shall not work at your occupations.

26 On the day of the first fruits, when you offer a grain offering of new grain to the LORD at your festival of weeks, you shall have a holy convocation; you shall not work at your occupations. 27 You shall offer a burnt offering, a pleasing odor to the LORD: two young bulls, one ram, seven male lambs a year old. 28 Their grain offering shall be of choice flour mixed with oil, three-tenths of an ephah for each bull, two-tenths for one ram, 29 one-tenth for each of the seven lambs; 30 with one male goat, to make atonement for you. 31 In addition to the regular burnt offering with its grain offering, you shall offer them and their drink offering. They shall be without blemish.

29 On the first day of the seventh month you shall have a holy convocation; you shall not work at your occupations. It is a day for you to blow the trumpets, 2 and you shall offer a burnt offering, a pleasing odor to the LORD: one young bull, one ram, seven male lambs a year old without blemish. 3 Their grain offering shall be of choice flour mixed with oil, three-tenths of one ephah for the bull, two-tenths for the ram, 4 and one-tenth for each of the seven lambs; 5 with one male goat for a sin offering, to make atonement for you. 6 These are in addition to the burnt offering of the new moon and its grain offering, and the regular burnt offering and its grain offering, and their drink offerings, according to the ordinance for them, a pleasing odor, an offering by fire to the LORD.

7 On the tenth day of this seventh month you shall have a holy convocation, and deny yourselves;[p] you shall do no work. 8 You shall offer a burnt offering to the LORD, a pleasing odor: one young bull, one ram, seven male lambs a year old. They shall be without blemish. 9 Their grain offering shall be of choice flour mixed with oil, three-tenths of an ephah for the bull, two-tenths for the one ram, 10 one-tenth for each of the seven lambs; 11 with one male goat for a sin offering, in addition to the sin offering of atonement, and the regular burnt offering and its grain offering, and their drink offerings.

12 On the fifteenth day of the seventh month you shall have a holy convocation; you shall not work at your occupations. You shall celebrate a festival to the LORD seven days. 13 You shall offer a burnt offering, an offering by fire, a pleasing odor to the LORD: thirteen young bulls, two rams, fourteen male lambs a year old. They shall be without blemish. 14 Their grain offering shall be of choice flour mixed with oil, three-tenths of an ephah for each of the thirteen

*p* Or *and fast*

**28.26–31:** Pentecost (Ex 23.16; 34.22; Lev 23.15–21).

**29.1–6:** New Year (Lev 23.23–25). **7–11:** Day of atonement (Lev 16.29–34; 23.26–32).

**29.12–38:** The offering for the festival of booths (Lev 23.33–36) exceeds that of any other convocation.

**30.1–16: On vows made by women. 2:**

bulls, two-tenths for each of the two rams, 15and one-tenth for each of the fourteen lambs; 16also one male goat for a sin offering, in addition to the regular burnt offering, its grain offering and its drink offering.

17 On the second day: twelve young bulls, two rams, fourteen male lambs a year old without blemish, 18with the grain offering and the drink offerings for the bulls, for the rams, and for the lambs, as prescribed in accordance with their number; 19also one male goat for a sin offering, in addition to the regular burnt offering and its grain offering, and their drink offerings.

20 On the third day: eleven bulls, two rams, fourteen male lambs a year old without blemish, 21with the grain offering and the drink offerings for the bulls, for the rams, and for the lambs, as prescribed in accordance with their number; 22also one male goat for a sin offering, in addition to the regular burnt offering and its grain offering and its drink offering.

23 On the fourth day: ten bulls, two rams, fourteen male lambs a year old without blemish, 24with the grain offering and the drink offerings for the bulls, for the rams, and for the lambs, as prescribed in accordance with their number; 25also one male goat for a sin offering, in addition to the regular burnt offering, its grain offering and its drink offering.

26 On the fifth day: nine bulls, two rams, fourteen male lambs a year old without blemish, 27with the grain offering and the drink offerings for the bulls, for the rams, and for the lambs, as prescribed in accordance with their number; 28also one male goat for a sin offering, in addition to the regular burnt offering and its grain offering and its drink offering.

29 On the sixth day: eight bulls, two rams, fourteen male lambs a year old without blemish, 30with the grain offering and the drink offerings for the bulls, for the rams, and for the lambs, as prescribed in accordance with their number; 31also one male goat for a sin offering, in addition to the regular burnt offering, its grain offering, and its drink offerings.

32 On the seventh day: seven bulls, two rams, fourteen male lambs a year old without blemish, 33with the grain offering and the drink offerings for the bulls, for the rams, and for the lambs, as prescribed in accordance with their number; 34also one male goat for a sin offering, besides the regular burnt offering, its grain offering, and its drink offering.

35 On the eighth day you shall have a solemn assembly; you shall not work at your occupations. 36You shall offer a burnt offering, an offering by fire, a pleasing odor to the LORD: one bull, one ram, seven male lambs a year old without blemish, 37and the grain offering and the drink offerings for the bull, for the ram, and for the lambs, as prescribed in accordance with their number; 38also one male goat for a sin offering, in addition to the regular burnt offering and its grain offering and its drink offering.

39 These you shall offer to the LORD at your appointed festivals, in addition to your votive offerings and your freewill offerings, as your burnt offerings, your grain offerings, your drink offerings, and your offerings of well-being.

40[q] So Moses told the Israelites everything just as the LORD had commanded Moses.

**30** Then Moses said to the heads of the tribes of the Israelites: This is what the LORD has commanded. 2When a man makes a vow to the LORD, or swears an oath to bind himself by a pledge, he shall not break his word; he shall do according to all that proceeds out of his mouth.

3 When a woman makes a vow to the LORD, or binds herself by a pledge, while

*q* Ch 30.1 in Heb

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Vows made by men (Gen 28.20–22; Judg 11.30–31) are absolutely binding (compare Lev ch 27; Deut 23.21–23).

**30.3–15**: These cases reflect a society in which a woman was subordinate to the man of the family. He could nullify her vow if he

within her father's house, in her youth, 4and her father hears of her vow or her pledge by which she has bound herself, and says nothing to her; then all her vows shall stand, and any pledge by which she has bound herself shall stand. 5But if her father expresses disapproval to her at the time that he hears of it, no vow of hers, and no pledge by which she has bound herself, shall stand; and the LORD will forgive her, because her father had expressed to her his disapproval.

6 If she marries, while obligated by her vows or any thoughtless utterance of her lips by which she has bound herself, 7and her husband hears of it and says nothing to her at the time that he hears, then her vows shall stand, and her pledges by which she has bound herself shall stand. 8But if, at the time that her husband hears of it, he expresses disapproval to her, then he shall nullify the vow by which she was obligated, or the thoughtless utterance of her lips, by which she bound herself; and the LORD will forgive her. 9(But every vow of a widow or of a divorced woman, by which she has bound herself, shall be binding upon her.) 10And if she made a vow in her husband's house, or bound herself by a pledge with an oath, 11and her husband heard it and said nothing to her, and did not express disapproval to her, then all her vows shall stand, and any pledge by which she bound herself shall stand. 12But if her husband nullifies them at the time that he hears them, then whatever proceeds out of her lips concerning her vows, or concerning her pledge of herself, shall not stand. Her husband has nullified them, and the LORD will forgive her. 13Any vow or any binding oath to deny herself,[r] her husband may allow to stand, or her husband may nullify. 14But if her husband says nothing to her from day to day,[s] then he validates all her vows, or all her pledges, by which she is obligated; he has validated them, because he said nothing to her at the time that he heard of them. 15But if he nullifies them some time after he has heard of them, then he shall bear her guilt.

16 These are the statutes that the LORD commanded Moses concerning a husband and his wife, and a father and his daughter while she is still young and in her father's house.

31 The LORD spoke to Moses, saying, 2"Avenge the Israelites on the Midianites; afterward you shall be gathered to your people." 3So Moses said to the people, "Arm some of your number for the war, so that they may go against Midian, to execute the LORD's vengeance on Midian. 4You shall send a thousand from each of the tribes of Israel to the war." 5So out of the thousands of Israel, a thousand from each tribe were conscripted, twelve thousand armed for battle. 6Moses sent them to the war, a thousand from each tribe, along with Phinehas son of Eleazar the priest,[t] with the vessels of the sanctuary and the trumpets for sounding the alarm in his hand. 7They did battle against Midian, as the LORD had commanded Moses, and killed every male. 8They killed the kings of Midian: Evi, Rekem, Zur, Hur, and Reba, the five kings of Midian, in addition to others who were slain by them;

*r* Or *to fast* *s* Or *from that day to the next*
*t* Gk: Heb adds *to the war*

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felt that it was rash or thoughtless. **9**: The exception is a vow made by a woman when widowed or divorced. **13**: *Deny herself,* i.e. by a vow of abstinence or discipline.

**31.1–54**: **Holy war against Midian.** The reason for this war was the corrupting influence of Midianites at Peor (25.16–18). **3**: *The LORD's vengeance,* i.e. holy war in which the enemy was placed under the sacrificial ban (Ex 17.8–16). **6**: Phinehas was sent instead of Eleazar, for the high priest, more than other priests, had to avoid contact with the dead (Lev 21.10–15). Strangely, no mention is made of the ark going into battle. **8**: In contrast to early tradition that portrayed Balaam as an advocate for Israel (chs 22–24), this priestly tradition holds him responsible for the apostasy at Peor (v. 16). **7**: Despite this annihilation, the Midianites were a formidable foe in a later period (Judg ch 6).

and they also killed Balaam son of Beor with the sword. 9The Israelites took the women of Midian and their little ones captive; and they took all their cattle, their flocks, and all their goods as booty. 10All their towns where they had settled, and all their encampments, they burned, 11but they took all the spoil and all the booty, both people and animals. 12Then they brought the captives and the booty and the spoil to Moses, to Eleazar the priest, and to the congregation of the Israelites, at the camp on the plains of Moab by the Jordan at Jericho.

13 Moses, Eleazar the priest, and all the leaders of the congregation went to meet them outside the camp. 14Moses became angry with the officers of the army, the commanders of thousands and the commanders of hundreds, who had come from service in the war. 15Moses said to them, "Have you allowed all the women to live? 16These women here, on Balaam's advice, made the Israelites act treacherously against the LORD in the affair of Peor, so that the plague came among the congregation of the LORD. 17Now therefore, kill every male among the little ones, and kill every woman who has known a man by sleeping with him. 18But all the young girls who have not known a man by sleeping with him, keep alive for yourselves. 19Camp outside the camp seven days; whoever of you has killed any person or touched a corpse, purify yourselves and your captives on the third and on the seventh day. 20You shall purify every garment, every article of skin, everything made of goats' hair, and every article of wood."

21 Eleazar the priest said to the troops who had gone to battle: "This is the statute of the law that the LORD has commanded Moses: 22gold, silver, bronze, iron, tin, and lead— 23everything that can withstand fire, shall be passed through fire, and it shall be clean. Nevertheless it shall also be purified with the water for purification; and whatever cannot withstand fire, shall be passed through the water. 24You must wash your clothes on the seventh day, and you shall be clean; afterward you may come into the camp."

25 The LORD spoke to Moses, saying, 26"You and Eleazar the priest and the heads of the ancestral houses of the congregation make an inventory of the booty captured, both human and animal. 27Divide the booty into two parts, between the warriors who went out to battle and all the congregation. 28From the share of the warriors who went out to battle, set aside as tribute for the LORD, one item out of every five hundred, whether persons, oxen, donkeys, sheep, or goats. 29Take it from their half and give it to Eleazar the priest as an offering to the LORD. 30But from the Israelites' half you shall take one out of every fifty, whether persons, oxen, donkeys, sheep, or goats—all the animals—and give them to the Levites who have charge of the tabernacle of the LORD."

31 Then Moses and Eleazar the priest did as the LORD had commanded Moses:

32 The booty remaining from the spoil that the troops had taken totaled six hundred seventy-five thousand sheep, 33seventy-two thousand oxen, 34sixty-one thousand donkeys, 35and thirty-two thousand persons in all, women who had not known a man by sleeping with him.

36 The half-share, the portion of those who had gone out to war, was in number three hundred thirty-seven

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**31.9–12**: According to the ideology of holy war, the enemy was offered as a sacrifice to the LORD (1 Sam ch 15).

**31.19–24**: A major concern of the story is the removal of uncleanness through contact with the dead. See ch 19 for the procedure for ceremonial purification. **20**: These articles could absorb uncleanness (Lev 11.24–38). **22–23**: Non-absorbent articles had to be subjected to fire as well as to *the water for purification* (19.9).

**31.25–30**: The law for the distribution of booty. **27**: 1 Sam 30.24–25. **28–30**: The warriors were to contribute one-fifth of one percent from their half of the booty to the high priest; this offering was regarded as *the tribute*

thousand five hundred sheep and goats. 37and the LORD's tribute of sheep and goats was six hundred seventy-five. 38The oxen were thirty-six thousand, of which the LORD's tribute was seventy-two. 39The donkeys were thirty thousand five hundred, of which the LORD's tribute was sixty-one. 40The persons were sixteen thousand, of which the LORD's tribute was thirty-two persons. 41Moses gave the tribute, the offering for the LORD, to Eleazar the priest, as the LORD had commanded Moses.

42 As for the Israelites' half, which Moses separated from that of the troops, 43the congregation's half was three hundred thirty-seven thousand five hundred sheep and goats, 44thirty-six thousand oxen, 45thirty thousand five hundred donkeys, 46and sixteen thousand persons. 47From the Israelites' half Moses took one of every fifty, both of persons and of animals, and gave them to the Levites who had charge of the tabernacle of the LORD; as the LORD had commanded Moses.

48 Then the officers who were over the thousands of the army, the commanders of thousands and the commanders of hundreds, approached Moses, 49and said to Moses, "Your servants have counted the warriors who are under our command, and not one of us is missing. 50And we have brought the LORD's offering, what each of us found, articles of gold, armlets and bracelets, signet rings, earrings, and pendants, to make atonement for ourselves before the LORD." 51Moses and Eleazar the priest received the gold from them, all in the form of crafted articles. 52And all the gold of the offering that they offered to the LORD, from the commanders of thousands and the commanders of hundreds, was sixteen thousand seven hundred fifty shekels. 53(The troops had all taken plunder for themselves.) 54So Moses and Eleazar the priest received the gold from the commanders of thousands and of hundreds, and brought it into the tent of meeting as a memorial for the Israelites before the LORD.

32 Now the Reubenites and the Gadites owned a very great number of cattle. When they saw that the land of Jazer and the land of Gilead was a good place for cattle, 2the Gadites and the Reubenites came and spoke to Moses, to Eleazar the priest, and to the leaders of the congregation, saying, 3"Ataroth, Dibon, Jazer, Nimrah, Heshbon, Elealeh, Sebam, Nebo, and Beon— 4the land that the LORD subdued before the congregation of Israel—is a land for cattle; and your servants have cattle." 5They continued, "If we have found favor in your sight, let this land be given to your servants for a possession; do not make us cross the Jordan."

6 But Moses said to the Gadites and to the Reubenites, "Shall your brothers go to war while you sit here? 7Why will you discourage the hearts of the Israelites from going over into the land that the LORD has given them? 8Your fathers did this, when I sent them from Kadesh-barnea to see the land. 9When they went up to the Wadi Eshcol and saw the land, they discouraged the hearts of the Israelites from going into the land that the LORD had given them. 10The LORD's anger was kindled on that day and he swore, saying, 11'Surely none of the people who came up out of Egypt, from twenty years old and upward, shall see the land that I swore to give to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob, because they have not unreservedly followed me— 12none except Caleb son of Jephunneh the Kenizzite and Joshua son of Nun, for they

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*for the LORD* (vv. 32–41). The people were to give two percent from their half to the Levites (vv. 42–47).

**31.50**: *Make atonement* (see Lev 1.4 n.), i.e. on account of ritual defilement by the dead.

**32.1–42**: **The allotment of land in Transjordan** to Reuben, Gad, and Manasseh, on the condition that they help the other tribes in the battle for Canaan (Deut 3.12–22; Josh 13.8–32). **1**: *Jazer*, on the boundary of Ammon (21.24). **6**: Compare Judg 5.16–17.

**32.8–13**: A summary of chs 13–14.

have unreservedly followed the LORD.' 13And the LORD's anger was kindled against Israel, and he made them wander in the wilderness for forty years, until all the generation that had done evil in the sight of the LORD had disappeared. 14And now you, a brood of sinners, have risen in place of your fathers, to increase the LORD's fierce anger against Israel! 15If you turn away from following him, he will again abandon them in the wilderness; and you will destroy all this people."

16 Then they came up to him and said, "We will build sheepfolds here for our flocks, and towns for our little ones, 17but we will take up arms as a vanguard[u] before the Israelites, until we have brought them to their place. Meanwhile our little ones will stay in the fortified towns because of the inhabitants of the land. 18We will not return to our homes until all the Israelites have obtained their inheritance. 19We will not inherit with them on the other side of the Jordan and beyond, because our inheritance has come to us on this side of the Jordan to the east."

20 So Moses said to them, "If you do this—if you take up arms to go before the LORD for the war, 21and all those of you who bear arms cross the Jordan before the LORD, until he has driven out his enemies from before him 22and the land is subdued before the LORD—then after that you may return and be free of obligation to the LORD and to Israel, and this land shall be your possession before the LORD. 23But if you do not do this, you have sinned against the LORD; and be sure your sin will find you out. 24Build towns for your little ones, and folds for your flocks; but do what you have promised."

25 Then the Gadites and the Reubenites said to Moses, "Your servants will do as my lord commands. 26Our little ones, our wives, our flocks, and all our livestock shall remain there in the towns of Gilead; 27but your servants will cross over, everyone armed for war, to do battle for the LORD, just as my lord orders."

28 So Moses gave command concerning them to Eleazar the priest, to Joshua son of Nun, and to the heads of the ancestral houses of the Israelite tribes. 29And Moses said to them, "If the Gadites and the Reubenites, everyone armed for battle before the LORD, will cross over the Jordan with you and the land shall be subdued before you, then you shall give them the land of Gilead for a possession; 30but if they will not cross over with you armed, they shall have possessions among you in the land of Canaan." 31The Gadites and the Reubenites answered, "As the LORD has spoken to your servants, so we will do. 32We will cross over armed before the LORD into the land of Canaan, but the possession of our inheritance shall remain with us on this side of[v] the Jordan."

33 Moses gave to them—to the Gadites and to the Reubenites and to the half-tribe of Manasseh son of Joseph—the kingdom of King Sihon of the Amorites and the kingdom of King Og of Bashan, the land and its towns, with the territories of the surrounding towns. 34And the Gadites rebuilt Dibon, Ataroth, Aroer, 35Atroth-shophan, Jazer, Jogbehah, 36Beth-nimrah, and Beth-haran, fortified cities, and folds for sheep. 37And the Reubenites rebuilt Heshbon, Elealeh, Kiriathaim, 38Nebo, and Baal-meon (some names being changed), and Sibmah; and they gave names to the towns that they rebuilt. 39The descendants of Machir son of Manasseh went to Gilead,

*u* Cn: Heb *hurrying* *v* Heb *beyond*

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**32.20–23:** This is conceived as a holy war which imposed a sacred obligation upon all the tribal confederacy (Deut 33.21).

**32.33:** *The half-tribe of Manasseh,* i.e. the part that located east of the Jordan as distinguished from the part that settled in the region around Shechem (Josh 17.1–3). **34–36:** Gad's territory included part of the kingdom of Sihon (21.24), i.e. from Heshbon northward into Gilead (Josh 13.24–28). **37–38:** Reuben's territory extended from Heshbon south to the Arnon, the frontier of Moab (Josh 13.15–23). **39–42:** Machir (26.29; see Gen 50.23 n.) received the territory of King

captured it, and dispossessed the Amorites who were there; 40so Moses gave Gilead to Machir son of Manasseh, and he settled there. 41Jair son of Manasseh went and captured their villages, and renamed them Havvoth-jair.[w] 42And Nobah went and captured Kenath and its villages, and renamed it Nobah after himself.

33 These are the stages by which the Israelites went out of the land of Egypt in military formation under the leadership of Moses and Aaron. 2Moses wrote down their starting points, stage by stage, by command of the LORD; and these are their stages according to their starting places. 3They set out from Rameses in the first month, on the fifteenth day of the first month; on the day after the passover the Israelites went out boldly in the sight of all the Egyptians, 4while the Egyptians were burying all their firstborn, whom the LORD had struck down among them. The LORD executed judgments even against their gods.

5 So the Israelites set out from Rameses, and camped at Succoth. 6They set out from Succoth, and camped at Etham, which is on the edge of the wilderness. 7They set out from Etham, and turned back to Pi-hahiroth, which faces Baal-zephon; and they camped before Migdol. 8They set out from Pi-hahiroth, passed through the sea into the wilderness, went a three days' journey in the wilderness of Etham, and camped at Marah. 9They set out from Marah and came to Elim; at Elim there were twelve springs of water and seventy palm trees, and they camped there. 10They set out from Elim and camped by the Red Sea.[x] 11They set out from the Red Sea[x] and camped in the wilderness of Sin. 12They set out from the wilderness of Sin and camped at Dophkah. 13They set out from Dophkah and camped at Alush. 14They set out from Alush and camped at Rephidim, where there was no water for the people to drink. 15They set out from Rephidim and camped in the wilderness of Sinai. 16They set out from the wilderness of Sinai and camped at Kibroth-hattaavah. 17They set out from Kibroth-hattaavah and camped at Hazeroth. 18They set out from Hazeroth and camped at Rithmah. 19They set out from Rithmah and camped at Rimmon-perez. 20They set out from Rimmon-perez and camped at Libnah. 21They set out from Libnah and camped at Rissah. 22They set out from Rissah and camped at Kehelathah. 23They set out from Kehelathah and camped at Mount Shepher. 24They set out from Mount Shepher and camped at Haradah. 25They set out from Haradah and camped at Makheloth. 26They set out from Makheloth and camped at Tahath. 27They set out from Tahath and camped at Terah. 28They set out from Terah and camped at Mithkah. 29They set out from Mithkah and camped at Hashmonah. 30They set out from Hashmonah and camped at Moseroth. 31They set out from Moseroth and camped at Bene-jaakan. 32They set out from Bene-jaakan and camped at Hor-haggidgad. 33They set out from Hor-haggidgad and camped at Jotbathah. 34They set out from Jotbathah and camped at Abronah. 35They set out from Abronah and camped at Ezion-geber. 36They set out from Ezion-geber and camped in the wilderness of Zin (that is, Kadesh). 37They set out from Kadesh and camped at Mount Hor, on the edge of the land of Edom.

38 Aaron the priest went up Mount Hor at the command of the LORD and died there in the fortieth year after the Israelites had come out of the land of

*w* That is *the villages of Jair* *x* Or *Sea of Reeds*

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Og (21.33), which included the rest of Gilead and all of Bashan (Josh 13.29–31). **41**: *Havvoth-jair,* 1 Kings 4.13.

**33.1–49**: **Israel's itinerary** from Egypt to the border of Canaan.

**33.5–15**: From the land of Goshen to Sinai (Ex 12.37–19.2). **8**: *Etham,* otherwise designated as Shur (Ex 15.22).

**33.16–36**: From Sinai to Kadesh-barnea (Num 10.11–20.1).

**33.37–49**: From Kadesh to the plains of Moab (20.22–22.1). The details of this phase

Egypt, on the first day of the fifth month. 39Aaron was one hundred twenty-three years old when he died on Mount Hor.

40 The Canaanite, the king of Arad, who lived in the Negeb in the land of Canaan, heard of the coming of the Israelites.

41 They set out from Mount Hor and camped at Zalmonah. 42They set out from Zalmonah and camped at Punon. 43They set out from Punon and camped at Oboth. 44They set out from Oboth and camped at Iye-abarim, in the territory of Moab. 45They set out from Iyim and camped at Dibon-gad. 46They set out from Dibon-gad and camped at Almon-diblathaim. 47They set out from Almon-diblathaim and camped in the mountains of Abarim, before Nebo. 48They set out from the mountains of Abarim and camped in the plains of Moab by the Jordan at Jericho; 49they camped by the Jordan from Beth-jeshimoth as far as Abel-shittim in the plains of Moab.

50 In the plains of Moab by the Jordan at Jericho, the LORD spoke to Moses, saying: 51Speak to the Israelites, and say to them: When you cross over the Jordan into the land of Canaan, 52you shall drive out all the inhabitants of the land from before you, destroy all their figured stones, destroy all their cast images, and demolish all their high places. 53You shall take possession of the land and settle in it, for I have given you the land to possess. 54You shall apportion the land by lot according to your clans; to a large one you shall give a large inheritance, and to a small one you shall give a small inheritance; the inheritance shall belong to the person on whom the lot falls; according to your ancestral tribes you shall inherit. 55But if you do not drive out the inhabitants of the land from before you, then those whom you let remain shall be as barbs in your eyes and thorns in your sides; they shall trouble you in the land where you are settling. 56And I will do to you as I thought to do to them.

34 The LORD spoke to Moses, saying: 2Command the Israelites, and say to them: When you enter the land of Canaan (this is the land that shall fall to you for an inheritance, the land of Canaan, defined by its boundaries), 3your south sector shall extend from the wilderness of Zin along the side of Edom. Your southern boundary shall begin from the end of the Dead Sea[y] on the east; 4your boundary shall turn south of the ascent of Akrabbim, and cross to Zin, and its outer limit shall be south of Kadesh-barnea; then it shall go on to Hazar-addar, and cross to Azmon; 5the boundary shall turn from Azmon to the Wadi of Egypt, and its termination shall be at the Sea.

6 For the western boundary, you shall have the Great Sea and its[z] coast; this shall be your western boundary.

7 This shall be your northern boundary: from the Great Sea you shall mark out your line to Mount Hor; 8from Mount Hor you shall mark it out to Lebo-hamath, and the outer limit of the boundary shall be at Zedad; 9then the boundary shall extend to Ziphron, and its end shall be at Hazar-enan; this shall be your northern boundary.

10 You shall mark out your eastern boundary from Hazar-enan to Shepham; 11and the boundary shall continue down

*y* Heb *Salt Sea* *z* Syr: Heb lacks *its*

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of the itinerary, including the journey to Ezion-geber (v. 35), are not clear.

**33.50–56: Warnings against the Canaanite cult.** See Ex 23.23–33; Lev ch 26.

**34.1–29: Ideal boundaries of the Promised Land** (compare Josh chs 13–19; Ezek 47.13–20). **1–12**: The extent of the land, south to north, is essentially from *the Wadi of Egypt* (v. 5) to *Lebo-hamath* (v. 8), near Riblah. Israel's territory did not extend so far north until the time of David (2 Sam 8.3–14; 1 Kings 8.65). Probably the tradition has visualized the past in the light of David, the "star" who arose out of Jacob (see 24.17–19 n.) to conquer the last of the opposing forces, thereby establishing in Israel's possession *the land of Canaan, defined by its boundaries* (v. 2).

from Shepham to Riblah on the east side of Ain; and the boundary shall go down, and reach the eastern slope of the sea of Chinnereth; 12and the boundary shall go down to the Jordan, and its end shall be at the Dead Sea.[a] This shall be your land with its boundaries all around.

13 Moses commanded the Israelites, saying: This is the land that you shall inherit by lot, which the LORD has commanded to give to the nine tribes and to the half-tribe; 14for the tribe of the Reubenites by their ancestral houses and the tribe of the Gadites by their ancestral houses have taken their inheritance, and also the half-tribe of Manasseh; 15the two tribes and the half-tribe have taken their inheritance beyond the Jordan at Jericho eastward, toward the sunrise.

16 The LORD spoke to Moses, saying: 17These are the names of the men who shall apportion the land to you for inheritance: the priest Eleazar and Joshua son of Nun. 18You shall take one leader of every tribe to apportion the land for inheritance. 19These are the names of the men: Of the tribe of Judah, Caleb son of Jephunneh. 20Of the tribe of the Simeonites, Shemuel son of Ammihud. 21Of the tribe of Benjamin, Elidad son of Chislon. 22Of the tribe of the Danites a leader, Bukki son of Jogli. 23Of the Josephites: of the tribe of the Manassites a leader, Hanniel son of Ephod, 24and of the tribe of the Ephraimites a leader, Kemuel son of Shiphtan. 25Of the tribe of the Zebulunites a leader, Eli-zaphan son of Parnach. 26Of the tribe of the Issacharites a leader, Paltiel son of Azzan. 27And of the tribe of the Asherites a leader, Ahihud son of Shelomi. 28Of the tribe of the Naphtalites a leader, Pedahel son of Ammihud. 29These were the ones whom the LORD commanded to apportion the inheritance for the Israelites in the land of Canaan.

35 In the plains of Moab by the Jordan at Jericho, the LORD spoke to Moses, saying: 2Command the Israelites to give, from the inheritance that they possess, towns for the Levites to live in; you shall also give to the Levites pasture lands surrounding the towns. 3The towns shall be theirs to live in, and their pasture lands shall be for their cattle, for their livestock, and for all their animals. 4The pasture lands of the towns, which you shall give to the Levites, shall reach from the wall of the town outward a thousand cubits all around. 5You shall measure, outside the town, for the east side two thousand cubits, for the south side two thousand cubits, for the west side two thousand cubits, and for the north side two thousand cubits, with the town in the middle; this shall belong to them as pasture land for their towns.

6 The towns that you give to the Levites shall include the six cities of refuge, where you shall permit a slayer to flee, and in addition to them you shall give forty-two towns. 7The towns that you give to the Levites shall total forty-eight, with their pasture lands. 8And as for the towns that you shall give from the possession of the Israelites, from the larger tribes you shall take many, and from the smaller tribes you shall take few; each, in proportion to the inheritance that it obtains, shall give of its towns to the Levites.

9 The LORD spoke to Moses, saying: 10Speak to the Israelites, and say to them: When you cross the Jordan into the land

*a* Heb *Salt Sea*

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**34.14–15**: Jericho is said to be east, presupposing a standpoint within Canaan rather than in Transjordan.

**35.1–34**: **Plans for Levitical cities and cities of refuge. 1–8**: Special cities were allotted because the Levites were not entitled to a tribal inheritance (Lev 25.32–34; Josh ch 21; 1 Chr 6.54–81).

**35.9–15**: The six cities of refuge (Deut 4.41–43; 19.1–13; Josh ch 20) represent an attempt to restrain the tribal law of blood revenge so that a killer might receive a trial (v. 12). Early legislation stipulated that a person might seek asylum from the *avenger* or next of kin (see Lev 25.25 n.), whose duty was to uphold family rights by killing the murderer or a relative (see Ex 21.12–14 n.).

**35.16–34**: This case law distinguishes be-

of Canaan, 11then you shall select cities to be cities of refuge for you, so that a slayer who kills a person without intent may flee there. 12The cities shall be for you a refuge from the avenger, so that the slayer may not die until there is a trial before the congregation.

13 The cities that you designate shall be six cities of refuge for you: 14you shall designate three cities beyond the Jordan, and three cities in the land of Canaan, to be cities of refuge. 15These six cities shall serve as refuge for the Israelites, for the resident or transient alien among them, so that anyone who kills a person without intent may flee there.

16 But anyone who strikes another with an iron object, and death ensues, is a murderer; the murderer shall be put to death. 17Or anyone who strikes another with a stone in hand that could cause death, and death ensues, is a murderer; the murderer shall be put to death. 18Or anyone who strikes another with a weapon of wood in hand that could cause death, and death ensues, is a murderer; the murderer shall be put to death. 19The avenger of blood is the one who shall put the murderer to death; when they meet, the avenger of blood shall execute the sentence. 20Likewise, if someone pushes another from hatred, or hurls something at another, lying in wait, and death ensues, 21or in enmity strikes another with the hand, and death ensues, then the one who struck the blow shall be put to death; that person is a murderer; the avenger of blood shall put the murderer to death, when they meet.

22 But if someone pushes another suddenly without enmity, or hurls any object without lying in wait, 23or, while handling any stone that could cause death, unintentionally[b] drops it on another and death ensues, though they were not enemies, and no harm was intended, 24then the congregation shall judge between the slayer and the avenger of blood, in accordance with these ordinances; 25and the congregation shall rescue the slayer from the avenger of blood. Then the congregation shall send the slayer back to the original city of refuge. The slayer shall live in it until the death of the high priest who was anointed with the holy oil. 26But if the slayer shall at any time go outside the bounds of the original city of refuge, 27and is found by the avenger of blood outside the bounds of the city of refuge, and is killed by the avenger, no bloodguilt shall be incurred. 28For the slayer must remain in the city of refuge until the death of the high priest; but after the death of the high priest the slayer may return home.

29 These things shall be a statute and ordinance for you throughout your generations wherever you live.

30 If anyone kills another, the murderer shall be put to death on the evidence of witnesses; but no one shall be put to death on the testimony of a single witness. 31Moreover you shall accept no ransom for the life of a murderer who is subject to the death penalty; a murderer must be put to death. 32Nor shall you accept ransom for one who has fled to a city of refuge, enabling the fugitive to return to live in the land before the death of the high priest. 33You shall not pollute the land in which you live; for blood pollutes the land, and no expiation can be made for the land, for the blood that is shed in it, except by the blood of the one who shed it. 34You shall not defile the land in which you live, in which I also dwell; for I the LORD dwell among the Israelites.

36 The heads of the ancestral houses of the clans of the descendants of

*b* Heb *without seeing*

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tween premeditated and unpremeditated murder (manslaughter). As a concession to ancient blood revenge, the tribunal lets the avenger exercise the duty of the next of kin if the killing was premeditated (vv. 19, 21).

**35.33–34**: Murder is a heinous offense because *blood pollutes the land* (Gen 4.10–11) in the midst of which the LORD dwells or "tabernacles." Therefore only the blood of the murderer can expiate the crime (Deut 19.10, 13).

Gilead son of Machir son of Manasseh, of the Josephite clans, came forward and spoke in the presence of Moses and the leaders, the heads of the ancestral houses of the Israelites; 2they said, "The LORD commanded my lord to give the land for inheritance by lot to the Israelites; and my lord was commanded by the LORD to give the inheritance of our brother Zelophehad to his daughters. 3But if they are married into another Israelite tribe, then their inheritance will be taken from the inheritance of our ancestors and added to the inheritance of the tribe into which they marry; so it will be taken away from the allotted portion of our inheritance. 4And when the jubilee of the Israelites comes, then their inheritance will be added to the inheritance of the tribe into which they have married; and their inheritance will be taken from the inheritance of our ancestral tribe."

5 Then Moses commanded the Israelites according to the word of the LORD, saying, "The descendants of the tribe of Joseph are right in what they are saying. 6This is what the LORD commands concerning the daughters of Zelophehad, 'Let them marry whom they think best; only it must be into a clan of their father's tribe that they are married, 7so that no inheritance of the Israelites shall be transferred from one tribe to another; for all Israelites shall retain the inheritance of their ancestral tribes. 8Every daughter who possesses an inheritance in any tribe of the Israelites shall marry one from the clan of her father's tribe, so that all Israelites may continue to possess their ancestral inheritance. 9No inheritance shall be transferred from one tribe to another; for each of the tribes of the Israelites shall retain its own inheritance.' "

10 The daughters of Zelophehad did as the LORD had commanded Moses. 11Mahlah, Tirzah, Hoglah, Milcah, and Noah, the daughters of Zelophehad, married sons of their father's brothers. 12They were married into the clans of the descendants of Manasseh son of Joseph, and their inheritance remained in the tribe of their father's clan.

13 These are the commandments and the ordinances that the LORD commanded through Moses to the Israelites in the plains of Moab by the Jordan at Jericho.

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**36.1–12: Tribal property must be maintained intact.** This law supplements 27.1–11 by stipulating that a woman who is allowed to inherit property must marry within her tribe. **1:** 26.28–34. **4:** On the jubilee year, see Lev 25.8–55. **6:** The law prevents tribal intermarriage only when the woman is an heiress.

**36.13: A concluding statement** covering all the laws given in Moab (22.1–36.12).

# *Deuteronomy*

The basic theme of Deuteronomy, meaning the "second law," is the reaffirmation of the covenant between God and the people of Israel. Here the legal tradition of the book of Exodus (for example, the Decalogue or the Covenant Code) is not just repeated; it is reinterpreted in contemporary terms, so that the promises and demands of the covenant were brought near to every worshiping Israelite.

At the end of the book of Numbers Israel is encamped in the plains of Moab, prepared for an attack upon Canaan from the east. Deuteronomy purports to be Moses' farewell address to the people in which he rehearses the mighty acts of the LORD, solemnly warns of the temptations of the new ways of Canaan, and pleads for loyalty to and love of God as the condition for life in the promised land.

Actually Deuteronomy contains not one address by Moses, but three. The first is found in 1.6 to 4.40; the second in chs 5–28; and the third in chs 29 and 30. The remaining chapters (31–34) pick up the story where it was left at the end of Numbers (see introduction to "The Pentateuch").

A distinctive teaching of Deuteronomy is that the worship of the LORD is to be centralized in one place, so that the syncretism characteristic of local shrines may be eliminated (ch 12). When Deuteronomy was published, the Jerusalem temple was regarded as the central sanctuary. Indeed, Deuteronomy was probably the "book of the law" (2 Kings 22.11) that prompted Josiah's sweeping religious reform in 621 B.C. (2 Kings chs 22–23) and led to the revision of the history found in Joshua, Judges, Samuel, and Kings, often called the Deuteronomistic History. Although Deuteronomy rests upon ancient tradition, fundamentally it is a rediscovery and reinterpretation of Mosaic teaching in the light of later historical experience.

1 These are the words that Moses spoke to all Israel beyond the Jordan—in the wilderness, on the plain opposite Suph, between Paran and Tophel, Laban, Hazeroth, and Di-zahab. 2 (By the way of Mount Seir it takes eleven days to reach Kadesh-barnea from Horeb.) 3 In the fortieth year, on the first day of the eleventh month, Moses spoke to the Israelites just as the LORD had commanded him to speak to them. 4 This was after he had defeated King Sihon of the Amorites, who reigned in Heshbon, and King Og of Bashan, who reigned in Ashtaroth and[a] in Edrei. 5 Beyond the Jordan in the land of Moab, Moses undertook to expound this law as follows:

6 The LORD our God spoke to us at Horeb, saying, "You have stayed long enough at this mountain. 7 Resume your journey, and go into the hill country of the Amorites as well as into the neighboring regions—the Arabah, the hill country, the Shephelah, the Negeb, and the seacoast—the land of the Canaanites and the Lebanon, as far as the great river, the river Euphrates. 8 See, I have set the land before you; go in and take possession of the land that I[b] swore to your ancestors, to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob, to give to them and to their descendants after them."

9 At that time I said to you, "I am unable by myself to bear you. 10 The LORD your God has multiplied you, so that today you are as numerous as the stars of heaven. 11 May the LORD, the God of your ancestors, increase you a thousand times more and bless you, as he has promised you! 12 But how can I bear the heavy burden of your disputes all by myself? 13 Choose for each of your tribes individuals who are wise, discerning, and reputable to be your leaders." 14 You answered me, "The plan you have proposed is a good one." 15 So I took the leaders of your tribes, wise and reputable individuals, and installed them as leaders over you, commanders of thousands, commanders of hundreds, commanders of fifties, commanders of tens, and officials, throughout your tribes. 16 I charged your judges at that time: "Give the members of your community a fair hearing, and judge rightly between one person and another, whether citizen or resident alien. 17 You must not be partial in judging: hear out the small and the great alike; you shall not be intimidated by anyone, for the judgment is God's. Any case that is too hard for you, bring to me, and I will hear it." 18 So I charged you at that time with all the things that you should do.

19 Then, just as the LORD our God had ordered us, we set out from Horeb and went through all that great and terrible wilderness that you saw, on the way to the hill country of the Amorites, until we reached Kadesh-barnea. 20 I said to you, "You have reached the hill country of the Amorites, which the LORD our God is giving us. 21 See, the LORD your God has given the land to you; go up, take possession, as the LORD, the God of

*a* Gk Syr Vg Compare Josh 12.4: Heb lacks *and*
*b* Sam Gk: MT *the* LORD

**1.1–3.29: Historical review.** Moses rehearses events since the departure from Sinai (Horeb) to show how the LORD marvelously guided the people of Israel in the wilderness.

**1.1–5:** Introduction to the first address (1.6–4.40), which was given *beyond the Jordan,* i.e. in the plains of Moab (Num 33.48; 36.13). **1–2:** The places mentioned refer to the wilderness journey. **3:** *Fortieth year,* counting from the Exodus (Ex 19.1; 40.17). **4:** Num 21.21–35. **7:** *Amorites, Canaanites,* see Num 13.29 n. The Israelite empire extended ideally to the Euphrates (Gen 15.18), the northern limit of David's conquests (2 Sam 8.3).

**1.9–18:** In this composite account (compare vv. 9–12 with Num 11.14–17 and vv. 13–17 with Ex 18.13–27) there is no reference to Jethro's initiative to lighten Moses' burden. **11:** *The God of your ancestors,* see Gen 26.24 n.

**1.19–46:** From Horeb to Kadesh: a summary of the spies' reconnaissance of the land (Num ch 13), the people's complaining about the LORD's inability to fulfill the promise to Israel's ancestors (Num 14.1–38), and the abortive attempt to penetrate Canaan from the south (Num 14.39–45; compare 21.1–3).

your ancestors, has promised you; do not fear or be dismayed."

22 All of you came to me and said, "Let us send men ahead of us to explore the land for us and bring back a report to us regarding the route by which we should go up and the cities we will come to." 23 The plan seemed good to me, and I selected twelve of you, one from each tribe. 24 They set out and went up into the hill country, and when they reached the Valley of Eshcol they spied it out 25 and gathered some of the land's produce, which they brought down to us. They brought back a report to us, and said, "It is a good land that the LORD our God is giving us."

26 But you were unwilling to go up. You rebelled against the command of the LORD your God; 27 you grumbled in your tents and said, "It is because the LORD hates us that he has brought us out of the land of Egypt, to hand us over to the Amorites to destroy us. 28 Where are we headed? Our kindred have made our hearts melt by reporting, 'The people are stronger and taller than we; the cities are large and fortified up to heaven! We actually saw there the offspring of the Anakim!' " 29 I said to you, "Have no dread or fear of them. 30 The LORD your God, who goes before you, is the one who will fight for you, just as he did for you in Egypt before your very eyes, 31 and in the wilderness, where you saw how the LORD your God carried you, just as one carries a child, all the way that you traveled until you reached this place. 32 But in spite of this, you have no trust in the LORD your God, 33 who goes before you on the way to seek out a place for you to camp, in fire by night, and in the cloud by day, to show you the route you should take."

34 When the LORD heard your words, he was wrathful and swore: 35 "Not one of these—not one of this evil generation—shall see the good land that I swore to give to your ancestors, 36 except Caleb son of Jephunneh. He shall see it, and to him and to his descendants I will give the land on which he set foot, because of his complete fidelity to the LORD." 37 Even with me the LORD was angry on your account, saying, "You also shall not enter there. 38 Joshua son of Nun, your assistant, shall enter there; encourage him, for he is the one who will secure Israel's possession of it. 39 And as for your little ones, who you thought would become booty, your children, who today do not yet know right from wrong, they shall enter there; to them I will give it, and they shall take possession of it. 40 But as for you, journey back into the wilderness, in the direction of the Red Sea."[c]

41 You answered me, "We have sinned against the LORD! We are ready to go up and fight, just as the LORD our God commanded us." So all of you strapped on your battle gear, and thought it easy to go up into the hill country. 42 The LORD said to me, "Say to them, 'Do not go up and do not fight, for I am not in the midst of you; otherwise you will be defeated by your enemies.' " 43 Although I told you, you would not listen. You rebelled against the command of the LORD and presumptuously went up into the hill country. 44 The Amorites who lived in that hill country then came out against you and chased you as bees do. They beat you down in Seir as far as Hormah. 45 When you returned and wept before the LORD, the LORD would neither heed your voice nor pay you any attention.

46 After you had stayed at Kadesh as many days as you did, 2 1 we journeyed back into the wilderness, in the direction of the Red Sea,[c] as the

[c] Or *Sea of Reeds*

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**1.28**: *Anakim*, see Num 13.22, 33 n. **30**: Ex 14.14. **33**: *Fire . . . cloud*, see Ex 13.21–22 n. **37**: Here Moses is not punished for his own sin (Num 20.10–13; 27.12–23), but vicariously bears the divine wrath on Israel's account.

**2.1–25**: The circuit via Transjordan. **1–8a**: Num 20.14–21. From Kadesh Israel turned

LORD had told me and skirted Mount Seir for many days. 2Then the LORD said to me: 3"You have been skirting this hill country long enough. Head north, 4and charge the people as follows: You are about to pass through the territory of your kindred, the descendants of Esau, who live in Seir. They will be afraid of you, so, be very careful 5not to engage in battle with them, for I will not give you even so much as a foot's length of their land, since I have given Mount Seir to Esau as a possession. 6You shall purchase food from them for money, so that you may eat; and you shall also buy water from them for money, so that you may drink. 7Surely the LORD your God has blessed you in all your undertakings; he knows your going through this great wilderness. These forty years the LORD your God has been with you; you have lacked nothing." 8So we passed by our kin, the descendants of Esau who live in Seir, leaving behind the route of the Arabah, and leaving behind Elath and Ezion-geber.

When we had headed out along the route of the wilderness of Moab, 9the LORD said to me: "Do not harass Moab or engage them in battle, for I will not give you any of its land as a possession, since I have given Ar as a possession to the descendants of Lot." 10(The Emim—a large and numerous people, as tall as the Anakim—had formerly inhabited it. 11Like the Anakim, they are usually reckoned as Rephaim, though the Moabites call them Emim. 12Moreover, the Horim had formerly inhabited Seir, but the descendants of Esau dispossessed them, destroying them and settling in their place, as Israel has done in the land that the LORD gave them as a possession.) 13"Now then, proceed to cross over the Wadi Zered."

So we crossed over the Wadi Zered. 14And the length of time we had traveled from Kadesh-barnea until we crossed the Wadi Zered was thirty-eight years, until the entire generation of warriors had perished from the camp, as the LORD had sworn concerning them. 15Indeed, the LORD's own hand was against them, to root them out from the camp, until all had perished.

16 Just as soon as all the warriors had died off from among the people, 17the LORD spoke to me, saying, 18"Today you are going to cross the boundary of Moab at Ar. 19When you approach the frontier of the Ammonites, do not harass them or engage them in battle, for I will not give the land of the Ammonites to you as a possession, because I have given it to the descendants of Lot." 20(It also is usually reckoned as a land of Rephaim. Rephaim formerly inhabited it, though the Ammonites call them Zamzummim, 21a strong and numerous people, as tall as the Anakim. But the LORD destroyed them from before the Ammonites so that they could dispossess them and settle in their place. 22He did the same for the descendants of Esau, who live in Seir, by destroying the Horim before them so that they could dispossess them and settle in their place even to this day. 23As for the Avvim, who had lived in settlements in the vicinity of Gaza, the Caphtorim, who came from Caphtor, destroyed them and settled in their place.) 24"Proceed on your journey and cross the Wadi Arnon. See, I have handed over to you King Sihon the Amorite of Heshbon, and his land. Begin to take possession by engaging him in battle. 25This day I will begin to put the dread and fear of you upon the peoples everywhere under heaven; when they hear report of you, they will tremble and be in anguish because of you."

26 So I sent messengers from the wil-

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south through the Arabah to the Gulf of Aqaba in order to go around Edom (Num 21.4; compare 33.37–49). **4**: *Descendants of Esau*, Gen 36.1.

**2.8b–25**: Num 21.4–20. Turning along the brook Zered (boundary of Edom), Israel detoured via the Moabite wilderness toward the Amorite kingdom of Sihon. **9**: Moab and Ammon (v. 19) were traditionally related through Lot (Gen 19.36–38). **10–11**: *Emim*,

derness of Kedemoth to King Sihon of Heshbon with the following terms of peace: 27 "If you let me pass through your land, I will travel only along the road; I will turn aside neither to the right nor to the left. 28 You shall sell me food for money, so that I may eat, and supply me water for money, so that I may drink. Only allow me to pass through on foot— 29 just as the descendants of Esau who live in Seir have done for me and likewise the Moabites who live in Ar— until I cross the Jordan into the land that the LORD our God is giving us." 30 But King Sihon of Heshbon was not willing to let us pass through, for the LORD your God had hardened his spirit and made his heart defiant in order to hand him over to you, as he has now done.

31 The LORD said to me, "See, I have begun to give Sihon and his land over to you. Begin now to take possession of his land." 32 So when Sihon came out against us, he and all his people for battle at Jahaz, 33 the LORD our God gave him over to us; and we struck him down, along with his offspring and all his people. 34 At that time we captured all his towns, and in each town we utterly destroyed men, women, and children. We left not a single survivor. 35 Only the livestock we kept as spoil for ourselves, as well as the plunder of the towns that we had captured. 36 From Aroer on the edge of the Wadi Arnon (including the town that is in the wadi itself) as far as Gilead, there was no citadel too high for us. The LORD our God gave everything to us. 37 You did not encroach, however, on the land of the Ammonites, avoiding the whole upper region of the Wadi Jabbok as well as the towns of the hill country, just as[d] the LORD our God had charged.

3 When we headed up the road to Bashan, King Og of Bashan came out against us, he and all his people, for battle at Edrei. 2 The LORD said to me, "Do not fear him, for I have handed him over to you, along with his people and his land. Do to him as you did to King Sihon of the Amorites, who reigned in Heshbon." 3 So the LORD our God also handed over to us King Og of Bashan and all his people. We struck him down until not a single survivor was left. 4 At that time we captured all his towns; there was no citadel that we did not take from them— sixty towns, the whole region of Argob, the kingdom of Og in Bashan. 5 All these were fortress towns with high walls, double gates, and bars, besides a great many villages. 6 And we utterly destroyed them, as we had done to King Sihon of Heshbon, in each city utterly destroying men, women, and children. 7 But all the livestock and the plunder of the towns we kept as spoil for ourselves.

8 So at that time we took from the two kings of the Amorites the land beyond the Jordan, from the Wadi Arnon to Mount Hermon 9 (the Sidonians call Hermon Sirion, while the Amorites call it Senir), 10 all the towns of the tableland, the whole of Gilead, and all of Bashan, as far as Salecah and Edrei, towns of Og's kingdom in Bashan. 11 (Now only King Og of Bashan was left of the remnant of the Rephaim. In fact his bed, an iron bed, can still be seen in Rabbah of the Ammonites. By the common cubit it is nine cubits long and four cubits wide.) 12 As for the land that we took possession of at that time, I gave to the Reubenites and Gadites the territory north of Aroer,[e]

*d* Gk Tg: Heb *and all* *e* Heb *territory from Aroer*

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*Rephaim* (compare v. 20; 3.11–13), names reflecting the legendary view that the aborigines were giants. *Horim,* see Gen 36.20 n. **23:** *Caphtor,* i.e. Crete. This verse refers to the conquest of the coastal plain by "sea-peoples" shortly after 1200 B.C. (see Gen 10.2–5 n.).

**2.26–37:** The victory over Sihon (Num 21.21–32), whose capital was at Heshbon. **30:** See Ex 4.21 n. **37:** The river Jabbok makes a wide bend south and thus forms the western border of Ammon (3.16).

**3.1–11:** The victory over Bashan (Num 21.33–35). **1:** *Edrei,* on the extreme south border of *Bashan.* **11:** The oversized bed of Og, one of the legendary Rephaim (2.10–11), was a "museum piece" in Rabbah, a city on the Ammonite border.

**3.12–22:** The allotment of tribal territories

that is on the edge of the Wadi Arnon, as well as half the hill country of Gilead with its towns, 13and I gave to the half-tribe of Manasseh the rest of Gilead and all of Bashan, Og's kingdom. (The whole region of Argob: all that portion of Bashan used to be called a land of Rephaim; 14Jair the Manassite acquired the whole region of Argob as far as the border of the Geshurites and the Maacathites, and he named them—that is, Bashan—after himself, Havvoth-jair,[f] as it is to this day.) 15To Machir I gave Gilead. 16And to the Reubenites and the Gadites I gave the territory from Gilead as far as the Wadi Arnon, with the middle of the wadi as a boundary, and up to the Jabbok, the wadi being boundary of the Ammonites; 17the Arabah also, with the Jordan and its banks, from Chinnereth down to the sea of the Arabah, the Dead Sea,[g] with the lower slopes of Pisgah on the east.

18 At that time, I charged you as follows: "Although the LORD your God has given you this land to occupy, all your troops shall cross over armed as the vanguard of your Israelite kin. 19Only your wives, your children, and your livestock—I know that you have much livestock—shall stay behind in the towns that I have given to you. 20When the LORD gives rest to your kindred, as to you, and they too have occupied the land that the LORD your God is giving them beyond the Jordan, then each of you may return to the property that I have given to you." 21And I charged Joshua as well at that time, saying: "Your own eyes have seen everything that the LORD your God has done to these two kings; so the LORD will do to all the kingdoms into which you are about to cross. 22Do not fear them, for it is the LORD your God who fights for you."

23 At that time, too, I entreated the LORD, saying: 24"O Lord GOD, you have only begun to show your servant your greatness and your might; what god in heaven or on earth can perform deeds and mighty acts like yours! 25Let me cross over to see the good land beyond the Jordan, that good hill country and the Lebanon." 26But the LORD was angry with me on your account and would not heed me. The LORD said to me, "Enough from you! Never speak to me of this matter again! 27Go up to the top of Pisgah and look around you to the west, to the north, to the south, and to the east. Look well, for you shall not cross over this Jordan. 28But charge Joshua, and encourage and strengthen him, because it is he who shall cross over at the head of this people and who shall secure their possession of the land that you will see." 29So we remained in the valley opposite Beth-peor.

4 So now, Israel, give heed to the statutes and ordinances that I am teaching you to observe, so that you may live to enter and occupy the land that the LORD, the God of your ancestors, is giving you. 2You must neither add anything to what I command you nor take away anything from it, but keep the commandments of the LORD your God with which I am charging you. 3You have

*f* That is *Settlement of Jair* *g* Heb *Salt Sea*

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in Transjordan (Num ch 32; Josh ch 13). **14:** Num 32.41. **17:** The territory included the eastern part of the Jordan Valley or Arabah. **22:** The whole story of the Exodus, wilderness journey, and invasion of Canaan is governed by the convictions of holy war: the LORD fights for the people of Israel; faith is response to God's dynamic presence in the events (20.1–20).

**3.23–29:** Num 27.12–23. **24:** The incomparability of the LORD, who performs *mighty acts* of salvation, is an ancient theme of hymnic praise (Ex 15.11; Ps 89.5–8). **26:** On Moses' vicarious suffering, see 1.37 n. **27:** Mount *Pisgah,* see 34.1 n.

**4.1–40: Conclusion to the first address.** The preceding recital of what the LORD had done for the people is the basis of Moses' appeal for faithful obedience. **1–8:** The incident of Peor (Num 25.1–9) teaches that obedience to God's law is the condition for life in Canaan and a testimony to the wisdom which the LORD graciously imparts.

seen for yourselves what the LORD did with regard to the Baal of Peor—how the LORD your God destroyed from among you everyone who followed the Baal of Peor, [4]while those of you who held fast to the LORD your God are all alive today.

5 See, just as the LORD my God has charged me, I now teach you statutes and ordinances for you to observe in the land that you are about to enter and occupy. [6]You must observe them diligently, for this will show your wisdom and discernment to the peoples, who, when they hear all these statutes, will say, "Surely this great nation is a wise and discerning people!" [7]For what other great nation has a god so near to it as the LORD our God is whenever we call to him? [8]And what other great nation has statutes and ordinances as just as this entire law that I am setting before you today?

9 But take care and watch yourselves closely, so as neither to forget the things that your eyes have seen nor to let them slip from your mind all the days of your life; make them known to your children and your children's children— [10]how you once stood before the LORD your God at Horeb, when the LORD said to me, "Assemble the people for me, and I will let them hear my words, so that they may learn to fear me as long as they live on the earth, and may teach their children so"; [11]you approached and stood at the foot of the mountain while the mountain was blazing up to the very heavens, shrouded in dark clouds. [12]Then the LORD spoke to you out of the fire. You heard the sound of words but saw no form; there was only a voice. [13]He declared to you his covenant, which he charged you to observe, that is, the ten commandments;[h] and he wrote them on two stone tablets. [14]And the LORD charged me at that time to teach you statutes and ordinances for you to observe in the land that you are about to cross into and occupy.

15 Since you saw no form when the LORD spoke to you at Horeb out of the fire, take care and watch yourselves closely, [16]so that you do not act corruptly by making an idol for yourselves, in the form of any figure—the likeness of male or female, [17]the likeness of any animal that is on the earth, the likeness of any winged bird that flies in the air, [18]the likeness of anything that creeps on the ground, the likeness of any fish that is in the water under the earth. [19]And when you look up to the heavens and see the sun, the moon, and the stars, all the host of heaven, do not be led astray and bow down to them and serve them, things that the LORD your God has allotted to all the peoples everywhere under heaven. [20]But the LORD has taken you and brought you out of the iron-smelter, out of Egypt, to become a people of his very own possession, as you are now.

21 The LORD was angry with me because of you, and he vowed that I should not cross the Jordan and that I should not enter the good land that the LORD your God is giving for your possession. [22]For I am going to die in this land without crossing over the Jordan, but you are going to cross over to take possession of that good land. [23]So be careful not to forget the covenant that the LORD your God made with you, and not to make for yourselves an idol in the form of anything that the LORD your God has forbidden you. [24]For the LORD your God is a devouring fire, a jealous God.

25 When you have had children and children's children, and become compla-

*h* Heb *the ten words*

**4.9–14:** The revelation at Sinai-Horeb (Ex chs 19–20) should be a constant reminder to *fear,* i.e. reverence, the LORD. **12:** At Horeb Israel heard the LORD's voice but *saw no form*—a warning against idolatry and image worship (vv. 15–18).

**4.15–40:** The great exhortation. **16–18:** In pagan religions, gods were represented in both human and animal form. The imageless worship of the invisible God was a fundamental tenet of Mosaic faith (Ex 20.4). Here it is grounded in the covenant (v. 23) made by the Lord of history and creation (v. 32). **24:** *A jealous God,* see Ex 34.14 n.

cent in the land, if you act corruptly by making an idol in the form of anything, thus doing what is evil in the sight of the LORD your God, and provoking him to anger, [26]I call heaven and earth to witness against you today that you will soon utterly perish from the land that you are crossing the Jordan to occupy; you will not live long on it, but will be utterly destroyed. [27]The LORD will scatter you among the peoples; only a few of you will be left among the nations where the LORD will lead you. [28]There you will serve other gods made by human hands, objects of wood and stone that neither see, nor hear, nor eat, nor smell. [29]From there you will seek the LORD your God, and you will find him if you search after him with all your heart and soul. [30]In your distress, when all these things have happened to you in time to come, you will return to the LORD your God and heed him. [31]Because the LORD your God is a merciful God, he will neither abandon you nor destroy you; he will not forget the covenant with your ancestors that he swore to them.

32 For ask now about former ages, long before your own, ever since the day that God created human beings on the earth; ask from one end of heaven to the other: has anything so great as this ever happened or has its like ever been heard of? [33]Has any people ever heard the voice of a god speaking out of a fire, as you have heard, and lived? [34]Or has any god ever attempted to go and take a nation for himself from the midst of another nation, by trials, by signs and wonders, by war, by a mighty hand and an outstretched arm, and by terrifying displays of power, as the LORD your God did for you in Egypt before your very eyes? [35]To you it was shown so that you would acknowledge that the LORD is God; there is no other besides him. [36]From heaven he made you hear his voice to discipline you. On earth he showed you his great fire, while you heard his words coming out of the fire. [37]And because he loved your ancestors, he chose their descendants after them. He brought you out of Egypt with his own presence, by his great power, [38]driving out before you nations greater and mightier than yourselves, to bring you in, giving you their land for a possession, as it is still today. [39]So acknowledge today and take to heart that the LORD is God in heaven above and on the earth beneath; there is no other. [40]Keep his statutes and his commandments, which I am commanding you today for your own well-being and that of your descendants after you, so that you may long remain in the land that the LORD your God is giving you for all time.

41 Then Moses set apart on the east side of the Jordan three cities [42]to which a homicide could flee, someone who unintentionally kills another person, the two not having been at enmity before; the homicide could flee to one of these cities and live: [43]Bezer in the wilderness on the tableland belonging to the Reubenites, Ramoth in Gilead belonging to the Gadites, and Golan in Bashan belonging to the Manassites.

44 This is the law that Moses set before the Israelites. [45]These are the decrees and the statutes and ordinances that Mo-

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**4.27–29**: These verses allude to the exile of conquered populations, a policy used effectively by Assyrians and Babylonians. **31**: Divine wrath is a temporary reaction to specific situations; God is fundamentally and unchangeably *a merciful God* (Ex 34.6–7).

**4.32–36**: The events that have happened in Israel's historical experience (i.e. Exodus and Sinai) show that the LORD only is God; for this people *there is no other besides him* (see Ex 20.3 n.). **33**: Ex 20.18–26; 33.20. **36**: *Discipline you,* Ex 20.20. **37**: A new element is added to the Pentateuchal tradition: the LORD's choice of Israel was based upon divine love (Hos 11.1). Israel's obedience, therefore, should be motivated by a responding love (6.4–5). *Presence,* Ex 33.14.

**4.41–43**: **An appendix** dealing with cities of refuge (see ch 19).

**4.44–26.19 (and ch 28): Moses' second address. 44–49: Introduction.**

**5.1–33: The giving of the law at Sinai.**

ses spoke to the Israelites when they had come out of Egypt, 46beyond the Jordan in the valley opposite Beth-peor, in the land of King Sihon of the Amorites, who reigned at Heshbon, whom Moses and the Israelites defeated when they came out of Egypt. 47They occupied his land and the land of King Og of Bashan, the two kings of the Amorites on the eastern side of the Jordan: 48from Aroer, which is on the edge of the Wadi Arnon, as far as Mount Sirion[i] (that is, Hermon), 49together with all the Arabah on the east side of the Jordan as far as the Sea of the Arabah, under the slopes of Pisgah.

5 Moses convened all Israel, and said to them:

Hear, O Israel, the statutes and ordinances that I am addressing to you today; you shall learn them and observe them diligently. 2The LORD our God made a covenant with us at Horeb. 3Not with our ancestors did the LORD make this covenant, but with us, who are all of us here alive today. 4The LORD spoke with you face to face at the mountain, out of the fire. 5(At that time I was standing between the LORD and you to declare to you the words[j] of the LORD; for you were afraid because of the fire and did not go up the mountain.) And he said:

6 I am the LORD your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of slavery; 7you shall have no other gods before[k] me.

8 You shall not make for yourself an idol, whether in the form of anything that is in heaven above, or that is on the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth. 9You shall not bow down to them or worship them; for I the LORD your God am a jealous God, punishing children for the iniquity of parents, to the third and fourth generation of those who reject me, 10but showing steadfast love to the thousandth generation[l] of those who love me and keep my commandments.

11 You shall not make wrongful use of the name of the LORD your God, for the LORD will not acquit anyone who misuses his name.

12 Observe the sabbath day and keep it holy, as the LORD your God commanded you. 13Six days you shall labor and do all your work. 14But the seventh day is a sabbath to the LORD your God; you shall not do any work—you, or your son or your daughter, or your male or female slave, or your ox or your donkey, or any of your livestock, or the resident alien in your towns, so that your male and female slave may rest as well as you. 15Remember that you were a slave in the land of Egypt, and the LORD your God brought you out from there with a mighty hand and an outstretched arm; therefore the LORD your God commanded you to keep the sabbath day.

16 Honor your father and your mother, as the LORD your God commanded you, so that your days may be long and that it may go well with you in the land that the LORD your God is giving you.

17 You shall not murder.[m]

18 Neither shall you commit adultery.

19 Neither shall you steal.

20 Neither shall you bear false witness against your neighbor.

21 Neither shall you covet your neighbor's wife.

Neither shall you desire your neighbor's house, or field, or male or female slave, or ox, or donkey, or anything that belongs to your neighbor.

*i* Syr: Heb *Sion* *j* Q Mss Sam Gk Syr Vg Tg: MT *word* *k* Or *besides* *l* Or *to thousands* *m* Or *kill*

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**1:** *Hear,* a frequently repeated verb, indicating that Deuteronomy is a sermon that interprets Israel's covenant responsibilities. **2–3:** The making of the covenant (Ex ch 24) was not just a past ceremony involving another generation but it is a contemporary covenant *with us, who are all of us here alive today* (see Ex 13.8 n.). The language may reflect a liturgy in which the covenant was periodically recalled and renewed (26.16–19; 31.10–11).

**5.6–21:** This version of the Decalogue differs only slightly from that in Ex 20.2–17.

22 These words the LORD spoke with
a loud voice to your whole assembly at
the mountain, out of the fire, the cloud,
and the thick darkness, and he added no
more. He wrote them on two stone tab-
lets, and gave them to me. 23 When you
heard the voice out of the darkness,
while the mountain was burning with
fire, you approached me, all the heads of
your tribes and your elders; 24 and you
said, "Look, the LORD our God has
shown us his glory and greatness, and we
have heard his voice out of the fire. To-
day we have seen that God may speak to
someone and the person may still live.
25 So now why should we die? For this
great fire will consume us; if we hear the
voice of the LORD our God any longer,
we shall die. 26 For who is there of all
flesh that has heard the voice of the living
God speaking out of fire, as we have, and
remained alive? 27 Go near, you yourself,
and hear all that the LORD our God will
say. Then tell us everything that the
LORD our God tells you, and we will
listen and do it."

28 The LORD heard your words when
you spoke to me, and the LORD said to
me: "I have heard the words of this peo-
ple, which they have spoken to you; they
are right in all that they have spoken. 29 If
only they had such a mind as this, to fear
me and to keep all my commandments
always, so that it might go well with
them and with their children forever!
30 Go say to them, 'Return to your tents.'
31 But you, stand here by me, and I will
tell you all the commandments, the stat-
utes and the ordinances, that you shall
teach them, so that they may do them in
the land that I am giving them to pos-
sess." 32 You must therefore be careful to
do as the LORD your God has command-
ed you; you shall not turn to the right or
to the left. 33 You must follow exactly the
path that the LORD your God has com-
manded you, so that you may live, and
that it may go well with you, and that
you may live long in the land that you are
to possess.

6 Now this is the commandment—
the statutes and the ordinances—
that the LORD your God charged me to
teach you to observe in the land that you
are about to cross into and occupy, 2 so
that you and your children and your chil-
dren's children may fear the LORD your
God all the days of your life, and keep all
his decrees and his commandments that
I am commanding you, so that your days
may be long. 3 Hear therefore, O Israel,
and observe them diligently, so that it
may go well with you, and so that you
may multiply greatly in a land flowing
with milk and honey, as the LORD, the
God of your ancestors, has promised
you.

4 Hear, O Israel: The LORD is our

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**5.22–23**: While the Decalogue was given directly to the people (vv. 4–5; compare 4.10–13), the rest of the laws were mediated to the people through Moses (v. 31; 4.14). **23–27**: 4.33; Ex 20.18–21. **31**: Moses is no mere legislator but is a teacher or expositor of God's will (1.5). Hence the *statutes and the ordinances* (chs 12–26; compare Ex 20.23–23.19) are expressed in a sermonic appeal to do God's will in the concrete situations of life.

**6.1–25**: **The meaning of the first commandment. 1**: In this chapter Moses deals with *the commandment;* in a later section he explains *the statutes* and *the ordinances* (see 5.31 n.). **3**: A characteristic Deuteronomic note: reverent obedience will result in divine blessings of long life, fruitfulness, and welfare (5.33; 6.18–19). Thus the promise made to Israel's ancestors will be fulfilled (Gen 12.1–7; Ex 3.16–17). *Milk and honey,* see Ex 3.8 n. **4–9**: In Jewish tradition these verses are known as the Shema, from the first word in the Hebrew ("shema'"), which means "*Hear.*" **4–5**: The great commandment (Mk 12.29–30) is essentially a restatement of the first commandment of the Decalogue in positive form. There are not many gods, for *the LORD alone* is sovereign and unique; thus Israel is to have only one loyalty. *Heart* (mind, will), *soul* (self, vital being), *might* express the idea of loving God (see 4.37 n.) with the full measure of one's devotion. **8–9**: Putting this law on the hand, forehead, and doorpost (compare Ex 13.9) signifies that it is to be *in your heart* (v. 6), i.e. constantly thought about and acted upon (Ps 1.2).

**6.10–19**: See ch 8. **13**: The love of God is

God, the LORD alone.[n] 5You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your might. 6Keep these words that I am commanding you today in your heart. 7Recite them to your children and talk about them when you are at home and when you are away, when you lie down and when you rise. 8Bind them as a sign on your hand, fix them as an emblem[o] on your forehead, 9and write them on the doorposts of your house and on your gates.

10 When the LORD your God has brought you into the land that he swore to your ancestors, to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob, to give you—a land with fine, large cities that you did not build, 11houses filled with all sorts of goods that you did not fill, hewn cisterns that you did not hew, vineyards and olive groves that you did not plant—and when you have eaten your fill, 12take care that you do not forget the LORD, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of slavery. 13The LORD your God you shall fear; him you shall serve, and by his name alone you shall swear. 14Do not follow other gods, any of the gods of the peoples who are all around you, 15because the LORD your God, who is present with you, is a jealous God. The anger of the LORD your God would be kindled against you and he would destroy you from the face of the earth.

16 Do not put the LORD your God to the test, as you tested him at Massah. 17You must diligently keep the commandments of the LORD your God, and his decrees, and his statutes that he has commanded you. 18Do what is right and good in the sight of the LORD, so that it may go well with you, and so that you may go in and occupy the good land that the LORD swore to your ancestors to give you, 19thrusting out all your enemies from before you, as the LORD has promised.

20 When your children ask you in time to come, "What is the meaning of the decrees and the statutes and the ordinances that the LORD our God has commanded you?" 21then you shall say to your children, "We were Pharaoh's slaves in Egypt, but the LORD brought us out of Egypt with a mighty hand. 22The LORD displayed before our eyes great and awesome signs and wonders against Egypt, against Pharaoh and all his household. 23He brought us out from there in order to bring us in, to give us the land that he promised on oath to our ancestors. 24Then the LORD commanded us to observe all these statutes, to fear the LORD our God, for our lasting good, so as to keep us alive, as is now the case. 25If we diligently observe this entire commandment before the LORD our God, as he has commanded us, we will be in the right."

7 When the LORD your God brings you into the land that you are about to enter and occupy, and he clears away many nations before you—the Hittites, the Girgashites, the Amorites, the Canaanites, the Perizzites, the Hivites, and the Jebusites, seven nations mightier and more numerous than you— 2and when the LORD your God gives them over to you and you defeat them, then you must utterly destroy them. Make no covenant with them and show them no mercy.

*n* Or *The LORD our God is one LORD,* or *The LORD our God, the LORD is one,* or *The LORD is our God, the LORD is one* *o* Or *as a frontlet*

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blended with fear, i.e. reverence before God's holy majesty (4.9–15). **15**: Divine jealousy is associated with divine wrath (4.24; Josh 24.19–20); both are expressions of the LORD's holiness which will not tolerate idolatry. **16**: See Ex 17.2–7; compare Mt 4.7.

**6.20–25**: Compare v. 7; Ex 13.14–16. Children are to be taught the marvelous story of God's redeeming acts which is the background and basis of the law. **21–23**: See 26.5–10 n.

**7.1–26**: **Life in Canaan.** Having dealt with the heart of the law (the Decalogue and the great commandment; chs 5–6), Moses now interprets what it means to be God's people in the new land. **1–5**: This holy war is

[3]Do not intermarry with them, giving your daughters to their sons or taking their daughters for your sons, [4]for that would turn away your children from following me, to serve other gods. Then the anger of the LORD would be kindled against you, and he would destroy you quickly. [5]But this is how you must deal with them: break down their altars, smash their pillars, hew down their sacred poles,[p] and burn their idols with fire. [6]For you are a people holy to the LORD your God; the LORD your God has chosen you out of all the peoples on earth to be his people, his treasured possession.

7 It was not because you were more numerous than any other people that the LORD set his heart on you and chose you—for you were the fewest of all peoples. [8]It was because the LORD loved you and kept the oath that he swore to your ancestors, that the LORD has brought you out with a mighty hand, and redeemed you from the house of slavery, from the hand of Pharaoh king of Egypt. [9]Know therefore that the LORD your God is God, the faithful God who maintains covenant loyalty with those who love him and keep his commandments, to a thousand generations, [10]and who repays in their own person those who reject him. He does not delay but repays in their own person those who reject him. [11]Therefore, observe diligently the commandment—the statutes and the ordinances—that I am commanding you today.

12 If you heed these ordinances, by diligently observing them, the LORD your God will maintain with you the covenant loyalty that he swore to your ancestors; [13]he will love you, bless you, and multiply you; he will bless the fruit of your womb and the fruit of your ground, your grain and your wine and your oil, the increase of your cattle and the issue of your flock, in the land that he swore to your ancestors to give you. [14]You shall be the most blessed of peoples, with neither sterility nor barrenness among you or your livestock. [15]The LORD will turn away from you every illness; all the dread diseases of Egypt that you experienced, he will not inflict on you, but he will lay them on all who hate you. [16]You shall devour all the peoples that the LORD your God is giving over to you, showing them no pity; you shall not serve their gods, for that would be a snare to you.

17 If you say to yourself, "These nations are more numerous than I; how can I dispossess them?" [18]do not be afraid of them. Just remember what the LORD your God did to Pharaoh and to all Egypt, [19]the great trials that your eyes saw, the signs and wonders, the mighty hand and the outstretched arm by which the LORD your God brought you out. The LORD your God will do the same to all the peoples of whom you are afraid. [20]Moreover, the LORD your God will send the pestilence[q] against them, until even the survivors and the fugitives are destroyed. [21]Have no dread of them, for the LORD your God, who is present with you, is a great and awesome God. [22]The

*p* Heb *Asherim* *q* Or *hornets*: Meaning of Heb uncertain

based on the fear of the corrupting influence of Canaanite culture (v. 16; Ex 23.23–33; 34.11–16). **1**: On the pre-Israelite peoples, see Gen 10.15–20. **2**: *Utterly destroy*, see Josh 6.17 n. **5**: *Pillars, sacred poles* (see Ex 34.13 n.).

**7.6–16**: An uncompromising attitude toward the nations is required because Israel is *a people holy to the* LORD (Ex 19.5–6), i.e. a people separated for a special service to God (see Lev 19.2 n.); therefore Israel is not to be a nation like other nations (Num 23.9; 1 Sam 8.4–22). **7–8**: The election of Israel is not based on the people's greatness or goodness (9.4–6) but upon the LORD's gracious love and faithfulness to the promise made to their ancestors. **9–10**: Ex 34.6–7. *Covenant loyalty* ("steadfast love"), see Gen 24.12 n. **12–14**: The blessings of fertility do not come from the nature gods of Canaan, but are bestowed by Israel's God who delivered the people from Egyptian bondage (Hos ch 2). **15**: *Dread diseases*, a reference to the plagues of Egypt.

**7.17–26**: Israel should not fear mighty nations, for, according to the conviction of holy

LORD your God will clear away these nations before you little by little; you will not be able to make a quick end of them, otherwise the wild animals would become too numerous for you. 23But the LORD your God will give them over to you, and throw them into great panic, until they are destroyed. 24He will hand their kings over to you and you shall blot out their name from under heaven; no one will be able to stand against you, until you have destroyed them. 25The images of their gods you shall burn with fire. Do not covet the silver or the gold that is on them and take it for yourself, because you could be ensnared by it; for it is abhorrent to the LORD your God. 26Do not bring an abhorrent thing into your house, or you will be set apart for destruction like it. You must utterly detest and abhor it, for it is set apart for destruction.

8 This entire commandment that I command you today you must diligently observe, so that you may live and increase, and go in and occupy the land that the LORD promised on oath to your ancestors. 2Remember the long way that the LORD your God has led you these forty years in the wilderness, in order to humble you, testing you to know what was in your heart, whether or not you would keep his commandments. 3He humbled you by letting you hunger, then by feeding you with manna, with which neither you nor your ancestors were acquainted, in order to make you understand that one does not live by bread alone, but by every word that comes from the mouth of the LORD.[r] 4The clothes on your back did not wear out and your feet did not swell these forty years. 5Know then in your heart that as a parent disciplines a child so the LORD your God disciplines you. 6Therefore keep the commandments of the LORD your God, by walking in his ways and by fearing him. 7For the LORD your God is bringing you into a good land, a land with flowing streams, with springs and underground waters welling up in valleys and hills, 8a land of wheat and barley, of vines and fig trees and pomegranates, a land of olive trees and honey, 9a land where you may eat bread without scarcity, where you will lack nothing, a land whose stones are iron and from whose hills you may mine copper. 10You shall eat your fill and bless the LORD your God for the good land that he has given you.

11 Take care that you do not forget the LORD your God, by failing to keep his commandments, his ordinances, and his statutes, which I am commanding you today. 12When you have eaten your fill and have built fine houses and live in them, 13and when your herds and flocks have multiplied, and your silver and gold is multiplied, and all that you have is multiplied, 14then do not exalt yourself, forgetting the LORD your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of slavery, 15who led you through the great and terrible wilderness, an arid wasteland with poisonous[s] snakes and scorpions. He made water flow for you from flint rock, 16and fed you in the wilderness with manna that your ancestors did not know, to humble you and to test you, and in the end to do you good. 17Do not say to yourself, "My power and the might of

*r* Or *by anything that the* LORD *decrees*
*s* Or *fiery*; Heb *seraph*

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war, *the* LORD *your God is present with you* (20.1–4). These verses echo ideas found in Ex 23.20–33. **20**: *Pestilence,* see Ex 23.27–28 n.; Josh 24.12. **22**: Ex 23.29–30.

**8.1–20**: **The temptation to pride and self-sufficiency.** Moses warns the people that success in Canaan will tempt them to forget the wilderness lesson of complete dependence upon God's mercies. **1–10**: An appeal to Israel's memory: in the wilderness God cared for the people daily (Ex 12.37–17.16; Num chs 11–14). **3**: *Manna,* see Ex ch 16; Num 11.7, 8. **5**: Suffering is here interpreted as discipline, analogous to a parent's correction of a child (Hos ch 11; Heb 12.3–11). God's purpose is to humble the people's pride and to test the quality of their faith.

**8.11–20**: The peril of prosperity. **15**: *Poisonous snakes,* Num 21.6–9. *Water . . . from flint rock,* Num 20.2–13.

my own hand have gotten me this wealth." 18But remember the LORD your God, for it is he who gives you power to get wealth, so that he may confirm his covenant that he swore to your ancestors, as he is doing today. 19If you do forget the LORD your God and follow other gods to serve and worship them, I solemnly warn you today that you shall surely perish. 20Like the nations that the LORD is destroying before you, so shall you perish, because you would not obey the voice of the LORD your God.

9 Hear, O Israel! You are about to cross the Jordan today, to go in and dispossess nations larger and mightier than you, great cities, fortified to the heavens, 2a strong and tall people, the offspring of the Anakim, whom you know. You have heard it said of them, "Who can stand up to the Anakim?" 3Know then today that the LORD your God is the one who crosses over before you as a devouring fire; he will defeat them and subdue them before you, so that you may dispossess and destroy them quickly, as the LORD has promised you.

4 When the LORD your God thrusts them out before you, do not say to yourself, "It is because of my righteousness that the LORD has brought me in to occupy this land"; it is rather because of the wickedness of these nations that the LORD is dispossessing them before you. 5It is not because of your righteousness or the uprightness of your heart that you are going in to occupy their land; but because of the wickedness of these nations the LORD your God is dispossessing them before you, in order to fulfill the promise that the LORD made on oath to your ancestors, to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob.

6 Know, then, that the LORD your God is not giving you this good land to occupy because of your righteousness; for you are a stubborn people. 7Remember and do not forget how you provoked the LORD your God to wrath in the wilderness; you have been rebellious against the LORD from the day you came out of the land of Egypt until you came to this place.

8 Even at Horeb you provoked the LORD to wrath, and the LORD was so angry with you that he was ready to destroy you. 9When I went up the mountain to receive the stone tablets, the tablets of the covenant that the LORD made with you, I remained on the mountain forty days and forty nights; I neither ate bread nor drank water. 10And the LORD gave me the two stone tablets written with the finger of God; on them were all the words that the LORD had spoken to you at the mountain out of the fire on the day of the assembly. 11At the end of forty days and forty nights the LORD gave me the two stone tablets, the tablets of the covenant. 12Then the LORD said to me, "Get up, go down quickly from here, for your people whom you have brought from Egypt have acted corruptly. They have been quick to turn from the way that I commanded them; they have cast an image for themselves." 13Furthermore the LORD said to me, "I have seen that this people is indeed a stubborn people. 14Let me alone that I may destroy them and blot out their name from under heaven; and I will make of you a nation mightier and more numerous than they."

15 So I turned and went down from the mountain, while the mountain was ablaze; the two tablets of the covenant were in my two hands. 16Then I saw that you had indeed sinned against the LORD your God, by casting for yourselves an

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**9.1–10.11: The temptation to self-righteousness.** God does not give the land to the people of Israel as a reward for righteousness, for in the wilderness they proved to be a rebellious people.

**9.2**: See Num 13.22 n. **4–5**: Victory will be given in the holy war because (negatively) Canaan has been corrupted by pagan religions and because (positively) the LORD is faithful to the promise made to Israel's ancestors.

**9.6–24**: The historical record shows that Israel has been rebellious ever since the Exodus (Ezek 20.5–8). **8–10**: Ex 24.12–18; 31.18. **11–21**: Ex ch 32. **22**: Num 11.1–3; Ex 17.1–7;

image of a calf; you had been quick to turn from the way that the LORD had commanded you. 17So I took hold of the two tablets and flung them from my two hands, smashing them before your eyes. 18Then I lay prostrate before the LORD as before, forty days and forty nights; I neither ate bread nor drank water, because of all the sin you had committed, provoking the LORD by doing what was evil in his sight. 19For I was afraid that the anger that the LORD bore against you was so fierce that he would destroy you. But the LORD listened to me that time also. 20The LORD was so angry with Aaron that he was ready to destroy him, but I interceded also on behalf of Aaron at that same time. 21Then I took the sinful thing you had made, the calf, and burned it with fire and crushed it, grinding it thoroughly, until it was reduced to dust; and I threw the dust of it into the stream that runs down the mountain.

22 At Taberah also, and at Massah, and at Kibroth-hattaavah, you provoked the LORD to wrath. 23And when the LORD sent you from Kadesh-barnea, saying, "Go up and occupy the land that I have given you," you rebelled against the command of the LORD your God, neither trusting him nor obeying him. 24You have been rebellious against the LORD as long as he has[t] known you.

25 Throughout the forty days and forty nights that I lay prostrate before the LORD when the LORD intended to destroy you, 26I prayed to the LORD and said, "Lord GOD, do not destroy the people who are your very own possession, whom you redeemed in your greatness, whom you brought out of Egypt with a mighty hand. 27Remember your servants, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob; pay no attention to the stubbornness of this people, their wickedness and their sin, 28otherwise the land from which you have brought us might say, 'Because the LORD was not able to bring them into the land that he promised them, and because he hated them, he has brought them out to let them die in the wilderness.' 29For they are the people of your very own possession, whom you brought out by your great power and by your outstretched arm."

10 At that time the LORD said to me, "Carve out two tablets of stone like the former ones, and come up to me on the mountain, and make an ark of wood. 2I will write on the tablets the words that were on the former tablets, which you smashed, and you shall put them in the ark." 3So I made an ark of acacia wood, cut two tablets of stone like the former ones, and went up the mountain with the two tablets in my hand. 4Then he wrote on the tablets the same words as before, the ten commandments[u] that the LORD had spoken to you on the mountain out of the fire on the day of the assembly; and the LORD gave them to me. 5So I turned and came down from the mountain, and put the tablets in the ark that I had made; and there they are, as the LORD commanded me.

6 (The Israelites journeyed from Beeroth-bene-jaakan[v] to Moserah. There Aaron died, and there he was buried; his son Eleazar succeeded him as priest. 7From there they journeyed to Gudgodah, and from Gudgodah to Jotbathah, a land with flowing streams. 8At that time the LORD set apart the tribe of

*t* Sam Gk: MT *I have* *u* Heb *the ten words*
*v* Or *the wells of the Bene-jaakan*

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and Num 11.31–34. **23**: Num chs 13–14.

**9.25–29**: A paraphrase of Ex 32.11–14. In Deuteronomy Moses is portrayed as the ideal prophet (34.10–12) who intercedes for the people and who suffers on their behalf (1.37; compare Isa ch 53).

**10.1–11**: The second ascent of the mountain (Ex 34.1–4, 27–28). **1–3**: These verses rest on an ancient tradition that Moses made the ark and put the stone tablets in it (1 Kings 8.9; see Ex 24.15–18 n.). **6–9**: An editorial insertion which in vv. 6–7 apparently quotes from a wilderness itinerary (compare Num 33.30–38). **6**: Num 20.22–29. **8**: Ex 32.25–29. The Levites' role is to bear the ark (Num 4.4–15), to *minister*, i.e. conduct the sacrificial services (Num ch 18), and to *bless* the people (Num 6.22–27).

Levi to carry the ark of the covenant of the LORD, to stand before the LORD to minister to him, and to bless in his name, to this day. 9Therefore Levi has no allotment or inheritance with his kindred; the LORD is his inheritance, as the LORD your God promised him.)

10 I stayed on the mountain forty days and forty nights, as I had done the first time. And once again the LORD listened to me. The LORD was unwilling to destroy you. 11The LORD said to me, "Get up, go on your journey at the head of the people, that they may go in and occupy the land that I swore to their ancestors to give them."

12 So now, O Israel, what does the LORD your God require of you? Only to fear the LORD your God, to walk in all his ways, to love him, to serve the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul, 13and to keep the commandments of the LORD your God[w] and his decrees that I am commanding you today, for your own well-being. 14Although heaven and the heaven of heavens belong to the LORD your God, the earth with all that is in it, 15yet the LORD set his heart in love on your ancestors alone and chose you, their descendants after them, out of all the peoples, as it is today. 16Circumcise, then, the foreskin of your heart, and do not be stubborn any longer. 17For the LORD your God is God of gods and Lord of lords, the great God, mighty and awesome, who is not partial and takes no bribe, 18who executes justice for the orphan and the widow, and who loves the strangers, providing them food and clothing. 19You shall also love the stranger, for you were strangers in the land of Egypt. 20You shall fear the LORD your God; him alone you shall worship; to him you shall hold fast, and by his name you shall swear. 21He is your praise; he is your God, who has done for you these great and awesome things that your own eyes have seen. 22Your ancestors went down to Egypt seventy persons; and now the LORD your God has made you as numerous as the stars in heaven.

11 You shall love the LORD your God, therefore, and keep his charge, his decrees, his ordinances, and his commandments always. 2Remember today that it was not your children (who have not known or seen the discipline of the LORD your God), but it is you who must acknowledge his greatness, his mighty hand and his outstretched arm, 3his signs and his deeds that he did in Egypt to Pharaoh, the king of Egypt, and to all his land; 4what he did to the Egyptian army, to their horses and chariots, how he made the water of the Red Sea[x] flow over them as they pursued you, so that the LORD has destroyed them to this day; 5what he did to you in the wilderness, until you came to this place; 6and what he did to Dathan and Abiram, sons of Eliab son of Reuben, how in the midst of all Israel the earth opened its mouth and swallowed them up, along with their households, their tents, and every living being in their company; 7for it is your own eyes that

*w* Q Ms Gk Syr: MT lacks *your God*
*x* Or *Sea of Reeds*

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**10.12–11.32. What the LORD requires.** This section is the climax and conclusion of the historical review found in ch 8 and 9.1–10.11.

**10.12**: God's gracious dealings form the background and presupposition of God's requirements (compare Mic 6.1–8). **16**: *Circumcise the . . . heart* means to open the mind, to direct the will toward God (see Lev 26.41 n.). **17–18**: Divine justice is disclosed in God's impartiality and defense of the legally helpless. *The stranger,* who resided within the covenant community without tribal status, was in danger of exploitation. **19**: Ex 22.21; 23.9; Lev 19.34. This verse implies the second great commandment of Lev 19.17–18. **22**: *Seventy persons,* Ex 1.5.

**11.1–26**: Loyalty to the covenant is the condition for life in Canaan. **2**: The word *today* appears frequently in Deuteronomy to emphasize the contemporaneity of the covenant demands and promises (see 5.2–3 n.). *Discipline,* see 8.5 n. **6**: The address follows the early tradition of Num ch 16 concerning

have seen every great deed that the LORD did.

8 Keep, then, this entire commandment that I am commanding you today, so that you may have strength to go in and occupy the land that you are crossing over to occupy, 9and so that you may live long in the land that the LORD swore to your ancestors to give them and to their descendants, a land flowing with milk and honey. 10For the land that you are about to enter to occupy is not like the land of Egypt, from which you have come, where you sow your seed and irrigate by foot like a vegetable garden. 11But the land that you are crossing over to occupy is a land of hills and valleys, watered by rain from the sky, 12a land that the LORD your God looks after. The eyes of the LORD your God are always on it, from the beginning of the year to the end of the year.

13 If you will only heed his every commandment[y] that I am commanding you today—loving the LORD your God, and serving him with all your heart and with all your soul— 14then he[z] will give the rain for your land in its season, the early rain and the later rain, and you will gather in your grain, your wine, and your oil; 15and he[z] will give grass in your fields for your livestock, and you will eat your fill. 16Take care, or you will be seduced into turning away, serving other gods and worshiping them, 17for then the anger of the LORD will be kindled against you and he will shut up the heavens, so that there will be no rain and the land will yield no fruit; then you will perish quickly off the good land that the LORD is giving you.

18 You shall put these words of mine in your heart and soul, and you shall bind them as a sign on your hand, and fix them as an emblem[a] on your forehead. 19Teach them to your children, talking about them when you are at home and when you are away, when you lie down and when you rise. 20Write them on the doorposts of your house and on your gates, 21so that your days and the days of your children may be multiplied in the land that the LORD swore to your ancestors to give them, as long as the heavens are above the earth.

22 If you will diligently observe this entire commandment that I am commanding you, loving the LORD your God, walking in all his ways, and holding fast to him, 23then the LORD will drive out all these nations before you, and you will dispossess nations larger and mightier than yourselves. 24Every place on which you set foot shall be yours; your territory shall extend from the wilderness to the Lebanon and from the River, the river Euphrates, to the Western Sea. 25No one will be able to stand against you; the LORD your God will put the fear and dread of you on all the land on which you set foot, as he promised you.

26 See, I am setting before you today a blessing and a curse: 27the blessing, if you obey the commandments of the LORD your God that I am commanding you today; 28and the curse, if you do not obey the commandments of the LORD your God, but turn from the way that I

*y* Compare Gk: Heb *my commandments*
*z* Sam Gk Vg: MT *I* *a* Or *as a frontlet*

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the revolt of Dathan and Abiram; note the silence about Korah's rebellion (Num 16.3–11).

**11.10–12**: The Nile valley must be irrigated through human effort; Palestine, however, is dependent upon seasonal rainfall. This difference is mentioned to show Israel's dependence upon the LORD, who gives and withholds rain (Am 4.7–9). **14**: The *early rain* comes at the end of the summer drought (October-November); the *later rain* comes in the spring (March-April). **16–17**: See 7.12–14 n.

**11.18–21**: 6.6–9. **24**: The territory is described in terms of the ideal limits of David's empire (see 1.7 n.). *The Western Sea,* the Mediterranean. **26–32**: The two ways (see ch 28; 30.15–20). **26**: *Blessing . . . curse,* an echo of an ancient ceremony of covenant renewal, perhaps inaugurated at Shechem (v. 29; see ch 27). The people stand in a time of solemn decision, facing the alternatives of

am commanding you today, to follow other gods that you have not known.

29 When the LORD your God has brought you into the land that you are entering to occupy, you shall set the blessing on Mount Gerizim and the curse on Mount Ebal. 30 As you know, they are beyond the Jordan, some distance to the west, in the land of the Canaanites who live in the Arabah, opposite Gilgal, beside the oak[b] of Moreh.

31 When you cross the Jordan to go in to occupy the land that the LORD your God is giving you, and when you occupy it and live in it, 32 you must diligently observe all the statutes and ordinances that I am setting before you today.

12 These are the statutes and ordinances that you must diligently observe in the land that the LORD, the God of your ancestors, has given you to occupy all the days that you live on the earth.

2 You must demolish completely all the places where the nations whom you are about to dispossess served their gods, on the mountain heights, on the hills, and under every leafy tree. 3 Break down their altars, smash their pillars, burn their sacred poles[c] with fire, and hew down the idols of their gods, and thus blot out their name from their places. 4 You shall not worship the LORD your God in such ways. 5 But you shall seek the place that the LORD your God will choose out of all your tribes as his habitation to put his name there. You shall go there, 6 bringing there your burnt offerings and your sacrifices, your tithes and your donations, your votive gifts, your freewill offerings, and the firstlings of your herds and flocks. 7 And you shall eat there in the presence of the LORD your God, you and your households together, rejoicing in all the undertakings in which the LORD your God has blessed you.

8 You shall not act as we are acting here today, all of us according to our own desires, 9 for you have not yet come into the rest and the possession that the LORD your God is giving you. 10 When you cross over the Jordan and live in the land that the LORD your God is allotting to you, and when he gives you rest from your enemies all around so that you live in safety, 11 then you shall bring everything that I command you to the place that the LORD your God will choose as a dwelling for his name: your burnt offerings and your sacrifices, your tithes and your donations, and all your choice votive gifts that you vow to the LORD. 12 And you shall rejoice before the LORD your God, you together with your sons and your daughters, your male and fe-

*b* Gk Syr: Compare Gen 12.6; Heb *oaks* or *terebinths* *c* Heb *Asherim*

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divine blessing or divine judgment. **29–30**: See ch 27. *The oak of Moreh* was near Shechem (see Gen 12.6 n.).

**12.1–31**: **The centralization of worship.** Israel is to worship at the central sanctuary chosen by the LORD and to make sacrifices only at this place. **1**: Here begins the exposition of *the statutes and the ordinances* (see 5.31 n.) found in chs 12–26. **3**: See Ex 34.13 n. **4**: The following law concerning the centralization of worship is intended to guard Israel from the paganism that flourished in local shrines (vv. 29–31). **5–7**: During the period of the tribal confederacy pilgrimages were made to Shiloh (Josh 18.1; 1 Sam 1.3–28), and under the leadership of David Jerusalem became the central sanctuary of Israel (2 Sam ch 6). During this whole period pilgrimages to the sanctuary did not preclude sacrificing at any altar in the land (Gen 12.7; 1 Sam 10.8; 1 Kings 3.2, 4). The present stringent law, providing for only one place for sacrificial worship, was the basis of the great reform carried out by King Josiah (2 Kings chs 22–23). **5**: God's dwelling place is in heaven (1 Kings 8.27), but the LORD's *name*—signifying God's personal identity (see Gen 32.27 n.)—dwells in the sanctuary (v. 11) and in this sense God is present there. This "name" theology, a characteristic of the Deuteronomic perspective, deals with the paradox of divine distance and nearness, or transcendence and immanence. **6**: For the types of sacrifice, see Lev chs 1–7. *Votive gifts,* Lev ch 27; Num ch 30. *Eat there in the presence of the LORD* refers to certain offerings that must be eaten at the sanctuary, such as the tithe (14.22–28) or the offering of well-being (Lev ch 3). **12**: *The Levites,* see 18.1 n.

male slaves, and the Levites who reside in your towns (since they have no allotment or inheritance with you).

13 Take care that you do not offer your burnt offerings at any place you happen to see. 14 But only at the place that the LORD will choose in one of your tribes—there you shall offer your burnt offerings and there you shall do everything I command you.

15 Yet whenever you desire you may slaughter and eat meat within any of your towns, according to the blessing that the LORD your God has given you; the unclean and the clean may eat of it, as they would of gazelle or deer. 16 The blood, however, you must not eat; you shall pour it out on the ground like water. 17 Nor may you eat within your towns the tithe of your grain, your wine, and your oil, the firstlings of your herds and your flocks, any of your votive gifts that you vow, your freewill offerings, or your donations; 18 these you shall eat in the presence of the LORD your God at the place that the LORD your God will choose, you together with your son and your daughter, your male and female slaves, and the Levites resident in your towns, rejoicing in the presence of the LORD your God in all your undertakings. 19 Take care that you do not neglect the Levite as long as you live in your land.

20 When the LORD your God enlarges your territory, as he has promised you, and you say, "I am going to eat some meat," because you wish to eat meat, you may eat meat whenever you have the desire. 21 If the place where the LORD your God will choose to put his name is too far from you, and you slaughter as I have commanded you any of your herd or flock that the LORD has given you, then you may eat within your towns whenever you desire. 22 Indeed, just as gazelle or deer is eaten, so you may eat it; the unclean and the clean alike may eat it. 23 Only be sure that you do not eat the blood; for the blood is the life, and you shall not eat the life with the meat. 24 Do not eat it; you shall pour it out on the ground like water. 25 Do not eat it, so that all may go well with you and your children after you, because you do what is right in the sight of the LORD. 26 But the sacred donations that are due from you, and your votive gifts, you shall bring to the place that the LORD will choose. 27 You shall present your burnt offerings, both the meat and the blood, on the altar of the LORD your God; the blood of your other sacrifices shall be poured out beside[d] the altar of the LORD your God, but the meat you may eat.

28 Be careful to obey all these words that I command you today,[e] so that it may go well with you and with your children after you forever, because you will be doing what is good and right in the sight of the LORD your God.

29 When the LORD your God has cut off before you the nations whom you are about to enter to dispossess them, when you have dispossessed them and live in their land, 30 take care that you are not snared into imitating them, after they have been destroyed before you: do not inquire concerning their gods, saying, "How did these nations worship their gods? I also want to do the same." 31 You must not do the same for the LORD your God, because every abhorrent thing that the LORD hates they have done for their gods. They would even burn their sons and their daughters in the fire to their

*d* Or *on* *e* Gk Sam Syr: MT lacks *today*

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**12.15–28:** Now that sacrifice is made only at the central sanctuary, a distinction is drawn between sacrifice and slaughter of animals for food, thus modifying earlier legislation (Lev 17.1–9). **15–16:** When eating slaughtered meat in a town, it is not necessary to observe the laws of ceremonial cleanness (Lev 7.19–21), for slaughtered meat may be considered in the same category as game (e.g. gazelle or deer). However, the ancient prohibition against eating blood must be maintained (vv. 23–24; see Gen 9.3–4; Lev 17.10–11). **17–18:** *Sacred donations* (v. 26), which belong by right, or by dedication, to the LORD, must be eaten at the central sanctuary.

**12.31:** *Every abhorrent thing*, e.g. sacred

gods. [32]*f*You must diligently observe everything that I command you; do not add to it or take anything from it.

13 [1]*g* If prophets or those who divine by dreams appear among you and promise you omens or portents, [2]and the omens or the portents declared by them take place, and they say, "Let us follow other gods" (whom you have not known) "and let us serve them," [3]you must not heed the words of those prophets or those who divine by dreams; for the LORD your God is testing you, to know whether you indeed love the LORD your God with all your heart and soul. [4]The LORD your God you shall follow, him alone you shall fear, his commandments you shall keep, his voice you shall obey, him you shall serve, and to him you shall hold fast. [5]But those prophets or those who divine by dreams shall be put to death for having spoken treason against the LORD your God—who brought you out of the land of Egypt and redeemed you from the house of slavery—to turn you from the way in which the LORD your God commanded you to walk. So you shall purge the evil from your midst.

6 If anyone secretly entices you—even if it is your brother, your father's son or[h] your mother's son, or your own son or daughter, or the wife you embrace, or your most intimate friend—saying, "Let us go worship other gods," whom neither you nor your ancestors have known, [7]any of the gods of the peoples that are around you, whether near you or far away from you, from one end of the earth to the other, [8]you must not yield to or heed any such persons. Show them no pity or compassion and do not shield them. [9]But you shall surely kill them; your own hand shall be first against them to execute them, and afterwards the hand of all the people. [10]Stone them to death for trying to turn you away from the LORD your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of slavery. [11]Then all Israel shall hear and be afraid, and never again do any such wickedness.

12 If you hear it said about one of the towns that the LORD your God is giving you to live in, [13]that scoundrels from among you have gone out and led the inhabitants of the town astray, saying, "Let us go and worship other gods," whom you have not known, [14]then you shall inquire and make a thorough investigation. If the charge is established that such an abhorrent thing has been done among you, [15]you shall put the inhabitants of that town to the sword, utterly destroying it and everything in it—even putting its livestock to the sword. [16]All of its spoil you shall gather into its public square; then burn the town and all its spoil with fire, as a whole burnt offering to the LORD your God. It shall remain a perpetual ruin, never to be rebuilt. [17]Do not let anything devoted to destruction

*f* Ch 13.1 in Heb *g* Ch 13.2 in Heb
*h* Sam Gk Compare Tg: MT lacks *your father's son or*

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prostitution (23.17–18) and ordeal by fire (see 18.10 n.).

**12.32–13.18: Warning against idolatry.** Subversives who entice their fellow Israelites into the worship of other gods must be eliminated from the covenant community.

**13.1–5**: The false prophet (Jer 23.9–32; Ezek ch 13). **1**: Dreams were regarded as a medium of divine communication to a prophet (Num 12.6; 22.20; 1 Sam 3.15; 28.6; Jer 23.25). This law makes it clear that *omens or portents* (see Ex 3.11–12 n.) are not in themselves proof that God has spoken, for God may give false prophets power to perform wonders in order to test the people's faith (compare 8.2). A miracle is not significant unless it prompts faith in the God whom Israel has *known* (vv. 6, 13) in its historical experience, that is, the God of Exodus and Sinai. **5**: The punishment is severe because idolatry contaminates the health or holiness of the community.

**13.6–11**: The same punishment applies to close friends or family members who entice one into idolatry. **10**: Stoning is prescribed because this is a communal mode of purging the evil that threatens the community (17.2–7).

**13.12–18**: When a city has turned to idolatry, it must be put under the sacrificial ban

stick to your hand, so that the LORD may turn from his fierce anger and show you compassion, and in his compassion multiply you, as he swore to your ancestors, 18if you obey the voice of the LORD your God by keeping all his commandments that I am commanding you today, doing what is right in the sight of the LORD your God.

14 You are children of the LORD your God. You must not lacerate yourselves or shave your forelocks for the dead. 2For you are a people holy to the LORD your God; it is you the LORD has chosen out of all the peoples on earth to be his people, his treasured possession.

3 You shall not eat any abhorrent thing. 4These are the animals you may eat: the ox, the sheep, the goat, 5the deer, the gazelle, the roebuck, the wild goat, the ibex, the antelope, and the mountain-sheep. 6Any animal that divides the hoof and has the hoof cleft in two, and chews the cud, among the animals, you may eat. 7Yet of those that chew the cud or have the hoof cleft you shall not eat these: the camel, the hare, and the rock badger, because they chew the cud but do not divide the hoof; they are unclean for you. 8And the pig, because it divides the hoof but does not chew the cud, is unclean for you. You shall not eat their meat, and you shall not touch their carcasses.

9 Of all that live in water you may eat these: whatever has fins and scales you may eat. 10And whatever does not have fins and scales you shall not eat; it is unclean for you.

11 You may eat any clean birds. 12But these are the ones that you shall not eat: the eagle, the vulture, the osprey, 13the buzzard, the kite of any kind; 14every raven of any kind; 15the ostrich, the nighthawk, the sea gull, the hawk of any kind; 16the little owl and the great owl, the water hen 17and the desert owl,[i] the carrion vulture and the cormorant, 18the stork, the heron of any kind; the hoopoe and the bat.[j] 19And all winged insects are unclean for you; they shall not be eaten. 20You may eat any clean winged creature.

21 You shall not eat anything that dies of itself; you may give it to aliens residing in your towns for them to eat, or you may sell it to a foreigner. For you are a people holy to the LORD your God.

You shall not boil a kid in its mother's milk.

22 Set apart a tithe of all the yield of your seed that is brought in yearly from the field. 23In the presence of the LORD your God, in the place that he will choose as a dwelling for his name, you shall eat the tithe of your grain, your wine, and your oil, as well as the firstlings of your herd and flock, so that you may learn to fear the LORD your God always. 24But if, when the LORD your God has blessed you, the distance is so great that you are unable to transport it, because the place where the LORD your God will choose to set his name is too far away from you, 25then you may turn it into money. With the money secure in hand, go to the place that the LORD your God will choose; 26spend the money for whatever you wish—oxen, sheep, wine, strong drink, or whatever you desire. And you shall eat there in the presence of the LORD your God, you and your household rejoicing

*i* Or *pelican* *j* Identification of several of the birds in verses 12-18 is uncertain

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and consumed as *a whole burnt offering*. **17**: *Anything devoted* (see Lev 27.21 n., 28–29), such as people, cattle, spoil, are holy, for they belong to the LORD's sacrifice (20.10–18).

**14.1–15.23: The lifestyle of a holy people** (see Lev 19.2 n.). In this section old laws are reinterpreted to enforce the contemporaneity of God's covenant demands.

**14.1**: Prohibition against pagan customs of mourning (see Lev 19.28; 21.5). **3–21**: Clean animals that are permitted for food (Lev 11.2–23). **21**: On the first law cited, see Ex 22.31 n. and the regulation for slaughter in Deut 12.15–28. On the second law, see Ex 23.18–19 n.

**14.22–29**: Israel is steward of the land which belongs to the LORD; therefore, tithes of produce must be offered annually at the harvest festival (16.9–12). **24–26**: This is a special Deuteronomic provision, arising out

together. 27 As for the Levites resident in your towns, do not neglect them, because they have no allotment or inheritance with you.

28 Every third year you shall bring out the full tithe of your produce for that year, and store it within your towns; 29 the Levites, because they have no allotment or inheritance with you, as well as the resident aliens, the orphans, and the widows in your towns, may come and eat their fill so that the LORD your God may bless you in all the work that you undertake.

15 Every seventh year you shall grant a remission of debts. 2 And this is the manner of the remission: every creditor shall remit the claim that is held against a neighbor, not exacting it of a neighbor who is a member of the community, because the LORD's remission has been proclaimed. 3 Of a foreigner you may exact it, but you must remit your claim on whatever any member of your community owes you. 4 There will, however, be no one in need among you, because the LORD is sure to bless you in the land that the LORD your God is giving you as a possession to occupy, 5 if only you will obey the LORD your God by diligently observing this entire commandment that I command you today. 6 When the LORD your God has blessed you, as he promised you, you will lend to many nations, but you will not borrow; you will rule over many nations, but they will not rule over you.

7 If there is among you anyone in need, a member of your community in any of your towns within the land that the LORD your God is giving you, do not be hard-hearted or tight-fisted toward your needy neighbor. 8 You should rather open your hand, willingly lending enough to meet the need, whatever it may be. 9 Be careful that you do not entertain a mean thought, thinking, "The seventh year, the year of remission, is near," and therefore view your needy neighbor with hostility and give nothing; your neighbor might cry to the LORD against you, and you would incur guilt. 10 Give liberally and be ungrudging when you do so, for on this account the LORD your God will bless you in all your work and in all that you undertake. 11 Since there will never cease to be some in need on the earth, I therefore command you, "Open your hand to the poor and needy neighbor in your land."

12 If a member of your community, whether a Hebrew man or a Hebrew woman, is sold[k] to you and works for you six years, in the seventh year you shall set that person free. 13 And when you send a male slave[l] out from you a free person, you shall not send him out empty-handed. 14 Provide liberally out of your flock, your threshing floor, and your wine press, thus giving to him some of the bounty with which the LORD your God has blessed you. 15 Remember that you were a slave in the land of Egypt, and the LORD your God redeemed you; for this reason I lay this command upon you today. 16 But if he says to you, "I will not go out from you," because he loves you and your

*k* Or *sells himself or herself* *l* Heb *him*

of centralization of worship. **27–29**: It was impractical for all Levites to serve at the central sanctuary; therefore special consideration was to be given to the town Levites (see 18.1 n.; 26.12–15). This law modifies the previous provision that an annual tithe be brought to the sanctuary for support of the Levites (Num 18.21–32).

**15.1–11**: The year of release. In Ex 23.10–11 the sabbatical year is for the sake of the poor; in Lev 25.1–7 it is a fallow year for the sake of the land. Here the sabbatical year, like the jubilee year (Lev 25.8–55), is a time for remission of debts. **3**: The law does not apply to a *foreigner* who visits for business (v. 6). A *neighbor* (v. 2) is a fellow member of the covenant community (see Lev 19.17–18 n.). **11**: If God's will were fully obeyed, there would be no poverty (vv. 3–5); but until that time comes *there will never cease to be poor people* (compare Jn 12.8) and the law must remain in force.

**15.12–18**: The law on Hebrew servitude (Ex 21.2–11). **13–15**: An expansion, showing Deuteronomy's ethical fervor (compare Lev 25.42–43). **17**: Unlike the older law, male and

household, since he is well off with you, 17then you shall take an awl and thrust it through his earlobe into the door, and he shall be your slave[m] forever.

You shall do the same with regard to your female slave.[n]

18 Do not consider it a hardship when you send them out from you free persons, because for six years they have given you services worth the wages of hired laborers; and the LORD your God will bless you in all that you do.

19 Every firstling male born of your herd and flock you shall consecrate to the LORD your God; you shall not do work with your firstling ox nor shear the firstling of your flock. 20You shall eat it, you together with your household, in the presence of the LORD your God year by year at the place that the LORD will choose. 21But if it has any defect—any serious defect, such as lameness or blindness—you shall not sacrifice it to the LORD your God; 22within your towns you may eat it, the unclean and the clean alike, as you would a gazelle or deer. 23Its blood, however, you must not eat; you shall pour it out on the ground like water.

16 Observe the month[o] of Abib by keeping the passover to the LORD your God, for in the month of Abib the LORD your God brought you out of Egypt by night. 2You shall offer the passover sacrifice to the LORD your God, from the flock and the herd, at the place that the LORD will choose as a dwelling for his name. 3You must not eat with it anything leavened. For seven days you shall eat unleavened bread with it—the bread of affliction—because you came out of the land of Egypt in great haste, so that all the days of your life you may remember the day of your departure from the land of Egypt. 4No leaven shall be seen with you in all your territory for seven days; and none of the meat of what you slaughter on the evening of the first day shall remain until morning. 5You are not permitted to offer the passover sacrifice within any of your towns that the LORD your God is giving you. 6But at the place that the LORD your God will choose as a dwelling for his name, only there shall you offer the passover sacrifice, in the evening at sunset, the time of day when you departed from Egypt. 7You shall cook it and eat it at the place that the LORD your God will choose; the next morning you may go back to your tents. 8For six days you shall continue to eat unleavened bread, and on the seventh day there shall be a solemn assembly for the LORD your God, when you shall do no work.

9 You shall count seven weeks; begin to count the seven weeks from the time the sickle is first put to the standing grain. 10Then you shall keep the festival of weeks to the LORD your God, contributing a freewill offering in proportion to the blessing that you have received from the LORD your God. 11Rejoice before the LORD your God—you and your sons and your daughters, your male and female slaves, the Levites resident in your towns, as well as the strangers, the orphans, and the widows who are among you—at the place that the LORD your God will choose as a dwelling for his name. 12Remember that

*m* Or *bondman* *n* Or *bondwoman* *o* Or *new moon*

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female slaves are put on the same level. **18**: Obeying the law should be easy (compare Jer 34.8–16; Neh 5.5).

**15.19–23**: The old law on the sacrifice of firstlings (see Ex 13.2 n.) is adapted to the requirement of the central sanctuary (12.15–28).

**16.1–17**: **A festal calendar** (Ex 23.14–17; 34.18–24; Lev ch 23; Num chs 28–29). **1–8**: The festival of the passover and unleavened bread (Ex 12.1–27; 13.3–10; 23.15, 18; 34.18, 25; Lev 23.5–8; Num 28.16–25). On the relation between these festivals, see Ex 12.14–20 n. Here the passover must be eaten at the central sanctuary, rather than in the towns according to previous custom. **1**: *Abib*, see Ex 13.4 n.

**16.9–12**: The festival of weeks (Ex 23.16; 34.22; Lev 23.15–16; Num 28.26), a harvest festival held in June (in the New Testament

you were a slave in Egypt, and diligently observe these statutes.

13 You shall keep the festival of booths[p] for seven days, when you have gathered in the produce from your threshing floor and your wine press. 14Rejoice during your festival, you and your sons and your daughters, your male and female slaves, as well as the Levites, the strangers, the orphans, and the widows resident in your towns. 15Seven days you shall keep the festival to the LORD your God at the place that the LORD will choose; for the LORD your God will bless you in all your produce and in all your undertakings, and you shall surely celebrate.

16 Three times a year all your males shall appear before the LORD your God at the place that he will choose: at the festival of unleavened bread, at the festival of weeks, and at the festival of booths.[p] They shall not appear before the LORD empty-handed; 17all shall give as they are able, according to the blessing of the LORD your God that he has given you.

18 You shall appoint judges and officials throughout your tribes, in all your towns that the LORD your God is giving you, and they shall render just decisions for the people. 19You must not distort justice; you must not show partiality; and you must not accept bribes, for a bribe blinds the eyes of the wise and subverts the cause of those who are in the right. 20Justice, and only justice, you shall pursue, so that you may live and occupy the land that the LORD your God is giving you.

21 You shall not plant any tree as a sacred pole[q] beside the altar that you make for the LORD your God; 22nor shall you set up a stone pillar—things that the LORD your God hates.

17 You must not sacrifice to the LORD your God an ox or a sheep that has a defect, anything seriously wrong; for that is abhorrent to the LORD your God.

2 If there is found among you, in one of your towns that the LORD your God is giving you, a man or woman who does what is evil in the sight of the LORD your God, and transgresses his covenant 3by going to serve other gods and worshiping them—whether the sun or the moon or any of the host of heaven, which I have forbidden— 4and if it is reported to you or you hear of it, and you make a thorough inquiry, and the charge is proved true that such an abhorrent thing has occurred in Israel, 5then you shall bring out to your gates that man or that woman who has committed this crime and you shall stone the man or woman to death. 6On the evidence of two or three witnesses the death sentence shall be executed; a person must not be put to death on the evidence of only one witness. 7The hands of the witnesses shall be the first raised against the person to execute the death penalty, and afterward the hands of all the people. So you shall purge the evil from your midst.

8 If a judicial decision is too difficult

*p* Or *tabernacles*; Heb *succoth* *q* Heb *Asherah*

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Pentecost, Acts 2.1; 20.16; 1 Cor 16.8). **13–15**: The festival of booths, in the King James Version tabernacles" (Ex 23.16; 34.22; Lev 23.33–43), the autumn thanksgiving festival. **16–17**: Summary of the pilgrimage festivals (Ex 23.17; 34.23).

**16.18–17.20: Laws dealing with justice and religion.**

**16.18–20**: The administration of justice. This law reflects a developed society in which responsibility for legal administration was delegated to appointed officials in every town. **18**: *Judges and officials,* 1.13–17. **19**: Ex 23.6–8. **21–22**: Prohibition against Canaanite cultic installations (7.5; see Ex 34.13 n.).

**17.1**: An unblemished sacrifice is frequently required in cultic laws (15.21; Lev 22.17–25). **2–7**: The penalty for idolatry is the same as for enticement to idolatry (ch 13). **3**: See 4.19. **6**: 19.15; Num 35.30.

**17.8–13**: A supreme tribunal is to adjudicate cases that are too difficult for local judges (16.18). Older legislation had dealt with premeditated and unpremeditated killing (Ex 21.12–14), bodily *assault* (Ex 21.18–27), and other legal rights, and had provided that cases

for you to make between one kind of bloodshed and another, one kind of legal right and another, or one kind of assault and another—any such matters of dispute in your towns—then you shall immediately go up to the place that the LORD your God will choose, 9where you shall consult with the levitical priests and the judge who is in office in those days; they shall announce to you the decision in the case. 10Carry out exactly the decision that they announce to you from the place that the LORD will choose, diligently observing everything they instruct you. 11You must carry out fully the law that they interpret for you or the ruling that they announce to you; do not turn aside from the decision that they announce to you, either to the right or to the left. 12As for anyone who presumes to disobey the priest appointed to minister there to the LORD your God, or the judge, that person shall die. So you shall purge the evil from Israel. 13All the people will hear and be afraid, and will not act presumptuously again.

14 When you have come into the land that the LORD your God is giving you, and have taken possession of it and settled in it, and you say, "I will set a king over me, like all the nations that are around me," 15you may indeed set over you a king whom the LORD your God will choose. One of your own community you may set as king over you; you are not permitted to put a foreigner over you, who is not of your own community. 16Even so, he must not acquire many horses for himself, or return the people to Egypt in order to acquire more horses, since the LORD has said to you, "You must never return that way again." 17And he must not acquire many wives for himself, or else his heart will turn away; also silver and gold he must not acquire in great quantity for himself. 18When he has taken the throne of his kingdom, he shall have a copy of this law written for him in the presence of the levitical priests. 19It shall remain with him and he shall read in it all the days of his life, so that he may learn to fear the LORD his God, diligently observing all the words of this law and these statutes, 20neither exalting himself above other members of the community nor turning aside from the commandment, either to the right or to the left, so that he and his descendants may reign long over his kingdom in Israel.

18 The levitical priests, the whole tribe of Levi, shall have no allotment or inheritance within Israel. They may eat the sacrifices that are the LORD's

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of doubt should be brought "before God" (Ex 22.9; compare 18.15–16; 33.7). Here the old legal practice is adapted to the law of the central sanctuary. **9**: *The levitical priests* are those who function in the sanctuary in distinction from town Levites (see 18.1 n.). *The judge,* perhaps the lay chief justice (19.17). One of the priests (see v. 12) was the ecclesiastical chief justice. The tribunal set up by Jehoshaphat was composed of lay and clerical judges (2 Chr 19.5–11). **14–20**: Restrictions upon the Israelite king.

**17.14–15**: In the view of the Israelite tribal confederacy, perhaps formed at Shechem (Josh ch 24), kingship was alien to the theocracy (Judg 8.22–23). Israel's monarchy represented an attempt to be *like all the nations,* whose kings claimed absolute power (1 Sam 8.4–22). **16–18**: These verses allude to "the ways of the king" (compare 1 Sam 8.10–18) exemplified by Solomon, e.g. his trade in horses (1 Kings 10.26–29). **18**: *This law,* i.e. the law of Deuteronomy, which was kept in the custody of levitical priests at the sanctuary (2 Kings 22.8). **19–20**: The king, elected from among his own people (v. 15), is subject to God's law, like any other citizen. Compare the admonitions to the "prince" (the future kings of the restored line of David) in Ezek 45.7–9.

**18.1–22: The proper worship of God.** **1–8**: Rights of the levitical priests. **1**: This law applies to *the whole tribe of Levi* (see Ex 28.1–5 n.), i.e. Levites who officiated at the central sanctuary ("the priests, the sons of Levi," 21.5) and those who functioned as teaching priests in the towns (12.18–19; 14.27, 29). Thus Deuteronomy adds a further qualification to priestly legislation which had distinguished only between Aaronic Levites who officiated at the altar and other Levites who were assistants in the sanctuary (see Num

portion[r] [2]but they shall have no inheritance among the other members of the community; the LORD is their inheritance, as he promised them.

3 This shall be the priests' due from the people, from those offering a sacrifice, whether an ox or a sheep: they shall give to the priest the shoulder, the two jowls, and the stomach. [4]The first fruits of your grain, your wine, and your oil, as well as the first of the fleece of your sheep, you shall give him. [5]For the LORD your God has chosen Levi[s] out of all your tribes, to stand and minister in the name of the LORD, him and his sons for all time.

6 If a Levite leaves any of your towns, from wherever he has been residing in Israel, and comes to the place that the LORD will choose (and he may come whenever he wishes), [7]then he may minister in the name of the LORD his God, like all his fellow-Levites who stand to minister there before the LORD. [8]They shall have equal portions to eat, even though they have income from the sale of family possessions.[r]

9 When you come into the land that the LORD your God is giving you, you must not learn to imitate the abhorrent practices of those nations. [10]No one shall be found among you who makes a son or daughter pass through fire, or who practices divination, or is a soothsayer, or an augur, or a sorcerer, [11]or one who casts spells, or who consults ghosts or spirits, or who seeks oracles from the dead. [12]For whoever does these things is abhorrent to the LORD; it is because of such abhorrent practices that the LORD your God is driving them out before you. [13]You must remain completely loyal to the LORD your God. [14]Although these nations that you are about to dispossess do give heed to soothsayers and diviners, as for you, the LORD your God does not permit you to do so.

15 The LORD your God will raise up for you a prophet[t] like me from among your own people; you shall heed such a prophet.[u] [16]This is what you requested of the LORD your God at Horeb on the day of the assembly when you said: "If I hear the voice of the LORD my God any more, or ever again see this great fire, I will die." [17]Then the LORD replied to me: "They are right in what they have said. [18]I will raise up for them a prophet[t] like you from among their own people; I will put my words in the mouth of the prophet,[v] who shall speak to them everything that I command. [19]Anyone who does not heed the words that the prophet[w] shall speak in my name, I myself will hold accountable. [20]But any prophet who speaks in the name of other gods, or who presumes to speak in my name a word that I have not commanded the prophet to speak—that prophet shall die." [21]You may say to yourself, "How can we recognize a word that the LORD has not spoken?" [22]If a prophet speaks in the name

*r* Meaning of Heb uncertain *s* Heb *him*
*t* Or *prophets* *u* Or *such prophets*
*v* Or *mouths of the prophets* *w* Heb *he*

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ch 18). **2**: As a landless tribe, Levites are entitled to support from the sacrifices, i.e. to receive portions of the *offerings by fire* (see Lev 2.2–3 n.) and of the first fruits. **3–4**: Lev 6.14–18; 7.28–36; Num 18.8–19. **6–8**: Town Levites, whose former role was changed by the centralization of worship, may take part in the services at the central sanctuary. This provision, however, proved impracticable in Josiah's time (2 Kings 23.8–9).

**18.9–14**: Prohibition against pagan superstition and magic. **10**: The meaning of the first practice is uncertain but probably refers to an ordeal of passing through the fire as a test of devotion to Molech, the god of Ammon (12.31). This pagan rite is frequently mentioned in the Old Testament (Lev 18.21; 2 Kings 16.3; 21.6; Jer 7.31; 19.5; 32.35, etc.).

**18.15–22**: Israelites are not to resort to pagan divination (see the foregoing law), for the LORD will raise up a prophet to reveal the divine will. **15**: *Like me,* Moses is regarded as the fountainhead of prophecy and the prototype of the true prophet (34.10–11). **16–17**: 5.23–31. **20–22**: The test of the true prophet (13.1–5) is that prophecy made by such a person will be brought to fulfillment according to God's purpose (1 Kings 22.26–28; Jer ch 28).

**19.1–21**: **The administration of justice.**

of the LORD but the thing does not take place or prove true, it is a word that the LORD has not spoken. The prophet has spoken it presumptuously; do not be frightened by it.

19 When the LORD your God has cut off the nations whose land the LORD your God is giving you, and you have dispossessed them and settled in their towns and in their houses, 2you shall set apart three cities in the land that the LORD your God is giving you to possess. 3You shall calculate the distances[x] and divide into three regions the land that the LORD your God gives you as a possession, so that any homicide can flee to one of them.

4 Now this is the case of a homicide who might flee there and live, that is, someone who has killed another person unintentionally when the two had not been at enmity before: 5Suppose someone goes into the forest with another to cut wood, and when one of them swings the ax to cut down a tree, the head slips from the handle and strikes the other person who then dies; the killer may flee to one of these cities and live. 6But if the distance is too great, the avenger of blood in hot anger might pursue and overtake and put the killer to death, although a death sentence was not deserved, since the two had not been at enmity before. 7Therefore I command you: You shall set apart three cities.

8 If the LORD your God enlarges your territory, as he swore to your ancestors—and he will give you all the land that he promised your ancestors to give you, 9provided you diligently observe this entire commandment that I command you today, by loving the LORD your God and walking always in his ways—then you shall add three more cities to these three, 10so that the blood of an innocent person may not be shed in the land that the LORD your God is giving you as an inheritance, thereby bringing bloodguilt upon you.

11 But if someone at enmity with another lies in wait and attacks and takes the life of that person, and flees into one of these cities, 12then the elders of the killer's city shall send to have the culprit taken from there and handed over to the avenger of blood to be put to death. 13Show no pity; you shall purge the guilt of innocent blood from Israel, so that it may go well with you.

14 You must not move your neighbor's boundary marker, set up by former generations, on the property that will be allotted to you in the land that the LORD your God is giving you to possess.

15 A single witness shall not suffice to convict a person of any crime or wrongdoing in connection with any offense that may be committed. Only on the evidence of two or three witnesses shall a charge be sustained. 16If a malicious witness comes forward to accuse someone of wrongdoing, 17then both parties to the dispute shall appear before the LORD, before the priests and the judges who are in office in those days, 18and the judges shall make a thorough inquiry. If the witness is a false witness, having testified falsely against another, 19then you shall do to the false witness just as the false witness had meant to do to the other. So you shall purge the evil from your midst. 20The rest shall hear and be afraid, and a crime such as this shall never again be committed among you. 21Show no pity: life for life, eye for eye, tooth for tooth, hand for hand, foot for foot.

*x* Or *prepare roads to them*

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**1–13**: Cities of refuge are to be established to limit the ancient tribal law of blood revenge (Num ch 35). **1–2**: Three cities are to be set apart in Canaan, besides the three in Transjordan (4.41–43). **4–6 (11–13)**: Num 35.16–28. **8–10**: Num ch 35 and Josh ch 20 provide for only six cities.

**19.14**: This verse preserves an ancient law prohibiting the removal of a property *boundary marker* (Isa 5.8; Hos 5.10; Prov 22.28). **15–21**: The evidence of witnesses. **15**: 17.6; Num 35.30. **16**: Malicious witnessing is prohibited in the Decalogue (Ex 20.16; compare 23.1; Lev 19.16). **17**: The case must come *before the LORD*, i.e. to the supreme tribunal (17.8–13). **21**: *Life for life*, the "lex talionis," or "law of

20 When you go out to war against your enemies, and see horses and chariots, an army larger than your own, you shall not be afraid of them; for the LORD your God is with you, who brought you up from the land of Egypt. 2Before you engage in battle, the priest shall come forward and speak to the troops, 3and shall say to them: "Hear, O Israel! Today you are drawing near to do battle against your enemies. Do not lose heart, or be afraid, or panic, or be in dread of them; 4for it is the LORD your God who goes with you, to fight for you against your enemies, to give you victory." 5Then the officials shall address the troops, saying, "Has anyone built a new house but not dedicated it? He should go back to his house, or he might die in the battle and another dedicate it. 6Has anyone planted a vineyard but not yet enjoyed its fruit? He should go back to his house, or he might die in the battle and another be first to enjoy its fruit. 7Has anyone become engaged to a woman but not yet married her? He should go back to his house, or he might die in the battle and another marry her." 8The officials shall continue to address the troops, saying, "Is anyone afraid or disheartened? He should go back to his house, or he might cause the heart of his comrades to melt like his own." 9When the officials have finished addressing the troops, then the commanders shall take charge of them.

10 When you draw near to a town to fight against it, offer it terms of peace. 11If it accepts your terms of peace and surrenders to you, then all the people in it shall serve you at forced labor. 12If it does not submit to you peacefully, but makes war against you, then you shall besiege it; 13and when the LORD your God gives it into your hand, you shall put all its males to the sword. 14You may, however, take as your booty the women, the children, livestock, and everything else in the town, all its spoil. You may enjoy the spoil of your enemies, which the LORD your God has given you. 15Thus you shall treat all the towns that are very far from you, which are not towns of the nations here. 16But as for the towns of these peoples that the LORD your God is giving you as an inheritance, you must not let anything that breathes remain alive. 17You shall annihilate them—the Hittites and the Amorites, the Canaanites and the Perizzites, the Hivites and the Jebusites—just as the LORD your God has commanded, 18so that they may not teach you to do all the abhorrent things that they do for their gods, and you thus sin against the LORD your God.

19 If you besiege a town for a long time, making war against it in order to take it, you must not destroy its trees by wielding an ax against them. Although you may take food from them, you must not cut them down. Are trees in the field human beings that they should come under siege from you? 20You may destroy

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retaliation," is quoted to emphasize that the judges shall determine a penalty appropriate to the crime (see Ex 21.22–25 n.).

**20.1–20: Rules for waging holy war.** The conception of holy war, rooted in ancient wilderness experiences, provides the basis for the Deuteronomic understanding of the conquest (2.33–35; 3.3–7, 18–22; 7.1–5; 11.22–25). **1–4:** The premise is that holy war is not a human enterprise, like the wars fought by kings with trained soldiers and impressive *horses and chariots,* but is an action in which the LORD is personally engaged and in which the people respond with zealous devotion (Judg ch 5). **4:** Ex 14.14, 25. **6:** The fruit of a vineyard could not be *enjoyed* (or, put to common use) until the fifth year (Lev 19.23–25). **7:** 24.5. **8:** Holy war is waged with selected warriors. The size of the army is not important, and above all the *afraid or disheartened* must be sifted out (Judg 7.2–3).

**20.10–15:** In war against a non-Palestinian city, booty may be taken (see Num ch 31). **15–18:** A Palestinian city, however, must be utterly destroyed, i.e. put under the sacrificial ban, lest the inhabitants corrupt Israel's faith (9.1–6). Since the condemned city is a holy sacrifice to the LORD (compare 13.12–18), no booty can be taken (Josh ch 7). **19–20:** This stipulation limits wanton destruction of natural resources which, unlike the city and its booty, are gifts from the LORD.

only the trees that you know do not produce food; you may cut them down for use in building siegeworks against the town that makes war with you, until it falls.

21 If, in the land that the LORD your God is giving you to possess, a body is found lying in open country, and it is not known who struck the person down, 2then your elders and your judges shall come out to measure the distances to the towns that are near the body. 3The elders of the town nearest the body shall take a heifer that has never been worked, one that has not pulled in the yoke; 4the elders of that town shall bring the heifer down to a wadi with running water, which is neither plowed nor sown, and shall break the heifer's neck there in the wadi. 5Then the priests, the sons of Levi, shall come forward, for the LORD your God has chosen them to minister to him and to pronounce blessings in the name of the LORD, and by their decision all cases of dispute and assault shall be settled. 6All the elders of that town nearest the body shall wash their hands over the heifer whose neck was broken in the wadi, 7and they shall declare: "Our hands did not shed this blood, nor were we witnesses to it. 8Absolve, O LORD, your people Israel, whom you redeemed; do not let the guilt of innocent blood remain in the midst of your people Israel." Then they will be absolved of bloodguilt. 9So you shall purge the guilt of innocent blood from your midst, because you must do what is right in the sight of the LORD.

10 When you go out to war against your enemies, and the LORD your God hands them over to you and you take them captive, 11suppose you see among the captives a beautiful woman whom you desire and want to marry, 12and so you bring her home to your house: she shall shave her head, pare her nails, 13discard her captive's garb, and shall remain in your house a full month, mourning for her father and mother; after that you may go in to her and be her husband, and she shall be your wife. 14But if you are not satisfied with her, you shall let her go free and not sell her for money. You must not treat her as a slave, since you have dishonored her.

15 If a man has two wives, one of them loved and the other disliked, and if both the loved and the disliked have borne him sons, the firstborn being the son of the one who is disliked, 16then on the day when he wills his possessions to his sons, he is not permitted to treat the son of the loved as the firstborn in preference to the son of the disliked, who is the firstborn. 17He must acknowledge as firstborn the son of the one who is disliked, giving him a double portion[y] of all that he has; since he is the first issue of his virility, the right of the firstborn is his.

18 If someone has a stubborn and rebellious son who will not obey his father

*y* Heb *two-thirds*

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**21.1–23.14: Miscellaneous laws.**

**21.1–9**: A law for the expiation of murder when the slayer is unknown. This ancient rite rests on the belief that bloodshed pollutes the land (vv. 8–9; 19.10, 13) and that it is the responsibility of the community to seek atonement for the crime. **2**: *The elders* (see v. 20 n.) represent the adjacent cities; the *judges* are apparently the Levites from the supreme tribunal of the sanctuary (v. 5; compare 17.8–13). **3–4**: The ritual is in some respects similar to that of Num 19.2–10 (compare Lev 14.4–7). In this case, the victim is a substitutionary sacrifice for the guilty party (see Lev 1.4 n.). **5**: *The priests, the sons of Levi,* i.e. the levitical priests from the central sanctuary rather than the town Levites (see 18.1 n.). **6–8**: The elders, representing the people, absolve themselves by the symbolic washing of hands and by taking a solemn oath.

**21.10–14**: A supplement to the law on holy war against a non-Palestinian city (20.10–15) that deals with treatment of female captives (compare Num 31.18). **15–20**: Two old case laws dealing with family affairs.

**21.15–17**: In antiquity it was believed that the right of the firstborn was inalienable (Gen 25.29–34). This law puts that right above family rivalry or preference. **18–21**: Like other ancient family laws (Ex 21.15, 17; Lev 20.9; compare Deut 27.16), this law is severe. It is designed to protect the family, the

and mother, who does not heed them when they discipline him, 19then his father and his mother shall take hold of him and bring him out to the elders of his town at the gate of that place. 20They shall say to the elders of his town, "This son of ours is stubborn and rebellious. He will not obey us. He is a glutton and a drunkard." 21Then all the men of the town shall stone him to death. So you shall purge the evil from your midst; and all Israel will hear, and be afraid.

22 When someone is convicted of a crime punishable by death and is executed, and you hang him on a tree, 23his corpse must not remain all night upon the tree; you shall bury him that same day, for anyone hung on a tree is under God's curse. You must not defile the land that the LORD your God is giving you for possession.

22 You shall not watch your neighbor's ox or sheep straying away and ignore them; you shall take them back to their owner. 2If the owner does not reside near you or you do not know who the owner is, you shall bring it to your own house, and it shall remain with you until the owner claims it; then you shall return it. 3You shall do the same with a neighbor's donkey; you shall do the same with a neighbor's garment; and you shall do the same with anything else that your neighbor loses and you find. You may not withhold your help.

4 You shall not see your neighbor's donkey or ox fallen on the road and ignore it; you shall help to lift it up.

5 A woman shall not wear a man's apparel, nor shall a man put on a woman's garment; for whoever does such things is abhorrent to the LORD your God.

6 If you come on a bird's nest, in any tree or on the ground, with fledglings or eggs, with the mother sitting on the fledglings or on the eggs, you shall not take the mother with the young. 7Let the mother go, taking only the young for yourself, in order that it may go well with you and you may live long.

8 When you build a new house, you shall make a parapet for your roof; otherwise you might have bloodguilt on your house, if anyone should fall from it.

9 You shall not sow your vineyard with a second kind of seed, or the whole yield will have to be forfeited, both the crop that you have sown and the yield of the vineyard itself.

10 You shall not plow with an ox and a donkey yoked together.

11 You shall not wear clothes made of wool and linen woven together.

12 You shall make tassels on the four corners of the cloak with which you cover yourself.

13 Suppose a man marries a woman, but after going in to her, he dislikes her 14and makes up charges against her, slandering her by saying, "I married this woman; but when I lay with her, I did not find evidence of her virginity." 15The father of the young woman and her mother shall then submit the evidence of the young woman's virginity to the elders of the city at the gate. 16The father of the young woman shall say to

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basic social unit of Israelite society. **19–20**: *The elders* sat at the city gate (Ruth 4.1–12) where they acted as a judicial council in legal matters. This case is an application of the fifth commandment (Ex 20.12). **22–23**: Hanging (impaling) a criminal on a tree after execution was regarded as the greatest disgrace (Josh 8.29; 10.26–27; 2 Sam 4.12). Only criminals who were regarded as accursed were subjected to this ignominy.

**22.1–4**: Ex 23.4–5. **5**: Apparently the purpose of this law was to prevent Israelites from taking part in Canaanite rites where worshipers simulated change of sex. **6**: People should exercise a reverent concern for God's creatures (compare 20.19–20), taking only what is needed for livelihood. **8**: This safety law was designed for ancient flat-roofed houses. **9–11**: The mixing of kinds was believed to be a violation of the differences that God has ordained (v. 5; Lev 19.19). **12**: Num 15.37–41.

**22.13–30**: Laws governing sexual relations. These laws (also 21.15–21), written in the casuistic (case-law) style of some laws in the Covenant Code (Ex 21.1–22.17; see Ex 21.1 n.), are apparently quoted from an older source, since they show no trace of Deutero-

the elders: "I gave my daughter in marriage to this man but he dislikes her; 17now he has made up charges against her, saying, 'I did not find evidence of your daughter's virginity.' But here is the evidence of my daughter's virginity." Then they shall spread out the cloth before the elders of the town. 18The elders of that town shall take the man and punish him; 19they shall fine him one hundred shekels of silver (which they shall give to the young woman's father) because he has slandered a virgin of Israel. She shall remain his wife; he shall not be permitted to divorce her as long as he lives.

20 If, however, this charge is true, that evidence of the young woman's virginity was not found, 21then they shall bring the young woman out to the entrance of her father's house and the men of her town shall stone her to death, because she committed a disgraceful act in Israel by prostituting herself in her father's house. So you shall purge the evil from your midst.

22 If a man is caught lying with the wife of another man, both of them shall die, the man who lay with the woman as well as the woman. So you shall purge the evil from Israel.

23 If there is a young woman, a virgin already engaged to be married, and a man meets her in the town and lies with her, 24you shall bring both of them to the gate of that town and stone them to death, the young woman because she did not cry for help in the town and the man because he violated his neighbor's wife. So you shall purge the evil from your midst.

25 But if the man meets the engaged woman in the open country, and the man seizes her and lies with her, then only the man who lay with her shall die. 26You shall do nothing to the young woman; the young woman has not committed an offense punishable by death, because this case is like that of someone who attacks and murders a neighbor. 27Since he found her in the open country, the engaged woman may have cried for help, but there was no one to rescue her.

28 If a man meets a virgin who is not engaged, and seizes her and lies with her, and they are caught in the act, 29the man who lay with her shall give fifty shekels of silver to the young woman's father, and she shall become his wife. Because he violated her he shall not be permitted to divorce her as long as he lives.

30[z] A man shall not marry his father's wife, thereby violating his father's rights.[a]

**23** No one whose testicles are crushed or whose penis is cut off shall be admitted to the assembly of the LORD.

2 Those born of an illicit union shall not be admitted to the assembly of the LORD. Even to the tenth generation, none of their descendants shall be admitted to the assembly of the LORD.

3 No Ammonite or Moabite shall be admitted to the assembly of the LORD. Even to the tenth generation, none of their descendants shall be admitted to the assembly of the LORD, 4because they did not meet you with food and water on your journey out of Egypt, and because

z Ch 23.1 in Heb  a Heb *uncovering his father's skirt*

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nomic style. **13–21**: The proof of virginity. **15**: On *the elders,* see 21.19–20 n. **21**: On the expression *committed a disgraceful act in Israel,* see Gen 34.7 n.

**22.22–27**: Adultery, a violation of the seventh commandment, was punishable by death (Lev 18.20; 20.10). Intercourse with a betrothed virgin is considered as adultery because the woman is already, in effect, another man's wife. **28–29**: The money payment to be given to the father is the marriage present (Ex 22.16–17). **30**: *Father's wife,* i.e. stepmother (27.20; Lev 18.8; 20.11).

**23.1–8**: Exclusions from the assembly of the LORD (33.5; Judg 20.2). **1–2**: Only those who are unblemished can "present themselves before God" (Josh 24.1). This excludes eunuchs (compare Lev 21.17–23), who in ancient pagan religions were temple priests, and perhaps also excludes children born of incestuous union (Lev 18.6–18). **3–6**: 2.9–25. The account in Num chs 21–22 does not mention

they hired against you Balaam son of Beor, from Pethor of Mesopotamia, to curse you. 5(Yet the LORD your God refused to heed Balaam; the LORD your God turned the curse into a blessing for you, because the LORD your God loved you.) 6You shall never promote their welfare or their prosperity as long as you live.

7 You shall not abhor any of the Edomites, for they are your kin. You shall not abhor any of the Egyptians, because you were an alien residing in their land. 8The children of the third generation that are born to them may be admitted to the assembly of the LORD.

9 When you are encamped against your enemies you shall guard against any impropriety.

10 If one of you becomes unclean because of a nocturnal emission, then he shall go outside the camp; he must not come within the camp. 11When evening comes, he shall wash himself with water, and when the sun has set, he may come back into the camp.

12 You shall have a designated area outside the camp to which you shall go. 13With your utensils you shall have a trowel; when you relieve yourself outside, you shall dig a hole with it and then cover up your excrement. 14Because the LORD your God travels along with your camp, to save you and to hand over your enemies to you, therefore your camp must be holy, so that he may not see anything indecent among you and turn away from you.

15 Slaves who have escaped to you from their owners shall not be given back to them. 16They shall reside with you, in your midst, in any place they choose in any one of your towns, wherever they please; you shall not oppress them.

17 None of the daughters of Israel shall be a temple prostitute; none of the sons of Israel shall be a temple prostitute. 18You shall not bring the fee of a prostitute or the wages of a male prostitute[b] into the house of the LORD your God in payment for any vow, for both of these are abhorrent to the LORD your God.

19 You shall not charge interest on loans to another Israelite, interest on money, interest on provisions, interest on anything that is lent. 20On loans to a foreigner you may charge interest, but on loans to another Israelite you may not charge interest, so that the LORD your God may bless you in all your undertakings in the land that you are about to enter and possess.

21 If you make a vow to the LORD your God, do not postpone fulfilling it; for the LORD your God will surely require it of you, and you would incur guilt. 22But if you refrain from vowing, you will not incur guilt. 23Whatever your lips utter you must diligently perform, just as you have freely vowed to the LORD your God with your own mouth.

24 If you go into your neighbor's vineyard, you may eat your fill of grapes, as many as you wish, but you shall not put any in a container.

25 If you go into your neighbor's standing grain, you may pluck the ears with your hand, but you shall not put a sickle to your neighbor's standing grain.

*b* Heb *a dog*

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Ammonite hostility against Israel. **7**: Gen 25.24–26; 36.1.

**23.9–14**: A supplement to the rules for holy war (see ch 20). Ceremonial cleanness is demanded because *the LORD your God travels along with your camp*. **10–11**: Lev 15.16–17. **12–14**: The camp must be clean not just in the sense of being sanitary but in the sense of being *holy* (see Lev 11.1–47 n.).

**23.15–25.19: Laws dealing with humanitarian and religious obligations.**

**23.15–16**: In contrast with this humane law, the Code of Hammurabi decreed death as the penalty for sheltering a fugitive slave. **17–18**: A strict prohibition against sacred prostitution (see Gen 38.15 n.). **19–20**: See Ex 22.25 n.; Lev 25.35–38; Deut 15.1–11. Loans within Israel, as distinguished from loans to outsiders, were usually occasioned by financial desperation and therefore became means of oppressing a fellow-Israelite. **21–23**: See Lev ch 27. **24–25**: Neighbors' goodwill

24 Suppose a man enters into marriage with a woman, but she does not please him because he finds something objectionable about her, and so he writes her a certificate of divorce, puts it in her hand, and sends her out of his house; she then leaves his house [2]and goes off to become another man's wife. [3]Then suppose the second man dislikes her, writes her a bill of divorce, puts it in her hand, and sends her out of his house (or the second man who married her dies); [4]her first husband, who sent her away, is not permitted to take her again to be his wife after she has been defiled; for that would be abhorrent to the LORD, and you shall not bring guilt on the land that the LORD your God is giving you as a possession.

5 When a man is newly married, he shall not go out with the army or be charged with any related duty. He shall be free at home one year, to be happy with the wife whom he has married.

6 No one shall take a mill or an upper millstone in pledge, for that would be taking a life in pledge.

7 If someone is caught kidnaping another Israelite, enslaving or selling the Israelite, then that kidnaper shall die. So you shall purge the evil from your midst.

8 Guard against an outbreak of a leprous[c] skin disease by being very careful; you shall carefully observe whatever the levitical priests instruct you, just as I have commanded them. [9]Remember what the LORD your God did to Miriam on your journey out of Egypt.

10 When you make your neighbor a loan of any kind, you shall not go into the house to take the pledge. [11]You shall wait outside, while the person to whom you are making the loan brings the pledge out to you. [12]If the person is poor, you shall not sleep in the garment given you as[d] the pledge. [13]You shall give the pledge back by sunset, so that your neighbor may sleep in the cloak and bless you; and it will be to your credit before the LORD your God.

14 You shall not withhold the wages of poor and needy laborers, whether other Israelites or aliens who reside in your land in one of your towns. [15]You shall pay them their wages daily before sunset, because they are poor and their livelihood depends on them; otherwise they might cry to the LORD against you, and you would incur guilt.

16 Parents shall not be put to death for their children, nor shall children be put to death for their parents; only for their own crimes may persons be put to death.

17 You shall not deprive a resident alien or an orphan of justice; you shall not take a widow's garment in pledge. [18]Remember that you were a slave in Egypt and the LORD your God redeemed you from there; therefore I command you to do this.

19 When you reap your harvest in your field and forget a sheaf in the field, you shall not go back to get it; it shall be

*c* A term for several skin diseases; precise meaning uncertain *d* Heb lacks *the garment given you as*

should not be presumed upon to the point of stealing from their harvest.

**24.1–4**: An old case law dealing with remarriage after divorce. Initiative for divorce rested with the husband, who, however, could not act without following a legal procedure, including the formulation of a *certificate of divorce* (Jer 3.8), stating the grounds. **5**: Another of the rules for holy war (20.1–20; 21.10–14; 23.9–14). **6**: A limitation upon the creditor. Since daily life depends upon bread, the mill cannot be taken as security for a loan (vv. 10–13). **7**: Ex 21.16. **8–9**: See Lev chs 13–14. *Remember . . . Miriam,* see comments on Num 12.1–15.

**24.10–13**: See Ex 22.26 n. (compare Am 2.8; Prov 22.27). **14–15**: Lev 19.13. Israel's humanitarianism is based on the conviction that the LORD is the vindicator of the weak and helpless. **16**: This law modifies the ancient belief that guilt affected a whole social group, especially the family (Num 16.31–33; Josh 7.24–25; 2 Sam 21.1–9). Although Deuteronomy does not reject the solidarity of the community in guilt (21.1–9; compare 13.12–18), it puts in the foreground the principle of individual responsibility (Jer 31.29; Ezek ch 18). See 2 Kings 14.6 for the application of this law. **17–18**: 15.15. **19–22**: Lev 19.9–10; 23.22.

left for the alien, the orphan, and the widow, so that the LORD your God may bless you in all your undertakings. 20When you beat your olive trees, do not strip what is left; it shall be for the alien, the orphan, and the widow.

21 When you gather the grapes of your vineyard, do not glean what is left; it shall be for the alien, the orphan, and the widow. 22Remember that you were a slave in the land of Egypt; therefore I am commanding you to do this.

25 Suppose two persons have a dispute and enter into litigation, and the judges decide between them, declaring one to be in the right and the other to be in the wrong. 2If the one in the wrong deserves to be flogged, the judge shall make that person lie down and be beaten in his presence with the number of lashes proportionate to the offense. 3Forty lashes may be given but not more; if more lashes than these are given, your neighbor will be degraded in your sight.

4 You shall not muzzle an ox while it is treading out the grain.

5 When brothers reside together, and one of them dies and has no son, the wife of the deceased shall not be married outside the family to a stranger. Her husband's brother shall go in to her, taking her in marriage, and performing the duty of a husband's brother to her, 6and the firstborn whom she bears shall succeed to the name of the deceased brother, so that his name may not be blotted out of Israel. 7But if the man has no desire to marry his brother's widow, then his brother's widow shall go up to the elders at the gate and say, "My husband's brother refuses to perpetuate his brother's name in Israel; he will not perform the duty of a husband's brother to me." 8Then the elders of his town shall summon him and speak to him. If he persists, saying, "I have no desire to marry her," 9then his brother's wife shall go up to him in the presence of the elders, pull his sandal off his foot, spit in his face, and declare, "This is what is done to the man who does not build up his brother's house." 10Throughout Israel his family shall be known as "the house of him whose sandal was pulled off."

11 If men get into a fight with one another, and the wife of one intervenes to rescue her husband from the grip of his opponent by reaching out and seizing his genitals, 12you shall cut off her hand; show no pity.

13 You shall not have in your bag two kinds of weights, large and small. 14You shall not have in your house two kinds of measures, large and small. 15You shall have only a full and honest weight; you shall have only a full and honest measure, so that your days may be long in the land that the LORD your God is giving you. 16For all who do such things, all who act dishonestly, are abhorrent to the LORD your God.

17 Remember what Amalek did to you on your journey out of Egypt, 18how he attacked you on the way, when you were faint and weary, and struck down all who lagged behind you; he did not fear God. 19Therefore when the LORD your God has given you rest from all your enemies on every hand, in the land that the LORD your God is giving you as an inheritance to possess, you shall blot out the remembrance of Amalek from under heaven; do not forget.

26 When you have come into the land that the LORD your God is giving you as an inheritance to possess, and you possess it, and settle in it, 2you shall take some of the first of all the fruit

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**25.1–3**: An old case law which imposes judicial restrictions on corporal punishment. *The judges*, 16.18. **4**: A law in the humane spirit of 22.6–7. **5–10**: An old case law on levirate marriage (see Gen 38.8 n.). **6**: Since a man's name, according to ancient thought, was the bearer of his person, a father lived on in his son (Gen 48.15–16). **7**: As in the case of Tamar (Gen ch 38), the wife had the obligation to see that *the duty of a husband's brother* (or levir) was performed. **9–10**: For the symbolic action of removing the sandal, in a more complicated levirate marriage situation, see Ruth 4.7 n.

**25.11–12**: Another law (compare the preceding one) intended to make it possible for

of the ground, which you harvest from the land that the LORD your God is giving you, and you shall put it in a basket and go to the place that the LORD your God will choose as a dwelling for his name. 3You shall go to the priest who is in office at that time, and say to him, "Today I declare to the LORD your God that I have come into the land that the LORD swore to our ancestors to give us." 4When the priest takes the basket from your hand and sets it down before the altar of the LORD your God, 5you shall make this response before the LORD your God: "A wandering Aramean was my ancestor; he went down into Egypt and lived there as an alien, few in number, and there he became a great nation, mighty and populous. 6When the Egyptians treated us harshly and afflicted us, by imposing hard labor on us, 7we cried to the LORD, the God of our ancestors; the LORD heard our voice and saw our affliction, our toil, and our oppression. 8The LORD brought us out of Egypt with a mighty hand and an outstretched arm, with a terrifying display of power, and with signs and wonders; 9and he brought us into this place and gave us this land, a land flowing with milk and honey. 10So now I bring the first of the fruit of the ground that you, O LORD, have given me." You shall set it down before the LORD your God and bow down before the LORD your God. 11Then you, together with the Levites and the aliens who reside among you, shall celebrate with all the bounty that the LORD your God has given to you and to your house.

12 When you have finished paying all the tithe of your produce in the third year (which is the year of the tithe), giving it to the Levites, the aliens, the orphans, and the widows, so that they may eat their fill within your towns, 13then you shall say before the LORD your God: "I have removed the sacred portion from the house, and I have given it to the Levites, the resident aliens, the orphans, and the widows, in accordance with your entire commandment that you commanded me; I have neither transgressed nor forgotten any of your commandments: 14I have not eaten of it while in mourning; I have not removed any of it while I was unclean; and I have not offered any of it to the dead. I have obeyed the LORD my God, doing just as you commanded me. 15Look down from your holy habitation, from heaven, and bless your people Israel and the ground that you have given us, as you swore to our ancestors—a land flowing with milk and honey."

16 This very day the LORD your God is commanding you to observe these statutes and ordinances; so observe them diligently with all your heart and with all your soul. 17Today you have obtained the LORD's agreement: to be your God; and for you to walk in his ways, to keep his statutes, his commandments, and his ordinances, and to obey him. 18Today the LORD has obtained your agreement:

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a man to produce offspring, in this case by protecting his genitals, the spring of fertility. **13–16**: Compare Lev 19.35–36. **17–19**: Holy war against Amalek (see Ex 17.8–15).

**26.1–19**: **Concluding liturgies and exhortation.** This chapter anticipates the climax and conclusion of Moses' main address (ch 28). **1–11**: A liturgy for the presentation of the first fruits at the central sanctuary. **2–3**: The occasion is the harvest pilgrimage festival, the feast of weeks (16.9–12), when the worshiper thanks God for the gift of the land and for a bounteous harvest. **5–10**: A basic confession of faith in the form of a story. **5**: *A wandering Aramean*, a reference to Jacob's semi-nomadic life. **6**: *Us:* the plural pronouns show that the worshiper identifies with the community of faith in making this recitation.

**26.12–15**: A liturgy for *the year of the tithe.* In the worshiper's home town *the sacred portion* has been set aside according to the ordinance of 14.28–29. **13**: *Before the LORD,* at the central sanctuary. **14**: The worshiper has not defiled the holy offering by touching it in a state of ritual uncleanness while mourning (Num 19.11–16) or by bringing it to a tomb as a funerary offering.

**26.16–19**: This exhortation concludes the exposition of the *statutes* and *ordinances* contained in chs 12–26. The language here may echo a ceremony of covenant renewal at the central sanctuary when the law was publicly

to be his treasured people, as he promised you, and to keep his commandments; [19]for him to set you high above all nations that he has made, in praise and in fame and in honor; and for you to be a people holy to the LORD your God, as he promised.

27 Then Moses and the elders of Israel charged all the people as follows: Keep the entire commandment that I am commanding you today. [2]On the day that you cross over the Jordan into the land that the LORD your God is giving you, you shall set up large stones and cover them with plaster. [3]You shall write on them all the words of this law when you have crossed over, to enter the land that the LORD your God is giving you, a land flowing with milk and honey, as the LORD, the God of your ancestors, promised you. [4]So when you have crossed over the Jordan, you shall set up these stones, about which I am commanding you today, on Mount Ebal, and you shall cover them with plaster. [5]And you shall build an altar there to the LORD your God, an altar of stones on which you have not used an iron tool. [6]You must build the altar of the LORD your God of unhewn[e] stones. Then offer up burnt offerings on it to the LORD your God, [7]make sacrifices of well-being, and eat them there, rejoicing before the LORD your God. [8]You shall write on the stones all the words of this law very clearly.

9 Then Moses and the levitical priests spoke to all Israel, saying: Keep silence and hear, O Israel! This very day you have become the people of the LORD your God. [10]Therefore obey the LORD your God, observing his commandments and his statutes that I am commanding you today.

11 The same day Moses charged the people as follows: [12]When you have crossed over the Jordan, these shall stand on Mount Gerizim for the blessing of the people: Simeon, Levi, Judah, Issachar, Joseph, and Benjamin. [13]And these shall stand on Mount Ebal for the curse: Reuben, Gad, Asher, Zebulun, Dan, and Naphtali. [14]Then the Levites shall declare in a loud voice to all the Israelites:

15 "Cursed be anyone who makes an idol or casts an image, anything abhorrent to the LORD, the work of an artisan, and sets it up in secret." All the people shall respond, saying, "Amen!"

16 "Cursed be anyone who dishonors father or mother." All the people shall say, "Amen!"

17 "Cursed be anyone who moves a neighbor's boundary marker." All the people shall say, "Amen!"

*e* Heb *whole*

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read and the covenant relation between the LORD and Israel was renewed (see 31.10–11 n.). *This very day,* i.e. the day of the ceremony, the LORD restates the demands of the covenant (v. 16), *today* the people reaffirm that the LORD alone is their God (v. 17), and *today* the promise is renewed that Israel is the LORD's *treasured people* (vv. 18–19; see Ex 19.5).

**27.1–26: The Shechem ceremony.** A cultic ceremony is to be inaugurated which will solemnly dramatize Israel's covenant responsibilities (11.26–32). **1**: Here Moses is referred to in the third person. This chapter stands independently and interrupts Moses' address (chs 5–26 and ch 28). **4**: *Mount Ebal* and Mount Gerizim (vv. 12, 13) overlook the city of Shechem (see Gen 12.6 n.). Contrary to the law of ch 12, an altar of unhewn stones (Ex 20.25) is to be set up at a place other than the central sanctuary, an evidence of the antiquity and independence of this tradition. **7**: *Eat . . . rejoicing,* a reference to the communion meal in connection with the *sacrifices of well-being* (see Lev ch 3).

**27.11–13**: These verses deal with an ancient ceremony at Shechem, instituted at the command of Moses according to Josh 8.30–35. The antiquity of the tribal list is seen in the facts that Levi is listed as a tribe (Gen 49.5–7) and that the division of the house of Joseph into Manasseh and Ephraim has not yet occurred (Gen 49.22–26).

**27.15–26**: The ritual of the blessing (v. 12; 28.3–6) is not preserved in this fragmentary record; only the ceremony of the curse is given (v. 13). The presiding Levites read a curse and in response the congregation says *Amen,* i.e. in full knowledge of the divine disapproval expressed in the twelve curses (correspond-

18 "Cursed be anyone who misleads a blind person on the road." All the people shall say, "Amen!"

19 "Cursed be anyone who deprives the alien, the orphan, and the widow of justice." All the people shall say, "Amen!"

20 "Cursed be anyone who lies with his father's wife, because he has violated his father's rights."[f] All the people shall say, "Amen!"

21 "Cursed be anyone who lies with any animal." All the people shall say, "Amen!"

22 "Cursed be anyone who lies with his sister, whether the daughter of his father or the daughter of his mother." All the people shall say, "Amen!"

23 "Cursed be anyone who lies with his mother-in-law." All the people shall say, "Amen!"

24 "Cursed be anyone who strikes down a neighbor in secret." All the people shall say, "Amen!"

25 "Cursed be anyone who takes a bribe to shed innocent blood." All the people shall say, "Amen!"

26 "Cursed be anyone who does not uphold the words of this law by observing them." All the people shall say, "Amen!"

28 If you will only obey the LORD your God, by diligently observing all his commandments that I am commanding you today, the LORD your God will set you high above all the nations of the earth; 2all these blessings shall come upon you and overtake you, if you obey the LORD your God:

3 Blessed shall you be in the city, and blessed shall you be in the field.

4 Blessed shall be the fruit of your womb, the fruit of your ground, and the fruit of your livestock, both the increase of your cattle and the issue of your flock.

5 Blessed shall be your basket and your kneading bowl.

6 Blessed shall you be when you come in, and blessed shall you be when you go out.

7 The LORD will cause your enemies who rise against you to be defeated before you; they shall come out against you one way, and flee before you seven ways. 8The LORD will command the blessing upon you in your barns, and in all that you undertake; he will bless you in the land that the LORD your God is giving you. 9The LORD will establish you as his holy people, as he has sworn to you, if you keep the commandments of the LORD your God and walk in his ways. 10All the peoples of the earth shall see that you are called by the name of the LORD, and they shall be afraid of you. 11The LORD will make you abound in prosperity, in the fruit of your womb, in the fruit of your livestock, and in the fruit of your ground in the land that the LORD swore to your ancestors to give you. 12The LORD will open for you his rich storehouse, the heavens, to give the rain of your land in its season and to bless all your undertakings. You will lend to many nations, but you will not borrow. 13The LORD will make you the head, and not the tail; you shall be only at the top, and not at the bottom—if you obey the commandments of the LORD your God, which I am commanding you today, by diligently observing them, 14and if you do not turn aside from any of the words that I am commanding you today, either to the right or to the left, following other gods to serve them.

15 But if you will not obey the LORD

*f* Heb *uncovered his father's skirt*

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ing to the twelve tribes), the people solemnly take upon themselves the covenant responsibilities (Jer 11.3). The twelve curses are very old laws which, with the exception of the last two, are paralleled in other codes of the Pentateuch.

**28.1–68: The conclusion of Moses' second address.** Moses calls the people to decision by announcing the blessings which accompany obedience and the curses that fall upon disobedience. **1:** Continuation from 26.16–19. **3–6:** These six blessings, formulated in short, emphatic style, were perhaps part of the old covenant ceremony preserved in fragmentary form in 27.11–26.

**28.7–14:** A commentary on the meaning

your God by diligently observing all his commandments and decrees, which I am commanding you today, then all these curses shall come upon you and overtake you:

16 Cursed shall you be in the city, and cursed shall you be in the field.

17 Cursed shall be your basket and your kneading bowl.

18 Cursed shall be the fruit of your womb, the fruit of your ground, the increase of your cattle and the issue of your flock.

19 Cursed shall you be when you come in, and cursed shall you be when you go out.

20 The LORD will send upon you disaster, panic, and frustration in everything you attempt to do, until you are destroyed and perish quickly, on account of the evil of your deeds, because you have forsaken me. 21 The LORD will make the pestilence cling to you until it has consumed you off the land that you are entering to possess. 22 The LORD will afflict you with consumption, fever, inflammation, with fiery heat and drought, and with blight and mildew; they shall pursue you until you perish. 23 The sky over your head shall be bronze, and the earth under you iron. 24 The LORD will change the rain of your land into powder, and only dust shall come down upon you from the sky until you are destroyed.

25 The LORD will cause you to be defeated before your enemies; you shall go out against them one way and flee before them seven ways. You shall become an object of horror to all the kingdoms of the earth. 26 Your corpses shall be food for every bird of the air and animal of the earth, and there shall be no one to frighten them away. 27 The LORD will afflict you with the boils of Egypt, with ulcers, scurvy, and itch, of which you cannot be healed. 28 The LORD will afflict you with madness, blindness, and confusion of mind; 29 you shall grope about at noon as blind people grope in darkness, but you shall be unable to find your way; and you shall be continually abused and robbed, without anyone to help. 30 You shall become engaged to a woman, but another man shall lie with her. You shall build a house, but not live in it. You shall plant a vineyard, but not enjoy its fruit. 31 Your ox shall be butchered before your eyes, but you shall not eat of it. Your donkey shall be stolen in front of you, and shall not be restored to you. Your sheep shall be given to your enemies, without anyone to help you. 32 Your sons and daughters shall be given to another people, while you look on; you will strain your eyes looking for them all day but be powerless to do anything. 33 A people whom you do not know shall eat up the fruit of your ground and of all your labors; you shall be continually abused and crushed, 34 and driven mad by the sight that your eyes shall see. 35 The LORD will strike you on the knees and on the legs with grievous boils of which you cannot be healed, from the sole of your foot to the crown of your head. 36 The LORD will bring you, and the king whom you set over you, to a nation that neither you nor your ancestors have known, where you shall serve other gods, of wood and stone. 37 You shall become an object of horror, a proverb, and a byword among all the peoples where the LORD will lead you.

38 You shall carry much seed into the field but shall gather little in, for the locust shall consume it. 39 You shall plant vineyards and dress them, but you shall neither drink the wine nor gather the

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of the blessings. **16–19**: These six curses, parallel to the six blessings, likewise echo the old Shechem ceremony.

**28.20–46**: A commentary on the curses. Perhaps it was the reading of this chapter which had a profound effect upon King Josiah (2 Kings 22.11–13). **27**: A reference to the Egyptian plagues. **30**: 20.5–7.

**28.36–37**: Conquest by a strange *nation* was experienced in 721 B.C. when the Assyrians destroyed the Northern Kingdom and deported its population into *captivity* (v. 41).

grapes, for the worm shall eat them. 40 You shall have olive trees throughout all your territory, but you shall not anoint yourself with the oil, for your olives shall drop off. 41 You shall have sons and daughters, but they shall not remain yours, for they shall go into captivity. 42 All your trees and the fruit of your ground the cicada shall take over. 43 Aliens residing among you shall ascend above you higher and higher, while you shall descend lower and lower. 44 They shall lend to you but you shall not lend to them; they shall be the head and you shall be the tail.

45 All these curses shall come upon you, pursuing and overtaking you until you are destroyed, because you did not obey the LORD your God, by observing the commandments and the decrees that he commanded you. 46 They shall be among you and your descendants as a sign and a portent forever.

47 Because you did not serve the LORD your God joyfully and with gladness of heart for the abundance of everything, 48 therefore you shall serve your enemies whom the LORD will send against you, in hunger and thirst, in nakedness and lack of everything. He will put an iron yoke on your neck until he has destroyed you. 49 The LORD will bring a nation from far away, from the end of the earth, to swoop down on you like an eagle, a nation whose language you do not understand, 50 a grim-faced nation showing no respect to the old or favor to the young. 51 It shall consume the fruit of your livestock and the fruit of your ground until you are destroyed, leaving you neither grain, wine, and oil, nor the increase of your cattle and the issue of your flock, until it has made you perish. 52 It shall besiege you in all your towns until your high and fortified walls, in which you trusted, come down throughout your land; it shall besiege you in all your towns throughout the land that the LORD your God has given you. 53 In the desperate straits to which the enemy siege reduces you, you will eat the fruit of your womb, the flesh of your own sons and daughters whom the LORD your God has given you. 54 Even the most refined and gentle of men among you will begrudge food to his own brother, to the wife whom he embraces, and to the last of his remaining children, 55 giving to none of them any of the flesh of his children whom he is eating, because nothing else remains to him, in the desperate straits to which the enemy siege will reduce you in all your towns. 56 She who is the most refined and gentle among you, so gentle and refined that she does not venture to set the sole of her foot on the ground, will begrudge food to the husband whom she embraces, to her own son, and to her own daughter, 57 begrudging even the afterbirth that comes out from between her thighs, and the children that she bears, because she is eating them in secret for lack of anything else, in the desperate straits to which the enemy siege will reduce you in your towns.

58 If you do not diligently observe all the words of this law that are written in this book, fearing this glorious and awesome name, the LORD your God, 59 then the LORD will overwhelm both you and your offspring with severe and lasting afflictions and grievous and lasting maladies. 60 He will bring back upon you all the diseases of Egypt, of which you were in dread, and they shall cling to you. 61 Every other malady and affliction, even though not recorded in the book of this law, the LORD will inflict on you until you are destroyed. 62 Although once you were as numerous as the stars in heaven, you shall be left few in number, because you did not obey the LORD your God. 63 And just as the LORD took delight

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**28.47–68**: A further expansion of the meaning of the curses. These verses apparently reflect the tragedy that befell Judah when the Babylonians laid siege to fortified cities (v. 52), conquered Jerusalem, and between 597 and 587 took many people into captivity.
**53–57**: Lev 26.29.

in making you prosperous and numerous, so the LORD will take delight in bringing you to ruin and destruction; you shall be plucked off the land that you are entering to possess. 64The LORD will scatter you among all peoples, from one end of the earth to the other; and there you shall serve other gods, of wood and stone, which neither you nor your ancestors have known. 65Among those nations you shall find no ease, no resting place for the sole of your foot. There the LORD will give you a trembling heart, failing eyes, and a languishing spirit. 66Your life shall hang in doubt before you; night and day you shall be in dread, with no assurance of your life. 67In the morning you shall say, "If only it were evening!" and at evening you shall say, "If only it were morning!"—because of the dread that your heart shall feel and the sights that your eyes shall see. 68The LORD will bring you back in ships to Egypt, by a route that I promised you would never see again; and there you shall offer yourselves for sale to your enemies as male and female slaves, but there will be no buyer.

29[g] These are the words of the covenant that the LORD commanded Moses to make with the Israelites in the land of Moab, in addition to the covenant that he had made with them at Horeb.

2[h] Moses summoned all Israel and said to them: You have seen all that the LORD did before your eyes in the land of Egypt, to Pharaoh and to all his servants and to all his land, 3the great trials that your eyes saw, the signs, and those great wonders. 4But to this day the LORD has not given you a mind to understand, or eyes to see, or ears to hear. 5I have led you forty years in the wilderness. The clothes on your back have not worn out, and the sandals on your feet have not worn out; 6you have not eaten bread, and you have not drunk wine or strong drink—so that you may know that I am the LORD your God. 7When you came to this place, King Sihon of Heshbon and King Og of Bashan came out against us for battle, but we defeated them. 8We took their land and gave it as an inheritance to the Reubenites, the Gadites, and the half-tribe of Manasseh. 9Therefore diligently observe the words of this covenant, in order that you may succeed[i] in everything that you do.

10 You stand assembled today, all of you, before the LORD your God—the leaders of your tribes,[j] your elders, and your officials, all the men of Israel, 11your children, your women, and the aliens who are in your camp, both those who cut your wood and those who draw your water— 12to enter into the covenant of the LORD your God, sworn by an oath, which the LORD your God is making with you today; 13in order that he may establish you today as his people, and that he may be your God, as he promised you and as he swore to your ancestors, to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob. 14I am making this covenant, sworn by an oath, not only with you who stand here with us today before the LORD our God, 15but also with those who are not here with us today. 16You know how we lived in the land of Egypt, and how we came through the midst of the nations through which you passed.

*g* Ch 28.69 in Heb *h* Ch 29.1 in Heb
*i* Or *deal wisely* *j* Gk Syr: Heb *your leaders, your tribes*

**28.68**: The disaster is interpreted as a return to Egyptian bondage, more pathetic than the former slavery.

**29.1–30.20**: **Moses' third address.** In this supplement Moses again exhorts Israel to renew the covenant and warns of the disastrous consequences of disobedience.

**29.1**: *The covenant* in Moab is not the original covenant but a renewal of it. **2–9**: As in the other addresses, the covenant is based on a recital of the LORD's mighty acts (compare Ex 19.3–6; Josh 24.2–13).

**29.10–14**: See 26.16–19 n. **14**: On the contemporaneity of the covenant, see 5.2–3 n. **18–19**: The community is responsible for rooting out the infectious poison of idolatry lest the *moist* (fertile and wholesome) people be swept away with the *dry* (ch 13).

17 You have seen their detestable things,
the filthy idols of wood and stone, of
silver and gold, that were among them.
18 It may be that there is among you a
man or woman, or a family or tribe,
whose heart is already turning away
from the LORD our God to serve the gods
of those nations. It may be that there is
among you a root sprouting poisonous
and bitter growth. 19 All who hear the
words of this oath and bless themselves,
thinking in their hearts, "We are safe
even though we go our own stubborn
ways" (thus bringing disaster on moist
and dry alike)[k]— 20 the LORD will be un-
willing to pardon them, for the LORD's
anger and passion will smoke against
them. All the curses written in this book
will descend on them, and the LORD will
blot out their names from under heaven.
21 The LORD will single them out from all
the tribes of Israel for calamity, in accor-
dance with all the curses of the covenant
written in this book of the law. 22 The
next generation, your children who rise
up after you, as well as the foreigner who
comes from a distant country, will see
the devastation of that land and the afflic-
tions with which the LORD has afflicted
it— 23 all its soil burned out by sulfur and
salt, nothing planted, nothing sprouting,
unable to support any vegetation, like
the destruction of Sodom and Gomor-
rah, Admah and Zeboiim, which the
LORD destroyed in his fierce anger—
24 they and indeed all the nations will
wonder, "Why has the LORD done thus
to this land? What caused this great dis-
play of anger?" 25 They will conclude, "It
is because they abandoned the covenant
of the LORD, the God of their ancestors,
which he made with them when he
brought them out of the land of Egypt.
26 They turned and served other gods,
worshiping them, gods whom they had
not known and whom he had not allot-
ted to them; 27 so the anger of the LORD
was kindled against that land, bringing
on it every curse written in this book.
28 The LORD uprooted them from their
land in anger, fury, and great wrath, and
cast them into another land, as is now the
case." 29 The secret things belong to the
LORD our God, but the revealed things
belong to us and to our children forever,
to observe all the words of this law.

30 When all these things have hap-
pened to you, the blessings and
the curses that I have set before you, if
you call them to mind among all the na-
tions where the LORD your God has driv-
en you, 2 and return to the LORD your
God, and you and your children obey
him with all your heart and with all your
soul, just as I am commanding you to-
day, 3 then the LORD your God will re-
store your fortunes and have compassion
on you, gathering you again from all the
peoples among whom the LORD your
God has scattered you. 4 Even if you are
exiled to the ends of the world,[l] from
there the LORD your God will gather
you, and from there he will bring you
back. 5 The LORD your God will bring
you into the land that your ancestors
possessed, and you will possess it; he will
make you more prosperous and numer-
ous than your ancestors.

6 Moreover, the LORD your God will
circumcise your heart and the heart of
your descendants, so that you will love
the LORD your God with all your heart
and with all your soul, in order that you
may live. 7 The LORD your God will put
all these curses on your enemies and on
the adversaries who took advantage of
you. 8 Then you shall again obey the
LORD, observing all his commandments

*k* Meaning of Heb uncertain *l* Heb *of heaven*

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**29.20**: See Ex 34.14 n. **23**: See Gen ch 19. **29**: *The secret things* refer to the divine wisdom beyond the human ken; *the revealed things* are the teachings set forth in Deuteronomy.

**30.1–10**: This passage presupposes that Israel is already in exile and anticipates the time when the LORD will restore the people. **2**: *Return to the LORD,* that is, repent—an act that involves turning away from unworthy loyalties and turning the heart (see 6.4–5 n.) to God (v. 10). **6**: God will work the inner change that makes it possible to fulfill the law

that I am commanding you today, [9]and the LORD your God will make you abundantly prosperous in all your undertakings, in the fruit of your body, in the fruit of your livestock, and in the fruit of your soil. For the LORD will again take delight in prospering you, just as he delighted in prospering your ancestors, [10]when you obey the LORD your God by observing his commandments and decrees that are written in this book of the law, because you turn to the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul.

11 Surely, this commandment that I am commanding you today is not too hard for you, nor is it too far away. [12]It is not in heaven, that you should say, "Who will go up to heaven for us, and get it for us so that we may hear it and observe it?" [13]Neither is it beyond the sea, that you should say, "Who will cross to the other side of the sea for us, and get it for us so that we may hear it and observe it?" [14]No, the word is very near to you; it is in your mouth and in your heart for you to observe.

15 See, I have set before you today life and prosperity, death and adversity. [16]If you obey the commandments of the LORD your God[m] that I am commanding you today, by loving the LORD your God, walking in his ways, and observing his commandments, decrees, and ordinances, then you shall live and become numerous, and the LORD your God will bless you in the land that you are entering to possess. [17]But if your heart turns away and you do not hear, but are led astray to bow down to other gods and serve them, [18]I declare to you today that you shall perish; you shall not live long in the land that you are crossing the Jordan to enter and possess. [19]I call heaven and earth to witness against you today that I have set before you life and death, blessings and curses. Choose life so that you and your descendants may live, [20]loving the LORD your God, obeying him, and holding fast to him; for that means life to you and length of days, so that you may live in the land that the LORD swore to give to your ancestors, to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob.

31 When Moses had finished speaking all[n] these words to all Israel, [2]he said to them: "I am now one hundred twenty years old. I am no longer able to get about, and the LORD has told me, 'You shall not cross over this Jordan.' [3]The LORD your God himself will cross over before you. He will destroy these nations before you, and you shall dispossess them. Joshua also will cross over before you, as the LORD promised. [4]The LORD will do to them as he did to Sihon and Og, the kings of the Amorites, and to their land, when he destroyed them. [5]The LORD will give them over to you and you shall deal with them in full accord with the command that I have given to you. [6]Be strong and bold; have no fear or dread of them, because it is the LORD your God who goes with you; he will not fail you or forsake you."

7 Then Moses summoned Joshua and said to him in the sight of all Israel: "Be strong and bold, for you are the one who will go with this people into the land that the LORD has sworn to their ancestors to give them; and you will put them in possession of it. [8]It is the LORD who goes before you. He will be with you; he will

*m* Gk: Heb lacks *If you obey the commandments of the LORD your God* *n* Q Ms Gk: MT *Moses went and spoke*

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of love. On circumcision of the heart, see 10.16 n. **9**: 28.3–6.

**30.11–14**: The covenant demand is not beyond human reach or understanding but has been graciously revealed (29.29) and, in the service of covenant renewal (29.1), *the word is very near to you*. **15–20**: The two ways, between which Israel must decide. Such a challenge formed a climactic moment in ceremonies of covenant renewal (26.16–27.26; Josh 24.14–15). **20**: *Life* is not the mere extension of days. It is loving, obeying, and cleaving to the LORD instead of pursuing the ways of idolatry.

**31.1–29: Concluding events of Moses' life. 1–8**: Moses' final charge to Joshua and the people. **2–3**: Compare 1.37–38; 3.18–28. **7–8**: Josh 1.1–9.

not fail you or forsake you. Do not fear or be dismayed."

9 Then Moses wrote down this law, and gave it to the priests, the sons of Levi, who carried the ark of the covenant of the LORD, and to all the elders of Israel. 10 Moses commanded them: "Every seventh year, in the scheduled year of remission, during the festival of booths,[o] 11 when all Israel comes to appear before the LORD your God at the place that he will choose, you shall read this law before all Israel in their hearing. 12 Assemble the people—men, women, and children, as well as the aliens residing in your towns—so that they may hear and learn to fear the LORD your God and to observe diligently all the words of this law, 13 and so that their children, who have not known it, may hear and learn to fear the LORD your God, as long as you live in the land that you are crossing over the Jordan to possess."

14 The LORD said to Moses, "Your time to die is near; call Joshua and present yourselves in the tent of meeting, so that I may commission him." So Moses and Joshua went and presented themselves in the tent of meeting, 15 and the LORD appeared at the tent in a pillar of cloud; the pillar of cloud stood at the entrance to the tent.

16 The LORD said to Moses, "Soon you will lie down with your ancestors. Then this people will begin to prostitute themselves to the foreign gods in their midst, the gods of the land into which they are going; they will forsake me, breaking my covenant that I have made with them. 17 My anger will be kindled against them in that day. I will forsake them and hide my face from them; they will become easy prey, and many terrible troubles will come upon them. In that day they will say, 'Have not these troubles come upon us because our God is not in our midst?' 18 On that day I will surely hide my face on account of all the evil they have done by turning to other gods. 19 Now therefore write this song, and teach it to the Israelites; put it in their mouths, in order that this song may be a witness for me against the Israelites. 20 For when I have brought them into the land flowing with milk and honey, which I promised on oath to their ancestors, and they have eaten their fill and grown fat, they will turn to other gods and serve them, despising me and breaking my covenant. 21 And when many terrible troubles come upon them, this song will confront them as a witness, because it will not be lost from the mouths of their descendants. For I know what they are inclined to do even now, before I have brought them into the land that I promised them on oath." 22 That very day Moses wrote this song and taught it to the Israelites.

23 Then the LORD commissioned Joshua son of Nun and said, "Be strong and bold, for you shall bring the Israelites into the land that I promised them; I will be with you."

24 When Moses had finished writing down in a book the words of this law to the very end, 25 Moses commanded the Levites who carried the ark of the covenant of the LORD, saying, 26 "Take this book of the law and put it beside the ark of the covenant of the LORD your God; let it remain there as a witness against

*o* Or *tabernacles*; Heb *succoth*

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**31.9–13**: A covenant ceremony, to be held every seven years, is instituted. **9**: The belief is expressed that the whole Deuteronomic law was written by Moses. **10–11**: Every *seventh year* or sabbatical year (15.1–11) the Deuteronomic law is to be read at the central sanctuary during the festival of booths (16.13–15). On this occasion a ceremony of covenant renewal is presumably to take place.

**31.14–23**: The commissioning of Joshua (Num 27.12–23). **14–15**: These verses connect with the old epic tradition in Ex 33.7–11. **16–22**: Moses is commanded to write a song which will confront the people as *a witness* when they turn to other gods. The song is found in ch 32. **23**: Continuation of vv. 14–15.

**31.24–27**: These verses resume the thought of vv. 9–13. **26**: *This book of the law*, i.e. Deuteronomy.

you. 27For I know well how rebellious and stubborn you are. If you already have been so rebellious toward the LORD while I am still alive among you, how much more after my death! 28Assemble to me all the elders of your tribes and your officials, so that I may recite these words in their hearing and call heaven and earth to witness against them. 29For I know that after my death you will surely act corruptly, turning aside from the way that I have commanded you. In time to come trouble will befall you, because you will do what is evil in the sight of the LORD, provoking him to anger through the work of your hands."

30 Then Moses recited the words of this song, to the very end, in the hearing of the whole assembly of Israel:

**32** Give ear, O heavens, and I will speak;
let the earth hear the words of my mouth.
2 May my teaching drop like the rain,
my speech condense like the dew;
like gentle rain on grass,
like showers on new growth.
3 For I will proclaim the name of the LORD;
ascribe greatness to our God!

4 The Rock, his work is perfect,
and all his ways are just.
A faithful God, without deceit,
just and upright is he;
5 yet his degenerate children have dealt falsely with him,[p]
a perverse and crooked generation.
6 Do you thus repay the LORD,
O foolish and senseless people?
Is not he your father, who created you,
who made you and established you?
7 Remember the days of old,
consider the years long past;
ask your father, and he will inform you;
your elders, and they will tell you.
8 When the Most High[q] apportioned the nations,
when he divided humankind,
he fixed the boundaries of the peoples
according to the number of the gods;[r]
9 the LORD's own portion was his people,
Jacob his allotted share.

10 He sustained[s] him in a desert land,
in a howling wilderness waste;
he shielded him, cared for him,
guarded him as the apple of his eye.
11 As an eagle stirs up its nest,
and hovers over its young;
as it spreads its wings, takes them up,
and bears them aloft on its pinions,
12 the LORD alone guided him;
no foreign god was with him.
13 He set him atop the heights of the land,
and fed him with[t] produce of the field;

*p* Meaning of Heb uncertain *q* Traditional rendering of Heb *Elyon* *r* Q Ms Compare Gk Tg: MT *the Israelites* *s* Sam Gk Compare Tg: MT *found* *t* Sam Gk Syr Tg: MT *he ate*

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**31.28–29**: *These words,* probably a reference to the following Song of Moses, not to the book of the law.

**31.30–32.47**: **The Song of Moses.** This psalm, which contrasts God's faithfulness with Israel's faithlessness, contains elements of a "covenant lawsuit" or legal controversy (Mic 6.1–8; Jer 2.1–13). Probably it dates from the early monarchy.

**32.1–3**: Introductory appeal (compare Isa 1.2; Mic 1.2). **4–6**: The integrity of God's ways is contrasted to the perversity of Israel. *Rock,* an ancient epithet for God (vv. 15, 18), suggesting stability and dependability.

**32.7–14**: A recital of the LORD's saving deeds in *the days of old.* **8**: *Gods,* the divine beings who belong to the heavenly court (see Gen 1.26 n.). To these heavenly beings the

he nursed him with honey from the crags,
with oil from flinty rock;
14 curds from the herd, and milk from the flock,
with fat of lambs and rams;
Bashan bulls and goats,
together with the choicest wheat—
you drank fine wine from the blood of grapes.
15 Jacob ate his fill;[u]
Jeshurun grew fat, and kicked.
You grew fat, bloated, and gorged!
He abandoned God who made him,
and scoffed at the Rock of his salvation.
16 They made him jealous with strange gods,
with abhorrent things they provoked him.
17 They sacrificed to demons, not God,
to deities they had never known,
to new ones recently arrived,
whom your ancestors had not feared.
18 You were unmindful of the Rock that bore you;[v]
you forgot the God who gave you birth.

19 The LORD saw it, and was jealous;[w]
he spurned[x] his sons and daughters.
20 He said: I will hide my face from them,
I will see what their end will be;
for they are a perverse generation,
children in whom there is no faithfulness.
21 They made me jealous with what is no god,
provoked me with their idols.
So I will make them jealous with what is no people,
provoke them with a foolish nation.
22 For a fire is kindled by my anger,
and burns to the depths of Sheol;
it devours the earth and its increase,
and sets on fire the foundations of the mountains.
23 I will heap disasters upon them,
spend my arrows against them:
24 wasting hunger,
burning consumption,
bitter pestilence.
The teeth of beasts I will send against them,
with venom of things crawling in the dust.
25 In the street the sword shall bereave,
and in the chambers terror,
for young man and woman alike,
nursing child and old gray head.
26 I thought to scatter them[y]
and blot out the memory of them from humankind;
27 but I feared provocation by the enemy,
for their adversaries might misunderstand
and say, "Our hand is triumphant;

*u* Q Mss Sam Gk: MT lacks *Jacob ate his fill* *v* Or *that begot you* *w* Q Mss Gk: MT lacks *was jealous* *x* Cn: Heb *he spurned because of provocation* *y* Gk: Meaning of Heb uncertain

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LORD delegated authority to govern other nations, but Israel was claimed as *the LORD's own portion*. **11–12**: Ex 19.4.

**32.15–18**: Israel's rebellious forgetfulness of the LORD. **15**: Like a well-fed animal, Israel rebelled against its master. *Jeshurun* ("the Upright One"), a term applied ironically to Israel (33.5, 26). **16**: *Jealous*, see Ex 34.14 n. **17**: *Demons*, a reference to the gods of Canaan (Ps 106.37–38), who are actually *not God*.

**32.19–27**: The LORD's righteous indignation. **21**: *No people*, a wordplay on *no god*. **22**: The poet envisions the foundations of the earth crumbling under the fire of divine wrath. According to ancient belief, the *foundations of the mountains* which supported the firmament were sunk in the subterranean ocean (Ps 46.2–3). *Sheol*, see Gen 37.35 n.

it was not the LORD who did all this."

28 They are a nation void of sense;
there is no understanding in them.
29 If they were wise, they would understand this;
they would discern what the end would be.
30 How could one have routed a thousand,
and two put a myriad to flight,
unless their Rock had sold them,
the LORD had given them up?
31 Indeed their rock is not like our Rock;
our enemies are fools.[z]
32 Their vine comes from the vinestock of Sodom,
from the vineyards of Gomorrah;
their grapes are grapes of poison,
their clusters are bitter;
33 their wine is the poison of serpents,
the cruel venom of asps.

34 Is not this laid up in store with me,
sealed up in my treasuries?
35 Vengeance is mine, and recompense,
for the time when their foot shall slip;
because the day of their calamity is at hand,
their doom comes swiftly.

36 Indeed the LORD will vindicate his people,
have compassion on his servants,
when he sees that their power is gone,
neither bond nor free remaining.
37 Then he will say: Where are their gods,
the rock in which they took refuge,
38 who ate the fat of their sacrifices,
and drank the wine of their libations?
Let them rise up and help you,
let them be your protection!

39 See now that I, even I, am he;
there is no god besides me.
I kill and I make alive;
I wound and I heal;
and no one can deliver from my hand.
40 For I lift up my hand to heaven,
and swear: As I live forever,
41 when I whet my flashing sword,
and my hand takes hold on judgment;
I will take vengeance on my adversaries,
and will repay those who hate me.
42 I will make my arrows drunk with blood,
and my sword shall devour flesh—
with the blood of the slain and the captives,
from the long-haired enemy.

43 Praise, O heavens,[a] his people,
worship him, all you gods![b]

*z* Gk: Meaning of Heb uncertain *a* Q Ms Gk: MT *nations* *b* Q Ms Gk: MT lacks this line

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**32.28–33:** The corruption of the nations. In vv. 28–29 *they* apparently refers to Israel and in vv. 31–33 *their* refers to the enemies. Israel cannot perceive that disaster has befallen them because *their Rock* abandoned them. *The rock* (god) of the enemies (vv. 37–38), however, cannot be compared to Israel's God. **32:** *Their vine* (i.e. of the enemies) is likened to the proverbial fruit of Sodom and Gomorrah: outwardly beautiful but inwardly worthless.

**32.34–43:** Because of the corruption of the nations the LORD will finally overthrow the wicked nations and vindicate the people of Israel. **34:** *This,* the nations' corruption (vv. 32–33). **35:** *Vengeance* means both judgment upon the oppressor and vindication of the oppressed (v. 36). *Their foot . . . their doom,* the reference is to Israel's enemies. **37–38:** See v. 17 n. **39:** *Kill . . . make alive,* i.e. God is sovereign in all things according to the poet's faith (Ex 4.11 n.; Isa 45.5–7). **43:** Con-

For he will avenge the blood of
his children,[c]
and take vengeance on his
adversaries;
he will repay those who hate
him,[d]
and cleanse the land for his
people.[e]

44 Moses came and recited all the words of this song in the hearing of the people, he and Joshua[f] son of Nun. 45When Moses had finished reciting all these words to all Israel, 46he said to them: "Take to heart all the words that I am giving in witness against you today; give them as a command to your children, so that they may diligently observe all the words of this law. 47This is no trifling matter for you, but rather your very life; through it you may live long in the land that you are crossing over the Jordan to possess."

48 On that very day the LORD addressed Moses as follows: 49"Ascend this mountain of the Abarim, Mount Nebo, which is in the land of Moab, across from Jericho, and view the land of Canaan, which I am giving to the Israelites for a possession; 50you shall die there on the mountain that you ascend and shall be gathered to your kin, as your brother Aaron died on Mount Hor and was gathered to his kin; 51because both of you broke faith with me among the Israelites at the waters of Meribath-kadesh in the wilderness of Zin, by failing to maintain my holiness among the Israelites. 52Although you may view the land from a distance, you shall not enter it—the land that I am giving to the Israelites."

33 This is the blessing with which Moses, the man of God, blessed the Israelites before his death. 2He said:

The LORD came from Sinai,
and dawned from Seir upon
us;[g]
he shone forth from Mount
Paran.
With him were myriads of holy
ones;[h]
at his right, a host of his
own.[i]
3 Indeed, O favorite among[j]
peoples,
all his holy ones were in your
charge;
they marched at your heels,
accepted direction from you.
4 Moses charged us with the law,
as a possession for the assembly
of Jacob.
5 There arose a king in Jeshurun,
when the leaders of the people
assembled—
the united tribes of Israel.

6 May Reuben live, and not die
out,
even though his numbers are
few.

*c* Q Ms Gk: MT *his servants* *d* Q Ms Gk: MT lacks this line *e* Q Ms Sam Gk Vg: MT *his land his people* *f* Sam Gk Syr Vg: MT *Hoshea* *g* Gk Syr Vg Compare Tg: Heb *upon them* *h* Cn Compare Gk Sam Syr Vg: MT *He came from Ribeboth-kodesh,* *i* Cn Compare Gk: meaning of Heb uncertain *j* Or *O lover of the*

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cluding hymn of praise. **44–47**: The conclusion of 31.16–29.

**32.48–52: Moses' vision.** Moses is commanded to ascend Mount Nebo (Num 20.10–13; 27.12–14).

**33.1–29**: **The blessing of Moses.** Before going to his death, Moses gives his final blessing to the Israelite tribes (see introduction to the blessing of Jacob, Gen ch 49). **1**: On deathbed blessings, see Gen 27.4 n. This poem assumes that the tribes are already settled in Palestine rather than looking forward to the settlement. In its present form it probably comes from the early period of the monarchy, though it may reflect slightly earlier tribal circumstances. Simeon, for example, is not mentioned, perhaps because the tribe had already disappeared (Gen 49.5–7). **2–5**: Introduction: the theophany *from Sinai* (see Ps 68.17; Hab 3.3), here associated with the land of Edom (Seir), as in Judg 5.4. **5**: *Jeshurun,* see 32.15 n. The context suggests the enthronement of the LORD as king in an assembly of *the united tribes of Israel* (Josh 24.1; Judg 20.2). **6**: Reuben, who once had the leadership of the firstborn (see Gen 49.3–4 n.), is apparently threatened with extinction, owing to military pressures in Transjordan.

7 And this he said of Judah:
O LORD, give heed to Judah,
and bring him to his people;
strengthen his hands for him,[k]
and be a help against his
adversaries.

8 And of Levi he said:
Give to Levi[l] your Thummim,
and your Urim to your loyal
one,
whom you tested at Massah,
with whom you contended at
the waters of Meribah;
9 who said of his father and mother,
"I regard them not";
he ignored his kin,
and did not acknowledge his
children.
For they observed your word,
and kept your covenant.
10 They teach Jacob your ordinances,
and Israel your law;
they place incense before you,
and whole burnt offerings on
your altar.
11 Bless, O LORD, his substance,
and accept the work of his
hands;
crush the loins of his adversaries,
of those that hate him, so that
they do not rise again.

12 Of Benjamin he said:
The beloved of the LORD rests in
safety—
the High God[m] surrounds him all
day long—
the beloved[n] rests between his
shoulders.

13 And of Joseph he said:
Blessed by the LORD be his land,
with the choice gifts of heaven
above,
and of the deep that lies
beneath;
14 with the choice fruits of the sun,
and the rich yield of the
months;
15 with the finest produce of the
ancient mountains,
and the abundance of the
everlasting hills;
16 with the choice gifts of the earth
and its fullness,
and the favor of the one who
dwells on Sinai.[o]
Let these come on the head of
Joseph,
on the brow of the prince
among his brothers.
17 A firstborn[p] bull—majesty is his!
His horns are the horns of a
wild ox;
with them he gores the peoples,
driving them to[q] the ends of the
earth;
such are the myriads of Ephraim,
such the thousands of Manasseh.

18 And of Zebulun he said:
Rejoice, Zebulun, in your going
out;
and Issachar, in your tents.

*k* Cn: Heb *with his hands he contended* *l* Q Ms Gk: MT lacks *Give to Levi* *m* Heb *above him* *n* Heb *he* *o* Cn: Heb *in the bush* *p* Q Ms Gk Syr Vg: MT *His firstborn* *q* Cn: Heb *the peoples, together*

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**33.7**: It is desired that Judah, in sore trouble because of an adversary (perhaps the Philistines), should be helped by other tribes. **8–11**: Levi, once a warlike tribe (Gen 49.5–7), is to receive the prerogatives of priesthood, namely teaching and officiating at the altar. **8**: *Urim* and *Thummim*, see Ex 28.15–30 n. Apparently the levitical priesthood originated at Kadesh, i.e. *Massah* and *Meribah* (Ex 17.1–7; Num 20.2–13). **9**: On Levi's zealous covenant loyalty see Ex 32.25–29.

**33.13–17**: The wish is that *Joseph* may be blessed with the bounties of nature and with invincible military strength (compare Gen 49.25–26). **16**: *Dwells on Sinai*, a reference to the LORD's revelation there (Ex 3.1–6). *Prince*, at the time of the poem Joseph enjoyed even greater prestige than Judah (v. 7). **17**: *Ephraim and Manasseh*, the two tribes that composed "the house of Joseph" (see Gen 48.13–14 n.). **18–19**: *Zebulun* and *Issachar* will enjoy great affluence owing to the resources of the Mediterranean and Sea of Galilee (Gen 49.13).

19 They call peoples to the mountain;
there they offer the right sacrifices;
for they suck the affluence of the seas
and the hidden treasures of the sand.

20 And of Gad he said:
Blessed be the enlargement of Gad!
Gad lives like a lion;
he tears at arm and scalp.
21 He chose the best for himself,
for there a commander's allotment was reserved;
he came at the head of the people,
he executed the justice of the LORD,
and his ordinances for Israel.

22 And of Dan he said:
Dan is a lion's whelp
that leaps forth from Bashan.

23 And of Naphtali he said:
O Naphtali, sated with favor,
full of the blessing of the LORD,
possess the west and the south.

24 And of Asher he said:
Most blessed of sons be Asher;
may he be the favorite of his brothers,
and may he dip his foot in oil.
25 Your bars are iron and bronze;
and as your days, so is your strength.

26 There is none like God,
O Jeshurun,
who rides through the heavens to your help,
majestic through the skies.
27 He subdues the ancient gods,[r]
shatters[s] the forces of old;[t]
he drove out the enemy before you,
and said, "Destroy!"
28 So Israel lives in safety,
untroubled is Jacob's abode[u]
in a land of grain and wine,
where the heavens drop down dew.
29 Happy are you, O Israel! Who is like you,
a people saved by the LORD,
the shield of your help,
and the sword of your triumph!
Your enemies shall come fawning to you,
and you shall tread on their backs.

34 Then Moses went up from the plains of Moab to Mount Nebo, to the top of Pisgah, which is opposite Jericho, and the LORD showed him the whole land: Gilead as far as Dan, 2all Naphtali, the land of Ephraim and Manasseh, all the land of Judah as far as the Western Sea, 3the Negeb, and the Plain—that is, the valley of Jericho, the city of palm trees—as far as Zoar. 4The LORD said to him, "This is the land of which I swore to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob, saying, 'I will give it to your descendants'; I have let you see it with

*r* Or *The eternal God is a dwelling place*
*s* Cn: Heb *from underneath* *t* Or *the everlasting arms* *u* Or *fountain*

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**33.20–21**: *Gad* occupied the best tableland in Transjordan but aided the other tribes in the occupation of Canaan (See Num ch 32). **22**: *Dan,* vigorous as *a lion's whelp,* has already migrated from its former position north of Judah to the base of Mount Hermon (Judg ch 18). **23**: *Naphtali,* located in the region of the Sea of Galilee and the Ginnesar plain. **24–25**: *Asher,* located below Phoenicia, is to be strong and prosperous. **26–29**: A concluding ascription of praise to the LORD who has given Israel victory and security in the bounteous land. **26**: *Jeshurun,* see 32.15 n.

**34.1–12**: **The death of Moses.** This chapter resumes the story from the end of Numbers, after Moses' "Deuteronomic" addresses to Israel. **1**: Two traditions about the place of Moses' death are included here: *Mount Nebo* is in Transjordan east of Jericho; *Mount Pisgah* is a peak in the same range, slightly west. **2–3**: From this lofty height Moses looks northward to the Sea of Galilee (area of Dan and Naphtali), to the Western Sea (Mediterranean), south to the Negeb (southern wilder-

your eyes, but you shall not cross over there." [5]Then Moses, the servant of the LORD, died there in the land of Moab, at the LORD's command. [6]He was buried in a valley in the land of Moab, opposite Beth-peor, but no one knows his burial place to this day. [7]Moses was one hundred twenty years old when he died; his sight was unimpaired and his vigor had not abated. [8]The Israelites wept for Moses in the plains of Moab thirty days; then the period of mourning for Moses was ended.

9 Joshua son of Nun was full of the spirit of wisdom, because Moses had laid his hands on him; and the Israelites obeyed him, doing as the LORD had commanded Moses.

10 Never since has there arisen a prophet in Israel like Moses, whom the LORD knew face to face. [11]He was unequaled for all the signs and wonders that the LORD sent him to perform in the land of Egypt, against Pharaoh and all his servants and his entire land, [12]and for all the mighty deeds and all the terrifying displays of power that Moses performed in the sight of all Israel.

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ness of Judah) and the Jordan valley as far south as *Zoar* (once located at the end of the Dead Sea; Gen 14.2). **6**: The Hebrew text may mean that the LORD secretly buried Moses, showing the marvelous disappearance of God's prophet (compare 2 Kings 2.11–12). **9**: Compare Num 27.18–23. **10–11**: For the judgment that Moses was the greatest of Israel's prophets, see 18.15–22; Num 12.6–8; compare 11.24–30; Hos 12.13.

# *The Historical Books*

Historical writings claim to be bound by the facts, and intend to record people, places, and events as they really were and as they, implicitly or explicitly, explain and give significance to the writer's own times.

The books in the Hebrew Scriptures that are usually labeled historical in this sense are Joshua, Judges, 1–2 Samuel, 1–2 Kings, 1–2 Chronicles, Ezra, and Nehemiah. Such grouping and descriptive nomenclature, however, are modern and, to a certain extent, misleading. In the original divisions of the Hebrew Bible, the books of Joshua through Kings belong to the "Former Prophets," and the rest appear as part of "The Writings." And there is little reason on literary grounds to exclude the books of Genesis and Exodus from the rubric of historical literature. Moreover, biblical authors and editors, whose work in some cases was in process of formation over several centuries, were less concerned with documentable fact than modern historians would require themselves to be. Often a writer developed high drama, including miracles and divine interventions; the narrator sometimes wove textures of metaphor and imaginative description, often adding aggrandizing elements that lent legendary and archetypal proportions to characters and themes.

In short, the historical books in the Hebrew Scriptures resist modern categories of either history or fiction; rather, they are theological and didactic historiography. The writings present different and sometimes overlapping versions of ancient Israel's past, each one shaped by the conviction that God was committed to intimate dealings with the descendants of Abraham, and each one asserting that this reality of faith and religion was of continuing relevance to the author and ancient reader. This perspective, which was so important in creating these books, is still held by religious Jews, Christians, and Muslims, who look to these historical books for divine instruction, whether informed by perspectives developed in the formative rabbinic writings, the New Testament and early Christian documents, or in the Koran.

Most scholars assume that Israel's earliest historians drew upon oral traditions as well as written sources when constructing a connected narrative of Israel's past. It is now difficult to distinguish one from the other. We may suppose that besides legends, folktales, and poetic materials, a writer would have used a variety of historical stories, such as Judg 9.1–21 and 1 Sam 11.1–11, and many lists, such as ancestral genealogy (Gen 10.1–32), tribal chiefs (Gen 36.40–43), rulers or "judges" (Judg 10.1–5), kings (1 Chr 1.43–51), itineraries (Num 33.5–7), royal officials (1 Kings 4.2–6; 2 Sam 23.24–39), populations (Neh 11.3–36), and towns (Josh chs 15–19). Writers associated with the monarchy, roughly 1000–600 B.C., would have used various administrative documents, including letters (Ezra 4.11–16) and reports of settlements and military campaigns (Judg 1.16–21; 1 Kings 14.25–26), palace and temple records (1 Kings 4.7–17; 7.1–12) and the like. If ancient Israel followed the ways of other ancient Near Eastern monarchies,

its scribes would also have produced inscriptions that commemorated and praised the religio-political accomplishments of various kings. We may suppose that prior to the production of such books as 1–2 Kings, royal scribes had shaped these various materials into connected records, perhaps chronicle-like narratives. Some such documents may be referred to by the repeated citations of sources throughout the books of Kings and Chronicles, such as "Book of the Annals of the Kings of Judah/Israel" (1 Kings 14.29; 16.5), "Book of the Acts of Solomon" (1 Kings 11.41), "the record of the seer Samuel" (1 Chr 29.29), and "The Commentary on the Book of the Kings" (2 Chr 24.27). Finally, we may mention the historical memoir, which seems to lie behind a book such as Nehemiah.

Many scholars believe that the earliest example of theological and didactic historiography in the Bible is what can be termed the "Court History of David" (2 Samuel 9–20 and 1 Kings 1–2), which is now a major element in the canonical Books of Samuel and Kings. Here a variety of sources were assembled into a literary unity and given a consistent theological point of view. Commonly admired for its literary qualities, this version of history deals with the domestic and political troubles of David, and tells finally how Solomon, contrary to the usual rules of primogeniture, comes to occupy the Davidic throne. The outcome, which was constantly in danger because of the twists and turns of love, envy, greed, and struggles for power, finally assures the continued vitality of God's promise to be with his covenant people through the longevity of the Davidic dynasty.

Later, this "court history" was joined to narratives and records of kings who ruled after David, and, supplemented with already formed materials relating to pre-monarchical times (now visible in the books of Joshua and Judges and Samuel), resulted in a new, expanded version of Israel's past. This massive composition is known as the "Deuteronomistic History," and, according to most scholars, includes all the books from Joshua through 2 Kings, with the Book of Deuteronomy serving as an introduction and flagship for the work's governing theological perspectives.

This composition, which may have existed in at least two versions dating from the seventh and sixth centuries B.C., portrays Israel's life from entrance into the land to exile in Babylon. The writer shapes this political history into a story of constant struggle to remain obedient to God's teaching (*torah*), to be God's covenant people, and so inherit divine blessings. In such a theological context, entrance into the homeland is fraught with temptation and transgression, but tempered by God's steady willingness to forgive and start afresh. Beginning with Saul (1 Sam 11) and ending when the last of the rulers in David's line goes into exile (2 Kings 25.1–7), the monarchy is also seen as problematic. It is a threat to God's rule, and finally becomes a moral, political, and religious failure. Destruction of Jerusalem and the temple, and dissolution of God's people, are divine punishments necessary to set things right. Not even the righteousness of an occasionally admired king, such as Hezekiah (2 Kings 18–20) or Josiah (2 Kings 23.26), could forestall or turn it aside. The writer allows just a hint of hopefulness to intrude into this bleak picture by noting at the end that Jehoiachin, the last of the Davidic line, was treated kindly by his Babylonian captor (2 Kings 25.27–30).

A second major historical work was written at the time of Israel's restoration from exile, about the fifth or fourth century B.C. Called the "Chronicler's History," this writing encompassed 1–2 Chronicles and may also have included the books of Ezra and Nehemiah, though this opinion has been recently disputed. Working in much the same way as earlier historians, the Chronicler selected and shaped materials from a variety of sources, many of which are cited as written works (e.g. 1 Chr 29.29; 2 Chr 13.22; 26.22). Presupposing the earlier Deuteronomistic

History, this author for the most part repeated, rewrote, and supplemented large portions of 1 Sam 31–2 Kings 25, while also drawing upon other portions of the Bible.

The result is a version of Israel's history that parallels Genesis–2 Kings, running from Adam through the Davidic monarchy and down to the Persian period, when Cyrus decreed that exiled Israelites might return to their homeland. The Chronicler's vision is both idealized and practical. A chain of genealogy leads to the house of David, and from this point David emerges as the archetypal king and religious figure. He rules in obedience to God and establishes authentic divine service, the temple, its priesthood, singers, prayers, and offerings. Sacred space is carefully demarcated, hence showing God's power as effective and available in the kingdom. Subsequent kings fall from this standard in a procession of evil and good rulers, until exile, as divine punishment, brings closure to Israel's monarchy. In its place, it is hinted that for the future there will be a newly constituted, priest-directed people, living in God's regulated commonwealth, and focussed on the holy space and time of temple and worship. The books of Ezra and Nehemiah then chronicle the rebuilding of Jerusalem and the successful creation of such a theocratic order.

It is commonly said that the writing of history began with the Greeks. The examples of historical works in the Bible oblige us to recognize the extent to which modern habits of historical thinking and writing also have their beginnings in the Hebraic world of the Bible's historians.

# *Joshua*

The book of Joshua is part of the larger story of Israel's life in its land. Optimism pervades the opening scenes of that story as told in this book: the successful settlement of Canaan by the Israelite tribes under Joshua. It takes on a more ominous character as it continues in the book of Judges, and reaches its climax with the founding of the Israelite monarchy in the books of Samuel. It comes to its tragic end with the books of Kings that narrate the fall of the Israelite kingdoms. Because the theological perspectives of the book of Deuteronomy undergird this narrative, the books of Joshua to 2 Kings are known as the Deuteronomistic History of Israel (see "The Historical Books," pp. 267–269 OT).

The book of Joshua simplifies what was the long and complex process by which the Israelite tribes came to settle in Canaan. The story does not reflect the actual course of events. Some details are missing; others are rearranged. Archaeological excavations, supplemented by sociological analysis, have helped reconstruct the history of the settlement period. All this has made it clear that the book of Joshua, using an idealized historical narrative, intends to describe Israel, past and future, its relationship with God, and the kind of society it wished to be.

The Canaan that the Israelite tribes entered following the Exodus was in a state of social and political turmoil. Their entrance into the region west of the Jordan river was a catalyst that brought a new social reality into being. The socio-economic system of the Canaanite city-states concentrated power in the upper classes to the detriment of the peasants. That system began to disintegrate under the pressure brought to bear by the new immigrants. The Israelite tribes that experienced a great liberation in Egypt entered Canaan as harbingers of a new society. The book of Joshua is the story of how an obedient Israel under God's chosen leader can bring into existence a society based on justice and freedom.

The book of Joshua falls into three parts. (*a*) Chapters 1–12 describe the settlement of the Israelite tribes in Canaan as the result of a successful military campaign led by Joshua against the Canaanites. The bulk of this narrative deals with central Canaan, followed by stories about campaigns in the south in 10.28–43, while 11.1–15 covers victories in the north. (*b*) Chapters 13–21 report the distribution of the land among the victorious tribes. These geographical lists probably come from the period of the Israelite monarchy. Here they serve to describe the extent of the Israelite occupation of Canaan. (*c*) The book concludes with three stories (chs 22–24) that focus on the loyalty that Israelite tribes owe to their God who has given them the land they now occupy.

The violence described in chs 1–12 has led some readers to ignore or spiritualize this book. There have been attempts to explain away the harshness of these stories by showing that they do not reflect the actual historical circumstances of Israelite tribes' conflicts with the Canaanites. Still it is true that ancient Israel did acquire the land, in part, through violent means; the violence that took place during the settlement period was evil. What the book of Joshua affirms is that God's purpose for Israel was served even by this evil. The aim of the book was not to edify but to move its readers to obedience. For ancient Israel this obedience was an act of faith in the God who brings good out of evil.

1 After the death of Moses the servant of the LORD, the LORD spoke to Joshua son of Nun, Moses' assistant, saying, 2"My servant Moses is dead. Now proceed to cross the Jordan, you and all this people, into the land that I am giving to them, to the Israelites. 3Every place that the sole of your foot will tread upon I have given to you, as I promised to Moses. 4From the wilderness and the Lebanon as far as the great river, the river Euphrates, all the land of the Hittites, to the Great Sea in the west shall be your territory. 5No one shall be able to stand against you all the days of your life. As I was with Moses, so I will be with you; I will not fail you or forsake you. 6Be strong and courageous; for you shall put this people in possession of the land that I swore to their ancestors to give them. 7Only be strong and very courageous, being careful to act in accordance with all the law that my servant Moses commanded you; do not turn from it to the right hand or to the left, so that you may be successful wherever you go. 8This book of the law shall not depart out of your mouth; you shall meditate on it day and night, so that you may be careful to act in accordance with all that is written in it. For then you shall make your way prosperous, and then you shall be successful. 9I hereby command you: Be strong and courageous; do not be frightened or dismayed, for the LORD your God is with you wherever you go."

10 Then Joshua commanded the officers of the people, 11"Pass through the camp, and command the people: 'Prepare your provisions; for in three days you are to cross over the Jordan, to go in to take possession of the land that the LORD your God gives you to possess.' "

12 To the Reubenites, the Gadites, and the half-tribe of Manasseh Joshua said, 13"Remember the word that Moses the servant of the LORD commanded you, saying, 'The LORD your God is providing you a place of rest, and will give you this land.' 14Your wives, your little ones, and your livestock shall remain in the land that Moses gave you beyond the Jordan. But all the warriors among you shall cross over armed before your kindred and shall help them, 15until the LORD gives rest to your kindred as well as to you, and they too take possession of the land that the LORD your God is giving them. Then you shall return to your own land and take possession of it, the land that Moses the servant of the LORD gave you beyond the Jordan to the east."

16 They answered Joshua: "All that you have commanded us we will do, and wherever you send us we will go. 17Just as we obeyed Moses in all things, so we will obey you. Only may the LORD your God be with you, as he was with Moses! 18Whoever rebels against your orders and disobeys your words, whatever you command, shall be put to death. Only be strong and courageous."

2 Then Joshua son of Nun sent two men secretly from Shittim as spies,

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**1.1–9: The LORD's address to Joshua.** The death of Moses provided the signal for entrance of the Israelites into Canaan, since God did not allow Moses to enter the land (Deut 32.48–52). **2**: The *Jordan* river was the natural eastern boundary of Canaan. **4**: The idealized boundaries of the Israelite settlement were *the wilderness* of Sinai to the south and east, the *Lebanon* mountain range to the northwest, the *river Euphrates* to the east, and the *Great Sea,* the Mediterranean Sea, to the west. **8**: Obedience to *this book of the law* (Deuteronomy) is the only requirement for the success of the project that the Israelites are to undertake.

**1.10–18: Joshua's address to the people.** Joshua instructs the Israelites to prepare for the entrance into Canaan. **14**: *Beyond the Jordan,* the region east of the Jordan where these tribes settled (Num 32). **15**: After the Transjordanian groups helped the other Israelites acquire the land west of the Jordan, they were to return to the territory *that Moses the servant of the LORD gave them.*

**2.1–24: Joshua's spies at Jericho.** The men whom Joshua sent to reconnoiter the situation find a friendly reception in the house of Rahab, to whom they promise safety when the city is taken. In Heb 11.31 Rahab is counted as one of the heroes of faith. **1**: *Shittim* was the site of the Israelite camp east of the Jordan and northeast of the Dead Sea; its precise loca-

saying, "Go, view the land, especially Jericho." So they went, and entered the house of a prostitute whose name was Rahab, and spent the night there. 2The king of Jericho was told, "Some Israelites have come here tonight to search out the land." 3Then the king of Jericho sent orders to Rahab, "Bring out the men who have come to you, who entered your house, for they have come only to search out the whole land." 4But the woman took the two men and hid them. Then she said, "True, the men came to me, but I did not know where they came from. 5And when it was time to close the gate at dark, the men went out. Where the men went I do not know. Pursue them quickly, for you can overtake them." 6She had, however, brought them up to the roof and hidden them with the stalks of flax that she had laid out on the roof. 7So the men pursued them on the way to the Jordan as far as the fords. As soon as the pursuers had gone out, the gate was shut.

8 Before they went to sleep, she came up to them on the roof 9and said to the men: "I know that the LORD has given you the land, and that dread of you has fallen on us, and that all the inhabitants of the land melt in fear before you. 10For we have heard how the LORD dried up the water of the Red Sea[a] before you when you came out of Egypt, and what you did to the two kings of the Amorites that were beyond the Jordan, to Sihon and Og, whom you utterly destroyed. 11As soon as we heard it, our hearts melted, and there was no courage left in any of us because of you. The LORD your God is indeed God in heaven above and on earth below. 12Now then, since I have dealt kindly with you, swear to me by the LORD that you in turn will deal kindly with my family. Give me a sign of good faith 13that you will spare my father and mother, my brothers and sisters, and all who belong to them, and deliver our lives from death." 14The men said to her, "Our life for yours! If you do not tell this business of ours, then we will deal kindly and faithfully with you when the LORD gives us the land."

15 Then she let them down by a rope through the window, for her house was on the outer side of the city wall and she resided within the wall itself. 16She said to them, "Go toward the hill country, so that the pursuers may not come upon you. Hide yourselves there three days, until the pursuers have returned; then afterward you may go your way." 17The men said to her, "We will be released from this oath that you have made us swear to you 18if we invade the land and you do not tie this crimson cord in the window through which you let us down, and you do not gather into your house your father and mother, your brothers, and all your family. 19If any of you go out of the doors of your house into the street, they shall be responsible for their own death, and we shall be innocent; but if a hand is laid upon any who are with you in the house, we shall bear the responsibility for their death. 20But if you tell this business of ours, then we shall be released from this oath that you made us swear to you." 21She said, "According to your words, so be it." She sent them away and they departed. Then she tied the crimson cord in the window.

22 They departed and went into the hill country and stayed there three days, until the pursuers returned. The pursuers had searched all along the way and found nothing. 23Then the two men came down again from the hill country. They crossed over, came to Joshua son of Nun, and told him all that had happened to them. 24They said to Joshua, "Truly

*a* Or *Sea of Reeds*

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tion is uncertain. *Jericho* is twenty-three miles east of Jerusalem; its location in the lower Jordan Valley near several fords in the river made it a gateway to Canaan from the east. The earliest remains on the site date from the 10th–8th millennia B.C. Archaeology has shown that in the 13th century B.C., when it was likely that the Israelites entered Canaan under Joshua, Jericho was an unfortified village.

the LORD has given all the land into our hands; moreover all the inhabitants of the land melt in fear before us."

3 Early in the morning Joshua rose and set out from Shittim with all the Israelites, and they came to the Jordan. They camped there before crossing over. 2At the end of three days the officers went through the camp 3and commanded the people, "When you see the ark of the covenant of the LORD your God being carried by the levitical priests, then you shall set out from your place. Follow it, 4so that you may know the way you should go, for you have not passed this way before. Yet there shall be a space between you and it, a distance of about two thousand cubits; do not come any nearer to it." 5Then Joshua said to the people, "Sanctify yourselves; for tomorrow the LORD will do wonders among you." 6To the priests Joshua said, "Take up the ark of the covenant, and pass on in front of the people." So they took up the ark of the covenant and went in front of the people.

7 The LORD said to Joshua, "This day I will begin to exalt you in the sight of all Israel, so that they may know that I will be with you as I was with Moses. 8You are the one who shall command the priests who bear the ark of the covenant, 'When you come to the edge of the waters of the Jordan, you shall stand still in the Jordan.' " 9Joshua then said to the Israelites, "Draw near and hear the words of the LORD your God." 10Joshua said, "By this you shall know that among you is the living God who without fail will drive out from before you the Canaanites, Hittites, Hivites, Perizzites, Girgashites, Amorites, and Jebusites: 11the ark of the covenant of the Lord of all the earth is going to pass before you into the Jordan. 12So now select twelve men from the tribes of Israel, one from each tribe. 13When the soles of the feet of the priests who bear the ark of the LORD, the Lord of all the earth, rest in the waters of the Jordan, the waters of the Jordan flowing from above shall be cut off; they shall stand in a single heap."

14 When the people set out from their tents to cross over the Jordan, the priests bearing the ark of the covenant were in front of the people. 15Now the Jordan overflows all its banks throughout the time of harvest. So when those who bore the ark had come to the Jordan, and the feet of the priests bearing the ark were dipped in the edge of the water, 16the waters flowing from above stood still, rising up in a single heap far off at Adam, the city that is beside Zarethan, while those flowing toward the sea of the Arabah, the Dead Sea,[b] were wholly cut off. Then the people crossed over opposite Jericho. 17While all Israel were crossing over on dry ground, the priests who bore the ark of the covenant of the LORD stood on dry ground in the middle of the Jordan, until the entire nation finished crossing over the Jordan.

4 When the entire nation had finished crossing over the Jordan, the LORD said to Joshua: 2"Select twelve men from the people, one from each tribe, 3and

*b* Heb *Salt Sea*

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**3.1–17: The crossing of the Jordan.** The crossing of the river took on the appearance of a liturgical ceremony. **3**: *The ark of the covenant* is the sign of God's presence among the tribes; it can be carried only by priests. **4**: The people were to keep their distance. *Two thousand cubits,* about three thousand feet. **5**: *Sanctify yourselves* reflects the cultic background of this story. It requires the Israelites to render themselves ritually pure.

**3.10**: A stereotypical listing of the pre-Israelite population of Canaan. It is difficult to identify the individual groups specifically.

**16**: *Adam,* eighteen miles north of Jericho, is probably Tell ed-Damiyeh. *Zarethan* is farther north. *The Dead Sea* is about one third suspended salts. This makes it impossible for plant or animal life to survive in it.

**4.1–5.1: A monument commemorating the crossing.** The chapter preserves two traditions about memorial stones set up to commemorate the crossing of the Jordan by the Israelites. One describes the memorial stones set up at Gilgal (4.1–3, 6–7, 8b, 20); the other describes stones set up in the bed of the river (4.4–5, 8a, 9, 15–19).

command them, 'Take twelve stones from here out of the middle of the Jordan, from the place where the priests' feet stood, carry them over with you, and lay them down in the place where you camp tonight.' " [4]Then Joshua summoned the twelve men from the Israelites, whom he had appointed, one from each tribe. [5]Joshua said to them, "Pass on before the ark of the LORD your God into the middle of the Jordan, and each of you take up a stone on his shoulder, one for each of the tribes of the Israelites, [6]so that this may be a sign among you. When your children ask in time to come, 'What do those stones mean to you?' [7]then you shall tell them that the waters of the Jordan were cut off in front of the ark of the covenant of the LORD. When it crossed over the Jordan, the waters of the Jordan were cut off. So these stones shall be to the Israelites a memorial forever."

8 The Israelites did as Joshua commanded. They took up twelve stones out of the middle of the Jordan, according to the number of the tribes of the Israelites, as the LORD told Joshua, carried them over with them to the place where they camped, and laid them down there. [9](Joshua set up twelve stones in the middle of the Jordan, in the place where the feet of the priests bearing the ark of the covenant had stood; and they are there to this day.)

10 The priests who bore the ark remained standing in the middle of the Jordan, until everything was finished that the LORD commanded Joshua to tell the people, according to all that Moses had commanded Joshua. The people crossed over in haste. [11]As soon as all the people had finished crossing over, the ark of the LORD, and the priests, crossed over in front of the people. [12]The Reubenites, the Gadites, and the half-tribe of Manasseh crossed over armed before the Israelites, as Moses had ordered them. [13]About forty thousand armed for war crossed over before the LORD to the plains of Jericho for battle.

14 On that day the LORD exalted Joshua in the sight of all Israel; and they stood in awe of him, as they had stood in awe of Moses, all the days of his life.

15 The LORD said to Joshua, [16]"Command the priests who bear the ark of the covenant,[c] to come up out of the Jordan." [17]Joshua therefore commanded the priests, "Come up out of the Jordan." [18]When the priests bearing the ark of the covenant of the LORD came up from the middle of the Jordan, and the soles of the priests' feet touched dry ground, the waters of the Jordan returned to their place and overflowed all its banks, as before.

19 The people came up out of the Jordan on the tenth day of the first month, and they camped in Gilgal on the east border of Jericho. [20]Those twelve stones, which they had taken out of the Jordan, Joshua set up in Gilgal, [21]saying to the Israelites, "When your children ask their parents in time to come, 'What do these stones mean?' [22]then you shall let your children know, 'Israel crossed over the Jordan here on dry ground.' [23]For the LORD your God dried up the waters of the Jordan for you until you crossed over, as the LORD your God did to the Red Sea,[d] which he dried up for us until we crossed over, [24]so that all the peoples of the earth may know that the hand of the LORD is mighty, and so that you may fear the LORD your God forever."

5 When all the kings of the Amorites beyond the Jordan to the west, and all the kings of the Canaanites by the sea, heard that the LORD had dried up the waters of the Jordan for the Israelites until they had crossed over, their hearts melted, and there was no longer any spirit in them, because of the Israelites.

*c* Or *treaty*, or *testimony*; Heb *eduth* *d* Or *Sea of Reeds*

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**4.19**: *The first month* was Abib (March–April), later called Nisan. *Gilgal*, probably Khirbet Mefjar, is about one mile from Jericho. It became an important Israelite shrine. Here the people made Saul their king (1 Sam 11.15); later David and his rebellious subjects were reconciled here (2 Sam 19.15, 40).

2 At that time the LORD said to Joshua, "Make flint knives and circumcise the Israelites a second time." 3So Joshua made flint knives, and circumcised the Israelites at Gibeath-haaraloth.[e] 4This is the reason why Joshua circumcised them: all the males of the people who came out of Egypt, all the warriors, had died during the journey through the wilderness after they had come out of Egypt. 5Although all the people who came out had been circumcised, yet all the people born on the journey through the wilderness after they had come out of Egypt had not been circumcised. 6For the Israelites traveled forty years in the wilderness, until all the nation, the warriors who came out of Egypt, perished, not having listened to the voice of the LORD. To them the LORD swore that he would not let them see the land that he had sworn to their ancestors to give us, a land flowing with milk and honey. 7So it was their children, whom he raised up in their place, that Joshua circumcised; for they were uncircumcised, because they had not been circumcised on the way.

8 When the circumcising of all the nation was done, they remained in their places in the camp until they were healed. 9The LORD said to Joshua, "Today I have rolled away from you the disgrace of Egypt." And so that place is called Gilgal[f] to this day.

10 While the Israelites were camped in Gilgal they kept the passover in the evening on the fourteenth day of the month in the plains of Jericho. 11On the day after the passover, on that very day, they ate the produce of the land, unleavened cakes and parched grain. 12The manna ceased on the day they ate the produce of the land, and the Israelites no longer had manna; they ate the crops of the land of Canaan that year.

13 Once when Joshua was by Jericho, he looked up and saw a man standing before him with a drawn sword in his hand. Joshua went to him and said to him, "Are you one of us, or one of our adversaries?" 14He replied, "Neither; but as commander of the army of the LORD I have now come." And Joshua fell on his face to the earth and worshiped, and he said to him, "What do you command your servant, my lord?" 15The commander of the army of the LORD said to Joshua, "Remove the sandals from your feet, for the place where you stand is holy." And Joshua did so.

6 Now Jericho was shut up inside and out because of the Israelites; no one came out and no one went in. 2The LORD said to Joshua, "See, I have handed Jericho over to you, along with its king and soldiers. 3You shall march around the city, all the warriors circling the city once. Thus you shall do for six days, 4with seven priests bearing seven trumpets of rams' horns before the ark. On

*e* That is *the Hill of the Foreskins* *f* Related to Heb *galal* to roll

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**5.2–12: The first passover in the land.** **2–9**: Ex 12.48 asserts that circumcision was required of all males who were to celebrate the passover. **2**: At one time circumcision was a common practice in the ancient Near East. It became a sign of Israel's unique relationship with God (Gen 17.11–13).

**5.8–9**: The precise nature of the *disgrace* is unclear; it may refer to the abject social status of the Hebrew slaves in Egypt. **11–12**: The first passover celebrates Israel's new life in the land. **12**: *The manna* was no longer necessary, since Israel could now live off the fruit of its new land.

**5.13–15: A theophany.** This passage belongs to a tradition that remembered the victory over Jericho as the result of a military victory. *The commander of the army of the LORD* did not give complete support to Joshua because God remained free to become Israel's adversary (see Hos 13.8; Lam 2.5). **15**: This is a direct quotation from Ex 3.5. The allusion to the call of Moses shows that Joshua was the divinely appointed successor of Moses.

**6.1–14: The siege of Jericho.** Archaeology does not allow this passage to be read as a factual account of events connected with the entrance of the Israelite tribes into Canaan. Excavations at Tell es-Sultan (ancient Jericho) have shown that in the 13th century B.C. an unfortified village occupied the site. The text reads like a description of the

the seventh day you shall march around the city seven times, the priests blowing the trumpets. 5When they make a long blast with the ram's horn, as soon as you hear the sound of the trumpet, then all the people shall shout with a great shout; and the wall of the city will fall down flat, and all the people shall charge straight ahead." 6So Joshua son of Nun summoned the priests and said to them, "Take up the ark of the covenant, and have seven priests carry seven trumpets of rams' horns in front of the ark of the LORD." 7To the people he said, "Go forward and march around the city; have the armed men pass on before the ark of the LORD."

8 As Joshua had commanded the people, the seven priests carrying the seven trumpets of rams' horns before the LORD went forward, blowing the trumpets, with the ark of the covenant of the LORD following them. 9And the armed men went before the priests who blew the trumpets; the rear guard came after the ark, while the trumpets blew continually. 10To the people Joshua gave this command: "You shall not shout or let your voice be heard, nor shall you utter a word, until the day I tell you to shout. Then you shall shout." 11So the ark of the LORD went around the city, circling it once; and they came into the camp, and spent the night in the camp.

12 Then Joshua rose early in the morning, and the priests took up the ark of the LORD. 13The seven priests carrying the seven trumpets of rams' horns before the ark of the LORD passed on, blowing the trumpets continually. The armed men went before them, and the rear guard came after the ark of the LORD, while the trumpets blew continually. 14On the second day they marched around the city once and then returned to the camp. They did this for six days.

15 On the seventh day they rose early, at dawn, and marched around the city in the same manner seven times. It was only on that day that they marched around the city seven times. 16And at the seventh time, when the priests had blown the trumpets, Joshua said to the people, "Shout! For the LORD has given you the city. 17The city and all that is in it shall be devoted to the LORD for destruction. Only Rahab the prostitute and all who are with her in her house shall live because she hid the messengers we sent. 18As for you, keep away from the things devoted to destruction, so as not to covet[g] and take any of the devoted things and make the camp of Israel an object for destruction, bringing trouble upon it. 19But all silver and gold, and vessels of bronze and iron, are sacred to the LORD; they shall go into the treasury of the LORD." 20So the people shouted, and the trumpets were blown. As soon as the people heard the sound of the trumpets, they raised a great shout, and the wall fell down flat; so the people charged straight ahead into the city and captured it. 21Then they devoted to destruction by the edge of the sword all in the city, both men and women, young and old, oxen, sheep, and donkeys.

22 Joshua said to the two men who had spied out the land, "Go into the prostitute's house, and bring the woman out of it and all who belong to her, as you swore to her." 23So the young men who had been spies went in and brought Rahab out, along with her father, her mother, her brothers, and all who belonged to her—they brought all her kindred out—

*g* Gk: Heb *devote to destruction* Compare 7.21

later liturgical celebration of what must have been a conflict over the spring that watered the plains of Jericho. **6.4**: The sacred number *seven* occurs repeatedly in this chapter.

**6.15–27**: **The fall of Jericho. 17**: *Devoted . . . for destruction* is a fixed formula meaning that *the city and all that is in it* are to be separated from ordinary use by a ritual act. This text may contain memories of how warfare was conducted before the monarchy, but it is not certain that all the details found here or in Deut 20 were ever in use. The complete devastation of the city represents the radical break between the old Canaanite society and the new Israelite one.

**6.25**: *Ever since* may show that people who

and set them outside the camp of Israel. 24They burned down the city, and everything in it; only the silver and gold, and the vessels of bronze and iron, they put into the treasury of the house of the LORD. 25But Rahab the prostitute, with her family and all who belonged to her, Joshua spared. Her family[h] has lived in Israel ever since. For she hid the messengers whom Joshua sent to spy out Jericho.

26 Joshua then pronounced this oath, saying,

"Cursed before the LORD be
anyone who tries
to build this city—this Jericho!
At the cost of his firstborn he shall
lay its foundation,
and at the cost of his youngest
he shall set up its gates!"

27 So the LORD was with Joshua; and his fame was in all the land.

7 But the Israelites broke faith in regard to the devoted things: Achan son of Carmi son of Zabdi son of Zerah, of the tribe of Judah, took some of the devoted things; and the anger of the LORD burned against the Israelites.

2 Joshua sent men from Jericho to Ai, which is near Beth-aven, east of Bethel, and said to them, "Go up and spy out the land." And the men went up and spied out Ai. 3Then they returned to Joshua and said to him, "Not all the people need go up; about two or three thousand men should go up and attack Ai. Since they are so few, do not make the whole people toil up there." 4So about three thousand of the people went up there; and they fled before the men of Ai. 5The men of Ai killed about thirty-six of them, chasing them from outside the gate as far as Shebarim and killing them on the slope. The hearts of the people melted and turned to water.

6 Then Joshua tore his clothes, and fell to the ground on his face before the ark of the LORD until the evening, he and the elders of Israel; and they put dust on their heads. 7Joshua said, "Ah, Lord GOD! Why have you brought this people across the Jordan at all, to hand us over to the Amorites so as to destroy us? Would that we had been content to settle beyond the Jordan! 8O Lord, what can I say, now that Israel has turned their backs to their enemies! 9The Canaanites and all the inhabitants of the land will hear of it, and surround us, and cut off our name from the earth. Then what will you do for your great name?"

10 The LORD said to Joshua, "Stand up! Why have you fallen upon your face? 11Israel has sinned; they have transgressed my covenant that I imposed on them. They have taken some of the devoted things; they have stolen, they have acted deceitfully, and they have put them among their own belongings. 12Therefore the Israelites are unable to stand before their enemies; they turn their backs to their enemies, because they have become a thing devoted for destruction themselves. I will be with you no more, unless you destroy the devoted things from among you. 13Proceed to sanctify the people, and say, 'Sanctify yourselves

*h* Heb *She*

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claimed to be descendants of Rahab lived in Jericho at the time that this story was composed; it thus served to explain the survival of some Canaanites and their continued presence in Israel. **26**: The fulfillment of this curse is recorded in 1 Kings 16.34.

**7.1–5**: **Defeat at Ai. 1**: This verse serves to unite what were two separate events: the taking of Ai (7.2–5; 8.1–29) and the sin of Achan (7.6–26). **2**: The name Ai (modern et-Tell) means "ruin." The site, two miles east of Bethel, was uninhabited during the settlement period. This is an exaggerated account of the Israelite capture of the unwalled village that occupied the site in the early Iron Age (around 1125 B.C.). **3–5**: The cause of Israel's defeat is a too-optimistic report on Ai's defenses.

**7.6–26**: **Achan's sin. 11–13**: The LORD reveals the true cause of Israel's defeat: the theft of booty from Jericho. The assumption here is that evil done by even a single individual has effects beyond that individual's person.

for tomorrow; for thus says the LORD, the God of Israel, "There are devoted things among you, O Israel; you will be unable to stand before your enemies until you take away the devoted things from among you." 14In the morning therefore you shall come forward tribe by tribe. The tribe that the LORD takes shall come near by clans, the clan that the LORD takes shall come near by households, and the household that the LORD takes shall come near one by one. 15And the one who is taken as having the devoted things shall be burned with fire, together with all that he has, for having transgressed the covenant of the LORD, and for having done an outrageous thing in Israel.'"

16 So Joshua rose early in the morning, and brought Israel near tribe by tribe, and the tribe of Judah was taken. 17He brought near the clans of Judah, and the clan of the Zerahites was taken; and he brought near the clan of the Zerahites, family by family,[i] and Zabdi was taken. 18And he brought near his household one by one, and Achan son of Carmi son of Zabdi son of Zerah, of the tribe of Judah, was taken. 19Then Joshua said to Achan, "My son, give glory to the LORD God of Israel and make confession to him. Tell me now what you have done; do not hide it from me." 20And Achan answered Joshua, "It is true; I am the one who sinned against the LORD God of Israel. This is what I did: 21when I saw among the spoil a beautiful mantle from Shinar, and two hundred shekels of silver, and a bar of gold weighing fifty shekels, then I coveted them and took them. They now lie hidden in the ground inside my tent, with the silver underneath."

22 So Joshua sent messengers, and they ran to the tent; and there it was, hidden in his tent with the silver underneath. 23They took them out of the tent and brought them to Joshua and all the Israelites; and they spread them out before the LORD. 24Then Joshua and all Israel with him took Achan son of Zerah, with the silver, the mantle, and the bar of gold, with his sons and daughters, with his oxen, donkeys, and sheep, and his tent and all that he had; and they brought them up to the Valley of Achor. 25Joshua said, "Why did you bring trouble on us? The LORD is bringing trouble on you today." And all Israel stoned him to death; they burned them with fire, cast stones on them, 26and raised over him a great heap of stones that remains to this day. Then the LORD turned from his burning anger. Therefore that place to this day is called the Valley of Achor.[j]

8 Then the LORD said to Joshua, "Do not fear or be dismayed; take all the fighting men with you, and go up now to Ai. See, I have handed over to you the king of Ai with his people, his city, and his land. 2You shall do to Ai and its king as you did to Jericho and its king; only its spoil and its livestock you may take as booty for yourselves. Set an ambush against the city, behind it."

3 So Joshua and all the fighting men set out to go up against Ai. Joshua chose thirty thousand warriors and sent them out by night 4with the command, "You shall lie in ambush against the city, behind it; do not go very far from the city, but all of you stay alert. 5I and all the people who are with me will approach the city. When they come out against us, as before, we shall flee from them. 6They

*i* Mss Syr: MT *man by man* *j* That is *Trouble*

**7.14**: *The LORD takes,* by the casting of lots.
**16–25**: Once Achan took the booty, he set in motion a process that inevitably led to his destruction and threatened the very existence of Israel.
**7.26**: The precise location of the *Valley of Achor* is not certain; in 15.7 it describes the border between Benjamin and Judah. Achan belonged to the tribe of Judah. Originally this story may have been one symptom of the rivalry between Benjamin (Saul's tribe) and Judah (David's tribe).
**8.1–29: Victory at Ai.** This is a detailed and probable report of a military expedition. Except for a few references to God's role in the taking of the city (vv. 1, 7b, 18, 27), the account is without miraculous elements.

will come out after us until we have drawn them away from the city; for they will say, 'They are fleeing from us, as before.' While we flee from them, 7 you shall rise up from the ambush and seize the city; for the LORD your God will give it into your hand. 8 And when you have taken the city, you shall set the city on fire, doing as the LORD has ordered; see, I have commanded you." 9 So Joshua sent them out; and they went to the place of ambush, and lay between Bethel and Ai, to the west of Ai; but Joshua spent that night in the camp. [k]

10 In the morning Joshua rose early and mustered the people, and went up, with the elders of Israel, before the people to Ai. 11 All the fighting men who were with him went up, and drew near before the city, and camped on the north side of Ai, with a ravine between them and Ai. 12 Taking about five thousand men, he set them in ambush between Bethel and Ai, to the west of the city. 13 So they stationed the forces, the main encampment that was north of the city and its rear guard west of the city. But Joshua spent that night in the valley. 14 When the king of Ai saw this, he and all his people, the inhabitants of the city, hurried out early in the morning to the meeting place facing the Arabah to meet Israel in battle; but he did not know that there was an ambush against him behind the city. 15 And Joshua and all Israel made a pretense of being beaten before them, and fled in the direction of the wilderness. 16 So all the people who were in the city were called together to pursue them, and as they pursued Joshua they were drawn away from the city. 17 There was not a man left in Ai or Bethel who did not go out after Israel; they left the city open, and pursued Israel.

18 Then the LORD said to Joshua, "Stretch out the sword that is in your hand toward Ai; for I will give it into your hand." And Joshua stretched out the sword that was in his hand toward the city. 19 As soon as he stretched out his hand, the troops in ambush rose quickly out of their place and rushed forward. They entered the city, took it, and at once set the city on fire. 20 So when the men of Ai looked back, the smoke of the city was rising to the sky. They had no power to flee this way or that, for the people who fled to the wilderness turned back against the pursuers. 21 When Joshua and all Israel saw that the ambush had taken the city and that the smoke of the city was rising, then they turned back and struck down the men of Ai. 22 And the others came out from the city against them; so they were surrounded by Israelites, some on one side, and some on the other; and Israel struck them down until no one was left who survived or escaped. 23 But the king of Ai was taken alive and brought to Joshua.

24 When Israel had finished slaughtering all the inhabitants of Ai in the open wilderness where they pursued them, and when all of them to the very last had fallen by the edge of the sword, all Israel returned to Ai, and attacked it with the edge of the sword. 25 The total of those who fell that day, both men and women, was twelve thousand—all the people of Ai. 26 For Joshua did not draw back his hand, with which he stretched out the sword, until he had utterly destroyed all the inhabitants of Ai. 27 Only the livestock and the spoil of that city Israel took as their booty, according to the word of the LORD that he had issued to Joshua. 28 So Joshua burned Ai, and made it forever a heap of ruins, as it is to this day. 29 And he hanged the king of Ai on a tree until evening; and at sunset Joshua commanded, and they took his body down from the tree, threw it down at the en-

*k* Heb *among the people*

**8.9**: *Bethel,* the modern Beitin, is eleven miles north of Jerusalem. Later it became one of the principal shrines of the Northern Kingdom (1 Kings 12.28–30).

**8.26**: *Utterly destroyed,* see 6.17 n. **29**: *A great heap of stones* was a reminder that Israel acquired its land in part by force of arms (compare 4.9; 7.26; Judg 6.24; 1 Sam 6.18).

trance of the gate of the city, and raised over it a great heap of stones, which stands there to this day.

30 Then Joshua built on Mount Ebal an altar to the LORD, the God of Israel, 31just as Moses the servant of the LORD had commanded the Israelites, as it is written in the book of the law of Moses, "an altar of unhewn[l] stones, on which no iron tool has been used"; and they offered on it burnt offerings to the LORD, and sacrificed offerings of well-being. 32And there, in the presence of the Israelites, Joshua[m] wrote on the stones a copy of the law of Moses, which he had written. 33All Israel, alien as well as citizen, with their elders and officers and their judges, stood on opposite sides of the ark in front of the levitical priests who carried the ark of the covenant of the LORD, half of them in front of Mount Gerizim and half of them in front of Mount Ebal, as Moses the servant of the LORD had commanded at the first, that they should bless the people of Israel. 34And afterward he read all the words of the law, blessings and curses, according to all that is written in the book of the law. 35There was not a word of all that Moses commanded that Joshua did not read before all the assembly of Israel, and the women, and the little ones, and the aliens who resided among them.

9 Now when all the kings who were beyond the Jordan in the hill country and in the lowland all along the coast of the Great Sea toward Lebanon—the Hittites, the Amorites, the Canaanites, the Perizzites, the Hivites, and the Jebusites—heard of this, 2they gathered together with one accord to fight Joshua and Israel.

3 But when the inhabitants of Gibeon heard what Joshua had done to Jericho and to Ai, 4they on their part acted with cunning: they went and prepared provisions,[n] and took worn-out sacks for their donkeys, and wineskins, worn-out and torn and mended, 5with worn-out, patched sandals on their feet, and worn-out clothes; and all their provisions were dry and moldy. 6They went to Joshua in the camp at Gilgal, and said to him and to the Israelites, "We have come from a far country; so now make a treaty with us." 7But the Israelites said to the Hivites, "Perhaps you live among us; then how can we make a treaty with you?" 8They said to Joshua, "We are your servants." And Joshua said to them, "Who are you? And where do you come from?" 9They said to him, "Your servants have come from a very far country, because of the name of the LORD your God; for we have heard a report of him, of all that he did in Egypt, 10and of all that he did to the two kings of the Amorites who were beyond the Jordan, King Sihon of Heshbon, and King Og of Bashan who lived in Ashtaroth. 11So our elders and all the inhabitants of our country said to us, 'Take provisions in your hand for the journey; go to meet them, and say to them, "We are your servants; come now, make a treaty with us."' 12Here is our bread; it was still warm when we took it from our houses as our food for the jour-

*l* Heb *whole* *m* Heb *he* *n* Cn: Meaning of Heb uncertain

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**8.30–35: The altar on Mount Ebal.** The events narrated in ch 9 are the natural sequel to the story about the fall of Ai (note that 8.29 flows into 9.3). Traveling to Ebal required the tribes to make a twenty-mile trip from Ai to Ebal and then to retrace their steps to encamp at Gilgal (9.6). This narrative serves to portray Joshua as carrying out the command given to Moses in Deut 27.4–5 (compare 11.29–30). Joshua, who obeyed, is the foil to Achan, who did not. **30:** *Mount Ebal* is one of the two mountains (Gerizim being the other) that flank the pass of Shechem in central Canaan.

**9.1–27: The stratagem of the Gibeonites.** The Israelite settlement in Canaan sometimes advanced through peaceful means, as this story shows. **3:** *Gibeon* is the modern el-Jib, about seven miles southwest of Ai. While Gibeon was an important city in the monarchic period, there is no archaeological evidence that the site was occupied when the Israelite tribes entered the region.

**9.6:** The Gibeonites pretend to be *from a far*

ney, on the day we set out to come to you, but now, see, it is dry and moldy; 13these wineskins were new when we filled them, and see, they are burst; and these garments and sandals of ours are worn out from the very long journey." 14So the leaders[o] partook of their provisions, and did not ask direction from the LORD. 15And Joshua made peace with them, guaranteeing their lives by a treaty; and the leaders of the congregation swore an oath to them.

16 But when three days had passed after they had made a treaty with them, they heard that they were their neighbors and were living among them. 17So the Israelites set out and reached their cities on the third day. Now their cities were Gibeon, Chephirah, Beeroth, and Kiriath-jearim. 18But the Israelites did not attack them, because the leaders of the congregation had sworn to them by the LORD, the God of Israel. Then all the congregation murmured against the leaders. 19But all the leaders said to all the congregation, "We have sworn to them by the LORD, the God of Israel, and now we must not touch them. 20This is what we will do to them: We will let them live, so that wrath may not come upon us, because of the oath that we swore to them." 21The leaders said to them, "Let them live." So they became hewers of wood and drawers of water for all the congregation, as the leaders had decided concerning them.

22 Joshua summoned them, and said to them, "Why did you deceive us, saying, 'We are very far from you,' while in fact you are living among us? 23Now therefore you are cursed, and some of you shall always be slaves, hewers of wood and drawers of water for the house of my God." 24They answered Joshua, "Because it was told to your servants for a certainty that the LORD your God had commanded his servant Moses to give you all the land, and to destroy all the inhabitants of the land before you; so we were in great fear for our lives because of you, and did this thing. 25And now we are in your hand: do as it seems good and right in your sight to do to us." 26This is what he did for them: he saved them from the Israelites; and they did not kill them. 27But on that day Joshua made them hewers of wood and drawers of water for the congregation and for the altar of the LORD, to continue to this day, in the place that he should choose.

10 When King Adoni-zedek of Jerusalem heard how Joshua had taken Ai, and had utterly destroyed it, doing to Ai and its king as he had done to Jericho and its king, and how the inhabitants of Gibeon had made peace with Israel and were among them, 2he[p] became greatly frightened, because Gibeon was a large city, like one of the royal cities, and was larger than Ai, and all its men were warriors. 3So King Adoni-zedek of Jerusalem sent a message to King Hoham of Hebron, to King Piram of Jarmuth, to King Japhia of Lachish, and to King Debir of Eglon, saying, 4"Come up and help me, and let us attack Gibeon; for it has made peace with Joshua and with the Israelites." 5Then the five kings of the Amorites—the king of Jerusalem, the king of Hebron, the king of Jarmuth, the

*o* Gk: Heb *men* *p* Heb *they*

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*country* so as to take advantage of the more lenient treatment afforded to such people (Deut 20.15).

**9.16**: The Israelites discover the ruse of the Gibeonites, who readily admit their deception (vv. 24–25) because they know that Israel has to honor the pact between them (v. 20).

**9.27**: An explanation for the presence of non-Israelites in the service of Israelite sanctuaries. The story also explains the survival of some Canaanites despite the command to exterminate them. *The place that he should choose* is the way that Deuteronomy alludes to Jerusalem in its legislation (e.g. Deut 12.5, 11, 14, 18).

**10.1–43: Campaigns south of Gibeon. 1–15**: The treaty between Gibeon and Israel incited the kings of five Amorite city-states to attack Gibeon. The Gibeonites call upon their Israelite allies, and Joshua defeats the coalition. **3**: The five city-states were to the south of Gibeon. **5**: Gen 10.16 lists *Amorites* as de-

king of Lachish, and the king of Eglon—gathered their forces, and went up with all their armies and camped against Gibeon, and made war against it.

6 And the Gibeonites sent to Joshua at the camp in Gilgal, saying, "Do not abandon your servants; come up to us quickly, and save us, and help us; for all the kings of the Amorites who live in the hill country are gathered against us." 7So Joshua went up from Gilgal, he and all the fighting force with him, all the mighty warriors. 8The LORD said to Joshua, "Do not fear them, for I have handed them over to you; not one of them shall stand before you." 9So Joshua came upon them suddenly, having marched up all night from Gilgal. 10And the LORD threw them into a panic before Israel, who inflicted a great slaughter on them at Gibeon, chased them by the way of the ascent of Beth-horon, and struck them down as far as Azekah and Makkedah. 11As they fled before Israel, while they were going down the slope of Beth-horon, the LORD threw down huge stones from heaven on them as far as Azekah, and they died; there were more who died because of the hailstones than the Israelites killed with the sword.

12 On the day when the LORD gave the Amorites over to the Israelites, Joshua spoke to the LORD; and he said in the sight of Israel,

"Sun, stand still at Gibeon,
and Moon, in the valley of
Aijalon."

13 And the sun stood still, and the
moon stopped,
until the nation took vengeance
on their enemies.

Is this not written in the Book of Jashar? The sun stopped in midheaven, and did not hurry to set for about a whole day. 14There has been no day like it before or since, when the LORD heeded a human voice; for the LORD fought for Israel.

15 Then Joshua returned, and all Israel with him, to the camp at Gilgal.

16 Meanwhile, these five kings fled and hid themselves in the cave at Makkedah. 17And it was told Joshua, "The five kings have been found, hidden in the cave at Makkedah." 18Joshua said, "Roll large stones against the mouth of the cave, and set men by it to guard them; 19but do not stay there yourselves; pursue your enemies, and attack them from the rear. Do not let them enter their towns, for the LORD your God has given them into your hand." 20When Joshua and the Israelites had finished inflicting a very great slaughter on them, until they were wiped out, and when the survivors had entered into the fortified towns, 21all the people returned safe to Joshua in the camp at Makkedah; no one dared to speak[q] against any of the Israelites.

22 Then Joshua said, "Open the mouth of the cave, and bring those five kings out to me from the cave." 23They did so, and brought the five kings out to him from the cave, the king of Jerusalem, the king of Hebron, the king of Jarmuth, the king of Lachish, and the king of Eglon. 24When they brought the kings out to Joshua, Joshua summoned all the Israelites, and said to the chiefs of the warriors who had gone with him, "Come near, put your feet on the necks of these kings." Then they came near and put their feet on their necks. 25And Joshua said to them, "Do not be afraid or dismayed; be strong and courageous; for thus the LORD will do to all the enemies against whom you fight." 26Afterward Joshua struck them down and put them to death, and he hung them on five trees. And they hung on the trees until evening. 27At sunset Joshua commanded, and they took them down from the trees and threw them into the cave where they

*q* Heb *moved his tongue*

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scendants of Canaan. **11–14**: The miracle of the hailstones (v. 11) and of the sun (vv. 12–14) reflects the Israelite belief that *the LORD fought for Israel*. **13**: *The Book of Jashar*, no longer extant, appears to have been a collection of poetry that extolled Israel's military victories and heroes (compare 2 Sam 1.18).

**10.16–27**: The defeat and humiliation of

had hidden themselves; they set large stones against the mouth of the cave, which remain to this very day.

28 Joshua took Makkedah on that day, and struck it and its king with the edge of the sword; he utterly destroyed every person in it; he left no one remaining. And he did to the king of Makkedah as he had done to the king of Jericho.

29 Then Joshua passed on from Makkedah, and all Israel with him, to Libnah, and fought against Libnah. 30The LORD gave it also and its king into the hand of Israel; and he struck it with the edge of the sword, and every person in it; he left no one remaining in it; and he did to its king as he had done to the king of Jericho.

31 Next Joshua passed on from Libnah, and all Israel with him, to Lachish, and laid siege to it, and assaulted it. 32The LORD gave Lachish into the hand of Israel, and he took it on the second day, and struck it with the edge of the sword, and every person in it, as he had done to Libnah.

33 Then King Horam of Gezer came up to help Lachish; and Joshua struck him and his people, leaving him no survivors.

34 From Lachish Joshua passed on with all Israel to Eglon; and they laid siege to it, and assaulted it; 35and they took it that day, and struck it with the edge of the sword; and every person in it he utterly destroyed that day, as he had done to Lachish.

36 Then Joshua went up with all Israel from Eglon to Hebron; they assaulted it, 37and took it, and struck it with the edge of the sword, and its king and its towns, and every person in it; he left no one remaining, just as he had done to Eglon, and utterly destroyed it with every person in it.

38 Then Joshua, with all Israel, turned back to Debir and assaulted it, 39and he took it with its king and all its towns; they struck them with the edge of the sword, and utterly destroyed every person in it; he left no one remaining; just as he had done to Hebron, and, as he had done to Libnah and its king, so he did to Debir and its king.

40 So Joshua defeated the whole land, the hill country and the Negeb and the lowland and the slopes, and all their kings; he left no one remaining, but utterly destroyed all that breathed, as the LORD God of Israel commanded. 41And Joshua defeated them from Kadesh-barnea to Gaza, and all the country of Goshen, as far as Gibeon. 42Joshua took all these kings and their land at one time, because the LORD God of Israel fought for Israel. 43Then Joshua returned, and all Israel with him, to the camp at Gilgal.

**11** When King Jabin of Hazor heard of this, he sent to King Jobab of Madon, to the king of Shimron, to the king of Achshaph, 2and to the kings who were in the northern hill country, and in the Arabah south of Chinneroth, and in the lowland, and in Naphoth-dor on the west, 3to the Canaanites in the east and the west, the Amorites, the Hittites, the Perizzites, and the Jebusites in the hill country, and the Hivites under Hermon

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the five kings was complete because God assured Israel of victory (vv. 19,25). **27**: The final shape of this episode serves to explain a large heap of stones near Makkedah, whose precise location is unknown.

**10.28–39**: Archaeology does not support this summary of Joshua's southern campaign. Judg 1.8–15 ascribes the defeat of Jerusalem, Hebron, and Debir to Judah and Caleb. Most of these territories became part of Israel during the time of David and Solomon.

**10.40–43**: This summary credits Joshua for the acquisition of *the whole land*. This is a retroversion (or projection back) of the achievements of the Israelite monarchy into the premonarchic period.

**11.1–23**: **Israel's victories in the north.** **1–15**: The source of this story was probably Judg 4–5. Archaeological evidence shows that Hazor, located nine miles north of the Sea of Galilee, was destroyed in the mid–13th century. Still there may be no connection between that destruction and Joshua's campaign. **1**: The name *Jabin* occurs here and in Judg 4 and Ps 83.9. The locations of *Madon, Shimron,* and *Achshaph* are unknown. **2**: *The Arabah* is the Jordan Valley; *Chinneroth,* the Sea of Galilee.

in the land of Mizpah. 4They came out, with all their troops, a great army, in number like the sand on the seashore, with very many horses and chariots. 5All these kings joined their forces, and came and camped together at the waters of Merom, to fight with Israel.

6 And the LORD said to Joshua, "Do not be afraid of them, for tomorrow at this time I will hand over all of them, slain, to Israel; you shall hamstring their horses, and burn their chariots with fire." 7So Joshua came suddenly upon them with all his fighting force, by the waters of Merom, and fell upon them. 8And the LORD handed them over to Israel, who attacked them and chased them as far as Great Sidon and Misrephothmaim, and eastward as far as the valley of Mizpeh. They struck them down, until they had left no one remaining. 9And Joshua did to them as the LORD commanded him; he hamstrung their horses, and burned their chariots with fire.

10 Joshua turned back at that time, and took Hazor, and struck its king down with the sword. Before that time Hazor was the head of all those kingdoms. 11And they put to the sword all who were in it, utterly destroying them; there was no one left who breathed, and he burned Hazor with fire. 12And all the towns of those kings, and all their kings, Joshua took, and struck them with the edge of the sword, utterly destroying them, as Moses the servant of the LORD had commanded. 13But Israel burned none of the towns that stood on mounds except Hazor, which Joshua did burn. 14All the spoil of these towns, and the livestock, the Israelites took for their booty; but all the people they struck down with the edge of the sword, until they had destroyed them, and they did not leave any who breathed. 15As the LORD had commanded his servant Moses, so Moses commanded Joshua, and so Joshua did; he left nothing undone of all that the LORD had commanded Moses.

16 So Joshua took all that land: the hill country and all the Negeb and all the land of Goshen and the lowland and the Arabah and the hill country of Israel and its lowland, 17from Mount Halak, which rises toward Seir, as far as Baal-gad in the valley of Lebanon below Mount Hermon. He took all their kings, struck them down, and put them to death. 18Joshua made war a long time with all those kings. 19There was not a town that made peace with the Israelites, except the Hivites, the inhabitants of Gibeon; all were taken in battle. 20For it was the LORD's doing to harden their hearts so that they would come against Israel in battle, in order that they might be utterly destroyed, and might receive no mercy, but be exterminated, just as the LORD had commanded Moses.

21 At that time Joshua came and wiped out the Anakim from the hill country, from Hebron, from Debir, from Anab, and from all the hill country of Judah, and from all the hill country of Israel; Joshua utterly destroyed them with their towns. 22None of the Anakim was left in the land of the Israelites; some remained only in Gaza, in Gath, and in Ashdod. 23So Joshua took the whole land, according to all that the LORD had spoken to Moses; and Joshua gave it for an inheritance to Israel according to their tribal allotments. And the land had rest from war.

12 Now these are the kings of the land, whom the Israelites defeated, whose land they occupied beyond the Jordan toward the east, from the Wadi Arnon to Mount Hermon, with all the Arabah eastward: 2King Sihon of the Amorites who lived at Heshbon, and ruled from Aroer, which is on the edge of the Wadi Arnon, and from the middle of the valley as far as the river Jabbok, the

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**11.5**: *Merom* is a city known from extrabiblical sources; its identification is not certain.

**11.21**: *The Anakim,* a term for the pre-Israelite inhabitants of Canaan renowned for their size and strength (Deut 9.2). **23**: The final summary to be followed by the distribution of the land.

**12.1–24: A list of Israel's victories. 1–6**: Moses' exploits in Transjordan. This summary draws from Deut 2–3.

boundary of the Ammonites, that is, half of Gilead, 3and the Arabah to the Sea of Chinneroth eastward, and in the direction of Beth-jeshimoth, to the sea of the Arabah, the Dead Sea,[r] southward to the foot of the slopes of Pisgah; 4and King Og[s] of Bashan, one of the last of the Rephaim, who lived at Ashtaroth and at Edrei 5and ruled over Mount Hermon and Salecah and all Bashan to the boundary of the Geshurites and the Maacathites, and over half of Gilead to the boundary of King Sihon of Heshbon. 6Moses, the servant of the LORD, and the Israelites defeated them; and Moses the servant of the LORD gave their land for a possession to the Reubenites and the Gadites and the half-tribe of Manasseh.

7 The following are the kings of the land whom Joshua and the Israelites defeated on the west side of the Jordan, from Baal-gad in the valley of Lebanon to Mount Halak, that rises toward Seir (and Joshua gave their land to the tribes of Israel as a possession according to their allotments, 8in the hill country, in the lowland, in the Arabah, in the slopes, in the wilderness, and in the Negeb, the land of the Hittites, Amorites, Canaanites, Perizzites, Hivites, and Jebusites):

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| 9 | the king of Jericho | one |
| | the king of Ai, which is next to Bethel | one |
| 10 | the king of Jerusalem | one |
| | the king of Hebron | one |
| 11 | the king of Jarmuth | one |
| | the king of Lachish | one |
| 12 | the king of Eglon | one |
| | the king of Gezer | one |
| 13 | the king of Debir | one |
| | the king of Geder | one |
| 14 | the king of Hormah | one |
| | the king of Arad | one |
| 15 | the king of Libnah | one |
| | the king of Adullam | one |
| 16 | the king of Makkedah | one |
| | the king of Bethel | one |
| 17 | the king of Tappuah | one |
| | the king of Hepher | one |
| 18 | the king of Aphek | one |
| | the king of Lasharon | one |
| 19 | the king of Madon | one |
| | the king of Hazor | one |
| 20 | the king of Shimron-meron | one |
| | the king of Achshaph | one |
| 21 | the king of Taanach | one |
| | the king of Megiddo | one |
| 22 | the king of Kedesh | one |
| | the king of Jokneam in Carmel | one |
| 23 | the king of Dor in Naphath-dor | one |
| | the king of Goiim in Galilee,[t] | one |
| 24 | the king of Tirzah | one |

thirty-one kings in all.

13 Now Joshua was old and advanced in years; and the LORD said to him, "You are old and advanced in years, and very much of the land still remains to be possessed. 2This is the land that still remains: all the regions of the Philistines, and all those of the Geshurites 3(from the Shihor, which is east of Egypt, northward to the boundary of Ekron, it is reckoned as Canaanite; there are five rulers of the Philistines, those of Gaza, Ashdod, Ashkelon, Gath, and Ekron), and those of the Avvim 4in the south; all the land of the Canaanites, and Mearah that belongs to the Sidonians, to Aphek, to the boundary of the Amorites, 5and the land of the Gebalites, and all Lebanon, toward the east, from Baal-gad

*r* Heb *Salt Sea* *s* Gk: Heb *the boundary of King Og* *t* Gk: Heb *Gilgal*

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**12.7–24**: Joshua's victories west of the Jordan. Previous narratives mention few of these names; the list contains names of only five kings of cities located between Gibeon and Galilee. The narratives in Joshua do not describe a single battle in this region. This may show that people of this region became independent of the Canaanite regimes before the arrival of Joshua and the Israelites.

**13.1–33**: **The distribution of the land begins.** Chapters 13–21 focus exclusively on this subject. **1**: The Israelite hegemony in Canaan was not the product of a total military conquest but of a complicated and gradual process. It was completed under David. **2–4**: Israel controlled Philistia only briefly under David and Solomon.

**13.5–7**: Israel never ruled Phoenicia. **8–**

below Mount Hermon to Lebo-hamath,
6 all the inhabitants of the hill country
from Lebanon to Misrephoth-maim,
even all the Sidonians. I will myself drive
them out from before the Israelites; only
allot the land to Israel for an inheritance,
as I have commanded you. 7 Now there-
fore divide this land for an inheritance to
the nine tribes and the half-tribe of Ma-
nasseh."

8 With the other half-tribe of Manas-
seh[u] the Reubenites and the Gadites re-
ceived their inheritance, which Moses
gave them, beyond the Jordan eastward,
as Moses the servant of the LORD gave
them: 9 from Aroer, which is on the edge
of the Wadi Arnon, and the town that is
in the middle of the valley, and all the
tableland from[v] Medeba as far as Dibon;
10 and all the cities of King Sihon of the
Amorites, who reigned in Heshbon, as
far as the boundary of the Ammonites;
11 and Gilead, and the region of the Gesh-
urites and Maacathites, and all Mount
Hermon, and all Bashan to Salecah; 12 all
the kingdom of Og in Bashan, who
reigned in Ashtaroth and in Edrei (he
alone was left of the survivors of the
Rephaim); these Moses had defeated and
driven out. 13 Yet the Israelites did not
drive out the Geshurites or the Maaca-
thites; but Geshur and Maacath live
within Israel to this day.

14 To the tribe of Levi alone Moses
gave no inheritance; the offerings by fire
to the LORD God of Israel are their inheri-
tance, as he said to them.

15 Moses gave an inheritance to the
tribe of the Reubenites according to their
clans. 16 Their territory was from Aroer,
which is on the edge of the Wadi Arnon,
and the town that is in the middle of the
valley, and all the tableland by Medeba;
17 with Heshbon, and all its towns that
are in the tableland; Dibon, and Bamoth-
baal, and Beth-baal-meon, 18 and Jahaz,
and Kedemoth, and Mephaath, 19 and
Kiriathaim, and Sibmah, and Zereth-
shahar on the hill of the valley, 20 and
Beth-peor, and the slopes of Pisgah, and
Beth-jeshimoth, 21 that is, all the towns
of the tableland, and all the kingdom of
King Sihon of the Amorites, who
reigned in Heshbon, whom Moses de-
feated with the leaders of Midian, Evi
and Rekem and Zur and Hur and Reba,
as princes of Sihon, who lived in the
land. 22 Along with the rest of those they
put to death, the Israelites also put to the
sword Balaam son of Beor, who prac-
ticed divination. 23 And the border of the
Reubenites was the Jordan and its banks.
This was the inheritance of the Reuben-
ites according to their families, with their
towns and villages.

24 Moses gave an inheritance also to
the tribe of the Gadites, according to
their families. 25 Their territory was Ja-
zer, and all the towns of Gilead, and half
the land of the Ammonites, to Aroer,
which is east of Rabbah, 26 and from
Heshbon to Ramath-mizpeh and Beto-
nim, and from Mahanaim to the territory
of Debir,[w] 27 and in the valley Beth-
haram, Beth-nimrah, Succoth, and Za-
phon, the rest of the kingdom of King
Sihon of Heshbon, the Jordan and its
banks, as far as the lower end of the Sea
of Chinnereth, eastward beyond the Jor-
dan. 28 This is the inheritance of the Gad-
ites according to their clans, with their
towns and villages.

29 Moses gave an inheritance to the
half-tribe of Manasseh; it was allotted to
the half-tribe of the Manassites according

*u* Cn: Heb *With it* *v* Compare Gk: Heb lacks *from* *w* Gk Syr Vg: Heb *Lidebir*

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**32**: Israel seldom controlled this territory, though Deuteronomy considered it part of Israel (see Deut 3.12–17). In Ezek 48 the Transjordan is not part of the ideal Israel (see also Josh 22.10–34). **12**: Israel remembered *the Rephaim* as a race of giants (Deut 3.11) like the Anakim of 11.21.

**13.13**: The statement that *the Israelites did not drive out the Geshurites* . . . is the first of a series of passages in this book and in Judges, derived from an ancient source, that indicate that the conquest was less thoroughgoing than the later editors of the books as a whole would have their readers understand (15.63; 16.10; 17.12–13; Judg 1.19, 21, 27–35). **33**: On *Levi*, see ch 21.

to their families. 30Their territory extended from Mahanaim, through all Bashan, the whole kingdom of King Og of Bashan, and all the settlements of Jair, which are in Bashan, sixty towns, 31and half of Gilead, and Ashtaroth, and Edrei, the towns of the kingdom of Og in Bashan; these were allotted to the people of Machir son of Manasseh according to their clans—for half the Machirites.

32 These are the inheritances that Moses distributed in the plains of Moab, beyond the Jordan east of Jericho. 33But to the tribe of Levi Moses gave no inheritance; the LORD God of Israel is their inheritance, as he said to them.

14 These are the inheritances that the Israelites received in the land of Canaan, which the priest Eleazar, and Joshua son of Nun, and the heads of the families of the tribes of the Israelites distributed to them. 2Their inheritance was by lot, as the LORD had commanded Moses for the nine and one-half tribes. 3For Moses had given an inheritance to the two and one-half tribes beyond the Jordan; but to the Levites he gave no inheritance among them. 4For the people of Joseph were two tribes, Manasseh and Ephraim; and no portion was given to the Levites in the land, but only towns to live in, with their pasture lands for their flocks and herds. 5The Israelites did as the LORD commanded Moses; they allotted the land.

6 Then the people of Judah came to Joshua at Gilgal; and Caleb son of Jephunneh the Kenizzite said to him, "You know what the LORD said to Moses the man of God in Kadesh-barnea concerning you and me. 7I was forty years old when Moses the servant of the LORD sent me from Kadesh-barnea to spy out the land; and I brought him an honest report. 8But my companions who went up with me made the heart of the people melt; yet I wholeheartedly followed the LORD my God. 9And Moses swore on that day, saying, 'Surely the land on which your foot has trodden shall be an inheritance for you and your children forever, because you have wholeheartedly followed the LORD my God.' 10And now, as you see, the LORD has kept me alive, as he said, these forty-five years since the time that the LORD spoke this word to Moses, while Israel was journeying through the wilderness; and here I am today, eighty-five years old. 11I am still as strong today as I was on the day that Moses sent me; my strength now is as my strength was then, for war, and for going and coming. 12So now give me this hill country of which the LORD spoke on that day; for you heard on that day how the Anakim were there, with great fortified cities; it may be that the LORD will be with me, and I shall drive them out, as the LORD said."

13 Then Joshua blessed him, and gave Hebron to Caleb son of Jephunneh for an inheritance. 14So Hebron became the inheritance of Caleb son of Jephunneh the Kenizzite to this day, because he wholeheartedly followed the LORD, the God of Israel. 15Now the name of Hebron formerly was Kiriath-arba;[x] this Arba was[y] the greatest man among the Anakim. And the land had rest from war.

15 The lot for the tribe of the people of Judah according to their families reached southward to the boundary

*x* That is *the city of Arba* *y* Heb lacks *this Arba was*

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**14.1–5: Distribution of the land west of the Jordan. 4:** *The people of Joseph were two tribes*, this reckoning, with the subtraction of Levi, makes a total of twelve still. Practically, however, Simeon became absorbed in Judah (see 19.9 n.), and each half-tribe of Ephraim and Manasseh came to count as a complete tribe.

**14.6–15: Hebron, the inheritance of Caleb.** The tribe of Judah eventually absorbed the Calebites. This tradition remembers that the claims of the Calebites on this region went back to Moses (Num 13.30; 14.24). **14:** *Hebron* is twenty miles south of Jerusalem; it was here that David was anointed king of Judah (2 Sam 2.4).

**15.1–63: The territory assigned to Judah. 1–12:** The boundaries of Judah described.

of Edom, to the wilderness of Zin at the farthest south. 2 And their south boundary ran from the end of the Dead Sea,[z] from the bay that faces southward; 3 it goes out southward of the ascent of Akrabbim, passes along to Zin, and goes up south of Kadesh-barnea, along by Hezron, up to Addar, makes a turn to Karka, 4 passes along to Azmon, goes out by the Wadi of Egypt, and comes to its end at the sea. This shall be your south boundary. 5 And the east boundary is the Dead Sea,[z] to the mouth of the Jordan. And the boundary on the north side runs from the bay of the sea at the mouth of the Jordan; 6 and the boundary goes up to Beth-hoglah, and passes along north of Beth-arabah; and the boundary goes up to the Stone of Bohan, Reuben's son; 7 and the boundary goes up to Debir from the Valley of Achor, and so northward, turning toward Gilgal, which is opposite the ascent of Adummim, which is on the south side of the valley; and the boundary passes along to the waters of En-shemesh, and ends at En-rogel; 8 then the boundary goes up by the valley of the son of Hinnom at the southern slope of the Jebusites (that is, Jerusalem); and the boundary goes up to the top of the mountain that lies over against the valley of Hinnom, on the west, at the northern end of the valley of Rephaim; 9 then the boundary extends from the top of the mountain to the spring of the Waters of Nephtoah, and from there to the towns of Mount Ephron; then the boundary bends around to Baalah (that is, Kiriath-jearim); 10 and the boundary circles west of Baalah to Mount Seir, passes along to the northern slope of Mount Jearim (that is, Chesalon), and goes down to Beth-shemesh, and passes along by Timnah; 11 the boundary goes out to the slope of the hill north of Ekron, then the boundary bends around to Shikkeron, and passes along to Mount Baalah, and goes out to Jabneel; then the boundary comes to an end at the sea. 12 And the west boundary was the Mediterranean with its coast. This is the boundary surrounding the people of Judah according to their families.

13 According to the commandment of the LORD to Joshua, he gave to Caleb son of Jephunneh a portion among the people of Judah, Kiriath-arba,[a] that is, Hebron (Arba was the father of Anak). 14 And Caleb drove out from there the three sons of Anak: Sheshai, Ahiman, and Talmai, the descendants of Anak. 15 From there he went up against the inhabitants of Debir; now the name of Debir formerly was Kiriath-sepher. 16 And Caleb said, "Whoever attacks Kiriath-sepher and takes it, to him I will give my daughter Achsah as wife." 17 Othniel son of Kenaz, the brother of Caleb, took it; and he gave him his daughter Achsah as wife. 18 When she came to him, she urged him to ask her father for a field. As she dismounted from her donkey, Caleb said to her, "What do you wish?" 19 She said to him, "Give me a present; since you have set me in the land of the Negeb, give me springs of water as well." So Caleb gave her the upper springs and the lower springs.

20 This is the inheritance of the tribe of the people of Judah according to their families. 21 The towns belonging to the tribe of the people of Judah in the extreme south, toward the boundary of Edom, were Kabzeel, Eder, Jagur, 22 Kinah, Dimonah, Adadah, 23 Kedesh, Hazor, Ithnan, 24 Ziph, Telem, Bealoth, 25 Hazor-hadattah, Kerioth-hezron (that is, Hazor), 26 Amam, Shema, Moladah, 27 Hazar-gaddah, Heshmon, Beth-pelet, 28 Hazar-shual, Beer-sheba, Biziothiah, 29 Baalah, Iim, Ezem, 30 Eltolad, Chesil,

*z* Heb *Salt Sea* *a* That is *the city of Arba*

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**15.13–19:** Information about Caleb (compare 14.6–15). **16–19:** These verses are almost identical with Judg 1.11–15.

**15.20–63:** A list of Judah's towns by districts. The cities were divided into districts probably corresponding to the administrative districts of the kingdom of Judah. See 1 Kings 4.7–19 for a similar list.

Hormah, 31Ziklag, Madmannah, Sansannah, 32Lebaoth, Shilhim, Ain, and Rimmon: in all, twenty-nine towns, with their villages.

33 And in the lowland, Eshtaol, Zorah, Ashnah, 34Zanoah, En-gannim, Tappuah, Enam, 35Jarmuth, Adullam, Socoh, Azekah, 36Shaaraim, Adithaim, Gederah, Gederothaim: fourteen towns with their villages.

37 Zenan, Hadashah, Migdal-gad, 38Dilan, Mizpeh, Jokthe-el, 39Lachish, Bozkath, Eglon, 40Cabbon, Lahmam, Chitlish, 41Gederoth, Beth-dagon, Naamah, and Makkedah: sixteen towns with their villages.

42 Libnah, Ether, Ashan, 43Iphtah, Ashnah, Nezib, 44Keilah, Achzib, and Mareshah: nine towns with their villages.

45 Ekron, with its dependencies and its villages; 46from Ekron to the sea, all that were near Ashdod, with their villages.

47 Ashdod, its towns and its villages; Gaza, its towns and its villages; to the Wadi of Egypt, and the Great Sea with its coast.

48 And in the hill country, Shamir, Jattir, Socoh, 49Dannah, Kiriath-sannah (that is, Debir), 50Anab, Eshtemoh, Anim, 51Goshen, Holon, and Giloh: eleven towns with their villages.

52 Arab, Dumah, Eshan, 53Janim, Beth-tappuah, Aphekah, 54Humtah, Kiriath-arba (that is, Hebron), and Zior: nine towns with their villages.

55 Maon, Carmel, Ziph, Juttah, 56Jezreel, Jokdeam, Zanoah, 57Kain, Gibeah, and Timnah: ten towns with their villages.

58 Halhul, Beth-zur, Gedor, 59Maarath, Beth-anoth, and Eltekon: six towns with their villages.

60 Kiriath-baal (that is, Kiriath-jearim) and Rabbah: two towns with their villages.

61 In the wilderness, Beth-arabah, Middin, Secacah, 62Nibshan, the City of Salt, and En-gedi: six towns with their villages.

63 But the people of Judah could not drive out the Jebusites, the inhabitants of Jerusalem; so the Jebusites live with the people of Judah in Jerusalem to this day.

16 The allotment of the Josephites went from the Jordan by Jericho, east of the waters of Jericho, into the wilderness, going up from Jericho into the hill country to Bethel; 2then going from Bethel to Luz, it passes along to Ataroth, the territory of the Archites; 3then it goes down westward to the territory of the Japhletites, as far as the territory of Lower Beth-horon, then to Gezer, and it ends at the sea.

4 The Josephites—Manasseh and Ephraim—received their inheritance.

5 The territory of the Ephraimites by their families was as follows: the boundary of their inheritance on the east was Ataroth-addar as far as Upper Beth-horon, 6and the boundary goes from there to the sea; on the north is Michmethath; then on the east the boundary makes a turn toward Taanath-shiloh, and passes along beyond it on the east to Janoah, 7then it goes down from Janoah to Ataroth and to Naarah, and touches Jericho, ending at the Jordan. 8From Tappuah the boundary goes westward to the Wadi Kanah, and ends at the sea. Such is the inheritance of the tribe of the Ephraimites by their families, 9together with the towns that were set apart for the Ephraimites within the inheritance of the Manassites, all those towns with their villages. 10They did not, however, drive out the Canaanites who lived in Gezer: so the Canaanites have lived within Ephra-

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**16.1–17.18: The territory of the Joseph tribes.** Since the Levites did not have a specific territory assigned to them (13.14), the tribe of Joseph was able to split into the tribes of Ephraim and Manasseh, named after Joseph's two sons (Gen 41.50–52). These two tribes occupied the central hill country north of Jerusalem with Ephraim in the south and Manasseh in the north. **1–4**: The southern boundary ran from Jericho west to the Mediterranean. **5–10**: Delimitation of the boundary of Ephraim. **10**: This verse is very similar to Judg 1.29.

im to this day but have been made to do forced labor.

17 Then allotment was made to the tribe of Manasseh, for he was the firstborn of Joseph. To Machir the firstborn of Manasseh, the father of Gilead, were allotted Gilead and Bashan, because he was a warrior. 2 And allotments were made to the rest of the tribe of Manasseh, by their families, Abiezer, Helek, Asriel, Shechem, Hepher, and Shemida; these were the male descendants of Manasseh son of Joseph, by their families.

3 Now Zelophehad son of Hepher son of Gilead son of Machir son of Manasseh had no sons, but only daughters; and these are the names of his daughters: Mahlah, Noah, Hoglah, Milcah, and Tirzah. 4 They came before the priest Eleazar and Joshua son of Nun and the leaders, and said, "The LORD commanded Moses to give us an inheritance along with our male kin." So according to the commandment of the LORD he gave them an inheritance among the kinsmen of their father. 5 Thus there fell to Manasseh ten portions, besides the land of Gilead and Bashan, which is on the other side of the Jordan, 6 because the daughters of Manasseh received an inheritance along with his sons. The land of Gilead was allotted to the rest of the Manassites.

7 The territory of Manasseh reached from Asher to Michmethath, which is east of Shechem; then the boundary goes along southward to the inhabitants of En-tappuah. 8 The land of Tappuah belonged to Manasseh, but the town of Tappuah on the boundary of Manasseh belonged to the Ephraimites. 9 Then the boundary went down to the Wadi Kanah. The towns here, to the south of the wadi, among the towns of Manasseh, belong to Ephraim. Then the boundary of Manasseh goes along the north side of the wadi and ends at the sea. 10 The land to the south is Ephraim's and that to the north is Manasseh's, with the sea forming its boundary; on the north Asher is reached, and on the east Issachar. 11 Within Issachar and Asher, Manasseh had Beth-shean and its villages, Ibleam and its villages, the inhabitants of Dor and its villages, the inhabitants of En-dor and its villages, the inhabitants of Taanach and its villages, and the inhabitants of Megiddo and its villages (the third is Naphath).[b] 12 Yet the Manassites could not take possession of those towns; but the Canaanites continued to live in that land. 13 But when the Israelites grew strong, they put the Canaanites to forced labor, but did not utterly drive them out.

14 The tribe of Joseph spoke to Joshua, saying, "Why have you given me but one lot and one portion as an inheritance, since we are a numerous people, whom all along the LORD has blessed?" 15 And Joshua said to them, "If you are a numerous people, go up to the forest, and clear ground there for yourselves in the land of the Perizzites and the Rephaim, since the hill country of Ephraim is too narrow for you." 16 The tribe of Joseph said, "The hill country is not enough for us; yet all the Canaanites who live in the plain have chariots of iron, both those in Beth-shean and its villages and those in the Valley of Jezreel." 17 Then Joshua said to the house of Joseph, to Ephraim and Manasseh, "You are indeed a numerous people, and have great power; you shall not have one lot only, 18 but the hill country shall be yours, for though it is a forest, you shall clear it and possess it to its farthest borders; for you shall drive out

*b* Meaning of Heb uncertain

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**17.1–6**: Arrangements for the clans of Manasseh. **2**: *The rest of the tribe,* those who had not already settled east of the Jordan (13.29–31). **7–13**: Delimitation of the boundary of Manasseh.

**17.11–13**: These verses are closely parallel to Judg 1.27–28. **14–18**: The Joseph tribes demand and receive a double portion. **16**: The *Jezreel Valley* that ran from the Carmel range east to the Jordan was not under Israelite control. *Beth-Shean* is located in the southeast corner of the Jezreel Valley. According to this verse and Judg 1.27 Israel did not take this city. It did not fall into Israelite hands until the time of David and Solomon.

the Canaanites, though they have chariots of iron, and though they are strong."

18 Then the whole congregation of the Israelites assembled at Shiloh, and set up the tent of meeting there. The land lay subdued before them.

2 There remained among the Israelites seven tribes whose inheritance had not yet been apportioned. 3So Joshua said to the Israelites, "How long will you be slack about going in and taking possession of the land that the LORD, the God of your ancestors, has given you? 4Provide three men from each tribe, and I will send them out that they may begin to go throughout the land, writing a description of it with a view to their inheritances. Then come back to me. 5They shall divide it into seven portions, Judah continuing in its territory on the south, and the house of Joseph in their territory on the north. 6You shall describe the land in seven divisions and bring the description here to me; and I will cast lots for you here before the LORD our God. 7The Levites have no portion among you, for the priesthood of the LORD is their heritage; and Gad and Reuben and the half-tribe of Manasseh have received their inheritance beyond the Jordan eastward, which Moses the servant of the LORD gave them."

8 So the men started on their way; and Joshua charged those who went to write the description of the land, saying, "Go throughout the land and write a description of it, and come back to me; and I will cast lots for you here before the LORD in Shiloh." 9So the men went and traversed the land and set down in a book a description of it by towns in seven divisions; then they came back to Joshua in the camp at Shiloh, 10and Joshua cast lots for them in Shiloh before the LORD; and there Joshua apportioned the land to the Israelites, to each a portion.

11 The lot of the tribe of Benjamin according to its families came up, and the territory allotted to it fell between the tribe of Judah and the tribe of Joseph. 12On the north side their boundary began at the Jordan; then the boundary goes up to the slope of Jericho on the north, then up through the hill country westward; and it ends at the wilderness of Beth-aven. 13From there the boundary passes along southward in the direction of Luz, to the slope of Luz (that is, Bethel), then the boundary goes down to Ataroth-addar, on the mountain that lies south of Lower Beth-horon. 14Then the boundary goes in another direction, turning on the western side southward from the mountain that lies to the south, opposite Beth-horon, and it ends at Kiriath-baal (that is, Kiriath-jearim), a town belonging to the tribe of Judah. This forms the western side. 15The southern side begins at the outskirts of Kiriath-jearim; and the boundary goes from there to Ephron,[c] to the spring of the Waters of Nephtoah; 16then the boundary goes down to the border of the mountain that overlooks the valley of the son of Hinnom, which is at the north end of the valley of Rephaim; and it then goes down the valley of Hinnom, south of the slope of the Jebusites, and downward to En-rogel; 17then it bends in a northerly direction going on to En-shemesh, and from there goes to Geliloth, which is opposite the ascent of Adummim; then it goes down to the Stone of Bohan, Reuben's son; 18and passing on to the north of the slope of Beth-arabah[d] it goes down to the Arabah; 19then the boundary passes on to the north of the slope of Beth-hoglah; and the boundary ends at the northern bay of the Dead Sea,[e] at the south end of the Jordan: this is the southern border. 20The Jordan forms its

*c* Cn See 15.9. Heb *westward the slope over against the Arabah*
*d* Gk: Heb *to*
*e* Heb *Salt Sea*

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**18.1–19.51: The territory of other tribes. 1–10:** General introduction to the allotment. **1:** *Shiloh,* an important Israelite sanctuary in the period before the monarchy (Judg 18.31; 1 Sam 4.3–4). It is twenty miles north of Jerusalem.

**18.11–18:** The territory of Benjamin is immediately north of Judah.

boundary on the eastern side. This is the inheritance of the tribe of Benjamin, according to its families, boundary by boundary all around.

21 Now the towns of the tribe of Benjamin according to their families were Jericho, Beth-hoglah, Emek-keziz, 22 Beth-arabah, Zemaraim, Bethel, 23 Avvim, Parah, Ophrah, 24 Chephar-ammoni, Ophni, and Geba—twelve towns with their villages: 25 Gibeon, Ramah, Beeroth, 26 Mizpeh, Chephirah, Mozah, 27 Rekem, Irpeel, Taralah, 28 Zela, Haeleph, Jebus[f] (that is, Jerusalem), Gibeah[g] and Kiriath-jearim[h]—fourteen towns with their villages. This is the inheritance of the tribe of Benjamin according to its families.

19 The second lot came out for Simeon, for the tribe of Simeon, according to its families; its inheritance lay within the inheritance of the tribe of Judah. 2 It had for its inheritance Beer-sheba, Sheba, Moladah, 3 Hazar-shual, Balah, Ezem, 4 Eltolad, Bethul, Hormah, 5 Ziklag, Beth-marcaboth, Hazar-susah, 6 Beth-lebaoth, and Sharuhen—thirteen towns with their villages; 7 Ain, Rimmon, Ether, and Ashan—four towns with their villages; 8 together with all the villages all around these towns as far as Baalath-beer, Ramah of the Negeb. This was the inheritance of the tribe of Simeon according to its families. 9 The inheritance of the tribe of Simeon formed part of the territory of Judah; because the portion of the tribe of Judah was too large for them, the tribe of Simeon obtained an inheritance within their inheritance.

10 The third lot came up for the tribe of Zebulun, according to its families. The boundary of its inheritance reached as far as Sarid; 11 then its boundary goes up westward, and on to Maralah, and touches Dabbesheth, then the wadi that is east of Jokneam; 12 from Sarid it goes in the other direction eastward toward the sunrise to the boundary of Chisloth-tabor; from there it goes to Daberath, then up to Japhia; 13 from there it passes along on the east toward the sunrise to Gath-hepher, to Eth-kazin, and going on to Rimmon it bends toward Neah; 14 then on the north the boundary makes a turn to Hannathon, and it ends at the valley of Iphtah-el; 15 and Kattath, Nahalal, Shimron, Idalah, and Bethlehem—twelve towns with their villages. 16 This is the inheritance of the tribe of Zebulun, according to its families—these towns with their villages.

17 The fourth lot came out for Issachar, for the tribe of Issachar, according to its families. 18 Its territory included Jezreel, Chesulloth, Shunem, 19 Hapharaim, Shion, Anaharath, 20 Rabbith, Kishion, Ebez, 21 Remeth, En-gannim, En-haddah, Beth-pazzez; 22 the boundary also touches Tabor, Shahazumah, and Beth-shemesh, and its boundary ends at the Jordan—sixteen towns with their villages. 23 This is the inheritance of the tribe of Issachar, according to its families—the towns with their villages.

24 The fifth lot came out for the tribe of Asher according to its families. 25 Its boundary included Helkath, Hali, Beten, Achshaph, 26 Allammelech, Amad, and Mishal; on the west it touches Carmel and Shihor-libnath, 27 then it turns eastward, goes to Beth-dagon, and touches Zebulun and the valley of Iphtah-el northward to Beth-emek and Neiel; then it continues in the north to Cabul, 28 Ebron, Rehob, Hammon, Kanah, as far as Great Sidon; 29 then the boundary turns to Ramah, reaching to the fortified city of Tyre; then the boundary turns to Hosah, and it ends at the sea; Mahalab,[i] Achzib, 30 Ummah, Aphek,

*f* Gk Syr Vg: Heb *the Jebusite* *g* Heb *Gibeath*
*h* Gk: Heb *Kiriath* *i* Cn Compare Gk: Heb *Mehebel*

**19.1–9**: The territory of Simeon. **9**: A rationalization for the incorporation of Simeon into Judah.

**19.10–48**: The territory of the tribes in Galilee. **10–16**: Zebulun. **17–23**: Issachar.

**19.24–31**: Asher. The list includes some Phoenician cities like Tyre (v. 29) that were never under Israelite control.

and Rehob—twenty-two towns with their villages. 31 This is the inheritance of the tribe of Asher according to its families—these towns with their villages.

32 The sixth lot came out for the tribe of Naphtali, for the tribe of Naphtali, according to its families. 33 And its boundary ran from Heleph, from the oak in Zaanannim, and Adami-nekeb, and Jabneel, as far as Lakkum; and it ended at the Jordan; 34 then the boundary turns westward to Aznoth-tabor, and goes from there to Hukkok, touching Zebulun at the south, and Asher on the west, and Judah on the east at the Jordan. 35 The fortified towns are Ziddim, Zer, Hammath, Rakkath, Chinnereth, 36 Adamah, Ramah, Hazor, 37 Kedesh, Edrei, Enhazor, 38 Iron, Migdal-el, Horem, Beth-anath, and Beth-shemesh—nineteen towns with their villages. 39 This is the inheritance of the tribe of Naphtali according to its families—the towns with their villages.

40 The seventh lot came out for the tribe of Dan, according to its families. 41 The territory of its inheritance included Zorah, Eshtaol, Ir-shemesh, 42 Shaalabbin, Aijalon, Ithlah, 43 Elon, Timnah, Ekron, 44 Eltekeh, Gibbethon, Baalath, 45 Jehud, Bene-berak, Gath-rimmon, 46 Me-jarkon, and Rakkon at the border opposite Joppa. 47 When the territory of the Danites was lost to them, the Danites went up and fought against Leshem, and after capturing it and putting it to the sword, they took possession of it and settled in it, calling Leshem, Dan, after their ancestor Dan. 48 This is the inheritance of the tribe of Dan, according to their families—these towns with their villages.

49 When they had finished distributing the several territories of the land as inheritances, the Israelites gave an inheritance among them to Joshua son of Nun. 50 By command of the LORD they gave him the town that he asked for, Timnath-serah in the hill country of Ephraim; he rebuilt the town, and settled in it.

51 These are the inheritances that the priest Eleazar and Joshua son of Nun and the heads of the families of the tribes of the Israelites distributed by lot at Shiloh before the LORD, at the entrance of the tent of meeting. So they finished dividing the land.

20 Then the LORD spoke to Joshua, saying, 2 "Say to the Israelites, 'Appoint the cities of refuge, of which I spoke to you through Moses, 3 so that anyone who kills a person without intent or by mistake may flee there; they shall be for you a refuge from the avenger of blood. 4 The slayer shall flee to one of these cities and shall stand at the entrance of the gate of the city, and explain the case to the elders of that city; then the fugitive shall be taken into the city, and given a place, and shall remain with them. 5 And if the avenger of blood is in pursuit, they shall not give up the slayer, because the neighbor was killed by mistake, there having been no enmity between them before. 6 The slayer shall remain in that city until there is a trial before the congregation, until the death of the one who is high priest at the time: then the slayer may return home, to the town in which the deed was done.' "

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**19.32–39**: Naphtali.

**19.40–48**: Dan. Ancient tradition located Dan in the south. **47**: Sometime before the time of the monarchy the Danites migrated to the north (see Judg 18). Judg 18.27 refers to *Leshem* as Laish. **49–51**: Conclusion. **49–50**: Joshua's personal allotment. **50**: *Timnath-serah* is identified with Khirbet Tibnah, seventeen miles southwest of Shechem.

**20.1–9**: **Joshua named cities of refuge** that provided the right of asylum for one accused of murder until the case was adjudicated. The passage shows how Joshua fulfilled what God had commanded Moses (Num 35.9–34) and Moses commanded Israel (Deut 19.1–13). **3**: *The avenger of blood* was the deceased's nearest relative. **4**: *The gate of the city* was where *the elders* of the city met to adjudicate disputes. Such gates were enclosed structures of more than one story with several rooms.

7 So they set apart Kedesh in Galilee
in the hill country of Naphtali, and She-
chem in the hill country of Ephraim, and
Kiriath-arba (that is, Hebron) in the hill
country of Judah. 8 And beyond the Jor-
dan east of Jericho, they appointed Bezer
in the wilderness on the tableland, from
the tribe of Reuben, and Ramoth in Gile-
ad, from the tribe of Gad, and Golan in
Bashan, from the tribe of Manasseh.
9 These were the cities designated for all
the Israelites, and for the aliens residing
among them, that anyone who killed a
person without intent could flee there, so
as not to die by the hand of the avenger
of blood, until there was a trial before the
congregation.

21 Then the heads of the families of
the Levites came to the priest Ele-
azar and to Joshua son of Nun and to the
heads of the families of the tribes of the
Israelites; 2 they said to them at Shiloh in
the land of Canaan, "The LORD com-
manded through Moses that we be given
towns to live in, along with their pasture
lands for our livestock." 3 So by com-
mand of the LORD the Israelites gave to
the Levites the following towns and pas-
ture lands out of their inheritance.

4 The lot came out for the families of
the Kohathites. So those Levites who
were descendants of Aaron the priest re-
ceived by lot thirteen towns from the
tribes of Judah, Simeon, and Benjamin.

5 The rest of the Kohathites received
by lot ten towns from the families of the
tribe of Ephraim, from the tribe of Dan,
and the half-tribe of Manasseh.

6 The Gershonites received by lot
thirteen towns from the families of the
tribe of Issachar, from the tribe of Asher,
from the tribe of Naphtali, and from the
half-tribe of Manasseh in Bashan.

7 The Merarites according to their
families received twelve towns from the
tribe of Reuben, the tribe of Gad, and the
tribe of Zebulun.

8 These towns and their pasture lands
the Israelites gave by lot to the Levites,
as the LORD had commanded through
Moses.

9 Out of the tribe of Judah and the
tribe of Simeon they gave the following
towns mentioned by name, 10 which
went to the descendants of Aaron, one of
the families of the Kohathites who be-
longed to the Levites, since the lot fell to
them first. 11 They gave them Kiriath-
arba (Arba being the father of Anak),
that is Hebron, in the hill country of Ju-
dah, along with the pasture lands around
it. 12 But the fields of the town and its
villages had been given to Caleb son of
Jephunneh as his holding.

13 To the descendants of Aaron the
priest they gave Hebron, the city of ref-
uge for the slayer, with its pasture lands,
Libnah with its pasture lands, 14 Jattir
with its pasture lands, Eshtemoa with its
pasture lands, 15 Holon with its pasture
lands, Debir with its pasture lands, 16 Ain
with its pasture lands, Juttah with its pas-
ture lands, and Beth-shemesh with its
pasture lands—nine towns out of these
two tribes. 17 Out of the tribe of Benja-
min: Gibeon with its pasture lands, Geba
with its pasture lands, 18 Anathoth with
its pasture lands, and Almon with its pas-
ture lands—four towns. 19 The towns of
the descendants of Aaron—the priests—
were thirteen in all, with their pasture
lands.

20 As to the rest of the Kohathites
belonging to the Kohathite families of
the Levites, the towns allotted to them
were out of the tribe of Ephraim. 21 To
them were given Shechem, the city of
refuge for the slayer, with its pasture
lands in the hill country of Ephraim, Ge-
zer with its pasture lands, 22 Kibzaim
with its pasture lands, and Beth-horon
with its pasture lands—four towns.
23 Out of the tribe of Dan: Elteke with its
pasture lands, Gibbethon with its pasture

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**21.1–42: The levitical cities.** Unlike previous statements in this book (13.14,33) that assert that the Levites received no land of their own, here (and in Num 35.1–8) the Levites receive forty-eight cities with the surrounding land for grazing. Most of the cities listed were not settled until 8th century.

lands, 24 Aijalon with its pasture lands, Gath-rimmon with its pasture lands—four towns. 25 Out of the half-tribe of Manasseh: Taanach with its pasture lands, and Gath-rimmon with its pasture lands—two towns. 26 The towns of the families of the rest of the Kohathites were ten in all, with their pasture lands.

27 To the Gershonites, one of the families of the Levites, were given out of the half-tribe of Manasseh, Golan in Bashan with its pasture lands, the city of refuge for the slayer, and Beeshterah with its pasture lands—two towns. 28 Out of the tribe of Issachar: Kishion with its pasture lands, Daberath with its pasture lands, 29 Jarmuth with its pasture lands, En-gannim with its pasture lands—four towns. 30 Out of the tribe of Asher: Mishal with its pasture lands, Abdon with its pasture lands, 31 Helkath with its pasture lands, and Rehob with its pasture lands—four towns. 32 Out of the tribe of Naphtali: Kedesh in Galilee with its pasture lands, the city of refuge for the slayer, Hammoth-dor with its pasture lands, and Kartan with its pasture lands—three towns. 33 The towns of the several families of the Gershonites were in all thirteen, with their pasture lands.

34 To the rest of the Levites—the Merarite families—were given out of the tribe of Zebulun: Jokneam with its pasture lands, Kartah with its pasture lands, 35 Dimnah with its pasture lands, Nahalal with its pasture lands—four towns. 36 Out of the tribe of Reuben: Bezer with its pasture lands, Jahzah with its pasture lands, 37 Kedemoth with its pasture lands, and Mephaath with its pasture lands—four towns. 38 Out of the tribe of Gad: Ramoth in Gilead with its pasture lands, the city of refuge for the slayer, Mahanaim with its pasture lands, 39 Heshbon with its pasture lands, Jazer with its pasture lands—four towns in all. 40 As for the towns of the several Merarite families, that is, the remainder of the families of the Levites, those allotted to them were twelve in all.

41 The towns of the Levites within the holdings of the Israelites were in all forty-eight towns with their pasture lands. 42 Each of these towns had its pasture lands around it; so it was with all these towns.

43 Thus the LORD gave to Israel all the land that he swore to their ancestors that he would give them; and having taken possession of it, they settled there. 44 And the LORD gave them rest on every side just as he had sworn to their ancestors; not one of all their enemies had withstood them, for the LORD had given all their enemies into their hands. 45 Not one of all the good promises that the LORD had made to the house of Israel had failed; all came to pass.

22 Then Joshua summoned the Reubenites, the Gadites, and the half-tribe of Manasseh, 2 and said to them, "You have observed all that Moses the servant of the LORD commanded you, and have obeyed me in all that I have commanded you; 3 you have not forsaken your kindred these many days, down to this day, but have been careful to keep the charge of the LORD your God. 4 And now the LORD your God has given rest to your kindred, as he promised them; therefore turn and go to your tents in the land where your possession lies, which Moses the servant of the LORD gave you on the other side of the Jordan. 5 Take good care to observe the commandment and instruction that Moses the servant of the LORD commanded you, to love the LORD your God, to walk in all his ways, to keep his commandments, and to hold fast to him, and to serve him with all your heart and with all your soul." 6 So Joshua blessed them and sent them away, and they went to their tents.

7 Now to the one half of the tribe of Manasseh Moses had given a possession in Bashan; but to the other half Joshua

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**21.43–45: Another summary.** This conclusion to the whole of the preceding material is couched in the language of Deuteronomy.

**22.1–34: The Transjordanian tribes.** The ties binding the tribes together were not firm. Joshua's style of leadership helped to

had given a possession beside their fellow Israelites in the land west of the Jordan. And when Joshua sent them away to their tents and blessed them, 8he said to them, "Go back to your tents with much wealth, and with very much livestock, with silver, gold, bronze, and iron, and with a great quantity of clothing; divide the spoil of your enemies with your kindred." 9So the Reubenites and the Gadites and the half-tribe of Manasseh returned home, parting from the Israelites at Shiloh, which is in the land of Canaan, to go to the land of Gilead, their own land of which they had taken possession by command of the LORD through Moses.

10 When they came to the region[j] near the Jordan that lies in the land of Canaan, the Reubenites and the Gadites and the half-tribe of Manasseh built there an altar by the Jordan, an altar of great size. 11The Israelites heard that the Reubenites and the Gadites and the half-tribe of Manasseh had built an altar at the frontier of the land of Canaan, in the region[k] near the Jordan, on the side that belongs to the Israelites. 12And when the people of Israel heard of it, the whole assembly of the Israelites gathered at Shiloh, to make war against them.

13 Then the Israelites sent the priest Phinehas son of Eleazar to the Reubenites and the Gadites and the half-tribe of Manasseh, in the land of Gilead, 14and with him ten chiefs, one from each of the tribal families of Israel, every one of them the head of a family among the clans of Israel. 15They came to the Reubenites, the Gadites, and the half-tribe of Manasseh, in the land of Gilead, and they said to them, 16"Thus says the whole congregation of the LORD, 'What is this treachery that you have committed against the God of Israel in turning away today from following the LORD, by building yourselves an altar today in rebellion against the LORD? 17Have we not had enough of the sin at Peor from which even yet we have not cleansed ourselves, and for which a plague came upon the congregation of the LORD, 18that you must turn away today from following the LORD! If you rebel against the LORD today, he will be angry with the whole congregation of Israel tomorrow. 19But now, if your land is unclean, cross over into the LORD's land where the LORD's tabernacle now stands, and take for yourselves a possession among us; only do not rebel against the LORD, or rebel against us[l] by building yourselves an altar other than the altar of the LORD our God. 20Did not Achan son of Zerah break faith in the matter of the devoted things, and wrath fell upon all the congregation of Israel? And he did not perish alone for his iniquity!' "

21 Then the Reubenites, the Gadites, and the half-tribe of Manasseh said in answer to the heads of the families of Israel, 22"The LORD, God of gods! The LORD, God of gods! He knows; and let Israel itself know! If it was in rebellion or in breach of faith toward the LORD, do not spare us today 23for building an altar to turn away from following the LORD; or if we did so to offer burnt offerings or grain offerings or offerings of well-being on it, may the LORD himself take vengeance. 24No! We did it from fear that in time to come your children might say to our children, 'What have you to do with the LORD, the God of Israel? 25For the LORD has made the Jordan a boundary between us and you, you Reubenites and Gadites; you have no portion in the

*j* Or *to Geliloth* *k* Or *at Geliloth*
*l* Or *make rebels of us*

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solve intertribal disputes, but such conflicts were a continuing problem. The issue here is the locus of legitimate worship, a central concern of Deuteronomy.

**22.9–34**: The central role of *Phineas* in dealing with this conflict may show that priestly circles edited this story. **12**: Holding strictly to the Deuteronomic law that forbade the offering of sacrifice anywhere except in the one central sanctuary (Deut 12.13,14), the other tribes apparently interpret the building of the altar as an act of disloyalty to Israel

LORD.' So your children might make our children cease to worship the LORD. 26Therefore we said, 'Let us now build an altar, not for burnt offering, nor for sacrifice, 27but to be a witness between us and you, and between the generations after us, that we do perform the service of the LORD in his presence with our burnt offerings and sacrifices and offerings of well-being; so that your children may never say to our children in time to come, "You have no portion in the LORD."' 28And we thought, If this should be said to us or to our descendants in time to come, we could say, 'Look at this copy of the altar of the LORD, which our ancestors made, not for burnt offerings, nor for sacrifice, but to be a witness between us and you.' 29Far be it from us that we should rebel against the LORD, and turn away this day from following the LORD by building an altar for burnt offering, grain offering, or sacrifice, other than the altar of the LORD our God that stands before his tabernacle!"

30 When the priest Phinehas and the chiefs of the congregation, the heads of the families of Israel who were with him, heard the words that the Reubenites and the Gadites and the Manassites spoke, they were satisfied. 31The priest Phinehas son of Eleazar said to the Reubenites and the Gadites and the Manassites, "Today we know that the LORD is among us, because you have not committed this treachery against the LORD; now you have saved the Israelites from the hand of the LORD."

32 Then the priest Phinehas son of Eleazar and the chiefs returned from the Reubenites and the Gadites in the land of Gilead to the land of Canaan, to the Israelites, and brought back word to them. 33The report pleased the Israelites; and the Israelites blessed God and spoke no more of making war against them, to destroy the land where the Reubenites and the Gadites were settled. 34The Reubenites and the Gadites called the altar Witness;[m] "For," said they, "it is a witness between us that the LORD is God."

23 A long time afterward, when the LORD had given rest to Israel from all their enemies all around, and Joshua was old and well advanced in years, 2Joshua summoned all Israel, their elders and heads, their judges and officers, and said to them, "I am now old and well advanced in years; 3and you have seen all that the LORD your God has done to all these nations for your sake, for it is the LORD your God who has fought for you. 4I have allotted to you as an inheritance for your tribes those nations that remain, along with all the nations that I have already cut off, from the Jordan to the Great Sea in the west. 5The LORD your God will push them back before you, and drive them out of your sight; and you shall possess their land, as the LORD your God promised you. 6Therefore be very steadfast to observe and do all that is written in the book of the law of Moses, turning aside from it neither to the right nor to the left, 7so that you may not be mixed with these nations left here among you, or make mention of the names of their gods, or swear by them, or serve them, or bow yourselves down to them, 8but hold fast to the LORD your God, as you have done to this day. 9For the LORD has driven out before you great and strong nations; and as for you, no one has been able to withstand you to this day. 10One of you puts to flight a thousand, since it is the LORD your God who fights for you, as he promised you. 11Be very careful, therefore, to love the

*m* Cn Compare Syr: Heb lacks *Witness*

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and to its God, and therefore prepare *to make war against them.* **17**: *The sin at Peor,* Num 25.3–5.

**22.20**: *Achan,* 7.1. **26–27**: It was not a real altar, but merely a memorial, *a witness.*

**23.1–16**: **Joshua's farewell admonitions.** Like other important leaders of Israel (Jacob, Gen 49; Moses, Deut 29–31; Samuel, 1 Sam 12; David, 1 Kings 2.1–9), Joshua delivers an address at the end of his life. Its tone is Deuteronomistic, stressing the fulfillment of God's promises and the need for Israel's obedience. This may have been the original ending of the book.

LORD your God. 12For if you turn back and join the survivors of these nations left here among you, and intermarry with them, so that you marry their women and they yours, 13know assuredly that the LORD your God will not continue to drive out these nations before you; but they shall be a snare and a trap for you, a scourge on your sides, and thorns in your eyes, until you perish from this good land that the LORD your God has given you.

14 "And now I am about to go the way of all the earth, and you know in your hearts and souls, all of you, that not one thing has failed of all the good things that the LORD your God promised concerning you; all have come to pass for you, not one of them has failed. 15But just as all the good things that the LORD your God promised concerning you have been fulfilled for you, so the LORD will bring upon you all the bad things, until he has destroyed you from this good land that the LORD your God has given you. 16If you transgress the covenant of the LORD your God, which he enjoined on you, and go and serve other gods and bow down to them, then the anger of the LORD will be kindled against you, and you shall perish quickly from the good land that he has given to you."

24 Then Joshua gathered all the tribes of Israel to Shechem, and summoned the elders, the heads, the judges, and the officers of Israel; and they presented themselves before God. 2And Joshua said to all the people, "Thus says the LORD, the God of Israel: Long ago your ancestors—Terah and his sons Abraham and Nahor—lived beyond the Euphrates and served other gods. 3Then I took your father Abraham from beyond the River and led him through all the land of Canaan and made his offspring many. I gave him Isaac; 4and to Isaac I gave Jacob and Esau. I gave Esau the hill country of Seir to possess, but Jacob and his children went down to Egypt. 5Then I sent Moses and Aaron, and I plagued Egypt with what I did in its midst; and afterwards I brought you out. 6When I brought your ancestors out of Egypt, you came to the sea; and the Egyptians pursued your ancestors with chariots and horsemen to the Red Sea.[n] 7When they cried out to the LORD, he put darkness between you and the Egyptians, and made the sea come upon them and cover them; and your eyes saw what I did to Egypt. Afterwards you lived in the wilderness a long time. 8Then I brought you to the land of the Amorites, who lived on the other side of the Jordan; they fought with you, and I handed them over to you, and you took possession of their land, and I destroyed them before you. 9Then King Balak son of Zippor of Moab, set out to fight against Israel. He sent and invited Balaam son of Beor to curse you, 10but I would not listen to Balaam; therefore he blessed you; so I rescued you out of his hand. 11When you went over the Jordan and came to Jericho, the citizens of Jericho fought against you, and also the Amorites, the Perizzites, the Canaanites, the Hittites, the Girgashites, the Hivites, and the Jebusites; and I handed them over to you. 12I sent the hornet[o] ahead of you, which drove out before you the two kings of the Amorites; it was not by your sword or by your bow. 13I gave you a land on

*n* Or *Sea of Reeds*

*o* Meaning of Heb uncertain

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**24.1–28: The covenant at Shechem.** Joshua fulfills the commands of Moses in Deut 11, 27, 31. All Israel unite under Joshua's leadership in the service of the LORD. **1**: *Shechem* (Tell Balata) became an important Israelite cultic and political center. It was one of the few major cities in Canaan not described as destroyed by the Israelites. Apparently it was incorporated into Israel peacefully. Early Israel then was a confederation of originally disparate groups unrelated by blood or common experience. **2–13**: This summary of God's actions on Israel's behalf does not mention Sinai or the divine guidance in the wilderness.

**24.9–11**: This text reflects a different memory of the Balaam incident (Num 22) and the fall of Jericho (Josh 6).

which you had not labored, and towns that you had not built, and you live in them; you eat the fruit of vineyards and oliveyards that you did not plant.

14 "Now therefore revere the LORD, and serve him in sincerity and in faithfulness; put away the gods that your ancestors served beyond the River and in Egypt, and serve the LORD. 15Now if you are unwilling to serve the LORD, choose this day whom you will serve, whether the gods your ancestors served in the region beyond the River or the gods of the Amorites in whose land you are living; but as for me and my household, we will serve the LORD."

16 Then the people answered, "Far be it from us that we should forsake the LORD to serve other gods; 17for it is the LORD our God who brought us and our ancestors up from the land of Egypt, out of the house of slavery, and who did those great signs in our sight. He protected us along all the way that we went, and among all the peoples through whom we passed; 18and the LORD drove out before us all the peoples, the Amorites who lived in the land. Therefore we also will serve the LORD, for he is our God."

19 But Joshua said to the people, "You cannot serve the LORD, for he is a holy God. He is a jealous God; he will not forgive your transgressions or your sins. 20If you forsake the LORD and serve foreign gods, then he will turn and do you harm, and consume you, after having done you good." 21And the people said to Joshua, "No, we will serve the LORD!" 22Then Joshua said to the people, "You are witnesses against yourselves that you have chosen the LORD, to serve him." And they said, "We are witnesses." 23He said, "Then put away the foreign gods that are among you, and incline your hearts to the LORD, the God of Israel." 24The people said to Joshua, "The LORD our God we will serve, and him we will obey." 25So Joshua made a covenant with the people that day, and made statutes and ordinances for them at Shechem. 26Joshua wrote these words in the book of the law of God; and he took a large stone, and set it up there under the oak in the sanctuary of the LORD. 27Joshua said to all the people, "See, this stone shall be a witness against us; for it has heard all the words of the LORD that he spoke to us; therefore it shall be a witness against you, if you deal falsely with your God." 28So Joshua sent the people away to their inheritances.

29 After these things Joshua son of Nun, the servant of the LORD, died, being one hundred ten years old. 30They buried him in his own inheritance at Timnath-serah, which is in the hill country of Ephraim, north of Mount Gaash.

31 Israel served the LORD all the days of Joshua, and all the days of the elders who outlived Joshua and had known all the work that the LORD did for Israel.

32 The bones of Joseph, which the Israelites had brought up from Egypt, were buried at Shechem, in the portion of ground that Jacob had bought from the children of Hamor, the father of Shechem, for one hundred pieces of money;[p] it became an inheritance of the descendants of Joseph.

33 Eleazar son of Aaron died; and they buried him at Gibeah, the town of his son Phinehas, which had been given him in the hill country of Ephraim.

*p* Heb *one hundred qesitah*

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**24.29–33**: **Final notes. 29–31**: Joshua's death and burial. **32**: Joseph was reburied (see Gen 33.19; 50.25; Ex 13.19). **33**: The burial of Eleazar, a priest associated with Joshua (14.1).

# *Judges*

This book tells the story of a period of transition for the Israelite tribes. The age of the great leaders of the past was gone. Both Moses and Joshua were dead. The age of the greatness under the rule of David was yet to come. Israel had leaders in this transitional period, but they were not like Moses, Joshua, or David. The judges were courageous, but they had their fears. Even their attitudes toward the God of Israel were not entirely commendable.

This is also the story of a new community emerging from disparate groups that were trying to create an entirely new pattern of life for their people. This new community was to be one in which all citizens had an equal range of opportunities. The Israelites rejected the absolutism of the Canaanite city-states with their oppressive political and social systems. This new people living in the highlands of central Canaan would serve only the LORD. The book of Judges shows that the creation of this new society was an immense struggle. In the midst of revolutionary social upheaval, the Israelites found support in their belief that they were ruled by the LORD who took the side of the lowly against their oppressors.

The traditional name of this book is The Book of Judges. Outside the introduction (2.16–19), however, the title "judge" appears only once and then it refers to the LORD (11.27). The human protagonists of these stories appear as servants of the LORD. To fulfill their task they receive "the spirit of the LORD" that leads them to exert great power in effecting the divine will as they lead in battle against the enemies of Israel. After defeating those enemies, the judges continued to exercise civil duties among their several clans and tribes.

This book is really a composite work, dealing with several clan and tribal heroes. The inclusion of their stories in the collection transforms these local champions into national figures. The hand of the Deuteronomistic editor is evident primarily in the texts that join one story with another. At one point this collection became part of a larger work that told the story of Israel in its land: the Deuteronomistic History (see pp. 267–269 OT). The author of that history found the stories of the judges illustrative of an important principle of the larger work: Israel's future is a product of the loyalty that Israel owes to its LORD.

1 After the death of Joshua, the Israelites inquired of the LORD, "Who shall go up first for us against the Canaanites, to fight against them?" 2The LORD said, "Judah shall go up. I hereby give the land into his hand." 3Judah said to his brother Simeon, "Come up with me into the territory allotted to me, that we may fight against the Canaanites; then I too will go with you into the territory allotted to you." So Simeon went with him. 4Then Judah went up and the LORD gave the Canaanites and the Perizzites into their hand; and they defeated ten thousand of them at Bezek. 5They came upon Adoni-bezek at Bezek, and fought against him, and defeated the Canaanites and the Perizzites. 6Adoni-bezek fled; but they pursued him, and caught him, and cut off his thumbs and big toes. 7Adoni-bezek said, "Seventy kings with their thumbs and big toes cut off used to pick up scraps under my table; as I have done, so God has paid me back." They brought him to Jerusalem, and he died there.

8 Then the people of Judah fought against Jerusalem and took it. They put it to the sword and set the city on fire. 9Afterward the people of Judah went down to fight against the Canaanites who lived in the hill country, in the Negeb, and in the lowland. 10Judah went against the Canaanites who lived in Hebron (the name of Hebron was formerly Kiriath-arba); and they defeated Sheshai and Ahiman and Talmai.

11 From there they went against the inhabitants of Debir (the name of Debir was formerly Kiriath-sepher). 12Then Caleb said, "Whoever attacks Kiriath-sepher and takes it, I will give him my daughter Achsah as wife." 13And Othniel son of Kenaz, Caleb's younger brother, took it; and he gave him his daughter Achsah as wife. 14When she came to him, she urged him to ask her father for a field. As she dismounted from her donkey, Caleb said to her, "What do you wish?" 15She said to him, "Give me a present; since you have set me in the land of the Negeb, give me also Gulloth-mayim."[a] So Caleb gave her Upper Gulloth and Lower Gulloth.

16 The descendants of Hobab[b] the Kenite, Moses' father-in-law, went up with the people of Judah from the city of palms into the wilderness of Judah, which lies in the Negeb near Arad. Then they went and settled with the Amalekites.[c] 17Judah went with his brother Simeon, and they defeated the Canaanites who inhabited Zephath, and devoted it to destruction. So the city was called Hormah. 18Judah took Gaza with its territory, Ashkelon with its territory, and Ekron with its territory. 19The LORD was

*a* That is *Basins of Water* *b* Gk: Heb lacks *Hobab* *c* See 1 Sam 15.6: Heb *people*

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**1.1–2.5: The period of the judges.** Israel's acquisition of the land was incomplete because of its failures to obey the LORD's commands. The story of the judges details the effects of Israel's failures and how the LORD dealt with those failures.

**1.1–21**: The military conquest in the south (compare Josh 15) was not completely successful because of the Canaanite superiority in armaments. **3**: The tribe of *Judah* in time absorbed *Simeon*, a tribe that played no significant role in the later history of Israel (see Josh 19.9 n.). **4**: The location of *Bezek* is uncertain, though Khirbet Ibzik seventeen miles north of Shechem is a possibility.

**1.8**: *Jerusalem* is not an Israelite city in its only other appearance in Judges (19.10; see Josh 15.63). It was David who brought Jerusalem into the Israelite orbit (2 Sam 5.6–9). **10**: *Hebron*, twenty miles south of Jerusalem. The continuous occupation of the area has made it impossible to locate the remains of the Bronze and Iron Age city. **11–15**: Josh 15.13–19. **11**: The identification of *Debir* with Tell Beit Mirsim is not certain; Khirbet er-Rabud is another possibility.

**1.16**: The Kenites were travelling smiths. *The city of palms* is probably Jericho (as in 3.13). **17**: The name *Hormah* derives from the Hebrew "ḥerem," the total destruction of a city and its inhabitants (see Josh 6.17 n.). **18**: *Gaza. . . Ashkelon . . . Ekron* were three of the five principal cities of the Philistine confederation (see 14.19 n.). It was David who captured these Philistine cities. The Septuagint asserts that Judah did not capture these cities.

with Judah, and he took possession of the hill country, but could not drive out the inhabitants of the plain, because they had chariots of iron. 20 Hebron was given to Caleb, as Moses had said; and he drove out from it the three sons of Anak. 21 But the Benjaminites did not drive out the Jebusites who lived in Jerusalem; so the Jebusites have lived in Jerusalem among the Benjaminites to this day.

22 The house of Joseph also went up against Bethel; and the LORD was with them. 23 The house of Joseph sent out spies to Bethel (the name of the city was formerly Luz). 24 When the spies saw a man coming out of the city, they said to him, "Show us the way into the city, and we will deal kindly with you." 25 So he showed them the way into the city; and they put the city to the sword, but they let the man and all his family go. 26 So the man went to the land of the Hittites and built a city, and named it Luz; that is its name to this day.

27 Manasseh did not drive out the inhabitants of Beth-shean and its villages, or Taanach and its villages, or the inhabitants of Dor and its villages, or the inhabitants of Ibleam and its villages, or the inhabitants of Megiddo and its villages; but the Canaanites continued to live in that land. 28 When Israel grew strong, they put the Canaanites to forced labor, but did not in fact drive them out.

29 And Ephraim did not drive out the Canaanites who lived in Gezer; but the Canaanites lived among them in Gezer.

30 Zebulun did not drive out the inhabitants of Kitron, or the inhabitants of Nahalol; but the Canaanites lived among them, and became subject to forced labor.

31 Asher did not drive out the inhabitants of Acco, or the inhabitants of Sidon, or of Ahlab, or of Achzib, or of Helbah, or of Aphik, or of Rehob; 32 but the Asherites lived among the Canaanites, the inhabitants of the land; for they did not drive them out.

33 Naphtali did not drive out the inhabitants of Beth-shemesh, or the inhabitants of Beth-anath, but lived among the Canaanites, the inhabitants of the land; nevertheless the inhabitants of Beth-shemesh and of Beth-anath became subject to forced labor for them.

34 The Amorites pressed the Danites back into the hill country; they did not allow them to come down to the plain. 35 The Amorites continued to live in Harheres, in Aijalon, and in Shaalbim, but the hand of the house of Joseph rested heavily on them, and they became subject to forced labor. 36 The border of the Amorites ran from the ascent of Akrabbim, from Sela and upward.

2 Now the angel of the LORD went up from Gilgal to Bochim, and said, "I brought you up from Egypt, and brought you into the land that I had promised to your ancestors. I said, 'I will never break my covenant with you. 2 For your part, do not make a covenant with the inhabitants of this land; tear down their altars.' But you have not obeyed my command. See what you have done! 3 So now I say, I will not drive them out before you; but they shall become adversaries[d] to you, and their gods shall be a snare to you." 4 When the angel of the LORD spoke these words to all the Israelites, the people lifted up their voices and wept. 5 So they named that place Bochim,[e] and there they sacrificed to the LORD.

6 When Joshua dismissed the people,

*d* OL Vg Compare Gk: Heb *sides* *e* That is *Weepers*

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**1.22–29**: The achievements of the Joseph tribes located in the central highlands north of Jerusalem (compare Josh chs 16–17). **30–36**: The achievements of the tribes of Galilee (Josh chs 18–19).

**2.1–5**: Israel did not do as the LORD ordered and so it will suffer. **1**: *The angel of the LORD* is a way of speaking about an appearance of God (compare Gen 16.7). *Bochim* occurs nowhere else in the Hebrew Bible; the Septuagint reads Bethel.

**2.6–3.6**: **Israel under the judges.** When good leaders die, the apostasy that they suppressed in Israel thrives again.

**2.6–10**: With the death of Joshua, Israel is bereft of the leadership that insured its fidelity

the Israelites all went to their own inheritances to take possession of the land. 7The people worshiped the LORD all the days of Joshua, and all the days of the elders who outlived Joshua, who had seen all the great work that the LORD had done for Israel. 8Joshua son of Nun, the servant of the LORD, died at the age of one hundred ten years. 9So they buried him within the bounds of his inheritance in Timnath-heres, in the hill country of Ephraim, north of Mount Gaash. 10Moreover, that whole generation was gathered to their ancestors, and another generation grew up after them, who did not know the LORD or the work that he had done for Israel.

11 Then the Israelites did what was evil in the sight of the LORD and worshiped the Baals; 12and they abandoned the LORD, the God of their ancestors, who had brought them out of the land of Egypt; they followed other gods, from among the gods of the peoples who were all around them, and bowed down to them; and they provoked the LORD to anger. 13They abandoned the LORD, and worshiped Baal and the Astartes. 14So the anger of the LORD was kindled against Israel, and he gave them over to plunderers who plundered them, and he sold them into the power of their enemies all around, so that they could no longer withstand their enemies. 15Whenever they marched out, the hand of the LORD was against them to bring misfortune, as the LORD had warned them and sworn to them; and they were in great distress.

16 Then the LORD raised up judges, who delivered them out of the power of those who plundered them. 17Yet they did not listen even to their judges; for they lusted after other gods and bowed down to them. They soon turned aside from the way in which their ancestors had walked, who had obeyed the commandments of the LORD; they did not follow their example. 18Whenever the LORD raised up judges for them, the LORD was with the judge, and he delivered them from the hand of their enemies all the days of the judge; for the LORD would be moved to pity by their groaning because of those who persecuted and oppressed them. 19But whenever the judge died, they would relapse and behave worse than their ancestors, following other gods, worshiping them and bowing down to them. They would not drop any of their practices or their stubborn ways. 20So the anger of the LORD was kindled against Israel; and he said, "Because this people have transgressed my covenant that I commanded their ancestors, and have not obeyed my voice, 21I will no longer drive out before them any of the nations that Joshua left when he died." 22In order to test Israel, whether or not they would take care to walk in the way of the LORD as their ancestors did, 23the LORD had left those nations, not driving them out at once, and had not handed them over to Joshua.

3 Now these are the nations that the LORD left to test all those in Israel who had no experience of any war in Canaan 2(it was only that successive generations of Israelites might know war, to teach those who had no experience of it before): 3the five lords of the Philistines, and all the Canaanites, and the Sidonians, and the Hivites who lived on Mount Lebanon, from Mount Baal-hermon as far as Lebo-hamath. 4They were for the testing of Israel, to know whether Israel would obey the commandments of the LORD, which he commanded their ancestors by Moses. 5So the Israelites lived among the Canaanites, the Hittites, the

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to the LORD (see also Josh 24.29–31). **13**: *Baal* was the principal Canaanite deity. Fertility was his concern, so the service of this god was a constant temptation in an agrarian society like Israel. *Astarte* was the consort of Baal in the form of the fertility cult adopted by some Israelites.

**2.16–19**: The *judges* were leaders of the tribal militia whose victories gave them a principal role in the government of their tribes during their lifetime.

**3.1–6**: Marriage outside the Israelite community leads to weakening of Israel's bonds with the LORD.

Amorites, the Perizzites, the Hivites, and the Jebusites; [6] and they took their daughters as wives for themselves, and their own daughters they gave to their sons; and they worshiped their gods.

7 The Israelites did what was evil in the sight of the LORD, forgetting the LORD their God, and worshiping the Baals and the Asherahs. [8] Therefore the anger of the LORD was kindled against Israel, and he sold them into the hand of King Cushan-rishathaim of Aram-naharaim; and the Israelites served Cushan-rishathaim eight years. [9] But when the Israelites cried out to the LORD, the LORD raised up a deliverer for the Israelites, who delivered them, Othniel son of Kenaz, Caleb's younger brother. [10] The spirit of the LORD came upon him, and he judged Israel; he went out to war, and the LORD gave King Cushan-rishathaim of Aram into his hand; and his hand prevailed over Cushan-rishathaim. [11] So the land had rest forty years. Then Othniel son of Kenaz died.

12 The Israelites again did what was evil in the sight of the LORD; and the LORD strengthened King Eglon of Moab against Israel, because they had done what was evil in the sight of the LORD. [13] In alliance with the Ammonites and the Amalekites, he went and defeated Israel; and they took possession of the city of palms. [14] So the Israelites served King Eglon of Moab eighteen years.

15 But when the Israelites cried out to the LORD, the LORD raised up for them a deliverer, Ehud son of Gera, the Benjaminite, a left-handed man. The Israelites sent tribute by him to King Eglon of Moab. [16] Ehud made for himself a sword with two edges, a cubit in length; and he fastened it on his right thigh under his clothes. [17] Then he presented the tribute to King Eglon of Moab. Now Eglon was a very fat man. [18] When Ehud had finished presenting the tribute, he sent the people who carried the tribute on their way. [19] But he himself turned back at the sculptured stones near Gilgal, and said, "I have a secret message for you, O king." So the king said,[f] "Silence!" and all his attendants went out from his presence. [20] Ehud came to him, while he was sitting alone in his cool roof chamber, and said, "I have a message from God for you." So he rose from his seat. [21] Then Ehud reached with his left hand, took the sword from his right thigh, and thrust it into Eglon's[g] belly; [22] the hilt also went in after the blade, and the fat closed over the blade, for he did not draw the sword out of his belly; and the dirt came out.[h] [23] Then Ehud went out into the vestibule,[i] and closed the doors of the roof chamber on him, and locked them.

24 After he had gone, the servants came. When they saw that the doors of the roof chamber were locked, they thought, "He must be relieving himself[j] in the cool chamber." [25] So they waited until they were embarrassed. When he still did not open the doors of the roof chamber, they took the key and opened them. There was their lord lying dead on the floor.

26 Ehud escaped while they delayed, and passed beyond the sculptured stones, and escaped to Seirah. [27] When he arrived, he sounded the trumpet in the hill country of Ephraim; and the Israelites went down with him from the hill country, having him at their head. [28] He said

*f* Heb *he said* *g* Heb *his* *h* With Tg Vg: Meaning of Heb uncertain *i* Meaning of Heb uncertain *j* Heb *covering his feet*

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**3.7–11: Othniel.** The hero of 1.12–15 appears here as a deliverer who defeated *Cushan-rishathaim* (Cushan "Double Trouble") of Aram "of the Two Rivers" (eastern Syria). **7:** *Asherah* was another female deity associated with Baal. **10:** *The spirit of the* LORD empowered Othniel. **11:** A type of editorial formula that occurs repeatedly in the book (see v. 30; 5.31; 8.28).

**3.12–30: Ehud.** The story of a Benjaminite hero who assassinated Eglon, the king of Moab, and delivered his tribe from Eglon's service. **12:** Moab, the country immediately east of the Dead Sea. **13:** *The city of palms,* Jericho. **19:** *Stones near Gilgal,* compare Josh 4.20.

to them, "Follow after me; for the LORD has given your enemies the Moabites into your hand." So they went down after him, and seized the fords of the Jordan against the Moabites, and allowed no one to cross over. 29At that time they killed about ten thousand of the Moabites, all strong, able-bodied men; no one escaped. 30So Moab was subdued that day under the hand of Israel. And the land had rest eighty years.

31 After him came Shamgar son of Anath, who killed six hundred of the Philistines with an oxgoad. He too delivered Israel.

4 The Israelites again did what was evil in the sight of the LORD, after Ehud died. 2So the LORD sold them into the hand of King Jabin of Canaan, who reigned in Hazor; the commander of his army was Sisera, who lived in Harosheth-ha-goiim. 3Then the Israelites cried out to the LORD for help; for he had nine hundred chariots of iron, and had oppressed the Israelites cruelly twenty years.

4 At that time Deborah, a prophetess, wife of Lappidoth, was judging Israel. 5She used to sit under the palm of Deborah between Ramah and Bethel in the hill country of Ephraim; and the Israelites came up to her for judgment. 6She sent and summoned Barak son of Abinoam from Kedesh in Naphtali, and said to him, "The LORD, the God of Israel, commands you, 'Go, take position at Mount Tabor, bringing ten thousand from the tribe of Naphtali and the tribe of Zebulun. 7I will draw out Sisera, the general of Jabin's army, to meet you by the Wadi Kishon with his chariots and his troops; and I will give him into your hand.' " 8Barak said to her, "If you will go with me, I will go; but if you will not go with me, I will not go." 9And she said, "I will surely go with you; nevertheless, the road on which you are going will not lead to your glory, for the LORD will sell Sisera into the hand of a woman." Then Deborah got up and went with Barak to Kedesh. 10Barak summoned Zebulun and Naphtali to Kedesh; and ten thousand warriors went up behind him; and Deborah went up with him.

11 Now Heber the Kenite had separated from the other Kenites, [k] that is, the descendants of Hobab the father-in-law of Moses, and had encamped as far away as Elon-bezaanannim, which is near Kedesh.

12 When Sisera was told that Barak son of Abinoam had gone up to Mount Tabor, 13Sisera called out all his chariots, nine hundred chariots of iron, and all the troops who were with him, from Harosheth-ha-goiim to the Wadi Kishon. 14Then Deborah said to Barak, "Up! For this is the day on which the LORD has given Sisera into your hand. The LORD is indeed going out before you." So Barak went down from Mount Tabor with ten thousand warriors following him. 15And the LORD threw Sisera and all his chariots and all his army

*k* Heb *from the Kain*

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**3.31: Shamgar.** This brief reference to Shamgar occurs here because the story of Deborah that follows mentions him (5.6). *The Philistines,* see 13.1 n.

**4.1–5.31: Deborah.** The prose story in ch 4 complements the older poetic account in ch 5. **4.2:** *Jabin* (see Josh 11.1; compare Ps 83.9) plays no direct role in this story. His title as *King . . . of Canaan* is inaccurate; Josh 11 calls him "king of Hazor." *Hazor* was an important city in Galilee because of its proximity to trade routes; it is nine miles north of the Sea of Galilee. *Sisera* is not a Semitic name. He may have been a Philistine in the service of Jabin. **3:** The number of chariots is unusually high and reflects the hopelessness of the situation. Such equipment gave the Canaanites an overwhelming advantage in battles waged on level ground, since the Israelites did not have chariot forces. **6:** *Mount Tabor* (1850 ft.) is a lone mountain standing in the northeast corner of the Jezreel Valley. **7:** The *Wadi Kishon* is a stream that flows westward through the Jezreel Valley that runs from the Carmel range to the Jordan. **10:** *Zebulun and Naphtali* are two tribes from Galilee. **11:** The *Kenites,* see 1.16 n.

into a panic[l] before Barak; Sisera got down from his chariot and fled away on foot, [16]while Barak pursued the chariots and the army to Harosheth-ha-goiim. All the army of Sisera fell by the sword; no one was left.

17 Now Sisera had fled away on foot to the tent of Jael wife of Heber the Kenite; for there was peace between King Jabin of Hazor and the clan of Heber the Kenite. [18]Jael came out to meet Sisera, and said to him, "Turn aside, my lord, turn aside to me; have no fear." So he turned aside to her into the tent, and she covered him with a rug. [19]Then he said to her, "Please give me a little water to drink; for I am thirsty." So she opened a skin of milk and gave him a drink and covered him. [20]He said to her, "Stand at the entrance of the tent, and if anybody comes and asks you, 'Is anyone here?' say, 'No.' " [21]But Jael wife of Heber took a tent peg, and took a hammer in her hand, and went softly to him and drove the peg into his temple, until it went down into the ground—he was lying fast asleep from weariness—and he died. [22]Then, as Barak came in pursuit of Sisera, Jael went out to meet him, and said to him, "Come, and I will show you the man whom you are seeking." So he went into her tent; and there was Sisera lying dead, with the tent peg in his temple.

23 So on that day God subdued King Jabin of Canaan before the Israelites. [24]Then the hand of the Israelites bore harder and harder on King Jabin of Canaan, until they destroyed King Jabin of Canaan.

5 Then Deborah and Barak son of Abinoam sang on that day, saying:

2 "When locks are long in Israel,
when the people offer
themselves willingly—
bless[m] the LORD!

3 "Hear, O kings; give ear,
O princes;
to the LORD I will sing,
I will make melody to the
LORD, the God of Israel.

4 "LORD, when you went out from
Seir,
when you marched from the
region of Edom,
the earth trembled,
and the heavens poured,
the clouds indeed poured water.
5 The mountains quaked before the
LORD, the One of Sinai,
before the LORD, the God of
Israel.

6 "In the days of Shamgar son of
Anath,
in the days of Jael, caravans
ceased
and travelers kept to the
byways.
7 The peasantry prospered in Israel,
they grew fat on plunder,
because you arose, Deborah,
arose as a mother in Israel.
8 When new gods were chosen,
then war was in the gates.
Was shield or spear to be seen
among forty thousand in Israel?
9 My heart goes out to the
commanders of Israel
who offered themselves
willingly among the people.
Bless the LORD.

10 "Tell of it, you who ride on white
donkeys,
you who sit on rich carpets[n]
and you who walk by the way.

*l* Heb adds *to the sword*; compare verse 16
*m* Or *You who offer yourselves willingly among the people, bless* *n* Meaning of Heb uncertain

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**5.2–31**: The Song of Deborah may be the oldest part of the Hebrew Bible; it is also one of the most obscure. The poem celebrates the LORD's victory over Sisera, won because of a sudden downpour that made it impossible for chariots to maneuver. **4**: *From Seir . . . Edom.* The God who comes from the barren regions of the southeast showed an ability to give rain.

11 To the sound of musicians[o] at the watering places,
there they repeat the triumphs of the LORD,
the triumphs of his peasantry in Israel.

"Then down to the gates marched the people of the LORD.

12 "Awake, awake, Deborah!
Awake, awake, utter a song!
Arise, Barak, lead away your captives,
O son of Abinoam.
13 Then down marched the remnant of the noble;
the people of the LORD marched down for him[p] against the mighty.
14 From Ephraim they set out[q] into the valley,[r]
following you, Benjamin, with your kin;
from Machir marched down the commanders,
and from Zebulun those who bear the marshal's staff;
15 the chiefs of Issachar came with Deborah,
and Issachar faithful to Barak;
into the valley they rushed out at his heels.
Among the clans of Reuben
there were great searchings of heart.
16 Why did you tarry among the sheepfolds,
to hear the piping for the flocks?
Among the clans of Reuben
there were great searchings of heart.
17 Gilead stayed beyond the Jordan;
and Dan, why did he abide with the ships?
Asher sat still at the coast of the sea,
settling down by his landings.
18 Zebulun is a people that scorned death;
Naphtali too, on the heights of the field.

19 "The kings came, they fought;
then fought the kings of Canaan,
at Taanach, by the waters of Megiddo;
they got no spoils of silver.
20 The stars fought from heaven,
from their courses they fought against Sisera.
21 The torrent Kishon swept them away,
the onrushing torrent, the torrent Kishon.
March on, my soul, with might!

22 "Then loud beat the horses' hoofs
with the galloping, galloping of his steeds.

23 "Curse Meroz, says the angel of the LORD,
curse bitterly its inhabitants,
because they did not come to the help of the LORD,
to the help of the LORD against the mighty.

24 "Most blessed of women be Jael,
the wife of Heber the Kenite,
of tent-dwelling women most blessed.
25 He asked water and she gave him milk,
she brought him curds in a lordly bowl.

*o* Meaning of Heb uncertain *p* Gk: Heb *me*
*q* Cn: Heb *From Ephraim their root* *r* Gk: Heb *in Amalek*

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**5.15–17**: *Reuben* . . . *Gilead* (Gad) . . . *Dan* and *Asher* do not join the battle. The tribes of Judah, Simeon, and Levi receive no mention in the poem. **19**: *Tanaach* . . . *Megiddo* were two large cities that guarded the northern approaches to passes through Mount Carmel. **23**: *Meroz* was a nearby Israelite village that did not join in the battle. **24–27**: A non-Israelite woman delivered the mortal blow to Sisera.

26 She put her hand to the tent peg
and her right hand to the
workmen's mallet;
she struck Sisera a blow,
she crushed his head,
she shattered and pierced his
temple.
27 He sank, he fell,
he lay still at her feet;
at her feet he sank, he fell;
where he sank, there he fell
dead.

28 "Out of the window she peered,
the mother of Sisera gazed[s]
through the lattice:
'Why is his chariot so long in
coming?
Why tarry the hoofbeats of his
chariots?'
29 Her wisest ladies make answer,
indeed, she answers the question
herself:
30 'Are they not finding and dividing
the spoil?—
A girl or two for every man;
spoil of dyed stuffs for Sisera,
spoil of dyed stuffs
embroidered,
two pieces of dyed work
embroidered for my neck as
spoil?'

31 "So perish all your enemies,
O LORD!
But may your friends be like the
sun as it rises in its might."

And the land had rest forty years.

6 The Israelites did what was evil in the sight of the LORD, and the LORD gave them into the hand of Midian seven years. 2The hand of Midian prevailed over Israel; and because of Midian the Israelites provided for themselves hiding places in the mountains, caves and strongholds. 3For whenever the Israelites put in seed, the Midianites and the Amalekites and the people of the east would come up against them. 4They would encamp against them and destroy the produce of the land, as far as the neighborhood of Gaza, and leave no sustenance in Israel, and no sheep or ox or donkey. 5For they and their livestock would come up, and they would even bring their tents, as thick as locusts; neither they nor their camels could be counted; so they wasted the land as they came in. 6Thus Israel was greatly impoverished because of Midian; and the Israelites cried out to the LORD for help.

7 When the Israelites cried to the LORD on account of the Midianites, 8the LORD sent a prophet to the Israelites; and he said to them, "Thus says the LORD, the God of Israel: I led you up from Egypt, and brought you out of the house of slavery; 9and I delivered you from the hand of the Egyptians, and from the hand of all who oppressed you, and drove them out before you, and gave you their land; 10and I said to you, 'I am

*s* Gk Compare Tg: Heb *exclaimed*

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**5.28–31**: The final scene is a poignant description of the conflicting emotions felt by the women who awaited the return of the Canaanite army.

**6.1–8.35**: **Gideon.** A hero of the tribe of Manasseh ends the oppression of his tribe by the Midianites, who were confiscating the food necessary for the survival of the people. The assumption behind this story is that the LORD guides the destinies of nations and tribes. This insures the fulfillment of the divine will despite the intentions of human participants in these events.

**6.1–40**: Gideon's call. **2–6**: The plight of the Israelite peasants. Behind this text may be the harvest-season taxes imposed on peasants by groups with the military power to make such impositions. **2**: *Midian* was among the descendants of Abraham (Gen 25.2–4; 1 Chr 1.32–33). **3**: *The Amalekites* were among the tribes descended from Esau (Gen 36.12). *The people of the east* had a role in prophetic oracles (see Isa 11.14; Jer 49.28; Ezek 25.1–10). **4**: *Gaza,* a Philistine city forty-five miles south of Jaffa. **5**: The first appearance of the domesticated camel in the Bible. **11–24**: A message from the LORD. The story about the establishment of a Yahwistic shrine at Ophrah (vv. 11a, 18–24) frames the commissioning of Gideon to be a military leader (vv.11b–17).

**6.11**: *The angel of the LORD,* see 2.1 n. *Abiezrite,* Josh 17.2; 1 Chr 7.18.

the LORD your God; you shall not pay reverence to the gods of the Amorites, in whose land you live.' But you have not given heed to my voice."

11 Now the angel of the LORD came and sat under the oak at Ophrah, which belonged to Joash the Abiezrite, as his son Gideon was beating out wheat in the wine press, to hide it from the Midianites. 12The angel of the LORD appeared to him and said to him, "The LORD is with you, you mighty warrior." 13Gideon answered him, "But sir, if the LORD is with us, why then has all this happened to us? And where are all his wonderful deeds that our ancestors recounted to us, saying, 'Did not the LORD bring us up from Egypt?' But now the LORD has cast us off, and given us into the hand of Midian." 14Then the LORD turned to him and said, "Go in this might of yours and deliver Israel from the hand of Midian; I hereby commission you." 15He responded, "But sir, how can I deliver Israel? My clan is the weakest in Manasseh, and I am the least in my family." 16The LORD said to him, "But I will be with you, and you shall strike down the Midianites, every one of them." 17Then he said to him, "If now I have found favor with you, then show me a sign that it is you who speak with me. 18Do not depart from here until I come to you, and bring out my present, and set it before you." And he said, "I will stay until you return."

19 So Gideon went into his house and prepared a kid, and unleavened cakes from an ephah of flour; the meat he put in a basket, and the broth he put in a pot, and brought them to him under the oak and presented them. 20The angel of God said to him, "Take the meat and the unleavened cakes, and put them on this rock, and pour out the broth." And he did so. 21Then the angel of the LORD reached out the tip of the staff that was in his hand, and touched the meat and the unleavened cakes; and fire sprang up from the rock and consumed the meat and the unleavened cakes; and the angel of the LORD vanished from his sight. 22Then Gideon perceived that it was the angel of the LORD; and Gideon said, "Help me, Lord GOD! For I have seen the angel of the LORD face to face." 23But the LORD said to him, "Peace be to you; do not fear, you shall not die." 24Then Gideon built an altar there to the LORD, and called it, The LORD is peace. To this day it still stands at Ophrah, which belongs to the Abiezrites.

25 That night the LORD said to him, "Take your father's bull, the second bull seven years old, and pull down the altar of Baal that belongs to your father, and cut down the sacred pole[t] that is beside it; 26and build an altar to the LORD your God on the top of the stronghold here, in proper order; then take the second bull, and offer it as a burnt offering with the wood of the sacred pole[t] that you shall cut down." 27So Gideon took ten of his servants, and did as the LORD had told him; but because he was too afraid of his family and the townspeople to do it by day, he did it by night.

28 When the townspeople rose early in the morning, the altar of Baal was broken down, and the sacred pole[t] beside it was cut down, and the second bull was offered on the altar that had been built. 29So they said to one another, "Who has done this?" After searching and inquiring, they were told, "Gideon son of Joash did it." 30Then the townspeople said to Joash, "Bring out your son, so that he may die, for he has pulled down the altar of Baal and cut down the sacred pole[t] beside it." 31But Joash said to all who were arrayed against him, "Will you contend for Baal? Or will you defend his cause? Whoever contends for him shall be put to death by morning. If he is a god, let him contend for himself,

*t* Heb *Asherah*

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**6.25–32:** Gideon's Yahwistic credentials. Gideon became identified with Jerubbaal, the head of a clan that ruled Shechem (9.1–2). Gideon's destruction of an altar to Baal made it possible to give an orthodox etymology to the name *Jerubbaal*. **25:** *Baal*, see 2.13 n.

because his altar has been pulled down." 32Therefore on that day Gideon[u] was called Jerubbaal, that is to say, "Let Baal contend against him," because he pulled down his altar.

33 Then all the Midianites and the Amalekites and the people of the east came together, and crossing the Jordan they encamped in the Valley of Jezreel. 34But the spirit of the LORD took possession of Gideon; and he sounded the trumpet, and the Abiezrites were called out to follow him. 35He sent messengers throughout all Manasseh, and they too were called out to follow him. He also sent messengers to Asher, Zebulun, and Naphtali, and they went up to meet them.

36 Then Gideon said to God, "In order to see whether you will deliver Israel by my hand, as you have said, 37I am going to lay a fleece of wool on the threshing floor; if there is dew on the fleece alone, and it is dry on all the ground, then I shall know that you will deliver Israel by my hand, as you have said." 38And it was so. When he rose early next morning and squeezed the fleece, he wrung enough dew from the fleece to fill a bowl with water. 39Then Gideon said to God, "Do not let your anger burn against me, let me speak one more time; let me, please, make trial with the fleece just once more; let it be dry only on the fleece, and on all the ground let there be dew." 40And God did so that night. It was dry on the fleece only, and on all the ground there was dew.

7 Then Jerubbaal (that is, Gideon) and all the troops that were with him rose early and encamped beside the spring of Harod; and the camp of Midian was north of them, below[v] the hill of Moreh, in the valley.

2 The LORD said to Gideon, "The troops with you are too many for me to give the Midianites into their hand. Israel would only take the credit away from me, saying, 'My own hand has delivered me.' 3Now therefore proclaim this in the hearing of the troops, 'Whoever is fearful and trembling, let him return home.'" Thus Gideon sifted them out;[w] twenty-two thousand returned, and ten thousand remained.

4 Then the LORD said to Gideon, "The troops are still too many; take them down to the water and I will sift them out for you there. When I say, 'This one shall go with you,' he shall go with you; and when I say, 'This one shall not go with you,' he shall not go." 5So he brought the troops down to the water; and the LORD said to Gideon, "All those who lap the water with their tongues, as a dog laps, you shall put to one side; all those who kneel down to drink, putting their hands to their mouths,[x] you shall put to the other side." 6The number of those that lapped was three hundred; but all the rest of the troops knelt down to drink water. 7Then the LORD said to Gideon, "With the three hundred that lapped I will deliver you, and give the Midianites into your hand. Let all the others go to their homes." 8So he took the jars of the troops from their hands,[y] and their trumpets; and he sent all the rest of Israel back to their own tents, but retained the three hundred. The camp of Midian was below him in the valley.

9 That same night the LORD said to him, "Get up, attack the camp; for I have given it into your hand. 10But if you fear to attack, go down to the camp with your servant Purah; 11and you shall hear

*u* Heb *he* *v* Heb *from* *w* Cn: Heb *home, and depart from Mount Gilead'* " *x* Heb places the words *putting their hands to their mouths* after the word *lapped* in verse 6 *y* Cn: Heb *So the people took provisions in their hands*

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**6.33–40**: Gideon prepared to attack the Midianites. **33**: *Valley of Jezreel*, see 4.7 n. **34**: *The spirit of the* LORD empowered Gideon so the victory belongs to God. **36–40**: Similar tests are common in folklore.

**7.1–22**: Gideon's victory. **1**: *The spring of Harod* is at the foot of Mount Gilboa in the southeast of the Jezreel Valley. *The Hill of Moreh* is identified with Jebel ed-Dehi in the Jezreel Valley. **2–8**: The reduction of Gideon's forces made it impossible to ascribe the victory over Midian to human prowess.

what they say, and afterward your hands shall be strengthened to attack the camp." Then he went down with his servant Purah to the outposts of the armed men that were in the camp. 12 The Midianites and the Amalekites and all the people of the east lay along the valley as thick as locusts; and their camels were without number, countless as the sand on the seashore. 13 When Gideon arrived, there was a man telling a dream to his comrade; and he said, "I had a dream, and in it a cake of barley bread tumbled into the camp of Midian, and came to the tent, and struck it so that it fell; it turned upside down, and the tent collapsed." 14 And his comrade answered, "This is no other than the sword of Gideon son of Joash, a man of Israel; into his hand God has given Midian and all the army."

15 When Gideon heard the telling of the dream and its interpretation, he worshiped; and he returned to the camp of Israel, and said, "Get up; for the LORD has given the army of Midian into your hand." 16 After he divided the three hundred men into three companies, and put trumpets into the hands of all of them, and empty jars, with torches inside the jars, 17 he said to them, "Look at me, and do the same; when I come to the outskirts of the camp, do as I do. 18 When I blow the trumpet, I and all who are with me, then you also blow the trumpets around the whole camp, and shout, 'For the LORD and for Gideon!' "

19 So Gideon and the hundred who were with him came to the outskirts of the camp at the beginning of the middle watch, when they had just set the watch; and they blew the trumpets and smashed the jars that were in their hands. 20 So the three companies blew the trumpets and broke the jars, holding in their left hands the torches, and in their right hands the trumpets to blow; and they cried, "A sword for the LORD and for Gideon!" 21 Every man stood in his place all around the camp, and all the men in camp ran; they cried out and fled. 22 When they blew the three hundred trumpets, the LORD set every man's sword against his fellow and against all the army; and the army fled as far as Beth-shittah toward Zererah, [z] as far as the border of Abel-meholah, by Tabbath. 23 And the men of Israel were called out from Naphtali and from Asher and from all Manasseh, and they pursued after the Midianites.

24 Then Gideon sent messengers throughout all the hill country of Ephraim, saying, "Come down against the Midianites and seize the waters against them, as far as Beth-barah, and also the Jordan." So all the men of Ephraim were called out, and they seized the waters as far as Beth-barah, and also the Jordan. 25 They captured the two captains of Midian, Oreb and Zeeb; they killed Oreb at the rock of Oreb, and Zeeb they killed at the wine press of Zeeb, as they pursued the Midianites. They brought the heads of Oreb and Zeeb to Gideon beyond the Jordan.

8 Then the Ephraimites said to him, "What have you done to us, not to call us when you went to fight against the Midianites?" And they upbraided him violently. 2 So he said to them, "What have I done now in comparison with you? Is not the gleaning of the grapes of Ephraim better than the vintage of Abiezer? 3 God has given into your hands the captains of Midian, Oreb and Zeeb; what have I been able to do in comparison with you?" When he said this, their anger against him subsided.

4 Then Gideon came to the Jordan and crossed over, he and the three hundred who were with him, exhausted and

z Another reading is *Zeredah*

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**7.9–14**: Dreams were believed to be a means of divine-human communication. **15–22**: Gideon's forces surprised the Midianites. **7.23–8.3**: The elimination of Midianite leaders consolidated Gideon's victory. **8.4–35**: The battle east of the Jordan. **4–12**: The elders of Succoth refuse to aid Gideon as he pursued the Midianite army. **5**: *Succoth*, a Transjordanian city east of Shechem, identified with Tell Deir Alla.

famished.[a] 5So he said to the people of Succoth, "Please give some loaves of bread to my followers, for they are exhausted, and I am pursuing Zebah and Zalmunna, the kings of Midian." 6But the officials of Succoth said, "Do you already have in your possession the hands of Zebah and Zalmunna, that we should give bread to your army?" 7Gideon replied, "Well then, when the LORD has given Zebah and Zalmunna into my hand, I will trample your flesh on the thorns of the wilderness and on briers." 8From there he went up to Penuel, and made the same request of them; and the people of Penuel answered him as the people of Succoth had answered. 9So he said to the people of Penuel, "When I come back victorious, I will break down this tower."

10 Now Zebah and Zalmunna were in Karkor with their army, about fifteen thousand men, all who were left of all the army of the people of the east; for one hundred twenty thousand men bearing arms had fallen. 11So Gideon went up by the caravan route east of Nobah and Jogbehah, and attacked the army; for the army was off its guard. 12Zebah and Zalmunna fled; and he pursued them and took the two kings of Midian, Zebah and Zalmunna, and threw all the army into a panic.

13 When Gideon son of Joash returned from the battle by the ascent of Heres, 14he caught a young man, one of the people of Succoth, and questioned him; and he listed for him the officials and elders of Succoth, seventy-seven people. 15Then he came to the people of Succoth, and said, "Here are Zebah and Zalmunna, about whom you taunted me, saying, 'Do you already have in your possession the hands of Zebah and Zalmunna, that we should give bread to your troops who are exhausted?' " 16So he took the elders of the city and he took thorns of the wilderness and briers and with them he trampled[b] the people of Succoth. 17He also broke down the tower of Penuel, and killed the men of the city.

18 Then he said to Zebah and Zalmunna, "What about the men whom you killed at Tabor?" They answered, "As you are, so were they, every one of them; they resembled the sons of a king." 19And he replied, "They were my brothers, the sons of my mother; as the LORD lives, if you had saved them alive, I would not kill you." 20So he said to Jether his firstborn, "Go kill them!" But the boy did not draw his sword, for he was afraid, because he was still a boy. 21Then Zebah and Zalmunna said, "You come and kill us; for as the man is, so is his strength." So Gideon proceeded to kill Zebah and Zalmunna; and he took the crescents that were on the necks of their camels.

22 Then the Israelites said to Gideon, "Rule over us, you and your son and your grandson also; for you have delivered us out of the hand of Midian." 23Gideon said to them, "I will not rule over you, and my son will not rule over you; the LORD will rule over you." 24Then Gideon said to them, "Let me make a request of you; each of you give me an earring he has taken as booty." (For the enemy[c] had golden earrings, because they were Ishmaelites.) 25"We will willingly give them," they answered. So they spread a garment, and each threw into it an earring he had taken as booty. 26The weight of the golden earrings that he requested was one thousand seven hundred shekels of gold (apart from the crescents and the pendants and the purple garments worn by the kings of Midian, and the collars that

*a* Gk: Heb *pursuing* Gk: Heb *he taught* *b* With verse 7, Compare *c* Heb *they*

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**8.13–21**: Gideon took reprisals against the people who refused to support his army.

**8.22–35**: An epilogue. **22–23**: Gideon's refusal reflected the ancient belief that only the LORD was to rule over Israel. **24–28**: The nature of the *ephod* is not certain; in Ex 28.6–14 and 39.2–7, it is a garment worn by the high priest. This passage suggests that the

were on the necks of their camels). 27Gideon made an ephod of it and put it in his town, in Ophrah; and all Israel prostituted themselves to it there, and it became a snare to Gideon and to his family. 28So Midian was subdued before the Israelites, and they lifted up their heads no more. So the land had rest forty years in the days of Gideon.

29 Jerubbaal son of Joash went to live in his own house. 30Now Gideon had seventy sons, his own offspring, for he had many wives. 31His concubine who was in Shechem also bore him a son, and he named him Abimelech. 32Then Gideon son of Joash died at a good old age, and was buried in the tomb of his father Joash at Ophrah of the Abiezrites.

33 As soon as Gideon died, the Israelites relapsed and prostituted themselves with the Baals, making Baal-berith their god. 34The Israelites did not remember the LORD their God, who had rescued them from the hand of all their enemies on every side; 35and they did not exhibit loyalty to the house of Jerubbaal (that is, Gideon) in return for all the good that he had done to Israel.

9 Now Abimelech son of Jerubbaal went to Shechem to his mother's kinsfolk and said to them and to the whole clan of his mother's family, 2"Say in the hearing of all the lords of Shechem, 'Which is better for you, that all seventy of the sons of Jerubbaal rule over you, or that one rule over you?' Remember also that I am your bone and your flesh." 3So his mother's kinsfolk spoke all these words on his behalf in the hearing of all the lords of Shechem; and their hearts inclined to follow Abimelech, for they said, "He is our brother." 4They gave him seventy pieces of silver out of the temple of Baal-berith with which Abimelech hired worthless and reckless fellows, who followed him. 5He went to his father's house at Ophrah, and killed his brothers the sons of Jerubbaal, seventy men, on one stone; but Jotham, the youngest son of Jerubbaal, survived, for he hid himself. 6Then all the lords of Shechem and all Beth-millo came together, and they went and made Abimelech king, by the oak of the pillar[d] at Shechem.

7 When it was told to Jotham, he went and stood on the top of Mount Gerizim, and cried aloud and said to them, "Listen to me, you lords of Shechem, so that God may listen to you.

8 The trees once went out
  to anoint a king over
    themselves.
  So they said to the olive tree,
    'Reign over us.'
9 The olive tree answered them,
  'Shall I stop producing my rich
    oil
    by which gods and mortals
      are honored,
    and go to sway over the
      trees?'
10 Then the trees said to the fig tree,
  'You come and reign over us.'
11 But the fig tree answered them,
  'Shall I stop producing my
    sweetness
    and my delicious fruit,
    and go to sway over the
      trees?'

*d* Cn: Meaning of Heb uncertain

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*ephod* of Gideon was an image. **34:** Freed from the Midianite threat, Israel returns to its familiar faults.

**9.1–57: Abimelech.** A disinherited son of Gideon seizes the royal dignity that Gideon rejected. Abimelech's power was fragile and he fell in a revolt against his rule. This chapter contains no reference to the God of Israel. **1–6:** Abimelech eliminated all potential rivals and took the throne of Shechem. **4:** The god *Baal-berith* ("the Lord of the covenant") is otherwise unknown. Since Shechem was the site of an Israelite covenant assembly (Josh 24.1–27), it may be that a hybrid form of Israelite religion was in vogue in the city. **6:** *The oak of the pillar,* Josh 24.26.

**9.7–15:** Jotham rebukes his elder brother by satirizing the monarchy. **7:** *Mount Gerizim* is just south of Shechem. **8:** *The olive tree* is the noblest tree, while *the bramble* (v. 14) is a useless bush.

*The parable of the trees*

12 Then the trees said to the vine,
'You come and reign over us.'
13 But the vine said to them,
'Shall I stop producing my wine
that cheers gods and mortals,
and go to sway over the
trees?'
14 So all the trees said to the
bramble,
'You come and reign over us.'
15 And the bramble said to the trees,
'If in good faith you are
anointing me king over
you,
then come and take refuge in
my shade;
but if not, let fire come out of
the bramble
and devour the cedars of
Lebanon.'

16 "Now therefore, if you acted in good faith and honor when you made Abimelech king, and if you have dealt well with Jerubbaal and his house, and have done to him as his actions deserved— 17for my father fought for you, and risked his life, and rescued you from the hand of Midian; 18but you have risen up against my father's house this day, and have killed his sons, seventy men on one stone, and have made Abimelech, the son of his slave woman, king over the lords of Shechem, because he is your kinsman— 19if, I say, you have acted in good faith and honor with Jerubbaal and with his house this day, then rejoice in Abimelech, and let him also rejoice in you; 20but if not, let fire come out from Abimelech, and devour the lords of Shechem, and Beth-millo; and let fire come out from the lords of Shechem, and from Beth-millo, and devour Abimelech." 21Then Jotham ran away and fled, going to Beer, where he remained for fear of his brother Abimelech.

22 Abimelech ruled over Israel three years. 23But God sent an evil spirit between Abimelech and the lords of Shechem; and the lords of Shechem dealt treacherously with Abimelech. 24This happened so that the violence done to the seventy sons of Jerubbaal might be avenged[e] and their blood be laid on their brother Abimelech, who killed them, and on the lords of Shechem, who strengthened his hands to kill his brothers. 25So, out of hostility to him, the lords of Shechem set ambushes on the mountain tops. They robbed all who passed by them along that way; and it was reported to Abimelech.

26 When Gaal son of Ebed moved into Shechem with his kinsfolk, the lords of Shechem put confidence in him. 27They went out into the field and gathered the grapes from their vineyards, trod them, and celebrated. Then they went into the temple of their god, ate and drank, and ridiculed Abimelech. 28Gaal son of Ebed said, "Who is Abimelech, and who are we of Shechem, that we should serve him? Did not the son of Jerubbaal and Zebul his officer serve the men of Hamor father of Shechem? Why then should we serve him? 29If only this people were under my command! Then I would remove Abimelech; I would say[f] to him, 'Increase your army, and come out.' "

30 When Zebul the ruler of the city heard the words of Gaal son of Ebed, his anger was kindled. 31He sent messengers to Abimelech at Arumah,[g] saying, "Look, Gaal son of Ebed and his kinsfolk have come to Shechem, and they are stirring up[h] the city against you. 32Now therefore, go by night, you and the troops that are with you, and lie in wait in the fields. 33Then early in the morning, as soon as the sun rises, get up and rush on the city; and when he and the troops that are with him come out

*e* Heb *might come* *f* Gk: Heb *and he said*
*g* Cn See 9.41. Heb *Tormah* *h* Cn: Heb *are besieging*

**9.22–29:** These conflicts show the tenuous hold that Abimelech had on Shechem.
**9.30–49:** Abimelech levels Shechem. Archaeology has revealed a massive destruction at Shechem in the 12th century.

against you, you may deal with them as best you can."

34 So Abimelech and all the troops with him got up by night and lay in wait against Shechem in four companies. 35When Gaal son of Ebed went out and stood in the entrance of the gate of the city, Abimelech and the troops with him rose from the ambush. 36And when Gaal saw them, he said to Zebul, "Look, people are coming down from the mountain tops!" And Zebul said to him, "The shadows on the mountains look like people to you." 37Gaal spoke again and said, "Look, people are coming down from Tabbur-erez, and one company is coming from the direction of Elon-meonenim."[i] 38Then Zebul said to him, "Where is your boast[j] now, you who said, 'Who is Abimelech, that we should serve him?' Are not these the troops you made light of? Go out now and fight with them." 39So Gaal went out at the head of the lords of Shechem, and fought with Abimelech. 40Abimelech chased him, and he fled before him. Many fell wounded, up to the entrance of the gate. 41So Abimelech resided at Arumah; and Zebul drove out Gaal and his kinsfolk, so that they could not live on at Shechem.

42 On the following day the people went out into the fields. When Abimelech was told, 43he took his troops and divided them into three companies, and lay in wait in the fields. When he looked and saw the people coming out of the city, he rose against them and killed them. 44Abimelech and the company that was[k] with him rushed forward and stood at the entrance of the gate of the city, while the two companies rushed on all who were in the fields and killed them. 45Abimelech fought against the city all that day; he took the city, and killed the people that were in it; and he razed the city and sowed it with salt.

46 When all the lords of the Tower of Shechem heard of it, they entered the stronghold of the temple of El-berith. 47Abimelech was told that all the lords of the Tower of Shechem were gathered together. 48So Abimelech went up to Mount Zalmon, he and all the troops that were with him. Abimelech took an ax in his hand, cut down a bundle of brushwood, and took it up and laid it on his shoulder. Then he said to the troops with him, "What you have seen me do, do quickly, as I have done." 49So every one of the troops cut down a bundle and following Abimelech put it against the stronghold, and they set the stronghold on fire over them, so that all the people of the Tower of Shechem also died, about a thousand men and women.

50 Then Abimelech went to Thebez, and encamped against Thebez, and took it. 51But there was a strong tower within the city, and all the men and women and all the lords of the city fled to it and shut themselves in; and they went to the roof of the tower. 52Abimelech came to the tower, and fought against it, and came near to the entrance of the tower to burn it with fire. 53But a certain woman threw an upper millstone on Abimelech's head, and crushed his skull. 54Immediately he called to the young man who carried his armor and said to him, "Draw your sword and kill me, so people will not say about me, 'A woman killed him.'" So the young man thrust him through, and he died. 55When the Israelites saw that Abimelech was dead, they all went home. 56Thus God repaid Abimelech for the crime he committed against his father in killing his seventy brothers; 57and God also made all the wickedness of the people of Shechem fall back on their heads, and on them came the curse of Jotham son of Jerubbaal.

10 After Abimelech, Tola son of Puah son of Dodo, a man of Issa-

*i* That is *Diviners' Oak* *j* Heb *mouth*
*k* Vg and some Gk Mss: Heb *companies that were*

**9.50–57**: The end of Abimelech was a judgment on his attempt to reestablish the discredited Canaanite socio-political system.

**10.1–5: Tola and Jair.** Several judges remembered in this book (see 3.31; 12.8–15) have no specific deeds associated with their

char, who lived at Shamir in the hill country of Ephraim, rose to deliver Israel. 2He judged Israel twenty-three years. Then he died, and was buried at Shamir.

3 After him came Jair the Gileadite, who judged Israel twenty-two years. 4He had thirty sons who rode on thirty donkeys; and they had thirty towns, which are in the land of Gilead, and are called Havvoth-jair to this day. 5Jair died, and was buried in Kamon.

6 The Israelites again did what was evil in the sight of the LORD, worshiping the Baals and the Astartes, the gods of Aram, the gods of Sidon, the gods of Moab, the gods of the Ammonites, and the gods of the Philistines. Thus they abandoned the LORD, and did not worship him. 7So the anger of the LORD was kindled against Israel, and he sold them into the hand of the Philistines and into the hand of the Ammonites, 8and they crushed and oppressed the Israelites that year. For eighteen years they oppressed all the Israelites that were beyond the Jordan in the land of the Amorites, which is in Gilead. 9The Ammonites also crossed the Jordan to fight against Judah and against Benjamin and against the house of Ephraim; so that Israel was greatly distressed.

10 So the Israelites cried to the LORD, saying, "We have sinned against you, because we have abandoned our God and have worshiped the Baals." 11And the LORD said to the Israelites, "Did I not deliver you[1] from the Egyptians and from the Amorites, from the Ammonites and from the Philistines? 12The Sidonians also, and the Amalekites, and the Maonites, oppressed you; and you cried to me, and I delivered you out of their hand. 13Yet you have abandoned me and worshiped other gods; therefore I will deliver you no more. 14Go and cry to the gods whom you have chosen; let them deliver you in the time of your distress." 15And the Israelites said to the LORD, "We have sinned; do to us whatever seems good to you; but deliver us this day!" 16So they put away the foreign gods from among them and worshiped the LORD; and he could no longer bear to see Israel suffer.

17 Then the Ammonites were called to arms, and they encamped in Gilead; and the Israelites came together, and they encamped at Mizpah. 18The commanders of the people of Gilead said to one another, "Who will begin the fight against the Ammonites? He shall be head over all the inhabitants of Gilead."

11 Now Jephthah the Gileadite, the son of a prostitute, was a mighty warrior. Gilead was the father of Jephthah. 2Gilead's wife also bore him sons; and when his wife's sons grew up, they drove Jephthah away, saying to him, "You shall not inherit anything in our father's house; for you are the son of another woman." 3Then Jephthah fled from his brothers and lived in the land of Tob. Outlaws collected around Jephthah and went raiding with him.

4 After a time the Ammonites made war against Israel. 5And when the Am-

*1* Heb lacks *Did I not deliver you*

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administration. Perhaps they were added to bring the total of judges named in the book to twelve.

**10.6–12.7**: **Jephthah.** The Transjordanian setting of this story is unique in Judges. The story unfolds as a series of crises. Though Jephthah saved Israel, he faced a personal tragedy because of his victory.

**10.6–16**: The Deuteronomistic introduction. Israel's problems resulted from its infidelity toward the LORD. **10**: This act of repentance in v. 16 is the only such act in the book. **13**: God's refusal to deliver Israel showed the degree of Israel's failures. This was a harbinger of the tragedy to come, since God was no longer swayed by a claim of repentance.

**10.17–11.11**: The choice of Jephthah. The Israelites considered their problem to be a military one, so they chose an accomplished military leader. Because of Jephthah's previous experience with the Gileadites, he accepted their commission only on his terms. A ritual at Mizpah sealed the commission.

**10.17**: *The Ammonites* were an Aramean

monites made war against Israel, the elders of Gilead went to bring Jephthah from the land of Tob. 6They said to Jephthah, "Come and be our commander, so that we may fight with the Ammonites." 7But Jephthah said to the elders of Gilead, "Are you not the very ones who rejected me and drove me out of my father's house? So why do you come to me now when you are in trouble?" 8The elders of Gilead said to Jephthah, "Nevertheless, we have now turned back to you, so that you may go with us and fight with the Ammonites, and become head over us, over all the inhabitants of Gilead." 9Jephthah said to the elders of Gilead, "If you bring me home again to fight with the Ammonites, and the LORD gives them over to me, I will be your head." 10And the elders of Gilead said to Jephthah, "The LORD will be witness between us; we will surely do as you say." 11So Jephthah went with the elders of Gilead, and the people made him head and commander over them; and Jephthah spoke all his words before the LORD at Mizpah.

12 Then Jephthah sent messengers to the king of the Ammonites and said, "What is there between you and me, that you have come to me to fight against my land?" 13The king of the Ammonites answered the messengers of Jephthah, "Because Israel, on coming from Egypt, took away my land from the Arnon to the Jabbok and to the Jordan; now therefore restore it peaceably." 14Once again Jephthah sent messengers to the king of the Ammonites 15and said to him: "Thus says Jephthah: Israel did not take away the land of Moab or the land of the Ammonites, 16but when they came up from Egypt, Israel went through the wilderness to the Red Sea[m] and came to Kadesh. 17Israel then sent messengers to the king of Edom, saying, 'Let us pass through your land'; but the king of Edom would not listen. They also sent to the king of Moab, but he would not consent. So Israel remained at Kadesh. 18Then they journeyed through the wilderness, went around the land of Edom and the land of Moab, arrived on the east side of the land of Moab, and camped on the other side of the Arnon. They did not enter the territory of Moab, for the Arnon was the boundary of Moab. 19Israel then sent messengers to King Sihon of the Amorites, king of Heshbon; and Israel said to him, 'Let us pass through your land to our country.' 20But Sihon did not trust Israel to pass through his territory; so Sihon gathered all his people together, and encamped at Jahaz, and fought with Israel. 21Then the LORD, the God of Israel, gave Sihon and all his people into the hand of Israel, and they defeated them; so Israel occupied all the land of the Amorites, who inhabited that country. 22They occupied all the territory of the Amorites from the Arnon to the Jabbok and from the wilderness to the Jordan. 23So now the LORD, the God of Israel, has conquered the Amorites for the benefit of his people Israel. Do you intend to take their place? 24Should you not possess what your god Chemosh gives you to possess? And should we not be the ones to possess everything that the LORD our God has conquered for our benefit? 25Now are you any better than King Balak son of Zippor of Moab? Did he ever enter into conflict with Israel, or did he ever go to war with them? 26While Israel lived in Heshbon and its villages, and in Aroer and its villages, and in all the towns that are along the Arnon, three hundred years, why did you not recover them within that time? 27It is not I who have sinned against you, but you are the

*m* Or *Sea of Reeds*

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group that settled along the Jabbok river in the 12th century. *Gilead* is the territory east of the Jordan river west of Ammonite territory.

**11.12–28**: This is the only example in Judges of diplomacy as a way to resolve disputes. Religious beliefs and historical precedents were the bases of the claims of Israel and the counterclaims of Ammon. **17**: Num 20.14–21. **19–23**: Num 21.21–32. **24**: *Chemosh* was the national god of the Moabites. The god of the Ammonites was Milcom or Molech (1 Kings 11.5, 7). **25**: *Balak*, see Num

one who does me wrong by making war on me. Let the LORD, who is judge, decide today for the Israelites or for the Ammonites." [28]But the king of the Ammonites did not heed the message that Jephthah sent him.

29 Then the spirit of the LORD came upon Jephthah, and he passed through Gilead and Manasseh. He passed on to Mizpah of Gilead, and from Mizpah of Gilead he passed on to the Ammonites. [30]And Jephthah made a vow to the LORD, and said, "If you will give the Ammonites into my hand, [31]then whoever comes out of the doors of my house to meet me, when I return victorious from the Ammonites, shall be the LORD's, to be offered up by me as a burnt offering." [32]So Jephthah crossed over to the Ammonites to fight against them; and the LORD gave them into his hand. [33]He inflicted a massive defeat on them from Aroer to the neighborhood of Minnith, twenty towns, and as far as Abel-keramim. So the Ammonites were subdued before the people of Israel.

34 Then Jephthah came to his home at Mizpah; and there was his daughter coming out to meet him with timbrels and with dancing. She was his only child; he had no son or daughter except her. [35]When he saw her, he tore his clothes, and said, "Alas, my daughter! You have brought me very low; you have become the cause of great trouble to me. For I have opened my mouth to the LORD, and I cannot take back my vow." [36]She said to him, "My father, if you have opened your mouth to the LORD, do to me according to what has gone out of your mouth, now that the LORD has given you vengeance against your enemies, the Ammonites." [37]And she said to her father, "Let this thing be done for me: Grant me two months, so that I may go and wander[n] on the mountains, and bewail my virginity, my companions and I." [38]"Go," he said and sent her away for two months. So she departed, she and her companions, and bewailed her virginity on the mountains. [39]At the end of two months, she returned to her father, who did with her according to the vow he had made. She had never slept with a man. So there arose an Israelite custom that [40]for four days every year the daughters of Israel would go out to lament the daughter of Jephthah the Gileadite.

12 The men of Ephraim were called to arms, and they crossed to Zaphon and said to Jephthah, "Why did you cross over to fight against the Ammonites, and did not call us to go with you? We will burn your house down over you!" [2]Jephthah said to them, "My people and I were engaged in conflict with the Ammonites who oppressed us[o] severely. But when I called you, you did

*n* Cn: Heb *go down* *o* Gk OL, Syr H: Heb lacks *who oppressed us*

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22–24. **28:** The Ammonites reject the Israelite contention that the fact of conquest determines the legitimacy of a territorial claim.

**11.29–40:** The centerpiece of this story is Jephthah's vow; the outcome of the battle with Ammon is almost an aside. **29:** The coming of *the spirit of the* LORD upon Jephthah should have been the guarantee of victory. **30–31:** Jephthah promises a sacrifice in exchange for victory. The Hebrew text does not assume that the intended victim would be a human being. Given the arrangement of homes with courtyards that housed domesticated animals, it is likely that Jephthah assumed that one of these animals would be encountered first upon his return home. **35:** While human sacrifice was not usually acceptable in ancient Israelite religion, neither was it unknown (2 Kings 16.3; Ezek 20.25–26, 31). **37:** Because a Hebrew woman could suffer no greater disgrace than to die childless, Jephthah's daughter asks for time to *bewail her virginity*. **39:** Similar rites elsewhere were disapproved; see Ezek 8.14; Zech 12.11. As the Israelite cult got an identity more detached from its Canaanite roots, practices such as human sacrifice and ritual mourning were censured (Jer 7.31; Mic 6.6–8; see Ps 106.37) and fell into disuse.

**12.1–7:** Perhaps the cause of the Ephraimites' complaints was that, not having participated in the war against Ammon, they would have no right to any spoils. **6:** The word *shibboleth* means "ear of corn." Local variations in

not deliver me from their hand. 3When I saw that you would not deliver me, I took my life in my hand, and crossed over against the Ammonites, and the LORD gave them into my hand. Why then have you come up to me this day, to fight against me?" 4Then Jephthah gathered all the men of Gilead and fought with Ephraim; and the men of Gilead defeated Ephraim, because they said, "You are fugitives from Ephraim, you Gileadites—in the heart of Ephraim and Manasseh."[p] 5Then the Gileadites took the fords of the Jordan against the Ephraimites. Whenever one of the fugitives of Ephraim said, "Let me go over," the men of Gilead would say to him, "Are you an Ephraimite?" When he said, "No," 6they said to him, "Then say Shibboleth," and he said, "Sibboleth," for he could not pronounce it right. Then they seized him and killed him at the fords of the Jordan. Forty-two thousand of the Ephraimites fell at that time.

7 Jephthah judged Israel six years. Then Jephthah the Gileadite died, and was buried in his town in Gilead.[q]

8 After him Ibzan of Bethlehem judged Israel. 9He had thirty sons. He gave his thirty daughters in marriage outside his clan and brought in thirty young women from outside for his sons. He judged Israel seven years. 10Then Ibzan died, and was buried at Bethlehem.

11 After him Elon the Zebulunite judged Israel; and he judged Israel ten years. 12Then Elon the Zebulunite died, and was buried at Aijalon in the land of Zebulun.

13 After him Abdon son of Hillel the Pirathonite judged Israel. 14He had forty sons and thirty grandsons, who rode on seventy donkeys; he judged Israel eight years. 15Then Abdon son of Hillel the Pirathonite died, and was buried at Pirathon in the land of Ephraim, in the hill country of the Amalekites.

13 The Israelites again did what was evil in the sight of the LORD, and the LORD gave them into the hand of the Philistines forty years.

2 There was a certain man of Zorah, of the tribe of the Danites, whose name was Manoah. His wife was barren, having borne no children. 3And the angel of the LORD appeared to the woman and said to her, "Although you are barren, having borne no children, you shall conceive and bear a son. 4Now be careful not to drink wine or strong drink, or to eat anything unclean, 5for you shall conceive and bear a son. No razor is to come on his head, for the boy shall be a nazirite[r] to God from birth. It is he who shall begin to deliver Israel from the hand of the Philistines." 6Then the woman came and told her husband, "A man of God came to me, and his appearance was like

*p* Meaning of Heb uncertain: Gk omits *because . . . Manasseh* *q* Gk: Heb *in the towns of Gilead*
*r* That is *one separated* or *one consecrated*

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pronunciation of common words aid in identifying the regional origin of the speaker (see Mt 26.73).

**12.8–15**: **Ibzan, Elon, and Abdon.** See 10.1–5 n. **8**: Since these judges were from the north, the *Bethlehem* mentioned here is probably the one in the territory of Zebulun (Josh 19.15).

**13.1–16.31**: **Samson.** The final deliverer described in the book does not fit the pattern set by his predecessors. He broke the vows he made to the LORD, married non-Israelite women, and never associated with other Israelites in his conflicts with the Philistines.

**13.1–25**: Samson's birth. **1**: This Deuteronomistic introduction helps to authenticate Samson as a judge. *The Philistines* were of Aegean-Asian origin. Prophetic tradition identified Caphtor as their precise place of origin (see Am 9.7; Jer 47.4). They entered Canaan shortly after the Israelites and were their chief rivals for hegemony in the region. **2**: *Zorah,* a town on the border between Judah and Dan (Josh 15.33; 19.41) identified with modern Sa'rah fifteen miles west of Jerusalem. Here the *Danites* are a southern tribe. Chapters 17–18 describe the migration of the tribe to the north. The Samson stories illustrate the reasons for the migration. **3**: *The angel of the LORD,* see 2.1 n. Any Israelite, male or female, who lived according to the norms of Num 6.1–21 was a *nazirite.* These norms reflect the values of a conservative Yahwistic lifestyle. **4**: The requirement that

that of an angel[s] of God, most awe-inspiring; I did not ask him where he came from, and he did not tell me his name; 7 but he said to me, 'You shall conceive and bear a son. So then drink no wine or strong drink, and eat nothing unclean, for the boy shall be a nazirite[t] to God from birth to the day of his death.' "

8 Then Manoah entreated the LORD, and said, "O LORD, I pray, let the man of God whom you sent come to us again and teach us what we are to do concerning the boy who will be born." 9 God listened to Manoah, and the angel of God came again to the woman as she sat in the field; but her husband Manoah was not with her. 10 So the woman ran quickly and told her husband, "The man who came to me the other day has appeared to me." 11 Manoah got up and followed his wife, and came to the man and said to him, "Are you the man who spoke to this woman?" And he said, "I am." 12 Then Manoah said, "Now when your words come true, what is to be the boy's rule of life; what is he to do?" 13 The angel of the LORD said to Manoah, "Let the woman give heed to all that I said to her. 14 She may not eat of anything that comes from the vine. She is not to drink wine or strong drink, or eat any unclean thing. She is to observe everything that I commanded her."

15 Manoah said to the angel of the LORD, "Allow us to detain you, and prepare a kid for you." 16 The angel of the LORD said to Manoah, "If you detain me, I will not eat your food; but if you want to prepare a burnt offering, then offer it to the LORD." (For Manoah did not know that he was the angel of the LORD.) 17 Then Manoah said to the angel of the LORD, "What is your name, so that we may honor you when your words come true?" 18 But the angel of the LORD said to him, "Why do you ask my name? It is too wonderful."

19 So Manoah took the kid with the grain offering, and offered it on the rock to the LORD, to him who works[u] wonders.[v] 20 When the flame went up toward heaven from the altar, the angel of the LORD ascended in the flame of the altar while Manoah and his wife looked on; and they fell on their faces to the ground. 21 The angel of the LORD did not appear again to Manoah and his wife. Then Manoah realized that it was the angel of the LORD. 22 And Manoah said to his wife, "We shall surely die, for we have seen God." 23 But his wife said to him, "If the LORD had meant to kill us, he would not have accepted a burnt offering and a grain offering at our hands, or shown us all these things, or now announced to us such things as these."

24 The woman bore a son, and named him Samson. The boy grew, and the LORD blessed him. 25 The spirit of the LORD began to stir him in Mahaneh-dan, between Zorah and Eshtaol.

**14** Once Samson went down to Timnah, and at Timnah he saw a Philistine woman. 2 Then he came up, and told his father and mother, "I saw a Philistine woman at Timnah; now get her for me as my wife." 3 But his father and mother said to him, "Is there not a woman among your kin, or among all

*s* Or *the angel* *t* That is *one separated* or *one consecrated* *u* Gk Vg: Heb *and working*
*v* Heb *wonders, while Manoah and his wife looked on*

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the *nazirite* abstain from wine becomes prenatal care (also v. 7).

**13.14**: The cultivation of grapes represents the settled life and the consequent compromise with Canaanite culture.

**13.24**: The name *Samson* is related to the Hebrew word for sun. **25**: *The spirit of the LORD*, see 3.10 n. *Mahaneh-dan, between Zorah and Eshtaol*, the references to definite towns and places in these stories show that they are part of a genuine local tradition. These sites were in the foothills southwest of Jerusalem.

**14.1–20**: **Samson's wedding.** The stories report Samson's naïveté toward women. It was a fatal flaw that led to his destruction. **1**: *Timnah* may be Tell el-Batashi, four miles north of Beth-Shemesh. **3**: Samson's marriage to a Philistine will lead to divided loyalties. **4**: An editorial comment reflecting the belief that God can use human folly to accom-

our[w] people, that you must go to take a wife from the uncircumcised Philistines?" But Samson said to his father, "Get her for me, because she pleases me." [4]His father and mother did not know that this was from the LORD; for he was seeking a pretext to act against the Philistines. At that time the Philistines had dominion over Israel.

5 Then Samson went down with his father and mother to Timnah. When he came to the vineyards of Timnah, suddenly a young lion roared at him. [6]The spirit of the LORD rushed on him, and he tore the lion apart barehanded as one might tear apart a kid. But he did not tell his father or his mother what he had done. [7]Then he went down and talked with the woman, and she pleased Samson. [8]After a while he returned to marry her, and he turned aside to see the carcass of the lion, and there was a swarm of bees in the body of the lion, and honey. [9]He scraped it out into his hands, and went on, eating as he went. When he came to his father and mother, he gave some to them, and they ate it. But he did not tell them that he had taken the honey from the carcass of the lion.

10 His father went down to the woman, and Samson made a feast there as the young men were accustomed to do. [11]When the people saw him, they brought thirty companions to be with him. [12]Samson said to them, "Let me now put a riddle to you. If you can explain it to me within the seven days of the feast, and find it out, then I will give you thirty linen garments and thirty festal garments. [13]But if you cannot explain it to me, then you shall give me thirty linen garments and thirty festal garments." So they said to him, "Ask your riddle; let us hear it." [14]He said to them,

"Out of the eater came something to eat.
Out of the strong came something sweet."

But for three days they could not explain the riddle.

15 On the fourth[x] day they said to Samson's wife, "Coax your husband to explain the riddle to us, or we will burn you and your father's house with fire. Have you invited us here to impoverish us?" [16]So Samson's wife wept before him, saying, "You hate me; you do not really love me. You have asked a riddle of my people, but you have not explained it to me." He said to her, "Look, I have not told my father or my mother. Why should I tell you?" [17]She wept before him the seven days that their feast lasted; and because she nagged him, on the seventh day he told her. Then she explained the riddle to her people. [18]The men of the town said to him on the seventh day before the sun went down,

"What is sweeter than honey?
What is stronger than a lion?"

And he said to them,

"If you had not plowed with my heifer,
you would not have found out my riddle."

[19]Then the spirit of the LORD rushed on him, and he went down to Ashkelon. He killed thirty men of the town, took their spoil, and gave the festal garments to those who had explained the riddle. In hot anger he went back to his father's house. [20]And Samson's wife was given to his companion, who had been his best man.

15 After a while, at the time of the wheat harvest, Samson went to

*w* Cn: Heb *my* *x* Gk Syr: Heb *seventh*

plish the divine purpose. **6**: *The spirit of the LORD* equipped Samson to overcome any physical threat.

**14.10–18**: The hostility between the Danites and Philistines flared up because of verbal jousting between Samson and his guests. Samson proposed a riddle that could not be solved, or so he thought. Samson's bride betrayed him. **19**: *Ashkelon* on the southern Mediterranean coast was one of the five main Philistine cities. Samson robbed the people of this city to pay his debts to the people of Timnah.

**15.1–20**: **Samson's revenge.** Samson's anger after his wife was given to another man led him to destroy the Philistines' grain crop.

visit his wife, bringing along a kid. He said, "I want to go into my wife's room." But her father would not allow him to go in. 2Her father said, "I was sure that you had rejected her; so I gave her to your companion. Is not her younger sister prettier than she? Why not take her instead?" 3Samson said to them, "This time, when I do mischief to the Philistines, I will be without blame." 4So Samson went and caught three hundred foxes, and took some torches; and he turned the foxes[y] tail to tail, and put a torch between each pair of tails. 5When he had set fire to the torches, he let the foxes go into the standing grain of the Philistines, and burned up the shocks and the standing grain, as well as the vineyards and[z] olive groves. 6Then the Philistines asked, "Who has done this?" And they said, "Samson, the son-in-law of the Timnite, because he has taken Samson's wife and given her to his companion." So the Philistines came up, and burned her and her father. 7Samson said to them, "If this is what you do, I swear I will not stop until I have taken revenge on you." 8He struck them down hip and thigh with great slaughter; and he went down and stayed in the cleft of the rock of Etam.

9 Then the Philistines came up and encamped in Judah, and made a raid on Lehi. 10The men of Judah said, "Why have you come up against us?" They said, "We have come up to bind Samson, to do to him as he did to us." 11Then three thousand men of Judah went down to the cleft of the rock of Etam, and they said to Samson, "Do you not know that the Philistines are rulers over us? What then have you done to us?" He replied, "As they did to me, so I have done to them." 12They said to him, "We have come down to bind you, so that we may give you into the hands of the Philistines." Samson answered them, "Swear to me that you yourselves will not attack me." 13They said to him, "No, we will only bind you and give you into their hands; we will not kill you." So they bound him with two new ropes, and brought him up from the rock.

14 When he came to Lehi, the Philistines came shouting to meet him; and the spirit of the LORD rushed on him, and the ropes that were on his arms became like flax that has caught fire, and his bonds melted off his hands. 15Then he found a fresh jawbone of a donkey, reached down and took it, and with it he killed a thousand men. 16And Samson said,

"With the jawbone of a donkey,
heaps upon heaps,
with the jawbone of a donkey
I have slain a thousand men."

17When he had finished speaking, he threw away the jawbone; and that place was called Ramath-lehi.[a]

18 By then he was very thirsty, and he called on the LORD, saying, "You have granted this great victory by the hand of your servant. Am I now to die of thirst, and fall into the hands of the uncircumcised?" 19So God split open the hollow place that is at Lehi, and water came from it. When he drank, his spirit returned, and he revived. Therefore it was named En-hakkore,[b] which is at Lehi to this day. 20And he judged Israel in the days of the Philistines twenty years.

16 Once Samson went to Gaza, where he saw a prostitute and

*y* Heb *them* *z* Gk Tg Vg: Heb lacks *and*
*a* That is *The Hill of the Jawbone* *b* That is *The Spring of the One who Called*

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This began a cycle of revenge. **1**: *A kid* was perhaps the usual gift for sexual intimacy (Gen 38.17). **8**: *Etam* cannot be located with certainty. It must have been in the south. *Hip and thigh,* a formulaic expression describing complete devastation.

**15.9–13**: The people of Judah refuse to provide Samson with sanctuary and even attempt to apprehend Samson for the Philistines. **14**: *The spirit of the* LORD, see 14.6 n. **15**: The *jawbone of a donkey* was sometimes worked into a sickle; it could then serve as a weapon. **16**: The couplet involves a pun, for the same Hebrew word can mean both *donkey* and *heap*. **20**: An editorial comment to authenticate Samson as a judge.

**16.1–31**: **Samson's death.** Samson's weakness for women led to his betrayal and

went in to her. 2The Gazites were told,[c] "Samson has come here." So they circled around and lay in wait for him all night at the city gate. They kept quiet all night, thinking, "Let us wait until the light of the morning; then we will kill him." 3But Samson lay only until midnight. Then at midnight he rose up, took hold of the doors of the city gate and the two posts, pulled them up, bar and all, put them on his shoulders, and carried them to the top of the hill that is in front of Hebron.

4 After this he fell in love with a woman in the valley of Sorek, whose name was Delilah. 5The lords of the Philistines came to her and said to her, "Coax him, and find out what makes his strength so great, and how we may overpower him, so that we may bind him in order to subdue him; and we will each give you eleven hundred pieces of silver." 6So Delilah said to Samson, "Please tell me what makes your strength so great, and how you could be bound, so that one could subdue you." 7Samson said to her, "If they bind me with seven fresh bowstrings that are not dried out, then I shall become weak, and be like anyone else." 8Then the lords of the Philistines brought her seven fresh bowstrings that had not dried out, and she bound him with them. 9While men were lying in wait in an inner chamber, she said to him, "The Philistines are upon you, Samson!" But he snapped the bowstrings, as a strand of fiber snaps when it touches the fire. So the secret of his strength was not known.

10 Then Delilah said to Samson, "You have mocked me and told me lies; please tell me how you could be bound." 11He said to her, "If they bind me with new ropes that have not been used, then I shall become weak, and be like anyone else." 12So Delilah took new ropes and bound him with them, and said to him, "The Philistines are upon you, Samson!" (The men lying in wait were in an inner chamber.) But he snapped the ropes off his arms like a thread.

13 Then Delilah said to Samson, "Until now you have mocked me and told me lies; tell me how you could be bound." He said to her, "If you weave the seven locks of my head with the web and make it tight with the pin, then I shall become weak, and be like anyone else." 14So while he slept, Delilah took the seven locks of his head and wove them into the web,[d] and made them tight with the pin. Then she said to him, "The Philistines are upon you, Samson!" But he awoke from his sleep, and pulled away the pin, the loom, and the web.

15 Then she said to him, "How can you say, 'I love you,' when your heart is not with me? You have mocked me three times now and have not told me what makes your strength so great." 16Finally, after she had nagged him with her words day after day, and pestered him, he was tired to death. 17So he told her his whole secret, and said to her, "A razor has never come upon my head; for I have been a nazirite[e] to God from my mother's womb. If my head were shaved, then my strength would leave me; I would become weak, and be like anyone else."

18 When Delilah realized that he had told her his whole secret, she sent and called the lords of the Philistines, saying, "This time come up, for he has told his whole secret to me." Then the lords of the Philistines came up to her, and brought the money in their hands. 19She

*c* Gk: Heb lacks *were told* *d* Compare Gk: in verses 13-14, Heb lacks *and make it tight . . . into the web* *e* That is *one separated* or *one consecrated*

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death. **1**: *Gaza,* see 6.4 n. **3**: An exaggeration to make the Philistines look powerless. The distance from Gaza to Hebron is forty miles and involves an ascent of more than three thousand feet.

**16.4–22**: The Delilah incident. **4**: The *valley of Sorek* is the modern Wadi-es-Sarar that begins thirteen miles southwest of Jerusalem. The name *Delilah* may be related to an Arabic root that means "flirt." The text does not say that she was a Philistine. Living in the valley of Sorek would allow her to be either a Philistine or an Israelite. **13**: *The web* and *the pin* were parts of a loom.

let him fall asleep on her lap; and she called a man, and had him shave off the seven locks of his head. He began to weaken,[f] and his strength left him. 20Then she said, "The Philistines are upon you, Samson!" When he awoke from his sleep, he thought, "I will go out as at other times, and shake myself free." But he did not know that the LORD had left him. 21So the Philistines seized him and gouged out his eyes. They brought him down to Gaza and bound him with bronze shackles; and he ground at the mill in the prison. 22But the hair of his head began to grow again after it had been shaved.

23 Now the lords of the Philistines gathered to offer a great sacrifice to their god Dagon, and to rejoice; for they said, "Our god has given Samson our enemy into our hand." 24When the people saw him, they praised their god; for they said, "Our god has given our enemy into our hand, the ravager of our country, who has killed many of us." 25And when their hearts were merry, they said, "Call Samson, and let him entertain us." So they called Samson out of the prison, and he performed for them. They made him stand between the pillars; 26and Samson said to the attendant who held him by the hand, "Let me feel the pillars on which the house rests, so that I may lean against them." 27Now the house was full of men and women; all the lords of the Philistines were there, and on the roof there were about three thousand men and women, who looked on while Samson performed.

28 Then Samson called to the LORD and said, "Lord GOD, remember me and strengthen me only this once, O God, so that with this one act of revenge I may pay back the Philistines for my two eyes."[g] 29And Samson grasped the two middle pillars on which the house rested, and he leaned his weight against them, his right hand on the one and his left hand on the other. 30Then Samson said, "Let me die with the Philistines." He strained with all his might; and the house fell on the lords and all the people who were in it. So those he killed at his death were more than those he had killed during his life. 31Then his brothers and all his family came down and took him and brought him up and buried him between Zorah and Eshtaol in the tomb of his father Manoah. He had judged Israel twenty years.

17 There was a man in the hill country of Ephraim whose name was Micah. 2He said to his mother, "The eleven hundred pieces of silver that were taken from you, about which you uttered a curse, and even spoke it in my hearing,—that silver is in my possession; I took it; but now I will return it to you."[h] And his mother said, "May my son be blessed by the LORD!" 3Then he returned the eleven hundred pieces of silver to his mother; and his mother said, "I consecrate the silver to the LORD from my hand for my son, to make an idol of cast metal." 4So when he returned the money to his mother, his mother took two hundred pieces of silver, and gave it to the silversmith, who made it into an idol of cast metal; and it was in the house of Micah. 5This man Micah had a shrine,

*f* Gk: Heb *She began to torment him* *g* Or *so that I may be avenged upon the Philistines for one of my two eyes* *h* The words *but now I will return it to you* are transposed from the end of verse 3 in Heb

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**16.23–31**: Samson's final act of vengeance. **23**: *Dagon* was a Canaanite god adopted by the Philistines. **28–30**: Samson's final words and deeds portray an honorable death.

**17.1–21.25**: **The failures of the Israelite tribes.** The final chapters of the book describe the self-destructive actions by the Israelites that almost succeeded in undoing the achievements of the judges. Chapters 17–18 describe cultic disintegration and chs 19–21 describe a civil war.

**17.1–6**: **The shrine of Micah. 1**: *The hill country of Ephraim* was the central highlands north of Bethel and south of Shechem. The story begins with an ironic twist: *Micah* is an abbreviation of a name that means "who is like the LORD"; an Israelite with such a name built a shrine with an image! **5**: An *ephod* was an elaborate priestly vestment. *Teraphim* were divinatory equipment of some type. **6**: An editorial comment that describes the end of the judges' period as disordered (21.25).

and he made an ephod and teraphim, and installed one of his sons, who became his priest. 6In those days there was no king in Israel; all the people did what was right in their own eyes.

7 Now there was a young man of Bethlehem in Judah, of the clan of Judah. He was a Levite residing there. 8This man left the town of Bethlehem in Judah, to live wherever he could find a place. He came to the house of Micah in the hill country of Ephraim to carry on his work.[i] 9Micah said to him, "From where do you come?" He replied, "I am a Levite of Bethlehem in Judah, and I am going to live wherever I can find a place." 10Then Micah said to him, "Stay with me, and be to me a father and a priest, and I will give you ten pieces of silver a year, a set of clothes, and your living."[j] 11The Levite agreed to stay with the man; and the young man became to him like one of his sons. 12So Micah installed the Levite, and the young man became his priest, and was in the house of Micah. 13Then Micah said, "Now I know that the LORD will prosper me, because the Levite has become my priest."

18 In those days there was no king in Israel. And in those days the tribe of the Danites was seeking for itself a territory to live in; for until then no territory among the tribes of Israel had been allotted to them. 2So the Danites sent five valiant men from the whole number of their clan, from Zorah and from Eshtaol, to spy out the land and to explore it; and they said to them, "Go, explore the land." When they came to the hill country of Ephraim, to the house of Micah, they stayed there. 3While they were at Micah's house, they recognized the voice of the young Levite; so they went over and asked him, "Who brought you here? What are you doing in this place? What is your business here?" 4He said to them, "Micah did such and such for me, and he hired me, and I have become his priest." 5Then they said to him, "Inquire of God that we may know whether the mission we are undertaking will succeed." 6The priest replied, "Go in peace. The mission you are on is under the eye of the LORD."

7 The five men went on, and when they came to Laish, they observed the people who were there living securely, after the manner of the Sidonians, quiet and unsuspecting, lacking[k] nothing on earth, and possessing wealth.[l] Furthermore, they were far from the Sidonians and had no dealings with Aram.[m] 8When they came to their kinsfolk at Zorah and Eshtaol, they said to them, "What do you report?" 9They said, "Come, let us go up against them; for we have seen the land, and it is very good. Will you do nothing? Do not be slow to go, but enter in and possess the land. 10When you go, you will come to an unsuspecting people. The land is broad—God has indeed given it into your hands—a place where there is no lack of anything on earth."

11 Six hundred men of the Danite

*i* Or *Ephraim, continuing his journey*
*j* Heb *living, and the Levite went*
*k* Cn Compare 18.10: Meaning of Heb uncertain
*l* Meaning of Heb uncertain *m* Symmachus: Heb *with anyone*

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**17.7–13: Micah's priest.** While any male Israelite could function as a priest, the Levites were the preferred specialists for ritual activities. **7**: This *Bethlehem* (see 12.8 n.) was in the territory of Judah, five miles south of Jerusalem.

**18.1–31: The migration of the tribe of Dan.** The Danites could not control Philistine incursions into their territory in the south. They abandoned this region and migrated to the far north of Galilee. **1–6**: An oracle assures the Danites of divine support for their move. **5**: Here *to inquire of God* refers to divination.

**18.7**: *Laish* was a city at the foot of Mount Hermon. *Living securely* means "undefended." Archaeology has shown that the pre-Israelite city was unwalled. *Sidon* was a Phoenician city along the Mediterranean. It was too far from Laish to offer it effective protection. *Aram* was just to the north of Laish. Without defenses or effective alliances Laish was easy prey.

**18.11–26**: On their way to Laish, the Dan-

clan, armed with weapons of war, set out from Zorah and Eshtaol, 12and went up and encamped at Kiriath-jearim in Judah. On this account that place is called Mahaneh-dan[n] to this day; it is west of Kiriath-jearim. 13From there they passed on to the hill country of Ephraim, and came to the house of Micah.

14 Then the five men who had gone to spy out the land (that is, Laish) said to their comrades, "Do you know that in these buildings there are an ephod, teraphim, and an idol of cast metal? Now therefore consider what you will do." 15So they turned in that direction and came to the house of the young Levite, at the home of Micah, and greeted him. 16While the six hundred men of the Danites, armed with their weapons of war, stood by the entrance of the gate, 17the five men who had gone to spy out the land proceeded to enter and take the idol of cast metal, the ephod, and the teraphim.[o] The priest was standing by the entrance of the gate with the six hundred men armed with weapons of war. 18When the men went into Micah's house and took the idol of cast metal, the ephod, and the teraphim, the priest said to them, "What are you doing?" 19They said to him, "Keep quiet! Put your hand over your mouth, and come with us, and be to us a father and a priest. Is it better for you to be priest to the house of one person, or to be priest to a tribe and clan in Israel?" 20Then the priest accepted the offer. He took the ephod, the teraphim, and the idol, and went along with the people.

21 So they resumed their journey, putting the little ones, the livestock, and the goods in front of them. 22When they were some distance from the home of Micah, the men who were in the houses near Micah's house were called out, and they overtook the Danites. 23They shouted to the Danites, who turned around and said to Micah, "What is the matter that you come with such a company?" 24He replied, "You take my gods that I made, and the priest, and go away, and what have I left? How then can you ask me, 'What is the matter?' " 25And the Danites said to him, "You had better not let your voice be heard among us or else hot-tempered fellows will attack you, and you will lose your life and the lives of your household." 26Then the Danites went their way. When Micah saw that they were too strong for him, he turned and went back to his home.

27 The Danites, having taken what Micah had made, and the priest who belonged to him, came to Laish, to a people quiet and unsuspecting, put them to the sword, and burned down the city. 28There was no deliverer, because it was far from Sidon and they had no dealings with Aram.[p] It was in the valley that belongs to Beth-rehob. They rebuilt the city, and lived in it. 29They named the city Dan, after their ancestor Dan, who was born to Israel; but the name of the city was formerly Laish. 30Then the Danites set up the idol for themselves. Jonathan son of Gershom, son of Moses,[q] and his sons were priests to the tribe of the Danites until the time the land went into captivity. 31So they maintained as their own Micah's idol that he had made, as long as the house of God was at Shiloh.

19 In those days, when there was no king in Israel, a certain Levite, residing in the remote parts of the hill country of Ephraim, took to himself a

*n* That is *Camp of Dan* *o* Compare 17.4, 5; 18.14: Heb *teraphim and the cast metal*
*p* Cn Compare verse 7: Heb *with anyone*
*q* Another reading is *son of Manasseh*

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ites stole Micah's cultic objects and induced his priest to join them.

**18.27–31**: The Danites took Laish, renamed it, and installed Micah's images there. **30**: A priesthood descended from Moses is associated with an illegitimate cult. **31**: A Deuteronomistic indictment against the shrine at Dan that became an important center of worship for the northern kingdom (1 Kings 12.29).

**19.1–9**: **The Levite and his concubine.** This incident set up a conflict that pitted the

concubine from Bethlehem in Judah. 2But his concubine became angry with[r] him, and she went away from him to her father's house at Bethlehem in Judah, and was there some four months. 3Then her husband set out after her, to speak tenderly to her and bring her back. He had with him his servant and a couple of donkeys. When he reached[s] her father's house, the girl's father saw him and came with joy to meet him. 4His father-in-law, the girl's father, made him stay, and he remained with him three days; so they ate and drank, and he[t] stayed there. 5On the fourth day they got up early in the morning, and he prepared to go; but the girl's father said to his son-in-law, "Fortify yourself with a bit of food, and after that you may go." 6So the two men sat and ate and drank together; and the girl's father said to the man, "Why not spend the night and enjoy yourself?" 7When the man got up to go, his father-in-law kept urging him until he spent the night there again. 8On the fifth day he got up early in the morning to leave; and the girl's father said, "Fortify yourself." So they lingered[u] until the day declined, and the two of them ate and drank.[v] 9When the man with his concubine and his servant got up to leave, his father-in-law, the girl's father, said to him, "Look, the day has worn on until it is almost evening. Spend the night. See, the day has drawn to a close. Spend the night here and enjoy yourself. Tomorrow you can get up early in the morning for your journey, and go home."

10 But the man would not spend the night; he got up and departed, and arrived opposite Jebus (that is, Jerusalem). He had with him a couple of saddled donkeys, and his concubine was with him. 11When they were near Jebus, the day was far spent, and the servant said to his master, "Come now, let us turn aside to this city of the Jebusites, and spend the night in it." 12But his master said to him, "We will not turn aside into a city of foreigners, who do not belong to the people of Israel; but we will continue on to Gibeah." 13Then he said to his servant, "Come, let us try to reach one of these places, and spend the night at Gibeah or at Ramah." 14So they passed on and went their way; and the sun went down on them near Gibeah, which belongs to Benjamin. 15They turned aside there, to go in and spend the night at Gibeah. He went in and sat down in the open square of the city, but no one took them in to spend the night.

16 Then at evening there was an old man coming from his work in the field. The man was from the hill country of Ephraim, and he was residing in Gibeah. (The people of the place were Benjaminites.) 17When the old man looked up and saw the wayfarer in the open square of the city, he said, "Where are you going and where do you come from?" 18He answered him, "We are passing from Bethlehem in Judah to the remote parts of the hill country of Ephraim, from which I come. I went to Bethlehem in Judah; and I am going to my home.[w] Nobody has offered to take me in. 19We your servants have straw and fodder for our donkeys, with bread and wine for me and the woman and the young man along with us. We need nothing more." 20The old man said, "Peace be to you. I will care for all your wants; only do not

*r* Gk OL: Heb *prostituted herself against*
*s* Gk: Heb *she brought him* *t* Compare verse 7 and Gk: Heb *they* *u* Cn: Heb *Linger*
*v* Gk: Heb lacks *and drank* *w* Gk Compare 19.29. Heb *to the house of the* LORD

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tribal assembly against Benjamin. The book of Judges then ends on a chaotic note. **2**: The woman of Bethlehem was not the full legal wife of the Levite, so the text calls her his *concubine*. Because v. 3 calls the Levite her husband, there must have been some regularity about their relationship. It is the woman who initiates the separation.

**19.10–30: The incident at Gibeah. 10–21**: The Levites prefer to spend the night in an Israelite rather than a Canaanite town. **12**: *Gibeah* is identified with Tell el Ful, four miles north of Jerusalem. It became Saul's royal residence (1 Sam 15.34). **13**: *Ramah* is identified with er-Ram, five miles north of Jerusalem.

spend the night in the square." 21So he brought him into his house, and fed the donkeys; they washed their feet, and ate and drank.

22 While they were enjoying themselves, the men of the city, a perverse lot, surrounded the house, and started pounding on the door. They said to the old man, the master of the house, "Bring out the man who came into your house, so that we may have intercourse with him." 23And the man, the master of the house, went out to them and said to them, "No, my brothers, do not act so wickedly. Since this man is my guest, do not do this vile thing. 24Here are my virgin daughter and his concubine; let me bring them out now. Ravish them and do whatever you want to them; but against this man do not do such a vile thing." 25But the men would not listen to him. So the man seized his concubine, and put her out to them. They wantonly raped her, and abused her all through the night until the morning. And as the dawn began to break, they let her go. 26As morning appeared, the woman came and fell down at the door of the man's house where her master was, until it was light.

27 In the morning her master got up, opened the doors of the house, and when he went out to go on his way, there was his concubine lying at the door of the house, with her hands on the threshold. 28"Get up," he said to her, "we are going." But there was no answer. Then he put her on the donkey; and the man set out for his home. 29When he had entered his house, he took a knife, and grasping his concubine he cut her into twelve pieces, limb by limb, and sent her throughout all the territory of Israel. 30Then he commanded the men whom he sent, saying, "Thus shall you say to all the Israelites, 'Has such a thing ever happened[x] since the day that the Israelites came up from the land of Egypt until this day? Consider it, take counsel, and speak out.' "

20 Then all the Israelites came out, from Dan to Beer-sheba, including the land of Gilead, and the congregation assembled in one body before the LORD at Mizpah. 2The chiefs of all the people, of all the tribes of Israel, presented themselves in the assembly of the people of God, four hundred thousand foot-soldiers bearing arms. 3(Now the Benjaminites heard that the people of Israel had gone up to Mizpah.) And the Israelites said, "Tell us, how did this criminal act come about?" 4The Levite, the husband of the woman who was murdered, answered, "I came to Gibeah that belongs to Benjamin, I and my concubine, to spend the night. 5The lords of Gibeah rose up against me, and surrounded the house at night. They intended to kill me, and they raped my concubine until she died. 6Then I took my concubine and cut her into pieces, and sent her throughout the whole extent of Israel's territory; for they have committed a vile outrage in Israel. 7So now, you Israelites, all of you, give your advice and counsel here."

8 All the people got up as one, saying, "We will not any of us go to our tents, nor will any of us return to our houses. 9But now this is what we will do to Gib-

*x* Compare Gk: Heb *30And all who saw it said, "Such a thing has not happened or been seen*

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**19.22–26:** To forestall his own rape by the men of Gibeah, the Levite offers them his concubine. The text implies that the woman died as a result of her night of horror. **27–30:** The Levite seeks redress of the crime by bringing the matter to the tribal authorities. **29:** In 1 Sam 11.7 Saul calls up the tribes of Israel in a strikingly similar fashion.

**20.1–48: The war against Benjamin. 1–11:** The tribal assembly condemns the crime against the Levite's concubine and takes steps to punish the guilty. **1:** *Dan* was the northernmost Israelite city, while *Beer-sheba* was the southernmost one. *Gilead* refers to the Transjordanian territories. *Mizpah* was the name of a few Israelite towns. The one intended here was probably the Mizpah of Benjamin (Josh 18.26). It is identified with Tell en-Nasbeh, eight miles north of Jerusalem.

eah: we will go up[y] against it by lot. 10We will take ten men of a hundred throughout all the tribes of Israel, and a hundred of a thousand, and a thousand of ten thousand, to bring provisions for the troops, who are going to repay[z] Gibeah of Benjamin for all the disgrace that they have done in Israel." 11So all the men of Israel gathered against the city, united as one.

12 The tribes of Israel sent men through all the tribe of Benjamin, saying, "What crime is this that has been committed among you? 13Now then, hand over those scoundrels in Gibeah, so that we may put them to death, and purge the evil from Israel." But the Benjaminites would not listen to their kinsfolk, the Israelites. 14The Benjaminites came together out of the towns to Gibeah, to go out to battle against the Israelites. 15On that day the Benjaminites mustered twenty-six thousand armed men from their towns, besides the inhabitants of Gibeah. 16Of all this force, there were seven hundred picked men who were left-handed; every one could sling a stone at a hair, and not miss. 17And the Israelites, apart from Benjamin, mustered four hundred thousand armed men, all of them warriors.

18 The Israelites proceeded to go up to Bethel, where they inquired of God, "Which of us shall go up first to battle against the Benjaminites?" And the LORD answered, "Judah shall go up first."

19 Then the Israelites got up in the morning, and encamped against Gibeah. 20The Israelites went out to battle against Benjamin; and the Israelites drew up the battle line against them at Gibeah. 21The Benjaminites came out of Gibeah, and struck down on that day twenty-two thousand of the Israelites. 23[a]The Israelites went up and wept before the LORD until the evening; and they inquired of the LORD, "Shall we again draw near to battle against our kinsfolk the Benjaminites?" And the LORD said, "Go up against them." 22The Israelites took courage, and again formed the battle line in the same place where they had formed it on the first day.

24 So the Israelites advanced against the Benjaminites the second day. 25Benjamin moved out against them from Gibeah the second day, and struck down eighteen thousand of the Israelites, all of them armed men. 26Then all the Israelites, the whole army, went back to Bethel and wept, sitting there before the LORD; they fasted that day until evening. Then they offered burnt offerings and sacrifices of well-being before the LORD. 27And the Israelites inquired of the LORD (for the ark of the covenant of God was there in those days, 28and Phinehas son of Eleazar, son of Aaron, ministered before it in those days), saying, "Shall we go out once more to battle against our kinsfolk the Benjaminites, or shall we desist?" The LORD answered, "Go up, for tomorrow I will give them into your hand."

29 So Israel stationed men in ambush around Gibeah. 30Then the Israelites went up against the Benjaminites on the third day, and set themselves in array against Gibeah, as before. 31When the Benjaminites went out against the army, they were drawn away from the city. As before they began to inflict casualties on the troops, along the main roads, one of which goes up to Bethel and the other to Gibeah, as well as in the open country, killing about thirty men of Israel. 32The Benjaminites thought, "They are being routed before us, as previously." But the

*y* Gk: Heb lacks *we will go up* *z* Compare Gk: Meaning of Heb uncertain *a* Verses 22 and 23 are transposed

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**20.12–17**: The Benjaminites refused to subject themselves to the authority of the tribal assembly.

**20.18–28**: The militia of the assembly experienced reversals in the field. *Bethel,* once known as Luz, had associations with both Abraham (Gen 12.8; 13.3) and Jacob (Gen 28.10–22). It is near the modern Beitin, fourteen miles north of Jerusalem.

**20.29–48**: The Benjaminites were so thoroughly defeated that only a few survivors remained.

Israelites said, "Let us retreat and draw them away from the city toward the roads." 33 The main body of the Israelites drew back its battle line to Baal-tamar, while those Israelites who were in ambush rushed out of their place west[b] of Geba. 34 There came against Gibeah ten thousand picked men out of all Israel, and the battle was fierce. But the Benjaminites did not realize that disaster was close upon them.

35 The LORD defeated Benjamin before Israel; and the Israelites destroyed twenty-five thousand one hundred men of Benjamin that day, all of them armed.

36 Then the Benjaminites saw that they were defeated.[c]

The Israelites gave ground to Benjamin, because they trusted to the troops in ambush that they had stationed against Gibeah. 37 The troops in ambush rushed quickly upon Gibeah. Then they put the whole city to the sword. 38 Now the agreement between the main body of Israel and the men in ambush was that when they sent up a cloud of smoke out of the city 39 the main body of Israel should turn in battle. But Benjamin had begun to inflict casualties on the Israelites, killing about thirty of them; so they thought, "Surely they are defeated before us, as in the first battle." 40 But when the cloud, a column of smoke, began to rise out of the city, the Benjaminites looked behind them—and there was the whole city going up in smoke toward the sky! 41 Then the main body of Israel turned, and the Benjaminites were dismayed, for they saw that disaster was close upon them. 42 Therefore they turned away from the Israelites in the direction of the wilderness; but the battle overtook them, and those who came out of the city[d] were slaughtering them in between.[e] 43 Cutting down[f] the Benjaminites, they pursued them from Nohah[g] and trod them down as far as a place east of Gibeah. 44 Eighteen thousand Benjaminites fell, all of them courageous fighters. 45 When they turned and fled toward the wilderness to the rock of Rimmon, five thousand of them were cut down on the main roads, and they were pursued as far as Gidom, and two thousand of them were slain. 46 So all who fell that day of Benjamin were twenty-five thousand arms-bearing men, all of them courageous fighters. 47 But six hundred turned and fled toward the wilderness to the rock of Rimmon, and remained at the rock of Rimmon for four months. 48 Meanwhile, the Israelites turned back against the Benjaminites, and put them to the sword—the city, the people, the animals, and all that remained. Also the remaining towns they set on fire.

21 Now the Israelites had sworn at Mizpah, "No one of us shall give his daughter in marriage to Benjamin." 2 And the people came to Bethel, and sat there until evening before God, and they lifted up their voices and wept bitterly. 3 They said, "O LORD, the God of Israel, why has it come to pass that today there should be one tribe lacking in Israel?" 4 On the next day, the people got up early, and built an altar there, and offered burnt offerings and sacrifices of well-being. 5 Then the Israelites said, "Which of all the tribes of Israel did not come up in the assembly to the LORD?" For a solemn oath had been taken concerning whoever did not come up to the LORD to Mizpah, saying, "That one shall be put to death." 6 But the Israelites had compassion for Benjamin their kin, and said, "One tribe is cut off from Israel this day. 7 What shall we do for wives for those

*b* Gk Vg: Heb *in the plain* *c* This sentence is continued by verse 45. *d* Compare Vg and some Gk Mss: Heb *cities* *e* Compare Syr: Meaning of Heb uncertain *f* Gk: Heb *Surrounding* *g* Gk: Heb *pursued them at their resting place*

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**21.1–25: Repopulating Benjamin.** The inept handling of the Gibeah incident led to the near extinction of the tribe of Benjamin. The other tribes resorted to murder, kidnap, and rape to repopulate the tribe. The final chapter of the book paints a pathetic picture of Israelite society. **1–14:** Revenge on Jabesh-gilead. **1:** The tribes swear not to intermarry with Benjamin, though that meant extinction for Benjamin. **5:** The oath here solves the

who are left, since we have sworn by the LORD that we will not give them any of our daughters as wives?"

8 Then they said, "Is there anyone from the tribes of Israel who did not come up to the LORD to Mizpah?" It turned out that no one from Jabesh-gilead had come to the camp, to the assembly. 9For when the roll was called among the people, not one of the inhabitants of Jabesh-gilead was there. 10So the congregation sent twelve thousand soldiers there and commanded them, "Go, put the inhabitants of Jabesh-gilead to the sword, including the women and the little ones. 11This is what you shall do; every male and every woman that has lain with a male you shall devote to destruction." 12And they found among the inhabitants of Jabesh-gilead four hundred young virgins who had never slept with a man and brought them to the camp at Shiloh, which is in the land of Canaan.

13 Then the whole congregation sent word to the Benjaminites who were at the rock of Rimmon, and proclaimed peace to them. 14Benjamin returned at that time; and they gave them the women whom they had saved alive of the women of Jabesh-gilead; but they did not suffice for them.

15 The people had compassion on Benjamin because the LORD had made a breach in the tribes of Israel. 16So the elders of the congregation said, "What shall we do for wives for those who are left, since there are no women left in Benjamin?" 17And they said, "There must be heirs for the survivors of Benjamin, in order that a tribe may not be blotted out from Israel. 18Yet we cannot give any of our daughters to them as wives." For the Israelites had sworn, "Cursed be anyone who gives a wife to Benjamin." 19So they said, "Look, the yearly festival of the LORD is taking place at Shiloh, which is north of Bethel, on the east of the highway that goes up from Bethel to Shechem, and south of Lebonah." 20And they instructed the Benjaminites, saying, "Go and lie in wait in the vineyards, 21and watch; when the young women of Shiloh come out to dance in the dances, then come out of the vineyards and each of you carry off a wife for himself from the young women of Shiloh, and go to the land of Benjamin. 22Then if their fathers or their brothers come to complain to us, we will say to them, 'Be generous and allow us to have them; because we did not capture in battle a wife for each man. But neither did you incur guilt by giving your daughters to them.' " 23The Benjaminites did so; they took wives for each of them from the dancers whom they abducted. Then they went and returned to their territory, and rebuilt the towns, and lived in them. 24So the Israelites departed from there at that time by tribes and families, and they went out from there to their own territories.

25 In those days there was no king in Israel; all the people did what was right in their own eyes.

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problem resulting from the oath of v. 1. **9**: *Jabesh-gilead,* a town in the northern Transjordan region. It has been identified with Tell Abu Haraz and Tell el-Meqbereh. **12**: Four hundred virgins are spared and given to Benjamin as wives (v. 14). *Shiloh* is identified with the modern Seilun nine miles north of Bethel.

**21.15–24**: A second strategy for repopulating Benjamin allows them to abduct unprotected dancers among the women of Shiloh. **25**: A final verdict on the events of chs 19–21. There is no individual (except the concubine) or group whose conduct is not abominably immoral.

# *Ruth*

In contrast to the story of the Israelite tribes in Joshua and Judges, the book of Ruth focuses on a single family. The story underscores the loyalty and fidelity that bind the family together. The book is highly entertaining because it skillfully moves winsome characters through an engaging plot. The mysterious ways of God are an important part of this story, which illustrates how God is at work in the lives of Naomi, Ruth, and Boaz. These individuals serve as models of faithful commitment to the God of Israel.

The Septuagint, the Greek version of the Hebrew Scriptures, is responsible for placing Ruth between Judges and 1 Samuel. Locating the book here disrupts the sequence of the Deuteronomistic History that begins with Joshua and ends with 2 Kings. Ruth shows no evidence of any Deuteronomistic editing. The editors of the Septuagint placed the book here because they considered it to reflect events during the time of the judges (1.1). More likely Ruth is a short story whose setting is the period before the monarchy.

It is difficult to be certain about a date for this book, yet ascertaining the dating is central to determining the reason for its composition. A date before the Exile leads to the view that the book intended to establish David's ancestry, to affirm the practice of levirate marriage (see Deut 25.5–10), or to commend the virtues of the book's protagonists to ancient Israel. A date after the Exile supports the conviction that the author wished to show that a non-Israelite could become a faithful worshiper of the LORD. This would counter the books of Ezra and Nehemiah, both of which consider intermarriage wrong (see Ezra chs 9 and 10; Neh 10.30). Like the books of Jonah and Isaiah chs 40–55, Ruth affirms that the concern of the LORD extends beyond the people of Israel to people of every nation.

1 In the days when the judges ruled, there was a famine in the land, and a certain man of Bethlehem in Judah went to live in the country of Moab, he and his wife and two sons. 2The name of the man was Elimelech and the name of his wife Naomi, and the names of his two sons were Mahlon and Chilion; they were Ephrathites from Bethlehem in Judah. They went into the country of Moab and remained there. 3But Elimelech, the husband of Naomi, died, and she was left with her two sons. 4These took Moabite wives; the name of the one was Orpah and the name of the other Ruth. When they had lived there about ten years, 5both Mahlon and Chilion also died, so that the woman was left without her two sons and her husband.

6 Then she started to return with her daughters-in-law from the country of Moab, for she had heard in the country of Moab that the LORD had considered his people and given them food. 7So she set out from the place where she had been living, she and her two daughters-in-law, and they went on their way to go back to the land of Judah. 8But Naomi said to her two daughters-in-law, "Go back each of you to your mother's house. May the LORD deal kindly with you, as you have dealt with the dead and with me. 9The LORD grant that you may find security, each of you in the house of your husband." Then she kissed them, and they wept aloud. 10They said to her, "No, we will return with you to your people." 11But Naomi said, "Turn back, my daughters, why will you go with me? Do I still have sons in my womb that they may become your husbands? 12Turn back, my daughters, go your way, for I am too old to have a husband. Even if I thought there was hope for me, even if I should have a husband tonight and bear sons, 13would you then wait until they were grown? Would you then refrain from marrying? No, my daughters, it has been far more bitter for me than for you, because the hand of the LORD has turned against me." 14Then they wept aloud again. Orpah kissed her mother-in-law, but Ruth clung to her.

15 So she said, "See, your sister-in-law has gone back to her people and to her gods; return after your sister-in-law." 16But Ruth said,

"Do not press me to leave you
or to turn back from following you!
Where you go, I will go;
where you lodge, I will lodge;
your people shall be my people,
and your God my God.
17 Where you die, I will die—
there will I be buried.
May the LORD do thus and so to me,
and more as well,
if even death parts me from you!"

18When Naomi saw that she was determined to go with her, she said no more to her.

19 So the two of them went on until they came to Bethlehem. When they came to Bethlehem, the whole town was stirred because of them; and the women said, "Is this Naomi?" 20She said to them,

"Call me no longer Naomi,[a]
call me Mara,[b]
for the Almighty[c] has dealt bitterly with me.

*a* That is *Pleasant* *b* That is *Bitter*
*c* Traditional rendering of Heb *Shaddai*

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**1.1–22: Ruth and Naomi.** The two principal characters of the story are Naomi, an Israelite woman, and her Moabite daughter-in-law, Ruth. **1–5**: Naomi had to leave her homeland because of a famine. While in Moab she lost her husband and both sons to death. **1**: *Bethlehem* of Judah is five miles south of Jerusalem. It was the home of David's family (1 Sam 16.1–5). *Moab* occupied the territory east of the Dead Sea and south of the river Arnon. The Israelites believed that the Moabites were related to them through Lot (Gen 19.37), the nephew of Abraham. Conflicting claims to the same territory led to enmity between the two peoples (Deut 23.4).

**1.6–18**: Ruth chooses to stay with Naomi, who was returning to Judah.

**1.19–22**: Naomi's losses have embittered her.

21 I went away full,
but the LORD has brought me
back empty;
why call me Naomi
when the LORD has dealt harshly
with[d] me,
and the Almighty[e] has brought
calamity upon me?"

22 So Naomi returned together with Ruth the Moabite, her daughter-in-law, who came back with her from the country of Moab. They came to Bethlehem at the beginning of the barley harvest.

2 Now Naomi had a kinsman on her husband's side, a prominent rich man, of the family of Elimelech, whose name was Boaz. 2 And Ruth the Moabite said to Naomi, "Let me go to the field and glean among the ears of grain, behind someone in whose sight I may find favor." She said to her, "Go, my daughter." 3 So she went. She came and gleaned in the field behind the reapers. As it happened, she came to the part of the field belonging to Boaz, who was of the family of Elimelech. 4 Just then Boaz came from Bethlehem. He said to the reapers, "The LORD be with you." They answered, "The LORD bless you." 5 Then Boaz said to his servant who was in charge of the reapers, "To whom does this young woman belong?" 6 The servant who was in charge of the reapers answered, "She is the Moabite who came back with Naomi from the country of Moab. 7 She said, 'Please, let me glean and gather among the sheaves behind the reapers.' So she came, and she has been on her feet from early this morning until now, without resting even for a moment."[f]

8 Then Boaz said to Ruth, "Now listen, my daughter, do not go to glean in another field or leave this one, but keep close to my young women. 9 Keep your eyes on the field that is being reaped, and follow behind them. I have ordered the young men not to bother you. If you get thirsty, go to the vessels and drink from what the young men have drawn." 10 Then she fell prostrate, with her face to the ground, and said to him, "Why have I found favor in your sight, that you should take notice of me, when I am a foreigner?" 11 But Boaz answered her, "All that you have done for your mother-in-law since the death of your husband has been fully told me, and how you left your father and mother and your native land and came to a people that you did not know before. 12 May the LORD reward you for your deeds, and may you have a full reward from the LORD, the God of Israel, under whose wings you have come for refuge!" 13 Then she said, "May I continue to find favor in your sight, my lord, for you have comforted me and spoken kindly to your servant, even though I am not one of your servants."

14 At mealtime Boaz said to her, "Come here, and eat some of this bread, and dip your morsel in the sour wine." So she sat beside the reapers, and he heaped up for her some parched grain. She ate until she was satisfied, and she had some left over. 15 When she got up to glean, Boaz instructed his young men, "Let her glean even among the standing sheaves, and do not reproach her. 16 You must also pull out some handfuls for her from the bundles, and leave them for her to glean, and do not rebuke her."

17 So she gleaned in the field until evening. Then she beat out what she had gleaned, and it was about an ephah of barley. 18 She picked it up and came into

*d* Or *has testified against* *e* Traditional rendering of Heb *Shaddi* *f* Compare Gk Vg: Meaning of Heb uncertain

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**2.1–23**: **Ruth and Boaz.** A new character is introduced into the story. **1**: *Boaz* belonged to the family of Naomi's deceased husband. **2**: Israelite law made provision for the poor to provide for themselves by gleaning the fields after the reapers had finished their work. To ensure that there would be something for the poor, the law required farmers to leave a part of their harvest for gleaning by the poor (Lev 19.9–10; 23.22; Deut 24.19–22).

**2.4–23**: Ruth attracts the attention of Boaz.

**2.15–16**: Boaz gives instructions to ensure that Ruth would glean enough grain. **19–20**:

the town, and her mother-in-law saw how much she had gleaned. Then she took out and gave her what was left over after she herself had been satisfied. 19Her mother-in-law said to her, "Where did you glean today? And where have you worked? Blessed be the man who took notice of you." So she told her mother-in-law with whom she had worked, and said, "The name of the man with whom I worked today is Boaz." 20Then Naomi said to her daughter-in-law, "Blessed be he by the LORD, whose kindness has not forsaken the living or the dead!" Naomi also said to her, "The man is a relative of ours, one of our nearest kin."[g] 21Then Ruth the Moabite said, "He even said to me, 'Stay close by my servants, until they have finished all my harvest.'" 22Naomi said to Ruth, her daughter-in-law, "It is better, my daughter, that you go out with his young women, otherwise you might be bothered in another field." 23So she stayed close to the young women of Boaz, gleaning until the end of the barley and wheat harvests; and she lived with her mother-in-law.

3 Naomi her mother-in-law said to her, "My daughter, I need to seek some security for you, so that it may be well with you. 2Now here is our kinsman Boaz, with whose young women you have been working. See, he is winnowing barley tonight at the threshing floor. 3Now wash and anoint yourself, and put on your best clothes and go down to the threshing floor; but do not make yourself known to the man until he has finished eating and drinking. 4When he lies down, observe the place where he lies; then, go and uncover his feet and lie down; and he will tell you what to do." 5She said to her, "All that you tell me I will do."

6 So she went down to the threshing floor and did just as her mother-in-law had instructed her. 7When Boaz had eaten and drunk, and he was in a contented mood, he went to lie down at the end of the heap of grain. Then she came stealthily and uncovered his feet, and lay down. 8At midnight the man was startled, and turned over, and there, lying at his feet, was a woman! 9He said, "Who are you?" And she answered, "I am Ruth, your servant; spread your cloak over your servant, for you are next-of-kin."[g] 10He said, "May you be blessed by the LORD, my daughter; this last instance of your loyalty is better than the first; you have not gone after young men, whether poor or rich. 11And now, my daughter, do not be afraid, I will do for you all that you ask, for all the assembly of my people know that you are a worthy woman. 12But now, though it is true that I am a near kinsman, there is another kinsman more closely related than I. 13Remain this night, and in the morning, if he will act as next-of-kin[g] for you, good; let him do it. If he is not willing to act as next-of-kin[g] for you, then, as the LORD lives, I will act as next-of-kin[g] for you. Lie down until the morning."

*g* Or *one with the right to redeem*

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Naomi recognizes the kindness of Boaz toward Ruth as an act of divine providence.

**3.1–18: Naomi's instructions.** In the previous scene Ruth comes to the field of Boaz looking for food; she returns looking for a spouse. **1–5**: Naomi wants to help Ruth in finding a husband (see 1.9). She considers Boaz the obvious choice.

**3.6–13**: By following Naomi's instructions Ruth wins the favor of Boaz. **9**: To *spread* one's *cloak over* a woman means to take her for one's wife. There is a slight overtone of sexual intimacy in the passage, since *feet* (vv. 4, 8) in Hebrew can be a euphemism for "genitals." That the relationship between Ruth and Boaz is honorable according to the standards of their time, however, is shown by subsequent events. The *next-of-kin* had an obligation to protect the honor and property of the family (Lev 25.25; see Josh 20.3 n.). In addition, a surviving brother was to marry the wife of his deceased brother (Deut 25.5–6). The application of the latter law to Boaz is not obvious, since he was not Ruth's brother-in-law. **10–11**: Boaz asks God to bless Ruth because she was looking for a husband in accordance with Israelite custom. **12**: Boaz informs Ruth that there is another male relative who has a prior claim that must be respected.

14 So she lay at his feet until morning,
but got up before one person could rec-
ognize another; for he said, "It must not
be known that the woman came to the
threshing floor." 15Then he said, "Bring
the cloak you are wearing and hold it
out." So she held it, and he measured out
six measures of barley, and put it on her
back; then he went into the city. 16She
came to her mother-in-law, who said,
"How did things go with you,[h] my
daughter?" Then she told her all that the
man had done for her, 17saying, "He
gave me these six measures of barley, for
he said, 'Do not go back to your mother-
in-law empty-handed.'" 18She replied,
"Wait, my daughter, until you learn how
the matter turns out, for the man will not
rest, but will settle the matter today."

4 No sooner had Boaz gone up to the
gate and sat down there than the
next-of-kin,[i] of whom Boaz had spo-
ken, came passing by. So Boaz said,
"Come over, friend; sit down here."
And he went over and sat down. 2Then
Boaz took ten men of the elders of the
city, and said, "Sit down here"; so they
sat down. 3He then said to the next-of-
kin,[i] "Naomi, who has come back from
the country of Moab, is selling the parcel
of land that belonged to our kinsman
Elimelech. 4So I thought I would tell you
of it, and say: Buy it in the presence of
those sitting here, and in the presence of
the elders of my people. If you will re-
deem it, redeem it; but if you will not,
tell me, so that I may know; for there is
no one prior to you to redeem it, and I
come after you." So he said, "I will re-
deem it." 5Then Boaz said, "The day
you acquire the field from the hand of
Naomi, you are also acquiring Ruth[j] the
Moabite, the widow of the dead man, to
maintain the dead man's name on his in-
heritance." 6At this, the next-of-kin[i]
said, "I cannot redeem it for myself with-
out damaging my own inheritance. Take
my right of redemption yourself, for I
cannot redeem it."

7 Now this was the custom in former
times in Israel concerning redeeming and
exchanging: to confirm a transaction, the
one took off a sandal and gave it to the
other; this was the manner of attesting in
Israel. 8So when the next-of-kin[i] said to
Boaz, "Acquire it for yourself," he took
off his sandal. 9Then Boaz said to the
elders and all the people, "Today you are
witnesses that I have acquired from the
hand of Naomi all that belonged to Elim-
elech and all that belonged to Chilion and
Mahlon. 10I have also acquired Ruth the
Moabite, the wife of Mahlon, to be my
wife, to maintain the dead man's name
on his inheritance, in order that the name
of the dead may not be cut off from his
kindred and from the gate of his native
place; today you are witnesses." 11Then
all the people who were at the gate, along
with the elders, said, "We are witnesses.
May the LORD make the woman who is
coming into your house like Rachel and
Leah, who together built up the house of
Israel. May you produce children in Eph-
rathah and bestow a name in Bethlehem;
12and, through the children that the
LORD will give you by this young wom-
an, may your house be like the house of
Perez, whom Tamar bore to Judah."

*h* Or *"Who are you,* *i* Or *one with the right to redeem* *j* OL Vg: Heb *from the hand of Naomi and from Ruth*

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**3.14–18**: Naomi is certain that Ruth's status will be settled soon.

**4.1–12**: **Boaz and Ruth will marry. 1–6**: The unnamed rival to Boaz renounces the claims he had on Elimelech's property and household. Ruth is still young enough to have children, and any son she might bear would be considered a child and heir of her deceased husband. This would complicate matters concerning Elimelech's property for the next-of-kin's own heirs. **2**: *The elders of the city* were leading and influential men who interpreted traditional Israelite law and settled disputes.

**4.7–12**: Boaz asserts his claim to both Ruth and the property of Elimelech. **7**: The procedures described here do not follow the prescriptions of Deut 25.7–10. The precise way of handling such situations probably changed over time and differed regionally as well. **10**: *The gate,* see Josh 20.4 n. **12**: *Tamar's* marital situation was similar to that of Ruth (see Gen 38).

**4.13–22**: **Ruth's child. 13–17**: People rec-

13 So Boaz took Ruth and she became
his wife. When they came together, the
LORD made her conceive, and she bore a
son. 14Then the women said to Naomi,
"Blessed be the LORD, who has not left
you this day without next-of-kin;[k] and
may his name be renowned in Israel!
15He shall be to you a restorer of life and
a nourisher of your old age; for your
daughter-in-law who loves you, who is
more to you than seven sons, has borne
him." 16Then Naomi took the child and
laid him in her bosom, and became his
nurse. 17The women of the neighbor-
hood gave him a name, saying, "A son
has been born to Naomi." They named
him Obed; he became the father of Jesse,
the father of David.

18 Now these are the descendants of
Perez: Perez became the father of Hez-
ron, 19Hezron of Ram, Ram of Ammin-
adab, 20Amminadab of Nahshon, Nah-
shon of Salmon, 21Salmon of Boaz, Boaz
of Obed, 22Obed of Jesse, and Jesse of
David.

*k* Or *one with the right to redeem*

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ognize that the LORD was responsible for bringing Naomi's situation to a happy conclusion. **17:** Ruth's son became the grandfather of David; the New Testament includes him among the ancestors of Jesus (Mt 1.4–6; Lk 3.32).

# *Chronological Tables of Rulers*

## THE UNITED MONARCHY

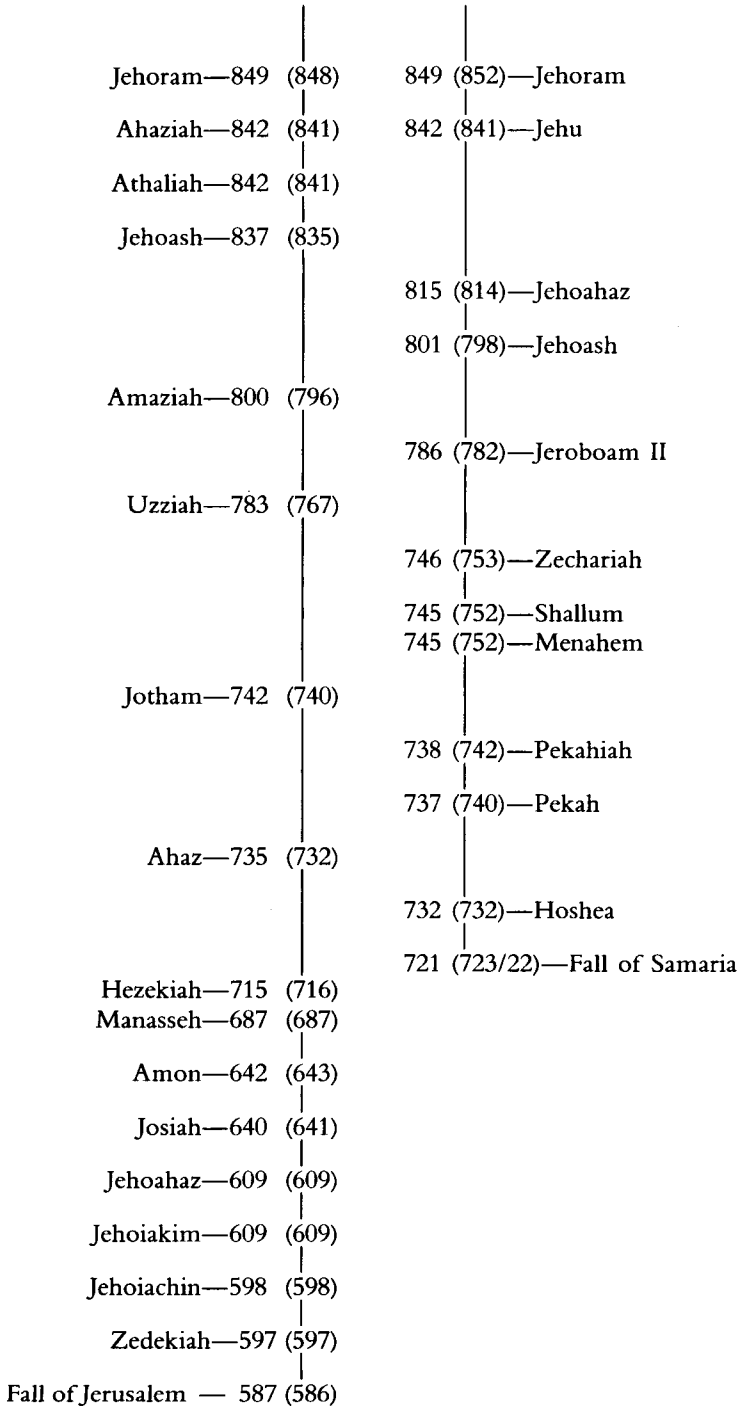
The length of Saul's reign is not known; David and Solomon are each said to have ruled for forty years, which is often used as a general and somewhat indefinite number. Their reigns must have fallen between about 1020 and 922 (931) B.C., perhaps as follows:

| | |
|---|---|
| Saul | 1020–1000 B.C. |
| David | 1000–961 (or 1000–965) B.C. |
| Solomon | 961–922 (or 965–931) B.C. |

## THE DIVIDED MONARCHY, JUDAH AND ISRAEL

Problems of chronology of the kings of Israel and Judah permit no easy solution. The following tables are based upon two widely accepted systems of chronology, one developed by W. F. Albright, and the other by E. R. Thiele. The dates of Thiele's system (3rd ed.), which are enclosed within parentheses, are presented in simplified form apart from coregencies and simultaneous claims to the throne. The two columns show the chronological relationships of the kings of the two kingdoms.

| JUDAH | ISRAEL |
|---|---|
| Rehoboam—922 (931) | 922 (931)—Jeroboam I |
| Abijam—915 (913) | |
| Asa—913 (911) | |
| | 901 (910)—Nadab |
| | 900 (909)—Baasha |
| | 877 (886)—Elah |
| | 876 (885)—Zimri |
| | 876 (Omri, Tibni 885)—Omri (Omri 880) |
| Jehoshaphat—873 (870) | |
| | 869 (874)—Ahab |
| | 850 (853)—Ahaziah |


Jehoram—849 (848)
Ahaziah—842 (841)
Athaliah—842 (841)
Jehoash—837 (835)
Amaziah—800 (796)
Uzziah—783 (767)
Jotham—742 (740)
Ahaz—735 (732)
Hezekiah—715 (716)
Manasseh—687 (687)
Amon—642 (643)
Josiah—640 (641)
Jehoahaz—609 (609)
Jehoiakim—609 (609)
Jehoiachin—598 (598)
Zedekiah—597 (597)
Fall of Jerusalem — 587 (586)
849 (852)—Jehoram
842 (841)—Jehu
815 (814)—Jehoahaz
801 (798)—Jehoash
786 (782)—Jeroboam II
746 (753)—Zechariah
745 (752)—Shallum
745 (752)—Menahem
738 (742)—Pekahiah
737 (740)—Pekah
732 (732)—Hoshea
721 (723/22)—Fall of Samaria

# *1 Samuel*

First Samuel as a separate book derives from the Greek translation of the Hebrew Scriptures (the Septuagint), which divided the story of Israel's monarchy into four sections now commonly known as 1 and 2 Samuel and 1 and 2 Kings. According to the royal formulas that mark literary divisions in the Hebrew of this larger complex (see 2 Sam 5.4–5; 1 Kings 14.21), the content of 1 Samuel falls into two main parts: the story of Samuel, viewed as a transition to monarchy (chs 1–12), and the story of Saul, Israel's first king (chs 13–31). David, an account of whose reign actually begins in 2 Sam 5, figures prominently in the latter.

A classic nineteenth-century theory postulated that two literary sources, an early and a later one, lay behind the present form of 1 Samuel. Most scholars now grant that composition and editing took place in several stages over a considerable time. All attempts to reconstruct this literary history, however, are speculative, since each depends upon assumptions and evidence that can rarely be corroborated outside the Bible itself. Assigning sections of the present biblical text to one stage or another is very difficult, and many scholars today are less confident about the results than were their predecessors.

One popular view is that 1 Samuel developed in three stages. First came early traditions about Samuel and Saul, still partly visible in such materials as the "Ark Narrative" (4.1–7.1), Saul's rise to the throne (9.1–11.15, possibly including chs 13–14), and the rise of David to prominence (chs 16–31). A second stage occurred when an editor molded these materials into a connected version of history that implied a prophet-like critique of events. Kingship is problematic, and must be set under the rule of God through his prophet, Samuel. Now an enhanced figure, Samuel is the sole mediator of God's power; he acts on God's behalf to select the king (8.1–10.27; 16.1–13) and to monitor the king's adherence to requirements of God's covenant with Israel (15.1–31). The third and final stage of literary history occurred when this prophetic story was incorporated into the much more extensive Deuteronomistic history (see Introduction to the Historical Books, pp. 267–269 OT). This composition, which itself may have existed in at least two versions composed during the 7th–6th centuries B.C., presented Israel's monarchy from beginning to end as a story of religious, moral, and political failure. Most scholars suggest that this historian's decidedly theological viewpoint may be seen in 1 Sam 8 and 12 (also 2 Sam 7), and in editorial touches elsewhere.

Regardless of how one evaluates such hypotheses, 1 Samuel as it now stands presents a fairly coherent account of the origins of Israel's monarchy. Through God's reluctant agreement to kingship, then full oversight of it during Saul's reign, and through the turmoil of David's rise to prominence (and on into 2 Samuel, where David becomes king), a reader grasps that David represents the highest expression of a kingdom under the rule of God. In this view, the covenantal bond between God and people that was first sealed through Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, then refined through Moses, continues to define a nation whose roots should draw nourishment above all from religious ideals.

***Hannah at the temple***

1 There was a certain man of Ramathaim, a Zuphite[a] from the hill country of Ephraim, whose name was Elkanah son of Jeroham son of Elihu son of Tohu son of Zuph, an Ephraimite. 2He had two wives; the name of the one was Hannah, and the name of the other Peninnah. Peninnah had children, but Hannah had no children.

3 Now this man used to go up year by year from his town to worship and to sacrifice to the LORD of hosts at Shiloh, where the two sons of Eli, Hophni and Phinehas, were priests of the LORD. 4On the day when Elkanah sacrificed, he would give portions to his wife Peninnah and to all her sons and daughters; 5but to Hannah he gave a double portion,[b] because he loved her, though the LORD had closed her womb. 6Her rival used to provoke her severely, to irritate her, because the LORD had closed her womb. 7So it went on year by year; as often as she went up to the house of the LORD, she used to provoke her. Therefore Hannah wept and would not eat. 8Her husband Elkanah said to her, "Hannah, why do you weep? Why do you not eat? Why is your heart sad? Am I not more to you than ten sons?"

9 After they had eaten and drunk at Shiloh, Hannah rose and presented herself before the LORD.[c] Now Eli the priest was sitting on the seat beside the doorpost of the temple of the LORD. 10She was deeply distressed and prayed to the LORD, and wept bitterly. 11She made this vow: "O LORD of hosts, if only you will look on the misery of your servant, and remember me, and not forget your servant, but will give to your servant a male child, then I will set him before you as a nazirite[d] until the day of his death. He shall drink neither wine nor intoxicants,[e] and no razor shall touch his head."

12 As she continued praying before the LORD, Eli observed her mouth. 13Hannah was praying silently; only her lips moved, but her voice was not heard; therefore Eli thought she was drunk. 14So Eli said to her, "How long will you make a drunken spectacle of yourself? Put away your wine." 15But Hannah answered, "No, my lord, I am a woman deeply troubled; I have drunk neither wine nor strong drink, but I have been pouring out my soul before the LORD. 16Do not regard your servant as a worthless woman, for I have been speaking out of my great anxiety and vexation all this time." 17Then Eli answered, "Go in peace; the God of Israel grant the petition you have made to him." 18And she said, "Let your servant find favor in your sight." Then the woman went to her quarters,[f] ate and drank with her husband,[g] and her countenance was sad no longer.[h]

*a* Compare Gk and 1 Chr 6.35-36: Heb *Ramathaim-zophim* *b* Syr: Meaning of Heb uncertain *c* Gk: Heb lacks *and presented herself before the LORD* *d* That is *one separated* or *one consecrated* *e* Cn Compare Gk Q Ms 1.22: MT *then I will give him to the LORD all the days of his life* *f* Gk: Heb *went her way*
*g* Gk: Heb lacks *and drank with her husband*
*h* Gk: Meaning of Heb uncertain

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**1.1–28: The birth and consecration of Samuel.** The story of a formerly barren woman who bears unusual offspring late in life as a special favor from God appears several times in the Bible. Besides Hannah, note Sarah (Gen 17.16–19), Rebekah (Gen 25.21–26), Rachel (Gen 29.31; 30.22–24), the mother of Samson (Judg 13.2–5), and Elizabeth (Lk 1.5–17). The unusual birth was thought to be symbolic of the importance of the person in later life. **1**: The Greek version begins thus: "There was a certain man of Ramah, a Zuphite of the hill country . . ."; comparison with v. 19 shows that Ramah was probably the familiar name of the place. **2**: *Two wives,* bigamy was not common in Old Testament times, but was allowed (Deut 21.15–17). **3**: The original meaning of the expression *LORD of hosts* is "LORD of armies" or "God of battles," referring to God's leadership of heavenly armies and those of his people in war. There was an important shrine at *Shiloh* in the days before the monarchy (Josh 18.1; Judg 21.19; Jer 7.12; Ps 78.60). We should read (with the Greek version), "Eli and his two sons"; it is evident from later verses that Eli had not retired.

**1.9–18**: Hannah went to the temple and

19 They rose early in the morning and worshiped before the LORD; then they went back to their house at Ramah. Elkanah knew his wife Hannah, and the LORD remembered her. 20 In due time Hannah conceived and bore a son. She named him Samuel, for she said, "I have asked him of the LORD."

21 The man Elkanah and all his household went up to offer to the LORD the yearly sacrifice, and to pay his vow. 22 But Hannah did not go up, for she said to her husband, "As soon as the child is weaned, I will bring him, that he may appear in the presence of the LORD, and remain there forever; I will offer him as a nazirite[i] for all time."[j] 23 Her husband Elkanah said to her, "Do what seems best to you, wait until you have weaned him; only—may the LORD establish his word."[k] So the woman remained and nursed her son, until she weaned him. 24 When she had weaned him, she took him up with her, along with a three-year-old bull,[l] an ephah of flour, and a skin of wine. She brought him to the house of the LORD at Shiloh; and the child was young. 25 Then they slaughtered the bull, and they brought the child to Eli. 26 And she said, "Oh, my lord! As you live, my lord, I am the woman who was standing here in your presence, praying to the LORD. 27 For this child I prayed; and the LORD has granted me the petition that I made to him. 28 Therefore I have lent him to the LORD; as long as he lives, he is given to the LORD."

She left him there for[m] the LORD.

2 Hannah prayed and said,
"My heart exults in the LORD;
my strength is exalted in my God.[n]
My mouth derides my enemies,
because I rejoice in my[o] victory.

2 "There is no Holy One like the LORD,
no one besides you;
there is no Rock like our God.
3 Talk no more so very proudly,
let not arrogance come from your mouth;
for the LORD is a God of knowledge,
and by him actions are weighed.
4 The bows of the mighty are broken,
but the feeble gird on strength.

*i* That is one separated or *one consecrated*
*j* Cn Compare Q Ms: MT lacks *I will offer him as a nazirite for all time* *k* MT: Q Ms Gk Compare Syr *that which goes out of your mouth* *l* Q Ms Gk Syr: MT *three bulls* *m* Gk (Compare Q Ms) and Gk at 2.11: MT *And he* (that is, Elkanah) *worshiped there before* *n* Gk: Heb *the* LORD
*o* Q Ms: MT *your*

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prayed for a son, promising to consecrate him to God's service if her prayer was granted.

**1.19–28**: The prayer was answered and the promise fulfilled. The Hebrew word for *asked* in v. 20 seems to be a play on the meaning of the name "Saul" rather than *Samuel,* which probably means "name of God," suggesting the boy's close affinity with God. There may be some confusion between Saul and Samuel here; but the word *asked* in Hebrew also means "borrowed," so perhaps this word should be connected with the word *lent* in v. 28; Hannah had begged or borrowed (same word in Hebrew) her son from God, so she *lent* him back to God, by whose grace he had been granted (see 2.20).

**2.1–11**: **The song of Hannah.** It was the custom of biblical editors to insert poems into prose books to increase artistic and religious appeal. The poems may be older or later than the contexts into which they are inserted. In this case the poem seems to be considerably later. It is really a psalm of national thanksgiving, and has a certain appropriateness at this point; it became the literary model for Mary's song of thanksgiving (the Magnificat) in the New Testament (Lk 1.46–55). **1**: *My strength,* literally "my horn," the figure of an animal tossing its head. The *I* of this psalm, as of many others, is the nation as well as the individual worshiper. The group and the individual are often identified in biblical poetry in a way strange to modern thinking. **2**: *Rock,* 2 Sam 22.2–3; Pss 18.2; 28.1; 62.2, 6; etc. **3**: The enemies of Israel are addressed. **4**: The reversal of fortune for the downtrodden and oppressed (also vv. 5, 8); compare Ps 113.7–9.

5 Those who were full have hired themselves out for bread,
but those who were hungry are fat with spoil.
The barren has borne seven,
but she who has many children is forlorn.
6 The LORD kills and brings to life;
he brings down to Sheol and raises up.
7 The LORD makes poor and makes rich;
he brings low, he also exalts.
8 He raises up the poor from the dust;
he lifts the needy from the ash heap,
to make them sit with princes
and inherit a seat of honor.[p]
For the pillars of the earth are the LORD's,
and on them he has set the world.

9 "He will guard the feet of his faithful ones,
but the wicked shall be cut off in darkness;
for not by might does one prevail.
10 The LORD! His adversaries shall be shattered;
the Most High[q] will thunder in heaven.
The LORD will judge the ends of the earth;
he will give strength to his king,
and exalt the power of his anointed."

11 Then Elkanah went home to Ramah, while the boy remained to minister to the LORD, in the presence of the priest Eli.

12 Now the sons of Eli were scoundrels; they had no regard for the LORD 13or for the duties of the priests to the people. When anyone offered sacrifice, the priest's servant would come, while the meat was boiling, with a three-pronged fork in his hand, 14and he would thrust it into the pan, or kettle, or caldron, or pot; all that the fork brought up the priest would take for himself.[r] This is what they did at Shiloh to all the Israelites who came there. 15Moreover, before the fat was burned, the priest's servant would come and say to the one who was sacrificing, "Give meat for the priest to roast; for he will not accept boiled meat from you, but only raw." 16And if the man said to him, "Let them burn the fat first, and then take whatever you wish," he would say, "No, you must give it now; if not, I will take it by force." 17Thus the sin of the young men was very great in the sight of the LORD; for they treated the offerings of the LORD with contempt.

18 Samuel was ministering before the LORD, a boy wearing a linen ephod. 19His mother used to make for him a

*p* Gk (Compare Q Ms) adds *He grants the vow of the one who vows, and blesses the years of the just*
*q* Cn Heb *against him he*
*r* Gk Syr Vg: Heb *with it*

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**2.5**: *The barren has borne seven,* this line may have suggested the insertion of the poem at this place. *Seven* is merely symbolic of a sizable family; Hannah seems not to have had more than six children (see v. 21). **6–7**: God controls all of life. *Brings to life* may refer to birth rather than to resurrection from the dead; likewise the next line may refer to deep trouble or desperate injuries and recovery from them. *Sheol,* the place of the dead under the earth, like Hades among the Greeks (Isa 14.9–21); but the term is sometimes used of conditions near death (Pss 86.13; 88.3–7). **8**: *Pillars of the earth;* the earth was conceived of as a platform resting on great pillars. **9**: The idea that the good would prosper and the wicked suffer ill fortune in this world was widespread in the post-exilic period (see Prov 3.9–10; 5.22–23); the books of Job and Ecclesiastes are a protest against this view of life. **10**: For God as the final judge of all, see Ps 98.9. *His king* and *his anointed* in this context could refer to the historical monarchy, but may also look forward to an ideal king of the future (see 10.1 n.).

**2.12–26**: **The sons of Eli.** The evil conduct of the sons of Eli contrasts with the growing spirituality of Samuel (vv. 21, 26 and ch 3).

**2.18**: The *linen ephod* was a light ceremonial

little robe and take it to him each year, when she went up with her husband to offer the yearly sacrifice. 20Then Eli would bless Elkanah and his wife, and say, "May the LORD repay[s] you with children by this woman for the gift that she made to[t] the LORD"; and then they would return to their home.

21 And[u] the LORD took note of Hannah; she conceived and bore three sons and two daughters. And the boy Samuel grew up in the presence of the LORD.

22 Now Eli was very old. He heard all that his sons were doing to all Israel, and how they lay with the women who served at the entrance to the tent of meeting. 23He said to them, "Why do you do such things? For I hear of your evil dealings from all these people. 24No, my sons; it is not a good report that I hear the people of the LORD spreading abroad. 25If one person sins against another, someone can intercede for the sinner with the LORD;[v] but if someone sins against the LORD, who can make intercession?" But they would not listen to the voice of their father; for it was the will of the LORD to kill them.

26 Now the boy Samuel continued to grow both in stature and in favor with the LORD and with the people.

27 A man of God came to Eli and said to him, "Thus the LORD has said, 'I revealed[w] myself to the family of your ancestor in Egypt when they were slaves[x] to the house of Pharaoh. 28I chose him out of all the tribes of Israel to be my priest, to go up to my altar, to offer incense, to wear an ephod before me; and I gave to the family of your ancestor all my offerings by fire from the people of Israel. 29Why then look with greedy eye[y] at my sacrifices and my offerings that I commanded, and honor your sons more than me by fattening yourselves on the choicest parts of every offering of my people Israel?' 30Therefore the LORD the God of Israel declares: 'I promised that your family and the family of your ancestor should go in and out before me forever'; but now the LORD declares: 'Far be it from me; for those who honor me I will honor, and those who despise me shall be treated with contempt. 31See, a time is coming when I will cut off your strength and the strength of your ancestor's family, so that no one in your family will live to old age. 32Then in distress you will look with greedy eye[z] on all the prosperity that shall be bestowed upon Israel; and no one in your family shall ever live to old age. 33The only one of you whom I shall not cut off from my altar shall be spared to weep out his[a] eyes and grieve his[b] heart; all the members of your household shall die by the sword.[c] 34The fate of your two sons, Hophni and Phinehas, shall be the sign to you—both of them shall die on the same day. 35I will

*s* Q Ms Gk: MT *give* *t* Q Ms Gk: MT *for the petition that she asked of* *u* Q Ms Gk: MT *When* *v* Gk Compare Q Ms: MT *another, God will mediate for him* *w* Gk Tg Syr: Heb *Did I reveal* *x* Q Ms Gk: MT lacks *slaves* *y* Q Ms Gk: MT *then kick* *z* Q Ms Gk: MT *will kick* *a* Q Ms Gk: MT *your* *b* Q Ms Gk: Heb *your* *c* Q Ms See Gk: MT *die like mortals*

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garment covering only the front of the body (2 Sam 6.14); it is sometimes referred to as an apron. Later the priests wore a more elaborate ephod (Ex 28.5–14). **20:** See 1.19–28 n.

**2.22**: The *tent of meeting* seems to be an error here, for the sanctuary at Shiloh was a building, not a tent. Perhaps there is some confusion with Ex 38.8. **25:** *It was the will of the LORD to kill them* is a theological way of saying that they were incorrigible, and therefore God had to punish them.

**2.27–36: The condemnation of the house of Eli.** This is possibly an insertion designed to justify the exclusion of Abiathar and his descendants from the priesthood in favor of Zadok and his descendants (1 Kings 2.27, 35; see 3.11–14 n.). Eli was an ancestor of Abiathar, according to the writer of this passage, and the sins of the fathers (Eli and his sons) were visited upon the children (Deut 5.9). **27:** *Your ancestor* refers to Aaron. **28:** *An ephod,* see v. 18 n. **33:** *The only one of you* is Abiathar, the only one to escape at Nob (1 Sam 22.18–23; 1 Kings 2.26–27). **35:** The *faithful priest* is Zadok (2 Sam 8.17; 15.24; 1 Kings 1.8; 2.35). *My anointed* refers to the king, real or ideal (see v. 10 n.).

raise up for myself a faithful priest, who shall do according to what is in my heart and in my mind. I will build him a sure house, and he shall go in and out before my anointed one forever. 36Everyone who is left in your family shall come to implore him for a piece of silver or a loaf of bread, and shall say, Please put me in one of the priest's places, that I may eat a morsel of bread.'"

3 Now the boy Samuel was ministering to the LORD under Eli. The word of the LORD was rare in those days; visions were not widespread.

2 At that time Eli, whose eyesight had begun to grow dim so that he could not see, was lying down in his room; 3the lamp of God had not yet gone out, and Samuel was lying down in the temple of the LORD, where the ark of God was. 4Then the LORD called, "Samuel! Samuel!"[d] and he said, "Here I am!" 5and ran to Eli, and said, "Here I am, for you called me." But he said, "I did not call; lie down again." So he went and lay down. 6The LORD called again, "Samuel!" Samuel got up and went to Eli, and said, "Here I am, for you called me." But he said, "I did not call, my son; lie down again." 7Now Samuel did not yet know the LORD, and the word of the LORD had not yet been revealed to him. 8The LORD called Samuel again, a third time. And he got up and went to Eli, and said, "Here I am, for you called me." Then Eli perceived that the LORD was calling the boy. 9Therefore Eli said to Samuel, "Go, lie down; and if he calls you, you shall say, 'Speak, LORD, for your servant is listening.'" So Samuel went and lay down in his place.

10 Now the LORD came and stood there, calling as before, "Samuel! Samuel!" And Samuel said, "Speak, for your servant is listening." 11Then the LORD said to Samuel, "See, I am about to do something in Israel that will make both ears of anyone who hears of it tingle. 12On that day I will fulfill against Eli all that I have spoken concerning his house, from beginning to end. 13For I have told him that I am about to punish his house forever, for the iniquity that he knew, because his sons were blaspheming God,[e] and he did not restrain them. 14Therefore I swear to the house of Eli that the iniquity of Eli's house shall not be expiated by sacrifice or offering forever."

15 Samuel lay there until morning; then he opened the doors of the house of the LORD. Samuel was afraid to tell the vision to Eli. 16But Eli called Samuel and said, "Samuel, my son." He said, "Here I am." 17Eli said, "What was it that he told you? Do not hide it from me. May God do so to you and more also, if you hide anything from me of all that he told you." 18So Samuel told him everything and hid nothing from him. Then he said, "It is the LORD; let him do what seems good to him."

19 As Samuel grew up, the LORD was with him and let none of his words fall to the ground. 20And all Israel from Dan to Beer-sheba knew that Samuel was a trustworthy prophet of the LORD. 21The LORD continued to appear at Shiloh, for the LORD revealed himself to Samuel at

*d* Q Ms Gk See 3.10: MT *the LORD called Samuel*
*e* Another reading is *for themselves*

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**3.1–4.1a: God's first revelation to Samuel.** According to Jewish tradition Samuel was twelve years old at this time, the age of Jesus when he discoursed in the temple at Jerusalem (Lk 2.40–52). These beautiful stories of the birth and childhood of Samuel were in the mind of Luke as he began the writing of his Gospel (see 2.1–10 n.). **1:** *Word* and *vision* here are essentially the same thing—a revelation from God. **3:** *The lamp of God* burned all night (Ex 27.21); hence the time was just before dawn. The *lamp* was near *the ark of God,* the portable shrine or chest symbolizing the presence and power of the Deity. Its early form was simple, but in later conception it became highly ornate (Ex 25.10–22; 37.1–9). The simple early form plays an important part in the story that follows in the next section.

**3.11–14:** These verses are connected with 2.27–36 above. God chastens as well as offering salvation. **4.1a:** *Word* here probably means

*The ark of God captured*

4 Shiloh by the word of the LORD. [1]And the word of Samuel came to all Israel.

In those days the Philistines mustered for war against Israel,[f] and Israel went out to battle against them;[g] they encamped at Ebenezer, and the Philistines encamped at Aphek. [2]The Philistines drew up in line against Israel, and when the battle was joined,[h] Israel was defeated by the Philistines, who killed about four thousand men on the field of battle. [3]When the troops came to the camp, the elders of Israel said, "Why has the LORD put us to rout today before the Philistines? Let us bring the ark of the covenant of the LORD here from Shiloh, so that he may come among us and save us from the power of our enemies." [4]So the people sent to Shiloh, and brought from there the ark of the covenant of the LORD of hosts, who is enthroned on the cherubim. The two sons of Eli, Hophni and Phinehas, were there with the ark of the covenant of God.

5 When the ark of the covenant of the LORD came into the camp, all Israel gave a mighty shout, so that the earth resounded. [6]When the Philistines heard the noise of the shouting, they said, "What does this great shouting in the camp of the Hebrews mean?" When they learned that the ark of the LORD had come to the camp, [7]the Philistines were afraid; for they said, "Gods have[i] come into the camp." They also said, "Woe to us! For nothing like this has happened before. [8]Woe to us! Who can deliver us from the power of these mighty gods? These are the gods who struck the Egyptians with every sort of plague in the wilderness. [9]Take courage, and be men, O Philistines, in order not to become slaves to the Hebrews as they have been to you; be men and fight."

10 So the Philistines fought; Israel was defeated, and they fled, everyone to his home. There was a very great slaugh-

*f* Gk: Heb lacks *In those days the Philistines mustered for war against Israel* *g* Gk: Heb *against the Philistines* *h* Meaning of Heb uncertain *i* Or *A god has*

"reputation"; Samuel became known and trusted throughout all the land as a leader who spoke for God.

**4.1b–7.2: The beginning of the war with the Philistines.** The first sentence of this section of the Greek version tells us that *the Philistines* took the lead in the war by mustering their forces against the Israelites. For the origin of the Philistines, see Judg 13.1 n. At the time this story begins (about 1050 B.C.) the Philistines apparently had decided that they were strong enough to attack the Israelites and perhaps to take over the whole land. Thus begins for the Israelites a life-and-death struggle. Samuel is not mentioned in this section; one might almost say that *the ark,* rather than any person, is here the center of the author's attention.

**4.1b–22: The defeat of Israel and capture of the ark.** The strategy of the Philistines was to drive up the coast, then down the plain of Esdraelon to the Jordan river, thus cutting communication between the parts of Israel north and south of the plain. By the end of 1 Samuel this strategy has succeeded, though in the meantime there were attempts to penetrate Israelite territory farther south.

**4.3–4:** *Ark of the covenant,* see 3.3 n. *The LORD of hosts,* see 1.3 n. *Who is enthroned on the cherubim,* 2 Sam 6.2; 2 Kings 19.15; Pss 80.1; 99.1; etc. *Cherubim,* see Gen 3.24 n. In Phoenicia the king was sometimes represented as sitting on a throne supported by cherubim; the translators here suggest that the LORD God of Israel is similarly *enthroned.* Another interpretation is that God "dwells in the cherubim." There is no necessary implication that cherubim formed a part of this early, simple ark.

**4.5–11: The loss of the ark. 6:** The word *Hebrews* in the earlier parts of the Hebrew Bible is nearly always used by non-Israelites as a term of contempt (compare Gen 39.14; 43.32); the Israelites seldom use it of themselves. Only later could Jonah and Paul say proudly, "I am a Hebrew" (Jon 1.9; Phil 3.5). **7, 8:** The plural expression *gods* would seem to imply that the Philistines had no conception of how the Israelites worshiped only one God (but compare 5.7, 8, 10, 11). Since the plagues occurred in Egypt, the phrase "in the wilderness" may be a mistake, or possibly the author is making sport of the ignorance of the Philistines. **10:** Most ancient documents, biblical and non-biblical, are less exact with regard to numbers than are modern writings.

ter, for there fell of Israel thirty thousand foot soldiers. 11 The ark of God was captured; and the two sons of Eli, Hophni and Phinehas, died.

12 A man of Benjamin ran from the battle line, and came to Shiloh the same day, with his clothes torn and with earth upon his head. 13 When he arrived, Eli was sitting upon his seat by the road watching, for his heart trembled for the ark of God. When the man came into the city and told the news, all the city cried out. 14 When Eli heard the sound of the outcry, he said, "What is this uproar?" Then the man came quickly and told Eli. 15 Now Eli was ninety-eight years old and his eyes were set, so that he could not see. 16 The man said to Eli, "I have just come from the battle; I fled from the battle today." He said, "How did it go, my son?" 17 The messenger replied, "Israel has fled before the Philistines, and there has also been a great slaughter among the troops; your two sons also, Hophni and Phinehas, are dead, and the ark of God has been captured." 18 When he mentioned the ark of God, Eli[j] fell over backward from his seat by the side of the gate; and his neck was broken and he died, for he was an old man, and heavy. He had judged Israel forty years.

19 Now his daughter-in-law, the wife of Phinehas, was pregnant, about to give birth. When she heard the news that the ark of God was captured, and that her father-in-law and her husband were dead, she bowed and gave birth; for her labor pains overwhelmed her. 20 As she was about to die, the women attending her said to her, "Do not be afraid, for you have borne a son." But she did not answer or give heed. 21 She named the child Ichabod, meaning, "The glory has departed from Israel," because the ark of God had been captured and because of her father-in-law and her husband. 22 She said, "The glory has departed from Israel, for the ark of God has been captured."

5 When the Philistines captured the ark of God, they brought it from Ebenezer to Ashdod; 2 then the Philistines took the ark of God and brought it into the house of Dagon and placed it beside Dagon. 3 When the people of Ashdod rose early the next day, there was Dagon, fallen on his face to the ground before the ark of the LORD. So they took Dagon and put him back in his place. 4 But when they rose early on the next morning, Dagon had fallen on his face to the ground before the ark of the LORD, and the head of Dagon and both his hands were lying cut off upon the threshold; only the trunk of[k] Dagon was left to him. 5 This is why the priests of Dagon and all who enter the house of Dagon do

*j* Heb *he* *k* Heb lacks *the trunk of*

**4.12–18: The death of Eli. 13:** *By the road,* the reading of the Greek version, "by the gate" (presumably the door of the temple), is preferable (1.9). **18:** *He had judged Israel forty years,* added by the Deuteronomic editor on the assumption that practically every prominent leader in those days was a judge of all Israel (Judg 16.31).

**4.19–22: The birth of Ichabod.** The name *Ichabod* means "no glory" or "alas for the glory!" Many names in the Bible describe the circumstances surrounding the bearer's birth or give an omen; compare the naming of Cain (Gen 4.1), Isaac ("laugh," Gen 21.3, 6), the children of Jacob (Gen 30.6–24), Moses ("draw out," Ex 2.10), and Jesus ("save," Mt 1.21).

**5.1–12: The ark troubles the Philistines.** The early Israelites must have taken much delight in this story of the power of the symbol of their God. **1:** *Ashdod* was one of the five principal Philistine towns (pentapolis), along with Ashkelon, Ekron, Gath, and Gaza (Judg 14.19 n.). **2:** *House* here means temple. *Dagon,* the principal deity of the Philistines (Judg 16.23), appears to have been borrowed, at least in name, from some of the surrounding Semitic peoples. The root meaning of the word was formerly thought to be "fish" (the Philistines being near the sea), but is now considered to be "grain." Hence Dagon is reckoned among the "fertility" deities that have to do with agricultural productivity. **5:** Leaping over *the threshold* was a common practice in primitive religions (Zeph 1.9), the doorsill being regarded with superstitious awe (compare the modern custom of carrying a bride over the threshold). The origins of the custom are very ancient; hence the explanation given here can hardly be correct.

not step on the threshold of Dagon in Ashdod to this day.

6 The hand of the LORD was heavy upon the people of Ashdod, and he terrified and struck them with tumors, both in Ashdod and in its territory. 7 And when the inhabitants of Ashdod saw how things were, they said, "The ark of the God of Israel must not remain with us; for his hand is heavy on us and on our god Dagon." 8 So they sent and gathered together all the lords of the Philistines, and said, "What shall we do with the ark of the God of Israel?" The inhabitants of Gath replied, "Let the ark of God be moved on to us."[l] So they moved the ark of the God of Israel to Gath.[m] 9 But after they had brought it to Gath,[n] the hand of the LORD was against the city, causing a very great panic; he struck the inhabitants of the city, both young and old, so that tumors broke out on them. 10 So they sent the ark of the God of Israel[o] to Ekron. But when the ark of God came to Ekron, the people of Ekron cried out, "Why[p] have they brought around to us[q] the ark of the God of Israel to kill us[q] and our[r] people?" 11 They sent therefore and gathered together all the lords of the Philistines, and said, "Send away the ark of the God of Israel, and let it return to its own place, that it may not kill us and our people." For there was a deathly panic[s] throughout the whole city. The hand of God was very heavy there; 12 those who did not die were stricken with tumors, and the cry of the city went up to heaven.

6 The ark of the LORD was in the country of the Philistines seven months. 2 Then the Philistines called for the priests and the diviners and said, "What shall we do with the ark of the LORD? Tell us what we should send with it to its place." 3 They said, "If you send away the ark of the God of Israel, do not send it empty, but by all means return him a guilt offering. Then you will be healed and will be ransomed;[t] will not his hand then turn from you?" 4 And they said, "What is the guilt offering that we shall return to him?" They answered, "Five gold tumors and five gold mice, according to the number of the lords of the Philistines; for the same plague was upon all of you and upon your lords. 5 So you must make images of your tumors and images of your mice that ravage the land, and give glory to the God of Israel; perhaps he will lighten his hand on you and your gods and your land. 6 Why should you harden your hearts as the Egyptians and Pharaoh hardened their hearts? After he had made fools of them, did they not let the people go, and they departed? 7 Now then, get ready a new cart and two milch cows that have never borne a yoke, and yoke the cows to the cart, but take their calves home, away from them. 8 Take the ark of the LORD and place it on the cart, and put in a box at its side the figures of gold, which you

*l* Gk Compare Q Ms: MT *They answered, "Let the ark of the God of Israel be brought around to Gath."* *m* Gk: Heb lacks *to Gath* *n* Q Ms: MT lacks *to Gath* *o* Q Ms Gk: MT lacks *of Israel* *p* Q Ms Gk: MT lacks *Why* *q* Heb *me* *r* Heb *my* *s* Q Ms reads *a panic from the* LORD *t* Q Ms Gk: MT *and it will be known to you*

**5.6, 9, 12:** These *tumors* are generally considered to have been the swellings of the bubonic plague. **7, 8, 10, 11:** The Philistines appear to understand that Israel has but one God.

**6.1–7.2: The voluntary return of the ark.** The Philistines, attributing the plague to the presence of the ark, make arrangements to return it to its former owners. **3:** The Philistines wish to make a guilt offering, to appease the God of Israel, who (so they thought) was angry. **4, 5:** *Five gold tumors and five gold mice* were prepared. We learn from the Greek version (5.6 and 6.1) that the plague was accompanied by swarms of mice. Bubonic plague is usually spread by a flea carried by rats. The Philistines may have been correct in connecting the disease with these "mice" (probably rats). By sending away images of the troublesome objects, they hoped, by a process of sympathetic magic, to be rid of the troubles themselves; and they hoped that *the God of Israel* would be pleased by their generosity in making the images of gold. **6:** To *harden your hearts* means to "make your minds stubborn" (Ex 8.19, 32).

are returning to him as a guilt offering. Then send it off, and let it go its way. 9And watch; if it goes up on the way to its own land, to Beth-shemesh, then it is he who has done us this great harm; but if not, then we shall know that it is not his hand that struck us; it happened to us by chance."

10 The men did so; they took two milch cows and yoked them to the cart, and shut up their calves at home. 11They put the ark of the LORD on the cart, and the box with the gold mice and the images of their tumors. 12The cows went straight in the direction of Beth-shemesh along one highway, lowing as they went; they turned neither to the right nor to the left, and the lords of the Philistines went after them as far as the border of Beth-shemesh.

13 Now the people of Beth-shemesh were reaping their wheat harvest in the valley. When they looked up and saw the ark, they went with rejoicing to meet it.[u] 14The cart came into the field of Joshua of Beth-shemesh, and stopped there. A large stone was there; so they split up the wood of the cart and offered the cows as a burnt offering to the LORD. 15The Levites took down the ark of the LORD and the box that was beside it, in which were the gold objects, and set them upon the large stone. Then the people of Beth-shemesh offered burnt offerings and presented sacrifices on that day to the LORD. 16When the five lords of the Philistines saw it, they returned that day to Ekron.

17 These are the gold tumors, which the Philistines returned as a guilt offering to the LORD: one for Ashdod, one for Gaza, one for Ashkelon, one for Gath, one for Ekron; 18also the gold mice, according to the number of all the cities of the Philistines belonging to the five lords, both fortified cities and unwalled villages. The great stone, beside which they set down the ark of the LORD, is a witness to this day in the field of Joshua of Beth-shemesh.

19 The descendants of Jeconiah did not rejoice with the people of Beth-shemesh when they greeted[v] the ark of the LORD; and he killed seventy men of them.[w] The people mourned because the LORD had made a great slaughter among the people. 20Then the people of Beth-shemesh said, "Who is able to stand before the LORD, this holy God? To whom shall he go so that we may be rid of him?" 21So they sent messengers to the inhabitants of Kiriath-jearim, saying, "The Philistines have returned the ark of the LORD. Come down and take it up to you." 7 1And the people of Kiriath-jearim came and took up the ark of the LORD, and brought it to the house of Abinadab on the hill. They consecrated his son, Eleazar, to have charge of the ark of the LORD.

2 From the day that the ark was lodged at Kiriath-jearim, a long time passed, some twenty years, and all the house of Israel lamented[x] after the LORD.

3 Then Samuel said to all the house of Israel, "If you are returning to the LORD with all your heart, then put away the foreign gods and the Astartes from among you. Direct your heart to the

*u* Gk: Heb *rejoiced to see it* *v* Gk: Heb *And he killed some of the people of Beth-shemesh, because they looked into* *w* Heb *killed seventy men, fifty thousand men* *x* Meaning of Heb uncertain

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**6.9**: *Beth-shemesh* was probably the nearest important Israelite town to Ekron, where the ark was prior to its return. **15**: This verse was inserted by a priestly editor to make the procedure conform to later requirements. The Levites did not begin to function as priestly assistants until later times. **17**: See 5.1 n.

**6.19**: The ungrammatical addition of the phrase "fifty thousand men" (see note *w*) shows how easily exaggerations could occur (see 4.10 n.). **21**: The ark was taken to *Kiriath-jearim* probably because Shiloh had been destroyed in the meantime (Jer 7.12–14; 26.6–9).

**7.2**: The expression *lamented after the LORD* seems to mean, in the light of what follows, "implored the LORD for help."

**7.3–17**: **Samuel as judge of all Israel.** *Samuel* immediately comes to the fore, as the focus returns to his role in the transitional days leading to Israel's first king. **3–4**: Probably added by the Deuteronomic editor, who

***Repentance and victory at Mizpah***

LORD, and serve him only, and he will deliver you out of the hand of the Philistines." 4So Israel put away the Baals and the Astartes, and they served the LORD only.

5 Then Samuel said, "Gather all Israel at Mizpah, and I will pray to the LORD for you." 6So they gathered at Mizpah, and drew water and poured it out before the LORD. They fasted that day, and said, "We have sinned against the LORD." And Samuel judged the people of Israel at Mizpah.

7 When the Philistines heard that the people of Israel had gathered at Mizpah, the lords of the Philistines went up against Israel. And when the people of Israel heard of it they were afraid of the Philistines. 8The people of Israel said to Samuel, "Do not cease to cry out to the LORD our God for us, and pray that he may save us from the hand of the Philistines." 9So Samuel took a sucking lamb and offered it as a whole burnt offering to the LORD; Samuel cried out to the LORD for Israel, and the LORD answered him. 10As Samuel was offering up the burnt offering, the Philistines drew near to attack Israel; but the LORD thundered with a mighty voice that day against the Philistines and threw them into confusion; and they were routed before Israel. 11And the men of Israel went out of Mizpah and pursued the Philistines, and struck them down as far as beyond Beth-car.

12 Then Samuel took a stone and set it up between Mizpah and Jeshanah,[y] and named it Ebenezer;[z] for he said, "Thus far the LORD has helped us." 13So the Philistines were subdued and did not again enter the territory of Israel; the hand of the LORD was against the Philistines all the days of Samuel. 14The towns that the Philistines had taken from Israel were restored to Israel, from Ekron to Gath; and Israel recovered their territory from the hand of the Philistines. There was peace also between Israel and the Amorites.

15 Samuel judged Israel all the days of his life. 16He went on a circuit year by year to Bethel, Gilgal, and Mizpah; and he judged Israel in all these places. 17Then he would come back to Ramah, for his home was there; he administered justice there to Israel, and built there an altar to the LORD.

8 When Samuel became old, he made his sons judges over Israel. 2The name of his firstborn son was Joel, and the name of his second, Abijah; they were judges in Beer-sheba. 3Yet his sons did not follow in his ways, but turned aside after gain; they took bribes and perverted justice.

4 Then all the elders of Israel gathered together and came to Samuel at Ramah, 5and said to him, "You are old and your sons do not follow in your ways; appoint

y Gk Syr: Heb *Shen* z That is *Stone of Help*

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felt that the worship of false gods was always the chief sin of the people (Judg 2.11–15; 3.7; 10.6; 13.1; etc.). *The Baals and the Astartes* (plural of Astarte, goddess of fertility) were the principal deities of the Canaanites, often said to have been worshiped by the Israelites when they departed from what the Deuteronomic writer considered to be the true faith.

**7.5**: Continuation of v. 2. **6**: Libations of *water* were unusual (wine was used generally), but to people with a desert background water would be sufficiently precious. **9**: *A whole burnt offering*, one that is entirely consumed (Ex 29.18; Lev 8.21; Deut 13.16; 33.10). Most burnt offerings were of this type; the use of the word *whole* emphasizes the importance of the occasion. **10**: It is characteristic of the Bible (and similar literary material) that battles are often won or lost by miraculous divine intervention. **13–14**: Most of the other potential enemies of Israel besides the Philistines could be classified as *Amorites*. The final sentence of v. 14 makes Samuel's success as a temporal ruler complete. But he was not really a "judge" or military hero like those in the Book of Judges; he was more like a circuit judge in the ordinary sense of the word (compare vv. 16–17).

**8.1–22: The people request a king.** This section views the rise of kingship as especially problematic and associates it with earlier failings of the people. Samuel dislikes the request, but after seeking God's will, he finds that he must yield, even though God feels

for us, then, a king to govern us, like other nations." 6But the thing displeased Samuel when they said, "Give us a king to govern us." Samuel prayed to the LORD, 7and the LORD said to Samuel, "Listen to the voice of the people in all that they say to you; for they have not rejected you, but they have rejected me from being king over them. 8Just as they have done to me,[a] from the day I brought them up out of Egypt to this day, forsaking me and serving other gods, so also they are doing to you. 9Now then, listen to their voice; only—you shall solemnly warn them, and show them the ways of the king who shall reign over them."

10 So Samuel reported all the words of the LORD to the people who were asking him for a king. 11He said, "These will be the ways of the king who will reign over you: he will take your sons and appoint them to his chariots and to be his horsemen, and to run before his chariots; 12and he will appoint for himself commanders of thousands and commanders of fifties, and some to plow his ground and to reap his harvest, and to make his implements of war and the equipment of his chariots. 13He will take your daughters to be perfumers and cooks and bakers. 14He will take the best of your fields and vineyards and olive orchards and give them to his courtiers. 15He will take one-tenth of your grain and of your vineyards and give it to his officers and his courtiers. 16He will take your male and female slaves, and the best of your cattle[b] and donkeys, and put them to his work. 17He will take one-tenth of your flocks, and you shall be his slaves. 18And in that day you will cry out because of your king, whom you have chosen for yourselves; but the LORD will not answer you in that day."

19 But the people refused to listen to the voice of Samuel; they said, "No! but we are determined to have a king over us, 20so that we also may be like other nations, and that our king may govern us and go out before us and fight our battles." 21When Samuel had heard all the words of the people, he repeated them in the ears of the LORD. 22The LORD said to Samuel, "Listen to their voice and set a king over them." Samuel then said to the people of Israel, "Each of you return home."

9 There was a man of Benjamin whose name was Kish son of Abiel son of Zeror son of Becorath son of Aphiah, a Benjaminite, a man of wealth. 2He had a son whose name was Saul, a handsome young man. There was not a man among the people of Israel more handsome than he; he stood head and shoulders above everyone else.

3 Now the donkeys of Kish, Saul's father, had strayed. So Kish said to his son Saul, "Take one of the boys with you; go and look for the donkeys." 4He passed through the hill country of Ephraim and passed through the land of Shalishah, but they did not find them. And they passed through the land of Shaalim, but they were not there. Then he passed

*a* Gk: Heb lacks *to me* *b* Gk: Heb *young men*

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offended. At God's behest Samuel delivers a severe lecture on the evils of kingship before yielding (vv. 9–18; compare Deut 17.14–20). The evils described here and in the Deuteronomy passage seem to be mainly those of the reign of Solomon, and it is probable that the resentment against the monarchy arose at this time and never ceased, becoming a part of the thought of many of the prophets and of the Deuteronomic writers.

**9.1–10.16: The secret choice of Saul.** Samuel appears here not as the judge or ruler of all Israel (7.5), but as a more modest figure, a local *man of God* (9.6), a highly respected *seer* (9.11), that is, a clairvoyant (9.20; 10.2), and possibly a circuit judge. Some of this material may belong to the earliest layers of the book. Most noteworthy in this section is the idea that the kingship is a splendid thing, a blessing from God voluntarily bestowed, and not a concession to the improper desires of the people (9.16; 10.1). Samuel himself seems immensely pleased with the idea of the kingship and his part in creating it (9.19–24), in contrast to his attitude in ch 8. It will soon appear also that this material is friendly to Saul, in contrast to ch 13. **9.2:** *Young man* here means "man in the prime of life," for Saul had

through the land of Benjamin, but they did not find them.

5 When they came to the land of Zuph, Saul said to the boy who was with him, "Let us turn back, or my father will stop worrying about the donkeys and worry about us." 6But he said to him, "There is a man of God in this town; he is a man held in honor. Whatever he says always comes true. Let us go there now; perhaps he will tell us about the journey on which we have set out." 7Then Saul replied to the boy, "But if we go, what can we bring the man? For the bread in our sacks is gone, and there is no present to bring to the man of God. What have we?" 8The boy answered Saul again, "Here, I have with me a quarter shekel of silver; I will give it to the man of God, to tell us our way." 9(Formerly in Israel, anyone who went to inquire of God would say, "Come, let us go to the seer"; for the one who is now called a prophet was formerly called a seer.) 10Saul said to the boy, "Good; come, let us go." So they went to the town where the man of God was.

11 As they went up the hill to the town, they met some girls coming out to draw water, and said to them, "Is the seer here?" 12They answered, "Yes, there he is just ahead of you. Hurry; he has come just now to the town, because the people have a sacrifice today at the shrine. 13As soon as you enter the town, you will find him, before he goes up to the shrine to eat. For the people will not eat until he comes, since he must bless the sacrifice; afterward those eat who are invited. Now go up, for you will meet him immediately." 14So they went up to the town. As they were entering the town, they saw Samuel coming out toward them on his way up to the shrine.

15 Now the day before Saul came, the LORD had revealed to Samuel: 16"Tomorrow about this time I will send to you a man from the land of Benjamin, and you shall anoint him to be ruler over my people Israel. He shall save my people from the hand of the Philistines; for I have seen the suffering of[c] my people, because their outcry has come to me." 17When Samuel saw Saul, the LORD told him, "Here is the man of whom I spoke to you. He it is who shall rule over my people." 18Then Saul approached Samuel inside the gate, and said, "Tell me, please, where is the house of the seer?" 19Samuel answered Saul, "I am the seer; go up before me to the shrine, for today you shall eat with me, and in the morning I will let you go and will tell you all that is on your mind. 20As for your donkeys that were lost three days ago, give no further thought to them, for they have been found. And on whom is all Israel's desire fixed, if not on you and on all your ancestral house?" 21Saul answered, "I am only a Benjaminite, from the least of the tribes of Israel, and my family is the humblest of all the families of the tribe of Benjamin. Why then have you spoken to me in this way?"

22 Then Samuel took Saul and his servant-boy and brought them into the hall, and gave them a place at the head of those who had been invited, of whom there were about thirty. 23And Samuel said to the cook, "Bring the portion I gave you, the one I asked you to put aside." 24The cook took up the thigh and

*c* Gk: Heb lacks *the suffering of*

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grown children. **6**: *This town* may be Ramah (7.17). **7**: Saul appears not to have heard of Samuel; contrast 4.1a and 7.15. **8**: There was no coinage in those days; *a quarter shekel of silver* was merely a bit of silver of a certain weight (about one-eighth oz.). **9**: A note by an editor, inserted after the word *seer* had gone out of use.

**9.11–14**: The *town* was apparently a small walled town, lying on the side of a hill, with only one gate; the spring was below, *the shrine* above. Samuel presided over the sacrificial meal as a sort of priest. Later, religious practices continued or developed at the high place shrines, and they were ordered to be destroyed (Deut 12.2–3; 2 Kings 23.8–9). **19**: Perhaps Saul had been brooding over the oppression by the Philistines. **25**: Roofs in that part of the world were flat, with protecting parapets, as they still are. Hence they were

what went with it[d] and set them before Saul. Samuel said, "See, what was kept is set before you. Eat; for it is set[e] before you at the appointed time, so that you might eat with the guests."[f]

So Saul ate with Samuel that day. 25 When they came down from the shrine into the town, a bed was spread for Saul[g] on the roof, and he lay down to sleep.[h] 26 Then at the break of dawn[i] Samuel called to Saul upon the roof, "Get up, so that I may send you on your way." Saul got up, and both he and Samuel went out into the street.

27 As they were going down to the outskirts of the town, Samuel said to Saul, "Tell the boy to go on before us, and when he has passed on, stop here yourself for a while, that I may make known to you the word of God."

**10** [1] Samuel took a vial of oil and poured it on his head, and kissed him; he said, "The LORD has anointed you ruler over his people Israel. You shall reign over the people of the LORD and you will save them from the hand of their enemies all around. Now this shall be the sign to you that the LORD has anointed you ruler[j] over his heritage: 2 When you depart from me today you will meet two men by Rachel's tomb in the territory of Benjamin at Zelzah; they will say to you, 'The donkeys that you went to seek are found, and now your father has stopped worrying about them and is worrying about you, saying: What shall I do about my son?' 3 Then you shall go on from there further and come to the oak of Tabor; three men going up to God at Bethel will meet you there, one carrying three kids, another carrying three loaves of bread, and another carrying a skin of wine. 4 They will greet you and give you two loaves of bread, which you shall accept from them. 5 After that you shall come to Gibeath-elohim,[k] at the place where the Philistine garrison is; there, as you come to the town, you will meet a band of prophets coming down from the shrine with harp, tambourine, flute, and lyre playing in front of them; they will be in a prophetic frenzy. 6 Then the spirit of the LORD will possess you, and you will be in a prophetic frenzy along with them and be turned into a different person. 7 Now when these signs meet you, do whatever you see fit to do, for God is with you. 8 And you shall go down to Gilgal ahead of me; then I will come down to you to present burnt offerings and offer sacrifices of well-being. Seven days you shall wait, until I come to you and show you what you shall do."

9 As he turned away to leave Samuel, God gave him another heart; and all these signs were fulfilled that day. 10 When they were going from there[l] to Gibeah,[m] a band of prophets met him; and the spirit of God possessed him, and he fell into a prophetic frenzy along with them.

*d* Meaning of Heb uncertain *e* Q Ms Gk: MT *it was kept* *f* Cn: Heb *it was kept for you, saying, I have invited the people* *g* Gk: Heb *and he spoke with Saul* *h* Gk: Heb lacks *and he lay down to sleep* *i* Gk: Heb *and they arose early and at break of dawn* *j* Gk: Heb lacks *over his people Israel. You shall . . . anointed you ruler* *k* Or *the Hill of God* *l* Gk: Heb *they came there* *m* Or *the hill*

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and are well adapted for sleeping during the summer months, when no rain falls.

**10.1**: The unguent used in anointing kings was olive oil. Though priests (Ex 29.7) and prophets (1 Kings 19.16) were sometimes anointed, the ceremony was more relevant to the kingship, so that the king came to be called "the LORD's anointed" (16.6; 24.6), or simply "the anointed one." This title was applied to an ideal future king in the form "Messiah" in Hebrew, "Christos" in Greek (see Mt 1.16). **2**: This site of *Rachel's tomb* is in Benjamin, north of Jerusalem (Jer 31.15). Another tradition locates it south of Jerusalem near Bethlehem, at the site shown to tourists today (Gen 35.16; 48.7; Mt 2.16–18). **3**: *Going up to God* means "going up to offer sacrifice." **5**: The mention of the *Philistine garrison* (or prefect) is a reminder of the task that lay before Saul. **6**: To *be in a prophetic frenzy . . . and be turned into a different person* means here to dance ecstatically and be out of one's head, in the fashion of the so-called ecstatic prophecy of those days (19.23–24). This was to be a sort of initiatory religious experience for the new king.

**10.9**: *God gave him another heart*, that is, made a new person of him. **11**: The change in

*Saul prophesies among the prophets*

11 When all who knew him before saw how he prophesied with the prophets, the people said to one another, "What has come over the son of Kish? Is Saul also among the prophets?" 12 A man of the place answered, "And who is their father?" Therefore it became a proverb, "Is Saul also among the prophets?" 13 When his prophetic frenzy had ended, he went home.[n]

14 Saul's uncle said to him and to the boy, "Where did you go?" And he replied, "To seek the donkeys; and when we saw they were not to be found, we went to Samuel." 15 Saul's uncle said, "Tell me what Samuel said to you." 16 Saul said to his uncle, "He told us that the donkeys had been found." But about the matter of the kingship, of which Samuel had spoken, he did not tell him anything.

17 Samuel summoned the people to the LORD at Mizpah 18 and said to them,[o] "Thus says the LORD, the God of Israel, 'I brought up Israel out of Egypt, and I rescued you from the hand of the Egyptians and from the hand of all the kingdoms that were oppressing you.' 19 But today you have rejected your God, who saves you from all your calamities and your distresses; and you have said, 'No! but set a king over us.' Now therefore present yourselves before the LORD by your tribes and by your clans."

20 Then Samuel brought all the tribes of Israel near, and the tribe of Benjamin was taken by lot. 21 He brought the tribe of Benjamin near by its families, and the family of the Matrites was taken by lot. Finally he brought the family of the Matrites near man by man,[p] and Saul the son of Kish was taken by lot. But when they sought him, he could not be found. 22 So they inquired again of the LORD, "Did the man come here?"[q] and the LORD said, "See, he has hidden himself among the baggage." 23 Then they ran and brought him from there. When he took his stand among the people, he was head and shoulders taller than any of them. 24 Samuel said to all the people, "Do you see the one whom the LORD has chosen? There is no one like him among all the people." And all the people shouted, "Long live the king!"

25 Samuel told the people the rights and duties of the kingship; and he wrote them in a book and laid it up before the LORD. Then Samuel sent all the people back to their homes. 26 Saul also went to his home at Gibeah, and with him went warriors whose hearts God had touched. 27 But some worthless fellows said, "How can this man save us?" They despised him and brought him no present. But he held his peace.

Now Nahash, king of the Ammonites, had been grievously oppressing the Gadites and the Reubenites. He would gouge out the right eye of each of them and would not grant Israel a deliverer. No one was left of the Israelites across the Jordan whose right eye Nahash, king of the Ammonites, had not gouged out. But there were seven thousand men who had escaped from the Ammonites and had entered Jabesh-gilead.[r]

11 About a month later,[s] Nahash the Ammonite went up and besieged Jabesh-gilead; and all the men of Jabesh said to Nahash, "Make a treaty

*n* Cn: Heb *he came to the shrine* *o* Heb *to the people of Israel* *p* Gk: Heb lacks *Finally . . . man by man* *q* Gk: Heb *Is there yet a man to come here?* *r* Q Ms Compare Josephus, *Antiquities* VI.v.1 (68–71): MT lacks *Now Nahash . . . entered Jabesh-gilead.*
*s* Q Ms Gk: MT lacks *About a month later*

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Saul began to be noticed. **12**: The phrase, *And who is their father?* may have something to do with an honorific title applied to a great prophet. See 2 Kings 13.14; 2.12.

**10.17–27**: **Saul chosen king by lot.** Samuel proceeds reluctantly (see v. 19), in contrast to 9.19–24. The story told here follows naturally upon ch 8, and has the same point of view. **21**: The clan of the *Matrites* is not mentioned elsewhere. **21–22**: These verses seem to reflect on Saul unfavorably.

**10.25**: This verse may be an editorial preparation for ch 12. The mention of *a book* is designed to show Samuel as a man of letters as well as priest, prophet, and judge. We know nothing more of this book. **26–27**:

with us, and we will serve you." 2But Nahash the Ammonite said to them, "On this condition I will make a treaty with you, namely that I gouge out everyone's right eye, and thus put disgrace upon all Israel." 3The elders of Jabesh said to him, "Give us seven days' respite that we may send messengers through all the territory of Israel. Then, if there is no one to save us, we will give ourselves up to you." 4When the messengers came to Gibeah of Saul, they reported the matter in the hearing of the people; and all the people wept aloud.

5 Now Saul was coming from the field behind the oxen; and Saul said, "What is the matter with the people, that they are weeping?" So they told him the message from the inhabitants of Jabesh. 6And the spirit of God came upon Saul in power when he heard these words, and his anger was greatly kindled. 7He took a yoke of oxen, and cut them in pieces and sent them throughout all the territory of Israel by messengers, saying, "Whoever does not come out after Saul and Samuel, so shall it be done to his oxen!" Then the dread of the LORD fell upon the people, and they came out as one. 8When he mustered them at Bezek, those from Israel were three hundred thousand, and those from Judah seventy[t] thousand. 9They said to the messengers who had come, "Thus shall you say to the inhabitants of Jabesh-gilead: 'Tomorrow, by the time the sun is hot, you shall have deliverance.' " When the messengers came and told the inhabitants of Jabesh, they rejoiced. 10So the inhabitants of Jabesh said, "Tomorrow we will give ourselves up to you, and you may do to us whatever seems good to you." 11The next day Saul put the people in three companies. At the morning watch they came into the camp and cut down the Ammonites until the heat of the day; and those who survived were scattered, so that no two of them were left together.

12 The people said to Samuel, "Who is it that said, 'Shall Saul reign over us?' Give them to us so that we may put them to death." 13But Saul said, "No one shall be put to death this day, for today the LORD has brought deliverance to Israel."

14 Samuel said to the people, "Come, let us go to Gilgal and there renew the kingship." 15So all the people went to Gilgal, and there they made Saul king before the LORD in Gilgal. There they sacrificed offerings of well-being before the LORD, and there Saul and all the Israelites rejoiced greatly.

12 Samuel said to all Israel, "I have listened to you in all that you have said to me, and have set a king over you. 2See, it is the king who leads you now; I am old and gray, but my sons are

*t* Q Ms Gk: MT *thirty*

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These verses, which also may be editorial, reflect both favorable and unfavorable opinion about Saul.

**11.1–15: Saul proves himself able to lead in battle and is publicly made king.** This chapter logically follows 10.16, portraying the opportunity for which Saul had been advised to be ready (10.1). The Ammonites to the east (Gen 19.38; Num 21.24; Deut 2.37; Judg 10.9) were not so dangerous to national security as the Philistines, but a victory over them would show Saul capable of meeting the stronger enemy on the west, and also free Israel from having to fight on two fronts. **1:** *Jabesh-gilead,* an Israelite town east of the Jordan.

**11.7:** Sending around the *pieces* of a sacrifice was a call to war (Judg 19.29). **8:** *Bezek* was between Shechem and Beth-shan. On the numbers see 4.10 n. **11:** Their day began at sundown, hence *the next day* would mean "that evening" in our reckoning. Apparently the Israelites marched all night to attack by surprise in the morning.

**12.1–25: Samuel's farewell address.** Late material with Deuteronomic editing. This chapter logically follows 10.17–27 (compare ch 8), though there are certain adjustments to ch 11 (compare 12.12). Most ancient historical documents, biblical and nonbiblical alike, contain speeches written at a time later than the events of the narrative, but regarded as appropriate to the occasion. This chapter is an excellent example of such literary material. **2:** The misconduct of the sons is not mentioned here (compare 8.3). **2, 5:** The

with you. I have led you from my youth until this day. 3Here I am; testify against me before the LORD and before his anointed. Whose ox have I taken? Or whose donkey have I taken? Or whom have I defrauded? Whom have I oppressed? Or from whose hand have I taken a bribe to blind my eyes with it? Testify against me[u] and I will restore it to you." 4They said, "You have not defrauded us or oppressed us or taken anything from the hand of anyone." 5He said to them, "The LORD is witness against you, and his anointed is witness this day, that you have not found anything in my hand." And they said, "He is witness."

6 Samuel said to the people, "The LORD is witness, who[v] appointed Moses and Aaron and brought your ancestors up out of the land of Egypt. 7Now therefore take your stand, so that I may enter into judgment with you before the LORD, and I will declare to you[w] all the saving deeds of the LORD that he performed for you and for your ancestors. 8When Jacob went into Egypt and the Egyptians oppressed them,[x] then your ancestors cried to the LORD and the LORD sent Moses and Aaron, who brought forth your ancestors out of Egypt, and settled them in this place. 9But they forgot the LORD their God; and he sold them into the hand of Sisera, commander of the army of King Jabin of[y] Hazor, and into the hand of the Philistines, and into the hand of the king of Moab; and they fought against them. 10Then they cried to the LORD, and said, 'We have sinned, because we have forsaken the LORD, and have served the Baals and the Astartes; but now rescue us out of the hand of our enemies, and we will serve you.' 11And the LORD sent Jerubbaal and Barak,[z] and Jephthah, and Samson,[a] and rescued you out of the hand of your enemies on every side; and you lived in safety. 12But when you saw that King Nahash of the Ammonites came against you, you said to me, 'No, but a king shall reign over us,' though the LORD your God was your king. 13See, here is the king whom you have chosen, for whom you have asked; see, the LORD has set a king over you. 14If you will fear the LORD and serve him and heed his voice and not rebel against the commandment of the LORD, and if both you and the king who reigns over you will follow the LORD your God, it will be well; 15but if you will not heed the voice of the LORD, but rebel against the commandment of the LORD, then the hand of the LORD will be against you and your king.[b] 16Now therefore take your stand and see this great thing that the LORD will do before your eyes. 17Is it not the wheat harvest today? I will call upon the LORD, that he may send thunder and rain; and you shall know and see that the wickedness that you have done in the sight of the LORD is great in demanding a king for yourselves." 18So Samuel called upon the LORD, and the LORD sent thunder and rain that day; and all the people greatly feared the LORD and Samuel.

19 All the people said to Samuel, "Pray to the LORD your God for your servants, so that we may not die; for we have added to all our sins the evil of de-

*u* Gk: Heb lacks *Testify against me* *v* Gk: Heb lacks *is witness, who* *w* Gk: Heb lacks *and I will declare to you* *x* Gk: Heb lacks *and the Egyptians oppressed them* *y* Gk: Heb lacks *King Jabin of* *z* Gk Syr: Heb *Bedan* *a* Gk: Heb *Samuel* *b* Gk: Heb *and your ancestors*

expression *his anointed* refers to the king (see 10.1 n.).

**12.9, 10, 11**: Note the similarity to the Deuteronomic framework of the Book of Judges; e.g. Judg 4.2–3. *The Baals and the Astartes;* see 7.3–4 n. **14, 15, 24, 25**: This philosophy of divine retribution is more fully developed in Deut ch 28 and Judg 2.11–23. **16–19**: The author wishes to show that Samuel was still in greater favor with God than was the idea of a king. *Rain* during the *wheat harvest* would be like "snow in summer" (Prov 26.1). This harvest took place in early summer, when no rain could be expected until autumn. Thus it is a miracle, the *thunder* making it more impressive. The miracle story is the writer's way of making a theological point.

manding a king for ourselves." 20And Samuel said to the people, "Do not be afraid; you have done all this evil, yet do not turn aside from following the LORD, but serve the LORD with all your heart; 21and do not turn aside after useless things that cannot profit or save, for they are useless. 22For the LORD will not cast away his people, for his great name's sake, because it has pleased the LORD to make you a people for himself. 23Moreover as for me, far be it from me that I should sin against the LORD by ceasing to pray for you; and I will instruct you in the good and the right way. 24Only fear the LORD, and serve him faithfully with all your heart; for consider what great things he has done for you. 25But if you still do wickedly, you shall be swept away, both you and your king."

13 Saul was . . .[c] years old when he began to reign; and he reigned . . . and two[d] years over Israel.

2 Saul chose three thousand out of Israel; two thousand were with Saul in Michmash and the hill country of Bethel, and a thousand were with Jonathan in Gibeah of Benjamin; the rest of the people he sent home to their tents. 3Jonathan defeated the garrison of the Philistines that was at Geba; and the Philistines heard of it. And Saul blew the trumpet throughout all the land, saying, "Let the Hebrews hear!" 4When all Israel heard that Saul had defeated the garrison of the Philistines, and also that Israel had become odious to the Philistines, the people were called out to join Saul at Gilgal.

5 The Philistines mustered to fight with Israel, thirty thousand chariots, and six thousand horsemen, and troops like the sand on the seashore in multitude; they came up and encamped at Michmash, to the east of Beth-aven. 6When the Israelites saw that they were in distress (for the troops were hard pressed), the people hid themselves in caves and in holes and in rocks and in tombs and in cisterns. 7Some Hebrews crossed the Jordan to the land of Gad and Gilead. Saul was still at Gilgal, and all the people followed him trembling.

8 He waited seven days, the time appointed by Samuel; but Samuel did not come to Gilgal, and the people began to slip away from Saul.[e] 9So Saul said, "Bring the burnt offering here to me, and the offerings of well-being." And he offered the burnt offering. 10As soon as he had finished offering the burnt offering, Samuel arrived; and Saul went out to meet him and salute him. 11Samuel said, "What have you done?" Saul replied, "When I saw that the people were slipping away from me, and that you did not come within the days appointed, and that the Philistines were mustering at Michmash, 12I said, 'Now the Philistines will come down upon me at Gilgal, and I have not entreated the favor of the LORD'; so I forced myself, and offered the burnt offering." 13Samuel said to Saul, "You have done foolishly; you have not kept the commandment of the LORD your God, which he commanded you. The LORD would have established your kingdom over Israel forever, 14but now your kingdom will not continue; the

*c* The number is lacking in the Heb text (the verse is lacking in the Septuagint). *d* *Two* is not the entire number; something has dropped out. *e* Heb *him*

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**13.1–7a: Saul begins the war with the Philistines.** Saul's son Jonathan makes the first move. **1**: Saul's age at this time is not known. Some suppose that he reigned twelve years; others put the figure at twenty-two (see note *d*). **5**: *Beth-aven,* probably an alternative name for Bethel. **7**: *Crossed the Jordan,* see Judg 12.5. *Gad and Gilead,* east of the Jordan.

**13.7b–15a: Saul's ritual sin and rejection by God.** This passage is more hostile to Saul than ch 15, another explanation of Saul's rejection. The thought is that the king had no right to exercise priestly functions, or at least Saul had no such right. Contrast the very different view of 14.31–35, where Saul definitely assists in priestly functions. Later David (2 Sam 6.12–19; 24.25) and Solomon (1 Kings 3.15) also exercised such functions. The *man after his* [God's] *own heart* (v. 14) is David. **8**: *The time appointed by Samuel,* see 10.8. No reason for Samuel's delay is given.

LORD has sought out a man after his own heart; and the LORD has appointed him to be ruler over his people, because you have not kept what the LORD commanded you." 15And Samuel left and went on his way from Gilgal.[f] The rest of the people followed Saul to join the army; they went up from Gilgal toward Gibeah of Benjamin.[g]

Saul counted the people who were present with him, about six hundred men. 16Saul, his son Jonathan, and the people who were present with them stayed in Geba of Benjamin; but the Philistines encamped at Michmash. 17And raiders came out of the camp of the Philistines in three companies; one company turned toward Ophrah, to the land of Shual, 18another company turned toward Beth-horon, and another company turned toward the mountain[h] that looks down upon the valley of Zeboim toward the wilderness.

19 Now there was no smith to be found throughout all the land of Israel; for the Philistines said, "The Hebrews must not make swords or spears for themselves"; 20so all the Israelites went down to the Philistines to sharpen their plowshares, mattocks, axes, or sickles;[i] 21The charge was two-thirds of a shekel[j] for the plowshares and for the mattocks, and one-third of a shekel for sharpening the axes and for setting the goads.[k] 22So on the day of the battle neither sword nor spear was to be found in the possession of any of the people with Saul and Jonathan; but Saul and his son Jonathan had them.

23 Now a garrison of the Philistines had gone out to the pass of Michmash.

14 1One day Jonathan son of Saul said to the young man who carried his armor, "Come, let us go over to the Philistine garrison on the other side." But he did not tell his father. 2Saul was staying in the outskirts of Gibeah under the pomegranate tree that is at Migron; the troops that were with him were about six hundred men, 3along with Ahijah son of Ahitub, Ichabod's brother, son of Phinehas son of Eli, the priest of the LORD in Shiloh, carrying an ephod. Now the people did not know that Jonathan had gone. 4In the pass,[l] by which Jonathan tried to go over to the Philistine garrison, there was a rocky crag on one side and a rocky crag on the other; the name of the one was Bozez, and the name of the other Seneh. 5One crag rose on the north in front of Michmash, and the other on the south in front of Geba.

6 Jonathan said to the young man who carried his armor, "Come, let us go over to the garrison of these uncircumcised; it may be that the LORD will act for us; for nothing can hinder the LORD from saving by many or by few." 7His armor-bearer said to him, "Do all that your mind inclines to.[m] I am with you; as your mind is, so is mine."[n] 8Then Jonathan

*f* Gk: Heb *went up from Gilgal to Gibeah of Benjamin* *g* Gk: Heb lacks *The rest . . . of Benjamin* *h* Cn Compare Gk: Heb *toward the border* *i* Gk: Heb *plowshare* *j* Heb *was a pim* *k* Cn: Meaning of Heb uncertain *l* Heb *Between the passes* *m* Gk: Heb *Do all that is in your mind. Turn* *n* Gk: Heb lacks *so is mine*

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**13.15b–14.52: Continuation of the Philistine War.** The Israelites had scattered and only *six hundred* fighting men (a realistic estimate) remained with Saul. **19–22**: These verses are by a writer who conceived the situation to be worse than it really was. The age of iron was just beginning in Palestine; the Philistines were superior to the Israelites in material culture, but the latter overcame the deficiency and eventually won the war. A *shekel* was about eleven and one-half grams of silver. With v. 22 compare Judg 5.8.

**14.1–5**: Jonathan again takes the lead in forcing the fighting. **3**: *Carrying an ephod,* this was not the *linen ephod* of 2.18, but a box containing Urim and Thummim, the sacred objects for determining the divine will by lot (v. 41; see Ex 28.30 n.). **6–15**: Jonathan's bravery leads to victory. *Uncircumcised* (v. 6) and *Hebrews* (v. 11) are used as uncomplimentary terms (see 4.6 n.). The Israelites, along with the other Semitic peoples to the east, such as the Amorites, Ammonites, Moabites, and Edomites, practiced circumcision

said, "Now we will cross over to those men and will show ourselves to them. 9If they say to us, 'Wait until we come to you,' then we will stand still in our place, and we will not go up to them. 10But if they say, 'Come up to us,' then we will go up; for the LORD has given them into our hand. That will be the sign for us." 11So both of them showed themselves to the garrison of the Philistines; and the Philistines said, "Look, Hebrews are coming out of the holes where they have hidden themselves." 12The men of the garrison hailed Jonathan and his armor-bearer, saying, "Come up to us, and we will show you something." Jonathan said to his armor-bearer, "Come up after me; for the LORD has given them into the hand of Israel." 13Then Jonathan climbed up on his hands and feet, with his armor-bearer following after him. The Philistines[o] fell before Jonathan, and his armor-bearer, coming after him, killed them. 14In that first slaughter Jonathan and his armor-bearer killed about twenty men within an area about half a furrow long in an acre[p] of land. 15There was a panic in the camp, in the field, and among all the people; the garrison and even the raiders trembled; the earth quaked; and it became a very great panic.

16 Saul's lookouts in Gibeah of Benjamin were watching as the multitude was surging back and forth.[q] 17Then Saul said to the troops that were with him, "Call the roll and see who has gone from us." When they had called the roll, Jonathan and his armor-bearer were not there. 18Saul said to Ahijah, "Bring the ark[r] of God here." For at that time the ark[r] of God went with the Israelites. 19While Saul was talking to the priest, the tumult in the camp of the Philistines increased more and more; and Saul said to the priest, "Withdraw your hand." 20Then Saul and all the people who were with him rallied and went into the battle; and every sword was against the other, so that there was very great confusion. 21Now the Hebrews who previously had been with the Philistines and had gone up with them into the camp turned and joined the Israelites who were with Saul and Jonathan. 22Likewise, when all the Israelites who had gone into hiding in the hill country of Ephraim heard that the Philistines were fleeing, they too followed closely after them in the battle. 23So the LORD gave Israel the victory that day.

The battle passed beyond Beth-aven, and the troops with Saul numbered altogether about ten thousand men. The battle spread out over the hill country of Ephraim.

24 Now Saul committed a very rash act on that day.[s] He had laid an oath on the troops, saying, "Cursed be anyone who eats food before it is evening and I have been avenged on my enemies." So none of the troops tasted food. 25All the troops[t] came upon a honeycomb; and there was honey on the ground. 26When the troops came upon the honeycomb, the honey was dripping out; but they did not put their hands to their mouths, for they feared the oath. 27But Jonathan had not heard his father charge the troops with the oath; so he extended the staff that was in his hand, and dipped the tip of it in the honeycomb, and put his hand to his mouth; and his eyes brightened. 28Then one of the soldiers said, "Your father strictly charged the troops with an

*o* Heb *They went and there Israelites were distressed that day* *p* Heb *yoke* *q* Gk: Heb *they* *r* Gk *the ephod* *s* Gk: Heb *The* *t* Heb *land*

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(see Jer 9.25 n.). The non-Semitic Philistines, coming from the west (see 4.1b n.), had no such custom. **11**: *Hebrews,* see 4.6 n.

**14.16–23**: Saul capitalizes on the advantage gained by Jonathan. **18**: Instead of *the ark of God,* the Greek version reads "the ephod" (compare ephod vv. 3, 41). **19**: *Withdraw your hand,* the priest had begun the casting of the Urim and Thummim. **21**: *Hebrews* and *Israelites* are not necessarily identical peoples here. Perhaps we can say that not all Hebrews were Israelites, since the former was the broader term. **24–30**: Fasting was supposed to be pleasing to God. Saul hoped thus to further his cause, but he was remiss in not seeing that Jonathan was informed.

oath, saying, 'Cursed be anyone who eats food this day.' And so the troops are faint." 29Then Jonathan said, "My father has troubled the land; see how my eyes have brightened because I tasted a little of this honey. 30How much better if today the troops had eaten freely of the spoil taken from their enemies; for now the slaughter among the Philistines has not been great."

31 After they had struck down the Philistines that day from Michmash to Aijalon, the troops were very faint; 32so the troops flew upon the spoil, and took sheep and oxen and calves, and slaughtered them on the ground; and the troops ate them with the blood. 33Then it was reported to Saul, "Look, the troops are sinning against the LORD by eating with the blood." And he said, "You have dealt treacherously; roll a large stone before me here."[u] 34Saul said, "Disperse yourselves among the troops, and say to them, 'Let all bring their oxen or their sheep, and slaughter them here, and eat; and do not sin against the LORD by eating with the blood.'" So all of the troops brought their oxen with them that night, and slaughtered them there. 35And Saul built an altar to the LORD; it was the first altar that he built to the LORD.

36 Then Saul said, "Let us go down after the Philistines by night and despoil them until the morning light; let us not leave one of them." They said, "Do whatever seems good to you." But the priest said, "Let us draw near to God here." 37So Saul inquired of God, "Shall I go down after the Philistines? Will you give them into the hand of Israel?" But he did not answer him that day. 38Saul said, "Come here, all you leaders of the people; and let us find out how this sin has arisen today. 39For as the LORD lives who saves Israel, even if it is in my son Jonathan, he shall surely die!" But there was no one among all the people who answered him. 40He said to all Israel, "You shall be on one side, and I and my son Jonathan will be on the other side." The people said to Saul, "Do what seems good to you." 41Then Saul said, "O LORD God of Israel, why have you not answered your servant today? If this guilt is in me or in my son Jonathan, O LORD God of Israel, give Urim; but if this guilt is in your people Israel,[v] give Thummim." And Jonathan and Saul were indicated by the lot, but the people were cleared. 42Then Saul said, "Cast the lot between me and my son Jonathan." And Jonathan was taken.

43 Then Saul said to Jonathan, "Tell me what you have done." Jonathan told him, "I tasted a little honey with the tip of the staff that was in my hand; here I am, I will die." 44Saul said, "God do so to me and more also; you shall surely die, Jonathan!" 45Then the people said to Saul, "Shall Jonathan die, who has accomplished this great victory in Israel? Far from it! As the LORD lives, not one hair of his head shall fall to the ground; for he has worked with God today." So the people ransomed Jonathan, and he did not die. 46Then Saul withdrew from pursuing the Philistines; and the Philistines went to their own place.

47 When Saul had taken the kingship over Israel, he fought against all his enemies on every side—against Moab, against the Ammonites, against Edom, against the kings of Zobah, and against the Philistines; wherever he turned he routed them. 48He did valiantly, and

*u* Gk: Heb *me this day* *v* Vg Compare Gk: Heb *41Saul said to the LORD, the God of Israel*

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**14.31–35**: Saul rather than the priests seems to have been in charge of the religious rites (contrast the attitude expressed in 13.7b–15a). The law against partaking of the blood appears in Lev 19.26; Deut 12.16. **36–42**: Saul wanted to press his advantage, but the priest sensed that something was wrong and suggested use of the sacred lots, *Urim* and *Thummim*. **43–46**: Presumably the ransom took the form of the substitution of an animal (Gen 22.13; Ex 13.13; 34.20). Verse 46 shows this point to be the end of a phase of the war.

**14.47–48, 49–51, 52**: A series of three editorial notes, summarizing the public and private situation of Saul at this time and bringing this account into line with the earlier "judges"

struck down the Amalekites, and rescued Israel out of the hands of those who plundered them.

49 Now the sons of Saul were Jonathan, Ishvi, and Malchishua; and the names of his two daughters were these: the name of the firstborn was Merab, and the name of the younger, Michal. 50 The name of Saul's wife was Ahinoam daughter of Ahimaaz. And the name of the commander of his army was Abner son of Ner, Saul's uncle; 51 Kish was the father of Saul, and Ner the father of Abner was the son of Abiel.

52 There was hard fighting against the Philistines all the days of Saul; and when Saul saw any strong or valiant warrior, he took him into his service.

15 Samuel said to Saul, "The LORD sent me to anoint you king over his people Israel; now therefore listen to the words of the LORD. 2 Thus says the LORD of hosts, 'I will punish the Amalekites for what they did in opposing the Israelites when they came up out of Egypt. 3 Now go and attack Amalek, and utterly destroy all that they have; do not spare them, but kill both man and woman, child and infant, ox and sheep, camel and donkey.' "

4 So Saul summoned the people, and numbered them in Telaim, two hundred thousand foot soldiers, and ten thousand soldiers of Judah. 5 Saul came to the city of the Amalekites and lay in wait in the valley. 6 Saul said to the Kenites, "Go! Leave! Withdraw from among the Amalekites, or I will destroy you with them; for you showed kindness to all the people of Israel when they came up out of Egypt." So the Kenites withdrew from the Amalekites. 7 Saul defeated the Amalekites, from Havilah as far as Shur, which is east of Egypt. 8 He took King Agag of the Amalekites alive, but utterly destroyed all the people with the edge of the sword. 9 Saul and the people spared Agag, and the best of the sheep and of the cattle and of the fatlings, and the lambs, and all that was valuable, and would not utterly destroy them; all that was despised and worthless they utterly destroyed.

10 The word of the LORD came to Samuel: 11 "I regret that I made Saul king, for he has turned back from following me, and has not carried out my commands." Samuel was angry; and he cried out to the LORD all night. 12 Samuel rose early in the morning to meet Saul, and Samuel was told, "Saul went to Carmel, where he set up a monument for himself, and on returning he passed on down to Gilgal." 13 When Samuel came to Saul, Saul said to him, "May you be blessed by the LORD; I have carried out the command of the LORD." 14 But Samuel said, "What then is this bleating of sheep in my ears, and the lowing of cattle that I hear?" 15 Saul said, "They have brought them from the Amalekites; for the people spared the best of the sheep and the cat-

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who rescued Israel (see Judg chs 8, 9; 10.1–5). Observe how favorably Saul is presented, especially in the first note (vv. 47–48).

**15.1–35: Another story of Saul's rejection.** Compare this section with 13.7b–15a and contrast with the preceding section. Samuel, not Saul, is the leading figure once more. Though Saul is king, and wins a military victory, he is depicted as a moral and religious reprobate, unworthy of the position he holds. **2:** *The Amalekites* is the name of a people traditionally descended from Esau (Gen 36.12). They were a wandering tribe from southern Canaan or northern Sinai which had been constantly troublesome to the Israelites (Deut 25.17–19; Ex 17.7–13; Judg 6.33). **3:** This verse seems to pick up the curse recorded in Deut 25.19. *Utterly destroy* means "put under the ban" or "destroy as a type of religious sacrifice" (Deut 20.16–18). Both the Israelites and their neighbors attempted at times this type of holy war, but usually without complete success. The Amalekites are still numerous and troublesome to David in ch 30.

**15.4:** Exaggerated numbers are characteristic of many ancient documents. **5–7:** *The Kenites* were a clan partly with the Midianites and partly with the Amalekites. Moses' father-in-law seems to have belonged to this group (Judg 1.16; 4.11). The tradition of *kindness* referred to here appears in Num 10.29–32.

tle, to sacrifice to the LORD your God; but the rest we have utterly destroyed." 16 Then Samuel said to Saul, "Stop! I will tell you what the LORD said to me last night." He replied, "Speak."

17 Samuel said, "Though you are little in your own eyes, are you not the head of the tribes of Israel? The LORD anointed you king over Israel. 18 And the LORD sent you on a mission, and said, 'Go, utterly destroy the sinners, the Amalekites, and fight against them until they are consumed.' 19 Why then did you not obey the voice of the LORD? Why did you swoop down on the spoil, and do what was evil in the sight of the LORD?" 20 Saul said to Samuel, "I have obeyed the voice of the LORD, I have gone on the mission on which the LORD sent me, I have brought Agag the king of Amalek, and I have utterly destroyed the Amalekites. 21 But from the spoil the people took sheep and cattle, the best of the things devoted to destruction, to sacrifice to the LORD your God in Gilgal." 22 And Samuel said,

"Has the LORD as great delight in
burnt offerings and
sacrifices,
as in obedience to the voice of
the LORD?
Surely, to obey is better than
sacrifice,
and to heed than the fat of
rams.
23 For rebellion is no less a sin than
divination,
and stubbornness is like iniquity
and idolatry.
Because you have rejected the
word of the LORD,
he has also rejected you from
being king."

24 Saul said to Samuel, "I have sinned; for I have transgressed the commandment of the LORD and your words, because I feared the people and obeyed their voice. 25 Now therefore, I pray, pardon my sin, and return with me, so that I may worship the LORD." 26 Samuel said to Saul, "I will not return with you; for you have rejected the word of the LORD, and the LORD has rejected you from being king over Israel." 27 As Samuel turned to go away, Saul caught hold of the hem of his robe, and it tore. 28 And Samuel said to him, "The LORD has torn the kingdom of Israel from you this very day, and has given it to a neighbor of yours, who is better than you. 29 Moreover the Glory of Israel will not recant[w] or change his mind; for he is not a mortal, that he should change his mind." 30 Then Saul[x] said, "I have sinned; yet honor me now before the elders of my people and before Israel, and return with me, so that I may worship the LORD your God." 31 So Samuel turned back after Saul; and Saul worshiped the LORD.

32 Then Samuel said, "Bring Agag king of the Amalekites here to me." And Agag came to him haltingly.[y] Agag said, "Surely this is the bitterness of death."[z] 33 But Samuel said,

"As your sword has made women
childless,
so your mother shall be childless
among women."

And Samuel hewed Agag in pieces before the LORD in Gilgal.

34 Then Samuel went to Ramah; and Saul went up to his house in Gibeah of Saul. 35 Samuel did not see Saul again until the day of his death, but Samuel grieved over Saul. And the LORD was sorry that he had made Saul king over Israel.

16 The LORD said to Samuel, "How long will you grieve over Saul? I have rejected him from being king over Israel. Fill your horn with oil and set out; I will send you to Jesse the Bethlehemite,

*w* Q Ms Gk: MT *deceive* *x* Heb *he*
*y* Cn Compare Gk: Meaning of Heb uncertain
*z* Q Ms Gk: MT *Surely the bitterness of death is past*

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**15.22**: *To obey is better than sacrifice;* compare Hos 6.6. **23**: On the sin of *divination* see Deut 18.9–14. **28**: The *neighbor* is David. **35**: There is a slight discrepancy between this verse and 19.24.

**16.1–13**: **The anointing of David.** This

for I have provided for myself a king among his sons." 2Samuel said, "How can I go? If Saul hears of it, he will kill me." And the LORD said, "Take a heifer with you, and say, 'I have come to sacrifice to the LORD.' 3Invite Jesse to the sacrifice, and I will show you what you shall do; and you shall anoint for me the one whom I name to you." 4Samuel did what the LORD commanded, and came to Bethlehem. The elders of the city came to meet him trembling, and said, "Do you come peaceably?" 5He said, "Peaceably; I have come to sacrifice to the LORD; sanctify yourselves and come with me to the sacrifice." And he sanctified Jesse and his sons and invited them to the sacrifice.

6 When they came, he looked on Eliab and thought, "Surely the LORD's anointed is now before the LORD."[a] 7But the LORD said to Samuel, "Do not look on his appearance or on the height of his stature, because I have rejected him; for the LORD does not see as mortals see; they look on the outward appearance, but the LORD looks on the heart." 8Then Jesse called Abinadab, and made him pass before Samuel. He said, "Neither has the LORD chosen this one." 9Then Jesse made Shammah pass by. And he said, "Neither has the LORD chosen this one." 10Jesse made seven of his sons pass before Samuel, and Samuel said to Jesse, "The LORD has not chosen any of these." 11Samuel said to Jesse, "Are all your sons here?" And he said, "There remains yet the youngest, but he is keeping the sheep." And Samuel said to Jesse, "Send and bring him; for we will not sit down until he comes here." 12He sent and brought him in. Now he was ruddy, and had beautiful eyes, and was handsome. The LORD said, "Rise and anoint him; for this is the one." 13Then Samuel took the horn of oil, and anointed him in the presence of his brothers; and the spirit of the LORD came mightily upon David from that day forward. Samuel then set out and went to Ramah.

14 Now the spirit of the LORD departed from Saul, and an evil spirit from the LORD tormented him. 15And Saul's servants said to him, "See now, an evil spirit from God is tormenting you. 16Let our lord now command the servants who attend you to look for someone who is skillful in playing the lyre; and when the evil spirit from God is upon you, he will play it, and you will feel better." 17So Saul said to his servants, "Provide for me someone who can play well, and bring him to me." 18One of the young men answered, "I have seen a son of Jesse the Bethlehemite who is skillful in playing, a man of valor, a warrior, prudent in speech, and a man of good presence; and the LORD is with him." 19So Saul sent messengers to Jesse, and said, "Send me your son David who is with the sheep." 20Jesse took a donkey loaded with bread, a skin of wine, and a kid, and sent them by his son David to Saul. 21And David came to Saul, and entered his service. Saul loved him greatly, and he became his armor-bearer. 22Saul sent to Jesse, saying, "Let David remain in my service, for he has found favor in my sight." 23And whenever the evil spirit from God came upon Saul, David took the lyre and played it with his hand, and Saul would be relieved and feel better, and the evil spirit would depart from him.

17 Now the Philistines gathered their armies for battle; they were gathered at Socoh, which belongs to Ju-

*a* Heb *him*

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story may be a counterpart to the anointing of Saul (see 10.1 n.). **5**: Consecration perhaps involved the ceremony of ritual washing. **12**: The word *ruddy* (compare 17.42) is sometimes taken to mean that David was red-haired, but the reference is to his complexion (compare Song 5.10, 11).

**16.14–23: David wins a position at the court of Saul.** This is a story of how Saul became acquainted with David. It also marks the beginning of the story of Saul's sufferings from mental illness, attributed in ancient times to *an evil spirit* (v. 14; compare Lk 11.24–26). **21–22**: Note the good relations between Saul and David.

**17.1–58: David kills Goliath.** A problem

dah, and encamped between Socoh and Azekah, in Ephes-dammim. 2Saul and the Israelites gathered and encamped in the valley of Elah, and formed ranks against the Philistines. 3The Philistines stood on the mountain on the one side, and Israel stood on the mountain on the other side, with a valley between them. 4And there came out from the camp of the Philistines a champion named Goliath, of Gath, whose height was six[b] cubits and a span. 5He had a helmet of bronze on his head, and he was armed with a coat of mail; the weight of the coat was five thousand shekels of bronze. 6He had greaves of bronze on his legs and a javelin of bronze slung between his shoulders. 7The shaft of his spear was like a weaver's beam, and his spear's head weighed six hundred shekels of iron; and his shield-bearer went before him. 8He stood and shouted to the ranks of Israel, "Why have you come out to draw up for battle? Am I not a Philistine, and are you not servants of Saul? Choose a man for yourselves, and let him come down to me. 9If he is able to fight with me and kill me, then we will be your servants; but if I prevail against him and kill him, then you shall be our servants and serve us." 10And the Philistine said, "Today I defy the ranks of Israel! Give me a man, that we may fight together." 11When Saul and all Israel heard these words of the Philistine, they were dismayed and greatly afraid.

12 Now David was the son of an Ephrathite of Bethlehem in Judah, named Jesse, who had eight sons. In the days of Saul the man was already old and advanced in years.[c] 13The three eldest sons of Jesse had followed Saul to the battle; the names of his three sons who went to the battle were Eliab the firstborn, and next to him Abinadab, and the third Shammah. 14David was the youngest; the three eldest followed Saul, 15but David went back and forth from Saul to feed his father's sheep at Bethlehem. 16For forty days the Philistine came forward and took his stand, morning and evening.

17 Jesse said to his son David, "Take for your brothers an ephah of this parched grain and these ten loaves, and carry them quickly to the camp to your brothers; 18also take these ten cheeses to the commander of their thousand. See how your brothers fare, and bring some token from them."

19 Now Saul, and they, and all the men of Israel, were in the valley of Elah, fighting with the Philistines. 20David rose early in the morning, left the sheep with a keeper, took the provisions, and went as Jesse had commanded him. He came to the encampment as the army was going forth to the battle line, shouting the war cry. 21Israel and the Philistines drew up for battle, army against army. 22David left the things in charge of the keeper of the baggage, ran to the ranks, and went and greeted his brothers. 23As he talked with them, the champion, the Philistine of Gath, Goliath by name, came up out of the ranks of the Philistines, and spoke the same words as before. And David heard him.

24 All the Israelites, when they saw the man, fled from him and were very much afraid. 25The Israelites said, "Have

*b* MT: Q Ms Gk *four* *c* Gk Syr: Heb *among men*

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arises because, according to vv. 55–58, Saul does not know David (16.21–23). This has been taken as evidence that a variety of materials, not always consistent in every detail, have been woven together (see Introduction).
**4**: According to 2 Sam 21.19, *Goliath of Gath* was slain at a later time by Elhanan, one of David's warriors. It may be supposed that this name became erroneously attached to David's victim, whose name was unknown (1 Chr 20.5). *Six cubits and a span,* about ten feet. **5**: *Five thousand shekels,* about one hundred and fifty lbs. **7**: *Six hundred shekels,* about nineteen lbs.

**17.12**: The abrupt break in the narrative at this point probably marks insertion of material from a different source.

**17.32–40**: Saul knows David well, in conformity with 16.14–23.

you seen this man who has come up? Surely he has come up to defy Israel. The king will greatly enrich the man who kills him, and will give him his daughter and make his family free in Israel." 26David said to the men who stood by him, "What shall be done for the man who kills this Philistine, and takes away the reproach from Israel? For who is this uncircumcised Philistine that he should defy the armies of the living God?" 27The people answered him in the same way, "So shall it be done for the man who kills him."

28 His eldest brother Eliab heard him talking to the men; and Eliab's anger was kindled against David. He said, "Why have you come down? With whom have you left those few sheep in the wilderness? I know your presumption and the evil of your heart; for you have come down just to see the battle." 29David said, "What have I done now? It was only a question." 30He turned away from him toward another and spoke in the same way; and the people answered him again as before.

31 When the words that David spoke were heard, they repeated them before Saul; and he sent for him. 32David said to Saul, "Let no one's heart fail because of him; your servant will go and fight with this Philistine." 33Saul said to David, "You are not able to go against this Philistine to fight with him; for you are just a boy, and he has been a warrior from his youth." 34But David said to Saul, "Your servant used to keep sheep for his father; and whenever a lion or a bear came, and took a lamb from the flock, 35I went after it and struck it down, rescuing the lamb from its mouth; and if it turned against me, I would catch it by the jaw, strike it down, and kill it. 36Your servant has killed both lions and bears; and this uncircumcised Philistine shall be like one of them, since he has defied the armies of the living God." 37David said, "The LORD, who saved me from the paw of the lion and from the paw of the bear, will save me from the hand of this Philistine." So Saul said to David, "Go, and may the LORD be with you!"

38 Saul clothed David with his armor; he put a bronze helmet on his head and clothed him with a coat of mail. 39David strapped Saul's sword over the armor, and he tried in vain to walk, for he was not used to them. Then David said to Saul, "I cannot walk with these; for I am not used to them." So David removed them. 40Then he took his staff in his hand, and chose five smooth stones from the wadi, and put them in his shepherd's bag, in the pouch; his sling was in his hand, and he drew near to the Philistine.

41 The Philistine came on and drew near to David, with his shield-bearer in front of him. 42When the Philistine looked and saw David, he disdained him, for he was only a youth, ruddy and handsome in appearance. 43The Philistine said to David, "Am I a dog, that you come to me with sticks?" And the Philistine cursed David by his gods. 44The Philistine said to David, "Come to me, and I will give your flesh to the birds of the air and to the wild animals of the field." 45But David said to the Philistine, "You come to me with sword and spear and javelin; but I come to you in the name of the LORD of hosts, the God of the armies of Israel, whom you have defied. 46This very day the LORD will deliver you into my hand, and I will strike you down and cut off your head; and I will give the dead bodies of the Philistine army this very day to the birds of the air and to the wild animals of the earth, so that all the earth may know that there is a God in Israel, 47and that all this assembly may know that the LORD does not save by sword and spear; for the battle is the LORD's and he will give you into our hand."

48 When the Philistine drew nearer to meet David, David ran quickly toward the battle line to meet the Philistine. 49David put his hand in his bag, took out a stone, slung it, and struck the Philistine on his forehead; the stone sank into his forehead, and he fell face down on the ground.

50 So David prevailed over the Philistine with a sling and a stone, striking down the Philistine and killing him;

there was no sword in David's hand. 51Then David ran and stood over the Philistine; he grasped his sword, drew it out of its sheath, and killed him; then he cut off his head with it.

When the Philistines saw that their champion was dead, they fled. 52The troops of Israel and Judah rose up with a shout and pursued the Philistines as far as Gath[d] and the gates of Ekron, so that the wounded Philistines fell on the way from Shaaraim as far as Gath and Ekron. 53The Israelites came back from chasing the Philistines, and they plundered their camp. 54David took the head of the Philistine and brought it to Jerusalem; but he put his armor in his tent.

55 When Saul saw David go out against the Philistine, he said to Abner, the commander of the army, "Abner, whose son is this young man?" Abner said, "As your soul lives, O king, I do not know." 56The king said, "Inquire whose son the stripling is." 57On David's return from killing the Philistine, Abner took him and brought him before Saul, with the head of the Philistine in his hand. 58Saul said to him, "Whose son are you, young man?" And David answered, "I am the son of your servant Jesse the Bethlehemite."

18 When David[e] had finished speaking to Saul, the soul of Jonathan was bound to the soul of David, and Jonathan loved him as his own soul. 2Saul took him that day and would not let him return to his father's house. 3Then Jonathan made a covenant with David, because he loved him as his own soul. 4Jonathan stripped himself of the robe that he was wearing, and gave it to David, and his armor, and even his sword and his bow and his belt. 5David went out and was successful wherever Saul sent him; as a result, Saul set him over the army. And all the people, even the servants of Saul, approved.

6 As they were coming home, when David returned from killing the Philistine, the women came out of all the towns of Israel, singing and dancing, to meet King Saul, with tambourines, with songs of joy, and with musical instruments.[f] 7And the women sang to one another as they made merry,

"Saul has killed his thousands,
and David his ten thousands."

8Saul was very angry, for this saying displeased him. He said, "They have ascribed to David ten thousands, and to me they have ascribed thousands; what more can he have but the kingdom?" 9So Saul eyed David from that day on.

10 The next day an evil spirit from God rushed upon Saul, and he raved within his house, while David was playing the lyre, as he did day by day. Saul had his spear in his hand; 11and Saul threw the spear, for he thought, "I will pin David to the wall." But David eluded him twice.

12 Saul was afraid of David, because the LORD was with him but had departed from Saul. 13So Saul removed him from his presence, and made him a commander of a thousand; and David marched out and came in, leading the army. 14David had success in all his undertakings; for the LORD was with him. 15When Saul saw that he had great success, he stood in awe of him. 16But all Israel and Judah loved David; for it was he who marched out and came in leading them.

17 Then Saul said to David, "Here is my elder daughter Merab; I will give her to you as a wife; only be valiant for me and fight the LORD's battles." For Saul thought, "I will not raise a hand against

*d* Gk Syr: Heb *Gai* *e* Heb *he*
*f* Or *triangles*, or *three-stringed instruments*

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**17.55–58**: Note how completely unknown David is to Saul, in contrast to vv. 32–40, but in entire consistency with 16.1–13.

**18.1–30**: **Saul becomes jealous of David. 1–3**: A deep friendship arose between David and Jonathan.

**18.6–9**: Saul's first anger at David. **17–19**: This incident of *Merab* is lacking in some Greek texts.

him; let the Philistines deal with him."
18 David said to Saul, "Who am I and
who are my kinsfolk, my father's family
in Israel, that I should be son-in-law to
the king?" 19 But at the time when Saul's
daughter Merab should have been given
to David, she was given to Adriel the
Meholathite as a wife.

20 Now Saul's daughter Michal loved
David. Saul was told, and the thing
pleased him. 21 Saul thought, "Let me
give her to him that she may be a snare
for him and that the hand of the Philis-
tines may be against him." Therefore
Saul said to David a second time,[g] "You
shall now be my son-in-law." 22 Saul
commanded his servants, "Speak to Da-
vid in private and say, 'See, the king is
delighted with you, and all his servants
love you; now then, become the king's
son-in-law.' " 23 So Saul's servants re-
ported these words to David in private.
And David said, "Does it seem to you a
little thing to become the king's son-in-
law, seeing that I am a poor man and of
no repute?" 24 The servants of Saul told
him, "This is what David said." 25 Then
Saul said, "Thus shall you say to David,
'The king desires no marriage present ex-
cept a hundred foreskins of the Philis-
tines, that he may be avenged on the
king's enemies.' " Now Saul planned to
make David fall by the hand of the Philis-
tines. 26 When his servants told David
these words, David was well pleased to
be the king's son-in-law. Before the time
had expired, 27 David rose and went,
along with his men, and killed one hun-
dred[h] of the Philistines; and David
brought their foreskins, which were giv-
en in full number to the king, that he
might become the king's son-in-law.
Saul gave him his daughter Michal as a
wife. 28 But when Saul realized that the
LORD was with David, and that Saul's
daughter Michal loved him, 29 Saul was
still more afraid of David. So Saul was
David's enemy from that time forward.

30 Then the commanders of the Phil-
istines came out to battle; and as often as
they came out, David had more success
than all the servants of Saul, so that his
fame became very great.

19 Saul spoke with his son Jonathan
and with all his servants about
killing David. But Saul's son Jonathan
took great delight in David. 2 Jonathan
told David, "My father Saul is trying to
kill you; therefore be on guard tomor-
row morning; stay in a secret place and
hide yourself. 3 I will go out and stand
beside my father in the field where you
are, and I will speak to my father about
you; if I learn anything I will tell you."
4 Jonathan spoke well of David to his fa-
ther Saul, saying to him, "The king
should not sin against his servant David,
because he has not sinned against you,
and because his deeds have been of good
service to you; 5 for he took his life in his
hand when he attacked the Philistine, and
the LORD brought about a great victory
for all Israel. You saw it, and rejoiced;
why then will you sin against an inno-
cent person by killing David without
cause?" 6 Saul heeded the voice of Jona-
than; Saul swore, "As the LORD lives, he
shall not be put to death." 7 So Jonathan
called David and related all these things
to him. Jonathan then brought David to
Saul, and he was in his presence as be-
fore.

8 Again there was war, and David
went out to fight the Philistines. He
launched a heavy attack on them, so that
they fled before him. 9 Then an evil spirit
from the LORD came upon Saul, as he sat
in his house with his spear in his hand,
while David was playing music. 10 Saul

*g* Heb *by two* *h* Gk Compare 2 Sam 3.14: Heb *two hundred*

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**18.25**: The *marriage present* is regarded by some as a gift to the bride's family, by others as a "price" paid for the bride. Probably the custom combined both elements. **27**: Only one hundred *foreskins* were required (v. 25); this story is to show David's superior prowess.

**19.1–10**: **Saul seeks David's life. 6–7**: Jonathan succeeds in restraining his father temporarily. **8–10**: Compare 18.10–11.

sought to pin David to the wall with the spear; but he eluded Saul, so that he struck the spear into the wall. David fled and escaped that night.

11 Saul sent messengers to David's house to keep watch over him, planning to kill him in the morning. David's wife Michal told him, "If you do not save your life tonight, tomorrow you will be killed." 12So Michal let David down through the window; he fled away and escaped. 13Michal took an idol[i] and laid it on the bed; she put a net[j] of goats' hair on its head, and covered it with the clothes. 14When Saul sent messengers to take David, she said, "He is sick." 15Then Saul sent the messengers to see David for themselves. He said, "Bring him up to me in the bed, that I may kill him." 16When the messengers came in, the idol[k] was in the bed, with the covering[j] of goats' hair on its head. 17Saul said to Michal, "Why have you deceived me like this, and let my enemy go, so that he has escaped?" Michal answered Saul, "He said to me, 'Let me go; why should I kill you?' "

18 Now David fled and escaped; he came to Samuel at Ramah, and told him all that Saul had done to him. He and Samuel went and settled at Naioth. 19Saul was told, "David is at Naioth in Ramah." 20Then Saul sent messengers to take David. When they saw the company of the prophets in a frenzy, with Samuel standing in charge of[j] them, the spirit of God came upon the messengers of Saul, and they also fell into a prophetic frenzy. 21When Saul was told, he sent other messengers, and they also fell into a frenzy. Saul sent messengers again the third time, and they also fell into a frenzy. 22Then he himself went to Ramah. He came to the great well that is in Secu;[l] he asked, "Where are Samuel and David?" And someone said, "They are at Naioth in Ramah." 23He went there, toward Naioth in Ramah; and the spirit of God came upon him. As he was going, he fell into a prophetic frenzy, until he came to Naioth in Ramah. 24He too stripped off his clothes, and he too fell into a frenzy before Samuel. He lay naked all that day and all that night. Therefore it is said, "Is Saul also among the prophets?"

20 David fled from Naioth in Ramah. He came before Jonathan and said, "What have I done? What is my guilt? And what is my sin against your father that he is trying to take my life?" 2He said to him, "Far from it! You shall not die. My father does nothing either great or small without disclosing it to me; and why should my father hide this from me? Never!" 3But David also swore, "Your father knows well that you like me; and he thinks, 'Do not let Jonathan know this, or he will be grieved.' But truly, as the LORD lives and as you yourself live, there is but a step between me and death." 4Then Jonathan said to David, "Whatever you say, I will do for you." 5David said to Jonathan, "Tomorrow is the new moon, and I should not fail to sit with the king at the meal; but

*i* Heb *took the teraphim* *j* Meaning of Heb uncertain *k* Heb *the teraphim* *l* Gk reads *to the well of the threshing floor on the bare height*

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**19.11–17: David forced to flee.** This incident follows naturally upon the marriage in 18.20–29. David seems to be unaware of the danger (compare the preceding verses) until Michal tells him. **13:** *Idol,* see Gen 31.19 n.; Judg 17.5. The nature of the *idol* and *net* here is obscure.

**19.18–24: Saul's ecstatic behavior.** Probably an independent story. See another version of this matter (10.10–12). The nature of this *frenzy* (v. 20) as ecstatic dancing or whirling must be kept in mind (see 10.6 n.). The names *Secu* and *Naioth in Ramah* (v. 22) seem to indicate locations within the town of Ramah.

**20.1–42: An independent tradition of the break between Saul and David,** incompatible with much of ch 19. David is represented as still a member of the king's household and Jonathan seems unaware of Saul's hatred of David. The break between Saul and David was so significant that many different stories about it were told. **1:** The first part of this verse is an editorial attempt to join it to ch 19. Actually, according to what follows, David had not yet left the court of Saul. **5:**

let me go, so that I may hide in the field until the third evening. 6If your father misses me at all, then say, 'David earnestly asked leave of me to run to Bethlehem his city; for there is a yearly sacrifice there for all the family.' 7If he says, 'Good!' it will be well with your servant; but if he is angry, then know that evil has been determined by him. 8Therefore deal kindly with your servant, for you have brought your servant into a sacred covenant[m] with you. But if there is guilt in me, kill me yourself; why should you bring me to your father?" 9Jonathan said, "Far be it from you! If I knew that it was decided by my father that evil should come upon you, would I not tell you?" 10Then David said to Jonathan, "Who will tell me if your father answers you harshly?" 11Jonathan replied to David, "Come, let us go out into the field." So they both went out into the field.

12 Jonathan said to David, "By the LORD, the God of Israel! When I have sounded out my father, about this time tomorrow, or on the third day, if he is well disposed toward David, shall I not then send and disclose it to you? 13But if my father intends to do you harm, the LORD do so to Jonathan, and more also, if I do not disclose it to you, and send you away, so that you may go in safety. May the LORD be with you, as he has been with my father. 14If I am still alive, show me the faithful love of the LORD; but if I die,[n] 15never cut off your faithful love from my house, even if the LORD were to cut off every one of the enemies of David from the face of the earth." 16Thus Jonathan made a covenant with the house of David, saying, "May the LORD seek out the enemies of David." 17Jonathan made David swear again by his love for him; for he loved him as he loved his own life.

18 Jonathan said to him, "Tomorrow is the new moon; you will be missed, because your place will be empty. 19On the day after tomorrow, you shall go a long way down; go to the place where you hid yourself earlier, and remain beside the stone there.[n] 20I will shoot three arrows to the side of it, as though I shot at a mark. 21Then I will send the boy, saying, 'Go, find the arrows.' If I say to the boy, 'Look, the arrows are on this side of you, collect them,' then you are to come, for, as the LORD lives, it is safe for you and there is no danger. 22But if I say to the young man, 'Look, the arrows are beyond you,' then go; for the LORD has sent you away. 23As for the matter about which you and I have spoken, the LORD is witness[o] between you and me forever."

24 So David hid himself in the field. When the new moon came, the king sat at the feast to eat. 25The king sat upon his seat, as at other times, upon the seat by the wall. Jonathan stood, while Abner sat by Saul's side; but David's place was empty.

26 Saul did not say anything that day; for he thought, "Something has befallen him; he is not clean, surely he is not clean." 27But on the second day, the day after the new moon, David's place was empty. And Saul said to his son Jonathan, "Why has the son of Jesse not come to the feast, either yesterday or today?" 28Jonathan answered Saul, "David earnestly asked leave of me to go to Bethlehem; 29he said, 'Let me go; for our family is holding a sacrifice in the city, and my brother has commanded me to be there. So now, if I have found favor in your sight, let me get away, and see my brothers.' For this reason he has not come to the king's table."

30 Then Saul's anger was kindled

*m* Heb *a covenant of the* LORD *n* Meaning of Heb uncertain *o* Gk: Heb lacks *witness*

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*The new moon* was a festival day, when all members of the household were supposed to eat together. **8**: *Sacred covenant* is a reference to the deep friendship of David and Jonathan. See 18.1–4.

**20.26**: Some mishap could have caused temporary ritual uncleanness.

**20.30**: A popular form of cursing was then, and is now, to berate a person's mother; hence the words *your mother's nakedness*, as

against Jonathan. He said to him, "You son of a perverse, rebellious woman! Do I not know that you have chosen the son of Jesse to your own shame, and to the shame of your mother's nakedness? 31For as long as the son of Jesse lives upon the earth, neither you nor your kingdom shall be established. Now send and bring him to me, for he shall surely die." 32Then Jonathan answered his father Saul, "Why should he be put to death? What has he done?" 33But Saul threw his spear at him to strike him; so Jonathan knew that it was the decision of his father to put David to death. 34Jonathan rose from the table in fierce anger and ate no food on the second day of the month, for he was grieved for David, and because his father had disgraced him.

35 In the morning Jonathan went out into the field to the appointment with David, and with him was a little boy. 36He said to the boy, "Run and find the arrows that I shoot." As the boy ran, he shot an arrow beyond him. 37When the boy came to the place where Jonathan's arrow had fallen, Jonathan called after the boy and said, "Is the arrow not beyond you?" 38Jonathan called after the boy, "Hurry, be quick, do not linger." So Jonathan's boy gathered up the arrows and came to his master. 39But the boy knew nothing; only Jonathan and David knew the arrangement. 40Jonathan gave his weapons to the boy and said to him, "Go and carry them to the city." 41As soon as the boy had gone, David rose from beside the stone heap[p] and prostrated himself with his face to the ground. He bowed three times, and they kissed each other, and wept with each other; David wept the more.[q] 42Then Jonathan said to David, "Go in peace, since both of us have sworn in the name of the LORD, saying, 'The LORD shall be between me and you, and between my descendants and your descendants, forever.' " He got up and left; and Jonathan went into the city.[r]

21 [s] David came to Nob to the priest Ahimelech. Ahimelech came trembling to meet David, and said to him, "Why are you alone, and no one with you?" 2David said to the priest Ahimelech, "The king has charged me with a matter, and said to me, 'No one must know anything of the matter about which I send you, and with which I have charged you.' I have made an appointment[t] with the young men for such and such a place. 3Now then, what have you at hand? Give me five loaves of bread, or whatever is here." 4The priest answered David, "I have no ordinary bread at hand, only holy bread—provided that the young men have kept themselves from women." 5David answered the priest, "Indeed women have been kept from us as always when I go on an expedition; the vessels of the young men are holy even when it is a common journey; how much more today will their vessels be holy?" 6So the priest gave him the holy bread; for there was no bread there except the bread of the Presence, which is removed from before the LORD, to be replaced by hot bread on the day it is taken away.

7 Now a certain man of the servants of Saul was there that day, detained before the LORD; his name was Doeg the Edomite, the chief of Saul's shepherds.

8 David said to Ahimelech, "Is there

*p* Gk: Heb *from beside the south*
*q* Vg: Meaning of Heb uncertain
*r* This sentence is 21.1 in Heb
*s* Ch 21.2 in Heb
*t* Q Ms Vg Compare Gk: Meaning of MT uncertain

though she were a prostitute or something of that sort. **33**: Compare the similar treatment of David, 18.11 and 19.10.

**21.1–9: David escapes to Nob. 6**: On *the holy bread* or *the bread of the Presence* in later tradition, see Lev 24.5–9; on the use of this passage in the New Testament, see Mk 2.23–28. **7**: *Doeg* appears later as David's betrayer (22.9). He was *detained* to perform some sort of religious ceremony. **8**: David was not only alone, but unarmed, a fact testifying to the hastiness of his flight (contrast the story of more leisurely departure in ch 20). **9**: *The ephod* is here a box, not a linen apron (see 14.3 n.).

no spear or sword here with you? I did not bring my sword or my weapons with me, because the king's business required haste." 9The priest said, "The sword of Goliath the Philistine, whom you killed in the valley of Elah, is here wrapped in a cloth behind the ephod; if you will take that, take it, for there is none here except that one." David said, "There is none like it; give it to me."

10 David rose and fled that day from Saul; he went to King Achish of Gath. 11The servants of Achish said to him, "Is this not David the king of the land? Did they not sing to one another of him in dances,

'Saul has killed his thousands,
and David his ten thousands'?"

12David took these words to heart and was very much afraid of King Achish of Gath. 13So he changed his behavior before them; he pretended to be mad when in their presence.[u] He scratched marks on the doors of the gate, and let his spittle run down his beard. 14Achish said to his servants, "Look, you see the man is mad; why then have you brought him to me? 15Do I lack madmen, that you have brought this fellow to play the madman in my presence? Shall this fellow come into my house?"

22 David left there and escaped to the cave of Adullam; when his brothers and all his father's house heard of it, they went down there to him. 2Everyone who was in distress, and everyone who was in debt, and everyone who was discontented gathered to him; and he became captain over them. Those who were with him numbered about four hundred.

3 David went from there to Mizpeh of Moab. He said to the king of Moab, "Please let my father and mother come[v] to you, until I know what God will do for me." 4He left them with the king of Moab, and they stayed with him all the time that David was in the stronghold. 5Then the prophet Gad said to David, "Do not remain in the stronghold; leave, and go into the land of Judah." So David left, and went into the forest of Hereth.

6 Saul heard that David and those who were with him had been located. Saul was sitting at Gibeah, under the tamarisk tree on the height, with his spear in his hand, and all his servants were standing around him. 7Saul said to his servants who stood around him, "Hear now, you Benjaminites; will the son of Jesse give every one of you fields and vineyards, will he make you all commanders of thousands and commanders of hundreds? 8Is that why all of you have conspired against me? No one discloses to me when my son makes a league with the son of Jesse, none of you is sorry for me or discloses to me that my son has stirred up my servant against me, to lie in wait, as he is doing today." 9Doeg the Edomite, who was in charge of Saul's servants, answered, "I saw the son of Jesse coming to Nob, to Ahimelech son of Ahitub; 10he inquired of the LORD for him, gave him provisions, and gave him the sword of Goliath the Philistine."

11 The king sent for the priest Ahimelech son of Ahitub and for all his father's house, the priests who were at Nob; and all of them came to the king. 12Saul said, "Listen now, son of Ahitub." He answered, "Here I am, my lord." 13Saul said to him, "Why have you conspired against me, you and the son of Jesse, by giving him bread and a sword, and by inquiring of God for him, so that he has

*u* Heb *in their hands* *v* Syr Vg: Heb *come out*

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**21.10–15: David flees to Gath.** Another version of this episode is found in ch 27. **11**: The purpose of this version of the story may have been to show that David and Achish had nothing to do with one another, in contrast to ch 27, where they get along very well.

**22.1–23: David at Adullam; massacre of the priests of Nob. 1**: *Adullam* was a place southwest of Bethlehem, in David's home territory, so to speak. **2**: David collects a retinue of malcontents from his native Judah. **3–5**: The locations of *Mizpeh of Moab* and *Hereth* are unknown. On *the prophet Gad* see 2 Sam 24.12. **9**: *Doeg the Edomite,* a foreigner who had attached himself to Saul and held a good position under him (21.7).

risen against me, to lie in wait, as he is doing today?"

14 Then Ahimelech answered the king, "Who among all your servants is so faithful as David? He is the king's son-in-law, and is quick[w] to do your bidding, and is honored in your house. 15Is today the first time that I have inquired of God for him? By no means! Do not let the king impute anything to his servant or to any member of my father's house; for your servant has known nothing of all this, much or little." 16The king said, "You shall surely die, Ahimelech, you and all your father's house." 17The king said to the guard who stood around him, "Turn and kill the priests of the LORD, because their hand also is with David; they knew that he fled, and did not disclose it to me." But the servants of the king would not raise their hand to attack the priests of the LORD. 18Then the king said to Doeg, "You, Doeg, turn and attack the priests." Doeg the Edomite turned and attacked the priests; on that day he killed eighty-five who wore the linen ephod. 19Nob, the city of the priests, he put to the sword; men and women, children and infants, oxen, donkeys, and sheep, he put to the sword.

20 But one of the sons of Ahimelech son of Ahitub, named Abiathar, escaped and fled after David. 21Abiathar told David that Saul had killed the priests of the LORD. 22David said to Abiathar, "I knew on that day, when Doeg the Edomite was there, that he would surely tell Saul. I am responsible[x] for the lives of all your father's house. 23Stay with me, and do not be afraid; for the one who seeks my life seeks your life; you will be safe with me."

***David saves the city of Keilah***

23 Now they told David, "The Philistines are fighting against Keilah, and are robbing the threshing floors." 2David inquired of the LORD, "Shall I go and attack these Philistines?" The LORD said to David, "Go and attack the Philistines and save Keilah." 3But David's men said to him, "Look, we are afraid here in Judah; how much more then if we go to Keilah against the armies of the Philistines?" 4Then David inquired of the LORD again. The LORD answered him, "Yes, go down to Keilah; for I will give the Philistines into your hand." 5So David and his men went to Keilah, fought with the Philistines, brought away their livestock, and dealt them a heavy defeat. Thus David rescued the inhabitants of Keilah.

6 When Abiathar son of Ahimelech fled to David at Keilah, he came down with an ephod in his hand. 7Now it was told Saul that David had come to Keilah. And Saul said, "God has given[y] him into my hand; for he has shut himself in by entering a town that has gates and bars." 8Saul summoned all the people to war, to go down to Keilah, to besiege David and his men. 9When David learned that Saul was plotting evil against him, he said to the priest Abiathar, "Bring the ephod here." 10David said, "O LORD, the God of Israel, your servant has heard that Saul seeks to come to Keilah, to destroy the city on my account. 11And now, will[z] Saul come down as your servant has heard? O LORD, the God of Israel, I beseech you, tell your servant." The LORD said, "He will come down." 12Then Da-

*w* Heb *and turns aside* *x* Gk Vg: Meaning of Heb uncertain *y* Gk Tg: Heb *made a stranger of* *z* Q Ms Compare Gk: MT *Will the men of Keilah surrender me into his hand? Will*

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**22.17**: The soldiers of Saul refused to commit this atrocious deed against their fellow Israelites, and Saul did not have the authority to compel them. **18**: *Doeg,* the foreigner, with loyalty to Saul but none to the Israelites, willingly did the deed. *Linen ephod,* see 2.18 n. **19**: See 15.3 n. Compare Josh ch 7. **20–23**: *Abiathar* was to play a very important part in the subsequent history of David.

**23.1–14**: **David's relief of Keilah. 1**: *Keilah* was a few miles south of Adullam (22.1). **3**: From this verse it is clear that *Keilah* belonged neither to *Judah* nor to *the Philistines* at that time.

**23.6**: The *ephod* here is the box containing the sacred lots, as in 21.9 (see 14.3 n.); compare vv. 9–10.

**23.15–24.22**: **David spares Saul's life.**

vid said, "Will the men of Keilah surrender me and my men into the hand of Saul?" The LORD said, "They will surrender you." 13Then David and his men, who were about six hundred, set out and left Keilah; they wandered wherever they could go. When Saul was told that David had escaped from Keilah, he gave up the expedition. 14David remained in the strongholds in the wilderness, in the hill country of the Wilderness of Ziph. Saul sought him every day, but the LORD[a] did not give him into his hand.

15 David was in the Wilderness of Ziph at Horesh when he learned that[b] Saul had come out to seek his life. 16Saul's son Jonathan set out and came to David at Horesh; there he strengthened his hand through the LORD.[c] 17He said to him, "Do not be afraid; for the hand of my father Saul shall not find you; you shall be king over Israel, and I shall be second to you; my father Saul also knows that this is so." 18Then the two of them made a covenant before the LORD; David remained at Horesh, and Jonathan went home.

19 Then some Ziphites went up to Saul at Gibeah and said, "David is hiding among us in the strongholds of Horesh, on the hill of Hachilah, which is south of Jeshimon. 20Now, O king, whenever you wish to come down, do so; and our part will be to surrender him into the king's hand." 21Saul said, "May you be blessed by the LORD for showing me compassion! 22Go and make sure once more; find out exactly where he is, and who has seen him there; for I am told that he is very cunning. 23Look around and learn all the hiding places where he lurks, and come back to me with sure information. Then I will go with you; and if he is in the land, I will search him out among all the thousands of Judah." 24So they set out and went to Ziph ahead of Saul.

David and his men were in the wilderness of Maon, in the Arabah to the south of Jeshimon. 25Saul and his men went to search for him. When David was told, he went down to the rock and stayed in the wilderness of Maon. When Saul heard that, he pursued David into the wilderness of Maon. 26Saul went on one side of the mountain, and David and his men on the other side of the mountain. David was hurrying to get away from Saul, while Saul and his men were closing in on David and his men to capture them. 27Then a messenger came to Saul, saying, "Hurry and come; for the Philistines have made a raid on the land." 28So Saul stopped pursuing David, and went against the Philistines; therefore that place was called the Rock of Escape.[d] 29[e]David then went up from there, and lived in the strongholds of En-gedi.

24 When Saul returned from following the Philistines, he was told, "David is in the wilderness of En-gedi." 2Then Saul took three thousand chosen men out of all Israel, and went to look for David and his men in the direction of the Rocks of the Wild Goats. 3He came to the sheepfolds beside the road, where there was a cave; and Saul went in to relieve himself.[f] Now David and his men were sitting in the innermost parts of the cave. 4The men of David said to him, "Here is the day of which the LORD said to you, 'I will give your enemy into your hand, and you shall do to him as it seems good to you.' " Then David went

*a* Q Ms Gk: MT *God* *b* Or *saw that*
*c* Compare Q Ms Gk: MT *God* *d* Or *Rock of Division*; Meaning of Heb uncertain
*e* Ch 24.1 in Heb *f* Heb *to cover his feet*

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Another version of this or a similar incident is found in ch 26. **14:** *Ziph* was a rocky area south of Hebron. *Every day,* in this context means "all the time" or "constantly." **19:** The names *Hachilah* and *Jeshimon,* which possibly mean "darkness" and "barren waste" respectively, suggest good places for hiding.

**23.24:** *Maon* was a little *south* of Ziph, Hachilah, and *Jeshimon* (compare Josh 15.55). *Arabah* here simply means "desert," not the depression north and south of the Dead Sea. **27–29:** In ch 26 there is no interruption by *the Philistines,* nor does the scene shift to *En-gedi,* on the west shore of the Dead Sea.

**24.2:** *Rocks of the Wild Goats* is most descriptive of the character of the terrain.

*The death of Samuel*

and stealthily cut off a corner of Saul's cloak. 5Afterward David was stricken to the heart because he had cut off a corner of Saul's cloak. 6He said to his men, "The LORD forbid that I should do this thing to my lord, the LORD's anointed, to raise my hand against him; for he is the LORD's anointed." 7So David scolded his men severely and did not permit them to attack Saul. Then Saul got up and left the cave, and went on his way.

8 Afterwards David also rose up and went out of the cave and called after Saul, "My lord the king!" When Saul looked behind him, David bowed with his face to the ground, and did obeisance. 9David said to Saul, "Why do you listen to the words of those who say, 'David seeks to do you harm'? 10This very day your eyes have seen how the LORD gave you into my hand in the cave; and some urged me to kill you, but I spared[g] you. I said, 'I will not raise my hand against my lord; for he is the LORD's anointed.' 11See, my father, see the corner of your cloak in my hand; for by the fact that I cut off the corner of your cloak, and did not kill you, you may know for certain that there is no wrong or treason in my hands. I have not sinned against you, though you are hunting me to take my life. 12May the LORD judge between me and you! May the LORD avenge me on you; but my hand shall not be against you. 13As the ancient proverb says, 'Out of the wicked comes forth wickedness'; but my hand shall not be against you. 14Against whom has the king of Israel come out? Whom do you pursue? A dead dog? A single flea? 15May the LORD therefore be judge, and give sentence between me and you. May he see to it, and plead my cause, and vindicate me against you."

16 When David had finished speaking these words to Saul, Saul said, "Is this your voice, my son David?" Saul lifted up his voice and wept. 17He said to David, "You are more righteous than I; for you have repaid me good, whereas I have repaid you evil. 18Today you have explained how you have dealt well with me, in that you did not kill me when the LORD put me into your hands. 19For who has ever found an enemy, and sent the enemy safely away? So may the LORD reward you with good for what you have done to me this day. 20Now I know that you shall surely be king, and that the kingdom of Israel shall be established in your hand. 21Swear to me therefore by the LORD that you will not cut off my descendants after me, and that you will not wipe out my name from my father's house." 22So David swore this to Saul. Then Saul went home; but David and his men went up to the stronghold.

25 Now Samuel died; and all Israel assembled and mourned for him. They buried him at his home in Ramah.

Then David got up and went down to the wilderness of Paran.

2 There was a man in Maon, whose property was in Carmel. The man was very rich; he had three thousand sheep and a thousand goats. He was shearing his sheep in Carmel. 3Now the name of

*g* Gk Syr Tg Vg: Heb *it* (my eye) *spared*

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**24.14**: Dogs were held in low esteem in those days; *a dead dog* would be less than nothing (2 Sam 9.8; 16.9). **20–21**: The incident comes to a close with Saul practically in tears, handing the kingdom to David (compare what Jonathan says in 23.17). In 26.22 nothing is said about David's becoming king.

**25.1a**: **The death of Samuel.** The notation of an editor, perhaps, repeated in 28.3a. The brevity of the obituary is surprising.

**25.1b–44**: **David, Nabal, and Abigail.** The story of how David obtained his second wife. **1b**: *The wilderness of Paran* is so far to the south that it could hardly have had any connection with the movements of David at this time; the Greek version reads "the wilderness of Maon," and some modern translations follow this reading. **2**: This *Carmel* lay between Ziph and Maon (see 23.14 n. and 24 n.); it must not be confused with the famous Mount Carmel to the north near the seacoast. **3**: The *Calebite* clan had not yet been absorbed by the tribes of Judah (Josh 15.13–19; Judg 1.12–15). **11**: *Water,* the Greek version reads "wine," no doubt correctly (compare vv. 18 and 36).

the man was Nabal, and the name of his wife Abigail. The woman was clever and beautiful, but the man was surly and mean; he was a Calebite. 4 David heard in the wilderness that Nabal was shearing his sheep. 5 So David sent ten young men; and David said to the young men, "Go up to Carmel, and go to Nabal, and greet him in my name. 6 Thus you shall salute him: 'Peace be to you, and peace be to your house, and peace be to all that you have. 7 I hear that you have shearers; now your shepherds have been with us, and we did them no harm, and they missed nothing, all the time they were in Carmel. 8 Ask your young men, and they will tell you. Therefore let my young men find favor in your sight; for we have come on a feast day. Please give whatever you have at hand to your servants and to your son David.' "

9 When David's young men came, they said all this to Nabal in the name of David; and then they waited. 10 But Nabal answered David's servants, "Who is David? Who is the son of Jesse? There are many servants today who are breaking away from their masters. 11 Shall I take my bread and my water and the meat that I have butchered for my shearers, and give it to men who come from I do not know where?" 12 So David's young men turned away, and came back and told him all this. 13 David said to his men, "Every man strap on his sword!" And every one of them strapped on his sword; David also strapped on his sword; and about four hundred men went up after David, while two hundred remained with the baggage.

14 But one of the young men told Abigail, Nabal's wife, "David sent messengers out of the wilderness to salute our master; and he shouted insults at them. 15 Yet the men were very good to us, and we suffered no harm, and we never missed anything when we were in the fields, as long as we were with them; 16 they were a wall to us both by night and by day, all the while we were with them keeping the sheep. 17 Now therefore know this and consider what you should do; for evil has been decided against our master and against all his house; he is so ill-natured that no one can speak to him."

18 Then Abigail hurried and took two hundred loaves, two skins of wine, five sheep ready dressed, five measures of parched grain, one hundred clusters of raisins, and two hundred cakes of figs. She loaded them on donkeys 19 and said to her young men, "Go on ahead of me; I am coming after you." But she did not tell her husband Nabal. 20 As she rode on the donkey and came down under cover of the mountain, David and his men came down toward her; and she met them. 21 Now David had said, "Surely it was in vain that I protected all that this fellow has in the wilderness, so that nothing was missed of all that belonged to him; but he has returned me evil for good. 22 God do so to David[h] and more also, if by morning I leave so much as one male of all who belong to him."

23 When Abigail saw David, she hurried and alighted from the donkey, and fell before David on her face, bowing to the ground. 24 She fell at his feet and said, "Upon me alone, my lord, be the guilt; please let your servant speak in your ears, and hear the words of your servant. 25 My lord, do not take seriously this ill-natured fellow, Nabal; for as his name is, so is he; Nabal[i] is his name, and folly is with him; but I, your servant, did not see the young men of my lord, whom you sent.

26 "Now then, my lord, as the LORD lives, and as you yourself live, since the LORD has restrained you from bloodguilt and from taking vengeance with your

*h* Gk Compare Syr: Heb *the enemies of David*
*i* That is *Fool*

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**25.16**: David and his men were outlaws, but of the "Robin Hood" type, even acting as a police force at times (compare v. 21).

**25.26**: The oath *as the LORD lives, and as you yourself live* may be translated more simply thus: "by the life of the LORD and by your

own hand, now let your enemies and those who seek to do evil to my lord be like Nabal. 27 And now let this present that your servant has brought to my lord be given to the young men who follow my lord. 28 Please forgive the trespass of your servant; for the LORD will certainly make my lord a sure house, because my lord is fighting the battles of the LORD; and evil shall not be found in you so long as you live. 29 If anyone should rise up to pursue you and to seek your life, the life of my lord shall be bound in the bundle of the living under the care of the LORD your God; but the lives of your enemies he shall sling out as from the hollow of a sling. 30 When the LORD has done to my lord according to all the good that he has spoken concerning you, and has appointed you prince over Israel, 31 my lord shall have no cause of grief, or pangs of conscience, for having shed blood without cause or for having saved himself. And when the LORD has dealt well with my lord, then remember your servant."

32 David said to Abigail, "Blessed be the LORD, the God of Israel, who sent you to meet me today! 33 Blessed be your good sense, and blessed be you, who have kept me today from bloodguilt and from avenging myself by my own hand! 34 For as surely as the LORD the God of Israel lives, who has restrained me from hurting you, unless you had hurried and come to meet me, truly by morning there would not have been left to Nabal so much as one male." 35 Then David received from her hand what she had brought him; he said to her, "Go up to your house in peace; see, I have heeded your voice, and I have granted your petition."

36 Abigail came to Nabal; he was holding a feast in his house, like the feast of a king. Nabal's heart was merry within him, for he was very drunk; so she told him nothing at all until the morning light. 37 In the morning, when the wine had gone out of Nabal, his wife told him these things, and his heart died within him; he became like a stone. 38 About ten days later the LORD struck Nabal, and he died.

39 When David heard that Nabal was dead, he said, "Blessed be the LORD who has judged the case of Nabal's insult to me, and has kept back his servant from evil; the LORD has returned the evildoing of Nabal upon his own head." Then David sent and wooed Abigail, to make her his wife. 40 When David's servants came to Abigail at Carmel, they said to her, "David has sent us to you to take you to him as his wife." 41 She rose and bowed down, with her face to the ground, and said, "Your servant is a slave to wash the feet of the servants of my lord." 42 Abigail got up hurriedly and rode away on a donkey; her five maids attended her. She went after the messengers of David and became his wife.

43 David also married Ahinoam of Jezreel; both of them became his wives. 44 Saul had given his daughter Michal, David's wife, to Palti son of Laish, who was from Gallim.

26 Then the Ziphites came to Saul at Gibeah, saying, "David is in hid-

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own life." **29**: *The bundle of the living* is the precious package of those for whom the LORD cares. **30**: The writer anticipates the future events in crediting Abigail with knowing that David was going to be king of Israel.

**25.37**: Perhaps a stroke or a heart attack. **38**: In biblical theology life and death are in the hands of God. **41**: Note the formal obsequiousness of Abigail's words. **43–44**: David lost one wife and gained two more. By marrying Abigail, David consolidated his position with the powerful Calebite clan. *Ahinoam* was also a woman of the southern area; compare Josh 15.56 for the location of this *Jezreel* (not to be confused with the plain of Esdraelon). These marriages were a great help to David politically.

**26.1–25: David spares Saul's life.** See 23.15–24.22 for another version of this incident. **5–6**: *Abner, Joab,* and *Abishai* were destined to play important parts in the story of David's reign in 2 Samuel. *Ahimelech the Hittite* is not to be confused with Ahimelech the priest in ch 21. Hittites had settled in the

ing on the hill of Hachilah, which is opposite Jeshimon."[j] 2So Saul rose and went down to the Wilderness of Ziph, with three thousand chosen men of Israel, to seek David in the Wilderness of Ziph. 3Saul encamped on the hill of Hachilah, which is opposite Jeshimon[j] beside the road. But David remained in the wilderness. When he learned that Saul had come after him into the wilderness, 4David sent out spies, and learned that Saul had indeed arrived. 5Then David set out and came to the place where Saul had encamped; and David saw the place where Saul lay, with Abner son of Ner, the commander of his army. Saul was lying within the encampment, while the army was encamped around him.

6 Then David said to Ahimelech the Hittite, and to Joab's brother Abishai son of Zeruiah, "Who will go down with me into the camp to Saul?" Abishai said, "I will go down with you." 7So David and Abishai went to the army by night; there Saul lay sleeping within the encampment, with his spear stuck in the ground at his head; and Abner and the army lay around him. 8Abishai said to David, "God has given your enemy into your hand today; now therefore let me pin him to the ground with one stroke of the spear; I will not strike him twice." 9But David said to Abishai, "Do not destroy him; for who can raise his hand against the LORD's anointed, and be guiltless?" 10David said, "As the LORD lives, the LORD will strike him down; or his day will come to die; or he will go down into battle and perish. 11The LORD forbid that I should raise my hand against the LORD's anointed; but now take the spear that is at his head, and the water jar, and let us go." 12So David took the spear that was at Saul's head and the water jar, and they went away. No one saw it, or knew it, nor did anyone awake; for they were all asleep, because a deep sleep from the LORD had fallen upon them.

13 Then David went over to the other side, and stood on top of a hill far away, with a great distance between them. 14David called to the army and to Abner son of Ner, saying, "Abner! Will you not answer?" Then Abner replied, "Who are you that calls to the king?" 15David said to Abner, "Are you not a man? Who is like you in Israel? Why then have you not kept watch over your lord the king? For one of the people came in to destroy your lord the king. 16This thing that you have done is not good. As the LORD lives, you deserve to die, because you have not kept watch over your lord, the LORD's anointed. See now, where is the king's spear, or the water jar that was at his head?"

17 Saul recognized David's voice, and said, "Is this your voice, my son David?" David said, "It is my voice, my lord, O king." 18And he added, "Why does my lord pursue his servant? For what have I done? What guilt is on my hands? 19Now therefore let my lord the king hear the words of his servant. If it is the LORD who has stirred you up against me, may he accept an offering; but if it is mortals, may they be cursed before the LORD, for they have driven me out today from my share in the heritage of the LORD, saying, 'Go, serve other gods.' 20Now therefore, do not let my blood fall to the ground, away from the presence of the LORD; for the king of Israel has come out to seek a single flea, like one who hunts a partridge in the mountains."

21 Then Saul said, "I have done wrong; come back, my son David, for I will never harm you again, because my life was precious in your sight today; I have been a fool, and have made a great

*j* Or *opposite the wasteland*

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country in earlier times (Gen 23.7; Josh 1.4), coming from the north. The few who remained in the time of David joined with the Israelites, adopting Hebrew names (as Uriah the Hittite, 2 Sam 11.3). **9**: *The LORD's anointed,* see 10.1 n.

**26.13–16**: Even today the Arabs in the wilder parts of the country shout across great distances in this manner. **17**: See 24.16. **21–24**: The meeting ends on a note of reconciliation, but, to judge from the opening words of the next chapter, David trusted Saul not at all.

mistake." 22David replied, "Here is the spear, O king! Let one of the young men come over and get it. 23The LORD rewards everyone for his righteousness and his faithfulness; for the LORD gave you into my hand today, but I would not raise my hand against the LORD's anointed. 24As your life was precious today in my sight, so may my life be precious in the sight of the LORD, and may he rescue me from all tribulation." 25Then Saul said to David, "Blessed be you, my son David! You will do many things and will succeed in them." So David went his way, and Saul returned to his place.

27 David said in his heart, "I shall now perish one day by the hand of Saul; there is nothing better for me than to escape to the land of the Philistines; then Saul will despair of seeking me any longer within the borders of Israel, and I shall escape out of his hand." 2So David set out and went over, he and the six hundred men who were with him, to King Achish son of Maoch of Gath. 3David stayed with Achish at Gath, he and his troops, every man with his household, and David with his two wives, Ahinoam of Jezreel, and Abigail of Carmel, Nabal's widow. 4When Saul was told that David had fled to Gath, he no longer sought for him.

5 Then David said to Achish, "If I have found favor in your sight, let a place be given me in one of the country towns, so that I may live there; for why should your servant live in the royal city with you?" 6So that day Achish gave him Ziklag; therefore Ziklag has belonged to the kings of Judah to this day. 7The length of time that David lived in the country of the Philistines was one year and four months.

8 Now David and his men went up and made raids on the Geshurites, the Girzites, and the Amalekites; for these were the landed settlements from Telam[k] on the way to Shur and on to the land of Egypt. 9David struck the land, leaving neither man nor woman alive, but took away the sheep, the oxen, the donkeys, the camels, and the clothing, and came back to Achish. 10When Achish asked, "Against whom[l] have you made a raid today?" David would say, "Against the Negeb of Judah," or "Against the Negeb of the Jerahmeelites," or, "Against the Negeb of the Kenites." 11David left neither man nor woman alive to be brought back to Gath, thinking, "They might tell about us, and say, 'David has done so and so.' " Such was his practice all the time he lived in the country of the Philistines. 12Achish trusted David, thinking, "He has made himself utterly abhorrent to his people Israel; therefore he shall always be my servant."

28 In those days the Philistines gathered their forces for war, to fight against Israel. Achish said to David,

*k* Compare Gk 15.4: Heb *from of old* *l* Q Ms Gk Vg: MT lacks *whom*

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**27.1–12: David becomes a vassal of the Philistines.** If David really became loyal to the Philistines, then he was a traitor to his own people; if he was not loyal to the Philistines, then he was a deceiver—so the dilemma is posed. In 27.10–12 he seems to be deceiving the Philistines, yet in 29.8 he seems to affirm his loyalty to Achish. Actually, the situation developed in such a way that he did not have to make a public choice (ch 29). **2:** David went to *Gath,* the very place from which Goliath was reputed to have come (17.4). **3:** Hope of better conditions for their wives and children was one of the reasons why David and his men took this step. **5–7:** *Ziklag* was located somewhere near the border between the territory of the Philistines and Judah.

**27.8–12:** David actually raided more distant and hostile peoples, such as *the Geshurites, the Girzites, and the Amalekites* (ch 15), while pretending that he had attacked his own or friendly peoples, such as *Judah, the Jerahmeelites,* or *the Kenites* (30.26–31), who lived in the *Negeb* (southern Palestine).

**28.1–25: Saul consults the spirit of Samuel through the medium of Endor.** This passage plots its action as an "aside," against the ominous background of gathering hostile forces (vv. 1, 4; 29.1). The scene is laid at Gilboa (v. 4) and nearby Endor (v. 7) on the night before the battle. **6:** The ordinary

"You know, of course, that you and your men are to go out with me in the army." 2David said to Achish, "Very well, then you shall know what your servant can do." Achish said to David, "Very well, I will make you my bodyguard for life."

3 Now Samuel had died, and all Israel had mourned for him and buried him in Ramah, his own city. Saul had expelled the mediums and the wizards from the land. 4The Philistines assembled, and came and encamped at Shunem. Saul gathered all Israel, and they encamped at Gilboa. 5When Saul saw the army of the Philistines, he was afraid, and his heart trembled greatly. 6When Saul inquired of the LORD, the LORD did not answer him, not by dreams, or by Urim, or by prophets. 7Then Saul said to his servants, "Seek out for me a woman who is a medium, so that I may go to her and inquire of her." His servants said to him, "There is a medium at Endor."

8 So Saul disguised himself and put on other clothes and went there, he and two men with him. They came to the woman by night. And he said, "Consult a spirit for me, and bring up for me the one whom I name to you." 9The woman said to him, "Surely you know what Saul has done, how he has cut off the mediums and the wizards from the land. Why then are you laying a snare for my life to bring about my death?" 10But Saul swore to her by the LORD, "As the LORD lives, no punishment shall come upon you for this thing." 11Then the woman said, "Whom shall I bring up for you?" He answered, "Bring up Samuel for me." 12When the woman saw Samuel, she cried out with a loud voice; and the woman said to Saul, "Why have you deceived me? You are Saul!" 13The king said to her, "Have no fear; what do you see?" The woman said to Saul, "I see a divine being[m] coming up out of the ground." 14He said to her, "What is his appearance?" She said, "An old man is coming up; he is wrapped in a robe." So Saul knew that it was Samuel, and he bowed with his face to the ground, and did obeisance.

15 Then Samuel said to Saul, "Why have you disturbed me by bringing me up?" Saul answered, "I am in great distress, for the Philistines are warring against me, and God has turned away from me and answers me no more, either by prophets or by dreams; so I have summoned you to tell me what I should do." 16Samuel said, "Why then do you ask me, since the LORD has turned from you and become your enemy? 17The LORD has done to you just as he spoke by me; for the LORD has torn the kingdom out of your hand, and given it to your neighbor, David. 18Because you did not obey the voice of the LORD, and did not carry out his fierce wrath against Amalek, therefore the LORD has done this thing to you today. 19Moreover the LORD will give Israel along with you into the hands of the Philistines; and tomorrow you and your sons shall be with me; the LORD will also give the army of Israel into the hands of the Philistines."

20 Immediately Saul fell full length on the ground, filled with fear because of the words of Samuel; and there was no

*m* Or *a god*; or *gods*

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means of finding God's will had failed Saul. On *Urim* ("and Thummim" understood) see 14.3 n. and 14.42.

**28.9**: Necromancy (consultation of the dead) continued to be practiced from time to time (Isa 8.19; 2 Kings 21.6) although forbidden by written law (Deut 18.10–11; Lev 19.31; 20.6, 27). Apparently it was already considered evil and a threat to true religion in Saul's time, and he had made an effort to stamp it out; but under pressure he himself relapsed into former practice. **12**: *Samuel,* probably an error for "Saul." **13**: The words *divine being* here mean a being from another world; that world was Sheol, the abode of the dead, conceived of as a great hollow place under the flat earth, hence the expression *coming up* (compare the word *up* in v. 11).

**28.17–18**: The writer or perhaps a later editor has added the prediction of David's kingship and a reference to the Amalek incident (compare ch 15).

**28.20–25**: Note the human kindness of the medium toward Saul.

strength in him, for he had eaten nothing all day and all night. 21 The woman came to Saul, and when she saw that he was terrified, she said to him, "Your servant has listened to you; I have taken my life in my hand, and have listened to what you have said to me. 22 Now therefore, you also listen to your servant; let me set a morsel of bread before you. Eat, that you may have strength when you go on your way." 23 He refused, and said, "I will not eat." But his servants, together with the woman, urged him; and he listened to their words. So he got up from the ground and sat on the bed. 24 Now the woman had a fatted calf in the house. She quickly slaughtered it, and she took flour, kneaded it, and baked unleavened cakes. 25 She put them before Saul and his servants, and they ate. Then they rose and went away that night.

29 Now the Philistines gathered all their forces at Aphek, while the Israelites were encamped by the fountain that is in Jezreel. 2 As the lords of the Philistines were passing on by hundreds and by thousands, and David and his men were passing on in the rear with Achish, 3 the commanders of the Philistines said, "What are these Hebrews doing here?" Achish said to the commanders of the Philistines, "Is this not David, the servant of King Saul of Israel, who has been with me now for days and years? Since he deserted to me I have found no fault in him to this day." 4 But the commanders of the Philistines were angry with him; and the commanders of the Philistines said to him, "Send the man back, so that he may return to the place that you have assigned to him; he shall not go down with us to battle, or else he may become an adversary to us in the battle. For how could this fellow reconcile himself to his lord? Would it not be with the heads of the men here? 5 Is this not David, of whom they sing to one another in dances,

'Saul has killed his thousands,
and David his ten thousands'?"

6 Then Achish called David and said to him, "As the LORD lives, you have been honest, and to me it seems right that you should march out and in with me in the campaign; for I have found nothing wrong in you from the day of your coming to me until today. Nevertheless the lords do not approve of you. 7 So go back now; and go peaceably; do nothing to displease the lords of the Philistines." 8 David said to Achish, "But what have I done? What have you found in your servant from the day I entered your service until now, that I should not go and fight against the enemies of my lord the king?" 9 Achish replied to David, "I know that you are as blameless in my sight as an angel of God; nevertheless, the commanders of the Philistines have said, 'He shall not go up with us to the battle.' 10 Now then rise early in the morning, you and the servants of your lord who came with you, and go to the place that I appointed for you. As for the evil report, do not take it to heart, for you have done well before me.[n] Start early in the morning, and leave as soon as you have light." 11 So David set out with his men early in the morning, to return to the land of the Philistines. But the Philistines went up to Jezreel.

*n* Gk: Heb lacks *and go to the place . . . done well before me*

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**29.1–11: The services of David rejected by the Philistine army.** On David's attitude toward the Philistines, see 27.1–12 n. **1**: *The Philistines gathered . . . at Aphek,* where they had captured the ark at the beginning of the war (4.1b). *The Israelites* were at *Jezreel,* a considerable distance away in the plain of Esdraelon (Esdraelon is the Greek form of Jezreel). **3**: *Hebrews,* see 4.6 n.

**29.6**: According to the Hebrew text, Achish shows his respect for David by swearing by David's God (compare *an angel of God* in v. 9). **11**: *The Philistines* quickly marched on *Jezreel,* about seventy-five miles away, where the Israelites were encamped. The latter then moved up Mount Gilboa, where they fortified themselves in preparation for the battle; the Philistines took up positions at Shunem (28.4).

30 Now when David and his men came to Ziklag on the third day, the Amalekites had made a raid on the Negeb and on Ziklag. They had attacked Ziklag, burned it down, 2and taken captive the women and all[o] who were in it, both small and great; they killed none of them, but carried them off, and went their way. 3When David and his men came to the city, they found it burned down, and their wives and sons and daughters taken captive. 4Then David and the people who were with him raised their voices and wept, until they had no more strength to weep. 5David's two wives also had been taken captive, Ahinoam of Jezreel, and Abigail the widow of Nabal of Carmel. 6David was in great danger; for the people spoke of stoning him, because all the people were bitter in spirit for their sons and daughters. But David strengthened himself in the LORD his God.

7 David said to the priest Abiathar son of Ahimelech, "Bring me the ephod." So Abiathar brought the ephod to David. 8David inquired of the LORD, "Shall I pursue this band? Shall I overtake them?" He answered him, "Pursue; for you shall surely overtake and shall surely rescue." 9So David set out, he and the six hundred men who were with him. They came to the Wadi Besor, where those stayed who were left behind. 10But David went on with the pursuit, he and four hundred men; two hundred stayed behind, too exhausted to cross the Wadi Besor.

11 In the open country they found an Egyptian, and brought him to David. They gave him bread and he ate; they gave him water to drink; 12they also gave him a piece of fig cake and two clusters of raisins. When he had eaten, his spirit revived; for he had not eaten bread or drunk water for three days and three nights. 13Then David said to him, "To whom do you belong? Where are you from?" He said, "I am a young man of Egypt, servant to an Amalekite. My master left me behind because I fell sick three days ago. 14We had made a raid on the Negeb of the Cherethites and on that which belongs to Judah and on the Negeb of Caleb; and we burned Ziklag down." 15David said to him, "Will you take me down to this raiding party?" He said, "Swear to me by God that you will not kill me, or hand me over to my master, and I will take you down to them."

16 When he had taken him down, they were spread out all over the ground, eating and drinking and dancing, because of the great amount of spoil they had taken from the land of the Philistines and from the land of Judah. 17David attacked them from twilight until the evening of the next day. Not one of them escaped, except four hundred young men, who mounted camels and fled. 18David recovered all that the Amalekites had taken; and David rescued his two wives. 19Nothing was missing, whether small or great, sons or daughters, spoil or anything that had been taken; David brought back everything. 20David also captured all the flocks and herds, which were driven ahead of the other cattle; people said, "This is David's spoil."

21 Then David came to the two hundred men who had been too exhausted to follow David, and who had been left at the Wadi Besor. They went out to meet David and to meet the people who were with him. When David drew near to the people he saluted them. 22Then all the corrupt and worthless fellows among the men who had gone with David said,

*o* Gk: Heb lacks *and all*

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**30.1–31: An interlude: the burning of Ziklag and David's pursuit of the Amalekites. 1**: *Ziklag* was about eighty miles south of Aphek, a long two-day march through rough terrain. **6**: The men almost revolted, and David saved himself only by an appeal in the name of God.

**30.7**: *Abiathar*, see 22.20–23 n. *The ephod*, see 14.3 n. **9–10**: *The Wadi Besor*, south of Ziklag. **14**: See 27.8–12 n. Some interpret the word *Cherethites* as meaning "Cretans" and so equate them with the Philistines (see 4.1b–7.2 n.; compare Ezek 25.16; Zeph 2.5).

**30.21–24**: David was not only fair-

"Because they did not go with us, we will not give them any of the spoil that we have recovered, except that each man may take his wife and children, and leave." 23But David said, "You shall not do so, my brothers, with what the LORD has given us; he has preserved us and handed over to us the raiding party that attacked us. 24Who would listen to you in this matter? For the share of the one who goes down into the battle shall be the same as the share of the one who stays by the baggage; they shall share alike." 25From that day forward he made it a statute and an ordinance for Israel; it continues to the present day.

26 When David came to Ziklag, he sent part of the spoil to his friends, the elders of Judah, saying, "Here is a present for you from the spoil of the enemies of the LORD"; 27it was for those in Bethel, in Ramoth of the Negeb, in Jattir, 28in Aroer, in Siphmoth, in Eshtemoa, 29in Racal, in the towns of the Jerahmeelites, in the towns of the Kenites, 30in Hormah, in Bor-ashan, in Athach, 31in Hebron, all the places where David and his men had roamed.

31 Now the Philistines fought against Israel; and the men of Israel fled before the Philistines, and many fell[p] on Mount Gilboa. 2The Philistines overtook Saul and his sons; and the Philistines killed Jonathan and Abinadab and Malchishua, the sons of Saul. 3The battle pressed hard upon Saul; the archers found him, and he was badly wounded by them. 4Then Saul said to his armor-bearer, "Draw your sword and thrust me through with it, so that these uncircumcised may not come and thrust me through, and make sport of me." But his armor-bearer was unwilling; for he was terrified. So Saul took his own sword and fell upon it. 5When his armor-bearer saw that Saul was dead, he also fell upon his sword and died with him. 6So Saul and his three sons and his armor-bearer and all his men died together on the same day. 7When the men of Israel who were on the other side of the valley and those beyond the Jordan saw that the men of Israel had fled and that Saul and his sons were dead, they forsook their towns and fled; and the Philistines came and occupied them.

8 The next day, when the Philistines came to strip the dead, they found Saul and his three sons fallen on Mount Gilboa. 9They cut off his head, stripped off his armor, and sent messengers throughout the land of the Philistines to carry the

*p* Heb *and they fell slain*

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minded, but politically wise at this point; he retained everybody's support. **25**: This verse is editorial; David was not yet king of Judah, to say nothing of Israel (compare Num 31.27). **26–31**: All these places, including *Bethel* (not the familiar one farther north), were in Judah. It is little wonder that David was soon made king of Judah (2 Sam 2.4). He could now work to that end, having been freed of his Philistine entanglement.

**31.1–13**: **The battle of Gilboa; death of Saul and his older sons.** Following the interlude (30.1–31), this chapter returns to the main plot of the Philistine threat. No details of the battle are given. Obviously the Israelites fortified themselves near the summit of the hill and the Philistines stormed their position successfully. **1–3**: The Israelites were totally defeated, three of Saul's sons were killed, and Saul was *badly wounded*. **4**: *These uncircumcised,* see 14.6 n. **5**: Biblical suicides are rare; compare 2 Sam 17.23; 1 Kings 16.18; Mt 27.5.

**31.7**: The phrase *and those beyond the Jordan,* if it refers to the Philistines, seems to be in error (it is lacking in 1 Chr 10.7). There is no evidence that the Philistines occupied territory east of the Jordan. **10**: *Astarte,* see 7.3–4 n. Was this *temple* in *Beth-shan,* which the Philistines apparently had occupied, or back in Philistia? The story is told somewhat differently in 1 Chr 10.10. **11–13**: The men of *Jabesh-gilead* now had opportunity to show their gratitude for what Saul had done for them (ch 11). With the burial in Jabesh, the story of Saul comes to an end, except for the later return of his bones to his native territory (2 Sam 21.12–14). According to some parts of the tradition, Saul came to a noble but tragic end, defending his people and land to the best of his ability. To other writers, probably later, however, he was utterly unwor-

good news to the houses of their idols and to the people. 10They put his armor in the temple of Astarte;[q] and they fastened his body to the wall of Beth-shan. 11But when the inhabitants of Jabesh-gilead heard what the Philistines had done to Saul, 12all the valiant men set out, traveled all night long, and took the body of Saul and the bodies of his sons from the wall of Beth-shan. They came to Jabesh and burned them there. 13Then they took their bones and buried them under the tamarisk tree in Jabesh, and fasted seven days.

*q* Heb plural

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thy, entirely deserving of an unhappy fate. Note the similar conclusion of 1 Chr 10.13–14. Later writers, in order to glorify David, felt it necessary to depreciate Saul. David himself may have had no such attitude (compare the immediate sequel, 2 Sam ch 1).

# *2 Samuel*

The second book of Samuel relates the rule of David, first as he gradually assumed control in Judah when Saul's claimants fell away (chs 1–4), and then (chs 5–24) as king over both Judah and the northern tribes (Israel). Most scholars believe that chs 9–20, together with 1 Kings 1–2, constituted originally an independent document. Commonly admired for its literary qualities as the "Court History" or the "Throne Succession Narrative," this story deals with the domestic and political troubles of David, and tells finally how Solomon assumed the throne, like Abraham's sons, at the expense of the rules of primogeniture (the requirement that the eldest surviving son should become king). The account in chs 21–24 somewhat interrupts this plot, and may have been inserted by another hand. The two books of Samuel were originally one book, and problems of composition are discussed in the Introduction to 1 Samuel.

1 After the death of Saul, when David had returned from defeating the Amalekites, David remained two days in Ziklag. 2On the third day, a man came from Saul's camp, with his clothes torn and dirt on his head. When he came to David, he fell to the ground and did obeisance. 3David said to him, "Where have you come from?" He said to him, "I have escaped from the camp of Israel." 4David said to him, "How did things go? Tell me!" He answered, "The army fled from the battle, but also many of the army fell and died; and Saul and his son Jonathan also died." 5Then David asked the young man who was reporting to him, "How do you know that Saul and his son Jonathan died?" 6The young man reporting to him said, "I happened to be on Mount Gilboa; and there was Saul leaning on his spear, while the chariots and the horsemen drew close to him. 7When he looked behind him, he saw me, and called to me. I answered, 'Here sir.' 8And he said to me, 'Who are you?' I answered him, 'I am an Amalekite.' 9He said to me, 'Come, stand over me and kill me; for convulsions have seized me, and yet my life still lingers.' 10So I stood over him, and killed him, for I knew that he could not live after he had fallen. I took the crown that was on his head and the armlet that was on his arm, and I have brought them here to my lord."

11 Then David took hold of his clothes and tore them; and all the men who were with him did the same. 12They mourned and wept, and fasted until evening for Saul and for his son Jonathan, and for the army of the LORD and for the house of Israel, because they had fallen by the sword. 13David said to the young man who had reported to him, "Where do you come from?" He answered, "I am the son of a resident alien, an Amalekite." 14David said to him, "Were you not afraid to lift your hand to destroy the LORD's anointed?" 15Then David called one of the young men and said, "Come here and strike him down." So he struck him down and he died. 16David said to him, "Your blood be on your head; for your own mouth has testified against you, saying, 'I have killed the LORD's anointed.' "

17 David intoned this lamentation over Saul and his son Jonathan. 18(He ordered that The Song of the Bow[a] be taught to the people of Judah; it is written in the Book of Jashar.) He said:

19 Your glory, O Israel, lies slain
upon your high places!
How the mighty have fallen!
20 Tell it not in Gath,
proclaim it not in the streets of
Ashkelon;
or the daughters of the Philistines
will rejoice,
the daughters of the
uncircumcised will exult.

21 You mountains of Gilboa,
let there be no dew or rain upon
you,
nor bounteous fields![b]
For there the shield of the mighty
was defiled,

*a* Heb *that The Bow* *b* Meaning of Heb uncertain

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**1.1–16: David learns of the death of Saul and Jonathan.** **13**: *Resident alien,* Hebrew "gēr," a technical term for a foreigner residing in Israel over a long period, deserving protection but not entitled to full civil rights (Ex 20.10; Deut 14.29).

**1.14–16**: Note David's continued respect for the memory of Saul and the office he held (1 Sam 26.9, 11, 16, 24). David of course did not know that the Amalekite was lying.

**1.17–27: David's elegy over Saul and Jonathan.** David is said to have played the lyre (1 Sam 16.23) and is traditionally connected with the composition of psalms (see superscriptions to Pss 3–6 and many others). This commemorative poem takes a positive view of Saul's heroism, in contrast to the harshly negative evaluation of him in some parts of 1 Samuel.

**1.18**: *The Book of Jashar* was apparently a collection of poems from various sources (see Josh 10.13 n.). **20**: *Gath* and *Ashkelon* were Philistine cities. *The uncircumcised,* see 1 Sam 14.6 n.

the shield of Saul, anointed with
oil no more.

22 From the blood of the slain,
from the fat of the mighty,
the bow of Jonathan did not turn
back,
nor the sword of Saul return
empty.

23 Saul and Jonathan, beloved and
lovely!
In life and in death they were
not divided;
they were swifter than eagles,
they were stronger than lions.

24 O daughters of Israel, weep over
Saul,
who clothed you with crimson,
in luxury,
who put ornaments of gold on
your apparel.

25 How the mighty have fallen
in the midst of the battle!

Jonathan lies slain upon your high
places.
26 I am distressed for you, my
brother Jonathan;
greatly beloved were you to me;
your love to me was wonderful,
passing the love of women.

27 How the mighty have fallen,
and the weapons of war
perished!

2 After this David inquired of the LORD, "Shall I go up into any of the cities of Judah?" The LORD said to him, "Go up." David said, "To which shall I go up?" He said, "To Hebron." 2So David went up there, along with his two wives, Ahinoam of Jezreel, and Abigail the widow of Nabal of Carmel. 3David brought up the men who were with him, every one with his household; and they settled in the towns of Hebron. 4Then the people of Judah came, and there they anointed David king over the house of Judah.

When they told David, "It was the people of Jabesh-gilead who buried Saul," 5David sent messengers to the people of Jabesh-gilead, and said to them, "May you be blessed by the LORD, because you showed this loyalty to Saul your lord, and buried him! 6Now may the LORD show steadfast love and faithfulness to you! And I too will reward you because you have done this thing.

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**2.1–11**: **David becomes king of Judah. 1**: Probably David *inquired of the LORD* by means of the ephod and Urim and Thummim (see 1 Sam 14.3, 41; 30.7–8). It should occasion no surprise that the tribe of *Judah* was able and willing to set up a separate kingdom. In the list of the tribes of Israel in Judg 5.13–18 Judah is not mentioned; it was apparently leading a separate existence. For other indications of separateness, see 3.10; 5.5; 19.8–15, 40–43; 20.1–2. *Judah* might never have joined the other tribes if the Philistine danger had not arisen. **4b–7**: David showed again his respect for the memory of Saul. When he dropped the political hint in v. 7, he probably did not know that Israel had a new king (vv. 8–9), or the new king had not yet been appointed.

**2.8**: On the relation of *Abner* to Saul, see 1 Sam 14.50–51. The name *Ishbaal,* "man of the lord," may have been changed in the Hebrew Mss (see note *c*) to *Ish-bosheth,* "man of shame." The element "baal" might have suggested the Canaanite god Baal who is particularly detested in the Deuteronomistic History (see Introduction to the Historical Books) as a rival of Israel's God (see Judg 2.11; 1 Kings 18.17–40). *Mahanaim* was the principal town of Gilead; the Philistines were in control of the territory of the Jordan. **9**: At the moment Ishbaal was king over *Gilead* only, but was theoretically king over *all Israel.* The other places mentioned probably sent representatives. The word *Ashurites* really means "Assyrians," a manifest impossibility; probably the correct form is "Asherites." **10–11**: As so frequently in ancient works, biblical and nonbiblical, the figures seem doubtful. *Ishbaal* could not have been *forty years old.* Though he is mentioned in 1 Sam 14.49 (called "Ishvi" there), he did not fight at Gilboa; therefore he was probably a minor at this time. This circumstance would explain why he was so completely under the control of Abner. If *he reigned two years* only, then *David* could hardly have reigned more than *seven years* in *He-*

7 Therefore let your hands be strong, and be valiant; for Saul your lord is dead, and the house of Judah has anointed me king over them."

8 But Abner son of Ner, commander of Saul's army, had taken Ishbaal[c] son of Saul, and brought him over to Mahanaim. 9 He made him king over Gilead, the Ashurites, Jezreel, Ephraim, Benjamin, and over all Israel. 10 Ishbaal,[c] Saul's son, was forty years old when he began to reign over Israel, and he reigned two years. But the house of Judah followed David. 11 The time that David was king in Hebron over the house of Judah was seven years and six months.

12 Abner son of Ner, and the servants of Ishbaal[c] son of Saul, went out from Mahanaim to Gibeon. 13 Joab son of Zeruiah, and the servants of David, went out and met them at the pool of Gibeon. One group sat on one side of the pool, while the other sat on the other side of the pool. 14 Abner said to Joab, "Let the young men come forward and have a contest before us." Joab said, "Let them come forward." 15 So they came forward and were counted as they passed by, twelve for Benjamin and Ishbaal[c] son of Saul, and twelve of the servants of David. 16 Each grasped his opponent by the head, and thrust his sword in his opponent's side; so they fell down together. Therefore that place was called Helkath-hazzurim,[d] which is at Gibeon. 17 The battle was very fierce that day; and Abner and the men of Israel were beaten by the servants of David.

18 The three sons of Zeruiah were there, Joab, Abishai, and Asahel. Now Asahel was as swift of foot as a wild gazelle. 19 Asahel pursued Abner, turning neither to the right nor to the left as he followed him. 20 Then Abner looked back and said, "Is it you, Asahel?" He answered, "Yes, it is." 21 Abner said to him, "Turn to your right or to your left, and seize one of the young men, and take his spoil." But Asahel would not turn away from following him. 22 Abner said again to Asahel, "Turn away from following me; why should I strike you to the ground? How then could I show my face to your brother Joab?" 23 But he refused to turn away. So Abner struck him in the stomach with the butt of his spear, so that the spear came out at his back. He fell there, and died where he lay. And all those who came to the place where Asahel had fallen and died, stood still.

24 But Joab and Abishai pursued Abner. As the sun was going down they came to the hill of Ammah, which lies before Giah on the way to the wilderness of Gibeon. 25 The Benjaminites rallied around Abner and formed a single band; they took their stand on the top of a hill. 26 Then Abner called to Joab, "Is the sword to keep devouring forever? Do you not know that the end will be bitter? How long will it be before you order your people to turn from the pursuit of their kinsmen?" 27 Joab said, "As God lives, if you had not spoken, the people would have continued to pursue their kinsmen, not stopping until morning." 28 Joab sounded the trumpet and all the

*c* Gk Compare 1 Chr 8.33; 9.39: Heb *Ish-bosheth*, "man of shame" *d* That is *Field of Sword-edges*

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*bron*. We gain the impression from 5.6 that *David* left *Hebron* soon after the death of *Ishbaal*. Probably the latter reigned more than *two years* and the former less than *seven years* in Hebron.

**2.12–32: War with Israel breaks out.** *Gibeon* (Josh ch 9) was an important town about five miles northwest of Jerusalem. Apparently both sides were planning to occupy the place when their fighting men met there. Something like a tournament, the exact nature of which is not clear, was agreed upon, but this soon degenerated into a real military engagement. *Joab* was David's nephew; both Saul (v. 8) and David had appointed relatives to be their commanders-in-chief.

**2.18**: *Zeruiah* was a sister or half sister of David (1 Chr 2.13–16). Joab and Abishai (1 Sam 26.6–9) play important parts in the history that follows. **22–23**: The killing of *Asahel* by *Abner* brought about a blood feud between *Joab* and *Abner*.

**2.24–28**: Both commanders realized that they had gone too far and a truce was called.

people stopped; they no longer pursued Israel or engaged in battle any further.

29 Abner and his men traveled all that night through the Arabah; they crossed the Jordan, and, marching the whole forenoon,[e] they came to Mahanaim. 30Joab returned from the pursuit of Abner; and when he had gathered all the people together, there were missing of David's servants nineteen men besides Asahel. 31But the servants of David had killed of Benjamin three hundred sixty of Abner's men. 32They took up Asahel and buried him in the tomb of his father, which was at Bethlehem. Joab and his men marched all night, and the day broke upon them at Hebron.

3 There was a long war between the house of Saul and the house of David; David grew stronger and stronger, while the house of Saul became weaker and weaker.

2 Sons were born to David at Hebron: his firstborn was Amnon, of Ahinoam of Jezreel; 3his second, Chileab, of Abigail the widow of Nabal of Carmel; the third, Absalom son of Maacah, daughter of King Talmai of Geshur; 4the fourth, Adonijah son of Haggith; the fifth, Shephatiah son of Abital; 5and the sixth, Ithream, of David's wife Eglah. These were born to David in Hebron.

6 While there was war between the house of Saul and the house of David, Abner was making himself strong in the house of Saul. 7Now Saul had a concubine whose name was Rizpah daughter of Aiah. And Ishbaal[f] said to Abner, "Why have you gone in to my father's concubine?" 8The words of Ishbaal[g] made Abner very angry; he said, "Am I a dog's head for Judah? Today I keep showing loyalty to the house of your father Saul, to his brothers, and to his friends, and have not given you into the hand of David; and yet you charge me now with a crime concerning this woman. 9So may God do to Abner and so may he add to it! For just what the LORD has sworn to David, that will I accomplish for him, 10to transfer the kingdom from the house of Saul, and set up the throne of David over Israel and over Judah, from Dan to Beer-sheba." 11And Ishbaal[f] could not answer Abner another word, because he feared him.

12 Abner sent messengers to David at Hebron,[h] saying, "To whom does the land belong? Make your covenant with me, and I will give you my support to bring all Israel over to you." 13He said, "Good; I will make a covenant with you. But one thing I require of you: you shall never appear in my presence unless you bring Saul's daughter Michal when you come to see me." 14Then David sent messengers to Saul's son Ishbaal,[i] saying, "Give me my wife Michal, to whom I became engaged at the price of one hundred foreskins of the Philistines." 15Ish-

*e* Meaning of Heb uncertain *f* Heb *And he*
*g* Gk Compare 1 Chr 8.33; 9.39: Heb *Ish-bosheth*, "man of shame" *h* Gk: Heb *where he was*
*i* Heb *Ish-bosheth*

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**29**: *The Arabah* ("the desert") here means the Jordan valley north of the Dead Sea. The term is also used of the dry depression south of the Dead Sea. **30–32**: The initial victory of David's forces was symptomatic of what was to come (see 3.1).

**3.1–39**: **Continuation of the war with Israel. 2–5**: These valuable verses were inserted by an editor interested in family statistics.

**3.6–11**: **Abner quarrels with Ishbaal.** According to the usage of that day, a king's *concubines* were royal property that must be kept within the royal household. To aspire to have such a *concubine* (v. 7) was to aspire to the kingship, and that was treason (16.21–22; 1 Kings 2.22). The *dog*, being regarded as an unclean animal, served as a term of reproach; "a dead dog" or *a dog's head* (v. 8) were common expressions (9.8; 16.9; 1 Sam 17.43; 24.14). Evidently Abner realized that references to *Judah* and to *David* (vv. 8, 9, 10) would frighten *Ishbaal* into submission.

**3.12–21**: **Abner negotiates with David.** David's demand for the return of Michal (1 Sam 18.20–27) was not due to any lack of wives, but had the political purpose of strengthening David's claim to Saul's throne as a son-in-law of the late king. **19**: It was particularly necessary to obtain the consent of Benjamin, Saul's own tribe, which was most likely to object.

baal[j] sent and took her from her husband Paltiel the son of Laish. 16But her husband went with her, weeping as he walked behind her all the way to Bahurim. Then Abner said to him, "Go back home!" So he went back.

17 Abner sent word to the elders of Israel, saying, "For some time past you have been seeking David as king over you. 18Now then bring it about; for the LORD has promised David: Through my servant David I will save my people Israel from the hand of the Philistines, and from all their enemies." 19Abner also spoke directly to the Benjaminites; then Abner went to tell David at Hebron all that Israel and the whole house of Benjamin were ready to do.

20 When Abner came with twenty men to David at Hebron, David made a feast for Abner and the men who were with him. 21Abner said to David, "Let me go and rally all Israel to my lord the king, in order that they may make a covenant with you, and that you may reign over all that your heart desires." So David dismissed Abner, and he went away in peace.

22 Just then the servants of David arrived with Joab from a raid, bringing much spoil with them. But Abner was not with David at Hebron, for David[k] had dismissed him, and he had gone away in peace. 23When Joab and all the army that was with him came, it was told Joab, "Abner son of Ner came to the king, and he has dismissed him, and he has gone away in peace." 24Then Joab went to the king and said, "What have you done? Abner came to you; why did you dismiss him, so that he got away? 25You know that Abner son of Ner came to deceive you, and to learn your comings and goings and to learn all that you are doing."

26 When Joab came out from David's presence, he sent messengers after Abner, and they brought him back from the cistern of Sirah; but David did not know about it. 27When Abner returned to Hebron, Joab took him aside in the gateway to speak with him privately, and there he stabbed him in the stomach. So he died for shedding[l] the blood of Asahel, Joab's[m] brother. 28Afterward, when David heard of it, he said, "I and my kingdom are forever guiltless before the LORD for the blood of Abner son of Ner. 29May the guilt[n] fall on the head of Joab, and on all his father's house; and may the house of Joab never be without one who has a discharge, or who is leprous,[o] or who holds a spindle, or who falls by the sword, or who lacks food!" 30So Joab and his brother Abishai murdered Abner because he had killed their brother Asahel in the battle at Gibeon.

31 Then David said to Joab and to all the people who were with him, "Tear your clothes, and put on sackcloth, and mourn over Abner." And King David followed the bier. 32They buried Abner at Hebron. The king lifted up his voice and wept at the grave of Abner, and all the people wept. 33The king lamented for Abner, saying,

"Should Abner die as a fool dies?
34 Your hands were not bound,
your feet were not fettered;
as one falls before the wicked
you have fallen."

And all the people wept over him again.

*j* Heb *Ish-bosheth* *k* Heb *he* *l* Heb lacks *shedding* *m* Heb *his* *n* Heb *May it* *o* A term for several skin diseases; precise meaning uncertain

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**3.22–39: The murder of Abner by Joab.** *Joab* had two motives for this murder: (*a*) to avenge the death of *Asahel* (2.22–23); (*b*) to eliminate a rival for the post of commander-in-chief of David's army (19.13; 20.9–10).

**3.28–39:** *Joab* was too powerful (v. 39) for *David* to order him executed, as had been done in the case of the Amalekite (1.15). Yet this murder greatly endangered David's position among the northern tribes. Therefore *David* did the best he could to make amends by invoking a series of curses upon *Joab* and his descendants (the *spindle* is a derogatory reference to women's work), by proclaiming public mourning throughout Judah, by himself taking the position of chief mourner at Abner's funeral and fasting all that day, then

35 Then all the people came to persuade David to eat something while it was still day; but David swore, saying, "So may God do to me, and more, if I taste bread or anything else before the sun goes down!" 36 All the people took notice of it, and it pleased them; just as everything the king did pleased all the people. 37 So all the people and all Israel understood that day that the king had no part in the killing of Abner son of Ner. 38 And the king said to his servants, "Do you not know that a prince and a great man has fallen this day in Israel? 39 Today I am powerless, even though anointed king; these men, the sons of Zeruiah, are too violent for me. The LORD pay back the one who does wickedly in accordance with his wickedness!"

4 When Saul's son Ishbaal[p] heard that Abner had died at Hebron, his courage failed, and all Israel was dismayed. 2 Saul's son had two captains of raiding bands; the name of the one was Baanah, and the name of the other Rechab. They were sons of Rimmon a Benjaminite from Beeroth—for Beeroth is considered to belong to Benjamin. 3 (Now the people of Beeroth had fled to Gittaim and are there as resident aliens to this day).

4 Saul's son Jonathan had a son who was crippled in his feet. He was five years old when the news about Saul and Jonathan came from Jezreel. His nurse picked him up and fled; and, in her haste to flee, it happened that he fell and became lame. His name was Mephibosheth.[q]

5 Now the sons of Rimmon the Beerothite, Rechab and Baanah, set out, and about the heat of the day they came to the house of Ishbaal,[r] while he was taking his noonday rest. 6 They came inside the house as though to take wheat, and they struck him in the stomach; then Rechab and his brother Baanah escaped.[s] 7 Now they had come into the house while he was lying on his couch in his bedchamber; they attacked him, killed him, and beheaded him. Then they took his head and traveled by way of the Arabah all night long. 8 They brought the head of Ishbaal[r] to David at Hebron and said to the king, "Here is the head of Ishbaal,[r] son of Saul, your enemy, who sought your life; the LORD has avenged my lord the king this day on Saul and on his offspring."

9 David answered Rechab and his brother Baanah, the sons of Rimmon the Beerothite, "As the LORD lives, who has redeemed my life out of every adversity, 10 when the one who told me, 'See, Saul is dead,' thought he was bringing good news, I seized him and killed him at Ziklag—this was the reward I gave him for his news. 11 How much more then, when wicked men have killed a righteous man on his bed in his own house! And now shall I not require his blood at your hand, and destroy you from the earth?" 12 So David commanded the young men, and they killed them; they cut off their hands and feet, and hung their bodies beside the pool at Hebron. But the head

*p* Heb lacks *Ishbaal* *q* In 1 Chr 8.34 and 9.40, *Merib-baal* *r* Heb *Ish-bosheth* *s* Meaning of Heb of verse 6 uncertain

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continuing to praise Abner thereafter. The people of Israel were convinced of David's innocence (v. 37) of the murder, though naturally any idea of making David king of Israel was put aside for the time.

**4.1–12: The murder of Ishbaal and David's punishment of the murderers. 2–3:** *Beeroth* was originally a city under Gibeonite control (Josh 9.17); but the Gibeonite *people of Beeroth had fled to Gittaim,* probably during Saul's persecution (21.1–2, 5), thus making it possible for *Rimmon* and other Israelites to settle in *Beeroth.* **4:** The original form of *Mephibosheth* ("he who spreads [?] shame") was Merib-baal ("he who strives for [?] the Lord," 1 Chr 8.34; 9.40). On reasons for the change, see 2.8 n. **8:** By saying *the LORD has avenged my lord,* the guilty pair try to justify what they have done.

**4.9–12:** David continues to show respect for the family of Saul and to punish anyone seeking to harm members of that family (1.14–16; 3.28–39).

of Ishbaal[t] they took and buried in the tomb of Abner at Hebron.

5 Then all the tribes of Israel came to David at Hebron, and said, "Look, we are your bone and flesh. 2For some time, while Saul was king over us, it was you who led out Israel and brought it in. The LORD said to you: It is you who shall be shepherd of my people Israel, you who shall be ruler over Israel." 3So all the elders of Israel came to the king at Hebron; and King David made a covenant with them at Hebron before the LORD, and they anointed David king over Israel. 4David was thirty years old when he began to reign, and he reigned forty years. 5At Hebron he reigned over Judah seven years and six months; and at Jerusalem he reigned over all Israel and Judah thirty-three years.

6 The king and his men marched to Jerusalem against the Jebusites, the inhabitants of the land, who said to David, "You will not come in here, even the blind and the lame will turn you back"—thinking, "David cannot come in here." 7Nevertheless David took the stronghold of Zion, which is now the city of David. 8David had said on that day, "Whoever would strike down the Jebusites, let him get up the water shaft to attack the lame and the blind, those whom David hates."[u] Therefore it is said, "The blind and the lame shall not come into the house." 9David occupied the stronghold, and named it the city of David. David built the city all around from the Millo inward. 10And David became greater and greater, for the LORD, the God of hosts, was with him.

11 King Hiram of Tyre sent messengers to David, along with cedar trees, and carpenters and masons who built David a house. 12David then perceived that the LORD had established him king over Israel, and that he had exalted his kingdom for the sake of his people Israel.

13 In Jerusalem, after he came from Hebron, David took more concubines and wives; and more sons and daughters were born to David. 14These are the names of those who were born to him in Jerusalem: Shammua, Shobab, Nathan, Solomon, 15Ibhar, Elishua, Nepheg, Japhia, 16Elishama, Eliada, and Eliphelet.

17 When the Philistines heard that David had been anointed king over Israel, all the Philistines went up in search of David; but David heard about it and went down to the stronghold. 18Now the Philistines had come and spread out

*t* Heb *Ish-bosheth* *u* Another reading is *those who hate David*

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**5.1–16: David becomes king of all Israel and Judah; he captures Jerusalem and makes it his capital. 4–5**: A chronological note by an editor which may be approximately correct, though David could hardly have been *thirty years old* at this time. *Forty years* is a favorite biblical expression meaning a reasonably long time. *Israel and Judah* are kept clearly separate in the writer's mind.

**5.6–9**: The details of how David captured *Jerusalem* or *Zion*, the last town remaining to the Canaanites (locally called *Jebusites*), are not clear (compare 1 Chr 11.4–9 for a somewhat different account). The capture was important because it removed the last vestige of Canaanite power in the land, and also provided a place where David could establish a neutral capital, belonging to neither Israel nor Judah, but lying between the two. Later tradition assumed an earlier possession of the city; contrast Judg 1.8 and 1 Sam 17.54 with Judg 19.10–12. *The Millo*, see 1 Kings 9.15 n. **11**: Apparently the same *Hiram* who much later helped Solomon in the building of the temple (1 Kings 5.1–12).

**5.13–16**: Children of David. Editorial information similar to that in 3.2–5, though somewhat out of place, since *Solomon* at least was born later. Large harems were customary at that time (see Judg 8.30–31) and increased the prestige of the ruler. David, with at least twenty concubines and wives, was apparently never criticized on this score. It was quite otherwise with Solomon (1 Kings 11.1–4).

**5.17–25: War with the Philistines.** The Philistines now realized that David was steering a course that would make him an enemy, and one to be feared (1 Sam chs 27 and 29); and David no longer pretended to be their ally. His success as king would depend on his ability to deal with the Philistines. **17**: It is not clear which *stronghold* is meant; some think Jerusalem, others Adullam (1 Sam 22.1). **18**: *The valley of Rephaim* was probably located

in the valley of Rephaim. 19David inquired of the LORD, "Shall I go up against the Philistines? Will you give them into my hand?" The LORD said to David, "Go up; for I will certainly give the Philistines into your hand." 20So David came to Baal-perazim, and David defeated them there. He said, "The LORD has burst forth against[v] my enemies before me, like a bursting flood." Therefore that place is called Baal-perazim.[w] 21The Philistines abandoned their idols there, and David and his men carried them away.

22 Once again the Philistines came up, and were spread out in the valley of Rephaim. 23When David inquired of the LORD, he said, "You shall not go up; go around to their rear, and come upon them opposite the balsam trees. 24When you hear the sound of marching in the tops of the balsam trees, then be on the alert; for then the LORD has gone out before you to strike down the army of the Philistines." 25David did just as the LORD had commanded him; and he struck down the Philistines from Geba all the way to Gezer.

6 David again gathered all the chosen men of Israel, thirty thousand. 2David and all the people with him set out and went from Baale-judah, to bring up from there the ark of God, which is called by the name of the LORD of hosts who is enthroned on the cherubim. 3They carried the ark of God on a new cart, and brought it out of the house of Abinadab, which was on the hill. Uzzah and Ahio,[x] the sons of Abinadab, were driving the new cart 4with the ark of God;[y] and Ahio[x] went in front of the ark. 5David and all the house of Israel were dancing before the LORD with all their might, with songs[z] and lyres and harps and tambourines and castanets and cymbals.

6 When they came to the threshing floor of Nacon, Uzzah reached out his hand to the ark of God and took hold of it, for the oxen shook it. 7The anger of the LORD was kindled against Uzzah; and God struck him there because he reached out his hand to the ark;[a] and he died there beside the ark of God. 8David was angry because the LORD had burst forth

*v* Heb *paraz* *w* That is *Lord of Bursting Forth* *x* Or *and his brother* *y* Compare Gk: Heb *and brought it out of the house of Abinadab, which was on the hill with the ark of God* *z* Q Ms Gk 1 Chr 13.8: Heb *fir trees* *a* 1 Chr 13.10 Compare Q Ms: Meaning of Heb uncertain

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southwest of Jerusalem. **20**: In good oriental fashion, the writer makes a folkloristic pun on the place where David's enemies were defeated (compare Gen 38.29).

**5.21**: Formerly the Philistines had captured the sacred ark of the Israelites (1 Sam 4.11; 5.1); now the tables were turned, and the Philistines lost their *idols*. **22–25**: David defeated the Philistines again, pushing them back *from Geba*, near Jerusalem, *to Gezer*, near the border of their own territory. **24**: The rustling of the leaves *in the tops of the balsam trees* became *the sound of marching*, an omen taken as the signal to advance.

**6.1–15**: **The bringing of the ark to Jerusalem.** David wished to add to the prestige of Jerusalem by making it a religious, as well as a political and military, center. Hence it was particularly appropriate for him to bring the ark there, since it was the sacred object of the northern tribes and now the symbol of the national God. **2**: *Baale-judah* is either an error or another name for Kiriath-jearim, the place where the ark was left (1 Sam 6.21–7.2). *The LORD of hosts who is enthroned on the cherubim*, see 1 Sam 4.4 n. **5**: Some interpreters consider this verse a later embellishment, since the full orchestra seems more appropriate to the time after the temple had been built (compare 2 Chr 5.12–13; Ps 150.3–5).

**6.6**: *Uzzah* was apparently trying to steady the ark as *the oxen shook it*. **7**: At this point Uzzah died. Most ancient peoples attributed disaster to the anger of a deity. According to a later interpretation introduced here, Uzzah should not have touched the ark (see Num 4.15 n.). Even in these earlier times, the ark was regarded as very dangerous (1 Sam 5.11–12; 6.19). **10–11**: A *Gittite* means a person from Gath, but *Obed-edom* was not necessarily from the Philistine town. Gath means "wine press," and there were several towns by that name in Israelite territory. On the other hand, this man could have been a follower of *David* from the latter's Philistine days (1 Sam 27.2–4).

with an outburst upon Uzzah; so that place is called Perez-uzzah,[b] to this day. 9David was afraid of the LORD that day; he said, "How can the ark of the LORD come into my care?" 10So David was unwilling to take the ark of the LORD into his care in the city of David; instead David took it to the house of Obed-edom the Gittite. 11The ark of the LORD remained in the house of Obed-edom the Gittite three months; and the LORD blessed Obed-edom and all his household.

12 It was told King David, "The LORD has blessed the household of Obed-edom and all that belongs to him, because of the ark of God." So David went and brought up the ark of God from the house of Obed-edom to the city of David with rejoicing; 13and when those who bore the ark of the LORD had gone six paces, he sacrificed an ox and a fatling. 14David danced before the LORD with all his might; David was girded with a linen ephod. 15So David and all the house of Israel brought up the ark of the LORD with shouting, and with the sound of the trumpet.

16 As the ark of the LORD came into the city of David, Michal daughter of Saul looked out of the window, and saw King David leaping and dancing before the LORD; and she despised him in her heart.

17 They brought in the ark of the LORD, and set it in its place, inside the tent that David had pitched for it; and David offered burnt offerings and offerings of well-being before the LORD. 18When David had finished offering the burnt offerings and the offerings of well-being, he blessed the people in the name of the LORD of hosts, 19and distributed food among all the people, the whole multitude of Israel, both men and women, to each a cake of bread, a portion of meat,[c] and a cake of raisins. Then all the people went back to their homes.

20 David returned to bless his household. But Michal the daughter of Saul came out to meet David, and said, "How the king of Israel honored himself today, uncovering himself today before the eyes of his servants' maids, as any vulgar fellow might shamelessly uncover himself!" 21David said to Michal, "It was before the LORD, who chose me in place of your father and all his household, to appoint me as prince over Israel, the people of the LORD, that I have danced before the LORD. 22I will make myself yet more contemptible than this, and I will be abased in my own eyes; but by the maids of whom you have spoken, by them I shall be held in honor." 23And Michal the daughter of Saul had no child to the day of her death.

7 Now when the king was settled in his house, and the LORD had given him rest from all his enemies around him, 2the king said to the prophet Nathan, "See now, I am living in a house of cedar, but the ark of God stays in a tent." 3Nathan said to the king, "Go, do all that you have in mind; for the LORD is with you."

4 But that same night the word of the

*b* That is *Bursting Out Against Uzzah* *c* Vg: Meaning of Heb uncertain

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**6.12–15**: The prosperity and peace of *the household of Obed-edom* were taken as signs that God's anger in connection with the ark had ceased (v. 12). Note that it was perfectly permissible for *David* to offer sacrifice (vv. 13, 17; compare 1 Sam 13.10–13); only later was this function restricted to priests. On religious dancing, see Ex 15.20 n.; 32.19; 1 Kings 18.26. On the *linen ephod,* see 1 Sam 2.18 n.

**6.16–23**: **Michal's alienation.** *Michal* may have been resentful at being torn away from her husband Paltiel (3.15–16), or at the discovery that she was only one among many wives of David, or at the decline of her family's fortunes (vv. 16, 20). **23**: It is not clear whether *Michal . . . had no child* because David put her away or because she was barren. Childlessness was considered a great misfortune; compare Gen 30.1; 1 Sam 1.6–11.

**7.1–29**: **David wishes to build a temple, but God wills that he establish an everlasting dynasty.** Like 1 Sam 2.27–36, this chapter is a late theological commentary

LORD came to Nathan: 5Go and tell my servant David: Thus says the LORD: Are you the one to build me a house to live in? 6I have not lived in a house since the day I brought up the people of Israel from Egypt to this day, but I have been moving about in a tent and a tabernacle. 7Wherever I have moved about among all the people of Israel, did I ever speak a word with any of the tribal leaders[d] of Israel, whom I commanded to shepherd my people Israel, saying, "Why have you not built me a house of cedar?" 8Now therefore thus you shall say to my servant David: Thus says the LORD of hosts: I took you from the pasture, from following the sheep to be prince over my people Israel; 9and I have been with you wherever you went, and have cut off all your enemies from before you; and I will make for you a great name, like the name of the great ones of the earth. 10And I will appoint a place for my people Israel and will plant them, so that they may live in their own place, and be disturbed no more; and evildoers shall afflict them no more, as formerly, 11from the time that I appointed judges over my people Israel; and I will give you rest from all your enemies. Moreover the LORD declares to you that the LORD will make you a house. 12When your days are fulfilled and you lie down with your ancestors, I will raise up your offspring after you, who shall come forth from your body, and I will establish his kingdom. 13He shall build a house for my name, and I will establish the throne of his kingdom forever. 14I will be a father to him, and he shall be a son to me. When he commits iniquity, I will punish him with a rod such as mortals use, with blows inflicted by human beings. 15But I will not take[e] my steadfast love from him, as I took it from Saul, whom I put away from before you. 16Your house and your kingdom shall be made sure forever before me;[f] your throne shall be established forever. 17In accordance with all these words and with all this vision, Nathan spoke to David.

18 Then King David went in and sat before the LORD, and said, "Who am I, O Lord GOD, and what is my house, that you have brought me thus far? 19And yet this was a small thing in your eyes, O Lord GOD; you have spoken also of your servant's house for a great while to come. May this be instruction for the people,[g] O Lord GOD! 20And what more can David say to you? For you know your servant, O Lord GOD! 21Because of your promise, and according to your own heart, you have wrought all this greatness, so that your servant may know it. 22Therefore you are great, O LORD God; for there is no one like you, and there is no God besides you, according to all that we have heard with our ears. 23Who is like your people, like Israel? Is there another[h] nation on earth whose God went to redeem it as a people, and to make a name for himself, doing great and awesome things for them,[i] by driving out[j] before his people nations and their gods?[k] 24And you established your people Israel for yourself to be your people forever; and you, O LORD, became their God. 25And now, O LORD God, as for the word that you

*d* Or *any of the tribes* *e* Gk Syr Vg 1 Chr 17.13: Heb *shall not depart* *f* Gk Heb Mss: MT *before you*; Compare 2 Sam 7.26, 29 *g* Meaning of Heb uncertain *h* Gk: Heb *one* *i* Heb *you* *j* Gk 1 Chr 17.21: Heb *for your land* *k* Cn: Heb *before your people, whom you redeemed for yourself from Egypt, nations and its gods*

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inserted into an early source. Based in part on Ps 89 (compare Ps 132.11–12), the writer explains why David did not build the great Temple in Jerusalem, and at the same time shows the importance of David's dynasty to the religious meaning of ancient Israel. In v. 6 the writer ignores the temple at Shiloh (1 Sam 1.7; 3.3).

The key to the understanding of this chapter is the play on the various meanings of the word *house;* in vv. 1–2 it means "palace"; in vv. 5, 6, 7, 13 it means "temple"; in vv. 11, 16, 19, 25, 26, 27, 29 it means "dynasty"; in v. 18 it means "family status."

Historically the dynasty of David was not everlasting. It fell in 587 (586) B.C., probably

have spoken concerning your servant and concerning his house, confirm it forever; do as you have promised. 26Thus your name will be magnified forever in the saying, 'The LORD of hosts is God over Israel'; and the house of your servant David will be established before you. 27For you, O LORD of hosts, the God of Israel, have made this revelation to your servant, saying, 'I will build you a house'; therefore your servant has found courage to pray this prayer to you. 28And now, O Lord GOD, you are God, and your words are true, and you have promised this good thing to your servant; 29now therefore may it please you to bless the house of your servant, so that it may continue forever before you; for you, O Lord GOD, have spoken, and with your blessing shall the house of your servant be blessed forever."

8 Some time afterward, David attacked the Philistines and subdued them; David took Metheg-ammah out of the hand of the Philistines.

2 He also defeated the Moabites and, making them lie down on the ground, measured them off with a cord; he measured two lengths of cord for those who were to be put to death, and one length[l] for those who were to be spared. And the Moabites became servants to David and brought tribute.

3 David also struck down King Hadadezer son of Rehob of Zobah, as he went to restore his monument[m] at the river Euphrates. 4David took from him one thousand seven hundred horsemen, and twenty thousand foot soldiers. David hamstrung all the chariot horses, but left enough for a hundred chariots. 5When the Arameans of Damascus came to help King Hadadezer of Zobah, David killed twenty-two thousand men of the Arameans. 6Then David put garrisons among the Arameans of Damascus; and the Arameans became servants to David and brought tribute. The LORD gave victory to David wherever he went. 7David took the gold shields that were carried by the servants of Hadadezer, and brought them to Jerusalem. 8From Betah and from Berothai, towns of Hadadezer, King David took a great amount of bronze.

9 When King Toi of Hamath heard that David had defeated the whole army of Hadadezer, 10Toi sent his son Joram to King David, to greet him and to congratulate him because he had fought against Hadadezer and defeated him. Now Hadadezer had often been at war with Toi. Joram brought with him articles of silver, gold, and bronze; 11these also King David dedicated to the LORD, together with the silver and gold that he dedicated from all the nations he subdued, 12from Edom, Moab, the Ammonites, the Philistines, Amalek, and from the spoil of King Hadadezer son of Rehob of Zobah.

13 David won a name for himself.

*l* Heb *one full length* *m* Compare 1 Sam 15.12 and 2 Sam 18.18

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some time before our author wrote. The language, however, is typical of courtly scribes who glorify a royal line.

**8.1–18: Summary of David's wars and the administration of his kingdom.** This chapter was contributed by a Deuteronomistic editor (see Introduction to 1 Samuel). It is not a mere digest of what follows, for it contains information not found elsewhere. **1**: This seems intended as a statement of the final defeat of the Philistines; compare 21.15–22 and 23.8–39 for some details. *Metheg-ammah,* 1 Chr 18.1 reads "Gath and its villages." **2**: The slaughter of two-thirds of the Moabites does not accord well with the friendly relations implied by 1 Sam 22.3–4. Perhaps something happened to revive the old enmity (1 Sam 14.47). **3–8**: David defeats the Arameans (Syrians). This passage may be a partial summary of 10.6–19. *Zobah* (vv. 3, 5) lay north of Damascus (vv. 5, 6) and was attempting to extend its power to the *Euphrates* (v. 3). South of *Zobah,* Syria was controlled by *Damascus.* David defeated the coalition (v. 5), and thus controlled all of Syria. He kept enough *horses* for *a hundred chariots* only (v. 4). Solomon greatly expanded the use of horses and chariots (1 Kings 10.26–29).

**8.9**: *Hamath* lay north of Zobah. David did not control this territory, but its king was friendly. **13–14**: David defeated Edom, and thus his little empire was enlarged to the

When he returned, he killed eighteen thousand Edomites[n] in the Valley of Salt. 14He put garrisons in Edom; throughout all Edom he put garrisons, and all the Edomites became David's servants. And the LORD gave victory to David wherever he went.

15 So David reigned over all Israel; and David administered justice and equity to all his people. 16Joab son of Zeruiah was over the army; Jehoshaphat son of Ahilud was recorder; 17Zadok son of Ahitub and Ahimelech son of Abiathar were priests; Seraiah was secretary; 18Benaiah son of Jehoiada was over[o] the Cherethites and the Pelethites; and David's sons were priests.

9 David asked, "Is there still anyone left of the house of Saul to whom I may show kindness for Jonathan's sake?" 2Now there was a servant of the house of Saul whose name was Ziba, and he was summoned to David. The king said to him, "Are you Ziba?" And he said, "At your service!" 3The king said, "Is there anyone remaining of the house of Saul to whom I may show the kindness of God?" Ziba said to the king, "There remains a son of Jonathan; he is crippled in his feet." 4The king said to him, "Where is he?" Ziba said to the king, "He is in the house of Machir son of Ammiel, at Lo-debar." 5Then King David sent and brought him from the house of Machir son of Ammiel, at Lo-debar. 6Mephibosheth[p] son of Jonathan son of Saul came to David, and fell on his face and did obeisance. David said, "Mephibosheth!"[p] He answered, "I am your servant." 7David said to him, "Do not be afraid, for I will show you kindness for the sake of your father Jonathan; I will restore to you all the land of your grandfather Saul, and you yourself shall eat at my table always." 8He did obeisance and said, "What is your servant, that you should look upon a dead dog such as I?"

9 Then the king summoned Saul's servant Ziba, and said to him, "All that belonged to Saul and to all his house I have given to your master's grandson. 10You and your sons and your servants shall till the land for him, and shall bring in the produce, so that your master's

*n* Gk: Heb *returned from striking down eighteen thousand Arameans* *o* Syr Tg Vg 20.23; 1 Chr 18.17: Heb lacks *was over*
*p* Or *Merib-baal*: See 4.4 note

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south. In these campaigns the king did not always take to the field in person (11.1). *The Valley of Salt* is either the depression south of the Dead Sea, or a valley running southeast from Beer-sheba. **16–18**: Another version of this list is found in 20.23–26. *Zadok* appears here (v. 17) historically for the first time (1 Sam 2.35). His earlier history is not known, though later his ancestry is traced back to Aaron (1 Chr 6.3–8). *Ahimelech the son of Abiathar* should perhaps be reversed (1 Sam 22.20), though it is also possible that *Abiathar* had a son *Ahimelech* who acted in place of his aged father (1 Chr 18.16; 24.3, 6, 31). **18**: *The Cherethites and Pelethites* were foreign mercenaries; possibly the names are equivalent to "Cretans and Philistines" (15.18; 20.7, 23; 1 Kings 1.38, 44; see 1 Sam 30.14 n.). It is entirely possible that some of *David's sons were priests,* for the restriction of the priesthood to a certain family had not yet arisen. The parallels, however, in 20.26 and 1 Chr 18.17 have different readings.

**9.1–20.26: The domestic and political troubles of David's reign.** This material is, in view of its superb literary style, the prose masterpiece of the Hebrew Scriptures. For the fullest appreciation the section should be read as a unit with its conclusion in 1 Kings chs 1–2.

**9.1–13: David shows dutiful kindness to Mephibosheth.** As preparation for this chapter, read 4.4 and 21.1–14; see comments on these passages. **1**: The word translated *kindness* contains the idea of obligation, "kindness required by loyalty to a covenant." *David* and *Jonathan* had sworn eternal loyalty to one another (1 Sam 18.1–4; 20.14–17). *David* was probably also fearful of reaction to the execution of seven of Saul's descendants at the request of the Gibeonites (see 21.11–14 n.). The king also needed to know whether any member of the former royal family remained who might serve as a focal point of rebellion. **3**: *The kindness of God* is a stronger expression of the *kindness* of v. 1, meaning "obligation under God." **4**: *Machir* of *Lo-debar,* see 17.27. **7**: Probably one reason that Mephibosheth might be *afraid* was what had happened to two of his half brothers and five of his nephews (21.8–9).

**9.8**: *Dead dog,* see 1 Sam 24.14 n. **13**: David

grandson may have food to eat; but your master's grandson Mephibosheth[q] shall always eat at my table." Now Ziba had fifteen sons and twenty servants. 11 Then Ziba said to the king, "According to all that my lord the king commands his servant, so your servant will do." Mephibosheth[q] ate at David's[r] table, like one of the king's sons. 12 Mephibosheth[q] had a young son whose name was Mica. And all who lived in Ziba's house became Mephibosheth's[s] servants. 13 Mephibosheth[q] lived in Jerusalem, for he always ate at the king's table. Now he was lame in both his feet.

10 Some time afterward, the king of the Ammonites died, and his son Hanun succeeded him. 2 David said, "I will deal loyally with Hanun son of Nahash, just as his father dealt loyally with me." So David sent envoys to console him concerning his father. When David's envoys came into the land of the Ammonites, 3 the princes of the Ammonites said to their lord Hanun, "Do you really think that David is honoring your father just because he has sent messengers with condolences to you? Has not David sent his envoys to you to search the city, to spy it out, and to overthrow it?" 4 So Hanun seized David's envoys, shaved off half the beard of each, cut off their garments in the middle at their hips, and sent them away. 5 When David was told, he sent to meet them, for the men were greatly ashamed. The king said, "Remain at Jericho until your beards have grown, and then return."

6 When the Ammonites saw that they had become odious to David, the Ammonites sent and hired the Arameans of Beth-rehob and the Arameans of Zobah, twenty thousand foot soldiers, as well as the king of Maacah, one thousand men, and the men of Tob, twelve thousand men. 7 When David heard of it, he sent Joab and all the army with the warriors. 8 The Ammonites came out and drew up in battle array at the entrance of the gate; but the Arameans of Zobah and of Rehob, and the men of Tob and Maacah, were by themselves in the open country.

9 When Joab saw that the battle was set against him both in front and in the rear, he chose some of the picked men of Israel, and arrayed them against the Arameans; 10 the rest of his men he put in the charge of his brother Abishai, and he arrayed them against the Ammonites. 11 He said, "If the Arameans are too strong for me, then you shall help me; but if the Ammonites are too strong for you, then I will come and help you. 12 Be strong, and let us be courageous for the sake of our people, and for the cities of our God; and may the LORD do what seems good to him." 13 So Joab and the people who were with him moved forward into battle against the Arameans; and they fled before him. 14 When the Ammonites saw that the Arameans fled, they likewise fled before Abishai, and entered the city. Then Joab returned from fighting against the Ammonites, and came to Jerusalem.

15 But when the Arameans saw that they had been defeated by Israel, they gathered themselves together. 16 Hadadezer sent and brought out the Arameans who were beyond the Euphrates; and they came to Helam, with Shobach the commander of the army of Hadadezer at

*q* Or *Merib-baal*: See 4.4 note
*r* Gk: Heb *my*
*s* Or *Merib-baal's*: See 4.4 note

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may have been pained that Jonathan's son was such a pathetic cripple, and yet relieved that this scion of Saul could hardly be expected to head an insurrection. *Ziba* claimed later that Mephibosheth was disloyal (16.1–4), but the claim seems to have been false (19.24–30).

**10.1–19: David defeats the Ammonites and Arameans (Syrians). 2:** There is no record of the covenant or agreement between *David* and *Nahash* (but compare 17.27). The relations between Saul and Nahash had been hostile (1 Sam ch 11). **3:** Perhaps Hanun's advisers were thinking of David's treatment of the Moabites (see 8.2 n.). **4:** Mutilation of the beard, the symbol of a man's honor, and forcible indecent exposure were the worst insults imaginable in those days.

**10.6–19:** The summary of these engagements in 8.3–8 omits mention of the part the Ammonites played in calling the *Arameans* (Syrians) into the conflict. **16:** Here *beyond the Euphrates* means "west of the Euphrates," as

their head. [17]When it was told David, he gathered all Israel together, and crossed the Jordan, and came to Helam. The Arameans arrayed themselves against David and fought with him. [18]The Arameans fled before Israel; and David killed of the Arameans seven hundred chariot teams, and forty thousand horsemen,[t] and wounded Shobach the commander of their army, so that he died there. [19]When all the kings who were servants of Hadadezer saw that they had been defeated by Israel, they made peace with Israel, and became subject to them. So the Arameans were afraid to help the Ammonites any more.

**11** In the spring of the year, the time when kings go out to battle, David sent Joab with his officers and all Israel with him; they ravaged the Ammonites, and besieged Rabbah. But David remained at Jerusalem.

2 It happened, late one afternoon, when David rose from his couch and was walking about on the roof of the king's house, that he saw from the roof a woman bathing; the woman was very beautiful. [3]David sent someone to inquire about the woman. It was reported, "This is Bathsheba daughter of Eliam, the wife of Uriah the Hittite." [4]So David sent messengers to get her, and she came to him, and he lay with her. (Now she was purifying herself after her period.) Then she returned to her house. [5]The woman conceived; and she sent and told David, "I am pregnant."

6 So David sent word to Joab, "Send me Uriah the Hittite." And Joab sent Uriah to David. [7]When Uriah came to him, David asked how Joab and the people fared, and how the war was going. [8]Then David said to Uriah, "Go down to your house, and wash your feet." Uriah went out of the king's house, and there followed him a present from the king. [9]But Uriah slept at the entrance of the king's house with all the servants of his lord, and did not go down to his house. [10]When they told David, "Uriah did not go down to his house," David said to Uriah, "You have just come from a journey. Why did you not go down to your house?" [11]Uriah said to David, "The ark and Israel and Judah remain in booths;[u] and my lord Joab and the servants of my lord are camping in the open field; shall I then go to my house, to eat and to drink, and to lie with my wife? As you live, and as your soul lives, I will not do such a thing." [12]Then David said to Uriah, "Remain here today also, and tomorrow I will send you back." So Uriah remained in Jerusalem that day. On the next day, [13]David invited him to eat and

*t* 1 Chr 19.18 and some Gk Mss read *foot soldiers*
*u* Or *at Succoth*

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in 1 Kings 4.24. David now takes to the field in person, in spite of the earlier warning in 21.17 (compare 12.28). **18**: On the numbers, see 1 Sam 4.10 n.

**11.1–27**: **Second campaign against Ammon; David wrongs Uriah.** At this point the author begins an intimate portrait of the domestic and political troubles of the royal family and the court, with all their sordidness and tragic consequences. The military history serves only as a framework in which to place the personal episodes in the private and public life of the king. The writer does not omit the sin of David with Bathsheba (as in 1 Chr 20.1–3) or gloss it over (as in 1 Sam 13.14). The consequences are so much a part of the story which follows that the cause must be clearly exhibited. Compare the superscription to Ps 51, added by an editor, who recognized the need for repentance and divine mercy in such a case. **1**: *His officers,* outstanding men of the royal bodyguard (23.8–39); *all Israel,* the army in general. **3**: *Uriah the Hittite,* see 1 Sam 26.6 n. **4**: See Lev 15.19–24 for the later codification of the law on the purification from a woman's *period.* **8**: The invitation *wash your feet* was standard custom after a journey (Gen 18.4; 19.2; 24.32). It may also be a euphemism for preparing for sexual intercourse, in view of David's secret plan (v. 11).

**11.9–13**: Continence was required of soldiers consecrated for war by religious sanction (1 Sam 21.4–5). Uriah refused to violate this taboo even when David made him drunk. **27**: Note the moral condemnation by the author in the name of God.

drink in his presence and made him drunk; and in the evening he went out to lie on his couch with the servants of his lord, but he did not go down to his house.

14 In the morning David wrote a letter to Joab, and sent it by the hand of Uriah. 15 In the letter he wrote, "Set Uriah in the forefront of the hardest fighting, and then draw back from him, so that he may be struck down and die." 16 As Joab was besieging the city, he assigned Uriah to the place where he knew there were valiant warriors. 17 The men of the city came out and fought with Joab; and some of the servants of David among the people fell. Uriah the Hittite was killed as well. 18 Then Joab sent and told David all the news about the fighting; 19 and he instructed the messenger, "When you have finished telling the king all the news about the fighting, 20 then, if the king's anger rises, and if he says to you, 'Why did you go so near the city to fight? Did you not know that they would shoot from the wall? 21 Who killed Abimelech son of Jerubbaal?[v] Did not a woman throw an upper millstone on him from the wall, so that he died at Thebez? Why did you go so near the wall?' then you shall say, 'Your servant Uriah the Hittite is dead too.' "

22 So the messenger went, and came and told David all that Joab had sent him to tell. 23 The messenger said to David, "The men gained an advantage over us, and came out against us in the field; but we drove them back to the entrance of the gate. 24 Then the archers shot at your servants from the wall; some of the king's servants are dead; and your servant Uriah the Hittite is dead also." 25 David said to the messenger, "Thus you shall say to Joab, 'Do not let this matter trouble you, for the sword devours now one and now another; press your attack on the city, and overthrow it.' And encourage him."

26 When the wife of Uriah heard that her husband was dead, she made lamentation for him. 27 When the mourning was over, David sent and brought her to his house, and she became his wife, and bore him a son.

But the thing that David had done displeased the LORD, 1 and the LORD sent Nathan to David. He came to him, and said to him, "There were two men in a certain city, the one rich and the other poor. 2 The rich man had very many flocks and herds; 3 but the poor man had nothing but one little ewe lamb, which he had bought. He brought it up, and it grew up with him and with his children; it used to eat of his meager fare, and drink from his cup, and lie in his bosom, and it was like a daughter to him. 4 Now there came a traveler to the rich man, and he was loath to take one of his own flock or herd to prepare for the wayfarer who had come to him, but he took the poor man's lamb, and prepared that for the guest who had come to him." 5 Then David's anger was greatly kindled against the man. He said to Nathan, "As the LORD lives, the man who has done this deserves to die; 6 he shall restore the lamb fourfold, because he did this thing, and because he had no pity."

7 Nathan said to David, "You are the man! Thus says the LORD, the God of Israel: I anointed you king over Israel, and I rescued you from the hand of Saul; 8 I gave you your master's house, and your master's wives into your bosom, and gave you the house of Israel and of Judah; and if that had been too little, I would have added as much more. 9 Why have you despised the word of the LORD, to do what is evil in his sight? You have

*v* Gk Syr Judg 7.1: Heb *Jerubbesheth*

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**12.1–25: Rebuke of David by the prophet Nathan; David's repentance and the birth of Solomon. 1–6:** Nathan's famous parable of the ewe lamb. The prophet showed courage, but not originality; what David had done was wrong, even according to the standards of that day (see 11.27). Later Nathan became an active supporter of Bathsheba (1 Kings 1.5–14). **8:** There is no other hint that David took over Saul's wives, though such was the custom (16.21–22; 1 Kings 2.17–25).

struck down Uriah the Hittite with the sword, and have taken his wife to be your wife, and have killed him with the sword of the Ammonites. 10Now therefore the sword shall never depart from your house, for you have despised me, and have taken the wife of Uriah the Hittite to be your wife. 11Thus says the LORD: I will raise up trouble against you from within your own house; and I will take your wives before your eyes, and give them to your neighbor, and he shall lie with your wives in the sight of this very sun. 12For you did it secretly; but I will do this thing before all Israel, and before the sun." 13David said to Nathan, "I have sinned against the LORD." Nathan said to David, "Now the LORD has put away your sin; you shall not die. 14Nevertheless, because by this deed you have utterly scorned the LORD, *w* the child that is born to you shall die." 15Then Nathan went to his house.

The LORD struck the child that Uriah's wife bore to David, and it became very ill. 16David therefore pleaded with God for the child; David fasted, and went in and lay all night on the ground. 17The elders of his house stood beside him, urging him to rise from the ground; but he would not, nor did he eat food with them. 18On the seventh day the child died. And the servants of David were afraid to tell him that the child was dead; for they said, "While the child was still alive, we spoke to him, and he did not listen to us; how then can we tell him the child is dead? He may do himself some harm." 19But when David saw that his servants were whispering together, he perceived that the child was dead; and David said to his servants, "Is the child dead?" They said, "He is dead."

20 Then David rose from the ground, washed, anointed himself, and changed his clothes. He went into the house of the LORD, and worshiped; he then went to his own house; and when he asked, they set food before him and he ate. 21Then his servants said to him, "What is this thing that you have done? You fasted and wept for the child while it was alive; but when the child died, you rose and ate food." 22He said, "While the child was still alive, I fasted and wept; for I said, 'Who knows? The LORD may be gracious to me, and the child may live.' 23But now he is dead; why should I fast? Can I bring him back again? I shall go to him, but he will not return to me."

24 Then David consoled his wife Bathsheba, and went to her, and lay with her; and she bore a son, and he named him Solomon. The LORD loved him, 25and sent a message by the prophet Nathan; so he named him Jedidiah, *x* because of the LORD.

26 Now Joab fought against Rabbah of the Ammonites, and took the royal city. 27Joab sent messengers to David, and said, "I have fought against Rabbah; moreover, I have taken the water city. 28Now, then, gather the rest of the people together, and encamp against the city, and take it; or I myself will take the

*w* Ancient scribal tradition: Compare 1 Sam 25.22 note: Heb *scorned the enemies of the* LORD *x* That is *Beloved of the* LORD

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**12.11**: The prediction of *trouble . . . from within your own house* is very exact; it points to subsequent episodes in which David's sons carry out similar deeds (see chs 13 and 15). The *neighbor* is presumably Absalom (16.21–22). **13–14**: According to the idea of the "lex talionis" (law of exact retaliation, Ex 21.23–25; Lev 24.19–21; Deut 19.21) David should have died. Instead, divine judgment fell upon the child, according to the ideas of that day, as a special favor to David. The sin is *against the LORD;* it is God who sets the moral standard, not human beings.

**12.23**: This verse reflects the idea of Sheol, the cavity under the earth where all the dead go (see Gen 37.35 n.; 1 Sam 2.6–7 n.), and from which there is no return (Job 7.9–10).

**12.26–31: Conclusion of the campaign against Ammon.** David takes the Ammonite capital. **26**: *Rabbah of the Ammonites* was the full name of the city, called more briefly Rabbath-Ammon or simply Rabbah. **27**: *The water city* means the place protecting the water supply. **28–29**: Joab was always careful to keep himself subservient to *David*. The word *people* here refers to the army. **30**: *Milcom* (see note *y*), the god of the Ammonites, may be the better reading (compare 1 Kings 11.5); if

city, and it will be called by my name." 29So David gathered all the people together and went to Rabbah, and fought against it and took it. 30He took the crown of Milcom[y] from his head; the weight of it was a talent of gold, and in it was a precious stone; and it was placed on David's head. He also brought forth the spoil of the city, a very great amount. 31He brought out the people who were in it, and set them to work with saws and iron picks and iron axes, or sent them to the brickworks. Thus he did to all the cities of the Ammonites. Then David and all the people returned to Jerusalem.

13 Some time passed. David's son Absalom had a beautiful sister whose name was Tamar; and David's son Amnon fell in love with her. 2Amnon was so tormented that he made himself ill because of his sister Tamar, for she was a virgin and it seemed impossible to Amnon to do anything to her. 3But Amnon had a friend whose name was Jonadab, the son of David's brother Shimeah; and Jonadab was a very crafty man. 4He said to him, "O son of the king, why are you so haggard morning after morning? Will you not tell me?" Amnon said to him, "I love Tamar, my brother Absalom's sister." 5Jonadab said to him, "Lie down on your bed, and pretend to be ill; and when your father comes to see you, say to him, 'Let my sister Tamar come and give me something to eat, and prepare the food in my sight, so that I may see it and eat it from her hand.' " 6So Amnon lay down, and pretended to be ill; and when the king came to see him, Amnon said to the king, "Please let my sister Tamar come and make a couple of cakes in my sight, so that I may eat from her hand."

7 Then David sent home to Tamar, saying, "Go to your brother Amnon's house, and prepare food for him." 8So Tamar went to her brother Amnon's house, where he was lying down. She took dough, kneaded it, made cakes in his sight, and baked the cakes. 9Then she took the pan and set them[z] out before him, but he refused to eat. Amnon said, "Send out everyone from me." So everyone went out from him. 10Then Amnon said to Tamar, "Bring the food into the chamber, so that I may eat from your hand." So Tamar took the cakes she had made, and brought them into the chamber to Amnon her brother. 11But when she brought them near him to eat, he took hold of her, and said to her, "Come, lie with me, my sister." 12She answered him, "No, my brother, do not force me; for such a thing is not done in Israel; do not do anything so vile! 13As for me, where could I carry my shame? And as for you, you would be as one of the scoundrels in Israel. Now therefore, I beg you, speak to the king; for he will not withhold me from you." 14But he would not listen to her; and being stronger than she, he forced her and lay with her.

15 Then Amnon was seized with a very great loathing for her; indeed, his

y Gk See 1 Kings 11.5, 33: Heb *their kings*
z Heb *and poured*

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so, the reference is to an image of the god. *The weight (a talent,* about sixty-five lbs.) may be exaggerated.

**13.1–20.26: The story of Absalom.** The ensuing events show what was meant by *trouble . . . from within your own house* (12.11). The actions of Absalom brought forth a series of political crises, with decisive effect on the future of the nation. The deaths of Amnon and Absalom opened the way for Solomon (12.24) to become king, though he was originally far down in the line of succession (3.2–5; 1 Kings ch 1).

**13.1–39: Tamar raped by Amnon; Absalom has Amnon murdered and flees from the court. 1:** Tamar was a full sister of Absalom, a half sister of Amnon. The latter, being the eldest son of David (3.2), would normally have succeeded David as king. Chileab, the second son (3.3), seems to have died young, leaving Absalom as the next in line of succession to the throne; this fact must be borne in mind as one considers the deeds of Absalom.

**13.13:** At that time a man could marry his half sister, though later this practice was for-

loathing was even greater than the lust he had felt for her. Amnon said to her, "Get out!" 16But she said to him, "No, my brother;[a] for this wrong in sending me away is greater than the other that you did to me." But he would not listen to her. 17He called the young man who served him and said, "Put this woman out of my presence, and bolt the door after her." 18(Now she was wearing a long robe with sleeves; for this is how the virgin daughters of the king were clothed in earlier times.[b]) So his servant put her out, and bolted the door after her. 19But Tamar put ashes on her head, and tore the long robe that she was wearing; she put her hand on her head, and went away, crying aloud as she went.

20 Her brother Absalom said to her, "Has Amnon your brother been with you? Be quiet for now, my sister; he is your brother; do not take this to heart." So Tamar remained, a desolate woman, in her brother Absalom's house. 21When King David heard of all these things, he became very angry, but he would not punish his son Amnon, because he loved him, for he was his firstborn.[c] 22But Absalom spoke to Amnon neither good nor bad; for Absalom hated Amnon, because he had raped his sister Tamar.

23 After two full years Absalom had sheepshearers at Baal-hazor, which is near Ephraim, and Absalom invited all the king's sons. 24Absalom came to the king, and said, "Your servant has sheepshearers; will the king and his servants please go with your servant?" 25But the king said to Absalom, "No, my son, let us not all go, or else we will be burdensome to you." He pressed him, but he would not go but gave him his blessing. 26Then Absalom said, "If not, please let my brother Amnon go with us." The king said to him, "Why should he go with you?" 27But Absalom pressed him until he let Amnon and all the king's sons go with him. Absalom made a feast like a king's feast.[d] 28Then Absalom commanded his servants, "Watch when Amnon's heart is merry with wine, and when I say to you, 'Strike Amnon,' then kill him. Do not be afraid; have I not myself commanded you? Be courageous and valiant." 29So the servants of Absalom did to Amnon as Absalom had commanded. Then all the king's sons rose, and each mounted his mule and fled.

30 While they were on the way, the report came to David that Absalom had killed all the king's sons, and not one of them was left. 31The king rose, tore his garments, and lay on the ground; and all his servants who were standing by tore their garments. 32But Jonadab, the son of David's brother Shimeah, said, "Let not my lord suppose that they have killed all the young men the king's sons; Amnon alone is dead. This has been determined by Absalom from the day Amnon[e] raped his sister Tamar. 33Now therefore, do not let my lord the king take it to heart, as if all the king's sons were dead; for Amnon alone is dead."

34 But Absalom fled. When the young man who kept watch looked up, he saw many people coming from the Horonaim road[f] by the side of the mountain. 35Jonadab said to the king, "See, the king's sons have come; as your servant said, so it has come about." 36As soon as he had finished speaking, the king's sons arrived, and raised their voices and wept; and the king and all his servants also wept very bitterly.

37 But Absalom fled, and went to Talmai son of Ammihud, king of Ge-

*a* Cn Compare Gk Vg: Meaning of Heb uncertain *b* Cn: Heb *were clothed in robes* *c* Q Ms Gk: MT lacks *but he would not punish . . . firstborn* *d* Gk Compare Q Ms: MT lacks *Absalom made a feast like a king's feast* *e* Heb *he* *f* Cn Compare Gk: Heb *the road behind him*

bidden (Lev 18.9). **19:** On these signs of grief see 15.32; 2 Kings 5.7; Esth 4.1; Jer 2.37.

**13.23–29:** Festivities at the time of sheepshearing were usual (1 Sam 25.4–13). **37:** *Absalom fled* to the land of his maternal grandfather (3.3). As an Aramean kingdom (15.8), *Geshur* was under the military control of David (8.3–8; 10.6–19).

shur. David mourned for his son day after day. 38 Absalom, having fled to Geshur, stayed there three years. 39 And the heart of[g] the king went out, yearning for Absalom; for he was now consoled over the death of Amnon.

14 Now Joab son of Zeruiah perceived that the king's mind was on Absalom. 2 Joab sent to Tekoa and brought from there a wise woman. He said to her, "Pretend to be a mourner; put on mourning garments, do not anoint yourself with oil, but behave like a woman who has been mourning many days for the dead. 3 Go to the king and speak to him as follows." And Joab put the words into her mouth.

4 When the woman of Tekoa came to the king, she fell on her face to the ground and did obeisance, and said, "Help, O king!" 5 The king asked her, "What is your trouble?" She answered, "Alas, I am a widow; my husband is dead. 6 Your servant had two sons, and they fought with one another in the field; there was no one to part them, and one struck the other and killed him. 7 Now the whole family has risen against your servant. They say, 'Give up the man who struck his brother, so that we may kill him for the life of his brother whom he murdered, even if we destroy the heir as well.' Thus they would quench my one remaining ember, and leave to my husband neither name nor remnant on the face of the earth."

8 Then the king said to the woman, "Go to your house, and I will give orders concerning you." 9 The woman of Tekoa said to the king, "On me be the guilt, my lord the king, and on my father's house; let the king and his throne be guiltless." 10 The king said, "If anyone says anything to you, bring him to me, and he shall never touch you again." 11 Then she said, "Please, may the king keep the LORD your God in mind, so that the avenger of blood may kill no more, and my son not be destroyed." He said, "As the LORD lives, not one hair of your son shall fall to the ground."

12 Then the woman said, "Please let your servant speak a word to my lord the king." He said, "Speak." 13 The woman said, "Why then have you planned such a thing against the people of God? For in giving this decision the king convicts himself, inasmuch as the king does not bring his banished one home again. 14 We must all die; we are like water spilled on the ground, which cannot be gathered up. But God will not take away a life; he will devise plans so as not to keep an outcast banished forever from his presence.[h] 15 Now I have come to say this to my lord the king because the people have made me afraid; your servant thought, 'I will speak to the king; it may be that the king will perform the request of his servant. 16 For the king will hear, and deliver his servant from the hand of the man who would cut both me and my son off from the heritage of God.' 17 Your servant thought, 'The word of my lord the king will set me at rest'; for my lord the king is like the angel of God, discerning good and evil. The LORD your God be with you!"

18 Then the king answered the woman, "Do not withhold from me anything I ask you." The woman said, "Let my lord the king speak." 19 The king said, "Is the hand of Joab with you in all this?" The woman answered and said, "As surely as you live, my lord the king, one cannot turn right or left from anything that my lord the king has said. For it was your servant Joab who commanded me; it was he who put all these words into the

*g* Q Ms Gk: MT *And David* *h* Meaning of Heb uncertain

**14.1–33: Joab brings about the return of Absalom.** This incident is another manifestation of the power and influence of *Joab,* who had a way of taking things into his own hands, though he carefully remained subservient to David (v. 22 and 12.28). **2:** *Tekoa,* a few miles south of Bethlehem, and thus in the home territory of David and Joab.

**14.7:** The use of the word *heir* by *the woman* is a good indication that Absalom was expected to succeed David as king.

mouth of your servant. [20]In order to change the course of affairs your servant Joab did this. But my lord has wisdom like the wisdom of the angel of God to know all things that are on the earth."

21 Then the king said to Joab, "Very well, I grant this; go, bring back the young man Absalom." [22]Joab prostrated himself with his face to the ground and did obeisance, and blessed the king; and Joab said, "Today your servant knows that I have found favor in your sight, my lord the king, in that the king has granted the request of his servant." [23]So Joab set off, went to Geshur, and brought Absalom to Jerusalem. [24]The king said, "Let him go to his own house; he is not to come into my presence." So Absalom went to his own house, and did not come into the king's presence.

25 Now in all Israel there was no one to be praised so much for his beauty as Absalom; from the sole of his foot to the crown of his head there was no blemish in him. [26]When he cut the hair of his head (for at the end of every year he used to cut it; when it was heavy on him, he cut it), he weighed the hair of his head, two hundred shekels by the king's weight. [27]There were born to Absalom three sons, and one daughter whose name was Tamar; she was a beautiful woman.

28 So Absalom lived two full years in Jerusalem, without coming into the king's presence. [29]Then Absalom sent for Joab to send him to the king; but Joab would not come to him. He sent a second time, but Joab would not come. [30]Then he said to his servants, "Look, Joab's field is next to mine, and he has barley there; go and set it on fire." So Absalom's servants set the field on fire. [31]Then Joab rose and went to Absalom at his house, and said to him, "Why have your servants set my field on fire?" [32]Absalom answered Joab, "Look, I sent word to you: Come here, that I may send you to the king with the question, 'Why have I come from Geshur? It would be better for me to be there still.' Now let me go into the king's presence; if there is guilt in me, let him kill me!" [33]Then Joab went to the king and told him; and he summoned Absalom. So he came to the king and prostrated himself with his face to the ground before the king; and the king kissed Absalom.

15 After this Absalom got himself a chariot and horses, and fifty men to run ahead of him. [2]Absalom used to rise early and stand beside the road into the gate; and when anyone brought a suit before the king for judgment, Absalom would call out and say, "From what city are you?" When the person said, "Your servant is of such and such a tribe in Israel," [3]Absalom would say, "See, your claims are good and right; but there is no one deputed by the king to hear you." [4]Absalom said moreover, "If only I were judge in the land! Then all who had a suit or cause might come to me, and I would

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**14.26**: There were at least two standards of *weight* at that time, the common and the royal, or *the king's weight*. The latter was somewhat heavier; *two hundred shekels* would have been roughly five pounds. **27**: Absalom seems to have named his daughter after his ravished sister, Tamar. The information about sons should be contrasted with 18.18. **28**: It was very likely during this period that Absalom began to plot revolt. Some have blamed David for delaying the reconciliation too long.

**15.1–37**: **Absalom revolts and David flees from Jerusalem.** Since *Absalom* was the natural heir to the throne (see 14.7 n.), it may be asked why he revolted during David's lifetime. Primogeniture (the requirement that the eldest surviving son should become king) was the normal practice in Israel (2 Sam 2.8–10; Deut 21.15–17), but there were exceptions (1 Chr 5.1–2; 26.10). David himself had established a new dynasty, and had failed to lay down a law of succession (1 Kings 1.27). Absalom, knowing that he had once been out of favor with his father, may have feared that something similar would happen again. Or perhaps, like Amnon, he simply could not wait for what he wanted so badly. **1–6**: *Chariot and horses, and fifty men,* compare 1 Kings 1.5. Absalom attacks another weakness of David's administration, the failure to establish a judiciary system, with consequent delay in the hearing of cases. David was better as a military leader than as a peacetime organizer.

give them justice." 5Whenever people came near to do obeisance to him, he would put out his hand and take hold of them, and kiss them. 6Thus Absalom did to every Israelite who came to the king for judgment; so Absalom stole the hearts of the people of Israel.

7 At the end of four[i] years Absalom said to the king, "Please let me go to Hebron and pay the vow that I have made to the LORD. 8For your servant made a vow while I lived at Geshur in Aram: If the LORD will indeed bring me back to Jerusalem, then I will worship the LORD in Hebron."[j] 9The king said to him, "Go in peace." So he got up, and went to Hebron. 10But Absalom sent secret messengers throughout all the tribes of Israel, saying, "As soon as you hear the sound of the trumpet, then shout: Absalom has become king at Hebron!" 11Two hundred men from Jerusalem went with Absalom; they were invited guests, and they went in their innocence, knowing nothing of the matter. 12While Absalom was offering the sacrifices, he sent for[k] Ahithophel the Gilonite, David's counselor, from his city Giloh. The conspiracy grew in strength, and the people with Absalom kept increasing.

13 A messenger came to David, saying, "The hearts of the Israelites have gone after Absalom." 14Then David said to all his officials who were with him at Jerusalem, "Get up! Let us flee, or there will be no escape for us from Absalom. Hurry, or he will soon overtake us, and bring disaster down upon us, and attack the city with the edge of the sword." 15The king's officials said to the king, "Your servants are ready to do whatever our lord the king decides." 16So the king left, followed by all his household, except ten concubines whom he left behind to look after the house. 17The king left, followed by all the people; and they stopped at the last house. 18All his officials passed by him; and all the Cherethites, and all the Pelethites, and all the six hundred Gittites who had followed him from Gath, passed on before the king.

19 Then the king said to Ittai the Gittite, "Why are you also coming with us? Go back, and stay with the king; for you are a foreigner, and also an exile from your home. 20You came only yesterday, and shall I today make you wander about with us, while I go wherever I can? Go back, and take your kinsfolk with you; and may the LORD show[l] steadfast love and faithfulness to you." 21But Ittai answered the king, "As the LORD lives, and as my lord the king lives, wherever my lord the king may be, whether for death or for life, there also your servant will be." 22David said to Ittai, "Go then, march on." So Ittai the Gittite marched on, with all his men and all the little ones who were with him. 23The whole country wept aloud as all the people passed by; the king crossed the Wadi Kidron, and all the people moved on toward the wilderness.

*i* Gk Syr: Heb *forty* *j* Gk Mss: Heb lacks *in Hebron* *k* Or *he sent* *l* Gk Compare 2.6: Heb lacks *may the* LORD *show*

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**15.7–12**: The conspiracy was carefully nurtured for a period of *four years*. Absalom could have worshiped in Jerusalem, but he had probably found disaffection in Hebron over the loss of status as the capital city. *Ahithophel the Gilonite* was perhaps the grandfather of Bathsheba (compare 11.3 with 23.34). If so, he may have resented David's conduct with his granddaughter in spite of the higher status which it brought to the family.

**15.13–18**: David flees Jerusalem, perhaps feeling that he would have an advantage by fighting in the open country. He probably also suspected the loyalty of some of those around him; by leaving, he could find out who would follow him regardless of circumstances, and at the same time he could leave behind his agents to work secretly for him in the city. See the superscription to Ps 3. *Ten concubines,* see 5.13–16 n. *Cherethites and . . . Pelethites,* see 8.18 n. *Gittites* (rather than "Gathites") is the proper form designating people *from Gath*. It is rather surprising to find so many Philistines in David's army. **23**: The weeping of *the people* indicates that *the king* retained much popular support. *The Wadi Kidron* marked the eastern boundary of the city.

24 Abiathar came up, and Zadok also, with all the Levites, carrying the ark of the covenant of God. They set down the ark of God, until the people had all passed out of the city. 25 Then the king said to Zadok, "Carry the ark of God back into the city. If I find favor in the eyes of the LORD, he will bring me back and let me see both it and the place where it stays. 26 But if he says, 'I take no pleasure in you,' here I am, let him do to me what seems good to him." 27 The king also said to the priest Zadok, "Look,[m] go back to the city in peace, you and Abiathar,[n] with your two sons, Ahimaaz your son, and Jonathan son of Abiathar. 28 See, I will wait at the fords of the wilderness until word comes from you to inform me." 29 So Zadok and Abiathar carried the ark of God back to Jerusalem, and they remained there.

30 But David went up the ascent of the Mount of Olives, weeping as he went, with his head covered and walking barefoot; and all the people who were with him covered their heads and went up, weeping as they went. 31 David was told that Ahithophel was among the conspirators with Absalom. And David said, "O LORD, I pray you, turn the counsel of Ahithophel into foolishness."

32 When David came to the summit, where God was worshiped, Hushai the Archite came to meet him with his coat torn and earth on his head. 33 David said to him, "If you go on with me, you will be a burden to me. 34 But if you return to the city and say to Absalom, 'I will be your servant, O king; as I have been your father's servant in time past, so now I will be your servant,' then you will defeat for me the counsel of Ahithophel. 35 The priests Zadok and Abiathar will be with you there. So whatever you hear from the king's house, tell it to the priests Zadok and Abiathar. 36 Their two sons are with them there, Zadok's son Ahimaaz and Abiathar's son Jonathan; and by them you shall report to me everything you hear." 37 So Hushai, David's friend, came into the city, just as Absalom was entering Jerusalem.

16 When David had passed a little beyond the summit, Ziba the servant of Mephibosheth[o] met him, with a couple of donkeys saddled, carrying two hundred loaves of bread, one hundred bunches of raisins, one hundred of summer fruits, and one skin of wine. 2 The king said to Ziba, "Why have you brought these?" Ziba answered, "The donkeys are for the king's household to ride, the bread and summer fruit for the young men to eat, and the wine is for those to drink who faint in the wilderness." 3 The king said, "And where is your master's son?" Ziba said to the king, "He remains in Jerusalem; for he said, 'Today the house of Israel will give me back my grandfather's kingdom.'" 4 Then the king said to Ziba, "All that belonged to Mephibosheth[o] is now yours." Ziba said, "I do obeisance; let me find favor in your sight, my lord the king."

*m* Gk: Heb *Are you a seer* or *Do you see?*
*n* Cn: Heb lacks *and Abiathar*
*o* Or *Merib-baal*: See 4.4 note

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**15.24–37**: David's leaving *the ark* in Jerusalem was a fair indication that he expected to return. It was also good diplomacy to have the loyal priests in the city (vv. 35–36). On *Zadok*, see 8.17 n. *Abiathar*, a priest closely associated with David (see 1 Sam 23.6–11; 2 Sam 20.25). *Hushai the Archite, David's friend* (i.e. "royal counselor," an official title, 1 Kings 4.5), came from an originally Canaanite group settled near Bethel (Josh 16.2). Under David's inclusive policy, various non-Israelite groups (Hittites, Philistines, Canaanites, and the like) became naturalized. These people seem to have been particularly loyal to David, perhaps partly because of his policies and personality, partly because he himself was not an Israelite (19.11–15).

**16.1–23: David in flight; Absalom takes over Jerusalem. 1–4**: *Mephibosheth*, see ch 9 and notes there. *Ziba* was probably lying for his own advantage; see Mephibosheth's defense in 19.24–30. David, perhaps disturbed by the reference to the dynasty of Saul, here makes too hasty a decision.

5 When King David came to Bahurim, a man of the family of the house of Saul came out whose name was Shimei son of Gera; he came out cursing. 6He threw stones at David and at all the servants of King David; now all the people and all the warriors were on his right and on his left. 7Shimei shouted while he cursed, "Out! Out! Murderer! Scoundrel! 8The LORD has avenged on all of you the blood of the house of Saul, in whose place you have reigned; and the LORD has given the kingdom into the hand of your son Absalom. See, disaster has overtaken you; for you are a man of blood."

9 Then Abishai son of Zeruiah said to the king, "Why should this dead dog curse my lord the king? Let me go over and take off his head." 10But the king said, "What have I to do with you, you sons of Zeruiah? If he is cursing because the LORD has said to him, 'Curse David,' who then shall say, 'Why have you done so?' " 11David said to Abishai and to all his servants, "My own son seeks my life; how much more now may this Benjaminite! Let him alone, and let him curse; for the LORD has bidden him. 12It may be that the LORD will look on my distress,[p] and the LORD will repay me with good for this cursing of me today." 13So David and his men went on the road, while Shimei went along on the hillside opposite him and cursed as he went, throwing stones and flinging dust at him. 14The king and all the people who were with him arrived weary at the Jordan;[q] and there he refreshed himself.

15 Now Absalom and all the Israelites[r] came to Jerusalem; Ahithophel was with him. 16When Hushai the Archite, David's friend, came to Absalom, Hushai said to Absalom, "Long live the king! Long live the king!" 17Absalom said to Hushai, "Is this your loyalty to your friend? Why did you not go with your friend?" 18Hushai said to Absalom, "No; but the one whom the LORD and this people and all the Israelites have chosen, his I will be, and with him I will remain. 19Moreover, whom should I serve? Should it not be his son? Just as I have served your father, so I will serve you."

20 Then Absalom said to Ahithophel, "Give us your counsel; what shall we do?" 21Ahithophel said to Absalom, "Go in to your father's concubines, the ones he has left to look after the house; and all Israel will hear that you have made yourself odious to your father, and the hands of all who are with you will be strengthened." 22So they pitched a tent for Absalom upon the roof; and Absalom went in to his father's concubines in the sight of all Israel. 23Now in those days the counsel that Ahithophel gave was as if one consulted the oracle[s] of God; so all the counsel of Ahithophel was esteemed, both by David and by Absalom.

17 Moreover Ahithophel said to Absalom, "Let me choose twelve thousand men, and I will set out and pursue David tonight. 2I will come upon him while he is weary and discouraged, and throw him into a panic; and all the

*p* Gk Vg: Heb *iniquity* *q* Gk: Heb lacks *at the Jordan* *r* Gk: Heb *all the people, the men of Israel* *s* Heb *word*

**16.5–14**: The disaffection in Judah over loss of the capital has already been noted (see 15.7–12 n.); here we see the disaffection in Israel over loss of the ruling dynasty (v. 8). This time, however, David keeps a cool head and refuses to be pushed into a hasty judgment. For the result, see 19.16–23; compare 1 Kings 2.8–9. *This dead dog,* see 3.8 n. On the undue haste of a *son of Zeruiah* with the sword, see 3.39.

**16.20–23**: The *concubines* were royal property; hence taking them over publicly was a sensational way of showing the people that Absalom had assumed the office and prerogatives of kingship (3.7; 15.16; 1 Kings 2.17–25).

**17.1–23: Hushai frustrates the plan of Ahithophel. 1–14**: The plan of Ahithophel would probably have led to success for Absalom. The plan of Hushai gave the advantage to David by enabling him to collect his forces for a formal battle in which experience and skill would be decisive. Recognition of these facts led to the suicide of Ahithophel (v. 23). The last sentence of v. 14 reminds the reader that all things are *ordained* by God.

people who are with him will flee. I will strike down only the king, [3]and I will bring all the people back to you as a bride comes home to her husband. You seek the life of only one man,[t] and all the people will be at peace." [4]The advice pleased Absalom and all the elders of Israel.

5 Then Absalom said, "Call Hushai the Archite also, and let us hear too what he has to say." [6]When Hushai came to Absalom, Absalom said to him, "This is what Ahithophel has said; shall we do as he advises? If not, you tell us." [7]Then Hushai said to Absalom, "This time the counsel that Ahithophel has given is not good." [8]Hushai continued, "You know that your father and his men are warriors, and that they are enraged, like a bear robbed of her cubs in the field. Besides, your father is expert in war; he will not spend the night with the troops. [9]Even now he has hidden himself in one of the pits, or in some other place. And when some of our troops[u] fall at the first attack, whoever hears it will say, 'There has been a slaughter among the troops who follow Absalom.' [10]Then even the valiant warrior, whose heart is like the heart of a lion, will utterly melt with fear; for all Israel knows that your father is a warrior, and that those who are with him are valiant warriors. [11]But my counsel is that all Israel be gathered to you, from Dan to Beer-sheba, like the sand by the sea for multitude, and that you go to battle in person. [12]So we shall come upon him in whatever place he may be found, and we shall light on him as the dew falls on the ground; and he will not survive, nor will any of those with him. [13]If he withdraws into a city, then all Israel will bring ropes to that city, and we shall drag it into the valley, until not even a pebble is to be found there." [14]Absalom and all the men of Israel said, "The counsel of Hushai the Archite is better than the counsel of Ahithophel." For the LORD had ordained to defeat the good counsel of Ahithophel, so that the LORD might bring ruin on Absalom.

15 Then Hushai said to the priests Zadok and Abiathar, "Thus and so did Ahithophel counsel Absalom and the elders of Israel; and thus and so I have counseled. [16]Therefore send quickly and tell David, 'Do not lodge tonight at the fords of the wilderness, but by all means cross over; otherwise the king and all the people who are with him will be swallowed up.'" [17]Jonathan and Ahimaaz were waiting at En-rogel; a servant-girl used to go and tell them, and they would go and tell King David; for they could not risk being seen entering the city. [18]But a boy saw them, and told Absalom; so both of them went away quickly, and came to the house of a man at Bahurim, who had a well in his courtyard; and they went down into it. [19]The man's wife took a covering, stretched it over the well's mouth, and spread out grain on it; and nothing was known of it. [20]When Absalom's servants came to the woman at the house, they said, "Where are Ahimaaz and Jonathan?" The woman said to them, "They have crossed over the brook[v] of water." And when they had searched and could not find them, they returned to Jerusalem.

21 After they had gone, the men came up out of the well, and went and told King David. They said to David, "Go and cross the water quickly; for thus and so has Ahithophel counseled against you." [22]So David and all the people who were with him set out and crossed the Jordan; by daybreak not one was left who had not crossed the Jordan.

23 When Ahithophel saw that his counsel was not followed, he saddled his

*t* Gk: Heb *like the return of the whole (is) the man whom you seek* *u* Gk Mss: Heb *some of them*
*v* Meaning of Heb uncertain

**17.15–22:** David is informed and crosses the Jordan. Hushai did not know which way the decision had gone; hence his recommendation to cross the river immediately. *En-rogel* is a spring near the southeast corner of Jerusalem, now called Job's Well. *Bahurim* is east of the Mt. of Olives. **23:** On biblical suicides, see 1 Sam 31.5 n.

donkey and went off home to his own city. He set his house in order, and hanged himself; he died and was buried in the tomb of his father.

24 Then David came to Mahanaim, while Absalom crossed the Jordan with all the men of Israel. 25Now Absalom had set Amasa over the army in the place of Joab. Amasa was the son of a man named Ithra the Ishmaelite,[w] who had married Abigal daughter of Nahash, sister of Zeruiah, Joab's mother. 26The Israelites and Absalom encamped in the land of Gilead.

27 When David came to Mahanaim, Shobi son of Nahash from Rabbah of the Ammonites, and Machir son of Ammiel from Lo-debar, and Barzillai the Gileadite from Rogelim, 28brought beds, basins, and earthen vessels, wheat, barley, meal, parched grain, beans and lentils,[x] 29honey and curds, sheep, and cheese from the herd, for David and the people with him to eat; for they said, "The troops are hungry and weary and thirsty in the wilderness."

18 Then David mustered the men who were with him, and set over them commanders of thousands and commanders of hundreds. 2And David divided the army into three groups:[y] one third under the command of Joab, one third under the command of Abishai son of Zeruiah, Joab's brother, and one third under the command of Ittai the Gittite. The king said to the men, "I myself will also go out with you." 3But the men said, "You shall not go out. For if we flee, they will not care about us. If half of us die, they will not care about us. But you are worth ten thousand of us;[z] therefore it is better that you send us help from the city." 4The king said to them, "Whatever seems best to you I will do." So the king stood at the side of the gate, while all the army marched out by hundreds and by thousands. 5The king ordered Joab and Abishai and Ittai, saying, "Deal gently for my sake with the young man Absalom." And all the people heard when the king gave orders to all the commanders concerning Absalom.

6 So the army went out into the field against Israel; and the battle was fought in the forest of Ephraim. 7The men of Israel were defeated there by the servants of David, and the slaughter there was great on that day, twenty thousand men. 8The battle spread over the face of all the country; and the forest claimed more victims that day than the sword.

9 Absalom happened to meet the servants of David. Absalom was riding on his mule, and the mule went under the thick branches of a great oak. His head caught fast in the oak, and he was left hanging[a] between heaven and earth, while the mule that was under him went on. 10A man saw it, and told Joab, "I saw Absalom hanging in an oak." 11Joab said

*w* 1 Chr 2.17: Heb *Israelite* *x* Heb *and lentils and parched grain* *y* Gk: Heb *sent forth the army* *z* Gk Vg Symmachus: Heb *for now there are ten thousand such as w* *a* Gk Syr Tg: Heb *was put*

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**17.24–29: David in Transjordan.** *Amasa* was a cousin of Joab; both of them were nephews of David and cousins of Absalom (1 Chr 2.13–17). The *Nahash* in v. 25 (probably an error) is not the same person as the *Nahash* of v. 27. On the latter as a friend of David, see 10.2. *Shobi,* unlike his brother Hanun, was friendly to David. It has even been proposed that David had deposed Hanun after the events of ch 10, putting *Shobi* in his place. *Machir,* see 9.4. The Aramean name of *Barzillai* shows him to have been a non-Israelite; see the comment on Hushai, 15.24–37 n.

**18.1–8: The battle in the forest of Ephraim. 3–4:** For an earlier agreement that David should remain out of the front line of battle, see 21.17; for an exception, see 12.28–29. **5:** In spite of Absalom's complete apostasy, David still loved him and wished that his life might be saved. **6–8:** As might have been expected, Absalom's hastily assembled forces were no match for David's standing army under skilled and experienced commanders. Great numbers of the raw recruits were driven into *the forest,* a trackless jungle, from which there was no escape. The number *twenty thousand* is an overgenerous estimate; there was no counting before or after the battle (see 12.30 n. and 1 Sam 4.10 n.).

**18.9–18: The death of Absalom.** There is a popular notion, based on 14.26, that Absalom was caught by his hair. The present

to the man who told him, "What, you saw him! Why then did you not strike him there to the ground? I would have been glad to give you ten pieces of silver and a belt." 12But the man said to Joab, "Even if I felt in my hand the weight of a thousand pieces of silver, I would not raise my hand against the king's son; for in our hearing the king commanded you and Abishai and Ittai, saying: For my sake protect the young man Absalom! 13On the other hand, if I had dealt treacherously against his life[b] (and there is nothing hidden from the king), then you yourself would have stood aloof." 14Joab said, "I will not waste time like this with you." He took three spears in his hand, and thrust them into the heart of Absalom, while he was still alive in the oak. 15And ten young men, Joab's armor-bearers, surrounded Absalom and struck him, and killed him.

16 Then Joab sounded the trumpet, and the troops came back from pursuing Israel, for Joab restrained the troops. 17They took Absalom, threw him into a great pit in the forest, and raised over him a very great heap of stones. Meanwhile all the Israelites fled to their homes. 18Now Absalom in his lifetime had taken and set up for himself a pillar that is in the King's Valley, for he said, "I have no son to keep my name in remembrance"; he called the pillar by his own name. It is called Absalom's Monument to this day.

19 Then Ahimaaz son of Zadok said, "Let me run, and carry tidings to the king that the LORD has delivered him from the power of his enemies." 20Joab said to him, "You are not to carry tidings today; you may carry tidings another day, but today you shall not do so, because the king's son is dead." 21Then Joab said to a Cushite, "Go, tell the king what you have seen." The Cushite bowed before Joab, and ran. 22Then Ahimaaz son of Zadok said again to Joab, "Come what may, let me also run after the Cushite." And Joab said, "Why will you run, my son, seeing that you have no reward[c] for the tidings?" 23"Come what may," he said, "I will run." So he said to him, "Run." Then Ahimaaz ran by the way of the Plain, and outran the Cushite.

24 Now David was sitting between the two gates. The sentinel went up to the roof of the gate by the wall, and when he looked up, he saw a man running alone. 25The sentinel shouted and told the king. The king said, "If he is alone, there are tidings in his mouth." He kept coming, and drew near. 26Then the sentinel saw another man running; and the sentinel called to the gatekeeper and said, "See, another man running alone!" The king said, "He also is bringing tidings." 27The sentinel said, "I think the running of the first one is like the running of Ahimaaz son of Zadok." The king said, "He is a good man, and comes with good tidings."

28 Then Ahimaaz cried out to the king, "All is well!" He prostrated himself before the king with his face to the ground, and said, "Blessed be the LORD your God, who has delivered up the men

*b* Another reading is *at the risk of my life* *c* Meaning of Heb uncertain

text implies that his whole *head* was caught (v. 9). Joab never withheld a fatal blow when he felt that it would be to his own or David's advantage (3.27; 20.10). **16–18**: These verses show that Absalom's tomb was very different from what he had intended; he had prepared for himself a showy monument near Jerusalem. The statement about his having *no son* appears to be inconsistent with 14.27. The monument commonly called "Absalom's Tomb," still standing today in the Kidron valley, is of Hellenistic or Roman date, and has no connection with the original *Absalom's Monument*.

**18.19–33**: **The grief of David.** The story in these verses provides the reason why some commentators believe *Ahimaaz son of Zadok* to be the author. But there is no persuasive reason to assume that an author (such as Ahimaaz here) would have put himself into the story. Ahimaaz was too excited to remain behind, yet when he faced *the king* he lacked the courage to tell the whole story, as Joab had foreseen.

who raised their hand against my lord the king." 29The king said, "Is it well with the young man Absalom?" Ahimaaz answered, "When Joab sent your servant,[d] I saw a great tumult, but I do not know what it was." 30The king said, "Turn aside, and stand here." So he turned aside, and stood still.

31 Then the Cushite came; and the Cushite said, "Good tidings for my lord the king! For the LORD has vindicated you this day, delivering you from the power of all who rose up against you." 32The king said to the Cushite, "Is it well with the young man Absalom?" The Cushite answered, "May the enemies of my lord the king, and all who rise up to do you harm, be like that young man."

33[e] The king was deeply moved, and went up to the chamber over the gate, and wept; and as he went, he said, "O my son Absalom, my son, my son Absalom! Would I had died instead of you, O Absalom, my son, my son!"

19 It was told Joab, "The king is weeping and mourning for Absalom." 2So the victory that day was turned into mourning for all the troops; for the troops heard that day, "The king is grieving for his son." 3The troops stole into the city that day as soldiers steal in who are ashamed when they flee in battle. 4The king covered his face, and the king cried with a loud voice, "O my son Absalom, O Absalom, my son, my son!" 5Then Joab came into the house to the king, and said, "Today you have covered with shame the faces of all your officers who have saved your life today, and the lives of your sons and your daughters, and the lives of your wives and your concubines, 6for love of those who hate you and for hatred of those who love you. You have made it clear today that commanders and officers are nothing to you; for I perceive that if Absalom were alive and all of us were dead today, then you would be pleased. 7So go out at once and speak kindly to your servants; for I swear by the LORD, if you do not go, not a man will stay with you this night; and this will be worse for you than any disaster that has come upon you from your youth until now." 8Then the king got up and took his seat in the gate. The troops were all told, "See, the king is sitting in the gate"; and all the troops came before the king.

Meanwhile, all the Israelites had fled to their homes. 9All the people were disputing throughout all the tribes of Israel, saying, "The king delivered us from the hand of our enemies, and saved us from the hand of the Philistines; and now he has fled out of the land because of Absalom. 10But Absalom, whom we anointed over us, is dead in battle. Now therefore why do you say nothing about bringing the king back?"

11 King David sent this message to the priests Zadok and Abiathar, "Say to the elders of Judah, 'Why should you be the last to bring the king back to his house? The talk of all Israel has come to the king.[f] 12You are my kin, you are my bone and my flesh; why then should you be the last to bring back the king?' 13And say to Amasa, 'Are you not my bone and my flesh? So may God do to me, and more, if you are not the commander of my army from now on, in place of Joab.' " 14Amasa[g] swayed the hearts of all the people of Judah as one, and they

*d* Heb *the king's servant, your servant*
*e* Ch 19.1 in Heb *f* Gk: Heb *to the king, to his house* *g* Heb *He*

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**18.31–33**: It remained for the Ethiopian slave (*the Cushite;* compare Jer 13.23; 38.7; 39.16–18) to reveal the true state of affairs. In his personal grief, David momentarily forgot his military victory and his public duties.

**19.1–43**: **David attempts to restore a divided and disorganized nation. 1–8a**: It was only Joab who could speak realistically to the king about his royal obligations. **8b–10**: The Israelites made the first overtures to renew allegiance to David.

**19.11–15**: *David* appeals to the Judahites on the basis of tribal loyalty and by giving Joab's position to *Amasa*. On Amasa's kinship to David and Joab, see 17.24–29 n. David no doubt resented Joab's killing of Absalom (18.14) and also remembered the case of Abner (3.27–29).

sent word to the king, "Return, both you and all your servants." 15So the king came back to the Jordan; and Judah came to Gilgal to meet the king and to bring him over the Jordan.

16 Shimei son of Gera, the Benjaminite, from Bahurim, hurried to come down with the people of Judah to meet King David; 17with him were a thousand people from Benjamin. And Ziba, the servant of the house of Saul, with his fifteen sons and his twenty servants, rushed down to the Jordan ahead of the king, 18while the crossing was taking place,[h] to bring over the king's household, and to do his pleasure.

Shimei son of Gera fell down before the king, as he was about to cross the Jordan, 19and said to the king, "May my lord not hold me guilty or remember how your servant did wrong on the day my lord the king left Jerusalem; may the king not bear it in mind. 20For your servant knows that I have sinned; therefore, see, I have come this day, the first of all the house of Joseph to come down to meet my lord the king." 21Abishai son of Zeruiah answered, "Shall not Shimei be put to death for this, because he cursed the LORD's anointed?" 22But David said, "What have I to do with you, you sons of Zeruiah, that you should today become an adversary to me? Shall anyone be put to death in Israel this day? For do I not know that I am this day king over Israel?" 23The king said to Shimei, "You shall not die." And the king gave him his oath.

24 Mephibosheth[i] grandson of Saul came down to meet the king; he had not taken care of his feet, or trimmed his beard; or washed his clothes, from the day the king left until the day he came back in safety. 25When he came from Jerusalem to meet the king, the king said to him, "Why did you not go with me, Mephibosheth?"[i] 26He answered, "My lord, O king, my servant deceived me; for your servant said to him, 'Saddle a donkey for me,[j] so that I may ride on it and go with the king.' For your servant is lame. 27He has slandered your servant to my lord the king. But my lord the king is like the angel of God; do therefore what seems good to you. 28For all my father's house were doomed to death before my lord the king; but you set your servant among those who eat at your table. What further right have I, then, to appeal to the king?" 29The king said to him, "Why speak any more of your affairs? I have decided: you and Ziba shall divide the land." 30Mephibosheth[i] said to the king, "Let him take it all, since my lord the king has arrived home safely."

31 Now Barzillai the Gileadite had come down from Rogelim; he went on with the king to the Jordan, to escort him over the Jordan. 32Barzillai was a very aged man, eighty years old. He had provided the king with food while he stayed at Mahanaim, for he was a very wealthy man. 33The king said to Barzillai, "Come over with me, and I will provide for you in Jerusalem at my side." 34But Barzillai said to the king, "How many years have I still to live, that I should go up with the king to Jerusalem? 35Today I am eighty years old; can I discern what is pleasant and what is not? Can your servant taste what he eats or what he drinks? Can I still listen to the voice of singing men and singing women? Why then should your servant be an added burden to my lord the king? 36Your ser-

*h* Cn: Heb *the ford crossed* *i* Or *Merib-baal*: See 4.4 note *j* Gk Syr Vg:Heb *said, 'I will saddle a donkey for myself*

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**19.16–23:** *Shimei* and *Ziba* rushed to pay homage to *David* (compare 16.1–14). *David* forgave *Shimei*. *House of Joseph* (v. 20), another name for the northern tribes or Israel.

**19.24–30:** See ch 9 and 16.1–5. David had made a hasty decision in Ziba's case against Mephibosheth. Now, confronted by both parties, *the king* seemed unable to make a firm decision, though Mephibosheth's evidences of loyalty (v. 24) and self-abnegation (vv. 28, 30) appear genuine.

**19.31–40a:** It is usually assumed that *Chimham* was the son of *Barzillai*, though the text does not specifically so state (compare 1 Kings 2.7). **40b:** The word *all* is something of an exaggeration, signifying that by this

vant will go a little way over the Jordan with the king. Why should the king recompense me with such a reward? 37Please let your servant return, so that I may die in my own town, near the graves of my father and my mother. But here is your servant Chimham; let him go over with my lord the king; and do for him whatever seems good to you." 38The king answered, "Chimham shall go over with me, and I will do for him whatever seems good to you; and all that you desire of me I will do for you." 39Then all the people crossed over the Jordan, and the king crossed over; the king kissed Barzillai and blessed him, and he returned to his own home. 40The king went on to Gilgal, and Chimham went on with him; all the people of Judah, and also half the people of Israel, brought the king on his way.

41 Then all the people of Israel came to the king, and said to him, "Why have our kindred the people of Judah stolen you away, and brought the king and his household over the Jordan, and all David's men with him?" 42All the people of Judah answered the people of Israel, "Because the king is near of kin to us. Why then are you angry over this matter? Have we eaten at all at the king's expense? Or has he given us any gift?" 43But the people of Israel answered the people of Judah, "We have ten shares in the king, and in David also we have more than you. Why then did you despise us? Were we not the first to speak of bringing back our king?" But the words of the people of Judah were fiercer than the words of the people of Israel.

20 Now a scoundrel named Sheba son of Bichri, a Benjaminite, happened to be there. He sounded the trumpet and cried out,

"We have no portion in David,
no share in the son of Jesse!
Everyone to your tents, O Israel!"

2So all the people of Israel withdrew from David and followed Sheba son of Bichri; but the people of Judah followed their king steadfastly from the Jordan to Jerusalem.

3 David came to his house at Jerusalem; and the king took the ten concubines whom he had left to look after the house, and put them in a house under guard, and provided for them, but did not go in to them. So they were shut up until the day of their death, living as if in widowhood.

4 Then the king said to Amasa, "Call the men of Judah together to me within three days, and be here yourself." 5So Amasa went to summon Judah; but he delayed beyond the set time that had been appointed him. 6David said to Abishai, "Now Sheba son of Bichri will do us more harm than Absalom; take your lord's servants and pursue him, or he will find fortified cities for himself, and escape from us." 7Joab's men went out after him, along with the Cherethites, the Pelethites, and all the warriors; they went out from Jerusalem to pursue Sheba son of Bichri. 8When they were at the large stone that is in Gibeon, Amasa came to meet them. Now Joab was wearing a soldier's garment and over it was a belt with a sword in its sheath fastened at his waist; as he went forward it fell out. 9Joab said to Amasa, "Is it well with you, my brother?" And Joab took Amasa by the beard with his right hand to kiss him. 10But Amasa did not notice

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time Judah was solidly in favor of David, whereas Israel was hardly more than half persuaded (compare 20.2). **41–43**: The antagonism between *Israel* and *Judah* breaks out again. In the light of this passage, it can be seen that the final division of the kingdom after the death of Solomon (1 Kings 12.16–20) had its roots in an old cleavage.

**20.1–22: New revolt in Israel; Joab murders Amasa, regains his position, and quells the revolt. 1–2**: It is significant that *Sheba* came from Benjamin, the most disaffected tribe (compare 16.5, 8). The war cry is repeated in 1 Kings 12.16. **3**: See 6.23 n. **4–13**: The delay of *Amasa* showed David that the new commander was not equal to Joab; but the king was too proud to approach Joab directly. Hence he called upon Abishai, Joab's brother, knowing that Joab would soon take the initiative (note the order of names in

the sword in Joab's hand; Joab struck him in the belly so that his entrails poured out on the ground, and he died. He did not strike a second blow.

Then Joab and his brother Abishai pursued Sheba son of Bichri. 11 And one of Joab's men took his stand by Amasa, and said, "Whoever favors Joab, and whoever is for David, let him follow Joab." 12 Amasa lay wallowing in his blood on the highway, and the man saw that all the people were stopping. Since he saw that all who came by him were stopping, he carried Amasa from the highway into a field, and threw a garment over him. 13 Once he was removed from the highway, all the people went on after Joab to pursue Sheba son of Bichri.

14 Sheba[k] passed through all the tribes of Israel to Abel of Beth-maacah;[l] and all the Bichrites[m] assembled, and followed him inside. 15 Joab's forces[n] came and besieged him in Abel of Beth-maacah; they threw up a siege ramp against the city, and it stood against the rampart. Joab's forces were battering the wall to break it down. 16 Then a wise woman called from the city, "Listen! Listen! Tell Joab, 'Come here, I want to speak to you.' " 17 He came near her; and the woman said, "Are you Joab?" He answered, "I am." Then she said to him, "Listen to the words of your servant." He answered, "I am listening." 18 Then she said, "They used to say in the old days, 'Let them inquire at Abel'; and so they would settle a matter. 19 I am one of those who are peaceable and faithful in Israel; you seek to destroy a city that is a mother in Israel; why will you swallow up the heritage of the LORD?" 20 Joab answered, "Far be it from me, far be it, that I should swallow up or destroy! 21 That is not the case! But a man of the hill country of Ephraim, called Sheba son of Bichri, has lifted up his hand against King David; give him up alone, and I will withdraw from the city." The woman said to Joab, "His head shall be thrown over the wall to you." 22 Then the woman went to all the people with her wise plan. And they cut off the head of Sheba son of Bichri, and threw it out to Joab. So he blew the trumpet, and they dispersed from the city, and all went to their homes, while Joab returned to Jerusalem to the king.

23 Now Joab was in command of all the army of Israel; [o] Benaiah son of Jehoiada was in command of the Cherethites and the Pelethites; 24 Adoram was in charge of the forced labor; Jehoshaphat son of Ahilud was the recorder; 25 Sheva was secretary; Zadok and Abiathar were priests; 26 and Ira the Jairite was also David's priest.

21 Now there was a famine in the days of David for three years, year after year; and David inquired of the LORD. The LORD said, "There is bloodguilt on Saul and on his house, because he put the Gibeonites to death." 2 So the

*k* Heb *He* *l* Compare 20.15: Heb *and Beth-maacah* *m* Compare Gk Vg: Heb *Berites* *n* Heb *They* *Israel* *o* Cn: Heb *Joab to all the army,*

v. 10b and the name of Joab alone in v. 13). On the *Cherethites, the Pelethites* (v. 7), see 8.18 n.

**20.14–22**: Joab was now in complete command of the army and of the situation. Joab showed his energy and efficiency in pursuing the rebel to this remote spot. **14**: The *Bichrites* were the members of Sheba's own clan (v. 1), perhaps the only followers remaining to him. **18**: The meaning of this verse is not clear, but it would seem that the town had a reputation for wisdom and the settling of disputes. **19**: *A city that is a mother in Israel* means one that had dependent villages called "daughters" (compare *villages,* literally "daughters," in Num 21.25, 32; Josh 15.45; Judg 11.26). **22**: The story continues in 1 Kings chs 1–2.

**20.23–26: A list of David's officials,** added by an editor; it seems to be another version of the similar list in 8.16–18 (see note there). Perhaps it was inserted here to emphasize that *Joab* was again in command. *Adoram* (or Adoniram) kept his position under Solomon (1 Kings 4.6). The institution of *forced labor* was one of the causes of the final division of the kingdom (1 Kings 12.18–19). *Ira the Jairite* was from Gilead, a territory which had welcomed *David* when he was in flight before Absalom (compare Num 32.40–41).

**21.1–24.25**: This section is something of

king called the Gibeonites and spoke to them. (Now the Gibeonites were not of the people of Israel, but of the remnant of the Amorites; although the people of Israel had sworn to spare them, Saul had tried to wipe them out in his zeal for the people of Israel and Judah.) 3David said to the Gibeonites, "What shall I do for you? How shall I make expiation, that you may bless the heritage of the LORD?" 4The Gibeonites said to him, "It is not a matter of silver or gold between us and Saul or his house; neither is it for us to put anyone to death in Israel." He said, "What do you say that I should do for you?" 5They said to the king, "The man who consumed us and planned to destroy us, so that we should have no place in all the territory of Israel— 6let seven of his sons be handed over to us, and we will impale them before the LORD at Gibeon on the mountain of the LORD."[p] The king said, "I will hand them over."

7 But the king spared Mephibosheth,[q] the son of Saul's son Jonathan, because of the oath of the LORD that was between them, between David and Jonathan son of Saul. 8The king took the two sons of Rizpah daughter of Aiah, whom she bore to Saul, Armoni and Mephibosheth;[q] and the five sons of Merab[r] daughter of Saul, whom she bore to Adriel son of Barzillai the Meholathite; 9he gave them into the hands of the Gibeonites, and they impaled them on the mountain before the LORD. The seven of them perished together. They were put to death in the first days of harvest, at the beginning of barley harvest.

10 Then Rizpah the daughter of Aiah took sackcloth, and spread it on a rock for herself, from the beginning of harvest until rain fell on them from the heavens; she did not allow the birds of the air to come on the bodies[s] by day, or the wild animals by night. 11When David was told what Rizpah daughter of Aiah, the concubine of Saul, had done, 12David went and took the bones of Saul and the bones of his son Jonathan from the people of Jabesh-gilead, who had stolen them from the public square of Beth-shan, where the Philistines had hung them up, on the day the Philistines killed Saul on Gilboa. 13He brought up from there the bones of Saul and the bones of

*p* Cn Compare Gk and 21.9: Heb *at Gibeah of Saul, the chosen of the* LORD *q* Or *Merib-baal*: See 4.4 note *r* Two Heb Mss Syr Compare Gk: MT *Michal* *s* Heb *them*

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an appendix to 2 Samuel, and some items relate to earlier material in the larger story. The principles by which these traditions have been ordered are unclear.

**21.1–14: The famine and the execution of the descendants of Saul.** This passage seems to relate to the early part of David's reign. **1**: There is no record of the occasion upon which *Saul . . . put the Gibeonites to death*. Apparently Saul was highly intolerant of non-Israelite elements in his kingdom, in contrast to the inclusive policy of David (see 15.24–37 n.). *David* heard a complaint from *the Gibeonites,* which he took as the voice of God, connected with the *famine*. The notion of *bloodguilt* was based on the "lex talionis" (see 12.13–14 n.). **2**: For the story of the original contact with *the Gibeonites,* see Josh 9.3–27. The pre-Israelite inhabitants of Palestine are sometimes called Canaanites, sometimes *Amorites*. **6**: The number *seven* was thought to have special significance.

**21.7**: This verse makes an editorial link with 9.1–13. **8**: Only *two sons* of Saul were found; the other *five* were grandsons. On *Rizpah,* see 3.7. The *Mephibosheth* of this verse is not the same person as the son of Jonathan in v. 7 and ch 9.

**21.10**: The *beginning of harvest* was in late April or May; rain does not fall in Palestine from that time until late autumn; hence the bodies were exposed all summer. The law of Deut 21.22–23 was not yet in effect; the long exposure (an added insult to the deceased; compare 1 Sam 31.10–13) was doubtless a part of the expiation which David was cooperating with the Gibeonites to bring about. **11–14**: The amazing vigil of Rizpah had doubtless excited much sympathy. David began to feel that the expiation had been overdone, and that it was time to do something favorable to the memory of Saul to avoid repercussions from partisans of the late king. Also, the beginning of rain had marked the end of the famine. For these reasons, the great public mass burial, including the bones of Saul and Jonathan (1 Sam 31.11–13), seemed in order.

his son Jonathan; and they gathered the bones of those who had been impaled. 14They buried the bones of Saul and of his son Jonathan in the land of Benjamin in Zela, in the tomb of his father Kish; they did all that the king commanded. After that, God heeded supplications for the land.

15 The Philistines went to war again with Israel, and David went down together with his servants. They fought against the Philistines, and David grew weary. 16Ishbi-benob, one of the descendants of the giants, whose spear weighed three hundred shekels of bronze, and who was fitted out with new weapons,[t] said he would kill David. 17But Abishai son of Zeruiah came to his aid, and attacked the Philistine and killed him. Then David's men swore to him, "You shall not go out with us to battle any longer, so that you do not quench the lamp of Israel."

18 After this a battle took place with the Philistines, at Gob; then Sibbecai the Hushathite killed Saph, who was one of the descendants of the giants. 19Then there was another battle with the Philistines at Gob; and Elhanan son of Jaareoregim, the Bethlehemite, killed Goliath the Gittite, the shaft of whose spear was like a weaver's beam. 20There was again war at Gath, where there was a man of great size, who had six fingers on each hand, and six toes on each foot, twenty-four in number; he too was descended from the giants. 21When he taunted Israel, Jonathan son of David's brother Shimei, killed him. 22These four were descended from the giants in Gath; they fell by the hands of David and his servants.

22 David spoke to the LORD the words of this song on the day when the LORD delivered him from the hand of all his enemies, and from the hand of Saul. 2He said:

The LORD is my rock, my
fortress, and my deliverer,
3 my God, my rock, in whom I
take refuge,
my shield and the horn of my
salvation,
my stronghold and my refuge,
my savior; you save me from
violence.
4 I call upon the LORD, who is
worthy to be praised,
and I am saved from my
enemies.

5 For the waves of death
encompassed me,
the torrents of perdition assailed
me;
6 the cords of Sheol entangled me,
the snares of death confronted
me.

7 In my distress I called upon the
LORD;
to my God I called.
From his temple he heard my
voice,
and my cry came to his ears.

8 Then the earth reeled and rocked;
the foundations of the heavens
trembled

*t* Heb *was belted anew*

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**21.15–22: Exploits in the war against the Philistines.** This brief fragment (probably with 23.8–39) may be part of the now partially lost story of David's victory over the Philistines. The tradition that there were giants among the Philistines here comes into full view. Another reflection of this idea is in 1 Sam ch 17. Some have supposed that these giants were the descendants of the Anakim, who had been defeated earlier by the Israelites (see Num 13.22 n.; Deut 1.28).

**21.16**: Compare the figure of *three hundred shekels* with that in 1 Sam 17.7. **17**: For other references to *Abishai,* see 2.18; 16.9–10; 19.21–22; 20.6–7. On the arrangement that David should stay behind, see 11.1; 12.28; 18.3–4. **19**: On the problem raised by the statement that *Elhanan . . . killed Goliath,* see 1 Sam 17.4 n. and 1 Chr 20.5 n. **22**: The preceding verses give no instance of *giants* who *fell by the hands of David;* perhaps these words were influenced by 1 Sam ch 17.

and quaked, because he was angry.
9 Smoke went up from his nostrils,
and devouring fire from his mouth;
glowing coals flamed forth from him.
10 He bowed the heavens, and came down;
thick darkness was under his feet.
11 He rode on a cherub, and flew;
he was seen upon the wings of the wind.
12 He made darkness around him a canopy,
thick clouds, a gathering of water.
13 Out of the brightness before him
coals of fire flamed forth.
14 The LORD thundered from heaven;
the Most High uttered his voice.
15 He sent out arrows, and scattered them
—lightning, and routed them.
16 Then the channels of the sea were seen,
the foundations of the world were laid bare
at the rebuke of the LORD,
at the blast of the breath of his nostrils.

17 He reached from on high, he took me,
he drew me out of mighty waters.
18 He delivered me from my strong enemy,
from those who hated me;
for they were too mighty for me.
19 They came upon me in the day of my calamity,
but the LORD was my stay.
20 He brought me out into a broad place;
he delivered me, because he delighted in me.

21 The LORD rewarded me according to my righteousness;
according to the cleanness of my hands he recompensed me.
22 For I have kept the ways of the LORD,
and have not wickedly departed from my God.
23 For all his ordinances were before me,
and from his statutes I did not turn aside.
24 I was blameless before him,
and I kept myself from guilt.
25 Therefore the LORD has recompensed me according to my righteousness,
according to my cleanness in his sight.

26 With the loyal you show yourself loyal;
with the blameless you show yourself blameless;
27 with the pure you show yourself pure,
and with the crooked you show yourself perverse.
28 You deliver a humble people,
but your eyes are upon the haughty to bring them down.
29 Indeed, you are my lamp, O LORD,
the LORD lightens my darkness.
30 By you I can crush a troop,
and by my God I can leap over a wall.
31 This God—his way is perfect;
the promise of the LORD proves true;
he is a shield for all who take refuge in him.

32 For who is God, but the LORD?

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**22.1–51: A hymn of praise.** It was the custom of certain writers and editors to insert poems into prose books for artistic and religious effect (see 1 Sam 2.1–10 n.). The present example is also preserved as Ps 18, to which reference should be made.

And who is a rock, except our God?
33 The God who has girded me with strength[u]
has opened wide my path.[v]
34 He made my[w] feet like the feet of deer,
and set me secure on the heights.
35 He trains my hands for war,
so that my arms can bend a bow of bronze.
36 You have given me the shield of your salvation,
and your help[x] has made me great.
37 You have made me stride freely,
and my feet do not slip;
38 I pursued my enemies and destroyed them,
and did not turn back until they were consumed.
39 I consumed them; I struck them down, so that they did not rise;
they fell under my feet.
40 For you girded me with strength for the battle;
you made my assailants sink under me.
41 You made my enemies turn their backs to me,
those who hated me, and I destroyed them.
42 They looked, but there was no one to save them;
they cried to the LORD, but he did not answer them.
43 I beat them fine like the dust of the earth,
I crushed them and stamped them down like the mire of the streets.

44 You delivered me from strife with the peoples;[y]
you kept me as the head of the nations;
people whom I had not known served me.
45 Foreigners came cringing to me;
as soon as they heard of me, they obeyed me.
46 Foreigners lost heart,
and came trembling out of their strongholds.

47 The LORD lives! Blessed be my rock,
and exalted be my God, the rock of my salvation,
48 the God who gave me vengeance
and brought down peoples under me,
49 who brought me out from my enemies;
you exalted me above my adversaries,
you delivered me from the violent.

50 For this I will extol you, O LORD, among the nations,
and sing praises to your name.
51 He is a tower of salvation for his king,
and shows steadfast love to his anointed,
to David and his descendants forever.

23 Now these are the last words of David:
The oracle of David, son of Jesse,
the oracle of the man whom God exalted,[z]
the anointed of the God of Jacob,
the favorite of the Strong One of Israel:

*u* Q Ms Gk Syr Vg Compare Ps 18.32: MT *God is my strong refuge* *v* Meaning of Heb uncertain *w* Another reading is *his* *x* Q Ms: MT *your answering* *y* Gk: Heb *from strife with my people* *z* Q Ms: MT *who was raised on high*

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**23.1–7: Another hymn of praise,** represented as *the last words of David* (see Gen 48.21–49.2 and Deut 33.1). This psalm is a late composition in the style of Ps 1 and Prov 4.10–19, with an introduction suggestive of the oracles of Balaam (Num 24.3–4, 15–16). The theme of the perpetuity of the *house* (dynasty) of David (v. 5) has already appeared in

2 The spirit of the LORD speaks
through me,
his word is upon my tongue.
3 The God of Israel has spoken,
the Rock of Israel has said to
me:
One who rules over people justly,
ruling in the fear of God,
4 is like the light of morning,
like the sun rising on a cloudless
morning,
gleaming from the rain on the
grassy land.

5 Is not my house like this with
God?
For he has made with me an
everlasting covenant,
ordered in all things and secure.
Will he not cause to prosper
all my help and my desire?
6 But the godless are[a] all like thorns
that are thrown away;
for they cannot be picked up
with the hand;
7 to touch them one uses an iron
bar
or the shaft of a spear.
And they are entirely consumed
in fire on the spot.[b]

8 These are the names of the warriors whom David had: Josheb-basshebeth a Tahchemonite; he was chief of the Three;[c] he wielded his spear[d] against eight hundred whom he killed at one time.

9 Next to him among the three warriors was Eleazar son of Dodo son of Ahohi. He was with David when they defied the Philistines who were gathered there for battle. The Israelites withdrew, 10but he stood his ground. He struck down the Philistines until his arm grew weary, though his hand clung to the sword. The LORD brought about a great victory that day. Then the people came back to him—but only to strip the dead.

11 Next to him was Shammah son of Agee, the Hararite. The Philistines gathered together at Lehi, where there was a plot of ground full of lentils; and the army fled from the Philistines. 12But he took his stand in the middle of the plot, defended it, and killed the Philistines; and the LORD brought about a great victory.

13 Towards the beginning of harvest three of the thirty[e] chiefs went down to join David at the cave of Adullam, while a band of Philistines was encamped in the valley of Rephaim. 14David was then in the stronghold; and the garrison of the Philistines was then at Bethlehem. 15David said longingly, "O that someone would give me water to drink from the well of Bethlehem that is by the gate!" 16Then the three warriors broke through the camp of the Philistines, drew water from the well of Bethlehem that was by the gate, and brought it to David. But he would not drink of it; he poured it out to the LORD, 17for he said, "The LORD forbid that I should do this. Can I drink the blood of the men who went at the risk of their lives?" Therefore he would not drink it. The three warriors did these things.

*a* Heb *But worthlessness* *b* Heb *in sitting* *c* Gk Vg Compare 1 Chr 11.11: Meaning of Heb uncertain *d* 1 Chr 11.11: Meaning of Heb uncertain *e* Heb adds *head*

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ch 7 (see the concluding note there). *The anointed of the God of Jacob,* see 1 Sam 2.10 n. and 10.1 n. The text of the last two verses is very corrupt, so that the exact meaning is not certain. It is also not certain whether the poem is complete as it stands or is only a fragment.

**23.8–39: Other exploits in the war against the Philistines, with a roster of warriors.** This passage relates to 21.15–22. It is also preserved in 1 Chr 11.11–47 at a more logical place in the narrative, but with some variation in the names and details. Here there are two orders of heroes, the order of *the Three* (v. 8) and the order of *the Thirty* (v. 18).

**8–11:** *Josheb-basshebeth a Tahchemonite* is an error of a copyist; 1 Chr 11.11 has *Jashobeam, son of Hachmoni.* It has been proposed that the man's original name was Ishbaal (see 2.8 n.).

**23.13–17:** This story is slightly misplaced, since it concerns *three of the thirty,* not *the*

18 Now Abishai son of Zeruiah, the brother of Joab, was chief of the Thirty.[f] With his spear he fought against three hundred men and killed them, and won a name beside the Three. 19 He was the most renowned of the Thirty,[g] and became their commander; but he did not attain to the Three.

20 Benaiah son of Jehoiada was a valiant warrior[h] from Kabzeel, a doer of great deeds; he struck down two sons of Ariel[i] of Moab. He also went down and killed a lion in a pit on a day when snow had fallen. 21 And he killed an Egyptian, a handsome man. The Egyptian had a spear in his hand; but Benaiah went against him with a staff, snatched the spear out of the Egyptian's hand, and killed him with his own spear. 22 Such were the things Benaiah son of Jehoiada did, and won a name beside the three warriors. 23 He was renowned among the Thirty, but he did not attain to the Three. And David put him in charge of his bodyguard.

24 Among the Thirty were Asahel brother of Joab; Elhanan son of Dodo of Bethlehem; 25 Shammah of Harod; Elika of Harod; 26 Helez the Paltite; Ira son of Ikkesh of Tekoa; 27 Abiezer of Anathoth; Mebunnai the Hushathite; 28 Zalmon the Ahohite; Maharai of Netophah; 29 Heleb son of Baanah of Netophah; Ittai son of Ribai of Gibeah of the Benjaminites; 30 Benaiah of Pirathon; Hiddai of the torrents of Gaash; 31 Abi-albon the Arbathite; Azmaveth of Bahurim; 32 Eliahba of Shaalbon; the sons of Jashen: Jonathan 33 son of[j] Shammah the Hararite; Ahiam son of Sharar the Hararite; 34 Eliphelet son of Ahasbai of Maacah; Eliam son of Ahithophel the Gilonite; 35 Hezro[k] of Carmel; Paarai the Arbite; 36 Igal son of Nathan of Zobah; Bani the Gadite; 37 Zelek the Ammonite; Naharai of Beeroth, the armor-bearer of Joab son of Zeruiah; 38 Ira the Ithrite; Gareb the Ithrite; 39 Uriah the Hittite—thirty-seven in all.

24 Again the anger of the LORD was kindled against Israel, and he incited David against them, saying, "Go, count the people of Israel and Judah." 2 So the king said to Joab and the com-

*f* Two Heb Mss Syr: MT *Three*
*g* Syr Compare 1 Chr 11.25: Heb *Was he the most renowned of the Three?* *h* Another reading is *the son of Ish-hai* *i* Gk: Heb lacks *sons of*
*j* Gk: Heb lacks *son of* *k* Another reading is *Hezrai*

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*Three* of the preceding verses. *The Thirty* are introduced in v. 18. **18–23**: On *Abishai,* see 2.18; 10.10; 16.9–10; 18.2; 19.21–22; 20.6. On *Benaiah,* see 8.18; 20.23. On the *bodyguard,* see 8.18 n. *Joab* is not listed here; he had a special status as commander-in-chief (20.23). **24–39**: There is some confusion in the list, and more than *thirty* names occur.

**23.24**: *Asahel brother of Joab* was killed while David was king of Judah only (2.23); either this name was included on an honorary basis, or the organization of *the Thirty* arose in the early days of David's kingship. On *Elhanan,* see 21.19 n.

**23.33**: *Shammah the Hararite* seems to be repeated from v. 11. **39**: The inclusion of *Uriah the Hittite* is noteworthy (compare 11.15–17). The number *thirty-seven* seems to be intended to include all the names mentioned in vv. 8–39, though they total only thirty-six. It has been suggested that Joab, as commander-in-chief, was included in the reckoning.

**24.1–25: The census, the plague, and the building of the altar.** This passage, along with 21.1–14, reflects the belief that natural calamity is caused by the wrath of God against human sin, and that this wrath must be appeased before the calamity can be stopped (compare Lk 13.1–4; Rom 1.18–23). **1**: 1 Chr 21.1 substitutes "Satan" for *the* LORD in this verse, a significant theological change. Some have wondered why it should have been considered sinful to *count the people of Israel and Judah.* The reason may have been that taking a census was deemed an infringement upon the prerogatives of their God, the sole arbiter of the destinies of the nation and its people. **3**: Joab expressed the popular fear in the matter, but he had to yield and oversee the counting in person (v. 4). **5–7**: Those who took the census began at *Aroer* (Deut 2.36; Josh 13.9) on the east side of the Dead Sea, went north to the limits of the country, then returned on the west side to *Beer-sheba.* If *Kadesh, Sidon,* and *Tyre* were included, the census must have been taken after David's Syrian campaigns (8.3–12; 10.15–19); but these cities were not truly in Israel or Judah,

manders of the army,[l] who were with him, "Go through all the tribes of Israel, from Dan to Beer-sheba, and take a census of the people, so that I may know how many there are." 3But Joab said to the king, "May the LORD your God increase the number of the people a hundredfold, while the eyes of my lord the king can still see it! But why does my lord the king want to do this?" 4But the king's word prevailed against Joab and the commanders of the army. So Joab and the commanders of the army went out from the presence of the king to take a census of the people of Israel. 5They crossed the Jordan, and began from[m] Aroer and from the city that is in the middle of the valley, toward Gad and on to Jazer. 6Then they came to Gilead, and to Kadesh in the land of the Hittites;[n] and they came to Dan, and from Dan[o] they went around to Sidon, 7and came to the fortress of Tyre and to all the cities of the Hivites and Canaanites; and they went out to the Negeb of Judah at Beer-sheba. 8So when they had gone through all the land, they came back to Jerusalem at the end of nine months and twenty days. 9Joab reported to the king the number of those who had been recorded: in Israel there were eight hundred thousand soldiers able to draw the sword, and those of Judah were five hundred thousand.

10 But afterward, David was stricken to the heart because he had numbered the people. David said to the LORD, "I have sinned greatly in what I have done. But now, O LORD, I pray you, take away the guilt of your servant; for I have done very foolishly." 11When David rose in the morning, the word of the LORD came to the prophet Gad, David's seer, saying, 12"Go and say to David: Thus says the LORD: Three things I offer[p] you; choose one of them, and I will do it to you." 13So Gad came to David and told him; he asked him, "Shall three[q] years of famine come to you on your land? Or will you flee three months before your foes while they pursue you? Or shall there be three days' pestilence in your land? Now consider, and decide what answer I shall return to the one who sent me." 14Then David said to Gad, "I am in great distress; let us fall into the hand of the LORD, for his mercy is great; but let me not fall into human hands."

15 So the LORD sent a pestilence on Israel from that morning until the appointed time; and seventy thousand of the people died, from Dan to Beer-sheba. 16But when the angel stretched out his hand toward Jerusalem to destroy it, the LORD relented concerning the evil, and said to the angel who was bringing destruction among the people, "It is enough; now stay your hand." The angel of the LORD was then by the threshing floor of Araunah the Jebusite. 17When David saw the angel who was destroying the people, he said to the LORD, "I alone have sinned, and I alone have done wickedly; but these sheep, what have they done? Let your hand, I pray, be against me and against my father's house."

18 That day Gad came to David and said to him, "Go up and erect an altar to the LORD on the threshing floor of Araunah the Jebusite." 19Following Gad's instructions, David went up, as the LORD had commanded. 20When Araunah looked down, he saw the king and his

*l* 1 Chr 21.2 Gk: Heb *to Joab the commander of the army* *m* Gk Mss: Heb *encamped in Aroer south of* *n* Gk: Heb *to the land of Tahtim-hodshi* *o* Cn Compare Gk: Heb *they came to Dan-jaan and* *p* Or *hold over* *q* 1 Chr 21.12 Gk: Heb *seven*

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even when under the control of David. **9**: The numbers here given are round numbers and incredibly high (1,300,000 fighting men alone); see 1 Sam 4.10 n.

**24.10–14**: We might say today that "David had an uneasy conscience" (v. 10). Compare the appearance of *Gad* in 1 Sam 22.5. **16**: *The angel* here is not specifically the angel of death, but simply a "messenger" (the original meaning of the word *angel*) of the LORD doing the LORD's will. **17**: The people are like innocent sheep led to slaughter; David feels that the evil should fall upon him.

**24.18–25**: *The threshing floor of Araunah the*

***David's altar on the threshing floor***

servants coming toward him; and Araunah went out and prostrated himself before the king with his face to the ground. 21 Araunah said, "Why has my lord the king come to his servant?" David said, "To buy the threshing floor from you in order to build an altar to the LORD, so that the plague may be averted from the people." 22 Then Araunah said to David, "Let my lord the king take and offer up what seems good to him; here are the oxen for the burnt offering, and the threshing sledges and the yokes of the oxen for the wood. 23 All this, O king, Araunah gives to the king." And Araunah said to the king, "May the LORD your God respond favorably to you."

24 But the king said to Araunah, "No, but I will buy them from you for a price; I will not offer burnt offerings to the LORD my God that cost me nothing." So David bought the threshing floor and the oxen for fifty shekels of silver. 25 David built there an altar to the LORD, and offered burnt offerings and offerings of well-being. So the LORD answered his supplication for the land, and the plague was averted from Israel.

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*Jebusite* later became the site of Solomon's temple (1 Chr 22.1; 2 Chr 3.1). The acquisition of this holy place, the building of an altar, and a sacrifice there were regarded as sufficient expiation to avert the plague from Israel (v. 25). *Fifty shekels of silver,* about 24 oz. (see 1 Sam 9.8 n.).

# *1 Kings*

The two books of Kings, like those of Samuel, were originally one. They continue the story of monarchy begun in 1–2 Samuel, and give a consecutive account of the Israelite kingdoms from the death of David and accession of Solomon, to the Exile (see "Survey of . . . Bible Lands," §§ 13 ff.). First Kings begins with the enthronement of Solomon and death of David (chs 1–2), recounts the reign of Solomon (chs 3–11) and the sometimes rivalrous, sometimes allied, kingdoms of the divided monarchy through the reigns of Ahab of Israel (the northern kingdom) and Jehoshaphat of Judah in the south (chs 12–22).

The books of Kings resulted from a long process of collection, writing, editing, and revising of diverse materials that themselves were based upon written documents (see, e.g., "Book of the Acts of Solomon," 1 Kings 11.41) or oral traditions (e.g. the stories of Elijah and Elisha, 1 Kings 17–19; 2 Kings 2–8). Most scholars now view the books of Kings as part of the Deuteronomistic History (see Introduction to the Historical Books). A widely shared opinion holds that 1 and 2 Kings were first cast into a pre-exilic version of this Deuteronomistic history (some suggest Josiah's time, others Hezekiah's), and later revised after 587 B.C. in light of the Judean exile, when the high hopes that had been vested in King Josiah (or perhaps Hezekiah) as religious reformer had come to nothing. Such elements as the formulaic introductory and concluding summaries that demarcate the regnal period of most kings (e.g. 1 Kings 14.21–22, 29–31), theological speeches and prayers (e.g. 1 Kings 2.1–4; 8.22–40), and sermon-like commentaries on events (e.g. 1 Kings 9.3–9; 11.9–13; 2 Kings 17.7–20) are usually attributed to these Deuteronomistic hands. However, disagreement on the details of such analysis persists.

Although the subject of 1–2 Kings is political history, its theme is the moral and religious failure that eventually led to the loss of national identity and autonomy (see 2 Kings 25). Each king is evaluated by how well he upheld the primacy of God and God's temple in Jerusalem or—more usually—how he failed in this responsibility, and in this departed from the ways of David. The people also are frequently condemned. Political and social turmoil, even national defeat, were thereby taken to result from such deficiencies. In particular, 1 Kings recounts the story of Solomon's glory and his downfall in apostasy (chs 3–11). The subsequent breakup of Solomon's rule leads to a long story of divided kingdoms whose troubles are rooted not only in his transgressions (11.9–13), but in those of Jeroboam as well, who, as the first king of the north, fell away from God's (and David's) ways (chs 11–13). The Deuteronomistic writer's voice is clearly heard through certain prophets (especially Elijah, chs 17–19), who zealously guard the absolute priority of being devoted exclusively to the God of Israel.

1 King David was old and advanced in years; and although they covered him with clothes, he could not get warm. 2So his servants said to him, "Let a young virgin be sought for my lord the king, and let her wait on the king, and be his attendant; let her lie in your bosom, so that my lord the king may be warm." 3So they searched for a beautiful girl throughout all the territory of Israel, and found Abishag the Shunammite, and brought her to the king. 4The girl was very beautiful. She became the king's attendant and served him, but the king did not know her sexually.

5 Now Adonijah son of Haggith exalted himself, saying, "I will be king"; he prepared for himself chariots and horsemen, and fifty men to run before him. 6His father had never at any time displeased him by asking, "Why have you done thus and so?" He was also a very handsome man, and he was born next after Absalom. 7He conferred with Joab son of Zeruiah and with the priest Abiathar, and they supported Adonijah. 8But the priest Zadok, and Benaiah son of Jehoiada, and the prophet Nathan, and Shimei, and Rei, and David's own warriors did not side with Adonijah.

9 Adonijah sacrificed sheep, oxen, and fatted cattle by the stone Zoheleth, which is beside En-rogel, and he invited all his brothers, the king's sons, and all the royal officials of Judah, 10but he did not invite the prophet Nathan or Benaiah or the warriors or his brother Solomon.

11 Then Nathan said to Bathsheba, Solomon's mother, "Have you not heard that Adonijah son of Haggith has become king and our lord David does not know it? 12Now therefore come, let me give you advice, so that you may save your own life and the life of your son Solomon. 13Go in at once to King David, and say to him, 'Did you not, my lord the king, swear to your servant, saying: Your son Solomon shall succeed me as king, and he shall sit on my throne? Why then is Adonijah king?' 14Then while you are still there speaking with the king, I will come in after you and confirm your words."

15 So Bathsheba went to the king in his room. The king was very old; Abishag the Shunammite was attending the king. 16Bathsheba bowed and did obeisance to the king, and the king said, "What do you wish?" 17She said to him, "My lord, you swore to your servant by the LORD your God, saying: Your son Solomon shall succeed me as king, and he shall sit on my throne. 18But now suddenly Adonijah has become king, though you, my lord the king, do not know it. 19He has sacrificed oxen, fatted cattle, and sheep in abundance, and has invited all the children of the king, the priest Abiathar, and Joab the commander of the army; but your servant Solomon he has not invited. 20But you, my lord the king—the eyes of all Israel are on you to tell them who shall sit on the throne of my lord the king after him. 21Otherwise it will come to pass, when my lord the king sleeps with his ancestors, that

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**1.1–53: The struggle for the succession and Solomon's attainment of the kingship.** This chapter continues the "Throne Succession Narrative," left off at 2 Sam 20 (see Introduction to 2 Samuel). A number of years had intervened and *King David was old and advanced in years* (v. 1). **3:** *Abishag the Shunammite,* i.e. from Shunem in the plain of Esdraelon near Mount Gilboa (1 Sam 28.4).

**1.5–10:** *Adonijah,* as David's eldest living son (Chileab seems to have died young. 2 Sam 3.3–4), naturally assumed that he would succeed his father. This seems to have been taken for granted also by the older followers of David, such as *Joab* and *Abiathar* (1 Sam 22.20–23; 2 Sam 2.13). Apparently, however, there was no strict law of primogeniture at that time (compare v. 20), and hence the younger followers of David, such as *Zadok* (2 Sam 8.17), *Benaiah* (2 Sam 8.18), and *Nathan* (2 Sam 12.1) were plotting to install Solomon in spite of his disadvantage in age. The group favoring Solomon had the advantage of including David's bodyguards. **9:** *En-rogel,* now known as Job's Well, a source of water southeast of the city, was considered a sacred place, appropriate for affairs of this kind (2 Sam 17.17).

**1.11–27:** It is surprising to find Nathan, who once so eloquently denounced David for

my son Solomon and I will be counted offenders."

22 While she was still speaking with the king, the prophet Nathan came in. 23The king was told, "Here is the prophet Nathan." When he came in before the king, he did obeisance to the king, with his face to the ground. 24Nathan said, "My lord the king, have you said, 'Adonijah shall succeed me as king, and he shall sit on my throne'? 25For today he has gone down and has sacrificed oxen, fatted cattle, and sheep in abundance, and has invited all the king's children, Joab the commander[a] of the army, and the priest Abiathar, who are now eating and drinking before him, and saying, 'Long live King Adonijah!' 26But he did not invite me, your servant, and the priest Zadok, and Benaiah son of Jehoiada, and your servant Solomon. 27Has this thing been brought about by my lord the king and you have not let your servants know who should sit on the throne of my lord the king after him?"

28 King David answered, "Summon Bathsheba to me." So she came into the king's presence, and stood before the king. 29The king swore, saying, "As the LORD lives, who has saved my life from every adversity, 30as I swore to you by the LORD, the God of Israel, 'Your son Solomon shall succeed me as king, and he shall sit on my throne in my place,' so will I do this day." 31Then Bathsheba bowed with her face to the ground, and did obeisance to the king, and said, "May my lord King David live forever!"

32 King David said, "Summon to me the priest Zadok, the prophet Nathan, and Benaiah son of Jehoiada." When they came before the king, 33the king said to them, "Take with you the servants of your lord, and have my son Solomon ride on my own mule, and bring him down to Gihon. 34There let the priest Zadok and the prophet Nathan anoint him king over Israel; then blow the trumpet, and say, 'Long live King Solomon!' 35You shall go up following him. Let him enter and sit on my throne; he shall be king in my place; for I have appointed him to be ruler over Israel and over Judah." 36Benaiah son of Jehoiada answered the king, "Amen! May the LORD, the God of my lord the king, so ordain. 37As the LORD has been with my lord the king, so may he be with Solomon, and make his throne greater than the throne of my lord King David."

38 So the priest Zadok, the prophet Nathan, and Benaiah son of Jehoiada, and the Cherethites and the Pelethites, went down and had Solomon ride on King David's mule, and led him to Gihon. 39There the priest Zadok took the horn of oil from the tent and anointed Solomon. Then they blew the trumpet, and all the people said, "Long live King Solomon!" 40And all the people went up following him, playing on pipes and rejoicing with great joy, so that the earth quaked at their noise.

41 Adonijah and all the guests who were with him heard it as they finished feasting. When Joab heard the sound of the trumpet, he said, "Why is the city in an uproar?" 42While he was still speaking, Jonathan son of the priest Abiathar arrived. Adonijah said, "Come in, for you are a worthy man and surely you bring good news." 43Jonathan answered Adonijah, "No, for our lord King David has made Solomon king; 44the king has

*a* Gk: Heb *the commanders*

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his affair with Bathsheba (2 Sam 12.1–15), now on Bathsheba's side. **28–31**: Bathsheba had apparently gone out while Nathan was speaking.

**1.32–37**: When Bathsheba came back, Nathan left and hence had to be recalled. **33**: *Gihon,* now called the Virgin's Fountain or Mary's Spring, is a short distance north of En-rogel (v. 9), out of sight of the latter because of a curve in the valley (Kidron) in which they lie, but well within earshot (compare v. 41). Gihon for long was the principal source of water for the city of Jerusalem (2 Chr 32.30), and hence was a place of special significance. **38–40**: *Cherethites* and *Pelethites,* see 1 Sam 30.14 n.; 2 Sam 8.18; 15.18. On the ceremony of anointing, see 1 Sam 10.1 n.

**1.41–48**: *Jonathan son of the priest Abiathar,*

sent with him the priest Zadok, the prophet Nathan, and Benaiah son of Jehoiada, and the Cherethites and the Pelethites; and they had him ride on the king's mule; 45the priest Zadok and the prophet Nathan have anointed him king at Gihon; and they have gone up from there rejoicing, so that the city is in an uproar. This is the noise that you heard. 46Solomon now sits on the royal throne. 47Moreover the king's servants came to congratulate our lord King David, saying, 'May God make the name of Solomon more famous than yours, and make his throne greater than your throne.' The king bowed in worship on the bed 48and went on to pray thus, 'Blessed be the LORD, the God of Israel, who today has granted one of my offspring[b] to sit on my throne and permitted me to witness it.' "

49 Then all the guests of Adonijah got up trembling and went their own ways. 50Adonijah, fearing Solomon, got up and went to grasp the horns of the altar. 51Solomon was informed, "Adonijah is afraid of King Solomon; see, he has laid hold of the horns of the altar, saying, 'Let King Solomon swear to me first that he will not kill his servant with the sword.' " 52So Solomon responded, "If he proves to be a worthy man, not one of his hairs shall fall to the ground; but if wickedness is found in him, he shall die." 53Then King Solomon sent to have him brought down from the altar. He came to do obeisance to King Solomon; and Solomon said to him, "Go home."

2 When David's time to die drew near, he charged his son Solomon, saying: 2"I am about to go the way of all the earth. Be strong, be courageous, 3and keep the charge of the LORD your God, walking in his ways and keeping his statutes, his commandments, his ordinances, and his testimonies, as it is written in the law of Moses, so that you may prosper in all that you do and wherever you turn. 4Then the LORD will establish his word that he spoke concerning me: 'If your heirs take heed to their way, to walk before me in faithfulness with all their heart and with all their soul, there shall not fail you a successor on the throne of Israel.'

5 "Moreover you know also what Joab son of Zeruiah did to me, how he dealt with the two commanders of the armies of Israel, Abner son of Ner, and Amasa son of Jether, whom he murdered, retaliating in time of peace for blood that had been shed in war, and putting the blood of war on the belt around his waist, and on the sandals on his feet. 6Act therefore according to your wisdom, but do not let his gray head go down to Sheol in peace. 7Deal loyally, however, with the sons of Barzillai the Gileadite, and let them be among those who eat at your table; for with such loyalty they met me when I fled from your brother Absalom. 8There is also with you Shimei son of Gera, the Benjaminite from Bahurim, who cursed me with a terrible curse on the day when I went to Mahanaim; but when he came down to meet me at the Jordan, I swore to him by the LORD, 'I will not put you to death with the sword.' 9Therefore do not hold him guiltless, for you are a wise man; you will know what you ought to do to him, and you must bring his gray head down with blood to Sheol."

*b* Gk: Heb *one*

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see 2 Sam 15.27, 36; 17.17–21. **49–53**: *The horns of the altar* were projections resembling horns at the four corners of an altar (Ex 29.12; 30.10; Lev 4.7; Ps 118.27). An altar was sacred, so that a person touching it was not supposed to be slain; but the taboo was not always honored (Ex 21.14; 1 Kings 2.28–34).

**2.1–46: The death of David and the elimination of rivals to the reign of Solomon. 1–4**: The first example of the viewpoint of the Deuteronomist (see Introduction). Solomon is warned that he must follow *the law of Moses* (i.e. the Deuteronomic law) or national ruin will result. See the Introduction to Deuteronomy and compare Deut 4.40, 44–45; 5.1; 11.1–17; 17.14–20.

**2.5–9**: When *Joab* (2 Sam 3.27; 20.10) and *Shimei* (2 Sam 16.5–14; 19.18–23) committed

10 Then David slept with his ancestors, and was buried in the city of David. 11 The time that David reigned over Israel was forty years; he reigned seven years in Hebron, and thirty-three years in Jerusalem. 12 So Solomon sat on the throne of his father David; and his kingdom was firmly established.

13 Then Adonijah son of Haggith came to Bathsheba, Solomon's mother. She asked, "Do you come peaceably?" He said, "Peaceably." 14 Then he said, "May I have a word with you?" She said, "Go on." 15 He said, "You know that the kingdom was mine, and that all Israel expected me to reign; however, the kingdom has turned about and become my brother's, for it was his from the LORD. 16 And now I have one request to make of you; do not refuse me." She said to him, "Go on." 17 He said, "Please ask King Solomon—he will not refuse you—to give me Abishag the Shunammite as my wife." 18 Bathsheba said, "Very well; I will speak to the king on your behalf."

19 So Bathsheba went to King Solomon, to speak to him on behalf of Adonijah. The king rose to meet her, and bowed down to her; then he sat on his throne, and had a throne brought for the king's mother, and she sat on his right. 20 Then she said, "I have one small request to make of you; do not refuse me." And the king said to her, "Make your request, my mother; for I will not refuse you." 21 She said, "Let Abishag the Shunammite be given to your brother Adonijah as his wife." 22 King Solomon answered his mother, "And why do you ask Abishag the Shunammite for Adonijah? Ask for him the kingdom as well! For he is my elder brother; ask not only for him but also for the priest Abiathar and for Joab son of Zeruiah!" 23 Then King Solomon swore by the LORD, "So may God do to me, and more also, for Adonijah has devised this scheme at the risk of his life! 24 Now therefore as the LORD lives, who has established me and placed me on the throne of my father David, and who has made me a house as he promised, today Adonijah shall be put to death." 25 So King Solomon sent Benaiah son of Jehoiada; he struck him down, and he died.

26 The king said to the priest Abiathar, "Go to Anathoth, to your estate; for you deserve death. But I will not at this time put you to death, because you carried the ark of the Lord GOD before my father David, and because you shared in all the hardships my father endured." 27 So Solomon banished Abiathar from being priest to the LORD, thus fulfilling the word of the LORD that he had spoken concerning the house of Eli in Shiloh.

28 When the news came to Joab—for Joab had supported Adonijah though he had not supported Absalom—Joab fled to the tent of the LORD and grasped the horns of the altar. 29 When it was told King Solomon, "Joab has fled to the tent of the LORD and now is beside the altar," Solomon sent Benaiah son of Jehoiada, saying, "Go, strike him down." 30 So Benaiah came to the tent of the LORD and said to him, "The king commands, 'Come out.' " But he said, "No, I will die here." Then Benaiah brought the king word again, saying, "Thus said Joab, and thus he answered me." 31 The king replied to him, "Do as he has said, strike him down and bury him; and thus take away from me and from my father's house the guilt for the blood that Joab shed without cause. 32 The LORD will

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the offenses referred to here, David was in such precarious political situations that he did not dare have these men put to death. On the friendship of Barzillai, see 2 Sam 17.27–29; 19.31–39.

**2.13–25**: An excuse is found to eliminate Adonijah. The members of the king's harem were considered royal property, to be passed on to the next king (compare v. 22). *Adonijah* made himself vulnerable by his request (2 Sam 3.6–11; 16.21–22).

**2.26–27**: Since *Abiathar* was a priest, and hence a sacrosanct personality, Solomon possibly did not want to execute him, although the narrator suggests that Abiathar's loyalty to David is the reason. **27**: See 1 Sam 2.27–36.

**28–35**: *Solomon* had orders from *David* to do away with *Joab,* and he proceeds quickly to

bring back his bloody deeds on his own head, because, without the knowledge of my father David, he attacked and killed with the sword two men more righteous and better than himself, Abner son of Ner, commander of the army of Israel, and Amasa son of Jether, commander of the army of Judah. 33So shall their blood come back on the head of Joab and on the head of his descendants forever; but to David, and to his descendants, and to his house, and to his throne, there shall be peace from the LORD forevermore." 34Then Benaiah son of Jehoiada went up and struck him down and killed him; and he was buried at his own house near the wilderness. 35The king put Benaiah son of Jehoiada over the army in his place, and the king put the priest Zadok in the place of Abiathar.

36 Then the king sent and summoned Shimei, and said to him, "Build yourself a house in Jerusalem, and live there, and do not go out from there to any place whatever. 37For on the day you go out, and cross the Wadi Kidron, know for certain that you shall die; your blood shall be on your own head." 38And Shimei said to the king, "The sentence is fair; as my lord the king has said, so will your servant do." So Shimei lived in Jerusalem many days.

39 But it happened at the end of three years that two of Shimei's slaves ran away to King Achish son of Maacah of Gath. When it was told Shimei, "Your slaves are in Gath," 40Shimei arose and saddled a donkey, and went to Achish in Gath, to search for his slaves; Shimei went and brought his slaves from Gath. 41When Solomon was told that Shimei had gone from Jerusalem to Gath and returned, 42the king sent and summoned Shimei, and said to him, "Did I not make you swear by the LORD, and solemnly adjure you, saying, 'Know for certain that on the day you go out and go to any place whatever, you shall die'? And you said to me, 'The sentence is fair; I accept.' 43Why then have you not kept your oath to the LORD and the commandment with which I charged you?" 44The king also said to Shimei, "You know in your own heart all the evil that you did to my father David; so the LORD will bring back your evil on your own head. 45But King Solomon shall be blessed, and the throne of David shall be established before the LORD forever." 46Then the king commanded Benaiah son of Jehoiada; and he went out and struck him down, and he died.

So the kingdom was established in the hand of Solomon.

3 Solomon made a marriage alliance with Pharaoh king of Egypt; he took Pharaoh's daughter and brought her into the city of David, until he had finished building his own house and the house of the LORD and the wall around Jerusalem. 2The people were sacrificing at the high places, however, because no house had yet been built for the name of the LORD.

3 Solomon loved the LORD, walking in the statutes of his father David; only, he sacrificed and offered incense at the high places. 4The king went to Gibeon to sacrifice there, for that was the principal

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carry out the orders (see 1.49–53 n.). The ever ready *Benaiah* becomes the new commander.

**2.36–46**: *Shimei* had not joined the party of Adonijah (1.8); hence *Solomon* by agreement placed him in protective custody instead of executing him. *Shimei*, however, violated the agreement, and Benaiah had the welcome task of performing another execution.

**3.1–28: Solomon in a dream prays for wisdom and receives it; he exercises it in judgment.** The reign of Solomon now begins. One might say that the story begins and ends with wisdom (ch 3 and 11.41), but includes folly (ch 11). **1–2**: The identity of the pharaoh whose daughter Solomon married is uncertain. Verse 2 is Deuteronomistic and apologetic, since to worship anywhere except at the temple was contrary to the editor's principles (Deut 12.1–14). Worship at *the high places* (hilltop shrines) was not outlawed until the time of Josiah (2 Kings 23.8). Solomon himself worshiped at *the principal high place* at *Gibeon* (v. 4).

**3.3–15**: On the story of how *Gibeon* became a part of the community of Israel, see

high place; Solomon used to offer a thousand burnt offerings on that altar. 5At Gibeon the LORD appeared to Solomon in a dream by night; and God said, "Ask what I should give you." 6And Solomon said, "You have shown great and steadfast love to your servant my father David, because he walked before you in faithfulness, in righteousness, and in uprightness of heart toward you; and you have kept for him this great and steadfast love, and have given him a son to sit on his throne today. 7And now, O LORD my God, you have made your servant king in place of my father David, although I am only a little child; I do not know how to go out or come in. 8And your servant is in the midst of the people whom you have chosen, a great people, so numerous they cannot be numbered or counted. 9Give your servant therefore an understanding mind to govern your people, able to discern between good and evil; for who can govern this your great people?"

10 It pleased the Lord that Solomon had asked this. 11God said to him, "Because you have asked this, and have not asked for yourself long life or riches, or for the life of your enemies, but have asked for yourself understanding to discern what is right, 12I now do according to your word. Indeed I give you a wise and discerning mind; no one like you has been before you and no one like you shall arise after you. 13I give you also what you have not asked, both riches and honor all your life; no other king shall compare with you. 14If you will walk in my ways, keeping my statutes and my commandments, as your father David walked, then I will lengthen your life."

15 Then Solomon awoke; it had been a dream. He came to Jerusalem where he stood before the ark of the covenant of the LORD. He offered up burnt offerings and offerings of well-being, and provided a feast for all his servants.

16 Later, two women who were prostitutes came to the king and stood before him. 17The one woman said, "Please, my lord, this woman and I live in the same house; and I gave birth while she was in the house. 18Then on the third day after I gave birth, this woman also gave birth. We were together; there was no one else with us in the house, only the two of us were in the house. 19Then this woman's son died in the night, because she lay on him. 20She got up in the middle of the night and took my son from beside me while your servant slept. She laid him at her breast, and laid her dead son at my breast. 21When I rose in the morning to nurse my son, I saw that he was dead; but when I looked at him closely in the morning, clearly it was not the son I had borne." 22But the other woman said, "No, the living son is mine, and the dead son is yours." The first said, "No, the dead son is yours, and the living son is mine." So they argued before the king.

23 Then the king said, "The one says, 'This is my son that is alive, and your son is dead'; while the other says, 'Not so! Your son is dead, and my son is the living one.' " 24So the king said, "Bring me a sword," and they brought a sword before the king. 25The king said, "Divide the living boy in two; then give half to the one, and half to the other." 26But the woman whose son was alive said to the king—because compassion for her son burned within her—"Please, my lord, give her the living boy; certainly do not kill him!" The other said, "It shall be neither mine nor yours; divide it." 27Then the king responded: "Give the first woman the living boy; do not kill him. She is his mother." 28All Israel heard of the judgment that the king had rendered; and they stood in awe of the king, because they perceived that the wisdom of God was in him, to execute justice.

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Josh ch 9; compare 2 Sam 21.2. **7**: The expression *only a little child* denotes humility; Solomon was probably about twenty years old. **14**: See v. 6. **15**: See 2 Sam 6.17–18. **16–28**: This is the most famous of the stories of Solomon's wisdom.

4 King Solomon was king over all Israel, 2and these were his high officials: Azariah son of Zadok was the priest; 3Elihoreph and Ahijah sons of Shisha were secretaries; Jehoshaphat son of Ahilud was recorder; 4Benaiah son of Jehoiada was in command of the army; Zadok and Abiathar were priests; 5Azariah son of Nathan was over the officials; Zabud son of Nathan was priest and king's friend; 6Ahishar was in charge of the palace; and Adoniram son of Abda was in charge of the forced labor.

7 Solomon had twelve officials over all Israel, who provided food for the king and his household; each one had to make provision for one month in the year. 8These were their names: Ben-hur, in the hill country of Ephraim; 9Ben-deker, in Makaz, Shaalbim, Beth-shemesh, and Elon-beth-hanan; 10Ben-hesed, in Arubboth (to him belonged Socoh and all the land of Hepher); 11Ben-abinadab, in all Naphath-dor (he had Taphath, Solomon's daughter, as his wife); 12Baana son of Ahilud, in Taanach, Megiddo, and all Beth-shean, which is beside Zarethan below Jezreel, and from Beth-shean to Abel-meholah, as far as the other side of Jokmeam; 13Ben-geber, in Ramoth-gilead (he had the villages of Jair son of Manasseh, which are in Gilead, and he had the region of Argob, which is in Bashan, sixty great cities with walls and bronze bars); 14Ahinadab son of Iddo, in Mahanaim; 15Ahimaaz, in Naphtali (he had taken Basemath, Solomon's daughter, as his wife); 16Baana son of Hushai, in Asher and Bealoth; 17Jehoshaphat son of Paruah, in Issachar; 18Shimei son of Ela, in Benjamin; 19Geber son of Uri, in the land of Gilead, the country of King Sihon of the Amorites and of King Og of Bashan. And there was one official in the land of Judah.

20 Judah and Israel were as numerous as the sand by the sea; they ate and drank and were happy. 21[c] Solomon was sovereign over all the kingdoms from the Euphrates to the land of the Philistines, even to the border of Egypt; they brought tribute and served Solomon all the days of his life.

22 Solomon's provision for one day was thirty cors of choice flour, and sixty cors of meal, 23ten fat oxen, and twenty pasture-fed cattle, one hundred sheep, besides deer, gazelles, roebucks, and fatted fowl. 24For he had dominion over all the region west of the Euphrates from Tiphsah to Gaza, over all the kings west of the Euphrates; and he had peace on all sides. 25During Solomon's lifetime Judah and Israel lived in safety, from Dan even to Beer-sheba, all of them under their vines and fig trees. 26Solomon also had forty thousand stalls of horses for his chariots, and twelve thousand horsemen. 27Those officials supplied provisions for King Solomon and for all who came to King Solomon's table, each one in his month; they let nothing be lacking. 28They also brought to the required place barley and straw for the horses and swift steeds, each according to his charge.

29 God gave Solomon very great wisdom, discernment, and breadth of understanding as vast as the the sand on the seashore, 30so that Solomon's wisdom surpassed the wisdom of all the people of

[c] Ch 5.1 in Heb

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**4.1–28: Solomon's organization of his kingdom. 1–6**: This list of high officials from the court records is now somewhat disordered. *Azariah son of Zadok* was probably not *the priest* (v. 2); that honor belonged to (another ?) Zadok (2.35) alone, *Abiathar (v. 4)* having been deposed (2.27).

**4.7–19**: Solomon's new administrative districts did not conform to the old tribal boundaries. Possibly this was one of the reasons for the revolt at the end of Solomon's reign, especially since Judah (v. 19) seems to have been exempt from the taxation mentioned in v. 7.

**4.20–21**: In the end, things turned out not to be so *happy*. Also, during Solomon's reign, the empire stretching *from the Euphrates . . . to the border of Egypt* began to fall away. Compare ch 11.

**4.22–28**: *Solomon's . . . stalls of horses for his chariots* (v. 26; compare 10.26–29) may have been similar to those of the time of Ahab found in the excavations at Megiddo.

**4.29–34: Further remarks on Solo-**

the east, and all the wisdom of Egypt. 31He was wiser than anyone else, wiser than Ethan the Ezrahite, and Heman, Calcol, and Darda, children of Mahol; his fame spread throughout all the surrounding nations. 32He composed three thousand proverbs, and his songs numbered a thousand and five. 33He would speak of trees, from the cedar that is in the Lebanon to the hyssop that grows in the wall; he would speak of animals, and birds, and reptiles, and fish. 34People came from all the nations to hear the wisdom of Solomon; they came from all the kings of the earth who had heard of his wisdom.

5 [d] Now King Hiram of Tyre sent his servants to Solomon, when he heard that they had anointed him king in place of his father; for Hiram had always been a friend to David. 2Solomon sent word to Hiram, saying, 3"You know that my father David could not build a house for the name of the LORD his God because of the warfare with which his enemies surrounded him, until the LORD put them under the soles of his feet. [e] 4But now the LORD my God has given me rest on every side; there is neither adversary nor misfortune. 5So I intend to build a house for the name of the LORD my God, as the LORD said to my father David, 'Your son, whom I will set on your throne in your place, shall build the house for my name.' 6Therefore command that cedars from the Lebanon be cut for me. My servants will join your servants, and I will give you whatever wages you set for your servants; for you know that there is no one among us who knows how to cut timber like the Sidonians."

7 When Hiram heard the words of Solomon, he rejoiced greatly, and said, "Blessed be the LORD today, who has given to David a wise son to be over this great people." 8Hiram sent word to Solomon, "I have heard the message that you have sent to me; I will fulfill all your needs in the matter of cedar and cypress timber. 9My servants shall bring it down to the sea from the Lebanon; I will make it into rafts to go by sea to the place you indicate. I will have them broken up there for you to take away. And you shall meet my needs by providing food for my household." 10So Hiram supplied Solomon's every need for timber of cedar and cypress. 11Solomon in turn gave Hiram twenty thousand cors of wheat as food for his household, and twenty cors of fine oil. Solomon gave this to Hiram year by year. 12So the LORD gave Solomon wisdom, as he promised him. There was peace between Hiram and Solomon; and the two of them made a treaty.

13 King Solomon conscripted forced labor out of all Israel; the levy numbered thirty thousand men. 14He sent them to the Lebanon, ten thousand a month in shifts; they would be a month in the Leb-

*d* Ch 5.15 in Heb

*e* Gk Tg Vg: Heb *my feet* or *his feet*

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**mon's wisdom.** In the biblical tradition, wisdom became Solomonic, just as laws were Mosaic, and psalms Davidic (compare Prov 1.1; Eccl 1.1, 12). **31**: On *Ethan* and *Heman,* compare the titles of Pss 88 and 89. **32**: On Solomon's reputation as a maker of *proverbs,* see Prov 1.1. With regard to the attribution of *songs* to Solomon, compare Pss 72; 127; and Song 1.1. The number *a thousand and five* suggests "The Thousand and One Nights" of Arabic literature or the number of Solomon's wives and concubines (11.3).

**5.1–18**: **Preparations for the building of the temple. 1–6**: On the friendship of *King Hiram of Tyre* with David, see 2 Sam 5.11–12. *The Sidonians* (v. 6), a term used here for all the people later called Phoenicians. From their two chief cities, Tyre and Sidon, they carried on a vast maritime enterprise, two of their chief articles of commerce being cedar wood and purple dye. About a century after the time of Solomon they established their most famous colony, Carthage in North Africa. **11**: *Twenty thousand cors of wheat,* estimated to equal 125,000 bushels; *twenty thousand cors* of liquid would equal over a million gallons, according to some computations. *Fine oil,* oil extracted from olives by beating, considered the best method for quality production.

**5.13–18**: One of the causes of the later disruption of the kingdom was *forced labor*

anon and two months at home; Adoniram was in charge of the forced labor. 15 Solomon also had seventy thousand laborers and eighty thousand stonecutters in the hill country, 16 besides Solomon's three thousand three hundred supervisors who were over the work, having charge of the people who did the work. 17 At the king's command, they quarried out great, costly stones in order to lay the foundation of the house with dressed stones. 18 So Solomon's builders and Hiram's builders and the Gebalites did the stonecutting and prepared the timber and the stone to build the house.

6 In the four hundred eightieth year after the Israelites came out of the land of Egypt, in the fourth year of Solomon's reign over Israel, in the month of Ziv, which is the second month, he began to build the house of the LORD. 2 The house that King Solomon built for the LORD was sixty cubits long, twenty cubits wide, and thirty cubits high. 3 The vestibule in front of the nave of the house was twenty cubits wide, across the width of the house. Its depth was ten cubits in front of the house. 4 For the house he made windows with recessed frames.[f] 5 He also built a structure against the wall of the house, running around the walls of the house, both the nave and the inner sanctuary; and he made side chambers all around. 6 The lowest story[g] was five cubits wide, the middle one was six cubits wide, and the third was seven cubits wide; for around the outside of the house he made offsets on the wall in order that the supporting beams should not be inserted into the walls of the house.

7 The house was built with stone finished at the quarry, so that neither hammer nor ax nor any tool of iron was heard in the temple while it was being built.

8 The entrance for the middle story was on the south side of the house: one went up by winding stairs to the middle story, and from the middle story to the third. 9 So he built the house, and finished it; he roofed the house with beams and planks of cedar. 10 He built the structure against the whole house, each story[h] five cubits high, and it was joined to the house with timbers of cedar.

11 Now the word of the LORD came to Solomon, 12 "Concerning this house that you are building, if you will walk in my statutes, obey my ordinances, and keep all my commandments by walking in them, then I will establish my promise with you, which I made to your father David. 13 I will dwell among the children of Israel, and will not forsake my people Israel."

14 So Solomon built the house, and finished it. 15 He lined the walls of the house on the inside with boards of cedar; from the floor of the house to the rafters of the ceiling, he covered them on the inside with wood; and he covered the floor of the house with boards of cy-

*f* Gk: Meaning of Heb uncertain *g* Gk: Heb *structure* *h* Heb lacks *each story*

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(12.4). *Adoniram,* also called Adoram and Hadoram (2 Sam 20.24; 2 Chr 10.18); compare 4.6; 12.18. *Gebalites,* people from Gebal, called Byblos by the Greeks, famous for its trade in Egyptian papyrus, the ancient form of paper. From the Greek name our word "Bible" is indirectly derived.

**6.1–38: The building of the temple. 1:** *The fourth year of Solomon's reign* would be approximately 960 B.C. *The four hundred eightieth year* before this (1440 B.C.) is now considered too early as a date for the Exodus and is possibly an artificially rounded number. *The month of Ziv* came in the spring (April-May). **2–6:** The *cubit,* approximately eighteen inches. Thus the temple itself had a rectangular floor plan of about 90 × 30 ft., and was about 45 ft. high. It consisted of two rooms: *the nave* or main room, which was about 60 ft. long (v. 17); and *the inner sanctuary* or holy of holies, a perfect cube about 30 ft. on a side (v. 20). In addition there was *the vestibule in front of the nave,* which, like the rest of the temple, was 30 ft. wide and about 15 ft. deep (v. 3). *Side chambers* surrounded the *nave and the inner sanctuary,* but not the vestibule.

**6.7:** There is no reason to doubt that the *stone* was *finished at the quarry,* though the writer has exaggerated the silence of the building operations. **8–10:** A further description of the side chambers.

**6.14–22:** No doubt the decorations of the temple were artistically intricate; the amount

press. 16He built twenty cubits of the rear of the house with boards of cedar from the floor to the rafters, and he built this within as an inner sanctuary, as the most holy place. 17The house, that is, the nave in front of the inner sanctuary, was forty cubits long. 18The cedar within the house had carvings of gourds and open flowers; all was cedar, no stone was seen. 19The inner sanctuary he prepared in the innermost part of the house, to set there the ark of the covenant of the LORD. 20The interior of the inner sanctuary was twenty cubits long, twenty cubits wide, and twenty cubits high; he overlaid it with pure gold. He also overlaid the altar with cedar.[i] 21Solomon overlaid the inside of the house with pure gold, then he drew chains of gold across, in front of the inner sanctuary, and overlaid it with gold. 22Next he overlaid the whole house with gold, in order that the whole house might be perfect; even the whole altar that belonged to the inner sanctuary he overlaid with gold.

23 In the inner sanctuary he made two cherubim of olivewood, each ten cubits high. 24Five cubits was the length of one wing of the cherub, and five cubits the length of the other wing of the cherub; it was ten cubits from the tip of one wing to the tip of the other. 25The other cherub also measured ten cubits; both cherubim had the same measure and the same form. 26The height of one cherub was ten cubits, and so was that of the other cherub. 27He put the cherubim in the innermost part of the house; the wings of the cherubim were spread out so that a wing of one was touching the one wall, and a wing of the other cherub was touching the other wall; their other wings toward the center of the house were touching wing to wing. 28He also overlaid the cherubim with gold.

29 He carved the walls of the house all around about with carved engravings of cherubim, palm trees, and open flowers, in the inner and outer rooms. 30The floor of the house he overlaid with gold, in the inner and outer rooms.

31 For the entrance to the inner sanctuary he made doors of olivewood; the lintel and the doorposts were five-sided.[i] 32He covered the two doors of olivewood with carvings of cherubim, palm trees, and open flowers; he overlaid them with gold, and spread gold on the cherubim and on the palm trees.

33 So also he made for the entrance to the nave doorposts of olivewood, four-sided each, 34and two doors of cypress wood; the two leaves of the one door were folding, and the two leaves of the other door were folding. 35He carved cherubim, palm trees, and open flowers, overlaying them with gold evenly applied upon the carved work. 36He built the inner court with three courses of dressed stone to one course of cedar beams.

37 In the fourth year the foundation of the house of the LORD was laid, in the month of Ziv. 38In the eleventh year, in the month of Bul, which is the eighth month, the house was finished in all its parts, and according to all its specifications. He was seven years in building it.

7 Solomon was building his own house thirteen years, and he finished his entire house.

2 He built the House of the Forest of the Lebanon one hundred cubits long, fifty cubits wide, and thirty cubits high, built on four rows of cedar pillars, with cedar beams on the pillars. 3It was roofed with cedar on the forty-five rafters, fifteen in each row, which were on the pillars. 4There were window frames in the three rows, facing each other in the three

*i* Meaning of Heb uncertain

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of gold, however, has probably been somewhat exaggerated. On *the ark of the covenant,* see 1 Sam 3.3 n.

**6.23–28:** On *the cherubim,* see 1 Sam 4.4 n.

**37–38:** *The month of Bul* was in the autumn (October-November).

**7.1–51: Details of Solomon's building operations. 1:** See 3.1. The palace and administrative complex took *thirteen years* to build, the temple only seven (6.38); compare 9.10.

rows. 5All the doorways and doorposts had four-sided frames, opposite, facing each other in the three rows.

6 He made the Hall of Pillars fifty cubits long and thirty cubits wide. There was a porch in front with pillars, and a canopy in front of them.

7 He made the Hall of the Throne where he was to pronounce judgment, the Hall of Justice, covered with cedar from floor to floor.

8 His own house where he would reside, in the other court back of the hall, was of the same construction. Solomon also made a house like this hall for Pharaoh's daughter, whom he had taken in marriage.

9 All these were made of costly stones, cut according to measure, sawed with saws, back and front, from the foundation to the coping, and from outside to the great court. 10The foundation was of costly stones, huge stones, stones of eight and ten cubits. 11There were costly stones above, cut to measure, and cedarwood. 12The great court had three courses of dressed stone to one layer of cedar beams all around; so had the inner court of the house of the LORD, and the vestibule of the house.

13 Now King Solomon invited and received Hiram from Tyre. 14He was the son of a widow of the tribe of Naphtali, whose father, a man of Tyre, had been an artisan in bronze; he was full of skill, intelligence, and knowledge in working bronze. He came to King Solomon, and did all his work.

15 He cast two pillars of bronze. Eighteen cubits was the height of the one, and a cord of twelve cubits would encircle it; the second pillar was the same.[j] 16He also made two capitals of molten bronze, to set on the tops of the pillars; the height of the one capital was five cubits, and the height of the other capital was five cubits. 17There were nets of checker work with wreaths of chain work for the capitals on the tops of the pillars; seven[k] for the one capital, and seven[k] for the other capital. 18He made the columns with two rows around each latticework to cover the capitals that were above the pomegranates; he did the same with the other capital. 19Now the capitals that were on the tops of the pillars in the vestibule were of lily-work, four cubits high. 20The capitals were on the two pillars and also above the rounded projection that was beside the latticework; there were two hundred pomegranates in rows all around; and so with the other capital. 21He set up the pillars at the vestibule of the temple; he set up the pillar on the south and called it Jachin; and he set up the pillar on the north and called it Boaz. 22On the tops of the pillars was lily-work. Thus the work of the pillars was finished.

23 Then he made the molten sea; it was round, ten cubits from brim to brim, and five cubits high. A line of thirty cubits would encircle it completely. 24Under its brim were panels all around it, each of ten cubits, surrounding the sea; there were two rows of panels, cast when it was cast. 25It stood on twelve oxen, three facing north, three facing west, three facing south, and three facing

*j* Cn: Heb *and a cord of twelve cubits encircled the second pillar*; Compare Jer 52.21 *k* Heb: Gk *a net*

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**7.6–12**: Details of the palace and administrative complex lying immediately south of the temple. **13–14**: The artisan *Hiram from Tyre* is not to be confused with the king of the same name; compare 2 Chr 2.13, where the name is given as Huram-abi.

**7.15–22**: In front of the vestibule were set up the two great freestanding *pillars of bronze* called *Jachin* and *Boaz*. The names mean something like "God establishes" and "He comes with power." The pillars themselves doubtless had a symbolic significance (e.g. "trees of life") which now eludes us. On their role at ceremonial occasions, see 2 Kings 11.14; 23.3.

**7.23–26**: *The molten sea* was a huge bowl or tank supported on *twelve oxen*. Its capacity was *two thousand baths* (the bath was a liquid measure equal to about six gallons). According to 2 Chr 4.6 the purpose *was for the priests to wash in*, though it is difficult to imagine just how the ablutions were accomplished, since the rim of the tank was some ten feet above the pavement. As with the pillars, there may

east; the sea was set on them. The hindquarters of each were toward the inside. 26Its thickness was a handbreadth; its brim was made like the brim of a cup, like the flower of a lily; it held two thousand baths.[l]

27 He also made the ten stands of bronze; each stand was four cubits long, four cubits wide, and three cubits high. 28This was the construction of the stands: they had borders; the borders were within the frames; 29on the borders that were set in the frames were lions, oxen, and cherubim. On the frames, both above and below the lions and oxen, there were wreaths of beveled work. 30Each stand had four bronze wheels and axles of bronze; at the four corners were supports for a basin. The supports were cast with wreaths at the side of each. 31Its opening was within the crown whose height was one cubit; its opening was round, as a pedestal is made; it was a cubit and a half wide. At its opening there were carvings; its borders were four-sided, not round. 32The four wheels were underneath the borders; the axles of the wheels were in the stands; and the height of a wheel was a cubit and a half. 33The wheels were made like a chariot wheel; their axles, their rims, their spokes, and their hubs were all cast. 34There were four supports at the four corners of each stand; the supports were of one piece with the stands. 35On the top of the stand there was a round band half a cubit high; on the top of the stand, its stays and its borders were of one piece with it. 36On the surfaces of its stays and on its borders he carved cherubim, lions, and palm trees, where each had space, with wreaths all around. 37In this way he made the ten stands; all of them were cast alike, with the same size and the same form.

38 He made ten basins of bronze; each basin held forty baths,[l] each basin measured four cubits; there was a basin for each of the ten stands. 39He set five of the stands on the south side of the house, and five on the north side of the house; he set the sea on the southeast corner of the house.

40 Hiram also made the pots, the shovels, and the basins. So Hiram finished all the work that he did for King Solomon on the house of the LORD: 41the two pillars, the two bowls of the capitals that were on the tops of the pillars, the two latticeworks to cover the two bowls of the capitals that were on the tops of the pillars; 42the four hundred pomegranates for the two latticeworks, two rows of pomegranates for each latticework, to cover the two bowls of the capitals that were on the pillars; 43the ten stands, the ten basins on the stands; 44the one sea, and the twelve oxen underneath the sea.

45 The pots, the shovels, and the basins, all these vessels that Hiram made for King Solomon for the house of the LORD were of burnished bronze. 46In the plain of the Jordan the king cast them, in the clay ground between Succoth and Zarethan. 47Solomon left all the vessels unweighed, because there were so many of them; the weight of the bronze was not determined.

48 So Solomon made all the vessels that were in the house of the LORD: the golden altar, the golden table for the bread of the Presence, 49the lampstands of pure gold, five on the south side and five on the north, in front of the inner sanctuary; the flowers, the lamps, and the tongs, of gold; 50the cups, snuffers, basins, dishes for incense, and firepans, of pure gold; the sockets for the doors of the innermost part of the house, the most

*l* A Heb measure of volume

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have been also a symbolic significance (such as "life-giving water"; compare the artificial lakes near Egyptian temples). The *twelve oxen* were really couchant bulls, symbols of fertility and power in many religions of the ancient Near East. Their arrangement according to the four points of the compass suggested universal dominion.

**7.27–39**: *The ten stands,* highly ornamented bronze wagons on each of which was mounted one of the *ten basins.*

**7.48–50**: In *the nave* were *the golden altar*

holy place, and for the doors of the nave of the temple, of gold.

51 Thus all the work that King Solomon did on the house of the LORD was finished. Solomon brought in the things that his father David had dedicated, the silver, the gold, and the vessels, and stored them in the treasuries of the house of the LORD.

8 Then Solomon assembled the elders of Israel and all the heads of the tribes, the leaders of the ancestral houses of the Israelites, before King Solomon in Jerusalem, to bring up the ark of the covenant of the LORD out of the city of David, which is Zion. 2All the people of Israel assembled to King Solomon at the festival in the month Ethanim, which is the seventh month. 3And all the elders of Israel came, and the priests carried the ark. 4So they brought up the ark of the LORD, the tent of meeting, and all the holy vessels that were in the tent; the priests and the Levites brought them up. 5King Solomon and all the congregation of Israel, who had assembled before him, were with him before the ark, sacrificing so many sheep and oxen that they could not be counted or numbered. 6Then the priests brought the ark of the covenant of the LORD to its place, in the inner sanctuary of the house, in the most holy place, underneath the wings of the cherubim. 7For the cherubim spread out their wings over the place of the ark, so that the cherubim made a covering above the ark and its poles. 8The poles were so long that the ends of the poles were seen from the holy place in front of the inner sanctuary; but they could not be seen from outside; they are there to this day. 9There was nothing in the ark except the two tablets of stone that Moses had placed there at Horeb, where the LORD made a covenant with the Israelites, when they came out of the land of Egypt. 10And when the priests came out of the holy place, a cloud filled the house of the LORD, 11so that the priests could not stand to minister because of the cloud; for the glory of the LORD filled the house of the LORD.

12 Then Solomon said,

"The LORD has said that he would
dwell in thick darkness.
13 I have built you an exalted house,
a place for you to dwell in
forever."

14 Then the king turned around and blessed all the assembly of Israel, while all the assembly of Israel stood. 15He said, "Blessed be the LORD, the God of Israel, who with his hand has fulfilled what he promised with his mouth to my father David, saying, 16'Since the day that I brought my people Israel out of Egypt, I have not chosen a city from any of the tribes of Israel in which to build a house, that my name might be there; but I chose David to be over my people Israel.' 17My father David had it in mind to build a house for the name of the LORD, the God of Israel. 18But the LORD said to

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for incense, the *table for the bread of the Presence* (or showbread, see Lev 24.5–9), and the ten *lampstands,* plus smaller objects. *The lampstands* were simple, each being a rod resting on a base, with a small bowl at the top for oil and wick; not to be confused with the lampstand described in Ex 25.31–40.

**8.1–66: The dedication of the temple.**

**1–11**: Bringing *the ark of the covenant* into the temple (2 Sam 6.12–15). *The city of David,* or *Zion,* was south of the temple area, in the southeastern part of the city. *The month Ethanim* or Tishri occurred in the autumn (September-October). The dedication of the temple was, therefore, postponed for eleven months (6.38), in order to make it a part of the autumnal new-year festival, the religious high point of the year.

**8.7**: *The cherubim,* see 6.23–28. The ark was carried by *the poles* (v. 8); the writer here possibly wrote or compiled this material during the time before the destruction of the temple, as is seen from the words *they are there to this day.*

**8.12–21**: Solomon's address to the people. It is impossible to tell how much of this comes from Solomon and how much from the Deuteronomistic writer. The *thick darkness* (v. 12) refers to the fact that the inner sanctuary had no windows, being in total darkness except when the door was opened on rare occasions. According to the Greek version, the poetic prologue (vv. 12–13) was taken from the Book of Jashar (see Josh 10.13 n.).

my father David, 'You did well to consider building a house for my name; 19nevertheless you shall not build the house, but your son who shall be born to you shall build the house for my name.' 20Now the LORD has upheld the promise that he made; for I have risen in the place of my father David; I sit on the throne of Israel, as the LORD promised, and have built the house for the name of the LORD, the God of Israel. 21There I have provided a place for the ark, in which is the covenant of the LORD that he made with our ancestors when he brought them out of the land of Egypt."

22 Then Solomon stood before the altar of the LORD in the presence of all the assembly of Israel, and spread out his hands to heaven. 23He said, "O LORD, God of Israel, there is no God like you in heaven above or on earth beneath, keeping covenant and steadfast love for your servants who walk before you with all their heart, 24the covenant that you kept for your servant my father David as you declared to him; you promised with your mouth and have this day fulfilled with your hand. 25Therefore, O LORD, God of Israel, keep for your servant my father David that which you promised him, saying, 'There shall never fail you a successor before me to sit on the throne of Israel, if only your children look to their way, to walk before me as you have walked before me.' 26Therefore, O God of Israel, let your word be confirmed, which you promised to your servant my father David.

27 "But will God indeed dwell on the earth? Even heaven and the highest heaven cannot contain you, much less this house that I have built! 28Regard your servant's prayer and his plea, O LORD my God, heeding the cry and the prayer that your servant prays to you today; 29that your eyes may be open night and day toward this house, the place of which you said, 'My name shall be there,' that you may heed the prayer that your servant prays toward this place. 30Hear the plea of your servant and of your people Israel when they pray toward this place; O hear in heaven your dwelling place; heed and forgive.

31 "If someone sins against a neighbor and is given an oath to swear, and comes and swears before your altar in this house, 32then hear in heaven, and act, and judge your servants, condemning the guilty by bringing their conduct on their own head, and vindicating the righteous by rewarding them according to their righteousness.

33 "When your people Israel, having sinned against you, are defeated before an enemy but turn again to you, confess your name, pray and plead with you in this house, 34then hear in heaven, forgive the sin of your people Israel, and bring them again to the land that you gave to their ancestors.

35 "When heaven is shut up and there is no rain because they have sinned against you, and then they pray toward this place, confess your name, and turn from their sin, because you punish[m] them, 36then hear in heaven, and forgive the sin of your servants, your people Israel, when you teach them the good way in which they should walk; and grant rain on your land, which you have given to your people as an inheritance.

37 "If there is famine in the land, if there is plague, blight, mildew, locust, or caterpillar; if their enemy besieges them in any[n] of their cities; whatever plague, whatever sickness there is; 38whatever prayer, whatever plea there is from any individual or from all your people Israel, all knowing the afflictions of their own hearts so that they stretch out their hands toward this house; 39then hear in heaven your dwelling place, for-

*m* Or *when you answer* *n* Gk Syr: Heb *in the land*

**8.22–40:** Solomon's prayer of dedication. This prayer, entirely in the spirit of the book of Deuteronomy, was composed mostly by the Deuteronomist. The phrase *and bring them again to the land that you gave to their ancestors* (v. 34) was possibly added during the Exile.

give, act, and render to all whose hearts you know—according to all their ways, for only you know what is in every human heart— 40so that they may fear you all the days that they live in the land that you gave to our ancestors.

41 "Likewise when a foreigner, who is not of your people Israel, comes from a distant land because of your name 42—for they shall hear of your great name, your mighty hand, and your outstretched arm—when a foreigner comes and prays toward this house, 43then hear in heaven your dwelling place, and do according to all that the foreigner calls to you, so that all the peoples of the earth may know your name and fear you, as do your people Israel, and so that they may know that your name has been invoked on this house that I have built.

44 "If your people go out to battle against their enemy, by whatever way you shall send them, and they pray to the LORD toward the city that you have chosen and the house that I have built for your name, 45then hear in heaven their prayer and their plea, and maintain their cause.

46 "If they sin against you—for there is no one who does not sin—and you are angry with them and give them to an enemy, so that they are carried away captive to the land of the enemy, far off or near; 47yet if they come to their senses in the land to which they have been taken captive, and repent, and plead with you in the land of their captors, saying, 'We have sinned, and have done wrong; we have acted wickedly'; 48if they repent with all their heart and soul in the land of their enemies, who took them captive, and pray to you toward their land, which you gave to their ancestors, the city that you have chosen, and the house that I have built for your name; 49then hear in heaven your dwelling place their prayer and their plea, maintain their cause 50and forgive your people who have sinned against you, and all their transgressions that they have committed against you; and grant them compassion in the sight of their captors, so that they may have compassion on them 51(for they are your people and heritage, which you brought out of Egypt, from the midst of the iron-smelter). 52Let your eyes be open to the plea of your servant, and to the plea of your people Israel, listening to them whenever they call to you. 53For you have separated them from among all the peoples of the earth, to be your heritage, just as you promised through Moses, your servant, when you brought our ancestors out of Egypt, O Lord GOD."

54 Now when Solomon finished offering all this prayer and this plea to the LORD, he arose from facing the altar of the LORD, where he had knelt with hands outstretched toward heaven; 55he stood and blessed all the assembly of Israel with a loud voice:

56 "Blessed be the LORD, who has given rest to his people Israel according to all that he promised; not one word has failed of all his good promise, which he spoke through his servant Moses. 57The LORD our God be with us, as he was with our ancestors; may he not leave us or abandon us, 58but incline our hearts to him, to walk in all his ways, and to keep his commandments, his statutes, and his ordinances, which he commanded our ancestors. 59Let these words of mine, with which I pleaded before the LORD, be near to the LORD our God day and night, and may he maintain the cause of his servant and the cause of his people Israel, as each day requires; 60so that all the peoples of the earth may know that the LORD is God; there is no other. 61Therefore devote yourselves completely to the LORD our God, walking in his statutes and keeping his commandments, as at this day."

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**8.41–53**: An expansion of the prayer by a writer during the Exile. The many references to being *carried away captive to the land of the enemy*, especially in vv. 46–53, should be noticed.

**8.62–66**: This would have been a natural

62 Then the king, and all Israel with him, offered sacrifice before the LORD. 63 Solomon offered as sacrifices of well-being to the LORD twenty-two thousand oxen and one hundred twenty thousand sheep. So the king and all the people of Israel dedicated the house of the LORD. 64 The same day the king consecrated the middle of the court that was in front of the house of the LORD; for there he offered the burnt offerings and the grain offerings and the fat pieces of the sacrifices of well-being, because the bronze altar that was before the LORD was too small to receive the burnt offerings and the grain offerings and the fat pieces of the sacrifices of well-being.

65 So Solomon held the festival at that time, and all Israel with him—a great assembly, people from Lebo-hamath to the Wadi of Egypt—before the LORD our God, seven days.[o] 66 On the eighth day he sent the people away; and they blessed the king, and went to their tents, joyful and in good spirits because of all the goodness that the LORD had shown to his servant David and to his people Israel.

9 When Solomon had finished building the house of the LORD and the king's house and all that Solomon desired to build, 2 the LORD appeared to Solomon a second time, as he had appeared to him at Gibeon. 3 The LORD said to him, "I have heard your prayer and your plea, which you made before me; I have consecrated this house that you have built, and put my name there forever; my eyes and my heart will be there for all time. 4 As for you, if you will walk before me, as David your father walked, with integrity of heart and uprightness, doing according to all that I have commanded you, and keeping my statutes and my ordinances, 5 then I will establish your royal throne over Israel forever, as I promised your father David, saying, 'There shall not fail you a successor on the throne of Israel.'

6 "If you turn aside from following me, you or your children, and do not keep my commandments and my statutes that I have set before you, but go and serve other gods and worship them, 7 then I will cut Israel off from the land that I have given them; and the house that I have consecrated for my name I will cast out of my sight; and Israel will become a proverb and a taunt among all peoples. 8 This house will become a heap of ruins;[p] everyone passing by it will be astonished, and will hiss; and they will say, 'Why has the LORD done such a thing to this land and to this house?' 9 Then they will say, 'Because they have forsaken the LORD their God, who brought their ancestors out of the land of Egypt, and embraced other gods, worshiping them and serving them; therefore the LORD has brought this disaster upon them.' "

10 At the end of twenty years, in which Solomon had built the two houses, the house of the LORD and the king's house, 11 King Hiram of Tyre having supplied Solomon with cedar and cypress timber and gold, as much as he desired, King Solomon gave to Hiram twenty cities in the land of Galilee. 12 But when Hiram came from Tyre to see the cities that Solomon had given him, they

*o* Compare Gk: Heb *seven days and seven days, fourteen days* *p* Syr Old Latin: Heb *will become high*

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conclusion of the chapter by a writer who worked during the time before the destruction of the temple. In v. 64 *the bronze altar* in front of the temple is specifically mentioned for the first time, though it is alluded to in vv. 22 and 54.

**9.1–9: Solomon's vision.** A thoroughly Deuteronomic composition, perhaps by a writer during the Exile, who lived after the temple had *become a heap of ruins* (v. 8), and could point out the sinfulness that had led to national ruin (see Introduction).

**9.10–14: An interlude;** a story told to explain the origin of a name. The meaning of *Cabul* is not known; "like nothing" is as good a conjecture as any. On the historical side, Hiram's supplying of timber is irrelevant; Solomon had paid for that (5.11). It would seem that Solomon was in financial difficulties and was forced to cede *twenty cities* to

did not please him. 13Therefore he said, "What kind of cities are these that you have given me, my brother?" So they are called the land of Cabul[q] to this day. 14But Hiram had sent to the king one hundred twenty talents of gold.

15 This is the account of the forced labor that King Solomon conscripted to build the house of the LORD and his own house, the Millo and the wall of Jerusalem, Hazor, Megiddo, Gezer 16(Pharaoh king of Egypt had gone up and captured Gezer and burned it down, had killed the Canaanites who lived in the city, and had given it as dowry to his daughter, Solomon's wife; 17so Solomon rebuilt Gezer), Lower Beth-horon, 18Baalath, Tamar in the wilderness, within the land, 19as well as all of Solomon's storage cities, the cities for his chariots, the cities for his cavalry, and whatever Solomon desired to build, in Jerusalem, in Lebanon, and in all the land of his dominion. 20All the people who were left of the Amorites, the Hittites, the Perizzites, the Hivites, and the Jebusites, who were not of the people of Israel— 21their descendants who were still left in the land, whom the Israelites were unable to destroy completely—these Solomon conscripted for slave labor, and so they are to this day. 22But of the Israelites Solomon made no slaves; they were the soldiers, they were his officials, his commanders, his captains, and the commanders of his chariotry and cavalry.

23 These were the chief officers who were over Solomon's work: five hundred fifty, who had charge of the people who carried on the work.

24 But Pharaoh's daughter went up from the city of David to her own house that Solomon had built for her; then he built the Millo.

25 Three times a year Solomon used to offer up burnt offerings and sacrifices of well-being on the altar that he built for the LORD, offering incense[r] before the LORD. So he completed the house.

26 King Solomon built a fleet of ships at Ezion-geber, which is near Eloth on the shore of the Red Sea,[s] in the land of Edom. 27Hiram sent his servants with the fleet, sailors who were familiar with the sea, together with the servants of Solomon. 28They went to Ophir, and imported from there four hundred twenty talents of gold, which they delivered to King Solomon.

10 When the queen of Sheba heard of the fame of Solomon (fame due to[t] the name of the LORD), she came to test him with hard questions. 2She came to Jerusalem with a very great retinue, with camels bearing spices, and very much gold, and precious stones; and when she came to Solomon, she told him all that was on her mind. 3Solomon answered all her questions; there was nothing hidden from the king that he

*q* Perhaps meaning *a land good for nothing*
*r* Gk: Heb *offering incense with it that was*
*s* Or *Sea of Reeds* *t* Meaning of Heb uncertain

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Hiram for a cash consideration (a gold talent would have weighed about seventy-five pounds).

**9.15–22: The forced levy** (see 5.13). *The Millo* (also v. 24; 2 Sam 5.9) is usually interpreted as an earthwork south of the temple area; the word probably means "a filling." Verse 22 seems to be contradicted by 5.13 and 12.4.

**9.23–28: Miscellaneous details. 24:** Compare v. 16 and 3.1. **25:** In those early days the king still exercised priestly functions. **26–28:** *Red Sea* here refers to the Gulf of Aqaba. The location of *Ophir* is unknown; it may have been in southern Arabia (compare 10.11 and Gen 10.29). Excavations at Ezion-geber have disclosed the refineries in which copper from the Arabah mines was smelted.

**10.1–29: The visit of the queen of Sheba; Solomon's wealth and business enterprises. 1–5:** *Sheba* is usually considered to have been located in southwest Arabia, modern Yemen. Some, however, think that this queen came from a colony of Sheba in northern Arabia, where a number of queens are known to have ruled. Practical wisdom, proverbial sayings, and contests of wits were characteristic of the biblical world; compare 4.29–34 and the Old Testament books of "wisdom," such as Job and Proverbs. The word for *spirit* (v. 5) can be translated

could not explain to her. 4When the queen of Sheba had observed all the wisdom of Solomon, the house that he had built, 5the food of his table, the seating of his officials, and the attendance of his servants, their clothing, his valets, and his burnt offerings that he offered at the house of the LORD, there was no more spirit in her.

6 So she said to the king, "The report was true that I heard in my own land of your accomplishments and of your wisdom, 7but I did not believe the reports until I came and my own eyes had seen it. Not even half had been told me; your wisdom and prosperity far surpass the report that I had heard. 8Happy are your wives![u] Happy are these your servants, who continually attend you and hear your wisdom! 9Blessed be the LORD your God, who has delighted in you and set you on the throne of Israel! Because the LORD loved Israel forever, he has made you king to execute justice and righteousness." 10Then she gave the king one hundred twenty talents of gold, a great quantity of spices, and precious stones; never again did spices come in such quantity as that which the queen of Sheba gave to King Solomon.

11 Moreover, the fleet of Hiram, which carried gold from Ophir, brought from Ophir a great quantity of almug wood and precious stones. 12From the almug wood the king made supports for the house of the LORD, and for the king's house, lyres also and harps for the singers; no such almug wood has come or been seen to this day.

13 Meanwhile King Solomon gave to the queen of Sheba every desire that she expressed, as well as what he gave her out of Solomon's royal bounty. Then she returned to her own land, with her servants.

14 The weight of gold that came to Solomon in one year was six hundred sixty-six talents of gold, 15besides that which came from the traders and from the business of the merchants, and from all the kings of Arabia and the governors of the land. 16King Solomon made two hundred large shields of beaten gold; six hundred shekels of gold went into each large shield. 17He made three hundred shields of beaten gold; three minas of gold went into each shield; and the king put them in the House of the Forest of Lebanon. 18The king also made a great ivory throne, and overlaid it with the finest gold. 19The throne had six steps. The top of the throne was rounded in the back, and on each side of the seat were arm rests and two lions standing beside the arm rests, 20while twelve lions were standing, one on each end of a step on the six steps. Nothing like it was ever made in any kingdom. 21All King Solomon's drinking vessels were of gold, and all the vessels of the House of the Forest of Lebanon were of pure gold; none were of silver—it was not considered as anything in the days of Solomon. 22For the king had a fleet of ships of Tarshish at sea with the fleet of Hiram. Once every three years the fleet of ships of Tarshish used to come bringing gold, silver, ivory, apes, and peacocks.[v]

23 Thus King Solomon excelled all the kings of the earth in riches and in wisdom. 24The whole earth sought the presence of Solomon to hear his wisdom, which God had put into his mind. 25Every one of them brought a present, objects of silver and gold, garments, weaponry, spices, horses, and mules, so much year by year.

*u* Gk Syr: Heb *men* *v* Or *baboons*

"breath"—the queen was breathless with amazement. **10**: On the weight of *talents of gold,* see 9.14 n.

**10.11–12**: An interlude, related to 9.26–28. *Almug wood* is now often called sandalwood. **13**: The Ethiopians (Abyssinians) have a tradition according to which *every desire that she expressed* included an heir, who later became king of Ethiopia, thus establishing the true dynasty of David for that country. **16–17**: If there were fifty shekels in a mina (Ezek 45.12), the smaller shields weighed one hundred and fifty shekels.

**10.22**: *Ships of Tarshish,* i.e. ships capable of making long voyages; compare vv. 11–12; 9.26–28; Isa 23.1. **26–29**: These verses de-

26 Solomon gathered together chariots and horses; he had fourteen hundred chariots and twelve thousand horses, which he stationed in the chariot cities and with the king in Jerusalem. 27The king made silver as common in Jerusalem as stones, and he made cedars as numerous as the sycamores of the Shephelah. 28Solomon's import of horses was from Egypt and Kue, and the king's traders received them from Kue at a price. 29A chariot could be imported from Egypt for six hundred shekels of silver, and a horse for one hundred fifty; so through the king's traders they were exported to all the kings of the Hittites and the kings of Aram.

11 King Solomon loved many foreign women along with the daughter of Pharaoh: Moabite, Ammonite, Edomite, Sidonian, and Hittite women, 2from the nations concerning which the LORD had said to the Israelites, "You shall not enter into marriage with them, neither shall they with you; for they will surely incline your heart to follow their gods"; Solomon clung to these in love. 3Among his wives were seven hundred princesses and three hundred concubines; and his wives turned away his heart. 4For when Solomon was old, his wives turned away his heart after other gods; and his heart was not true to the LORD his God, as was the heart of his father David. 5For Solomon followed Astarte the goddess of the Sidonians, and Milcom the abomination of the Ammonites. 6So Solomon did what was evil in the sight of the LORD, and did not completely follow the LORD, as his father David had done. 7Then Solomon built a high place for Chemosh the abomination of Moab, and for Molech the abomination of the Ammonites, on the mountain east of Jerusalem. 8He did the same for all his foreign wives, who offered incense and sacrificed to their gods.

9 Then the LORD was angry with Solomon, because his heart had turned away from the LORD, the God of Israel, who had appeared to him twice, 10and had commanded him concerning this matter, that he should not follow other gods; but he did not observe what the LORD commanded. 11Therefore the LORD said to Solomon, "Since this has been your mind and you have not kept my covenant and my statutes that I have commanded you, I will surely tear the kingdom from you and give it to your servant. 12Yet for the sake of your father David I will not do it in your lifetime; I will tear it out of the hand of your son. 13I will not, however, tear away the entire kingdom; I will give one tribe to your son, for the sake of my servant David and for the sake of Jerusalem, which I have chosen."

14 Then the LORD raised up an adversary against Solomon, Hadad the Edomite; he was of the royal house in Edom. 15For when David was in Edom, and Joab the commander of the army went up to bury the dead, he killed every male in Edom 16(for Joab and all Israel remained there six months, until he had eliminated every male in Edom); 17but Hadad fled to Egypt with some Edomites who were servants of his father. He was a young boy at that time. 18They set out from Midian and came to Paran; they took people with them from Paran and came to Egypt, to Pharaoh king of Egypt, who gave him a house, assigned

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scribe Solomon's very large commerce in *horses* and *chariots*. *Kue* was Cilicia, in southeast Asia Minor. *The kings of the Hittites* ruled small principalities in what is now northern Syria.

**11.1–43: The dark side of Solomon's reign.** The Deuteronomistic writer knew the tragedies that followed Solomon (vv. 12–13) and sought to probe their causes. In this connection, Deut 17.14–20, from the same school of writers, should be carefully considered. **1–13:** Judgment on Solomon. Compare Deut 7.1–4. On *Astarte,* see 1 Sam 7.3–4 n. On the *high place,* see 3.1–2 n.

**11.14–40:** Adversaries of Solomon.

**11.14–22:** Hadad the Edomite. **15:** *David* had conquered *Edom* (*every male* is of course an exaggeration). Near the beginning of Solomon's reign (v. 21), *Hadad the Edomite* revolted rather successfully (v. 25). **23–25:** Re-

him an allowance of food, and gave him land. 19Hadad found great favor in the sight of Pharaoh, so that he gave him his sister-in-law for a wife, the sister of Queen Tahpenes. 20The sister of Tahpenes gave birth by him to his son Genubath, whom Tahpenes weaned in Pharaoh's house; Genubath was in Pharaoh's house among the children of Pharaoh. 21When Hadad heard in Egypt that David slept with his ancestors and that Joab the commander of the army was dead, Hadad said to Pharaoh, "Let me depart, that I may go to my own country." 22But Pharaoh said to him, "What do you lack with me that you now seek to go to your own country?" And he said, "No, do let me go."

23 God raised up another adversary against Solomon,[w] Rezon son of Eliada, who had fled from his master, King Hadadezer of Zobah. 24He gathered followers around him and became leader of a marauding band, after the slaughter by David; they went to Damascus, settled there, and made him king in Damascus. 25He was an adversary of Israel all the days of Solomon, making trouble as Hadad did; he despised Israel and reigned over Aram.

26 Jeroboam son of Nebat, an Ephraimite of Zeredah, a servant of Solomon, whose mother's name was Zeruah, a widow, rebelled against the king. 27The following was the reason he rebelled against the king. Solomon built the Millo, and closed up the gap in the wall[x] of the city of his father David. 28The man Jeroboam was very able, and when Solomon saw that the young man was industrious he gave him charge over all the forced labor of the house of Joseph. 29About that time, when Jeroboam was leaving Jerusalem, the prophet Ahijah the Shilonite found him on the road. Ahijah had clothed himself with a new garment. The two of them were alone in the open country 30when Ahijah laid hold of the new garment he was wearing and tore it into twelve pieces. 31He then said to Jeroboam: Take for yourself ten pieces; for thus says the LORD, the God of Israel, "See, I am about to tear the kingdom from the hand of Solomon, and will give you ten tribes. 32One tribe will remain his, for the sake of my servant David and for the sake of Jerusalem, the city that I have chosen out of all the tribes of Israel. 33This is because he has[y] forsaken me, worshiped Astarte the goddess of the Sidonians, Chemosh the god of Moab, and Milcom the god of the Ammonites, and has[y] not walked in my ways, doing what is right in my sight and keeping my statutes and my ordinances, as his father David did. 34Nevertheless I will not take the whole kingdom away from him but will make him ruler all the days of his life, for the sake of my servant David whom I chose and who did keep my commandments and my statutes; 35but I will take the kingdom away from his son and give it to you—that is, the ten tribes. 36Yet to his son I will give one tribe, so that my servant David may always have a lamp before me in Jerusalem, the city where I have chosen to put my name. 37I will take you, and you shall reign over all that your soul desires; you shall be king over Israel. 38If you will listen to all that I command you, walk in my ways, and do what is right in my sight by keeping my statutes and my commandments, as David my servant did, I will be with you, and will build you an enduring house, as

*w* Heb *him* *x* Heb lacks *in the wall*
*y* Gk Syr Vg: Heb *they have*

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zon of *Aram* (Syria). On David's conquest of *King Hadadezer of Zobah* and of the Syrians (Arameans) of *Damascus,* see 2 Sam 8.3–6; 10.15–19. *Rezon* set up a new kingdom in *Damascus* and defied Solomon. Thus the empire of *David* began to melt away under Solomon.

**11.26–40**: Jeroboam of Israel. The greatest danger, namely internal revolt, came from *Jeroboam son of Nebat. The prophet Ahijah the Shilonite* (of Shiloh) expected that *Jeroboam* would be more loyal to *the God of Israel* than *Solomon* had been. The *lamp* (v. 36) was a symbol of the permanence of the Davidic dy-

I built for David, and I will give Israel to you. 39For this reason I will punish the descendants of David, but not forever." 40Solomon sought therefore to kill Jeroboam; but Jeroboam promptly fled to Egypt, to King Shishak of Egypt, and remained in Egypt until the death of Solomon.

41 Now the rest of the acts of Solomon, all that he did as well as his wisdom, are they not written in the Book of the Acts of Solomon? 42The time that Solomon reigned in Jerusalem over all Israel was forty years. 43Solomon slept with his ancestors and was buried in the city of his father David; and his son Rehoboam succeeded him.

12 Rehoboam went to Shechem, for all Israel had come to Shechem to make him king. 2When Jeroboam son of Nebat heard of it (for he was still in Egypt, where he had fled from King Solomon), then Jeroboam returned from[z] Egypt. 3And they sent and called him; and Jeroboam and all the assembly of Israel came and said to Rehoboam, 4"Your father made our yoke heavy. Now therefore lighten the hard service of your father and his heavy yoke that he placed on us, and we will serve you." 5He said to them, "Go away for three days, then come again to me." So the people went away.

6 Then King Rehoboam took counsel with the older men who had attended his father Solomon while he was still alive, saying, "How do you advise me to answer this people?" 7They answered him, "If you will be a servant to this people today and serve them, and speak good words to them when you answer them, then they will be your servants forever." 8But he disregarded the advice that the older men gave him, and consulted with the young men who had grown up with him and now attended him. 9He said to them, "What do you advise that we answer this people who have said to me, 'Lighten the yoke that your father put on us'?" 10The young men who had grown up with him said to him, "Thus you should say to this people who spoke to you, 'Your father made our yoke heavy, but you must lighten it for us'; thus you should say to them, 'My little finger is thicker than my father's loins. 11Now, whereas my father laid on you a heavy yoke, I will add to your yoke. My father disciplined you with whips, but I will discipline you with scorpions.' "

12 So Jeroboam and all the people came to Rehoboam the third day, as the king had said, "Come to me again the third day." 13The king answered the people harshly. He disregarded the advice that the older men had given him 14and spoke to them according to the advice of the young men, "My father made your yoke heavy, but I will add to your yoke; my father disciplined you with whips, but I will discipline you with scorpions." 15So the king did not listen to the people, because it was a turn of affairs brought about by the LORD that he might fulfill his word, which the LORD had spoken by Ahijah the Shilonite to Jeroboam son of Nebat.

16 When all Israel saw that the king would not listen to them, the people answered the king,

"What share do we have in David?
We have no inheritance in the
son of Jesse.
To your tents, O Israel!

z Gk Vg Compare 2 Chr 10.2: Heb *lived in*

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nasty (2 Sam 21.17). *King Shishak of Egypt* was probably the less friendly successor of the pharaoh whose daughter was married to *Solomon* (3.1). **41–43**: Conclusion. On *the Book of the Acts of Solomon*, see the Introduction. The figure *forty years* is an approximation; compare the same figure for David in 2.11.

**12.1–33**: **The kingdom divided; Jeroboam's idolatry. 1–5**: *Shechem* was at that time the chief town of the northern tribes (Josh 24.1, 32), where *Rehoboam* needed to be confirmed as *king* in order to hold the allegiance of these tribes. **11**: The word *scorpions* designates here stinging whips, much more cruel than ordinary *whips*.

**12.12–15**: *Rehoboam* takes the tragically wrong advice of *the young men*. The attitude of the writer in v. 15 is explained in 11.33.

Look now to your own house,
O David."

So Israel went away to their tents. 17But Rehoboam reigned over the Israelites who were living in the towns of Judah. 18When King Rehoboam sent Adoram, who was taskmaster over the forced labor, all Israel stoned him to death. King Rehoboam then hurriedly mounted his chariot to flee to Jerusalem. 19So Israel has been in rebellion against the house of David to this day.

20 When all Israel heard that Jeroboam had returned, they sent and called him to the assembly and made him king over all Israel. There was no one who followed the house of David, except the tribe of Judah alone.

21 When Rehoboam came to Jerusalem, he assembled all the house of Judah and the tribe of Benjamin, one hundred eighty thousand chosen troops to fight against the house of Israel, to restore the kingdom to Rehoboam son of Solomon. 22But the word of God came to Shemaiah the man of God: 23Say to King Rehoboam of Judah, son of Solomon, and to all the house of Judah and Benjamin, and to the rest of the people, 24"Thus says the LORD, You shall not go up or fight against your kindred the people of Israel. Let everyone go home, for this thing is from me." So they heeded the word of the LORD and went home again, according to the word of the LORD.

25 Then Jeroboam built Shechem in the hill country of Ephraim, and resided there; he went out from there and built Penuel. 26Then Jeroboam said to himself, "Now the kingdom may well revert to the house of David. 27If this people continues to go up to offer sacrifices in the house of the LORD at Jerusalem, the heart of this people will turn again to their master, King Rehoboam of Judah; they will kill me and return to King Rehoboam of Judah." 28So the king took counsel, and made two calves of gold. He said to the people,[a] "You have gone up to Jerusalem long enough. Here are your gods, O Israel, who brought you up out of the land of Egypt." 29He set one in Bethel, and the other he put in Dan. 30And this thing became a sin, for the people went to worship before the one at Bethel and before the other as far as Dan.[b] 31He also made houses[c] on high places, and appointed priests from among all the people, who were not Levites. 32Jeroboam appointed a festival on the fifteenth day of the eighth month like the festival that was in Judah, and he offered sacrifices on the altar; so he did in Bethel, sacrificing to the calves that he had made. And he placed in Bethel the priests of the high places that he had made. 33He went up to the altar that he had made in Bethel on the fifteenth day in the eighth month, in the month that he alone had devised; he appointed a festival for the people of Israel, and he went up to the altar to offer incense.

13 While Jeroboam was standing by the altar to offer incense, a man of

*a* Gk: Heb *to them* *b* Compare Gk: Heb *went to the one as far as Dan* *c* Gk Vg Compare 13.32: Heb *a house*

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**12.16**: On the readiness of the northern tribes to withdraw from Judah, compare 2 Sam 20.1, where even the wording is similar. **17–20**: Certain Israelites remained in *Judah;* and when *Rehoboam* attempted to enforce his oppressive policy in the north, *Jeroboam* was promptly made *king over all Israel. Judah alone* remained under *Rehoboam.* **21–24**: According to these verses, the prophetic party of *Judah,* represented by *Shemaiah,* favored the division, hoping that the north would be more loyal to the LORD (see 11.26–40 n.). *Benjamin* in vv. 21, 23 is editorial, to support the idea that there were exactly ten tribes in the north and two in the south. Actually, Benjamin may have been split in the division.

**12.25–33**: *Jeroboam* straightway led his people into worse apostasy than that of the south. *Jeroboam* intended the *two calves of gold* (really bulls) to represent the LORD (*gods* in v. 28 should probably be "God"); according to the Deuteronomistic writer, this was very wrong, since the bull was also the symbol of Baal, and all images were forbidden (see 7.23–26 n.; Deut 5.8–9). Jeroboam also had a political purpose in attempting to keep his people from going to Jerusalem.

God came out of Judah by the word of the LORD to Bethel 2and proclaimed against the altar by the word of the LORD, and said, "O altar, altar, thus says the LORD: 'A son shall be born to the house of David, Josiah by name; and he shall sacrifice on you the priests of the high places who offer incense on you, and human bones shall be burned on you.' " 3He gave a sign the same day, saying, "This is the sign that the LORD has spoken: 'The altar shall be torn down, and the ashes that are on it shall be poured out.' " 4When the king heard what the man of God cried out against the altar at Bethel, Jeroboam stretched out his hand from the altar, saying, "Seize him!" But the hand that he stretched out against him withered so that he could not draw it back to himself. 5The altar also was torn down, and the ashes poured out from the altar, according to the sign that the man of God had given by the word of the LORD. 6The king said to the man of God, "Entreat now the favor of the LORD your God, and pray for me, so that my hand may be restored to me." So the man of God entreated the LORD; and the king's hand was restored to him, and became as it was before. 7Then the king said to the man of God, "Come home with me and dine, and I will give you a gift." 8But the man of God said to the king, "If you give me half your kingdom, I will not go in with you; nor will I eat food or drink water in this place. 9For thus I was commanded by the word of the LORD: You shall not eat food, or drink water, or return by the way that you came." 10So he went another way, and did not return by the way that he had come to Bethel.

11 Now there lived an old prophet in Bethel. One of his sons came and told him all that the man of God had done that day in Bethel; the words also that he had spoken to the king, they told to their father. 12Their father said to them, "Which way did he go?" And his sons showed him the way that the man of God who came from Judah had gone. 13Then he said to his sons, "Saddle a donkey for me." So they saddled a donkey for him, and he mounted it. 14He went after the man of God, and found him sitting under an oak tree. He said to him, "Are you the man of God who came from Judah?" He answered, "I am." 15Then he said to him, "Come home with me and eat some food." 16But he said, "I cannot return with you, or go in with you; nor will I eat food or drink water with you in this place; 17for it was said to me by the word of the LORD: You shall not eat food or drink water there, or return by the way that you came." 18Then the other[d] said to him, "I also am a prophet as you are, and an angel spoke to me by the word of the LORD: Bring him back with you into your house so that he may eat food and drink water." But he was deceiving him. 19Then the man of God[d] went back with him, and ate food and drank water in his house.

20 As they were sitting at the table, the word of the LORD came to the prophet who had brought him back; 21and he proclaimed to the man of God who came from Judah, "Thus says the LORD: Because you have disobeyed the word of the LORD, and have not kept the commandment that the LORD your God commanded you, 22but have come back and have eaten food and drunk water in the place of which he said to you, 'Eat no food, and drink no water,' your body shall not come to your ancestral tomb."

*d* Heb *he*

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**13.1–34: The prophets turn against Jeroboam.** This chapter continues the condemnation of Jeroboam begun in ch 12. To *eat food, or drink water* (vv. 9, 22) in Israel would have implied approval of what was happening there. There are two definite indications of date in the story: the territory of Israel was not called *Samaria* (v. 32) until after that kingdom fell in 721 B.C. (2 Kings 17.24); Josiah (v. 2) died in 609 B.C. The writer of about 600 B.C. is trying to evaluate the conditions existing about three hundred years earlier.

23 After the man of God[e] had eaten food and had drunk, they saddled for him a donkey belonging to the prophet who had brought him back. 24 Then as he went away, a lion met him on the road and killed him. His body was thrown in the road, and the donkey stood beside it; the lion also stood beside the body. 25 People passed by and saw the body thrown in the road, with the lion standing by the body. And they came and told it in the town where the old prophet lived.

26 When the prophet who had brought him back from the way heard of it, he said, "It is the man of God who disobeyed the word of the LORD; therefore the LORD has given him to the lion, which has torn him and killed him according to the word that the LORD spoke to him." 27 Then he said to his sons, "Saddle a donkey for me." So they saddled one, 28 and he went and found the body thrown in the road, with the donkey and the lion standing beside the body. The lion had not eaten the body or attacked the donkey. 29 The prophet took up the body of the man of God, laid it on the donkey, and brought it back to the city,[f] to mourn and to bury him. 30 He laid the body in his own grave; and they mourned over him, saying, "Alas, my brother!" 31 After he had buried him, he said to his sons, "When I die, bury me in the grave in which the man of God is buried; lay my bones beside his bones. 32 For the saying that he proclaimed by the word of the LORD against the altar in Bethel, and against all the houses of the high places that are in the cities of Samaria, shall surely come to pass."

33 Even after this event Jeroboam did not turn from his evil way, but made priests for the high places again from among all the people; any who wanted to be priests he consecrated for the high places. 34 This matter became sin to the house of Jeroboam, so as to cut it off and to destroy it from the face of the earth.

14 At that time Abijah son of Jeroboam fell sick. 2 Jeroboam said to his wife, "Go, disguise yourself, so that it will not be known that you are the wife of Jeroboam, and go to Shiloh; for the prophet Ahijah is there, who said of me that I should be king over this people. 3 Take with you ten loaves, some cakes, and a jar of honey, and go to him; he will tell you what shall happen to the child."

4 Jeroboam's wife did so; she set out and went to Shiloh, and came to the house of Ahijah. Now Ahijah could not see, for his eyes were dim because of his age. 5 But the LORD said to Ahijah, "The wife of Jeroboam is coming to inquire of you concerning her son; for he is sick. Thus and thus you shall say to her."

When she came, she pretended to be another woman. 6 But when Ahijah heard the sound of her feet, as she came in at the door, he said, "Come in, wife of Jeroboam; why do you pretend to be another? For I am charged with heavy tidings for you. 7 Go, tell Jeroboam, 'Thus says the LORD, the God of Israel: Because I exalted you from among the people, made you leader over my people Israel, 8 and tore the kingdom away from the house of David to give it to you; yet you have not been like my servant David, who kept my commandments and followed me with all his heart, doing only that which was right in my sight, 9 but you have done evil above all those who were before you and have gone and made

*e* Heb *he* *f* Gk: Heb *he came to the town of the old prophet*

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**14.1–31: Conclusion of the reigns of Jeroboam and Rehoboam.** From this point to the downfall of the northern kingdom (2 Kings 17.6), the writer skillfully weaves back and forth from one kingdom to the other in order to tell the story of both kingdoms as nearly continuously as possible. **1–16:** *Ahijah,* who had encouraged *Jeroboam* to revolt in the first place (11.29–31), now also turns against the king in bitter disappointment. The writer knew how short-lived was the *house* (dynasty) *of Jeroboam* (15.25–30) and how the whole northern kingdom fell in 721 B.C. (v. 15), and explained these somber events in terms of religious apostasy (vv. 9, 16).

for yourself other gods, and cast images, provoking me to anger, and have thrust me behind your back; [10]therefore, I will bring evil upon the house of Jeroboam. I will cut off from Jeroboam every male, both bond and free in Israel, and will consume the house of Jeroboam, just as one burns up dung until it is all gone. [11]Anyone belonging to Jeroboam who dies in the city, the dogs shall eat; and anyone who dies in the open country, the birds of the air shall eat; for the LORD has spoken.' [12]Therefore set out, go to your house. When your feet enter the city, the child shall die. [13]All Israel shall mourn for him and bury him; for he alone of Jeroboam's family shall come to the grave, because in him there is found something pleasing to the LORD, the God of Israel, in the house of Jeroboam. [14]Moreover the LORD will raise up for himself a king over Israel, who shall cut off the house of Jeroboam today, even right now![g]

15 "The LORD will strike Israel, as a reed is shaken in the water; he will root up Israel out of this good land that he gave to their ancestors, and scatter them beyond the Euphrates, because they have made their sacred poles,[h] provoking the LORD to anger. [16]He will give Israel up because of the sins of Jeroboam, which he sinned and which he caused Israel to commit."

17 Then Jeroboam's wife got up and went away, and she came to Tirzah. As she came to the threshold of the house, the child died. [18]All Israel buried him and mourned for him, according to the word of the LORD, which he spoke by his servant the prophet Ahijah.

19 Now the rest of the acts of Jeroboam, how he warred and how he reigned, are written in the Book of the Annals of the Kings of Israel. [20]The time that Jeroboam reigned was twenty-two years; then he slept with his ancestors, and his son Nadab succeeded him.

21 Now Rehoboam son of Solomon reigned in Judah. Rehoboam was forty-one years old when he began to reign, and he reigned seventeen years in Jerusalem, the city that the LORD had chosen out of all the tribes of Israel, to put his name there. His mother's name was Naamah the Ammonite. [22]Judah did what was evil in the sight of the LORD; they provoked him to jealousy with their sins that they committed, more than all that their ancestors had done. [23]For they also built for themselves high places, pillars, and sacred poles[h] on every high hill and under every green tree; [24]there were also male temple prostitutes in the land. They committed all the abominations of the nations that the LORD drove out before the people of Israel.

25 In the fifth year of King Rehoboam, King Shishak of Egypt came up against Jerusalem; [26]he took away the treasures of the house of the LORD and the treasures of the king's house; he took everything. He also took away all the shields of gold that Solomon had made; [27]so King Rehoboam made shields of bronze instead, and committed them to the hands of the officers of the guard, who kept the door of the king's house. [28]As often as the king went into the house of the LORD, the guard carried them and brought them back to the guardroom.

29 Now the rest of the acts of Rehoboam, and all that he did, are they not written in the Book of the Annals of the Kings of Judah? [30]There was war between Rehoboam and Jeroboam continually. [31]Rehoboam slept with his ancestors and was buried with his ancestors in the city of David. His mother's name

*g* Meaning of Heb uncertain *h* Heb *Asherim*

**14.15:** *Sacred poles* were symbols of the Canaanite fertility goddess Asherah, who is mentioned about forty times in the Hebrew Scriptures as a temptation to the Israelites. **17:** *Tirzah* was *Jeroboam's* place of residence after Shechem (12.25), thus becoming the capital of Israel (15.33) until Samaria was built (16.24).

**14.21–31:** The reign of Rehoboam. Judah at this time did no better than Israel, according to the writer (vv. 22–24). According to Egyptian sources, *Shishak* (v. 25) also invad-

was Naamah the Ammonite. His son Abijam succeeded him.

15 Now in the eighteenth year of King Jeroboam son of Nebat, Abijam began to reign over Judah. 2He reigned for three years in Jerusalem. His mother's name was Maacah daughter of Abishalom. 3He committed all the sins that his father did before him; his heart was not true to the LORD his God, like the heart of his father David. 4Nevertheless for David's sake the LORD his God gave him a lamp in Jerusalem, setting up his son after him, and establishing Jerusalem; 5because David did what was right in the sight of the LORD, and did not turn aside from anything that he commanded him all the days of his life, except in the matter of Uriah the Hittite. 6The war begun between Rehoboam and Jeroboam continued all the days of his life. 7The rest of the acts of Abijam, and all that he did, are they not written in the Book of the Annals of the Kings of Judah? There was war between Abijam and Jeroboam. 8Abijam slept with his ancestors, and they buried him in the city of David. Then his son Asa succeeded him.

9 In the twentieth year of King Jeroboam of Israel, Asa began to reign over Judah; 10he reigned forty-one years in Jerusalem. His mother's name was Maacah daughter of Abishalom. 11Asa did what was right in the sight of the LORD, as his father David had done. 12He put away the male temple prostitutes out of the land, and removed all the idols that his ancestors had made. 13He also removed his mother Maacah from being queen mother, because she had made an abominable image for Asherah; Asa cut down her image and burned it at the Wadi Kidron. 14But the high places were not taken away. Nevertheless the heart of Asa was true to the LORD all his days. 15He brought into the house of the LORD the votive gifts of his father and his own votive gifts—silver, gold, and utensils.

16 There was war between Asa and King Baasha of Israel all their days. 17King Baasha of Israel went up against Judah, and built Ramah, to prevent anyone from going out or coming in to King Asa of Judah. 18Then Asa took all the silver and the gold that were left in the treasures of the house of the LORD and the treasures of the king's house, and gave them into the hands of his servants. King Asa sent them to King Ben-hadad son of Tabrimmon son of Hezion of Aram, who resided in Damascus, saying, 19"Let there be an alliance between me and you, like that between my father and your father: I am sending you a present of silver and gold; go, break your alliance with King Baasha of Israel, so that he may withdraw from me." 20Ben-hadad listened to King Asa, and sent the commanders of his armies against the cities of Israel. He conquered Ijon, Dan, Abel-beth-maacah, and all Chinneroth, with all the land of Naphtali. 21When Baasha heard of it, he stopped building Ramah and lived in Tirzah. 22Then King Asa made a proclamation to all Judah, none was exempt: they carried away the stones of Ramah and its timber, with which Baasha had been building; with them King Asa built Geba of Benjamin and Mizpah. 23Now the rest of all the acts of Asa, all his power, all that he did, and the cities that he built, are they not written in the Book of the Annals of the Kings of Judah? But in his old age he was diseased in his feet. 24Then Asa slept with his ancestors, and was buried with his ancestors in the city of his father David; his son Jehoshaphat succeeded him.

25 Nadab son of Jeroboam began to reign over Israel in the second year of

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ed Israel; a fragment of his stela has been found in the excavations at Megiddo.

**15.1–8**: **Abijam of Judah** was little better than his father. Verse 6 is out of place; compare 14.30.

**15.9–24**: **Asa of Judah.** This king is credited with reforms and given a fairly clean bill of religious health. **13**: *Asherah,* see 14.15 n. **18–22**: Asa carried on continual war with Israel, and bribed *Ben-hadad . . . of Aram* (Syria) to change sides, thus tipping the balance in favor of Judah.

King Asa of Judah; he reigned over Israel two years. 26He did what was evil in the sight of the LORD, walking in the way of his ancestor and in the sin that he caused Israel to commit.

27 Baasha son of Ahijah, of the house of Issachar, conspired against him; and Baasha struck him down at Gibbethon, which belonged to the Philistines; for Nadab and all Israel were laying siege to Gibbethon. 28So Baasha killed Nadab[i] in the third year of King Asa of Judah, and succeeded him. 29As soon as he was king, he killed all the house of Jeroboam; he left to the house of Jeroboam not one that breathed, until he had destroyed it, according to the word of the LORD that he spoke by his servant Ahijah the Shilonite— 30because of the sins of Jeroboam that he committed and that he caused Israel to commit, and because of the anger to which he provoked the LORD, the God of Israel.

31 Now the rest of the acts of Nadab, and all that he did, are they not written in the Book of the Annals of the Kings of Israel? 32There was war between Asa and King Baasha of Israel all their days.

33 In the third year of King Asa of Judah, Baasha son of Ahijah began to reign over all Israel at Tirzah; he reigned twenty-four years. 34He did what was evil in the sight of the LORD, walking in the way of Jeroboam and in the sin that he caused Israel to commit.

16 The word of the LORD came to Jehu son of Hanani against Baasha, saying, 2"Since I exalted you out of the dust and made you leader over my people Israel, and you have walked in the way of Jeroboam, and have caused my people Israel to sin, provoking me to anger with their sins, 3therefore, I will consume Baasha and his house, and I will make your house like the house of Jeroboam son of Nebat. 4Anyone belonging to Baasha who dies in the city the dogs shall eat; and anyone of his who dies in the field the birds of the air shall eat."

5 Now the rest of the acts of Baasha, what he did, and his power, are they not written in the Book of the Annals of the Kings of Israel? 6Baasha slept with his ancestors, and was buried at Tirzah; and his son Elah succeeded him. 7Moreover the word of the LORD came by the prophet Jehu son of Hanani against Baasha and his house, both because of all the evil that he did in the sight of the LORD, provoking him to anger with the work of his hands, in being like the house of Jeroboam, and also because he destroyed it.

8 In the twenty-sixth year of King Asa of Judah, Elah son of Baasha began to reign over Israel in Tirzah; he reigned two years. 9But his servant Zimri, commander of half his chariots, conspired against him. When he was at Tirzah, drinking himself drunk in the house of Arza, who was in charge of the palace at Tirzah, 10Zimri came in and struck him down and killed him, in the twenty-seventh year of King Asa of Judah, and succeeded him.

11 When he began to reign, as soon as he had seated himself on his throne, he killed all the house of Baasha; he did not leave him a single male of his kindred or his friends. 12Thus Zimri destroyed all the house of Baasha, according to the word of the LORD, which he spoke against Baasha by the prophet Jehu— 13because of all the sins of Baasha and the sins of his son Elah that they committed, and that they caused Israel to commit, provoking the LORD God of Israel to anger with their idols. 14Now the rest of the acts of Elah, and all that he did, are they not written in the Book of the Annals of the Kings of Israel?

*i* Heb *him*

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**15.25–32: Nadab of Israel** and his assassination. Here begins a series of assassinations of kings of Israel, interpreted by the writer as a just judgment against the northern kingdom (vv. 29–30); see 14.1–16 n.

**15.33–16.7: Baasha of Israel.** A new prophet, *Jehu son of Hanani,* takes up the theme of condemnation already made familiar by Ahijah the Shilonite.

**16.8–14: Elah of Israel** and his assassination by *Zimri.* Note the now familiar evaluation in v. 13.

15 In the twenty-seventh year of King Asa of Judah, Zimri reigned seven days in Tirzah. Now the troops were encamped against Gibbethon, which belonged to the Philistines, 16 and the troops who were encamped heard it said, "Zimri has conspired, and he has killed the king"; therefore all Israel made Omri, the commander of the army, king over Israel that day in the camp. 17 So Omri went up from Gibbethon, and all Israel with him, and they besieged Tirzah. 18 When Zimri saw that the city was taken, he went into the citadel of the king's house; he burned down the king's house over himself with fire, and died— 19 because of the sins that he committed, doing evil in the sight of the LORD, walking in the way of Jeroboam, and for the sin that he committed, causing Israel to sin. 20 Now the rest of the acts of Zimri, and the conspiracy that he made, are they not written in the Book of the Annals of the Kings of Israel?

21 Then the people of Israel were divided into two parts; half of the people followed Tibni son of Ginath, to make him king, and half followed Omri. 22 But the people who followed Omri overcame the people who followed Tibni son of Ginath; so Tibni died, and Omri became king. 23 In the thirty-first year of King Asa of Judah, Omri began to reign over Israel; he reigned for twelve years, six of them in Tirzah.

24 He bought the hill of Samaria from Shemer for two talents of silver; he fortified the hill, and called the city that he built, Samaria, after the name of Shemer, the owner of the hill.

25 Omri did what was evil in the sight of the LORD; he did more evil than all who were before him. 26 For he walked in all the way of Jeroboam son of Nebat, and in the sins that he caused Israel to commit, provoking the LORD, the God of Israel, to anger by their idols. 27 Now the rest of the acts of Omri that he did, and the power that he showed, are they not written in the Book of the Annals of the Kings of Israel? 28 Omri slept with his ancestors, and was buried in Samaria; his son Ahab succeeded him.

29 In the thirty-eighth year of King Asa of Judah, Ahab son of Omri began to reign over Israel; Ahab son of Omri reigned over Israel in Samaria twenty-two years. 30 Ahab son of Omri did evil in the sight of the LORD more than all who were before him.

31 And as if it had been a light thing for him to walk in the sins of Jeroboam son of Nebat, he took as his wife Jezebel daughter of King Ethbaal of the Sidonians, and went and served Baal, and worshiped him. 32 He erected an altar for Baal in the house of Baal, which he built in Samaria. 33 Ahab also made a sacred pole.[j] Ahab did more to provoke the anger of the LORD, the God of Israel, than had all the kings of Israel who were before him. 34 In his days Hiel of Bethel built Jericho; he laid its foundation at the cost of Abiram his firstborn, and set up its gates at the cost of his youngest son

*j* Heb *Asherah*

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**16.15–20: Zimri of Israel** is attacked by *Omri* and commits suicide.

**16.21–28: Omri of Israel.** *Omri* was an able and important king, as we know from extra-biblical sources. The Moabite Stone tells us that he subjugated Moab, and the Assyrian records refer to Israel as "the land of the house of Omri" long after Omri's descendants had ceased to rule. The Deuteronomistic writer, interested chiefly in religious matters, lists among the accomplishments of Omri only the founding of Samaria as the new capital. Otherwise, the king is roundly condemned, no doubt chiefly because he married his son Ahab to Jezebel, the daughter of the king of the neighboring Phoenicians (*Sidonians*). This was good political policy, but it turned out to be religiously disastrous.

**16.29–34: Introduction to the reign of Ahab in Israel.** This reign is treated in great detail (17.1–22.40) because of the religious crisis that ensued. *The Sidonians,* see 5.1–6 n. *Sacred pole,* see 14.15 n. **34:** The bodies of the children were buried under the foundations to bring good luck to the building project. Such practices were regarded as abominable by the

Segub, according to the word of the LORD, which he spoke by Joshua son of Nun.

17 Now Elijah the Tishbite, of Tishbe[k] in Gilead, said to Ahab, "As the LORD the God of Israel lives, before whom I stand, there shall be neither dew nor rain these years, except by my word." 2The word of the LORD came to him, saying, 3"Go from here and turn eastward, and hide yourself by the Wadi Cherith, which is east of the Jordan. 4You shall drink from the wadi, and I have commanded the ravens to feed you there." 5So he went and did according to the word of the LORD; he went and lived by the Wadi Cherith, which is east of the Jordan. 6The ravens brought him bread and meat in the morning, and bread and meat in the evening; and he drank from the wadi. 7But after a while the wadi dried up, because there was no rain in the land.

8 Then the word of the LORD came to him, saying, 9"Go now to Zarephath, which belongs to Sidon, and live there; for I have commanded a widow there to feed you." 10So he set out and went to Zarephath. When he came to the gate of the town, a widow was there gathering sticks; he called to her and said, "Bring me a little water in a vessel, so that I may drink." 11As she was going to bring it, he called to her and said, "Bring me a morsel of bread in your hand." 12But she said, "As the LORD your God lives, I have nothing baked, only a handful of meal in a jar, and a little oil in a jug; I am now gathering a couple of sticks, so that I may go home and prepare it for myself and my son, that we may eat it, and die." 13Elijah said to her, "Do not be afraid; go and do as you have said; but first make me a little cake of it and bring it to me, and afterwards make something for yourself and your son. 14For thus says the LORD the God of Israel: The jar of meal will not be emptied and the jug of oil will not fail until the day that the LORD sends rain on the earth." 15She went and did as Elijah said, so that she as well as he and her household ate for many days. 16The jar of meal was not emptied, neither did the jug of oil fail, according to the word of the LORD that he spoke by Elijah.

17 After this the son of the woman, the mistress of the house, became ill; his illness was so severe that there was no breath left in him. 18She then said to Elijah, "What have you against me, O man of God? You have come to me to bring my sin to remembrance, and to cause the death of my son!" 19But he said to her, "Give me your son." He took him from her bosom, carried him up into the upper chamber where he was lodging, and laid him on his own bed. 20He cried out to

*k* Gk: Heb *of the settlers*

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Deuteronomists; hence the curse in Josh 6.26. The last clause of v. 34 brings the account into conformity with the passage in Joshua.

**17.1–24: The beginning of the story of Elijah.** 1 Kings ch 17 to 2 Kings ch 10 is mostly a detailed account of affairs in the northern kingdom, featuring the prophets Elijah and Elisha, the reign of Ahab, and the destruction of the dynasty of Omri. These stories are based on northern source material, possibly brought to Judah by refugees from Israel. It must be remembered that all final redaction was done in Judah, and therefore we are fortunate in having this northern material. The element of the miraculous in the stories is an integral part of the writer's intent to dramatize the power of God through prophets' words and actions. **1–7**: The story opens abruptly, leading some to believe that the beginning, with a proper introduction of Elijah, has been lost. **1**: The Canaanite (or Phoenician) god Baal (16.31–32) was held by his worshipers to be the one who controlled the *rain*. Elijah intended to show that his God, *the LORD the God of Israel*, was the one who really controlled the *rain*. **3**: The words *east of the Jordan* (also v. 5) probably refer to territory outside of Ahab's jurisdiction. Ahab had been eagerly seeking to apprehend the prophet in order to find some reconciliation with him to end the drought (18.10).

**17.8–16:** *Zarephath*, on the Phoenician coast, was definitely in territory beyond the control of Ahab. **17–24**: Some have argued that the child was not really dead, and hence that no miracle was involved. This is beside

the LORD, "O LORD my God, have you brought calamity even upon the widow with whom I am staying, by killing her son?" 21Then he stretched himself upon the child three times, and cried out to the LORD, "O LORD my God, let this child's life come into him again." 22The LORD listened to the voice of Elijah; the life of the child came into him again, and he revived. 23Elijah took the child, brought him down from the upper chamber into the house, and gave him to his mother; then Elijah said, "See, your son is alive." 24So the woman said to Elijah, "Now I know that you are a man of God, and that the word of the LORD in your mouth is truth."

18 After many days the word of the LORD came to Elijah, in the third year of the drought,[l] saying, "Go, present yourself to Ahab; I will send rain on the earth." 2So Elijah went to present himself to Ahab. The famine was severe in Samaria. 3Ahab summoned Obadiah, who was in charge of the palace. (Now Obadiah revered the LORD greatly; 4when Jezebel was killing off the prophets of the LORD, Obadiah took a hundred prophets, hid them fifty to a cave, and provided them with bread and water.) 5Then Ahab said to Obadiah, "Go through the land to all the springs of water and to all the wadis; perhaps we may find grass to keep the horses and mules alive, and not lose some of the animals." 6So they divided the land between them to pass through it; Ahab went in one direction by himself, and Obadiah went in another direction by himself.

7 As Obadiah was on the way, Elijah met him; Obadiah recognized him, fell on his face, and said, "Is it you, my lord Elijah?" 8He answered him, "It is I. Go, tell your lord that Elijah is here." 9And he said, "How have I sinned, that you would hand your servant over to Ahab, to kill me? 10As the LORD your God lives, there is no nation or kingdom to which my lord has not sent to seek you; and when they would say, 'He is not here,' he would require an oath of the kingdom or nation, that they had not found you. 11But now you say, 'Go, tell your lord that Elijah is here.' 12As soon as I have gone from you, the spirit of the LORD will carry you I know not where; so, when I come and tell Ahab and he cannot find you, he will kill me, although I your servant have revered the LORD from my youth. 13Has it not been told my lord what I did when Jezebel killed the prophets of the LORD, how I hid a hundred of the LORD's prophets fifty to a cave, and provided them with bread and water? 14Yet now you say, 'Go, tell your lord that Elijah is here'; he will surely kill me." 15Elijah said, "As the LORD of hosts lives, before whom I stand, I will surely show myself to him today." 16So Obadiah went to meet Ahab, and told him; and Ahab went to meet Elijah.

17 When Ahab saw Elijah, Ahab said to him, "Is it you, you troubler of Israel?" 18He answered, "I have not troubled Israel; but you have, and your father's house, because you have forsaken the commandments of the LORD and followed the Baals. 19Now therefore have all Israel assemble for me at Mount Carmel, with the four hundred fifty proph-

*l* Heb lacks *of the drought*

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the point. The writer meant to portray a powerful God and a worthy prophet (compare 2 Kings 4.32–37; Acts 20.9–12).

**18.1–46: The contest on Mount Carmel. 1–6**: The drought is about to end. The question is, Which God withholds and sends the rain: Yahweh (the LORD) or the great Baal, called Baal of the Heavens by his followers? The very name of *Elijah,* meaning "Yah [short form of Yahweh, or the LORD] is God," proclaims his faith. *Obadiah* means "Servant of Yahweh." *Jezebel* has been persecuting *the prophets of the* LORD (Yahweh).

**18.7–16**: *Ahab* has been hunting *Elijah* everywhere, but now the prophet volunteers to meet the king (see 17.1–7 n.). **17–19**: *Elijah* is quick to point out that the fault lies with *Ahab* in not recognizing the LORD as the supreme God, and in allowing his wife *Jezebel* to propagate her religion in Israel. *Asherah,* one of the consorts of *Baal* (see 14.15 n.). *The Baals* may have been local versions of the great sky-god, *Baal;* thus there was one *Baal,* but also many *Baals.*

ets of Baal and the four hundred prophets of Asherah, who eat at Jezebel's table."

20 So Ahab sent to all the Israelites, and assembled the prophets at Mount Carmel. 21 Elijah then came near to all the people, and said, "How long will you go limping with two different opinions? If the LORD is God, follow him; but if Baal, then follow him." The people did not answer him a word. 22 Then Elijah said to the people, "I, even I only, am left a prophet of the LORD; but Baal's prophets number four hundred fifty. 23 Let two bulls be given to us; let them choose one bull for themselves, cut it in pieces, and lay it on the wood, but put no fire to it; I will prepare the other bull and lay it on the wood, but put no fire to it. 24 Then you call on the name of your god and I will call on the name of the LORD; the god who answers by fire is indeed God." All the people answered, "Well spoken!" 25 Then Elijah said to the prophets of Baal, "Choose for yourselves one bull and prepare it first, for you are many; then call on the name of your god, but put no fire to it." 26 So they took the bull that was given them, prepared it, and called on the name of Baal from morning until noon, crying, "O Baal, answer us!" But there was no voice, and no answer. They limped about the altar that they had made. 27 At noon Elijah mocked them, saying, "Cry aloud! Surely he is a god; either he is meditating, or he has wandered away, or he is on a journey, or perhaps he is asleep and must be awakened." 28 Then they cried aloud and, as was their custom, they cut themselves with swords and lances until the blood gushed out over them. 29 As midday passed, they raved on until the time of the offering of the oblation, but there was no voice, no answer, and no response.

30 Then Elijah said to all the people, "Come closer to me"; and all the people came closer to him. First he repaired the altar of the LORD that had been thrown down; 31 Elijah took twelve stones, according to the number of the tribes of the sons of Jacob, to whom the word of the LORD came, saying, "Israel shall be your name"; 32 with the stones he built an altar in the name of the LORD. Then he made a trench around the altar, large enough to contain two measures of seed. 33 Next he put the wood in order, cut the bull in pieces, and laid it on the wood. He said, "Fill four jars with water and pour it on the burnt offering and on the wood." 34 Then he said, "Do it a second time"; and they did it a second time. Again he said, "Do it a third time"; and they did it a third time, 35 so that the water ran all around the altar, and filled the trench also with water.

36 At the time of the offering of the oblation, the prophet Elijah came near and said, "O LORD, God of Abraham, Isaac, and Israel, let it be known this day that you are God in Israel, that I am your servant, and that I have done all these things at your bidding. 37 Answer me, O LORD, answer me, so that this people may know that you, O LORD, are God, and that you have turned their hearts back." 38 Then the fire of the LORD fell

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**18.20–29**: The contest begins; the Baal worshipers test their god first. **26**: *They limped about the altar,* i.e. they performed a kind of limping dance, bending first one knee and then the other. This form of ritual is well known from a number of sources (compare Ps 26.6–7). **27**: One of the sharpest satires on non-Hebraic religion ever penned. *He has wandered away* is probably a euphemism for attending to natural needs. **28**: Ritualistic gashing of one's self was fairly common (compare Deut 14.1; Lev 19.28; Hos 7.14; Jer 16.6; 41.5; 47.5). **29**: *The time of the offering of the oblation* was 3 p.m. (compare 2 Kings 16.15; Acts 3.1).

**18.30–35**: Verses 31–32a are based on Gen 35.10. **38**: Some wish to rationalize *the fire of the LORD* by calling it lightning preceding the rain; but it must be borne in mind that the ancient writer intended to describe a miracle. **40**: The slaughter of *the prophets of Baal* is sometimes interpreted as a vast human sacrifice to the LORD. The people of the time and the (slightly later) writer saw the struggle between Baal and the LORD as one of life and death.

and consumed the burnt offering, the wood, the stones, and the dust, and even licked up the water that was in the trench. 39When all the people saw it, they fell on their faces and said, "The LORD indeed is God; the LORD indeed is God." 40Elijah said to them, "Seize the prophets of Baal; do not let one of them escape." Then they seized them; and Elijah brought them down to the Wadi Kishon, and killed them there.

41 Elijah said to Ahab, "Go up, eat and drink; for there is a sound of rushing rain." 42So Ahab went up to eat and to drink. Elijah went up to the top of Carmel; there he bowed himself down upon the earth and put his face between his knees. 43He said to his servant, "Go up now, look toward the sea." He went up and looked, and said, "There is nothing." Then he said, "Go again seven times." 44At the seventh time he said, "Look, a little cloud no bigger than a person's hand is rising out of the sea." Then he said, "Go say to Ahab, 'Harness your chariot and go down before the rain stops you.' " 45In a little while the heavens grew black with clouds and wind; there was a heavy rain. Ahab rode off and went to Jezreel. 46But the hand of the LORD was on Elijah; he girded up his loins and ran in front of Ahab to the entrance of Jezreel.

19 Ahab told Jezebel all that Elijah had done, and how he had killed all the prophets with the sword. 2Then Jezebel sent a messenger to Elijah, saying, "So may the gods do to me, and more also, if I do not make your life like the life of one of them by this time tomorrow." 3Then he was afraid; he got up and fled for his life, and came to Beersheba, which belongs to Judah; he left his servant there.

4 But he himself went a day's journey into the wilderness, and came and sat down under a solitary broom tree. He asked that he might die: "It is enough; now, O LORD, take away my life, for I am no better than my ancestors." 5Then he lay down under the broom tree and fell asleep. Suddenly an angel touched him and said to him, "Get up and eat." 6He looked, and there at his head was a cake baked on hot stones, and a jar of water. He ate and drank, and lay down again. 7The angel of the LORD came a second time, touched him, and said, "Get up and eat, otherwise the journey will be too much for you." 8He got up, and ate and drank; then he went in the strength of that food forty days and forty nights to Horeb the mount of God. 9At that place he came to a cave, and spent the night there.

Then the word of the LORD came to him, saying, "What are you doing here, Elijah?" 10He answered, "I have been very zealous for the LORD, the God of hosts; for the Israelites have forsaken your covenant, thrown down your altars, and killed your prophets with the sword. I alone am left, and they are seeking my life, to take it away."

11 He said, "Go out and stand on the mountain before the LORD, for the LORD

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**18.41–46**: *Eat and drink,* i.e. break the fast which was in effect during the religious ceremonies. The end of the drought was supposed to be final proof that the LORD, not Baal, ruled the heavens, and controlled the destinies of the Israelites. The town of *Jezreel,* near Mount Gilboa (1 Sam 29.1; 31.1), was used by *Ahab* as a second place of residence (21.1), the primary capital being Samaria (16.24; 20.43; 21.1). *Elijah* ran seventeen miles before the *chariot* of *Ahab,* in a high state of excitement, to herald what he considered a complete victory over the forces of Baal.

**19.1–18**: **The revelation to Elijah on Mount Horeb. 1–3**: The power of *Jezebel* very quickly turned the tables, and Elijah *was afraid.* Suddenly, it seems, he is at *Beer-sheba,* one hundred and thirty miles south of Jezreel, well within *Judah.* **4–8**: By miraculous divine help, the prophet arrived at *Horeb,* the place where the LORD revealed the law to Moses, according to northern (Israelite) tradition—called Sinai in the southern (Judahite) literature. The round number, *forty days,* simply indicates a great distance (compare Ex 34.28). The traditional site of Mount Horeb, probably not intended here, is some two hundred miles to the south.

**19.9–18**: Compare Ex 33.17–23. **12**: The *sound of sheer silence* was the demanding voice

is about to pass by." Now there was a great wind, so strong that it was splitting mountains and breaking rocks in pieces before the LORD, but the LORD was not in the wind; and after the wind an earthquake, but the LORD was not in the earthquake; 12and after the earthquake a fire, but the LORD was not in the fire; and after the fire a sound of sheer silence. 13When Elijah heard it, he wrapped his face in his mantle and went out and stood at the entrance of the cave. Then there came a voice to him that said, "What are you doing here, Elijah?" 14He answered, "I have been very zealous for the LORD, the God of hosts; for the Israelites have forsaken your covenant, thrown down your altars, and killed your prophets with the sword. I alone am left, and they are seeking my life, to take it away." 15Then the LORD said to him, "Go, return on your way to the wilderness of Damascus; when you arrive, you shall anoint Hazael as king over Aram. 16Also you shall anoint Jehu son of Nimshi as king over Israel; and you shall anoint Elisha son of Shaphat of Abel-meholah as prophet in your place. 17Whoever escapes from the sword of Hazael, Jehu shall kill; and whoever escapes from the sword of Jehu, Elisha shall kill. 18Yet I will leave seven thousand in Israel, all the knees that have not bowed to Baal, and every mouth that has not kissed him."

19 So he set out from there, and found Elisha son of Shaphat, who was plowing. There were twelve yoke of oxen ahead of him, and he was with the twelfth. Elijah passed by him and threw his mantle over him. 20He left the oxen, ran after Elijah, and said, "Let me kiss my father and my mother, and then I will follow you." Then Elijah[m] said to him, "Go back again; for what have I done to you?" 21He returned from following him, took the yoke of oxen, and slaughtered them; using the equipment from the oxen, he boiled their flesh, and gave it to the people, and they ate. Then he set out and followed Elijah, and became his servant.

20 King Ben-hadad of Aram gathered all his army together; thirty-two kings were with him, along with horses and chariots. He marched against Samaria, laid siege to it, and attacked it. 2Then he sent messengers into the city to King Ahab of Israel, and said to him: "Thus says Ben-hadad: 3Your silver and gold are mine; your fairest wives and children also are mine." 4The king of Israel answered, "As you say, my lord, O king, I am yours, and all that I have." 5The messengers came again and said: "Thus says Ben-hadad: I sent to you, saying, 'Deliver to me your silver and gold, your wives and children'; 6nevertheless I will send my servants to you tomorrow about this time, and they shall search your house and the houses of your servants, and lay hands on whatever pleases them,[n] and take it away."

7 Then the king of Israel called all the elders of the land, and said, "Look now!

*m* Heb *he* *n* Gk Syr Vg: Heb *you*

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of God. Elijah was willing to oblige, for he was *very zealous*. **15**: *The wilderness of Damascus,* the present-day Syrian Desert. **18**: The words *seven thousand* express the idea of the righteous remnant, which appears again in Am 5.15; Isa 10.20; 11.11. *Kissed* the Baal image, see Hos 13.2.

**19.19–21**: **The call of Elisha.** *Elijah* returns from Horeb and proceeds to carry out first the third command of the "sound of sheer silence." He did not actually "anoint" *Elisha* (v. 16), but *threw his mantle over him.* The end of v. 20 means, "Go, and return to me, for I have done something very important to you." For similar extemporaneous sacrifices (v. 21), compare 1 Sam 6.14; 2 Sam 24.22–25. It was *Elisha,* not *Elijah,* who carried out the first and second injunctions of the "sound" (2 Kings 8.13; 9.1–3).

**20.1–43**: **Ahab's wars with the Arameans; prophetic opposition to his policy.** Verses 1–34 come from a source favorable to *Ahab,* in sharp contrast to vv. 35–43 and to chs 17–19 and ch 21; Elijah and Elisha disappear for a moment. *Ahab* appears as an able and popular ruler; his *people* stand by him in adversity (v. 8), and the prophets of the LORD support him (vv. 13–14, 22); to a defeated enemy he shows noble generosity (vv. 32, 34). **1–6**: *Kings* here no doubt means, as often

See how this man is seeking trouble; for he sent to me for my wives, my children, my silver, and my gold; and I did not refuse him." 8Then all the elders and all the people said to him, "Do not listen or consent." 9So he said to the messengers of Ben-hadad, "Tell my lord the king: All that you first demanded of your servant I will do; but this thing I cannot do." The messengers left and brought him word again. 10Ben-hadad sent to him and said, "The gods do so to me, and more also, if the dust of Samaria will provide a handful for each of the people who follow me." 11The king of Israel answered, "Tell him: One who puts on armor should not brag like one who takes it off." 12When Ben-hadad heard this message—now he had been drinking with the kings in the booths—he said to his men, "Take your positions!" And they took their positions against the city.

13 Then a certain prophet came up to King Ahab of Israel and said, "Thus says the LORD, Have you seen all this great multitude? Look, I will give it into your hand today; and you shall know that I am the LORD." 14Ahab said, "By whom?" He said, "Thus says the LORD, By the young men who serve the district governors." Then he said, "Who shall begin the battle?" He answered, "You." 15Then he mustered the young men who served the district governors, two hundred thirty-two; after them he mustered all the people of Israel, seven thousand.

16 They went out at noon, while Ben-hadad was drinking himself drunk in the booths, he and the thirty-two kings allied with him. 17The young men who served the district governors went out first. Ben-hadad had sent out scouts,[o] and they reported to him, "Men have come out from Samaria." 18He said, "If they have come out for peace, take them alive; if they have come out for war, take them alive."

19 But these had already come out of the city: the young men who served the district governors, and the army that followed them. 20Each killed his man; the Arameans fled and Israel pursued them, but King Ben-hadad of Aram escaped on a horse with the cavalry. 21The king of Israel went out, attacked the horses and chariots, and defeated the Arameans with a great slaughter.

22 Then the prophet approached the king of Israel and said to him, "Come, strengthen yourself, and consider well what you have to do; for in the spring the king of Aram will come up against you."

23 The servants of the king of Aram said to him, "Their gods are gods of the hills, and so they were stronger than we; but let us fight against them in the plain, and surely we shall be stronger than they. 24Also do this: remove the kings, each from his post, and put commanders in place of them; 25and muster an army like the army that you have lost, horse for horse, and chariot for chariot; then we will fight against them in the plain, and surely we shall be stronger than they." He heeded their voice, and did so.

26 In the spring Ben-hadad mustered the Arameans and went up to Aphek to fight against Israel. 27After the Israelites had been mustered and provisioned, they went out to engage them; the people of Israel encamped opposite them like two little flocks of goats, while the Arameans filled the country. 28A man of God approached and said to the king of Israel, "Thus says the LORD: Because the Arameans have said, 'The LORD is a god of the hills but he is not a god of the valleys,' therefore I will give all this great

*o* Heb lacks *scouts*

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in the Bible, rulers of small independent towns. The second demand (v. 6) was more drastic even than the first (v. 3), amounting to the privilege of unlimited looting.

**20.11**: Ahab quotes a proverb to the effect that as long as there is a battle to be fought, one should not boast; the battle may go either way.

**20.24**: *The kings* were figureheads, the *commanders* experienced military men. **29**: The

multitude into your hand, and you shall know that I am the LORD." [29]They encamped opposite one another seven days. Then on the seventh day the battle began; the Israelites killed one hundred thousand Aramean foot soldiers in one day. [30]The rest fled into the city of Aphek; and the wall fell on twenty-seven thousand men that were left.

Ben-hadad also fled, and entered the city to hide. [31]His servants said to him, "Look, we have heard that the kings of the house of Israel are merciful kings; let us put sackcloth around our waists and ropes on our heads, and go out to the king of Israel; perhaps he will spare your life." [32]So they tied sackcloth around their waists, put ropes on their heads, went to the king of Israel, and said, "Your servant Ben-hadad says, 'Please let me live.' " And he said, "Is he still alive? He is my brother." [33]Now the men were watching for an omen; they quickly took it up from him and said, "Yes, Ben-hadad is your brother." Then he said, "Go and bring him." So Ben-hadad came out to him; and he had him come up into the chariot. [34]Ben-hadad[p] said to him, "I will restore the towns that my father took from your father; and you may establish bazaars for yourself in Damascus, as my father did in Samaria." The king of Israel responded,[q] "I will let you go on those terms." So he made a treaty with him and let him go.

35 At the command of the LORD a certain member of a company of prophets[r] said to another, "Strike me!" But the man refused to strike him. [36]Then he said to him, "Because you have not obeyed the voice of the LORD, as soon as you have left me, a lion will kill you." And when he had left him, a lion met him and killed him. [37]Then he found another man and said, "Strike me!" So the man hit him, striking and wounding him. [38]Then the prophet departed, and waited for the king along the road, disguising himself with a bandage over his eyes. [39]As the king passed by, he cried to the king and said, "Your servant went out into the thick of the battle; then a soldier turned and brought a man to me, and said, 'Guard this man; if he is missing, your life shall be given for his life, or else you shall pay a talent of silver.' [40]While your servant was busy here and there, he was gone." The king of Israel said to him, "So shall your judgment be; you yourself have decided it." [41]Then he quickly took the bandage away from his eyes. The king of Israel recognized him as one of the prophets. [42]Then he said to him, "Thus says the LORD, 'Because you have let the man go whom I had devoted to destruction, therefore your life shall be for his life, and your people for his people.' " [43]The king of Israel set out toward home, resentful and sullen, and came to Samaria.

21 Later the following events took place: Naboth the Jezreelite had a vineyard in Jezreel, beside the palace of King Ahab of Samaria. [2]And Ahab said to Naboth, "Give me your vineyard, so that I may have it for a vegetable garden, because it is near my house; I will give you a better vineyard for it; or, if it seems good to you, I will give you its value in money." [3]But Naboth said to Ahab, "The LORD forbid that I should give you my ancestral inheritance." [4]Ahab went home resentful and sullen because of

*p* Heb *He responded* *q* Heb lacks *The king of Israel* *r* Heb *of the sons of the prophets*

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figure *one hundred thousand Aramean foot soldiers* is not to be taken numerically; the meaning is "a large number."

**20.35–43**: The change of tone in this section should be noted. Ahab is violently criticized for what seems a noble act in v. 34. **39**: *A talent of silver,* roughly seventy-five lbs., would have been an enormous fine in those days. **42**: On the ban or "herem," a practice whereby something or someone is *devoted to destruction* as a religious act, see Josh 6.17 n.; 1 Sam 15.3 n.

**21.1–29**: **Naboth's vineyard.** In this chapter Elijah and the source concerned with him return. **1–4**: *Naboth* could not give up his *ancestral inheritance* because by well-established legal and religious custom, ancestral property must remain in the family in

what Naboth the Jezreelite had said to him; for he had said, "I will not give you my ancestral inheritance." He lay down on his bed, turned away his face, and would not eat.

5 His wife Jezebel came to him and said, "Why are you so depressed that you will not eat?" 6He said to her, "Because I spoke to Naboth the Jezreelite and said to him, 'Give me your vineyard for money; or else, if you prefer, I will give you another vineyard for it'; but he answered, 'I will not give you my vineyard.'" 7His wife Jezebel said to him, "Do you now govern Israel? Get up, eat some food, and be cheerful; I will give you the vineyard of Naboth the Jezreelite."

8 So she wrote letters in Ahab's name and sealed them with his seal; she sent the letters to the elders and the nobles who lived with Naboth in his city. 9She wrote in the letters, "Proclaim a fast, and seat Naboth at the head of the assembly; 10seat two scoundrels opposite him, and have them bring a charge against him, saying, 'You have cursed God and the king.' Then take him out, and stone him to death." 11The men of his city, the elders and the nobles who lived in his city, did as Jezebel had sent word to them. Just as it was written in the letters that she had sent to them, 12they proclaimed a fast and seated Naboth at the head of the assembly. 13The two scoundrels came in and sat opposite him; and the scoundrels brought a charge against Naboth, in the presence of the people, saying, "Naboth cursed God and the king." So they took him outside the city, and stoned him to death. 14Then they sent to Jezebel, saying, "Naboth has been stoned; he is dead."

15 As soon as Jezebel heard that Naboth had been stoned and was dead, Jezebel said to Ahab, "Go, take possession of the vineyard of Naboth the Jezreelite, which he refused to give you for money; for Naboth is not alive, but dead." 16As soon as Ahab heard that Naboth was dead, Ahab set out to go down to the vineyard of Naboth the Jezreelite, to take possession of it.

17 Then the word of the LORD came to Elijah the Tishbite, saying: 18Go down to meet King Ahab of Israel, who rules[s] in Samaria; he is now in the vineyard of Naboth, where he has gone to take possession. 19You shall say to him, "Thus says the LORD: Have you killed, and also taken possession?" You shall say to him, "Thus says the LORD: In the place where dogs licked up the blood of Naboth, dogs will also lick up your blood."

20 Ahab said to Elijah, "Have you found me, O my enemy?" He answered, "I have found you. Because you have sold yourself to do what is evil in the sight of the LORD, 21I will bring disaster on you; I will consume you, and will cut off from Ahab every male, bond or free, in Israel; 22and I will make your house like the house of Jeroboam son of Nebat, and like the house of Baasha son of Ahijah, because you have provoked me to anger and have caused Israel to sin. 23Also concerning Jezebel the LORD said, 'The dogs shall eat Jezebel within the bounds of Jezreel.' 24Anyone belonging to Ahab who dies in the city the dogs shall eat; and anyone of his who dies in the open country the birds of the air shall eat."

25 (Indeed, there was no one like

*s* Heb *who is*

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perpetuity (Lev 25.10, 13–17, 23–24, 34). Ahab was *resentful and sullen* because he knew that *Naboth* was legally and religiously right. **5–7**: *Jezebel* had no real respect for the laws and religion of Israel.

**21.8–14**: For *a fast* as part of the solemn assembly when a serious problem was to be considered, see Judg 20.26; 1 Sam 7.6; 14.24. To *seat Naboth at the head of the assembly* probably means that he, as a prominent citizen, was to preside. *Two* witnesses and *death* by stoning, see Deut 17.5–6; 19.15. *Naboth cursed God and the king,* compare Ex 22.28; Lev 24.10–16.

**21.22–24**: Probably an expansion of Elijah's speech by the Deuteronomistic editor (compare 13.33–34; 14.10–11; 16.1–4; 2 Kings 9.35–36). **25–26**: The evaluation by

Ahab, who sold himself to do what was evil in the sight of the LORD, urged on by his wife Jezebel. 26He acted most abominably in going after idols, as the Amorites had done, whom the LORD drove out before the Israelites.)

27 When Ahab heard those words, he tore his clothes and put sackcloth over his bare flesh; he fasted, lay in the sackcloth, and went about dejectedly. 28Then the word of the LORD came to Elijah the Tishbite: 29"Have you seen how Ahab has humbled himself before me? Because he has humbled himself before me, I will not bring the disaster in his days; but in his son's days I will bring the disaster on his house."

22 For three years Aram and Israel continued without war. 2But in the third year King Jehoshaphat of Judah came down to the king of Israel. 3The king of Israel said to his servants, "Do you know that Ramoth-gilead belongs to us, yet we are doing nothing to take it out of the hand of the king of Aram?" 4He said to Jehoshaphat, "Will you go with me to battle at Ramoth-gilead?" Jehoshaphat replied to the king of Israel, "I am as you are; my people are your people, my horses are your horses."

5 But Jehoshaphat also said to the king of Israel, "Inquire first for the word of the LORD." 6Then the king of Israel gathered the prophets together, about four hundred of them, and said to them, "Shall I go to battle against Ramoth-gilead, or shall I refrain?" They said, "Go up; for the LORD will give it into the hand of the king." 7But Jehoshaphat said, "Is there no other prophet of the LORD here of whom we may inquire?" 8The king of Israel said to Jehoshaphat, "There is still one other by whom we may inquire of the LORD, Micaiah son of Imlah; but I hate him, for he never prophesies anything favorable about me, but only disaster." Jehoshaphat said, "Let the king not say such a thing." 9Then the king of Israel summoned an officer and said, "Bring quickly Micaiah son of Imlah." 10Now the king of Israel and King Jehoshaphat of Judah were sitting on their thrones, arrayed in their robes, at the threshing floor at the entrance of the gate of Samaria; and all the prophets were prophesying before them. 11Zedekiah son of Chenaanah made for himself horns of iron, and he said, "Thus says the LORD: With these you shall gore the Arameans until they are destroyed." 12All the prophets were prophesying the same and saying, "Go up to Ramoth-gilead and triumph; the LORD will give it into the hand of the king."

13 The messenger who had gone to summon Micaiah said to him, "Look, the words of the prophets with one accord are favorable to the king; let your word be like the word of one of them, and speak favorably." 14But Micaiah said, "As the LORD lives, whatever the LORD says to me, that I will speak."

15 When he had come to the king, the king said to him, "Micaiah, shall we go

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the writer, breaking the connection between vv. 24 and 27. *Amorites,* see 2 Sam 21.2 n. **29**: This verse, in the light of what happened, appraises the situation more realistically than vv. 21 and 24; it was perhaps added by a writer during the Exile.

**22.1–53**: **Ahab dies in battle; reign of Jehoshaphat in Judah; accession of Ahaziah in Israel.** Verses 1–40 resume the story of the Aramean wars from ch 20. **1–4**: During the *three years* of peace between themselves, *Aram and Israel* had formed a military alliance and had successfully fought, together with other allies, against the invading Assyrians at Qarqar (853 B.C.), thus preserving both kingdoms. Ahab now formed an alliance with *Jehoshaphat,* marrying his daughter Athaliah to the son of *the king of Judah* (2 Kings 8.18, 26); for he had quarreled with *the king of Aram* over the possession of the town of *Ramoth-gilead,* east of the Jordan (4.13; Deut 4.43).

**22.5–12**: The need to *inquire* of one's god before a battle was widely felt in ancient times (1 Sam 23.2). In this source *the prophets* of the LORD are mostly on the side of Ahab (compare 20.13, 28). Yet there is one *prophet of the LORD,* not Elijah, but *Micaiah,* who appears only here and is hostile. *Horns of iron,* compare Deut 33.17; Zech 1.18–21. **15**: *Micaiah* mimics the supporters of *the king.*

to Ramoth-gilead to battle, or shall we refrain?" He answered him, "Go up and triumph; the LORD will give it into the hand of the king." 16But the king said to him, "How many times must I make you swear to tell me nothing but the truth in the name of the LORD?" 17Then Micaiah[t] said, "I saw all Israel scattered on the mountains, like sheep that have no shepherd; and the LORD said, 'These have no master; let each one go home in peace.' " 18The king of Israel said to Jehoshaphat, "Did I not tell you that he would not prophesy anything favorable about me, but only disaster?"

19 Then Micaiah[t] said, "Therefore hear the word of the LORD: I saw the LORD sitting on his throne, with all the host of heaven standing beside him to the right and to the left of him. 20And the LORD said, 'Who will entice Ahab, so that he may go up and fall at Ramoth-gilead?' Then one said one thing, and another said another, 21until a spirit came forward and stood before the LORD, saying, 'I will entice him.' 22'How?' the LORD asked him. He replied, 'I will go out and be a lying spirit in the mouth of all his prophets.' Then the LORD[t] said, 'You are to entice him, and you shall succeed; go out and do it.' 23So you see, the LORD has put a lying spirit in the mouth of all these your prophets; the LORD has decreed disaster for you."

24 Then Zedekiah son of Chenaanah came up to Micaiah, slapped him on the cheek, and said, "Which way did the spirit of the LORD pass from me to speak to you?" 25Micaiah replied, "You will find out on that day when you go in to hide in an inner chamber." 26The king of Israel then ordered, "Take Micaiah, and return him to Amon the governor of the city and to Joash the king's son, 27and say, 'Thus says the king: Put this fellow in prison, and feed him on reduced rations of bread and water until I come in peace.' " 28Micaiah said, "If you return in peace, the LORD has not spoken by me." And he said, "Hear, you peoples, all of you!"

29 So the king of Israel and King Jehoshaphat of Judah went up to Ramoth-gilead. 30The king of Israel said to Jehoshaphat, "I will disguise myself and go into battle, but you wear your robes." So the king of Israel disguised himself and went into battle. 31Now the king of Aram had commanded the thirty-two captains of his chariots, "Fight with no one small or great, but only with the king of Israel." 32When the captains of the chariots saw Jehoshaphat, they said, "It is surely the king of Israel." So they turned to fight against him; and Jehoshaphat cried out. 33When the captains of the chariots saw that it was not the king of Israel, they turned back from pursuing him. 34But a certain man drew his bow and unknowingly struck the king of Israel between the scale armor and the breastplate; so he said to the driver of his chariot, "Turn around, and carry me out of the battle, for I am wounded." 35The battle grew hot that day, and the king was propped up in his chariot facing the Arameans, until at evening he died; the blood from the wound had flowed into the bottom of the chariot. 36Then about sunset a shout went through the army, "Every man to his city, and every man to his country!"

37 So the king died, and was brought to Samaria; they buried the king in Samaria. 38They washed the chariot by the pool of Samaria; the dogs licked up his

*t* Heb *he*

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**22.19–23**: The celestial scene portrayed here is unique in the earlier literature of Israel. The *lying spirit,* here still under the control of the LORD; compare the "evil spirit" of 1 Sam 16.14, and Satan in Zech 3.1–2; Job chs 1–2. **26**: Ahab put the prisoner in charge of *the king's son* (one of his own sons) for maximum security. **27–28**: *In peace,* i.e. "victorious." **22.30**: The *disguise* shows that Ahab was fearful that Micaiah might be right. **31**: *Thirty-two captains,* compare 20.1, 24.

**22.38**: This verse is editorial, with reference to 21.19, though Naboth died in Jezreel. The addition of *the prostitutes* symbolizes the fertility cult, a prominent feature of the Baal religion that included ritual sexual inter-

blood, and the prostitutes washed themselves in it,[u] according to the word of the LORD that he had spoken. [39]Now the rest of the acts of Ahab, and all that he did, and the ivory house that he built, and all the cities that he built, are they not written in the Book of the Annals of the Kings of Israel? [40]So Ahab slept with his ancestors; and his son Ahaziah succeeded him.

41 Jehoshaphat son of Asa began to reign over Judah in the fourth year of King Ahab of Israel. [42]Jehoshaphat was thirty-five years old when he began to reign, and he reigned twenty-five years in Jerusalem. His mother's name was Azubah daughter of Shilhi. [43]He walked in all the way of his father Asa; he did not turn aside from it, doing what was right in the sight of the LORD; yet the high places were not taken away, and the people still sacrificed and offered incense on the high places. [44]Jehoshaphat also made peace with the king of Israel.

45 Now the rest of the acts of Jehoshaphat, and his power that he showed, and how he waged war, are they not written in the Book of the Annals of the Kings of Judah? [46]The remnant of the male temple prostitutes who were still in the land in the days of his father Asa, he exterminated.

47 There was no king in Edom; a deputy was king. [48]Jehoshaphat made ships of the Tarshish type to go to Ophir for gold; but they did not go, for the ships were wrecked at Ezion-geber. [49]Then Ahaziah son of Ahab said to Jehoshaphat, "Let my servants go with your servants in the ships," but Jehoshaphat was not willing. [50]Jehoshaphat slept with his ancestors and was buried with his ancestors in the city of his father David; his son Jehoram succeeded him.

51 Ahaziah son of Ahab began to reign over Israel in Samaria in the seventeenth year of King Jehoshaphat of Judah; he reigned two years over Israel. [52]He did what was evil in the sight of the LORD, and walked in the way of his father and mother, and in the way of Jeroboam son of Nebat, who caused Israel to sin. [53]He served Baal and worshiped him; he provoked the LORD, the God of Israel, to anger, just as his father had done.

[u] Heb lacks *in it*

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course. **39**: *The ivory house,* a palace in Samaria, decorated with carved ivory inlay and containing furniture so decorated. Some of these decorative inlays have been found in the archaeological excavation at Samaria (compare 10.22; Am 3.15; 6.4; Ps 45.8). **41–46**: *Jehoshaphat* of *Judah* is credited with certain reforms and given qualified approval by the Deuteronomistic editor, as was his father *Asa* (15.9–14).

**22.47–50**: Jehoshaphat controlled Edom (2 Chr ch 20), and wished to imitate Solomon in maritime operations (compare 9.26–28; 10.22). *Ships of the Tarshish type,* see 10.22 n. **48–49**: For a different version, see 2 Chr 20.35–37. **51–53**: *Ahaziah* is condemned by the Deuteronomistic editor, as are all the kings of *Israel*. The account of his reign is continued immediately in 2 Kings ch 1.

# *2 Kings*

Since 1 and 2 Kings are really one book, the problems and sources common to both are discussed in the Introduction to 1 Kings. Second Kings continues the story of the Hebrew monarchies. Chapters 1–17 describe the period from the reigns of Ahaziah of Israel and Jehoshaphat of Judah until the fall of Samaria and the end of the kingdom of Israel in 721 B.C. Chapters 18–25 relate the story of the kingdom of Judah from the fall of the kingdom of Israel to the fall of Judah with the capture and destruction of Jerusalem by Nebuchadnezzar in 586 B.C., ending with a brief account of the governorship of Gedaliah and the elevation of King Jehoiachin in exile. The book thus covers the period from the middle of the ninth century to near the middle of the sixth century (see "Survey of . . . Bible Lands," §§ 15–17 and 27). The fall of both Israel and Judah is interpreted in terms of the judgment of the LORD.

1 After the death of Ahab, Moab rebelled against Israel.

2 Ahaziah had fallen through the lattice in his upper chamber in Samaria, and lay injured; so he sent messengers, telling them, "Go, inquire of Baal-zebub, the god of Ekron, whether I shall recover from this injury." 3But the angel of the LORD said to Elijah the Tishbite, "Get up, go to meet the messengers of the king of Samaria, and say to them, 'Is it because there is no God in Israel that you are going to inquire of Baal-zebub, the god of Ekron?' 4Now therefore thus says the LORD, 'You shall not leave the bed to which you have gone, but you shall surely die.' " So Elijah went.

5 The messengers returned to the king, who said to them, "Why have you returned?" 6They answered him, "There came a man to meet us, who said to us, 'Go back to the king who sent you, and say to him: Thus says the LORD: Is it because there is no God in Israel that you are sending to inquire of Baal-zebub, the god of Ekron? Therefore you shall not leave the bed to which you have gone, but shall surely die.' " 7He said to them, "What sort of man was he who came to meet you and told you these things?" 8They answered him, "A hairy man, with a leather belt around his waist." He said, "It is Elijah the Tishbite."

9 Then the king sent to him a captain of fifty with his fifty men. He went up to Elijah, who was sitting on the top of a hill, and said to him, "O man of God, the king says, 'Come down.' " 10But Elijah answered the captain of fifty, "If I am a man of God, let fire come down from heaven and consume you and your fifty." Then fire came down from heaven, and consumed him and his fifty.

11 Again the king sent to him another captain of fifty with his fifty. He went up[a] and said to him, "O man of God, this is the king's order: Come down quickly!" 12But Elijah answered them, "If I am a man of God, let fire come down from heaven and consume you and your fifty." Then the fire of God came down from heaven and consumed him and his fifty.

13 Again the king sent the captain of a third fifty with his fifty. So the third captain of fifty went up, and came and fell on his knees before Elijah, and entreated him, "O man of God, please let my life, and the life of these fifty servants of yours, be precious in your sight. 14Look, fire came down from heaven and consumed the two former captains of fifty men with their fifties; but now let my life be precious in your sight." 15Then the angel of the LORD said to Elijah, "Go down with him; do not be afraid of him." So he set out and went down with him to the king, 16and said to him, "Thus says the LORD: Because you have sent messengers to inquire of Baal-zebub, the god of Ekron,—is it because there is no God in Israel to inquire of his word?—therefore you shall not leave the bed to which you have gone, but you shall surely die."

17 So he died according to the word of the LORD that Elijah had spoken. His brother,[b] Jehoram succeeded him as king in the second year of King Jehoram

*a* Gk Compare verses 9, 13: Heb *He answered*
*b* Gk Syr: Heb lacks *His brother*

**1.1–18: The reappearance of Elijah, the death of Ahaziah, and the accession of Jehoram of Israel. 1**: This information is probably out of place here (compare 3.5). **2–5**: *The lattice,* some sort of protective fence or grating, in this case failed to perform its function. *Baal-zebub* means "lord of flies"; it is perhaps a mocking distortion of "ba'al zbl," a Canaanite name meaning either "lord of the divine abode," or "Baal the Prince," one of the names and manifestations of the great Baal, the rival of the God of Israel (see 1 Kings 18.1–6 n., 17–19 n.). Later, the name of this deity became one synonym for the leader of evil forces in the Gospels (Mt 10.25; 12.24; Mk 3.22; Lk 11.15–19). If Ahaziah was a son of Jezebel, it is not surprising that he preferred Baal to the LORD.

**1.9–16**: As before (1 Kings 18.38), the power of God acting through Elijah is symbolized by fire. **17**: *Jehoram,* son of Ahab and king of Israel, must not be confused with his brother-in-law, *Jehoram son of King Jehoshaphat of Judah* (8.16, 25).

son of Jehoshaphat of Judah, because Ahaziah had no son. 18Now the rest of the acts of Ahaziah that he did, are they not written in the Book of the Annals of the Kings of Israel?

2 Now when the LORD was about to take Elijah up to heaven by a whirlwind, Elijah and Elisha were on their way from Gilgal. 2Elijah said to Elisha, "Stay here; for the LORD has sent me as far as Bethel." But Elisha said, "As the LORD lives, and as you yourself live, I will not leave you." So they went down to Bethel. 3The company of prophets[c] who were in Bethel came out to Elisha, and said to him, "Do you know that today the LORD will take your master away from you?" And he said, "Yes, I know; keep silent."

4 Elijah said to him, "Elisha, stay here; for the LORD has sent me to Jericho." But he said, "As the LORD lives, and as you yourself live, I will not leave you." So they came to Jericho. 5The company of prophets[c] who were at Jericho drew near to Elisha, and said to him, "Do you know that today the LORD will take your master away from you?" And he answered, "Yes, I know; be silent."

6 Then Elijah said to him, "Stay here; for the LORD has sent me to the Jordan." But he said, "As the LORD lives, and as you yourself live, I will not leave you." So the two of them went on. 7Fifty men of the company of prophets[c] also went, and stood at some distance from them, as they both were standing by the Jordan. 8Then Elijah took his mantle and rolled it up, and struck the water; the water was parted to the one side and to the other, until the two of them crossed on dry ground.

9 When they had crossed, Elijah said to Elisha, "Tell me what I may do for you, before I am taken from you." Elisha said, "Please let me inherit a double share of your spirit." 10He responded, "You have asked a hard thing; yet, if you see me as I am being taken from you, it will be granted you; if not, it will not." 11As they continued walking and talking, a chariot of fire and horses of fire separated the two of them, and Elijah ascended in a whirlwind into heaven. 12Elisha kept watching and crying out, "Father, father! The chariots of Israel and its horsemen!" But when he could no longer see him, he grasped his own clothes and tore them in two pieces.

13 He picked up the mantle of Elijah that had fallen from him, and went back and stood on the bank of the Jordan. 14He took the mantle of Elijah that had fallen from him, and struck the water, saying, "Where is the LORD, the God of Elijah?" When he had struck the water, the water was parted to the one side and to the other, and Elisha went over.

15 When the company of prophets[c] who were at Jericho saw him at a distance, they declared, "The spirit of Elijah rests on Elisha." They came to meet him and bowed to the ground before him. 16They said to him, "See now, we have fifty strong men among your servants; please let them go and seek your master; it may be that the spirit of the LORD has caught him up and thrown him down on some mountain or into some valley." He responded, "No, do not send them." 17But when they urged him until he was ashamed, he said, "Send them." So they

*c* Heb *sons of the prophets*

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**2.1–25: Elijah, taken up to heaven, is succeeded by Elisha.** As always, the power and greatness of Elijah are expressed by the ancient writer in terms of legend and miracle. According to biblical tradition, only two persons, Enoch (Gen 5.24) and Elijah, were worthy to be taken up by God without having to die. **1–2:** This *Gilgal* was north of *Bethel*. **3:** The expression *the company of prophets* means "members of the prophetic order"; see 1 Sam 10.5. **11:** The *chariot of fire and horses of fire* continue the symbolism of fire (see 1.9–16 n.). **12:** Elisha means perhaps that Elijah was more important and more powerful than *chariots* and *horsemen;* in 13.14 Elisha receives the same compliment. *Father* as the title of a man of religion is a very old usage (Judg 17.10). **13–14:** See 1 Kings 19.19. **15:** Elisha is acknowledged leader by *the company of prophets*.

sent fifty men who searched for three days but did not find him. 18When they came back to him (he had remained at Jericho), he said to them, "Did I not say to you, Do not go?"

19 Now the people of the city said to Elisha, "The location of this city is good, as my lord sees; but the water is bad, and the land is unfruitful." 20He said, "Bring me a new bowl, and put salt in it." So they brought it to him. 21Then he went to the spring of water and threw the salt into it, and said, "Thus says the LORD, I have made this water wholesome; from now on neither death nor miscarriage shall come from it." 22So the water has been wholesome to this day, according to the word that Elisha spoke.

23 He went up from there to Bethel; and while he was going up on the way, some small boys came out of the city and jeered at him, saying, "Go away, baldhead! Go away, baldhead!" 24When he turned around and saw them, he cursed them in the name of the LORD. Then two she-bears came out of the woods and mauled forty-two of the boys. 25From there he went on to Mount Carmel, and then returned to Samaria.

3 In the eighteenth year of King Jehoshaphat of Judah, Jehoram son of Ahab became king over Israel in Samaria; he reigned twelve years. 2He did what was evil in the sight of the LORD, though not like his father and mother, for he removed the pillar of Baal that his father had made. 3Nevertheless he clung to the sin of Jeroboam son of Nebat, which he caused Israel to commit; he did not depart from it.

4 Now King Mesha of Moab was a sheep breeder, who used to deliver to the king of Israel one hundred thousand lambs, and the wool of one hundred thousand rams. 5But when Ahab died, the king of Moab rebelled against the king of Israel. 6So King Jehoram marched out of Samaria at that time and mustered all Israel. 7As he went he sent word to King Jehoshaphat of Judah, "The king of Moab has rebelled against me; will you go with me to battle against Moab?" He answered, "I will; I am with you, my people are your people, my horses are your horses." 8Then he asked, "By which way shall we march?" Jehoram answered, "By the way of the wilderness of Edom."

9 So the king of Israel, the king of Judah, and the king of Edom set out; and when they had made a roundabout march of seven days, there was no water for the army or for the animals that were with them. 10Then the king of Israel said, "Alas! The LORD has summoned us, three kings, only to be handed over to Moab." 11But Jehoshaphat said, "Is there no prophet of the LORD here, through whom we may inquire of the LORD?" Then one of the servants of the king of Israel answered, "Elisha son of Shaphat, who used to pour water on the hands of Elijah, is here." 12Jehoshaphat said, "The word of the LORD is with him." So the

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**2.19–22**: The God-given power of Elisha is attested by a miracle. Today, the finest spring in Jericho is sometimes called Elisha's Fountain. **23–25**: Not all ancient writers, to say nothing of modern, would have told a story like this to inculcate respect for a prophet. On *forty-two* as a number of ill-omen, compare 10.14; Rev 11.2; 13.5.

**3.1–27**: **The war with Moab. 1–3**: *In the eighteenth year of King Jehoshaphat* does not agree with 1.17 ("second year of King Jehoram . . . of Judah"). The data come from two irreconcilable chronological systems. **4–8**: The famous "Moabite Stone," discovered in 1868, gives an account of the war from the standpoint of *King Mesha of Moab*. In naming *King Jehoram*, the author disregards the brief reign of Ahaziah (vv. 5–6; compare 1 Kings 22.40). The naming of *King Jehoshaphat of Judah* is based on the synchronism in v. 1, not that in 1.17. It was necessary for *the king of Israel* to get the cooperation of the *king of Judah* in order to march through the territory west of the Dead Sea on the way to *the wilderness of Edom*.

**3.9–12**: The plan was to strike *Moab* from the south through *Edom*. At that time the *king of Edom* was a vassal of *the king of Judah*, not a king in his own right (1 Kings 22.47). *Used to pour water on the hands of Elijah* (when he washed), i.e. *Elisha* had waited on his mentor like a servant.

king of Israel and Jehoshaphat and the king of Edom went down to him.

13 Elisha said to the king of Israel, "What have I to do with you? Go to your father's prophets or to your mother's." But the king of Israel said to him, "No; it is the LORD who has summoned us, three kings, only to be handed over to Moab." 14 Elisha said, "As the LORD of hosts lives, whom I serve, were it not that I have regard for King Jehoshaphat of Judah, I would give you neither a look nor a glance. 15 But get me a musician." And then, while the musician was playing, the power of the LORD came on him. 16 And he said, "Thus says the LORD, 'I will make this wadi full of pools.' 17 For thus says the LORD, 'You shall see neither wind nor rain, but the wadi shall be filled with water, so that you shall drink, you, your cattle, and your animals.' 18 This is only a trifle in the sight of the LORD, for he will also hand Moab over to you. 19 You shall conquer every fortified city and every choice city; every good tree you shall fell, all springs of water you shall stop up, and every good piece of land you shall ruin with stones." 20 The next day, about the time of the morning offering, suddenly water began to flow from the direction of Edom, until the country was filled with water.

21 When all the Moabites heard that the kings had come up to fight against them, all who were able to put on armor, from the youngest to the oldest, were called out and were drawn up at the frontier. 22 When they rose early in the morning, and the sun shone upon the water, the Moabites saw the water opposite them as red as blood. 23 They said, "This is blood; the kings must have fought together, and killed one another. Now then, Moab, to the spoil!" 24 But when they came to the camp of Israel, the Israelites rose up and attacked the Moabites, who fled before them; as they entered Moab they continued the attack.[d] 25 The cities they overturned, and on every good piece of land everyone threw a stone, until it was covered; every spring of water they stopped up, and every good tree they felled. Only at Kir-hareseth did the stone walls remain, until the slingers surrounded and attacked it. 26 When the king of Moab saw that the battle was going against him, he took with him seven hundred swordsmen to break through, opposite the king of Edom; but they could not. 27 Then he took his firstborn son who was to succeed him, and offered him as a burnt offering on the wall. And great wrath came upon Israel, so they withdrew from him and returned to their own land.

4 Now the wife of a member of the company of prophets[e] cried to Elisha, "Your servant my husband is dead; and you know that your servant feared

*d* Compare Gk Syr: Meaning of Heb uncertain
*e* Heb *the sons of the prophets*

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**3.13–20**: The phrase *to your father's prophets or to your mother's* (prophets of Baal) indicates that Jehoram was a son of Jezebel. **15**: The *musician* was used to induce a trance, out of which the prophet could give his oracle (1 Sam 10.5–6; 19.20–24). **16**: The *wadi* may have been "the brook Zered" (Deut 2.13). **22**: *Red as blood,* colored by the red sandstone of Edom (see Gen 25.30 note *t*).

**3.27**: Human sacrifice, common in many ancient religions, was not unknown among the people of Israel and Judah (Ex 22.29–30; Judg 11.30–31, 39; 1 Kings 16.34), though they learned that it was wrong (Gen 22.12; Ex 34.20; Deut 18.10). *The king of Moab* in his terrible extremity made the supreme sacrifice of *his firstborn son,* and the forces of Israel were so impressed and so filled with fear of the *great wrath* (perhaps of Chemosh, the god of Moab) that they gave up the victory that lay within their grasp and hastily *returned to their own land.* Two later kings of Judah are condemned for participating in the horrible practice (16.3; 21.6).

**4.1–8.6**: **An interlude on the miracles of Elisha.** See 2.19–22 n. In ancient times, miracle stories were considered to be one of the best ways of portraying the importance of a religious leader. Two differences from Elijah should be noted: *Elisha* belonged to and worked with *the company of prophets* (members of the prophetic order living in communities); he was often in the company of the king and the army (compare ch 3).

the LORD, but a creditor has come to take my two children as slaves." 2Elisha said to her, "What shall I do for you? Tell me, what do you have in the house?" She answered, "Your servant has nothing in the house, except a jar of oil." 3He said, "Go outside, borrow vessels from all your neighbors, empty vessels and not just a few. 4Then go in, and shut the door behind you and your children, and start pouring into all these vessels; when each is full, set it aside." 5So she left him and shut the door behind her and her children; they kept bringing vessels to her, and she kept pouring. 6When the vessels were full, she said to her son, "Bring me another vessel." But he said to her, "There are no more." Then the oil stopped flowing. 7She came and told the man of God, and he said, "Go sell the oil and pay your debts, and you and your children can live on the rest."

8 One day Elisha was passing through Shunem, where a wealthy woman lived, who urged him to have a meal. So whenever he passed that way, he would stop there for a meal. 9She said to her husband, "Look, I am sure that this man who regularly passes our way is a holy man of God. 10Let us make a small roof chamber with walls, and put there for him a bed, a table, a chair, and a lamp, so that he can stay there whenever he comes to us."

11 One day when he came there, he went up to the chamber and lay down there. 12He said to his servant Gehazi, "Call the Shunammite woman." When he had called her, she stood before him. 13He said to him, "Say to her, Since you have taken all this trouble for us, what may be done for you? Would you have a word spoken on your behalf to the king or to the commander of the army?" She answered, "I live among my own people." 14He said, "What then may be done for her?" Gehazi answered, "Well, she has no son, and her husband is old." 15He said, "Call her." When he had called her, she stood at the door. 16He said, "At this season, in due time, you shall embrace a son." She replied, "No, my lord, O man of God; do not deceive your servant."

17 The woman conceived and bore a son at that season, in due time, as Elisha had declared to her.

18 When the child was older, he went out one day to his father among the reapers. 19He complained to his father, "Oh, my head, my head!" The father said to his servant, "Carry him to his mother." 20He carried him and brought him to his mother; the child sat on her lap until noon, and he died. 21She went up and laid him on the bed of the man of God, closed the door on him, and left. 22Then she called to her husband, and said, "Send me one of the servants and one of the donkeys, so that I may quickly go to the man of God and come back again." 23He said, "Why go to him today? It is neither new moon nor sabbath." She said, "It will be all right." 24Then she saddled the donkey and said to her servant, "Urge the animal on; do not hold back for me unless I tell you." 25So she set out, and came to the man of God at Mount Carmel.

When the man of God saw her coming, he said to Gehazi his servant, "Look, there is the Shunammite woman; 26run at once to meet her, and say to her, Are you all right? Is your husband all right? Is the child all right?" She answered, "It is all right." 27When she came to the man of God at the mountain, she caught hold

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**4.1–7**: **The jar of oil.** This story is a parallel to Elijah's miracle in 1 Kings 17.14–16. Taking *children* as *slaves* for debt was legal in Israel (Ex 21.7). Later, in Judah, the practice was modified somewhat (Deut 15.12–18; Lev 25.39–46), at least in theory (compare Jer 34.8–16).

**4.8–37**: **The son restored to life.** The first part of this story (vv. 8–17) exhibits the favorite theme of the birth of a child late in life to a hitherto barren woman (see 1 Sam ch 1 n.). The second part of the story (vv. 18–37) parallels the account of Elijah's resuscitation of a child in 1 Kings 17.17–24.

**4.23**: *It is neither new moon nor sabbath,* it was considered more propitious to visit a prophet on holy days.

of his feet. Gehazi approached to push her away. But the man of God said, "Let her alone, for she is in bitter distress; the LORD has hidden it from me and has not told me." 28Then she said, "Did I ask my lord for a son? Did I not say, Do not mislead me?" 29He said to Gehazi, "Gird up your loins, and take my staff in your hand, and go. If you meet anyone, give no greeting, and if anyone greets you, do not answer; and lay my staff on the face of the child." 30Then the mother of the child said, "As the LORD lives, and as you yourself live, I will not leave without you." So he rose up and followed her. 31Gehazi went on ahead and laid the staff on the face of the child, but there was no sound or sign of life. He came back to meet him and told him, "The child has not awakened."

32 When Elisha came into the house, he saw the child lying dead on his bed. 33So he went in and closed the door on the two of them, and prayed to the LORD. 34Then he got up on the bed[f] and lay upon the child, putting his mouth upon his mouth, his eyes upon his eyes, and his hands upon his hands; and while he lay bent over him, the flesh of the child became warm. 35He got down, walked once to and fro in the room, then got up again and bent over him; the child sneezed seven times, and the child opened his eyes. 36Elisha[g] summoned Gehazi and said, "Call the Shunammite woman." So he called her. When she came to him, he said, "Take your son." 37She came and fell at his feet, bowing to the ground; then she took her son and left.

38 When Elisha returned to Gilgal, there was a famine in the land. As the company of prophets was[h] sitting before him, he said to his servant, "Put the large pot on, and make some stew for the company of prophets."[i] 39One of them went out into the field to gather herbs; he found a wild vine and gathered from it a lapful of wild gourds, and came and cut them up into the pot of stew, not knowing what they were. 40They served some for the men to eat. But while they were eating the stew, they cried out, "O man of God, there is death in the pot!" They could not eat it. 41He said, "Then bring some flour." He threw it into the pot, and said, "Serve the people and let them eat." And there was nothing harmful in the pot.

42 A man came from Baal-shalishah, bringing food from the first fruits to the man of God: twenty loaves of barley and fresh ears of grain in his sack. Elisha said, "Give it to the people and let them eat." 43But his servant said, "How can I set this before a hundred people?" So he repeated, "Give it to the people and let them eat, for thus says the LORD, 'They shall eat and have some left.' " 44He set it before them, they ate, and had some left, according to the word of the LORD.

5 Naaman, commander of the army of the king of Aram, was a great man and in high favor with his master, because by him the LORD had given victory to Aram. The man, though a mighty warrior, suffered from leprosy.[j] 2Now the Arameans on one of their raids had taken a young girl captive from the land of Israel, and she served Naaman's wife. 3She said to her mistress, "If only my lord were with the prophet who is in Samaria! He would cure him of his lepro-

*f* Heb lacks *on the bed* *g* Heb *he* *h* Heb *sons of the prophets were* *i* Heb *sons of the prophets* *j* A term for several skin diseases; precise meaning uncertain

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**4.38–41: The spoiled pot of stew.** Compare 2.19–22. **42–44: The twenty loaves.** The most striking parallels to this miracle are to be found in the New Testament, Mt 14.13–21; 15.32–38.

**5.1–27: The curing of the leprosy of Naaman. 1–7:** Neither the name of *the king of Aram* nor that of *the king of Israel* is mentioned. The story assumes that the Arameans held the upper hand at this time. The *ten talents of silver* would have weighed 750 lbs.; the *six thousand shekels of gold* would have weighed about 150 lbs. There is no way to estimate what the equivalent worth today would be, but a considerable fortune is intended.

sy."[k] [4]So Naaman[l] went in and told his lord just what the girl from the land of Israel had said. [5]And the king of Aram said, "Go then, and I will send along a letter to the king of Israel."

He went, taking with him ten talents of silver, six thousand shekels of gold, and ten sets of garments. [6]He brought the letter to the king of Israel, which read, "When this letter reaches you, know that I have sent to you my servant Naaman, that you may cure him of his leprosy."[k] [7]When the king of Israel read the letter, he tore his clothes and said, "Am I God, to give death or life, that this man sends word to me to cure a man of his leprosy?[k] Just look and see how he is trying to pick a quarrel with me."

8 But when Elisha the man of God heard that the king of Israel had torn his clothes, he sent a message to the king, "Why have you torn your clothes? Let him come to me, that he may learn that there is a prophet in Israel." [9]So Naaman came with his horses and chariots, and halted at the entrance of Elisha's house. [10]Elisha sent a messenger to him, saying, "Go, wash in the Jordan seven times, and your flesh shall be restored and you shall be clean." [11]But Naaman became angry and went away, saying, "I thought that for me he would surely come out, and stand and call on the name of the LORD his God, and would wave his hand over the spot, and cure the leprosy![k] [12]Are not Abana[m] and Pharpar, the rivers of Damascus, better than all the waters of Israel? Could I not wash in them, and be clean?" He turned and went away in a rage. [13]But his servants approached and said to him, "Father, if the prophet had commanded you to do something difficult, would you not have done it? How much more, when all he said to you was, 'Wash, and be clean'?" [14]So he went down and immersed himself seven times in the Jordan, according to the word of the man of God; his flesh was restored like the flesh of a young boy, and he was clean.

15 Then he returned to the man of God, he and all his company; he came and stood before him and said, "Now I know that there is no God in all the earth except in Israel; please accept a present from your servant." [16]But he said, "As the LORD lives, whom I serve, I will accept nothing!" He urged him to accept, but he refused. [17]Then Naaman said, "If not, please let two mule-loads of earth be given to your servant; for your servant will no longer offer burnt offering or sacrifice to any god except the LORD. [18]But may the LORD pardon your servant on one count: when my master goes into the house of Rimmon to worship there, leaning on my arm, and I bow down in the house of Rimmon, when I do bow down in the house of Rimmon, may the LORD pardon your servant on this one count." [19]He said to him, "Go in peace."

But when Naaman had gone from him a short distance, [20]Gehazi, the servant of Elisha the man of God, thought, "My master has let that Aramean Naaman off too lightly by not accepting from him what he offered. As the LORD lives, I will run after him and get something out of him." [21]So Gehazi went after Naaman. When Naaman saw someone running after him, he jumped down from the chariot to meet him and said, "Is everything all right?" [22]He replied, "Yes, but my master has sent me to say, 'Two members of a company of prophets[n] have just come to me from the hill country of Ephraim; please give them a talent of sil-

*k* A term for several skin diseases; precise meaning uncertain *l* Heb *he* *m* Another reading is *Amana* *n* Heb *sons of the prophets*

**5.14**: For another description of the disease of leprosy, compare Lev ch 13. The New Testament has a number of examples of the healing of this or a similar disease (Mt 8.2–3; Mk 1.40–42; Lk 5.12–13; compare Mt 11.5; Lk 7.22).

**5.15–19a**: *Naaman* would have preferred to worship the LORD alone thenceforth if that would have been possible. He asked to take home *two mule-loads of earth* from Israel, the idea being that a god could not be worshiped apart from his own land. If he should bow down to *Rimmon* (another name for Hadad, the chief god of Aram), it would only be because he was forced to do so.

ver and two changes of clothing.'" 23Naaman said, "Please accept two talents." He urged him, and tied up two talents of silver in two bags, with two changes of clothing, and gave them to two of his servants, who carried them in front of Gehazi. *o* 24When he came to the citadel, he took the bags*p* from them, and stored them inside; he dismissed the men, and they left.

25 He went in and stood before his master; and Elisha said to him, "Where have you been, Gehazi?" He answered, "Your servant has not gone anywhere at all." 26But he said to him, "Did I not go with you in spirit when someone left his chariot to meet you? Is this a time to accept money and to accept clothing, olive orchards and vineyards, sheep and oxen, and male and female slaves? 27Therefore the leprosy*q* of Naaman shall cling to you, and to your descendants forever." So he left his presence leprous, *q* as white as snow.

6 Now the company of prophets*r* said to Elisha, "As you see, the place where we live under your charge is too small for us. 2Let us go to the Jordan, and let us collect logs there, one for each of us, and build a place there for us to live." He answered, "Do so." 3Then one of them said, "Please come with your servants." And he answered, "I will." 4So he went with them. When they came to the Jordan, they cut down trees. 5But as one was felling a log, his ax head fell into the water; he cried out, "Alas, master! It was borrowed." 6Then the man of God said, "Where did it fall?" When he showed him the place, he cut off a stick, and threw it in there, and made the iron float. 7He said, "Pick it up." So he reached out his hand and took it.

8 Once when the king of Aram was at war with Israel, he took counsel with his officers. He said, "At such and such a place shall be my camp." 9But the man of God sent word to the king of Israel, "Take care not to pass this place, because the Arameans are going down there." 10The king of Israel sent word to the place of which the man of God spoke. More than once or twice he warned such a place*s* so that it was on the alert.

11 The mind of the king of Aram was greatly perturbed because of this; he called his officers and said to them, "Now tell me who among us sides with the king of Israel?" 12Then one of his officers said, "No one, my lord king. It is Elisha, the prophet in Israel, who tells the king of Israel the words that you speak in your bedchamber." 13He said, "Go and find where he is; I will send and seize him." He was told, "He is in Dothan." 14So he sent horses and chariots there and a great army; they came by night, and surrounded the city.

15 When an attendant of the man of God rose early in the morning and went out, an army with horses and chariots was all around the city. His servant said, "Alas, master! What shall we do?" 16He replied, "Do not be afraid, for there are more with us than there are with them." 17Then Elisha prayed: "O LORD, please open his eyes that he may see." So the LORD opened the eyes of the servant, and he saw; the mountain was full of horses and chariots of fire all around Elisha. 18When the Arameans*t* came down against him, Elisha prayed to the LORD, and said, "Strike this people, please, with blindness." So he struck them with

*o* Heb *him* *p* Heb lacks *the bags* *q* A term for several skin diseases; precise meaning uncertain *r* Heb *sons of the prophets* *s* Heb *warned it* *t* Heb *they*

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**5.26**: Elisha caught the culprit by extrasensory perception (*in spirit*). This trait comes out more strongly in the next chapter. **27**: For another case of *leprosy* as punishment, compare 15.4–5.

**6.1–7**: **The iron ax head.** See 4.1–8.6 n.

**6.8–23**: **The Aramean army blinded and captured.** As in 5.1–7 neither *the king of Aram* nor *the king of Israel* is named. Verses 8–14 portray Elisha's extraordinary skill in the use of extrasensory perception. **10**: The meaning is that the *king of Israel sent* someone else to investigate. *Dothan* (v. 13) was about ten miles north of *Samaria* (v. 19).

**6.17**: The *horses and chariots of fire* remind one of the stories about Elijah (2.11; 1 Kings

blindness as Elisha had asked. 19 Elisha said to them, "This is not the way, and this is not the city; follow me, and I will bring you to the man whom you seek." And he led them to Samaria.

20 As soon as they entered Samaria, Elisha said, "O LORD, open the eyes of these men so that they may see." The LORD opened their eyes, and they saw that they were inside Samaria. 21 When the king of Israel saw them he said to Elisha, "Father, shall I kill them? Shall I kill them?" 22 He answered, "No! Did you capture with your sword and your bow those whom you want to kill? Set food and water before them so that they may eat and drink; and let them go to their master." 23 So he prepared for them a great feast; after they ate and drank, he sent them on their way, and they went to their master. And the Arameans no longer came raiding into the land of Israel.

24 Some time later King Ben-hadad of Aram mustered his entire army; he marched against Samaria and laid siege to it. 25 As the siege continued, famine in Samaria became so great that a donkey's head was sold for eighty shekels of silver, and one-fourth of a kab of dove's dung for five shekels of silver. 26 Now as the king of Israel was walking on the city wall, a woman cried out to him, "Help, my lord king!" 27 He said, "No! Let the LORD help you. How can I help you? From the threshing floor or from the wine press?" 28 But then the king asked her, "What is your complaint?" She answered, "This woman said to me, 'Give up your son; we will eat him today, and we will eat my son tomorrow.' 29 So we cooked my son and ate him. The next day I said to her, 'Give up your son and we will eat him.' But she has hidden her son." 30 When the king heard the words of the woman he tore his clothes—now since he was walking on the city wall, the people could see that he had sackcloth on his body underneath— 31 and he said, "So may God do to me, and more, if the head of Elisha son of Shaphat stays on his shoulders today." 32 So he dispatched a man from his presence.

Now Elisha was sitting in his house, and the elders were sitting with him. Before the messenger arrived, Elisha said to the elders, "Are you aware that this murderer has sent someone to take off my head? When the messenger comes, see that you shut the door and hold it closed against him. Is not the sound of his master's feet behind him?" 33 While he was still speaking with them, the king[u] came down to him and said, "This trouble is from the LORD! Why should I hope in the LORD any longer?"

7 1 But Elisha said, "Hear the word of the LORD: thus says the LORD, Tomorrow about this time a measure of choice meal shall be sold for a shekel, and two measures of barley for a shekel, at the gate of Samaria." 2 Then the captain on whose hand the king leaned said to the man of God, "Even if the LORD were to make windows in the sky, could such a thing happen?" But he said, "You shall see it with your own eyes, but you shall not eat from it."

3 Now there were four leprous[v] men outside the city gate, who said to one another, "Why should we sit here until we die? 4 If we say, 'Let us enter the city,'

*u* See 7.2: Heb *messenger* *v* A term for several skin diseases; precise meaning uncertain

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18.38). **23**: *The Arameans* were either so pleased by the hospitality of the king or so frightened by the power of the prophet that they momentarily gave up the war.

**6.24–7.20**: **Ben-hadad's siege of Samaria repulsed by divine intervention.** **24**: The mention of the name of the *king of Aram* does not establish the chronology, since there were probably two Ben-hadads during these times, and the name of the king of Israel is not mentioned. **25**: These prices were enormously high. *Eighty shekels* would have been about a pound, *a kab* about a quart. **28–29**: See Deut 28.54–57; Lam 2.20; 4.10; Ezek 5.10. **31**: For some unknown reason, the king blamed *Elisha,* though in vv. 8–23 king and prophet were on the best of terms.

**6.32–7.2**: Elisha predicted a quick reversal of fortune; a *captain* doubted and his doom was predicted by the prophet.

the famine is in the city, and we shall die there; but if we sit here, we shall also die. Therefore, let us desert to the Aramean camp; if they spare our lives, we shall live; and if they kill us, we shall but die." 5So they arose at twilight to go to the Aramean camp; but when they came to the edge of the Aramean camp, there was no one there at all. 6For the Lord had caused the Aramean army to hear the sound of chariots, and of horses, the sound of a great army, so that they said to one another, "The king of Israel has hired the kings of the Hittites and the kings of Egypt to fight against us." 7So they fled away in the twilight and abandoned their tents, their horses, and their donkeys leaving the camp just as it was, and fled for their lives. 8When these leprous[w] men had come to the edge of the camp, they went into a tent, ate and drank, carried off silver, gold, and clothing, and went and hid them. Then they came back, entered another tent, carried off things from it, and went and hid them.

9 Then they said to one another, "What we are doing is wrong. This is a day of good news; if we are silent and wait until the morning light, we will be found guilty; therefore let us go and tell the king's household." 10So they came and called to the gatekeepers of the city, and told them, "We went to the Aramean camp, but there was no one to be seen or heard there, nothing but the horses tied, the donkeys tied, and the tents as they were." 11Then the gatekeepers called out and proclaimed it to the king's household. 12The king got up in the night, and said to his servants, "I will tell you what the Arameans have prepared against us. They know that we are starving; so they have left the camp to hide themselves in the open country, thinking, 'When they come out of the city, we shall take them alive and get into the city.' " 13One of his servants said, "Let some men take five of the remaining horses, since those left here will suffer the fate of the whole multitude of Israel that have perished already;[x] let us send and find out." 14So they took two mounted men, and the king sent them after the Aramean army, saying, "Go and find out." 15So they went after them as far as the Jordan; the whole way was littered with garments and equipment that the Arameans had thrown away in their haste. So the messengers returned, and told the king.

16 Then the people went out, and plundered the camp of the Arameans. So a measure of choice meal was sold for a shekel, and two measures of barley for a shekel, according to the word of the LORD. 17Now the king had appointed the captain on whose hand he leaned to have charge of the gate; the people trampled him to death in the gate, just as the man of God had said when the king came down to him. 18For when the man of God had said to the king, "Two measures of barley shall be sold for a shekel, and a measure of choice meal for a shekel, about this time tomorrow in the gate of Samaria," 19the captain had answered the man of God, "Even if the LORD were to make windows in the sky, could such a thing happen?" And he had answered, "You shall see it with your own eyes, but you shall not eat from it." 20It did indeed happen to him; the people trampled him to death in the gate.

8 Now Elisha had said to the woman whose son he had restored to life, "Get up and go with your household, and settle wherever you can; for the LORD has called for a famine, and it will

*w* A term for several skin diseases; precise meaning uncertain *x* Compare Gk Syr Vg: Meaning of Heb uncertain

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**7.3–8**: The lepers do not seem to be overly ill from their disease. It is the LORD alone who routs the enemy; no fighting is recorded. The word here translated *Egypt* probably refers to a small country to the north, in the same general area as *the Hittites* (likewise in 1 Kings 10.28–29).

**8.1–6**: **Elisha again helps the woman whose child he had saved.** This section may be a continuation of 4.8–37. **1–2**: Isaac also

*The Shunammite woman's land restored*

come on the land for seven years." 2So the woman got up and did according to the word of the man of God; she went with her household and settled in the land of the Philistines seven years. 3At the end of the seven years, when the woman returned from the land of the Philistines, she set out to appeal to the king for her house and her land. 4Now the king was talking with Gehazi the servant of the man of God, saying, "Tell me all the great things that Elisha has done." 5While he was telling the king how Elisha had restored a dead person to life, the woman whose son he had restored to life appealed to the king for her house and her land. Gehazi said, "My lord king, here is the woman, and here is her son whom Elisha restored to life." 6When the king questioned the woman, she told him. So the king appointed an official for her, saying, "Restore all that was hers, together with all the revenue of the fields from the day that she left the land until now."

7 Elisha went to Damascus while King Ben-hadad of Aram was ill. When it was told him, "The man of God has come here," 8the king said to Hazael, "Take a present with you and go to meet the man of God. Inquire of the LORD through him, whether I shall recover from this illness." 9So Hazael went to meet him, taking a present with him, all kinds of goods of Damascus, forty camel loads. When he entered and stood before him, he said, "Your son King Ben-hadad of Aram has sent me to you, saying, 'Shall I recover from this illness?' " 10Elisha said to him, "Go, say to him, 'You shall certainly recover'; but the LORD has shown me that he shall certainly die." 11He fixed his gaze and stared at him, until he was ashamed. Then the man of God wept. 12Hazael asked, "Why does my lord weep?" He answered, "Because I know the evil that you will do to the people of Israel; you will set their fortresses on fire, you will kill their young men with the sword, dash in pieces their little ones, and rip up their pregnant women." 13Hazael said, "What is your servant, who is a mere dog, that he should do this great thing?" Elisha answered, "The LORD has shown me that you are to be king over Aram." 14Then he left Elisha, and went to his master Ben-hadad,[y] who said to him, "What did Elisha say to you?" And he answered, "He told me that you would certainly recover." 15But the next day he took the bed-cover and dipped it in water and spread it over the king's face, until he died. And Hazael succeeded him.

16 In the fifth year of King Joram son of Ahab of Israel,[z] Jehoram son of King Jehoshaphat of Judah began to reign. 17He was thirty-two years old when he became king, and he reigned eight years in Jerusalem. 18He walked in the way of the kings of Israel, as the house of Ahab had done, for the daughter of Ahab was his wife. He did what was evil in the sight of the LORD. 19Yet the LORD would not destroy Judah, for the sake of his

*y* Heb lacks *Ben-hadad* *z* Gk Syr: Heb adds *Jehoshaphat being king of Judah,*

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went to *the land of the Philistines* to avoid *a famine* (Gen 26.1); compare Gen 12.10, where the place of refuge is Egypt. Drought and famine were common (4.38; 1 Kings 17.1). **3**: Apparently the caretakers were trying to usurp the property. **4**: The leprosy of *Gehazi* (5.27) is ignored here. Perhaps it was a mild case (7.3, 8), or perhaps the tradition from which this story comes knew nothing of it.

**8.7–15: Elisha foments revolution in Syria.** Elijah was able to carry out only one (the third) of the three divine commands given him at Horeb (1 Kings 19.15–16). *Elisha* now proceeds to carry out the first command. The idea behind this is that Israel needed to be punished for its sins, and that Hazael was divinely ordained to do this work. The prophet was sorrowful over this doleful necessity (vv. 11–12), but nevertheless felt that God's will must be done (compare Hos 13.16).

**8.16–24: The reign of Jehoram (Joram) of Judah. 16**: This synchronism with *Joram* (Jehoram) *of Israel* agrees with that in 3.1, not with that in 1.17 (see 3.1–3 n.). **18**: See 1 Kings 22.1–4 n. The adverse moral evaluation of the Deuteronomist is probably owing to the marriage. **19**: On the *lamp* as a

servant David, since he had promised to give a lamp to him and to his descendants forever.

20 In his days Edom revolted against the rule of Judah, and set up a king of their own. 21 Then Joram crossed over to Zair with all his chariots. He set out by night and attacked the Edomites and their chariot commanders who had surrounded him;[a] but his army fled home. 22 So Edom has been in revolt against the rule of Judah to this day. Libnah also revolted at the same time. 23 Now the rest of the acts of Joram, and all that he did, are they not written in the Book of the Annals of the Kings of Judah? 24 So Joram slept with his ancestors, and was buried with them in the city of David; his son Ahaziah succeeded him.

25 In the twelfth year of King Joram son of Ahab of Israel, Ahaziah son of King Jehoram of Judah began to reign. 26 Ahaziah was twenty-two years old when he began to reign; he reigned one year in Jerusalem. His mother's name was Athaliah, a granddaughter of King Omri of Israel. 27 He also walked in the way of the house of Ahab, doing what was evil in the sight of the LORD, as the house of Ahab had done, for he was son-in-law to the house of Ahab.

28 He went with Joram son of Ahab to wage war against King Hazael of Aram at Ramoth-gilead, where the Arameans wounded Joram. 29 King Joram returned to be healed in Jezreel of the wounds that the Arameans had inflicted on him at Ramah, when he fought against King Hazael of Aram. King Ahaziah son of Jehoram of Judah went down to see Joram son of Ahab in Jezreel, because he was wounded.

9 Then the prophet Elisha called a member of the company of prophets[b] and said to him, "Gird up your loins; take this flask of oil in your hand, and go to Ramoth-gilead. 2 When you arrive, look there for Jehu son of Jehoshaphat, son of Nimshi; go in and get him to leave his companions, and take him into an inner chamber. 3 Then take the flask of oil, pour it on his head, and say, 'Thus says the LORD: I anoint you king over Israel.' Then open the door and flee; do not linger."

4 So the young man, the young prophet, went to Ramoth-gilead. 5 He arrived while the commanders of the army were in council, and he announced, "I have a message for you, commander." "For which one of us?" asked Jehu. "For you, commander." 6 So Jehu[c] got up and went inside; the young man poured the oil on his head, saying to him, "Thus says the LORD the God of Israel: I anoint you king over the people of the LORD, over Israel. 7 You shall strike down the house of your master Ahab, so that I may avenge on Jezebel the blood of my servants the prophets, and the blood of all the servants of the LORD. 8 For the whole house of Ahab shall perish; I will cut off from Ahab every male, bond or free, in Israel. 9 I will make the house of Ahab like the house of Jeroboam son of Nebat, and like the house of Baasha son of Ahijah. 10 The dogs shall eat Jezebel in the territory of Jezreel, and no one shall bury

*a* Meaning of Heb uncertain *b* Heb *sons of the prophets* *c* Heb *he*

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symbol of the permanence of the Davidic dynasty, see 2 Sam 21.17; 1 Kings 11.36; 15.4.

**20**: See 3.9–12 n.

**8.25–29**: **The reign of Ahaziah of Judah.** This *Ahaziah* must not be confused with his uncle, Ahaziah of Israel (1.2–18; 1 Kings 22.40, 51–53). His relationship to *the house of Ahab* was enough to condemn him in the eyes of the editor. The term *son-in-law* (v. 27) would apply more accurately to Ahaziah's father. Ahaziah himself was actually related by blood *to the house of Ahab. Ramoth-gilead,* see 1 Kings 22.29–36. Like *Ahab, Joram* sought help from the *king of Judah*. The visit of *Ahaziah* to *Joram* set the stage for the catastrophic events of the next chapter. (*Ramah* is the same as Ramoth-gilead.)

**9.1–37**: **Elisha foments the revolution of Jehu; assassination of Joram, Ahaziah, and Jezebel.** Elisha now proceeds to carry out the second and only unfulfilled command given him at Horeb (see 8.7–15 n.).

her." Then he opened the door and fled.

11 When Jehu came back to his master's officers, they said to him, "Is everything all right? Why did that madman come to you?" He answered them, "You know the sort and how they babble." 12They said, "Liar! Come on, tell us!" So he said, "This is just what he said to me: 'Thus says the LORD, I anoint you king over Israel.' " 13Then hurriedly they all took their cloaks and spread them for him on the bare[d] steps; and they blew the trumpet, and proclaimed, "Jehu is king."

14 Thus Jehu son of Jehoshaphat son of Nimshi conspired against Joram. Joram with all Israel had been on guard at Ramoth-gilead against King Hazael of Aram; 15but King Joram had returned to be healed in Jezreel of the wounds that the Arameans had inflicted on him, when he fought against King Hazael of Aram. So Jehu said, "If this is your wish, then let no one slip out of the city to go and tell the news in Jezreel." 16Then Jehu mounted his chariot and went to Jezreel, where Joram was lying ill. King Ahaziah of Judah had come down to visit Joram.

17 In Jezreel, the sentinel standing on the tower spied the company of Jehu arriving, and said, "I see a company." Joram said, "Take a horseman; send him to meet them, and let him say, 'Is it peace?' " 18So the horseman went to meet him; he said, "Thus says the king, 'Is it peace?' " Jehu responded, "What have you to do with peace? Fall in behind me." The sentinel reported, saying, "The messenger reached them, but he is not coming back." 19Then he sent out a second horseman, who came to them and said, "Thus says the king, 'Is it peace?' " Jehu answered, "What have you to do with peace? Fall in behind me." 20Again the sentinel reported, "He reached them, but he is not coming back. It looks like the driving of Jehu son of Nimshi; for he drives like a maniac."

21 Joram said, "Get ready." And they got his chariot ready. Then King Joram of Israel and King Ahaziah of Judah set out, each in his chariot, and went to meet Jehu; they met him at the property of Naboth the Jezreelite. 22When Joram saw Jehu, he said, "Is it peace, Jehu?" He answered, "What peace can there be, so long as the many whoredoms and sorceries of your mother Jezebel continue?" 23Then Joram reined about and fled, saying to Ahaziah, "Treason, Ahaziah!" 24Jehu drew his bow with all his strength, and shot Joram between the shoulders, so that the arrow pierced his heart; and he sank in his chariot. 25Jehu said to his aide Bidkar, "Lift him out, and throw him on the plot of ground belonging to Naboth the Jezreelite; for remember, when you and I rode side by side behind his father Ahab how the LORD uttered this oracle against him: 26'For the blood of Naboth and for the blood of his children that I saw yesterday, says the LORD, I swear I will repay you on this very plot of ground.' Now therefore lift him out and throw him on the plot of ground, in accordance with the word of the LORD."

27 When King Ahaziah of Judah saw this, he fled in the direction of Beth-haggan. Jehu pursued him, saying, "Shoot him also!" And they shot him[e] in the chariot at the ascent to Gur, which is by Ibleam. Then he fled to Megiddo, and died there. 28His officers carried him in a chariot to Jerusalem, and buried him in his tomb with his ancestors in the city of David.

29 In the eleventh year of Joram son of Ahab, Ahaziah began to reign over Judah.

30 When Jehu came to Jezreel, Jezebel heard of it; she painted her eyes, and

*d* Meaning of Heb uncertain *e* Syr Vg Compare Gk: Heb lacks *and they shot him*

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**9.16**: Compare 8.29. *Jezreel,* see 1 Kings 18.41–46 n. **26**: Compare 1 Kings 21.17–19, 28–29.

**9.29**: This verse may be a correction of 8.25. **31**: *Zimri* was infamous for his brutal assassinations (1 Kings 16.8–12). **37**: The editor may have added this verse to the oracle in 1 Kings 21.23.

adorned her head, and looked out of the window. 31 As Jehu entered the gate, she said, "Is it peace, Zimri, murderer of your master?" 32 He looked up to the window and said, "Who is on my side? Who?" Two or three eunuchs looked out at him. 33 He said, "Throw her down." So they threw her down; some of her blood spattered on the wall and on the horses, which trampled on her. 34 Then he went in and ate and drank; he said, "See to that cursed woman and bury her; for she is a king's daughter." 35 But when they went to bury her, they found no more of her than the skull and the feet and the palms of her hands. 36 When they came back and told him, he said, "This is the word of the LORD, which he spoke by his servant Elijah the Tishbite, 'In the territory of Jezreel the dogs shall eat the flesh of Jezebel; 37 the corpse of Jezebel shall be like dung on the field in the territory of Jezreel, so that no one can say, This is Jezebel.' "

10 Now Ahab had seventy sons in Samaria. So Jehu wrote letters and sent them to Samaria, to the rulers of Jezreel,[f] to the elders, and to the guardians of the sons of[g] Ahab, saying, 2 "Since your master's sons are with you and you have at your disposal chariots and horses, a fortified city, and weapons, 3 select the son of your master who is the best qualified, set him on his father's throne, and fight for your master's house." 4 But they were utterly terrified and said, "Look, two kings could not withstand him; how then can we stand?" 5 So the steward of the palace, and the governor of the city, along with the elders and the guardians, sent word to Jehu: "We are your servants; we will do anything you say. We will not make anyone king; do whatever you think right." 6 Then he wrote them a second letter, saying, "If you are on my side, and if you are ready to obey me, take the heads of your master's sons and come to me at Jezreel tomorrow at this time." Now the king's sons, seventy persons, were with the leaders of the city, who were charged with their upbringing. 7 When the letter reached them, they took the king's sons and killed them, seventy persons; they put their heads in baskets and sent them to him at Jezreel. 8 When the messenger came and told him, "They have brought the heads of the king's sons," he said, "Lay them in two heaps at the entrance of the gate until the morning." 9 Then in the morning when he went out, he stood and said to all the people, "You are innocent. It was I who conspired against my master and killed him; but who struck down all these? 10 Know then that there shall fall to the earth nothing of the word of the LORD, which the LORD spoke concerning the house of Ahab; for the LORD has done what he said through his servant Elijah." 11 So Jehu killed all who were left of the house of Ahab in Jezreel, all his leaders, close friends, and priests, until he left him no survivor.

12 Then he set out and went to Samaria. On the way, when he was at Beth-eked of the Shepherds, 13 Jehu met relatives of King Ahaziah of Judah and said, "Who are you?" They answered, "We are kin of Ahaziah; we have come down to visit the royal princes and the sons of the queen mother." 14 He said, "Take them alive." They took them alive, and slaughtered them at the pit of Beth-eked, forty-two in all; he spared none of them.

15 When he left there, he met Jehonadab son of Rechab coming to meet him; he greeted him, and said to him, "Is your heart as true to mine as mine is to

*f* Or *of the city*; Vg Compare Gk

*g* Gk: Heb lacks *of the sons of*

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**10.1–36: Continuation of the purge; massacre of the princes of Israel, the princes of Judah, and the worshipers of Baal; decline of the power of Israel. 1:** *Seventy sons* probably includes grandsons (compare, however, Judg 8.30; 9.5; 12.13).

**10.10–11:** Compare 1 Kings 21.21. **15:** *Jehonadab* (or Jonadab) *son of Rechab* was the leader of that group, called the Rechabites, which, some scholars believe, fiercely maintained the old desert way of life, believing that only thus could they properly worship

yours?"[h] Jehonadab answered, "It is." Jehu said,[i] "If it is, give me your hand." So he gave him his hand. Jehu took him up with him into the chariot. 16He said, "Come with me, and see my zeal for the LORD." So he[j] had him ride in his chariot. 17When he came to Samaria, he killed all who were left to Ahab in Samaria, until he had wiped them out, according to the word of the LORD that he spoke to Elijah.

18 Then Jehu assembled all the people and said to them, "Ahab offered Baal small service; but Jehu will offer much more. 19Now therefore summon to me all the prophets of Baal, all his worshipers, and all his priests; let none be missing, for I have a great sacrifice to offer to Baal; whoever is missing shall not live." But Jehu was acting with cunning in order to destroy the worshipers of Baal. 20Jehu decreed, "Sanctify a solemn assembly for Baal." So they proclaimed it. 21Jehu sent word throughout all Israel; all the worshipers of Baal came, so that there was no one left who did not come. They entered the temple of Baal, until the temple of Baal was filled from wall to wall. 22He said to the keeper of the wardrobe, "Bring out the vestments for all the worshipers of Baal." So he brought out the vestments for them. 23Then Jehu entered the temple of Baal with Jehonadab son of Rechab; he said to the worshipers of Baal, "Search and see that there is no worshiper of the LORD here among you, but only worshipers of Baal." 24Then they proceeded to offer sacrifices and burnt offerings.

Now Jehu had stationed eighty men outside, saying, "Whoever allows any of those to escape whom I deliver into your hands shall forfeit his life." 25As soon as he had finished presenting the burnt offering, Jehu said to the guards and to the officers, "Come in and kill them; let no one escape." So they put them to the sword. The guards and the officers threw them out, and then went into the citadel of the temple of Baal. 26They brought out the pillar[k] that was in the temple of Baal, and burned it. 27Then they demolished the pillar of Baal, and destroyed the temple of Baal, and made it a latrine to this day.

28 Thus Jehu wiped out Baal from Israel. 29But Jehu did not turn aside from the sins of Jeroboam son of Nebat, which he caused Israel to commit—the golden calves that were in Bethel and in Dan. 30The LORD said to Jehu, "Because you have done well in carrying out what I consider right, and in accordance with all that was in my heart have dealt with the house of Ahab, your sons of the fourth generation shall sit on the throne of Israel." 31But Jehu was not careful to follow the law of the LORD the God of Israel with all his heart; he did not turn from the sins of Jeroboam, which he caused Israel to commit.

32 In those days the LORD began to trim off parts of Israel. Hazael defeated them throughout the territory of Israel: 33from the Jordan eastward, all the land of Gilead, the Gadites, the Reubenites, and the Manassites, from Aroer, which is by the Wadi Arnon, that is, Gilead and Bashan. 34Now the rest of the acts of Jehu, all that he did, and all his power,

*h* Gk: Heb *Is it right with your heart, as my heart is with your heart?* *i* Gk: Heb lacks *Jehu said* *j* Gk Syr Tg: Heb *they* *k* Gk Vg Syr Tg: Heb *pillars*

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the LORD (1 Chr 2.55; Jer ch 35). The nazirites were of similar type, though they practiced as individuals (Judg 13.4–5; Am 2.11–12; Num 6.1–21).

**10.18–27**: In slaughtering *the prophets of Baal,* with *his priests* and *worshipers, Jehu* was following in the footsteps of Elijah (compare v. 25 with 1 Kings 18.40).

**10.28–31**: The verses belong to the formulaic summaries (see Introduction to 1 Kings). A later prophet condemns this butchery by Jehu (Hos 1.4–5). **32–36**: On the successes of *Hazael* against *the territory of Israel,* see the prediction in 8.12. After the death of so many leaders, the defensive position of Israel was naturally weakened. It was probably during this time that Moab, south of the Arnon, also attacked Israel again and won final freedom from vassalage, as related on the Moabite Stone (see 3.4–8 n.).

are they not written in the Book of the Annals of the Kings of Israel? 35So Jehu slept with his ancestors, and they buried him in Samaria. His son Jehoahaz succeeded him. 36The time that Jehu reigned over Israel in Samaria was twenty-eight years.

11 Now when Athaliah, Ahaziah's mother, saw that her son was dead, she set about to destroy all the royal family. 2But Jehosheba, King Joram's daughter, Ahaziah's sister, took Joash son of Ahaziah, and stole him away from among the king's children who were about to be killed; she put[l] him and his nurse in a bedroom. Thus she[m] hid him from Athaliah, so that he was not killed; 3he remained with her six years, hidden in the house of the LORD, while Athaliah reigned over the land.

4 But in the seventh year Jehoiada summoned the captains of the Carites and of the guards and had them come to him in the house of the LORD. He made a covenant with them and put them under oath in the house of the LORD; then he showed them the king's son. 5He commanded them, "This is what you are to do: one-third of you, those who go off duty on the sabbath and guard the king's house 6(another third being at the gate Sur and a third at the gate behind the guards), shall guard the palace; 7and your two divisions that come on duty in force on the sabbath and guard the house of the LORD[n] 8shall surround the king, each with weapons in hand; and whoever approaches the ranks is to be killed. Be with the king in his comings and goings."

9 The captains did according to all that the priest Jehoiada commanded; each brought his men who were to go off duty on the sabbath, with those who were to come on duty on the sabbath, and came to the priest Jehoiada. 10The priest delivered to the captains the spears and shields that had been King David's, which were in the house of the LORD; 11the guards stood, every man with his weapons in his hand, from the south side of the house to the north side of the house, around the altar and the house, to guard the king on every side. 12Then he brought out the king's son, put the crown on him, and gave him the covenant;[o] they proclaimed him king, and anointed him; they clapped their hands and shouted, "Long live the king!"

13 When Athaliah heard the noise of the guard and of the people, she went into the house of the LORD to the people; 14when she looked, there was the king standing by the pillar, according to custom, with the captains and the trumpeters beside the king, and all the people of the land rejoicing and blowing trumpets. Athaliah tore her clothes and cried, "Treason! Treason!" 15Then the priest Jehoiada commanded the captains who were set over the army, "Bring her out

*l* With 2 Chr 22.11: Heb lacks *she put*
*m* Gk Syr Vg Compare 2 Chr 22.11: Heb *they*
*n* Heb *the* LORD *to the king*
*o* Or *treaty* or *testimony*; Heb *eduth*

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**11.1–21: The usurpation of Athaliah in Judah, the revolt against her, and the coronation of Joash (Jehoash).** Jehu's attempt to eliminate the family of Ahab and the worship of Baal from Israel resulted in the temporary seizure of the throne of Judah by one who was both a descendant of Ahab and a worshiper of Baal (v. 18). **2–3:** *Jehosheba* was not a daughter of Athaliah; hence she was only *Ahaziah's* half *sister*. According to 2 Chr 22.11 she was the wife of Jehoiada the priest (vv. 4, 9). *Joash* (Jehoash, 12.1) was the grandson of *Athaliah* as well as of *King Joram*; but while he was *hidden in the house of the* LORD, he was taught the ways of the LORD. **4:** The revolt was led by Jehoiada, the priest of the LORD (v. 9). *The Carites* were mercenaries; the word may be only an error for Cherethites (see 1 Sam 30.14 n.; 2 Sam 8.16–18 n.).

**11.12:** The word *covenant* or testimony (see note *o*) may refer to a book or document; or it may be an error for "armlet," a royal symbol in 2 Sam 1.10. **14:** *The pillar* (before the temple), see 1 Kings 7.15–22 n. Much debated is the social and political significance of *the people of the land* (see also 23.35; 25.19); perhaps they were free persons who had remained loyal to the old Yahwistic traditions.

between the ranks, and kill with the sword anyone who follows her." For the priest said, "Let her not be killed in the house of the LORD." 16So they laid hands on her; she went through the horses' entrance to the king's house, and there she was put to death.

17 Jehoiada made a covenant between the LORD and the king and people, that they should be the LORD's people; also between the king and the people. 18Then all the people of the land went to the house of Baal, and tore it down; his altars and his images they broke in pieces, and they killed Mattan, the priest of Baal, before the altars. The priest posted guards over the house of the LORD. 19He took the captains, the Carites, the guards, and all the people of the land; then they brought the king down from the house of the LORD, marching through the gate of the guards to the king's house. He took his seat on the throne of the kings. 20So all the people of the land rejoiced; and the city was quiet after Athaliah had been killed with the sword at the king's house.

21[p] Jehoash[q] was seven years old when he began to reign.

12 In the seventh year of Jehu, Jehoash began to reign; he reigned forty years in Jerusalem. His mother's name was Zibiah of Beer-sheba. 2Jehoash did what was right in the sight of the LORD all his days, because the priest Jehoiada instructed him. 3Nevertheless the high places were not taken away; the people continued to sacrifice and make offerings on the high places.

4 Jehoash said to the priests, "All the money offered as sacred donations that is brought into the house of the LORD, the money for which each person is assessed—the money from the assessment of persons—and the money from the voluntary offerings brought into the house of the LORD, 5let the priests receive from each of the donors; and let them repair the house wherever any need of repairs is discovered." 6But by the twenty-third year of King Jehoash the priests had made no repairs on the house. 7Therefore King Jehoash summoned the priest Jehoiada with the other priests and said to them, "Why are you not repairing the house? Now therefore do not accept any more money from your donors but hand it over for the repair of the house." 8So the priests agreed that they would neither accept more money from the people nor repair the house.

9 Then the priest Jehoiada took a chest, made a hole in its lid, and set it beside the altar on the right side as one entered the house of the LORD; the priests who guarded the threshold put in it all the money that was brought into the house of the LORD. 10Whenever they saw that there was a great deal of money in the chest, the king's secretary and the high priest went up, counted the money that was found in the house of the LORD, and tied it up in bags. 11They would give the money that was weighed out into the hands of the workers who had the oversight of the house of the LORD; then they paid it out to the carpenters and the builders who worked on the house of the LORD, 12to the masons and the stonecut-

*p* Ch 12.1 in Heb *q* Another spelling is *Joash*; see verse 19

**12.1–21: Reign of Jehoash of Judah; difficulties with repairs to the temple; attack by the Arameans; assassination of Jehoash. 1–3**: During the childhood of the king, *the priest Jehoiada instructed him,* being no doubt the real power behind the throne. **4–8**: According to the writer, the controversy over the repair of the temple was the fault of the priests rather than of the king. The identity of the *donors* (vv. 5, 7) is not clear.

**12.9–16**: A new method of collection resulted in enough funds for repairs, but not enough for replacement of the valuable furnishings probably lost during Athaliah's regime (2 Chr 24.7). *Jehoiada* might properly be called "chief priest," but the term *high priest* is post-exilic and here editorial. For a story about apostasy on the part of Joash, and his assassination of Jehoiada's son, see 2 Chr 24.17–22. **19–21**: According to 2 Chr 24.23–27, *Joash* (Jehoash) was defeated and assassinated because of his apostasy. In the end he turned out to be a true grandson of Athaliah (see 11.2–3 n.).

ters, as well as to buy timber and quarried stone for making repairs on the house of the LORD, as well as for any outlay for repairs of the house. 13But for the house of the LORD no basins of silver, snuffers, bowls, trumpets, or any vessels of gold, or of silver, were made from the money that was brought into the house of the LORD, 14for that was given to the workers who were repairing the house of the LORD with it. 15They did not ask an accounting from those into whose hand they delivered the money to pay out to the workers, for they dealt honestly. 16The money from the guilt offerings and the money from the sin offerings was not brought into the house of the LORD; it belonged to the priests.

17 At that time King Hazael of Aram went up, fought against Gath, and took it. But when Hazael set his face to go up against Jerusalem, 18King Jehoash of Judah took all the votive gifts that Jehoshaphat, Jehoram, and Ahaziah, his ancestors, the kings of Judah, had dedicated, as well as his own votive gifts, all the gold that was found in the treasuries of the house of the LORD and of the king's house, and sent these to King Hazael of Aram. Then Hazael withdrew from Jerusalem.

19 Now the rest of the acts of Joash, and all that he did, are they not written in the Book of the Annals of the Kings of Judah? 20His servants arose, devised a conspiracy, and killed Joash in the house of Millo, on the way that goes down to Silla. 21It was Jozacar son of Shimeath and Jehozabad son of Shomer, his servants, who struck him down, so that he died. He was buried with his ancestors in the city of David; then his son Amaziah succeeded him.

13 In the twenty-third year of King Joash son of Ahaziah of Judah, Jehoahaz son of Jehu began to reign over Israel in Samaria; he reigned seventeen years. 2He did what was evil in the sight of the LORD, and followed the sins of Jeroboam son of Nebat, which he caused Israel to sin; he did not depart from them. 3The anger of the LORD was kindled against Israel, so that he gave them repeatedly into the hand of King Hazael of Aram, then into the hand of Benhadad son of Hazael. 4But Jehoahaz entreated the LORD, and the LORD heeded him; for he saw the oppression of Israel, how the king of Aram oppressed them. 5Therefore the LORD gave Israel a savior, so that they escaped from the hand of the Arameans; and the people of Israel lived in their homes as formerly. 6Nevertheless they did not depart from the sins of the house of Jeroboam, which he caused Israel to sin, but walked[r] in them; the sacred pole[s] also remained in Samaria. 7So Jehoahaz was left with an army of not more than fifty horsemen, ten chariots and ten thousand footmen; for the king of Aram had destroyed them and made them like the dust at threshing. 8Now the rest of the acts of Jehoahaz and all that he did, including his might, are they not written in the Book of the Annals of the Kings of Israel? 9So Jehoahaz slept with his ancestors, and they buried him in Samaria; then his son Joash succeeded him.

10 In the thirty-seventh year of King Joash of Judah, Jehoash son of Jehoahaz began to reign over Israel in Samaria; he reigned sixteen years. 11He also did what was evil in the sight of the LORD; he did not depart from all the sins of Jeroboam son of Nebat, which he caused Israel to sin, but he walked in them. 12Now the rest of the acts of Joash, and all that he did, as well as the might with which he fought against King Amaziah of Judah, are they not written in the Book of the Annals of the Kings of Israel? 13So Joash

*r* Gk Syr Tg Vg: Heb *he walked*
*s* Heb *Asherah*

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**13.1–25: The reigns of Jehoahaz and Jehoash of Israel; the death of Elisha. 3:** Compare 8.12. **4–5:** Compare the "framework" of Judges (see Introduction to Judges). **6:** *The sacred pole,* here a symbol of the goddess (see 1 Kings 14.15 n.; 18.17–19 n.).

**13.13:** This Jeroboam is Jeroboam II, to be distinguished from Jeroboam I mentioned in

slept with his ancestors, and Jeroboam sat upon his throne; Joash was buried in Samaria with the kings of Israel.

14 Now when Elisha had fallen sick with the illness of which he was to die, King Joash of Israel went down to him, and wept before him, crying, "My father, my father! The chariots of Israel and its horsemen!" 15Elisha said to him, "Take a bow and arrows"; so he took a bow and arrows. 16Then he said to the king of Israel, "Draw the bow"; and he drew it. Elisha laid his hands on the king's hands. 17Then he said, "Open the window eastward"; and he opened it. Elisha said, "Shoot"; and he shot. Then he said, "The LORD's arrow of victory, the arrow of victory over Aram! For you shall fight the Arameans in Aphek until you have made an end of them." 18He continued, "Take the arrows"; and he took them. He said to the king of Israel, "Strike the ground with them"; he struck three times, and stopped. 19Then the man of God was angry with him, and said, "You should have struck five or six times; then you would have struck down Aram until you had made an end of it, but now you will strike down Aram only three times."

20 So Elisha died, and they buried him. Now bands of Moabites used to invade the land in the spring of the year. 21As a man was being buried, a marauding band was seen and the man was thrown into the grave of Elisha; as soon as the man touched the bones of Elisha, he came to life and stood on his feet.

22 Now King Hazael of Aram oppressed Israel all the days of Jehoahaz. 23But the LORD was gracious to them and had compassion on them; he turned toward them, because of his covenant with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and would not destroy them; nor has he banished them from his presence until now.

24 When King Hazael of Aram died, his son Ben-hadad succeeded him. 25Then Jehoash son of Jehoahaz took again from Ben-hadad son of Hazael the towns that he had taken from his father Jehoahaz in war. Three times Joash defeated him and recovered the towns of Israel.

14 In the second year of King Joash son of Joahaz of Israel, King Amaziah son of Joash of Judah, began to reign. 2He was twenty-five years old when he began to reign, and he reigned twenty-nine years in Jerusalem. His mother's name was Jehoaddin of Jerusalem. 3He did what was right in the sight of the LORD, yet not like his ancestor David; in all things he did as his father Joash had done. 4But the high places were not removed; the people still sacrificed and made offerings on the high places. 5As soon as the royal power was firmly in his hand he killed his servants who had murdered his father the king. 6But he did not put to death the children of the murderers; according to what is written in the book of the law of Moses, where the LORD commanded, "The parents shall not be put to death for the children, or the children be put to death for the parents; but all shall be put to death for their own sins."

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v. 11. **14**: Note the friendly relations between the prophet and the grandson of Jehu; on the words of Joash, see 2.12 n. **18**: The striking *three times* refers to the three victories in v. 25.

**13.20–21**: On the miracle, see 4.1–8.6 n. **23**: A theological anticipation of vv. 24–25, added by an editor who, though friendly to Israel, yet knew that in the end the kingdom had fallen. **24–25**: This *Ben-hadad* (also in v. 3) is the third of that name, possibly the fourth, mentioned in these pages (compare 1 Kings 15.18–21; 20.1; 2 Kings 6.24; 8.7).

**14.1–22: Warfare between Amaziah of Judah and Jehoash of Israel. 1**: The reigns of *Joash* (Jehoash) *of Israel* and *Joash* (Jehoash) *of Judah* overlapped by about two years. Compare the earlier overlapping and more nearly coincident reigns of the two brothers-in-law, Joram (Jehoram) of Israel and Joram (Jehoram) of Judah (see 1.17; 8.16, 25–exhibiting two different chronological systems; see p. 339 OT. **6**: *The law,* Deut 24.16; compare Jer 31.29–30; Ezek 18.2–4, 20; earlier theory and practice may be seen from Ex 20.5; Deut 5.9–10; Josh 7.24–25; 1 Kings 21.21. **7**: *The Valley of Salt,* probably the depression south of the Dead Sea. On the relations between Judah and the *Edomites,* compare 8.20–22.

7 He killed ten thousand Edomites in the Valley of Salt and took Sela by storm; he called it Jokthe-el, which is its name to this day.

8 Then Amaziah sent messengers to King Jehoash son of Jehoahaz, son of Jehu, of Israel, saying, "Come, let us look one another in the face." 9King Jehoash of Israel sent word to King Amaziah of Judah, "A thornbush on Lebanon sent to a cedar on Lebanon, saying, 'Give your daughter to my son for a wife'; but a wild animal of Lebanon passed by and trampled down the thornbush. 10You have indeed defeated Edom, and your heart has lifted you up. Be content with your glory, and stay at home; for why should you provoke trouble so that you fall, you and Judah with you?"

11 But Amaziah would not listen. So King Jehoash of Israel went up; he and King Amaziah of Judah faced one another in battle at Beth-shemesh, which belongs to Judah. 12Judah was defeated by Israel; everyone fled home. 13King Jehoash of Israel captured King Amaziah of Judah son of Jehoash, son of Ahaziah, at Beth-shemesh; he came to Jerusalem, and broke down the wall of Jerusalem from the Ephraim Gate to the Corner Gate, a distance of four hundred cubits. 14He seized all the gold and silver, and all the vessels that were found in the house of the LORD and in the treasuries of the king's house, as well as hostages; then he returned to Samaria.

15 Now the rest of the acts that Jehoash did, his might, and how he fought with King Amaziah of Judah, are they not written in the Book of the Annals of the Kings of Israel? 16Jehoash slept with his ancestors, and was buried in Samaria with the kings of Israel; then his son Jeroboam succeeded him.

17 King Amaziah son of Joash of Judah lived fifteen years after the death of King Jehoash son of Jehoahaz of Israel. 18Now the rest of the deeds of Amaziah, are they not written in the Book of the Annals of the Kings of Judah? 19They made a conspiracy against him in Jerusalem, and he fled to Lachish. But they sent after him to Lachish, and killed him there. 20They brought him on horses; he was buried in Jerusalem with his ancestors in the city of David. 21All the people of Judah took Azariah, who was sixteen years old, and made him king to succeed his father Amaziah. 22He rebuilt Elath and restored it to Judah, after King Amaziah[t] slept with his ancestors.

23 In the fifteenth year of King Amaziah son of Joash of Judah, King Jeroboam son of Joash of Israel began to reign in Samaria; he reigned forty-one years. 24He did what was evil in the sight of the LORD; he did not depart from all the sins of Jeroboam son of Nebat, which he caused Israel to sin. 25He restored the border of Israel from Lebo-hamath as far as the Sea of the Arabah, according to the word of the LORD, the God of Israel, which he spoke by his servant Jonah son of Amittai, the prophet, who was from

*t* Heb *the king*

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**14.8–10**: See Judg 9.8–15. The analogy in the fable here should not be pressed in every detail. In general, the idea is that a miserable little *thornbush* tried to make itself equal to a *cedar,* and was badly *trampled* for its trouble. *Jehoash* was both *cedar* and *wild animal.* **13**: *Four hundred cubits,* about two hundred yards. *The Ephraim Gate* would naturally be in the north wall. *The Corner Gate* was probably near the northwest angle of the wall. **14**: Compare 12.18. Apparently the captured king (v. 13) was released and *hostages* were taken instead.

**14.15–16**: These verses duplicate 13.12–13. **19**: Perhaps Amaziah was assassinated by those resentful of the punishment he had meted out to his father's assassins (v. 5). **21**: *Azariah,* also called Uzziah (2 Chr 26.1). **22**: The restoration of Elath as a seaport of Judah was possible because Edom had again been subdued (v. 7; see 8.20–22; 1 Kings 9.26–28; 22.47–50).

**14.23–29**: **The reign of Jeroboam II** was long and prosperous. **25**: Jeroboam is here said to have ruled from the Dead Sea (*Sea of the Arabah*) as far north as Solomon's limit (1 Kings 8.65). His prophetic supporter was *Jonah son of Amittai,* whose name was long afterwards given to the hero of the Book of Jonah (see Jon 1.1). **26–27**: These verses

Gath-hepher. [26]For the LORD saw that the distress of Israel was very bitter; there was no one left, bond or free, and no one to help Israel. [27]But the LORD had not said that he would blot out the name of Israel from under heaven, so he saved them by the hand of Jeroboam son of Joash.

28 Now the rest of the acts of Jeroboam, and all that he did, and his might, how he fought, and how he recovered for Israel Damascus and Hamath, which had belonged to Judah, are they not written in the Book of the Annals of the Kings of Israel? [29]Jeroboam slept with his ancestors, the kings of Israel; his son Zechariah succeeded him.

15 In the twenty-seventh year of King Jeroboam of Israel King Azariah son of Amaziah of Judah began to reign. [2]He was sixteen years old when he began to reign, and he reigned fifty-two years in Jerusalem. His mother's name was Jecoliah of Jerusalem. [3]He did what was right in the sight of the LORD, just as his father Amaziah had done. [4]Nevertheless the high places were not taken away; the people still sacrificed and made offerings on the high places. [5]The LORD struck the king, so that he was leprous[u] to the day of his death, and lived in a separate house. Jotham the king's son was in charge of the palace, governing the people of the land. [6]Now the rest of the acts of Azariah, and all that he did, are they not written in the Book of the Annals of the Kings of Judah? [7]Azariah slept with his ancestors; they buried him with his ancestors in the city of David; his son Jotham succeeded him.

8 In the thirty-eighth year of King Azariah of Judah, Zechariah son of Jeroboam reigned over Israel in Samaria six months. [9]He did what was evil in the sight of the LORD, as his ancestors had done. He did not depart from the sins of Jeroboam son of Nebat, which he caused Israel to sin. [10]Shallum son of Jabesh conspired against him, and struck him down in public and killed him, and reigned in place of him. [11]Now the rest of the deeds of Zechariah are written in the Book of the Annals of the Kings of Israel. [12]This was the promise of the LORD that he gave to Jehu, "Your sons shall sit on the throne of Israel to the fourth generation." And so it happened.

13 Shallum son of Jabesh began to reign in the thirty-ninth year of King Uzziah of Judah; he reigned one month in Samaria. [14]Then Menahem son of Gadi came up from Tirzah and came to Samaria; he struck down Shallum son of Jabesh in Samaria and killed him; he reigned in place of him. [15]Now the rest of the deeds of Shallum, including the conspiracy that he made, are written in

*u* A term for several skin diseases; precise meaning uncertain

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show sympathy for Israel and are inconsistent with the usual attitudes of the Deuteronomist (see Introduction to 1 Kings and contrast v. 24). Contrast the attitudes of Amos (Am 7.11) and Hosea (Hos 1.4–5; 10.7, 15; 13.16), who prophesied during the reign of *Jeroboam* (see Introductions to Amos and Hosea). **28**: This verse has been badly damaged in transmission; some scholars propose to read something like this: "how he fought with Damascus and how he averted the wrath of the LORD from Israel . . ."

**15.1–7**: **The reign of Azariah (Uzziah) in Judah.** The reign of *Azariah* (called Uzziah in vv. 13, 30, 32, 34, and elsewhere) was long and prosperous, like that of *Jeroboam* II in Israel (see 14.23–24 and additional data in 2 Chr 26.6–15). **5**: Because *the king was leprous,* his son *Jotham* acted as regent (*was in charge of the palace*) during the latter years of the reign. **7**: On his death see Isa 6.1. A limestone inscription found at Jerusalem bears the inscription: "Hither were brought the bones of Uzziah, King of Judah: not to be opened" (date 1st cent. A.D.).

**15.8–31**: **The reigns of Zechariah, Shallum, Menahem, Pekahiah, and Pekah in Israel. 8–12**: *Zechariah* was the last of the dynasty of *Jehu* (v. 12; compare 10.30). His assassination began a series of revolts and counter-revolts like those preceding the reign of Omri (1 Kings ch 16). **13–16**: *Shallum* was quickly murdered by *Menahem*. On the custom of disemboweling pregnant women, see 8.12; Hos 13.16; Am 1.13.

the Book of the Annals of the Kings of Israel. 16 At that time Menahem sacked Tiphsah, all who were in it and its territory from Tirzah on; because they did not open it to him, he sacked it. He ripped open all the pregnant women in it.

17 In the thirty-ninth year of King Azariah of Judah, Menahem son of Gadi began to reign over Israel; he reigned ten years in Samaria. 18 He did what was evil in the sight of the LORD; he did not depart all his days from any of the sins of Jeroboam son of Nebat, which he caused Israel to sin. 19 King Pul of Assyria came against the land; Menahem gave Pul a thousand talents of silver, so that he might help him confirm his hold on the royal power. 20 Menahem exacted the money from Israel, that is, from all the wealthy, fifty shekels of silver from each one, to give to the king of Assyria. So the king of Assyria turned back, and did not stay there in the land. 21 Now the rest of the deeds of Menahem, and all that he did, are they not written in the Book of the Annals of the Kings of Israel? 22 Menahem slept with his ancestors, and his son Pekahiah succeeded him.

23 In the fiftieth year of King Azariah of Judah, Pekahiah son of Menahem began to reign over Israel in Samaria; he reigned two years. 24 He did what was evil in the sight of the LORD; he did not turn away from the sins of Jeroboam son of Nebat, which he caused Israel to sin. 25 Pekah son of Remaliah, his captain, conspired against him with fifty of the Gileadites, and attacked him in Samaria, in the citadel of the palace along with Argob and Arieh; he killed him, and reigned in place of him. 26 Now the rest of the deeds of Pekahiah, and all that he did, are written in the Book of the Annals of the Kings of Israel.

27 In the fifty-second year of King Azariah of Judah, Pekah son of Remaliah began to reign over Israel in Samaria; he reigned twenty years. 28 He did what was evil in the sight of the LORD; he did not depart from the sins of Jeroboam son of Nebat, which he caused Israel to sin.

29 In the days of King Pekah of Israel, King Tiglath-pileser of Assyria came and captured Ijon, Abel-beth-maacah, Janoah, Kedesh, Hazor, Gilead, and Galilee, all the land of Naphtali; and he carried the people captive to Assyria. 30 Then Hoshea son of Elah made a conspiracy against Pekah son of Remaliah, attacked him, and killed him; he reigned in place of him, in the twentieth year of Jotham son of Uzziah. 31 Now the rest of the acts of Pekah, and all that he did, are written in the Book of the Annals of the Kings of Israel.

32 In the second year of King Pekah son of Remaliah of Israel, King Jotham son of Uzziah of Judah began to reign. 33 He was twenty-five years old when he began to reign and reigned sixteen years in Jerusalem. His mother's name was Jerusha daughter of Zadok. 34 He did what

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**15.17–22**: Menahem's reign. Israel, tottering internally, was an easy prey to outside attack by a reviving Assyria. **19–20**: *Pul* was another name of Tiglath-pileser III, *king of Assyria*. Menahem was forced to pay a huge sum to be allowed to hold his throne (roughly, a talent weighs 75 lbs.; it contains 3000 shekels. In order to amass 1000 talents, 60,000 of *the wealthy* were each taxed *fifty shekels,* about 20 oz., *of silver*.). The time was 738 B.C. Israel was henceforth a vassal state. **23–26**: Pekahiah's reign. **27–31**: Pekah's reign. **27**: The total of *twenty years* is much too long for the reign of Pekah (see 14.1 n.).

**15.29**: A somewhat garbled list, containing first the names of certain towns, followed by three names of larger areas: *Gilead, and Galilee, all the land of Naphtali*. Two or three lists may have been combined. In any case, all the names belong to the northern part of the country, which was ravaged by Tiglath-pileser in his campaigns of 733–732 B.C., when he punished Pekah for anti-Assyrian plotting (v. 37; 16.5, 7–8) and also put an end to the kingdom of Aram (Syria) by capturing Damascus (16.9). We notice the beginning of Israelite deportation in this verse (compare 17.6). **30**: Tiglath-pileser in his own "Annals" claims to have had a hand in the overthrow of Pekah by Hoshea. Thus Hoshea began with a pro-Assyrian policy.

**15.32–38: The reign of Jotham in Ju-**

was right in the sight of the LORD, just as his father Uzziah had done. 35 Nevertheless the high places were not removed; the people still sacrificed and made offerings on the high places. He built the upper gate of the house of the LORD. 36 Now the rest of the acts of Jotham, and all that he did, are they not written in the Book of the Annals of the Kings of Judah? 37 In those days the LORD began to send King Rezin of Aram and Pekah son of Remaliah against Judah. 38 Jotham slept with his ancestors, and was buried with his ancestors in the city of David, his ancestor; his son Ahaz succeeded him.

16 In the seventeenth year of Pekah son of Remaliah, King Ahaz son of Jotham of Judah began to reign. 2 Ahaz was twenty years old when he began to reign; he reigned sixteen years in Jerusalem. He did not do what was right in the sight of the LORD his God, as his ancestor David had done, 3 but he walked in the way of the kings of Israel. He even made his son pass through fire, according to the abominable practices of the nations whom the LORD drove out before the people of Israel. 4 He sacrificed and made offerings on the high places, on the hills, and under every green tree.

5 Then King Rezin of Aram and King Pekah son of Remaliah of Israel came up to wage war on Jerusalem; they besieged Ahaz but could not conquer him. 6 At that time the king of Edom[v] recovered Elath for Edom,[w] and drove the Judeans from Elath; and the Edomites came to Elath, where they live to this day. 7 Ahaz sent messengers to King Tiglath-pileser of Assyria, saying, "I am your servant and your son. Come up, and rescue me from the hand of the king of Aram and from the hand of the king of Israel, who are attacking me." 8 Ahaz also took the silver and gold found in the house of the LORD and in the treasures of the king's house, and sent a present to the king of Assyria. 9 The king of Assyria listened to him; the king of Assyria marched up against Damascus, and took it, carrying its people captive to Kir; then he killed Rezin.

10 When King Ahaz went to Damascus to meet King Tiglath-pileser of Assyria, he saw the altar that was at Damascus. King Ahaz sent to the priest Uriah a model of the altar, and its pattern, exact in all its details. 11 The priest Uriah built the altar; in accordance with all that King Ahaz had sent from Damascus, just so did the priest Uriah build it, before King Ahaz arrived from Damascus. 12 When the king came from Damascus, the king viewed the altar. Then the king drew near to the altar, went up on it, 13 and offered his burnt offering and his grain offering, poured his drink offering, and dashed the blood of his offerings of well-

*v* Cn: Heb *King Rezin of Aram* *w* Cn: Heb *Aram*

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**dah.** For futher details of his reign, see 2 Chr 27.1–9. **37**: The idea of this attack was to force Judah to join a coalition against Assyria (see v. 29 n. and 16.5–9).

**16.1–20: The reign of Ahaz in Judah. 1–4**: *Ahaz* is condemned as unusually bad by the Deuteronomistic editor in comparison with other kings of Judah. Worst of all, he revived the barbarous custom of human sacrifice (see 3.27 n.). **5**: See 15.37 n.; compare also Isa 7.1–17; 8.1–8a. **6**: *Edom* took advantage of the situation to throw off the control of Judah (see 14.22 n.). **7–9**: *Ahaz* disregarded the advice of Isaiah (Isa 7.4, 16–17; 8.4–8a) and called on *Tiglath-pileser* for help, sending an enormous gift. *The king of Assyria,* glad to be paid for what he had intended to do anyhow, took Damascus and devastated Israel (see 15.29 n.). *Kir* was the place in Mesopotamia from which some of the Arameans (Syrians) had come originally (Am 1.5; 9.7).

**16.10–16**: *Ahaz went to Damascus* to pay homage to his overlord, the *King . . . of Assyria;* while there he saw an altar, probably of Assyrian type, which he liked. He had this altar duplicated and placed before the temple in Jerusalem. Ahaz was probably thus paying his respects to a foreign religion, though the matter is not absolutely certain. *The priest Uriah* is probably the same person as the Uriah of Isa 8.2, and hence could hardly have been wholly disloyal to the LORD. **17–18**: It was necessary for Ahaz to dismantle some of the costly bronze equipment of the temple in order to pay the heavy tribute to Assyria. *The stands,* see 1 Kings 7.27–37. *The sea* and *the*

being against the altar. 14The bronze altar that was before the LORD he removed from the front of the house, from the place between his altar and the house of the LORD, and put it on the north side of his altar. 15King Ahaz commanded the priest Uriah, saying, "Upon the great altar offer the morning burnt offering, and the evening grain offering, and the king's burnt offering, and his grain offering, with the burnt offering of all the people of the land, their grain offering, and their drink offering; then dash against it all the blood of the burnt offering, and all the blood of the sacrifice; but the bronze altar shall be for me to inquire by." 16The priest Uriah did everything that King Ahaz commanded.

17 Then King Ahaz cut off the frames of the stands, and removed the laver from them; he removed the sea from the bronze oxen that were under it, and put it on a pediment of stone. 18The covered portal for use on the sabbath that had been built inside the palace, and the outer entrance for the king he removed from[x] the house of the LORD. He did this because of the king of Assyria. 19Now the rest of the acts of Ahaz that he did, are they not written in the Book of the Annals of the Kings of Judah? 20Ahaz slept with his ancestors, and was buried with his ancestors in the city of David; his son Hezekiah succeeded him.

**17** In the twelfth year of King Ahaz of Judah, Hoshea son of Elah began to reign in Samaria over Israel; he reigned nine years. 2He did what was evil in the sight of the LORD, yet not like the kings of Israel who were before him. 3King Shalmaneser of Assyria came up against him; Hoshea became his vassal, and paid him tribute. 4But the king of Assyria found treachery in Hoshea; for he had sent messengers to King So of Egypt, and offered no tribute to the king of Assyria, as he had done year by year; therefore the king of Assyria confined him and imprisoned him.

5 Then the king of Assyria invaded all the land and came to Samaria; for three years he besieged it. 6In the ninth year of Hoshea the king of Assyria captured Samaria; he carried the Israelites away to Assyria. He placed them in Halah, on the Habor, the river of Gozan, and in the cities of the Medes.

7 This occurred because the people of Israel had sinned against the LORD their God, who had brought them up out of the land of Egypt from under the hand of Pharaoh king of Egypt. They had worshiped other gods 8and walked in the customs of the nations whom the LORD drove out before the people of Israel, and in the customs that the kings of Israel had introduced.[y] 9The people of Israel secretly did things that were not right against the LORD their God. They built

*x* Cn: Heb lacks *from* *y* Meaning of Heb uncertain

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*bronze oxen that were under it,* 1 Kings 7.23–26. The words *the covered portal for use on the sabbath* represent a Hebrew phrase of uncertain meaning.

**17.1–41: The end of Israel, with reasons for the catastrophe; the origin of the Samaritans. 1**: *In the twelfth year of King Ahaz* is probably an erroneous synchronism (compare 15.30; see p. 339 OT). **2**: Perhaps the writer treated Hoshea more gently because of his tragic position as the last king of Israel. **3**: This was *Shalmaneser* V (727–722 B.C.). **4–5**: See 15.30 n. *Hoshea* now foolishly and disastrously plotted with Egypt (compare Hos 7.11); he left the capital, perhaps to plead for mercy, but was imprisoned; the siege of *Samaria* continued *for three years*. **6**: In the meantime Shalmaneser died and was succeeded by Sargon II (Isa 20.1), who captured the city and deported, according to his own records, 27,290 inhabitants to faraway places. Thus ended for all time the kingdom of Israel (721 B.C.).

**17.7–18**: These verses are the most important in the entire book (1 and 2 Kings) for the understanding of the theological and ethical viewpoint of the Deuteronomists (see Introduction to 1 Kings). The Israelites were considered sinners in the hands of an angry God (v. 18). Israel, not Assyria, was blamed. Playing politics with Egypt and Assyria was of no avail. Israel could have been saved by a proper attitude toward God and internal religious reform, but the warnings of the prophets

for themselves high places at all their towns, from watchtower to fortified city; [10] they set up for themselves pillars and sacred poles[z] on every high hill and under every green tree; [11] there they made offerings on all the high places, as the nations did whom the LORD carried away before them. They did wicked things, provoking the LORD to anger; [12] they served idols, of which the LORD had said to them, "You shall not do this." [13] Yet the LORD warned Israel and Judah by every prophet and every seer, saying, "Turn from your evil ways and keep my commandments and my statutes, in accordance with all the law that I commanded your ancestors and that I sent to you by my servants the prophets." [14] They would not listen but were stubborn, as their ancestors had been, who did not believe in the LORD their God. [15] They despised his statutes, and his covenant that he made with their ancestors, and the warnings that he gave them. They went after false idols and became false; they followed the nations that were around them, concerning whom the LORD had commanded them that they should not do as they did. [16] They rejected all the commandments of the LORD their God and made for themselves cast images of two calves; they made a sacred pole,[a] worshiped all the host of heaven, and served Baal. [17] They made their sons and their daughters pass through fire; they used divination and augury; and they sold themselves to do evil in the sight of the LORD, provoking him to anger. [18] Therefore the LORD was very angry with Israel and removed them out of his sight; none was left but the tribe of Judah alone.

19 Judah also did not keep the commandments of the LORD their God but walked in the customs that Israel had introduced. [20] The LORD rejected all the descendants of Israel; he punished them and gave them into the hand of plunderers, until he had banished them from his presence.

21 When he had torn Israel from the house of David, they made Jeroboam son of Nebat king. Jeroboam drove Israel from following the LORD and made them commit great sin. [22] The people of Israel continued in all the sins that Jeroboam committed; they did not depart from them [23] until the LORD removed Israel out of his sight, as he had foretold through all his servants the prophets. So Israel was exiled from their own land to Assyria until this day.

24 The king of Assyria brought people from Babylon, Cuthah, Avva, Hamath, and Sepharvaim, and placed them in the cities of Samaria in place of the people of Israel; they took possession of Samaria, and settled in its cities. [25] When they first settled there, they did not worship the LORD; therefore the LORD sent lions among them, which killed some of them. [26] So the king of Assyria was told, "The nations that you have carried away and placed in the cities of Samaria do not know the law of the god of the land; therefore he has sent lions among them; they are killing them, because they do not know the law of the god of the land." [27] Then the king of Assyria commanded, "Send there one of the priests whom you carried away from there; let him[b] go and live there, and teach them the law of the god of the land." [28] So one of the priests whom they had carried away from Samaria came and lived in Bethel; he taught

*z* Heb *Asherim* *a* Heb *Asherah* *b* Syr Vg: Heb *them*

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were disregarded (vv. 13–14). *Sacred pole* (vv. 10, 16), see 1 Kings 14.15 n.; 18.17–19 n. On the worship of the heavenly bodies (*host of heaven*, v. 16), see 21.5; 23.4–5. **17**: Human sacrifice, see 3.27 n.

**17.19–20**: By a writer, perhaps a second Deuteronomist, who knew the fate of the southern kingdom. **21–23**: A concluding summary of vv. 7–18. **24–28**: Sargon's own record confirms v. 24 thus: "[The cities] I set up again and made more populous than before. People from lands which I had taken I settled there." Later Assyrian kings continued this policy. The land was no longer called Israel, but *Samaria* (v. 24). The people were Samaritans (v. 29), not Israelites.

them how they should worship the LORD.

29 But every nation still made gods of
its own and put them in the shrines of the
high places that the people of Samaria
had made, every nation in the cities in
which they lived; 30the people of Bab-
ylon made Succoth-benoth, the people
of Cuth made Nergal, the people of Ha-
math made Ashima; 31the Avvites made
Nibhaz and Tartak; the Sepharvites
burned their children in the fire to
Adrammelech and Anammelech, the
gods of Sepharvaim. 32They also wor-
shiped the LORD and appointed from
among themselves all sorts of people as
priests of the high places, who sacrificed
for them in the shrines of the high places.
33So they worshiped the LORD but also
served their own gods, after the manner
of the nations from among whom they
had been carried away. 34To this day
they continue to practice their former
customs.

They do not worship the LORD and
they do not follow the statutes or the
ordinances or the law or the command-
ment that the LORD commanded the chil-
dren of Jacob, whom he named Israel.
35The LORD had made a covenant with
them and commanded them, "You shall
not worship other gods or bow your-
selves to them or serve them or sacrifice
to them, 36but you shall worship the
LORD, who brought you out of the land
of Egypt with great power and with an
outstretched arm; you shall bow your-
selves to him, and to him you shall sacri-
fice. 37The statutes and the ordinances
and the law and the commandment that
he wrote for you, you shall always be
careful to observe. You shall not worship
other gods; 38you shall not forget the
covenant that I have made with you.
You shall not worship other gods, 39but
you shall worship the LORD your God; he
will deliver you out of the hand of all
your enemies." 40They would not listen,
however, but they continued to practice
their former custom.

41 So these nations worshiped the
LORD, but also served their carved im-
ages; to this day their children and their
children's children continue to do as their
ancestors did.

18 In the third year of King Hoshea
son of Elah of Israel, Hezekiah
son of King Ahaz of Judah began to
reign. 2He was twenty-five years old
when he began to reign; he reigned

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**17.29–34a:** Thus it came about that the worship of the LORD became contaminated by various foreign cults. *To this day* (v. 34a) presumably means the time of the Deuteronomist, a century after the fall of Israel; *their former customs* refers to their religions practiced before they were brought to Samaria.

**17.34b–40:** An addition by a late editor who wished to make it plain that the Samaritans were not to be credited with any proper worship of the LORD whatever—they were to be considered beyond the pale of religiously proper persons. This attitude toward the Samaritans continued into New Testament times (Ezra 4.1–3; Lk 10.33; 17.16–18; Jn 4.9; 8.48). **41:** This verse summarizes vv. 29–34a.

**18.1–20.21: The reign of Hezekiah.** *Hezekiah* was almost as highly favored by the Deuteronomistic writer (18.5) as Josiah (23.25). For this reason, perhaps, a comparatively large amount of space is allotted to Hezekiah's reign. The reign was also significant because of political events such as the attack of *Sennacherib* (18.13), and because of the activities of *the prophet Isaiah* (19.2). These three chapters present many exegetical problems, but the main outlines of the story seem to be clear: Hezekiah revolted against Assyria (18.7) and Judah was severely punished (701 B.C.). Sennacherib himself reported that forty-six of the fortified cities and "countless small villages" were taken, while Hezekiah was shut up in Jerusalem "like a bird in a cage" (compare Isa 1.7–8). Jerusalem escaped capture only by the payment of a huge sum for indemnity (18.13–16). Judah was forced to remain a subservient vassal of Assyria. Some scholars believe that Sennacherib attacked again several years later and was repulsed; solid proof of this view (called "the two-campaign theory") is lacking. 18.13–20.19 is repeated in Isa chs 36–39 with certain omissions and additions. For additional comments see notes there.

**18.1–12: The accession of Hezekiah, his reforms. 1:** *In the third year of King Hoshea* is probably too early. The Deuteronomistic author wishes to place the fall of Samaria during

twenty-nine years in Jerusalem. His mother's name was Abi daughter of Zechariah. 3He did what was right in the sight of the LORD just as his ancestor David had done. 4He removed the high places, broke down the pillars, and cut down the sacred pole.[c] He broke in pieces the bronze serpent that Moses had made, for until those days the people of Israel had made offerings to it; it was called Nehushtan. 5He trusted in the LORD the God of Israel; so that there was no one like him among all the kings of Judah after him, or among those who were before him. 6For he held fast to the LORD; he did not depart from following him but kept the commandments that the LORD commanded Moses. 7The LORD was with him; wherever he went, he prospered. He rebelled against the king of Assyria and would not serve him. 8He attacked the Philistines as far as Gaza and its territory, from watchtower to fortified city.

9 In the fourth year of King Hezekiah, which was the seventh year of King Hoshea son of Elah of Israel, King Shalmaneser of Assyria came up against Samaria, besieged it, 10and at the end of three years, took it. In the sixth year of Hezekiah, which was the ninth year of King Hoshea of Israel, Samaria was taken. 11The king of Assyria carried the Israelites away to Assyria, settled them in Halah, on the Habor, the river of Gozan, and in the cities of the Medes, 12because they did not obey the voice of the LORD their God but transgressed his covenant—all that Moses the servant of the LORD had commanded; they neither listened nor obeyed.

13 In the fourteenth year of King Hezekiah, King Sennacherib of Assyria came up against all the fortified cities of Judah and captured them. 14King Hezekiah of Judah sent to the king of Assyria at Lachish, saying, "I have done wrong; withdraw from me; whatever you impose on me I will bear." The king of Assyria demanded of King Hezekiah of Judah three hundred talents of silver and thirty talents of gold. 15Hezekiah gave him all the silver that was found in the house of the LORD and in the treasuries of the king's house. 16At that time Hezekiah stripped the gold from the doors of the temple of the LORD, and from the doorposts that King Hezekiah of Judah had overlaid and gave it to the king of Assyria. 17The king of Assyria sent the Tartan, the Rabsaris, and the Rabshakeh with a great army from Lachish to King Hezekiah at Jerusalem. They went up and came to Jerusalem. When they arrived, they came and stood by the conduit of the upper pool, which is on the highway to the Fuller's Field. 18When they called for the king, there came out to them Eliakim son of Hilkiah, who was in charge of the palace, and Shebnah the secretary, and Joah son of Asaph, the recorder.

19 The Rabshakeh said to them, "Say to Hezekiah: Thus says the great king, the king of Assyria: On what do you base this confidence of yours? 20Do you think that mere words are strategy and power

c Heb *Asherah*

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the reign of Hezekiah (vv. 9–10), but modern chronologists tend to place this catastrophe in the reign of Ahaz, in conformity with v. 13 (fourteenth yr. of Hezekiah = about 701 B.C., first yr. = about 715 B.C.).

**18.4**: *The sacred pole,* see 1 Kings 14.15 n. *The bronze serpent,* see Num 21.6–9; this object doubtless had negative associations, since the serpent was one of the symbols of the Baal religion. **9–12**: The fall of Samaria; largely a repetition of 17.5–6.

**18.13–37**: **The attack of Sennacherib.** See Isa ch 36. These verses present a highly dramatized account of the historical incident. Verses 14–16 are lacking from the account in Isa ch 36. **17–36**: If this narrative belongs to the first (and only historically certain) attack of Sennacherib, it should come before v. 14. Otherwise, it may be referred to the hypothetical second campaign some twelve or thirteen years later.

**18.17–18**: Three Assyrian officials, *the Tartan, the Rabsaris, and the Rabshakeh* confer with three Judahite officials.

for war? On whom do you now rely, that you have rebelled against me? 21 See, you are relying now on Egypt, that broken reed of a staff, which will pierce the hand of anyone who leans on it. Such is Pharaoh king of Egypt to all who rely on him. 22 But if you say to me, 'We rely on the LORD our God,' is it not he whose high places and altars Hezekiah has removed, saying to Judah and to Jerusalem, 'You shall worship before this altar in Jerusalem'? 23 Come now, make a wager with my master the king of Assyria: I will give you two thousand horses, if you are able on your part to set riders on them. 24 How then can you repulse a single captain among the least of my master's servants, when you rely on Egypt for chariots and for horsemen? 25 Moreover, is it without the LORD that I have come up against this place to destroy it? The LORD said to me, Go up against this land, and destroy it."

26 Then Eliakim son of Hilkiah, and Shebnah, and Joah said to the Rabshakeh, "Please speak to your servants in the Aramaic language, for we understand it; do not speak to us in the language of Judah within the hearing of the people who are on the wall." 27 But the Rabshakeh said to them, "Has my master sent me to speak these words to your master and to you, and not to the people sitting on the wall, who are doomed with you to eat their own dung and to drink their own urine?"

28 Then the Rabshakeh stood and called out in a loud voice in the language of Judah, "Hear the word of the great king, the king of Assyria! 29 Thus says the king: 'Do not let Hezekiah deceive you, for he will not be able to deliver you out of my hand. 30 Do not let Hezekiah make you rely on the LORD by saying, The LORD will surely deliver us, and this city will not be given into the hand of the king of Assyria.' 31 Do not listen to Hezekiah; for thus says the king of Assyria: 'Make your peace with me and come out to me; then every one of you will eat from your own vine and your own fig tree, and drink water from your own cistern, 32 until I come and take you away to a land like your own land, a land of grain and wine, a land of bread and vineyards, a land of olive oil and honey, that you may live and not die. Do not listen to Hezekiah when he misleads you by saying, The LORD will deliver us. 33 Has any of the gods of the nations ever delivered its land out of the hand of the king of Assyria? 34 Where are the gods of Hamath and Arpad? Where are the gods of Sepharvaim, Hena, and Ivvah? Have they delivered Samaria out of my hand? 35 Who among all the gods of the countries have delivered their countries out of my hand, that the LORD should deliver Jerusalem out of my hand?' "

36 But the people were silent and answered him not a word, for the king's command was, "Do not answer him." 37 Then Eliakim son of Hilkiah, who was in charge of the palace, and Shebna the secretary, and Joah son of Asaph, the recorder, came to Hezekiah with their clothes torn and told him the words of the Rabshakeh.

19 When King Hezekiah heard it, he tore his clothes, covered himself with sackcloth, and went into the house of the LORD. 2 And he sent Eliakim, who was in charge of the palace, and Shebna the secretary, and the senior priests, covered with sackcloth, to the prophet Isaiah son of Amoz. 3 They said to him, "Thus says Hezekiah, This day is a day of distress, of rebuke, and of disgrace; children

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**18.26**: After the Exile *the Aramaic language* (the language of Syria) came into common use among the Jews of Palestine (see Neh 8.7–8 n.), and thus was the medium in which Jesus spoke; *the language of Judah* here means what is now called Hebrew, which was largely superseded by Aramaic.

**19.1–37**: **Hezekiah consults Isaiah.** See Isa ch 37. Sennacherib departs without capturing Jerusalem and is assassinated by his sons. Legend and history seem to be interwoven here. In neither campaign (if there were two) did Judah really win a victory; Jerusalem merely escaped capture. It is questionable whether *the prophet Isaiah* predicted the assassination of Sennacherib (v. 7), uttered a taunt

have come to the birth, and there is no strength to bring them forth. 4It may be that the LORD your God heard all the words of the Rabshakeh, whom his master the king of Assyria has sent to mock the living God, and will rebuke the words that the LORD your God has heard; therefore lift up your prayer for the remnant that is left." 5When the servants of King Hezekiah came to Isaiah, 6Isaiah said to them, "Say to your master, 'Thus says the LORD: Do not be afraid because of the words that you have heard, with which the servants of the king of Assyria have reviled me. 7I myself will put a spirit in him, so that he shall hear a rumor and return to his own land; I will cause him to fall by the sword in his own land.' "

8 The Rabshakeh returned, and found the king of Assyria fighting against Libnah; for he had heard that the king had left Lachish. 9When the king[d] heard concerning King Tirhakah of Ethiopia,[e] "See, he has set out to fight against you," he sent messengers again to Hezekiah, saying, 10"Thus shall you speak to King Hezekiah of Judah: Do not let your God on whom you rely deceive you by promising that Jerusalem will not be given into the hand of the king of Assyria. 11See, you have heard what the kings of Assyria have done to all lands, destroying them utterly. Shall you be delivered? 12Have the gods of the nations delivered them, the nations that my predecessors destroyed, Gozan, Haran, Rezeph, and the people of Eden who were in Telassar? 13Where is the king of Hamath, the king of Arpad, the king of the city of Sepharvaim, the king of Hena, or the king of Ivvah?"

14 Hezekiah received the letter from the hand of the messengers and read it; then Hezekiah went up to the house of the LORD and spread it before the LORD. 15And Hezekiah prayed before the LORD, and said: "O LORD the God of Israel, who are enthroned above the cherubim, you are God, you alone, of all the kingdoms of the earth; you have made heaven and earth. 16Incline your ear, O LORD, and hear; open your eyes, O LORD, and see; hear the words of Sennacherib, which he has sent to mock the living God. 17Truly, O LORD, the kings of Assyria have laid waste the nations and their lands, 18and have hurled their gods into the fire, though they were no gods but the work of human hands—wood and stone—and so they were destroyed. 19So now, O LORD our God, save us, I pray you, from his hand, so that all the kingdoms of the earth may know that you, O LORD, are God alone."

20 Then Isaiah son of Amoz sent to Hezekiah, saying, "Thus says the LORD, the God of Israel: I have heard your prayer to me about King Sennacherib of Assyria. 21This is the word that the LORD has spoken concerning him:

She despises you, she scorns you—
virgin daughter Zion;
she tosses her head—behind your back,
daughter Jerusalem.

22 "Whom have you mocked and reviled?
Against whom have you raised your voice
and haughtily lifted your eyes?
Against the Holy One of Israel!
23 By your messengers you have mocked the Lord,
and you have said, 'With my many chariots
I have gone up the heights of the mountains,

*d* Heb *he* *e* Or *Nubia*; Heb *Cush*

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song or ode of derision against the Assyrian king (vv. 20–28), or proclaimed the inviolability of the city (v. 34). Tradition tended to turn an escape into a victory.

**19.9**: *King Tirhakah of Ethiopia* did not become king or pharaoh of Egypt until 690 or 688 B.C.; hence some have regarded mention of this name as proof of a second campaign (see 18.17–36 n.). Others regard the name as an error, or point out that *Tirhakah* was a general long before he became king.

**19.20–28**: For similar anti-Assyrian mate-

to the far recesses of Lebanon;
I felled its tallest cedars,
its choicest cypresses;
I entered its farthest retreat,
its densest forest.
24 I dug wells
and drank foreign waters,
I dried up with the sole of my foot
all the streams of Egypt.'

25 "Have you not heard
that I determined it long ago?
I planned from days of old
what now I bring to pass,
that you should make fortified cities
crash into heaps of ruins,
26 while their inhabitants, shorn of strength,
are dismayed and confounded;
they have become like plants of the field
and like tender grass,
like grass on the housetops,
blighted before it is grown.

27 "But I know your rising[f] and your sitting,
your going out and coming in,
and your raging against me.
28 Because you have raged against me
and your arrogance has come to my ears,
I will put my hook in your nose
and my bit in your mouth;
I will turn you back on the way
by which you came.

29 "And this shall be the sign for you: This year you shall eat what grows of itself, and in the second year what springs from that; then in the third year sow, reap, plant vineyards, and eat their fruit. 30 The surviving remnant of the house of Judah shall again take root downward, and bear fruit upward; 31 for from Jerusalem a remnant shall go out, and from Mount Zion a band of survivors. The zeal of the LORD of hosts will do this.

32 "Therefore thus says the LORD concerning the king of Assyria: He shall not come into this city, shoot an arrow there, come before it with a shield, or cast up a siege ramp against it. 33 By the way that he came, by the same he shall return; he shall not come into this city, says the LORD. 34 For I will defend this city to save it, for my own sake and for the sake of my servant David."

35 That very night the angel of the LORD set out and struck down one hundred eighty-five thousand in the camp of the Assyrians; when morning dawned, they were all dead bodies. 36 Then King Sennacherib of Assyria left, went home, and lived at Nineveh. 37 As he was worshiping in the house of his god Nisroch, his sons Adrammelech and Sharezer killed him with the sword, and they es-

*f* Gk Compare Isa 37.27 Q Ms: MT lacks *rising*

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rial, also attributed to *Isaiah,* compare Isa 10.12–19; 14.24–27. **21**: *Daughter Zion* and *daughter Jerusalem,* terms of endearment.

**19.29–31**: These verses, though not very clear, seem to be more modestly realistic than the rest of the chapter in expecting only *a remnant* and *a band of survivors* to carry forward the work of the LORD. **32–34**: Contrast these verses with the preceding. It has been claimed, on the basis of this passage and the parallel in Isa 37.33–35, that Isaiah taught the doctrine of "the inviolability of Zion," i.e. that Jerusalem could never be taken (compare 20.6). Many interpreters doubt this claim, with very good reason.

**19.35**: This defeat has been discussed without much justification in relation to a tradition by Herodotus (*Hist.,* II.141) that *the Assyrians* suffered a defeat on the borders of Egypt because their bowstrings and other leather equipment were chewed by a sudden onslaught of field mice. Mice may be carriers of the plague (see 1 Sam 6.4–5 n.). **37**: The murder did not take place until the year 681, twenty years after the first (and only?) campaign against Jerusalem, and at least eight years after the hypothetical second campaign. The god *Nisroch* has not been identified with certainty. *Ararat* is Armenia (compare Gen 8.4).

caped into the land of Ararat. His son Esar-haddon succeeded him.

20 In those days Hezekiah became sick and was at the point of death. The prophet Isaiah son of Amoz came to him, and said to him, "Thus says the LORD: Set your house in order, for you shall die; you shall not recover." 2Then Hezekiah turned his face to the wall and prayed to the LORD: 3"Remember now, O LORD, I implore you, how I have walked before you in faithfulness with a whole heart, and have done what is good in your sight." Hezekiah wept bitterly. 4Before Isaiah had gone out of the middle court, the word of the LORD came to him: 5"Turn back, and say to Hezekiah prince of my people, Thus says the LORD, the God of your ancestor David: I have heard your prayer, I have seen your tears; indeed, I will heal you; on the third day you shall go up to the house of the LORD. 6I will add fifteen years to your life. I will deliver you and this city out of the hand of the king of Assyria; I will defend this city for my own sake and for my servant David's sake." 7Then Isaiah said, "Bring a lump of figs. Let them take it and apply it to the boil, so that he may recover."

8 Hezekiah said to Isaiah, "What shall be the sign that the LORD will heal me, and that I shall go up to the house of the LORD on the third day?" 9Isaiah said, "This is the sign to you from the LORD, that the LORD will do the thing that he has promised: the shadow has now advanced ten intervals; shall it retreat ten intervals?" 10Hezekiah answered, "It is normal for the shadow to lengthen ten intervals; rather let the shadow retreat ten intervals." 11The prophet Isaiah cried to the LORD; and he brought the shadow back the ten intervals, by which the sun[g] had declined on the dial of Ahaz.

12 At that time King Merodach-baladan son of Baladan of Babylon sent envoys with letters and a present to Hezekiah, for he had heard that Hezekiah had been sick. 13Hezekiah welcomed them;[h] he showed them all his treasure house, the silver, the gold, the spices, the precious oil, his armory, all that was found in his storehouses; there was nothing in his house or in all his realm that Hezekiah did not show them. 14Then the prophet Isaiah came to King Hezekiah, and said to him, "What did these men say? From where did they come to you?" Hezekiah answered, "They have come from a far country, from Babylon." 15He said, "What have they seen in your house?" Hezekiah answered, "They have seen all that is in my house; there is nothing in my storehouses that I did not show them."

16 Then Isaiah said to Hezekiah, "Hear the word of the LORD: 17Days are coming when all that is in your house, and that which your ancestors have stored up until this day, shall be carried

*g* Syr See Isa 38.8 and Tg: Heb *it* *h* Gk Vg Syr: Heb *When Hezekiah heard about them*

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**20.1–11: Hezekiah's illness and recovery.** See Isa ch 38. **1**: *In those days* is only a vague indication of time. Actually, this chapter (except for vv. 20–21) is out of order, for both stories in it belong before the attack of Sennacherib in 701 B.C. (compare v. 6; Merodach-baladan ruled in Babylon, 722–710 and 703–702). **7**: The use of *a lump of figs* as a poultice was widespread in Bible times.

**20.8–10:** Compare Josh 10.12–13 and 1 Kings ch 17 n. Though it is really the earth which moves, we still say, "The sun rises."

**20.12–19: Merodach-baladan's embassy.** See Isa 39.1–8. The Babylonian name of *Merodach-baladan* was Marduk-apaliddina. This mission was a part of the plotting against Assyria to which *Isaiah* was opposed and which led to the disastrous attack of 701 B.C., discussed above (18.7, 21; Isa 7.17; 8.7–8; 20.1–6; 31.1–3). **16–19**: Babylon and Egypt were both plotting; Isaiah was a neutralist, opposed to both; he was equally opposed to an alliance with Assyria (see 16.7–9 n.); but after Judah became an Assyrian vassal, he advocated loyalty to the obligation. The point of these verses, that Isaiah rebuked Hezekiah, and warned against the danger of invasion, would seem to be correct; the anachronistic reference to the Babylonian captivity, which took place more than a century later, brings this story into the Deuteronomist's aim to explain the catastrophe of exile.

to Babylon; nothing shall be left, says the LORD. 18Some of your own sons who are born to you shall be taken away; they shall be eunuchs in the palace of the king of Babylon." 19Then Hezekiah said to Isaiah, "The word of the LORD that you have spoken is good." For he thought, "Why not, if there will be peace and security in my days?"

20 The rest of the deeds of Hezekiah, all his power, how he made the pool and the conduit and brought water into the city, are they not written in the Book of the Annals of the Kings of Judah? 21Hezekiah slept with his ancestors; and his son Manasseh succeeded him.

21 Manasseh was twelve years old when he began to reign; he reigned fifty-five years in Jerusalem. His mother's name was Hephzibah. 2He did what was evil in the sight of the LORD, following the abominable practices of the nations that the LORD drove out before the people of Israel. 3For he rebuilt the high places that his father Hezekiah had destroyed; he erected altars for Baal, made a sacred pole,[i] as King Ahab of Israel had done, worshiped all the host of heaven, and served them. 4He built altars in the house of the LORD, of which the LORD had said, "In Jerusalem I will put my name." 5He built altars for all the host of heaven in the two courts of the house of the LORD. 6He made his son pass through fire; he practiced soothsaying and augury, and dealt with mediums and with wizards. He did much evil in the sight of the LORD, provoking him to anger. 7The carved image of Asherah that he had made he set in the house of which the LORD said to David and to his son Solomon, "In this house, and in Jerusalem, which I have chosen out of all the tribes of Israel, I will put my name forever; 8I will not cause the feet of Israel to wander any more out of the land that I gave to their ancestors, if only they will be careful to do according to all that I have commanded them, and according to all the law that my servant Moses commanded them." 9But they did not listen; Manasseh misled them to do more evil than the nations had done that the LORD destroyed before the people of Israel.

10 The LORD said by his servants the prophets, 11"Because King Manasseh of Judah has committed these abominations, has done things more wicked than all that the Amorites did, who were before him, and has caused Judah also to sin with his idols; 12therefore thus says the LORD, the God of Israel, I am bringing upon Jerusalem and Judah such evil that the ears of everyone who hears of it will tingle. 13I will stretch over Jerusalem the measuring line for Samaria, and the plummet for the house of Ahab; I will wipe Jerusalem as one wipes a dish, wiping it and turning it upside down. 14I will

*i* Heb *Asherah*

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**20.20–21**: Deuteronomistic conclusion to the reign of Hezekiah, with an additional note about *the pool and the conduit,* improvements in the water supply of Jerusalem in preparation for possible attack (compare Isa 22.8b–11). This conduit, with an identifying inscription, has been found and is now popularly called Hezekiah's Tunnel, or the Siloam Tunnel (compare 2 Chr 32.30). It runs from Gihon (see 1 Kings 1.33 n.), which was outside the city wall, to the Pool of Siloam, which was inside the wall. Extending 1700 feet through solid rock, this tunnel was a remarkable engineering achievement in its time.

**21.1–26: The wicked reigns of Manasseh and Amon.** According to the Deuteronomists, this was the worst period of apostasy in Judah. Any good done by Hezekiah was quickly undone by Manasseh, who probably reigned longer than any other king of Israel or Judah, though the figure of *fifty-five years* appears to be exaggerated (see p. 339 OT). For a somewhat different interpretation, see 2 Chr ch 33. **3**: *Sacred pole,* see 1 Kings 14.15 n. Child sacrifice, see 3.27 n. **7–9**: Compare Deut 12.5, 29–31; 17.3; 18.9–14.

**21.10–15**: This section was written after the fall of *Jerusalem* in 587–6 B.C. and during the Babylonian captivity (see Introduction to 1 Kings). This writer blames the fall of Jerusalem and Judah on the apostasy of Manasseh. *Amorites,* see 2 Sam 21.2 n. *The measuring line . . . and the plummet,* see Isa 34.11; Lam 2.8;

cast off the remnant of my heritage, and give them into the hand of their enemies; they shall become a prey and a spoil to all their enemies, 15because they have done what is evil in my sight and have provoked me to anger, since the day their ancestors came out of Egypt, even to this day."

16 Moreover Manasseh shed very much innocent blood, until he had filled Jerusalem from one end to another, besides the sin that he caused Judah to sin so that they did what was evil in the sight of the LORD.

17 Now the rest of the acts of Manasseh, all that he did, and the sin that he committed, are they not written in the Book of the Annals of the Kings of Judah? 18Manasseh slept with his ancestors, and was buried in the garden of his house, in the garden of Uzza. His son Amon succeeded him.

19 Amon was twenty-two years old when he began to reign; he reigned two years in Jerusalem. His mother's name was Meshullemeth daughter of Haruz of Jotbah. 20He did what was evil in the sight of the LORD, as his father Manasseh had done. 21He walked in all the way in which his father walked, served the idols that his father served, and worshiped them; 22he abandoned the LORD, the God of his ancestors, and did not walk in the way of the LORD. 23The servants of Amon conspired against him, and killed the king in his house. 24But the people of the land killed all those who had conspired against King Amon, and the people of the land made his son Josiah king in place of him. 25Now the rest of the acts of Amon that he did, are they not written in the Book of the Annals of the Kings of Judah? 26He was buried in his tomb in the garden of Uzza; then his son Josiah succeeded him.

22 Josiah was eight years old when he began to reign; he reigned thirty-one years in Jerusalem. His mother's name was Jedidah daughter of Adaiah of Bozkath. 2He did what was right in the sight of the LORD, and walked in all the way of his father David; he did not turn aside to the right or to the left.

3 In the eighteenth year of King Josiah, the king sent Shaphan son of Azaliah, son of Meshullam, the secretary, to the house of the LORD, saying, 4"Go up to the high priest Hilkiah, and have him count the entire sum of the money that has been brought into the house of the LORD, which the keepers of the threshold have collected from the people; 5let it be given into the hand of the workers who have the oversight of the house of the LORD; let them give it to the workers who are at the house of the LORD, repairing the house, 6that is, to the carpenters, to the builders, to the masons; and let them use it to buy timber and quarried stone to repair the house. 7But no accounting shall be asked from them for the money that is delivered into their hand, for they deal honestly."

8 The high priest Hilkiah said to Shaphan the secretary, "I have found the book of the law in the house of the LORD." When Hilkiah gave the book to Shaphan, he read it. 9Then Shaphan the secretary came to the king, and reported to the king, "Your servants have emptied

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Am 7.7–9. **16**: *Manasseh* actually persecuted the followers of the LORD, practically driving them underground.

**21.19–26**: A popular reaction and revolt set in, ending in the assassination of Amon early in his reign, and the accession of Josiah.

**22.1–20**: **The beginning of the reign of Josiah; the repairing of the temple and the finding of the book of the law. 1–2**: Besides David, *Josiah* is the favorite king of the Deuteronomists because of his reforms (see ch 23). **3–7**: *The eighteenth year of King Josiah,* 621 B.C. On the collection of *money* (unminted metal) to repair the temple, compare 12.4–16. **8–10**: This *book of the law,* really a scroll, was apparently found in a collection box (12.9) or in some rubbish about to be removed from the temple. It is also possible that *Hilkiah* had known about it and brought it forth intentionally at this time. Most scholars suppose that the scroll contained the earliest form of our present book of Deuteronomy (see Introduction to Deuteronomy), as subsequent references in this and the following chapter will show.

out the money that was found in the house, and have delivered it into the hand of the workers who have oversight of the house of the LORD." 10Shaphan the secretary informed the king, "The priest Hilkiah has given me a book." Shaphan then read it aloud to the king.

11 When the king heard the words of the book of the law, he tore his clothes. 12Then the king commanded the priest Hilkiah, Ahikam son of Shaphan, Achbor son of Micaiah, Shaphan the secretary, and the king's servant Asaiah, saying, 13"Go, inquire of the LORD for me, for the people, and for all Judah, concerning the words of this book that has been found; for great is the wrath of the LORD that is kindled against us, because our ancestors did not obey the words of this book, to do according to all that is written concerning us."

14 So the priest Hilkiah, Ahikam, Achbor, Shaphan, and Asaiah went to the prophetess Huldah the wife of Shallum son of Tikvah, son of Harhas, keeper of the wardrobe; she resided in Jerusalem in the Second Quarter, where they consulted her. 15She declared to them, "Thus says the LORD, the God of Israel: Tell the man who sent you to me, 16Thus says the LORD, I will indeed bring disaster on this place and on its inhabitants—all the words of the book that the king of Judah has read. 17Because they have abandoned me and have made offerings to other gods, so that they have provoked me to anger with all the work of their hands, therefore my wrath will be kindled against this place, and it will not be quenched. 18But as to the king of Judah, who sent you to inquire of the LORD, thus shall you say to him, Thus says the LORD, the God of Israel: Regarding the words that you have heard, 19because your heart was penitent, and you humbled yourself before the LORD, when you heard how I spoke against this place, and against its inhabitants, that they should become a desolation and a curse, and because you have torn your clothes and wept before me, I also have heard you, says the LORD. 20Therefore, I will gather you to your ancestors, and you shall be gathered to your grave in peace; your eyes shall not see all the disaster that I will bring on this place." They took the message back to the king.

23 Then the king directed that all the elders of Judah and Jerusalem should be gathered to him. 2The king went up to the house of the LORD, and with him went all the people of Judah, all the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the priests, the prophets, and all the people, both small and great; he read in their hearing all the words of the book of the covenant that had been found in the house of the LORD. 3The king stood by the pillar and made a covenant before the LORD, to follow the LORD, keeping his commandments, his decrees, and his statutes, with all his heart and all his soul, to perform the words of this covenant that were written in this book. All the people joined in the covenant.

4 The king commanded the high priest Hilkiah, the priests of the second order, and the guardians of the threshold, to bring out of the temple of the LORD all the vessels made for Baal, for

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**22.11–13**: The consternation of *the king* and his reference to *the wrath of the* LORD suggest that the scroll contained such words as those of Deut 6.13–15 and 28.15–24. To *inquire of the* LORD in an emergency by consulting a prophet was common practice (see 1 Kings 22.5–12 n.). **16–17**: These words seem to reflect the Deuteronomist's view of the fall of Jerusalem.

**23.1–30**: **The reforms and death of Josiah. 1–3**: The adoption of this program not only meant a religious reform, but also a declaration of political independence from Assyria, which was now in its last days as a great power (Nineveh fell in 612 B.C.). **2**: *The book of the covenant,* contrast 22.8, 11. The idea of *the covenant,* or agreement, between the LORD and his people is one of the most important theological elements in the Hebrew Scriptures (see Ex 24.7–8; Deut 29.1; Jer 11.3–4; 30.22 and many other similar passages). *The pillar,* see 11.14; 1 Kings 7.15–22 n.

**23.4–14**: Josiah tried valiantly to get rid of the pagan cults in accordance with Deut

Asherah, and for all the host of heaven; he burned them outside Jerusalem in the fields of the Kidron, and carried their ashes to Bethel. 5He deposed the idolatrous priests whom the kings of Judah had ordained to make offerings in the high places at the cities of Judah and around Jerusalem; those also who made offerings to Baal, to the sun, the moon, the constellations, and all the host of the heavens. 6He brought out the image of[j] Asherah from the house of the LORD, outside Jerusalem, to the Wadi Kidron, burned it at the Wadi Kidron, beat it to dust and threw the dust of it upon the graves of the common people. 7He broke down the houses of the male temple prostitutes that were in the house of the LORD, where the women did weaving for Asherah. 8He brought all the priests out of the towns of Judah, and defiled the high places where the priests had made offerings, from Geba to Beer-sheba; he broke down the high places of the gates that were at the entrance of the gate of Joshua the governor of the city, which were on the left at the gate of the city. 9The priests of the high places, however, did not come up to the altar of the LORD in Jerusalem, but ate unleavened bread among their kindred. 10He defiled Topheth, which is in the valley of Ben-hinnom, so that no one would make a son or a daughter pass through fire as an offering to Molech. 11He removed the horses that the kings of Judah had dedicated to the sun, at the entrance to the house of the LORD, by the chamber of the eunuch Nathan-melech, which was in the precincts;[k] then he burned the chariots of the sun with fire. 12The altars on the roof of the upper chamber of Ahaz, which the kings of Judah had made, and the altars that Manasseh had made in the two courts of the house of the LORD, he pulled down from there and broke in pieces, and threw the rubble into the Wadi Kidron. 13The king defiled the high places that were east of Jerusalem, to the south of the Mount of Destruction, which King Solomon of Israel had built for Astarte the abomination of the Sidonians, for Chemosh the abomination of Moab, and for Milcom the abomination of the Ammonites. 14He broke the pillars in pieces, cut down the sacred poles,[l] and covered the sites with human bones.

15 Moreover, the altar at Bethel, the high place erected by Jeroboam son of Nebat, who caused Israel to sin—he pulled down that altar along with the high place. He burned the high place, crushing it to dust; he also burned the sacred pole.[m] 16As Josiah turned, he saw the tombs there on the mount; and he sent and took the bones out of the tombs, and burned them on the altar, and defiled it, according to the word of the LORD that the man of God proclaimed,[n] when Jeroboam stood by the altar at the festival; he turned and looked up at the tomb of the man of God who had predicted these things. 17Then he said, "What is that monument that I see?" The people of the city told him, "It is the tomb of the man of God who came from Judah and predicted these things that you have done against the altar at Bethel." 18He said, "Let him rest; let no one move his bones." So they let his bones alone, with the bones of the prophet who came out of Samaria. 19Moreover, Josiah removed all the shrines of the high places that were in the towns of Samaria, which kings of Israel had made, provoking the LORD to anger; he did to them just as he had done at Bethel. 20He slaughtered on the altars

*j* Heb lacks *image of* *k* Meaning of Heb uncertain *l* Heb *Asherim* *m* Heb *Asherah* *n* Gk: Heb *proclaimed, who had predicted these things*

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15.19–18.22. He even attempted to abolish all worship of the LORD outside of the temple in Jerusalem (at *the high places,* v. 8, compare Deut ch 12). The consequently unemployed local priests (called Levites in Deuteronomy) were supposed to join the temple staff in Jerusalem (Deut 18.6–8), but this arrangement did not succeed (v. 9). **17–18:** See 1 Kings ch 13 (and notes there). *Samaria* is probably an error for Bethel (compare 1 Kings 13.11, 31).

all the priests of the high places who were there, and burned human bones on them. Then he returned to Jerusalem.

21 The king commanded all the people, "Keep the passover to the LORD your God as prescribed in this book of the covenant." 22No such passover had been kept since the days of the judges who judged Israel, even during all the days of the kings of Israel and of the kings of Judah; 23but in the eighteenth year of King Josiah this passover was kept to the LORD in Jerusalem.

24 Moreover Josiah put away the mediums, wizards, teraphim,[o] idols, and all the abominations that were seen in the land of Judah and in Jerusalem, so that he established the words of the law that were written in the book that the priest Hilkiah had found in the house of the LORD. 25Before him there was no king like him, who turned to the LORD with all his heart, with all his soul, and with all his might, according to all the law of Moses; nor did any like him arise after him.

26 Still the LORD did not turn from the fierceness of his great wrath, by which his anger was kindled against Judah, because of all the provocations with which Manasseh had provoked him. 27The LORD said, "I will remove Judah also out of my sight, as I have removed Israel; and I will reject this city that I have chosen, Jerusalem, and the house of which I said, My name shall be there."

28 Now the rest of the acts of Josiah, and all that he did, are they not written in the Book of the Annals of the Kings of Judah? 29In his days Pharaoh Neco king of Egypt went up to the king of Assyria to the river Euphrates. King Josiah went to meet him; but when Pharaoh Neco met him at Megiddo, he killed him. 30His servants carried him dead in a chariot from Megiddo, brought him to Jerusalem, and buried him in his own tomb. The people of the land took Jehoahaz son of Josiah, anointed him, and made him king in place of his father.

31 Jehoahaz was twenty-three years old when he began to reign; he reigned three months in Jerusalem. His mother's name was Hamutal daughter of Jeremiah of Libnah. 32He did what was evil in the sight of the LORD, just as his ancestors had done. 33Pharaoh Neco confined him at Riblah in the land of Hamath, so that he might not reign in Jerusalem, and imposed tribute on the land of one hundred talents of silver and a talent of gold. 34Pharaoh Neco made Eliakim son of Josiah king in place of his father Josiah, and changed his name to Jehoiakim. But he took Jehoahaz away; he came to Egypt, and died there. 35Jehoiakim gave the silver and the gold to Pharaoh, but he taxed the land in order to meet Pharaoh's demand for money. He exacted the silver and the gold from the people of the land, from all according to their assessment, to give it to Pharaoh Neco.

36 Jehoiakim was twenty-five years old when he began to reign; he reigned eleven years in Jerusalem. His mother's name was Zebidah daughter of Pedaiah

*o* Or *household gods*

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**23.21–23**: The great *passover*, the climax of the reform. **24–25**: Opinion differs as to whether the author ended the account just before or just after the death of Josiah in 609. **25**: Compare the evaluation of Hezekiah in 18.5. **26–27**: These verses have been ascribed to an author writing during the exile (see 21.10–15 n.). **28–30**: Some scholars believe an author writing before the destruction of the temple ended the story of the monarchy here. Compare the fuller account of Josiah's death in 2 Chr 35.20–24. Nineveh had fallen in 612 before the Medes and Chaldeans, but Assyria was still fighting; Egypt was the ally of Assyria, hence *Pharaoh Neco king of Egypt went up to the king of Assyria* to help him. Josiah, now in revolt against Assyria, felt it necessary to oppose Neco. Josiah lost his life, and Judah became a vassal of Egypt.

**23.31–37**: **The reign of Jehoahaz and the beginning of the reign of Jehoiakim.** The people's choice for king (v. 30) was *Jehoahaz* or Shallum (1 Chr 3.15; Jer 22.11), a younger son of Josiah; but *Pharaoh Neco* was now master. He deposed *Jehoahaz*, levied heavy *tribute*, and made *Eliakim*, an older son, king, changing his name to *Jehoiakim* as a symbol of his vassalage.

of Rumah. 37He did what was evil in the sight of the LORD, just as all his ancestors had done.

24 In his days King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon came up; Jehoiakim became his servant for three years; then he turned and rebelled against him. 2The LORD sent against him bands of the Chaldeans, bands of the Arameans, bands of the Moabites, and bands of the Ammonites; he sent them against Judah to destroy it, according to the word of the LORD that he spoke by his servants the prophets. 3Surely this came upon Judah at the command of the LORD, to remove them out of his sight, for the sins of Manasseh, for all that he had committed, 4and also for the innocent blood that he had shed; for he filled Jerusalem with innocent blood, and the LORD was not willing to pardon. 5Now the rest of the deeds of Jehoiakim, and all that he did, are they not written in the Book of the Annals of the Kings of Judah? 6So Jehoiakim slept with his ancestors; then his son Jehoiachin succeeded him. 7The king of Egypt did not come again out of his land, for the king of Babylon had taken over all that belonged to the king of Egypt from the Wadi of Egypt to the River Euphrates.

8 Jehoiachin was eighteen years old when he began to reign; he reigned three months in Jerusalem. His mother's name was Nehushta daughter of Elnathan of Jerusalem. 9He did what was evil in the sight of the LORD, just as his father had done.

10 At that time the servants of King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon came up to Jerusalem, and the city was besieged. 11King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon came to the city, while his servants were besieging it; 12King Jehoiachin of Judah gave himself up to the king of Babylon, himself, his mother, his servants, his officers, and his palace officials. The king of Babylon took him prisoner in the eighth year of his reign.

13 He carried off all the treasures of the house of the LORD, and the treasures of the king's house; he cut in pieces all the vessels of gold in the temple of the LORD, which King Solomon of Israel had made, all this as the LORD had foretold. 14He carried away all Jerusalem, all the officials, all the warriors, ten thousand captives, all the artisans and the smiths; no one remained, except the poorest people of the land. 15He carried away Jehoiachin to Babylon; the king's mother, the king's wives, his officials, and the elite of the land, he took into captivity from Jerusalem to Babylon. 16The king of Babylon brought captive to Babylon all the men of valor, seven thousand, the artisans and the smiths, one thousand, all of them strong and fit for war. 17The king of Babylon made Mattaniah, Jehoiachin's uncle, king in his place, and changed his name to Zedekiah.

18 Zedekiah was twenty-one years

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**24.1–17: The first fall of Jerusalem and the first deportation (reigns of Jehoiakim and Jehoiachin). 1–7:** The Chaldeans (the Neo-Babylonians) defeated the Assyrians and Egyptians at the battle of Carchemish in 605 B.C. (Jer 46.2). This event removed Egyptian control of Judah, which thereupon came under the dominance of the Chaldeans, but revolted after *three years* (v. 1). Verses 3–4 are the comment of the Deuteronomist. **8:** Jehoiakim died (598 B.C.) before he could be punished, and his young son Jehoiachin (also called Jeconiah, 1 Chr 3.16, and Coniah, Jer 22.24) took the tottering throne.

**24.10–17:** Jehoiachin almost immediately surrendered to *Nebuchadnezzar* (more correct form, Nebuchadrezzar, Jer 21.2 and frequently in Jeremiah), on March 16, 597 B.C., in the seventh (Jer 52.28) year of Nebuchadrezzar, as related in the Babylonian records. According to v. 14, *ten thousand captives* were deported; according to v. 16, eight thousand; Jer 52.28 says 3,023, which perhaps does not count women and children, or perhaps it is a more accurate figure. Tablets found in Babylon make reference to Jehoiachin and five sons (compare 1 Chr 3.17–18). His uncle *Mattaniah,* another son of Josiah (1 Chr 3.15), was made *king in his place,* and given a new name, *Zedekiah,* as a token of vassalage (see 23.31–37 n.).

**24.18–25.21: The reign of Zedekiah; second fall of Jerusalem and its destruction; the second deportation.** This section

old when he began to reign; he reigned eleven years in Jerusalem. His mother's name was Hamutal daughter of Jeremiah of Libnah. 19He did what was evil in the sight of the LORD, just as Jehoiakim had done. 20Indeed, Jerusalem and Judah so angered the LORD that he expelled them from his presence.

Zedekiah rebelled against the king of
25 Babylon. 1And in the ninth year of his reign, in the tenth month, on the tenth day of the month, King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon came with all his army against Jerusalem, and laid siege to it; they built siegeworks against it all around. 2So the city was besieged until the eleventh year of King Zedekiah. 3On the ninth day of the fourth month the famine became so severe in the city that there was no food for the people of the land. 4Then a breach was made in the city wall;[p] the king with all the soldiers fled[q] by night by the way of the gate between the two walls, by the king's garden, though the Chaldeans were all around the city. They went in the direction of the Arabah. 5But the army of the Chaldeans pursued the king, and overtook him in the plains of Jericho; all his army was scattered, deserting him. 6Then they captured the king and brought him up to the king of Babylon at Riblah, who passed sentence on him. 7They slaughtered the sons of Zedekiah before his eyes, then put out the eyes of Zedekiah; they bound him in fetters and took him to Babylon.

8 In the fifth month, on the seventh day of the month—which was the nineteenth year of King Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon—Nebuzaradan, the captain of the bodyguard, a servant of the king of Babylon, came to Jerusalem. 9He burned the house of the LORD, the king's house, and all the houses of Jerusalem; every great house he burned down. 10All the army of the Chaldeans who were with the captain of the guard broke down the walls around Jerusalem. 11Nebuzaradan the captain of the guard carried into exile the rest of the people who were left in the city and the deserters who had defected to the king of Babylon—all the rest of the population. 12But the captain of the guard left some of the poorest people of the land to be vinedressers and tillers of the soil.

13 The bronze pillars that were in the house of the LORD, as well as the stands and the bronze sea that were in the house of the LORD, the Chaldeans broke in pieces, and carried the bronze to Babylon. 14They took away the pots, the shovels, the snuffers, the dishes for incense, and all the bronze vessels used in the temple service, 15as well as the firepans and the basins. What was made of gold the captain of the guard took away for the gold, and what was made of silver, for the silver. 16As for the two pillars, the one sea, and the stands, which Solomon had made for the house of the LORD, the bronze of all these vessels was beyond weighing. 17The height of the one pillar was eighteen cubits, and on it was a bronze capital; the height of the capital was three cubits; latticework and

*p* Heb lacks *wall* *q* Gk Compare Jer 39.4; 52.7: Heb lacks *the king* and lacks *fled*

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is repeated in Jer ch 52 with certain changes; 25.1–12 is found in Jer 39.1–10 with changes; compare the parallel in 2 Chr 36.11–21. **24.18**: More information about Zedekiah is found in Jer chs 21; 24; 27; 29; 32; 37; 38; Ezek 17.11–21.

**24.20b–25.7**: The sad story hastens to its woeful conclusion. In spite of his oath of allegiance (2 Chr 36.13; Ezek 17.13), *Zedekiah* began to plot with Egypt and other nations against the Chaldeans (Jer 27.3–7; Ezek 17.15), and *rebelled against the king of Babylon.* Jerusalem was besieged, and after terrible privation (25.3; Deut 28.52–57; Lam 4.10), fell in *the eleventh year of King Zedekiah,* 587 or 586 B.C. The king was tortured and carried *to Babylon,* where he died (Jer 52.11).

**25.8–12**: The temple, the palace, *and all the houses of Jerusalem* were *burned,* and the walls were broken down. A second deportation was carried out (see 24.10–17 n.), the number taken being only 832, according to Jer 52.29. **13–17**: All the valuable equipment of the temple was carried to Babylon.

pomegranates, all of bronze, were on the capital all around. The second pillar had the same, with the latticework.

18 The captain of the guard took the chief priest Seraiah, the second priest Zephaniah, and the three guardians of the threshold; 19 from the city he took an officer who had been in command of the soldiers, and five men of the king's council who were found in the city; the secretary who was the commander of the army who mustered the people of the land; and sixty men of the people of the land who were found in the city. 20 Nebuzaradan the captain of the guard took them, and brought them to the king of Babylon at Riblah. 21 The king of Babylon struck them down and put them to death at Riblah in the land of Hamath. So Judah went into exile out of its land.

22 He appointed Gedaliah son of Ahikam son of Shaphan as governor over the people who remained in the land of Judah, whom King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon had left. 23 Now when all the captains of the forces and their men heard that the king of Babylon had appointed Gedaliah as governor, they came with their men to Gedaliah at Mizpah, namely, Ishmael son of Nethaniah, Johanan son of Kareah, Seraiah son of Tanhumeth the Netophathite, and Jaazaniah son of the Maacathite. 24 Gedaliah swore to them and their men, saying, "Do not be afraid because of the Chaldean officials; live in the land, serve the king of Babylon, and it shall be well with you." 25 But in the seventh month, Ishmael son of Nethaniah son of Elishama, of the royal family, came with ten men; they struck down Gedaliah so that he died, along with the Judeans and Chaldeans who were with him at Mizpah. 26 Then all the people, high and low,[r] and the captains of the forces set out and went to Egypt; for they were afraid of the Chaldeans.

27 In the thirty-seventh year of the exile of King Jehoiachin of Judah, in the twelfth month, on the twenty-seventh day of the month, King Evil-merodach of Babylon, in the year that he began to reign, released King Jehoiachin of Judah from prison; 28 he spoke kindly to him, and gave him a seat above the other seats of the kings who were with him in Babylon. 29 So Jehoiachin put aside his prison clothes. Every day of his life he dined regularly in the king's presence. 30 For his allowance, a regular allowance was given him by the king, a portion every day, as long as he lived.

r Or *young and old*

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**25.18–21**: All remaining leaders were executed. **22–26**: This section does not appear in Jer ch 52; there is, however, an expanded account in Jer 40.7–41.18. In Jer 40.6 and chs 42–43, the prophet is brought into the story. It is a cause for amazement that Jeremiah is not mentioned even once in 2 Kings, whereas the book of Jeremiah contains a wealth of additional information about the last days of Judah.

**25.22–26**: **The governorship of Gedaliah. 22–24**: The abolition of the monarchy and the appointment of *Gedaliah* as a native governor under Chaldean control should have meant peace and stability for Judah. Gedaliah's father, *Ahikam,* had been a trusted adviser of Josiah (22.12) and a friend of Jeremiah (Jer 26.24). *Gedaliah* himself was well disposed toward the prophet (Jer 39.14; 40.6), and enjoyed the confidence of his fellow citizens (Jer 40.11–12). **25–26**: The dastardly assassination of this good man by *Ishmael,* a member of the deposed *royal family,* brought about utter chaos and ruin (Jer 40.13–41.18); see the evaluation of the situation by the Deuteronomic editor of the book of Jeremiah in Jer 44.1–14.

**25.27–30**: **Jehoiachin in exile.** Also found in Jer 52.31–34. From exile, the Deuteronomist reports that Jehoiachin was still safe, and was enjoying favored treatment by *King Evil-merodach of Babylon*. The report has been partially confirmed by archaeological researchers. The writer may have used this information to end the book with a note of modest hope, as though to say (in spite of 24.9): the Davidic dynasty has not been snuffed out.

# 1 Chronicles

The two books of Chronicles, like 1 and 2 Samuel and 1 and 2 Kings, were originally one book; this combined book of Chronicles formed the original conclusion to the Hebrew Scriptures. In the ancient Greek version of the Bible, however, 1 and 2 Chronicles were grouped together with Samuel and Kings and called, "Miscellanies [Paralipomena, i.e. matters omitted] concerning the Kings of Judah." This arrangement persists in most modern non-Jewish translations today, despite the fact that it falsifies the original ordering of the Hebrew Scriptures.

Chronicles tells the story of Israel from the creation of the world down to the beginnings of the Persian Empire. Summarizing the period from Adam to the reign of King Saul in genealogies (1 Chr 1–9), the writer deals extensively with David's reign (chs 10–29). Second Chronicles begins with Solomon's rule and carries the account through destruction and exile, until a decree from King Cyrus of Persia allows a return to the land (2 Chr 36.22–23). Many scholars believe that 1 and 2 Chronicles were originally part of a larger work, written in the fifth or fourth century B.C., which also included Ezra and Nehemiah. The matter is disputed, however, and some recent scholars have strongly urged that Ezra and Nehemiah be treated as independent works (see Introduction to the Historical Books; Introduction to Ezra).

The Chronicler drew mainly, but selectively, upon 1 Sam 31–2 Kings 25. Other materials were used in briefer fashion, including many unknown sources, some of which may have overlapped with writings mentioned in 1 and 2 Kings (see 1 Kings 14.29), and many others that apparently did not, such as "the records of the seer Samuel . . . the prophet Nathan . . . the seer Gad" (1 Chr 29.29), "the story of the prophet Iddo" (2 Chr 13.22), "The Commentary on the Book of the Kings" (2 Chr 24.27), or a writing by Isaiah on the reign of Uzziah (2 Chr 26.22). It is difficult to tell whether these citations point to real or fictional sources. What seems certain is that the Chronicler rewrote, quoted, edited, and supplemented material from the Pentateuch, Samuel, and Kings without attribution. The result is a parallel version of Israel's history from Genesis through Kings, and a theological account of monarchical times that differs markedly from the Deuteronomistic History (see Introduction to 1 Kings; Introduction to the Historical Books).

The Davidic dynasty, the socio-political shape of his kingdom, the holy temple in Jerusalem with its authorized attendants, Levites, and temple singers; the surety of rewards and punishments linked to obedience or disobedience; attentiveness to God's presence in temple service—these are the themes that the Chronicler used to support consciousness of God through memory of a glorious, but failed, past. For this author, the bond between God and the true Israel, and the sacrality of those times, were symbolized above all in David and his establishment of a divinely empowered kingdom with its center in God's sacred space (temple). Even though the monarchy after David eventually came to a bad end, the writer allows us to glimpse a future that opens onto restoration and the survival of God's people (2 Chr 36.23).

1 Adam, Seth, Enosh; 2 Kenan, Mahalalel, Jared; 3 Enoch, Methuselah, Lamech; 4 Noah, Shem, Ham, and Japheth.

5 The descendants of Japheth: Gomer, Magog, Madai, Javan, Tubal, Meshech, and Tiras. 6 The descendants of Gomer: Ashkenaz, Diphath,[a] and Togarmah. 7 The descendants of Javan: Elishah, Tarshish, Kittim, and Rodanim.[b]

8 The descendants of Ham: Cush, Egypt, Put, and Canaan. 9 The descendants of Cush: Seba, Havilah, Sabta, Raama, and Sabteca. The descendants of Raamah: Sheba and Dedan. 10 Cush became the father of Nimrod; he was the first to be a mighty one on the earth.

11 Egypt became the father of Ludim, Anamim, Lehabim, Naphtuhim, 12 Pathrusim, Casluhim, and Caphtorim, from whom the Philistines come.[c]

13 Canaan became the father of Sidon his firstborn, and Heth, 14 and the Jebusites, the Amorites, the Girgashites, 15 the Hivites, the Arkites, the Sinites, 16 the Arvadites, the Zemarites, and the Hamathites.

17 The descendants of Shem: Elam, Asshur, Arpachshad, Lud, Aram, Uz, Hul, Gether, and Meshech.[d] 18 Arpachshad became the father of Shelah; and Shelah became the father of Eber. 19 To Eber were born two sons: the name of the one was Peleg (for in his days the earth was divided), and the name of his brother Joktan. 20 Joktan became the father of Almodad, Sheleph, Hazarmaveth, Jerah, 21 Hadoram, Uzal, Diklah, 22 Ebal, Abimael, Sheba, 23 Ophir, Havilah, and Jobab; all these were the descendants of Joktan.

24 Shem, Arpachshad, Shelah; 25 Eber, Peleg, Reu; 26 Serug, Nahor, Terah; 27 Abram, that is, Abraham.

28 The sons of Abraham: Isaac and Ishmael. 29 These are their genealogies: the firstborn of Ishmael, Nebaioth; and Kedar, Adbeel, Mibsam, 30 Mishma, Dumah, Massa, Hadad, Tema, 31 Jetur, Naphish, and Kedemah. These are the sons of Ishmael. 32 The sons of Keturah, Abraham's concubine: she bore Zimran, Jokshan, Medan, Midian, Ishbak, and Shuah. The sons of Jokshan: Sheba and Dedan. 33 The sons of Midian: Ephah, Epher, Hanoch, Abida, and Eldaah. All these were the descendants of Keturah.

34 Abraham became the father of Isaac. The sons of Isaac: Esau and Israel. 35 The sons of Esau: Eliphaz, Reuel, Jeush, Jalam, and Korah. 36 The sons of Eliphaz: Teman, Omar, Zephi, Gatam, Kenaz, Timna, and Amalek. 37 The sons of Reuel: Nahath, Zerah, Shammah, and Mizzah.

38 The sons of Seir: Lotan, Shobal,

*a* Gen 10.3 *Ripath*; see Gk Vg *b* Gen 10.4 *Dodanim*; see Syr Vg *c* Heb *Casluhim, from which the Philistines come, Caphtorim*; see Am 9.7, Jer 47.4 *d* *Mash* in Gen 10.23

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**1.1–54: The place of Abraham and his descendants among the nations. 1–4:** Summary of Gen ch 5. **5–7:** The sons of Japheth, or the Japhethites, in the genealogies represent in general the ancestors of those people whom today we call Indo-Europeans; for example, *Javan* (lit., Ionia) refers to the Greeks (compare Gen 10.2–4).

**1.8–16:** Today the term "Hamitic" is restricted largely to the peoples and languages of ancient Egypt; the Canaanites (*Canaan*) and *the Amorites* are now classified as Semites, and the Hittites (*Heth*) are sometimes classified among the Indo-Europeans. *Cush* sometimes refers to Ethiopia (v. 8), sometimes to a location in Mesopotamia (v. 10). Compare Gen 10.6–20.

**1.17–27:** *The descendants of Shem,* or the Semites. The Hebrews (*Eber*) belonged to this group, and from it emerged *Abram* or *Abraham*. Such modern terms as "Hamitic" and "Semitic" have linguistic, rather than racial, connotations. Ancient classifications (such as *descendants of Shem*) were based on considerations of geography and cultural (not racial) affinity. Verses 17–23 are condensed from Gen 10.21–31, vv. 24–27 from Gen 11.10–26.

**1.28–33:** From *Abraham* sprang both *Isaac,* the progenitor of the Edomites and Israelites (v. 34), and *Ishmael,* traditionally, since Josephus (*Antiq.*I.xii.2), the progenitor of the Arabs (compare Gen 25.1–4, 12–18). **34–37:** The Chronicler does not use the personal name Jacob at all, but only the community term, *Israel*. *Esau* (Edom) is given special attention as the brother of *Israel*.

**1.38–42:** *Seir* is another name for Edom

Zibeon, Anah, Dishon, Ezer, and Dishan. 39The sons of Lotan: Hori and Homam; and Lotan's sister was Timna. 40The sons of Shobal: Alian, Manahath, Ebal, Shephi, and Onam. The sons of Zibeon: Aiah and Anah. 41The sons of Anah: Dishon. The sons of Dishon: Hamran, Eshban, Ithran, and Cheran. 42The sons of Ezer: Bilhan, Zaavan, and Jaakan.[e] The sons of Dishan:[f] Uz and Aran.

43 These are the kings who reigned in the land of Edom before any king reigned over the Israelites: Bela son of Beor, whose city was called Dinhabah. 44When Bela died, Jobab son of Zerah of Bozrah succeeded him. 45When Jobab died, Husham of the land of the Temanites succeeded him. 46When Husham died, Hadad son of Bedad, who defeated Midian in the country of Moab, succeeded him; and the name of his city was Avith. 47When Hadad died, Samlah of Masrekah succeeded him. 48When Samlah died, Shaul[g] of Rehoboth on the Euphrates succeeded him. 49When Shaul[g] died, Baal-hanan son of Achbor succeeded him. 50When Baal-hanan died, Hadad succeeded him; the name of his city was Pai, and his wife's name Mehetabel daughter of Matred, daughter of Mezahab. 51And Hadad died.

The clans[h] of Edom were: clans[h] Timna, Aliah,[i] Jetheth, 52Oholibamah, Elah, Pinon, 53Kenaz, Teman, Mibzar, 54Magdiel, and Iram; these are the clans[h] of Edom.

2 These are the sons of Israel: Reuben, Simeon, Levi, Judah, Issachar, Zebulun, 2Dan, Joseph, Benjamin, Naphtali, Gad, and Asher. 3The sons of Judah: Er, Onan, and Shelah; these three the Canaanite woman Bath-shua bore to him. Now Er, Judah's firstborn, was wicked in the sight of the LORD, and he put him to death. 4His daughter-in-law Tamar also bore him Perez and Zerah. Judah had five sons in all.

5 The sons of Perez: Hezron and Hamul. 6The sons of Zerah: Zimri, Ethan, Heman, Calcol, and Dara,[j] five in all. 7The sons of Carmi: Achar, the troubler of Israel, who transgressed in the matter of the devoted thing; 8and Ethan's son was Azariah.

9 The sons of Hezron, who were born to him: Jerahmeel, Ram, and Chelubai. 10Ram became the father of Amminadab, and Amminadab became the father of Nahshon, prince of the sons of Judah. 11Nahshon became the father of Salma, Salma of Boaz, 12Boaz of Obed, Obed of Jesse. 13Jesse became the father of Eliab his firstborn, Abinadab the second, Shimea the third, 14Nethanel the fourth, Raddai the fifth, 15Ozem the sixth, David the seventh; 16and their sisters were Zeruiah and Abigail. The sons of Zeruiah: Abishai, Joab, and Asahel, three. 17Abigail bore Amasa, and the father of Amasa was Jether the Ishmaelite.

18 Caleb son of Hezron had children by his wife Azubah, and by Jerioth; these were her sons: Jesher, Shobab, and Ardon. 19When Azubah died, Caleb married Ephrath, who bore him Hur. 20Hur became the father of Uri, and Uri became the father of Bezalel.

21 Afterward Hezron went in to the daughter of Machir father of Gilead, whom he married when he was sixty years old; and she bore him Segub; 22and Segub became the father of Jair, who had twenty-three towns in the land of Gilead. 23But Geshur and Aram took from them Havvoth-jair, Kenath and its villages, sixty towns. All these were descendants of Machir, father of Gilead. 24After the death of Hezron, in Caleb-ephrathah,

*e* Or *and Akan*; see Gen 36.27 *f* See 1.38: Heb *Dishon* *g* Or *Saul* *h* Or *chiefs* *i* Or *Alvah*; see Gen 36.40 *j* Or *Darda*; Compare Syr Tg some Gk Mss; see 1 Kings 4.31

(Gen 36.8, 20–30). **43–54**: *The kings . . . of Edom,* compare Gen 36.31–43.

**2.1–55: Descendants of Judah.** The chief sources are Gen chs 35; 38; 46; Num 1.7; 32.41–42; Josh chs 7; 14; 15; Ruth 4.18–22; 1 Sam 27.10.

Abijah wife of Hezron bore him Ashhur, father of Tekoa.

25 The sons of Jerahmeel, the firstborn of Hezron: Ram his firstborn, Bunah, Oren, Ozem, and Ahijah. 26 Jerahmeel also had another wife, whose name was Atarah; she was the mother of Onam. 27 The sons of Ram, the firstborn of Jerahmeel: Maaz, Jamin, and Eker. 28 The sons of Onam: Shammai and Jada. The sons of Shammai: Nadab and Abishur. 29 The name of Abishur's wife was Abihail, and she bore him Ahban and Molid. 30 The sons of Nadab: Seled and Appaim; and Seled died childless. 31 The son[k] of Appaim: Ishi. The son[k] of Ishi: Sheshan. The son[k] of Sheshan: Ahlai. 32 The sons of Jada, Shammai's brother: Jether and Jonathan; and Jether died childless. 33 The sons of Jonathan: Peleth and Zaza. These were the descendants of Jerahmeel. 34 Now Sheshan had no sons, only daughters; but Sheshan had an Egyptian slave, whose name was Jarha. 35 So Sheshan gave his daughter in marriage to his slave Jarha; and she bore him Attai. 36 Attai became the father of Nathan, and Nathan of Zabad. 37 Zabad became the father of Ephlal, and Ephlal of Obed. 38 Obed became the father of Jehu, and Jehu of Azariah. 39 Azariah became the father of Helez, and Helez of Eleasah. 40 Eleasah became the father of Sismai, and Sismai of Shallum. 41 Shallum became the father of Jekamiah, and Jekamiah of Elishama.

42 The sons of Caleb brother of Jerahmeel: Mesha[l] his firstborn, who was father of Ziph. The sons of Mareshah father of Hebron. 43 The sons of Hebron: Korah, Tappuah, Rekem, and Shema. 44 Shema became father of Raham, father of Jorkeam; and Rekem became the father of Shammai. 45 The son of Shammai: Maon; and Maon was the father of Bethzur. 46 Ephah also, Caleb's concubine, bore Haran, Moza, and Gazez; and Haran became the father of Gazez. 47 The sons of Jahdai: Regem, Jotham, Geshan, Pelet, Ephah, and Shaaph. 48 Maacah, Caleb's concubine, bore Sheber and Tirhanah. 49 She also bore Shaaph father of Madmannah, Sheva father of Machbenah and father of Gibea; and the daughter of Caleb was Achsah. 50 These were the descendants of Caleb.

The sons[m] of Hur the firstborn of Ephrathah: Shobal father of Kiriath-jearim, 51 Salma father of Bethlehem, and Hareph father of Beth-gader. 52 Shobal father of Kiriath-jearim had other sons: Haroeh, half of the Menuhoth. 53 And the families of Kiriath-jearim: the Ithrites, the Puthites, the Shumathites, and the Mishraites; from these came the Zorathites and the Eshtaolites. 54 The sons of Salma: Bethlehem, the Netophathites, Atroth-beth-joab, and half of the Manahathites, the Zorites. 55 The families also of the scribes that lived at Jabez: the Tirathites, the Shimeathites, and the Sucathites. These are the Kenites who came from Hammath, father of the house of Rechab.

3 These are the sons of David who were born to him in Hebron: the firstborn Amnon, by Ahinoam the Jezreelite; the second Daniel, by Abigail the Carmelite; 2 the third Absalom, son of Maacah, daughter of King Talmai of Geshur; the fourth Adonijah, son of Haggith; 3 the fifth Shephatiah, by Abital; the sixth Ithream, by his wife Eglah; 4 six were born to him in Hebron, where he reigned for seven years and six months. And he reigned thirty-three years in Jerusalem. 5 These were born to him in Jerusalem: Shimea, Shobab, Nathan, and Solomon, four by Bath-shua, daughter of Ammiel; 6 then Ibhar, Elishama, Eliphelet, 7 Nogah, Nepheg, Japhia,

*k* Heb *sons* *l* Gk reads *Mareshah*
*m* Gk Vg: Heb *son*

**3.1–24**: **The descendants of David** are traced down to the Chronicler's own time. These were very important people, even though the dynasty of David had not been restored (compare 2 Sam 3.2–5; 5.13–16; 13.1). Non-biblical sources were also utilized.

8 Elishama, Eliada, and Eliphelet, nine.
9 All these were David's sons, besides the sons of the concubines; and Tamar was their sister.

10 The descendants of Solomon: Rehoboam, Abijah his son, Asa his son, Jehoshaphat his son, 11 Joram his son, Ahaziah his son, Joash his son, 12 Amaziah his son, Azariah his son, Jotham his son, 13 Ahaz his son, Hezekiah his son, Manasseh his son, 14 Amon his son, Josiah his son. 15 The sons of Josiah: Johanan the firstborn, the second Jehoiakim, the third Zedekiah, the fourth Shallum. 16 The descendants of Jehoiakim: Jeconiah his son, Zedekiah his son; 17 and the sons of Jeconiah, the captive: Shealtiel his son, 18 Malchiram, Pedaiah, Shenazzar, Jekamiah, Hoshama, and Nedabiah; 19 The sons of Pedaiah: Zerubbabel and Shimei; and the sons of Zerubbabel: Meshullam and Hananiah, and Shelomith was their sister; 20 and Hashubah, Ohel, Berechiah, Hasadiah, and Jushab-hesed, five. 21 The sons of Hananiah: Pelatiah and Jeshaiah, his son[n] Rephaiah, his son[n] Arnan, his son[n] Obadiah, his son[n] Shecaniah. 22 The son[o] of Shecaniah: Shemaiah. And the sons of Shemaiah: Hattush, Igal, Bariah, Neariah, and Shaphat, six. 23 The sons of Neariah: Elioenai, Hizkiah, and Azrikam, three. 24 The sons of Elioenai: Hodaviah, Eliashib, Pelaiah, Akkub, Johanan, Delaiah, and Anani, seven.

4 The sons of Judah: Perez, Hezron, Carmi, Hur, and Shobal. 2 Reaiah son of Shobal became the father of Jahath, and Jahath became the father of Ahumai and Lahad. These were the families of the Zorathites. 3 These were the sons[p] of Etam: Jezreel, Ishma, and Idbash; and the name of their sister was Hazzelelponi, 4 and Penuel was the father of Gedor, and Ezer the father of Hushah. These were the sons of Hur, the firstborn of Ephrathah, the father of Bethlehem. 5 Ashhur father of Tekoa had two wives, Helah and Naarah; 6 Naarah bore him Ahuzzam, Hepher, Temeni, and Haahashtari.[q] These were the sons of Naarah. 7 The sons of Helah: Zereth, Izhar,[r] and Ethnan. 8 Koz became the father of Anub, Zobebah, and the families of Aharhel son of Harum. 9 Jabez was honored more than his brothers; and his mother named him Jabez, saying, "Because I bore him in pain." 10 Jabez called on the God of Israel, saying, "Oh that you would bless me and enlarge my border, and that your hand might be with me, and that you would keep me from hurt and harm!" And God granted what he asked. 11 Chelub the brother of Shuhah became the father of Mehir, who was the father of Eshton. 12 Eshton became the father of Beth-rapha, Paseah, and Tehinnah the father of Ir-nahash. These are the men of Recah. 13 The sons of Kenaz: Othniel and Seraiah; and the sons of Othniel: Hathath and Meonothai.[s] 14 Meonothai became the father of Ophrah; and Seraiah became the father of Joab father of Ge-harashim,[t] so-called because they were artisans. 15 The sons of Caleb son of Jephunneh: Iru, Elah, and Naam; and the son[o] of Elah: Kenaz. 16 The sons of Jehallelel: Ziph, Ziphah, Tiria, and Asarel. 17 The sons of Ezrah: Jether, Mered, Epher, and Jalon. These are the sons of Bithiah, daughter of Pharaoh, whom Mered married;[u] and she conceived and bore[v] Miriam, Shammai, and Ishbah father of Eshtemoa. 18 And his Judean wife bore Jered father of Gedor, Heber father of Soco, and Jekuthiel father of Zanoah. 19 The sons of the wife

*n* Gk Compare Syr Vg: Heb *sons of*
*o* Heb *sons* *p* Gk Compare Vg: Heb *the father*
*q* Or *Ahashtari* *r* Another reading is *Zohar*
*s* Gk Vg: Heb lacks *and Meonothai* *t* That is *Valley of artisans* *u* The clause: *These are . . . married* is transposed from verse 18
*v* Heb lacks *and bore*

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**4.1–43: The descendants of Judah and Simeon.** The writer takes a genealogical excursion into the early days of the tribes of Judah and Simeon (compare Josh chs 15 and 19). These two tribes were closely related (Gen 29.33, 35), and Simeon was finally absorbed into Judah and lost its identity (note its absence in Deut ch 33).

of Hodiah, the sister of Naham, were the fathers of Keilah the Garmite and Eshtemoa the Maacathite. 20The sons of Shimon: Amnon, Rinnah, Ben-hanan, and Tilon. The sons of Ishi: Zoheth and Benzoheth. 21The sons of Shelah son of Judah: Er father of Lecah, Laadah father of Mareshah, and the families of the guild of linen workers at Beth-ashbea; 22and Jokim, and the men of Cozeba, and Joash, and Saraph, who married into Moab but returned to Lehem[w] (now the records[x] are ancient). 23These were the potters and inhabitants of Netaim and Gederah; they lived there with the king in his service.

24 The sons of Simeon: Nemuel, Jamin, Jarib, Zerah, Shaul;[y] 25Shallum was his son, Mibsam his son, Mishma his son. 26The sons of Mishma: Hammuel his son, Zaccur his son, Shimei his son. 27Shimei had sixteen sons and six daughters; but his brothers did not have many children, nor did all their family multiply like the Judeans. 28They lived in Beersheba, Moladah, Hazar-shual, 29Bilhah, Ezem, Tolad, 30Bethuel, Hormah, Ziklag, 31Beth-marcaboth, Hazar-susim, Beth-biri, and Shaaraim. These were their towns until David became king. 32And their villages were Etam, Ain, Rimmon, Tochen, and Ashan, five towns, 33along with all their villages that were around these towns as far as Baal. These were their settlements. And they kept a genealogical record.

34 Meshobab, Jamlech, Joshah son of Amaziah, 35Joel, Jehu son of Joshibiah son of Seraiah son of Asiel, 36Elioenai, Jaakobah, Jeshohaiah, Asaiah, Adiel, Jesimiel, Benaiah, 37Ziza son of Shiphi son of Allon son of Jedaiah son of Shimri son of Shemaiah— 38these mentioned by name were leaders in their families, and their clans increased greatly. 39They journeyed to the entrance of Gedor, to the east side of the valley, to seek pasture for their flocks, 40where they found rich, good pasture, and the land was very broad, quiet, and peaceful; for the former inhabitants there belonged to Ham. 41These, registered by name, came in the days of King Hezekiah of Judah, and attacked their tents and the Meunim who were found there, and exterminated them to this day, and settled in their place, because there was pasture there for their flocks. 42And some of them, five hundred men of the Simeonites, went to Mount Seir, having as their leaders Pelatiah, Neariah, Rephaiah, and Uzziel, sons of Ishi; 43they destroyed the remnant of the Amalekites that had escaped, and they have lived there to this day.

5 The sons of Reuben the firstborn of Israel. (He was the firstborn, but because he defiled his father's bed his birthright was given to the sons of Joseph son of Israel, so that he is not enrolled in the genealogy according to the birthright; 2though Judah became prominent among his brothers and a ruler came from him, yet the birthright belonged to Joseph.) 3The sons of Reuben, the firstborn of Israel: Hanoch, Pallu, Hezron, and Carmi. 4The sons of Joel: Shemaiah his son, Gog his son, Shimei his son, 5Micah his son, Reaiah his son, Baal his son, 6Beerah his son, whom King Tilgath-pilneser of Assyria carried away into exile; he was a chieftain of the Reubenites. 7And his kindred by their families, when the genealogy of their generations was reckoned: the chief, Jeiel, and Zechariah, 8and Bela son of Azaz, son of Shema, son of Joel, who lived in Aroer, as far as Nebo and Baal-meon. 9He also lived to the east as far as the beginning of the desert this side of the Euphrates, be-

*w* Vg Compare Gk: Heb *and Jashubi-lahem*
*x* Or *matters* *y* Or *Saul*

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**5.1–26: The descendants of Reuben, Gad, and the half-tribe of Manasseh,** the tribes located east of the Jordan. **1–10:** *Reuben* was traditionally connected with *Judah* (Gen 29.32, 35), but by remaining east of the Jordan lost power and influence (Gen 35.22; Deut 33.6). The Joseph tribes (*sons of Joseph*) became dominant (Gen 49.22–26; Deut 33.13–17), yet from *Judah* sprang *a ruler,* David, the greatest figure of the past, who became in other literature one prototype of the Messiah to come.

cause their cattle had multiplied in the land of Gilead. 10 And in the days of Saul they made war on the Hagrites, who fell by their hand; and they lived in their tents throughout all the region east of Gilead.

11 The sons of Gad lived beside them in the land of Bashan as far as Salecah: 12 Joel the chief, Shapham the second, Janai, and Shaphat in Bashan. 13 And their kindred according to their clans: Michael, Meshullam, Sheba, Jorai, Jacan, Zia, and Eber, seven. 14 These were the sons of Abihail son of Huri, son of Jaroah, son of Gilead, son of Michael, son of Jeshishai, son of Jahdo, son of Buz; 15 Ahi son of Abdiel, son of Guni, was chief in their clan; 16 and they lived in Gilead, in Bashan and in its towns, and in all the pasture lands of Sharon to their limits. 17 All of these were enrolled by genealogies in the days of King Jotham of Judah, and in the days of King Jeroboam of Israel.

18 The Reubenites, the Gadites, and the half-tribe of Manasseh had valiant warriors, who carried shield and sword, and drew the bow, expert in war, forty-four thousand seven hundred sixty, ready for service. 19 They made war on the Hagrites, Jetur, Naphish, and Nodab; 20 and when they received help against them, the Hagrites and all who were with them were given into their hands, for they cried to God in the battle, and he granted their entreaty because they trusted in him. 21 They captured their livestock: fifty thousand of their camels, two hundred fifty thousand sheep, two thousand donkeys, and one hundred thousand captives. 22 Many fell slain, because the war was of God. And they lived in their territory until the exile.

23 The members of the half-tribe of Manasseh lived in the land; they were very numerous from Bashan to Baal-hermon, Senir, and Mount Hermon. 24 These were the heads of their clans: Epher,[z] Ishi, Eliel, Azriel, Jeremiah, Hodaviah, and Jahdiel, mighty warriors, famous men, heads of their clans. 25 But they transgressed against the God of their ancestors, and prostituted themselves to the gods of the peoples of the land, whom God had destroyed before them. 26 So the God of Israel stirred up the spirit of King Pul of Assyria, the spirit of King Tilgath-pilneser of Assyria, and he carried them away, namely, the Reubenites, the Gadites, and the half-tribe of Manasseh, and brought them to Halah, Habor, Hara, and the river Gozan, to this day.

6 [a] The sons of Levi: Gershom,[b] Kohath, and Merari. 2 The sons of Kohath: Amram, Izhar, Hebron, and Uzziel. 3 The children of Amram: Aaron, Moses, and Miriam. The sons of Aaron: Nadab, Abihu, Eleazar, and Ithamar. 4 Eleazar became the father of Phinehas, Phinehas of Abishua, 5 Abishua of Bukki, Bukki of Uzzi, 6 Uzzi of Zerahiah, Zerahiah of Meraioth, 7 Meraioth of Amariah, Amariah of Ahitub, 8 Ahitub of Zadok, Zadok of Ahimaaz, 9 Ahimaaz of Azariah, Azariah of Johanan, 10 and Johanan of Azariah (it was he who served as priest in the house that Solomon built in

*z* Gk Vg: Heb *and Epher* *a* Ch 5.27 in Heb
*b* Heb *Gershon*, variant of *Gershom*; See 6.16

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**5.11–17**: *Gad* was just north of Reuben and seems to have been stronger and more important (Deut 33.20–21). **18–22**: In this story of the wars of the Transjordanian tribes with their neighbors, we see the tendency to express the greatness of God's people in terms of military might, with figures somewhat exaggerated.

**5.23–26**: To the north of Gad was the *half-tribe of Manasseh*, i.e. the part of Manasseh that remained east of the Jordan (Num 32.33–42). All these tribes were carried into exile by the Assyrians, according to the tradition utilized in these verses (compare 2 Kings 15.29).

**6.1–81**: **The lineage of the Levites. 1–5**: The Levites were an ancient warlike tribe (Gen 49.5–7) that became a priestly caste (Deut 33.8–10; Judg 17.9–13; 18.19). The line running through Zadok (v. 8; compare 2 Sam 8.17) produced the chief priests, who are here traced down to the Exile (compare Gen 46.11; Ex 6.18–19; Num 26.59–60).

Jerusalem). 11 Azariah became the father of Amariah, Amariah of Ahitub, 12 Ahitub of Zadok, Zadok of Shallum, 13 Shallum of Hilkiah, Hilkiah of Azariah, 14 Azariah of Seraiah, Seraiah of Jehozadak; 15 and Jehozadak went into exile when the LORD sent Judah and Jerusalem into exile by the hand of Nebuchadnezzar.

16[c] The sons of Levi: Gershom, Kohath, and Merari. 17 These are the names of the sons of Gershom: Libni and Shimei. 18 The sons of Kohath: Amram, Izhar, Hebron, and Uzziel. 19 The sons of Merari: Mahli and Mushi. These are the clans of the Levites according to their ancestry. 20 Of Gershom: Libni his son, Jahath his son, Zimmah his son, 21 Joah his son, Iddo his son, Zerah his son, Jeatherai his son. 22 The sons of Kohath: Amminadab his son, Korah his son, Assir his son, 23 Elkanah his son, Ebiasaph his son, Assir his son, 24 Tahath his son, Uriel his son, Uzziah his son, and Shaul his son. 25 The sons of Elkanah: Amasai and Ahimoth, 26 Elkanah his son, Zophai his son, Nahath his son, 27 Eliab his son, Jeroham his son, Elkanah his son. 28 The sons of Samuel: Joel[d] his firstborn, the second Abijah.[e] 29 The sons of Merari: Mahli, Libni his son, Shimei his son, Uzzah his son, 30 Shimea his son, Haggiah his son, and Asaiah his son.

31 These are the men whom David put in charge of the service of song in the house of the LORD, after the ark came to rest there. 32 They ministered with song before the tabernacle of the tent of meeting, until Solomon had built the house of the LORD in Jerusalem; and they performed their service in due order. 33 These are the men who served; and their sons were: Of the Kohathites: Heman, the singer, son of Joel, son of Samuel, 34 son of Elkanah, son of Jeroham, son of Eliel, son of Toah, 35 son of Zuph, son of Elkanah, son of Mahath, son of Amasai, 36 son of Elkanah, son of Joel, son of Azariah, son of Zephaniah, 37 son of Tahath, son of Assir, son of Ebiasaph, son of Korah, 38 son of Izhar, son of Kohath, son of Levi, son of Israel; 39 and his brother Asaph, who stood on his right, namely, Asaph son of Berechiah, son of Shimea, 40 son of Michael, son of Baaseiah, son of Malchijah, 41 son of Ethni, son of Zerah, son of Adaiah, 42 son of Ethan, son of Zimmah, son of Shimei, 43 son of Jahath, son of Gershom, son of Levi. 44 On the left were their kindred the sons of Merari: Ethan son of Kishi, son of Abdi, son of Malluch, 45 son of Hashabiah, son of Amaziah, son of Hilkiah, 46 son of Amzi, son of Bani, son of Shemer, 47 son of Mahli, son of Mushi, son of Merari, son of Levi; 48 and their kindred the Levites were appointed for all the service of the tabernacle of the house of God.

49 But Aaron and his sons made offerings on the altar of burnt offering and on the altar of incense, doing all the work of the most holy place, to make atonement for Israel, according to all that Moses the servant of God had commanded. 50 These are the sons of Aaron: Eleazar his son, Phinehas his son, Abishua his son, 51 Bukki his son, Uzzi his son, Zerahiah his son, 52 Meraioth his son, Amariah his son, Ahitub his son, 53 Zadok his son, Ahimaaz his son.

54 These are their dwelling places ac-

*c* Ch 6.1 in Heb *d* Gk Syr Compare verse 33 and 1 Sam 8.2: Heb lacks *Joel* *e* Heb reads *Vashni, and Abijah* for *the second Abijah*, taking *the second* as a proper name

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**6.16–48**: Other Levites, not of the privileged priestly family, performed auxiliary duties in the temple, such as singing (*the service of song*, v. 31). *David* is credited with instituting the musical service of the temple as it existed in the Chronicler's own day, somewhat as Moses is credited with all the laws in Deuteronomy. Prominent family names associated with these singers were *Heman* (v. 33), *Korah* (v. 37), *Asaph* (v. 39), and *Ethan* (v. 44); see the titles to Pss 73–83; 88–89.

**6.49–53**: To be a priest in the Chronicler's time it was necessary to be a descendant of Aaron; to be a high priest, one had to be a descendant of Zadok.

**6.54–81**: Territory allotted to Levitical clans before the Levites had become a priestly

cording to their settlements within their borders: to the sons of Aaron of the families of Kohathites—for the lot fell to them first— 55to them they gave Hebron in the land of Judah and its surrounding pasture lands, 56but the fields of the city and its villages they gave to Caleb son of Jephunneh. 57To the sons of Aaron they gave the cities of refuge: Hebron, Libnah with its pasture lands, Jattir, Eshtemoa with its pasture lands, 58Hilen[f] with its pasture lands, Debir with its pasture lands, 59Ashan with its pasture lands, and Beth-shemesh with its pasture lands. 60From the tribe of Benjamin, Geba with its pasture lands, Alemeth with its pasture lands, and Anathoth with its pasture lands. All their towns throughout their families were thirteen.

61 To the rest of the Kohathites were given by lot out of the family of the tribe, out of the half-tribe, the half of Manasseh, ten towns. 62To the Gershomites according to their families were allotted thirteen towns out of the tribes of Issachar, Asher, Naphtali, and Manasseh in Bashan. 63To the Merarites according to their families were allotted twelve towns out of the tribes of Reuben, Gad, and Zebulun. 64So the people of Israel gave the Levites the towns with their pasture lands. 65They also gave them by lot out of the tribes of Judah, Simeon, and Benjamin these towns that are mentioned by name.

66 And some of the families of the sons of Kohath had towns of their territory out of the tribe of Ephraim. 67They were given the cities of refuge: Shechem with its pasture lands in the hill country of Ephraim, Gezer with its pasture lands, 68Jokmeam with its pasture lands, Beth-horon with its pasture lands, 69Aijalon with its pasture lands, Gath-rimmon with its pasture lands; 70and out of the half-tribe of Manasseh, Aner with its pasture lands, and Bileam with its pasture lands, for the rest of the families of the Kohathites.

71 To the Gershomites: out of the half-tribe of Manasseh: Golan in Bashan with its pasture lands and Ashtaroth with its pasture lands; 72and out of the tribe of Issachar: Kedesh with its pasture lands, Daberath[g] with its pasture lands, 73Ramoth with its pasture lands, and Anem with its pasture lands; 74out of the tribe of Asher: Mashal with its pasture lands, Abdon with its pasture lands, 75Hukok with its pasture lands, and Rehob with its pasture lands; 76and out of the tribe of Naphtali: Kedesh in Galilee with its pasture lands, Hammon with its pasture lands, and Kiriathaim with its pasture lands. 77To the rest of the Merarites out of the tribe of Zebulun: Rimmono with its pasture lands, Tabor with its pasture lands, 78and across the Jordan from Jericho, on the east side of the Jordan, out of the tribe of Reuben: Bezer in the steppe with its pasture lands, Jahzah with its pasture lands, 79Kedemoth with its pasture lands, and Mephaath with its pasture lands; 80and out of the tribe of Gad: Ramoth in Gilead with its pasture lands, Mahanaim with its pasture lands, 81Heshbon with its pasture lands, and Jazer with its pasture lands.

7 The sons[h] of Issachar: Tola, Puah, Jashub, and Shimron, four. 2The sons of Tola: Uzzi, Rephaiah, Jeriel, Jahmai, Ibsam, and Shemuel, heads of their ancestral houses, namely of Tola, mighty warriors of their generations, their number in the days of David being twenty-two thousand six hundred. 3The son[i] of Uzzi: Izrahiah. And the sons of Izrahiah: Michael, Obadiah, Joel, and Isshiah, five, all of them chiefs; 4and along

*f* Other readings *Hilez*, *Holon*; See Josh 21.15
*g* Or *Dobrath* *h* Syr Compare Vg: Heb *And to the sons* *i* Heb *sons*

caste supported by other Israelites and thus needing no land (Num 26.62). The main source is Josh ch 21.

**7.1–40: Descendants of Issachar, Benjamin, Naphtali, Ephraim, and Asher.** A swift genealogical glance at the northern tribes, which were perhaps of interest to the writer mainly because they served David (v. 2).

with them, by their generations, according to their ancestral houses, were units of the fighting force, thirty-six thousand, for they had many wives and sons. 5Their kindred belonging to all the families of Issachar were in all eighty-seven thousand mighty warriors, enrolled by genealogy.

6 The sons of Benjamin: Bela, Becher, and Jediael, three. 7The sons of Bela: Ezbon, Uzzi, Uzziel, Jerimoth, and Iri, five, heads of ancestral houses, mighty warriors; and their enrollment by genealogies was twenty-two thousand thirty-four. 8The sons of Becher: Zemirah, Joash, Eliezer, Elioenai, Omri, Jeremoth, Abijah, Anathoth, and Alemeth. All these were the sons of Becher; 9and their enrollment by genealogies, according to their generations, as heads of their ancestral houses, mighty warriors, was twenty thousand two hundred. 10The sons of Jediael: Bilhan. And the sons of Bilhan: Jeush, Benjamin, Ehud, Chenaanah, Zethan, Tarshish, and Ahishahar. 11All these were the sons of Jediael according to the heads of their ancestral houses, mighty warriors, seventeen thousand two hundred, ready for service in war. 12And Shuppim and Huppim were the sons of Ir, Hushim the son[j] of Aher.

13 The descendants of Naphtali: Jahziel, Guni, Jezer, and Shallum, the descendants of Bilhah.

14 The sons of Manasseh: Asriel, whom his Aramean concubine bore; she bore Machir the father of Gilead. 15And Machir took a wife for Huppim and for Shuppim. The name of his sister was Maacah. And the name of the second was Zelophehad; and Zelophehad had daughters. 16Maacah the wife of Machir bore a son, and she named him Peresh; the name of his brother was Sheresh; and his sons were Ulam and Rekem. 17The son[j] of Ulam: Bedan. These were the sons of Gilead son of Machir, son of Manasseh. 18And his sister Hammolecheth bore Ishhod, Abiezer, and Mahlah. 19The sons of Shemida were Ahian, Shechem, Likhi, and Aniam.

20 The sons of Ephraim: Shuthelah, and Bered his son, Tahath his son, Eleadah his son, Tahath his son, 21Zabad his son, Shuthelah his son, and Ezer and Elead. Now the people of Gath, who were born in the land, killed them, because they came down to raid their cattle. 22And their father Ephraim mourned many days, and his brothers came to comfort him. 23Ephraim[k] went in to his wife, and she conceived and bore a son; and he named him Beriah, because disaster[l] had befallen his house. 24His daughter was Sheerah, who built both Lower and Upper Beth-horon, and Uzzensheerah. 25Rephah was his son, Resheph his son, Telah his son, Tahan his son, 26Ladan his son, Ammihud his son, Elishama his son, 27Nun[m] his son, Joshua his son. 28Their possessions and settlements were Bethel and its towns, and eastward Naaran, and westward Gezer and its towns, Shechem and its towns, as far as Ayyah and its towns; 29also along the borders of the Manassites, Beth-shean and its towns, Taanach and its towns, Megiddo and its towns, Dor and its towns. In these lived the sons of Joseph son of Israel.

30 The sons of Asher: Imnah, Ishvah, Ishvi, Beriah, and their sister Serah. 31The sons of Beriah: Heber and Malchiel, who was the father of Birzaith. 32Heber became the father of Japhlet, Shomer, Hotham, and their sister Shua. 33The sons of Japhlet: Pasach, Bimhal, and Ashvath. These are the sons of Japhlet. 34The sons of Shemer: Ahi, Rohgah, Hubbah, and Aram. 35The sons of Helem[n] his brother: Zophah, Imna, Shelesh, and Amal. 36The sons of Zophah:

*j* Heb *sons* *k* Heb *He* *l* Heb *beraah*
*m* Here spelled *Non*; see Ex 33.11
*n* Or *Hotham*; see 7.32

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**7.6**: *Benjamin*, which appears again in the next chapter, may have been confused with Zebulun, which strangely fails to appear here in its proper place (compare Gen 46.17–27; Num 26.23–50; much non-canonical material is also used).

Suah, Harnepher, Shual, Beri, Imrah, 37Bezer, Hod, Shamma, Shilshah, Ithran, and Beera. 38The sons of Jether: Jephunneh, Pispa, and Ara. 39The sons of Ulla: Arah, Hanniel, and Rizia. 40All of these were men of Asher, heads of ancestral houses, select mighty warriors, chief of the princes. Their number enrolled by genealogies, for service in war, was twenty-six thousand men.

8 Benjamin became the father of Bela his firstborn, Ashbel the second, Aharah the third, 2Nohah the fourth, and Rapha the fifth. 3And Bela had sons: Addar, Gera, Abihud,[o] 4Abishua, Naaman, Ahoah, 5Gera, Shephuphan, and Huram. 6These are the sons of Ehud (they were heads of ancestral houses of the inhabitants of Geba, and they were carried into exile to Manahath): 7Naaman,[p] Ahijah, and Gera, that is, Heglam,[q] who became the father of Uzza and Ahihud. 8And Shaharaim had sons in the country of Moab after he had sent away his wives Hushim and Baara. 9He had sons by his wife Hodesh: Jobab, Zibia, Mesha, Malcam, 10Jeuz, Sachia, and Mirmah. These were his sons, heads of ancestral houses. 11He also had sons by Hushim: Abitub and Elpaal. 12The sons of Elpaal: Eber, Misham, and Shemed, who built Ono and Lod with its towns, 13and Beriah and Shema (they were heads of ancestral houses of the inhabitants of Aijalon, who put to flight the inhabitants of Gath); 14and Ahio, Shashak, and Jeremoth. 15Zebadiah, Arad, Eder, 16Michael, Ishpah, and Joha were sons of Beriah. 17Zebadiah, Meshullam, Hizki, Heber, 18Ishmerai, Izliah, and Jobab were the sons of Elpaal. 19Jakim, Zichri, Zabdi, 20Elienai, Zillethai, Eliel, 21Adaiah, Beraiah, and Shimrath were the sons of Shimei. 22Ishpan, Eber, Eliel, 23Abdon, Zichri, Hanan, 24Hananiah, Elam, Anthothijah, 25Iphdeiah, and Penuel were the sons of Shashak. 26Shamsherai, Shehariah, Athaliah, 27Jaareshiah, Elijah, and Zichri were the sons of Jeroham. 28These were the heads of ancestral houses, according to their generations, chiefs. These lived in Jerusalem.

29 Jeiel[r] the father of Gibeon lived in Gibeon, and the name of his wife was Maacah. 30His firstborn son: Abdon, then Zur, Kish, Baal,[s] Nadab, 31Gedor, Ahio, Zecher, 32and Mikloth, who became the father of Shimeah. Now these also lived opposite their kindred in Jerusalem, with their kindred. 33Ner became the father of Kish, Kish of Saul,[t] Saul[t] of Jonathan, Malchishua, Abinadab, and Esh-baal; 34and the son of Jonathan was Merib-baal; and Merib-baal became the father of Micah. 35The sons of Micah: Pithon, Melech, Tarea, and Ahaz. 36Ahaz became the father of Jehoaddah; and Jehoaddah became the father of Alemeth, Azmaveth, and Zimri; Zimri became the father of Moza. 37Moza became the father of Binea; Raphah was his son, Eleasah his son, Azel his son. 38Azel had six sons, and these are their names: Azrikam, Bocheru, Ishmael, Sheariah, Obadiah, and Hanan; all these were the sons of Azel. 39The sons of his brother Eshek: Ulam his firstborn, Jeush the second, and Eliphelet the third. 40The sons of Ulam were mighty warriors, archers, having many children and grandchildren, one hundred fifty. All these were Benjaminites.

9 So all Israel was enrolled by genealogies; and these are written in the Book of the Kings of Israel. And Judah was taken into exile in Babylon because

*o* Or *father of Ehud*; see 8.6 *p* Heb *and Naaman* *q* Or *he carried them into exile* *r* Compare 9.35: Heb lacks *Jeiel* *s* Gk Ms adds *Ner*; Compare 8.33 and 9.36 *t* Or *Shaul*

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**8.1–40: The descendants of Benjamin.** *Benjamin* was given special treatment because *Jerusalem* (v. 28) belonged traditionally to this tribe (Josh 18.28), and perhaps because from it came *Saul* (v. 33), who, though disliked by the Chronicler (10.13–14), was nevertheless the first king of Israel and the predecessor of David. Verse 28 is usually taken to mean that there were numerous Benjaminites in Jerusalem in the Chronicler's own time. **33–34:** The names *Esh-baal* and *Meribbaal* are correctly transmitted (see 2 Sam 2.8 n. and 4.4 n.).

**9.1–44: The genealogies of families in Jerusalem after the Exile. 1:** *The Book of the*

*Inhabitants of Jerusalem after the exile*

of their unfaithfulness. 2Now the first to live again in their possessions in their towns were Israelites, priests, Levites, and temple servants.

3 And some of the people of Judah, Benjamin, Ephraim, and Manasseh lived in Jerusalem: 4Uthai son of Ammihud, son of Omri, son of Imri, son of Bani, from the sons of Perez son of Judah. 5And of the Shilonites: Asaiah the firstborn, and his sons. 6Of the sons of Zerah: Jeuel and their kin, six hundred ninety. 7Of the Benjaminites: Sallu son of Meshullam, son of Hodaviah, son of Hassenuah, 8Ibneiah son of Jeroham, Elah son of Uzzi, son of Michri, and Meshullam son of Shephatiah, son of Reuel, son of Ibnijah; 9and their kindred according to their generations, nine hundred fifty-six. All these were heads of families according to their ancestral houses.

10 Of the priests: Jedaiah, Jehoiarib, Jachin, 11and Azariah son of Hilkiah, son of Meshullam, son of Zadok, son of Meraioth, son of Ahitub, the chief officer of the house of God; 12and Adaiah son of Jeroham, son of Pashhur, son of Malchijah, and Maasai son of Adiel, son of Jahzerah, son of Meshullam, son of Meshillemith, son of Immer; 13besides their kindred, heads of their ancestral houses, one thousand seven hundred sixty, qualified for the work of the service of the house of God.

14 Of the Levites: Shemaiah son of Hasshub, son of Azrikam, son of Hashabiah, of the sons of Merari; 15and Bakbakkar, Heresh, Galal, and Mattaniah son of Mica, son of Zichri, son of Asaph; 16and Obadiah son of Shemaiah, son of Galal, son of Jeduthun, and Berechiah son of Asa, son of Elkanah, who lived in the villages of the Netophathites.

17 The gatekeepers were: Shallum, Akkub, Talmon, Ahiman; and their kindred Shallum was the chief, 18stationed previously in the king's gate on the east side. These were the gatekeepers of the camp of the Levites. 19Shallum son of Kore, son of Ebiasaph, son of Korah, and his kindred of his ancestral house, the Korahites, were in charge of the work of the service, guardians of the thresholds of the tent, as their ancestors had been in charge of the camp of the LORD, guardians of the entrance. 20And Phinehas son of Eleazar was chief over them in former times; the LORD was with him. 21Zechariah son of Meshelemiah was gatekeeper at the entrance of the tent of meeting. 22All these, who were chosen as gatekeepers at the thresholds, were two hundred twelve. They were enrolled by genealogies in their villages. David and the seer Samuel established them in their office of trust. 23So they and their descendants were in charge of the gates of the house of the LORD, that is, the house of the tent, as guards. 24The gatekeepers were on the four sides, east, west, north, and south; 25and their kindred who were in their villages were obliged to come in every seven days, in turn, to be with them; 26for the four chief gatekeepers, who were Levites, were in charge of the chambers and the treasures of the house of God. 27And they would spend the night near the house of God; for on them lay the duty of watching, and they had charge of opening it every morning.

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*Kings of Israel* is not to be confused with the canonical books of Kings. When the northern kingdom fell, the southern kingdom appropriated the name *Israel* (Mic 1.13–15; 2.7; 3.1, 9–10). For a further comment on *their unfaithfulness,* see 2 Chr 36.11–21. **2–16:** These verses have an inexact parallel in Neh 11.3–19, though it is not claimed there that *people of . . . Ephraim and Manasseh dwelt in Jerusalem.* In earlier times people of these tribes did not live in Jerusalem, but in the Chronicler's time representatives of "all Israel" (the post-exilic Jews) did live there.

**9.17–34:** In these paragraphs is developed the idea that *David* established (with the help of *Samuel*) all the arrangements of the temple and its services which were carried on into post-exilic times. If 1 Kings chs 6–7 are true, then David did not actually accomplish the building of the temple; he must perforce have utilized *the tent of meeting* (or "tabernacle"), the portable shrine that preceded the temple.

28 Some of them had charge of the utensils of service, for they were required to count them when they were brought in and taken out. 29 Others of them were appointed over the furniture, and over all the holy utensils, also over the choice flour, the wine, the oil, the incense, and the spices. 30 Others, of the sons of the priests, prepared the mixing of the spices, 31 and Mattithiah, one of the Levites, the firstborn of Shallum the Korahite, was in charge of making the flat cakes. 32 Also some of their kindred of the Kohathites had charge of the rows of bread, to prepare them for each sabbath.

33 Now these are the singers, the heads of ancestral houses of the Levites, living in the chambers of the temple free from other service, for they were on duty day and night. 34 These were heads of ancestral houses of the Levites, according to their generations; these leaders lived in Jerusalem.

35 In Gibeon lived the father of Gibeon, Jeiel, and the name of his wife was Maacah. 36 His firstborn son was Abdon, then Zur, Kish, Baal, Ner, Nadab, 37 Gedor, Ahio, Zechariah, and Mikloth; 38 and Mikloth became the father of Shimeam; and these also lived opposite their kindred in Jerusalem, with their kindred. 39 Ner became the father of Kish, Kish of Saul, Saul of Jonathan, Malchishua, Abinadab, and Esh-baal; 40 and the son of Jonathan was Merib-baal; and Merib-baal became the father of Micah. 41 The sons of Micah: Pithon, Melech, Tahrea, and Ahaz;[u] 42 and Ahaz became the father of Jarah, and Jarah of Alemeth, Azmaveth, and Zimri; and Zimri became the father of Moza. 43 Moza became the father of Binea; and Rephaiah was his son, Eleasah his son, Azel his son. 44 Azel had six sons, and these are their names: Azrikam, Bocheru, Ishmael, Sheariah, Obadiah, and Hanan; these were the sons of Azel.

10 Now the Philistines fought against Israel; and the men of Israel fled before the Philistines, and fell slain on Mount Gilboa. 2 The Philistines overtook Saul and his sons; and the Philistines killed Jonathan and Abinadab and Malchishua, sons of Saul. 3 The battle pressed hard on Saul; and the archers found him, and he was wounded by the archers. 4 Then Saul said to his armor-bearer, "Draw your sword, and thrust me through with it, so that these uncircumcised may not come and make sport of me." But his armor-bearer was unwilling, for he was terrified. So Saul took his own sword and fell on it. 5 When his armor-bearer saw that Saul was dead, he also fell on his sword and died. 6 Thus Saul died; he and his three sons and all his house died together. 7 When all the men of Israel who were in the valley saw that the army[v] had fled and that Saul and his sons were dead, they abandoned their towns and fled; and the Philistines came and occupied them.

8 The next day when the Philistines came to strip the dead, they found Saul and his sons fallen on Mount Gilboa. 9 They stripped him and took his head and his armor, and sent messengers throughout the land of the Philistines to carry the good news to their idols and to the people. 10 They put his armor in the temple of their gods, and fastened his head in the temple of Dagon. 11 But when all Jabesh-gilead heard everything that the Philistines had done to Saul, 12 all the valiant warriors got up and took away the body of Saul and the bodies of his sons, and brought them to Jabesh. Then

*u* Compare 8.35: Heb lacks *and Ahaz*
*v* Heb *they*

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**9.35–44**: The genealogy of the family of Saul is repeated here from 8.29–38 in anticipation of the next chapter.

**10.1–14**: **Saul, the unfaithful predecessor of David. 1–12**: These verses follow closely their source, 1 Sam 31.1–13, except in v. 10. Compare also v. 12 in the two passages. In spite of his dislike of Saul, the Chronicler hesitated to relate the disgraceful exposure of the bodies.

they buried their bones under the oak in Jabesh, and fasted seven days.

13 So Saul died for his unfaithfulness; he was unfaithful to the LORD in that he did not keep the command of the LORD; moreover, he had consulted a medium, seeking guidance, 14and did not seek guidance from the LORD. Therefore the LORD [w] put him to death and turned the kingdom over to David son of Jesse.

11 Then all Israel gathered together to David at Hebron and said, "See, we are your bone and flesh. 2For some time now, even while Saul was king, it was you who commanded the army of Israel. The LORD your God said to you: It is you who shall be shepherd of my people Israel, you who shall be ruler over my people Israel." 3So all the elders of Israel came to the king at Hebron, and David made a covenant with them at Hebron before the LORD. And they anointed David king over Israel, according to the word of the LORD by Samuel.

4 David and all Israel marched to Jerusalem, that is Jebus, where the Jebusites were, the inhabitants of the land. 5The inhabitants of Jebus said to David, "You will not come in here." Nevertheless David took the stronghold of Zion, now the city of David. 6David had said, "Whoever attacks the Jebusites first shall be chief and commander." And Joab son of Zeruiah went up first, so he became chief. 7David resided in the stronghold; therefore it was called the city of David. 8He built the city all around, from the Millo in complete circuit; and Joab repaired the rest of the city. 9And David became greater and greater, for the LORD of hosts was with him.

10 Now these are the chiefs of David's warriors, who gave him strong support in his kingdom, together with all Israel, to make him king, according to the word of the LORD concerning Israel. 11This is an account of David's mighty warriors: Jashobeam, son of Hachmoni, [x] was chief of the Three; [y] he wielded his spear against three hundred whom he killed at one time.

12 And next to him among the three warriors was Eleazar son of Dodo, the Ahohite. 13He was with David at Pasdammim when the Philistines were gathered there for battle. There was a plot of ground full of barley. Now the people had fled from the Philistines, 14but he and David took their stand in the middle of the plot, defended it, and killed the Philistines; and the LORD saved them by a great victory.

15 Three of the thirty chiefs went down to the rock to David at the cave of Adullam, while the army of Philistines was encamped in the valley of Rephaim. 16David was then in the stronghold; and the garrison of the Philistines was then at Bethlehem. 17David said longingly, "O that someone would give me water to drink from the well of Bethlehem that is by the gate!" 18Then the Three broke through the camp of the Philistines, and drew water from the well of Bethlehem that was by the gate, and they brought it to David. But David would not drink of it; he poured it out to the LORD, 19and said, "My God forbid that I should do this. Can I drink the blood of these men? For at the risk of their lives they brought

*w* Heb *he* *x* Or *a Hachmonite* *y* Compare 2 Sam 23.8: Heb *Thirty* or *captains*

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**10.13–14**: The Chronicler brings *Saul* into his story mainly in contrast with *David* to the greater glory of the latter (see 1 Sam 31.10–13 n.). *Medium,* 1 Sam 28.3–25.

**11.1–47**: **The accession of David, the capture of Jerusalem, and a list of David's mighty warriors. 1–3**: Omitting all the problems and troubles of 2 Sam chs 1–4, the Chronicler sees *David* quickly and easily anointed king over all *Israel*. The source is 2 Sam 5.1–3, except the last phrase, which is condensed from 1 Sam 16.1–13. **4–9**: The source is 2 Sam 5.6–10. The additional information on *Joab* presented here is generally considered to be historical (see 2 Sam 5.6–9 n.).

**11.10–47**: The main source of this list is 2 Sam 23.8–39, though additional names of unknown origin are also present.

it." Therefore he would not drink it. The three warriors did these things.

20 Now Abishai,[z] the brother of Joab, was chief of the Thirty.[a] With his spear he fought against three hundred and killed them, and won a name beside the Three. 21 He was the most renowned[b] of the Thirty,[a] and became their commander; but he did not attain to the Three.

22 Benaiah son of Jehoiada was a valiant man[c] of Kabzeel, a doer of great deeds; he struck down two sons of[d] Ariel of Moab. He also went down and killed a lion in a pit on a day when snow had fallen. 23 And he killed an Egyptian, a man of great stature, five cubits tall. The Egyptian had in his hand a spear like a weaver's beam; but Benaiah went against him with a staff, snatched the spear out of the Egyptian's hand, and killed him with his own spear. 24 Such were the things Benaiah son of Jehoiada did, and he won a name beside the three warriors. 25 He was renowned among the Thirty, but he did not attain to the Three. And David put him in charge of his bodyguard.

26 The warriors of the armies were Asahel brother of Joab, Elhanan son of Dodo of Bethlehem, 27 Shammoth of Harod,[e] Helez the Pelonite, 28 Ira son of Ikkesh of Tekoa, Abiezer of Anathoth, 29 Sibbecai the Hushathite, Ilai the Ahohite, 30 Maharai of Netophah, Heled son of Baanah of Netophah, 31 Ithai son of Ribai of Gibeah of the Benjaminites, Benaiah of Pirathon, 32 Hurai of the wadis of Gaash, Abiel the Arbathite, 33 Azmaveth of Baharum, Eliahba of Shaalbon, 34 Hashem[f] the Gizonite, Jonathan son of Shagee the Hararite, 35 Ahiam son of Sachar the Hararite, Eliphal son of Ur, 36 Hepher the Mecherathite, Ahijah the Pelonite, 37 Hezro of Carmel, Naarai son of Ezbai, 38 Joel the brother of Nathan, Mibhar son of Hagri, 39 Zelek the Ammonite, Naharai of Beeroth, the armorbearer of Joab son of Zeruiah, 40 Ira the Ithrite, Gareb the Ithrite, 41 Uriah the Hittite, Zabad son of Ahlai, 42 Adina son of Shiza the Reubenite, a leader of the Reubenites, and thirty with him, 43 Hanan son of Maacah, and Joshaphat the Mithnite, 44 Uzzia the Ashterathite, Shama and Jeiel sons of Hotham the Aroerite, 45 Jediael son of Shimri, and his brother Joha the Tizite, 46 Eliel the Mahavite, and Jeribai and Joshaviah sons of Elnaam, and Ithmah the Moabite, 47 Eliel, and Obed, and Jaasiel the Mezobaite.

12 The following are those who came to David at Ziklag, while he could not move about freely because of Saul son of Kish; they were among the mighty warriors who helped him in war. 2 They were archers, and could shoot arrows and sling stones with either the right hand or the left; they were Benjaminites, Saul's kindred. 3 The chief was Ahiezer, then Joash, both sons of Shemaah of Gibeah; also Jeziel and Pelet sons of Azmaveth; Beracah, Jehu of Anathoth, 4 Ishmaiah of Gibeon, a warrior among the Thirty and a leader over the Thirty; Jeremiah,[g] Jahaziel, Johanan, Jozabad of Gederah, 5 Eluzai,[h] Jerimoth, Bealiah, Shemariah, Shephatiah the Haruphite; 6 Elkanah, Isshiah, Azarel, Joezer, and Jashobeam, the Korahites; 7 and Joelah and Zebadiah, sons of Jeroham of Gedor.

8 From the Gadites there went over to David at the stronghold in the wilderness mighty and experienced warriors, expert with shield and spear, whose faces were like the faces of lions, and who were

*z* Gk Vg Tg Compare 2 Sam 23.18: Heb *Abshai*
*a* Syr: Heb *Three* *b* Compare 2 Sam 23.19: Heb *more renowned among the two* *c* Syr: Heb *the son of a valiant man* *d* See 2 Sam 23.20: Heb lacks *sons of* *e* Compare 2 Sam 23.25: Heb *the Harorite* *f* Compare Gk and 2 Sam 23.32: Heb *the sons of Hashem*
*g* Heb verse 5 *h* Heb verse 6

**12.1–40: David's ability to attract men of valor.** A description of David's army. David is linked to the past by historical allusions, yet he is also in other sources the prototype of the ideal future king or Messiah. **1–7:** Compare v. 1 with 1 Sam 27.5–12; v. 2 with Judg 3.15 and 20.15–16; v. 4 with 2 Sam 23.18–19.

**12.8–15:** Compare 1 Sam 26.1–3 and Deut 33.20–21. These *Gadites,* like *David* himself,

swift as gazelles on the mountains: [9]Ezer the chief, Obadiah second, Eliab third, [10]Mishmannah fourth, Jeremiah fifth, [11]Attai sixth, Eliel seventh, [12]Johanan eighth, Elzabad ninth, [13]Jeremiah tenth, Machbannai eleventh. [14]These Gadites were officers of the army, the least equal to a hundred and the greatest to a thousand. [15]These are the men who crossed the Jordan in the first month, when it was overflowing all its banks, and put to flight all those in the valleys, to the east and to the west.

16 Some Benjaminites and Judahites came to the stronghold to David. [17]David went out to meet them and said to them, "If you have come to me in friendship, to help me, then my heart will be knit to you; but if you have come to betray me to my adversaries, though my hands have done no wrong, then may the God of our ancestors see and give judgment." [18]Then the spirit came upon Amasai, chief of the Thirty, and he said,

"We are yours, O David;
and with you, O son of Jesse!
Peace, peace to you,
and peace to the one who helps you!
For your God is the one who helps you."

Then David received them, and made them officers of his troops.

19 Some of the Manassites deserted to David when he came with the Philistines for the battle against Saul. (Yet he did not help them, for the rulers of the Philistines took counsel and sent him away, saying, "He will desert to his master Saul at the cost of our heads.") [20]As he went to Ziklag these Manassites deserted to him: Adnah, Jozabad, Jediael, Michael, Jozabad, Elihu, and Zillethai, chiefs of the thousands in Manasseh. [21]They helped David against the band of raiders,[i] for they were all warriors and commanders in the army. [22]Indeed from day to day people kept coming to David to help him, until there was a great army, like an army of God.

23 These are the numbers of the divisions of the armed troops who came to David in Hebron to turn the kingdom of Saul over to him, according to the word of the LORD. [24]The people of Judah bearing shield and spear numbered six thousand eight hundred armed troops. [25]Of the Simeonites, mighty warriors, seven thousand one hundred. [26]Of the Levites four thousand six hundred. [27]Jehoiada, leader of the house of Aaron, and with him three thousand seven hundred. [28]Zadok, a young warrior, and twenty-two commanders from his own ancestral house. [29]Of the Benjaminites, the kindred of Saul, three thousand, of whom the majority had continued to keep their allegiance to the house of Saul. [30]Of the Ephraimites, twenty thousand eight hundred, mighty warriors, notables in their ancestral houses. [31]Of the half-tribe of Manasseh, eighteen thousand, who were expressly named to come and make David king. [32]Of Issachar, those who had understanding of the times, to know what Israel ought to do, two hundred chiefs, and all their kindred under their command. [33]Of Zebulun, fifty thousand seasoned troops, equipped for battle with all the weapons of war, to help David[j] with singleness of purpose. [34]Of Naphtali, a thousand commanders, with whom there were thirty-seven thousand armed with shield and spear. [35]Of the Danites, twenty-eight thousand six hundred equipped for battle. [36]Of Asher, forty thousand seasoned troops ready for battle. [37]Of the Reubenites and Gadites and the half-tribe of Manasseh from be-

*i* Or *as officers of his troops* *j* Gk: Heb lacks *David*

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are here highly idealized. They are as much soldiers of the future as of the past.

**12.19–22**: The Chronicler's revised version of 1 Sam chs 29–30. That *Manassites deserted to David* in this manner is not attested elsewhere.

**12.23–37**: The writer now returns to the enthronement scene of 11.1–3. The total

yond the Jordan, one hundred twenty thousand armed with all the weapons of war.

38 All these, warriors arrayed in battle order, came to Hebron with full intent to make David king over all Israel; likewise all the rest of Israel were of a single mind to make David king. 39They were there with David for three days, eating and drinking, for their kindred had provided for them. 40And also their neighbors, from as far away as Issachar and Zebulun and Naphtali, came bringing food on donkeys, camels, mules, and oxen—abundant provisions of meal, cakes of figs, clusters of raisins, wine, oil, oxen, and sheep, for there was joy in Israel.

13 David consulted with the commanders of the thousands and of the hundreds, with every leader. 2David said to the whole assembly of Israel, "If it seems good to you, and if it is the will of the LORD our God, let us send abroad to our kindred who remain in all the land of Israel, including the priests and Levites in the cities that have pasture lands, that they may come together to us. 3Then let us bring again the ark of our God to us; for we did not turn to it in the days of Saul." 4The whole assembly agreed to do so, for the thing pleased all the people.

5 So David assembled all Israel from the Shihor of Egypt to Lebo-hamath, to bring the ark of God from Kiriath-jearim. 6And David and all Israel went up to Baalah, that is, to Kiriath-jearim, which belongs to Judah, to bring up from there the ark of God, the LORD, who is enthroned on the cherubim, which is called by his[k] name. 7They carried the ark of God on a new cart, from the house of Abinadab, and Uzzah and Ahio[l] were driving the cart. 8David and all Israel were dancing before God with all their might, with song and lyres and harps and tambourines and cymbals and trumpets.

9 When they came to the threshing floor of Chidon, Uzzah put out his hand to hold the ark, for the oxen shook it. 10The anger of the LORD was kindled against Uzzah; he struck him down because he put out his hand to the ark; and he died there before God. 11David was angry because the LORD had burst out against Uzzah; so that place is called Perez-uzzah[m] to this day. 12David was afraid of God that day; he said, "How can I bring the ark of God into my care?" 13So David did not take the ark into his care into the city of David; he took it instead to the house of Obed-edom the Gittite. 14The ark of God remained with the household of Obed-edom in his house three months, and the LORD blessed the household of Obed-edom and all that he had.

14 King Hiram of Tyre sent messengers to David, along with cedar logs, and masons and carpenters to build a house for him. 2David then perceived that the LORD had established him as king over Israel, and that his kingdom was highly exalted for the sake of his people Israel.

3 David took more wives in Jerusalem, and David became the father of more sons and daughters. 4These are the names of the children whom he had in Jerusalem: Shammua, Shobab, and Na-

*k* Heb lacks *his* *l* Or *and his brother*
*m* That is *Bursting Out Against Uzzah*

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number of fighting men listed here is fantastic, historically speaking.

**13.1–14: David's concern to bring the ark to Jerusalem.** The Chronicler partly reverses the order of 2 Samuel, placing his version of 2 Sam 6.2–11, which is the source of the present chapter, ahead of his treatment of 2 Sam 5.11–25 (in ch 14). 2 Sam 6.12–19 is then utilized in 15.25–16.3. The purpose of this rearrangement is probably to show the new David's primary concern with cultic rather than military matters, in spite of his skill in the latter (compare 14.17). **1–4**: In the times of the historical *David*, the distinction between *priests* and *Levites* did not exist. **5**: *The Shihor of Egypt*, the eastern branch of the Nile delta; *Lebo-hamath* was in Syria. **6**: *The cherubim*, see 1 Sam 4.4 n.

**14.1–17: David's family and his defeat of the Philistines.** The source is 2 Sam 5.11–

than; Solomon, 5Ibhar, Elishua, and Elpelet; 6Nogah, Nepheg, and Japhia; 7Elishama, Beeliada, and Eliphelet.

8 When the Philistines heard that David had been anointed king over all Israel, all the Philistines went up in search of David; and David heard of it and went out against them. 9Now the Philistines had come and made a raid in the valley of Rephaim. 10David inquired of God, "Shall I go up against the Philistines? Will you give them into my hand?" The LORD said to him, "Go up, and I will give them into your hand." 11So he went up to Baal-perazim, and David defeated them there. David said, "God has burst out[n] against my enemies by my hand, like a bursting flood." Therefore that place is called Baal-perazim.[o] 12They abandoned their gods there, and at David's command they were burned.

13 Once again the Philistines made a raid in the valley. 14When David again inquired of God, God said to him, "You shall not go up after them; go around and come on them opposite the balsam trees. 15When you hear the sound of marching in the tops of the balsam trees, then go out to battle; for God has gone out before you to strike down the army of the Philistines." 16David did as God had commanded him, and they struck down the Philistine army from Gibeon to Gezer. 17The fame of David went out into all lands, and the LORD brought the fear of him on all nations.

15 David[p] built houses for himself in the city of David, and he prepared a place for the ark of God and pitched a tent for it. 2Then David commanded that no one but the Levites were to carry the ark of God, for the LORD had chosen them to carry the ark of the LORD and to minister to him forever. 3David assembled all Israel in Jerusalem to bring up the ark of the LORD to its place, which he had prepared for it. 4Then David gathered together the descendants of Aaron and the Levites: 5of the sons of Kohath, Uriel the chief, with one hundred twenty of his kindred; 6of the sons of Merari, Asaiah the chief, with two hundred twenty of his kindred; 7of the sons of Gershom, Joel the chief, with one hundred thirty of his kindred; 8of the sons of Elizaphan, Shemaiah the chief, with two hundred of his kindred; 9of the sons of Hebron, Eliel the chief, with eighty of his kindred; 10of the sons of Uzziel, Amminadab the chief, with one hundred twelve of his kindred.

11 David summoned the priests Zadok and Abiathar, and the Levites Uriel, Asaiah, Joel, Shemaiah, Eliel, and Amminadab. 12He said to them, "You are the heads of families of the Levites; sanctify yourselves, you and your kindred, so that you may bring up the ark of the LORD, the God of Israel, to the place that I have prepared for it. 13Because you did not carry it the first time,[q] the LORD our God burst out against us, because we did not give it proper care." 14So the priests and the Levites sanctified themselves to bring up the ark of the LORD, the God of Israel. 15And the Levites carried the ark of God on their shoulders with the poles, as Moses had commanded according to the word of the LORD.

16 David also commanded the chiefs of the Levites to appoint their kindred as the singers to play on musical instruments, on harps and lyres and cymbals, to raise loud sounds of joy. 17So the Levites appointed Heman son of Joel; and of his kindred Asaph son of Berechiah; and of the sons of Merari, their kindred,

*n* Heb *paraz* *o* That is *Lord of Bursting Out*
*p* Heb *He* *q* Meaning of Heb uncertain

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25. The Chronicler adds v. 17 to portray *David* (see 12.23–37 n.) as a military figure feared throughout the world.

**15.1–29: The ark is brought to Jerusalem.** The Chronicler returns to the picture of David as establishing and overseeing temple worship (see ch 13 n.). **1–15**: Note the emphasis on the Levites, who did not exist as a special class in the time of the historical *David;* they are not even mentioned in 2 Sam ch 6.

**15.16–24**: The musical arrangements here set forth were largely drawn from the practice in the Chronicler's own day. These names

Ethan son of Kushaiah; 18and with them their kindred of the second order, Zechariah, Jaaziel, Shemiramoth, Jehiel, Unni, Eliab, Benaiah, Maaseiah, Mattithiah, Eliphelehu, and Mikneiah, and the gatekeepers Obed-edom and Jeiel. 19The singers Heman, Asaph, and Ethan were to sound bronze cymbals; 20Zechariah, Aziel, Shemiramoth, Jehiel, Unni, Eliab, Maaseiah, and Benaiah were to play harps according to Alamoth; 21but Mattithiah, Eliphelehu, Mikneiah, Obed-edom, Jeiel, and Azaziah were to lead with lyres according to the Sheminith. 22Chenaniah, leader of the Levites in music, was to direct the music, for he understood it. 23Berechiah and Elkanah were to be gatekeepers for the ark. 24Shebaniah, Joshaphat, Nethanel, Amasai, Zechariah, Benaiah, and Eliezer, the priests, were to blow the trumpets before the ark of God. Obed-edom and Jehiah also were to be gatekeepers for the ark.

25 So David and the elders of Israel, and the commanders of the thousands, went to bring up the ark of the covenant of the LORD from the house of Obed-edom with rejoicing. 26And because God helped the Levites who were carrying the ark of the covenant of the LORD, they sacrificed seven bulls and seven rams. 27David was clothed with a robe of fine linen, as also were all the Levites who were carrying the ark, and the singers, and Chenaniah the leader of the music of the singers; and David wore a linen ephod. 28So all Israel brought up the ark of the covenant of the LORD with shouting, to the sound of the horn, trumpets, and cymbals, and made loud music on harps and lyres.

29 As the ark of the covenant of the LORD came to the city of David, Michal daughter of Saul looked out of the window, and saw King David leaping and dancing; and she despised him in her heart.

16 They brought in the ark of God, and set it inside the tent that David had pitched for it; and they offered burnt offerings and offerings of well-being before God. 2When David had finished offering the burnt offerings and the offerings of well-being, he blessed the people in the name of the LORD; 3and he distributed to every person in Israel—man and woman alike—to each a loaf of bread, a portion of meat,[r] and a cake of raisins.

4 He appointed certain of the Levites as ministers before the ark of the LORD, to invoke, to thank, and to praise the LORD, the God of Israel. 5Asaph was the chief, and second to him Zechariah, Jeiel, Shemiramoth, Jehiel, Mattithiah, Eliab, Benaiah, Obed-edom, and Jeiel, with harps and lyres; Asaph was to sound the cymbals, 6and the priests Benaiah and Jahaziel were to blow trumpets regularly, before the ark of the covenant of God.

7 Then on that day David first appointed the singing of praises to the LORD by Asaph and his kindred.

8 O give thanks to the LORD, call on his name,
make known his deeds among the peoples.
9 Sing to him, sing praises to him,
tell of all his wonderful works.
10 Glory in his holy name;
let the hearts of those who seek the LORD rejoice.

[r] Compare Gk Syr Vg: Meaning of Heb uncertain

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had become traditional in the musical guild. *Sheminith* (v. 21), a musical term; the exact meaning is unknown.

**15.25–28**: Based upon 2 Sam 6.12–15, with the addition of Levites, singers, more musical instruments, and more clothing on the person of *David* (see 1 Sam 2.18 n.). **29**: A close approximation of 2 Sam 6.16.

**16.1–43**: **A service of dedication, and further arrangements.** A continuation of ch 15. **1–3**: Compare 2 Sam 6.17–19 as source. All reference to 2 Sam 6.20–23 is omitted. This idealized David would not be guilty of indecent exposure (see 15.25–28 n.) or of unseemly disputes with members of his harem.

**16.8–36**: A composite psalm inserted for artistic effect, perhaps by an editor (see 1 Sam 2.1–10 n.; 2 Sam ch 22 n.; 23.1–7 n.). The sources of the present composition are

*David's psalm of thanksgiving*

11 Seek the LORD and his strength,
seek his presence continually.
12 Remember the wonderful works
he has done,
his miracles, and the judgments
he uttered,
13 O offspring of his servant Israel,[s]
children of Jacob, his chosen ones.

14 He is the LORD our God;
his judgments are in all the earth.
15 Remember his covenant forever,
the word that he commanded,
for a thousand generations,
16 the covenant that he made with
Abraham,
his sworn promise to Isaac,
17 which he confirmed to Jacob as a
statute,
to Israel as an everlasting
covenant,
18 saying, "To you I will give the
land of Canaan
as your portion for an
inheritance."

19 When they were few in number,
of little account, and strangers
in the land,[t]
20 wandering from nation to nation,
from one kingdom to another
people,
21 he allowed no one to oppress
them;
he rebuked kings on their
account,
22 saying, "Do not touch my
anointed ones;
do my prophets no harm."

23 Sing to the LORD, all the earth.
Tell of his salvation from day to
day.
24 Declare his glory among the
nations,
his marvelous works among all
the peoples.
25 For great is the LORD, and greatly
to be praised;
he is to be revered above all gods.
26 For all the gods of the peoples are
idols,
but the LORD made the heavens.
27 Honor and majesty are before him;
strength and joy are in his place.

28 Ascribe to the LORD, O families of
the peoples,
ascribe to the LORD glory and
strength.
29 Ascribe to the LORD the glory due
his name;
bring an offering, and come
before him.
Worship the LORD in holy
splendor;
30 tremble before him, all the
earth.
The world is firmly established;
it shall never be moved.
31 Let the heavens be glad, and let
the earth rejoice,
and let them say among the
nations, "The LORD is
king!"
32 Let the sea roar, and all that
fills it;
let the field exult, and
everything in it.
33 Then shall the trees of the forest
sing for joy
before the LORD, for he comes
to judge the earth.
34 O give thanks to the LORD, for he
is good;
for his steadfast love endures
forever.

35 Say also:
"Save us, O God of our salvation,
and gather and rescue us from
among the nations,
that we may give thanks to your
holy name,
and glory in your praise.
36 Blessed be the LORD, the God of
Israel,
from everlasting to everlasting."

*s* Another reading is *Abraham* (compare Ps 105.6) *t* Heb *in it*

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Ps 105.1–15 (vv. 8–22); Ps 96.1–13 (vv. 23–33); Ps 106.1, 47–48 (vv. 34–36).

Then all the people said "Amen!" and praised the LORD.

37 David left Asaph and his kinsfolk there before the ark of the covenant of the LORD to minister regularly before the ark as each day required, 38and also Obed-edom and his[u] sixty-eight kinsfolk; while Obed-edom son of Jeduthun and Hosah were to be gatekeepers. 39And he left the priest Zadok and his kindred the priests before the tabernacle of the LORD in the high place that was at Gibeon, 40to offer burnt offerings to the LORD on the altar of burnt offering regularly, morning and evening, according to all that is written in the law of the LORD that he commanded Israel. 41With them were Heman and Jeduthun, and the rest of those chosen and expressly named to render thanks to the LORD, for his steadfast love endures forever. 42Heman and Jeduthun had with them trumpets and cymbals for the music, and instruments for sacred song. The sons of Jeduthun were appointed to the gate.

43 Then all the people departed to their homes, and David went home to bless his household.

17 Now when David settled in his house, David said to the prophet Nathan, "I am living in a house of cedar, but the ark of the covenant of the LORD is under a tent." 2Nathan said to David, "Do all that you have in mind, for God is with you."

3 But that same night the word of the LORD came to Nathan, saying: 4Go and tell my servant David: Thus says the LORD: You shall not build me a house to live in. 5For I have not lived in a house since the day I brought out Israel to this very day, but I have lived in a tent and a tabernacle.[v] 6Wherever I have moved about among all Israel, did I ever speak a word with any of the judges of Israel, whom I commanded to shepherd my people, saying, Why have you not built me a house of cedar? 7Now therefore thus you shall say to my servant David: Thus says the LORD of hosts: I took you from the pasture, from following the sheep, to be ruler over my people Israel; 8and I have been with you wherever you went, and have cut off all your enemies before you; and I will make for you a name, like the name of the great ones of the earth. 9I will appoint a place for my people Israel, and will plant them, so that they may live in their own place, and be disturbed no more; and evildoers shall wear them down no more, as they did formerly, 10from the time that I appointed judges over my people Israel; and I will subdue all your enemies.

Moreover I declare to you that the LORD will build you a house. 11When your days are fulfilled to go to be with your ancestors, I will raise up your offspring after you, one of your own sons, and I will establish his kingdom. 12He shall build a house for me, and I will establish his throne forever. 13I will be a father to him, and he shall be a son to me. I will not take my steadfast love from him, as I took it from him who was before you, 14but I will confirm him in my house and in my kingdom forever, and his throne shall be established forever. 15In accordance with all these words and all this vision, Nathan spoke to David.

16 Then King David went in and sat before the LORD, and said, "Who am I, O LORD God, and what is my house, that you have brought me thus far? 17And even this was a small thing in your sight, O God; you have also spoken of your servant's house for a great while to come. You regard me as someone of high rank,[w] O LORD God! 18And what more can David say to you for honoring your servant? You know your servant. 19For your servant's sake, O LORD, and

*u* Gk Syr Vg: Heb *their* *v* Gk 2 Sam 7.6: Heb *but I have been from tent to tent and from tabernacle*
*w* Meaning of Heb uncertain

**16.37–42:** A continuation of vv. 4–6; similar to 15.1–24.

**16.43:** Taken from 2 Sam 6.19b–20a; a continuation of v. 3.

**17.1–27: Why David himself did not build the temple.** This chapter follows closely its source, 2 Sam ch 7.

according to your own heart, you have done all these great deeds, making known all these great things. 20There is no one like you, O LORD, and there is no God besides you, according to all that we have heard with our ears. 21Who is like your people Israel, one nation on the earth whom God went to redeem to be his people, making for yourself a name for great and terrible things, in driving out nations before your people whom you redeemed from Egypt? 22And you made your people Israel to be your people forever; and you, O LORD, became their God.

23 "And now, O LORD, as for the word that you have spoken concerning your servant and concerning his house, let it be established forever, and do as you have promised. 24Thus your name will be established and magnified forever in the saying, 'The LORD of hosts, the God of Israel, is Israel's God'; and the house of your servant David will be established in your presence. 25For you, my God, have revealed to your servant that you will build a house for him; therefore your servant has found it possible to pray before you. 26And now, O LORD, you are God, and you have promised this good thing to your servant; 27therefore may it please you to bless the house of your servant, that it may continue forever before you. For you, O LORD, have blessed and are blessed[x] forever."

18 Some time afterward, David attacked the Philistines and subdued them; he took Gath and its villages from the Philistines.

2 He defeated Moab, and the Moabites became subject to David and brought tribute.

3 David also struck down King Hadadezer of Zobah, toward Hamath,[y] as he went to set up a monument at the river Euphrates. 4David took from him one thousand chariots, seven thousand cavalry, and twenty thousand foot soldiers. David hamstrung all the chariot horses, but left one hundred of them. 5When the Arameans of Damascus came to help King Hadadezer of Zobah, David killed twenty-two thousand Arameans. 6Then David put garrisons[z] in Aram of Damascus; and the Arameans became subject to David, and brought tribute. The LORD gave victory to David wherever he went. 7David took the gold shields that were carried by the servants of Hadadezer, and brought them to Jerusalem. 8From Tibhath and from Cun, cities of Hadadezer, David took a vast quantity of bronze; with it Solomon made the bronze sea and the pillars and the vessels of bronze.

9 When King Tou of Hamath heard that David had defeated the whole army of King Hadadezer of Zobah, 10he sent his son Hadoram to King David, to greet him and to congratulate him, because he had fought against Hadadezer and defeated him. Now Hadadezer had often been at war with Tou. He sent all sorts of articles of gold, of silver, and of bronze; 11these also King David dedicated to the LORD, together with the silver and gold that he had carried off from all the nations, from Edom, Moab, the Ammonites, the Philistines, and Amalek.

12 Abishai son of Zeruiah killed eighteen thousand Edomites in the Valley of Salt. 13He put garrisons in Edom; and all the Edomites became subject to David. And the LORD gave victory to David wherever he went.

14 So David reigned over all Israel;

*x* Or *and it is blessed* *y* Meaning of Heb uncertain *z* Gk Vg 2 Sam 8.6 Compare Syr: Heb lacks *garrisons*

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**18.1–17: David's further military prowess.** This chapter and the two following resume the theme of ch 14 (see note there). The idealized *David* was both a great military leader and a noble founder of religious institutions. **1–13:** *David* defeats *the Philistines, Moabites, Arameans* (Syrians), and *Edomites.* 2 Sam 8.1–14 is the source.

**18.14–17:** The source is 2 Sam 8.15–18. **17:** *David's sons* are changed from priests (see

and he administered justice and equity to all his people. 15Joab son of Zeruiah was over the army; Jehoshaphat son of Ahilud was recorder; 16Zadok son of Ahitub and Ahimelech son of Abiathar were priests; Shavsha was secretary; 17Benaiah son of Jehoiada was over the Cherethites and the Pelethites; and David's sons were the chief officials in the service of the king.

19 Some time afterward, King Nahash of the Ammonites died, and his son succeeded him. 2David said, "I will deal loyally with Hanun son of Nahash, for his father dealt loyally with me." So David sent messengers to console him concerning his father. When David's servants came to Hanun in the land of the Ammonites, to console him, 3the officials of the Ammonites said to Hanun, "Do you think, because David has sent consolers to you, that he is honoring your father? Have not his servants come to you to search and to overthrow and to spy out the land?" 4So Hanun seized David's servants, shaved them, cut off their garments in the middle at their hips, and sent them away; 5and they departed. When David was told about the men, he sent messengers to them, for they felt greatly humiliated. The king said, "Remain at Jericho until your beards have grown, and then return."

6 When the Ammonites saw that they had made themselves odious to David, Hanun and the Ammonites sent a thousand talents of silver to hire chariots and cavalry from Mesopotamia, from Aram-maacah and from Zobah. 7They hired thirty-two thousand chariots and the king of Maacah with his army, who came and camped before Medeba. And the Ammonites were mustered from their cities and came to battle. 8When David heard of it, he sent Joab and all the army of the warriors. 9The Ammonites came out and drew up in battle array at the entrance of the city, and the kings who had come were by themselves in the open country.

10 When Joab saw that the line of battle was set against him both in front and in the rear, he chose some of the picked men of Israel and arrayed them against the Arameans; 11the rest of his troops he put in the charge of his brother Abishai, and they were arrayed against the Ammonites. 12He said, "If the Arameans are too strong for me, then you shall help me; but if the Ammonites are too strong for you, then I will help you. 13Be strong, and let us be courageous for our people and for the cities of our God; and may the LORD do what seems good to him." 14So Joab and the troops who were with him advanced toward the Arameans for battle; and they fled before him. 15When the Ammonites saw that the Arameans fled, they likewise fled before Abishai, Joab's brother, and entered the city. Then Joab came to Jerusalem.

16 But when the Arameans saw that they had been defeated by Israel, they sent messengers and brought out the Arameans who were beyond the Euphrates, with Shophach the commander of the army of Hadadezer at their head. 17When David was informed, he gathered all Israel together, crossed the Jordan, came to them, and drew up his forces against them. When David set the battle in array against the Arameans, they fought with him. 18The Arameans fled before Israel; and David killed seven thousand Aramean charioteers and forty thousand foot soldiers, and also killed Shophach the commander of their army. 19When the servants of Hadadezer saw that they had been defeated by Israel, they made peace with David, and became subject to him. So the Arameans were not willing to help the Ammonites any more.

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2 Sam 8.18 n.) to *chief officials*, for the Chronicler believed only descendants of Aaron could be priests.

**19.1–19: David defeats the Ammonites and their Aramean (Syrian) allies.** The Chronicler omits 2 Sam ch 9, having already declared (10.6) that the whole house of Saul had disappeared. The theme of David's military prowess is continued, the source being 2 Sam ch 10 with a few changes.

20 In the spring of the year, the time when kings go out to battle, Joab led out the army, ravaged the country of the Ammonites, and came and besieged Rabbah. But David remained at Jerusalem. Joab attacked Rabbah, and overthrew it. 2David took the crown of Milcom[a] from his head; he found that it weighed a talent of gold, and in it was a precious stone; and it was placed on David's head. He also brought out the booty of the city, a very great amount. 3He brought out the people who were in it, and set them to work[b] with saws and iron picks and axes.[c] Thus David did to all the cities of the Ammonites. Then David and all the people returned to Jerusalem.

4 After this, war broke out with the Philistines at Gezer; then Sibbecai the Hushathite killed Sippai, who was one of the descendants of the giants; and the Philistines were subdued. 5Again there was war with the Philistines; and Elhanan son of Jair killed Lahmi the brother of Goliath the Gittite, the shaft of whose spear was like a weaver's beam. 6Again there was war at Gath, where there was a man of great size, who had six fingers on each hand, and six toes on each foot, twenty-four in number; he also was descended from the giants. 7When he taunted Israel, Jonathan son of Shimea, David's brother, killed him. 8These were descended from the giants in Gath; they fell by the hand of David and his servants.

21 Satan stood up against Israel, and incited David to count the people of Israel. 2So David said to Joab and the commanders of the army, "Go, number Israel, from Beer-sheba to Dan, and bring me a report, so that I may know their number." 3But Joab said, "May the LORD increase the number of his people a hundredfold! Are they not, my lord the king, all of them my lord's servants? Why then should my lord require this? Why should he bring guilt on Israel?" 4But the king's word prevailed against Joab. So Joab departed and went throughout all Israel, and came back to Jerusalem. 5Joab gave the total count of the people to David. In all Israel there were one million one hundred thousand men who drew the sword, and in Judah four hundred seventy thousand who drew the sword. 6But he did not include Levi and Benjamin in the numbering, for the king's command was abhorrent to Joab.

7 But God was displeased with this

*a* Gk Vg See 1 Kings 11.5, 33: MT *of their king*
*b* Compare 2 Sam 12.31: Heb *and he sawed*
*c* Compare 2 Sam 12.31: Heb *saws*

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**20.1–8: The conquest of Ammon; further wars with the Philistines. 1:** The first two sentences of this verse come from 2 Sam 11.1; to get the last sentence the Chronicler turned to 2 Sam 12.26, thus eliminating the story of David's adultery with Bathsheba, his murder of her husband, and the prophet's rebuke of the king for his conduct. **2–3:** The source is 2 Sam 12.30–31 (see 2 Sam 12.30 n.).

**20.4–8:** The writer now jumps to 2 Sam 21.18–22 for source material, thus eliminating a whole series of discreditable incidents: the violent and immoral conduct of David's sons, Absalom's rebellion, David's flight and weak sentimentality, the disaffection of the northern tribes, Joab's control over David, the execution of more of Saul's descendants. **5:** The addition of the words *Lahmi the brother of* would seem to be for the purpose of resolving the conflict between 1 Sam ch 17 and 2 Sam 21.19 as to who killed Goliath (see 1 Sam 17.4 n.).

**21.1–22.1: The census, the plague, and the acquisition of a site for the sanctuary.** This story, based upon 2 Sam ch 24, though not altogether to the credit of David, was used by the Chronicler as the introduction to the next section of his book because the outcome of the trouble in the story was the fixing of the temple site, and the Chronicler from here on is concerned with David as the real founder of the temple. **1:** *Satan* (or "an adversary") replaces "the anger of the LORD" of 2 Sam 24.1. At this time, perhaps some five hundred years since the writing of the earlier account, a figure called "the *satan*" (the "adversary" or "accuser") was associated with evil and misfortune, but not as an enemy of God (see Job 1–2; Zech 3.1–2 and compare 1 Kings 22.19–22).

**21.5:** The numbers are somewhat different

thing, and he struck Israel. 8David said to God, "I have sinned greatly in that I have done this thing. But now, I pray you, take away the guilt of your servant; for I have done very foolishly." 9The LORD spoke to Gad, David's seer, saying, 10"Go and say to David, 'Thus says the LORD: Three things I offer you; choose one of them, so that I may do it to you.' " 11So Gad came to David and said to him, "Thus says the LORD, 'Take your choice: 12either three years of famine; or three months of devastation by your foes, while the sword of your enemies overtakes you; or three days of the sword of the LORD, pestilence on the land, and the angel of the LORD destroying throughout all the territory of Israel.' Now decide what answer I shall return to the one who sent me." 13Then David said to Gad, "I am in great distress; let me fall into the hand of the LORD, for his mercy is very great; but let me not fall into human hands."

14 So the LORD sent a pestilence on Israel; and seventy thousand persons fell in Israel. 15And God sent an angel to Jerusalem to destroy it; but when he was about to destroy it, the LORD took note and relented concerning the calamity; he said to the destroying angel, "Enough! Stay your hand." The angel of the LORD was then standing by the threshing floor of Ornan the Jebusite. 16David looked up and saw the angel of the LORD standing between earth and heaven, and in his hand a drawn sword stretched out over Jerusalem. Then David and the elders, clothed in sackcloth, fell on their faces. 17And David said to God, "Was it not I who gave the command to count the people? It is I who have sinned and done very wickedly. But these sheep, what have they done? Let your hand, I pray, O LORD my God, be against me and against my father's house; but do not let your people be plagued!"

18 Then the angel of the LORD commanded Gad to tell David that he should go up and erect an altar to the LORD on the threshing floor of Ornan the Jebusite. 19So David went up following Gad's instructions, which he had spoken in the name of the LORD. 20Ornan turned and saw the angel; and while his four sons who were with him hid themselves, Ornan continued to thresh wheat. 21As David came to Ornan, Ornan looked and saw David; he went out from the threshing floor, and did obeisance to David with his face to the ground. 22David said to Ornan, "Give me the site of the threshing floor that I may build on it an altar to the LORD—give it to me at its full price—so that the plague may be averted from the people." 23Then Ornan said to David, "Take it; and let my lord the king do what seems good to him; see, I present the oxen for burnt offerings, and the threshing sledges for the wood, and the wheat for a grain offering. I give it all." 24But King David said to Ornan, "No; I will buy them for the full price. I will not take for the LORD what is yours, nor offer burnt offerings that cost me nothing." 25So David paid Ornan six hundred shekels of gold by weight for the site. 26David built there an altar to the LORD and presented burnt offerings and offerings of well-being. He called upon the LORD, and he answered him with fire from heaven on the altar of burnt offering. 27Then the LORD commanded the angel, and he put his sword back into its sheath.

28 At that time, when David saw that the LORD had answered him at the threshing floor of Ornan the Jebusite, he made his sacrifices there. 29For the tabernacle of the LORD, which Moses had

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in 2 Sam 24.9. **6:** *Levi,* compare Num 1.47–49. **15:** *Ornan,* Araunah in 2 Sam 24.16–24. **20:** The *four sons* do not appear in 2 Sam 24.19–20.

**21.25:** The modest price of fifty shekels (about 20 oz.) of silver (see 2 Sam 24.18–25 n.) is here raised to the very large sum of *six hundred shekels of gold,* which would weigh about 15 lbs. The author is telling his readers that no price was too great for this precious site. **26:** The *fire from heaven* is lacking in the original account; it is a symbol of God's strong approval (compare 1 Kings 18.36–39).

**21.28–30:** These verses, not in 2 Sam

made in the wilderness, and the altar of burnt offering were at that time in the high place at Gibeon; 30but David could not go before it to inquire of God, for he was afraid of the sword of the angel of the LORD.

22 1Then David said, "Here shall be the house of the LORD God and here the altar of burnt offering for Israel."

2 David gave orders to gather together the aliens who were residing in the land of Israel, and he set stonecutters to prepare dressed stones for building the house of God. 3David also provided great stores of iron for nails for the doors of the gates and for clamps, as well as bronze in quantities beyond weighing, 4and cedar logs without number—for the Sidonians and Tyrians brought great quantities of cedar to David. 5For David said, "My son Solomon is young and inexperienced, and the house that is to be built for the LORD must be exceedingly magnificent, famous and glorified throughout all lands; I will therefore make preparation for it." So David provided materials in great quantity before his death.

6 Then he called for his son Solomon and charged him to build a house for the LORD, the God of Israel. 7David said to Solomon, "My son, I had planned to build a house to the name of the LORD my God. 8But the word of the LORD came to me, saying, 'You have shed much blood and have waged great wars; you shall not build a house to my name, because you have shed so much blood in my sight on the earth. 9See, a son shall be born to you; he shall be a man of peace. I will give him peace from all his enemies on every side; for his name shall be Solomon,[d] and I will give peace[e] and quiet to Israel in his days. 10He shall build a house for my name. He shall be a son to me, and I will be a father to him, and I will establish his royal throne in Israel forever.' 11Now, my son, the LORD be with you, so that you may succeed in building the house of the LORD your God, as he has spoken concerning you. 12Only, may the LORD grant you discretion and understanding, so that when he gives you charge over Israel you may keep the law of the LORD your God. 13Then you will prosper if you are careful to observe the statutes and the ordinances that the LORD commanded Moses for Israel. Be strong and of good courage. Do not be afraid or dismayed. 14With great pains I have provided for the house of the LORD one hundred thousand talents of gold, one million talents of silver, and bronze and iron beyond weighing, for there is so much of it; timber and stone too I have provided. To these you must add more. 15You have an abundance of workers: stonecutters, masons, carpenters, and all kinds of artisans without number, skilled in working 16gold, silver, bronze, and iron. Now begin the work, and the LORD be with you."

17 David also commanded all the

*d* Heb *Shelomoh* *e* Heb *shalom*

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ch 24, are designed to show that there is now only one true place of sacrifice. **22.1**: A continuation of the preceding verses. The source, 2 Sam ch 24, identified the site as that of *the altar,* but said nothing about *the house of the* LORD *God.*

**22.2–19**: **David makes preparations for the construction of the temple.** According to the earlier record, David may have thought of building a temple (1 Kings 5.2–6), but it was Solomon who made and executed the plans, with the aid of Hiram of Tyre (1 Kings chs 5–7). The Chronicler regarded the temple as Judaism's greatest institution, and David as the nation's most important human figure. This figure and this institution must, therefore, be brought together. **2**: The reference to forced labor of *aliens* only may be based on 1 Kings 9.22, which overlooks 1 Kings 5.13; 11.28; 12.4. **3–5**: See 1 Kings ch 5, where this preparatory activity is credited to Solomon.

**22.6–12**: Compare 1 Kings 8.17–21. **8**: *Blood and . . . wars,* compare 1 Kings 5.3. **13**: Compare 1 Kings 2.2. **14**: The amount of *gold* and *silver* is fantastically large (about 3750 tons of gold and 37,500 tons of silver). It is a figure of speech expressing the inestimable preciousness of the temple as a religious institution. Compare the more modest figures in 1 Kings 9.14, 28; 10.10, 14.

leaders of Israel to help his son Solomon, saying, 18"Is not the LORD your God with you? Has he not given you peace on every side? For he has delivered the inhabitants of the land into my hand; and the land is subdued before the LORD and his people. 19Now set your mind and heart to seek the LORD your God. Go and build the sanctuary of the LORD God so that the ark of the covenant of the LORD and the holy vessels of God may be brought into a house built for the name of the LORD."

23 When David was old and full of days, he made his son Solomon king over Israel.

2 David assembled all the leaders of Israel and the priests and the Levites. 3The Levites, thirty years old and upward, were counted, and the total was thirty-eight thousand. 4"Twenty-four thousand of these," David said, "shall have charge of the work in the house of the LORD, six thousand shall be officers and judges, 5four thousand gatekeepers, and four thousand shall offer praises to the LORD with the instruments that I have made for praise." 6And David organized them in divisions corresponding to the sons of Levi: Gershon,[f] Kohath, and Merari.

7 The sons of Gershon[g] were Ladan and Shimei. 8The sons of Ladan: Jehiel the chief, Zetham, and Joel, three. 9The sons of Shimei: Shelomoth, Haziel, and Haran, three. These were the heads of families of Ladan. 10And the sons of Shimei: Jahath, Zina, Jeush, and Beriah. These four were the sons of Shimei. 11Jahath was the chief, and Zizah the second; but Jeush and Beriah did not have many sons, so they were enrolled as a single family.

12 The sons of Kohath: Amram, Izhar, Hebron, and Uzziel, four. 13The sons of Amram: Aaron and Moses. Aaron was set apart to consecrate the most holy things, so that he and his sons forever should make offerings before the LORD, and minister to him and pronounce blessings in his name forever; 14but as for Moses the man of God, his sons were to be reckoned among the tribe of Levi. 15The sons of Moses: Gershom and Eliezer. 16The sons of Gershom: Shebuel the chief. 17The sons of Eliezer: Rehabiah the chief; Eliezer had no other sons, but the sons of Rehabiah were very numerous. 18The sons of Izhar: Shelomith the chief. 19The sons of Hebron: Jeriah the chief, Amariah the second, Jahaziel the third, and Jekameam the fourth. 20The sons of Uzziel: Micah the chief and Isshiah the second.

21 The sons of Merari: Mahli and Mushi. The sons of Mahli: Eleazar and Kish. 22Eleazar died having no sons, but only daughters; their kindred, the sons of Kish, married them. 23The sons of Mushi: Mahli, Eder, and Jeremoth, three.

24 These were the sons of Levi by their ancestral houses, the heads of families as they were enrolled according to the number of the names of the individuals from twenty years old and upward who were to do the work for the service of the house of the LORD. 25For David said, "The LORD, the God of Israel, has given rest to his people; and he resides in Jerusalem forever. 26And so the Levites

*f* Or *Gershom*; See 1 Chr 6.1, note, and 23.15
*g* Vg Compare Gk Syr: Heb *to the Gershonite*

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**23.1–32: David organizes the Levites and assigns them their duties.** In the time of the historical David there was no special class of Levites (see notes on ch 6). But to the Chronicler, more than five hundred years later, they were very important; hence they must be brought into relationship with David. **1**: This single verse moves swiftly all the way from 1 Kings 1.1 to 1 Kings 2.1. **2–6**: On the use of men *thirty years old and upward,* compare Num 4.3; this was apparently older practice (but see Num 8.24). When more elaborate ritual required more men, the age for beginning service was apparently lowered to *twenty years,* as in vv. 24, 27. On *the instruments,* see ch 26, and compare Am 6.5.

**23.7–21**: These verses were probably inspired by Num chs 3; 4; 8, at least in part.

**23.24–32**: The new duties of *the Levites* are here more carefully defined.

no longer need to carry the tabernacle or any of the things for its service"— 27for according to the last words of David these were the number of the Levites from twenty years old and upward— 28"but their duty shall be to assist the descendants of Aaron for the service of the house of the LORD, having the care of the courts and the chambers, the cleansing of all that is holy, and any work for the service of the house of God; 29to assist also with the rows of bread, the choice flour for the grain offering, the wafers of unleavened bread, the baked offering, the offering mixed with oil, and all measures of quantity or size. 30And they shall stand every morning, thanking and praising the LORD, and likewise at evening, 31and whenever burnt offerings are offered to the LORD on sabbaths, new moons, and appointed festivals, according to the number required of them, regularly before the LORD. 32Thus they shall keep charge of the tent of meeting and the sanctuary, and shall attend the descendants of Aaron, their kindred, for the service of the house of the LORD."

24 The divisions of the descendants of Aaron were these. The sons of Aaron: Nadab, Abihu, Eleazar, and Ithamar. 2But Nadab and Abihu died before their father, and had no sons; so Eleazar and Ithamar became the priests. 3Along with Zadok of the sons of Eleazar, and Ahimelech of the sons of Ithamar, David organized them according to the appointed duties in their service. 4Since more chief men were found among the sons of Eleazar than among the sons of Ithamar, they organized them under sixteen heads of ancestral houses of the sons of Eleazar, and eight of the sons of Ithamar. 5They organized them by lot, all alike, for there were officers of the sanctuary and officers of God among both the sons of Eleazar and the sons of Ithamar. 6The scribe Shemaiah son of Nethanel, a Levite, recorded them in the presence of the king, and the officers, and Zadok the priest, and Ahimelech son of Abiathar, and the heads of ancestral houses of the priests and of the Levites; one ancestral house being chosen for Eleazar and one chosen for Ithamar.

7 The first lot fell to Jehoiarib, the second to Jedaiah, 8the third to Harim, the fourth to Seorim, 9the fifth to Malchijah, the sixth to Mijamin, 10the seventh to Hakkoz, the eighth to Abijah, 11the ninth to Jeshua, the tenth to Shecaniah, 12the eleventh to Eliashib, the twelfth to Jakim, 13the thirteenth to Huppah, the fourteenth to Jeshebeab, 14the fifteenth to Bilgah, the sixteenth to Immer, 15the seventeenth to Hezir, the eighteenth to Happizzez, 16the nineteenth to Pethahiah, the twentieth to Jehezkel, 17the twenty-first to Jachin, the twenty-second to Gamul, 18the twenty-third to Delaiah, the twenty-fourth to Maaziah. 19These had as their appointed duty in their service to enter the house of the LORD according to the procedure established for them by their ancestor Aaron, as the LORD God of Israel had commanded him.

20 And of the rest of the sons of Levi: of the sons of Amram, Shubael; of the sons of Shubael, Jehdeiah. 21Of Rehabiah: of the sons of Rehabiah, Isshiah the chief. 22Of the Izharites, Shelomoth; of the sons of Shelomoth, Jahath. 23The sons of Hebron:[h] Jeriah the chief,[i] Amariah the second, Jahaziel the third, Jekameam the fourth. 24The sons of Uzziel,

*h* See 23.19: Heb lacks *Hebron* *i* See 23.19: Heb lacks *the chief*

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**24.1–31: David organizes the priests.** David organized not only the Levites (ch 23), but also the priests. Thus the highest religious authority was lodged in David. **1–6:** See Num 3.2–4. **3:** *Zadok . . . and Ahimelech,* this should read "Zadok . . . and Abiathar"; compare vv. 6, 31; 18.16; see also 2 Sam 8.16–18 n. **4:** The priests, at least in theory, were organized into twenty-four groups or divisions.

**24.7–19:** A detailed exposition of the twenty-four divisions as they were or should have been in the Chronicler's own day. On the division of Abijah, see Lk 1.5.

**24.20–31:** A supplementary list of Levites, having some names in common with 23.7–23.

Micah; of the sons of Micah, Shamir.
25 The brother of Micah, Isshiah; of the sons of Isshiah, Zechariah. 26 The sons of Merari: Mahli and Mushi. The sons of Jaaziah: Beno.[j] 27 The sons of Merari: of Jaaziah, Beno,[j] Shoham, Zaccur, and Ibri. 28 Of Mahli: Eleazar, who had no sons. 29 Of Kish, the sons of Kish: Jerahmeel. 30 The sons of Mushi: Mahli, Eder, and Jerimoth. These were the sons of the Levites according to their ancestral houses. 31 These also cast lots corresponding to their kindred, the descendants of Aaron, in the presence of King David, Zadok, Ahimelech, and the heads of ancestral houses of the priests and of the Levites, the chief as well as the youngest brother.

25 David and the officers of the army also set apart for the service the sons of Asaph, and of Heman, and of Jeduthun, who should prophesy with lyres, harps, and cymbals. The list of those who did the work and of their duties was: 2 Of the sons of Asaph: Zaccur, Joseph, Nethaniah, and Asarelah, sons of Asaph, under the direction of Asaph, who prophesied under the direction of the king. 3 Of Jeduthun, the sons of Jeduthun: Gedaliah, Zeri, Jeshaiah, Shimei,[k] Hashabiah, and Mattithiah, six, under the direction of their father Jeduthun, who prophesied with the lyre in thanksgiving and praise to the LORD. 4 Of Heman, the sons of Heman: Bukkiah, Mattaniah, Uzziel, Shebuel, and Jerimoth, Hananiah, Hanani, Eliathah, Giddalti, and Romamti-ezer, Joshbekashah, Mallothi, Hothir, Mahazioth. 5 All these were the sons of Heman the king's seer, according to the promise of God to exalt him; for God had given Heman fourteen sons and three daughters. 6 They were all under the direction of their father for the music in the house of the LORD with cymbals, harps, and lyres for the service of the house of God. Asaph, Jeduthun, and Heman were under the order of the king. 7 They and their kindred, who were trained in singing to the LORD, all of whom were skillful, numbered two hundred eighty-eight. 8 And they cast lots for their duties, small and great, teacher and pupil alike.

9 The first lot fell for Asaph to Joseph; the second to Gedaliah, to him and his brothers and his sons, twelve; 10 the third to Zaccur, his sons and his brothers, twelve; 11 the fourth to Izri, his sons and his brothers, twelve; 12 the fifth to Nethaniah, his sons and his brothers, twelve; 13 the sixth to Bukkiah, his sons and his brothers, twelve; 14 the seventh to Jesarelah,[l] his sons and his brothers, twelve; 15 the eighth to Jeshaiah, his sons and his brothers, twelve; 16 the ninth to Mattaniah, his sons and his brothers, twelve; 17 the tenth to Shimei, his sons and his brothers, twelve; 18 the eleventh to Azarel, his sons and his brothers, twelve; 19 the twelfth to Hashabiah, his sons and his brothers, twelve; 20 to the thirteenth, Shubael, his sons and his brothers, twelve; 21 to the fourteenth, Mattithiah, his sons and his brothers, twelve; 22 to the fifteenth, to Jeremoth, his sons and his brothers, twelve; 23 to the sixteenth, to Hananiah, his sons and his brothers,

*j* Or *his son*: Meaning of Heb uncertain
*k* One Ms: Gk: MT lacks *Shimei*
*l* Or *Asarelah*; see 25.2

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**25.1–31: David organizes the musicians. 1–8**: Corresponding to the twenty-four divisions of priests (ch 24) are projected twenty-four divisions of musicians, arranged under three great names, *Asaph, Heman,* and *Jeduthun* (compare 6.31–48; 15.16–24; 16.4–7, 37–42; 23.5). Here Jeduthun takes the place of Ethan in some of the other lists. According to 23.5 the total number of musicians was thought to be four thousand but here (v. 7) only *two hundred and eighty-eight* (24 × 12) are considered. For a more primitive use of music by a *seer* (v. 5) to aid him to *prophesy* (v. 1), see 2 Kings 3.15; compare 1 Sam 10.5. **4**: *Hananiah . . . Mahazioth,* these nine names seem artificially formed, for when put together and translated they suggest a series of phrases often used in prayer: "Be gracious, O LORD, be gracious to me; thou art my God, whom I magnify and exalt, my help when in trouble; I have fulfilled (or spoken), he has increased visions."

**25.9–31**: This is a highly artificial alternating arrangement of the names of vv. 2–4.

*Divisions of the gatekeepers*

twelve; [24]to the seventeenth, to Joshbekashah, his sons and his brothers, twelve; [25]to the eighteenth, to Hanani, his sons and his brothers, twelve; [26]to the nineteenth, to Mallothi, his sons and his brothers, twelve; [27]to the twentieth, to Eliathah, his sons and his brothers, twelve; [28]to the twenty-first, to Hothir, his sons and his brothers, twelve; [29]to the twenty-second, to Giddalti, his sons and his brothers, twelve; [30]to the twenty-third, to Mahazioth, his sons and his brothers, twelve; [31]to the twenty-fourth, to Romamti-ezer, his sons and his brothers, twelve.

26 As for the divisions of the gatekeepers: of the Korahites, Meshelemiah son of Kore, of the sons of Asaph. [2]Meshelemiah had sons: Zechariah the firstborn, Jediael the second, Zebadiah the third, Jathniel the fourth, [3]Elam the fifth, Jehohanan the sixth, Eliehoenai the seventh. [4]Obed-edom had sons: Shemaiah the firstborn, Jehozabad the second, Joah the third, Sachar the fourth, Nethanel the fifth, [5]Ammiel the sixth, Issachar the seventh, Peullethai the eighth; for God blessed him. [6]Also to his son Shemaiah sons were born who exercised authority in their ancestral houses, for they were men of great ability. [7]The sons of Shemaiah: Othni, Rephael, Obed, and Elzabad, whose brothers were able men, Elihu and Semachiah. [8]All these, sons of Obed-edom with their sons and brothers, were able men qualified for the service; sixty-two of Obed-edom. [9]Meshelemiah had sons and brothers, able men, eighteen. [10]Hosah, of the sons of Merari, had sons: Shimri the chief (for though he was not the firstborn, his father made him chief), [11]Hilkiah the second, Tebaliah the third, Zechariah the fourth: all the sons and brothers of Hosah totaled thirteen.

12 These divisions of the gatekeepers, corresponding to their leaders, had duties, just as their kindred did, ministering in the house of the LORD; [13]and they cast lots by ancestral houses, small and great alike, for their gates. [14]The lot for the east fell to Shelemiah. They cast lots also for his son Zechariah, a prudent counselor, and his lot came out for the north. [15]Obed-edom's came out for the south, and to his sons was allotted the storehouse. [16]For Shuppim and Hosah it came out for the west, at the gate of Shallecheth on the ascending road. Guard corresponded to guard. [17]On the east there were six Levites each day,[m] on the north four each day, on the south four each day, as well as two and two at the storehouse; [18]and for the colonnade[n] on the west there were four at the road and two at the colonnade.[n] [19]These were the divisions of the gatekeepers among the Korahites and the sons of Merari.

20 And of the Levites, Ahijah had charge of the treasuries of the house of God and the treasuries of the dedicated gifts. [21]The sons of Ladan, the sons of the Gershonites belonging to Ladan, the heads of families belonging to Ladan the Gershonite: Jehieli.[o]

22 The sons of Jehieli, Zetham and his brother Joel, were in charge of the treasuries of the house of the LORD. [23]Of the Amramites, the Izharites, the Hebronites, and the Uzzielites: [24]Shebuel son of Gershom, son of Moses, was chief officer in charge of the treasuries. [25]His brothers: from Eliezer were his son Re-

*m* Gk: Heb lacks *each day* *n* Heb *parbar*: meaning uncertain *o* The Hebrew text of verse 21 is confused

**26.1–32: Organization of the gatekeepers, treasurers, and other functionaries.** The Chronicler concludes the presentation of the organization of the Levites in the service of the temple (compare 9.17–27; 15.23–24; 16.37–42; Ps 84.10). **1–11**: It is obvious from such names as *Korahites* (6.37), *Asaph* (6.39), and *Obed-edom* (15.21) that the gatekeepers were considered to be closely related to the musicians. All told there were four thousand (23.5), though only ninety-three (62 + 18 + 13, vv. 8, 9, 11) are considered here.

**26.12–19**: The Chronicler describes the temple at the time of writing, mentioning the four sides on the *east, north, south,* and *west;* also the gates (v. 13), even giving the name of one (v. 16). **26**: Compare Num 31.48–54.

habiah, his son Jeshaiah, his son Joram, his son Zichri, and his son Shelomoth. 26This Shelomoth and his brothers were in charge of all the treasuries of the dedicated gifts that King David, and the heads of families, and the officers of the thousands and the hundreds, and the commanders of the army, had dedicated. 27From booty won in battles they dedicated gifts for the maintenance of the house of the LORD. 28Also all that Samuel the seer, and Saul son of Kish, and Abner son of Ner, and Joab son of Zeruiah had dedicated—all dedicated gifts were in the care of Shelomoth[p] and his brothers.

29 Of the Izharites, Chenaniah and his sons were appointed to outside duties for Israel, as officers and judges. 30Of the Hebronites, Hashabiah and his brothers, one thousand seven hundred men of ability, had the oversight of Israel west of the Jordan for all the work of the LORD and for the service of the king. 31Of the Hebronites, Jerijah was chief of the Hebronites. (In the fortieth year of David's reign search was made, of whatever genealogy or family, and men of great ability among them were found at Jazer in Gilead.) 32King David appointed him and his brothers, two thousand seven hundred men of ability, heads of families, to have the oversight of the Reubenites, the Gadites, and the half-tribe of the Manassites for everything pertaining to God and for the affairs of the king.

27 This is the list of the people of Israel, the heads of families, the commanders of the thousands and the hundreds, and their officers who served the king in all matters concerning the divisions that came and went, month after month throughout the year, each division numbering twenty-four thousand:

2 Jashobeam son of Zabdiel was in charge of the first division in the first month; in his division were twenty-four thousand. 3He was a descendant of Perez, and was chief of all the commanders of the army for the first month. 4Dodai the Ahohite was in charge of the division of the second month; Mikloth was the chief officer of his division. In his division were twenty-four thousand. 5The third commander, for the third month, was Benaiah son of the priest Jehoiada, as chief; in his division were twenty-four thousand. 6This is the Benaiah who was a mighty man of the Thirty and in command of the Thirty; his son Ammizabad was in charge of his division.[q] 7Asahel brother of Joab was fourth, for the fourth month, and his son Zebadiah after him; in his division were twenty-four thousand. 8The fifth commander, for the fifth month, was Shamhuth, the Izrahite; in his division were twenty-four thousand. 9Sixth, for the sixth month, was Ira son of Ikkesh the Tekoite; in his division were twenty-four thousand. 10Seventh, for the seventh month, was Helez the Pelonite, of the Ephraimites; in his division were twenty-four thousand. 11Eighth, for the eighth month, was Sibbecai the Hushathite, of the Zerahites; in his division were twenty-four thousand. 12Ninth, for the ninth month, was Abiezer of Anathoth, a Benjaminite; in his division were twenty-four thousand. 13Tenth, for the tenth month, was Maharai of Netophah, of the Zerahites; in

*p* Gk Compare 26.28: Heb *Shelomith*
*q* Gk Vg: Heb *Ammizabad was his division*

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**26.29–32**: Those appointed to outside duties were to look after the interests of the religious establishment in all the rest of the idealized nation.

**27.1–34**: **David organizes military and civil affairs.** The arbitrary numerical schemes already applied to the temple officials (23.4–5; 24.4; 25.9–31) are extended to the military and other groups. **1**: The total number of the king's bodyguard, 288,000 (12 × 24,000) is historically unrealistic, but entirely in line with the Chronicler's idealization of David's kingdom (see 22.14 n. and contrast the modest figure in 2 Sam 15.18). **2–4**: Compare 11.11–12; 2 Sam 23.8–9. **5**: Compare 11.22; 2 Sam 23.20–23.

**27.7**: *Asahel* was killed early in his career (2 Sam 2.18–23); hence *his son Zebadiah* had to take his place.

his division were twenty-four thousand. 14 Eleventh, for the eleventh month, was Benaiah of Pirathon, of the Ephraimites; in his division were twenty-four thousand. 15 Twelfth, for the twelfth month, was Heldai the Netophathite, of Othniel; in his division were twenty-four thousand.

16 Over the tribes of Israel, for the Reubenites, Eliezer son of Zichri was chief officer; for the Simeonites, Shephatiah son of Maacah; 17 for Levi, Hashabiah son of Kemuel; for Aaron, Zadok; 18 for Judah, Elihu, one of David's brothers; for Issachar, Omri son of Michael; 19 for Zebulun, Ishmaiah son of Obadiah; for Naphtali, Jerimoth son of Azriel; 20 for the Ephraimites, Hoshea son of Azaziah; for the half-tribe of Manasseh, Joel son of Pedaiah; 21 for the half-tribe of Manasseh in Gilead, Iddo son of Zechariah; for Benjamin, Jaasiel son of Abner; 22 for Dan, Azarel son of Jeroham. These were the leaders of the tribes of Israel. 23 David did not count those below twenty years of age, for the LORD had promised to make Israel as numerous as the stars of heaven. 24 Joab son of Zeruiah began to count them, but did not finish; yet wrath came upon Israel for this, and the number was not entered into the account of the Annals of King David.

25 Over the king's treasuries was Azmaveth son of Adiel. Over the treasuries in the country, in the cities, in the villages and in the towers, was Jonathan son of Uzziah. 26 Over those who did the work of the field, tilling the soil, was Ezri son of Chelub. 27 Over the vineyards was Shimei the Ramathite. Over the produce of the vineyards for the wine cellars was Zabdi the Shiphmite. 28 Over the olive and sycamore trees in the Shephelah was Baal-hanan the Gederite. Over the stores of oil was Joash. 29 Over the herds that pastured in Sharon was Shitrai the Sharonite. Over the herds in the valleys was Shaphat son of Adlai. 30 Over the camels was Obil the Ishmaelite. Over the donkeys was Jehdeiah the Meronothite. Over the flocks was Jaziz the Hagrite. 31 All these were stewards of King David's property.

32 Jonathan, David's uncle, was a counselor, being a man of understanding and a scribe; Jehiel son of Hachmoni attended the king's sons. 33 Ahithophel was the king's counselor, and Hushai the Archite was the king's friend. 34 After Ahithophel came Jehoiada son of Benaiah, and Abiathar. Joab was commander of the king's army.

28 David assembled at Jerusalem all the officials of Israel, the officials of the tribes, the officers of the divisions that served the king, the commanders of the thousands, the commanders of the hundreds, the stewards of all the property and cattle of the king and his sons, together with the palace officials, the mighty warriors, and all the warriors. 2 Then King David rose to his feet and said: "Hear me, my brothers and my people. I had planned to build a house of rest for the ark of the covenant of the LORD, for the footstool of our God; and I made preparations for building. 3 But God said to me, 'You shall not build a

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**27.16–22**: The traditional tribal divisions, obsolete in the Chronicler's day, are regarded as important in this ideal past.

**27.23–24**: Two references to the census of ch 21. **23**: Compare 22.17.

**27.32–34**: No *Jonathan* who was David's uncle is known elsewhere; perhaps the name here is reminiscent of Saul's son (1 Sam 18.1–4). This *Jehiel* is otherwise unknown. *Ahithophel* (2 Sam 15.31; 16.23; 17.23) and *Hushai the Archite* (2 Sam 15.32–37; 16.16–19; 17.5–16) were well-known historical characters. *Jehoiada son of Benaiah*, the reverse of the names in v. 5; probably correct, as boys were often named after their grandfathers. *Abiathar* is doubtless the priest (compare 1 Sam 22.20–23). *Joab*, see 2 Sam 2.12–17 n.

**28.1–21**: **David transmits the final plans for the temple to Solomon. 1–8**: Compare 22.2–19 and 23.1, where the new David's resolve to name Solomon his successor and to turn the temple plans over to him is already set forth (see 22.2–19 n.). Here a great assembly is called to carry out the resolve. **2**: Compare Ps 132. **3**: See 22.6–12 n. **6–8**: Compare 17.11–14; 22.9–10; Deut 4.5.

house for my name, for you are a warrior and have shed blood.' 4Yet the LORD God of Israel chose me from all my ancestral house to be king over Israel forever; for he chose Judah as leader, and in the house of Judah my father's house, and among my father's sons he took delight in making me king over all Israel. 5And of all my sons, for the LORD has given me many, he has chosen my son Solomon to sit upon the throne of the kingdom of the LORD over Israel. 6He said to me, 'It is your son Solomon who shall build my house and my courts, for I have chosen him to be a son to me, and I will be a father to him. 7I will establish his kingdom forever if he continues resolute in keeping my commandments and my ordinances, as he is today.' 8Now therefore in the sight of all Israel, the assembly of the LORD, and in the hearing of our God, observe and search out all the commandments of the LORD your God; that you may possess this good land, and leave it for an inheritance to your children after you forever.

9 "And you, my son Solomon, know the God of your father, and serve him with single mind and willing heart; for the LORD searches every mind, and understands every plan and thought. If you seek him, he will be found by you; but if you forsake him, he will abandon you forever. 10Take heed now, for the LORD has chosen you to build a house as the sanctuary; be strong, and act."

11 Then David gave his son Solomon the plan of the vestibule of the temple, and of its houses, its treasuries, its upper rooms, and its inner chambers, and of the room for the mercy seat;[r] 12and the plan of all that he had in mind: for the courts of the house of the LORD, all the surrounding chambers, the treasuries of the house of God, and the treasuries for dedicated gifts; 13for the divisions of the priests and of the Levites, and all the work of the service in the house of the LORD; for all the vessels for the service in the house of the LORD, 14the weight of gold for all golden vessels for each service, the weight of silver vessels for each service, 15the weight of the golden lampstands and their lamps, the weight of gold for each lampstand and its lamps, the weight of silver for a lampstand and its lamps, according to the use of each in the service, 16the weight of gold for each table for the rows of bread, the silver for the silver tables, 17and pure gold for the forks, the basins, and the cups; for the golden bowls and the weight of each; for the silver bowls and the weight of each; 18for the altar of incense made of refined gold, and its weight; also his plan for the golden chariot of the cherubim that spread their wings and covered the ark of the covenant of the LORD.

19 "All this, in writing at the LORD's direction, he made clear to me—the plan of all the works."

20 David said further to his son Solomon, "Be strong and of good courage, and act. Do not be afraid or dismayed; for the LORD God, my God, is with you. He will not fail you or forsake you, until all the work for the service of the house of the LORD is finished. 21Here are the divisions of the priests and the Levites for all the service of the house of God; and with you in all the work will be every volunteer who has skill for any kind of service; also the officers and all the people will be wholly at your command."

29 King David said to the whole assembly, "My son Solomon, whom alone God has chosen, is young

r Or *the cover*

**28.9–10**: Compare Deut 4.25–31.

**28.11–19**: The Chronicler makes the point that David is much greater than Solomon, and that all these things were done in accordance with the divine will. *The golden chariot* may have been suggested by Ps 18.10 and Ezek 1.4–21. **19**: David is said to have received plans for the temple in much the same way as Moses traditionally received plans for the tabernacle (Ex ch 25). It is not clear whether *the writing* is thought of as done by David or the LORD (compare Ex 24.4, 12; 31.18; 34.1, 27–28; Deut 5.22).

**29.1–30**: **The investiture of Solomon**

and inexperienced, and the work is great; for the temple[s] will not be for mortals but for the LORD God. 2So I have provided for the house of my God, so far as I was able, the gold for the things of gold, the silver for the things of silver, and the bronze for the things of bronze, the iron for the things of iron, and wood for the things of wood, besides great quantities of onyx and stones for setting, antimony, colored stones, all sorts of precious stones, and marble in abundance. 3Moreover, in addition to all that I have provided for the holy house, I have a treasure of my own of gold and silver, and because of my devotion to the house of my God I give it to the house of my God: 4three thousand talents of gold, of the gold of Ophir, and seven thousand talents of refined silver, for overlaying the walls of the house, 5and for all the work to be done by artisans, gold for the things of gold and silver for the things of silver. Who then will offer willingly, consecrating themselves today to the LORD?"

6 Then the leaders of ancestral houses made their freewill offerings, as did also the leaders of the tribes, the commanders of the thousands and of the hundreds, and the officers over the king's work. 7They gave for the service of the house of God five thousand talents and ten thousand darics of gold, ten thousand talents of silver, eighteen thousand talents of bronze, and one hundred thousand talents of iron. 8Whoever had precious stones gave them to the treasury of the house of the LORD, into the care of Jehiel the Gershonite. 9Then the people rejoiced because these had given willingly, for with single mind they had offered freely to the LORD; King David also rejoiced greatly.

10 Then David blessed the LORD in the presence of all the assembly; David said: "Blessed are you, O LORD, the God of our ancestor Israel, forever and ever. 11Yours, O LORD, are the greatness, the power, the glory, the victory, and the majesty; for all that is in the heavens and on the earth is yours; yours is the kingdom, O LORD, and you are exalted as head above all. 12Riches and honor come from you, and you rule over all. In your hand are power and might; and it is in your hand to make great and to give strength to all. 13And now, our God, we give thanks to you and praise your glorious name.

14 "But who am I, and what is my people, that we should be able to make this freewill offering? For all things come from you, and of your own have we given you. 15For we are aliens and transients before you, as were all our ancestors; our days on the earth are like a shadow, and there is no hope. 16O LORD our God, all this abundance that we have provided for building you a house for your holy name comes from your hand and is all your own. 17I know, my God, that you search the heart, and take pleasure in uprightness; in the uprightness of my heart I have freely offered all these things, and now I have seen your people, who are present here, offering freely and joyously to you. 18O LORD, the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Israel, our ancestors, keep forever such purposes and thoughts in the hearts of your people, and direct their hearts toward you. 19Grant to my son Solomon that with single mind he may keep your commandments, your decrees, and your statutes, performing all

s Heb *fortress*

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**and the death of David. 2–5**: Compare 22.14–16. **6–9**: The call for a freewill offering again follows the tradition of Moses (see 28.19 n.; compare Ex 25.1–9; 35.4–29). *Darics* were originally coins of Persian origin; compare Ezra 8.27.

**29.10–19**: David's prayer of farewell, a beautiful composition of the Chronicler, which parallels, segment by segment, the psalmic anthology in 16.8–36. **22**: The phrase *the second time* is used in reference to 23.1. The scene here is a kind of ratification of what David had already done because God had determined it (v. 1). Note the part played by *Zadok* in 1 Kings ch 1.

**29.23**: The equivalent of this verse in the

of them, and that he may build the temple[t] for which I have made provision."

20 Then David said to the whole assembly, "Bless the LORD your God." And all the assembly blessed the LORD, the God of their ancestors, and bowed their heads and prostrated themselves before the LORD and the king. 21 On the next day they offered sacrifices and burnt offerings to the LORD, a thousand bulls, a thousand rams, and a thousand lambs, with their libations, and sacrifices in abundance for all Israel; 22 and they ate and drank before the LORD on that day with great joy.

They made David's son Solomon king a second time; they anointed him as the LORD's prince, and Zadok as priest. 23 Then Solomon sat on the throne of the LORD, succeeding his father David as king; he prospered, and all Israel obeyed him. 24 All the leaders and the mighty warriors, and also all the sons of King David, pledged their allegiance to King Solomon. 25 The LORD highly exalted Solomon in the sight of all Israel, and bestowed upon him such royal majesty as had not been on any king before him in Israel.

26 Thus David son of Jesse reigned over all Israel. 27 The period that he reigned over Israel was forty years; he reigned seven years in Hebron, and thirty-three years in Jerusalem. 28 He died in a good old age, full of days, riches, and honor; and his son Solomon succeeded him. 29 Now the acts of King David, from first to last, are written in the records of the seer Samuel, and in the records of the prophet Nathan, and in the records of the seer Gad, 30 with accounts of all his rule and his might and of the events that befell him and Israel and all the kingdoms of the earth.

*t* Heb *fortress*

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earlier account (1 Kings 2.12) comes after the death of David. **27**: See 1 Kings 2.11. **28**: Compare the adulatory quality of this verse with 1 Kings 2.10.

**29.29–30**: On the nature of these sources, see the Introduction. The phrase *the kingdoms of the earth* refers to the surrounding peoples with which David came into contact, such as the Philistines, the Arameans, the Ammonites, the Moabites, and the Edomites.

# *2 Chronicles*

The character of 2 Chronicles is discussed in the Introduction to 1 Chronicles, since 1 and 2 Chronicles were originally a single book. Chapters 1–9 of 2 Chronicles present the reign of Solomon, who is an idealized figure nearly as great as David. Chapters 10–36 cover the subsequent years of the divided kingdoms down to exile of the southern kingdom. As little notice as possible is given to the northern kingdom, which was irredeemably false to God, and hence not God's true Israel. Instead, the Chronicler pictures Judah as a kingdom with holy space (the temple) and holy servants (the priests, prophets, and temple singers) at its center, and kings who are supposed to rule under stringent obligations to God. National calamity comes precisely because the Judean kings after Solomon, despite the righteous actions of a few of them, finally and utterly fail in their religious duty. The book ends with Judah in exile, but not without hope. Cyrus of Persia, under God's prompting, decrees that a new temple is to be built in Jerusalem and that God's people may go up, exodus-like, to their homeland (2 Chr 36.22–23). These words of hope and anticipation are the conclusion of the Hebrew Scriptures.

1 Solomon son of David established himself in his kingdom; the LORD his God was with him and made him exceedingly great.

2 Solomon summoned all Israel, the commanders of the thousands and of the hundreds, the judges, and all the leaders of all Israel, the heads of families. 3Then Solomon, and the whole assembly with him, went to the high place that was at Gibeon; for God's tent of meeting, which Moses the servant of the LORD had made in the wilderness, was there. 4(But David had brought the ark of God up from Kiriath-jearim to the place that David had prepared for it; for he had pitched a tent for it in Jerusalem.) 5Moreover the bronze altar that Bezalel son of Uri, son of Hur, had made, was there in front of the tabernacle of the LORD. And Solomon and the assembly inquired at it. 6Solomon went up there to the bronze altar before the LORD, which was at the tent of meeting, and offered a thousand burnt offerings on it.

7 That night God appeared to Solomon, and said to him, "Ask what I should give you." 8Solomon said to God, "You have shown great and steadfast love to my father David, and have made me succeed him as king. 9O LORD God, let your promise to my father David now be fulfilled, for you have made me king over a people as numerous as the dust of the earth. 10Give me now wisdom and knowledge to go out and come in before this people, for who can rule this great people of yours?" 11God answered Solomon, "Because this was in your heart, and you have not asked for possessions, wealth, honor, or the life of those who hate you, and have not even asked for long life, but have asked for wisdom and knowledge for yourself that you may rule my people over whom I have made you king, 12wisdom and knowledge are granted to you. I will also give you riches, possessions, and honor, such as none of the kings had who were before you, and none after you shall have the like." 13So Solomon came from[a] the high place at Gibeon, from the tent of meeting, to Jerusalem. And he reigned over Israel.

14 Solomon gathered together chariots and horses; he had fourteen hundred chariots and twelve thousand horses, which he stationed in the chariot cities and with the king in Jerusalem. 15The king made silver and gold as common in Jerusalem as stone, and he made cedar as plentiful as the sycamore of the Shephelah. 16Solomon's horses were imported from Egypt and Kue; the king's traders received them from Kue at the prevailing price. 17They imported from Egypt, and then exported, a chariot for six hundred shekels of silver, and a horse for one hundred fifty; so through them these were exported to all the kings of the Hittites and the kings of Aram.

2[b] Solomon decided to build a temple for the name of the LORD, and a royal palace for himself. 2[c]Solomon conscripted seventy thousand laborers and eighty thousand stonecutters in the hill country, with three thousand six hundred to oversee them.

3 Solomon sent word to King Huram

*a* Gk Vg: Heb *to* *b* Ch 1.18 in Heb
*c* Ch 2.1 in Heb

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**1.1–17: Solomon receives wisdom. 2–6:** The author passes over the machinations and murders of 1 Kings chs 1–2, also the marriage alliance with Egypt of 1 Kings 3.1–2, and begins the account of Solomon with a religious act, the visit to the high place at Gibeon. The ark of God is introduced into the story (contrast 1 Kings 3.3–15) to legitimate a visit to a high place (compare 1 Kings 3.3; 2 Kings 23.5; 1 Chr 21.29). *Bezazel* and *the bronze altar,* compare Ex 27.1–2; 31.1; 1 Chr 2.20. **1.7–13:** This episode, very creditable to Solomon, is here abridged from 1 Kings 3.3–15; the statement that it was a dream has been removed. Also removed is the story of the judgment between the two prostitutes (1 Kings 3.16–28). **9:** *People as numerous as the dust of the earth,* compare 1 Kings 4.20. **14–17:** This section is taken from 1 Kings 10.26–29.

**2.1–18: Solomon prepares to build the temple. 1–10:** This is a rewritten version of 1 Kings 5.1–6, 11; note *Huram* instead of Hi-

of Tyre: "Once you dealt with my father David and sent him cedar to build himself a house to live in. 4I am now about to build a house for the name of the LORD my God and dedicate it to him for offering fragrant incense before him, and for the regular offering of the rows of bread, and for burnt offerings morning and evening, on the sabbaths and the new moons and the appointed festivals of the LORD our God, as ordained forever for Israel. 5The house that I am about to build will be great, for our God is greater than other gods. 6But who is able to build him a house, since heaven, even highest heaven, cannot contain him? Who am I to build a house for him, except as a place to make offerings before him? 7So now send me an artisan skilled to work in gold, silver, bronze, and iron, and in purple, crimson, and blue fabrics, trained also in engraving, to join the skilled workers who are with me in Judah and Jerusalem, whom my father David provided. 8Send me also cedar, cypress, and algum timber from Lebanon, for I know that your servants are skilled in cutting Lebanon timber. My servants will work with your servants 9to prepare timber for me in abundance, for the house I am about to build will be great and wonderful. 10I will provide for your servants, those who cut the timber, twenty thousand cors of crushed wheat, twenty thousand cors of barley, twenty thousand baths[d] of wine, and twenty thousand baths of oil."

11 Then King Huram of Tyre answered in a letter that he sent to Solomon, "Because the LORD loves his people he has made you king over them." 12Huram also said, "Blessed be the LORD God of Israel, who made heaven and earth, who has given King David a wise son, endowed with discretion and understanding, who will build a temple for the LORD, and a royal palace for himself.

13 "I have dispatched Huram-abi, a skilled artisan, endowed with understanding, 14the son of one of the Danite women, his father a Tyrian. He is trained to work in gold, silver, bronze, iron, stone, and wood, and in purple, blue, and crimson fabrics and fine linen, and to do all sorts of engraving and execute any design that may be assigned him, with your artisans, the artisans of my lord, your father David. 15Now, as for the wheat, barley, oil, and wine, of which my lord has spoken, let him send them to his servants. 16We will cut whatever timber you need from Lebanon, and bring it to you as rafts by sea to Joppa; you will take it up to Jerusalem."

17 Then Solomon took a census of all the aliens who were residing in the land of Israel, after the census that his father David had taken; and there were found to be one hundred fifty-three thousand six hundred. 18Seventy thousand of them he assigned as laborers, eighty thousand as stonecutters in the hill country, and three thousand six hundred as overseers to make the people work.

3 Solomon began to build the house of the LORD in Jerusalem on Mount Moriah, where the LORD had appeared to his father David, at the place that David

*d* A Hebrew measure of volume

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ram as the name of *the king of Tyre*. **11–12**: Expanded from 1 Kings 5.7, where the *letter* does not appear.

**2.13–16**: *Huram-abi*, see 1 Kings 7.13–14 n. Here his mother is from *Dan*, in 1 Kings 7.14 from the tribe of Naphtali (compare Ex 31.1–5). *Joppa* is not mentioned in 1 Kings 5.9. **17–18**: In the idealized Israel of the Chronicler (see Introduction to 1 Chronicles) *aliens* must of course perform the forced labor, though the historical arrangement was quite otherwise (compare 1 Kings 5.13–18, especially v. 13; also 1 Kings 9.22; 12.4).

**3.1–17**: **Details of the building.** This is a condensed and rewritten version of 1 Kings ch 6 and 1 Kings 7.15–22 (see notes there). **1**: The name *Moriah* appears only here and in Gen 22.2, where another location is probably to be understood. *Ornan the Jebusite*, in 2 Sam 24.16 "Araunah" (compare 1 Chr 21.15). **3**: *Cubits*, see 1 Kings 6.2–6 n. The *cubits of the old standard* were larger, being about twenty inches in length. **4**: In 1 Kings 6.2 the height of the main part of the building is given as "thirty cubits"; here the measurement *hundred and twenty cubits*, given as the height of *the*

had designated, on the threshing floor of Ornan the Jebusite. 2He began to build on the second day of the second month of the fourth year of his reign. 3These are Solomon's measurements[e] for building the house of God: the length, in cubits of the old standard, was sixty cubits, and the width twenty cubits. 4The vestibule in front of the nave of the house was twenty cubits long, across the width of the house;[f] and its height was one hundred twenty cubits. He overlaid it on the inside with pure gold. 5The nave he lined with cypress, covered it with fine gold, and made palms and chains on it. 6He adorned the house with settings of precious stones. The gold was gold from Parvaim. 7So he lined the house with gold—its beams, its thresholds, its walls, and its doors; and he carved cherubim on the walls.

8 He made the most holy place; its length, corresponding to the width of the house, was twenty cubits, and its width was twenty cubits; he overlaid it with six hundred talents of fine gold. 9The weight of the nails was fifty shekels of gold. He overlaid the upper chambers with gold.

10 In the most holy place he made two carved cherubim and overlaid[g] them with gold. 11The wings of the cherubim together extended twenty cubits: one wing of the one, five cubits long, touched the wall of the house, and its other wing, five cubits long, touched the wing of the other cherub; 12and of this cherub, one wing, five cubits long, touched the wall of the house, and the other wing, also five cubits long, was joined to the wing of the first cherub. 13The wings of these cherubim extended twenty cubits; the cherubim[h] stood on their feet, facing the nave. 14And Solomon[i] made the curtain of blue and purple and crimson fabrics and fine linen, and worked cherubim into it.

15 In front of the house he made two pillars thirty-five cubits high, with a capital of five cubits on the top of each. 16He made encircling[j] chains and put them on the tops of the pillars; and he made one hundred pomegranates, and put them on the chains. 17He set up the pillars in front of the temple, one on the right, the other on the left; the one on the right he called Jachin, and the one on the left, Boaz.

4 He made an altar of bronze, twenty cubits long, twenty cubits wide, and ten cubits high. 2Then he made the molten sea; it was round, ten cubits from rim to rim, and five cubits high. A line of thirty cubits would encircle it completely. 3Under it were panels all around, each of ten cubits, surrounding the sea; there were two rows of panels, cast when it was cast. 4It stood on twelve oxen, three facing north, three facing west, three facing south, and three facing east; the sea was set on them. The hindquarters of each were toward the inside. 5Its thickness was a handbreadth; its rim was made like the rim of a cup, like the flower

*e* Syr: Heb *foundations* *f* Compare 1 Kings 6.3: Meaning of Heb uncertain
*g* Heb *they overlaid* *h* Heb *they* *i* Heb *he*
*j* Cn: Heb *in the inner sanctuary*

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*vestibule,* is either a textual error or a typical exaggeration of the Chronicler to emphasize the impressiveness of the ideal temple. **6:** The location of *Parvaim* is unknown; it may be Arabia (see Ophir, 1 Kings 9.28 n.).

**3.8–9:** Compare 1 Kings 6.19–22, where much *gold* is already in evidence; but *six hundred talents* (about 45,000 lbs.) stands here only and fairly staggers the imagination, so impressive is the ideal temple. **10–14:** Abridged from 1 Kings 6.23–28. *Cherubim,* see 1 Sam 4.4 n. The description of *the curtain* before *the most holy place* (the inner room at the rear of the temple, sometimes called the "holy of holies") is drawn from a similar feature of the tabernacle (Ex 26.31). The historical temple of Solomon had doors at this point (1 Kings 6.31). At the time of the Chronicler there may have been a curtain, as there was in New Testament times (Mt 27.51; Mk 15.38; Lk 23.45). **15–17:** *Two pillars . . . called Jachin and . . . Boaz,* see 1 Kings 7.15–22 n.

**4.1–22: The temple equipment.** This chapter is taken mainly from 1 Kings 7.23–51, omitting vv. 27–37. **1:** The *altar of bronze* is not mentioned in 1 Kings ch 7, but it appears in 1 Kings 8.64 and 2 Kings 16.14.

**4.5–6:** On the idea *that the sea was for the*

of a lily; it held three thousand baths.[k] 6He also made ten basins in which to wash, and set five on the right side, and five on the left. In these they were to rinse what was used for the burnt offering. The sea was for the priests to wash in.

7 He made ten golden lampstands as prescribed, and set them in the temple, five on the south side and five on the north. 8He also made ten tables and placed them in the temple, five on the right side and five on the left. And he made one hundred basins of gold. 9He made the court of the priests, and the great court, and doors for the court; he overlaid their doors with bronze. 10He set the sea at the southeast corner of the house.

11 And Huram made the pots, the shovels, and the basins. Thus Huram finished the work that he did for King Solomon on the house of God: 12the two pillars, the bowls, and the two capitals on the top of the pillars; and the two latticeworks to cover the two bowls of the capitals that were on the top of the pillars; 13the four hundred pomegranates for the two latticeworks, two rows of pomegranates for each latticework, to cover the two bowls of the capitals that were on the pillars. 14He made the stands, the basins on the stands, 15the one sea, and the twelve oxen underneath it. 16The pots, the shovels, the forks, and all the equipment for these Huram-abi made of burnished bronze for King Solomon for the house of the LORD. 17In the plain of the Jordan the king cast them, in the clay ground between Succoth and Zeredah. 18Solomon made all these things in great quantities, so that the weight of the bronze was not determined.

19 So Solomon made all the things that were in the house of God: the golden altar, the tables for the bread of the Presence, 20the lampstands and their lamps of pure gold to burn before the inner sanctuary, as prescribed; 21the flowers, the lamps, and the tongs, of purest gold; 22the snuffers, basins, ladles, and firepans, of pure gold. As for the entrance to the temple: the inner doors to the most holy place and the doors of the nave of the temple were of gold.

5 Thus all the work that Solomon did for the house of the LORD was finished. Solomon brought in the things that his father David had dedicated, and stored the silver, the gold, and all the vessels in the treasuries of the house of God.

2 Then Solomon assembled the elders of Israel and all the heads of the tribes, the leaders of the ancestral houses of the people of Israel, in Jerusalem, to bring up the ark of the covenant of the LORD out of the city of David, which is Zion. 3And all the Israelites assembled before the king at the festival that is in the seventh month. 4And all the elders of Israel came, and the Levites carried the ark. 5So they brought up the ark, the tent of meeting, and all the holy vessels that were in the tent; the priests and the Levites brought them up. 6King Solomon and all the congregation of Israel, who had assembled before him, were before the ark, sacrificing so many sheep and oxen that they could not be numbered or counted. 7Then the priests brought the ark of the covenant of the LORD to its place, in the inner sanctuary of the house, in the most holy place, underneath the wings of the cherubim. 8For the cherubim spread out their wings over the place of the ark, so that the cherubim made a covering above the ark and its poles. 9The poles were so long that the ends of the poles were seen from the holy place in front of the inner sanctuary; but

*k* A Hebrew measure of volume

*priests to wash in,* see 1 Kings 7.23–26 n. (which has the more correct figure of "two thousand" rather than *three thousand baths*).

**5.1–14: Bringing the ark of the covenant into the temple.** This is drawn mainly from 1 Kings 8.1–11, with the insertion of a section on the priests and the Levitical singers (vv. 11b–13a), in which the Chronicler was particularly interested (see Introduction to 1 Chronicles); compare 1 Chr chs 25–26. **4:** *The Levites* are substituted for "the priests" of the source (1 Kings 8.3).

they could not be seen from outside; they are there to this day. 10There was nothing in the ark except the two tablets that Moses put there at Horeb, where the LORD made a covenant[l] with the people of Israel after they came out of Egypt.

11 Now when the priests came out of the holy place (for all the priests who were present had sanctified themselves, without regard to their divisions), 12all the levitical singers, Asaph, Heman, and Jeduthun, their sons and kindred, arrayed in fine linen, with cymbals, harps, and lyres, stood east of the altar with one hundred twenty priests who were trumpeters. 13It was the duty of the trumpeters and singers to make themselves heard in unison in praise and thanksgiving to the LORD, and when the song was raised, with trumpets and cymbals and other musical instruments, in praise to the LORD,

"For he is good,
for his steadfast love endures
forever,"

the house, the house of the LORD, was filled with a cloud, 14so that the priests could not stand to minister because of the cloud; for the glory of the LORD filled the house of God.

6 Then Solomon said, "The LORD has said that he would reside in thick darkness. 2I have built you an exalted house, a place for you to reside in forever."

3 Then the king turned around and blessed all the assembly of Israel, while all the assembly of Israel stood. 4And he said, "Blessed be the LORD, the God of Israel, who with his hand has fulfilled what he promised with his mouth to my father David, saying, 5'Since the day that I brought my people out of the land of Egypt, I have not chosen a city from any of the tribes of Israel in which to build a house, so that my name might be there, and I chose no one as ruler over my people Israel; 6but I have chosen Jerusalem in order that my name may be there, and I have chosen David to be over my people Israel.' 7My father David had it in mind to build a house for the name of the LORD, the God of Israel. 8But the LORD said to my father David, 'You did well to consider building a house for my name; 9nevertheless you shall not build the house, but your son who shall be born to you shall build the house for my name.' 10Now the LORD has fulfilled his promise that he made; for I have succeeded my father David, and sit on the throne of Israel, as the LORD promised, and have built the house for the name of the LORD, the God of Israel. 11There I have set the ark, in which is the covenant of the LORD that he made with the people of Israel."

12 Then Solomon[m] stood before the altar of the LORD in the presence of the whole assembly of Israel, and spread out his hands. 13Solomon had made a bronze platform five cubits long, five cubits wide, and three cubits high, and had set it in the court; and he stood on it. Then he knelt on his knees in the presence of the whole assembly of Israel, and spread out his hands toward heaven. 14He said, "O LORD, God of Israel, there is no God like you, in heaven or on earth, keeping covenant in steadfast love with your servants who walk before you with all their heart— 15you who have kept for your servant, my father David, what you promised to him. Indeed, you promised with your mouth and this day have ful-

*l* Heb lacks *a covenant* *m* Heb *he*

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**6.1–42: Solomon's address to the people and his prayer of dedication.** This whole chapter, with the exception of vv. 13 and 41–42, is taken with little change from 1 Kings 8.12–52 (see the notes there). Verses 4–11 are the address to the people and vv. 12–42 the prayer of dedication. The *bronze platform* of v. 13, added by the Chronicler, provides a proper place for *Solomon* to kneel; the regular place of prayer before the altar was sacred to the priests, according to usage at the time of the Chronicler. Verses 41–42, adapted from Ps 132.8–10, provide a fitting conclusion, showing the idealized Solomon to be a very devout and holy man, yet reminding the reader that *David* is, after all, the more important figure; *your anointed one* is King Solomon himself.

filled with your hand. 16 Therefore, O LORD, God of Israel, keep for your servant, my father David, that which you promised him, saying, 'There shall never fail you a successor before me to sit on the throne of Israel, if only your children keep to their way, to walk in my law as you have walked before me.' 17 Therefore, O LORD, God of Israel, let your word be confirmed, which you promised to your servant David.

18 "But will God indeed reside with mortals on earth? Even heaven and the highest heaven cannot contain you, how much less this house that I have built! 19 Regard your servant's prayer and his plea, O LORD my God, heeding the cry and the prayer that your servant prays to you. 20 May your eyes be open day and night toward this house, the place where you promised to set your name, and may you heed the prayer that your servant prays toward this place. 21 And hear the plea of your servant and of your people Israel, when they pray toward this place; may you hear from heaven your dwelling place; hear and forgive.

22 "If someone sins against another and is required to take an oath and comes and swears before your altar in this house, 23 may you hear from heaven, and act, and judge your servants, repaying the guilty by bringing their conduct on their own head, and vindicating those who are in the right by rewarding them in accordance with their righteousness.

24 "When your people Israel, having sinned against you, are defeated before an enemy but turn again to you, confess your name, pray and plead with you in this house, 25 may you hear from heaven, and forgive the sin of your people Israel, and bring them again to the land that you gave to them and to their ancestors.

26 "When heaven is shut up and there is no rain because they have sinned against you, and then they pray toward this place, confess your name, and turn from their sin, because you punish them, 27 may you hear in heaven, forgive the sin of your servants, your people Israel, when you teach them the good way in which they should walk; and send down rain upon your land, which you have given to your people as an inheritance.

28 "If there is famine in the land, if there is plague, blight, mildew, locust, or caterpillar; if their enemies besiege them in any of the settlements of the lands; whatever suffering, whatever sickness there is; 29 whatever prayer, whatever plea from any individual or from all your people Israel, all knowing their own suffering and their own sorrows so that they stretch out their hands toward this house; 30 may you hear from heaven, your dwelling place, forgive, and render to all whose heart you know, according to all their ways, for only you know the human heart. 31 Thus may they fear you and walk in your ways all the days that they live in the land that you gave to our ancestors.

32 "Likewise when foreigners, who are not of your people Israel, come from a distant land because of your great name, and your mighty hand, and your outstretched arm, when they come and pray toward this house, 33 may you hear from heaven your dwelling place, and do whatever the foreigners ask of you, in order that all the peoples of the earth may know your name and fear you, as do your people Israel, and that they may know that your name has been invoked on this house that I have built.

34 "If your people go out to battle against their enemies, by whatever way you shall send them, and they pray to you toward this city that you have chosen and the house that I have built for your name, 35 then hear from heaven their prayer and their plea, and maintain their cause.

36 "If they sin against you—for there is no one who does not sin—and you are angry with them and give them to an enemy, so that they are carried away captive to a land far or near; 37 then if they come to their senses in the land to which they have been taken captive, and repent, and plead with you in the land of their captivity, saying, 'We have sinned, and have done wrong; we have acted wickedly'; 38 if they repent with all their heart and soul in the land of their captivity, to

which they were taken captive, and pray toward their land, which you gave to their ancestors, the city that you have chosen, and the house that I have built for your name, 39then hear from heaven your dwelling place their prayer and their pleas, maintain their cause and forgive your people who have sinned against you. 40Now, O my God, let your eyes be open and your ears attentive to prayer from this place.

41 "Now rise up, O LORD God, and
go to your resting place,
you and the ark of your might.
Let your priests, O LORD God, be
clothed with salvation,
and let your faithful rejoice in
your goodness.
42 O LORD God, do not reject your
anointed one.
Remember your steadfast love
for your servant David."

7 When Solomon had ended his prayer, fire came down from heaven and consumed the burnt offering and the sacrifices; and the glory of the LORD filled the temple. 2The priests could not enter the house of the LORD, because the glory of the LORD filled the LORD's house. 3When all the people of Israel saw the fire come down and the glory of the LORD on the temple, they bowed down on the pavement with their faces to the ground, and worshiped and gave thanks to the LORD, saying,

"For he is good,
for his steadfast love endures
forever."

4 Then the king and all the people offered sacrifice before the LORD. 5King Solomon offered as a sacrifice twenty-two thousand oxen and one hundred twenty thousand sheep. So the king and all the people dedicated the house of God. 6The priests stood at their posts; the Levites also, with the instruments for music to the LORD that King David had made for giving thanks to the LORD—for his steadfast love endures forever—whenever David offered praises by their ministry. Opposite them the priests sounded trumpets; and all Israel stood.

7 Solomon consecrated the middle of the court that was in front of the house of the LORD; for there he offered the burnt offerings and the fat of the offerings of well-being because the bronze altar Solomon had made could not hold the burnt offering and the grain offering and the fat parts.

8 At that time Solomon held the festival for seven days, and all Israel with him, a very great congregation, from Lebo-hamath to the Wadi of Egypt. 9On the eighth day they held a solemn assembly; for they had observed the dedication of the altar seven days and the festival seven days. 10On the twenty-third day of the seventh month he sent the people away to their homes, joyful and in good spirits because of the goodness that the LORD had shown to David and to Solomon and to his people Israel.

11 Thus Solomon finished the house of the LORD and the king's house; all that Solomon had planned to do in the house of the LORD and in his own house he successfully accomplished.

12 Then the LORD appeared to Solomon in the night and said to him: "I have

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**7.1–22: The consecration of the sanctuary and the divine admonition. 1**: *Fire . . . from heaven* (not in 1 Kings 8.54), see 1 Chr 21.26 n. and compare Lev 9.24. **2**: *The glory of the LORD,* compare 5.14 and see 1 Kings 8.11. **3**: The Chronicler added the obeisance of the people. For the liturgical words, see 5.13; Ps 136.1. **4–5**: Compare 1 Kings 8.62–63, the source. **6**: Compare 5.11–13, also 1 Chr ch 25; the Levitical musicians did not exist in Solomon's day.

**7.7–8**: Compare 1 Kings 8.64–65, the source. **9–10**: The source, 1 Kings 8.66, has been drastically changed. The people are not sent away *on the eighth day,* but are kept on for another occasion, *a solemn assembly,* until *the twenty-third day* (compare Lev 23.36; Num 29.35–38; Neh 8.18).

**7.11–22**: This section, the divine admonition, is taken from 1 Kings 9.1–9, with little change except that vv. 13–15 were inserted to give a slightly more hopeful tone (compare 6.26–27, 37–39).

heard your prayer, and have chosen this place for myself as a house of sacrifice. 13When I shut up the heavens so that there is no rain, or command the locust to devour the land, or send pestilence among my people, 14if my people who are called by my name humble themselves, pray, seek my face, and turn from their wicked ways, then I will hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin and heal their land. 15Now my eyes will be open and my ears attentive to the prayer that is made in this place. 16For now I have chosen and consecrated this house so that my name may be there forever; my eyes and my heart will be there for all time. 17As for you, if you walk before me, as your father David walked, doing according to all that I have commanded you and keeping my statutes and my ordinances, 18then I will establish your royal throne, as I made covenant with your father David saying, 'You shall never lack a successor to rule over Israel.'

19 "But if you[n] turn aside and forsake my statutes and my commandments that I have set before you, and go and serve other gods and worship them, 20then I will pluck you[o] up from the land that I have given you;[o] and this house, which I have consecrated for my name, I will cast out of my sight, and will make it a proverb and a byword among all peoples. 21And regarding this house, now exalted, everyone passing by will be astonished, and say, 'Why has the LORD done such a thing to this land and to this house?' 22Then they will say, 'Because they abandoned the LORD the God of their ancestors who brought them out of the land of Egypt, and they adopted other gods, and worshiped them and served them; therefore he has brought all this calamity upon them.' "

8 At the end of twenty years, during which Solomon had built the house of the LORD and his own house, 2Solomon rebuilt the cities that Huram had given to him, and settled the people of Israel in them.

3 Solomon went to Hamath-zobah, and captured it. 4He built Tadmor in the wilderness and all the storage towns that he built in Hamath. 5He also built Upper Beth-horon and Lower Beth-horon, fortified cities, with walls, gates, and bars, 6and Baalath, as well as all Solomon's storage towns, and all the towns for his chariots, the towns for his cavalry, and whatever Solomon desired to build, in Jerusalem, in Lebanon, and in all the land of his dominion. 7All the people who were left of the Hittites, the Amorites, the Perizzites, the Hivites, and the Jebusites, who were not of Israel, 8from their descendants who were still left in the land, whom the people of Israel had not destroyed—these Solomon conscripted for forced labor, as is still the case today. 9But of the people of Israel Solomon made no slaves for his work; they were soldiers, and his officers, the commanders of his chariotry and cavalry. 10These were the chief officers of King Solomon, two hundred fifty of them, who exercised authority over the people.

11 Solomon brought Pharaoh's daughter from the city of David to the house that he had built for her, for he said, "My wife shall not live in the house of King David of Israel, for the places to

*n* The word *you* in this verse is plural
*o* Heb *them*

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**8.1–18: Various activities of Solomon.** This chapter is based on 1 Kings 9.10–28. **2:** In 1 Kings 9.10–14 *Solomon* ceded *the cities* to Hiram (here called *Huram*) to raise needed money; but here the cities go to Solomon. **3:** This campaign is otherwise unknown; it is perhaps an adaptation of 1 Chr 18.3. **4:** *Tadmor* is Palmyra, the great city of the Syrian desert, which could hardly be intended here; 1 Kings 9.18 reads "Tamar," a small place in southern Judah (Ezek 47.19; 48.28).

**8.7–10:** These verses follow 1 Kings 9.20–23 closely, except that in v. 10 a smaller number is given; usually the numbers of the Chronicler are larger (see 1 Chr 27.1 n.). **11:** Compare 1 Kings 3.1; 7.8; 9.24. The reason given for moving the residence of the woman is an addition by the Chronicler (compare Ezek 44.9).

**8.12–15:** These verses are an expansion of

which the ark of the LORD has come are holy."

12 Then Solomon offered up burnt offerings to the LORD on the altar of the LORD that he had built in front of the vestibule, 13as the duty of each day required, offering according to the commandment of Moses for the sabbaths, the new moons, and the three annual festivals—the festival of unleavened bread, the festival of weeks, and the festival of booths. 14According to the ordinance of his father David, he appointed the divisions of the priests for their service, and the Levites for their offices of praise and ministry alongside the priests as the duty of each day required, and the gatekeepers in their divisions for the several gates; for so David the man of God had commanded. 15They did not turn away from what the king had commanded the priests and Levites regarding anything at all, or regarding the treasuries.

16 Thus all the work of Solomon was accomplished from[p] the day the foundation of the house of the LORD was laid until the house of the LORD was finished completely.

17 Then Solomon went to Ezion-geber and Eloth on the shore of the sea, in the land of Edom. 18Huram sent him, in the care of his servants, ships and servants familiar with the sea. They went to Ophir, together with the servants of Solomon, and imported from there four hundred fifty talents of gold and brought it to King Solomon.

9 When the queen of Sheba heard of the fame of Solomon, she came to Jerusalem to test him with hard questions, having a very great retinue and camels bearing spices and very much gold and precious stones. When she came to Solomon, she discussed with him all that was on her mind. 2Solomon answered all her questions; there was nothing hidden from Solomon that he could not explain to her. 3When the queen of Sheba had observed the wisdom of Solomon, the house that he had built, 4the food of his table, the seating of his officials, and the attendance of his servants, and their clothing, his valets, and their clothing, and his burnt offerings[q] that he offered at the house of the LORD, there was no more spirit left in her.

5 So she said to the king, "The report was true that I heard in my own land of your accomplishments and of your wisdom, 6but I did not believe the[r] reports until I came and my own eyes saw it. Not even half of the greatness of your wisdom had been told to me; you far surpass the report that I had heard. 7Happy are your people! Happy are these your servants, who continually attend you and hear your wisdom! 8Blessed be the LORD your God, who has delighted in you and set you on his throne as king for the LORD your God. Because your God loved Israel and would establish them forever, he has made you king over them, that you may execute justice and righteousness." 9Then she gave the king one hundred twenty talents of gold, a very great quantity of spices, and precious stones: there were no spices such as those that the queen of Sheba gave to King Solomon.

10 Moreover the servants of Huram and the servants of Solomon who brought gold from Ophir brought algum wood and precious stones. 11From the algum wood, the king made steps[s] for the house of the LORD and for the king's house, lyres also and harps for the singers; there never was seen the like of them before in the land of Judah.

12 Meanwhile King Solomon granted the queen of Sheba every desire that

*p* Gk Syr Vg: Heb *to* *q* Gk Syr Vg 1 Kings 10.5: Heb *ascent* *r* Heb *their*
*s* Gk Vg: Meaning of Heb uncertain

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1 Kings 9.25 to bring these acts of Solomon in line with the ideas of the Chronicler. In v. 12 it is made clear that Solomon remained outside the sanctuary *in front of the vestibule;* only the priests could go inside (see 1 Kings 9.25 n.). **16:** Added by the Chronicler. **17–18:** Taken with a few changes from 1 Kings 9.26–28 (see notes there).

**9.1–31: The visit of the queen of Sheba; Solomon's wealth and grandeur; his death. 1–12:** Taken with little change from 1 Kings 10.1–13 (see notes there).

she expressed, well beyond what she had brought to the king. Then she returned to her own land, with her servants.

13 The weight of gold that came to Solomon in one year was six hundred sixty-six talents of gold, 14 besides that which the traders and merchants brought; and all the kings of Arabia and the governors of the land brought gold and silver to Solomon. 15 King Solomon made two hundred large shields of beaten gold; six hundred shekels of beaten gold went into each large shield. 16 He made three hundred shields of beaten gold; three hundred shekels of gold went into each shield; and the king put them in the House of the Forest of Lebanon. 17 The king also made a great ivory throne, and overlaid it with pure gold. 18 The throne had six steps and a footstool of gold, which were attached to the throne, and on each side of the seat were arm rests and two lions standing beside the arm rests, 19 while twelve lions were standing, one on each end of a step on the six steps. The like of it was never made in any kingdom. 20 All King Solomon's drinking vessels were of gold, and all the vessels of the House of the Forest of Lebanon were of pure gold; silver was not considered as anything in the days of Solomon. 21 For the king's ships went to Tarshish with the servants of Huram; once every three years the ships of Tarshish used to come bringing gold, silver, ivory, apes, and peacocks.[t]

22 Thus King Solomon excelled all the kings of the earth in riches and in wisdom. 23 All the kings of the earth sought the presence of Solomon to hear his wisdom, which God had put into his mind. 24 Every one of them brought a present, objects of silver and gold, garments, weaponry, spices, horses, and mules, so much year by year. 25 Solomon had four thousand stalls for horses and chariots, and twelve thousand horses, which he stationed in the chariot cities and with the king in Jerusalem. 26 He ruled over all the kings from the Euphrates to the land of the Philistines, and to the border of Egypt. 27 The king made silver as common in Jerusalem as stone, and cedar as plentiful as the sycamore of the Shephelah. 28 Horses were imported for Solomon from Egypt and from all lands.

29 Now the rest of the acts of Solomon, from first to last, are they not written in the history of the prophet Nathan, and in the prophecy of Ahijah the Shilonite, and in the visions of the seer Iddo concerning Jeroboam son of Nebat? 30 Solomon reigned in Jerusalem over all Israel forty years. 31 Solomon slept with his ancestors and was buried in the city of his father David; and his son Rehoboam succeeded him.

10 Rehoboam went to Shechem, for all Israel had come to Shechem to make him king. 2 When Jeroboam son of Nebat heard of it (for he was in Egypt, where he had fled from King Solomon), then Jeroboam returned from Egypt. 3 They sent and called him; and Jeroboam and all Israel came and said to Rehoboam, 4 "Your father made our yoke heavy. Now therefore lighten the hard service of your father and his heavy yoke that he placed on us, and we will serve you." 5 He said to them, "Come to me again in three days." So the people went away.

6 Then King Rehoboam took counsel with the older men who had attended his father Solomon while he was still alive, saying, "How do you advise me to answer this people?" 7 They answered him, "If you will be kind to this people and please them, and speak good words to them, then they will be your servants

*t* Or *baboons*

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**9.13–28**: From 1 Kings 10.14–28a with a few changes. With vv. 25–28, compare 1.14–17; 1 Kings 4.21, 26.

**9.29–31**: Taken with changes from 1 Kings 11.41–43, omitting all unfavorable aspects of Solomon's reign presented in 1 Kings 11.1–40 (see notes there). On the books mentioned in v. 29, see Introduction to 1 Chronicles.

**10.1–19: The division of the kingdom.** This chapter reproduces almost exactly 1 Kings 12.1–19, in spite of the fact that the

forever." 8But he rejected the advice that the older men gave him, and consulted the young men who had grown up with him and now attended him. 9He said to them, "What do you advise that we answer this people who have said to me, 'Lighten the yoke that your father put on us'?" 10The young men who had grown up with him said to him, "Thus should you speak to the people who said to you, 'Your father made our yoke heavy, but you must lighten it for us'; tell them, 'My little finger is thicker than my father's loins. 11Now, whereas my father laid on you a heavy yoke, I will add to your yoke. My father disciplined you with whips, but I will discipline you with scorpions.' "

12 So Jeroboam and all the people came to Rehoboam the third day, as the king had said, "Come to me again the third day." 13The king answered them harshly. King Rehoboam rejected the advice of the older men; 14he spoke to them in accordance with the advice of the young men, "My father made your yoke heavy, but I will add to it; my father disciplined you with whips, but I will discipline you with scorpions." 15So the king did not listen to the people, because it was a turn of affairs brought about by God so that the LORD might fulfill his word, which he had spoken by Ahijah the Shilonite to Jeroboam son of Nebat.

16 When all Israel saw that the king would not listen to them, the people answered the king,

"What share do we have in David?
We have no inheritance in the
son of Jesse.
Each of you to your tents,
O Israel!
Look now to your own house,
O David."

So all Israel departed to their tents. 17But Rehoboam reigned over the people of Israel who were living in the cities of Judah. 18When King Rehoboam sent Hadoram, who was taskmaster over the forced labor, the people of Israel stoned him to death. King Rehoboam hurriedly mounted his chariot to flee to Jerusalem. 19So Israel has been in rebellion against the house of David to this day.

11 When Rehoboam came to Jerusalem, he assembled one hundred eighty thousand chosen troops of the house of Judah and Benjamin to fight against Israel, to restore the kingdom to Rehoboam. 2But the word of the LORD came to Shemaiah the man of God: 3Say to King Rehoboam of Judah, son of Solomon, and to all Israel in Judah and Benjamin, 4"Thus says the LORD: You shall not go up or fight against your kindred. Let everyone return home, for this thing is from me." So they heeded the word of the LORD and turned back from the expedition against Jeroboam.

5 Rehoboam resided in Jerusalem, and he built cities for defense in Judah. 6He built up Bethlehem, Etam, Tekoa, 7Beth-zur, Soco, Adullam, 8Gath, Mareshah, Ziph, 9Adoraim, Lachish, Azekah, 10Zorah, Aijalon, and Hebron, fortified cities that are in Judah and in Benjamin. 11He made the fortresses strong, and put commanders in them, and stores of food, oil, and wine. 12He also put large shields and spears in all the cities, and made them very strong. So he held Judah and Benjamin.

13 The priests and the Levites who were in all Israel presented themselves to

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account reflects little credit on *Rehoboam;* 1 Kings 12.20, which reveals the weakness of Judah, is omitted.

**11.1–23: The beginning of the reign of Rehoboam. 1–4**: These verses follow closely 1 Kings 12.21–24, in spite of a tendency in favor of the northern kingdom. The phrase *all Israel in Judah and Benjamin,* lacking in 1 Kings 12.23, is intended to make clear that the southern kingdom was the true Israel. In the older sources, "all Israel" means the northern tribes only (compare 2 Sam 2.9; 1 Kings 12.18, 20). After the fall of the northern kingdom, this name was gradually assumed by Judah. **5–12**: These verses, which have no parallel in 1 Kings, are added for the purpose of showing the strength of Judah; they are probably based on a good source. **10, 12**: *Benjamin,* see 1 Kings 12.21–24 n.

**11.13–17**: These verses, also without paral-

him from all their territories. 14 The Levites had left their common lands and their holdings and had come to Judah and Jerusalem, because Jeroboam and his sons had prevented them from serving as priests of the LORD, 15 and had appointed his own priests for the high places, and for the goat-demons, and for the calves that he had made. 16 Those who had set their hearts to seek the LORD God of Israel came after them from all the tribes of Israel to Jerusalem to sacrifice to the LORD, the God of their ancestors. 17 They strengthened the kingdom of Judah, and for three years they made Rehoboam son of Solomon secure, for they walked for three years in the way of David and Solomon.

18 Rehoboam took as his wife Mahalath daughter of Jerimoth son of David, and of Abihail daughter of Eliab son of Jesse. 19 She bore him sons: Jeush, Shemariah, and Zaham. 20 After her he took Maacah daughter of Absalom, who bore him Abijah, Attai, Ziza, and Shelomith. 21 Rehoboam loved Maacah daughter of Absalom more than all his other wives and concubines (he took eighteen wives and sixty concubines, and became the father of twenty-eight sons and sixty daughters). 22 Rehoboam appointed Abijah son of Maacah as chief prince among his brothers, for he intended to make him king. 23 He dealt wisely, and distributed some of his sons through all the districts of Judah and Benjamin, in all the fortified cities; he gave them abundant provisions, and found many wives for them.

12 When the rule of Rehoboam was established and he grew strong, he abandoned the law of the LORD, he and all Israel with him. 2 In the fifth year of King Rehoboam, because they had been unfaithful to the LORD, King Shishak of Egypt came up against Jerusalem 3 with twelve hundred chariots and sixty thousand cavalry. A countless army came with him from Egypt—Libyans, Sukkiim, and Ethiopians.[u] 4 He took the fortified cities of Judah and came as far as Jerusalem. 5 Then the prophet Shemaiah came to Rehoboam and to the officers of Judah, who had gathered at Jerusalem because of Shishak, and said to them, "Thus says the LORD: You abandoned me, so I have abandoned you to the hand of Shishak." 6 Then the officers of Israel and the king humbled themselves and said, "The LORD is in the right." 7 When the LORD saw that they humbled themselves, the word of the LORD came to Shemaiah, saying: "They have humbled themselves; I will not destroy them, but I will grant them some deliverance, and my wrath shall not be poured out on Jerusalem by the hand of Shishak. 8 Nevertheless they shall be his servants, so that they may know the difference between serving me and serving the kingdoms of other lands."

9 So King Shishak of Egypt came up against Jerusalem; he took away the treasures of the house of the LORD and the treasures of the king's house; he took everything. He also took away the shields of gold that Solomon had made; 10 but King Rehoboam made in place of them shields of bronze, and committed them to the hands of the officers of the guard, who kept the door of the king's house. 11 Whenever the king went into the house

*u* Or *Nubians*; Heb *Cushites*

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lel in 1 Kings, are designed to show that the northern kingdom (*all Israel*, v. 13; see vv. 1–4 n.) was faithless to the LORD; hence *the priests and Levites* flocked to the south. Other good people also came, and things went well *for three years*.

**11.18–23**: In 1 Kings ch 11, Solomon is reproached for having a multitude of *wives and concubines*. The Chronicler omits this section and, in an account from an otherwise unknown source, transfers some of the onus to *Rehoboam*.

**12.1–16**: **Rehoboam's sin; his punishment and death.** The source is 1 Kings 14.21–31, with expansions to show that Shishak's invasion was the direct result of the apostasy of *Rehoboam* and *all Israel* (meaning Judah; compare v. 6 and see 11.1–4 n.). Complete destruction was averted by repentance (vv. 7, 12). See 1 Kings 14.21–31 n.

of the LORD, the guard would come along bearing them, and would then bring them back to the guardroom. 12Because he humbled himself the wrath of the LORD turned from him, so as not to destroy them completely; moreover, conditions were good in Judah.

13 So King Rehoboam established himself in Jerusalem and reigned. Rehoboam was forty-one years old when he began to reign; he reigned seventeen years in Jerusalem, the city that the LORD had chosen out of all the tribes of Israel to put his name there. His mother's name was Naamah the Ammonite. 14He did evil, for he did not set his heart to seek the LORD.

15 Now the acts of Rehoboam, from first to last, are they not written in the records of the prophet Shemaiah and of the seer Iddo, recorded by genealogy? There were continual wars between Rehoboam and Jeroboam. 16Rehoboam slept with his ancestors and was buried in the city of David; and his son Abijah succeeded him.

13 In the eighteenth year of King Jeroboam, Abijah began to reign over Judah. 2He reigned for three years in Jerusalem. His mother's name was Micaiah daughter of Uriel of Gibeah.

Now there was war between Abijah and Jeroboam. 3Abijah engaged in battle, having an army of valiant warriors, four hundred thousand picked men; and Jeroboam drew up his line of battle against him with eight hundred thousand picked mighty warriors. 4Then Abijah stood on the slope of Mount Zemaraim that is in the hill country of Ephraim, and said, "Listen to me, Jeroboam and all Israel! 5Do you not know that the LORD God of Israel gave the kingship over Israel forever to David and his sons by a covenant of salt? 6Yet Jeroboam son of Nebat, a servant of Solomon son of David, rose up and rebelled against his lord; 7and certain worthless scoundrels gathered around him and defied Rehoboam son of Solomon, when Rehoboam was young and irresolute and could not withstand them.

8 "And now you think that you can withstand the kingdom of the LORD in the hand of the sons of David, because you are a great multitude and have with you the golden calves that Jeroboam made as gods for you. 9Have you not driven out the priests of the LORD, the descendants of Aaron, and the Levites, and made priests for yourselves like the peoples of other lands? Whoever comes to be consecrated with a young bull or seven rams becomes a priest of what are no gods. 10But as for us, the LORD is our God, and we have not abandoned him. We have priests ministering to the LORD who are descendants of Aaron, and Levites for their service. 11They offer to the LORD every morning and every evening burnt offerings and fragrant incense, set out the rows of bread on the table of pure gold, and care for the golden lampstand so that its lamps may burn every evening; for we keep the charge of the LORD our God, but you have abandoned him. 12See, God is with us at our head, and his priests have their battle trumpets to sound the call to battle against you. O Israelites, do not fight against the LORD, the God of your ancestors; for you cannot succeed."

13 Jeroboam had sent an ambush around to come on them from behind; thus his troops[v] were in front of Judah, and the ambush was behind them. 14When Judah turned, the battle was in front of them and behind them. They cried out to the LORD, and the priests blew the trumpets. 15Then the people of

*v* Heb *they*

**13.1–22: The reign of Abijah; his great victory over the north.** Verses 1–2 parallel 1 Kings 15.1–2, with slight differences in names; v. 22 may be compared with 1 Kings 15.7a. Except for these parallels, the chapter is apparently a free composition of the Chronicler, developed from 1 Kings 15.7b. The theme is not really a war between north and south, or Israel and Judah (note the exaggerated numbers); rather it is the perpetual conflict between apostasy and true worship in all times.

Judah raised the battle shout. And when the people of Judah shouted, God defeated Jeroboam and all Israel before Abijah and Judah. 16 The Israelites fled before Judah, and God gave them into their hands. 17 Abijah and his army defeated them with great slaughter; five hundred thousand picked men of Israel fell slain. 18 Thus the Israelites were subdued at that time, and the people of Judah prevailed, because they relied on the LORD, the God of their ancestors. 19 Abijah pursued Jeroboam, and took cities from him: Bethel with its villages and Jeshanah with its villages and Ephron[w] with its villages. 20 Jeroboam did not recover his power in the days of Abijah; the LORD struck him down, and he died. 21 But Abijah grew strong. He took fourteen wives, and became the father of twenty-two sons and sixteen daughters. 22 The rest of the acts of Abijah, his behavior and his deeds, are written in the story of the prophet Iddo.

14[x] So Abijah slept with his ancestors, and they buried him in the city of David. His son Asa succeeded him. In his days the land had rest for ten years. 2[y] Asa did what was good and right in the sight of the LORD his God. 3 He took away the foreign altars and the high places, broke down the pillars, hewed down the sacred poles,[z] 4 and commanded Judah to seek the LORD, the God of their ancestors, and to keep the law and the commandment. 5 He also removed from all the cities of Judah the high places and the incense altars. And the kingdom had rest under him. 6 He built fortified cities in Judah while the land had rest. He had no war in those years, for the LORD gave him peace. 7 He said to Judah, "Let us build these cities, and surround them with walls and towers, gates and bars; the land is still ours because we have sought the LORD our God; we have sought him, and he has given us peace on every side." So they built and prospered. 8 Asa had an army of three hundred thousand from Judah, armed with large shields and spears, and two hundred eighty thousand troops from Benjamin who carried shields and drew bows; all these were mighty warriors.

9 Zerah the Ethiopian[a] came out against them with an army of a million men and three hundred chariots, and came as far as Mareshah. 10 Asa went out to meet him, and they drew up their lines of battle in the valley of Zephathah at Mareshah. 11 Asa cried to the LORD his God, "O LORD, there is no difference for you between helping the mighty and the weak. Help us, O LORD our God, for we rely on you, and in your name we have come against this multitude. O LORD, you are our God; let no mortal prevail against you." 12 So the LORD defeated the Ethiopians[b] before Asa and before Judah, and the Ethiopians[b] fled. 13 Asa and the army with him pursued them as far as Gerar, and the Ethiopians[b] fell until no one remained alive; for they were broken before the LORD and his army. The people of Judah[c] carried away a great quantity of booty. 14 They defeated all the cities around Gerar, for the fear of the LORD was on them. They plundered all the cities; for there was much plunder in them. 15 They also attacked the tents of

*w* Another reading is *Ephrain* *x* Ch 13.23 in Heb *y* Ch 14.1 in Heb *z* Heb *Asherim* *a* Or *Nubian*; Heb *Cushite* *b* Or *Nubians*; Heb *Cushites* *c* Heb *They*

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**14.1–15: The beginning of the reign of Asa, and his great victory over the Ethiopians.** In 1 Kings only a relatively brief passage (1 Kings 15.9–24) deals with Asa; here the story is expanded to three chapters (chs 14; 15; 16). Asa is presented by the Chronicler as a man like David, great on the field of battle and diligent in religious reform. In the end, his religious loyalty flagged, and he had to be suitably punished. **1–5:** Roughly parallel to 1 Kings 15.8–14. **6–8:** Added by the Chronicler from another source (compare 1 Kings 15.23; Jer 41.9).

**14.9–15:** This is another legendary battle, like that of ch 13, to show the piety of Asa and the power of the LORD. There is no hint of it elsewhere in the Bible. *The Ethiopian* may mean "the Egyptian" (see 2 Kings 19.9 n.) or "the Arabian," but no king named *Zerah* is otherwise known.

those who had livestock,[d] and carried away sheep and goats in abundance, and camels. Then they returned to Jerusalem.

15 The spirit of God came upon Azariah son of Oded. 2He went out to meet Asa and said to him, "Hear me, Asa, and all Judah and Benjamin: The LORD is with you, while you are with him. If you seek him, he will be found by you, but if you abandon him, he will abandon you. 3For a long time Israel was without the true God, and without a teaching priest, and without law; 4but when in their distress they turned to the LORD, the God of Israel, and sought him, he was found by them. 5In those times it was not safe for anyone to go or come, for great disturbances afflicted all the inhabitants of the lands. 6They were broken in pieces, nation against nation and city against city, for God troubled them with every sort of distress. 7But you, take courage! Do not let your hands be weak, for your work shall be rewarded."

8 When Asa heard these words, the prophecy of Azariah son of Oded,[e] he took courage, and put away the abominable idols from all the land of Judah and Benjamin and from the towns that he had taken in the hill country of Ephraim. He repaired the altar of the LORD that was in front of the vestibule of the house of the LORD.[f] 9He gathered all Judah and Benjamin, and those from Ephraim, Manasseh, and Simeon who were residing as aliens with them, for great numbers had deserted to him from Israel when they saw that the LORD his God was with him. 10They were gathered at Jerusalem in the third month of the fifteenth year of the reign of Asa. 11They sacrificed to the LORD on that day, from the booty that they had brought, seven hundred oxen and seven thousand sheep. 12They entered into a covenant to seek the LORD, the God of their ancestors, with all their heart and with all their soul. 13Whoever would not seek the LORD, the God of Israel, should be put to death, whether young or old, man or woman. 14They took an oath to the LORD with a loud voice, and with shouting, and with trumpets, and with horns. 15All Judah rejoiced over the oath; for they had sworn with all their heart, and had sought him with their whole desire, and he was found by them, and the LORD gave them rest all around.

16 King Asa even removed his mother Maacah from being queen mother because she had made an abominable image for Asherah. Asa cut down her image, crushed it, and burned it at the Wadi Kidron. 17But the high places were not taken out of Israel. Nevertheless the heart of Asa was true all his days. 18He brought into the house of God the votive gifts of his father and his own votive gifts—silver, gold, and utensils. 19And there was no more war until the thirty-fifth year of the reign of Asa.

16 In the thirty-sixth year of the reign of Asa, King Baasha of Israel went up against Judah, and built Ramah, to prevent anyone from going out or coming into the territory of[g] King Asa of Judah. 2Then Asa took silver and gold from the treasures of the house of the LORD and the king's house, and sent them to King Ben-hadad of Aram, who resided in Damascus, saying, 3"Let there be an alliance between me and you, like that between my father and your father; I am sending to you silver and gold; go, break your alliance with King Baasha of Israel, so that he may withdraw from me." 4Ben-hadad listened to King Asa, and sent the commanders of his armies

*d* Meaning of Heb uncertain *e* Compare Syr Vg: Heb *the prophecy, the prophet Obed* *f* Heb *the vestibule of the* LORD *g* Heb lacks *the territory of*

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**15.1–19: Asa's reform. 1–5:** In this passage, which has no parallel, Asa is pictured as a great reformer, like Hezekiah and Josiah at a later date. The prophet *Azariah son of Oded* is not mentioned elsewhere.

**15.16–19:** For a parallel, see 1 Kings 15.13–15, which suggested Asa as a reformer. **16:** *Asherah,* see 1 Kings 14.15 n.

**16.1–14: The war with Baasha; Asa's apostasy, punishment, and death. 1–6:** Except for the date, these verses follow closely 1 Kings 15.17–22.

*Ethiopian invasion is repulsed*

against the cities of Israel. They conquered Ijon, Dan, Abel-maim, and all the store-cities of Naphtali. 5When Baasha heard of it, he stopped building Ramah, and let his work cease. 6Then King Asa brought all Judah, and they carried away the stones of Ramah and its timber, with which Baasha had been building, and with them he built up Geba and Mizpah.

7 At that time the seer Hanani came to King Asa of Judah, and said to him, "Because you relied on the king of Aram, and did not rely on the LORD your God, the army of the king of Aram has escaped you. 8Were not the Ethiopians[h] and the Libyans a huge army with exceedingly many chariots and cavalry? Yet because you relied on the LORD, he gave them into your hand. 9For the eyes of the LORD range throughout the entire earth, to strengthen those whose heart is true to him. You have done foolishly in this; for from now on you will have wars." 10Then Asa was angry with the seer, and put him in the stocks, in prison, for he was in a rage with him because of this. And Asa inflicted cruelties on some of the people at the same time.

11 The acts of Asa, from first to last, are written in the Book of the Kings of Judah and Israel. 12In the thirty-ninth year of his reign Asa was diseased in his feet, and his disease became severe; yet even in his disease he did not seek the LORD, but sought help from physicians. 13Then Asa slept with his ancestors, dying in the forty-first year of his reign. 14They buried him in the tomb that he had hewn out for himself in the city of David. They laid him on a bier that had been filled with various kinds of spices prepared by the perfumer's art; and they made a very great fire in his honor.

17 His son Jehoshaphat succeeded him, and strengthened himself against Israel. 2He placed forces in all the fortified cities of Judah, and set garrisons in the land of Judah, and in the cities of Ephraim that his father Asa had taken. 3The LORD was with Jehoshaphat, because he walked in the earlier ways of his father;[i] he did not seek the Baals, 4but sought the God of his father and walked in his commandments, and not according to the ways of Israel. 5Therefore the LORD established the kingdom in his hand. All Judah brought tribute to Jehoshaphat, and he had great riches and honor. 6His heart was courageous in the ways of the LORD; and furthermore he removed the high places and the sacred poles[j] from Judah.

7 In the third year of his reign he sent his officials, Ben-hail, Obadiah, Zechariah, Nethanel, and Micaiah, to teach in the cities of Judah. 8With them were the Levites, Shemaiah, Nethaniah, Zebadiah, Asahel, Shemiramoth, Jehonathan, Adonijah, Tobijah, and Tob-adonijah; and with these Levites, the priests Elishama and Jehoram. 9They taught in Judah, having the book of the law of the LORD

*h* Or *Nubians*; Heb *Cushites* *i* Another reading is *his father David* *j* Heb *Asherim*

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**16.7–10**: This rebuke by the prophet and the unrepentant attitude of Asa were introduced here by the Chronicler to explain the later illness of the king (v. 12). **11–14**: 1 Kings 15.23–24a has been expanded by emphasis on the culpability of Asa and the grandeur of his funeral, in spite of his sin.

**17.1–19**: **The initially good and prosperous reign of Jehoshaphat.** Chapters 17–20 are taken up with the reign of this king, exhibiting, as also in the case of Asa (see 14.1–14 n.), a considerable expansion of the source material (found in 1 Kings 15.24b; 22.1–35a, 41–49). Jehoshaphat is represented as a ruler who did mostly good things, for which he was rewarded, but also some bad things, for which he was punished. **1–6**: With the exception of v. 1a (1 Kings 15.24b), this comes largely from sources now lost or is the author's creation. **6**: This contradicts 20.33 and 1 Kings 22.43. *The sacred poles,* see 1 Kings 14.15 n.

**17.7–9**: No parallel. Here the Chronicler has the king send out a delegation of five princes, nine Levites, and two priests for religious education *among the people*. The preponderance of Levites is significant for the Chronicler's ideology. *The book of the law,* compare 2 Kings 22.8–13; Deut 17.18–20.

with them; they went around through all the cities of Judah and taught among the people.

10 The fear of the LORD fell on all the kingdoms of the lands around Judah, and they did not make war against Jehoshaphat. 11 Some of the Philistines brought Jehoshaphat presents, and silver for tribute; and the Arabs also brought him seven thousand seven hundred rams and seven thousand seven hundred male goats. 12 Jehoshaphat grew steadily greater. He built fortresses and storage cities in Judah. 13 He carried out great works in the cities of Judah. He had soldiers, mighty warriors, in Jerusalem. 14 This was the muster of them by ancestral houses: Of Judah, the commanders of the thousands: Adnah the commander, with three hundred thousand mighty warriors, 15 and next to him Jehohanan the commander, with two hundred eighty thousand, 16 and next to him Amasiah son of Zichri, a volunteer for the service of the LORD, with two hundred thousand mighty warriors. 17 Of Benjamin: Eliada, a mighty warrior, with two hundred thousand armed with bow and shield, 18 and next to him Jehozabad with one hundred eighty thousand armed for war. 19 These were in the service of the king, besides those whom the king had placed in the fortified cities throughout all Judah.

18 Now Jehoshaphat had great riches and honor; and he made a marriage alliance with Ahab. 2 After some years he went down to Ahab in Samaria. Ahab slaughtered an abundance of sheep and oxen for him and for the people who were with him, and induced him to go up against Ramoth-gilead. 3 King Ahab of Israel said to King Jehoshaphat of Judah, "Will you go with me to Ramoth-gilead?" He answered him, "I am with you, my people are your people. We will be with you in the war."

4 But Jehoshaphat also said to the king of Israel, "Inquire first for the word of the LORD." 5 Then the king of Israel gathered the prophets together, four hundred of them, and said to them, "Shall we go to battle against Ramoth-gilead, or shall I refrain?" They said, "Go up; for God will give it into the hand of the king." 6 But Jehoshaphat said, "Is there no other prophet of the LORD here of whom we may inquire?" 7 The king of Israel said to Jehoshaphat, "There is still one other by whom we may inquire of the LORD, Micaiah son of Imlah; but I hate him, for he never prophesies anything favorable about me, but only disaster." Jehoshaphat said, "Let the king not say such a thing." 8 Then the king of Israel summoned an officer and said, "Bring quickly Micaiah son of Imlah." 9 Now the king of Israel and King Jehoshaphat of Judah were sitting on their thrones, arrayed in their robes; and they were sitting at the threshing floor at the entrance of the gate of Samaria; and all the prophets were prophesying before them. 10 Zedekiah son of Chenaanah made for himself horns of iron, and he said, "Thus says the LORD: With these you shall gore the Arameans until they are destroyed." 11 All the prophets were prophesying the same and saying, "Go up to Ramoth-gilead and triumph; the LORD will give it into the hand of the king."

12 The messenger who had gone to summon Micaiah said to him, "Look, the words of the prophets with one accord are favorable to the king; let your word be like the word of one of them,

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**17.10–19**: Without parallel. The king was not only a man of religion, but also a man of military might. Since he is represented as having an army of 1,160,000 men, it is understandable that *the fear of the LORD fell on all the kingdoms of the lands around Judah*. The numbers are exaggerated.

**18.1–34**: **Jehoshaphat's ill-fated alliance with Ahab.** With the exception of vv. 1–2, this chapter is taken almost verbatim from 1 Kings 22.1–35a. It constitutes by far the largest body of material from the northern kingdom used by the Chronicler. It was inserted here probably because it reflects upon Ahab and prepares for the rebuke of Jehoshaphat in the next chapter (see 1 Kings ch 22 n.). **1**: Compare 2 Kings 8.18, 25–27. **2**: An expansion of 1 Kings 22.2.

*Micaiah predicts failure*

and speak favorably." 13But Micaiah said, "As the LORD lives, whatever my God says, that I will speak."

14 When he had come to the king, the king said to him, "Micaiah, shall we go to Ramoth-gilead to battle, or shall I refrain?" He answered, "Go up and triumph; they will be given into your hand." 15But the king said to him, "How many times must I make you swear to tell me nothing but the truth in the name of the LORD?" 16Then Micaiah[k] said, "I saw all Israel scattered on the mountains, like sheep without a shepherd; and the LORD said, 'These have no master; let each one go home in peace.' " 17The king of Israel said to Jehoshaphat, "Did I not tell you that he would not prophesy anything favorable about me, but only disaster?"

18 Then Micaiah[k] said, "Therefore hear the word of the LORD: I saw the LORD sitting on his throne, with all the host of heaven standing to the right and to the left of him. 19And the LORD said, 'Who will entice King Ahab of Israel, so that he may go up and fall at Ramoth-gilead?' Then one said one thing, and another said another, 20until a spirit came forward and stood before the LORD, saying, 'I will entice him.' The LORD asked him, 'How?' 21He replied, 'I will go out and be a lying spirit in the mouth of all his prophets.' Then the LORD[k] said, 'You are to entice him, and you shall succeed; go out and do it.' 22So you see, the LORD has put a lying spirit in the mouth of these your prophets; the LORD has decreed disaster for you."

23 Then Zedekiah son of Chenaanah came up to Micaiah, slapped him on the cheek, and said, "Which way did the spirit of the LORD pass from me to speak to you?" 24Micaiah replied, "You will find out on that day when you go in to hide in an inner chamber." 25The king of Israel then ordered, "Take Micaiah, and return him to Amon the governor of the city and to Joash the king's son; 26and say, 'Thus says the king: Put this fellow in prison, and feed him on reduced rations of bread and water until I return in peace.' " 27Micaiah said, "If you return in peace, the LORD has not spoken by me." And he said, "Hear, you peoples, all of you!"

28 So the king of Israel and King Jehoshaphat of Judah went up to Ramoth-gilead. 29The king of Israel said to Jehoshaphat, "I will disguise myself and go into battle, but you wear your robes." So the king of Israel disguised himself, and they went into battle. 30Now the king of Aram had commanded the captains of his chariots, "Fight with no one small or great, but only with the king of Israel." 31When the captains of the chariots saw Jehoshaphat, they said, "It is the king of Israel." So they turned to fight against him; and Jehoshaphat cried out, and the LORD helped him. God drew them away from him, 32for when the captains of the chariots saw that it was not the king of Israel, they turned back from pursuing him. 33But a certain man drew his bow and unknowingly struck the king of Israel between the scale armor and the breastplate; so he said to the driver of his chariot, "Turn around, and carry me out of the battle, for I am wounded." 34The battle grew hot that day, and the king of Israel propped himself up in his chariot facing the Arameans until evening; then at sunset he died.

19 King Jehoshaphat of Judah returned in safety to his house in Jerusalem. 2Jehu son of Hanani the seer went out to meet him and said to King Jehoshaphat, "Should you help the wicked and love those who hate the LORD? Because of this, wrath has gone out against you from the LORD. 3Neverthe-

*k* Heb *he*

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**19.1–11: Jehoshaphat, having been rebuked by a prophet, rules wisely. 1–3:** These verses were composed by the Chronicler, who felt it necessary to protest against the entanglement with Ahab. According to 1 Kings 16.1, *Jehu son of Hanani* prophesied nearly fifty years earlier. This may be the same man, or a person of the same name;

less, some good is found in you, for you destroyed the sacred poles[l] out of the land, and have set your heart to seek God."

4 Jehoshaphat resided at Jerusalem; then he went out again among the people, from Beer-sheba to the hill country of Ephraim, and brought them back to the LORD, the God of their ancestors. 5He appointed judges in the land in all the fortified cities of Judah, city by city, 6and said to the judges, "Consider what you are doing, for you judge not on behalf of human beings but on the LORD's behalf; he is with you in giving judgment. 7Now, let the fear of the LORD be upon you; take care what you do, for there is no perversion of justice with the LORD our God, or partiality, or taking of bribes."

8 Moreover in Jerusalem Jehoshaphat appointed certain Levites and priests and heads of families of Israel, to give judgment for the LORD and to decide disputed cases. They had their seat at Jerusalem. 9He charged them: "This is how you shall act: in the fear of the LORD, in faithfulness, and with your whole heart; 10whenever a case comes to you from your kindred who live in their cities, concerning bloodshed, law or commandment, statutes or ordinances, then you shall instruct them, so that they may not incur guilt before the LORD and wrath may not come on you and your kindred. Do so, and you will not incur guilt. 11See, Amariah the chief priest is over you in all matters of the LORD; and Zebadiah son of Ishmael, the governor of the house of Judah, in all the king's matters; and the Levites will serve you as officers. Deal courageously, and may the LORD be with the good!"

20 After this the Moabites and Ammonites, and with them some of the Meunites,[m] came against Jehoshaphat for battle. 2Messengers[n] came and told Jehoshaphat, "A great multitude is coming against you from Edom,[o] from beyond the sea; already they are at Hazazon-tamar" (that is, En-gedi). 3Jehoshaphat was afraid; he set himself to seek the LORD, and proclaimed a fast throughout all Judah. 4Judah assembled to seek help from the LORD; from all the towns of Judah they came to seek the LORD.

5 Jehoshaphat stood in the assembly of Judah and Jerusalem, in the house of the LORD, before the new court, 6and said, "O LORD, God of our ancestors, are you not God in heaven? Do you not rule over all the kingdoms of the nations? In your hand are power and might, so that no one is able to withstand you. 7Did you not, O our God, drive out the inhabitants of this land before your people Israel, and give it forever to the descendants of your friend Abraham? 8They have lived in it, and in it have built you a sanctuary for your name, saying, 9'If disaster comes upon us, the sword, judgment,[p] or pestilence, or famine, we will stand before this house, and before you, for your name is in this house, and cry to you in our distress, and you will hear and

*l* Heb *Asheroth* *m* Compare 26.7: Heb *Ammonites* *n* Heb *They* *o* One Ms: MT *Aram* *p* Or *the sword of judgment*

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compare the "Hanani" of 16.7. *The sacred poles,* see 1 Kings 14.15 n. **4–7**: No parallel in 1 Kings. The idea of the appointment of *judges* by this king may have been suggested to the Chronicler by the name *Jehoshaphat,* which means "the LORD judges." Compare Deut 1.16–17; 16.18.

**19.8**: Here *Israel* means Judah, the true Israel in the eyes of the Chronicler (see 11.1–4 n.). **11**: Note the prominence of *the Levites,* who did not exist as a separate class in the time of the historical *Jehoshaphat* (see 1 Chr 6.1–5 n.; 13.1–4 n.). Compare the procedure of judges in Deut 17.8–13.

**20.1–37: The great victory over enemies of the true faith; Jehoshaphat's final mistake and consequent punishment.** The Chronicler, having established the character of Jehoshaphat as a righteous king, attributes to him a victory of faith even greater than those of Abijah (ch 13) and Asa (ch 14). There is only a faint parallel in 2 Kings 3.4–27.

**20.5**: *The new court* was a feature of the temple of the Chronicler's time. **6**: This

save.' [10]See now, the people of Ammon. Moab, and Mount Seir, whom you would not let Israel invade when they came from the land of Egypt, and whom they avoided and did not destroy— [11]they reward us by coming to drive us out of your possession that you have given us to inherit. [12]O our God, will you not execute judgment upon them? For we are powerless against this great multitude that is coming against us. We do not know what to do, but our eyes are on you."

13 Meanwhile all Judah stood before the LORD, with their little ones, their wives, and their children. [14]Then the spirit of the LORD came upon Jahaziel son of Zechariah, son of Benaiah, son of Jeiel, son of Mattaniah, a Levite of the sons of Asaph, in the middle of the assembly. [15]He said, "Listen, all Judah and inhabitants of Jerusalem, and King Jehoshaphat: Thus says the LORD to you: 'Do not fear or be dismayed at this great multitude; for the battle is not yours but God's. [16]Tomorrow go down against them; they will come up by the ascent of Ziz; you will find them at the end of the valley, before the wilderness of Jeruel. [17]This battle is not for you to fight; take your position, stand still, and see the victory of the LORD on your behalf, O Judah and Jerusalem.' Do not fear or be dismayed; tomorrow go out against them, and the LORD will be with you."

18 Then Jehoshaphat bowed down with his face to the ground, and all Judah and the inhabitants of Jerusalem fell down before the LORD, worshiping the LORD. [19]And the Levites, of the Kohathites and the Korahites, stood up to praise the LORD, the God of Israel, with a very loud voice.

20 They rose early in the morning and went out into the wilderness of Tekoa; and as they went out, Jehoshaphat stood and said, "Listen to me, O Judah and inhabitants of Jerusalem! Believe in the LORD your God and you will be established; believe his prophets." [21]When he had taken counsel with the people, he appointed those who were to sing to the LORD and praise him in holy splendor, as they went before the army, saying,

"Give thanks to the LORD,
for his steadfast love endures
forever."

[22]As they began to sing and praise, the LORD set an ambush against the Ammonites, Moab, and Mount Seir, who had come against Judah, so that they were routed. [23]For the Ammonites and Moab attacked the inhabitants of Mount Seir, destroying them utterly; and when they had made an end of the inhabitants of Seir, they all helped to destroy one another.

24 When Judah came to the watchtower of the wilderness, they looked toward the multitude; they were corpses lying on the ground; no one had escaped. [25]When Jehoshaphat and his people came to take the booty from them, they found livestock[q] in great numbers, goods, clothing, and precious things, which they took for themselves until they could carry no more. They spent three days taking the booty, because of its abundance. [26]On the fourth day they assembled in the Valley of Beracah, for there they blessed the LORD; therefore that place has been called the Valley of Beracah[r] to this day. [27]Then all the people of Judah and Jerusalem, with Jehoshaphat at their head, returned to Jerusalem with joy, for the LORD had enabled them to rejoice over their enemies. [28]They came to Jerusalem, with harps and lyres and

*q* Gk: Heb *among them* *r* That is *Blessing*

highly-developed monotheism was characteristic of the theology of the Chronicler's time (compare 6.14). **14:** *A Levite* takes the lead in prophecy. **17:** In battles of this kind, God's people do not need to fight, since God alone is commander and warrior among human and divine forces (compare 13.15; 14.12; Ezek 38.17–23). Jehoshaphat's army of 1,160,000 (see 17.10–19 n.) was unnecessary.

**20.18–23:** The singing of *the Levites* seems to have been the decisive human factor in this victory (compare Judg 7.22). **24–30:** Compare Ezek ch 39.

trumpets, to the house of the LORD. 29The fear of God came on all the kingdoms of the countries when they heard that the LORD had fought against the enemies of Israel. 30And the realm of Jehoshaphat was quiet, for his God gave him rest all around.

31 So Jehoshaphat reigned over Judah. He was thirty-five years old when he began to reign; he reigned twenty-five years in Jerusalem. His mother's name was Azubah daughter of Shilhi. 32He walked in the way of his father Asa and did not turn aside from it, doing what was right in the sight of the LORD. 33Yet the high places were not removed; the people had not yet set their hearts upon the God of their ancestors.

34 Now the rest of the acts of Jehoshaphat, from first to last, are written in the Annals of Jehu son of Hanani, which are recorded in the Book of the Kings of Israel.

35 After this King Jehoshaphat of Judah joined with King Ahaziah of Israel, who did wickedly. 36He joined him in building ships to go to Tarshish; they built the ships in Ezion-geber. 37Then Eliezer son of Dodavahu of Mareshah prophesied against Jehoshaphat, saying, "Because you have joined with Ahaziah, the LORD will destroy what you have made." And the ships were wrecked and were not able to go to Tarshish.

21 Jehoshaphat slept with his ancestors and was buried with his ancestors in the city of David; his son Jehoram succeeded him. 2He had brothers, the sons of Jehoshaphat: Azariah, Jehiel, Zechariah, Azariah, Michael, and Shephatiah; all these were the sons of King Jehoshaphat of Judah.[s] 3Their father gave them many gifts, of silver, gold, and valuable possessions, together with fortified cities in Judah; but he gave the kingdom to Jehoram, because he was the firstborn. 4When Jehoram had ascended the throne of his father and was established, he put all his brothers to the sword, and also some of the officials of Israel. 5Jehoram was thirty-two years old when he began to reign; he reigned eight years in Jerusalem. 6He walked in the way of the kings of Israel, as the house of Ahab had done; for the daughter of Ahab was his wife. He did what was evil in the sight of the LORD. 7Yet the LORD would not destroy the house of David because of the covenant that he had made with David, and since he had promised to give a lamp to him and to his descendants forever.

8 In his days Edom revolted against the rule of Judah and set up a king of their own. 9Then Jehoram crossed over with his commanders and all his chariots. He set out by night and attacked the Edomites, who had surrounded him and his chariot commanders. 10So Edom has been in revolt against the rule of Judah to this day. At that time Libnah also revolted against his rule, because he had forsaken the LORD, the God of his ancestors.

11 Moreover he made high places in the hill country of Judah, and led the inhabitants of Jerusalem into unfaithfulness, and made Judah go astray. 12A letter came to him from the prophet Elijah,

*s* Gk Syr: Heb *Israel*

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**20.31–33**: Compare the source, 1 Kings 22.41–43. **34**: The parallel is 1 Kings 22.45, with a difference in the name of the book. *Israel* here means Judah (see 11.1–4 n.).

**20.35–37**: The parallel is 1 Kings 22.44, 48–49, drastically rewritten to show that the loss of the ships was due to improper association with *Ahaziah*.

**21.1–20**: **Jehoram's wicked reign and his punishment.** *Jehoram* is already given a bad reputation in 2 Kings 8.18; the Chronicler makes him worse and increases his punishments. **1**: The source is 1 Kings 22.50. **2–4**: These verses, which have no known source, are probably based on historically correct information (compare 11.22–23; Judg 9.1–6). **5–7**: Taken with changes from 2 Kings 8.17–19.

**21.8–10**: Taken from 2 Kings 8.20–22, with the addition of the last clause giving the Chronicler's explanation why *Jehoram* was having this trouble. **11–15**: The *letter . . . from the prophet Elijah* is a creation of the Chronicler, used to sharpen the rebuke of Jehoram.

saying: "Thus says the LORD, the God of your father David: Because you have not walked in the ways of your father Jehoshaphat or in the ways of King Asa of Judah, 13but have walked in the way of the kings of Israel, and have led Judah and the inhabitants of Jerusalem into unfaithfulness, as the house of Ahab led Israel into unfaithfulness, and because you also have killed your brothers, members of your father's house, who were better than yourself, 14see, the LORD will bring a great plague on your people, your children, your wives, and all your possessions, 15and you yourself will have a severe sickness with a disease of your bowels, until your bowels come out, day after day, because of the disease."

16 The LORD aroused against Jehoram the anger of the Philistines and of the Arabs who are near the Ethiopians.[t] 17They came up against Judah, invaded it, and carried away all the possessions they found that belonged to the king's house, along with his sons and his wives, so that no son was left to him except Jehoahaz, his youngest son.

18 After all this the LORD struck him in his bowels with an incurable disease. 19In course of time, at the end of two years, his bowels came out because of the disease, and he died in great agony. His people made no fire in his honor, like the fires made for his ancestors. 20He was thirty-two years old when he began to reign; he reigned eight years in Jerusalem. He departed with no one's regret. They buried him in the city of David, but not in the tombs of the kings.

22 The inhabitants of Jerusalem made his youngest son Ahaziah king as his successor; for the troops who came with the Arabs to the camp had killed all the older sons. So Ahaziah son of Jehoram reigned as king of Judah. 2Ahaziah was forty-two years old when he began to reign; he reigned one year in Jerusalem. His mother's name was Athaliah, a granddaughter of Omri. 3He also walked in the ways of the house of Ahab, for his mother was his counselor in doing wickedly. 4He did what was evil in the sight of the LORD, as the house of Ahab had done; for after the death of his father they were his counselors, to his ruin. 5He even followed their advice, and went with Jehoram son of King Ahab of Israel to make war against King Hazael of Aram at Ramoth-gilead. The Arameans wounded Joram, 6and he returned to be healed in Jezreel of the wounds that he had received at Ramah, when he fought King Hazael of Aram. And Ahaziah son of King Jehoram of Judah went down to see Joram son of Ahab in Jezreel, because he was sick.

7 But it was ordained by God that the downfall of Ahaziah should come about through his going to visit Joram. For when he came there he went out with Jehoram to meet Jehu son of Nimshi, whom the LORD had anointed to destroy the house of Ahab. 8When Jehu was executing judgment on the house of Ahab, he met the officials of Judah and the sons of Ahaziah's brothers, who attended Ahaziah, and he killed them. 9He searched for Ahaziah, who was captured while hiding in Samaria and was brought to Jehu, and put to death. They buried him, for they said, "He is the grandson of Jehoshaphat, who sought the LORD with all his heart." And the house of Ahaziah had no one able to rule the kingdom.

10 Now when Athaliah, Ahaziah's

*The reign of Ahaziah*

*t* Or *Nubians*; Heb *Cushites*

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**21.16–17**: More military punishment; not found in 2 Kings. *Arabs who are near the Ethiopians*, see 14.9–15 n. **18–19**: Personal punishment, to fulfill the prophecy in v. 15. Contrast the fine funeral of Asa, 16.14. **20**: The same as v. 5, with typical additions (compare 2 Kings 8.24a).

**22.1–12: The brief but wicked reign of Ahaziah; his punishment; the usurpation of Athaliah. 1–6**: This is a slightly rewritten version of 2 Kings 8.24b–29, with the guilt of Ahaziah heightened. **2**: *Forty-two* is an error for "twenty-two"; compare 2 Kings 8.26.

**22.7**: A theological interpretation of v. 6 and of 2 Kings 9.21. **8–9**: Drawn from 2 Kings 9.27–28, but somewhat rewritten to

mother, saw that her son was dead, she set about to destroy all the royal family of the house of Judah. 11 But Jehoshabeath, the king's daughter, took Joash son of Ahaziah, and stole him away from among the king's children who were about to be killed; she put him and his nurse in a bedroom. Thus Jehoshabeath, daughter of King Jehoram and wife of the priest Jehoiada—because she was a sister of Ahaziah—hid him from Athaliah, so that she did not kill him; 12he remained with them six years, hidden in the house of God, while Athaliah reigned over the land.

23 But in the seventh year Jehoiada took courage, and entered into a compact with the commanders of the hundreds, Azariah son of Jeroham, Ishmael son of Jehohanan, Azariah son of Obed, Maaseiah son of Adaiah, and Elishaphat son of Zichri. 2They went around through Judah and gathered the Levites from all the towns of Judah, and the heads of families of Israel, and they came to Jerusalem. 3Then the whole assembly made a covenant with the king in the house of God. Jehoiada[u] said to them, "Here is the king's son! Let him reign, as the LORD promised concerning the sons of David. 4This is what you are to do: one-third of you, priests and Levites, who come on duty on the sabbath, shall be gatekeepers, 5one-third shall be at the king's house, and one-third at the Gate of the Foundation; and all the people shall be in the courts of the house of the LORD. 6Do not let anyone enter the house of the LORD except the priests and ministering Levites; they may enter, for they are holy, but all the other[v] people shall observe the instructions of the LORD. 7The Levites shall surround the king, each with his weapons in his hand; and whoever enters the house shall be killed. Stay with the king in his comings and goings."

8 The Levites and all Judah did according to all that the priest Jehoiada commanded; each brought his men, who were to come on duty on the sabbath, with those who were to go off duty on the sabbath; for the priest Jehoiada did not dismiss the divisions. 9The priest Jehoiada delivered to the captains the spears and the large and small shields that had been King David's, which were in the house of God; 10and he set all the people as a guard for the king, everyone with weapon in hand, from the south side of the house to the north side of the house, around the altar and the house. 11Then he brought out the king's son, put the crown on him, and gave him the covenant;[w] they proclaimed him king, and Jehoiada and his sons anointed him; and they shouted, "Long live the king!"

12 When Athaliah heard the noise of the people running and praising the king, she went into the house of the LORD to the people; 13and when she looked, there was the king standing by his pillar at the entrance, and the captains and the trumpeters beside the king, and all the people of the land rejoicing and blowing trumpets, and the singers with their musical instruments leading in the celebration. Athaliah tore her clothes, and cried, "Treason! Treason!" 14Then the priest Jehoiada brought out the captains who were set over the army, saying to them, "Bring her out between the ranks; anyone who follows her is to be put to the sword." For the priest said, "Do not put her to death in the house of the LORD."

*u* Heb *He* *v* Heb lacks *other* *w* Or *treaty*, or *testimony*; Heb *eduth*

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make the end of Ahaziah less honorable, and to prepare for what follows. **10–12:** 2 Kings 11.1–3 with slight changes.

**23.1–21: The revolt against Athaliah; her punishment by death and the enthronement of Joash.** Taken from 2 Kings 11.4–20, with certain characteristic changes and additions with a view to making the revolt the work of the Levites and singers rather than of the military; see vv. 2–3, 6, 18–19, added by the Chronicler; in v. 19, even *the gatekeepers* have a share (compare 1 Chr ch 26). In v. 13 the insertion of *the singers with their musical instruments leading in the celebration* changes drastically the tense military atmosphere of 2 Kings ch 11.

15 So they laid hands on her; she went into the entrance of the Horse Gate of the king's house, and there they put her to death.

16 Jehoiada made a covenant between himself and all the people and the king that they should be the LORD's people. 17 Then all the people went to the house of Baal, and tore it down; his altars and his images they broke in pieces, and they killed Mattan, the priest of Baal, in front of the altars. 18 Jehoiada assigned the care of the house of the LORD to the levitical priests whom David had organized to be in charge of the house of the LORD, to offer burnt offerings to the LORD, as it is written in the law of Moses, with rejoicing and with singing, according to the order of David. 19 He stationed the gatekeepers at the gates of the house of the LORD so that no one should enter who was in any way unclean. 20 And he took the captains, the nobles, the governors of the people, and all the people of the land, and they brought the king down from the house of the LORD, marching through the upper gate to the king's house. They set the king on the royal throne. 21 So all the people of the land rejoiced, and the city was quiet after Athaliah had been killed with the sword.

24 Joash was seven years old when he began to reign; he reigned forty years in Jerusalem; his mother's name was Zibiah of Beer-sheba. 2 Joash did what was right in the sight of the LORD all the days of the priest Jehoiada. 3 Jehoiada got two wives for him, and he became the father of sons and daughters.

4 Some time afterward Joash decided to restore the house of the LORD. 5 He assembled the priests and the Levites and said to them, "Go out to the cities of Judah and gather money from all Israel to repair the house of your God, year by year; and see that you act quickly." But the Levites did not act quickly. 6 So the king summoned Jehoiada the chief, and said to him, "Why have you not required the Levites to bring in from Judah and Jerusalem the tax levied by Moses, the servant of the LORD, on[x] the congregation of Israel for the tent of the covenant?"[y] 7 For the children of Athaliah, that wicked woman, had broken into the house of God, and had even used all the dedicated things of the house of the LORD for the Baals.

8 So the king gave command, and they made a chest, and set it outside the gate of the house of the LORD. 9 A proclamation was made throughout Judah and Jerusalem to bring in for the LORD the tax that Moses the servant of God laid on Israel in the wilderness. 10 All the leaders and all the people rejoiced and brought their tax and dropped it into the chest until it was full. 11 Whenever the chest was brought to the king's officers by the Levites, when they saw that there was a large amount of money in it, the king's secretary and the officer of the chief priest would come and empty the chest and take it and return it to its place. So they did day after day, and collected money in abundance. 12 The king and Jehoiada gave it to those who had charge of the work of the house of the LORD, and they hired masons and carpenters to restore the house of the LORD, and also workers in iron and bronze to repair the house of the LORD. 13 So those who were engaged in the work labored, and the repairing went forward at their hands, and they restored the house of God to its

*x* Compare Vg: Heb *and* *y* Or *treaty*, or *testimony*; Heb *eduth*

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**24.1–27: The good beginning of Joash; his later apostasy and consequent punishment.** Based upon 2 Kings ch 12. Joash is depicted by the Chronicler as being considerably worse than he appears to be in 2 Kings, probably because he was a grandson of Athaliah (see 2 Kings 12.19–21 n.). Such treatment also provides an explanation of Joash's military misfortune and his assassination, both unexplained in 2 Kings. **1–3**: 2 Kings 12.3 is omitted and v. 3 here is added. **4–7**: Rewritten to give *the Levites* a greater share, even in the delaying tactics (v. 5). Verse 7 is an added observation.

**24.8–14**: See 2 Kings 12.9–16 n.

proper condition and strengthened it. 14 When they had finished, they brought the rest of the money to the king and Jehoiada, and with it were made utensils for the house of the LORD, utensils for the service and for the burnt offerings, and ladles, and vessels of gold and silver. They offered burnt offerings in the house of the LORD regularly all the days of Jehoiada.

15 But Jehoiada grew old and full of days, and died; he was one hundred thirty years old at his death. 16 And they buried him in the city of David among the kings, because he had done good in Israel, and for God and his house.

17 Now after the death of Jehoiada the officials of Judah came and did obeisance to the king; then the king listened to them. 18 They abandoned the house of the LORD, the God of their ancestors, and served the sacred poles[z] and the idols. And wrath came upon Judah and Jerusalem for this guilt of theirs. 19 Yet he sent prophets among them to bring them back to the LORD; they testified against them, but they would not listen.

20 Then the spirit of God took possession of[a] Zechariah son of the priest Jehoiada; he stood above the people and said to them, "Thus says God: Why do you transgress the commandments of the LORD, so that you cannot prosper? Because you have forsaken the LORD, he has also forsaken you." 21 But they conspired against him, and by command of the king they stoned him to death in the court of the house of the LORD. 22 King Joash did not remember the kindness that Jehoiada, Zechariah's father, had shown him, but killed his son. As he was dying, he said, "May the LORD see and avenge!"

23 At the end of the year the army of Aram came up against Joash. They came to Judah and Jerusalem, and destroyed all the officials of the people from among them, and sent all the booty they took to the king of Damascus. 24 Although the army of Aram had come with few men, the LORD delivered into their hand a very great army, because they had abandoned the LORD, the God of their ancestors. Thus they executed judgment on Joash.

25 When they had withdrawn, leaving him severely wounded, his servants conspired against him because of the blood of the son[b] of the priest Jehoiada, and they killed him on his bed. So he died; and they buried him in the city of David, but they did not bury him in the tombs of the kings. 26 Those who conspired against him were Zabad son of Shimeath the Ammonite, and Jehozabad son of Shimrith the Moabite. 27 Accounts of his sons, and of the many oracles against him, and of the rebuilding[c] of the house of God are written in the Commentary on the Book of the Kings. And his son Amaziah succeeded him.

25 Amaziah was twenty-five years old when he began to reign, and he reigned twenty-nine years in Jerusalem. His mother's name was Jehoaddan of Jerusalem. 2 He did what was right in the sight of the LORD, yet not with a true heart. 3 As soon as the royal power was firmly in his hand he killed his servants who had murdered his father the king. 4 But he did not put their children to death, according to what is written in the law, in the book of Moses, where the LORD commanded, "The parents shall not be put to death for the children, or the children be put to death for the parents; but all shall be put to death for their own sins."

5 Amaziah assembled the people of

*z* Heb *Asherim* *a* Heb *clothed itself with*
*b* Gk Vg: Heb *sons* *c* Heb *founding*

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**24.15–22**: This story, not attested elsewhere, prepares for what follows. Compare Lk 11.51. **23–24**: A drastically rewritten form of 2 Kings 12.17–18. **25–27**: A reinterpretation of 2 Kings 12.19–21. *The Commentary on the Book of the Kings* can no more be identified than can other such works referred to by the Chronicler (see Introduction to 1 Chronicles).

**25.1–28: Amaziah acts wrongfully and suffers punishment.** Based upon 2 Kings 14.2–14, 17–20. **1–4**: Not essentially different from 2 Kings 14.2–6.

**25.5–13**: An expansion of a single verse,

Judah, and set them by ancestral houses under commanders of the thousands and of the hundreds for all Judah and Benjamin. He mustered those twenty years old and upward, and found that they were three hundred thousand picked troops fit for war, able to handle spear and shield. 6He also hired one hundred thousand mighty warriors from Israel for one hundred talents of silver. 7But a man of God came to him and said, "O king, do not let the army of Israel go with you, for the LORD is not with Israel—all these Ephraimites. 8Rather, go by yourself and act; be strong in battle, or God will fling you down before the enemy; for God has power to help or to overthrow." 9Amaziah said to the man of God, "But what shall we do about the hundred talents that I have given to the army of Israel?" The man of God answered, "The LORD is able to give you much more than this." 10Then Amaziah discharged the army that had come to him from Ephraim, letting them go home again. But they became very angry with Judah, and returned home in fierce anger.

11 Amaziah took courage, and led out his people; he went to the Valley of Salt, and struck down ten thousand men of Seir. 12The people of Judah captured another ten thousand alive, took them to the top of Sela, and threw them down from the top of Sela, so that all of them were dashed to pieces. 13But the men of the army whom Amaziah sent back, not letting them go with him to battle, fell on the cities of Judah from Samaria to Beth-horon; they killed three thousand people in them, and took much booty.

14 Now after Amaziah came from the slaughter of the Edomites, he brought the gods of the people of Seir, set them up as his gods, and worshiped them, making offerings to them. 15The LORD was angry with Amaziah and sent to him a prophet, who said to him, "Why have you resorted to a people's gods who could not deliver their own people from your hand?" 16But as he was speaking the king[d] said to him, "Have we made you a royal counselor? Stop! Why should you be put to death?" So the prophet stopped, but said, "I know that God has determined to destroy you, because you have done this and have not listened to my advice."

17 Then King Amaziah of Judah took counsel and sent to King Joash son of Jehoahaz son of Jehu of Israel, saying, "Come, let us look one another in the face." 18King Joash of Israel sent word to King Amaziah of Judah, "A thornbush on Lebanon sent to a cedar on Lebanon, saying, 'Give your daughter to my son for a wife'; but a wild animal of Lebanon passed by and trampled down the thornbush. 19You say, 'See, I have defeated Edom,' and your heart has lifted you up in boastfulness. Now stay at home; why should you provoke trouble so that you fall, you and Judah with you?"

20 But Amaziah would not listen—it was God's doing, in order to hand them over, because they had sought the gods of Edom. 21So King Joash of Israel went up; he and King Amaziah of Judah faced one another in battle at Beth-shemesh, which belongs to Judah. 22Judah was defeated by Israel; everyone fled home. 23King Joash of Israel captured King Amaziah of Judah, son of Joash, son of Ahaziah, at Beth-shemesh; he brought him to Jerusalem, and broke down the wall of Jerusalem from the Ephraim Gate to the Corner Gate, a distance of four hundred cubits. 24He seized all the gold and silver, and all the vessels that were found in the house of God, and Obed-edom with them; he seized also the trea-

*d* Heb *he*

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2 Kings 14.7. *Amaziah* did wrong in hiring troops from the northern kingdom; even while winning a victory over Edom, he was punished for his indiscretion (v. 13). *Samaria* and *Beth-horon* were not among the *cities of Judah;* there is some confusion here.

**25.14–16**: These verses, not found in 2 Kings, are the Chronicler's way of explaining what follows. **17–19**: See note on the parallel, 2 Kings 14.8–10.

**25.20–24**: Similar to 2 Kings 14.11–14, except for the theological explanation in

suries of the king's house, also hostages; then he returned to Samaria.

25 King Amaziah son of Joash of Judah, lived fifteen years after the death of King Joash son of Jehoahaz of Israel. 26 Now the rest of the deeds of Amaziah, from first to last, are they not written in the Book of the Kings of Judah and Israel? 27 From the time that Amaziah turned away from the LORD they made a conspiracy against him in Jerusalem, and he fled to Lachish. But they sent after him to Lachish, and killed him there. 28 They brought him back on horses; he was buried with his ancestors in the city of David.

26 Then all the people of Judah took Uzziah, who was sixteen years old, and made him king to succeed his father Amaziah. 2 He rebuilt Eloth and restored it to Judah, after the king slept with his ancestors. 3 Uzziah was sixteen years old when he began to reign, and he reigned fifty-two years in Jerusalem. His mother's name was Jecoliah of Jerusalem. 4 He did what was right in the sight of the LORD, just as his father Amaziah had done. 5 He set himself to seek God in the days of Zechariah, who instructed him in the fear of God; and as long as he sought the LORD, God made him prosper.

6 He went out and made war against the Philistines, and broke down the wall of Gath and the wall of Jabneh and the wall of Ashdod; he built cities in the territory of Ashdod and elsewhere among the Philistines. 7 God helped him against the Philistines, against the Arabs who lived in Gur-baal, and against the Meunites. 8 The Ammonites paid tribute to Uzziah, and his fame spread even to the border of Egypt, for he became very strong. 9 Moreover Uzziah built towers in Jerusalem at the Corner Gate, at the Valley Gate, and at the Angle, and fortified them. 10 He built towers in the wilderness and hewed out many cisterns, for he had large herds, both in the Shephelah and in the plain, and he had farmers and vinedressers in the hills and in the fertile lands, for he loved the soil. 11 Moreover Uzziah had an army of soldiers, fit for war, in divisions according to the numbers in the muster made by the secretary Jeiel and the officer Maaseiah, under the direction of Hananiah, one of the king's commanders. 12 The whole number of the heads of ancestral houses of mighty warriors was two thousand six hundred. 13 Under their command was an army of three hundred seven thousand five hundred, who could make war with mighty power, to help the king against the enemy. 14 Uzziah provided for all the army the shields, spears, helmets, coats of mail, bows, and stones for slinging. 15 In Jerusalem he set up machines, invented by skilled workers, on the towers and the corners for shooting arrows and large stones. And his fame spread far, for he was marvelously helped until he became strong.

16 But when he had become strong he grew proud, to his destruction. For he was false to the LORD his God, and entered the temple of the LORD to make offering on the altar of incense. 17 But the priest Azariah went in after him, with eighty priests of the LORD who were men of valor; 18 they withstood King Uzziah, and said to him, "It is not for you, Uzziah, to make offering to the LORD, but for the priests the descendants of Aaron,

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v. 20b. **25–28**: Much the same as 2 Kings 14.17–20, except for the explanatory phrase *From the time that Amaziah turned away from the* LORD (v. 27).

**26.1–23**: **Uzziah's good beginning and consequent prosperity; his subsequent sin and consequent punishment.** The brief parallel is found in 2 Kings 14.21–22; 15.2–3, 5–7. The reign of Uzziah (called also Azariah in 2 Kings) was a long one (v. 3), and the account is greatly expanded here. **1–4**: Compare 2 Kings 14.21–22; 15.2–3. **5**: Added by the Chronicler. This Zechariah is otherwise unknown; he served the same function as Jehoiada in 24.2.

**26.6–15**: Without parallel in 2 Kings, but there is here valuable historical material from an unknown source.

**26.16–20**: A composition of the Chronicler, perhaps from a lost source, to explain the

who are consecrated to make offering. Go out of the sanctuary; for you have done wrong, and it will bring you no honor from the LORD God." 19Then Uzziah was angry. Now he had a censer in his hand to make offering, and when he became angry with the priests a leprous[e] disease broke out on his forehead, in the presence of the priests in the house of the LORD, by the altar of incense. 20When the chief priest Azariah, and all the priests, looked at him, he was leprous[e] in his forehead. They hurried him out, and he himself hurried to get out, because the LORD had struck him. 21King Uzziah was leprous[e] to the day of his death, and being leprous[e] lived in a separate house, for he was excluded from the house of the LORD. His son Jotham was in charge of the palace of the king, governing the people of the land.

22 Now the rest of the acts of Uzziah, from first to last, the prophet Isaiah son of Amoz wrote. 23Uzziah slept with his ancestors; they buried him near his ancestors in the burial field that belonged to the kings, for they said, "He is leprous."[e] His son Jotham succeeded him.

27 Jotham was twenty-five years old when he began to reign; he reigned sixteen years in Jerusalem. His mother's name was Jerushah daughter of Zadok. 2He did what was right in the sight of the LORD just as his father Uzziah had done—only he did not invade the temple of the LORD. But the people still followed corrupt practices. 3He built the upper gate of the house of the LORD, and did extensive building on the wall of Ophel. 4Moreover he built cities in the hill country of Judah, and forts and towers on the wooded hills. 5He fought with the king of the Ammonites and prevailed against them. The Ammonites gave him that year one hundred talents of silver, ten thousand cors of wheat and ten thousand of barley. The Ammonites paid him the same amount in the second and the third years. 6So Jotham became strong because he ordered his ways before the LORD his God. 7Now the rest of the acts of Jotham, and all his wars and his ways, are written in the Book of the Kings of Israel and Judah. 8He was twenty-five years old when he began to reign; he reigned sixteen years in Jerusalem. 9Jotham slept with his ancestors, and they buried him in the city of David; and his son Ahaz succeeded him.

28 Ahaz was twenty years old when he began to reign; he reigned sixteen years in Jerusalem. He did not do what was right in the sight of the LORD, as his ancestor David had done, 2but he walked in the ways of the kings of Israel. He even made cast images for the Baals; 3and he made offerings in the valley of the son of Hinnom, and made his sons pass through fire, according to the abominable practices of the nations whom the LORD drove out before the people of Israel. 4He sacrificed and made offerings on the high places, on the hills, and under every green tree.

5 Therefore the LORD his God gave him into the hand of the king of Aram, who defeated him and took captive a

*e* A term for several skin diseases; precise meaning uncertain

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leprosy of Uzziah. **21–23:** Parallel to 2 Kings 15.5–7, with the change of the name of a book in v. 22.

**27.1–9: Jotham's goodness and consequent prosperity.** This short chapter parallels 2 Kings 15.33–38, with a few significant changes. Jotham is represented by the Chronicler as a totally good and hence completely prosperous king. Verse 2b was added to show that the king was ritually correct; v. 2c to show that faults came from the people, not the king. Verses 4–6 were added to show the good king's military might; 2 Kings 15.37 was omitted because the Chronicler wished to present the reign of the idealized Jotham as being without any troubles whatever.

**28.1–27: The enormous iniquity of Ahaz and the appropriate punishments which he received.** Based upon 2 Kings ch 16 with drastic rewriting to intensify the unfavorable portrait already present in the source. To the Chronicler, the wholly good reign of Jotham was followed by the wholly bad reign of Ahaz. **1–4:** Not greatly changed from the source, 2 Kings 16.2–4.

great number of his people and brought them to Damascus. He was also given into the hand of the king of Israel, who defeated him with great slaughter. 6Pekah son of Remaliah killed one hundred twenty thousand in Judah in one day, all of them valiant warriors, because they had abandoned the LORD, the God of their ancestors. 7And Zichri, a mighty warrior of Ephraim, killed the king's son Maaseiah, Azrikam the commander of the palace, and Elkanah the next in authority to the king.

8 The people of Israel took captive two hundred thousand of their kin, women, sons, and daughters; they also took much booty from them and brought the booty to Samaria. 9But a prophet of the LORD was there, whose name was Oded; he went out to meet the army that came to Samaria, and said to them, "Because the LORD, the God of your ancestors, was angry with Judah, he gave them into your hand, but you have killed them in a rage that has reached up to heaven. 10Now you intend to subjugate the people of Judah and Jerusalem, male and female, as your slaves. But what have you except sins against the LORD your God? 11Now hear me, and send back the captives whom you have taken from your kindred, for the fierce wrath of the LORD is upon you." 12Moreover, certain chiefs of the Ephraimites, Azariah son of Johanan, Berechiah son of Meshillemoth, Jehizkiah son of Shallum, and Amasa son of Hadlai, stood up against those who were coming from the war, 13and said to them, "You shall not bring the captives in here, for you propose to bring on us guilt against the LORD in addition to our present sins and guilt. For our guilt is already great, and there is fierce wrath against Israel." 14So the warriors left the captives and the booty before the officials and all the assembly. 15Then those who were mentioned by name got up and took the captives, and with the booty they clothed all that were naked among them; they clothed them, gave them sandals, provided them with food and drink, and anointed them; and carrying all the feeble among them on donkeys, they brought them to their kindred at Jericho, the city of palm trees. Then they returned to Samaria.

16 At that time King Ahaz sent to the king[f] of Assyria for help. 17For the Edomites had again invaded and defeated Judah, and carried away captives. 18And the Philistines had made raids on the cities in the Shephelah and the Negeb of Judah, and had taken Beth-shemesh, Aijalon, Gederoth, Soco with its villages, Timnah with its villages, and Gimzo with its villages; and they settled there. 19For the LORD brought Judah low because of King Ahaz of Israel, for he had behaved without restraint in Judah and had been faithless to the LORD. 20So King Tilgath-pilneser of Assyria came against him, and oppressed him instead of strengthening him. 21For Ahaz plundered the house of the LORD and the houses of the king and of the officials, and gave tribute to the king of Assyria; but it did not help him.

22 In the time of his distress he became yet more faithless to the LORD—this same King Ahaz. 23For he sacrificed to the gods of Damascus, which had defeated him, and said, "Because the gods of the kings of Aram helped them, I will sacrifice to them so that they may help me." But they were the ruin of him, and of all Israel. 24Ahaz gathered together the utensils of the house of God, and cut in pieces the utensils of the house of God. He shut up the doors of the house of the LORD and made himself altars in every

*f* Gk Syr Vg Compare 2 Kings 16.7: Heb *kings*

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**28.5–15**: A drastic rewriting and expansion of 2 Kings 16.5–6. Both *Aram* and *Israel* defeat *Judah* with tremendous slaughter, signalizing God's retributive justice. At the same time, the wicked northern kingdom is not allowed to retain any advantage from its punitive victory (vv. 8–15).

**28.16–25**: Somewhat briefer than the source, 2 Kings 16.7–18. The aim of the writer is to show that Ahaz did not profit even

corner of Jerusalem. 25In every city of Judah he made high places to make offerings to other gods, provoking to anger the LORD, the God of his ancestors. 26Now the rest of his acts and all his ways, from first to last, are written in the Book of the Kings of Judah and Israel. 27Ahaz slept with his ancestors, and they buried him in the city, in Jerusalem; but they did not bring him into the tombs of the kings of Israel. His son Hezekiah succeeded him.

29 Hezekiah began to reign when he was twenty-five years old; he reigned twenty-nine years in Jerusalem. His mother's name was Abijah daughter of Zechariah. 2He did what was right in the sight of the LORD, just as his ancestor David had done.

3 In the first year of his reign, in the first month, he opened the doors of the house of the LORD and repaired them. 4He brought in the priests and the Levites and assembled them in the square on the east. 5He said to them, "Listen to me, Levites! Sanctify yourselves, and sanctify the house of the LORD, the God of your ancestors, and carry out the filth from the holy place. 6For our ancestors have been unfaithful and have done what was evil in the sight of the LORD our God; they have forsaken him, and have turned away their faces from the dwelling of the LORD, and turned their backs. 7They also shut the doors of the vestibule and put out the lamps, and have not offered incense or made burnt offerings in the holy place to the God of Israel. 8Therefore the wrath of the LORD came upon Judah and Jerusalem, and he has made them an object of horror, of astonishment, and of hissing, as you see with your own eyes. 9Our fathers have fallen by the sword and our sons and our daughters and our wives are in captivity for this. 10Now it is in my heart to make a covenant with the LORD, the God of Israel, so that his fierce anger may turn away from us. 11My sons, do not now be negligent, for the LORD has chosen you to stand in his presence to minister to him, and to be his ministers and make offerings to him."

12 Then the Levites arose, Mahath son of Amasai, and Joel son of Azariah, of the sons of the Kohathites; and of the sons of Merari, Kish son of Abdi, and Azariah son of Jehallelel; and of the Gershonites, Joah son of Zimmah, and Eden son of Joah; 13and of the sons of Elizaphan, Shimri and Jeuel; and of the sons of Asaph, Zechariah and Mattaniah; 14and of the sons of Heman, Jehuel and Shimei; and of the sons of Jeduthun, Shemaiah and Uzziel. 15They gathered their brothers, sanctified themselves, and went in as the king had commanded, by the words of the LORD, to cleanse the house of the LORD. 16The priests went into the inner part of the house of the LORD to cleanse it, and they brought out all the unclean things that they found in the temple of the LORD into the court of the house of the LORD; and the Levites took them and carried them out to the Wadi Kidron. 17They began to sanctify on the first day of the first month, and on the eighth day of the month they came to the vestibule of the LORD; then for eight

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temporarily from his unholy alliance with the Assyrians. **26–27**: Rewritten from 2 Kings 16.19–20. Verse 27 contradicts 2 Kings 16.20 with regard to the burial of the king; the evil Ahaz could not be buried in a royal tomb (compare 21.20; 24.25; 26.23).

**29.1–36**: **Hezekiah begins his good reign by cleansing the temple.** Second Kings considers Hezekiah an important and on the whole a good king; three chapters (chs 18–20) are devoted to him. The Chronicler makes him a reformer like the later Josiah, and devotes four chapters to him (chs 29–32). **1–2**: Taken with little change from 2 Kings 18.2–3. **3–11**: In 28.24 the Chronicler had said that Ahaz closed down the temple entirely (in contrast to 2 Kings 16.10–16). Thus the way was prepared for the present passage, with its theme of reform carried out by *priests and Levites*—a favorite subject with the Chronicler. There is only the slightest affinity with 2 Kings 18.4–6. Verses 6–9 suggest liturgical confession during the Babylonian captivity (compare Zech 1.1–6).

**29.12–19**: Continuation of the reform; no parallel; the Chronicler presents an ideal re-

days they sanctified the house of the LORD, and on the sixteenth day of the first month they finished. 18Then they went inside to King Hezekiah and said, "We have cleansed all the house of the LORD, the altar of burnt offering and all its utensils, and the table for the rows of bread and all its utensils. 19All the utensils that King Ahaz repudiated during his reign when he was faithless, we have made ready and sanctified; see, they are in front of the altar of the LORD."

20 Then King Hezekiah rose early, assembled the officials of the city, and went up to the house of the LORD. 21They brought seven bulls, seven rams, seven lambs, and seven male goats for a sin offering for the kingdom and for the sanctuary and for Judah. He commanded the priests the descendants of Aaron to offer them on the altar of the LORD. 22So they slaughtered the bulls, and the priests received the blood and dashed it against the altar; they slaughtered the rams and their blood was dashed against the altar; they also slaughtered the lambs and their blood was dashed against the altar. 23Then the male goats for the sin offering were brought to the king and the assembly; they laid their hands on them, 24and the priests slaughtered them and made a sin offering with their blood at the altar, to make atonement for all Israel. For the king commanded that the burnt offering and the sin offering should be made for all Israel.

25 He stationed the Levites in the house of the LORD with cymbals, harps, and lyres, according to the commandment of David and of Gad the king's seer and of the prophet Nathan, for the commandment was from the LORD through his prophets. 26The Levites stood with the instruments of David, and the priests with the trumpets. 27Then Hezekiah commanded that the burnt offering be offered on the altar. When the burnt offering began, the song to the LORD began also, and the trumpets, accompanied by the instruments of King David of Israel. 28The whole assembly worshiped, the singers sang, and the trumpeters sounded; all this continued until the burnt offering was finished. 29When the offering was finished, the king and all who were present with him bowed down and worshiped. 30King Hezekiah and the officials commanded the Levites to sing praises to the LORD with the words of David and of the seer Asaph. They sang praises with gladness, and they bowed down and worshiped.

31 Then Hezekiah said, "You have now consecrated yourselves to the LORD; come near, bring sacrifices and thank offerings to the house of the LORD." The assembly brought sacrifices and thank offerings; and all who were of a willing heart brought burnt offerings. 32The number of the burnt offerings that the assembly brought was seventy bulls, one hundred rams, and two hundred lambs; all these were for a burnt offering to the LORD. 33The consecrated offerings were six hundred bulls and three thousand sheep. 34But the priests were too few and could not skin all the burnt offerings, so, until other priests had sanctified themselves, their kindred, the Levites, helped them until the work was finished—for the Levites were more conscientious[g] than the priests in sanctifying themselves. 35Besides the great number of burnt offerings there was the fat of the offerings of well-being, and there were the drink offerings for the burnt offerings. Thus the service of the house of the LORD was restored. 36And Hezekiah and all the people rejoiced because of what God had done for the people; for the thing had come about suddenly.

*g* Heb *upright in heart*

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form with emphasis on *the Levites*. **20–24**: The ideal sacrifice of rededication.

**29.25–30**: Note the great importance of the Levitical musicians (see Introduction to 1 Chronicles and compare 1 Chr ch 25). **31–36**: To the Chronicler, *the Levites were more conscientious than the priests in sanctifying themselves*.

*The great passover*

30 Hezekiah sent word to all Israel and Judah, and wrote letters also to Ephraim and Manasseh, that they should come to the house of the LORD at Jerusalem, to keep the passover to the LORD the God of Israel. 2For the king and his officials and all the assembly in Jerusalem had taken counsel to keep the passover in the second month 3(for they could not keep it at its proper time because the priests had not sanctified themselves in sufficient number, nor had the people assembled in Jerusalem). 4The plan seemed right to the king and all the assembly. 5So they decreed to make a proclamation throughout all Israel, from Beer-sheba to Dan, that the people should come and keep the passover to the LORD the God of Israel, at Jerusalem; for they had not kept it in great numbers as prescribed. 6So couriers went throughout all Israel and Judah with letters from the king and his officials, as the king had commanded, saying, "O people of Israel, return to the LORD, the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Israel, so that he may turn again to the remnant of you who have escaped from the hand of the kings of Assyria. 7Do not be like your ancestors and your kindred, who were faithless to the LORD God of their ancestors, so that he made them a desolation, as you see. 8Do not now be stiff-necked as your ancestors were, but yield yourselves to the LORD and come to his sanctuary, which he has sanctified forever, and serve the LORD your God, so that his fierce anger may turn away from you. 9For as you return to the LORD, your kindred and your children will find compassion with their captors, and return to this land. For the LORD your God is gracious and merciful, and will not turn away his face from you, if you return to him."

10 So the couriers went from city to city through the country of Ephraim and Manasseh, and as far as Zebulun; but they laughed them to scorn, and mocked them. 11Only a few from Asher, Manasseh, and Zebulun humbled themselves and came to Jerusalem. 12The hand of God was also on Judah to give them one heart to do what the king and the officials commanded by the word of the LORD.

13 Many people came together in Jerusalem to keep the festival of unleavened bread in the second month, a very large assembly. 14They set to work and removed the altars that were in Jerusalem, and all the altars for offering incense they took away and threw into the Wadi Kidron. 15They slaughtered the passover lamb on the fourteenth day of the second month. The priests and the Levites were ashamed, and they sanctified themselves and brought burnt offerings into the house of the LORD. 16They took their accustomed posts according to the law of Moses the man of God; the priests dashed the blood that they received[h] from the hands of the Levites. 17For there were many in the assembly who had not sanctified themselves; therefore the Levites had to slaughter the passover lamb for everyone who was not clean, to make it holy to the LORD. 18For a multitude of the people, many of them from Ephraim, Manasseh, Issachar, and Zebulun, had not cleansed themselves, yet they ate the passover otherwise than as prescribed. But Hezekiah prayed for them, saying, "The good LORD pardon all 19who set their hearts to seek God, the LORD the God of their ancestors, even though not in accordance with the sanctuary's rules of cleanness." 20The LORD heard Hezekiah, and healed the people. 21The people of Israel who were present at Jerusalem kept the festival of unleavened bread seven days with great gladness; and the Levites and the priests praised the LORD day by day, accompanied by loud instruments for the LORD.

*h* Heb lacks *that they received*

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**30.1–27: Hezekiah's great passover festival.** There is no hint of this in 2 Kings. It seems to be a kind of parallel to or preparation for Josiah's great passover in ch 35. Included is the prophetic hope of the return of the northern tribes to their former loyalty to Je-

22 Hezekiah spoke encouragingly to all the Levites who showed good skill in the service of the LORD. So the people ate the food of the festival for seven days, sacrificing offerings of well-being and giving thanks to the LORD the God of their ancestors.

23 Then the whole assembly agreed together to keep the festival for another seven days; so they kept it for another seven days with gladness. 24 For King Hezekiah of Judah gave the assembly a thousand bulls and seven thousand sheep for offerings, and the officials gave the assembly a thousand bulls and ten thousand sheep. The priests sanctified themselves in great numbers. 25 The whole assembly of Judah, the priests and the Levites, and the whole assembly that came out of Israel, and the resident aliens who came out of the land of Israel, and the resident aliens who lived in Judah, rejoiced. 26 There was great joy in Jerusalem, for since the time of Solomon son of King David of Israel there had been nothing like this in Jerusalem. 27 Then the priests and the Levites stood up and blessed the people, and their voice was heard; their prayer came to his holy dwelling in heaven.

31 Now when all this was finished, all Israel who were present went out to the cities of Judah and broke down the pillars, hewed down the sacred poles,[i] and pulled down the high places and the altars throughout all Judah and Benjamin, and in Ephraim and Manasseh, until they had destroyed them all. Then all the people of Israel returned to their cities, all to their individual properties.

2 Hezekiah appointed the divisions of the priests and of the Levites, division by division, everyone according to his service, the priests and the Levites, for burnt offerings and offerings of well-being, to minister in the gates of the camp of the LORD and to give thanks and praise. 3 The contribution of the king from his own possessions was for the burnt offerings: the burnt offerings of morning and evening, and the burnt offerings for the sabbaths, the new moons, and the appointed festivals, as it is written in the law of the LORD. 4 He commanded the people who lived in Jerusalem to give the portion due to the priests and the Levites, so that they might devote themselves to the law of the LORD. 5 As soon as the word spread, the people of Israel gave in abundance the first fruits of grain, wine, oil, honey, and of all the produce of the field; and they brought in abundantly the tithe of everything. 6 The people of Israel and Judah who lived in the cities of Judah also brought in the tithe of cattle and sheep, and the tithe of the dedicated things that had been consecrated to the LORD their God, and laid them in heaps. 7 In the third month they began to pile up the heaps, and finished them in the seventh month. 8 When Hezekiah and the officials came and saw the heaps, they blessed the LORD and his people Israel. 9 Hezekiah questioned the priests and the Levites about the heaps. 10 The chief priest Azariah, who was of the house of Zadok, answered him, "Since they began to bring the contributions into the house of the LORD, we have had enough to eat and have plenty to spare; for the LORD has blessed his people, so that we have this great supply left over."

*i* Heb *Asherim*

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rusalem (compare Ezek 37.15–23). The tolerant laxity of vv. 17–19 is in contrast to the usual attitude of this writer.

**31.1–21: Hezekiah's reform and his re-establishment of the priests and Levites.** 1: Similar to 2 Kings 18.4 (see note there), except that here the reforming activity is extended to the territory of the former northern kingdom. Some regard this latter as historically correct, pointing out that the northern kingdom had fallen, and claiming that the Assyrians did not exercise strict control. There is also the possibility that we have here the hope of reunion referred to in ch 30 (see notes there).

**31.2–10:** As David established *the divisions of the priests and of the Levites,* so Hezekiah re-established them, and saw that they were

11 Then Hezekiah commanded them
to prepare store-chambers in the house of
the LORD; and they prepared them.
12 Faithfully they brought in the contri-
butions, the tithes and the dedicated
things. The chief officer in charge of
them was Conaniah the Levite, with his
brother Shimei as second; 13 while Jehiel,
Azaziah, Nahath, Asahel, Jerimoth, Joz-
abad, Eliel, Ismachiah, Mahath, and Be-
naiah were overseers assisting Conaniah
and his brother Shimei, by the appoint-
ment of King Hezekiah and of Azariah
the chief officer of the house of God.
14 Kore son of Imnah the Levite, keeper
of the east gate, was in charge of the
freewill offerings to God, to apportion
the contribution reserved for the LORD
and the most holy offerings. 15 Eden,
Miniamin, Jeshua, Shemaiah, Amariah,
and Shecaniah were faithfully assisting
him in the cities of the priests, to distrib-
ute the portions to their kindred, old and
young alike, by divisions, 16 except those
enrolled by genealogy, males from three
years old and upwards, all who entered
the house of the LORD as the duty of each
day required, for their service according
to their offices, by their divisions. 17 The
enrollment of the priests was according
to their ancestral houses; that of the Le-
vites from twenty years old and upwards
was according to their offices, by their
divisions. 18 The priests were enrolled
with all their little children, their wives,
their sons, and their daughters, the
whole multitude; for they were faithful
in keeping themselves holy. 19 And for
the descendants of Aaron, the priests,
who were in the fields of common land
belonging to their towns, town by town,
the people designated by name were to
distribute portions to every male among
the priests and to everyone among the
Levites who was enrolled.

20 Hezekiah did this throughout all
Judah; he did what was good and right
and faithful before the LORD his God.
21 And every work that he undertook in
the service of the house of God, and in
accordance with the law and the com-
mandments, to seek his God, he did with
all his heart; and he prospered.

32 After these things and these acts
of faithfulness, King Sennacherib
of Assyria came and invaded Judah and
encamped against the fortified cities,
thinking to win them for himself. 2 When
Hezekiah saw that Sennacherib had come
and intended to fight against Jerusalem,
3 he planned with his officers and his war-
riors to stop the flow of the springs that
were outside the city; and they helped
him. 4 A great many people were gath-
ered, and they stopped all the springs and
the wadi that flowed through the land,
saying, "Why should the Assyrian kings
come and find water in abundance?"
5 Hezekiah[j] set to work resolutely and
built up the entire wall that was broken
down, and raised towers on it,[k] and out-
side it he built another wall; he also
strengthened the Millo in the city of Da-
vid, and made weapons and shields in
abundance. 6 He appointed combat com-
manders over the people, and gathered
them together to him in the square at the
gate of the city and spoke encouragingly
to them, saying, 7 "Be strong and of
good courage. Do not be afraid or dis-
mayed before the king of Assyria and all
the horde that is with him; for there is
one greater with us than with him. 8 With
him is an arm of flesh; but with us is the
LORD our God, to help us and to fight our
battles." The people were encouraged by
the words of King Hezekiah of Judah.

9 After this, while King Sennacherib
of Assyria was at Lachish with all his
forces, he sent his servants to Jerusalem
to King Hezekiah of Judah and to all the
people of Judah that were in Jerusalem,
saying, 10 "Thus says King Sennacherib
of Assyria: On what are you relying, that

*j* Heb *He* *k* Vg: Heb *and raised on the towers*

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provided for. **11–21**: Compare 1 Chr 23.7–23.

**32.1–33: The invasion of Sennacherib and the end of Hezekiah's reign.** Based upon 2 Kings 18.13–20.21, with much omission and some addition. **1**: From 2 Kings 18.13, with the change of "and took them" to

you undergo the siege of Jerusalem? 11 Is not Hezekiah misleading you, handing you over to die by famine and by thirst, when he tells you, 'The LORD our God will save us from the hand of the king of Assyria'? 12 Was it not this same Hezekiah who took away his high places and his altars and commanded Judah and Jerusalem, saying, 'Before one altar you shall worship, and upon it you shall make your offerings'? 13 Do you not know what I and my ancestors have done to all the peoples of other lands? Were the gods of the nations of those lands at all able to save their lands out of my hand? 14 Who among all the gods of those nations that my ancestors utterly destroyed was able to save his people from my hand, that your God should be able to save you from my hand? 15 Now therefore do not let Hezekiah deceive you or mislead you in this fashion, and do not believe him, for no god of any nation or kingdom has been able to save his people from my hand or from the hand of my ancestors. How much less will your God save you out of my hand!"

16 His servants said still more against the Lord GOD and against his servant Hezekiah. 17 He also wrote letters to throw contempt on the LORD the God of Israel and to speak against him, saying, "Just as the gods of the nations in other lands did not rescue their people from my hands, so the God of Hezekiah will not rescue his people from my hand." 18 They shouted it with a loud voice in the language of Judah to the people of Jerusalem who were on the wall, to frighten and terrify them, in order that they might take the city. 19 They spoke of the God of Jerusalem as if he were like the gods of the peoples of the earth, which are the work of human hands.

20 Then King Hezekiah and the prophet Isaiah son of Amoz prayed because of this and cried to heaven. 21 And the LORD sent an angel who cut off all the mighty warriors and commanders and officers in the camp of the king of Assyria. So he returned in disgrace to his own land. When he came into the house of his god, some of his own sons struck him down there with the sword. 22 So the LORD saved Hezekiah and the inhabitants of Jerusalem from the hand of King Sennacherib of Assyria and from the hand of all his enemies; he gave them rest[l] on every side. 23 Many brought gifts to the LORD in Jerusalem and precious things to King Hezekiah of Judah, so that he was exalted in the sight of all nations from that time onward.

24 In those days Hezekiah became sick and was at the point of death. He prayed to the LORD, and he answered him and gave him a sign. 25 But Hezekiah did not respond according to the benefit done to him, for his heart was proud. Therefore wrath came upon him and upon Judah and Jerusalem. 26 Then Hezekiah humbled himself for the pride of his heart, both he and the inhabitants of Jerusalem, so that the wrath of the LORD did not come upon them in the days of Hezekiah.

27 Hezekiah had very great riches and honor; and he made for himself treasuries for silver, for gold, for precious stones, for spices, for shields, and for all kinds of costly objects; 28 storehouses also for the yield of grain, wine, and oil; and stalls for all kinds of cattle, and sheepfolds.[m] 29 He likewise provided cities for himself, and flocks and herds in abundance; for God had given him very great possessions. 30 This same Hezekiah closed the upper

*l* Gk Vg: Heb *guided them* *m* Gk Vg: Heb *flocks for folds*

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*thinking to win them for himself.* **2–8**: These preparations for the siege were added by the Chronicler from a source now lost.

**32.9–19**: A greatly condensed version of 2 Kings 18.17–35.

**32.20**: This single sentence is a condensation of the long passage, 2 Kings 19.1–34. **21**: The Chronicler's version of 2 Kings 19.35–37. **22–23**: The Chronicler's comments on the preceding part of the chapter. **24–26**: A condensation of 2 Kings 20.1–19 (Isa chs 38–39), showing that Hezekiah was very good, but not quite perfect.

**32.27–29**: Compare 2 Kings 20.13. **30**:

outlet of the waters of Gihon and directed them down to the west side of the city of David. Hezekiah prospered in all his works. 31 So also in the matter of the envoys of the officials of Babylon, who had been sent to him to inquire about the sign that had been done in the land, God left him to himself, in order to test him and to know all that was in his heart.

32 Now the rest of the acts of Hezekiah, and his good deeds, are written in the vision of the prophet Isaiah son of Amoz in the Book of the Kings of Judah and Israel. 33 Hezekiah slept with his ancestors, and they buried him on the ascent to the tombs of the descendants of David; and all Judah and the inhabitants of Jerusalem did him honor at his death. His son Manasseh succeeded him.

33 Manasseh was twelve years old when he began to reign; he reigned fifty-five years in Jerusalem. 2 He did what was evil in the sight of the LORD, according to the abominable practices of the nations whom the LORD drove out before the people of Israel. 3 For he rebuilt the high places that his father Hezekiah had pulled down, and erected altars to the Baals, made sacred poles,[n] worshiped all the host of heaven, and served them. 4 He built altars in the house of the LORD, of which the LORD had said, "In Jerusalem shall my name be forever." 5 He built altars for all the host of heaven in the two courts of the house of the LORD. 6 He made his son pass through fire in the valley of the son of Hinnom, practiced soothsaying and augury and sorcery, and dealt with mediums and with wizards. He did much evil in the sight of the LORD, provoking him to anger. 7 The carved image of the idol that he had made he set in the house of God, of which God said to David and to his son Solomon, "In this house, and in Jerusalem, which I have chosen out of all the tribes of Israel, I will put my name forever; 8 I will never again remove the feet of Israel from the land that I appointed for your ancestors, if only they will be careful to do all that I have commanded them, all the law, the statutes, and the ordinances given through Moses." 9 Manasseh misled Judah and the inhabitants of Jerusalem, so that they did more evil than the nations whom the LORD had destroyed before the people of Israel.

10 The LORD spoke to Manasseh and to his people, but they gave no heed. 11 Therefore the LORD brought against them the commanders of the army of the king of Assyria, who took Manasseh captive in manacles, bound him with fetters, and brought him to Babylon. 12 While he was in distress he entreated the favor of the LORD his God and humbled himself greatly before the God of his ancestors. 13 He prayed to him, and God received his entreaty, heard his plea, and restored him again to Jerusalem and to his kingdom. Then Manasseh knew that the LORD indeed was God.

14 Afterward he built an outer wall for the city of David west of Gihon, in the valley, reaching the entrance at the Fish Gate; he carried it around Ophel,

*n* Heb *Asheroth*

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Compare vv. 3–4 and see 2 Kings 20.20–21 n. **31**: Further comment on 2 Kings 20.12–19. **32–33**: Slightly expanded from 2 Kings 20.20–21. The reference to *the vision of the prophet Isaiah* is not necessarily to the canonical book of this prophet, which does, however, contain material on Hezekiah (Isa chs 36–39; compare Isa 1.1).

**33.1–25: The bad beginning of Manasseh; his punishment and repentance; the evil reign of Amon.** This chapter is unusual in that it presents a king of Judah, Manasseh, as less evil than he appears in 2 Kings. Perhaps the Chronicler could not believe that Manasseh was wholly bad, since he reigned longer than any other king of Israel or Judah. **1–9**: These verses follow closely their source, 2 Kings 21.1–9.

**33.10–13**: There is no hint of Manasseh's captivity and release in 2 Kings, though his name appears in Assyrian inscriptions as a vassal of Esarhaddon and Ashurbanipal, sometimes under suspicion. Thus the Babylonian captivity of Manasseh is historically possible, though the Chronicler uses it here as divine punishment to bring the sinning king to repentance. This repentance is somewhat doubtful in view of 2 Kings 21.10–17.

and raised it to a very great height. He also put commanders of the army in all the fortified cities in Judah. 15He took away the foreign gods and the idol from the house of the LORD, and all the altars that he had built on the mountain of the house of the LORD and in Jerusalem, and he threw them out of the city. 16He also restored the altar of the LORD and offered on it sacrifices of well-being and of thanksgiving; and he commanded Judah to serve the LORD the God of Israel. 17The people, however, still sacrificed at the high places, but only to the LORD their God.

18 Now the rest of the acts of Manasseh, his prayer to his God, and the words of the seers who spoke to him in the name of the LORD God of Israel, these are in the Annals of the Kings of Israel. 19His prayer, and how God received his entreaty, all his sin and his faithlessness, the sites on which he built high places and set up the sacred poles[o] and the images, before he humbled himself, these are written in the records of the seers.[p] 20So Manasseh slept with his ancestors, and they buried him in his house. His son Amon succeeded him.

21 Amon was twenty-two years old when he began to reign; he reigned two years in Jerusalem. 22He did what was evil in the sight of the LORD, as his father Manasseh had done. Amon sacrificed to all the images that his father Manasseh had made, and served them. 23He did not humble himself before the LORD, as his father Manasseh had humbled himself, but this Amon incurred more and more guilt. 24His servants conspired against him and killed him in his house. 25But the people of the land killed all those who had conspired against King Amon; and the people of the land made his son Josiah king to succeed him.

34 Josiah was eight years old when he began to reign; he reigned thirty-one years in Jerusalem. 2He did what was right in the sight of the LORD, and walked in the ways of his ancestor David; he did not turn aside to the right or to the left. 3For in the eighth year of his reign, while he was still a boy, he began to seek the God of his ancestor David, and in the twelfth year he began to purge Judah and Jerusalem of the high places, the sacred poles,[o] and the carved and the cast images. 4In his presence they pulled down the altars of the Baals; he demolished the incense altars that stood above them. He broke down the sacred poles[o] and the carved and the cast images; he made dust of them and scattered it over the graves of those who had sacrificed to them. 5He also burned the bones of the priests on their altars, and purged Judah and Jerusalem. 6In the towns of Manasseh, Ephraim, and Simeon, and as far as Naphtali, in their ruins[q] all around, 7he broke down the altars, beat the sacred poles[r] and the images into powder, and demolished all the incense altars throughout all the land of Israel. Then he returned to Jerusalem.

8 In the eighteenth year of his reign,

*o* Heb *Asherim* *p* One Ms Gk: MT *of Hozai*
*q* Meaning of Heb uncertain *r* Heb *Asherim*

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**33.14–17**: None of these verses, except the last, has any parallel. Verse 17 shows that the reform fell short of perfection; compare 2 Kings 21.16, which is much stronger in condemnation.

**33.18–20**: These verses are a new version of 2 Kings 21.17–18 in the light of the Chronicler's own interpretation of the reign of Manasseh. **21–25**: From 2 Kings 21.19–24, and in agreement with the source in the low evaluation of Amon; v. 23 has been rewritten to conform to the new evaluation of Manasseh. For the (apocryphal) Prayer of Manasseh, see p. 282 AP.

**34.1–33**: **The good reign of Josiah; his reforms and the finding of the book of the law.** The Chronicler pictures Josiah as the great reformer, the best king since David and Solomon, and the last good king. 2 Kings 22.1–23.30 is in basic agreement on the character and importance of Josiah. **3–7**: These verses transfer the great reform from a time after the finding of the book of the law to a time near the beginning of Josiah's reign (compare 2 Kings 23.4–20). *The sacred poles,* see 1 Kings 14.15 n.

**34.8–13**: The repair of the temple. This paragraph follows 2 Kings 22.3–7, but with

when he had purged the land and the house, he sent Shaphan son of Azaliah, Maaseiah the governor of the city, and Joah son of Joahaz, the recorder, to repair the house of the LORD his God. 9They came to the high priest Hilkiah and delivered the money that had been brought into the house of God, which the Levites, the keepers of the threshold, had collected from Manasseh and Ephraim and from all the remnant of Israel and from all Judah and Benjamin and from the inhabitants of Jerusalem. 10They delivered it to the workers who had the oversight of the house of the LORD, and the workers who were working in the house of the LORD gave it for repairing and restoring the house. 11They gave it to the carpenters and the builders to buy quarried stone, and timber for binders, and beams for the buildings that the kings of Judah had let go to ruin. 12The people did the work faithfully. Over them were appointed the Levites Jahath and Obadiah, of the sons of Merari, along with Zechariah and Meshullam, of the sons of the Kohathites, to have oversight. Other Levites, all skillful with instruments of music, 13were over the burden bearers and directed all who did work in every kind of service; and some of the Levites were scribes, and officials, and gatekeepers.

14 While they were bringing out the money that had been brought into the house of the LORD, the priest Hilkiah found the book of the law of the LORD given through Moses. 15Hilkiah said to the secretary Shaphan, "I have found the book of the law in the house of the LORD"; and Hilkiah gave the book to Shaphan. 16Shaphan brought the book to the king, and further reported to the king, "All that was committed to your servants they are doing. 17They have emptied out the money that was found in the house of the LORD and have delivered it into the hand of the overseers and the workers." 18The secretary Shaphan informed the king, "The priest Hilkiah has given me a book." Shaphan then read it aloud to the king.

19 When the king heard the words of the law he tore his clothes. 20Then the king commanded Hilkiah, Ahikam son of Shaphan, Abdon son of Micah, the secretary Shaphan, and the king's servant Asaiah: 21"Go, inquire of the LORD for me and for those who are left in Israel and in Judah, concerning the words of the book that has been found; for the wrath of the LORD that is poured out on us is great, because our ancestors did not keep the word of the LORD, to act in accordance with all that is written in this book."

22 So Hilkiah and those whom the king had sent went to the prophet Huldah, the wife of Shallum son of Tokhath son of Hasrah, keeper of the wardrobe (who lived in Jerusalem in the Second Quarter) and spoke to her to that effect. 23She declared to them, "Thus says the LORD, the God of Israel: Tell the man who sent you to me, 24Thus says the LORD: I will indeed bring disaster upon this place and upon its inhabitants, all the curses that are written in the book that was read before the king of Judah. 25Because they have forsaken me and have made offerings to other gods, so that they have provoked me to anger with all the works of their hands, my wrath will be poured out on this place and will not be quenched. 26But as to the king of Judah, who sent you to inquire of the LORD, thus shall you say to him: Thus says the LORD, the God of Israel: Regarding the words that you have heard, 27because your heart was penitent and you humbled yourself before God when you heard his words against this place and its inhabitants, and you have humbled yourself before me, and have torn your clothes and wept before me, I also have

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more attention to the Levites, the musicians, and the help from the territory of the former northern kingdom.

**34.14–18**: The finding of the book of the law. This account is not essentially different from its source, 2 Kings 22.8–10 (see note there).

**34.19–28**: Very similar to its source,

heard you, says the LORD. 28I will gather you to your ancestors and you shall be gathered to your grave in peace; your eyes shall not see all the disaster that I will bring on this place and its inhabitants." They took the message back to the king.

29 Then the king sent word and gathered together all the elders of Judah and Jerusalem. 30The king went up to the house of the LORD, with all the people of Judah, the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the priests and the Levites, all the people both great and small; he read in their hearing all the words of the book of the covenant that had been found in the house of the LORD. 31The king stood in his place and made a covenant before the LORD, to follow the LORD, keeping his commandments, his decrees, and his statutes, with all his heart and all his soul, to perform the words of the covenant that were written in this book. 32Then he made all who were present in Jerusalem and in Benjamin pledge themselves to it. And the inhabitants of Jerusalem acted according to the covenant of God, the God of their ancestors. 33Josiah took away all the abominations from all the territory that belonged to the people of Israel, and made all who were in Israel worship the LORD their God. All his days they did not turn away from following the LORD the God of their ancestors.

35 Josiah kept a passover to the LORD in Jerusalem; they slaughtered the passover lamb on the fourteenth day of the first month. 2He appointed the priests to their offices and encouraged them in the service of the house of the LORD. 3He said to the Levites who taught all Israel and who were holy to the LORD, "Put the holy ark in the house that Solomon son of David, king of Israel, built; you need no longer carry it on your shoulders. Now serve the LORD your God and his people Israel. 4Make preparations by your ancestral houses by your divisions, following the written directions of King David of Israel and the written directions of his son Solomon. 5Take position in the holy place according to the groupings of the ancestral houses of your kindred the people, and let there be Levites for each division of an ancestral house.[s] 6Slaughter the passover lamb, sanctify yourselves, and on behalf of your kindred make preparations, acting according to the word of the LORD by Moses."

7 Then Josiah contributed to the people, as passover offerings for all that were present, lambs and kids from the flock to the number of thirty thousand, and three thousand bulls; these were from the king's possessions. 8His officials contributed willingly to the people, to the priests, and to the Levites. Hilkiah, Zechariah, and Jehiel, the chief officers of the house of God, gave to the priests for the passover offerings two thousand six hundred lambs and kids and three hundred bulls. 9Conaniah also, and his brothers Shemaiah and Nethanel, and Hashabiah and Jeiel and Jozabad, the chiefs of the Levites, gave to the Levites for the passover offerings five thousand lambs and kids and five hundred bulls.

10 When the service had been prepared for, the priests stood in their place, and the Levites in their divisions according to the king's command. 11They slaughtered the passover lamb, and the priests dashed the blood that they re-

s Meaning of Heb uncertain

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2 Kings 22.11–20 (see notes there). **29–33**: Expanded from 2 Kings 23.1–3. **30**: *The Levites* are substituted for "the prophets." **32**: *Benjamin* is added. **33**: A kind of summary of 2 Kings 23.4–20.

**35.1–27**: **Josiah's great passover celebration; his tragic mistake and consequent death. 1–6**: 2 Kings 23.21–23 tells us that Josiah kept the greatest passover of any up to his time, but gives no details. The Chronicler seizes the opportunity to describe in detail what he regarded as the most important festival, as it was kept in his time, or as it ought to be kept in the future. Verse 4 refers to 1 Chr chs 24–26.

**35.7–9**: Compare 1 Chr 29.6–9. **10–15**: A prominent place is given to *the Levites* and *the singers* (see Introduction to 1 Chronicles).

ceived[t] from them, while the Levites did the skinning. 12They set aside the burnt offerings so that they might distribute them according to the groupings of the ancestral houses of the people, to offer to the LORD, as it is written in the book of Moses. And they did the same with the bulls. 13They roasted the passover lamb with fire according to the ordinance; and they boiled the holy offerings in pots, in caldrons, and in pans, and carried them quickly to all the people. 14Afterward they made preparations for themselves and for the priests, because the priests the descendants of Aaron were occupied in offering the burnt offerings and the fat parts until night; so the Levites made preparations for themselves and for the priests, the descendants of Aaron. 15The singers, the descendants of Asaph, were in their place according to the command of David, and Asaph, and Heman, and the king's seer Jeduthun. The gatekeepers were at each gate; they did not need to interrupt their service, for their kindred the Levites made preparations for them.

16 So all the service of the LORD was prepared that day, to keep the passover and to offer burnt offerings on the altar of the LORD, according to the command of King Josiah. 17The people of Israel who were present kept the passover at that time, and the festival of unleavened bread seven days. 18No passover like it had been kept in Israel since the days of the prophet Samuel; none of the kings of Israel had kept such a passover as was kept by Josiah, by the priests and the Levites, by all Judah and Israel who were present, and by the inhabitants of Jerusalem. 19In the eighteenth year of the reign of Josiah this passover was kept.

20 After all this, when Josiah had set the temple in order, King Neco of Egypt went up to fight at Carchemish on the Euphrates, and Josiah went out against him. 21But Neco[u] sent envoys to him, saying, "What have I to do with you, king of Judah? I am not coming against you today, but against the house with which I am at war; and God has commanded me to hurry. Cease opposing God, who is with me, so that he will not destroy you." 22But Josiah would not turn away from him, but disguised himself in order to fight with him. He did not listen to the words of Neco from the mouth of God, but joined battle in the plain of Megiddo. 23The archers shot King Josiah; and the king said to his servants, "Take me away, for I am badly wounded." 24So his servants took him out of the chariot and carried him in his second chariot[v] and brought him to Jerusalem. There he died, and was buried in the tombs of his ancestors. All Judah and Jerusalem mourned for Josiah. 25Jeremiah also uttered a lament for Josiah, and all the singing men and singing women have spoken of Josiah in their laments to this day. They made these a custom in Israel; they are recorded in the Laments. 26Now the rest of the acts of Josiah and his faithful deeds in accordance with what is written in the law of the LORD, 27and his acts, first and last, are

*t* Heb lacks *that they received* *u* Heb *he*
*v* Or *the chariot of his deputy*

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**35.16–19:** Compare 2 Kings 23.22–23. **20–24:** A greatly expanded version of 2 Kings 23.29–30; some of the added details are doubtless historically correct. The most characteristic touch of the Chronicler is in describing *the words of Neco* as coming *from the mouth of God* (v. 22). Only thus could a writer who believed every misfortune a direct punishment from God explain the untimely death of the otherwise righteous Josiah.

**35.25:** Strangely enough the prophet *Jeremiah* is not mentioned in 2 Kings. The Chronicler here makes good the omission (compare Jer 1.2; 3.6; 22.10, 15). *The Laments* mentioned here are not to be confused with the canonical book of Lamentations. **26–27:** A characteristic expansion of 2 Kings 23.28.

**36.1–23: The last agonies of the doomed nation.** The goodness of David, Solomon, Asa, Hezekiah, and Josiah was not sufficient, and the apostate nation was doomed (compare 34.24–28). The source is 2 Kings 23.30b–25.21, with some condensation and much rewriting near the end. **1–4:**

written in the Book of the Kings of Israel and Judah.

36 The people of the land took Jehoahaz son of Josiah and made him king to succeed his father in Jerusalem. 2Jehoahaz was twenty-three years old when he began to reign; he reigned three months in Jerusalem. 3Then the king of Egypt deposed him in Jerusalem and laid on the land a tribute of one hundred talents of silver and one talent of gold. 4The king of Egypt made his brother Eliakim king over Judah and Jerusalem, and changed his name to Jehoiakim; but Neco took his brother Jehoahaz and carried him to Egypt.

5 Jehoiakim was twenty-five years old when he began to reign; he reigned eleven years in Jerusalem. He did what was evil in the sight of the LORD his God. 6Against him King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon came up, and bound him with fetters to take him to Babylon. 7Nebuchadnezzar also carried some of the vessels of the house of the LORD to Babylon and put them in his palace in Babylon. 8Now the rest of the acts of Jehoiakim, and the abominations that he did, and what was found against him, are written in the Book of the Kings of Israel and Judah; and his son Jehoiachin succeeded him.

9 Jehoiachin was eight years old when he began to reign; he reigned three months and ten days in Jerusalem. He did what was evil in the sight of the LORD. 10In the spring of the year King Nebuchadnezzar sent and brought him to Babylon, along with the precious vessels of the house of the LORD, and made his brother Zedekiah king over Judah and Jerusalem.

11 Zedekiah was twenty-one years old when he began to reign; he reigned eleven years in Jerusalem. 12He did what was evil in the sight of the LORD his God. He did not humble himself before the prophet Jeremiah who spoke from the mouth of the LORD. 13He also rebelled against King Nebuchadnezzar, who had made him swear by God; he stiffened his neck and hardened his heart against turning to the LORD, the God of Israel. 14All the leading priests and the people also were exceedingly unfaithful, following all the abominations of the nations; and they polluted the house of the LORD that he had consecrated in Jerusalem.

15 The LORD, the God of their ancestors, sent persistently to them by his messengers, because he had compassion on his people and on his dwelling place; 16but they kept mocking the messengers of God, despising his words, and scoffing at his prophets, until the wrath of the LORD against his people became so great that there was no remedy.

17 Therefore he brought up against them the king of the Chaldeans, who killed their youths with the sword in the house of their sanctuary, and had no compassion on young man or young woman, the aged or the feeble; he gave them all into his hand. 18All the vessels of the house of God, large and small, and the treasures of the house of the LORD,

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The ill-fated reign of Jehoahaz, taken with slight condensation from 2 Kings 23.30b–34.

**36.5–8**: Much abridged from 2 Kings 23.36–24.6. In v. 6 Jehoiakim seems to be taken *to Babylon*, contrary to the source, 2 Kings 24.6 (compare Dan 1.1–2). Verse 7 is added, anticipating v. 10 (compare Dan 1.2). **9–10**: The story of *Jehoiachin* is drastically abridged from 2 Kings 24.8–17. The correct age in v. 9 is not *eight years*, but eighteen years (compare 2 Kings 24.8). Tablets from Babylonia disclose that by 592 B.C. he had five sons.

**36.11–13**: Based on 2 Kings 24.18–20, but with certain changes, such as the dropping of the names of the king's mother and grandfather, the introduction of *the prophet Jeremiah* (see 35.25 n. and compare Jer chs 37–39), and the mention of the king's oath (compare Ezek 17.16). **14**: There is no parallel to this in 2 Kings, where the blame is laid chiefly on the king (compare Jer ch 7; Ezek ch 8). The Chronicler does not condemn the Levites and musicians. **15–16**: The Chronicler is fond of the theme of the unheeded prophet (compare 12.5–8; 15.1–8; 19.1–3; 21.12–15; 25.7–9, 15–17; Jer 26.20–24; 29.16–20; 35.14–15). **17–21**: A condensation of 2 Kings 25.1–21, with additional references to *the establishment of the kingdom of Persia* (compare v. 22), the

*Cyrus proclaims liberty for the exiles*

and the treasures of the king and of his officials, all these he brought to Babylon. 19They burned the house of God, broke down the wall of Jerusalem, burned all its palaces with fire, and destroyed all its precious vessels. 20He took into exile in Babylon those who had escaped from the sword, and they became servants to him and to his sons until the establishment of the kingdom of Persia, 21to fulfill the word of the LORD by the mouth of Jeremiah, until the land had made up for its sabbaths. All the days that it lay desolate it kept sabbath, to fulfill seventy years.

22 In the first year of King Cyrus of Persia, in fulfillment of the word of the LORD spoken by Jeremiah, the LORD stirred up the spirit of King Cyrus of Persia so that he sent a herald throughout all his kingdom and also declared in a written edict: 23"Thus says King Cyrus of Persia: The LORD, the God of heaven, has given me all the kingdoms of the earth, and he has charged me to build him a house at Jerusalem, which is in Judah. Whoever is among you of all his people, may the LORD his God be with him! Let him go up."

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prophecies of *Jeremiah* (compare Jer 25.11–12; 29.10), and the *sabbaths* (sabbatical years; compare Lev 25.1–7; 26.27–39). **22–23**: This note of hope is reproduced here from what immediately follows, Ezra 1.1–3, where it more properly belongs. If Chronicles originally belonged with Ezra and Nehemiah (see Introductions to 1 and 2 Chronicles), then one might say that 1 and 2 Chronicles portrayed the downfall, and Ezra/Nehemiah the restoration, of God's people. In the arrangement of the Hebrew Bible, 2 Chronicles is the last book; thus this version of Israel's history, like 2 Kings 25.27–30, does not end on a note of doom (compare 2 Kings 25.27–30 and see note there).

# *Ezra*

Anciently several books circulated under the name of Ezra, not only our Ezra and Nehemiah as a single book, but others now preserved in the Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha. Our Ezra-Nehemiah is usually ascribed to the Chronicler (see Introduction to 1 Chronicles), prepared as a supplement to Chronicles on the basis of Hebrew and Aramaic documents, memoirs of Nehemiah, a memorial of Ezra, genealogies, and archives. Chronicles ends with the destruction of Jerusalem and the carrying away of treasure and captives. This supplement, the first verses of which appear also at the end of Chronicles, was written to tell how some returned from captivity and labored at restoring religion at a restored temple in a refortified Jerusalem (see "Survey of . . . Bible Lands," §18). During the exile religious interest had concentrated particularly on the laws associated with the name of Moses, and had fostered that exclusiveness which became so characteristic of Judaism. Thus the returned exiles were concerned not only with reconstruction of altar, temple, and city, but with social and religious problems, freeing the community of foreign elements, and establishing religious practice in stricter conformity to their understanding of Mosaic law. To the author the returned exiles were a godly remnant with a religious mission.

There seem to have been four stages of the return: (1) a return under Cyrus (about 538 B.C.) led by Sheshbazzar, who commenced rebuilding the temple but, under local opposition, had to leave it unfinished; (2) a return under Darius I (521–485) led by Zerubbabel and Jeshua, who also encountered opposition but, with encouragement from the prophets Haggai and Zechariah, completed the temple; (3) a group, under Artaxerxes I (464–423), led by Ezra, who brought a codification of Mosaic law; (4) another group, under Artaxerxes II (404–358), led by Nehemiah, who came twice under Artaxerxes I to build the walls of Jerusalem, still against opposition from the local groups, and to attempt to establish purity of community and worship. An alternate solution of difficult textual problems places Ezra's return under Artaxerxes II, after Nehemiah.

The text of Ezra and Nehemiah has been dislocated in transmission. It is probable that Neh 8 originally stood between Ezra 8 and 9 and that Neh 9.1–5 originally stood between Ezra 10.15 and 10.16. An editor, faced with this textual confusion, endeavored to ease it by supplying connecting sentences and by insertions, such as the name of Nehemiah in Neh 8.9 and Ezra in Neh 12.26,36.

1 In the first year of King Cyrus of Persia, in order that the word of the LORD by the mouth of Jeremiah might be accomplished, the LORD stirred up the spirit of King Cyrus of Persia so that he sent a herald throughout all his kingdom, and also in a written edict declared:

2 "Thus says King Cyrus of Persia: The LORD, the God of heaven, has given me all the kingdoms of the earth, and he has charged me to build him a house at Jerusalem in Judah. 3 Any of those among you who are of his people—may their God be with them!—are now permitted to go up to Jerusalem in Judah, and rebuild the house of the LORD, the God of Israel—he is the God who is in Jerusalem; 4 and let all survivors, in whatever place they reside, be assisted by the people of their place with silver and gold, with goods and with animals, besides freewill offerings for the house of God in Jerusalem."

5 The heads of the families of Judah and Benjamin, and the priests and the Levites—everyone whose spirit God had stirred—got ready to go up and rebuild the house of the LORD in Jerusalem. 6 All their neighbors aided them with silver vessels, with gold, with goods, with animals, and with valuable gifts, besides all that was freely offered. 7 King Cyrus himself brought out the vessels of the house of the LORD that Nebuchadnezzar had carried away from Jerusalem and placed in the house of his gods. 8 King Cyrus of Persia had them released into the charge of Mithredath the treasurer, who counted them out to Sheshbazzar the prince of Judah. 9 And this was the inventory: gold basins, thirty; silver basins, one thousand; knives,[a] twenty-nine; 10 gold bowls, thirty; other silver bowls, four hundred ten; other vessels, one thousand; 11 the total of the gold and silver vessels was five thousand four hundred. All these Sheshbazzar brought up, when the exiles were brought up from Babylonia to Jerusalem.

2 Now these were the people of the province who came from those captive exiles whom King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon had carried captive to Babylonia; they returned to Jerusalem and Judah, all to their own towns. 2 They came with Zerubbabel, Jeshua, Nehemiah, Seraiah, Reelaiah, Mordecai, Bilshan, Mispar, Bigvai, Rehum, and Baanah.

The number of the Israelite people: 3 the descendants of Parosh, two thousand one hundred seventy-two. 4 Of Shephatiah, three hundred seventy-two. 5 Of Arah, seven hundred seventy-five. 6 Of Pahath-moab, namely the descendants of Jeshua and Joab, two thousand eight hundred twelve. 7 Of Elam, one thousand two hundred fifty-four. 8 Of Zattu, nine hundred forty-five. 9 Of Zaccai, seven hundred sixty. 10 Of Bani, six hundred forty-two. 11 Of Bebai, six hundred twenty-three. 12 Of Azgad, one thousand two hundred twenty-two. 13 Of Adonikam, six hundred sixty-six. 14 Of Bigvai, two thousand fifty-six. 15 Of Adin, four hundred fifty-four. 16 Of Ater, namely of Hezekiah, ninety-eight. 17 Of Bezai, three hundred twenty-three. 18 Of Jorah, one hundred twelve. 19 Of Hashum, two hundred twenty-three. 20 Of Gibbar, ninety-five. 21 Of Bethlehem, one hundred twenty-three. 22 The people of Netophah, fifty-six. 23 Of Ana-

*a* Vg: Meaning of Heb uncertain

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**1.1–4: Cyrus' decree.** His *first year* at Babylon was 538 B.C., and his proclamation seemed the fulfilment of Jer 29.10 (2 Chr 36.21) under divine direction (Isa 44.28; 45.1–3). **2–3:** In his inscriptions Cyrus shows interest in restoring temples. To him the LORD is the local deity of Jerusalem (6.12), whose temple was destroyed in 586 B.C. by Nebuchadnezzar (5.12).

**1.5–11: Gifts for refurnishing the temple,** including the return of the *vessels* taken by *Nebuchadnezzar* (2 Kings 25.14–16).

**1.8:** *Mithredath* (Mithridates) was temple *treasurer*. *Sheshbazzar* is the Babylonian name of a Jewish court official. **9–11:** These numbers vary in different texts and are uncertain.

**2.1–70: A census of the first return** (= Neh 7.6–73a), covering several groups: lead-

thoth, one hundred twenty-eight. 24The descendants of Azmaveth, forty-two. 25Of Kiriatharim, Chephirah, and Beeroth, seven hundred forty-three. 26Of Ramah and Geba, six hundred twenty-one. 27The people of Michmas, one hundred twenty-two. 28Of Bethel and Ai, two hundred twenty-three. 29The descendants of Nebo, fifty-two. 30Of Magbish, one hundred fifty-six. 31Of the other Elam, one thousand two hundred fifty-four. 32Of Harim, three hundred twenty. 33Of Lod, Hadid, and Ono, seven hundred twenty-five. 34Of Jericho, three hundred forty-five. 35Of Senaah, three thousand six hundred thirty.

36 The priests: the descendants of Jedaiah, of the house of Jeshua, nine hundred seventy-three. 37Of Immer, one thousand fifty-two. 38Of Pashhur, one thousand two hundred forty-seven. 39Of Harim, one thousand seventeen.

40 The Levites: the descendants of Jeshua and Kadmiel, of the descendants of Hodaviah, seventy-four. 41The singers: the descendants of Asaph, one hundred twenty-eight. 42The descendants of the gatekeepers: of Shallum, of Ater, of Talmon, of Akkub, of Hatita, and of Shobai, in all one hundred thirty-nine.

43 The temple servants: the descendants of Ziha, Hasupha, Tabbaoth, 44Keros, Siaha, Padon, 45Lebanah, Hagabah, Akkub, 46Hagab, Shamlai, Hanan, 47Giddel, Gahar, Reaiah, 48Rezin, Nekoda, Gazzam, 49Uzza, Paseah, Besai, 50Asnah, Meunim, Nephisim, 51Bakbuk, Hakupha, Harhur, 52Bazluth, Mehida, Harsha, 53Barkos, Sisera, Temah, 54Neziah, and Hatipha.

55 The descendants of Solomon's servants: Sotai, Hassophereth, Peruda, 56Jaalah, Darkon, Giddel, 57Shephatiah, Hattil, Pochereth-hazzebaim, and Ami.

58 All the temple servants and the descendants of Solomon's servants were three hundred ninety-two.

59 The following were those who came up from Tel-melah, Tel-harsha, Cherub, Addan, and Immer, though they could not prove their families or their descent, whether they belonged to Israel: 60the descendants of Delaiah, Tobiah, and Nekoda, six hundred fifty-two. 61Also, of the descendants of the priests: the descendants of Habaiah, Hakkoz, and Barzillai (who had married one of the daughters of Barzillai the Gileadite, and was called by their name). 62These looked for their entries in the genealogical records, but they were not found there, and so they were excluded from the priesthood as unclean; 63the governor told them that they were not to partake of the most holy food, until there should be a priest to consult Urim and Thummim.

64 The whole assembly together was forty-two thousand three hundred sixty, 65besides their male and female servants, of whom there were seven thousand three hundred thirty-seven; and they had two hundred male and female singers. 66They had seven hundred thirty-six horses, two hundred forty-five mules, 67four hundred thirty-five camels, and six thousand seven hundred twenty donkeys.

68 As soon as they came to the house of the LORD in Jerusalem, some of the heads of families made freewill offerings for the house of God, to erect it on its site. 69According to their resources they gave to the building fund sixty-one thousand darics of gold, five thousand minas of silver, and one hundred priestly robes.

70 The priests, the Levites, and some of the people lived in Jerusalem and its

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ers, temple officials, servants, those of dubious genealogy, and animals.

**2.36–39**: There are only four priestly groups as against twenty-four in 1 Chr ch 24.

**2.43, 58**: *The temple servants* are the Nethinim (lit., "those given" [to the temple]; see 1 Chr 9.2; Josh 9.27 n.), many of whose names are non-Jewish. **63**: The *governor* is Sheshbazzar. *Urim and Thummim* are the sacred lots (1 Sam 14.41; Deut 33.8).

**2.64**: This total exceeds the numbers of the various groups; it doubtless includes others unmentioned. **69**: A *daric* was a Persian gold coin, a *mina* a Mesopotamian weight for precious metals. The amount differs from that mentioned in Neh 7.70–72.

vicinity;[b] and the singers, the gatekeepers, and the temple servants lived in their towns, and all Israel in their towns.

3 When the seventh month came, and the Israelites were in the towns, the people gathered together in Jerusalem. 2Then Jeshua son of Jozadak, with his fellow priests, and Zerubbabel son of Shealtiel with his kin set out to build the altar of the God of Israel, to offer burnt offerings on it, as prescribed in the law of Moses the man of God. 3They set up the altar on its foundation, because they were in dread of the neighboring peoples, and they offered burnt offerings upon it to the LORD, morning and evening. 4And they kept the festival of booths,[c] as prescribed, and offered the daily burnt offerings by number according to the ordinance, as required for each day, 5and after that the regular burnt offerings, the offerings at the new moon and at all the sacred festivals of the LORD, and the offerings of everyone who made a freewill offering to the LORD. 6From the first day of the seventh month they began to offer burnt offerings to the LORD. But the foundation of the temple of the LORD was not yet laid. 7So they gave money to the masons and the carpenters, and food, drink, and oil to the Sidonians and the Tyrians to bring cedar trees from Lebanon to the sea, to Joppa, according to the grant that they had from King Cyrus of Persia.

8 In the second year after their arrival at the house of God at Jerusalem, in the second month, Zerubbabel son of Shealtiel and Jeshua son of Jozadak made a beginning, together with the rest of their people, the priests and the Levites and all who had come to Jerusalem from the captivity. They appointed the Levites, from twenty years old and upward, to have the oversight of the work on the house of the LORD. 9And Jeshua with his sons and his kin, and Kadmiel and his sons, Binnui and Hodaviah[d] along with the sons of Henadad, the Levites, their sons and kin, together took charge of the workers in the house of God.

10 When the builders laid the foundation of the temple of the LORD, the priests in their vestments were stationed to praise the LORD with trumpets, and the Levites, the sons of Asaph, with cymbals, according to the directions of King David of Israel; 11and they sang responsively, praising and giving thanks to the LORD,

"For he is good,
for his steadfast love endures
forever toward Israel."

And all the people responded with a great shout when they praised the LORD, because the foundation of the house of the LORD was laid. 12But many of the priests and Levites and heads of families, old people who had seen the first house on its foundations, wept with a loud voice when they saw this house, though many shouted aloud for joy, 13so that the people could not distinguish the sound of the joyful shout from the sound of the people's weeping, for the people shouted so loudly that the sound was heard far away.

*b* 1 Esdras 5.46: Heb lacks *lived in Jerusalem and its vicinity* *c* Or *tabernacles*; Heb *succoth*
*d* Compare 2.40; Neh 7.43; 1 Esdras 5.58: Heb *sons of Judah*

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**3.1–13: Rebuilding the temple.** This had commenced under Sheshbazzar (5.14–16) but stopped, and recommenced now under Zerubbabel and Jeshua, leaders of the second return, who *built the altar* as center for the temple cultus. The *seventh month* would be Tishri (September-October) of 520 B.C., in the second year of Darius I (Hag 2.1–4). **2:** *The law of Moses* is not our Pentateuch, but the body of laws associated with Moses' name, especially in Deuteronomy. **3:** Once the altar was *set*, the religious life with *morning and evening* sacrifice, **4:** annual festivals such as *booths* (tabernacles), etc., could be recommenced, and then the temple built.

**3.7:** Compare Solomon's preparations in 2 Chr 2.1–11. Minted *money* was known in the Persian period, though payment in kind was more common. **10–11:** The laying of the foundation was celebrated with music and praise (compare Ps 118). For the directions of David see 2 Chr 29.25–30.

4 When the adversaries of Judah and Benjamin heard that the returned exiles were building a temple to the LORD, the God of Israel, [2]they approached Zerubbabel and the heads of families and said to them, "Let us build with you, for we worship your God as you do, and we have been sacrificing to him ever since the days of King Esarhaddon of Assyria who brought us here." [3]But Zerubbabel, Jeshua, and the rest of the heads of families in Israel said to them, "You shall have no part with us in building a house to our God; but we alone will build to the LORD, the God of Israel, as King Cyrus of Persia has commanded us."

4 Then the people of the land discouraged the people of Judah, and made them afraid to build, [5]and they bribed officials to frustrate their plan throughout the reign of King Cyrus of Persia and until the reign of King Darius of Persia.

6 In the reign of Ahasuerus, in his accession year, they wrote an accusation against the inhabitants of Judah and Jerusalem.

7 And in the days of Artaxerxes, Bishlam and Mithredath and Tabeel and the rest of their associates wrote to King Artaxerxes of Persia; the letter was written in Aramaic and translated.[e] [8]Rehum the royal deputy and Shimshai the scribe wrote a letter against Jerusalem to King Artaxerxes as follows [9](then Rehum the royal deputy, Shimshai the scribe, and the rest of their associates, the judges, the envoys, the officials, the Persians, the people of Erech, the Babylonians, the people of Susa, that is, the Elamites, [10]and the rest of the nations whom the great and noble Osnappar deported and settled in the cities of Samaria and in the rest of the province Beyond the River wrote—and now [11]this is a copy of the letter that they sent):

"To King Artaxerxes: Your servants, the people of the province Beyond the River, send greeting. And now [12]may it be known to the king that the Jews who came up from you to us have gone to Jerusalem. They are rebuilding that rebellious and wicked city; they are finishing the walls and repairing the foundations. [13]Now may it be known to the king that, if this city is rebuilt and the walls finished, they will not pay tribute, custom, or toll, and the royal revenue will be reduced. [14]Now because we share the salt of the palace and it is not fitting for us to witness the king's dishonor, therefore we send and inform the king, [15]so that a search may be made in the annals of your ancestors. You will discover in the annals that this is a rebellious city, hurtful to kings and provinces, and that sedition was stirred up in it from long ago. On that account this city was laid waste. [16]We make known to the king that, if this city is rebuilt and its walls finished, you will then have no possession in the province Beyond the River."

17 The king sent an answer: "To Re-

*e* Heb adds *in Aramaic,* indicating that 4.8–6.18 is in Aramaic. Another interpretation is *The letter was written in the Aramaic script and set forth in the Aramaic language*

**4.1–6: Opposition to the rebuilding of the temple.** The rejoicing alerted neighboring mixed groups who claimed fellowship in religion (2 Kings 17.24–28). *Esarhaddon* settled groups in the cities of Samaria in 676 B.C. **3:** The phrase *we alone* evidences the exclusiveness which turned these neighbors into adversaries. **5:** The *officials* would plead their case at court. *Cyrus* died in 529 B.C. *Darius* reigned 521–485. **6:** *Ahasuerus,* Xerxes I, reigned 485–464.

**4.7–23: Opposition to the rebuilding of the city.** This section is a digression on later opposition encountered by the Jews. Artaxerxes reigned 464–423 B.C. The Aramaic letter to him is from his local officials, authorized by the *commander,* and written by the *scribe.* **10:** *Osnappar* apparently means Assurbanipal (668–630 B.C.). *Beyond the River* denotes the Syro-Palestinian region west of the Euphrates.

**4.13:** The revenues expected by the Persian treasury were the provincial *tribute,* the *custom* levies for provincial expenses, and *toll* for upkeep of the roads. **15:** For such books of *annals* see Esth 2.23; 6.1; Mal 3.16. *Laid waste,* see 2 Kings 24.13–15.

hum the royal deputy and Shimshai the scribe and the rest of their associates who live in Samaria and in the rest of the province Beyond the River, greeting. And now 18 the letter that you sent to us has been read in translation before me. 19 So I made a decree, and someone searched and discovered that this city has risen against kings from long ago, and that rebellion and sedition have been made in it. 20 Jerusalem has had mighty kings who ruled over the whole province Beyond the River, to whom tribute, custom, and toll were paid. 21 Therefore issue an order that these people be made to cease, and that this city not be rebuilt, until I make a decree. 22 Moreover, take care not to be slack in this matter; why should damage grow to the hurt of the king?"

23 Then when the copy of King Artaxerxes' letter was read before Rehum and the scribe Shimshai and their associates, they hurried to the Jews in Jerusalem and by force and power made them cease. 24 At that time the work on the house of God in Jerusalem stopped and was discontinued until the second year of the reign of King Darius of Persia.

5 Now the prophets, Haggai[f] and Zechariah son of Iddo, prophesied to the Jews who were in Judah and Jerusalem, in the name of the God of Israel who was over them. 2 Then Zerubbabel son of Shealtiel and Jeshua son of Jozadak set out to rebuild the house of God in Jerusalem; and with them were the prophets of God, helping them.

3 At the same time Tattenai the governor of the province Beyond the River and Shethar-bozenai and their associates came to them and spoke to them thus, "Who gave you a decree to build this house and to finish this structure?" 4 They[g] also asked them this, "What are the names of the men who are building this building?" 5 But the eye of their God was upon the elders of the Jews, and they did not stop them until a report reached Darius and then answer was returned by letter in reply to it.

6 The copy of the letter that Tattenai the governor of the province Beyond the River and Shethar-bozenai and his associates the envoys who were in the province Beyond the River sent to King Darius; 7 they sent him a report, in which was written as follows: "To Darius the king, all peace! 8 May it be known to the king that we went to the province of Judah, to the house of the great God. It is being built of hewn stone, and timber is laid in the walls; this work is being done diligently and prospers in their hands. 9 Then we spoke to those elders and asked them, 'Who gave you a decree to build this house and to finish this structure?' 10 We also asked them their names, for your information, so that we might write down the names of the men at their head. 11 This was their reply to us: 'We are the servants of the God of heaven and earth, and we are rebuilding the house that was built many years ago, which a great king of Israel built and finished. 12 But because our ancestors had angered the God of heaven, he gave them into the hand of King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon, the Chaldean, who destroyed this house and carried away the people to Babylonia. 13 However, King Cyrus of Babylon, in the first year of his reign, made a decree that this house of God should be rebuilt. 14 Moreover, the gold and silver vessels of the house of God, which Nebuchadnezzar had taken out of the temple in Jerusalem and had brought into the temple of Babylon, these King Cyrus took out of the temple of Babylon, and they were delivered to a man

*f* Aram adds *the prophet* *g* Gk Syr: Aram *We*

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**4.24–6.22: The rebuilding continued.** Verse 24 follows naturally on v. 5, taking us back to the reign of Darius, in whose second year the prophets Haggai and Zechariah encouraged the building (Hag 1.1–4; 2.1–4; Zech 4.9; 6.15). **5.3**: *Tattenai* appears in cuneiform tablets as governor of the province *Beyond the River*.

**5.11**: The *great king* was Solomon. **14**: *The temple of Babylon* would be that of Marduk. **17**: *Royal archives,* the *king's treasury* of 7.20; compare 6.1.

named Sheshbazzar, whom he had made governor. 15He said to him, "Take these vessels; go and put them in the temple in Jerusalem, and let the house of God be rebuilt on its site." 16Then this Sheshbazzar came and laid the foundations of the house of God in Jerusalem; and from that time until now it has been under construction, and it is not yet finished.' 17And now, if it seems good to the king, have a search made in the royal archives there in Babylon, to see whether a decree was issued by King Cyrus for the rebuilding of this house of God in Jerusalem. Let the king send us his pleasure in this matter."

6 Then King Darius made a decree, and they searched the archives where the documents were stored in Babylon. 2But it was in Ecbatana, the capital in the province of Media, that a scroll was found on which this was written: "A record. 3In the first year of his reign, King Cyrus issued a decree: Concerning the house of God at Jerusalem, let the house be rebuilt, the place where sacrifices are offered and burnt offerings are brought;[h] its height shall be sixty cubits and its width sixty cubits, 4with three courses of hewn stones and one course of timber; let the cost be paid from the royal treasury. 5Moreover, let the gold and silver vessels of the house of God, which Nebuchadnezzar took out of the temple in Jerusalem and brought to Babylon, be restored and brought back to the temple in Jerusalem, each to its place; you shall put them in the house of God."

6 "Now you, Tattenai, governor of the province Beyond the River, Shetharbozenai, and you, their associates, the envoys in the province Beyond the River, keep away; 7let the work on this house of God alone; let the governor of the Jews and the elders of the Jews rebuild this house of God on its site. 8Moreover I make a decree regarding what you shall do for these elders of the Jews for the rebuilding of this house of God: the cost is to be paid to these people, in full and without delay, from the royal revenue, the tribute of the province Beyond the River. 9Whatever is needed—young bulls, rams, or sheep for burnt offerings to the God of heaven, wheat, salt, wine, or oil, as the priests in Jerusalem require—let that be given to them day by day without fail, 10so that they may offer pleasing sacrifices to the God of heaven, and pray for the life of the king and his children. 11Furthermore I decree that if anyone alters this edict, a beam shall be pulled out of the house of the perpetrator, who then shall be impaled on it. The house shall be made a dunghill. 12May the God who has established his name there overthrow any king or people that shall put forth a hand to alter this, or to destroy this house of God in Jerusalem. I, Darius, make a decree; let it be done with all diligence."

13 Then, according to the word sent by King Darius, Tattenai, the governor of the province Beyond the River, Shethar-bozenai, and their associates did with all diligence what King Darius had ordered. 14So the elders of the Jews built and prospered, through the prophesying of the prophet Haggai and Zechariah son of Iddo. They finished their building by command of the God of Israel and by decree of Cyrus, Darius, and King Artaxerxes of Persia; 15and this house was finished on the third day of the month of Adar, in the sixth year of the reign of King Darius.

*h* Meaning of Aram uncertain

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**6.2:** *Ecbatana* was the king's summer residence. **7:** *Governor* probably means Zerubbabel (see Hag 2.21).

**6.9:** Provision is made for the burnt offering (Lev ch 1), grain offering (Lev 2.1–13), and drink offering (Lev 23.13). **11:** The punishment for interference was impalement, on which see Esth 2.23; 9.14; Herodotus, *Hist.* III, 159. To make a house a dunghill was the limit of contempt (2 Kings 10.27; Dan 2.5). **15:** *Adar,* the twelfth month (March-April). *The sixth year . . . of King Darius,* 516 B.C.; therefore *Artaxerxes* in v. 14 is a scribal interpolation on the ground of 4.7.

16 The people of Israel, the priests and the Levites, and the rest of the returned exiles, celebrated the dedication of this house of God with joy. 17 They offered at the dedication of this house of God one hundred bulls, two hundred rams, four hundred lambs, and as a sin offering for all Israel, twelve male goats, according to the number of the tribes of Israel. 18 Then they set the priests in their divisions and the Levites in their courses for the service of God at Jerusalem, as it is written in the book of Moses.

19 On the fourteenth day of the first month the returned exiles kept the passover. 20 For both the priests and the Levites had purified themselves; all of them were clean. So they killed the passover lamb for all the returned exiles, for their fellow priests, and for themselves. 21 It was eaten by the people of Israel who had returned from exile, and also by all who had joined them and separated themselves from the pollutions of the nations of the land to worship the LORD, the God of Israel. 22 With joy they celebrated the festival of unleavened bread seven days; for the LORD had made them joyful, and had turned the heart of the king of Assyria to them, so that he aided them in the work on the house of God, the God of Israel.

7 After this, in the reign of King Artaxerxes of Persia, Ezra son of Seraiah, son of Azariah, son of Hilkiah, 2 son of Shallum, son of Zadok, son of Ahitub, 3 son of Amariah, son of Azariah, son of Meraioth, 4 son of Zerahiah, son of Uzzi, son of Bukki, 5 son of Abishua, son of Phinehas, son of Eleazar, son of the chief priest Aaron— 6 this Ezra went up from Babylonia. He was a scribe skilled in the law of Moses that the LORD the God of Israel had given; and the king granted him all that he asked, for the hand of the LORD his God was upon him.

7 Some of the people of Israel, and some of the priests and Levites, the singers and gatekeepers, and the temple servants also went up to Jerusalem, in the seventh year of King Artaxerxes. 8 They came to Jerusalem in the fifth month, which was in the seventh year of the king. 9 On the first day of the first month the journey up from Babylon was begun, and on the first day of the fifth month he came to Jerusalem, for the gracious hand of his God was upon him. 10 For Ezra had set his heart to study the law of the LORD, and to do it, and to teach the statutes and ordinances in Israel.

11 This is a copy of the letter that King Artaxerxes gave to the priest Ezra, the scribe, a scholar of the text of the commandments of the LORD and his statutes for Israel: 12 "Artaxerxes, king of kings, to the priest Ezra, the scribe of the law of the God of heaven: Peace.[i] And now 13 I decree that any of the people of Israel or their priests or Levites in my kingdom who freely offers to go to Jerusalem may go with you. 14 For you are sent by the king and his seven counselors to make inquiries about Judah and Jerusalem according to the law of your God, which is in your hand, 15 and also to convey the silver and gold that the king and his counselors have freely offered to the God of Israel, whose dwelling is in Jerusalem, 16 with all the silver and gold that you shall find in the whole province of Babylonia, and with the freewill offerings of the people and the priests, given willingly for the house of their God in Jerusalem. 17 With this money, then, you shall with all diligence buy bulls, rams,

*i* Syr Vg 1 Esdras 8.9: Aram *Perfect*

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**6.16–18**: There was a dedication of the new temple as Solomon had dedicated his (1 Kings 8.5, 63), and only then could *priests and Levites* take up their *courses*. No such division of courses is contained in the Pentateuch.

**6.19–22**: Now also the festivals (e.g. *the passover* and then *unleavened bread;* Deut 16.1–8), could be celebrated by officiants ritually *clean*. *King of Assyria,* perhaps because Persia now ruled the former Assyria.

**7.1–10.16**: **The history of Ezra. 7**: *Seventh year of King Artaxerxes* I, 458 B.C. (See Introduction).

**7.12–26**: **The king's letter** is in Aramaic. **14**: For the *seven counselors* see Esth 1.14; Herodotus, *Hist.* III, 84. **20**: The *king's*

and lambs, and their grain offerings and their drink offerings, and you shall offer them on the altar of the house of your God in Jerusalem. 18 Whatever seems good to you and your colleagues to do with the rest of the silver and gold, you may do, according to the will of your God. 19 The vessels that have been given you for the service of the house of your God, you shall deliver before the God of Jerusalem. 20 And whatever else is required for the house of your God, which you are responsible for providing, you may provide out of the king's treasury.

21 "I, King Artaxerxes, decree to all the treasurers in the province Beyond the River: Whatever the priest Ezra, the scribe of the law of the God of heaven, requires of you, let it be done with all diligence, 22 up to one hundred talents of silver, one hundred cors of wheat, one hundred baths[j] of wine, one hundred baths[j] of oil, and unlimited salt. 23 Whatever is commanded by the God of heaven, let it be done with zeal for the house of the God of heaven, or wrath will come upon the realm of the king and his heirs. 24 We also notify you that it shall not be lawful to impose tribute, custom, or toll on any of the priests, the Levites, the singers, the doorkeepers, the temple servants, or other servants of this house of God.

25 "And you, Ezra, according to the God-given wisdom you possess, appoint magistrates and judges who may judge all the people in the province Beyond the River who know the laws of your God; and you shall teach those who do not know them. 26 All who will not obey the law of your God and the law of the king, let judgment be strictly executed on them, whether for death or for banishment or for confiscation of their goods or for imprisonment."

27 Blessed be the LORD, the God of our ancestors, who put such a thing as this into the heart of the king to glorify the house of the LORD in Jerusalem, 28 and who extended to me steadfast love before the king and his counselors, and before all the king's mighty officers. I took courage, for the hand of the LORD my God was upon me, and I gathered leaders from Israel to go up with me.

8 These are their family heads, and this is the genealogy of those who went up with me from Babylonia, in the reign of King Artaxerxes: 2 Of the descendants of Phinehas, Gershom. Of Ithamar, Daniel. Of David, Hattush, 3 of the descendants of Shecaniah. Of Parosh, Zechariah, with whom were registered one hundred fifty males. 4 Of the descendants of Pahath-moab, Eliehoenai son of Zerahiah, and with him two hundred males. 5 Of the descendants of Zattu,[k] Shecaniah son of Jahaziel, and with him three hundred males. 6 Of the descendants of Adin, Ebed son of Jonathan, and with him fifty males. 7 Of the descendants of Elam, Jeshaiah son of Athaliah, and with him seventy males. 8 Of the descendants of Shephatiah, Zebadiah son of Michael, and with him eighty males. 9 Of the descendants of Joab, Obadiah son of Jehiel, and with him two hundred eighteen males. 10 Of the descendants of Bani,[l] Shelomith son of Josiphiah, and with him one hundred sixty males. 11 Of the descendants of Bebai, Zechariah son of Bebai, and with him twenty-eight males. 12 Of the descendants of Azgad, Johanan son of Hakkatan, and with him one hundred ten males. 13 Of the descendants of Adonikam, those who came later, their names being Eliphelet, Jeuel, and Shemaiah, and with them sixty males. 14 Of the descendants of Bigvai,

*j* A Heb measure of volume
*k* Gk 1 Esdras 8.32: Heb lacks *of Zattu*
*l* Gk 1 Esdras 8.36: Heb lacks *Bani*

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*treasury* must mean the provincial treasure house, see v. 21. **22**: For the equivalent of the *talent, cor,* and *bath,* see p. 424. **24**: Temple functionaries are exempted from taxation. **25**: The *wisdom* of Ezra is that of the new law book of v. 14, which he was empowered to enforce through *magistrates and judges,* with four types of penalty.

**8.1–29: A list of priestly and lay clans who returned with Ezra.**

Uthai and Zaccur, and with them seventy males.

15 I gathered them by the river that runs to Ahava, and there we camped three days. As I reviewed the people and the priests, I found there none of the descendants of Levi. 16Then I sent for Eliezer, Ariel, Shemaiah, Elnathan, Jarib, Elnathan, Nathan, Zechariah, and Meshullam, who were leaders, and for Joiarib and Elnathan, who were wise, 17and sent them to Iddo, the leader at the place called Casiphia, telling them what to say to Iddo and his colleagues the temple servants at Casiphia, namely, to send us ministers for the house of our God. 18Since the gracious hand of our God was upon us, they brought us a man of discretion, of the descendants of Mahli son of Levi son of Israel, namely Sherebiah, with his sons and kin, eighteen; 19also Hashabiah and with him Jeshaiah of the descendants of Merari, with his kin and their sons, twenty; 20besides two hundred twenty of the temple servants, whom David and his officials had set apart to attend the Levites. These were all mentioned by name.

21 Then I proclaimed a fast there, at the river Ahava, that we might deny ourselves[m] before our God, to seek from him a safe journey for ourselves, our children, and all our possessions. 22For I was ashamed to ask the king for a band of soldiers and cavalry to protect us against the enemy on our way, since we had told the king that the hand of our God is gracious to all who seek him, but his power and his wrath are against all who forsake him. 23So we fasted and petitioned our God for this, and he listened to our entreaty.

24 Then I set apart twelve of the leading priests: Sherebiah, Hashabiah, and ten of their kin with them. 25And I weighed out to them the silver and the gold and the vessels, the offering for the house of our God that the king, his counselors, his lords, and all Israel there present had offered; 26I weighed out into their hand six hundred fifty talents of silver, and one hundred silver vessels worth . . . talents,[n] and one hundred talents of gold, 27twenty gold bowls worth a thousand darics, and two vessels of fine polished bronze as precious as gold. 28And I said to them, "You are holy to the LORD, and the vessels are holy; and the silver and the gold are a freewill offering to the LORD, the God of your ancestors. 29Guard them and keep them until you weigh them before the chief priests and the Levites and the heads of families in Israel at Jerusalem, within the chambers of the house of the LORD." 30So the priests and the Levites took over the silver, the gold, and the vessels as they were weighed out, to bring them to Jerusalem, to the house of our God.

31 Then we left the river Ahava on the twelfth day of the first month, to go to Jerusalem; the hand of our God was upon us, and he delivered us from the hand of the enemy and from ambushes along the way. 32We came to Jerusalem and remained there three days. 33On the fourth day, within the house of our God, the silver, the gold, and the vessels were weighed into the hands of the priest Meremoth son of Uriah, and with him was Eleazar son of Phinehas, and with them were the Levites, Jozabad son of Jeshua and Noadiah son of Binnui. 34The total was counted and weighed, and the weight of everything was recorded.

35 At that time those who had come from captivity, the returned exiles, offered burnt offerings to the God of Israel, twelve bulls for all Israel, ninety-six rams, seventy-seven lambs, and as a sin offering twelve male goats; all this was a

*m* Or *might fast* *n* The number of talents is lacking

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**8.15**: The location of *Ahava* is unknown, but *the river* was doubtless a tributary of the Euphrates. The dearth of Levites parallels that of 2.40. **17**: *Casiphia* is unidentified.

**8.21, 23**: For preparatory fasting see Esth 4.16; 2 Chron 20.3; Jer 36.9. **28**: Only *holy* persons should handle *holy* things.

**8.29**: The *chambers* were the temple storehouses (10.6; Neh 10.37; 13.4–7).

**9.1–15**: **The problem of mixed mar-**

burnt offering to the LORD. 36They also delivered the king's commissions to the king's satraps and to the governors of the province Beyond the River; and they supported the people and the house of God.

9 After these things had been done, the officials approached me and said, "The people of Israel, the priests, and the Levites have not separated themselves from the peoples of the lands with their abominations, from the Canaanites, the Hittites, the Perizzites, the Jebusites, the Ammonites, the Moabites, the Egyptians, and the Amorites. 2For they have taken some of their daughters as wives for themselves and for their sons. Thus the holy seed has mixed itself with the peoples of the lands, and in this faithlessness the officials and leaders have led the way." 3When I heard this, I tore my garment and my mantle, and pulled hair from my head and beard, and sat appalled. 4Then all who trembled at the words of the God of Israel, because of the faithlessness of the returned exiles, gathered around me while I sat appalled until the evening sacrifice.

5 At the evening sacrifice I got up from my fasting, with my garments and my mantle torn, and fell on my knees, spread out my hands to the LORD my God, 6and said,

"O my God, I am too ashamed and embarrassed to lift my face to you, my God, for our iniquities have risen higher than our heads, and our guilt has mounted up to the heavens. 7From the days of our ancestors to this day we have been deep in guilt, and for our iniquities we, our kings, and our priests have been handed over to the kings of the lands, to the sword, to captivity, to plundering, and to utter shame, as is now the case. 8But now for a brief moment favor has been shown by the LORD our God, who has left us a remnant, and given us a stake in his holy place, in order that he[o] may brighten our eyes and grant us a little sustenance in our slavery. 9For we are slaves; yet our God has not forsaken us in our slavery, but has extended to us his steadfast love before the kings of Persia, to give us new life to set up the house of our God, to repair its ruins, and to give us a wall in Judea and Jerusalem.

10 "And now, our God, what shall we say after this? For we have forsaken your commandments, 11which you commanded by your servants the prophets, saying, 'The land that you are entering to possess is a land unclean with the pollutions of the peoples of the lands, with their abominations. They have filled it from end to end with their uncleanness. 12Therefore do not give your daughters to their sons, neither take their daughters for your sons, and never seek their peace or prosperity, so that you may be strong and eat the good of the land and leave it for an inheritance to your children forever.' 13After all that has come upon us for our evil deeds and for our great guilt, seeing that you, our God, have punished us less than our iniquities deserved and have given us such a remnant as this, 14shall we break your commandments again and intermarry with the peoples who practice these abominations? Would you not be angry with us until you destroy us without remnant or survivor? 15O LORD, God of

*o* Heb *our God*

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**riages.** The older codes had not specially discouraged intermarriages, but experience during the exile, which had developed the principle of exclusiveness, made this contamination of the *holy seed* a major problem for those who returned under Zerubbabel (4.3; 6.21), under Nehemiah (Neh 10.28–30; 13.3, 23–30), and now under Ezra, who found priests, Levites, and chief officials involved therein. **1**: This list of peoples is only a formula (Deut 7.1; Neh 13.23). **2**: *Holy seed,* because as dedicated to God they were separated (Ex 19.5, 6; Isa 62.12).

**9.5–15**: **Ezra's confession. 7**: *To this day,* for they were still subject to Persia (v. 9). **8**: *Remnant,* see vv. 13–15; Zech 8.12; Isa 28.5. **9**: *Kings,* i.e. Cyrus, Darius, Xerxes, and Artaxerxes. **11–12**: No such passage occurs in extant prophetic writings, but see Lev 18.24–30 and Deut 7.3.

Israel, you are just, but we have escaped as a remnant, as is now the case. Here we are before you in our guilt, though no one can face you because of this."

10 While Ezra prayed and made confession, weeping and throwing himself down before the house of God, a very great assembly of men, women, and children gathered to him out of Israel; the people also wept bitterly. 2 Shecaniah son of Jehiel, of the descendants of Elam, addressed Ezra, saying, "We have broken faith with our God and have married foreign women from the peoples of the land, but even now there is hope for Israel in spite of this. 3 So now let us make a covenant with our God to send away all these wives and their children, according to the counsel of my lord and of those who tremble at the commandment of our God; and let it be done according to the law. 4 Take action, for it is your duty, and we are with you; be strong, and do it." 5 Then Ezra stood up and made the leading priests, the Levites, and all Israel swear that they would do as had been said. So they swore.

6 Then Ezra withdrew from before the house of God, and went to the chamber of Jehohanan son of Eliashib, where he spent the night.[p] He did not eat bread or drink water, for he was mourning over the faithlessness of the exiles. 7 They made a proclamation throughout Judah and Jerusalem to all the returned exiles that they should assemble at Jerusalem, 8 and that if any did not come within three days, by order of the officials and the elders all their property should be forfeited, and they themselves banned from the congregation of the exiles.

9 Then all the people of Judah and Benjamin assembled at Jerusalem within the three days; it was the ninth month, on the twentieth day of the month. All the people sat in the open square before the house of God, trembling because of this matter and because of the heavy rain. 10 Then Ezra the priest stood up and said to them, "You have trespassed and married foreign women, and so increased the guilt of Israel. 11 Now make confession to the LORD the God of your ancestors, and do his will; separate yourselves from the peoples of the land and from the foreign wives." 12 Then all the assembly answered with a loud voice, "It is so; we must do as you have said. 13 But the people are many, and it is a time of heavy rain; we cannot stand in the open. Nor is this a task for one day or for two, for many of us have transgressed in this matter. 14 Let our officials represent the whole assembly, and let all in our towns who have taken foreign wives come at appointed times, and with them the elders and judges of every town, until the fierce wrath of our God on this account is averted from us." 15 Only Jonathan son of Asahel and Jahzeiah son of Tikvah opposed this, and Meshullam and Shabbethai the Levites supported them.

16 Then the returned exiles did so. Ezra the priest selected men,[q] heads of families, according to their families, each of them designated by name. On the first day of the tenth month they sat down to examine the matter. 17 By the first day of the first month they had come to the end

*p* 1 Esdras 9.2: Heb *where he went*
*q* 1 Esdras 9.16: Syr: Heb *And there were selected Ezra,*

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**10.1–44: Repentance of the people and divorce of gentile wives.** **2**: No extant law required divorce in such cases, so *Shechaniah* proposes a way out, a *hope* by a *covenant* (v. 3), suggesting by the words he uses for *married* and *foreign women* that these had not been true marriages. **3**: The *law* would be that of Deut 7.3. **4**: *It is your duty,* for the covenant oath must be administered by Ezra.

**10.6**: *Jehohanan* was grandson of Eliashib the high priest, and became himself high priest under Darius II. **9**: *Heavy rain* is usual in Chislev, *the ninth month* (November-December); so *the assembly* asks for local enforcement of the covenant.

**10.16–17**: The work commenced in Tebet (*the tenth month,* December-January) and was completed in Nisan (*the first month,* March-April).

**10.18–44**: Lists, which were probably derived from official archives. **19**: The *guilt offering* signified that the wrong had been righted.

of all the men who had married foreign women.

18 There were found of the descendants of the priests who had married foreign women, of the descendants of Jeshua son of Jozadak and his brothers: Maaseiah, Eliezer, Jarib, and Gedaliah. 19 They pledged themselves to send away their wives, and their guilt offering was a ram of the flock for their guilt. 20 Of the descendants of Immer: Hanani and Zebadiah. 21 Of the descendants of Harim: Maaseiah, Elijah, Shemaiah, Jehiel, and Uzziah. 22 Of the descendants of Pashhur: Elioenai, Maaseiah, Ishmael, Nethanel, Jozabad, and Elasah.

23 Of the Levites: Jozabad, Shimei, Kelaiah (that is, Kelita), Pethahiah, Judah, and Eliezer. 24 Of the singers: Eliashib. Of the gatekeepers: Shallum, Telem, and Uri.

25 And of Israel: of the descendants of Parosh: Ramiah, Izziah, Malchijah, Mijamin, Eleazar, Hashabiah,[r] and Benaiah. 26 Of the descendants of Elam: Mattaniah, Zechariah, Jehiel, Abdi, Jeremoth, and Elijah. 27 Of the descendants of Zattu: Elioenai, Eliashib, Mattaniah, Jeremoth, Zabad, and Aziza. 28 Of the descendants of Bebai: Jehohanan, Hananiah, Zabbai, and Athlai. 29 Of the descendants of Bani: Meshullam, Malluch, Adaiah, Jashub, Sheal, and Jeremoth. 30 Of the descendants of Pahath-moab: Adna, Chelal, Benaiah, Maaseiah, Mattaniah, Bezalel, Binnui, and Manasseh. 31 Of the descendants of Harim: Eliezer, Isshijah, Malchijah, Shemaiah, Shimeon, 32 Benjamin, Malluch, and Shemariah. 33 Of the descendants of Hashum: Mattenai, Mattattah, Zabad, Eliphelet, Jeremai, Manasseh, and Shimei. 34 Of the descendants of Bani: Maadai, Amram, Uel, 35 Benaiah, Bedeiah, Cheluhi, 36 Vaniah, Meremoth, Eliashib, 37 Mattaniah, Mattenai, and Jaasu. 38 Of the descendants of Binnui:[s] Shimei, 39 Shelemiah, Nathan, Adaiah, 40 Machnadebai, Shashai, Sharai, 41 Azarel, Shelemiah, Shemariah, 42 Shallum, Amariah, and Joseph. 43 Of the descendants of Nebo: Jeiel, Mattithiah, Zabad, Zebina, Jaddai, Joel, and Benaiah. 44 All these had married foreign women, and they sent them away with their children.[t]

*r* 1 Esdras 9.26 Gk: Heb *Malchijah* *s* Gk: Heb *Bani, Binnui* *t* 1 Esdras 9.36; Meaning of Heb uncertain

# *Nehemiah*

Since the books of Ezra and Nehemiah are really one book and since parts of Nehemiah are apparently misplaced and belong in Ezra, problems of origin, structure, and historical background are discussed in the Introduction to Ezra. It is sufficient to say here that the book which we call Nehemiah relates the return of Nehemiah for two periods of governorship over Judah during the reign of Artaxerxes I (464–423 B.C.). The first return was in 445/444. Nehemiah rebuilt the walls of Jerusalem and instituted social and religious reforms. An outstanding aspect of Nehemiah's religious life was his dependence on God and his frequent prayers (1.4–10; 2.18; 4.4, 20; 5.9, 19; 6.14; 13.14, 31).

1 The words of Nehemiah son of Hacaliah. In the month of Chislev, in the twentieth year, while I was in Susa the capital, 2one of my brothers, Hanani, came with certain men from Judah; and I asked them about the Jews that survived, those who had escaped the captivity, and about Jerusalem. 3They replied, "The survivors there in the province who escaped captivity are in great trouble and shame; the wall of Jerusalem is broken down, and its gates have been destroyed by fire."

4 When I heard these words I sat down and wept, and mourned for days, fasting and praying before the God of heaven. 5I said, "O LORD God of heaven, the great and awesome God who keeps covenant and steadfast love with those who love him and keep his commandments; 6let your ear be attentive and your eyes open to hear the prayer of your servant that I now pray before you day and night for your servants, the people of Israel, confessing the sins of the people of Israel, which we have sinned against you. Both I and my family have sinned. 7We have offended you deeply, failing to keep the commandments, the statutes, and the ordinances that you commanded your servant Moses. 8Remember the word that you commanded your servant Moses, 'If you are unfaithful, I will scatter you among the peoples; 9but if you return to me and keep my commandments and do them, though your outcasts are under the farthest skies, I will gather them from there and bring them to the place at which I have chosen to establish my name.' 10They are your servants and your people, whom you redeemed by your great power and your strong hand. 11O Lord, let your ear be attentive to the prayer of your servant, and to the prayer of your servants who delight in revering your name. Give success to your servant today, and grant him mercy in the sight of this man!"

At the time, I was cupbearer to the king.

2 In the month of Nisan, in the twentieth year of King Artaxerxes, when wine was served him, I carried the wine and gave it to the king. Now, I had never been sad in his presence before. 2So the king said to me, "Why is your face sad, since you are not sick? This can only be sadness of the heart." Then I was very much afraid. 3I said to the king, "May the king live forever! Why should my face not be sad, when the city, the place of my ancestors' graves, lies waste, and its gates have been destroyed by fire?" 4Then the king said to me, "What do you request?" So I prayed to the God of heaven. 5Then I said to the king, "If it pleases the king, and if your servant has found favor with you, I ask that you send me to Judah, to the city of my ancestors' graves, so that I may rebuild it." 6The king said to me (the queen also was sitting beside him), "How long will you be gone, and when will you return?" So it pleased the king to send me, and I set him a date. 7Then I said to the king, "If it pleases the king, let letters be given me to the governors of the province Beyond the River, that they may grant me passage until I arrive in Judah; 8and a letter to Asaph, the keeper of the king's forest,

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**1.1–7.5: Nehemiah's memoirs. 1.1–11: Report from Jerusalem and Nehemiah's prayer.** Nehemiah was a palace servant of Artaxerxes I at *Susa* in Elam, winter residence of the Persian kings (Esth 1.2, 5; Dan 8.2). **1.1:** *Chislev,* November-December. The *twentieth year* of Artaxerxes was 445–444 B.C. The date here is problematic, as it is later than that given in 2.1. Perhaps it should be the nineteenth year. **2:** The *men from Judah* seem to have been visitors to the *capital.*

**1.4:** *Mourned,* compare 9.3–5; Ezra 10.6. **6:** He makes confession for the people just as Ezra does. **8–9:** There is no such passage in our Pentateuch, but see Deut 30.1–5. The *place* is Jerusalem.

**1.11:** As *this man* means Artaxerxes, this verse belongs more appropriately after 2.4. *Cupbearer,* i.e. butler, who sampled and poured wine for the king, an honorable and privileged office.

**2.1–20: Nehemiah's mission. 5:** *Graves* was a polite understatement, for his plan was to restore the walls (vv. 8, 12–15).

directing him to give me timber to make beams for the gates of the temple fortress, and for the wall of the city, and for the house that I shall occupy." And the king granted me what I asked, for the gracious hand of my God was upon me.

9 Then I came to the governors of the province Beyond the River, and gave them the king's letters. Now the king had sent officers of the army and cavalry with me. 10 When Sanballat the Horonite and Tobiah the Ammonite official heard this, it displeased them greatly that someone had come to seek the welfare of the people of Israel.

11 So I came to Jerusalem and was there for three days. 12 Then I got up during the night, I and a few men with me; I told no one what my God had put into my heart to do for Jerusalem. The only animal I took was the animal I rode. 13 I went out by night by the Valley Gate past the Dragon's Spring and to the Dung Gate, and I inspected the walls of Jerusalem that had been broken down and its gates that had been destroyed by fire. 14 Then I went on to the Fountain Gate and to the King's Pool; but there was no place for the animal I was riding to continue. 15 So I went up by way of the valley by night and inspected the wall. Then I turned back and entered by the Valley Gate, and so returned. 16 The officials did not know where I had gone or what I was doing; I had not yet told the Jews, the priests, the nobles, the officials, and the rest that were to do the work.

17 Then I said to them, "You see the trouble we are in, how Jerusalem lies in ruins with its gates burned. Come, let us rebuild the wall of Jerusalem, so that we may no longer suffer disgrace." 18 I told them that the hand of my God had been gracious upon me, and also the words that the king had spoken to me. Then they said, "Let us start building!" So they committed themselves to the common good. 19 But when Sanballat the Horonite and Tobiah the Ammonite official, and Geshem the Arab heard of it, they mocked and ridiculed us, saying, "What is this that you are doing? Are you rebelling against the king?" 20 Then I replied to them, "The God of heaven is the one who will give us success, and we his servants are going to start building; but you have no share or claim or historic right in Jerusalem."

3 Then the high priest Eliashib set to work with his fellow priests and rebuilt the Sheep Gate. They consecrated it and set up its doors; they consecrated it as far as the Tower of the Hundred and as far as the Tower of Hananel. 2 And the men of Jericho built next to him. And next to them[a] Zaccur son of Imri built.

3 The sons of Hassenaah built the Fish Gate; they laid its beams and set up its doors, its bolts, and its bars. 4 Next to them Meremoth son of Uriah son of Hakkoz made repairs. Next to them Meshullam son of Berechiah son of Meshezabel made repairs. Next to them Zadok son of Baana made repairs. 5 Next to them the Tekoites made repairs; but their nobles would not put their shoulders to the work of their Lord.[b]

6 Joiada son of Paseah and Meshullam son of Besodeiah repaired the Old Gate; they laid its beams and set up its doors, its bolts, and its bars. 7 Next to them repairs were made by Melatiah the Gibe-

*a* Heb *him* *b* Or *lords*

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**2.8**: *Fortress,* see 7.2; 1 Macc 13.52; Acts 21.37. **10**: As local leaders had hindered the work under Zerubbabel (Ezra 4.3–24), so they try again. *Sanballat* is mentioned in the Elephantine papyri as governor of Samaria. Tobiah was apparently an Ammonite official in Persian service.

**2.12–16**: A secret inspection of the ruined walls by night, making a complete circuit of the walls, beginning and ending at the *Valley Gate*. **19**: His enemies suspect the building of the wall was a prelude to rebellion. *Geshem* (6.6) was king of Kedar.

**3.1–32: Work on the wall. 1**: *Eliashib* (12.22; 13.4) was grandson of that Jeshua who worked with Zerubbabel (12.10), and grandfather of the later high priest Jehohanan.

**3.5**: *The Tekoites* (Am 1.1) were not supported by their upper class families.

onite and Jadon the Meronothite—the men of Gibeon and of Mizpah—who were under the jurisdiction of[c] the governor of the province Beyond the River. 8 Next to them Uzziel son of Harhaiah, one of the goldsmiths, made repairs. Next to him Hananiah, one of the perfumers, made repairs; and they restored Jerusalem as far as the Broad Wall. 9 Next to them Rephaiah son of Hur, ruler of half the district of[d] Jerusalem, made repairs. 10 Next to them Jedaiah son of Harumaph made repairs opposite his house; and next to him Hattush son of Hashabneiah made repairs. 11 Malchijah son of Harim and Hasshub son of Pahath-moab repaired another section and the Tower of the Ovens. 12 Next to him Shallum son of Hallohesh, ruler of half the district of[d] Jerusalem, made repairs, he and his daughters.

13 Hanun and the inhabitants of Zanoah repaired the Valley Gate; they rebuilt it and set up its doors, its bolts, and its bars, and repaired a thousand cubits of the wall, as far as the Dung Gate.

14 Malchijah son of Rechab, ruler of the district of[e] Beth-haccherem, repaired the Dung Gate; he rebuilt it and set up its doors, its bolts, and its bars.

15 And Shallum son of Col-hozeh, ruler of the district of[e] Mizpah, repaired the Fountain Gate; he rebuilt it and covered it and set up its doors, its bolts, and its bars; and he built the wall of the Pool of Shelah of the king's garden, as far as the stairs that go down from the City of David. 16 After him Nehemiah son of Azbuk, ruler of half the district of[d] Beth-zur, repaired from a point opposite the graves of David, as far as the artificial pool and the house of the warriors. 17 After him the Levites made repairs: Rehum son of Bani; next to him Hashabiah, ruler of half the district of[d] Keilah, made repairs for his district. 18 After him their kin made repairs: Binnui,[f] son of Henadad, ruler of half the district of[d] Keilah; 19 next to him Ezer son of Jeshua, ruler[g] of Mizpah, repaired another section opposite the ascent to the armory at the Angle. 20 After him Baruch son of Zabbai repaired another section from the Angle to the door of the house of the high priest Eliashib. 21 After him Meremoth son of Uriah son of Hakkoz repaired another section from the door of the house of Eliashib to the end of the house of Eliashib. 22 After him the priests, the men of the surrounding area, made repairs. 23 After them Benjamin and Hasshub made repairs opposite their house. After them Azariah son of Maaseiah son of Ananiah made repairs beside his own house. 24 After him Binnui son of Henadad repaired another section, from the house of Azariah to the Angle and to the corner. 25 Palal son of Uzai repaired opposite the Angle and the tower projecting from the upper house of the king at the court of the guard. After him Pedaiah son of Parosh 26 and the temple servants living[h] on Ophel made repairs up to a point opposite the Water Gate on the east and the projecting tower. 27 After him the Tekoites repaired another section opposite the great projecting tower as far as the wall of Ophel.

28 Above the Horse Gate the priests made repairs, each one opposite his own house. 29 After them Zadok son of Immer made repairs opposite his own house. After him Shemaiah son of Shecaniah, the keeper of the East Gate, made repairs. 30 After him Hananiah son of Shelemiah and Hanun sixth son of Zalaph repaired another section. After him Meshullam son of Berechiah made repairs opposite his living quarters. 31 After him Malchijah, one of the goldsmiths, made repairs as far as the house of the temple servants and of the merchants, opposite the Muster Gate,[i] and to the

*c* Meaning of Heb uncertain *d* Or *supervisor of half the portion assigned to* *e* Or *supervisor of the portion assigned to* *f* Gk Syr Compare verse 24, 10.9: Heb *Bavvai* *g* Or *supervisor* *h* Cn: Heb *were living* *i* Or *Hammiphkad Gate*

**3.15**: *City of David,* the old Jebusite town on the hill (2 Sam 5.6–9). **16**: *Graves of David,* 2 Chr 32.33. The *house of the warriors* was the barracks.

upper room of the corner. 32And between the upper room of the corner and the Sheep Gate the goldsmiths and the merchants made repairs.

4 [j] Now when Sanballat heard that we were building the wall, he was angry and greatly enraged, and he mocked the Jews. 2He said in the presence of his associates and of the army of Samaria, "What are these feeble Jews doing? Will they restore things? Will they sacrifice? Will they finish it in a day? Will they revive the stones out of the heaps of rubbish—and burned ones at that?" 3Tobiah the Ammonite was beside him, and he said, "That stone wall they are building—any fox going up on it would break it down!" 4Hear, O our God, for we are despised; turn their taunt back on their own heads, and give them over as plunder in a land of captivity. 5Do not cover their guilt, and do not let their sin be blotted out from your sight; for they have hurled insults in the face of the builders.

6 So we rebuilt the wall, and all the wall was joined together to half its height; for the people had a mind to work.

7 [k] But when Sanballat and Tobiah and the Arabs and the Ammonites and the Ashdodites heard that the repairing of the walls of Jerusalem was going forward and the gaps were beginning to be closed, they were very angry, 8and all plotted together to come and fight against Jerusalem and to cause confusion in it. 9So we prayed to our God, and set a guard as a protection against them day and night.

10 But Judah said, "The strength of the burden bearers is failing, and there is too much rubbish so that we are unable to work on the wall." 11And our enemies said, "They will not know or see anything before we come upon them and kill them and stop the work." 12When the Jews who lived near them came, they said to us ten times, "From all the places where they live[l] they will come up against us."[m] 13So in the lowest parts of the space behind the wall, in open places, I stationed the people according to their families,[n] with their swords, their spears, and their bows. 14After I looked these things over, I stood up and said to the nobles and the officials and the rest of the people, "Do not be afraid of them. Remember the LORD, who is great and awesome, and fight for your kin, your sons, your daughters, your wives, and your homes."

15 When our enemies heard that their plot was known to us, and that God had frustrated it, we all returned to the wall, each to his work. 16From that day on, half of my servants worked on construction, and half held the spears, shields, bows, and body-armor; and the leaders posted themselves behind the whole house of Judah, 17who were building the wall. The burden bearers carried their loads in such a way that each labored on the work with one hand and with the other held a weapon. 18And each of the builders had his sword strapped at his side while he built. The man who sounded the trumpet was beside me. 19And I said to the nobles, the officials, and the rest of the people, "The work is great and widely spread out, and we are separated far from one another on the wall. 20Rally to us wherever you hear the sound of the trumpet. Our God will fight for us."

21 So we labored at the work, and half of them held the spears from break of dawn until the stars came out. 22I also said to the people at that time, "Let every man and his servant pass the night inside Jerusalem, so that they may be a guard

*j* Ch 3.33 in Heb *k* Ch 4.1 in Heb
*l* Cn: Heb *you return* *m* Compare Gk Syr: Meaning of Heb uncertain *n* Meaning of Heb uncertain

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**4.1–7.5: Troubles for the builders. 4.1–9:** Trouble from Sanballat and his associates. **4–5:** Words of ill omen must be countered by words of ill omen. **10–14:** To trouble from without was added trouble from within. **16:** By *my servants* he would mean his personal, better armed, bodyguard. **21:** Night work was hardly possible in those days.

for us by night and may labor by day." 23So neither I nor my brothers nor my servants nor the men of the guard who followed me ever took off our clothes; each kept his weapon in his right hand.[o]

5 Now there was a great outcry of the people and of their wives against their Jewish kin. 2For there were those who said, "With our sons and our daughters, we are many; we must get grain, so that we may eat and stay alive." 3There were also those who said, "We are having to pledge our fields, our vineyards, and our houses in order to get grain during the famine." 4And there were those who said, "We are having to borrow money on our fields and vineyards to pay the king's tax. 5Now our flesh is the same as that of our kindred; our children are the same as their children; and yet we are forcing our sons and daughters to be slaves, and some of our daughters have been ravished; we are powerless, and our fields and vineyards now belong to others."

6 I was very angry when I heard their outcry and these complaints. 7After thinking it over, I brought charges against the nobles and the officials; I said to them, "You are all taking interest from your own people." And I called a great assembly to deal with them, 8and said to them, "As far as we were able, we have bought back our Jewish kindred who had been sold to other nations; but now you are selling your own kin, who must then be bought back by us!" They were silent, and could not find a word to say. 9So I said, "The thing that you are doing is not good. Should you not walk in the fear of our God, to prevent the taunts of the nations our enemies? 10Moreover I and my brothers and my servants are lending them money and grain. Let us stop this taking of interest. 11Restore to them, this very day, their fields, their vineyards, their olive orchards, and their houses, and the interest on money, grain, wine, and oil that you have been exacting from them." 12Then they said, "We will restore everything and demand nothing more from them. We will do as you say." And I called the priests, and made them take an oath to do as they had promised. 13I also shook out the fold of my garment and said, "So may God shake out everyone from house and from property who does not perform this promise. Thus may they be shaken out and emptied." And all the assembly said, "Amen," and praised the LORD. And the people did as they had promised.

14 Moreover from the time that I was appointed to be their governor in the land of Judah, from the twentieth year to the thirty-second year of King Artaxerxes, twelve years, neither I nor my brothers ate the food allowance of the governor. 15The former governors who were before me laid heavy burdens on the people, and took food and wine from them, besides forty shekels of silver. Even their servants lorded it over the people. But I did not do so, because of the fear of God. 16Indeed, I devoted myself to the work on this wall, and acquired no land; and all my servants were gathered there for the work. 17Moreover there were at my table one hundred fifty people, Jews and officials, besides those who came to us from the nations around us. 18Now that which was prepared for one day was one ox and six choice sheep; also fowls were prepared for me, and every ten days skins of wine in abundance; yet with all this I did not demand the food allowance of the governor, because of the heavy burden of labor on the people. 19Re-

*o* Cn: Heb *each his weapon the water*

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**5.1–13**: Economic ills. Concentration on the walls had led to economic crisis. **3**: *Pledge*, i.e. giving as security. **4**: *The king's tax* was the tribute due to Persia.

**5.7–10**: It was legal to take *interest* from non-Jews but not from fellow Jews (Deut 23.20). **11**: The *interest* (literally one hundredth) is usually taken as meaning one percent monthly. **13**: *Fold* refers to that part of the outer garment which served as a pocket.

**5.14–19**: Nehemiah's apologia for his *twelve years* as *governor*.

member for my good, O my God, all that I have done for this people.

6 Now when it was reported to Sanballat and Tobiah and to Geshem the Arab and to the rest of our enemies that I had built the wall and that there was no gap left in it (though up to that time I had not set up the doors in the gates), 2Sanballat and Geshem sent to me, saying, "Come and let us meet together in one of the villages in the plain of Ono." But they intended to do me harm. 3So I sent messengers to them, saying, "I am doing a great work and I cannot come down. Why should the work stop while I leave it to come down to you?" 4They sent to me four times in this way, and I answered them in the same manner. 5In the same way Sanballat for the fifth time sent his servant to me with an open letter in his hand. 6In it was written, "It is reported among the nations—and Geshem[p] also says it—that you and the Jews intend to rebel; that is why you are building the wall; and according to this report you wish to become their king. 7You have also set up prophets to proclaim in Jerusalem concerning you, 'There is a king in Judah!' And now it will be reported to the king according to these words. So come, therefore, and let us confer together." 8Then I sent to him, saying, "No such things as you say have been done; you are inventing them out of your own mind" 9—for they all wanted to frighten us, thinking, "Their hands will drop from the work, and it will not be done." But now, O God, strengthen my hands.

10 One day when I went into the house of Shemaiah son of Delaiah son of Mehetabel, who was confined to his house, he said, "Let us meet together in the house of God, within the temple, and let us close the doors of the temple, for they are coming to kill you; indeed, tonight they are coming to kill you." 11But I said, "Should a man like me run away? Would a man like me go into the temple to save his life? I will not go in!" 12Then I perceived and saw that God had not sent him at all, but he had pronounced the prophecy against me because Tobiah and Sanballat had hired him. 13He was hired for this purpose, to intimidate me and make me sin by acting in this way, and so they could give me a bad name, in order to taunt me. 14Remember Tobiah and Sanballat, O my God, according to these things that they did, and also the prophetess Noadiah and the rest of the prophets who wanted to make me afraid.

15 So the wall was finished on the twenty-fifth day of the month Elul, in fifty-two days. 16And when all our enemies heard of it, all the nations around us were afraid[q] and fell greatly in their own esteem; for they perceived that this work had been accomplished with the help of our God. 17Moreover in those days the nobles of Judah sent many letters to Tobiah, and Tobiah's letters came to them. 18For many in Judah were bound by oath to him, because he was the son-in-law of Shecaniah son of Arah: and his son Jehohanan had married the daughter of Meshullam son of Berechiah. 19Also they spoke of his good deeds in my presence, and reported my words to him. And Tobiah sent letters to intimidate me.

7 Now when the wall had been built and I had set up the doors, and the gatekeepers, the singers, and the Levites had been appointed, 2I gave my brother Hanani charge over Jerusalem, along with Hananiah the commander of the citadel—for he was a faithful man and feared God more than many. 3And I said

*p* Heb *Gashmu* *q* Another reading is *saw*

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**6.1–19:** Finishing the wall, in spite of plots. **2:** They try to lure Nehemiah to *Ono* near Lydda to *harm* him. **5–7:** Failing this, they try to frighten him by threatening to report him to the king, mentioning *prophets* because they were known as fomenters of rebellion (Jer 28.1–4).

**6.10:** *Shemaiah* is the enemy within the camp. **13:** That prophets could be *hired* illustrates Zech 13.2–6. **15:** *Elul* was the sixth month (August-September).

**7.1–5:** Setting up the guards. **2:** *Hanani*, see 1.2. *The citadel* is the fortress (2.8). **3:** *The gates* are to be open from sunrise to sunset. At

to them, "The gates of Jerusalem are not to be opened until the sun is hot; while the gatekeepers[r] are still standing guard, let them shut and bar the doors. Appoint guards from among the inhabitants of Jerusalem, some at their watch posts, and others before their own houses." 4The city was wide and large, but the people within it were few and no houses had been built.

5 Then my God put it into my mind to assemble the nobles and the officials and the people to be enrolled by genealogy. And I found the book of the genealogy of those who were the first to come back, and I found the following written in it:

6 These are the people of the province who came up out of the captivity of those exiles whom King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon had carried into exile; they returned to Jerusalem and Judah, each to his town. 7They came with Zerubbabel, Jeshua, Nehemiah, Azariah, Raamiah, Nahamani, Mordecai, Bilshan, Mispereth, Bigvai, Nehum, Baanah.

The number of the Israelite people: 8the descendants of Parosh, two thousand one hundred seventy-two. 9Of Shephatiah, three hundred seventy-two. 10Of Arah, six hundred fifty-two. 11Of Pahath-moab, namely the descendants of Jeshua and Joab, two thousand eight hundred eighteen. 12Of Elam, one thousand two hundred fifty-four. 13Of Zattu, eight hundred forty-five. 14Of Zaccai, seven hundred sixty. 15Of Binnui, six hundred forty-eight. 16Of Bebai, six hundred twenty-eight. 17Of Azgad, two thousand three hundred twenty-two. 18Of Adonikam, six hundred sixty-seven. 19Of Bigvai, two thousand sixty-seven. 20Of Adin, six hundred fifty-five. 21Of Ater, namely of Hezekiah, ninety-eight. 22Of Hashum, three hundred twenty-eight. 23Of Bezai, three hundred twenty-four. 24Of Hariph, one hundred twelve. 25Of Gibeon, ninety-five. 26The people of Bethlehem and Netophah, one hundred eighty-eight. 27Of Anathoth, one hundred twenty-eight. 28Of Beth-azmaveth, forty-two. 29Of Kiriath-jearim, Chephirah, and Beeroth, seven hundred forty-three. 30Of Ramah and Geba, six hundred twenty-one. 31Of Michmas, one hundred twenty-two. 32Of Bethel and Ai, one hundred twenty-three. 33Of the other Nebo, fifty-two. 34The descendants of the other Elam, one thousand two hundred fifty-four. 35Of Harim, three hundred twenty. 36Of Jericho, three hundred forty-five. 37Of Lod, Hadid, and Ono, seven hundred twenty-one. 38Of Senaah, three thousand nine hundred thirty.

39 The priests: the descendants of Jedaiah, namely the house of Jeshua, nine hundred seventy-three. 40Of Immer, one thousand fifty-two. 41Of Pashhur, one thousand two hundred forty-seven. 42Of Harim, one thousand seventeen.

43 The Levites: the descendants of Jeshua, namely of Kadmiel of the descendants of Hodevah, seventy-four. 44The singers: the descendants of Asaph, one hundred forty-eight. 45The gatekeepers: the descendants of Shallum, of Ater, of Talmon, of Akkub, of Hatita, of Shobai, one hundred thirty-eight.

46 The temple servants: the descendants of Ziha, of Hasupha, of Tabbaoth, 47of Keros, of Sia, of Padon, 48of Lebana, of Hagaba, of Shalmai, 49of Hanan, of Giddel, of Gahar, 50of Reaiah, of Rezin, of Nekoda, 51of Gazzam, of Uzza, of Paseah, 52of Besai, of Meunim, of Nephushesim, 53of Bakbuk, of Hakupha, of Harhur, 54of Bazlith, of Mehida, of Harsha, 55of Barkos, of Sisera, of Temah, 56of Neziah, of Hatipha.

57 The descendants of Solomon's servants: of Sotai, of Sophereth, of Perida,

*r* Heb *while they*

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v. 5a the memoirs of Nehemiah break off to be picked up again after chapter 10. Verse 5b is a transition verse to introduce the genealogies of vv. 6–73a which parallel Ezra 2.1–70.

**7.6–73: A census of the first return.** See Ezra 2.1–70 n. **73b:** A connecting verse based on Ezra 3.1.

58 of Jaala, of Darkon, of Giddel, 59 of Shephatiah, of Hattil, of Pochereth-hazzebaim, of Amon.

60 All the temple servants and the descendants of Solomon's servants were three hundred ninety-two.

61 The following were those who came up from Tel-melah, Tel-harsha, Cherub, Addon, and Immer, but they could not prove their ancestral houses or their descent, whether they belonged to Israel: 62 the descendants of Delaiah, of Tobiah, of Nekoda, six hundred forty-two. 63 Also, of the priests: the descendants of Hobaiah, of Hakkoz, of Barzillai (who had married one of the daughters of Barzillai the Gileadite and was called by their name). 64 These sought their registration among those enrolled in the genealogies, but it was not found there, so they were excluded from the priesthood as unclean; 65 the governor told them that they were not to partake of the most holy food, until a priest with Urim and Thummim should come.

66 The whole assembly together was forty-two thousand three hundred sixty, 67 besides their male and female slaves, of whom there were seven thousand three hundred thirty-seven; and they had two hundred forty-five singers, male and female. 68 They had seven hundred thirty-six horses, two hundred forty-five mules,[s] 69 four hundred thirty-five camels, and six thousand seven hundred twenty donkeys.

70 Now some of the heads of ancestral houses contributed to the work. The governor gave to the treasury one thousand darics of gold, fifty basins, and five hundred thirty priestly robes. 71 And some of the heads of ancestral houses gave into the building fund twenty thousand darics of gold and two thousand two hundred minas of silver. 72 And what the rest of the people gave was twenty thousand darics of gold, two thousand minas of silver, and sixty-seven priestly robes.

73 So the priests, the Levites, the gatekeepers, the singers, some of the people, the temple servants, and all Israel settled in their towns.

When the seventh month came—the people of Israel being settled in their towns— 8 1 all the people gathered together into the square before the Water Gate. They told the scribe Ezra to bring the book of the law of Moses, which the LORD had given to Israel. 2 Accordingly, the priest Ezra brought the law before the assembly, both men and women and all who could hear with understanding. This was on the first day of the seventh month. 3 He read from it facing the square before the Water Gate from early morning until midday, in the presence of the men and the women and those who could understand; and the ears of all the people were attentive to the book of the law. 4 The scribe Ezra stood on a wooden platform that had been made for the purpose; and beside him stood Mattithiah, Shema, Anaiah, Uriah, Hilkiah, and Maaseiah on his right hand; and Pedaiah, Mishael, Malchijah, Hashum, Hash-baddanah, Zechariah, and Meshullam on his left hand. 5 And Ezra opened the book in the sight of all the people, for he was standing above all the people; and when he opened it, all the people stood up. 6 Then Ezra blessed the LORD, the great God, and all the people answered, "Amen, Amen," lifting up their hands. Then they bowed their heads and worshiped the LORD with their faces to the ground. 7 Also Jeshua, Bani, Sherebiah, Jamin, Akkub, Shabbethai, Hodiah, Maaseiah, Kelita, Azariah, Joza-

[s] Ezra 2.66 and the margins of some Hebrew Mss: MT lacks *They had . . . forty-five mules*

**8.1–9.37: Continuation of the Ezra story. 8.1–12: Reading the book of the law. 1:** *The Water Gate* is doubtless that of 3.26. For Ezra's *book of the law* see Ezra 7.6, 10, 14. The citations from it in vv. 14, 15 (and Ezra 9.11, 12) are not in our Pentateuch, but see Lev 23.40–42. **2:** *The seventh month* was Tishri (September-October), the *first day* of which was a day of convocation (Num 29.1). **4:** *Wooden platform,* lit. "tower." **7–8:** Since the *book* was in Hebrew, it was interpreted to the people in the more familiar Aramaic. The

bad, Hanan, Pelaiah, the Levites,[t] helped the people to understand the law, while the people remained in their places. 8So they read from the book, from the law of God, with interpretation. They gave the sense, so that the people understood the reading.

9 And Nehemiah, who was the governor, and Ezra the priest and scribe, and the Levites who taught the people said to all the people, "This day is holy to the LORD your God; do not mourn or weep." For all the people wept when they heard the words of the law. 10Then he said to them, "Go your way, eat the fat and drink sweet wine and send portions of them to those for whom nothing is prepared, for this day is holy to our LORD; and do not be grieved, for the joy of the LORD is your strength." 11So the Levites stilled all the people, saying, "Be quiet, for this day is holy; do not be grieved." 12And all the people went their way to eat and drink and to send portions and to make great rejoicing, because they had understood the words that were declared to them.

13 On the second day the heads of ancestral houses of all the people, with the priests and the Levites, came together to the scribe Ezra in order to study the words of the law. 14And they found it written in the law, which the LORD had commanded by Moses, that the people of Israel should live in booths[u] during the festival of the seventh month, 15and that they should publish and proclaim in all their towns and in Jerusalem as follows, "Go out to the hills and bring branches of olive, wild olive, myrtle, palm, and other leafy trees to make booths," as it is written." 16So the people went out and brought them, and made booths[u] for themselves, each on the roofs of their houses, and in their courts and in the courts of the house of God, and in the square at the Water Gate and in the square at the Gate of Ephraim. 17And all the assembly of those who had returned from the captivity made booths[u] and lived in them; for from the days of Jeshua son of Nun to that day the people of Israel had not done so. And there was very great rejoicing. 18And day by day, from the first day to the last day, he read from the book of the law of God. They kept the festival seven days; and on the eighth day there was a solemn assembly, according to the ordinance.

9 Now on the twenty-fourth day of this month the people of Israel were assembled with fasting and in sackcloth, and with earth on their heads.[v] 2Then those of Israelite descent separated themselves from all foreigners, and stood and confessed their sins and the iniquities of their ancestors. 3They stood up in their place and read from the book of the law of the LORD their God for a fourth part of the day, and for another fourth they made confession and worshiped the LORD their God. 4Then Jeshua, Bani, Kadmiel, Shebaniah, Bunni, Sherebiah, Bani, and Chenani stood on the stairs of the Levites and cried out with a loud voice to the LORD their God. 5Then the Levites, Jeshua, Kadmiel, Bani, Hashabneiah, Sherebiah, Hodiah, Shebaniah, and Pethahiah, said, "Stand up and bless the LORD your God from everlasting to everlasting. Blessed be your glorious

*t* 1 Esdras 9.48 Vg: Heb *and the Levites*
*u* Or *tabernacles*; Heb *succoth* *v* Heb *on them*

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name *Nehemiah* in v. 9 is a scribal insertion. **10–12**: A feast is appointed to celebrate the event.

**8.13–18**: **Celebration of the festival of booths.** Reading *the law* made them aware that this month of Tishri (September-October) was the time for the festival of *booths*, the Mosaic regulations for which are in Lev 23.33–43. **15**: *The hills* must mean the hilly country around Jerusalem. **16**: The *booths* were apparently both domestic and communal. **17**: *Jeshua son of Nun*, that is, from the time of the Conquest of the land.

**9.1–37**: **The great confession. 1–5**: The setting. **2**: The confession was something in which non-Jews might not participate. **3**: They *read*, i.e. they listened to the reading. **4**: *The stairs* possibly belonged to the pulpit of 8.4.

name, which is exalted above all blessing and praise."

6 And Ezra said:[w] "You are the LORD, you alone; you have made heaven, the heaven of heavens, with all their host, the earth and all that is on it, the seas and all that is in them. To all of them you give life, and the host of heaven worships you. 7 You are the LORD, the God who chose Abram and brought him out of Ur of the Chaldeans and gave him the name Abraham; 8 and you found his heart faithful before you, and made with him a covenant to give to his descendants the land of the Canaanite, the Hittite, the Amorite, the Perizzite, the Jebusite, and the Girgashite; and you have fulfilled your promise, for you are righteous.

9 "And you saw the distress of our ancestors in Egypt and heard their cry at the Red Sea.[x] 10 You performed signs and wonders against Pharaoh and all his servants and all the people of his land, for you knew that they acted insolently against our ancestors. You made a name for yourself, which remains to this day. 11 And you divided the sea before them, so that they passed through the sea on dry land, but you threw their pursuers into the depths, like a stone into mighty waters. 12 Moreover, you led them by day with a pillar of cloud, and by night with a pillar of fire, to give them light on the way in which they should go. 13 You came down also upon Mount Sinai, and spoke with them from heaven, and gave them right ordinances and true laws, good statutes and commandments, 14 and you made known your holy sabbath to them and gave them commandments and statutes and a law through your servant Moses. 15 For their hunger you gave them bread from heaven, and for their thirst you brought water for them out of the rock, and you told them to go in to possess the land that you swore to give them.

16 "But they and our ancestors acted presumptuously and stiffened their necks and did not obey your commandments; 17 they refused to obey, and were not mindful of the wonders that you performed among them; but they stiffened their necks and determined to return to their slavery in Egypt. But you are a God ready to forgive, gracious and merciful, slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love, and you did not forsake them. 18 Even when they had cast an image of a calf for themselves and said, 'This is your God who brought you up out of Egypt,' and had committed great blasphemies, 19 you in your great mercies did not forsake them in the wilderness; the pillar of cloud that led them in the way did not leave them by day, nor the pillar of fire by night that gave them light on the way by which they should go. 20 You gave your good spirit to instruct them, and did not withhold your manna from their mouths, and gave them water for their thirst. 21 Forty years you sustained them in the wilderness so that they lacked nothing; their clothes did not wear out and their feet did not swell. 22 And you gave them kingdoms and peoples, and allotted to them every corner,[y] so they took possession of the land of King Sihon of Heshbon and the land of King Og of Bashan. 23 You multiplied their descendants like the stars of heaven, and brought them into the land that you had told their ancestors to enter and possess. 24 So the descendants went in and possessed the land, and you subdued before them the inhabitants of the land, the Canaanites, and gave them into their hands, with their kings and the peoples of the land, to do with them as they pleased. 25 And they captured fortress cities and a rich land, and took possession of houses filled with all sorts of goods, hewn cisterns, vineyards, olive orchards,

*w* Gk: Heb lacks *And Ezra said* *x* Or *Sea of Reeds* *y* Meaning of Heb uncertain

**9.6–37**: Ezra's confession and complaint. **17**: Num 14.4 says only that they suggested appointing such a leader.

**9.20a**: *You gave your good spirit,* perhaps a reference to the appointment of elders (Num 11.17–29).

and fruit trees in abundance; so they ate, and were filled and became fat, and delighted themselves in your great goodness.

26 "Nevertheless they were disobedient and rebelled against you and cast your law behind their backs and killed your prophets, who had warned them in order to turn them back to you, and they committed great blasphemies. 27 Therefore you gave them into the hands of their enemies, who made them suffer. Then in the time of their suffering they cried out to you and you heard them from heaven, and according to your great mercies you gave them saviors who saved them from the hands of their enemies. 28 But after they had rest, they again did evil before you, and you abandoned them to the hands of their enemies, so that they had dominion over them; yet when they turned and cried to you, you heard from heaven, and many times you rescued them according to your mercies. 29 And you warned them in order to turn them back to your law. Yet they acted presumptuously and did not obey your commandments, but sinned against your ordinances, by the observance of which a person shall live. They turned a stubborn shoulder and stiffened their neck and would not obey. 30 Many years you were patient with them, and warned them by your spirit through your prophets; yet they would not listen. Therefore you handed them over to the peoples of the lands. 31 Nevertheless, in your great mercies you did not make an end of them or forsake them, for you are a gracious and merciful God.

32 "Now therefore, our God—the great and mighty and awesome God, keeping covenant and steadfast love—do not treat lightly all the hardship that has come upon us, upon our kings, our officials, our priests, our prophets, our ancestors, and all your people, since the time of the kings of Assyria until today. 33 You have been just in all that has come upon us, for you have dealt faithfully and we have acted wickedly; 34 our kings, our officials, our priests, and our ancestors have not kept your law or heeded the commandments and the warnings that you gave them. 35 Even in their own kingdom, and in the great goodness you bestowed on them, and in the large and rich land that you set before them, they did not serve you and did not turn from their wicked works. 36 Here we are, slaves to this day—slaves in the land that you gave to our ancestors to enjoy its fruit and its good gifts. 37 Its rich yield goes to the kings whom you have set over us because of our sins; they have power also over our bodies and over our livestock at their pleasure, and we are in great distress."

38[z] Because of all this we make a firm agreement in writing, and on that sealed document are inscribed the names of our officials, our Levites, and our priests.

10[a] Upon the sealed document are the names of Nehemiah the governor, son of Hacaliah, and Zedekiah; 2 Seraiah, Azariah, Jeremiah, 3 Pashhur, Amariah, Malchijah, 4 Hattush, Shebaniah, Malluch, 5 Harim, Meremoth, Obadiah, 6 Daniel, Ginnethon, Baruch, 7 Meshullam, Abijah, Mijamin, 8 Maaziah, Bilgai, Shemaiah; these are the priests. 9 And the Levites: Jeshua son of Azaniah, Binnui of the sons of Henadad, Kadmiel; 10 and their associates, Shebaniah, Hodiah, Kelita, Pelaiah, Hanan, 11 Mica, Rehob, Hashabiah, 12 Zaccur, Sherebiah, Shebaniah, 13 Hodiah, Bani, Beninu. 14 The leaders of the people: Parosh, Pahath-moab, Elam, Zattu, Bani, 15 Bunni, Azgad, Bebai, 16 Adonijah, Bigvai, Adin, 17 Ater, Hezekiah, Azzur, 18 Hodiah, Hashum, Bezai, 19 Hariph,

z Ch 10.1 in Heb  a Ch 10.2 in Heb

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**9.27**: The *saviors* here are the judges (Judg 2.16). **30**: *By your spirit,* see Zech 7.12; 2 Chr 24.20.

**9.38–10.39: The covenant to support God's house;** a document belonging to the Nehemiah story. **9.38**: *Because of all this* refers to ch 13.

Anathoth, Nebai, 20 Magpiash, Meshullam, Hezir, 21 Meshezabel, Zadok, Jaddua, 22 Pelatiah, Hanan, Anaiah, 23 Hoshea, Hananiah, Hasshub, 24 Hallohesh, Pilha, Shobek, 25 Rehum, Hashabnah, Maaseiah, 26 Ahiah, Hanan, Anan, 27 Malluch, Harim, and Baanah.

28 The rest of the people, the priests, the Levites, the gatekeepers, the singers, the temple servants, and all who have separated themselves from the peoples of the lands to adhere to the law of God, their wives, their sons, their daughters, all who have knowledge and understanding, 29 join with their kin, their nobles, and enter into a curse and an oath to walk in God's law, which was given by Moses the servant of God, and to observe and do all the commandments of the LORD our Lord and his ordinances and his statutes. 30 We will not give our daughters to the peoples of the land or take their daughters for our sons; 31 and if the peoples of the land bring in merchandise or any grain on the sabbath day to sell, we will not buy it from them on the sabbath or on a holy day; and we will forego the crops of the seventh year and the exaction of every debt.

32 We also lay on ourselves the obligation to charge ourselves yearly one-third of a shekel for the service of the house of our God: 33 for the rows of bread, the regular grain offering, the regular burnt offering, the sabbaths, the new moons, the appointed festivals, the sacred donations, and the sin offerings to make atonement for Israel, and for all the work of the house of our God. 34 We have also cast lots among the priests, the Levites, and the people, for the wood offering, to bring it into the house of our God, by ancestral houses, at appointed times, year by year, to burn on the altar of the Lord our God, as it is written in the law. 35 We obligate ourselves to bring the first fruits of our soil and the first fruits of all fruit of every tree, year by year, to the house of the LORD; 36 also to bring to the house of our God, to the priests who minister in the house of our God, the firstborn of our sons and of our livestock, as it is written in the law, and the firstlings of our herds and of our flocks; 37 and to bring the first of our dough, and our contributions, the fruit of every tree, the wine and the oil, to the priests, to the chambers of the house of our God; and to bring to the Levites the tithes from our soil, for it is the Levites who collect the tithes in all our rural towns. 38 And the priest, the descendant of Aaron, shall be with the Levites when the Levites receive the tithes; and the Levites shall bring up a tithe of the tithes to the house of our God, to the chambers of the storehouse. 39 For the people of Israel and the sons of Levi shall bring the contribution of grain, wine, and oil to the storerooms where the vessels of the sanctuary are, and where the priests that minister, and the gatekeepers and the singers are. We will not neglect the house of our God.

11 Now the leaders of the people lived in Jerusalem; and the rest of the people cast lots to bring one out of ten to live in the holy city Jerusalem, while nine-tenths remained in the other towns. 2 And the people blessed all those who willingly offered to live in Jerusalem.

3 These are the leaders of the province who lived in Jerusalem; but in the towns of Judah all lived on their property in their towns: Israel, the priests, the Levites, the temple servants, and the de-

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**10.28**: *Separated themselves,* see 9.2; 13.3; and Ezra 6.21. **31**: *Sabbath day,* see 13.15–18. *A holy day* was treated as a sabbath. For the *seventh year* see Ex 23.10, and for the *debt,* Deut 15.1–3.

**10.32**: The temple tax was voluntary; later it became an obligatory half-shekel tax (Ex 30.13; Mt 17.24). **34**: Casting *lots* was a recognized procedure (11.1; 1 Chr 25.8; 1 Sam 14.40–45; Acts 1.23–26). *The wood offering* was for the altar fires (13.31; Lev 6.12).

**10.35–36**: The law on *first fruits,* Ex 22.29; 23.19; Num 18.15–18. **37**: *Tithes,* see Lev 27.30; Num 18.25–32. *The chambers* were the temple store-rooms (13.13; Ezra 8.29; 10.6).

**11.1–13.31**: **Continuation of Nehemiah's memoirs,** picking up from 7.5a. **11.1–36**: **A census list.**

scendants of Solomon's servants. 4And in Jerusalem lived some of the Judahites and of the Benjaminites. Of the Judahites: Athaiah son of Uzziah son of Zechariah son of Amariah son of Shephatiah son of Mahalalel, of the descendants of Perez; 5and Maaseiah son of Baruch son of Col-hozeh son of Hazaiah son of Adaiah son of Joiarib son of Zechariah son of the Shilonite. 6All the descendants of Perez who lived in Jerusalem were four hundred sixty-eight valiant warriors.

7 And these are the Benjaminites: Sallu son of Meshullam son of Joed son of Pedaiah son of Kolaiah son of Maaseiah son of Ithiel son of Jeshaiah. 8And his brothers[b] Gabbai, Sallai: nine hundred twenty-eight. 9Joel son of Zichri was their overseer; and Judah son of Hassenuah was second in charge of the city.

10 Of the priests: Jedaiah son of Joiarib, Jachin, 11Seraiah son of Hilkiah son of Meshullam son of Zadok son of Meraioth son of Ahitub, officer of the house of God, 12and their associates who did the work of the house, eight hundred twenty-two; and Adaiah son of Jeroham son of Pelaliah son of Amzi son of Zechariah son of Pashhur son of Malchijah, 13and his associates, heads of ancestral houses, two hundred forty-two; and Amashsai son of Azarel son of Ahzai son of Meshillemoth son of Immer, 14and their associates, valiant warriors, one hundred twenty-eight; their overseer was Zabdiel son of Haggedolim.

15 And of the Levites: Shemaiah son of Hasshub son of Azrikam son of Hashabiah son of Bunni; 16and Shabbethai and Jozabad, of the leaders of the Levites, who were over the outside work of the house of God; 17and Mattaniah son of Mica son of Zabdi son of Asaph, who was the leader to begin the thanksgiving in prayer, and Bakbukiah, the second among his associates; and Abda son of Shammua son of Galal son of Jeduthun. 18All the Levites in the holy city were two hundred eighty-four.

19 The gatekeepers, Akkub, Talmon and their associates, who kept watch at the gates, were one hundred seventy-two. 20And the rest of Israel, and of the priests and the Levites, were in all the towns of Judah, all of them in their inheritance. 21But the temple servants lived on Ophel; and Ziha and Gishpa were over the temple servants.

22 The overseer of the Levites in Jerusalem was Uzzi son of Bani son of Hashabiah son of Mattaniah son of Mica, of the descendants of Asaph, the singers, in charge of the work of the house of God. 23For there was a command from the king concerning them, and a settled provision for the singers, as was required every day. 24And Pethahiah son of Meshezabel, of the descendants of Zerah son of Judah, was at the king's hand in all matters concerning the people.

25 And as for the villages, with their fields, some of the people of Judah lived in Kiriath-arba and its villages, and in Dibon and its villages, and in Jekabzeel and its villages, 26and in Jeshua and in Moladah and Beth-pelet, 27in Hazar-shual, in Beer-sheba and its villages, 28in Ziklag, in Meconah and its villages, 29in En-rimmon, in Zorah, in Jarmuth, 30Zanoah, Adullam, and their villages, Lachish and its fields, and Azekah and its villages. So they camped from Beer-sheba to the valley of Hinnom. 31The people of Benjamin also lived from Geba onward, at Michmash, Aija, Bethel and its villages, 32Anathoth, Nob, Ananiah, 33Hazor, Ramah, Gittaim, 34Hadid, Zeboim, Neballat, 35Lod, and Ono, the valley of artisans. 36And certain divisions of the Levites in Judah were joined to Benjamin.

12 These are the priests and the Levites who came up with Zerub-

*b* Gk Mss: Heb *And after him*

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**11.9, 14, 22:** There was an overseer over each group. **24:** *At the king's hand,* i.e. he was one of the Persian monarch's famous "eyes" reporting on Judean affairs.

**11.25–36:** Census of the village distribution.

**12.1–26:** **An appendix** to the census lists, see Ezra 2.36–40. Verses 9 and 24 suggest

babel son of Shealtiel, and Jeshua: Seraiah, Jeremiah, Ezra, 2 Amariah, Malluch, Hattush, 3 Shecaniah, Rehum, Meremoth, 4 Iddo, Ginnethoi, Abijah, 5 Mijamin, Maadiah, Bilgah, 6 Shemaiah, Joiarib, Jedaiah, 7 Sallu, Amok, Hilkiah, Jedaiah. These were the leaders of the priests and of their associates in the days of Jeshua.

8 And the Levites: Jeshua, Binnui, Kadmiel, Sherebiah, Judah, and Mattaniah, who with his associates was in charge of the songs of thanksgiving. 9 And Bakbukiah and Unno their associates stood opposite them in the service. 10 Jeshua was the father of Joiakim, Joiakim the father of Eliashib, Eliashib the father of Joiada, 11 Joiada the father of Jonathan, and Jonathan the father of Jaddua.

12 In the days of Joiakim the priests, heads of ancestral houses, were: of Seraiah, Meraiah; of Jeremiah, Hananiah; 13 of Ezra, Meshullam; of Amariah, Jehohanan; 14 of Malluchi, Jonathan; of Shebaniah, Joseph; 15 of Harim, Adna; of Meraioth, Helkai; 16 of Iddo, Zechariah; of Ginnethon, Meshullam; 17 of Abijah, Zichri; of Miniamin, of Moadiah, Piltai; 18 of Bilgah, Shammua; of Shemaiah, Jehonathan; 19 of Joiarib, Mattenai; of Jedaiah, Uzzi; 20 of Sallai, Kallai; of Amok, Eber; 21 of Hilkiah, Hashabiah; of Jedaiah, Nethanel.

22 As for the Levites, in the days of Eliashib, Joiada, Johanan, and Jaddua, there were recorded the heads of ancestral houses; also the priests until the reign of Darius the Persian. 23 The Levites, heads of ancestral houses, were recorded in the Book of the Annals until the days of Johanan son of Eliashib. 24 And the leaders of the Levites: Hashabiah, Sherebiah, and Jeshua son of Kadmiel, with their associates over against them, to praise and to give thanks, according to the commandment of David the man of God, section opposite to section. 25 Mattaniah, Bakbukiah, Obadiah, Meshullam, Talmon, and Akkub were gatekeepers standing guard at the storehouses of the gates. 26 These were in the days of Joiakim son of Jeshua son of Jozadak, and in the days of the governor Nehemiah and of the priest Ezra, the scribe.

27 Now at the dedication of the wall of Jerusalem they sought out the Levites in all their places, to bring them to Jerusalem to celebrate the dedication with rejoicing, with thanksgivings and with singing, with cymbals, harps, and lyres. 28 The companies of the singers gathered together from the circuit around Jerusalem and from the villages of the Netophathites; 29 also from Beth-gilgal and from the region of Geba and Azmaveth; for the singers had built for themselves villages around Jerusalem. 30 And the priests and the Levites purified themselves; and they purified the people and the gates and the wall.

31 Then I brought the leaders of Judah up onto the wall, and appointed two great companies that gave thanks and went in procession. One went to the right on the wall to the Dung Gate; 32 and after them went Hoshaiah and half the officials of Judah, 33 and Azariah, Ezra, Meshullam, 34 Judah, Benjamin, Shemaiah, and Jeremiah, 35 and some of the young priests with trumpets: Zechariah son of Jonathan son of Shemaiah son of Mattaniah son of Micaiah son of Zaccur son of Asaph; 36 and his kindred, Shemaiah, Azarel, Milalai, Gilalai, Maai, Nethanel, Judah, and Hanani, with the musical instruments of David the man of God; and the scribe Ezra went in front of them. 37 At the Fountain Gate, in front of

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antiphonal singing. **23**: This does not necessarily mean our book of Chronicles. **26**: The phrase *the priest Ezra, the scribe* is an editorial insertion.

**12.27–43**: **The dedication of the walls,** with music, purification, procession, and sacrifice. **28**: People from Netophath, southwest of Jerusalem (1 Chr 9.16; Ezra 2.22). **31**: *Two great companies,* for they marched in opposite directions and met at the temple.

**12.36**: They used the same kinds of instruments which tradition said belonged to David's time. The reference to Ezra here and in v. 33 is an editorial insertion.

them, they went straight up by the stairs of the city of David, at the ascent of the wall, above the house of David, to the Water Gate on the east.

38 The other company of those who gave thanks went to the left,[c] and I followed them with half of the people on the wall, above the Tower of the Ovens, to the Broad Wall, 39and above the Gate of Ephraim, and by the Old Gate, and by the Fish Gate and the Tower of Hananel and the Tower of the Hundred, to the Sheep Gate; and they came to a halt at the Gate of the Guard. 40So both companies of those who gave thanks stood in the house of God, and I and half of the officials with me; 41and the priests Eliakim, Maaseiah, Miniamin, Micaiah, Elioenai, Zechariah, and Hananiah, with trumpets; 42and Maaseiah, Shemaiah, Eleazar, Uzzi, Jehohanan, Malchijah, Elam, and Ezer. And the singers sang with Jezrahiah as their leader. 43They offered great sacrifices that day and rejoiced, for God had made them rejoice with great joy; the women and children also rejoiced. The joy of Jerusalem was heard far away.

44 On that day men were appointed over the chambers for the stores, the contributions, the first fruits, and the tithes, to gather into them the portions required by the law for the priests and for the Levites from the fields belonging to the towns; for Judah rejoiced over the priests and the Levites who ministered. 45They performed the service of their God and the service of purification, as did the singers and the gatekeepers, according to the command of David and his son Solomon. 46For in the days of David and Asaph long ago there was a leader of the singers, and there were songs of praise and thanksgiving to God. 47In the days of Zerubbabel and in the days of Nehemiah all Israel gave the daily portions for the singers and the gatekeepers. They set apart that which was for the Levites; and the Levites set apart that which was for the descendants of Aaron.

13 On that day they read from the book of Moses in the hearing of the people; and in it was found written that no Ammonite or Moabite should ever enter the assembly of God, 2because they did not meet the Israelites with bread and water, but hired Balaam against them to curse them—yet our God turned the curse into a blessing. 3When the people heard the law, they separated from Israel all those of foreign descent.

4 Now before this, the priest Eliashib, who was appointed over the chambers of the house of our God, and who was related to Tobiah, 5prepared for Tobiah a large room where they had previously put the grain offering, the frankincense, the vessels, and the tithes of grain, wine, and oil, which were given by commandment to the Levites, singers, and gatekeepers, and the contributions for the priests. 6While this was taking place I was not in Jerusalem, for in the thirty-second year of King Artaxerxes of Babylon I went to the king. After some time I asked leave of the king 7and returned to Jerusalem. I then discovered the wrong that Eliashib had done on behalf of Tobiah, preparing a room for him in the courts of the house of God. 8And I was very angry, and I threw all the household furniture of Tobiah out of the room. 9Then I gave orders and they cleansed the chambers, and I brought back the

[c] Cn: Heb *opposite*

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**12.43**: *Great sacrifices,* see Ezra 6.17.

**12.44–47**: **Arrangements for temple revenues. 45**: See 2 Chr 8.14, referring back to 1 Chr chs 23–26.

**13.1–31**: **Nehemiah's second administration.** Verses 1–3 are introductory to connect with 8.18. **1**: *Written,* compare Deut 23.3–5. **2**: *Balaam,* see Num chs 22–24. **4–9**: The ejection of *Tobiah* an Ammonite (2.10). **4–5**: *Eliashib* is the high priest of 3.1, 20; 12.22; Ezra 10.6, and who was connected by marriage with Sanballat (v. 28); in defiance of the law against Ammonites (v. 1), he had allotted Tobiah a temple *room.* **6**: Artaxerxes' *thirty-second year,* 433 B.C. (5.14); as he died in 423 the *some time* falls between those two years. **9**: That he *gave orders* proves that his return was with royal authority.

vessels of the house of God, with the grain offering and the frankincense.

10 I also found out that the portions of the Levites had not been given to them; so that the Levites and the singers, who had conducted the service, had gone back to their fields. 11 So I remonstrated with the officials and said, "Why is the house of God forsaken?" And I gathered them together and set them in their stations. 12 Then all Judah brought the tithe of the grain, wine, and oil into the storehouses. 13 And I appointed as treasurers over the storehouses the priest Shelemiah, the scribe Zadok, and Pedaiah of the Levites, and as their assistant Hanan son of Zaccur son of Mattaniah, for they were considered faithful; and their duty was to distribute to their associates. 14 Remember me, O my God, concerning this, and do not wipe out my good deeds that I have done for the house of my God and for his service.

15 In those days I saw in Judah people treading wine presses on the sabbath, and bringing in heaps of grain and loading them on donkeys; and also wine, grapes, figs, and all kinds of burdens, which they brought into Jerusalem on the sabbath day; and I warned them at that time against selling food. 16 Tyrians also, who lived in the city, brought in fish and all kinds of merchandise and sold them on the sabbath to the people of Judah, and in Jerusalem. 17 Then I remonstrated with the nobles of Judah and said to them, "What is this evil thing that you are doing, profaning the sabbath day? 18 Did not your ancestors act in this way, and did not our God bring all this disaster on us and on this city? Yet you bring more wrath on Israel by profaning the sabbath."

19 When it began to be dark at the gates of Jerusalem before the sabbath, I commanded that the doors should be shut and gave orders that they should not be opened until after the sabbath. And I set some of my servants over the gates, to prevent any burden from being brought in on the sabbath day. 20 Then the merchants and sellers of all kinds of merchandise spent the night outside Jerusalem once or twice. 21 But I warned them and said to them, "Why do you spend the night in front of the wall? If you do so again, I will lay hands on you." From that time on they did not come on the sabbath. 22 And I commanded the Levites that they should purify themselves and come and guard the gates, to keep the sabbath day holy. Remember this also in my favor, O my God, and spare me according to the greatness of your steadfast love.

23 In those days also I saw Jews who had married women of Ashdod, Ammon, and Moab; 24 and half of their children spoke the language of Ashdod, and they could not speak the language of Judah, but spoke the language of various peoples. 25 And I contended with them and cursed them and beat some of them and pulled out their hair; and I made them take an oath in the name of God, saying, "You shall not give your daughters to their sons, or take their daughters for your sons or for yourselves. 26 Did not King Solomon of Israel sin on account of such women? Among the many nations there was no king like him, and he was beloved by his God, and God made him king over all Israel; nevertheless, foreign women made even him to sin. 27 Shall we then listen to you and do all this great evil and act treacherously against our God by marrying foreign women?"

28 And one of the sons of Jehoiada, son of the high priest Eliashib, was the

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**13.10–14**: Restoration of tithes to the temple staff. **14**: *Do not wipe out,* see 4.5. **15–22**: Instances of sabbath breaking.

**13.19–20**: Shutting the gates prevented produce from entering the city, a restriction which merchants sought to nullify by trading *outside* the walls. **23–30**: The problem of mixed marriages (10.30; Ezra 9.1–2; 10.2). **25**: Such physical violence is common in Oriental history. **26**: *Solomon,* 1 Kings 11.1–8.

son-in-law of Sanballat the Horonite; I chased him away from me. 29 Remember them, O my God, because they have defiled the priesthood, the covenant of the priests and the Levites.

30 Thus I cleansed them from everything foreign, and I established the duties of the priests and Levites, each in his work; 31 and I provided for the wood offering, at appointed times, and for the first fruits. Remember me, O my God, for good.

# *Esther*

In the Hebrew Bible, Esther comes last of the five scrolls (megillōth) that are read at the great festivals of the Jewish year. It is the scroll for Purim. In the Greek Bible, Esther has its place among the historical books, and has been lengthened by the addition of passages (totalling 107 verses) intended to make it a more religious book. The King James Version included these, "The Additions to the Book of Esther," among the Apocrypha.

Esther is the fascinating tale that provides the "historical" basis for a non-Mosaic (and, probably, originally a pagan) festival. Thanks to the wisdom of Mordecai and the courageous efforts of Queen Esther, wife of the Persian King Ahasuerus (or Xerxes I), Jews throughout the Achaemenid empire were saved from a subtly planned anti-Semitic pogrom, with the result that henceforth all Jews must celebrate that deliverance on the fourteenth and fifteenth of the month of Adar (in February-March).

Simple though its story and purpose are, no other book of the Hebrew Bible has received such mixed reviews from good, God-fearing people--both Jews and Christians—as Esther. Some have criticized the book for what it contains; others, for what it lacks.

The Persian king, for instance, is mentioned 190 times, but the God of Israel, not once—nor are such basic Jewish practices and institutions as the Law, covenant, prayer, dietary regulations, or Jerusalem. However, other religious books, in varying degrees, also share many of these same "deficiencies," notably, such wisdom books as Proverbs, Job, and Ecclesiastes.

The book has frequently been faulted for its moral tone. Not only are such basic Judaic values as kindness, mercy, and forgiveness lacking; but, as many Jews and Christians have lamented, the story evidences a vengeful, bloodthirsty, and chauvinistic spirit. Intrigue, deceit, and hatred abound regardless of whether the spotlight is on Haman, Esther, Mordecai, or on their enemies. The Hebrew account, however, in contrast to its Greek version, is not anti-Gentile.

Small wonder, then, that the book's canonicity was much contested by certain Jews as late as the fourth century A.D. and by a number of Greek church fathers centuries after that.

Nonetheless, Esther is still a religious work. For although the Deity is not seen or even heard on its stage, God is standing in the wings, following the drama and arranging the props for a successful resolution of the play. Certain religious concepts are clearly presupposed in the Hebrew text, notably the concept of Providence (4.14; 5.1–6) and the efficacy of fasting (4.16) and, by implication, of prayer (4.16). The author is saying that, as in the case of Mordecai and Esther, Providence can be relied upon to reverse the ill-fortunes that beset individuals or the nation—provided that such leaders and their followers actively do their part, acting wisely and courageously.

In spite of the story's historical trappings and its author's familiarity with Persian history, customs, vocabulary, and names, the book of Esther is essentially fiction, created out of three originally separate and independent tales: a harem tale involving a certain Vashti, a court intrigue/deliverance tale featuring a Mordecai, and a success/deliverance tale starring an Esther, or Hadassah. They were combined to provide the explanation for the origins of a non-Mosaic and, probably, pagan festival the real origins of which scholars have, thus far, been unable to trace.

In its present form, Esther dates to the early Hellenistic Period, that is, shortly prior to the Maccabean Period (167–135 B.C.), when antagonism toward Gentiles ran high among Jews. Esther may have been composed in the Eastern Dispersion, but Palestine is a distinct possibility.

1 This happened in the days of Ahasuerus, the same Ahasuerus who ruled over one hundred twenty-seven provinces from India to Ethiopia.[a] 2In those days when King Ahasuerus sat on his royal throne in the citadel of Susa, 3in the third year of his reign, he gave a banquet for all his officials and ministers. The army of Persia and Media and the nobles and governors of the provinces were present, 4while he displayed the great wealth of his kingdom and the splendor and pomp of his majesty for many days, one hundred eighty days in all.

5 When these days were completed, the king gave for all the people present in the citadel of Susa, both great and small, a banquet lasting for seven days, in the court of the garden of the king's palace. 6There were white cotton curtains and blue hangings tied with cords of fine linen and purple to silver rings[b] and marble pillars. There were couches of gold and silver on a mosaic pavement of porphyry, marble, mother-of-pearl, and colored stones. 7Drinks were served in golden goblets, goblets of different kinds, and the royal wine was lavished according to the bounty of the king. 8Drinking was by flagons, without restraint; for the king had given orders to all the officials of his palace to do as each one desired. 9Furthermore, Queen Vashti gave a banquet for the women in the palace of King Ahasuerus.

10 On the seventh day, when the king was merry with wine, he commanded Mehuman, Biztha, Harbona, Bigtha and Abagtha, Zethar and Carkas, the seven eunuchs who attended him, 11to bring Queen Vashti before the king, wearing the royal crown, in order to show the peoples and the officials her beauty; for she was fair to behold. 12But Queen Vashti refused to come at the king's command conveyed by the eunuchs. At this the king was enraged, and his anger burned within him.

13 Then the king consulted the sages who knew the laws[c] (for this was the king's procedure toward all who were versed in law and custom, 14and those next to him were Carshena, Shethar, Admatha, Tarshish, Meres, Marsena, and Memucan, the seven officials of Persia and Media, who had access to the king, and sat first in the kingdom): 15"According to the law, what is to be done to Queen Vashti because she has not performed the command of King Ahasuerus conveyed by the eunuchs?" 16Then Memucan said in the presence of the king and the officials, "Not only has Queen Vashti done wrong to the king, but also to all the officials and all the peoples who are in all the provinces of King Ahasuerus. 17For this deed of the queen will be made known to all women, causing them to look with contempt on their husbands, since they will say, 'King Ahasuerus commanded Queen Vashti to be brought before him, and she did not come.' 18This very day the noble ladies of Persia and Media who have heard of the queen's behavior will rebel against[d]

*a* Or *Nubia*; Heb *Cush* *b* Or *rods*
*c* Cn: Heb *times* *d* Cn: Heb *will tell*

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**1.1–9: Ahasuerus' feast.** *Ahasuerus* (Ezra 4.6; Dan 9.1) is Xerxes I (485–464 B.C.), whose Persian empire, from *India,* i.e. the Indus valley, to *Ethiopia,* the modern Nubia, included some twenty satrapies (Herodotus, *Hist.* III, 89), subdivided into *provinces.* **2:** Persepolis was his capital; *the citadel* ("acropolis") *of Susa,* his winter residence in Elam, was located two hundred miles northeast of Babylon. **3:** Greek writers mention fabulous feasts given by Persian kings. **5:** Excavations at *Susa* and at Persepolis have uncovered such a *court.* **9:** *Vashti* is, in all likelihood, a Persian name, and figures in the original harem tale. Xerxes' *queen* was Amestris, a Persian (Herodotus, *Hist.* VII, 61).

**1.10–2.4: Vashti's fall.** Apart from deposing Vashti so as to clear the way for Esther, the entire story is told for comedic effect. The names here, as elsewhere in this book, are attempts to reproduce Persian names. **11:** *Crown* indicates that she was to appear in royal attire.

**1.12:** *Vashti refused . . . the king's command* to come before him while, ironically, Esther refused to stay away (4.11), which resulted in quite different consequences. **13:** *Sages,* probably his seven privy counselors (Ezra 7.14;

the king's officials, and there will be no end of contempt and wrath! 19If it pleases the king, let a royal order go out from him, and let it be written among the laws of the Persians and the Medes so that it may not be altered, that Vashti is never again to come before King Ahasuerus; and let the king give her royal position to another who is better than she. 20So when the decree made by the king is proclaimed throughout all his kingdom, vast as it is, all women will give honor to their husbands, high and low alike."

21 This advice pleased the king and the officials, and the king did as Memucan proposed; 22he sent letters to all the royal provinces, to every province in its own script and to every people in its own language, declaring that every man should be master in his own house.[e]

2 After these things, when the anger of King Ahasuerus had abated, he remembered Vashti and what she had done and what had been decreed against her. 2Then the king's servants who attended him said, "Let beautiful young virgins be sought out for the king. 3And let the king appoint commissioners in all the provinces of his kingdom to gather all the beautiful young virgins to the harem in the citadel of Susa under custody of Hegai, the king's eunuch, who is in charge of the women; let their cosmetic treatments be given them. 4And let the girl who pleases the king be queen instead of Vashti." This pleased the king, and he did so.

5 Now there was a Jew in the citadel of Susa whose name was Mordecai son of Jair son of Shimei son of Kish, a Benjaminite. 6Kish[f] had been carried away from Jerusalem among the captives carried away with King Jeconiah of Judah, whom King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon had carried away. 7Mordecai[g] had brought up Hadassah, that is Esther, his cousin, for she had neither father nor mother; the girl was fair and beautiful, and when her father and her mother died, Mordecai adopted her as his own daughter. 8So when the king's order and his edict were proclaimed, and when many young women were gathered in the citadel of Susa in custody of Hegai, Esther also was taken into the king's palace and put in custody of Hegai, who had charge of the women. 9The girl pleased him and won his favor, and he quickly provided her with her cosmetic treatments and her portion of food, and with seven chosen maids from the king's palace, and advanced her and her maids to the best place in the harem. 10Esther did not reveal her people or kindred, for Mordecai had charged her not to tell. 11Every day Mordecai would walk around in front of the court of the harem, to learn how Esther was and how she fared.

12 The turn came for each girl to go

*e* Heb adds *and speak according to the language of his people* *f* Heb *a Benjamite* 6*who* *g* Heb *He*

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Herodotus, *Hist.* III, 31, 84). **19:** This belief in the immutability of Medo-Persian law appears in 8.8; Dan 6.8. **22:** *To every people in its own language* is a rhetorical exaggeration here (as in 3.12 and 8.9). Aramaic was normally used for such official correspondence.

**2.2:** *Servants,* i.e. his pages, not his counselors. **3, 9:** *Harem,* lit. "house of women."

**2.5–23: Mordecai and Esther.** They were cousins with names derived, perhaps, from the Babylonian deities Marduk and Ishtar (or, possibly, Persian "stara," star), who also were cousins. That, like Saul, he was a Benjaminite, is emphasized to prepare readers for the enmity of Haman, an Amalekite of the Agag family, Saul's enemy (see 3.1–15 n.). The Babylonian name "Marduka" was borne by a number of individuals, including an accountant from Susa who lived during the early years of Xerxes or the last years of his father. **6:** *Jeconiah* is Jehoiachin (2 Kings 24.6); so Mordecai was about one hundred and twenty years old. **7:** *Hadassah* ("myrtle") was Esther's Hebrew name. He was her foster father (Isa 49.23). **10:** Esther's concealment of her race is a necessary literary device (v. 20); but the Greek version is at pains to show that as queen she strictly followed the law, including dietary restrictions. **11:** Mordecai's closeness to the *harem* suggests that he was a minor official, perhaps a eunuch gatekeeper (vv. 19, 21; 6.10).

in to King Ahasuerus, after being twelve months under the regulations for the women, since this was the regular period of their cosmetic treatment, six months with oil of myrrh and six months with perfumes and cosmetics for women. 13When the girl went in to the king she was given whatever she asked for to take with her from the harem to the king's palace. 14In the evening she went in; then in the morning she came back to the second harem in custody of Shaashgaz, the king's eunuch, who was in charge of the concubines; she did not go in to the king again, unless the king delighted in her and she was summoned by name.

15 When the turn came for Esther daughter of Abihail the uncle of Mordecai, who had adopted her as his own daughter, to go in to the king, she asked for nothing except what Hegai the king's eunuch, who had charge of the women, advised. Now Esther was admired by all who saw her. 16When Esther was taken to King Ahasuerus in his royal palace in the tenth month, which is the month of Tebeth, in the seventh year of his reign, 17the king loved Esther more than all the other women; of all the virgins she won his favor and devotion, so that he set the royal crown on her head and made her queen instead of Vashti. 18Then the king gave a great banquet to all his officials and ministers—"Esther's banquet." He also granted a holiday[h] to the provinces, and gave gifts with royal liberality.

19 When the virgins were being gathered together,[i] Mordecai was sitting at the king's gate. 20Now Esther had not revealed her kindred or her people, as Mordecai had charged her; for Esther obeyed Mordecai just as when she was brought up by him. 21In those days, while Mordecai was sitting at the king's gate, Bigthan and Teresh, two of the king's eunuchs, who guarded the threshold, became angry and conspired to assassinate[j] King Ahasuerus. 22But the matter came to the knowledge of Mordecai, and he told it to Queen Esther, and Esther told the king in the name of Mordecai. 23When the affair was investigated and found to be so, both the men were hanged on the gallows. It was recorded in the book of the annals in the presence of the king.

3 After these things King Ahasuerus promoted Haman son of Hammedatha the Agagite, and advanced him and set his seat above all the officials who were with him. 2And all the king's servants who were at the king's gate bowed down and did obeisance to Haman; for the king had so commanded concerning him. But Mordecai did not bow down or do obeisance. 3Then the king's servants who were at the king's gate said to Mordecai, "Why do you disobey the king's command?" 4When they spoke to him day after day and he would not listen to them, they told Haman, in order to see whether Mordecai's words would avail; for he had told them that he was a Jew. 5When Haman saw that Mordecai did not bow down or do obeisance to him, Haman was infuriated. 6But he thought it beneath him to lay hands on Mordecai alone. So, having been told who Mordecai's people were, Haman plotted to de-

*h* Or *an amnesty* *i* Heb adds *a second time*
*j* Heb *to lay hands on*

**2.12**: *Their cosmetic treatment,* apparently by massage. **15**: *Abihail,* in the Hebrew Bible, can be either a male (Num 3.35; 1 Chr 5.14) or female (1 Chr 2.29) name. **16**: *Tebeth* (December-January), as all the month-names in this book, is a Babylonian name. **18**: This *banquet* being a wedding feast, the king favors his subjects with largesse. **21**: *The threshold,* that of the bed-chamber. Xerxes actually fell victim to such a conspiracy of bed-chamber servants, as have other Oriental potentates. **23**: *On the gallows,* lit. "on a tree," i.e. impalement, the normal form of punishment in Persia for political offenders. In the Greek version (12.6), Haman's hostility toward Mordecai begins with his reporting of this plot. *Annals,* such records kept by court scribes in Persia are mentioned by Greek writers.

**3.1–15**: **Haman and Mordecai.** For the Benjaminite-Agagite enmity see 1 Sam 15.7–9. *Haman* was *advanced* to be grand vizier, to whom lower officials must make obeisance, an honor which Mordecai as a Benjaminite

stroy all the Jews, the people of Mordecai, throughout the whole kingdom of Ahasuerus.

7 In the first month, which is the month of Nisan, in the twelfth year of King Ahasuerus, they cast Pur—which means "the lot"—before Haman for the day and for the month, and the lot fell on the thirteenth day[k] of the twelfth month, which is the month of Adar. 8Then Haman said to King Ahasuerus, "There is a certain people scattered and separated among the peoples in all the provinces of your kingdom; their laws are different from those of every other people, and they do not keep the king's laws, so that it is not appropriate for the king to tolerate them. 9If it pleases the king, let a decree be issued for their destruction, and I will pay ten thousand talents of silver into the hands of those who have charge of the king's business, so that they may put it into the king's treasuries." 10So the king took his signet ring from his hand and gave it to Haman son of Hammedatha the Agagite, the enemy of the Jews. 11The king said to Haman, "The money is given to you, and the people as well, to do with them as it seems good to you."

12 Then the king's secretaries were summoned on the thirteenth day of the first month, and an edict, according to all that Haman commanded, was written to the king's satraps and to the governors over all the provinces and to the officials of all the peoples, to every province in its own script and every people in its own language; it was written in the name of King Ahasuerus and sealed with the king's ring. 13Letters were sent by couriers to all the king's provinces, giving orders to destroy, to kill, and to annihilate all Jews, young and old, women and children, in one day, the thirteenth day of the twelfth month, which is the month of Adar, and to plunder their goods. 14A copy of the document was to be issued as a decree in every province by proclamation, calling on all the peoples to be ready for that day. 15The couriers went quickly by order of the king, and the decree was issued in the citadel of Susa. The king and Haman sat down to drink; but the city of Susa was thrown into confusion.

4 When Mordecai learned all that had been done, Mordecai tore his clothes and put on sackcloth and ashes, and went through the city, wailing with a loud and bitter cry; 2he went up to the entrance of the king's gate, for no one might enter the king's gate clothed with sackcloth. 3In every province, wherever the king's command and his decree came, there was great mourning among the Jews, with fasting and weeping and lamenting, and most of them lay in sackcloth and ashes.

4 When Esther's maids and her eunuchs came and told her, the queen was deeply distressed; she sent garments to clothe Mordecai, so that he might take off his sackcloth; but he would not accept them. 5Then Esther called for Hathach, one of the king's eunuchs, who had been appointed to attend her, and ordered him to go to Mordecai to learn what was happening and why. 6Hathach went out to Mordecai in the open square of the city in front of the king's gate, 7and Mordecai told him all that had happened to him,

*k* Cn Compare Gk and verse 13 below: Heb *the twelfth month*

would not pay an Agagite (see 2.5–23 n.; 9.16 n.). **6**: Haman's indignation naturally suggested a pogrom of *all the Jews*.

**3.7**: *Pur* is an Akkadian word for lot, and casting lots was not irreligious (1 Sam 14.42; Acts 1.26; Herodotus, *Hist.* III, 128). The lot was to decide an appropriate date for the pogrom. **8**: *Their laws are different*, i.e. the Mosaic law. **9**: To clinch his argument Haman offers a fabulous sum as a bribe. **10**: *His signet ring* gave validity to documents (8.2, 8; Gen 41.42). **11**: The king refuses the bribe but authorizes the pogrom. **13**: The *couriers* carrying the royal edict were the famous post service organized by Cyrus. The apocryphal Additions to the Book of Esther purport to give the text of the documents. **14**: The *copy* was the local public distribution of the *edict* (v.12).

**4.1–17**: **The appeal to Esther.** **1**: These are traditional Oriental manifestations of

and the exact sum of money that Haman had promised to pay into the king's treasuries for the destruction of the Jews. 8 Mordecai also gave him a copy of the written decree issued in Susa for their destruction, that he might show it to Esther, explain it to her, and charge her to go to the king to make supplication to him and entreat him for her people.

9 Hathach went and told Esther what Mordecai had said. 10 Then Esther spoke to Hathach and gave him a message for Mordecai, saying, 11 "All the king's servants and the people of the king's provinces know that if any man or woman goes to the king inside the inner court without being called, there is but one law—all alike are to be put to death. Only if the king holds out the golden scepter to someone, may that person live. I myself have not been called to come in to the king for thirty days." 12 When they told Mordecai what Esther had said, 13 Mordecai told them to reply to Esther, "Do not think that in the king's palace you will escape any more than all the other Jews. 14 For if you keep silence at such a time as this, relief and deliverance will rise for the Jews from another quarter, but you and your father's family will perish. Who knows? Perhaps you have come to royal dignity for just such a time as this." 15 Then Esther said in reply to Mordecai, 16 "Go, gather all the Jews to be found in Susa, and hold a fast on my behalf, and neither eat nor drink for three days, night or day. I and my maids will also fast as you do. After that I will go to the king, though it is against the law; and if I perish, I perish." 17 Mordecai then went away and did everything as Esther had ordered him.

5 On the third day Esther put on her royal robes and stood in the inner court of the king's palace, opposite the king's hall. The king was sitting on his royal throne inside the palace opposite the entrance to the palace. 2 As soon as the king saw Queen Esther standing in the court, she won his favor and he held out to her the golden scepter that was in his hand. Then Esther approached and touched the top of the scepter. 3 The king said to her, "What is it, Queen Esther? What is your request? It shall be given you, even to the half of my kingdom." 4 Then Esther said, "If it pleases the king, let the king and Haman come today to a banquet that I have prepared for the king." 5 Then the king said, "Bring Haman quickly, so that we may do as Esther desires." So the king and Haman came to the banquet that Esther had prepared. 6 While they were drinking wine, the king said to Esther, "What is your petition? It shall be granted you. And what is your request? Even to the half of my kingdom, it shall be fulfilled." 7 Then Esther said, "This is my petition and request: 8 If I have won the king's favor, and if it pleases the king to grant my petition and fulfill my request, let the king and Haman come tomorrow to the banquet that I will prepare for them, and then I will do as the king has said."

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grief and mourning, which render one ritually unclean, so Mordecai (v. 2) could not *enter the king's gate*.

**4.11**: Interdiction to enter without being summoned was a security precaution. **14**: *From another quarter* and *Perhaps you have come . . . for just such a time . . .* probably refer to Divine providence. **16**: *Hold a fast,* the only religious activity mentioned in the book (9.31); fasting in the Hebrew Bible is usually accompanied by prayer. The apocryphal Additions to the Book of Esther insert here the prayers of Esther and Mordecai, which greatly enhance the religious character of the Greek version.

**5.1–8**: **Esther before the king. 1**: By appearing unbidden she had violated custom; so she *stood* at the *inner court* to await the monarch's reaction. **2**: *She won his favor,* in the Greek version (Addition D), the king is initially hostile, but God miraculously changes his attitude, thereby making that the climax of the entire book. **3, 6**: *The half of my kingdom* (7.2) is a customary hyperbole (compare Mk 6.23). **4, 8**: No subtle reason need be sought for the first and second *banquet,* nor for Haman's being the only guest; these are but literary embellishments needful to the story.

9 Haman went out that day happy and in good spirits. But when Haman saw Mordecai in the king's gate, and observed that he neither rose nor trembled before him, he was infuriated with Mordecai; 10nevertheless Haman restrained himself and went home. Then he sent and called for his friends and his wife Zeresh, 11and Haman recounted to them the splendor of his riches, the number of his sons, all the promotions with which the king had honored him, and how he had advanced him above the officials and the ministers of the king. 12Haman added, "Even Queen Esther let no one but myself come with the king to the banquet that she prepared. Tomorrow also I am invited by her, together with the king. 13Yet all this does me no good so long as I see the Jew Mordecai sitting at the king's gate." 14Then his wife Zeresh and all his friends said to him, "Let a gallows fifty cubits high be made, and in the morning tell the king to have Mordecai hanged on it; then go with the king to the banquet in good spirits." This advice pleased Haman, and he had the gallows made.

6 On that night the king could not sleep, and he gave orders to bring the book of records, the annals, and they were read to the king. 2It was found written how Mordecai had told about Bigthana and Teresh, two of the king's eunuchs, who guarded the threshold, and who had conspired to assassinate[l] King Ahasuerus. 3Then the king said, "What honor or distinction has been bestowed on Mordecai for this?" The king's servants who attended him said, "Nothing has been done for him." 4The king said, "Who is in the court?" Now Haman had just entered the outer court of the king's palace to speak to the king about having Mordecai hanged on the gallows that he had prepared for him. 5So the king's servants told him, "Haman is there, standing in the court." The king said, "Let him come in." 6So Haman came in, and the king said to him, "What shall be done for the man whom the king wishes to honor?" Haman said to himself, "Whom would the king wish to honor more than me?" 7So Haman said to the king, "For the man whom the king wishes to honor, 8let royal robes be brought, which the king has worn, and a horse that the king has ridden, with a royal crown on its head. 9Let the robes and the horse be handed over to one of the king's most noble officials; let him[m] robe the man whom the king wishes to honor, and let him[m] conduct the man on horseback through the open square of the city, proclaiming before him: 'Thus shall it be done for the man whom the king wishes to honor.' " 10Then the king said to Haman, "Quickly, take the robes and the horse, as you have said, and do so to the Jew Mordecai who sits at the king's gate. Leave out nothing that you have mentioned." 11So Haman took the robes and the horse and robed Mordecai and led him riding through the open square

*l* Heb *to lay hands on* *m* Heb *them*

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**5.9–14: Haman's exaltation and chagrin. 10**: Haman's boasting before *his friends* will make his subsequent fall even more ironic. They are the *advisers* of 6.13. **14**: *Gallows,* see 2.23 n. The *fifty cubits,* i.e. over seventy feet, is hyperbole for literary effect. Haman could prepare this, but only the monarch could condemn anyone to death.

**6.1–14: Mordecai's triumph. 1**: Whether the king's sleeplessness was simply a literary device common to many Near Eastern tales or an expression of divine Providence is debated by scholars. In the Greek version, God is the cause of it. **3**: Herodotus (*Hist.* VIII, 85, 90) records how Persian monarchs kept records of notable services rendered. **4**: The inquiry, *Who is in the court?* merely means, What official is currently in attendance? Haman's eagerness drove him to early attendance, and his superior rank gave him precedence. **8**: The bestowal of *robes* of honor was common in ancient times (Gen 41.42; 1 Sam 18.4), and is still practiced. The *royal crown* here was an ornament for the horse, such as is pictured on monuments. **10**: *Do so to . . . Mordecai,* this is one of the many dramatic reversals in the book, and it clearly foreshadows the ultimate triumph of Mordecai and his people over their enemies.

of the city, proclaiming, "Thus shall it be done for the man whom the king wishes to honor."

12 Then Mordecai returned to the king's gate, but Haman hurried to his house, mourning and with his head covered. 13When Haman told his wife Zeresh and all his friends everything that had happened to him, his advisers and his wife Zeresh said to him, "If Mordecai, before whom your downfall has begun, is of the Jewish people, you will not prevail against him, but will surely fall before him."

14 While they were still talking with him, the king's eunuchs arrived and hurried Haman off to the banquet that Esther had prepared.

7 1So the king and Haman went in to feast with Queen Esther. 2On the second day, as they were drinking wine, the king again said to Esther, "What is your petition, Queen Esther? It shall be granted you. And what is your request? Even to the half of my kingdom, it shall be fulfilled." 3Then Queen Esther answered, "If I have won your favor, O king, and if it pleases the king, let my life be given me—that is my petition—and the lives of my people—that is my request. 4For we have been sold, I and my people, to be destroyed, to be killed, and to be annihilated. If we had been sold merely as slaves, men and women, I would have held my peace; but no enemy can compensate for this damage to the king."[n] 5Then King Ahasuerus said to Queen Esther, "Who is he, and where is he, who has presumed to do this?" 6Esther said, "A foe and enemy, this wicked Haman!" Then Haman was terrified before the king and the queen. 7The king rose from the feast in wrath and went into the palace garden, but Haman stayed to beg his life from Queen Esther, for he saw that the king had determined to destroy him. 8When the king returned from the palace garden to the banquet hall, Haman had thrown himself on the couch where Esther was reclining; and the king said, "Will he even assault the queen in my presence, in my own house?" As the words left the mouth of the king, they covered Haman's face. 9Then Harbona, one of the eunuchs in attendance on the king, said, "Look, the very gallows that Haman has prepared for Mordecai, whose word saved the king, stands at Haman's house, fifty cubits high." And the king said, "Hang him on that." 10So they hanged Haman on the gallows that he had prepared for Mordecai. Then the anger of the king abated.

8 On that day King Ahasuerus gave to Queen Esther the house of Haman, the enemy of the Jews; and Mordecai came before the king, for Esther had told what he was to her. 2Then the king took off his signet ring, which he had taken from Haman, and gave it to Mordecai. So Esther set Mordecai over the house of Haman.

3 Then Esther spoke again to the king; she fell at his feet, weeping and pleading with him to avert the evil design of Haman the Agagite and the plot that he had devised against the Jews. 4The king held out the golden scepter to

*n* Meaning of Heb uncertain

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**6.12**: *Mourning,* i.e. weeping with chagrin. To cover the head was a sign of grief (2 Sam 15.30; Jer 14.4). **14**: It was a Near Eastern custom for guests to be brought to an entertainment (Lk 14.17).

**7.1–10: Haman's fall. 4**: *We have been sold* is a reference to Haman's bribe in 3.9. Had Haman planned to sell the Jews into slavery to enrich the royal treasury, Esther would not have intervened; but planned destruction changes the situation. **6**: *Enemy* is used to recall the ancient enmity of Agag and the Amalekites (see 3.1–15 n.). **8**: To throw oneself as a suppliant at someone's feet was a common custom (8.3; 1 Sam 25.23, 24; 2 Kings 4.27; Mk 7.25), but even touching the queen's couch was a violation of harem law. Whether covering the face of the condemned was a Persian practice is unknown; it was certainly a Greco-Roman custom. **9**: It was inevitable that some servant would think of this as "poetic justice."

**8.1–17: The rise of Mordecai and the revocation of the edict. 1**: Herodotus (*Hist.* III, 129) mentions the property of criminals being confiscated. The transference of the sig-

Esther, 5and Esther rose and stood before the king. She said, "If it pleases the king, and if I have won his favor, and if the thing seems right before the king, and I have his approval, let an order be written to revoke the letters devised by Haman son of Hammedatha the Agagite, which he wrote giving orders to destroy the Jews who are in all the provinces of the king. 6For how can I bear to see the calamity that is coming on my people? Or how can I bear to see the destruction of my kindred?" 7Then King Ahasuerus said to Queen Esther and to the Jew Mordecai, "See, I have given Esther the house of Haman, and they have hanged him on the gallows, because he plotted to lay hands on the Jews. 8You may write as you please with regard to the Jews, in the name of the king, and seal it with the king's ring; for an edict written in the name of the king and sealed with the king's ring cannot be revoked."

9 The king's secretaries were summoned at that time, in the third month, which is the month of Sivan, on the twenty-third day; and an edict was written, according to all that Mordecai commanded, to the Jews and to the satraps and the governors and the officials of the provinces from India to Ethiopia,[o] one hundred twenty-seven provinces, to every province in its own script and to every people in its own language, and also to the Jews in their script and their language. 10He wrote letters in the name of King Ahasuerus, sealed them with the king's ring, and sent them by mounted couriers riding on fast steeds bred from the royal herd.[p] 11By these letters the king allowed the Jews who were in every city to assemble and defend their lives, to destroy, to kill, and to annihilate any armed force of any people or province that might attack them, with their children and women, and to plunder their goods 12on a single day throughout all the provinces of King Ahasuerus, on the thirteenth day of the twelfth month, which is the month of Adar. 13A copy of the writ was to be issued as a decree in every province and published to all peoples, and the Jews were to be ready on that day to take revenge on their enemies. 14So the couriers, mounted on their swift royal steeds, hurried out, urged by the king's command. The decree was issued in the citadel of Susa.

15 Then Mordecai went out from the presence of the king, wearing royal robes of blue and white, with a great golden crown and a mantle of fine linen and purple, while the city of Susa shouted and rejoiced. 16For the Jews there was light and gladness, joy and honor. 17In every province and in every city, wherever the king's command and his edict came, there was gladness and joy among the Jews, a festival and a holiday. Furthermore, many of the peoples of the country professed to be Jews, because the fear of the Jews had fallen upon them.

9 Now in the twelfth month, which is the month of Adar, on the thirteenth day, when the king's command and edict were about to be executed, on the very day when the enemies of the Jews hoped to gain power over them, but which had been changed to a day when the Jews

*o* Or *Nubia*; Heb *Cush* *p* Meaning of Heb uncertain

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net ring indicates promotion of Mordecai as grand vizier. **5**: Esther subtly suggests that the edict was not really his but *devised by Haman*. **8**: The king rejects this subterfuge, accepts the responsibility, but neutralizes the edict by new instructions.

**8.9**: *Sivan* is the hebraized name for the Babylonian month of May-June. **10**: Greek writers mention the *steeds* of the Persian postal system. **12**: The date is carefully given, for it is important for the Purim festival. After v. 12 the apocryphal Additions to the Book of Esther insert the text of the king's letter. **15**: Mordecai appears in his state robes, *crown* here being the viziral turban. **17**: *A festival and a holiday* contrast with the fasting and lamentation of 4.3. The improbability of many Persians becoming proselytes leads some to translate the verb as "joined themselves to," i.e. took the part of the Jews (9.27).

**9.1–32: Destruction of the enemies and inauguration of the feast of Purim. 1**: The important date is again given (compare 8.12). **3–5**: *The royal officials,* anxious to please the

would gain power over their foes, 2the Jews gathered in their cities throughout all the provinces of King Ahasuerus to lay hands on those who had sought their ruin; and no one could withstand them, because the fear of them had fallen upon all peoples. 3All the officials of the provinces, the satraps and the governors, and the royal officials were supporting the Jews, because the fear of Mordecai had fallen upon them. 4For Mordecai was powerful in the king's house, and his fame spread throughout all the provinces as the man Mordecai grew more and more powerful. 5So the Jews struck down all their enemies with the sword, slaughtering, and destroying them, and did as they pleased to those who hated them. 6In the citadel of Susa the Jews killed and destroyed five hundred people. 7They killed Parshandatha, Dalphon, Aspatha, 8Poratha, Adalia, Aridatha, 9Parmashta, Arisai, Aridai, Vaizatha, 10the ten sons of Haman son of Hammedatha, the enemy of the Jews; but they did not touch the plunder.

11 That very day the number of those killed in the citadel of Susa was reported to the king. 12The king said to Queen Esther, "In the citadel of Susa the Jews have killed five hundred people and also the ten sons of Haman. What have they done in the rest of the king's provinces? Now what is your petition? It shall be granted you. And what further is your request? It shall be fulfilled." 13Esther said, "If it pleases the king, let the Jews who are in Susa be allowed tomorrow also to do according to this day's edict, and let the ten sons of Haman be hanged on the gallows." 14So the king commanded this to be done; a decree was issued in Susa, and the ten sons of Haman were hanged. 15The Jews who were in Susa gathered also on the fourteenth day of the month of Adar and they killed three hundred persons in Susa; but they did not touch the plunder.

16 Now the other Jews who were in the king's provinces also gathered to defend their lives, and gained relief from their enemies, and killed seventy-five thousand of those who hated them; but they laid no hands on the plunder. 17This was on the thirteenth day of the month of Adar, and on the fourteenth day they rested and made that a day of feasting and gladness.

18 But the Jews who were in Susa gathered on the thirteenth day and on the fourteenth, and rested on the fifteenth day, making that a day of feasting and gladness. 19Therefore the Jews of the villages, who live in the open towns, hold the fourteenth day of the month of Adar as a day for gladness and feasting, a holiday on which they send gifts of food to one another.

20 Mordecai recorded these things, and sent letters to all the Jews who were in all the provinces of King Ahasuerus, both near and far, 21enjoining them that they should keep the fourteenth day of the month Adar and also the fifteenth day of the same month, year by year, 22as the days on which the Jews gained relief from their enemies, and as the month that had been turned for them from sor-

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new vizier, *were supporting the Jews*. **5**: *Slaughtering . . . and destroying them* represents one more dramatic incidence of the sudden changes so characteristic of the book. **7**: The names of Haman's sons, represented as Persian names, are written peculiarly in the Hebrew text, favoring cryptic interpretations. *Parshandatha* is an authentic Persian name; it has been found on a carved seal from that general period.

**9.13**: It is unclear whether Haman's ten sons were hanged on the gallows out of revenge or as a deterrent or as an expression of peripeteia (sudden turn of fortune). **15**: The second day's slaughter is probably a device to explain why the city Jews had a two-day Purim celebration but the country Jews only one. **16**: The emphasis here, as in vv. 10, 15, that the Jews did not *plunder* seems a reminder of the Agag story, where they plundered to their own hurt (1 Sam 15.9). **19, 22**: *Gifts of food*, i.e. dainties (Neh 8.10).

**9.20–32**: The official institution of Purim (possibly an addition to the book from a later source). Mordecai as vizier takes the initiative; Esther with queenly authority confirms the arrangements, so Mordecai writes to the Jewish communities and Esther follows with

row into gladness and from mourning into a holiday; that they should make them days of feasting and gladness, days for sending gifts of food to one another and presents to the poor. 23So the Jews adopted as a custom what they had begun to do, as Mordecai had written to them.

24 Haman son of Hammedatha the Agagite, the enemy of all the Jews, had plotted against the Jews to destroy them, and had cast Pur—that is "the lot"—to crush and destroy them; 25but when Esther came before the king, he gave orders in writing that the wicked plot that he had devised against the Jews should come upon his own head, and that he and his sons should be hanged on the gallows. 26Therefore these days are called Purim, from the word Pur. Thus because of all that was written in this letter, and of what they had faced in this matter, and of what had happened to them, 27the Jews established and accepted as a custom for themselves and their descendants and all who joined them, that without fail they would continue to observe these two days every year, as it was written and at the time appointed. 28These days should be remembered and kept throughout every generation, in every family, province, and city; and these days of Purim should never fall into disuse among the Jews, nor should the commemoration of these days cease among their descendants.

29 Queen Esther daughter of Abihail, along with the Jew Mordecai, gave full written authority, confirming this second letter about Purim. 30Letters were sent wishing peace and security to all the Jews, to the one hundred twenty-seven provinces of the kingdom of Ahasuerus, 31and giving orders that these days of Purim should be observed at their appointed seasons, as the Jew Mordecai and Queen Esther enjoined on the Jews, just as they had laid down for themselves and for their descendants regulations concerning their fasts and their lamentations. 32The command of Queen Esther fixed these practices of Purim, and it was recorded in writing.

10 King Ahasuerus laid tribute on the land and on the islands of the sea. 2All the acts of his power and might, and the full account of the high honor of Mordecai, to which the king advanced him, are they not written in the annals of the kings of Media and Persia? 3For Mordecai the Jew was next in rank to King Ahasuerus, and he was powerful among the Jews and popular with his many kindred, for he sought the good of his people and interceded for the welfare of all his descendants.

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a letter. This emphasis on the *written* word is doubtless intended to legalize a festival not mentioned in the Torah.

**10.1–3: Conclusion.** A paragraph on the continued greatness of Xerxes and fame of Mordecai. Following 10.3 the apocryphal Additions to the Book of Esther append Mordecai's interpretation of the dream (Addition F) that he had had at the beginning of the Greek version (Addition A).

# *The Poetical Books or "Writings"*

The poetical books of the Old Testament coincide only in part with the "Writings," the third and final part of the Hebrew canon (see "Introduction to the Old Testament," pp. xxxi–xxxiii OT ). Neither term is exact: poetry is scattered throughout the Old Testament, and writings can refer to the entire Bible. In the Jewish canon, the Writings include such disparate books as Chronicles and Psalms, as well as the so-called wisdom literature. This third part is perhaps the most interesting because it contains such a wide variety of literature. The Psalms, many dating from before the exile, were finally collected and used in worship in the second temple after the exile. First and Second Chronicles constitute a history that replicates in a sense the books of Samuel and Kings, but interprets Israel's history for the post-exilic community. Ezra and Nehemiah fill out the details of the return from the exile and the establishment of Judah. Ruth and Esther are stories of valiant women from different periods (Ruth 1.1, "In the days when the judges ruled . . ."; Esth 1.1, "In the days of Ahasuerus . . ."). Both of them were later included in the *megilloth* or five scrolls that were used for Jewish liturgical festivals: Ruth (Weeks), Esther (Purim)—and to them were added Song of Solomon (Passover), Lamentations (destruction of Temple), and Ecclesiastes (Tabernacles). Because Daniel was written late in the post-exilic period (*ca.* 165, the time of the Maccabees), it too was included among the Writings.

In more modern times the term "wisdom literature" has become a popular designation for three books among the Writings: Job, Proverbs, and Ecclesiastes (and, outside the Hebrew canon, Sirach and the Wisdom of Solomon among the apocryphal/deuterocanonical books). The influence of this literature has also extended to other parts of the Bible, such as "wisdom" Psalms like Ps 37. As the Psalms were generally attributed to David, so these books were assigned to Solomon as author (Prov 1.1; Eccl 1.1; Song 1.1; see 1 Kings 4.29–34). But it is generally agreed that they are the products of Israelite sages. The precise settings in which they worked are hard to determine. Some were associated with the court (e.g. Prov 25.1, "the officials of King Hezekiah," a Jerusalem monarch of Isaiah's time). Qoheleth and Ben Sira were recognized as teachers (Eccl 12.9; Sir 51.23). The role of the family parent and tribal elder in the education of youth must also be recognized (Prov 10.1). Although one may presume that some sort of "school" (court? scribal?) existed, on the analogy of the educational institutions known in the Fertile Crescent, we have no firsthand evidence of this. Most of the wisdom literature was written in the post-exilic period (parts of Proverbs and Job being the only exception).

Wisdom (Hebrew *ḥokhmah*) has its own favorite but limited vocabulary (e.g. understanding, *binah;* discipline, *musar*), and its own emphasis (e.g. proper speech and conduct; the connection between wisdom/prosperity and folly/destruction). A characteristic feature is a certain linguistic style, such as the short saying or aphorism (two or at times three lines in parallelism), a command or admonition (usually with a motive clause). There are also lengthy wisdom poems, es-

pecially the 22-line (the number of letters in the Hebrew alphabet) poem, as in Prov 2.1–22; 31.10–31; Sir 1.11–30. Each book can have its special traits, such as the narrative framework to the book of Job (1.1–2.22; 42.7–17), or the reflections in Ecclesiastes (e.g. 2.18–26), or the "praise of the fathers" in Sir chs 44–50. This broad range of literary style is united by the dominant concern of wisdom, which deals with daily experience and how to cope with it.

During the twentieth century many examples of this kind of wisdom have been recovered from ancient Mesopotamia and especially from Egypt. Many of the "wise men" of Egypt are known by name, such as Ptah-hotep and Amenemope (the influence of the latter upon Prov 22.17ff. is generally admitted). It is significant that the wisdom of Solomon was said to surpass "all the wisdom of Egypt" (1 Kings 4.30); the Israelites were aware of the achievements of their neighbors in this area. Some have described the wisdom enterprise as a search for order, according to the model of the Egyptian *ma'at* (justice, or order) established by the divinity—and the pharaoh was divine. It is simpler to see wisdom as the teaching that the sages propagated as a result of their dialogue with reality, the lessons that they considered necessary for the attainment of a happy and prosperous life. The modern reader will be particularly impressed by the fact that the teaching of the sages was far from monolithic. The contrast of Proverbs with Job and Ecclesiastes is a striking illustration. Proverbs presents a serene program for prosperous living; Job wrestles with the suffering of the just; Qoheleth cannot understand the "work of God" (8.17; 11.5). Furthermore, Sirach is a traditionalist, but the Wisdom of Solomon (1.15) proclaims a message of blessed immortality.

There are no wisdom books in the New Testament, but the style of the Letter of James approximates Old Testament wisdom. More importantly, the sayings and parables of Jesus continue the wisdom tradition of his forebears. It is not for nothing that in the Gospels he is frequently called "teacher."

# *Job*

The Book of Job does not explain the mystery of suffering or "justify the ways of God" with human beings, but it does probe the depths of faith in the midst of suffering. An ancient folktale about a saintly Job (Ezek 14.14,20) has been used as a setting (1.1–2.13; 42.7–17) for a discussion between Job and his three friends (3.1–31.40), a statement by Elihu (32.1–37.24, regarded by some as a later insertion), and the speeches of the LORD (38.1–42.6). The date of the work is uncertain (perhaps around the time of the Exile, in the sixth century B.C.).

The folktale introduces a profound question on the lips of Satan (a Hebrew word meaning "adversary" or "accuser," not the devil of New Testament thought): "Does Job fear God for nothing?" (1.9) That is, does Job serve God because it is profitable, because God has been good to him? In the prologue, Job is totally resigned to God (1.21; 2.10). Then the author stages the great dispute. Job curses the day he was born (ch 3), and the debate is on (chs 4–31, where Job and his friends alternate in speeches which gradually become acrimonious; the text seems disturbed in chs 25–27, for Zophar disappears). The friends give lectures to Job in defense of the orthodox opinion about divine justice. Job oscillates between despair (e.g. 7.11–21; 9.14–24) and faith (19.23–27); he replies to the friends, and only Job addresses God directly. He closes out the dialogue with bravado and self-confidence (31.35–37). The intervention of Elihu (chs 32–37) is in the style of the friends. Finally the LORD speaks from the whirlwind, asking Job "impossible" questions and drawing him ever deeper into mystery, until Job has the experience of an immediate communion with God (42.5, "now my eye sees you").

In the poetic language of the book, God is at work in the universe, even "to bring rain on a land where no one lives" (38.26), and God is fully aware of evil (personified by the monsters Behemoth and Leviathan, 40.15–41.34). At the same time the LORD cares for Job so much that he reveals himself personally and shares with him the vision of cosmic responsibilities. A God who confesses his burdens to a human being is a God who is profoundly involved in human destiny. He is also a God who respects human independence, who wishes to have the *free* gift of human service, and towards that end there is the testing of human beings. The restoration of Job in 42.7ff. is not the point of the book; it is merely the recognition of Job's integrity, and in line with divine generosity.

1 There was once a man in the land of Uz whose name was Job. That man was blameless and upright, one who feared God and turned away from evil. 2There were born to him seven sons and three daughters. 3He had seven thousand sheep, three thousand camels, five hundred yoke of oxen, five hundred donkeys, and very many servants; so that this man was the greatest of all the people of the east. 4His sons used to go and hold feasts in one another's houses in turn; and they would send and invite their three sisters to eat and drink with them. 5And when the feast days had run their course, Job would send and sanctify them, and he would rise early in the morning and offer burnt offerings according to the number of them all; for Job said, "It may be that my children have sinned, and cursed God in their hearts." This is what Job always did.

6 One day the heavenly beings[a] came to present themselves before the LORD, and Satan[b] also came among them. 7The LORD said to Satan,[b] "Where have you come from?" Satan[b] answered the LORD, "From going to and fro on the earth, and from walking up and down on it." 8The LORD said to Satan,[b] "Have you considered my servant Job? There is no one like him on the earth, a blameless and upright man who fears God and turns away from evil." 9Then Satan[b] answered the LORD, "Does Job fear God for nothing? 10Have you not put a fence around him and his house and all that he has, on every side? You have blessed the work of his hands, and his possessions have increased in the land. 11But stretch out your hand now, and touch all that he has, and he will curse you to your face." 12The LORD said to Satan,[b] "Very well, all that he has is in your power; only do not stretch out your hand against him!" So Satan[b] went out from the presence of the LORD.

13 One day when his sons and daughters were eating and drinking wine in the eldest brother's house, 14a messenger came to Job and said, "The oxen were plowing and the donkeys were feeding beside them, 15and the Sabeans fell on them and carried them off, and killed the servants with the edge of the sword; I alone have escaped to tell you." 16While he was still speaking, another came and said, "The fire of God fell from heaven and burned up the sheep and the servants, and consumed them; I alone have escaped to tell you." 17While he was still speaking, another came and said, "The Chaldeans formed three columns, made a raid on the camels and carried them off, and killed the servants with the edge of the sword; I alone have escaped to tell you." 18While he was still speaking, another came and said, "Your sons and daughters were eating and drinking wine in their eldest brother's house, 19and suddenly a great wind came across the desert, struck the four corners of the house, and it fell on the young people, and they are dead; I alone have escaped to tell you."

20 Then Job arose, tore his robe,

*a* Heb *sons of God* *b* Or *the Accuser*; Heb *ha-satan*

**1.1–2.13: The prologue.** A blameless man is deprived of wealth, posterity and health, but keeps his faith in God. **1**: *The land of Uz* is perhaps Edom.

**1.6–7**: The scene shifts to the heavenly court, where the LORD musters out the *heavenly beings,* among them *Satan*. His function is to patrol *the earth;* he is not yet the demonic personification of later Judaism (compare 1 Chr 21.1) and Christianity. **9**: *Does Job fear God for nothing?* One of the most fundamental questions in the Bible: Do human beings serve God because of what they receive from God? **11–12**: Satan's proposal puts God in a no-win situation. If God refuses, it looks as though he fears there may be a basis to Satan's claim; if God accepts, he comes out of it looking heartless.

**1.13–19**: Conversation is the style in which this legend describes activity: in this case, Job's loss of property and children. **20–21**: Although a foreigner, Job is portrayed as a worshiper of the LORD, since he is the protagonist of the author. *Shall I return there:* there is correspondence between mother's womb and "mother earth." **22**: The sinlessness of Job is explicitly noted, and this is fundamental to the book.

shaved his head, and fell on the ground and worshiped. 21He said, "Naked I came from my mother's womb, and naked shall I return there; the LORD gave, and the LORD has taken away; blessed be the name of the LORD."

22 In all this Job did not sin or charge God with wrongdoing.

2 One day the heavenly beings[c] came to present themselves before the LORD, and Satan[d] also came among them to present himself before the LORD. 2The LORD said to Satan,[d] "Where have you come from?" Satan[e] answered the LORD, "From going to and fro on the earth, and from walking up and down on it." 3The LORD said to Satan,[d] "Have you considered my servant Job? There is no one like him on the earth, a blameless and upright man who fears God and turns away from evil. He still persists in his integrity, although you incited me against him, to destroy him for no reason." 4Then Satan[d] answered the LORD, "Skin for skin! All that people have they will give to save their lives.[f] 5But stretch out your hand now and touch his bone and his flesh, and he will curse you to your face." 6The LORD said to Satan,[d] "Very well, he is in your power; only spare his life."

7 So Satan[d] went out from the presence of the LORD, and inflicted loathsome sores on Job from the sole of his foot to the crown of his head. 8Job[g] took a potsherd with which to scrape himself, and sat among the ashes.

9 Then his wife said to him, "Do you still persist in your integrity? Curse[h] God, and die." 10But he said to her, "You speak as any foolish woman would speak. Shall we receive the good at the hand of God, and not receive the bad?" In all this Job did not sin with his lips.

11 Now when Job's three friends heard of all these troubles that had come upon him, each of them set out from his home—Eliphaz the Temanite, Bildad the Shuhite, and Zophar the Naamathite. They met together to go and console and comfort him. 12When they saw him from a distance, they did not recognize him, and they raised their voices and wept aloud; they tore their robes and threw dust in the air upon their heads. 13They sat with him on the ground seven days and seven nights, and no one spoke a word to him, for they saw that his suffering was very great.

3 After this Job opened his mouth and cursed the day of his birth. 2Job said:

3 "Let the day perish in which I was born,
and the night that said,
'A man-child is conceived.'
4 Let that day be darkness!
May God above not seek it,
or light shine on it.
5 Let gloom and deep darkness claim it.
Let clouds settle upon it;
let the blackness of the day terrify it.
6 That night—let thick darkness seize it!
let it not rejoice among the days of the year;
let it not come into the number of the months.
7 Yes, let that night be barren;
let no joyful cry be heard[i] in it.
8 Let those curse it who curse the Sea,[j]
those who are skilled to rouse up Leviathan.

*c* Heb *sons of God* *d* Or *the Accuser*; Heb *ha-satan* *e* Or *The Accuser*; Heb *ha-satan* *f* Or *All that the man has he will give for his life* *g* Heb *He* *h* Heb *Bless* *i* Heb *come* *j* Cn: Heb *day*

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**2.4**: *Skin for skin:* the image comes from bartering hides. **7**: *Sores,* not necessarily leprosy (Hansen's disease) but a skin ailment, otherwise unknown.

**2.9**: *Curse,* literally "bless," a euphemism. Job's wife still believed in his *integrity* (see 4.6 n.) but wishes to shorten his torture. **11**: Like Job, his friends are also non-Israelites, apparently from northwest Arabia.

**3.1–26**: **Job's curse of the day/night of his birth. 8**: Job wants skilled cursers, who control Sea (see 7.12; Isa 51.10; Hab 3.8) and Leviathan (see 41.1; Ps 104.26), the monsters of the deep, that personify chaos.

9 Let the stars of its dawn be dark;
let it hope for light, but have none;
may it not see the eyelids of the morning—
10 because it did not shut the doors of my mother's womb,
and hide trouble from my eyes.

11 "Why did I not die at birth,
come forth from the womb and expire?
12 Why were there knees to receive me,
or breasts for me to suck?
13 Now I would be lying down and quiet;
I would be asleep; then I would be at rest
14 with kings and counselors of the earth
who rebuild ruins for themselves,
15 or with princes who have gold,
who fill their houses with silver.
16 Or why was I not buried like a stillborn child,
like an infant that never sees the light?
17 There the wicked cease from troubling,
and there the weary are at rest.
18 There the prisoners are at ease together;
they do not hear the voice of the taskmaster.
19 The small and the great are there,
and the slaves are free from their masters.

20 "Why is light given to one in misery,
and life to the bitter in soul,
21 who long for death, but it does not come,
and dig for it more than for hidden treasures;
22 who rejoice exceedingly,
and are glad when they find the grave?
23 Why is light given to one who cannot see the way,
whom God has fenced in?
24 For my sighing comes like[k] my bread,
and my groanings are poured out like water.
25 Truly the thing that I fear comes upon me,
and what I dread befalls me.
26 I am not at ease, nor am I quiet;
I have no rest; but trouble comes."

4 Then Eliphaz the Temanite answered:
2 "If one ventures a word with you, will you be offended?
But who can keep from speaking?
3 See, you have instructed many;
you have strengthened the weak hands.
4 Your words have supported those who were stumbling,
and you have made firm the feeble knees.
5 But now it has come to you, and you are impatient;
it touches you, and you are dismayed.
6 Is not your fear of God your confidence,
and the integrity of your ways your hope?

7 "Think now, who that was innocent ever perished?

*k* Heb *before*

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**3.11**: *Why?* A question continually repeated here and throughout the book.

**3.23**: *God,* Hebrew "Eloah," the only explicit mention in this poem. Job, like many Semites, accepted God as the cause of both good and evil (disaster, calamities, etc.); see 2.10; Isa 45.7; Am 3.6; Lam 3.38).

**4.1–5.27**: **First discourse of Eliphaz. 1–4**: A courteous and gentle beginning. The poet insists on the sincerity of Job's comforters, who present the traditional orthodox teaching on retribution (4.7–11).

**4.6**: Job's *integrity* (Hebrew word related to *blameless* in 1.1; see 2.9 n.) is not yet ques-

Or where were the upright cut off?
8 As I have seen, those who plow iniquity
and sow trouble reap the same.
9 By the breath of God they perish,
and by the blast of his anger they are consumed.
10 The roar of the lion, the voice of the fierce lion,
and the teeth of the young lions are broken.
11 The strong lion perishes for lack of prey,
and the whelps of the lioness are scattered.

12 "Now a word came stealing to me,
my ear received the whisper of it.
13 Amid thoughts from visions of the night,
when deep sleep falls on mortals,
14 dread came upon me, and trembling,
which made all my bones shake.
15 A spirit glided past my face;
the hair of my flesh bristled.
16 It stood still,
but I could not discern its appearance.
A form was before my eyes;
there was silence, then I heard a voice:
17 'Can mortals be righteous before[l] God?
Can human beings be pure before[l] their Maker?
18 Even in his servants he puts no trust,
and his angels he charges with error;
19 how much more those who live in houses of clay,
whose foundation is in the dust,
who are crushed like a moth.
20 Between morning and evening they are destroyed;
they perish forever without any regarding it.
21 Their tent-cord is plucked up within them,
and they die devoid of wisdom.'

5 "Call now; is there anyone who will answer you?
To which of the holy ones will you turn?
2 Surely vexation kills the fool,
and jealousy slays the simple.
3 I have seen fools taking root,
but suddenly I cursed their dwelling.
4 Their children are far from safety,
they are crushed in the gate,
and there is no one to deliver them.
5 The hungry eat their harvest,
and they take it even out of the thorns;[m]
and the thirsty[n] pant after their wealth.
6 For misery does not come from the earth,
nor does trouble sprout from the ground;
7 but human beings are born to trouble
just as sparks[o] fly upward.

8 "As for me, I would seek God,
and to God I would commit my cause.
9 He does great things and unsearchable,

*l* Or *more than* *m* Meaning of Heb uncertain
*n* Aquila Symmachus Syr Vg: Heb *snare*
*o* Or *birds*; Heb *sons of Resheph*

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tioned. **12–16**: Eliphaz appeals to a *vision*, a *spirit*, as his source of authority; normally the sages appealed to experience and tradition.

**4.17–21**: This reasoning is intended to make it easy for Job to admit that he is sinful (and thus preserve the divine justice). *Tent-cord:* an image for sudden disaster that comes to the wicked.

**5.1**: *The holy ones*, or sons of God (see also 1.6; 15.15; Ex 15.11 n.; Ps 82.1 n.), can not help Job since they are at fault (4.18).

**5.8–16**: Eliphaz draws a picture of the God

marvelous things without
number.
10 He gives rain on the earth
and sends waters on the fields;
11 he sets on high those who are
lowly,
and those who mourn are lifted
to safety.
12 He frustrates the devices of the
crafty,
so that their hands achieve no
success.
13 He takes the wise in their own
craftiness;
and the schemes of the wily are
brought to a quick end.
14 They meet with darkness in the
daytime,
and grope at noonday as in the
night.
15 But he saves the needy from the
sword of their mouth,
from the hand of the mighty.
16 So the poor have hope,
and injustice shuts its mouth.

17 "How happy is the one whom
God reproves;
therefore do not despise the
discipline of the Almighty.[p]
18 For he wounds, but he binds up;
he strikes, but his hands heal.
19 He will deliver you from six
troubles;
in seven no harm shall touch
you.
20 In famine he will redeem you
from death,
and in war from the power of
the sword.
21 You shall be hidden from the
scourge of the tongue,
and shall not fear destruction
when it comes.
22 At destruction and famine you
shall laugh,
and shall not fear the wild
animals of the earth.
23 For you shall be in league with the
stones of the field,
and the wild animals shall be at
peace with you.
24 You shall know that your tent is
safe,
you shall inspect your fold and
miss nothing.
25 You shall know that your
descendants will be many,
and your offspring like the grass
of the earth.
26 You shall come to your grave in
ripe old age,
as a shock of grain comes up to
the threshing floor in its
season.
27 See, we have searched this out; it
is true.
Hear, and know it for yourself."

6 Then Job answered:
2 "O that my vexation were
weighed,
and all my calamity laid in the
balances!
3 For then it would be heavier than
the sand of the sea;
therefore my words have been
rash.
4 For the arrows of the Almighty[p]
are in me;
my spirit drinks their poison;
the terrors of God are arrayed
against me.
5 Does the wild ass bray over its
grass,
or the ox low over its fodder?

*p* Traditional rendering of Heb *Shaddai*

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to whom Job should appeal. **17**: Suffering is *discipline* (Hebrew "musar"), which will lead to Job's healing and eventual prosperity. Discipline was seen as a means to conversion (Prov 3.11–12; Job 36.5–15).

**6.1–7.21**: **Reply of Job.** The orthodox explanation cannot be valid in Job's case, as the reader knows from chs 1–2. His *calamity* exceeds all ordinary misfortunes, and his relationship to *the Almighty* seems destroyed.

**6.8–10**: Death would be preferable in these circumstances; at least Job could have the consolation of not having *denied the words of the Holy One* (this text is obscure).

6 Can that which is tasteless be
eaten without salt,
or is there any flavor in the
juice of mallows?[q]
7 My appetite refuses to touch them;
they are like food that is
loathsome to me.[q]

8 "O that I might have my request,
and that God would grant my
desire;
9 that it would please God to crush
me,
that he would let loose his hand
and cut me off!
10 This would be my consolation;
I would even exult[q] in
unrelenting pain;
for I have not denied the words
of the Holy One.
11 What is my strength, that I should
wait?
And what is my end, that I
should be patient?
12 Is my strength the strength of
stones,
or is my flesh bronze?
13 In truth I have no help in me,
and any resource is driven from
me.

14 "Those who withhold[r] kindness
from a friend
forsake the fear of the
Almighty.[s]
15 My companions are treacherous
like a torrent-bed,
like freshets that pass away,
16 that run dark with ice,
turbid with melting snow.
17 In time of heat they disappear;
when it is hot, they vanish from
their place.
18 The caravans turn aside from their
course;
they go up into the waste, and
perish.
19 The caravans of Tema look,
the travelers of Sheba hope.
20 They are disappointed because
they were confident;
they come there and are
confounded.
21 Such you have now become to
me;[t]
you see my calamity, and are
afraid.
22 Have I said, 'Make me a gift'?
Or, 'From your wealth offer a
bribe for me'?
23 Or, 'Save me from an opponent's
hand'?
Or, 'Ransom me from the hand
of oppressors'?

24 "Teach me, and I will be silent;
make me understand how I have
gone wrong.
25 How forceful are honest words!
But your reproof, what does it
reprove?
26 Do you think that you can
reprove words,
as if the speech of the desperate
were wind?
27 You would even cast lots over the
orphan,
and bargain over your friend.

28 "But now, be pleased to look at
me;
for I will not lie to your face.
29 Turn, I pray, let no wrong be
done.
Turn now, my vindication is at
stake.
30 Is there any wrong on my tongue?
Cannot my taste discern
calamity?

*q* Meaning of Heb uncertain *r* Syr Vg Compare Tg: Meaning of Heb uncertain
*s* Traditional rendering of Heb *Shaddai*
*t* Cn Compare Gk Syr: Meaning of Heb uncertain

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**6.14–23**: He condemns the three friends, likening them to *treacherous* gullies that contain no water.

**6.24–30**: He further challenges them to show how he has *erred*, to convict him of *any wrong*.

7 "Do not human beings have a hard service on earth,
and are not their days like the days of a laborer?
2 Like a slave who longs for the shadow,
and like laborers who look for their wages,
3 so I am allotted months of emptiness,
and nights of misery are apportioned to me.
4 When I lie down I say, 'When shall I rise?'
But the night is long,
and I am full of tossing until dawn.
5 My flesh is clothed with worms and dirt;
my skin hardens, then breaks out again.
6 My days are swifter than a weaver's shuttle,
and come to their end without hope.[u]

7 "Remember that my life is a breath;
my eye will never again see good.
8 The eye that beholds me will see me no more;
while your eyes are upon me, I shall be gone.
9 As the cloud fades and vanishes,
so those who go down to Sheol do not come up;
10 they return no more to their houses,
nor do their places know them any more.

11 "Therefore I will not restrain my mouth;
I will speak in the anguish of my spirit;
I will complain in the bitterness of my soul.
12 Am I the Sea, or the Dragon,
that you set a guard over me?
13 When I say, 'My bed will comfort me,
my couch will ease my complaint,'
14 then you scare me with dreams
and terrify me with visions,
15 so that I would choose strangling
and death rather than this body.
16 I loathe my life; I would not live forever.
Let me alone, for my days are a breath.
17 What are human beings, that you make so much of them,
that you set your mind on them,
18 visit them every morning,
test them every moment?
19 Will you not look away from me for a while,
let me alone until I swallow my spittle?

*u* Or *as the thread runs out*

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**7.1–6**: A classic description of the hard life that mortals (and Job in particular, v. 5) are subject to. **7–11**: Job addresses God directly; he will do this frequently, whereas the friends never do so. They address their lectures to Job. Job appeals to divine compassion with the implied mockery that God will act only when it is too late: *I shall be gone* (see also v. 21). The statement about *Sheol*, repeated in several ways elsewhere (10.21–22), is a clear indication that Job does entertain the idea of a blessed immortality (compare 14.7–22).

**7.12**: Were Job *the Sea, or the Dragon* (see 3.8 n.), he could understand the intensity of God's supervision, which is described in the following verses. **16**: But Job is a mere *breath*, a common biblical theme (e.g., Ps 144.3–4).

**7.17–18**: A parody of Ps 8. While the psalmist praised the creator who assigns to insignificant mortals a place of pre-eminence in nature, Job ironically prefers to receive minimal attention. **20**: Job hypothetically admits his *sin* in order to provoke God who is acting unlike a merciful God by making Job his *target*. **21**: Compare v. 8. *You will seek me*, i.e. you will grope in the darkness after me, *but I shall not be*. Job threatens the Almighty with his own non-being! He at once reaffirms his former trust in a loving God and sarcastically implies the frustration of that love.

20 If I sin, what do I do to you, you
watcher of humanity?
Why have you made me your
target?
Why have I become a burden to
you?
21 Why do you not pardon my
transgression
and take away my iniquity?
For now I shall lie in the earth;
you will seek me, but I shall not
be."

8 Then Bildad the Shuhite answered:
2 "How long will you say these
things,
and the words of your mouth
be a great wind?
3 Does God pervert justice?
Or does the Almighty[v] pervert
the right?
4 If your children sinned against
him,
he delivered them into the
power of their
transgression.
5 If you will seek God
and make supplication to the
Almighty,[v]
6 if you are pure and upright,
surely then he will rouse himself
for you
and restore to you your rightful
place.
7 Though your beginning was
small,
your latter days will be very
great.

8 "For inquire now of bygone
generations,
and consider what their
ancestors have found;
9 for we are but of yesterday, and
we know nothing,
for our days on earth are but a
shadow.
10 Will they not teach you and tell
you
and utter words out of their
understanding?

11 "Can papyrus grow where there is
no marsh?
Can reeds flourish where there
is no water?
12 While yet in flower and not cut
down,
they wither before any other
plant.
13 Such are the paths of all who
forget God;
the hope of the godless shall
perish.
14 Their confidence is gossamer,
a spider's house their trust.
15 If one leans against its house, it
will not stand;
if one lays hold of it, it will not
endure.
16 The wicked thrive[w] before the
sun,
and their shoots spread over the
garden.
17 Their roots twine around the
stoneheap;
they live among the rocks.[x]
18 If they are destroyed from their
place,

*v* Traditional rendering of Heb *Shaddai*
*w* Heb *He thrives* *x* Gk Vg: Meaning of Heb uncertain

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**8.1–22: First discourse of Bildad.** **1–3:** The debate heats up, and Bildad implies that Job accuses God of perverting *justice*. **4:** He also implies that Job suffers for the sin of his *children*, whose *transgression* has *the power* to destroy the collective personality of the clan to which they belonged.

**8.5–10:** If only Job would *make supplication* (i.e. admit his sinfulness), and be *upright* (ironically, this word, "yashar," is used of Job in the prologue; see 1.1, 8), he would be restored. Such is the traditional teaching of the *ancestors*.

**8.11–22:** Bildad uses *plant* imagery to describe the fate of the *godless* (the text is very uncertain) and assures Job of God's acceptance of a *blameless person* (again an echo of the prologue, where Job is described as blameless, 1.1, 8!).

then it will deny them, saying,
'I have never seen you.'
19 See, these are their happy ways,[y]
and out of the earth still others will spring.

20 "See, God will not reject a blameless person,
nor take the hand of evildoers.
21 He will yet fill your mouth with laughter,
and your lips with shouts of joy.
22 Those who hate you will be clothed with shame,
and the tent of the wicked will be no more."

9 Then Job answered:
2 "Indeed I know that this is so;
but how can a mortal be just before God?
3 If one wished to contend with him,
one could not answer him once in a thousand.
4 He is wise in heart, and mighty in strength
—who has resisted him, and succeeded?—
5 he who removes mountains, and they do not know it,
when he overturns them in his anger;
6 who shakes the earth out of its place,
and its pillars tremble;
7 who commands the sun, and it does not rise;
who seals up the stars;
8 who alone stretched out the heavens
and trampled the waves of the Sea;[z]
9 who made the Bear and Orion,
the Pleiades and the chambers of the south;
10 who does great things beyond understanding,
and marvelous things without number.
11 Look, he passes by me, and I do not see him;
he moves on, but I do not perceive him.
12 He snatches away; who can stop him?
Who will say to him, 'What are you doing?'

13 "God will not turn back his anger;
the helpers of Rahab bowed beneath him.
14 How then can I answer him,
choosing my words with him?
15 Though I am innocent, I cannot answer him;
I must appeal for mercy to my accuser.[a]
16 If I summoned him and he answered me,
I do not believe that he would listen to my voice.
17 For he crushes me with a tempest,
and multiplies my wounds without cause;
18 he will not let me get my breath,
but fills me with bitterness.
19 If it is a contest of strength, he is the strong one!
If it is a matter of justice, who can summon him?[b]
20 Though I am innocent, my own mouth would condemn me;
though I am blameless, he would prove me perverse.

*y* Meaning of Heb uncertain *z* Or *trampled the back of the sea dragon* *a* Or *for my right* *b* Compare Gk: Heb *me*

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**9.1–10.22: Reply of Job.** There is not much logical sequence in the argumentation; here Job replies (compare 9.2 with 4.17) to Eliphaz rather than to Bildad. **9.3–28:** In a lawsuit, the creator has the advantage of strength. There is no human or divine judge of God (who is implicitly compared to a thief or kidnapper, v. 12), a thought that anticipates the theme of the umpire (see vv. 33–35).

**9.13:** *Rahab* is the dragon of chaos defeated in the beginning (26.12–13; Ps 89.10; Isa 51.9). **14–24:** Job describes the futility of his appeal; *he crushes me with a tempest* (this is in con-

21 I am blameless; I do not know myself;
I loathe my life.
22 It is all one; therefore I say,
he destroys both the blameless and the wicked.
23 When disaster brings sudden death,
he mocks at the calamity[c] of the innocent.
24 The earth is given into the hand of the wicked;
he covers the eyes of its judges—
if it is not he, who then is it?

25 "My days are swifter than a runner;
they flee away, they see no good.
26 They go by like skiffs of reed,
like an eagle swooping on the prey.
27 If I say, 'I will forget my complaint;
I will put off my sad countenance and be of good cheer,'
28 I become afraid of all my suffering,
for I know you will not hold me innocent.
29 I shall be condemned;
why then do I labor in vain?
30 If I wash myself with soap
and cleanse my hands with lye,
31 yet you will plunge me into filth,
and my own clothes will abhor me.
32 For he is not a mortal, as I am,
that I might answer him,
that we should come to trial together.
33 There is no umpire[d] between us,
who might lay his hand on us both.
34 If he would take his rod away from me,
and not let dread of him terrify me,
35 then I would speak without fear of him,
for I know I am not what I am thought to be.[e]

10 "I loathe my life;
I will give free utterance to my complaint;
I will speak in the bitterness of my soul.
2 I will say to God, Do not condemn me;
let me know why you contend against me.
3 Does it seem good to you to oppress,
to despise the work of your hands
and favor the schemes of the wicked?
4 Do you have eyes of flesh?
Do you see as humans see?
5 Are your days like the days of mortals,
or your years like human years,
6 that you seek out my iniquity
and search for my sin,
7 although you know that I am not guilty,
and there is no one to deliver out of your hand?
8 Your hands fashioned and made me;
and now you turn and destroy me.[f]
9 Remember that you fashioned me like clay;

*c* Meaning of Heb uncertain *d* Another reading is *Would that there were an umpire*
*e* Cn: Heb *for I am not so in myself*
*f* Cn Compare Gk Syr: Heb *made me together all around, and you destroy me*

---

trast to the comparatively gentle theophany of chs 38–41!). But he accuses God of rank injustice in vv. 22–24.

**9.25–35:** Job returns to the theme of fleeting existence (vv. 25–26) and entertains three possibilities: to *forget* his *complaint,* to attempt to *cleanse* himself, and the possibility of an *umpire* between them. But none of these works.

**10.1–12:** Job prepares a tender address to God: Can all that divine care in creation be nullified by the present treatment of him?

and will you turn me to dust again?
10 Did you not pour me out like milk
and curdle me like cheese?
11 You clothed me with skin and flesh,
and knit me together with bones and sinews.
12 You have granted me life and steadfast love,
and your care has preserved my spirit.
13 Yet these things you hid in your heart;
I know that this was your purpose.
14 If I sin, you watch me,
and do not acquit me of my iniquity.
15 If I am wicked, woe to me!
If I am righteous, I cannot lift up my head,
for I am filled with disgrace
and look upon my affliction.
16 Bold as a lion you hunt me;
you repeat your exploits against me.
17 You renew your witnesses against me,
and increase your vexation toward me;
you bring fresh troops against me.[g]

18 "Why did you bring me forth from the womb?
Would that I had died before any eye had seen me,
19 and were as though I had not been,
carried from the womb to the grave.
20 Are not the days of my life few?[h]
Let me alone, that I may find a little comfort[i]
21 before I go, never to return,
to the land of gloom and deep darkness,
22 the land of gloom[j] and chaos,
where light is like darkness."

11 Then Zophar the Naamathite answered:
2 "Should a multitude of words go unanswered,
and should one full of talk be vindicated?
3 Should your babble put others to silence,
and when you mock, shall no one shame you?
4 For you say, 'My conduct[k] is pure,
and I am clean in God's[l] sight.'
5 But O that God would speak,
and open his lips to you,
6 and that he would tell you the secrets of wisdom!
For wisdom is many-sided.[m]
Know then that God exacts of you less than your guilt deserves.

7 "Can you find out the deep things of God?
Can you find out the limit of the Almighty?[n]
8 It is higher than heaven[o]—what can you do?
Deeper than Sheol—what can you know?
9 Its measure is longer than the earth,

*g* Cn Compare Gk: Heb *toward me; changes and a troop are with me* *h* Cn Compare Gk Syr: Heb *Are not my days few? Let him cease!* *i* Heb *that I may brighten up a little* *j* Heb *gloom as darkness, deep darkness* *k* Gk: Heb *teaching* *l* Heb *your*
*m* Meaning of Heb uncertain
*n* Traditional rendering of Heb *Shaddai*
*o* Heb *The heights of heaven*

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**10.13–22:** He is actually being hounded by God (v. 16), and he can only conclude with the eternal question, Why? If God would only *let* him *alone,* he might find *comfort* in that *land of gloom and deep darkness,* Sheol (see also 14.13).

**11.1–20: First discourse of Zophar. 1–6:** The third friend cannot restrain his theological passion. He turns aside Job's claim (v. 4) and accuses him of *guilt* (v. 6), but the *secrets of wisdom* will not be what Zophar thinks (see 42.7).

and broader than the sea.
10 If he passes through, and imprisons,
and assembles for judgment, who can hinder him?
11 For he knows those who are worthless;
when he sees iniquity, will he not consider it?
12 But a stupid person will get understanding,
when a wild ass is born human.[p]

13 "If you direct your heart rightly,
you will stretch out your hands toward him.
14 If iniquity is in your hand, put it far away,
and do not let wickedness reside in your tents.
15 Surely then you will lift up your face without blemish;
you will be secure, and will not fear.
16 You will forget your misery;
you will remember it as waters that have passed away.
17 And your life will be brighter than the noonday;
its darkness will be like the morning.
18 And you will have confidence, because there is hope;
you will be protected[q] and take your rest in safety.
19 You will lie down, and no one will make you afraid;
many will entreat your favor.
20 But the eyes of the wicked will fail;
all way of escape will be lost to them,
and their hope is to breathe their last."

12 Then Job answered:
2 "No doubt you are the people,
and wisdom will die with you.
3 But I have understanding as well as you;
I am not inferior to you.
Who does not know such things as these?
4 I am a laughingstock to my friends;
I, who called upon God and he answered me,
a just and blameless man, I am a laughingstock.
5 Those at ease have contempt for misfortune,[p]
but it is ready for those whose feet are unstable.
6 The tents of robbers are at peace,
and those who provoke God are secure,
who bring their god in their hands.[r]

7 "But ask the animals, and they will teach you;
the birds of the air, and they will tell you;
8 ask the plants of the earth,[s] and they will teach you;
and the fish of the sea will declare to you.
9 Who among all these does not know

*p* Meaning of Heb uncertain *q* Or *you will look around* *r* Or *whom God brought forth by his hand*; Meaning of Heb uncertain
*s* Or *speak to the earth*

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**11.7–12**: This poem on God's inscrutable *deep things,* or mystery, ends with insulting implications for Job (even if the meaning of v. 12 is obscure).

**11.13–20**: This address assumes that Job's *misery* is due to his *iniquity;* if he repents he will be restored. It is precisely the integrity of Job that prohibits him from espousing the short-sighted theology of the friends.

**12.1–14.22**: **Reply of Job. 12.3–6**: Job answers with sarcasm and contrasts his situation (*a laughingstock*) with *those who provoke God.* **6**: *Who bring their god in their hand.* This seems to mean that they make power their god.

**12.7–25**: Even the beasts know that God's unrestrained and irresistible omnipotence is

that the hand of the LORD has done this?
10 In his hand is the life of every living thing
and the breath of every human being.
11 Does not the ear test words as the palate tastes food?
12 Is wisdom with the aged, and understanding in length of days?

13 "With God[t] are wisdom and strength;
he has counsel and understanding.
14 If he tears down, no one can rebuild;
if he shuts someone in, no one can open up.
15 If he withholds the waters, they dry up;
if he sends them out, they overwhelm the land.
16 With him are strength and wisdom;
the deceived and the deceiver are his.
17 He leads counselors away stripped, and makes fools of judges.
18 He looses the sash of kings, and binds a waistcloth on their loins.
19 He leads priests away stripped, and overthrows the mighty.
20 He deprives of speech those who are trusted, and takes away the discernment of the elders.
21 He pours contempt on princes, and looses the belt of the strong.
22 He uncovers the deeps out of darkness, and brings deep darkness to light.
23 He makes nations great, then destroys them; he enlarges nations, then leads them away.
24 He strips understanding from the leaders[u] of the earth, and makes them wander in a pathless waste.
25 They grope in the dark without light; he makes them stagger like a drunkard.

13 "Look, my eye has seen all this,
my ear has heard and understood it.
2 What you know, I also know;
I am not inferior to you.
3 But I would speak to the Almighty,[v]
and I desire to argue my case with God.
4 As for you, you whitewash with lies;
all of you are worthless physicians.
5 If you would only keep silent, that would be your wisdom!
6 Hear now my reasoning, and listen to the pleadings of my lips.
7 Will you speak falsely for God, and speak deceitfully for him?
8 Will you show partiality toward him,
will you plead the case for God?
9 Will it be well with you when he searches you out?
Or can you deceive him, as one person deceives another?
10 He will surely rebuke you if in secret you show partiality.
11 Will not his majesty terrify you, and the dread of him fall upon you?

*t* Heb *him* *u* Heb adds *of the people*
*v* Traditional rendering of Heb *Shaddai*

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behind everything; God has *strength and wisdom,* but he *overthrows* the leaders of the world.

**13.1–12:** Job attacks the friends as speaking *falsely for God* and offering *proverbs of ashes.*

12 Your maxims are proverbs of ashes,
your defenses are defenses of clay.

13 "Let me have silence, and I will speak,
and let come on me what may.
14 I will take my flesh in my teeth,
and put my life in my hand.[w]
15 See, he will kill me; I have no hope;[x]
but I will defend my ways to his face.
16 This will be my salvation,
that the godless shall not come before him.
17 Listen carefully to my words,
and let my declaration be in your ears.
18 I have indeed prepared my case;
I know that I shall be vindicated.
19 Who is there that will contend with me?
For then I would be silent and die.
20 Only grant two things to me,
then I will not hide myself from your face:
21 withdraw your hand far from me,
and do not let dread of you terrify me.
22 Then call, and I will answer;
or let me speak, and you reply to me.
23 How many are my iniquities and my sins?
Make me know my transgression and my sin.
24 Why do you hide your face,
and count me as your enemy?
25 Will you frighten a windblown leaf
and pursue dry chaff?
26 For you write bitter things against me,
and make me reap[y] the iniquities of my youth.
27 You put my feet in the stocks,
and watch all my paths;
you set a bound to the soles of my feet.
28 One wastes away like a rotten thing,
like a garment that is moth-eaten.

14 "A mortal, born of woman,
few of days and full of trouble,
2 comes up like a flower and withers,
flees like a shadow and does not last.
3 Do you fix your eyes on such a one?
Do you bring me into judgment with you?
4 Who can bring a clean thing out of an unclean?
No one can.
5 Since their days are determined,
and the number of their months is known to you,
and you have appointed the bounds that they cannot pass,

*w* Gk: Heb *Why should I take . . . in my hand?*
*x* Or *Though he kill me, yet I will trust in him*
*y* Heb *inherit*

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**13.13–19**: He has *prepared* his *case,* and despite the risk he is taking (vv. 14–15), he will state it boldly, certain that he *shall be vindicated.* **15**: *I have no hope,* is the reading of the consonantal text, contrary to the traditional "yet will I trust in him" (compare v. 18, and see note *x*). **16**: Job's passionate desire to *come before* God, his would-be slayer, testifies to his innocence, for *the godless* would not dare do this. **19**: The question is a challenge to God to engage in a lawsuit.

**13.20–28**: Despite his bold words, Job speaks rather gently, asking for *two things:* perhaps the withdrawal of the divine *hand* and *dread.* **23**: Job is willing to learn from God whether his *sins* (see v. 26) are the cause of his misery. This seems to be rhetorical flourish (compare 31.35–36); he has done no wrong that would call for such treatment (see 1.1, 8, 22).

**14.1–22**: A classic poem on the human condition: *few of days and full of trouble,* even

6 look away from them, and desist,[z]
that they may enjoy, like laborers, their days.

7 "For there is hope for a tree,
if it is cut down, that it will sprout again,
and that its shoots will not cease.
8 Though its root grows old in the earth,
and its stump dies in the ground,
9 yet at the scent of water it will bud
and put forth branches like a young plant.
10 But mortals die, and are laid low;
humans expire, and where are they?
11 As waters fail from a lake,
and a river wastes away and dries up,
12 so mortals lie down and do not rise again;
until the heavens are no more, they will not awake
or be roused out of their sleep.
13 O that you would hide me in Sheol,
that you would conceal me until your wrath is past,
that you would appoint me a set time, and remember me!
14 If mortals die, will they live again?
All the days of my service I would wait
until my release should come.
15 You would call, and I would answer you;
you would long for the work of your hands.
16 For then you would not[a] number my steps,
you would not keep watch over my sin;
17 my transgression would be sealed up in a bag,
and you would cover over my iniquity.

18 "But the mountain falls and crumbles away,
and the rock is removed from its place;
19 the waters wear away the stones;
the torrents wash away the soil of the earth;
so you destroy the hope of mortals.
20 You prevail forever against them, and they pass away;
you change their countenance, and send them away.
21 Their children come to honor, and they do not know it;
they are brought low, and it goes unnoticed.
22 They feel only the pain of their own bodies,
and mourn only for themselves."

15 Then Eliphaz the Temanite answered:
2 "Should the wise answer with windy knowledge,
and fill themselves with the east wind?
3 Should they argue in unprofitable talk,
or in words with which they can do no good?
4 But you are doing away with the fear of God,

*z* Cn: Heb *that they may desist* *a* Syr: Heb lacks *not*

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sinful (v. 4); why bother to *fix your eyes on such a one?* (see 7.19). **7–22:** *There is hope for a tree* to live again, but not for *mortals.*

**14.13–14:** Job toys with the idea of respite *in Sheol,* hidden from divine *wrath* that would eventually pass away. Finally God would *call* him and *cover over* his *iniquity!* **18–22:** This is merely a flight of fancy; reality is otherwise, for God destroys *the hope of mortals.*

**15.1–35: Second discourse of Eliphaz.** A second round of discussion now begins. **2–3:** This time the speaker dispenses completely with soothing formulas of introduction (contrast 4.1–4). **4:** The insecurity of tra-

and hindering meditation before God.
5 For your iniquity teaches your mouth,
and you choose the tongue of the crafty.
6 Your own mouth condemns you, and not I;
your own lips testify against you.

7 "Are you the firstborn of the human race?
Were you brought forth before the hills?
8 Have you listened in the council of God?
And do you limit wisdom to yourself?
9 What do you know that we do not know?
What do you understand that is not clear to us?
10 The gray-haired and the aged are on our side,
those older than your father.
11 Are the consolations of God too small for you,
or the word that deals gently with you?
12 Why does your heart carry you away,
and why do your eyes flash,[b]
13 so that you turn your spirit against God,
and let such words go out of your mouth?
14 What are mortals, that they can be clean?
Or those born of woman, that they can be righteous?
15 God puts no trust even in his holy ones,
and the heavens are not clean in his sight;
16 how much less one who is abominable and corrupt,
one who drinks iniquity like water!

17 "I will show you; listen to me;
what I have seen I will declare—
18 what sages have told,
and their ancestors have not hidden,
19 to whom alone the land was given,
and no stranger passed among them.
20 The wicked writhe in pain all their days,
through all the years that are laid up for the ruthless.
21 Terrifying sounds are in their ears;
in prosperity the destroyer will come upon them.
22 They despair of returning from darkness,
and they are destined for the sword.
23 They wander abroad for bread, saying, 'Where is it?'
They know that a day of darkness is ready at hand;
24 distress and anguish terrify them;
they prevail against them, like a king prepared for battle.
25 Because they stretched out their hands against God,
and bid defiance to the Almighty,[c]
26 running stubbornly against him

*b* Meaning of Heb uncertain
*c* Traditional rendering of Heb *Shaddai*

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ditional wisdom faces the courage of non-conformism.

**15.7–14:** The following questions are designed to ridicule Job. The *firstborn of the human race* is not a reference to Adam of Gen 1–3. More likely, it is a reference to a myth about a First Man, who existed before the earth, had a share in the divine *council* of the heavenly court, and was born *before the hills*. Such a person would have *wisdom* not available to others. The myth resembles partly the story of Lady Wisdom in Prov 8.22–31. **11:** *The consolations of God,* such words as Eliphaz uttered in 4.15ff. **14–16:** Compare 4.17–19.

**15.17–35:** A typical statement concerning the retribution visited upon *the wicked.*

with a thick-bossed shield;
27 because they have covered their faces with their fat,
and gathered fat upon their loins,
28 they will live in desolate cities,
in houses that no one should inhabit,
houses destined to become heaps of ruins;
29 they will not be rich, and their wealth will not endure,
nor will they strike root in the earth;[d]
30 they will not escape from darkness;
the flame will dry up their shoots,
and their blossom[e] will be swept away[f] by the wind.
31 Let them not trust in emptiness, deceiving themselves;
for emptiness will be their recompense.
32 It will be paid in full before their time,
and their branch will not be green.
33 They will shake off their unripe grape, like the vine,
and cast off their blossoms, like the olive tree.
34 For the company of the godless is barren,
and fire consumes the tents of bribery.
35 They conceive mischief and bring forth evil
and their heart prepares deceit."

16 Then Job answered:
2 "I have heard many such things;
miserable comforters are you all.
3 Have windy words no limit?
Or what provokes you that you keep on talking?
4 I also could talk as you do,
if you were in my place;
I could join words together against you,
and shake my head at you.
5 I could encourage you with my mouth,
and the solace of my lips would assuage your pain.

6 "If I speak, my pain is not assuaged,
and if I forbear, how much of it leaves me?
7 Surely now God has worn me out;
he has[g] made desolate all my company.
8 And he has[g] shriveled me up, which is a witness against me;
my leanness has risen up against me,
and it testifies to my face.
9 He has torn me in his wrath, and hated me;
he has gnashed his teeth at me;
my adversary sharpens his eyes against me.
10 They have gaped at me with their mouths;
they have struck me insolently on the cheek;
they mass themselves together against me.
11 God gives me up to the ungodly,
and casts me into the hands of the wicked.
12 I was at ease, and he broke me in two;
he seized me by the neck and dashed me to pieces;
he set me up as his target;
13 his archers surround me.
He slashes open my kidneys, and shows no mercy;

*d* Vg:Meaning of Heb uncertain *e* Gk: Heb *mouth* *f* Cn: Heb *will depart* *g* Heb *you have*

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**16.1–17.16: Reply of Job. 16.1–17**: In the face of God's continuing hostility (vv. 6–16), Job reaffirms his innocence (v. 17).

**16.18**: His "murder" must be avenged; personified *earth* is invited to assist in the avenging (compare Gen 4.10–11). **19–22**: The identity of the *witness* is disputed: either God or someone else *in heaven*. In the first case Job is

he pours out my gall on the ground.
14 He bursts upon me again and again;
he rushes at me like a warrior.
15 I have sewed sackcloth upon my skin,
and have laid my strength in the dust.
16 My face is red with weeping,
and deep darkness is on my eyelids,
17 though there is no violence in my hands,
and my prayer is pure.

18 "O earth, do not cover my blood;
let my outcry find no resting place.
19 Even now, in fact, my witness is in heaven,
and he that vouches for me is on high.
20 My friends scorn me;
my eye pours out tears to God,
21 that he would maintain the right of a mortal with God,
as[h] one does for a neighbor.
22 For when a few years have come,
I shall go the way from which I shall not return.

17 My spirit is broken, my days are extinct,
the grave is ready for me.
2 Surely there are mockers around me,
and my eye dwells on their provocation.

3 "Lay down a pledge for me with yourself;
who is there that will give surety for me?
4 Since you have closed their minds to understanding,
therefore you will not let them triumph.
5 Those who denounce friends for reward—
the eyes of their children will fail.

6 "He has made me a byword of the peoples,
and I am one before whom people spit.
7 My eye has grown dim from grief,
and all my members are like a shadow.
8 The upright are appalled at this,
and the innocent stir themselves up against the godless.
9 Yet the righteous hold to their way,
and they that have clean hands grow stronger and stronger.
10 But you, come back now, all of you,
and I shall not find a sensible person among you.
11 My days are past, my plans are broken off,
the desires of my heart.
12 They make night into day;
'The light,' they say, 'is near to the darkness.'[i]
13 If I look for Sheol as my house,
if I spread my couch in darkness,
14 if I say to the Pit, 'You are my father,'
and to the worm, 'My mother,' or 'My sister,'
15 where then is my hope?
Who will see my hope?
16 Will it go down to the bars of Sheol?

*h* Syr Vg Tg: Heb *and* *i* Meaning of Heb uncertain

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appealing to God against God: *to maintain the right of a mortal against God.* Otherwise the one who *vouches* for him could be an angel (see 5.1; 33.23, and also 9.33).

**17.1–10:** He describes his piteous condition; no one *will give surety for* him, especially his three friends (v. 10).

**17.11–16:** Job turns to the thought of death, as frequently in ending his replies (7.21; 10.21–33).

Shall we descend together into the dust?"

18 Then Bildad the Shuhite answered:

2 "How long will you hunt for words?
Consider, and then we shall speak.
3 Why are we counted as cattle?
Why are we stupid in your sight?
4 You who tear yourself in your anger—
shall the earth be forsaken because of you,
or the rock be removed out of its place?

5 "Surely the light of the wicked is put out,
and the flame of their fire does not shine.
6 The light is dark in their tent,
and the lamp above them is put out.
7 Their strong steps are shortened,
and their own schemes throw them down.
8 For they are thrust into a net by their own feet,
and they walk into a pitfall.
9 A trap seizes them by the heel;
a snare lays hold of them.
10 A rope is hid for them in the ground,
a trap for them in the path.
11 Terrors frighten them on every side,
and chase them at their heels.
12 Their strength is consumed by hunger,[j]
and calamity is ready for their stumbling.
13 By disease their skin is consumed,[k]
the firstborn of Death consumes their limbs.
14 They are torn from the tent in which they trusted,
and are brought to the king of terrors.
15 In their tents nothing remains;
sulfur is scattered upon their habitations.
16 Their roots dry up beneath,
and their branches wither above.
17 Their memory perishes from the earth,
and they have no name in the street.
18 They are thrust from light into darkness,
and driven out of the world.
19 They have no offspring or descendant among their people,
and no survivor where they used to live.
20 They of the west are appalled at their fate,
and horror seizes those of the east.
21 Surely such are the dwellings of the ungodly,
such is the place of those who do not know God."

19 Then Job answered:

2 "How long will you torment me,
and break me in pieces with words?
3 These ten times you have cast reproach upon me;
are you not ashamed to wrong me?
4 And even if it is true that I have erred,

*j* Or *Disaster is hungry for them* *k* Cn: Heb *It consumes the limbs of his skin*

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**18.1–21: Second discourse of Bildad.** It deals with the fate of the wicked (see 15.17–35), specifying that a disease, the *firstborn of Death,* is in store for them, a foretaste of their ultimate fate, when they will be brought before the *king of terrors,* or Death personified.

**19.1–29: Reply of Job. 2–6:** The friends do not understand, and *reproach* him *ten times* (i.e. repeatedly; see Gen 31.7). **4:** Job does not admit his *error,* or sin (he has asserted his

my error remains with me.
5 If indeed you magnify yourselves against me,
and make my humiliation an argument against me,
6 know then that God has put me in the wrong,
and closed his net around me.
7 Even when I cry out, 'Violence!' I am not answered;
I call aloud, but there is no justice.
8 He has walled up my way so that I cannot pass,
and he has set darkness upon my paths.
9 He has stripped my glory from me,
and taken the crown from my head.
10 He breaks me down on every side, and I am gone,
he has uprooted my hope like a tree.
11 He has kindled his wrath against me,
and counts me as his adversary.
12 His troops come on together;
they have thrown up siegeworks[l] against me,
and encamp around my tent.

13 "He has put my family far from me,
and my acquaintances are wholly estranged from me.
14 My relatives and my close friends have failed me;
15 the guests in my house have forgotten me;
my serving girls count me as a stranger;
I have become an alien in their eyes.
16 I call to my servant, but he gives me no answer;
I must myself plead with him.
17 My breath is repulsive to my wife;
I am loathsome to my own family.
18 Even young children despise me;
when I rise, they talk against me.
19 All my intimate friends abhor me,
and those whom I loved have turned against me.
20 My bones cling to my skin and to my flesh,
and I have escaped by the skin of my teeth.
21 Have pity on me, have pity on me, O you my friends,
for the hand of God has touched me!
22 Why do you, like God, pursue me,
never satisfied with my flesh?

23 "O that my words were written down!
O that they were inscribed in a book!
24 O that with an iron pen and with lead
they were engraved on a rock forever!
25 For I know that my Redeemer[m] lives,

*l* Cn: Heb *their way* *m* Or *Vindicator*

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innocence often enough, 9.21; 10.7; 16.17); his point is that his conduct is a matter between him and God, and not for them to judge (in v. 22 he accuses them of pursuing him, *like God*). **7–12:** Once more he describes God's attack (see 16.7–14).

**19.13–22:** Society has expelled Job from its ranks, even the most intimate circle of household, family, and friends. This ostracism is typical, and the author of the narrative does not feel obliged to follow the details of the prologue (1.16–19).

**19.23–24:** Job wishes that his *words* were made permanent (does this refer to his whole argument, or to what he is about to say?). They are to be inscribed *in a book* (a scroll or a tablet of clay), *engraved on a rock forever,* as some inscriptions were engraved on a cliff at the Nahr el-Kelb in Lebanon by military conquerors over many centuries.

**19.25–27:** There is no certain translation of these difficult, probably textually corrupt, verses. What is clear is that Job makes an act of faith in a *Redeemer* (better, *Vindicator,* as in

and that at the last he[n] will
stand upon the earth;[o]
26 and after my skin has been thus
destroyed,
then in[p] my flesh I shall see
God,[q]
27 whom I shall see on my side,[r]
and my eyes shall behold, and
not another.
My heart faints within me!
28 If you say, 'How we will
persecute him!'
and, 'The root of the matter is
found in him';
29 be afraid of the sword,
for wrath brings the punishment
of the sword,
so that you may know there is a
judgment."

**20** Then Zophar the Naamathite answered:

2 "Pay attention! My thoughts urge
me to answer,
because of the agitation within
me.
3 I hear censure that insults me,
and a spirit beyond my
understanding answers me.
4 Do you not know this from of
old,
ever since mortals were placed
on earth,
5 that the exulting of the wicked is
short,
and the joy of the godless is but
for a moment?
6 Even though they mount up high
as the heavens,
and their head reaches to the
clouds,
7 they will perish forever like their
own dung;
those who have seen them will
say, 'Where are they?'
8 They will fly away like a dream,
and not be found;
they will be chased away like a
vision of the night.
9 The eye that saw them will see
them no more,
nor will their place behold them
any longer.
10 Their children will seek the favor
of the poor,
and their hands will give back
their wealth.
11 Their bodies, once full of youth,
will lie down in the dust with
them.

12 "Though wickedness is sweet in
their mouth,
though they hide it under their
tongues,
13 though they are loath to let it go,
and hold it in their mouths,
14 yet their food is turned in their
stomachs;
it is the venom of asps within
them.

*n* Or *that he the Last* *o* Heb *dust*
*p* Or *without* *q* Meaning of Heb of this verse uncertain *r* Or *for myself*

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note *m*), and that he claims he shall see God with his eyes (affirmed three times). The vindicator (Hebrew "gō'ēl") is a member of one's kinfolk who will avenge one's honor, or stand good for one's debts (compare Lev 25.25; Deut 25.5–10; Ruth 2.20).

There is some dispute whether the "gō'ēl" is to be identified with God, or a mediator (see 9.33–35), or a heavenly witness (see 16.19–21). In any case Job makes the magnificent affirmation that his justice will be recognized (therefore, ultimately by God). When will this be? The meaning of v. 26 is too uncertain a one on which to base a firm conclusion, but the rendering of this verse in the NRSV would allow the possibility of a resurrected Job. The doctrine of the resurrection, however, appears late in Hebrew thought (see Dan 12.1–3, probably in Maccabean times), and nowhere in the rest of the book does Job seriously consider the possibility (see ch 14). Nevertheless, one must not lose sight of this emphasis on being vindicated on high, and upon seeing God (a theme that will be all important in the theophany of chs 38–42).

**20.1–29: Second discourse of Zophar. 3:** The *censure* Zophar hears is in part 19.28–29. **4–29:** Another description of the fate of the wicked.

they swallow down riches and
vomit them up again;
God casts them out of their
bellies.
16 They will suck the poison of asps;
the tongue of a viper will kill
them.
17 They will not look on the rivers,
the streams flowing with honey
and curds.
18 They will give back the fruit of
their toil,
and will not swallow it down;
from the profit of their trading
they will get no enjoyment.
19 For they have crushed and
abandoned the poor,
they have seized a house that
they did not build.

20 "They knew no quiet in their
bellies;
in their greed they let nothing
escape.
21 There was nothing left after they
had eaten;
therefore their prosperity will
not endure.
22 In full sufficiency they will be in
distress;
all the force of misery will come
upon them.
23 To fill their belly to the full
God[s] will send his fierce anger
into them,
and rain it upon them as their
food.[t]
24 They will flee from an iron
weapon;
a bronze arrow will strike them
through.
25 It is drawn forth and comes out of
their body,
and the glittering point comes
out of their gall;
terrors come upon them.
26 Utter darkness is laid up for their
treasures;
a fire fanned by no one will
devour them;
what is left in their tent will be
consumed.
27 The heavens will reveal their
iniquity,
and the earth will rise up against
them.
28 The possessions of their house will
be carried away,
dragged off in the day of
God's[u] wrath.
29 This is the portion of the wicked
from God,
the heritage decreed for them by
God."

**21** Then Job answered:
2 "Listen carefully to my
words,
and let this be your consolation.
3 Bear with me, and I will speak;
then after I have spoken, mock
on.
4 As for me, is my complaint
addressed to mortals?
Why should I not be impatient?
5 Look at me, and be appalled,
and lay your hand upon your
mouth.
6 When I think of it I am dismayed,
and shuddering seizes my flesh.
7 Why do the wicked live on,
reach old age, and grow mighty
in power?
8 Their children are established in
their presence,
and their offspring before their
eyes.
9 Their houses are safe from fear,
and no rod of God is upon
them.
10 Their bull breeds without fail;
their cow calves and never
miscarries.

*s* Heb *he* *t* Cn: Meaning of Heb uncertain
*u* Heb *his*

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**21.1–34: Reply of Job.** This discourse is directed to the friends only, and he points out that the wicked remain unpunished (vv. 7–13), though they repudiate God (vv. 14–18; compare v. 15 with 1.9); the traditional belief in hereditary guilt (collective responsibility)

11 They send out their little ones like a flock,
and their children dance around.
12 They sing to the tambourine and the lyre,
and rejoice to the sound of the pipe.
13 They spend their days in prosperity,
and in peace they go down to Sheol.
14 They say to God, 'Leave us alone!
We do not desire to know your ways.
15 What is the Almighty,[v] that we should serve him?
And what profit do we get if we pray to him?'
16 Is not their prosperity indeed their own achievement?[w]
The plans of the wicked are repugnant to me.

17 "How often is the lamp of the wicked put out?
How often does calamity come upon them?
How often does God[x] distribute pains in his anger?
18 How often are they like straw before the wind,
and like chaff that the storm carries away?
19 You say, 'God stores up their iniquity for their children.'
Let it be paid back to them, so that they may know it.
20 Let their own eyes see their destruction,
and let them drink of the wrath of the Almighty.[v]
21 For what do they care for their household after them,
when the number of their months is cut off?
22 Will any teach God knowledge,
seeing that he judges those that are on high?
23 One dies in full prosperity,
being wholly at ease and secure,
24 his loins full of milk
and the marrow of his bones moist.
25 Another dies in bitterness of soul,
never having tasted of good.
26 They lie down alike in the dust,
and the worms cover them.

27 "Oh, I know your thoughts,
and your schemes to wrong me.
28 For you say, 'Where is the house of the prince?
Where is the tent in which the wicked lived?'
29 Have you not asked those who travel the roads,
and do you not accept their testimony,
30 that the wicked are spared in the day of calamity,
and are rescued in the day of wrath?
31 Who declares their way to their face,
and who repays them for what they have done?
32 When they are carried to the grave,
a watch is kept over their tomb.
33 The clods of the valley are sweet to them;
everyone will follow after,
and those who went before are innumerable.
34 How then will you comfort me with empty nothings?
There is nothing left of your answers but falsehood."

22 Then Eliphaz the Temanite answered:
2 "Can a mortal be of use to God?
Can even the wisest be of service to him?

*v* Traditional rendering of Heb *Shaddai*
*w* Heb *in their hand* *x* Heb *he*

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is ineffective; finally, the honorable funeral of the wicked (vv. 27–34) is a travesty of justice.

**22.1–30: Third discourse of Eliphaz.** The third cycle of speeches begins, but there may be some disorder in chs 24–27, since Zophar is not portrayed as speaking. **2–3**: No

3 Is it any pleasure to the Almighty[y] if you are righteous,
or is it gain to him if you make your ways blameless?
4 Is it for your piety that he reproves you,
and enters into judgment with you?
5 Is not your wickedness great?
There is no end to your iniquities.
6 For you have exacted pledges from your family for no reason,
and stripped the naked of their clothing.
7 You have given no water to the weary to drink,
and you have withheld bread from the hungry.
8 The powerful possess the land,
and the favored live in it.
9 You have sent widows away empty-handed,
and the arms of the orphans you have crushed.[z]
10 Therefore snares are around you,
and sudden terror overwhelms you,
11 or darkness so that you cannot see;
a flood of water covers you.

12 "Is not God high in the heavens?
See the highest stars, how lofty they are!
13 Therefore you say, 'What does God know?
Can he judge through the deep darkness?
14 Thick clouds enwrap him, so that he does not see,
and he walks on the dome of heaven.'
15 Will you keep to the old way that the wicked have trod?
16 They were snatched away before their time;
their foundation was washed away by a flood.
17 They said to God, 'Leave us alone,'
and 'What can the Almighty[y] do to us?'[a]
18 Yet he filled their houses with good things—
but the plans of the wicked are repugnant to me.
19 The righteous see it and are glad;
the innocent laugh them to scorn,
20 saying, 'Surely our adversaries are cut off,
and what they left, the fire has consumed.'

21 "Agree with God,[b] and be at peace;
in this way good will come to you.
22 Receive instruction from his mouth,
and lay up his words in your heart.
23 If you return to the Almighty,[y] you will be restored,
if you remove unrighteousness from your tents,
24 if you treat gold like dust,
and gold of Ophir like the stones of the torrent-bed,
25 and if the Almighty[y] is your gold
and your precious silver,
26 then you will delight yourself in the Almighty,[y]
and lift up your face to God.

*y* Traditional rendering of Heb *Shaddai*
*z* Gk Syr Tg Vg: Heb *were crushed* *a* Gk Syr: Heb *them* *b* Heb *him*

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one is of any *use* to God, no matter how wise or *righteous;* hence it can be presumed that the divine judgment on Job is exact and justified. Eliphaz proceeds to show that it is so by detailing Job's wrongdoings (vv. 6–11).

**22.12–30:** He draws a picture of a transcendent and impartial God of justice and invites Job to *return to the Almighty*. God will *hear* his prayer (of repentance) and he will be restored. This, of course, Job cannot do because of his very integrity.

27 You will pray to him, and he will hear you,
and you will pay your vows.
28 You will decide on a matter, and it will be established for you,
and light will shine on your ways.
29 When others are humiliated, you say it is pride;
for he saves the humble.
30 He will deliver even those who are guilty;
they will escape because of the cleanness of your hands."[c]

**23** Then Job answered:
2 "Today also my complaint is bitter;[d]
his[e] hand is heavy despite my groaning.
3 Oh, that I knew where I might find him,
that I might come even to his dwelling!
4 I would lay my case before him,
and fill my mouth with arguments.
5 I would learn what he would answer me,
and understand what he would say to me.
6 Would he contend with me in the greatness of his power?
No; but he would give heed to me.
7 There an upright person could reason with him,
and I should be acquitted forever by my judge.

8 "If I go forward, he is not there;
or backward, I cannot perceive him;
9 on the left he hides, and I cannot behold him;
I turn[f] to the right, but I cannot see him.
10 But he knows the way that I take;
when he has tested me, I shall come out like gold.
11 My foot has held fast to his steps;
I have kept his way and have not turned aside.
12 I have not departed from the commandment of his lips;
I have treasured in[g] my bosom the words of his mouth.
13 But he stands alone and who can dissuade him?
What he desires, that he does.
14 For he will complete what he appoints for me;
and many such things are in his mind.
15 Therefore I am terrified at his presence;
when I consider, I am in dread of him.
16 God has made my heart faint;
the Almighty[h] has terrified me;
17 If only I could vanish in darkness,
and thick darkness would cover my face![i]

**24** "Why are times not kept by the Almighty,[h]
and why do those who know him never see his days?
2 The wicked[j] remove landmarks;
they seize flocks and pasture them.

*c* Meaning of Heb uncertain *d* Syr Vg Tg: Heb *rebellious* *e* Gk Syr: Heb *my*
*f* Syr Vg: Heb *he turns* *g* Gk Vg: Heb *from*
*h* Traditional rendering of Heb *Shaddai*
*i* Or *But I am not destroyed by the darkness; he has concealed the thick darkness from me*
*j* Gk: Heb *they*

**23.1–24.17**: **Reply of Job. 23.1–17**: Another search for God's presence; now Job wants to *lay* his *case* before God, confident that *he would give heed* (in contrast to 9.32–34; 13.20–21). But he cannot find God, despite his own fidelity (vv. 11–12), and once more he experiences *dread*. **13**: *He stands alone*, literally, "he is in one," perhaps denoting divine sovereignty (see Deut 6.4).

**24.1–17**: Job accuses God of not having *times* for adjudication, and catalogues the sins of the wicked. Meanwhile, the *poor* suffer, but *God pays no attention to their prayer.*

3 They drive away the donkey of the orphan;
they take the widow's ox for a pledge.
4 They thrust the needy off the road;
the poor of the earth all hide themselves.
5 Like wild asses in the desert
they go out to their toil,
scavenging in the wasteland food for their young.
6 They reap in a field not their own
and they glean in the vineyard of the wicked.
7 They lie all night naked, without clothing,
and have no covering in the cold.
8 They are wet with the rain of the mountains,
and cling to the rock for want of shelter.

9 "There are those who snatch the orphan child from the breast,
and take as a pledge the infant of the poor.
10 They go about naked, without clothing;
though hungry, they carry the sheaves;
11 between their terraces[k] they press out oil;
they tread the wine presses, but suffer thirst.
12 From the city the dying groan,
and the throat of the wounded cries for help;
yet God pays no attention to their prayer.

13 "There are those who rebel against the light,
who are not acquainted with its ways,
and do not stay in its paths.
14 The murderer rises at dusk
to kill the poor and needy,
and in the night is like a thief.
15 The eye of the adulterer also waits for the twilight,
saying, 'No eye will see me';
and he disguises his face.
16 In the dark they dig through houses;
by day they shut themselves up;
they do not know the light.
17 For deep darkness is morning to all of them;
for they are friends with the terrors of deep darkness.

18 "Swift are they on the face of the waters;
their portion in the land is cursed;
no treader turns toward their vineyards.
19 Drought and heat snatch away the snow waters;
so does Sheol those who have sinned.
20 The womb forgets them;
the worm finds them sweet;
they are no longer remembered;
so wickedness is broken like a tree.

21 "They harm[l] the childless woman,
and do no good to the widow.
22 Yet God[m] prolongs the life of the mighty by his power;
they rise up when they despair of life.

*k* Meaning of Heb uncertain *l* Gk Tg: Heb *feed on* or *associate with* *m* Heb *he*

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**24.18–25**: Not only are there textual problems in these verses, but they are also difficult to interpret and seem out of character if spoken by Job, since they appear to affirm the doctrine advocated by the friends: divine punishment for the wicked. The various solutions proposed, however (to attribute them to Bildad, or to Zophar, or to add "you say" in v. 18, as in the RSV), remain quite hypothetical. The wicked seem to be described in vv. 18–21; God's justice may be delayed (vv. 22–23), but it never fails (vv. 24–25).

23 He gives them security, and they are supported;
his eyes are upon their ways.
24 They are exalted a little while, and then are gone;
they wither and fade like the mallow;[n]
they are cut off like the heads of grain.
25 If it is not so, who will prove me a liar,
and show that there is nothing in what I say?"

25 Then Bildad the Shuhite answered:
2 "Dominion and fear are with God;[o]
he makes peace in his high heaven.
3 Is there any number to his armies?
Upon whom does his light not arise?
4 How then can a mortal be righteous before God?
How can one born of woman be pure?
5 If even the moon is not bright
and the stars are not pure in his sight,
6 how much less a mortal, who is a maggot,
and a human being, who is a worm!"

26 Then Job answered:
2 "How you have helped one who has no power!
How you have assisted the arm that has no strength!
3 How you have counseled one who has no wisdom,
and given much good advice!
4 With whose help have you uttered words,
and whose spirit has come forth from you?
5 The shades below tremble,
the waters and their inhabitants.
6 Sheol is naked before God,
and Abaddon has no covering.
7 He stretches out Zaphon[p] over the void,
and hangs the earth upon nothing.
8 He binds up the waters in his thick clouds,
and the cloud is not torn open by them.
9 He covers the face of the full moon,

*n* Gk: Heb *like all others* *o* Heb *him*
*p* Or *the North*

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**25.1–6**: **Third discourse of Bildad.** This is a suspiciously short speech, and some join it with 26.5–14 in order to fill out the usual pattern of complete speeches. There is no textual warrant for this. The theme is the uncleanness and abasement of mortals, which had already been developed by Eliphaz (4.17–21; 15.14–16) and Zophar (11.5–12); Job also subscribed to this (9.2–12; 12.9–25; 14.4), without using it for self-accusation.

**26.1–14**: **Reply of Job. 2–4**: Job's reply to Bildad is harsh and sarcastic. He leaves unnamed the *spirit* that *has come forth from* Bildad, but the implication is that it is evil or unworthy. **5–14**: A hymn about divine omnipotence. While such a theme is not impossible in the mouth of Job, it has been ignored by him in the third round of the discussion, to be replaced by the theme of divine indifference. Neither is it directly related to the immediate context (vv. 2–4 and 27.2). Hence some attribute the poem to Bildad, but without textual evidence. **5–6**: The *shades* are those who inhabit the *waters* that are found in *Sheol/Abaddon*. They are not beyond the divine reach (12.22; Ps 139.8; Prov 15.11; see also Am 9.2), but they enjoy no loving contact with God (Ps 6.5).

**26.7**: *Zaphon* means "north," and is usually associated with the dwelling of the gods according to Canaanite mythology. The mountain of their assembly (see Isa 14.13) is comparable to the Greek Mt. Olympus; here, however, it is said to be stretched out (like a tent?) *over the void* (Hebrew "tōhū," mentioned in Gen 1.2). This picture differs from the usual description, according to which the earth is built on pillars (9.6) that seem to be fixed in the abyss; here the earth *hangs upon nothing*. **8**: Despite the weight of the *waters, the cloud is not torn open by them*. **9**: God has his own *cloud*, which covers *the face of the full moon*

and spreads over it his cloud.
10 He has described a circle on the face of the waters,
at the boundary between light and darkness.
11 The pillars of heaven tremble,
and are astounded at his rebuke.
12 By his power he stilled the Sea;
by his understanding he struck down Rahab.
13 By his wind the heavens were made fair;
his hand pierced the fleeing serpent.
14 These are indeed but the outskirts of his ways;
and how small a whisper do we hear of him!
But the thunder of his power who can understand?"

27 Job again took up his discourse and said:
2 "As God lives, who has taken away my right,
and the Almighty,[q] who has made my soul bitter,
3 as long as my breath is in me
and the spirit of God is in my nostrils,
4 my lips will not speak falsehood,
and my tongue will not utter deceit.
5 Far be it from me to say that you are right;
until I die I will not put away my integrity from me.
6 I hold fast my righteousness, and will not let it go;
my heart does not reproach me for any of my days.

7 "May my enemy be like the wicked,
and may my opponent be like the unrighteous.
8 For what is the hope of the godless when God cuts them off,
when God takes away their lives?
9 Will God hear their cry when trouble comes upon them?
10 Will they take delight in the Almighty?[q]
Will they call upon God at all times?
11 I will teach you concerning the hand of God;
that which is with the Almighty[q] I will not conceal.
12 All of you have seen it yourselves;

*q* Traditional rendering of Heb *Shaddai*

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(or perhaps his throne?). This prevents him from being seen, and it is no wonder that Job looked for him in vain (ch 23). **10**: The *circle* is the God-given limit to the *waters* of chaos on the horizon, which is *the boundary between light and darkness*.
**26.11**: The *pillars of heaven* are supports for the firmament or sky, and perhaps designate the mountains on the horizon; they *tremble*, because of the divine *rebuke* of the waters, described in v. 12. *Sea* is personified as in 3.8, where it is paired with Leviathan instead of with *Rahab* (see 9.13 n.). These are the waters of chaos (38.8–11). **13**: The description of the conflict with chaos continues in the mention of piercing *the fleeing serpent*, who is coupled with Leviathan in Isa 27.1. **14**: *Outskirts of his ways* is perhaps the outline of the divine plan for the cosmos, and mortals merely catch *a whisper* of *the thunder of his power* (see also 37.2, 4).

**27.1–23**: **Job's Reply.** **1**: *Discourse:* Hebrew "mashal" probably indicates a very solemn statement, such as the oath that Job is about to take (2–6). **2**: *As God lives* indicates that Job is invoking the very God he has accused, to curse him if his words are not true. Parallel to this is an oath by *the Almighty* ("Shaddai"). Job is really forcing God's hand. **3**: *As long as* Job lives, to the very end, he will uphold his oath. **5**: *Far be it from me* is another type of oath formula (compare 2 Sam 20.20). *My integrity*, since Job can not deny his conscience (nor the verdict of the Lord in 1.8!). **6**: *Righteousness* is not to be mistaken for self-righteousness.
**27.7–23**: Some contend that the "lost" third speech of Zophar is in these verses, but in the Hebrew text they are the words of Job. **7–10**: An imprecation against an *enemy* (not explicitly identified). Job relies, somewhat illogically, on divine justice against *the godless*.

why then have you become altogether vain?

13 "This is the portion of the wicked with God,
and the heritage that oppressors receive from the Almighty:[r]
14 If their children are multiplied, it is for the sword;
and their offspring have not enough to eat.
15 Those who survive them the pestilence buries,
and their widows make no lamentation.
16 Though they heap up silver like dust,
and pile up clothing like clay—
17 they may pile it up, but the just will wear it,
and the innocent will divide the silver.
18 They build their houses like nests,
like booths made by sentinels of the vineyard.
19 They go to bed with wealth, but will do so no more;
they open their eyes, and it is gone.
20 Terrors overtake them like a flood;
in the night a whirlwind carries them off.
21 The east wind lifts them up and they are gone;
it sweeps them out of their place.
22 It[s] hurls at them without pity;
they flee from its[t] power in headlong flight.
23 It[s] claps its[t] hands at them,
and hisses at them from its[t] place.

28 "Surely there is a mine for silver,
and a place for gold to be refined.
2 Iron is taken out of the earth,
and copper is smelted from ore.
3 Miners put[u] an end to darkness,
and search out to the farthest bound
the ore in gloom and deep darkness.
4 They open shafts in a valley away from human habitation;
they are forgotten by travelers,
they sway suspended, remote from people.
5 As for the earth, out of it comes bread;
but underneath it is turned up as by fire.
6 Its stones are the place of sapphires,[v]
and its dust contains gold.

7 "That path no bird of prey knows,
and the falcon's eye has not seen it.
8 The proud wild animals have not trodden it;
the lion has not passed over it.

9 "They put their hand to the flinty rock,

*r* Traditional rendering of Heb *Shaddai*
*s* Or *He* (that is God) *t* Or *his* *u* Heb *He puts* *v* Or *lapis lazuli*

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**27.13–23**: Typical of the descriptions of *the portion of the wicked with God*. Since it does not fit with Job's viewpoint (the wicked are not punished; 21.7–34), it is difficult to explain; perhaps it belongs to one of the friends, or is intended as an imprecation upon Job's enemies.

**28.1–28**: **Hymn on the inaccessibility of wisdom.** This is not prefaced by the usual introduction, and it is difficult to consider it as a continuation of the previous chapter. It is not addressed to anyone, and it is out of character with the usual complaints of Job. Hence it is often called a "bridge," or "interlude," but neither is helpful. The point is nevertheless clear: One can find precious stones that are deep in the earth, but no one can find wisdom (see also vv. 12, 20) because it is with God, who alone knows the *way* to wisdom (v. 23). In fact, his vision is perfect and hence he *sees everything* (v. 24), and seems to have put wisdom somewhere (v. 27).

nd overturn mountains by the roots.
10 They cut out channels in the rocks,
and their eyes see every precious thing.
11 The sources of the rivers they probe;[w]
hidden things they bring to light.

12 "But where shall wisdom be found?
And where is the place of understanding?
13 Mortals do not know the way to it,[x]
and it is not found in the land of the living.
14 The deep says, 'It is not in me,'
and the sea says, 'It is not with me.'
15 It cannot be gotten for gold,
and silver cannot be weighed out as its price.
16 It cannot be valued in the gold of Ophir,
in precious onyx or sapphire.[y]
17 Gold and glass cannot equal it,
nor can it be exchanged for jewels of fine gold.
18 No mention shall be made of coral or of crystal;
the price of wisdom is above pearls.
19 The chrysolite of Ethiopia[z] cannot compare with it,
nor can it be valued in pure gold.

20 "Where then does wisdom come from?
And where is the place of understanding?
21 It is hidden from the eyes of all living,
and concealed from the birds of the air.
22 Abaddon and Death say,
'We have heard a rumor of it with our ears.'

23 "God understands the way to it,
and he knows its place.
24 For he looks to the ends of the earth,
and sees everything under the heavens.
25 When he gave to the wind its weight,
and apportioned out the waters by measure;
26 when he made a decree for the rain,
and a way for the thunderbolt;
27 then he saw it and declared it;
he established it, and searched it out.
28 And he said to humankind,
'Truly, the fear of the Lord, that is wisdom;
and to depart from evil is understanding.' "

29 Job again took up his discourse and said:
2 "O that I were as in the months of old,
as in the days when God watched over me;
3 when his lamp shone over my head,
and by his light I walked through darkness;
4 when I was in my prime,

*w* Gk Vg: Heb *bind* *x* Gk: Heb *its price*
*y* Or *lapis lazuli* *z* Or *Nubia*; Heb *Cush*

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**28.28**: The final verse is in a certain tension with the previous lines; for humankind, wisdom is fear of God (the sacred name YHWH is not used) and avoidance of evil—a link with 1.2, 8. Obviously this is not the transcendent wisdom described in vv. 1–27.

**29.1–31.40: The final defense of Job.** Contrasting his happy past (ch 29) with the present distress (ch 30), Job delivers his final plea or oath of clearance (ch 31). It is in the style of a soliloquy, for Job no longer addresses the friends. **1**: *Discourse,* as in 27.1, there is the same solemn introduction ("mashal"). **2–6**: In former days Job enjoyed a relationship with God, and the extravagant imagery in v. 6 indicates his prosperity.

*Job recalls his past happiness*

when the friendship of God was upon my tent;
5 when the Almighty[a] was still with me,
when my children were around me;
6 when my steps were washed with milk,
and the rock poured out for me streams of oil!
7 When I went out to the gate of the city,
when I took my seat in the square,
8 the young men saw me and withdrew,
and the aged rose up and stood;
9 the nobles refrained from talking,
and laid their hands on their mouths;
10 the voices of princes were hushed,
and their tongues stuck to the roof of their mouths.
11 When the ear heard, it commended me,
and when the eye saw, it approved;
12 because I delivered the poor who cried,
and the orphan who had no helper.
13 The blessing of the wretched came upon me,
and I caused the widow's heart to sing for joy.
14 I put on righteousness, and it clothed me;
my justice was like a robe and a turban.
15 I was eyes to the blind,
and feet to the lame.
16 I was a father to the needy,
and I championed the cause of the stranger.
17 I broke the fangs of the unrighteous,
and made them drop their prey from their teeth.
18 Then I thought, 'I shall die in my nest,
and I shall multiply my days like the phoenix;[b]
19 my roots spread out to the waters,
with the dew all night on my branches;
20 my glory was fresh with me,
and my bow ever new in my hand.'

21 "They listened to me, and waited,
and kept silence for my counsel.
22 After I spoke they did not speak again,
and my word dropped upon them like dew.[c]
23 They waited for me as for the rain;
they opened their mouths as for the spring rain.
24 I smiled on them when they had no confidence;
and the light of my countenance they did not extinguish.[d]
25 I chose their way, and sat as chief,
and I lived like a king among his troops,
like one who comforts mourners.

30 "But now they make sport of me,
those who are younger than I,
whose fathers I would have disdained
to set with the dogs of my flock.
2 What could I gain from the strength of their hands?
All their vigor is gone.

*a* Traditional rendering of Heb *Shaddai*
*b* Or *like sand* *c* Heb lacks *like dew*
*d* Meaning of Heb uncertain

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**29.7–10**: He was honored in the community (see also vv. 21–25). **11–20**: His reputation was well deserved because of his care for the poor; he had no reason to think that his lot would change. **18**: *Like the phoenix,* an allusion to the myth that the phoenix rises to a new life from its ashes.

**30.1–8**: Job describes the treatment he now receives from those who are the outcasts of society.

3 Through want and hard hunger
they gnaw the dry and desolate ground,
4 they pick mallow and the leaves of bushes,
and to warm themselves the roots of broom.
5 They are driven out from society;
people shout after them as after a thief.
6 In the gullies of wadis they must live,
in holes in the ground, and in the rocks.
7 Among the bushes they bray;
under the nettles they huddle together.
8 A senseless, disreputable brood,
they have been whipped out of the land.

9 "And now they mock me in song;
I am a byword to them.
10 They abhor me, they keep aloof from me;
they do not hesitate to spit at the sight of me.
11 Because God has loosed my bowstring and humbled me,
they have cast off restraint in my presence.
12 On my right hand the rabble rise up;
they send me sprawling,
and build roads for my ruin.
13 They break up my path,
they promote my calamity;
no one restrains[e] them.
14 As through a wide breach they come;
amid the crash they roll on.
15 Terrors are turned upon me;
my honor is pursued as by the wind,
and my prosperity has passed away like a cloud.
16 "And now my soul is poured out within me;
days of affliction have taken hold of me.
17 The night racks my bones,
and the pain that gnaws me takes no rest.
18 With violence he seizes my garment;[f]
he grasps me by[g] the collar of my tunic.
19 He has cast me into the mire,
and I have become like dust and ashes.
20 I cry to you and you do not answer me;
I stand, and you merely look at me.
21 You have turned cruel to me;
with the might of your hand you persecute me.
22 You lift me up on the wind, you make me ride on it,
and you toss me about in the roar of the storm.
23 I know that you will bring me to death,
and to the house appointed for all living.

24 "Surely one does not turn against the needy,[h]
when in disaster they cry for help.[i]
25 Did I not weep for those whose day was hard?
Was not my soul grieved for the poor?
26 But when I looked for good, evil came;
and when I waited for light, darkness came.
27 My inward parts are in turmoil, and are never still;

*e* Cn: Heb *helps* *f* Gk: Heb *my garment is disfigured* *g* Heb *like* *h* Heb *ruin*
*i* Cn: Meaning of Heb uncertain

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**30.9–11**: Opposition comes to him from the *rabble*. But it is God who has broken his *bowstring* (by undoing Job's bow, rendering him powerless).

**30.16–23**: God, not humankind, is Job's real enemy. **24–31**: A piteous lament about his present condition.

days of affliction come to meet me.
28 I go about in sunless gloom;
I stand up in the assembly and cry for help.
29 I am a brother of jackals,
and a companion of ostriches.
30 My skin turns black and falls from me,
and my bones burn with heat.
31 My lyre is turned to mourning,
and my pipe to the voice of those who weep.

31 "I have made a covenant with my eyes;
how then could I look upon a virgin?
2 What would be my portion from God above,
and my heritage from the Almighty[j] on high?
3 Does not calamity befall the unrighteous,
and disaster the workers of iniquity?
4 Does he not see my ways,
and number all my steps?

5 "If I have walked with falsehood,
and my foot has hurried to deceit—
6 let me be weighed in a just balance,
and let God know my integrity!—
7 if my step has turned aside from the way,
and my heart has followed my eyes,
and if any spot has clung to my hands;
8 then let me sow, and another eat;
and let what grows for me be rooted out.
9 "If my heart has been enticed by a woman,
and I have lain in wait at my neighbor's door;
10 then let my wife grind for another,
and let other men kneel over her.
11 For that would be a heinous crime;
that would be a criminal offense;
12 for that would be a fire consuming down to Abaddon,
and it would burn to the root all my harvest.

13 "If I have rejected the cause of my male or female slaves,
when they brought a complaint against me;
14 what then shall I do when God rises up?
When he makes inquiry, what shall I answer him?
15 Did not he who made me in the womb make them?
And did not one fashion us in the womb?

16 "If I have withheld anything that the poor desired,
or have caused the eyes of the widow to fail,
17 or have eaten my morsel alone,
and the orphan has not eaten from it—
18 for from my youth I reared the orphan[k] like a father,
and from my mother's womb I guided the widow[l]—

*j* Traditional rendering of Heb *Shaddai*
*k* Heb *him* *l* Heb *her*

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**31.1–40**: A negative confession, consisting of a series of oaths calling down a curse if one has acted wrongly. **5**: *If* begins the customary form of the oath, to which the consequence is usually, but not always, added: If I have done so and so, then let so and so happen to me. The exact number of oaths Job takes is not easy to determine (between nine and sixteen). He mentions lust, dishonesty, adultery, treatment of slaves, mistreatment of the poor, avarice, idolatry (v. 27 may refer to throwing kisses with the *hand*), revenge, failure of hospitality, hypocrisy, and mistreatment of the land.

19 if I have seen anyone perish for
lack of clothing,
or a poor person without
covering,
20 whose loins have not blessed me,
and who was not warmed with
the fleece of my sheep;
21 if I have raised my hand against
the orphan,
because I saw I had supporters
at the gate;
22 then let my shoulder blade fall
from my shoulder,
and let my arm be broken from
its socket.
23 For I was in terror of calamity
from God,
and I could not have faced his
majesty.

24 "If I have made gold my trust,
or called fine gold my
confidence;
25 if I have rejoiced because my
wealth was great,
or because my hand had gotten
much;
26 if I have looked at the sun[m] when
it shone,
or the moon moving in
splendor,
27 and my heart has been secretly
enticed,
and my mouth has kissed my
hand;
28 this also would be an iniquity to
be punished by the judges,
for I should have been false to
God above.

29 "If I have rejoiced at the ruin of
those who hated me,
or exulted when evil overtook
them—
30 I have not let my mouth sin
by asking for their lives with a
curse—
31 if those of my tent ever said,
'O that we might be sated with
his flesh!'[n]—
32 the stranger has not lodged in the
street;
I have opened my doors to the
traveler—
33 if I have concealed my
transgressions as others
do,[o]
by hiding my iniquity in my
bosom,
34 because I stood in great fear of the
multitude,
and the contempt of families
terrified me,
so that I kept silence, and did
not go out of doors—
35 O that I had one to hear me!
(Here is my signature! Let the
Almighty[p] answer me!)
O that I had the indictment
written by my adversary!
36 Surely I would carry it on my
shoulder;
I would bind it on me like a
crown;
37 I would give him an account of all
my steps;
like a prince I would approach
him.

38 "If my land has cried out against
me,
and its furrows have wept
together;
39 if I have eaten its yield without
payment,
and caused the death of its
owners;
40 let thorns grow instead of wheat,
and foul weeds instead of
barley."

The words of Job are ended.

*m* Heb *the light* *n* Meaning of Heb uncertain *o* Or *as Adam did* *p* Traditional rendering of Heb *Shaddai*

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**31.35:** With considerable bravado Job offers his *signature*, literally his "taw," the last letter of the Hebrew alphabet, which was shaped like a cross, meaning "mark," or signature. Any *indictment* of him would be merely a badge of honor, since he can give full *account* of his life.

32 So these three men ceased to answer Job, because he was righteous in his own eyes. 2Then Elihu son of Barachel the Buzite, of the family of Ram, became angry. He was angry at Job because he justified himself rather than God; 3he was angry also at Job's three friends because they had found no answer, though they had declared Job to be in the wrong.[q] 4Now Elihu had waited to speak to Job, because they were older than he. 5But when Elihu saw that there was no answer in the mouths of these three men, he became angry.

6 Elihu son of Barachel the Buzite answered:

"I am young in years,
and you are aged;
therefore I was timid and afraid
to declare my opinion to you.
7 I said, 'Let days speak,
and many years teach wisdom.'
8 But truly it is the spirit in a mortal,
the breath of the Almighty,[r]
that makes for understanding.
9 It is not the old[s] that are wise,
nor the aged that understand what is right.
10 Therefore I say, 'Listen to me;
let me also declare my opinion.'

11 "See, I waited for your words,
I listened for your wise sayings,
while you searched out what to say.
12 I gave you my attention,
but there was in fact no one that confuted Job,
no one among you that answered his words.
13 Yet do not say, 'We have found wisdom;
God may vanquish him, not a human.'
14 He has not directed his words against me,
and I will not answer him with your speeches.

15 "They are dismayed, they answer no more;
they have not a word to say.
16 And am I to wait, because they do not speak,

*q* Another ancient tradition reads *answer, and had put God in the wrong* *r* Traditional rendering of Heb *Shaddai* *s* Gk Syr Vg: Heb *many*

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**32.1–37.24: Discourses of Elihu.** Many commentators believe that these chapters, with their peculiar language (containing many Aramaic words) and different style (Elihu seems to quote Job's speeches and even the as-yet-undelivered discourse of the Lord), belong to another hand than that of the poet. In addition it seems to be interruptive: Job's final challenge (31.35–37) calls for the immediate manifestation of God (which occurs now in ch 38). The epilogue (42.7–17) ignores Elihu, which possibly indicates that he did not belong to the original cast of characters; there is, however, no textual evidence that the book ever existed without these chapters. It is possible to construe Elihu as the answer to Job's request for someone to hear him (31.35). Elihu does develop the revelatory function of suffering (33.19–33; 36.5–15); some would argue that his speeches serve to prepare dramatically, psychologically, and even theologically for the intervention of the LORD.

**32.1–33.7: Prose and Poetic introduction.** After the prose narrative, in which Elihu appears to be hotheaded and impatient (vv. 1–6), he launches into a bombastic and prolix introduction that continues to 33.7. **2:** *Elihu* means "My God is he." *Buzite* suggests that he was an Aramean living not far from Edom, for Buz in Gen 22.21 is a brother of Uz (see Job 1.1 n.) and an Aramean (compare Gen 11.26–32). *He justified himself rather than God:* Elihu quite correctly estimates the situation. Job has risen for the defense of self, not God. **3:** The reading in note *q* (*had put God in the wrong*) may be the original one, which scribes found offensive and corrected in the manuscripts. **5:** *No answer,* since the silence of the friends after Job's final words in ch 31 could be taken as an admission of defeat (see vv. 11–14).

**32.8:** *The breath of the Almighty* need not refer to anything more than the breath of life (Gen 2.7), because in 33.4–7 Elihu does not claim to be any different from Job in his humanity. **18:** *I am full of words,* indeed!

because they stand there, and answer no more?
17 I also will give my answer;
I also will declare my opinion.
18 For I am full of words;
the spirit within me constrains me.
19 My heart is indeed like wine that has no vent;
like new wineskins, it is ready to burst.
20 I must speak, so that I may find relief;
I must open my lips and answer.
21 I will not show partiality to any person
or use flattery toward anyone.
22 For I do not know how to flatter—
or my Maker would soon put an end to me!

33 "But now, hear my speech, O Job,
and listen to all my words.
2 See, I open my mouth;
the tongue in my mouth speaks.
3 My words declare the uprightness of my heart,
and what my lips know they speak sincerely.
4 The spirit of God has made me,
and the breath of the Almighty[t] gives me life.
5 Answer me, if you can;
set your words in order before me; take your stand.
6 See, before God I am as you are;
I too was formed from a piece of clay.
7 No fear of me need terrify you;
my pressure will not be heavy on you.
8 "Surely, you have spoken in my hearing,
and I have heard the sound of your words.
9 You say, 'I am clean, without transgression;
I am pure, and there is no iniquity in me.
10 Look, he finds occasions against me,
he counts me as his enemy;
11 he puts my feet in the stocks,
and watches all my paths.'

12 "But in this you are not right. I will answer you:
God is greater than any mortal.
13 Why do you contend against him,
saying, 'He will answer none of my[u] words'?
14 For God speaks in one way,
and in two, though people do not perceive it.
15 In a dream, in a vision of the night,
when deep sleep falls on mortals,
while they slumber on their beds,
16 then he opens their ears,
and terrifies them with warnings,
17 that he may turn them aside from their deeds,
and keep them from pride,
18 to spare their souls from the Pit,
their lives from traversing the River.
19 They are also chastened with pain upon their beds,
and with continual strife in their bones,

*t* Traditional rendering of Heb *Shaddai*
*u* Compare Gk: Heb *his*

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**33.1:** An explicit reference to Job, and the following verses continue the bombast.

**33.8–33:** Elihu summarizes Job's claims and gives the rather simplistic answer that *God is greater than any mortal.* But he also argues that God does speak to humans *in a dream* and also by chastening them *with pain.* He also describes the intercessory role of *an angel, a mediator,* who will offer a *ransom,* so that the sufferer is healed. But this occurs apparently only on the condition that a person admits: *I sinned* (v. 27). This is obviously not appropriate to Job's situation, but Elihu rattles on (vv. 31–33).

20 so that their lives loathe bread,
and their appetites dainty food.
21 Their flesh is so wasted away that it cannot be seen;
and their bones, once invisible, now stick out.
22 Their souls draw near the Pit,
and their lives to those who bring death.
23 Then, if there should be for one of them an angel,
a mediator, one of a thousand,
one who declares a person upright,
24 and he is gracious to that person, and says,
'Deliver him from going down into the Pit;
I have found a ransom;
25 let his flesh become fresh with youth;
let him return to the days of his youthful vigor';
26 then he prays to God, and is accepted by him,
he comes into his presence with joy,
and God[v] repays him for his righteousness.
27 That person sings to others and says,
'I sinned, and perverted what was right,
and it was not paid back to me.
28 He has redeemed my soul from going down to the Pit,
and my life shall see the light.'

29 "God indeed does all these things,
twice, three times, with mortals,
30 to bring back their souls from the Pit,
so that they may see the light of life.[w]
31 Pay heed, Job, listen to me;
be silent, and I will speak.
32 If you have anything to say, answer me;
speak, for I desire to justify you.
33 If not, listen to me;
be silent, and I will teach you wisdom."

34 Then Elihu continued and said:
2 "Hear my words, you wise men,
and give ear to me, you who know;
3 for the ear tests words
as the palate tastes food.
4 Let us choose what is right;
let us determine among ourselves what is good.
5 For Job has said, 'I am innocent,
and God has taken away my right;
6 in spite of being right I am counted a liar;
my wound is incurable, though I am without transgression.'
7 Who is there like Job,
who drinks up scoffing like water,
8 who goes in company with evildoers
and walks with the wicked?
9 For he has said, 'It profits one nothing
to take delight in God.'

10 "Therefore, hear me, you who have sense,
far be it from God that he should do wickedness,
and from the Almighty[x] that he should do wrong.

*v* Heb *he* — *w* Syr: Heb *to be lighted with the light of life* — *x* Traditional rendering of Heb *Shaddai*

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**34.1–37: Second discourse of Elihu.** Elihu addresses *wise men* and cites Job for claiming to be *innocent* and charging that *God has taken away* his *right* (v. 5). But it is inconceivable that God *should do wrong*. Elihu then gives a lengthy lecture on the divine exercise of justice in governing the world. He concludes (vv. 31–37) that the *wise* will properly condemn Job.

11 For according to their deeds he will repay them,
and according to their ways he will make it befall them.
12 Of a truth, God will not do wickedly,
and the Almighty[y] will not pervert justice.
13 Who gave him charge over the earth
and who laid on him[z] the whole world?
14 If he should take back his spirit[a] to himself,
and gather to himself his breath,
15 all flesh would perish together,
and all mortals return to dust.

16 "If you have understanding, hear this;
listen to what I say.
17 Shall one who hates justice govern?
Will you condemn one who is righteous and mighty,
18 who says to a king, 'You scoundrel!'
and to princes, 'You wicked men!';
19 who shows no partiality to nobles,
nor regards the rich more than the poor,
for they are all the work of his hands?
20 In a moment they die;
at midnight the people are shaken and pass away,
and the mighty are taken away by no human hand.

21 "For his eyes are upon the ways of mortals,
and he sees all their steps.
22 There is no gloom or deep darkness
where evildoers may hide themselves.
23 For he has not appointed a time[b] for anyone
to go before God in judgment.
24 He shatters the mighty without investigation,
and sets others in their place.
25 Thus, knowing their works,
he overturns them in the night, and they are crushed.
26 He strikes them for their wickedness
while others look on,
27 because they turned aside from following him,
and had no regard for any of his ways,
28 so that they caused the cry of the poor to come to him,
and he heard the cry of the afflicted—
29 When he is quiet, who can condemn?
When he hides his face, who can behold him,
whether it be a nation or an individual?—
30 so that the godless should not reign,
or those who ensnare the people.

31 "For has anyone said to God,
'I have endured punishment; I will not offend any more;
32 teach me what I do not see;
if I have done iniquity, I will do it no more'?
33 Will he then pay back to suit you, because you reject it?
For you must choose, and not I;
therefore declare what you know.[c]
34 Those who have sense will say to me,
and the wise who hear me will say,
35 'Job speaks without knowledge,
his words are without insight.'
36 Would that Job were tried to the limit,
because his answers are those of the wicked.
37 For he adds rebellion to his sin;
he claps his hands among us,

*y* Traditional rendering of Heb *Shaddai*
*z* Heb lacks *on him* *a* Heb *his heart his spirit*
*b* Cn: Heb *yet* *c* Meaning of Heb of verses 29-33 uncertain

and multiplies his words against God."

35 Elihu continued and said:
2 "Do you think this to be just?
You say, 'I am in the right before God.'
3 If you ask, 'What advantage have I?
How am I better off than if I had sinned?'
4 I will answer you
and your friends with you.
5 Look at the heavens and see;
observe the clouds, which are higher than you.
6 If you have sinned, what do you accomplish against him?
And if your transgressions are multiplied, what do you do to him?
7 If you are righteous, what do you give to him;
or what does he receive from your hand?
8 Your wickedness affects others like you,
and your righteousness, other human beings.

9 "Because of the multitude of oppressions people cry out;
they call for help because of the arm of the mighty.
10 But no one says, 'Where is God my Maker,
who gives strength in the night,
11 who teaches us more than the animals of the earth,
and makes us wiser than the birds of the air?'
12 There they cry out, but he does not answer,
because of the pride of evildoers.
13 Surely God does not hear an empty cry,
nor does the Almighty[d] regard it.
14 How much less when you say that you do not see him,
that the case is before him, and you are waiting for him!
15 And now, because his anger does not punish,
and he does not greatly heed transgression,[e]
16 Job opens his mouth in empty talk,
he multiplies words without knowledge."

36 Elihu continued and said:
2 "Bear with me a little, and I will show you,
for I have yet something to say on God's behalf.
3 I will bring my knowledge from far away,
and ascribe righteousness to my Maker.
4 For truly my words are not false;
one who is perfect in knowledge is with you.

5 "Surely God is mighty and does not despise any;
he is mighty in strength of understanding.
6 He does not keep the wicked alive,
but gives the afflicted their right.

*d* Traditional rendering of Heb *Shaddai*
*e* Theodotion Symmachus Compare Vg: Meaning of Heb uncertain

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**35.1–16: Third discourse of Elihu.** He claims to *answer* (v. 4) Job's argument to be *in the right* (v. 2). God is transcendent, and receives nothing from Job's *hand* (v. 7). When there is no answer to the cry of the oppressed, it is *because of the pride of evildoers* (v. 12). Job's case is even less worthy, *empty talk* (v. 16). **10:** *Strength in the night* is literally "songs in the night."

**36.1–37.24: Fourth discourse of Elihu.** He defends divine justice, which distinguishes between *the wicked* and *the afflicted* (v. 6). Affliction is an *instruction* that will lead to *prosperity* (v. 11), if heeded; see v. 15. But

7 He does not withdraw his eyes from the righteous,
but with kings on the throne he sets them forever, and they are exalted.
8 And if they are bound in fetters and caught in the cords of affliction,
9 then he declares to them their work and their transgressions, that they are behaving arrogantly.
10 He opens their ears to instruction, and commands that they return from iniquity.
11 If they listen, and serve him, they complete their days in prosperity, and their years in pleasantness.
12 But if they do not listen, they shall perish by the sword, and die without knowledge.

13 "The godless in heart cherish anger;
they do not cry for help when he binds them.
14 They die in their youth, and their life ends in shame.[f]
15 He delivers the afflicted by their affliction, and opens their ear by adversity.
16 He also allured you out of distress into a broad place where there was no constraint, and what was set on your table was full of fatness.

17 "But you are obsessed with the case of the wicked;
judgment and justice seize you.
18 Beware that wrath does not entice you into scoffing, and do not let the greatness of the ransom turn you aside.
19 Will your cry avail to keep you from distress, or will all the force of your strength?
20 Do not long for the night, when peoples are cut off in their place.
21 Beware! Do not turn to iniquity; because of that you have been tried by affliction.
22 See, God is exalted in his power; who is a teacher like him?
23 Who has prescribed for him his way, or who can say, 'You have done wrong'?

24 "Remember to extol his work, of which mortals have sung.
25 All people have looked on it; everyone watches it from far away.
26 Surely God is great, and we do not know him; the number of his years is unsearchable.
27 For he draws up the drops of water; he distills[g] his mist in rain,
28 which the skies pour down and drop upon mortals abundantly.
29 Can anyone understand the spreading of the clouds, the thunderings of his pavilion?
30 See, he scatters his lightning around him and covers the roots of the sea.
31 For by these he governs peoples;

*f* Heb *ends among the temple prostitutes*
*g* Cn: Heb *they distill*

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Job's situation is different (vv. 17–23): his iniquity is the reason he has been *tried by affliction* (v. 21). He urges Job to praise God and launches into a hymn to the divine power. God is the sovereign ruler of nature; his purpose and his benevolence appear in the majestic unfolding of the seasons: autumn (36.27–33, *rain* and *clouds*), winter (37.1–13, *snow* and *ice*), and summer (37.14–22, *hot* and *south wind*). Throughout the hymn, thunder and lightning and clouds have a major role, and in 37.14–22 Elihu speaks more personally to Job in the style of the speeches of the Lord in chs 38–41. **37.24**: A typical wisdom ending; compare Job 28.28; Prov 1.7.

he gives food in abundance.
32 He covers his hands with the lightning,
and commands it to strike the mark.
33 Its crashing[h] tells about him;
he is jealous[h] with anger against iniquity.

37 "At this also my heart trembles,
and leaps out of its place.
2 Listen, listen to the thunder of his voice
and the rumbling that comes from his mouth.
3 Under the whole heaven he lets it loose,
and his lightning to the corners of the earth.
4 After it his voice roars;
he thunders with his majestic voice
and he does not restrain the lightnings[i] when his voice is heard.
5 God thunders wondrously with his voice;
he does great things that we cannot comprehend.
6 For to the snow he says, 'Fall on the earth';
and the shower of rain, his heavy shower of rain,
7 serves as a sign on everyone's hand,
so that all whom he has made may know it.[j]
8 Then the animals go into their lairs
and remain in their dens.
9 From its chamber comes the whirlwind,
and cold from the scattering winds.
10 By the breath of God ice is given,
and the broad waters are frozen fast.
11 He loads the thick cloud with moisture;
the clouds scatter his lightning.
12 They turn round and round by his guidance,
to accomplish all that he commands them
on the face of the habitable world.
13 Whether for correction, or for his land,
or for love, he causes it to happen.

14 "Hear this, O Job;
stop and consider the wondrous works of God.
15 Do you know how God lays his command upon them,
and causes the lightning of his cloud to shine?
16 Do you know the balancings of the clouds,
the wondrous works of the one whose knowledge is perfect,
17 you whose garments are hot
when the earth is still because of the south wind?
18 Can you, like him, spread out the skies,
hard as a molten mirror?
19 Teach us what we shall say to him;
we cannot draw up our case because of darkness.
20 Should he be told that I want to speak?
Did anyone ever wish to be swallowed up?

21 Now, no one can look on the light
when it is bright in the skies,
when the wind has passed and cleared them.
22 Out of the north comes golden splendor;
around God is awesome majesty.
23 The Almighty[k]—we cannot find him;
he is great in power and justice,
and abundant righteousness he will not violate.

*h* Meaning of Heb uncertain *i* Heb *them*
*j* Meaning of Heb of verse 7 uncertain
*k* Traditional rendering of Heb *Shaddai*

24 Therefore mortals fear him;
he does not regard any who are
wise in their own conceit."

38 Then the LORD answered Job out of the whirlwind:

2 "Who is this that darkens counsel
by words without
knowledge?
3 Gird up your loins like a man,
I will question you, and you
shall declare to me.

4 "Where were you when I laid the
foundation of the earth?
Tell me, if you have
understanding.
5 Who determined its
measurements—surely you
know!
Or who stretched the line upon
it?
6 On what were its bases sunk,
or who laid its cornerstone
7 when the morning stars sang
together
and all the heavenly beings[l]
shouted for joy?

8 "Or who shut in the sea with
doors
when it burst out from the
womb?—
9 when I made the clouds its
garment,
and thick darkness its swaddling
band,
10 and prescribed bounds for it,
and set bars and doors,
11 and said, 'Thus far shall you
come, and no farther,
and here shall your proud waves
be stopped'?

12 "Have you commanded the
morning since your days
began,
and caused the dawn to know
its place,
13 so that it might take hold of the
skirts of the earth,
and the wicked be shaken out of
it?
14 It is changed like clay under the
seal,
and it is dyed[m] like a garment.
15 Light is withheld from the
wicked,
and their uplifted arm is broken.

16 "Have you entered into the
springs of the sea,
or walked in the recesses of the
deep?
17 Have the gates of death been
revealed to you,
or have you seen the gates of
deep darkness?
18 Have you comprehended the
expanse of the earth?
Declare, if you know all this.

19 "Where is the way to the dwelling
of light,

*l* Heb *sons of God* *m* Cn: Heb *and they stand forth*

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**38.1–42.6: The voice from the whirlwind.** There are two remarkable speeches of the LORD, and two replies from Job.

**38.1–40.2: First speech of the LORD.** **38.1**: *The whirlwind,* a frequent setting of theophanies, i.e. divine appearances (Nah 1.3; Zech 9.14; Ps 18.7–15; 50.3; Ezek 1.4; Hab ch 3). **2–3**: Throughout, Job has asked why misfortune happened (e.g. 3.11, 16, 20; 13.24). The LORD now offers him the right to challenge the divine rule, but first he has questions to put to Job. These questions seem irrelevant and unexpected, yet playful (only 38.21 displays sharp irony). Their apparent purpose is to lead Job into the mystery of God's creation, of which Job and his suffering form only one part. The questions range through the whole of creation: *earth* (vv. 4–7); *sea* (vv. 8–11); *dawn* (vv. 12–15); Sheol (*the deep, death,* vv. 16–18); *light* and *darkness* (vv. 19–21); weather phenomena (vv. 22–30); the constellations (vv. 31–33); *clouds* and *water* (vv. 34–38); the providential care of the animal world (from *lion* to *eagle,* 38.39–39.40). **7**: *Heavenly beings,* see 1.6 n.; here they are associated with the *morning stars* on the festive occasion of the creative actions. **8**: *Sea,* see 3.8 n.

and where is the place of
darkness,
20 that you may take it to its
territory
and that you may discern the
paths to its home?
21 Surely you know, for you were
born then,
and the number of your days is
great!

22 "Have you entered the storehouses
of the snow,
or have you seen the
storehouses of the hail,
23 which I have reserved for the time
of trouble,
for the day of battle and war?
24 What is the way to the place
where the light is
distributed,
or where the east wind is
scattered upon the earth?

25 "Who has cut a channel for the
torrents of rain,
and a way for the thunderbolt,
26 to bring rain on a land where no
one lives,
on the desert, which is empty of
human life,
27 to satisfy the waste and desolate
land,
and to make the ground put
forth grass?

28 "Has the rain a father,
or who has begotten the drops
of dew?
29 From whose womb did the ice
come forth,
and who has given birth to the
hoarfrost of heaven?
30 The waters become hard like
stone,
and the face of the deep is
frozen.

31 "Can you bind the chains of the
Pleiades,
or loose the cords of Orion?
32 Can you lead forth the Mazzaroth
in their season,
or can you guide the Bear with
its children?
33 Do you know the ordinances of
the heavens?
Can you establish their rule on
the earth?

34 "Can you lift up your voice to the
clouds,
so that a flood of waters may
cover you?
35 Can you send forth lightnings, so
that they may go
and say to you, 'Here we are'?
36 Who has put wisdom in the
inward parts,[n]
or given understanding to the
mind?[n]
37 Who has the wisdom to number
the clouds?
Or who can tilt the waterskins
of the heavens,
38 when the dust runs into a mass
and the clods cling together?

39 "Can you hunt the prey for the
lion,
or satisfy the appetite of the
young lions,
40 when they crouch in their dens,
or lie in wait in their covert?
41 Who provides for the raven its
prey,
when its young ones cry to
God,
and wander about for lack of
food?

*n* Meaning of Heb uncertain

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**38.21**: A truly sarcastic jibe; Job would have had to have been *born* before the creation, like Wisdom in Prov 8.22ff. **26**: Astonishingly, *rain* falls *on a land where no one lives;* such puzzling prodigality!

**38.32**: The determination of these stars is uncertain.

**39.13–18**: The text is uncertain; perhaps the *ostrich,* lacking *wisdom* (v. 17), is a point made against Job.

39 "Do you know when the mountain goats give birth?
Do you observe the calving of the deer?
2 Can you number the months that they fulfill,
and do you know the time when they give birth,
3 when they crouch to give birth to their offspring,
and are delivered of their young?
4 Their young ones become strong, they grow up in the open;
they go forth, and do not return to them.

5 "Who has let the wild ass go free?
Who has loosed the bonds of the swift ass,
6 to which I have given the steppe for its home,
the salt land for its dwelling place?
7 It scorns the tumult of the city;
it does not hear the shouts of the driver.
8 It ranges the mountains as its pasture,
and it searches after every green thing.

9 "Is the wild ox willing to serve you?
Will it spend the night at your crib?
10 Can you tie it in the furrow with ropes,
or will it harrow the valleys after you?
11 Will you depend on it because its strength is great,
and will you hand over your labor to it?
12 Do you have faith in it that it will return,
and bring your grain to your threshing floor?[o]

13 "The ostrich's wings flap wildly,
though its pinions lack plumage.[p]
14 For it leaves its eggs to the earth,
and lets them be warmed on the ground,
15 forgetting that a foot may crush them,
and that a wild animal may trample them.
16 It deals cruelly with its young, as if they were not its own;
though its labor should be in vain, yet it has no fear;
17 because God has made it forget wisdom,
and given it no share in understanding.
18 When it spreads its plumes aloft,[p]
it laughs at the horse and its rider.

19 "Do you give the horse its might?
Do you clothe its neck with mane?
20 Do you make it leap like the locust?
Its majestic snorting is terrible.
21 It paws[q] violently, exults mightily;
it goes out to meet the weapons.
22 It laughs at fear, and is not dismayed;
it does not turn back from the sword.
23 Upon it rattle the quiver,
the flashing spear, and the javelin.
24 With fierceness and rage it swallows the ground;
it cannot stand still at the sound of the trumpet.
25 When the trumpet sounds, it says 'Aha!'
From a distance it smells the battle,
the thunder of the captains, and the shouting.

26 "Is it by your wisdom that the hawk soars,
and spreads its wings toward the south?

*o* Heb *your grain and your threshing floor*
*p* Meaning of Heb uncertain *q* Gk Syr Vg: Heb *they dig*

27 Is it at your command that the eagle mounts up
and makes its nest on high?
28 It lives on the rock and makes its home
in the fastness of the rocky crag.
29 From there it spies the prey;
its eyes see it from far away.
30 Its young ones suck up blood;
and where the slain are, there it is."

40 And the LORD said to Job:
2 "Shall a faultfinder contend with the Almighty?[r]
Anyone who argues with God must respond."

3 Then Job answered the LORD:
4 "See, I am of small account; what shall I answer you?
I lay my hand on my mouth.
5 I have spoken once, and I will not answer;
twice, but will proceed no further."

6 Then the LORD answered Job out of the whirlwind:
7 "Gird up your loins like a man;
I will question you, and you declare to me.
8 Will you even put me in the wrong?
Will you condemn me that you may be justified?
9 Have you an arm like God,
and can you thunder with a voice like his?

10 "Deck yourself with majesty and dignity;
clothe yourself with glory and splendor.
11 Pour out the overflowings of your anger,
and look on all who are proud, and abase them.
12 Look on all who are proud, and bring them low;
tread down the wicked where they stand.
13 Hide them all in the dust together;
bind their faces in the world below.[s]
14 Then I will also acknowledge to you
that your own right hand can give you victory.

15 "Look at Behemoth,
which I made just as I made you;
it eats grass like an ox.
16 Its strength is in its loins,
and its power in the muscles of its belly.
17 It makes its tail stiff like a cedar;
the sinews of its thighs are knit together.
18 Its bones are tubes of bronze,
its limbs like bars of iron.

19 "It is the first of the great acts of God—
only its Maker can approach it with the sword.
20 For the mountains yield food for it
where all the wild animals play.
21 Under the lotus plants it lies,

r Traditional rendering of Heb *Shaddai*
s Heb *the hidden place*

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**40.3–5: Job's reply.** Job offers an elaborate statement—of silence. Is this evasive, or humility, or defiance? He does not say that he has sinned (see 42.7).

**40.6–41.34: Second speech of the LORD. 8:** *Will you condemn me that you may be justified?* The issue is finally joined, and the LORD seems to say in vv. 9–14 that if Job can take on the role of king (v. 10) in a divine style, and can manage the world, especially the *wicked,* then the LORD will *acknowledge* his *victory.* This is an invitation to usurp God's role! But it is a safe one, since Job cannot and will not accept it.

**40.15–24:** *Behemoth* is not a mere hippopotamus but a primeval monster (v. 19), a mythical symbol of chaos and evil. **15:** *Which I made just as I made you,* Job and Behemoth have that in common, at least.

in the covert of the reeds and in the marsh.
22 The lotus trees cover it for shade;
the willows of the wadi surround it.
23 Even if the river is turbulent, it is not frightened;
it is confident though Jordan rushes against its mouth.
24 Can one take it with hooks[t]
or pierce its nose with a snare?

41 [u] "Can you draw out Leviathan[v] with a fishhook,
or press down its tongue with a cord?
2 Can you put a rope in its nose,
or pierce its jaw with a hook?
3 Will it make many supplications to you?
Will it speak soft words to you?
4 Will it make a covenant with you
to be taken as your servant forever?
5 Will you play with it as with a bird,
or will you put it on leash for your girls?
6 Will traders bargain over it?
Will they divide it up among the merchants?
7 Can you fill its skin with harpoons,
or its head with fishing spears?
8 Lay hands on it;
think of the battle; you will not do it again!
9 [w] Any hope of capturing it[x] will be disappointed;
were not even the gods[y] overwhelmed at the sight of it?
10 No one is so fierce as to dare to stir it up.
Who can stand before it?[z]
11 Who can confront it[z] and be safe?[a]
—under the whole heaven, who?[b]

12 "I will not keep silence concerning its limbs,
or its mighty strength, or its splendid frame.
13 Who can strip off its outer garment?
Who can penetrate its double coat of mail?[c]
14 Who can open the doors of its face?
There is terror all around its teeth.
15 Its back[d] is made of shields in rows,
shut up closely as with a seal.
16 One is so near to another
that no air can come between them.
17 They are joined one to another;
they clasp each other and cannot be separated.
18 Its sneezes flash forth light,
and its eyes are like the eyelids of the dawn.
19 From its mouth go flaming torches;
sparks of fire leap out.
20 Out of its nostrils comes smoke,
as from a boiling pot and burning rushes.
21 Its breath kindles coals,
and a flame comes out of its mouth.
22 In its neck abides strength,
and terror dances before it.
23 The folds of its flesh cling together;
it is firmly cast and immovable.
24 Its heart is as hard as stone,

*t* Cn: Heb *in his eyes* *u* Ch 40.25 in Heb
*v* Or *the crocodile* *w* Ch 41.1 in Heb
*x* Heb *of it* *y* Cn Compare Symmachus Syr: Heb *one is* *z* Heb *me* *a* Gk: Heb *that I shall repay* *b* Heb *to me* *c* Gk: Heb *bridle*
*d* Cn Compare Gk Vg: Heb *pride*

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**41.1–34**: *Leviathan* is not an ordinary crocodile, but the sea-monster that personifies chaos (3.8; 26.13; Ps 74.14). It is only a plaything in the eyes of God, as the psalmist also indicates (Ps 104.26).

as hard as the lower millstone.
25 When it raises itself up the gods are afraid;
at the crashing they are beside themselves.
26 Though the sword reaches it, it does not avail,
nor does the spear, the dart, or the javelin.
27 It counts iron as straw,
and bronze as rotten wood.
28 The arrow cannot make it flee;
slingstones, for it, are turned to chaff.
29 Clubs are counted as chaff;
it laughs at the rattle of javelins.
30 Its underparts are like sharp potsherds;
it spreads itself like a threshing sledge on the mire.
31 It makes the deep boil like a pot;
it makes the sea like a pot of ointment.
32 It leaves a shining wake behind it;
one would think the deep to be white-haired.
33 On earth it has no equal,
a creature without fear.
34 It surveys everything that is lofty;
it is king over all that are proud."

**42** Then Job answered the LORD:
2 "I know that you can do all things,
and that no purpose of yours can be thwarted.
3 'Who is this that hides counsel without knowledge?'
Therefore I have uttered what I did not understand,
things too wonderful for me, which I did not know.
4 'Hear, and I will speak;
I will question you, and you declare to me.'
5 I had heard of you by the hearing of the ear,
but now my eye sees you;
6 therefore I despise myself,
and repent in dust and ashes."

7 After the LORD had spoken these words to Job, the LORD said to Eliphaz the Temanite: "My wrath is kindled against you and against your two friends; for you have not spoken of me what is right, as my servant Job has. 8Now therefore take seven bulls and seven rams, and go to my servant Job, and offer up for yourselves a burnt offering; and my servant Job shall pray for you, for I will accept his prayer not to deal with you according to your folly; for you have not spoken of me what is right, as my servant Job has done." 9So Eliphaz the Temanite and Bildad the Shuhite and Zophar the Naamathite went and did what the LORD had told them; and the LORD accepted Job's prayer.

10 And the LORD restored the fortunes of Job when he had prayed for his friends; and the LORD gave Job twice as

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**42.1–6**: **Job's reply.** Job acknowledges the divine *purpose* (v. 2) and reacts to two quotations of the LORD's words: 38.2 (v. 3a) and 40.7 (v. 4) by stating his ignorance (v. 3b) and his experience of God (v. 5). A hearsay understanding of the LORD has now yielded to a vision (compare 19.26–27) or experience that satisfies Job. He receives no explanation of his predicament; it is enough that his creator has come to him personally. **6**: The meaning is not clear. *I despise myself,* but no object of the verb is indicated in the Hebrew. *Repent,* a verb that is often used to indicate a change of mind on the LORD's part (Ex 32.14; Jer 18.8, 10). Here it does not mean repentance for sin (see vv. 7–8, where Job is said to have spoken *what is right*). *In dust and ashes,* in the sense that this figure expresses his weakness and humanity "since I am but dust and ashes" (see also Gen 18.27; Job 30.19).

**42.7–17**: **The epilogue.** The style, language, and situation ties in with 1.1–2.13. **7–8**: The verdict of the LORD is clearly in favor of Job, against the friends, who are to ask Job to be their intercessor; quite a turnaround! **9–16**: Job's restoration follows upon his intercession. It is a misreading to consider the restoration the point of the story. The author would not deny that God also rewards people, but this is at the divine pleasure. **14**: *Jemimah:* Dove; *Kezizah:* cassia, or cinnamon; *Keren-happuch:* horn of eye cosmetic.

much as he had before. [11]Then there came to him all his brothers and sisters and all who had known him before, and they ate bread with him in his house; they showed him sympathy and comforted him for all the evil that the LORD had brought upon him; and each of them gave him a piece of money[e] and a gold ring. [12]The LORD blessed the latter days of Job more than his beginning; and he had fourteen thousand sheep, six thousand camels, a thousand yoke of oxen, and a thousand donkeys. [13]He also had seven sons and three daughters. [14]He named the first Jemimah, the second Keziah, and the third Keren-happuch. [15]In all the land there were no women so beautiful as Job's daughters; and their father gave them an inheritance along with their brothers. [16]After this Job lived one hundred and forty years, and saw his children, and his children's children, four generations. [17]And Job died, old and full of days.

*e* Heb *a qesitah*

# *The Psalms*

The living spirit of any religion shines through most clearly in the hymns by which its adherents bring before God their troubles and fears, their hopes, aspirations, and reasons for confidence. The Psalter is the hymnal of ancient Israel, compiled from older collections of lyrics for use in the temple of Zerubbabel (Ezra 5.2; Hag 1.14). Most of the psalms were probably composed to accompany acts of worship in the temple and may be classified as follows: *Hymns* (acts of praise suitable for any occasion and including the sub-types *Enthronement Hymns,* celebrating the Lord's kingship, and *Songs of Zion,* expressing devotion to the Holy City); *Laments* (in which an individual seeks deliverance from illness or false accusation, or the nation asks for help in time of distress); *Songs of Trust* (in which individuals express their confidence in God's readiness to help); *Thanksgivings* (in which individuals express their gratitude for deliverance); *Sacred History* (in which the nation recounts the story of God's dealings with it); *Royal Psalms* (designed to be used for occasions such as a coronation or royal wedding); *Wisdom Psalms* (which are meditations on life and the ways of God); and *Liturgies* (which are often of mixed type and were composed for some special cultic or historical occasion. One suggested cultic occasion is a regularly occurring ceremony for renewing the covenant). In imitation of the Pentateuch the Psalter is divided into five books (see 41.13 n.).

The titles or superscriptions of the psalms contain a variety of items. They frequently include musical directions, such as "To the choirmaster: with stringed instruments" (Pss 4; 6; etc.). The meaning of a number of technical terms is no longer definitely known; for example, Shiggaion (Ps 7), Miktam (Pss 16; 56–60), Maskil (Pss 42; 44; 52–55; etc.), Sheminith (Pss 6; 12), Gittith (Pss 8; 81; 84), Muth-Labben (Ps 9), Alamoth (Ps 46), Mahalath (Ps 53), Mahalath Leannoth (Ps 88), Shushan-Eduth (Ps 60). The first three may refer to types of psalms, and the rest, preceded by "According to," may be the names of tunes, as also The Hind of the Dawn (Ps 22), Lilies (Pss 45; 69), The Dove on the Far-off Terebinths (Ps 56), and Do Not Destroy (Pss 57–59; 75). References to the descendants of Korah (Pss 42; 44–49; 84; etc.), Jeduthun (Pss 39; 62; 77), Asaph (Pss 50; 73–83), Heman (Ps 88), and Ethan (Ps 89) point to the work of professional Levitical musicians (1 Chr 15.16–22; Neh 12.41–46). Song of Ascents (Pss 120–134) may mean "pilgrim song," that is, of ascent to Jerusalem. The ascription of nearly half of the psalms to David is testimony to the regard in which the great singer of Israel was held. The tradition that David wrote *all* the psalms is much later than the book itself. Interior evidence shows that the Psalter is the product of many minds during many centuries (see, for example, Pss 72.1; 82.1; 98.1; 102.1). For the significance of the frequently recurring word, "Selah," see 3.2 n.

The book of Psalms reflects many aspects of the religious experience of Israel. Its intrinsic spiritual depth and beauty have made it from earliest times a treasury of resources for public and private devotion in both Judaism and Christianity.

# BOOK I

## Psalm 1

1 Happy are those
who do not follow the advice of the wicked,
or take the path that sinners tread,
or sit in the seat of scoffers;
2 but their delight is in the law of the LORD,
and on his law they meditate day and night.
3 They are like trees
planted by streams of water,
which yield their fruit in its season,
and their leaves do not wither.
In all that they do, they prosper.

4 The wicked are not so,
but are like chaff that the wind drives away.
5 Therefore the wicked will not stand in the judgment,
nor sinners in the congregation of the righteous;
6 for the LORD watches over the way of the righteous,
but the way of the wicked will perish.

## Psalm 2

1 Why do the nations conspire,
and the peoples plot in vain?
2 The kings of the earth set themselves,
and the rulers take counsel together,
against the LORD and his anointed, saying,
3 "Let us burst their bonds asunder,
and cast their cords from us."

4 He who sits in the heavens laughs;
the LORD has them in derision.
5 Then he will speak to them in his wrath,
and terrify them in his fury, saying,
6 "I have set my king on Zion, my holy hill."

7 I will tell of the decree of the LORD:
He said to me, "You are my son;
today I have begotten you.
8 Ask of me, and I will make the nations your heritage,
and the ends of the earth your possession.
9 You shall break them with a rod of iron,
and dash them in pieces like a potter's vessel."

10 Now therefore, O kings, be wise;
be warned, O rulers of the earth.
11 Serve the LORD with fear,
with trembling 12kiss his feet,[a]

*a* Cn: Meaning of Heb of verses 11b and 12a is uncertain

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**Ps 1: The contrasting fate of the righteous and the wicked** (a wisdom psalm). Compare Jer 17.5–8. **1–3**: The prosperity of the righteous. **1**: *Happy* is the conventional translation of a Hebrew expression meaning literally "the happinesses of." **2**: Compare Ps 119. **4–6**: The disastrous end of the wicked. **4**: In threshing, the crushed sheaves were tossed into the air, where the wind blew away the lighter *chaff*.

**Ps 2: The LORD gives universal dominion to his king** (a royal psalm, composed for a coronation). **1–3**: Israel's subject peoples plot rebellion against the new king. **2**: The word *anointed* in Hebrew is literally "messiah," one of the titles of an Israelite king; after the extinction of the Hebrew monarchy, this became a name for the ideal king of a future, hoped-for restoration, and the psalm was reinterpreted accordingly (compare Acts 4.25–29).

**2.4–9**: The newly-enthroned king quotes God's promise of universal rule. **7**: *You are my son . . . begotten you*, a formula of adoption whereby the king became God's son (compare 2 Sam 7.14; Ps 89.26–27; also Acts 13.33). **10–12**: Rebellious rulers are warned to submit.

or he will be angry, and you will perish in the way;
for his wrath is quickly kindled.

Happy are all who take refuge in him.

## Psalm 3

*A Psalm of David, when he fled from his son Absalom.*

1 O LORD, how many are my foes!
Many are rising against me;
2 many are saying to me,
"There is no help for you[b] in God." *Selah*

3 But you, O LORD, are a shield around me,
my glory, and the one who lifts up my head.
4 I cry aloud to the LORD,
and he answers me from his holy hill. *Selah*

5 I lie down and sleep;
I wake again, for the LORD sustains me.
6 I am not afraid of ten thousands of people
who have set themselves against me all around.

7 Rise up, O LORD!
Deliver me, O my God!
For you strike all my enemies on the cheek;
you break the teeth of the wicked.

8 Deliverance belongs to the LORD;
may your blessing be on your people! *Selah*

## Psalm 4

*To the leader: with stringed instruments. A Psalm of David.*

1 Answer me when I call, O God of my right!
You gave me room when I was in distress.
Be gracious to me, and hear my prayer.

2 How long, you people, shall my honor suffer shame?
How long will you love vain words, and seek after lies? *Selah*
3 But know that the LORD has set apart the faithful for himself;
the LORD hears when I call to him.

4 When you are disturbed,[c] do not sin;
ponder it on your beds, and be silent. *Selah*
5 Offer right sacrifices,
and put your trust in the LORD.

6 There are many who say, "O that we might see some good!
Let the light of your face shine on us, O LORD!"
7 You have put gladness in my heart more than when their grain and wine abound.

*b* Syr: Heb *him* *c* Or *are angry*

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**Ps 3: Prayer for deliverance from personal enemies** (a lament). **1–2**: The psalmist's complaint. **2**: *Selah* is a liturgical direction; it may indicate that there should be an instrumental interlude at this point in the singing of the psalm. **3–4**: Expression of trust, a regular element in psalms which are laments. **5–6**: It is perhaps after having spent the night in the temple that the psalmist receives assurance that the LORD's attitude is still favorable. **7–8**: Concluding prayer for the psalmist and the nation.

**Ps 4: Prayer for deliverance from personal enemies** (a lament). **1**: Cry for help. **2–4**: A rebuke for those who falsely accuse the psalmist of wrong-doing. The charge is probably a formal accusation to which the accused replies by a public declaration of innocence (compare 26.4–7). **2, 4**: *Selah*, see 3.2 n. **5–8**: The accused is assured of the LORD's help. The ceremony in which this psalm was used evidently included sacrifice (v. 5) and possibly spending the night in the temple (v. 8; compare 3.5).

8 I will both lie down and sleep in peace;
for you alone, O LORD, make me lie down in safety.

## Psalm 5

*To the leader: for the flutes.*
*A Psalm of David.*

1 Give ear to my words, O LORD;
give heed to my sighing.
2 Listen to the sound of my cry,
my King and my God,
for to you I pray.
3 O LORD, in the morning you hear my voice;
in the morning I plead my case to you, and watch.

4 For you are not a God who delights in wickedness;
evil will not sojourn with you.
5 The boastful will not stand before your eyes;
you hate all evildoers.
6 You destroy those who speak lies;
the LORD abhors the bloodthirsty and deceitful.

7 But I, through the abundance of your steadfast love,
will enter your house,
I will bow down toward your holy temple
in awe of you.
8 Lead me, O LORD, in your righteousness
because of my enemies;
make your way straight before me.

9 For there is no truth in their mouths;
their hearts are destruction;
their throats are open graves;
they flatter with their tongues.
10 Make them bear their guilt, O God;
let them fall by their own counsels;
because of their many transgressions cast them out,
for they have rebelled against you.

11 But let all who take refuge in you rejoice;
let them ever sing for joy.
Spread your protection over them,
so that those who love your name may exult in you.
12 For you bless the righteous, O LORD;
you cover them with favor as with a shield.

## Psalm 6

*To the leader: with stringed instruments;*
*according to The Sheminith.*
*A Psalm of David.*

1 O LORD, do not rebuke me in your anger,
or discipline me in your wrath.
2 Be gracious to me, O LORD, for I am languishing;
O LORD, heal me, for my bones are shaking with terror.
3 My soul also is struck with terror,
while you, O LORD—how long?

4 Turn, O LORD, save my life;
deliver me for the sake of your steadfast love.
5 For in death there is no remembrance of you;

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**Ps 5: Prayer for deliverance from personal enemies** (a lament). **1–2**: Cry for help. **3–7**: Expression of trust (compare 3.3–4). **3**: *In the morning . . . I plead my case to you* probably refers to a ceremonial plea at the end of a night's vigil (compare 3.5; 4.8).
**5.8–12**: Concluding prayer.
**5.9–10**: See 4.2–4 n.

**Ps 6: Prayer for healing from severe illness** (a lament). In the church liturgy this is the first of seven Penitential Psalms (6; 32; 38; 51; 102; 130; 143). **1–5**: Cry for help. **5**: *Sheol*, the place of the dead, where people retain only the faintest semblance of life (compare 88.5–6; Job 3.13–19; see Gen 37.35 n.).

in Sheol who can give you praise?

6 I am weary with my moaning;
every night I flood my bed with tears;
I drench my couch with my weeping.
7 My eyes waste away because of grief;
they grow weak because of all my foes.

8 Depart from me, all you workers of evil,
for the LORD has heard the sound of my weeping.
9 The LORD has heard my supplication;
the LORD accepts my prayer.
10 All my enemies shall be ashamed and struck with terror;
they shall turn back, and in a moment be put to shame.

## Psalm 7

*A Shiggaion of David, which he sang to the LORD concerning Cush, a Benjaminite.*

1 O LORD my God, in you I take refuge;
save me from all my pursuers, and deliver me,
2 or like a lion they will tear me apart;
they will drag me away, with no one to rescue.

3 O LORD my God, if I have done this,
if there is wrong in my hands,
4 if I have repaid my ally with harm or plundered my foe without cause,
5 then let the enemy pursue and overtake me,
trample my life to the ground,
and lay my soul in the dust. *Selah*

6 Rise up, O LORD, in your anger;
lift yourself up against the fury of my enemies;
awake, O my God;[d] you have appointed a judgment.
7 Let the assembly of the peoples be gathered around you,
and over it take your seat[e] on high.
8 The LORD judges the peoples;
judge me, O LORD, according to my righteousness
and according to the integrity that is in me.

9 O let the evil of the wicked come to an end,
but establish the righteous,
you who test the minds and hearts,
O righteous God.
10 God is my shield,
who saves the upright in heart.
11 God is a righteous judge,
and a God who has indignation every day.

12 If one does not repent, God[f] will whet his sword;
he has bent and strung his bow;
13 he has prepared his deadly weapons,

*d* Or *awake for me* *e* Cn: Heb *return*
*f* Heb *he*

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**6.6–7**: The psalmist's weakened condition. **8–10**: The petitioner receives assurance that the prayer has been heard. **8**: The psalmist puts the blame for the illness on enemies, perhaps believing they have uttered a curse (compare Ps 102.8).

**Ps 7**: **Prayer for deliverance from personal enemies** (a lament). **1–2**: Cry for help. **3–5**: Protestation of innocence (see 4.2–4 n.). **3**: *This,* the specific crime of which the psalmist was accused. **5**: *Selah,* see 3.2 n.

**7.6–9**: Prayer for God's intervention in the psalmist's trial. **10–16**: Expression of trust in God's righteous dealing (compare 3.3–4). **17**: The psalmist promises to give formal thanks to God, probably by offering a thanksgiving sacrifice (compare 66.13–15).

making his arrows fiery shafts.
14 See how they conceive evil,
and are pregnant with mischief,
and bring forth lies.
15 They make a pit, digging it out,
and fall into the hole that they
have made.
16 Their mischief returns upon their
own heads,
and on their own heads their
violence descends.

17 I will give to the LORD the thanks
due to his righteousness,
and sing praise to the name of
the LORD, the Most High.

## Psalm 8

*To the leader: according to The Gittith.*
*A Psalm of David.*

1 O LORD, our Sovereign,
how majestic is your name in all
the earth!

You have set your glory above the
heavens.
2 Out of the mouths of babes and
infants
you have founded a bulwark
because of your foes,
to silence the enemy and the
avenger.

3 When I look at your heavens, the
work of your fingers,
the moon and the stars that you
have established;
4 what are human beings that you
are mindful of them,
mortals[g] that you care for
them?

5 Yet you have made them a little
lower than God,[h]
and crowned them with glory
and honor.
6 You have given them dominion
over the works of your
hands;
you have put all things under
their feet,
7 all sheep and oxen,
and also the beasts of the field,
8 the birds of the air, and the fish of
the sea,
whatever passes along the paths
of the seas.

9 O LORD, our Sovereign,
how majestic is your name in all
the earth!

## Psalm 9

*To the leader: according to Muth-labben.*
*A Psalm of David.*

1 I will give thanks to the LORD
with my whole heart;
I will tell of all your wonderful
deeds.
2 I will be glad and exult in you;
I will sing praise to your name,
O Most High.

3 When my enemies turned back,

*g* Heb *ben adam*, lit. *son of man* *h* Or *than the divine beings* or *angels*: Heb *elohim*

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**Ps 8: Hymn celebrating God's glory and the God-given dignity of human beings. 1–4:** The glory of God as manifest in the night sky and in the songs of children. **4:** See 144.3–4; Job 7.17–18 n. *Mortals,* literally "son of man." See note *g*. In the New Testament, this is taken to be a title of the Messiah (see, for example, Heb 2.5–8; Mt 10.23).

**8.5–8:** God has given human beings a share in his own dignity by conferring on them dominion over the rest of creation (Gen 1.26). **9:** The opening verse repeated as a refrain.

**Pss 9–10: Prayer for deliverance from personal enemies** (a lament). This composition, which is printed as a single psalm in the Septuagint, is constructed on the acrostic principle, every second verse beginning with a different successive letter of the Hebrew alphabet, a circumstance which helps to account for the seeming lack of logical sequence. **1–2:** A vow in anticipation of deliverance (see 7.17 n.). **3–12:** Expression of confidence, based on God's previous just dealings (compare 3.3–4).

they stumbled and perished
before you.
4 For you have maintained my just
cause;
you have sat on the throne
giving righteous judgment.

5 You have rebuked the nations,
you have destroyed the
wicked;
you have blotted out their name
forever and ever.
6 The enemies have vanished in
everlasting ruins;
their cities you have rooted out;
the very memory of them has
perished.

7 But the LORD sits enthroned
forever,
he has established his throne for
judgment.
8 He judges the world with
righteousness;
he judges the peoples with
equity.

9 The LORD is a stronghold for the
oppressed,
a stronghold in times of trouble.
10 And those who know your name
put their trust in you,
for you, O LORD, have not
forsaken those who seek
you.

11 Sing praises to the LORD, who
dwells in Zion.
Declare his deeds among the
peoples.
12 For he who avenges blood is
mindful of them;
he does not forget the cry of the
afflicted.

13 Be gracious to me, O LORD.
See what I suffer from those
who hate me;
you are the one who lifts me up
from the gates of death,
14 so that I may recount all your
praises,
and, in the gates of daughter
Zion,
rejoice in your deliverance.

15 The nations have sunk in the pit
that they made;
in the net that they hid has their
own foot been caught.
16 The LORD has made himself
known, he has executed
judgment;
the wicked are snared in the
work of their own hands.
*Higgaion. Selah*

17 The wicked shall depart to Sheol,
all the nations that forget God.

18 For the needy shall not always be
forgotten,
nor the hope of the poor perish
forever.

19 Rise up, O LORD! Do not let
mortals prevail;
let the nations be judged before
you.
20 Put them in fear, O LORD;
let the nations know that they
are only human. *Selah*

## Psalm 10

1 Why, O LORD, do you stand far
off?
Why do you hide yourself in
times of trouble?

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**9.13–14**: The psalmist's situation. **15–18**: Renewed expression of confidence. **15**: *The nations,* the psalmist's enemies. **16**: The meaning of *Higgaion* is unknown. *Selah,* see 3.2 n. **17**: *Sheol,* see 6.5 n.

**9.19–10.15**: Prayer that God may intervene against the wicked. **10.3–11**: The greedy, haughty, irreligious, and tyrannical spirit of the psalmist's enemies. **4**: They are not atheists, but they deny that God is concerned with moral retribution (compare v. 11 and 94.7). **16–18**: Concluding expression of confidence.

2 In arrogance the wicked persecute the poor—
let them be caught in the schemes they have devised.

3 For the wicked boast of the desires of their heart,
those greedy for gain curse and renounce the LORD.
4 In the pride of their countenance the wicked say, "God will not seek it out";
all their thoughts are, "There is no God."

5 Their ways prosper at all times;
your judgments are on high, out of their sight;
as for their foes, they scoff at them.
6 They think in their heart, "We shall not be moved;
throughout all generations we shall not meet adversity."

7 Their mouths are filled with cursing and deceit and oppression;
under their tongues are mischief and iniquity.
8 They sit in ambush in the villages;
in hiding places they murder the innocent.

Their eyes stealthily watch for the helpless;
9 they lurk in secret like a lion in its covert;
they lurk that they may seize the poor;
they seize the poor and drag them off in their net.

10 They stoop, they crouch,
and the helpless fall by their might.
11 They think in their heart, "God has forgotten,
he has hidden his face, he will never see it."

12 Rise up, O LORD; O God, lift up your hand;
do not forget the oppressed.
13 Why do the wicked renounce God,
and say in their hearts, "You will not call us to account"?

14 But you do see! Indeed you note trouble and grief,
that you may take it into your hands;
the helpless commit themselves to you;
you have been the helper of the orphan.

15 Break the arm of the wicked and evildoers;
seek out their wickedness until you find none.
16 The LORD is king forever and ever;
the nations shall perish from his land.

17 O LORD, you will hear the desire of the meek;
you will strengthen their heart, you will incline your ear
18 to do justice for the orphan and the oppressed,
so that those from earth may strike terror no more.[i]

## Psalm 11

*To the leader. Of David.*

1 In the LORD I take refuge; how can you say to me,
"Flee like a bird to the mountains;[j]

*i* Meaning of Heb uncertain *j* Gk Syr Jerome Tg: Heb *flee to your mountain, O bird*

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**Ps 11: Confidence in God's concern for justice.** This type of psalm (the song of trust) probably developed as an expansion of the expression of trust that is a common feature of the laments (see 3.3–4 n.; compare 5.3–7; 7.10–16; 9.3–12). **1–3**: The psalmist rebukes

2 for look, the wicked bend the bow,
they have fitted their arrow to the string,
to shoot in the dark at the upright in heart.
3 If the foundations are destroyed,
what can the righteous do?"

4 The LORD is in his holy temple;
the LORD's throne is in heaven.
His eyes behold, his gaze examines humankind.
5 The LORD tests the righteous and the wicked,
and his soul hates the lover of violence.
6 On the wicked he will rain coals of fire and sulfur;
a scorching wind shall be the portion of their cup.
7 For the LORD is righteous;
he loves righteous deeds;
the upright shall behold his face.

## Psalm 12

*To the leader: according to The Sheminith. A Psalm of David.*

1 Help, O LORD, for there is no longer anyone who is godly;
the faithful have disappeared from humankind.
2 They utter lies to each other;
with flattering lips and a double heart they speak.

3 May the LORD cut off all flattering lips,
the tongue that makes great boasts,
4 those who say, "With our tongues we will prevail;
our lips are our own—who is our master?"

5 "Because the poor are despoiled, because the needy groan,
I will now rise up," says the LORD;
"I will place them in the safety for which they long."
6 The promises of the LORD are promises that are pure,
silver refined in a furnace on the ground,
purified seven times.

7 You, O LORD, will protect us;
you will guard us from this generation forever.
8 On every side the wicked prowl,
as vileness is exalted among humankind.

## Psalm 13

*To the leader. A Psalm of David.*

1 How long, O LORD? Will you forget me forever?
How long will you hide your face from me?
2 How long must I bear pain[k] in my soul,
and have sorrow in my heart all day long?
How long shall my enemy be exalted over me?

3 Consider and answer me, O LORD my God!

*k* Syr: Heb *hold counsels*

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those who say that only flight can provide safety from one's enemies. **4–7**: One should stand one's ground and depend on God for vindication. **6**: *Cup,* Isa 51.17; see Lk 22.42.

**Ps 12: Prayer for deliverance from personal enemies** (a lament). **1–4**: Cry for help. The psalmist's trials are characteristic of the faithlessness of the times. **5**: Perhaps spoken by a priest or temple prophet as a formal act of assurance to the suppliant. **6–8**: The choir (which is perhaps implied in the use of *us*) commends reliance on the promise just made and prays that it may soon be carried out.

**Ps 13: Prayer for deliverance from personal enemies** (a lament). **1–2**: The psalmist's complaint is given special emotional force by the four-fold "How long?" **3–4**: Prayer for help (see 4.2–4 n.). *Give light to my*

Give light to my eyes, or I will
sleep the sleep of death,
4 and my enemy will say, "I have
prevailed";
my foes will rejoice because I
am shaken.

5 But I trusted in your steadfast
love;
my heart shall rejoice in your
salvation.
6 I will sing to the LORD,
because he has dealt bountifully
with me.

## Psalm 14

*To the leader. Of David.*

1 Fools say in their hearts, "There is
no God."
They are corrupt, they do
abominable deeds;
there is no one who does good.

2 The LORD looks down from
heaven on humankind
to see if there are any who are
wise,
who seek after God.

3 They have all gone astray, they
are all alike perverse;
there is no one who does good,
no, not one.

4 Have they no knowledge, all the
evildoers
who eat up my people as they
eat bread,
and do not call upon the LORD?
5 There they shall be in great terror,
for God is with the company of
the righteous.
6 You would confound the plans of
the poor,
but the LORD is their refuge.

7 O that deliverance for Israel would
come from Zion!
When the LORD restores the
fortunes of his people,
Jacob will rejoice; Israel will be
glad.

## Psalm 15

*A Psalm of David.*

1 O LORD, who may abide in your
tent?
Who may dwell on your holy
hill?

2 Those who walk blamelessly, and
do what is right,
and speak the truth from their
heart;
3 who do not slander with their
tongue,
and do no evil to their friends,
nor take up a reproach against
their neighbors;
4 in whose eyes the wicked are
despised,
but who honor those who fear
the LORD;
who stand by their oath even to
their hurt;
5 who do not lend money at
interest,

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*eyes,* compare 38.10. **5**: Expression of trust (compare 3.3–4). **6**: The vow (see 7.17 n.).

**Ps 14: Condemnation of a cynical and unrighteous age.** This psalm (which is almost identical with Ps 53) seems to be a variation on the typical lament; the psalmist generalizes personal troubles as characteristic of an evil generation (compare 12.1–4). **1–3**: The corruption of the age. **1**: *Fools,* not silly people, but those who are utterly corrupt in their moral character (compare 2 Sam 13.13; Prov 10.23). *There is no God,* see 10.4 n. **4–6**: A threat to the evil-doers, having the force of a curse. *Eat up my people,* compare Mic 3.2–3. **7**: A yearning for better times.

**Ps 15: A liturgy for admission to the temple.** **1**: The question: Who shall be admitted to the worshiping congregation? **2–5**: The answer: Only those who have the requisite moral qualities. **5**: The prohibition of *interest* (Ex 22.25; Lev 25.35–37) has reference to charitable loans made for the relief of distress rather than to the purely business type of loan which became common in a later commercial age.

and do not take a bribe against the innocent.

Those who do these things shall never be moved.

## Psalm 16

*A Miktam of David.*

1 Protect me, O God, for in you I take refuge.
2 I say to the LORD, "You are my Lord;
I have no good apart from you."[l]

3 As for the holy ones in the land, they are the noble,
in whom is all my delight.

4 Those who choose another god multiply their sorrows;[m]
their drink offerings of blood I will not pour out
or take their names upon my lips.

5 The LORD is my chosen portion and my cup;
you hold my lot.
6 The boundary lines have fallen for me in pleasant places;
I have a goodly heritage.

7 I bless the LORD who gives me counsel;
in the night also my heart instructs me.
8 I keep the LORD always before me;
because he is at my right hand, I shall not be moved.

9 Therefore my heart is glad, and my soul rejoices;
my body also rests secure.
10 For you do not give me up to Sheol,
or let your faithful one see the Pit.

11 You show me the path of life.
In your presence there is fullness of joy;
in your right hand are pleasures forevermore.

## Psalm 17

*A Prayer of David.*

1 Hear a just cause, O LORD; attend to my cry;
give ear to my prayer from lips free of deceit.
2 From you let my vindication come;
let your eyes see the right.

3 If you try my heart, if you visit me by night,
if you test me, you will find no wickedness in me;
my mouth does not transgress.
4 As for what others do, by the word of your lips
I have avoided the ways of the violent.
5 My steps have held fast to your paths;
my feet have not slipped.

6 I call upon you, for you will answer me, O God;
incline your ear to me, hear my words.

*l* Jerome Tg: Meaning of Heb uncertain
*m* Cn: Meaning of Heb uncertain

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**Ps 16: An act of personal faith in God's power to save** (a song of trust; see Ps 11 n.). **1**: Prayer for deliverance from trouble. **2–8**: The psalmist makes an appeal to God based upon past devotion to God and to the community of the faithful.

**16.9–11**: The psalmist has complete confidence that God will not permit a devoted worshiper to perish. **10**: *Sheol,* see 6.5 n.; *the Pit* is a synonym. **11**: The psalmist will survive the ordeal and through God's help enjoy life's pleasures again.

**Ps 17: Prayer for deliverance from personal enemies** (a lament). **1**: Cry for vindication against false accusers (compare vv. 9–12). **3–5**: Protestation of innocence (see

7 Wondrously show your steadfast love,
O savior of those who seek refuge
from their adversaries at your right hand.

8 Guard me as the apple of the eye;
hide me in the shadow of your wings,
9 from the wicked who despoil me,
my deadly enemies who surround me.
10 They close their hearts to pity;
with their mouths they speak arrogantly.
11 They track me down;[n] now they surround me;
they set their eyes to cast me to the ground.
12 They are like a lion eager to tear,
like a young lion lurking in ambush.

13 Rise up, O LORD, confront them, overthrow them!
By your sword deliver my life from the wicked,
14 from mortals—by your hand, O LORD—
from mortals whose portion in life is in this world.
May their bellies be filled with what you have stored up for them;
may their children have more than enough;
may they leave something over to their little ones.

15 As for me, I shall behold your face in righteousness;
when I awake I shall be satisfied, beholding your likeness.

## Psalm 18

*To the leader. A Psalm of David the servant of the LORD, who addressed the words of this song to the LORD on the day when the LORD delivered him from the hand of all his enemies, and from the hand of Saul. He said:*

1 I love you, O LORD, my strength.
2 The LORD is my rock, my fortress, and my deliverer,
my God, my rock in whom I take refuge,
my shield, and the horn of my salvation, my stronghold.
3 I call upon the LORD, who is worthy to be praised,
so I shall be saved from my enemies.

4 The cords of death encompassed me;
the torrents of perdition assailed me;
5 the cords of Sheol entangled me;
the snares of death confronted me.

6 In my distress I called upon the LORD;
to my God I cried for help.
From his temple he heard my voice,
and my cry to him reached his ears.

7 Then the earth reeled and rocked;

*n* One Ms Compare Syr: MT *Our steps*

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4.2–4 n.). **3:** *By night,* see 3.5–6 n. **6–14:** The psalmist's prayer renewed.

**17.8:** *Apple of the eye,* the pupil, the most precious part (Zech 2.8). **10–12:** Description of the accusers. **15:** Expression of confidence (see 3.3–4 n.). *When I awake,* compare v. 3.

**Ps 18: A king gives thanks for a victory in battle** (a royal thanksgiving). This psalm is also found with minor variations in 2 Sam ch 22. **1–3:** Confession of faith in God's readiness to help. **4–6:** Metaphorical description of the psalmist's difficulties; for the actual situation see vv. 37–45. Narration of the troubles from which the worshiper has been saved is a regular feature of the thanksgiving psalms.

**18.7–19:** God's intervention in the battle. The imagery associates the LORD's appearance with the phenomena of a thunderstorm

the foundations also of the mountains trembled
and quaked, because he was angry.
8 Smoke went up from his nostrils,
and devouring fire from his mouth;
glowing coals flamed forth from him.
9 He bowed the heavens, and came down;
thick darkness was under his feet.
10 He rode on a cherub, and flew;
he came swiftly upon the wings of the wind.
11 He made darkness his covering around him,
his canopy thick clouds dark with water.
12 Out of the brightness before him there broke through his clouds hailstones and coals of fire.
13 The LORD also thundered in the heavens,
and the Most High uttered his voice.[o]
14 And he sent out his arrows, and scattered them;
he flashed forth lightnings, and routed them.
15 Then the channels of the sea were seen,
and the foundations of the world were laid bare
at your rebuke, O LORD,
at the blast of the breath of your nostrils.

16 He reached down from on high, he took me;
he drew me out of mighty waters.
17 He delivered me from my strong enemy,
and from those who hated me;
for they were too mighty for me.
18 They confronted me in the day of my calamity;
but the LORD was my support.
19 He brought me out into a broad place;
he delivered me, because he delighted in me.

20 The LORD rewarded me according to my righteousness;
according to the cleanness of my hands he recompensed me.
21 For I have kept the ways of the LORD,
and have not wickedly departed from my God.
22 For all his ordinances were before me,
and his statutes I did not put away from me.
23 I was blameless before him,
and I kept myself from guilt.
24 Therefore the LORD has recompensed me according to my righteousness,
according to the cleanness of my hands in his sight.

25 With the loyal you show yourself loyal;
with the blameless you show yourself blameless;
26 with the pure you show yourself pure;
and with the crooked you show yourself perverse.
27 For you deliver a humble people,
but the haughty eyes you bring down.
28 It is you who light my lamp;

*o* Gk See 2 Sam 22.14: Heb adds *hailstones and coals of fire*

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(compare Judg 5.4–5; Ps 29.3–9). **8:** *Glowing coals,* the lightning. **10:** *Cherub,* probably a personification of the storm cloud (see Ezek 1.5 n.; Pss 68.33; 104.3). **13:** *His voice,* the thunder, as in Ps 29. **15:** *The breath of your nostrils,* the storm wind.

**18.20–27:** The king attributes the LORD's favor toward him to his own previous loyalty to God and his keeping the commandments. **28–30:** An exuberant outburst of confidence in what he can accomplish with God's help.

the LORD, my God, lights up my darkness.
29 By you I can crush a troop,
and by my God I can leap over a wall.
30 This God—his way is perfect;
the promise of the LORD proves true;
he is a shield for all who take refuge in him.

31 For who is God except the LORD?
And who is a rock besides our God?—
32 the God who girded me with strength,
and made my way safe.
33 He made my feet like the feet of a deer,
and set me secure on the heights.
34 He trains my hands for war,
so that my arms can bend a bow of bronze.
35 You have given me the shield of your salvation,
and your right hand has supported me;
your help[p] has made me great.
36 You gave me a wide place for my steps under me,
and my feet did not slip.
37 I pursued my enemies and overtook them;
and did not turn back until they were consumed.
38 I struck them down, so that they were not able to rise;
they fell under my feet.
39 For you girded me with strength for the battle;
you made my assailants sink under me.
40 You made my enemies turn their backs to me,
and those who hated me I destroyed.
41 They cried for help, but there was no one to save them;
they cried to the LORD, but he did not answer them.
42 I beat them fine, like dust before the wind;
I cast them out like the mire of the streets.

43 You delivered me from strife with the peoples;[q]
you made me head of the nations;
people whom I had not known served me.
44 As soon as they heard of me they obeyed me;
foreigners came cringing to me.
45 Foreigners lost heart,
and came trembling out of their strongholds.

46 The LORD lives! Blessed be my rock,
and exalted be the God of my salvation,
47 the God who gave me vengeance
and subdued peoples under me;
48 who delivered me from my enemies;
indeed, you exalted me above my adversaries;
you delivered me from the violent.

49 For this I will extol you, O LORD, among the nations,
and sing praises to your name.
50 Great triumphs he gives to his king,
and shows steadfast love to his anointed,
to David and his descendants forever.

*p* Or *gentleness* *q* Gk Tg: Heb *people*

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**18.31–42**: A more prosaic account of the battle and the subsequent victory (compare vv. 17–19).

**18.43–45**: The king became ruler of an empire at peace. **46–50**: Concluding hymn of praise and thanksgiving. **50**: This verse establishes the identity of the psalmist as a king of the Davidic dynasty. *His anointed,* see Ps 2.2 n. At least the nucleus of this psalm may go back to David.

## Psalm 19

*To the leader. A Psalm of David.*

1 The heavens are telling the glory of God;
and the firmament[r] proclaims his handiwork.
2 Day to day pours forth speech,
and night to night declares knowledge.
3 There is no speech, nor are there words;
their voice is not heard;
4 yet their voice[s] goes out through all the earth,
and their words to the end of the world.

In the heavens[t] he has set a tent for the sun,
5 which comes out like a bridegroom from his wedding canopy,
and like a strong man runs its course with joy.
6 Its rising is from the end of the heavens,
and its circuit to the end of them;
and nothing is hid from its heat.

7 The law of the LORD is perfect, reviving the soul;
the decrees of the LORD are sure, making wise the simple;
8 the precepts of the LORD are right, rejoicing the heart;
the commandment of the LORD is clear, enlightening the eyes;
9 the fear of the LORD is pure, enduring forever;
the ordinances of the LORD are true
and righteous altogether.
10 More to be desired are they than gold,
even much fine gold;
sweeter also than honey,
and drippings of the honeycomb.

11 Moreover by them is your servant warned;
in keeping them there is great reward.
12 But who can detect their errors?
Clear me from hidden faults.
13 Keep back your servant also from the insolent;[u]
do not let them have dominion over me.
Then I shall be blameless,
and innocent of great transgression.

14 Let the words of my mouth and the meditation of my heart
be acceptable to you,
O LORD, my rock and my redeemer.

## Psalm 20

*To the leader. A Psalm of David.*

1 The LORD answer you in the day of trouble!

*r* Or *dome* *s* Gk Jerome Compare Syr: Heb *line* *t* Heb *In them* *u* Or *from proud thoughts*

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**Ps 19: Hymn to God as creator of nature and giver of the law. 1–6**: The glory of God is manifested in the phenomena of the heavens and particularly in the might of the sun. **1–4a**: The sky and the successive days and nights are personified as members of a choir ceaselessly singing God's praises. **3**: *There is no speech . . .* i.e. they cannot be heard by human ears. **4b–6**: The skies provide a track along which the sun, like an athlete, runs its daily course.

**19.7–14**: Probably a later writer added these verses praising the revelation of God's will in the Mosaic law in order to counterbalance what seemed to him the almost pagan emphasis upon the revelation of God in nature (vv. 1–6). **7–9**: Six synonyms are used to describe the law (compare Ps 119). **9**: *Fear,* many scholars emend to "word" (see 119.11). **10**: Observance of the law is a joy, not a burden. **12–13**: The poet asks to be delivered from either accidental or deliberate violations of the commandments. **14**: A prayer that this hymn may be pleasing to God.

The name of the God of Jacob
protect you!
2 May he send you help from the
sanctuary,
and give you support from
Zion.
3 May he remember all your
offerings,
and regard with favor your
burnt sacrifices. *Selah*

4 May he grant you your heart's
desire,
and fulfill all your plans.
5 May we shout for joy over your
victory,
and in the name of our God set
up our banners.
May the LORD fulfill all your
petitions.

6 Now I know that the LORD will
help his anointed;
he will answer him from his
holy heaven
with mighty victories by his
right hand.
7 Some take pride in chariots, and
some in horses,
but our pride is in the name of
the LORD our God.
8 They will collapse and fall,
but we shall rise and stand
upright.

9 Give victory to the king, O LORD;
answer us when we call.[v]

## Psalm 21

*To the leader. A Psalm of David.*

1 In your strength the king rejoices,
O LORD,
and in your help how greatly he
exults!
2 You have given him his heart's
desire,
and have not withheld the
request of his lips. *Selah*
3 For you meet him with rich
blessings;
you set a crown of fine gold on
his head.
4 He asked you for life; you gave it
to him—
length of days forever and ever.
5 His glory is great through your
help;
splendor and majesty you
bestow on him.
6 You bestow on him blessings
forever;
you make him glad with the joy
of your presence.
7 For the king trusts in the LORD,
and through the steadfast love
of the Most High he shall
not be moved.

8 Your hand will find out all your
enemies;
your right hand will find out
those who hate you.
9 You will make them like a fiery
furnace
when you appear.
The LORD will swallow them up
in his wrath,
and fire will consume them.
10 You will destroy their offspring
from the earth,
and their children from among
humankind.

*v* Gk: Heb *give victory, O LORD; let the King answer us when we call*

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**Ps 20: Prayer for the king's victory in battle.** This psalm was probably composed to accompany a sacrifice offered before the battle was begun (v. 3; compare 1 Sam 13.8–15a). **1–5:** The prayer sung at the altar, or while approaching it. **3:** *Selah,* see 3.2 n. **5:** Between v. 5 and v. 6 some liturgical action evidently occurred, probably the proclamation of an oracle of victory by a priest or temple prophet (see 12.5 n.; compare also 21.8–12), which then inspired the expression of confidence in vv. 6–8. **6:** *Anointed,* see 2.2 n. **9:** Concluding exclamatory prayer.

**Ps 21: Thanksgiving after the king's victory in battle.** This psalm is intentionally paired with Ps 20. **1–7:** God is praised for having answered the king's prayer. **2:** *Selah,* see 3.2 n. **8–12:** An oracle promising a succes-

11 If they plan evil against you,
if they devise mischief, they will not succeed.
12 For you will put them to flight;
you will aim at their faces with your bows.

13 Be exalted, O LORD, in your strength!
We will sing and praise your power.

## Psalm 22

*To the leader: according to The Deer of the Dawn. A Psalm of David.*

1 My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?
Why are you so far from helping me, from the words of my groaning?
2 O my God, I cry by day, but you do not answer;
and by night, but find no rest.

3 Yet you are holy,
enthroned on the praises of Israel.
4 In you our ancestors trusted;
they trusted, and you delivered them.
5 To you they cried, and were saved;
in you they trusted, and were not put to shame.

6 But I am a worm, and not human;
scorned by others, and despised by the people.
7 All who see me mock at me;
they make mouths at me, they shake their heads;
8 "Commit your cause to the LORD;
let him deliver—
let him rescue the one in whom he delights!"

9 Yet it was you who took me from the womb;
you kept me safe on my mother's breast.
10 On you I was cast from my birth,
and since my mother bore me you have been my God.
11 Do not be far from me,
for trouble is near
and there is no one to help.

12 Many bulls encircle me,
strong bulls of Bashan surround me;
13 they open wide their mouths at me,
like a ravening and roaring lion.

14 I am poured out like water,
and all my bones are out of joint;
my heart is like wax;
it is melted within my breast;
15 my mouth[w] is dried up like a potsherd,
and my tongue sticks to my jaws;
you lay me in the dust of death.

16 For dogs are all around me;
a company of evildoers encircles me.

*w* Cn: Heb *strength*

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sion of victories, addressed to the king by a priest or temple prophet (compare 20.5 n.). **13**: Concluding exclamation of praise.

**Ps 22**: **Prayer for deliverance from mortal illness** (a lament). **1–2**: Cry for help. **1**: Quoted by Jesus on the cross (Mk 15.34). **3**: God has helped his people in time past. **6–8**: The psalmist's misery is aggravated by the mockery of those who regard illness as proof of God's displeasure.

**22.9–11**: God's help in former times inspires the psalmist to pray that it may continue in the present. **12–18**: Description of the psalmist's condition. **12–13**: The detractors behave like savage animals (see also v. 16, although the meaning of the third line is obscure; and vv. 20–21). *Bulls of Bashan,* Am 4.1.

**22.14–15, 17–18**: A vivid account of the poet's fever and resulting weakness. **16**: *Dogs,* enemies (compare *lion, wild oxen,* v. 21). **18**: The sick one is so nearly dead that neighbors

My hands and feet have
shriveled;[x]
17 I can count all my bones.
They stare and gloat over me;
18 they divide my clothes among
themselves,
and for my clothing they cast
lots.

19 But you, O LORD, do not be far
away!
O my help, come quickly to
my aid!
20 Deliver my soul from the sword,
my life[y] from the power of the
dog!
21 Save me from the mouth of the
lion!

From the horns of the wild oxen
you have rescued[z] me.
22 I will tell of your name to my
brothers and sisters;[a]
in the midst of the congregation
I will praise you:
23 You who fear the LORD, praise
him!
All you offspring of Jacob,
glorify him;
stand in awe of him, all you
offspring of Israel!
24 For he did not despise or abhor
the affliction of the afflicted;
he did not hide his face from me,[b]
but heard when I[c] cried to him.

25 From you comes my praise in the
great congregation;
my vows I will pay before those
who fear him.
26 The poor[d] shall eat and be
satisfied;
those who seek him shall praise
the LORD.
May your hearts live forever!

27 All the ends of the earth shall
remember
and turn to the LORD;
and all the families of the nations
shall worship before him.[e]
28 For dominion belongs to the
LORD,
and he rules over the nations.

29 To him,[f] indeed, shall all who
sleep in[g] the earth bow
down;
before him shall bow all who go
down to the dust,
and I shall live for him.[h]
30 Posterity will serve him;
future generations will be told
about the Lord,
31 and[i] proclaim his deliverance to a
people yet unborn,
saying that he has done it.

## Psalm 23

*A Psalm of David.*

1 The LORD is my shepherd, I shall
not want.
2 He makes me lie down in green
pastures;
he leads me beside still waters;[j]
3 he restores my soul.[k]
He leads me in right paths[l]
for his name's sake.

4 Even though I walk through the
darkest valley,[m]

*x* Meaning of Heb uncertain *y* Heb *my only one* *z* Heb *answered* *a* Or *kindred* *b* Heb *him* *c* Heb *he* *d* Or *afflicted* *e* Gk Syr Jerome: Heb *you* *f* Cn: Heb *They have eaten and* *g* Cn: Heb *all the fat ones* *h* Compare Gk Syr Vg: Heb *and he who cannot keep himself alive* *i* Compare Gk: Heb *it will be told about the Lord to the generation,* 31*they will come and* *j* Heb *waters of rest* *k* Or *life* *l* Or *paths of righteousness* *m* Or *the valley of the shadow of death*

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and relatives have already begun to divide the property. **19–21**: Prayer for healing and for deliverance from slanderers.

**22.22–31**: The psalmist vows, on recovery, to offer a formal thanksgiving *in the midst of the congregation* at the temple (see 7.17 n.). **22**: The vow (compare v. 25). **23–31**: The hymn that will then be sung.

**Ps 23: An expression of confidence in God's protection** (a song of trust; see Ps 11 n.). **1–4**: The LORD is compared to a shepherd. **3**: *Soul* means vitality, the individual-

I fear no evil;
for you are with me;
your rod and your staff—
they comfort me.

5 You prepare a table before me
in the presence of my enemies;
you anoint my head with oil;
my cup overflows.
6 Surely[n] goodness and mercy[o]
shall follow me
all the days of my life,
and I shall dwell in the house of the LORD
my whole life long.[p]

## Psalm 24

*Of David. A Psalm.*

1 The earth is the LORD's and all that is in it,
the world, and those who live in it;
2 for he has founded it on the seas,
and established it on the rivers.

3 Who shall ascend the hill of the LORD?
And who shall stand in his holy place?
4 Those who have clean hands and pure hearts,
who do not lift up their souls to what is false,
and do not swear deceitfully.
5 They will receive blessing from the LORD,
and vindication from the God of their salvation.
6 Such is the company of those who seek him,
who seek the face of the God of Jacob.[q] *Selah*

7 Lift up your heads, O gates!
and be lifted up, O ancient doors!
that the King of glory may come in.
8 Who is the King of glory?
The LORD, strong and mighty,
the LORD, mighty in battle.
9 Lift up your heads, O gates!
and be lifted up, O ancient doors!
that the King of glory may come in.
10 Who is this King of glory?
The LORD of hosts,
he is the King of glory. *Selah*

## Psalm 25

*Of David.*

1 To you, O LORD, I lift up my soul.
2 O my God, in you I trust;
do not let me be put to shame;
do not let my enemies exult over me.

*n* Or *Only* *o* Or *kindness* *p* Heb *for length of days* *q* Gk Syr: Heb *your face, O Jacob*

---

ized principle of life. *Right paths,* literally "paths of rightness." **4**: *Darkest valley:* "shadow of death" is an ancient, but probably fanciful, rendering; compare 44.19; 107.10; Job 3.5; Isa 9.2; etc. where the same Hebrew expression occurs. **5–6**: The LORD is compared to a gracious host. **6**: *Dwell in the house of the LORD* means to worship in the temple (compare 27.4). *My whole life long,* Hebrew, "for length of days."

**Ps 24: A liturgy on entering the sanctuary,** probably used in connection with a procession of the ark. **1–6**: Perhaps sung by a choir within the temple gates. **1–2**: Acknowledgment of the LORD as the creator. **3**: The question: Who shall be admitted to the temple? (compare Ps 15). **4–6**: The answer: Only those who have the requisite moral qualities. **6**: *Selah,* see 3.2 n.

**24.7–10**: The choir outside the gates, presumably accompanied by the ark, now requests to be admitted. **7**: *Heads,* lintels. **8–10**: *The King of glory . . . ,* means the God of Israel, whose presence was associated with the ark (Num 10.35–36).

**Ps 25: Prayer for deliverance from personal enemies** (a lament). In acrostic form (compare Pss 9–10 n.), every successive

3 Do not let those who wait for you
be put to shame;
let them be ashamed who are
wantonly treacherous.

4 Make me to know your ways,
O LORD;
teach me your paths.
5 Lead me in your truth, and teach
me,
for you are the God of my
salvation;
for you I wait all day long.

6 Be mindful of your mercy,
O LORD, and of your
steadfast love,
for they have been from of old.
7 Do not remember the sins of my
youth or my transgressions;
according to your steadfast love
remember me,
for your goodness' sake,
O LORD!

8 Good and upright is the LORD;
therefore he instructs sinners in
the way.
9 He leads the humble in what is
right,
and teaches the humble his way.
10 All the paths of the LORD are
steadfast love and
faithfulness,
for those who keep his covenant
and his decrees.

11 For your name's sake, O LORD,
pardon my guilt, for it is great.
12 Who are they that fear the LORD?
He will teach them the way that
they should choose.
13 They will abide in prosperity,
and their children shall possess
the land.
14 The friendship of the LORD is for
those who fear him,
and he makes his covenant
known to them.
15 My eyes are ever toward the
LORD,
for he will pluck my feet out of
the net.

16 Turn to me and be gracious to
me,
for I am lonely and afflicted.
17 Relieve the troubles of my heart,
and bring me[r] out of my
distress.
18 Consider my affliction and my
trouble,
and forgive all my sins.

19 Consider how many are my foes,
and with what violent hatred
they hate me.
20 O guard my life, and deliver me;
do not let me be put to shame,
for I take refuge in you.
21 May integrity and uprightness
preserve me,
for I wait for you.

22 Redeem Israel, O God,
out of all its troubles.

## Psalm 26

*Of David.*

1 Vindicate me, O LORD,
for I have walked in my
integrity,

*r* Or *The troubles of my heart are enlarged; bring me*

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verse beginning with another letter of the Hebrew alphabet. This artificial pattern accounts for the absence of any clear, logical structure, although the psalm has most of the elements of the typical lament: cry for help (vv. 1–3), the psalmist's situation (vv. 18–19), protestation of present innocence in spite of sins in the past (v. 21, compare 7, 11, 18), expression of trust (vv. 8–15), prayer for vindication (vv. 16–20).

**25.13**: *Possess the land,* see 37.9, 11, 29; compare Deut 11.8–9. **22**: Probably a liturgical addition adapting an individual prayer to congregational use.

**Ps 26: Prayer for deliverance from personal enemies** (a lament). **1–3**: Cry for

and I have trusted in the LORD
without wavering.
2 Prove me, O LORD, and try me;
test my heart and mind.
3 For your steadfast love is before
my eyes,
and I walk in faithfulness to
you.[s]

4 I do not sit with the worthless,
nor do I consort with
hypocrites;
5 I hate the company of evildoers,
and will not sit with the
wicked.

6 I wash my hands in innocence,
and go around your altar,
O LORD,
7 singing aloud a song of
thanksgiving,
and telling all your wondrous
deeds.

8 O LORD, I love the house in
which you dwell,
and the place where your glory
abides.
9 Do not sweep me away with
sinners,
nor my life with the
bloodthirsty,
10 those in whose hands are evil
devices,
and whose right hands are full
of bribes.

11 But as for me, I walk in my
integrity;
redeem me, and be gracious
to me.
12 My foot stands on level ground;
in the great congregation I will
bless the LORD.

*Plea for justice and declaration of righteousness*

## Psalm 27

*Of David.*

1 The LORD is my light and my
salvation;
whom shall I fear?
The LORD is the stronghold[t] of
my life;
of whom shall I be afraid?

2 When evildoers assail me
to devour my flesh—
my adversaries and foes—
they shall stumble and fall.

3 Though an army encamp against
me,
my heart shall not fear;
though war rise up against me,
yet I will be confident.

4 One thing I asked of the LORD,
that will I seek after:
to live in the house of the LORD
all the days of my life,
to behold the beauty of the LORD,
and to inquire in his temple.

5 For he will hide me in his shelter
in the day of trouble;
he will conceal me under the cover
of his tent;
he will set me high on a rock.

6 Now my head is lifted up
above my enemies all around
me,
and I will offer in his tent
sacrifices with shouts of joy;
I will sing and make melody to
the LORD.

7 Hear, O LORD, when I cry aloud,

*s* Or *in your faithfulness* *t* Or *refuge*

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vindication against an unjust charge (compare 1 Kings 8.31–32). **4–7**: Protestation of innocence (compare 4.2–4).

**26.6–7**: The protest is dramatized in a liturgical ceremony. *Wash my hands in innocence,* compare Deut 21.6–8; Ps 51.7. **8–11**: Prayer for help. *Your glory abides,* Isa 4.5; Ezek 43.4–5. **12**: The vow (see 7.17 n.).

**Ps 27: An act of devotion and a prayer for deliverance. 1–6**: Song of trust (see Ps 11 n.). **4**: *Live in the house of the LORD,* see 23.6 n. As with most of the psalms, the author is probably a temple functionary, a Levite. **6**: *Tent,* poetic name for the temple. **7–14**: A lament.

**27.7–9**: Cry for help. **10–12**: The psalm-

be gracious to me and answer me!
8 "Come," my heart says, "seek his face!"
Your face, LORD, do I seek.
9 Do not hide your face from me.

Do not turn your servant away in anger,
you who have been my help.
Do not cast me off, do not forsake me,
O God of my salvation!
10 If my father and mother forsake me,
the LORD will take me up.

11 Teach me your way, O LORD,
and lead me on a level path because of my enemies.
12 Do not give me up to the will of my adversaries,
for false witnesses have risen against me,
and they are breathing out violence.

13 I believe that I shall see the goodness of the LORD
in the land of the living.
14 Wait for the LORD;
be strong, and let your heart take courage;
wait for the LORD!

## Psalm 28

*Of David.*

1 To you, O LORD, I call;
my rock, do not refuse to hear me,
for if you are silent to me,
I shall be like those who go down to the Pit.
2 Hear the voice of my supplication,
as I cry to you for help,
as I lift up my hands
toward your most holy sanctuary.[u]

3 Do not drag me away with the wicked,
with those who are workers of evil,
who speak peace with their neighbors,
while mischief is in their hearts.
4 Repay them according to their work,
and according to the evil of their deeds;
repay them according to the work of their hands;
render them their due reward.
5 Because they do not regard the works of the LORD,
or the work of his hands,
he will break them down and build them up no more.

6 Blessed be the LORD,
for he has heard the sound of my pleadings.
7 The LORD is my strength and my shield;
in him my heart trusts;
so I am helped, and my heart exults,
and with my song I give thanks to him.

8 The LORD is the strength of his people;
he is the saving refuge of his anointed.
9 O save your people, and bless your heritage;

[u] Heb *your innermost sanctuary*

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ist's situation. **13–14**: Expression of confidence. *In the land of the living,* i.e. "during my life."

**Ps 28**: **Prayer for deliverance from personal enemies** (a lament). **1–5**: Cry for vindication (compare 26.1–3). **1**: *The Pit,* i.e. Sheol (see 6.5 n.).

**28.6–7**: After v. 5, a priest or temple prophet probably delivered an oracle of assurance (compare 12.5 n.), to which these verses are the psalmist's grateful response. **8–9**: See 25.22 n. **8**: *Anointed,* see 2.2 n. **9**: *Shepherd,* Isa 40.11.

be their shepherd, and carry
them forever.

## Psalm 29

*A Psalm of David.*

1 Ascribe to the LORD, O heavenly
beings,[v]
ascribe to the LORD glory and
strength.
2 Ascribe to the LORD the glory of
his name;
worship the LORD in holy
splendor.

3 The voice of the LORD is over the
waters;
the God of glory thunders,
the LORD, over mighty waters.
4 The voice of the LORD is
powerful;
the voice of the LORD is full of
majesty.

5 The voice of the LORD breaks the
cedars;
the LORD breaks the cedars of
Lebanon.
6 He makes Lebanon skip like a calf,
and Sirion like a young wild ox.

7 The voice of the LORD flashes
forth flames of fire.
8 The voice of the LORD shakes the
wilderness;
the LORD shakes the wilderness
of Kadesh.

9 The voice of the LORD causes the
oaks to whirl,[w]
and strips the forest bare;
and in his temple all say,
"Glory!"

10 The LORD sits enthroned over the
flood;
the LORD sits enthroned as king
forever.
11 May the LORD give strength to his
people!
May the LORD bless his people
with peace!

## Psalm 30

*A Psalm. A Song at the dedication of the temple. Of David.*

1 I will extol you, O LORD, for you
have drawn me up,
and did not let my foes rejoice
over me.
2 O LORD my God, I cried to you
for help,
and you have healed me.
3 O LORD, you brought up my soul
from Sheol,
restored me to life from among
those gone down to the
Pit.[x]

4 Sing praises to the LORD, O you
his faithful ones,
and give thanks to his holy
name.
5 For his anger is but for a moment;
his favor is for a lifetime.
Weeping may linger for the night,
but joy comes with the
morning.

*v* Heb *sons of gods* *w* Or *causes the deer to calve*
*x* Or *that I should not go down to the Pit*

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**Ps 29: Hymn to the God of the storm. 1–2:** Call to worship. **3–9:** The LORD's manifestation in the thunderstorm. **3:** *The voice of the* LORD, the thunder. *The waters,* the Mediterranean, but with mythological overtones. **5:** *Lebanon,* the principal mountains of Syria. **6:** *Sirion,* Mount Hermon. **7:** *Flames of fire,* the lightning. **8:** *Kadesh,* probably the Kadesh of the wilderness wanderings (Num 20.1). **10–11:** Above the tumult of the storm, the LORD reigns in majestic peace.

**Ps 30: Thanksgiving for healing. 1–3:** God is praised for the psalmist's recovery. The psalm was probably sung in fulfillment of a vow (see 7.17 n.). **3:** *Sheol . . . the Pit,* see 28.1 n. **4–5:** The congregation is invited to join in giving thanks.

6 As for me, I said in my prosperity,
"I shall never be moved."
7 By your favor, O LORD,
you had established me as a strong mountain;
you hid your face;
I was dismayed.

8 To you, O LORD, I cried,
and to the LORD I made supplication:
9 "What profit is there in my death,
if I go down to the Pit?
Will the dust praise you?
Will it tell of your faithfulness?
10 Hear, O LORD, and be gracious to me!
O LORD, be my helper!"

11 You have turned my mourning into dancing;
you have taken off my sackcloth and clothed me with joy,
12 so that my soul[y] may praise you and not be silent.
O LORD my God, I will give thanks to you forever.

## Psalm 31

*To the leader. A Psalm of David.*

1 In you, O LORD, I seek refuge;
do not let me ever be put to shame;
in your righteousness deliver me.
2 Incline your ear to me;
rescue me speedily.
Be a rock of refuge for me,
a strong fortress to save me.
3 You are indeed my rock and my fortress;
for your name's sake lead me and guide me,
4 take me out of the net that is hidden for me,
for you are my refuge.
5 Into your hand I commit my spirit;
you have redeemed me,
O LORD, faithful God.

6 You hate[z] those who pay regard to worthless idols,
but I trust in the LORD.
7 I will exult and rejoice in your steadfast love,
because you have seen my affliction;
you have taken heed of my adversities,
8 and have not delivered me into the hand of the enemy;
you have set my feet in a broad place.

9 Be gracious to me, O LORD, for I am in distress;
my eye wastes away from grief,
my soul and body also.
10 For my life is spent with sorrow,
and my years with sighing;
my strength fails because of my misery,[a]
and my bones waste away.

11 I am the scorn of all my adversaries,

*y* Heb *that glory* *z* One Heb Ms Gk Syr Jerome: MT *I hate* *a* Gk Syr: Heb *my iniquity*

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**30.6–12**: The story of what had happened (see 18.4–6 n.): Before becoming ill, the psalmist had felt perfectly secure (vv. 6–7), but, when illness came, turned to God in prayer (vv. 8–10) and God had answered by restoring health (vv. 11–12).

**Ps 31**: **Prayer for deliverance from personal enemies** (a lament). Verses 1–8 and 9–24 are parallel in form, both containing the principal elements of a lament. **1–8**: Cry for help (vv. 1–5), the psalmist's situation (v. 4), expression of confidence (v. 5), protestation of innocence (v. 6), grateful recognition of God's help (vv. 7–8; perhaps this followed an oracle of assurance; see 12.5 n.).

**31.9–24**: Cry for help (v. 9), the psalmist's situation (vv. 10–13), expression of confidence (vv. 14, 19–20), prayer for vindication

a horror[b] to my neighbors,
an object of dread to my acquaintances;
those who see me in the street flee from me.
12 I have passed out of mind like one who is dead;
I have become like a broken vessel.
13 For I hear the whispering of many—
terror all around!—
as they scheme together against me,
as they plot to take my life.

14 But I trust in you, O LORD;
I say, "You are my God."
15 My times are in your hand;
deliver me from the hand of my enemies and persecutors.
16 Let your face shine upon your servant;
save me in your steadfast love.
17 Do not let me be put to shame, O LORD,
for I call on you;
let the wicked be put to shame;
let them go dumbfounded to Sheol.
18 Let the lying lips be stilled
that speak insolently against the righteous
with pride and contempt.

19 O how abundant is your goodness
that you have laid up for those who fear you,
and accomplished for those who take refuge in you,
in the sight of everyone!
20 In the shelter of your presence you hide them
from human plots;
you hold them safe under your shelter
from contentious tongues.

21 Blessed be the LORD,
for he has wondrously shown his steadfast love to me
when I was beset as a city under siege.
22 I had said in my alarm,
"I am driven far[c] from your sight."
But you heard my supplications
when I cried out to you for help.

23 Love the LORD, all you his saints.
The LORD preserves the faithful,
but abundantly repays the one who acts haughtily.
24 Be strong, and let your heart take courage,
all you who wait for the LORD.

## Psalm 32

*Of David. A Maskil.*

1 Happy are those whose transgression is forgiven,
whose sin is covered.
2 Happy are those to whom the LORD imputes no iniquity,
and in whose spirit there is no deceit.

3 While I kept silence, my body wasted away
through my groaning all day long.
4 For day and night your hand was heavy upon me;

*b* Cn: Heb *exceedingly* *c* Another reading is *cut off*

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(vv. 15–18), grateful recognition of God's help (vv. 21–24). **12:** *Broken vessel,* compare Ecc l 12.6. **13:** Jer 20.10. **23:** See 30.4 n.

**Ps 32: Thanksgiving for healing. 1–2:** God is praised for the psalmist's recovery. **1:** *Happy,* see 1.1 n. Since disease was commonly regarded as punishment for sin, healing is evidence that the *transgression is forgiven.* **3–5:** The psalmist's experience (see 18.4–6 n.). **4:** *Selah,* see 3.2 n.

my strength was dried up[d] as
by the heat of summer.
*Selah*

5 Then I acknowledged my sin to you,
and I did not hide my iniquity;
I said, "I will confess my transgressions to the LORD,"
and you forgave the guilt of my sin. *Selah*

6 Therefore let all who are faithful offer prayer to you;
at a time of distress,[e] the rush of mighty waters
shall not reach them.
7 You are a hiding place for me;
you preserve me from trouble;
you surround me with glad cries of deliverance. *Selah*

8 I will instruct you and teach you the way you should go;
I will counsel you with my eye upon you.
9 Do not be like a horse or a mule, without understanding,
whose temper must be curbed with bit and bridle,
else it will not stay near you.

10 Many are the torments of the wicked,
but steadfast love surrounds those who trust in the LORD.
11 Be glad in the LORD and rejoice, O righteous,
and shout for joy, all you upright in heart.

## Psalm 33

1 Rejoice in the LORD, O you righteous.
Praise befits the upright.
2 Praise the LORD with the lyre;
make melody to him with the harp of ten strings.
3 Sing to him a new song;
play skillfully on the strings, with loud shouts.

4 For the word of the LORD is upright,
and all his work is done in faithfulness.
5 He loves righteousness and justice;
the earth is full of the steadfast love of the LORD.

6 By the word of the LORD the heavens were made,
and all their host by the breath of his mouth.
7 He gathered the waters of the sea as in a bottle;
he put the deeps in storehouses.

8 Let all the earth fear the LORD;
let all the inhabitants of the world stand in awe of him.
9 For he spoke, and it came to be;
he commanded, and it stood firm.

10 The LORD brings the counsel of the nations to nothing;
he frustrates the plans of the peoples.
11 The counsel of the LORD stands forever,
the thoughts of his heart to all generations.
12 Happy is the nation whose God is the LORD,
the people whom he has chosen as his heritage.

*d* Meaning of Heb uncertain *e* Cn: Heb *at a time of finding only*

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**32.5**: Healing came only after acknowledgment of sin. **6–11**: The psalmist commends to the congregation similar faith in God (vv. 6–7, 10) and obedience to God's will (vv. 8–9).

**Ps 33: Hymn to God as creator and lord of history. 1–3**: Call to worship. **4–5**: The character of Israel's God. **6–9**: The LORD as creator. The emphasis upon the divine word in vv. 6 and 9 reflects Gen 1.3–31.

**33.10–19**: The LORD rules over the destinies of nations.

13 The LORD looks down from heaven;
he sees all humankind.
14 From where he sits enthroned he watches
all the inhabitants of the earth—
15 he who fashions the hearts of them all,
and observes all their deeds.
16 A king is not saved by his great army;
a warrior is not delivered by his great strength.
17 The war horse is a vain hope for victory,
and by its great might it cannot save.

18 Truly the eye of the LORD is on those who fear him,
on those who hope in his steadfast love,
19 to deliver their soul from death,
and to keep them alive in famine.

20 Our soul waits for the LORD;
he is our help and shield.
21 Our heart is glad in him,
because we trust in his holy name.
22 Let your steadfast love, O LORD,
be upon us,
even as we hope in you.

## Psalm 34

*Of David, when he feigned madness before Abimelech, so that he drove him out, and he went away.*

1 I will bless the LORD at all times;
his praise shall continually be in my mouth.
2 My soul makes its boast in the LORD;
let the humble hear and be glad.
3 O magnify the LORD with me,
and let us exalt his name together.

4 I sought the LORD, and he answered me,
and delivered me from all my fears.
5 Look to him, and be radiant;
so your[f] faces shall never be ashamed.
6 This poor soul cried, and was heard by the LORD,
and was saved from every trouble.
7 The angel of the LORD encamps
around those who fear him, and delivers them.
8 O taste and see that the LORD is good;
happy are those who take refuge in him.
9 O fear the LORD, you his holy ones,
for those who fear him have no want.
10 The young lions suffer want and hunger,
but those who seek the LORD lack no good thing.

11 Come, O children, listen to me;
I will teach you the fear of the LORD.
12 Which of you desires life,
and covets many days to enjoy good?
13 Keep your tongue from evil,

*f* Gk Syr Jerome: Heb *their*

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**33.20–22**: Israel puts her complete trust in him.

**Ps 34: Thanksgiving for deliverance from trouble.** Like Pss 9–10 and 25, this psalm is an alphabetical acrostic. **1–3**: A brief hymn of praise. **4–6**: The narrative of the psalmist's experience (see 18.4–6 n.; compare 30.6–12; 32.3–5).

**34.7–22**: He commends to the congregation the same kind of faith in God, and assures them that the LORD will never be found wanting (compare 32.6–11). The style is that of the teachers of wisdom (compare Pss 1 and 37; also v. 11 with Prov 1.8; 2.1). **12–14**: 1 Pet 3.10–12. **20**: Jn 19.36.

and your lips from speaking deceit.
14 Depart from evil, and do good;
seek peace, and pursue it.

15 The eyes of the LORD are on the righteous,
and his ears are open to their cry.
16 The face of the LORD is against evildoers,
to cut off the remembrance of them from the earth.
17 When the righteous cry for help, the LORD hears,
and rescues them from all their troubles.
18 The LORD is near to the brokenhearted,
and saves the crushed in spirit.

19 Many are the afflictions of the righteous,
but the LORD rescues them from them all.
20 He keeps all their bones;
not one of them will be broken.
21 Evil brings death to the wicked,
and those who hate the righteous will be condemned.
22 The LORD redeems the life of his servants;
none of those who take refuge in him will be condemned.

## Psalm 35

*Of David.*

1 Contend, O LORD, with those who contend with me;
fight against those who fight against me!
2 Take hold of shield and buckler,
and rise up to help me!
3 Draw the spear and javelin against my pursuers;
say to my soul,
"I am your salvation."

4 Let them be put to shame and dishonor
who seek after my life.
Let them be turned back and confounded
who devise evil against me.
5 Let them be like chaff before the wind,
with the angel of the LORD driving them on.
6 Let their way be dark and slippery,
with the angel of the LORD pursuing them.

7 For without cause they hid their net[g] for me;
without cause they dug a pit[h] for my life.
8 Let ruin come on them unawares.
And let the net that they hid ensnare them;
let them fall in it—to their ruin.

9 Then my soul shall rejoice in the LORD,
exulting in his deliverance.
10 All my bones shall say,
"O LORD, who is like you?
You deliver the weak
from those too strong for them,
the weak and needy from those who despoil them."

11 Malicious witnesses rise up;
they ask me about things I do not know.
12 They repay me evil for good;
my soul is forlorn.

*g* Heb *a pit, their net* *h* The word *pit* is transposed from the preceding line

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**Ps 35: Prayer for deliverance from personal enemies** (a lament). As in Ps 31, the elements of the lament occur more than once, so that vv. 1–10, 11–18, and 19–28 can be treated as separate units. **1–10**: The first lament. **1–6**: Cry for vindication and vengeance. **7**: The psalmist's situation. **8**: Prayer for vengeance renewed.

**35.9–10**: The vow (see 7.17 n.). **11–18**: The second lament. **11–16**: The psalmist's sit-

13 But as for me, when they were sick,
I wore sackcloth;
I afflicted myself with fasting.
I prayed with head bowed[i] on my bosom,
14 as though I grieved for a friend or a brother;
I went about as one who laments for a mother,
bowed down and in mourning.

15 But at my stumbling they gathered in glee,
they gathered together against me;
ruffians whom I did not know tore at me without ceasing;
16 they impiously mocked more and more,[j]
gnashing at me with their teeth.

17 How long, O LORD, will you look on?
Rescue me from their ravages, my life from the lions!
18 Then I will thank you in the great congregation;
in the mighty throng I will praise you.

19 Do not let my treacherous enemies rejoice over me,
or those who hate me without cause wink the eye.
20 For they do not speak peace,
but they conceive deceitful words
against those who are quiet in the land.
21 They open wide their mouths against me;
they say, "Aha, Aha,
our eyes have seen it."

22 You have seen, O LORD; do not be silent!
O Lord, do not be far from me!
23 Wake up! Bestir yourself for my defense,
for my cause, my God and my Lord!
24 Vindicate me, O LORD, my God, according to your righteousness,
and do not let them rejoice over me.
25 Do not let them say to themselves,
"Aha, we have our heart's desire."
Do not let them say, "We have swallowed you[k] up."

26 Let all those who rejoice at my calamity
be put to shame and confusion;
let those who exalt themselves against me
be clothed with shame and dishonor.

27 Let those who desire my vindication
shout for joy and be glad,
and say evermore,
"Great is the LORD,
who delights in the welfare of his servant."
28 Then my tongue shall tell of your righteousness
and of your praise all day long.

## Psalm 36

*To the leader. Of David, the servant of the* LORD.

1 Transgression speaks to the wicked
deep in their hearts;
there is no fear of God

*i* Or *My prayer turned back* *j* Cn Compare Gk: Heb *like the profanest of mockers of a cake* *k* Heb *him*

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uation: persecution without cause. As in some other laments, it is not clear whether the psalmist's principal trouble arises from enemies or from a sickness of which they have taken advantage. **17**: Cry for help. **18**: The vow (see 7.17 n.). **19–29**: The third lament. **35.19**: Cry for help. **20–21**: The psalmist's situation. **22–27**: Prayer for vindication. **28**: The vow (compare v. 18).

**Ps 36**: **A psalm of mixed type:** vv. 1–4

before their eyes.
2 For they flatter themselves in their own eyes
that their iniquity cannot be found out and hated.
3 The words of their mouths are mischief and deceit;
they have ceased to act wisely and do good.
4 They plot mischief while on their beds;
they are set on a way that is not good;
they do not reject evil.

5 Your steadfast love, O LORD, extends to the heavens,
your faithfulness to the clouds.
6 Your righteousness is like the mighty mountains,
your judgments are like the great deep;
you save humans and animals alike, O LORD.

7 How precious is your steadfast love, O God!
All people may take refuge in the shadow of your wings.
8 They feast on the abundance of your house,
and you give them drink from the river of your delights.
9 For with you is the fountain of life;
in your light we see light.

10 O continue your steadfast love to those who know you,
and your salvation to the upright of heart!
11 Do not let the foot of the arrogant tread on me,
or the hand of the wicked drive me away.
12 There the evildoers lie prostrate;
they are thrust down, unable to rise.

## Psalm 37

*Of David.*

1 Do not fret because of the wicked;
do not be envious of wrongdoers,
2 for they will soon fade like the grass,
and wither like the green herb.

3 Trust in the LORD, and do good;
so you will live in the land, and enjoy security.
4 Take delight in the LORD,
and he will give you the desires of your heart.

5 Commit your way to the LORD;
trust in him, and he will act.
6 He will make your vindication shine like the light,
and the justice of your cause like the noonday.

7 Be still before the LORD, and wait patiently for him;
do not fret over those who prosper in their way,
over those who carry out evil devices.

8 Refrain from anger, and forsake wrath.

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are in the type of a wisdom psalm; vv. 5–9, a hymn; vv. 10–12, a prayer in the style of a lament. Since the last section seems to determine the character of the whole, the psalm should probably be classified as a liturgy of lament. **1–4**: The character of the wicked. **1**: The wicked are inspired by *transgression* just as a prophet is inspired by the Spirit of God.

**36.5–9**: The character of God, who is a source of blessing to the righteous and provides them with a refuge. *Fountain of life,* compare Jer 2.13. **10–11**: Prayer for deliverance. **12**: Assurance of having been heard.

**Ps 37**: **The certainty of retribution for the wicked** (a wisdom psalm). The argument is directed to those discouraged by the injustices which apparently dominate the world. The acrostic form of the psalm (see Pss 9–10 n.) explains the lack of a clear outline or logical progression of thought. **3**: *The land,* Palestine (vv. 9, 11, 22, 29; compare Deut 11.8–32).

Do not fret—it leads only to evil.
9 For the wicked shall be cut off,
but those who wait for the LORD shall inherit the land.

10 Yet a little while, and the wicked will be no more;
though you look diligently for their place, they will not be there.
11 But the meek shall inherit the land,
and delight themselves in abundant prosperity.

12 The wicked plot against the righteous,
and gnash their teeth at them;
13 but the LORD laughs at the wicked,
for he sees that their day is coming.

14 The wicked draw the sword and bend their bows
to bring down the poor and needy,
to kill those who walk uprightly;
15 their sword shall enter their own heart,
and their bows shall be broken.

16 Better is a little that the righteous person has
than the abundance of many wicked.
17 For the arms of the wicked shall be broken,
but the LORD upholds the righteous.

18 The LORD knows the days of the blameless,
and their heritage will abide forever;
19 they are not put to shame in evil times,
in the days of famine they have abundance.

20 But the wicked perish,
and the enemies of the LORD are like the glory of the pastures;
they vanish—like smoke they vanish away.

21 The wicked borrow, and do not pay back,
but the righteous are generous and keep giving;
22 for those blessed by the LORD shall inherit the land,
but those cursed by him shall be cut off.

23 Our steps[l] are made firm by the LORD,
when he delights in our[m] way;
24 though we stumble,[n] we[o] shall not fall headlong,
for the LORD holds us[p] by the hand.

25 I have been young, and now am old,
yet I have not seen the righteous forsaken
or their children begging bread.
26 They are ever giving liberally and lending,
and their children become a blessing.

27 Depart from evil, and do good;
so you shall abide forever.
28 For the LORD loves justice;
he will not forsake his faithful ones.

*l* Heb *A man's steps* *m* Heb *his* *n* Heb *he stumbles* *o* Heb *he* *p* Heb *him*

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**37.10**: The heart of the argument: Do not be impatient! Retribution will come soon, even though it is not evident now (compare vv. 35–36). **11**: Compare Mt 5.5.

**37.25**: Compare Job 4.7. **34**: Patient waiting for the LORD to act is the proper attitude, not querulous anxiety (compare v. 9; 38.15; 62.1, 5; 130.5; Isa 40.31).

The righteous shall be kept safe forever,
but the children of the wicked shall be cut off.
29 The righteous shall inherit the land,
and live in it forever.

30 The mouths of the righteous utter wisdom,
and their tongues speak justice.
31 The law of their God is in their hearts;
their steps do not slip.

32 The wicked watch for the righteous,
and seek to kill them.
33 The LORD will not abandon them to their power,
or let them be condemned when they are brought to trial.

34 Wait for the LORD, and keep to his way,
and he will exalt you to inherit the land;
you will look on the destruction of the wicked.

35 I have seen the wicked oppressing,
and towering like a cedar of Lebanon.[q]
36 Again I[r] passed by, and they were no more;
though I sought them, they could not be found.

37 Mark the blameless, and behold the upright,
for there is posterity for the peaceable.
38 But transgressors shall be altogether destroyed;
the posterity of the wicked shall be cut off.

39 The salvation of the righteous is from the LORD;
he is their refuge in the time of trouble.
40 The LORD helps them and rescues them;
he rescues them from the wicked, and saves them,
because they take refuge in him.

## Psalm 38

*A Psalm of David, for the memorial offering.*

1 O LORD, do not rebuke me in your anger,
or discipline me in your wrath.
2 For your arrows have sunk into me,
and your hand has come down on me.

3 There is no soundness in my flesh because of your indignation;
there is no health in my bones because of my sin.
4 For my iniquities have gone over my head;
they weigh like a burden too heavy for me.

5 My wounds grow foul and fester because of my foolishness;
6 I am utterly bowed down and prostrate;
all day long I go around mourning.

*q* Gk: Meaning of Heb uncertain *r* Gk Syr Jerome: Heb *he*

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**Ps 38: Prayer for healing in sickness** (a lament). The psalmist is mainly concerned with an attack of some grave disease, but also is troubled by enemies who are taking advantage of it. Their attitude was made more plausible by the common belief that illness was a punishment for sin and therefore an indication that God was against the sick person (compare Ps 22). **Title:** *Memorial offering,* Lev 2.1–10; compare Lev 24.7. **1:** Cry for help. **2–20:** The psalmist's situation. **2:** *Your arrows,* Job 6.4; 16.12, 13. **3–10:** The nature of the disease. **3–4:** The psalmist acknowledges that the disease must be a deserved punish-

7 For my loins are filled with burning,
and there is no soundness in my flesh.
8 I am utterly spent and crushed;
I groan because of the tumult of my heart.

9 O Lord, all my longing is known to you;
my sighing is not hidden from you.
10 My heart throbs, my strength fails me;
as for the light of my eyes—it also has gone from me.
11 My friends and companions stand aloof from my affliction,
and my neighbors stand far off.

12 Those who seek my life lay their snares;
those who seek to hurt me speak of ruin,
and meditate treachery all day long.

13 But I am like the deaf, I do not hear;
like the mute, who cannot speak.
14 Truly, I am like one who does not hear,
and in whose mouth is no retort.

15 But it is for you, O LORD, that I wait;
it is you, O Lord my God, who will answer.
16 For I pray, "Only do not let them rejoice over me,
those who boast against me when my foot slips."

17 For I am ready to fall,
and my pain is ever with me.
18 I confess my iniquity;
I am sorry for my sin.
19 Those who are my foes without cause[s] are mighty,
and many are those who hate me wrongfully.
20 Those who render me evil for good
are my adversaries because I follow after good.

21 Do not forsake me, O LORD;
O my God, do not be far from me;
22 make haste to help me,
O Lord, my salvation.

## Psalm 39

*To the leader: to Jeduthun.*
*A Psalm of David.*

1 I said, "I will guard my ways
that I may not sin with my tongue;
I will keep a muzzle on my mouth
as long as the wicked are in my presence."
2 I was silent and still;
I held my peace to no avail;
my distress grew worse,
3 my heart became hot within me.
While I mused, the fire burned;
then I spoke with my tongue:

s Q Ms: MT *my living foes*

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ment for having committed some sin, perhaps unwittingly (compare v. 18). **11**: Former friends avoid the writer as one forsaken by God. **12**: Enemies are circulating lies about the psalmist (compare vv. 19–20).

**38.13–16**: Not really fretful, the writer is waiting for God to act (compare 37.34). **18**: By confessing to be a sinner, the psalmist hopes to be forgiven and healed (compare 32.3–5). **21–22**: Cry for help.

**Ps 39: Prayer for healing in sickness** (a lament). **1–3**: During a severe illness, by which faith in God's good-will has been almost shaken, the psalmist has not made any public complaint, not wishing to give encouragement to *the wicked* (i.e. the skeptical), who deny God's concern for justice and goodness (compare 10.4 and Ps 14). But now the psalmist can be silent no longer: a complaint must be made, if only to God in pri-

4 "LORD, let me know my end,
and what is the measure of my days;
let me know how fleeting my life is.
5 You have made my days a few handbreadths,
and my lifetime is as nothing in your sight.
Surely everyone stands as a mere breath. *Selah*
6 Surely everyone goes about like a shadow.
Surely for nothing they are in turmoil;
they heap up, and do not know who will gather.

7 "And now, O Lord, what do I wait for?
My hope is in you.
8 Deliver me from all my transgressions.
Do not make me the scorn of the fool.
9 I am silent; I do not open my mouth,
for it is you who have done it.
10 Remove your stroke from me;
I am worn down by the blows[t] of your hand.

11 "You chastise mortals in punishment for sin,
consuming like a moth what is dear to them;
surely everyone is a mere breath. *Selah*

12 "Hear my prayer, O LORD,
and give ear to my cry;
do not hold your peace at my tears.
For I am your passing guest,
an alien, like all my forebears.
13 Turn your gaze away from me,
that I may smile again,
before I depart and am no more."

## Psalm 40

*To the leader. Of David. A Psalm.*

1 I waited patiently for the LORD;
he inclined to me and heard my cry.
2 He drew me up from the desolate pit,[u]
out of the miry bog,
and set my feet upon a rock,
making my steps secure.
3 He put a new song in my mouth,
a song of praise to our God.
Many will see and fear,
and put their trust in the LORD.

4 Happy are those who make the LORD their trust,
who do not turn to the proud,
to those who go astray after false gods.
5 You have multiplied, O LORD my God,
your wondrous deeds and your thoughts toward us;
none can compare with you.
Were I to proclaim and tell of them,
they would be more than can be counted.

*t* Heb *hostility* *u* Cn: Heb *pit of tumult*

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vate. **4–6**: The writer knows that all human life is short. **5**: *Selah*, see 3.2 n. *Handbreadths*, a measure of about three inches (four fingers); compare Ezek 40.5; 43.13.

**39.7–13**: Prayer for healing. **8**: *Deliver . . . from . . . transgressions*, i.e. heal the diseases they have caused (compare 31.1). **12–13**: The psalmist knows that, in any case, life will be short, but hopes for at least one more respite, brief though it may be.

**Ps 40**: **Thanksgiving for deliverance from trouble, together with a prayer for help.** A composite psalm: vv. 1–11 are a thanksgiving; vv. 12–17, a lament. Perhaps two originally independent units have been combined into a liturgy. **1–3**: The psalmist's experience (compare 18.4–6). The nature of the trouble is not specified. **4–10**: Fulfillment of the vow (see 7.17 n. and 22.22–31 n.).

6 Sacrifice and offering you do not desire,
but you have given me an open ear.[v]
Burnt offering and sin offering you have not required.
7 Then I said, "Here I am;
in the scroll of the book it is written of me.[w]
8 I delight to do your will, O my God;
your law is within my heart."

9 I have told the glad news of deliverance
in the great congregation;
see, I have not restrained my lips, as you know, O LORD.
10 I have not hidden your saving help within my heart,
I have spoken of your faithfulness and your salvation;
I have not concealed your steadfast love and your faithfulness
from the great congregation.

11 Do not, O LORD, withhold your mercy from me;
let your steadfast love and your faithfulness keep me safe forever.
12 For evils have encompassed me without number;
my iniquities have overtaken me, until I cannot see;
they are more than the hairs of my head,
and my heart fails me.

13 Be pleased, O LORD, to deliver me;
O LORD, make haste to help me.
14 Let all those be put to shame and confusion
who seek to snatch away my life;
let those be turned back and brought to dishonor
who desire my hurt.
15 Let those be appalled because of their shame
who say to me, "Aha, Aha!"

16 But may all who seek you rejoice and be glad in you;
may those who love your salvation
say continually, "Great is the LORD!"
17 As for me, I am poor and needy,
but the Lord takes thought for me.
You are my help and my deliverer;
do not delay, O my God.

## Psalm 41

*To the leader. A Psalm of David.*

1 Happy are those who consider the poor;[x]
the LORD delivers them in the day of trouble.
2 The LORD protects them and keeps them alive;
they are called happy in the land.
You do not give them up to the will of their enemies.

*v* Heb *ears you have dug for me* *w* Meaning of Heb uncertain *x* Or *weak*

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**40.6–8**: Rather than offer a formal sacrifice of thanksgiving, the writer promises to do God's will. Quoted in Heb 10.5–7. **6**: Compare 50.8–13; 51.16, 17; Am 5.21–24; Hos 6.6. **7**: *Scroll of the book,* compare 56.8; 139.16. **9**: Compare 22.22. **11**: Prayer for continuing help. **12–17**: A lament. **12**: The psalmist's situation.

**40.13–17**: Prayer for deliverance. This passage is almost identical with Ps 70.

**Ps 41**: **Prayer for healing from sickness** (a lament). **1–3**: Act of faith, in the style of the wisdom writers (compare Ps 1).

**41.4–9**: The psalmist's situation: Mortally ill, with enemies who are glad of it; even a dear friend has become an enemy. **10–12**:

3 The LORD sustains them on their sickbed;
in their illness you heal all their infirmities.[y]

4 As for me, I said, "O LORD, be gracious to me;
heal me, for I have sinned against you."
5 My enemies wonder in malice when I will die, and my name perish.
6 And when they come to see me, they utter empty words,
while their hearts gather mischief;
when they go out, they tell it abroad.
7 All who hate me whisper together about me;
they imagine the worst for me.

8 They think that a deadly thing has fastened on me,
that I will not rise again from where I lie.
9 Even my bosom friend in whom I trusted,
who ate of my bread, has lifted the heel against me.
10 But you, O LORD, be gracious to me,
and raise me up, that I may repay them.

11 By this I know that you are pleased with me;
because my enemy has not triumphed over me.
12 But you have upheld me because of my integrity,
and set me in your presence forever.

13 Blessed be the LORD, the God of Israel,
from everlasting to everlasting.
Amen and Amen.

# BOOK II

## Psalm 42

*To the leader. A Maskil of the Korahites.*

1 As a deer longs for flowing streams,
so my soul longs for you, O God.
2 My soul thirsts for God, for the living God.
When shall I come and behold the face of God?
3 My tears have been my food day and night,
while people say to me continually,
"Where is your God?"

4 These things I remember, as I pour out my soul:
how I went with the throng,[z]
and led them in procession to the house of God,
with glad shouts and songs of thanksgiving,
a multitude keeping festival.
5 Why are you cast down, O my soul,
and why are you disquieted within me?

*y* Heb *you change all his bed* *z* Meaning of Heb uncertain

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Prayer for deliverance. **13**: A doxology (no part of the psalm) marking the end of the first of the five books into which the Psalter was divided in imitation of the Pentateuch (compare 72.18–20; 89.52; 106.48).

**Pss 42–43: Prayer for healing in preparation for a pilgrimage** (a lament). These two psalms are a single lyric consisting of three stanzas with a refrain (42.5, 11; 43.5). The author, who lives in the far north of Palestine near Mount Hermon and the sources of the Jordan (42.6–7), has been prevented by illness (42.10) from making the accustomed pilgrimage to Jerusalem (42.4; 43.3–4). **42.1–4**: The psalmist's love for the temple and for God's presence there. **3**: People regard the sickness as evidence that God has forsaken the sufferer (compare 22.6–8).

**42.5–10**: The writer's present situation: sick and far from the temple. **6**: *Mount Mizar,*

Hope in God; for I shall again
praise him,
my help [6]and my God.

My soul is cast down within me;
therefore I remember you
from the land of Jordan and of
Hermon,
from Mount Mizar.
[7] Deep calls to deep
at the thunder of your cataracts;
all your waves and your billows
have gone over me.
[8] By day the LORD commands his
steadfast love,
and at night his song is with
me,
a prayer to the God of my life.

[9] I say to God, my rock,
"Why have you forgotten me?
Why must I walk about
mournfully
because the enemy oppresses
me?"
[10] As with a deadly wound in my
body,
my adversaries taunt me,
while they say to me continually,
"Where is your God?"

[11] Why are you cast down, O my
soul,
and why are you disquieted
within me?
Hope in God; for I shall again
praise him,
my help and my God.

## Psalm 43

[1] Vindicate me, O God, and defend
my cause
against an ungodly people;
from those who are deceitful and
unjust
deliver me!
[2] For you are the God in whom I
take refuge;
why have you cast me off?
Why must I walk about
mournfully
because of the oppression of the
enemy?

[3] O send out your light and your
truth;
let them lead me;
let them bring me to your holy
hill
and to your dwelling.
[4] Then I will go to the altar of God,
to God my exceeding joy;
and I will praise you with the
harp,
O God, my God.

[5] Why are you cast down, O my
soul,
and why are you disquieted
within me?
Hope in God; for I shall again
praise him,
my help and my God.

## Psalm 44

*To the leader. Of the Korahites. A Maskil.*

[1] We have heard with our ears,
O God,
our ancestors have told us,
what deeds you performed in their
days,
in the days of old:
[2] you with your own hand drove
out the nations,
but them you planted;
you afflicted the peoples,
but them you set free;
[3] for not by their own sword did
they win the land,
nor did their own arm give
them victory;
but your right hand, and your
arm,

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probably near Mount *Hermon*, but exact location is unknown.

**43.1–4**: Prayer that, by the healing of the disease, the psalmist may be vindicated as a righteous person and enabled to go to Jerusalem.

**Ps 44**: **Prayer for deliverance from national enemies** (a group lament). Israel has

and the light of your countenance,
for you delighted in them.

4 You are my King and my God;
you command[a] victories for Jacob.
5 Through you we push down our foes;
through your name we tread down our assailants.
6 For not in my bow do I trust,
nor can my sword save me.
7 But you have saved us from our foes,
and have put to confusion those who hate us.
8 In God we have boasted continually,
and we will give thanks to your name forever. *Selah*

9 Yet you have rejected us and abased us,
and have not gone out with our armies.
10 You made us turn back from the foe,
and our enemies have gotten spoil.
11 You have made us like sheep for slaughter,
and have scattered us among the nations.
12 You have sold your people for a trifle,
demanding no high price for them.

13 You have made us the taunt of our neighbors,
the derision and scorn of those around us.
14 You have made us a byword among the nations,
a laughingstock[b] among the peoples.
15 All day long my disgrace is before me,
and shame has covered my face
16 at the words of the taunters and revilers,
at the sight of the enemy and the avenger.

17 All this has come upon us,
yet we have not forgotten you,
or been false to your covenant.
18 Our heart has not turned back,
nor have our steps departed from your way,
19 yet you have broken us in the haunt of jackals,
and covered us with deep darkness.

20 If we had forgotten the name of our God,
or spread out our hands to a strange god,
21 would not God discover this?
For he knows the secrets of the heart.
22 Because of you we are being killed all day long,
and accounted as sheep for the slaughter.

23 Rouse yourself! Why do you sleep, O Lord?
Awake, do not cast us off forever!
24 Why do you hide your face?

*a* Gk Syr: Heb *You are my King, O God; command*
*b* Heb *a shaking of the head*

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suffered a humiliating defeat at the hand of some unnamed foreign nation. **1–8**: God is reminded of the victories he had given Israel in previous times, from the days of the conquest onward. **3**: Deut 8.17; Judg 7.2. **8**: *Selah*, see 3.2 n.

**44.9–16**: Now God has allowed Israel to be defeated and shamed. **11**: *You . . . have scattered us among the nations* seems appropriate only to the period after the Babylonian Exile, a circumstance which helps to date the poem. Some have put it as late as the Maccabean Age (second century B.C.).

**44.17–22**: Defeat has not been the result of sin or apostasy, but of unshaken loyalty to the God of Israel. **23–26**: Cry for help (compare 78.65; Isa 51.9). The language emphasizes the strong emotions of the speaker.

Why do you forget our
affliction and oppression?
25 For we sink down to the dust;
our bodies cling to the ground.
26 Rise up, come to our help.
Redeem us for the sake of your
steadfast love.

## Psalm 45

*To the leader: according to Lilies. Of the Korahites. A Maskil. A love song.*

1 My heart overflows with a goodly
theme;
I address my verses to the king;
my tongue is like the pen of a
ready scribe.

2 You are the most handsome of
men;
grace is poured upon your lips;
therefore God has blessed you
forever.
3 Gird your sword on your thigh,
O mighty one,
in your glory and majesty.

4 In your majesty ride on
victoriously
for the cause of truth and to
defend[c] the right;
let your right hand teach you
dread deeds.
5 Your arrows are sharp
in the heart of the king's
enemies;
the peoples fall under you.

6 Your throne, O God,[d] endures
forever and ever.
Your royal scepter is a scepter
of equity;
7 you love righteousness and hate
wickedness.
Therefore God, your God, has
anointed you
with the oil of gladness beyond
your companions;
8 your robes are all fragrant with
myrrh and aloes and cassia.
From ivory palaces stringed
instruments make you glad;
9 daughters of kings are among
your ladies of honor;
at your right hand stands the
queen in gold of Ophir.

10 Hear, O daughter, consider and
incline your ear;
forget your people and your
father's house,
11 and the king will desire your
beauty.
Since he is your lord, bow to him;
12 the people[e] of Tyre will seek
your favor with gifts,
the richest of the people [13]with
all kinds of wealth.

The princess is decked in her
chamber with gold-woven
robes;[f]
14 in many-colored robes she is led
to the king;
behind her the virgins, her
companions, follow.
15 With joy and gladness they are
led along
as they enter the palace of the
king.

*c* Cn: Heb *and the meekness of* *d* Or *Your throne is a throne of God, it* *e* Heb *daughter* *f* Or *people.* [13]*All glorious is the princess within, gold embroidery is her clothing*

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**Ps 45: An ode for a royal wedding. 1:** Introduction. The author is identified as a professional writer (*a ready scribe*), presumably a court poet. **2–9:** The king is addressed in flattering language.

**45.6:** *Your throne, O God:* the king seems to be addressed as "God." This is without parallel in the Hebrew Scriptures, but common in surrounding nations. Compare Heb 1.8. **8:** The mention of *ivory palaces* (1 Kings 22.39; Am 3.15) shows that the bridegroom was a king of the kingdom of Israel.

**45.10–13a:** The queen, probably a Phoenician (note the mention of *Tyre* in v. 12), is instructed to forget her own ancestry and be loyal to her husband.

**45.13b–15:** The wedding procession. **16–17:** The poet promises the king (the pronouns, in Hebrew, are masculine; see note *g*) successful progeny and literary immortality.

16 In the place of ancestors you,
O king,[g] shall have sons;
you will make them princes in
all the earth.
17 I will cause your name to be
celebrated in all generations;
therefore the peoples will praise
you forever and ever.

## Psalm 46

*To the leader. Of the Korahites. According to Alamoth. A Song.*

1 God is our refuge and strength,
a very present[h] help in trouble.
2 Therefore we will not fear, though
the earth should change,
though the mountains shake in
the heart of the sea;
3 though its waters roar and foam,
though the mountains tremble
with its tumult. *Selah*

4 There is a river whose streams
make glad the city of God,
the holy habitation of the
Most High.
5 God is in the midst of the city;[i] it
shall not be moved;
God will help it when the
morning dawns.
6 The nations are in an uproar, the
kingdoms totter;
he utters his voice, the earth
melts.
7 The LORD of hosts is with us;
the God of Jacob is our refuge.[j]
*Selah*

8 Come, behold the works of the
LORD;
see what desolations he has
brought on the earth.
9 He makes wars cease to the end of
the earth;
he breaks the bow, and shatters
the spear;
he burns the shields with fire.
10 "Be still, and know that I am
God!
I am exalted among the nations,
I am exalted in the earth."
11 The LORD of hosts is with us;
the God of Jacob is our refuge.[j]
*Selah*

## Psalm 47

*To the leader. Of the Korahites. A Psalm.*

1 Clap your hands, all you peoples;
shout to God with loud songs
of joy.
2 For the LORD, the Most High, is
awesome,
a great king over all the earth.
3 He subdued peoples under us,
and nations under our feet.
4 He chose our heritage for us,
the pride of Jacob whom he
loves. *Selah*

5 God has gone up with a shout,
the LORD with the sound of a
trumpet.

*g* Heb lacks *O king* *h* Or *well proved*
*i* Heb *of it* *j* Or *fortress*

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**Ps 46: A song of Zion celebrating God's ultimate victory over the nations. 1–3**: God will preserve his people even during the cosmic tumults of the latter days (compare Joel 3.16). **1**: This verse inspired Luther's hymn, "A Mighty Fortress." **3**: *Selah,* see 3.2 n. **4–7**: Jerusalem, God's dwelling place on earth, will stand secure. This emphasis upon the Holy City leads to the classification of this and some other psalms as "songs of Zion" (for the term, see 137.3).

**46.4**: *A river,* compare Isa 33.21; Ezek 47.1–12; Zech 14.8; Rev 22.1–2. **7**: A refrain (compare v. 11); it has probably dropped out by accident after v. 3. **8–11**: The establishment of God's kingdom will bring peace to the earth (compare Isa 2.4).

**Ps 47: A hymn celebrating God's enthronement as king of all nations. 1–4**: Summons to all the world to praise the God of Israel as king. **4**: *Selah,* see 3.2 n. **5–9**: These words were evidently composed to accompany a religious ceremony, probably connected with the ark, which dramatized the LORD's kingship (compare 24.7–10 and 68.17–18). **7**: The word translated "psalm" is

6 Sing praises to God, sing praises;
sing praises to our King, sing praises.
7 For God is the king of all the earth;
sing praises with a psalm.[k]

8 God is king over the nations;
God sits on his holy throne.
9 The princes of the peoples gather
as the people of the God of Abraham.
For the shields of the earth belong to God;
he is highly exalted.

## Psalm 48

*A Song. A Psalm of the Korahites.*

1 Great is the LORD and greatly to be praised
in the city of our God.
His holy mountain, 2beautiful in elevation,
is the joy of all the earth,
Mount Zion, in the far north,
the city of the great King.
3 Within its citadels God
has shown himself a sure defense.

4 Then the kings assembled,
they came on together.
5 As soon as they saw it, they were astounded;
they were in panic, they took to flight;
6 trembling took hold of them there,
pains as of a woman in labor,
7 as when an east wind shatters
the ships of Tarshish.
8 As we have heard, so have we seen
in the city of the LORD of hosts,
in the city of our God,
which God establishes forever.
*Selah*

9 We ponder your steadfast love, O God,
in the midst of your temple.
10 Your name, O God, like your praise,
reaches to the ends of the earth.
Your right hand is filled with victory.
11 Let Mount Zion be glad,
let the towns[l] of Judah rejoice
because of your judgments.

12 Walk about Zion, go all around it,
count its towers,
13 consider well its ramparts;
go through its citadels,
that you may tell the next generation
14 that this is God,
our God forever and ever.
He will be our guide forever.

## Psalm 49

*To the leader. Of the Korahites. A Psalm.*

1 Hear this, all you peoples;
give ear, all inhabitants of the world,
2 both low and high,
rich and poor together.

*k* Heb *Maskil* *l* Heb *daughters*

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Maskil; see Introduction. **8**: *Throne,* Isa 6.1. **9**: *Shields,* rulers (compare 89.18 n.).

**Ps 48**: **A song celebrating the beauty and security of Zion. 1–3**: The LORD is praised as the God of Jerusalem. **2**: Mount Zion, one of the hills upon which Jerusalem is built. *In the far north,* a curious phrase which apparently identifies the Israelite holy mountain with the Canaanite mountain of the gods (called Zaphon or "North" in the Ras Shamra tablets). **4–8**: When, in the last days, the heathen unite to attack God's city, they will be routed (compare Ezek chs 38–39; Zech chs 12; 14; Rev 20.9–10). **7**: *Ships of Tarshish,* see 1 Kings 10.22 n. **8**: *Selah,* see 3.2 n.

**48.9–11**: All of this causes anticipatory rejoicing in the ceremonies of the temple. **12–14**: Call for a procession about the city walls (Ps 24.7–10).

**Ps 49**: **Meditation on the transience of life and wealth** (a wisdom psalm). **1**: The poet summons an audience. **5–6**: The theme:

3 My mouth shall speak wisdom;
the meditation of my heart shall be understanding.
4 I will incline my ear to a proverb;
I will solve my riddle to the music of the harp.

5 Why should I fear in times of trouble,
when the iniquity of my persecutors surrounds me,
6 those who trust in their wealth
and boast of the abundance of their riches?
7 Truly, no ransom avails for one's life,[m]
there is no price one can give to God for it.
8 For the ransom of life is costly,
and can never suffice,
9 that one should live on forever
and never see the grave.[n]

10 When we look at the wise, they die;
fool and dolt perish together
and leave their wealth to others.
11 Their graves[o] are their homes forever,
their dwelling places to all generations,
though they named lands their own.
12 Mortals cannot abide in their pomp;
they are like the animals that perish.

13 Such is the fate of the foolhardy,
the end of those[p] who are pleased with their lot. *Selah*
14 Like sheep they are appointed for Sheol;
Death shall be their shepherd;
straight to the grave they descend,[q]
and their form shall waste away;
Sheol shall be their home.[r]
15 But God will ransom my soul
from the power of Sheol,
for he will receive me. *Selah*

16 Do not be afraid when some become rich,
when the wealth of their houses increases.
17 For when they die they will carry nothing away;
their wealth will not go down after them.
18 Though in their lifetime they count themselves happy
—for you are praised when you do well for yourself—
19 they[s] will go to the company of their ancestors,
who will never again see the light.
20 Mortals cannot abide in their pomp;
they are like the animals that perish.

## Psalm 50

*A Psalm of Asaph.*

1 The mighty one, God the LORD,
speaks and summons the earth
from the rising of the sun to its setting.
2 Out of Zion, the perfection of beauty,
God shines forth.

*m* Another reading is *no one can ransom a brother* *n* Heb *the pit* *o* Gk Syr Compare Tg: Heb *their inward* (thought) *p* Tg: Heb *after them* *q* Cn: Heb *the upright shall have dominion over them in the morning* *r* Meaning of Heb uncertain *s* Cn: Heb *you*

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Why should one be afraid of the wealthy and powerful? **7–12**: People do not have power over the disposition of their own lives, nor can they take their wealth with them.

**49.9**: *The Pit,* Sheol (see 6.5 n.). **12**: A refrain; compare v. 20. **13–14**: Death is the end even for the arrogant. **13**: *Selah,* see 3.2 n. **15**: This might express the psalmist's assurance of personal immortality, but is perhaps better understood merely as confidence in being delivered from present trouble (89.48; Hos 13.14). **16–20**: The audience is instructed therefore not to be afraid of the wealthy.

**Ps 50**: **A liturgy of divine judgment.**

3 Our God comes and does not keep
silence,
before him is a devouring fire,
and a mighty tempest all around
him.
4 He calls to the heavens above
and to the earth, that he may
judge his people:
5 "Gather to me my faithful ones,
who made a covenant with me
by sacrifice!"
6 The heavens declare his
righteousness,
for God himself is judge. *Selah*

7 "Hear, O my people, and I will
speak,
O Israel, I will testify against
you.
I am God, your God.
8 Not for your sacrifices do I rebuke
you;
your burnt offerings are
continually before me.
9 I will not accept a bull from your
house,
or goats from your folds.
10 For every wild animal of the forest
is mine,
the cattle on a thousand hills.
11 I know all the birds of the air,[t]
and all that moves in the field is
mine.

12 "If I were hungry, I would not tell
you,
for the world and all that is in it
is mine.
13 Do I eat the flesh of bulls,
or drink the blood of goats?
14 Offer to God a sacrifice of
thanksgiving,[u]
and pay your vows to the
Most High.
15 Call on me in the day of trouble;
I will deliver you, and you shall
glorify me."

16 But to the wicked God says:
"What right have you to recite
my statutes,
or take my covenant on your
lips?
17 For you hate discipline,
and you cast my words behind
you.
18 You make friends with a thief
when you see one,
and you keep company with
adulterers.

19 "You give your mouth free rein
for evil,
and your tongue frames deceit.
20 You sit and speak against your
kin;
you slander your own mother's
child.
21 These things you have done and I
have been silent;
you thought that I was one just
like yourself.
But now I rebuke you, and lay the
charge before you.

22 "Mark this, then, you who forget
God,
or I will tear you apart, and
there will be no one to
deliver.
23 Those who bring thanksgiving as
their sacrifice honor me;
to those who go the right way[v]
I will show the salvation of
God."

*t* Gk Syr Tg: Heb *mountains* *u* Or *make thanksgiving your sacrifice to God* *v* Heb *who set a way*

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**1–6**: God coming to judge his people. **3**: Compare 18.8; Hab 3.4. **6**: *Selah*, see 3.2 n.

**50.7–23**: The LORD's arraignment of the nation. **8–13**: They have brought sacrifices in abundance, but this is not what God wants (see 40.6 n.). **14–15**: His demand is rather for thanksgiving and prayer.

**50.16–21**: They have violated God's law by tolerating evil (v. 18) and indulging in slander (vv. 19–20). **16**: The first line is probably an editorial addition, modifying the poet's sweeping judgment on the nation as a whole. **22–23**: Concluding warning.

## Psalm 51

*To the leader. A Psalm of David, when the prophet Nathan came to him, after he had gone in to Bathsheba.*

1 Have mercy on me, O God,
according to your steadfast love;
according to your abundant mercy
blot out my transgressions.
2 Wash me thoroughly from my iniquity,
and cleanse me from my sin.

3 For I know my transgressions,
and my sin is ever before me.
4 Against you, you alone, have I sinned,
and done what is evil in your sight,
so that you are justified in your sentence
and blameless when you pass judgment.
5 Indeed, I was born guilty,
a sinner when my mother conceived me.

6 You desire truth in the inward being;[w]
therefore teach me wisdom in my secret heart.
7 Purge me with hyssop, and I shall be clean;
wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow.
8 Let me hear joy and gladness;
let the bones that you have crushed rejoice.
9 Hide your face from my sins,
and blot out all my iniquities.

10 Create in me a clean heart, O God,
and put a new and right[x] spirit within me.
11 Do not cast me away from your presence,
and do not take your holy spirit from me.
12 Restore to me the joy of your salvation,
and sustain in me a willing[y] spirit.

13 Then I will teach transgressors your ways,
and sinners will return to you.
14 Deliver me from bloodshed, O God,
O God of my salvation,
and my tongue will sing aloud of your deliverance.

15 O Lord, open my lips,
and my mouth will declare your praise.
16 For you have no delight in sacrifice;
if I were to give a burnt offering, you would not be pleased.
17 The sacrifice acceptable to God[z] is a broken spirit;
a broken and contrite heart, O God, you will not despise.

18 Do good to Zion in your good pleasure;
rebuild the walls of Jerusalem,
19 then you will delight in right sacrifices,

*w* Meaning of Heb uncertain *x* Or *steadfast*
*y* Or *generous* *z* Or *My sacrifice, O God,*

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**Ps 51: Prayer for healing and moral renewal** (a lament). **1–2**: Prayer for deliverance. Although v. 8 makes it clear that the psalmist's problem is one of illness, the main emphasis is upon restoration to moral, rather than merely physical, health. **3–5**: The psalmist confesses to having had a sinful nature even from the moment of conception. **51.6–12**: Renewed prayer for deliverance. **7**: Purging with hyssop is a reference to some ceremony of sprinkling (Ex 12.22; Lev 14.51), but in a purely metaphorical sense. **51.13–17**: The vow (see 7.17 n.) is to instruct others and to praise and serve God rather than to offer a sacrifice (see 40.6 n.). **18–19**: A later addition, evidently from the exilic or

in burnt offerings and whole burnt offerings;
then bulls will be offered on your altar.

## Psalm 52

*To the leader. A Maskil of David, when Doeg the Edomite came to Saul and said to him, "David has come to the house of Ahimelech."*

1 Why do you boast, O mighty one,
of mischief done against the godly?[a]
All day long 2you are plotting destruction.
Your tongue is like a sharp razor,
you worker of treachery.
3 You love evil more than good,
and lying more than speaking the truth. *Selah*
4 You love all words that devour,
O deceitful tongue.

5 But God will break you down forever;
he will snatch and tear you from your tent;
he will uproot you from the land of the living. *Selah*
6 The righteous will see, and fear,
and will laugh at the evildoer,[b] saying,
7 "See the one who would not take refuge in God,
but trusted in abundant riches,
and sought refuge in wealth!"[c]

8 But I am like a green olive tree in the house of God.
I trust in the steadfast love of God forever and ever.
9 I will thank you forever,
because of what you have done.
In the presence of the faithful
I will proclaim[d] your name, for it is good.

## Psalm 53

*To the leader: according to Mahalath. A Maskil of David.*

1 Fools say in their hearts, "There is no God."
They are corrupt, they commit abominable acts;
there is no one who does good.

2 God looks down from heaven on humankind
to see if there are any who are wise,
who seek after God.

3 They have all fallen away, they are all alike perverse;
there is no one who does good,
no, not one.

4 Have they no knowledge, those evildoers,
who eat up my people as they eat bread,
and do not call upon God?

5 There they shall be in great terror,
in terror such as has not been.
For God will scatter the bones of the ungodly;[e]

*a* Cn Compare Syr: Heb *the kindness of God*
*b* Heb *him* *c* Syr Tg: Heb *in his destruction*
*d* Cn: Heb *wait for* *e* Cn Compare Gk Syr: Heb *him who encamps against you*

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post-exilic period, designed to modify the anti-sacrificial spirit of the preceding verses and to adapt the psalm to liturgical use.

**Ps 52: God's imminent judgment against a tyrant** (a lament). Prayer for deliverance in the form of a denunciation of the psalmist's enemy. **1–4**: Character of the psalmist's enemy. **3**: *Selah*, see 3.2 n.

**52.5–7**: Retribution is about to befall the enemy. **8**: The psalmist is confident of being delivered (compare 1.3). **9**: The vow (see 7.17 n.).

**Ps 53: Condemnation of a cynical and unrighteous age.** This psalm is almost identical with Ps 14, except for the alteration of the divine name Yahweh (the LORD) to Elohim (God).

they will be put to shame,[f] for
God has rejected them.

6 O that deliverance for Israel would
come from Zion!
When God restores the fortunes
of his people,
Jacob will rejoice; Israel will be
glad.

## Psalm 54

*To the leader: with stringed instruments.*
*A Maskil of David, when the Ziphites went and told Saul, "David is in hiding among us."*

1 Save me, O God, by your name,
and vindicate me by your
might.
2 Hear my prayer, O God;
give ear to the words of my
mouth.

3 For the insolent have risen
against me,
the ruthless seek my life;
they do not set God before
them. *Selah*

4 But surely, God is my helper;
the Lord is the upholder of[g] my
life.
5 He will repay my enemies for
their evil.
In your faithfulness, put an end
to them.

6 With a freewill offering I will
sacrifice to you;
I will give thanks to your name,
O LORD, for it is good.
7 For he has delivered me from
every trouble,
and my eye has looked in
triumph on my enemies.

## Psalm 55

*To the leader: with stringed instruments.*
*A Maskil of David.*

1 Give ear to my prayer, O God;
do not hide yourself from my
supplication.
2 Attend to me, and answer me;
I am troubled in my complaint.
I am distraught [3]by the noise of
the enemy,
because of the clamor of the
wicked.
For they bring[h] trouble upon me,
and in anger they cherish
enmity against me.

4 My heart is in anguish within me,
the terrors of death have fallen
upon me.
5 Fear and trembling come upon
me,
and horror overwhelms me.
6 And I say, "O that I had wings
like a dove!
I would fly away and be at rest;
7 truly, I would flee far away;
I would lodge in the wilderness;
*Selah*
8 I would hurry to find a shelter for
myself
from the raging wind and
tempest."

9 Confuse, O Lord, confound their
speech;
for I see violence and strife in
the city.
10 Day and night they go around it
on its walls,

*f* Gk: Heb *you have put (them) to shame* *g* Gk Syr Jerome: Heb *is of those who uphold* or *is with those who uphold* *h* Cn Compare Gk: Heb *they cause to totter*

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**Ps 54: Prayer for deliverance from personal enemies** (a lament). **1**: Cry for help. **3**: The psalmist's situation. *Selah*, see 3.2 n. **4–5**: Expression of trust. **6–7**: The vow (see 7.17 n.). **6**: *Freewill offering*, Num 15.3.

**Ps 55: Prayer for deliverance from personal enemies** (a lament). **1–2**: Cry for help. **3–14**: The psalmist's situation: the chief enemy is a former friend (vv. 12–14, 20–21). **7**: *Selah*, see 3.2 n. **15**: A curse upon the enemies. The violence of the language is probably an attempt to counteract the effect of a

and iniquity and trouble are within it;
11 ruin is in its midst;
oppression and fraud
do not depart from its marketplace.

12 It is not enemies who taunt me—
I could bear that;
it is not adversaries who deal insolently with me—
I could hide from them.
13 But it is you, my equal,
my companion, my familiar friend,
14 with whom I kept pleasant company;
we walked in the house of God with the throng.
15 Let death come upon them;
let them go down alive to Sheol;
for evil is in their homes and in their hearts.

16 But I call upon God,
and the LORD will save me.
17 Evening and morning and at noon
I utter my complaint and moan,
and he will hear my voice.
18 He will redeem me unharmed
from the battle that I wage,
for many are arrayed against me.
19 God, who is enthroned from of old, *Selah*
will hear, and will humble them—
because they do not change,
and do not fear God.

20 My companion laid hands on a friend
and violated a covenant with me[i]
21 with speech smoother than butter,
but with a heart set on war;
with words that were softer than oil,
but in fact were drawn swords.

22 Cast your burden[j] on the LORD,
and he will sustain you;
he will never permit
the righteous to be moved.

23 But you, O God, will cast them down
into the lowest pit;
the bloodthirsty and treacherous
shall not live out half their days.
But I will trust in you.

## Psalm 56

*To the leader: according to The Dove on Far-off Terebinths. Of David. A Miktam, when the Philistines seized him in Gath.*

1 Be gracious to me, O God, for people trample on me;
all day long foes oppress me;
2 my enemies trample on me all day long,
for many fight against me.
O Most High, 3when I am afraid,
I put my trust in you.
4 In God, whose word I praise,
in God I trust; I am not afraid;
what can flesh do to me?

5 All day long they seek to injure my cause;
all their thoughts are against me for evil.

*i* Heb lacks *with me* *j* Or *Cast what he has given you*

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curse believed to have been pronounced by the enemies (compare Ps 58). *Alive to Sheol,* compare Num 16.30.

**55.16–19**: Expression of trust. **20–23**: Complaint (vv. 20–21); confidence (vv. 22–23).

**Ps 56: Prayer for deliverance from personal enemies** (a lament). **1–2, 5–6ab**: The psalmist's situation. **3–4, 8–11**: Expression of trust.

**56.6c–7**: Prayer for vindication. **7**: *The peoples,* a metaphor for the psalmist's enemies. **8**: *Your record,* 40.7. **12–13**: The vow (see 7.17 n.).

6 They stir up strife, they lurk,
they watch my steps.
As they hoped to have my life,
7 so repay[k] them for their crime;
in wrath cast down the peoples,
O God!

8 You have kept count of my
tossings;
put my tears in your bottle.
Are they not in your record?
9 Then my enemies will retreat
in the day when I call.
This I know, that[l] God is for
me.
10 In God, whose word I praise,
in the LORD, whose word I
praise,
11 in God I trust; I am not afraid.
What can a mere mortal do to
me?

12 My vows to you I must perform,
O God;
I will render thank offerings
to you.
13 For you have delivered my soul
from death,
and my feet from falling,
so that I may walk before God
in the light of life.

## Psalm 57

*To the leader: Do Not Destroy. Of David. A Miktam, when he fled from Saul, in the cave.*

1 Be merciful to me, O God, be
merciful to me,
for in you my soul takes refuge;
in the shadow of your wings I
will take refuge,
until the destroying storms
pass by.
2 I cry to God Most High,
to God who fulfills his purpose
for me.
3 He will send from heaven and
save me,
he will put to shame those who
trample on me. *Selah*
God will send forth his steadfast
love and his faithfulness.

4 I lie down among lions
that greedily devour[m] human
prey;
their teeth are spears and arrows,
their tongues sharp swords.

5 Be exalted, O God, above the
heavens.
Let your glory be over all the
earth.

6 They set a net for my steps;
my soul was bowed down.
They dug a pit in my path,
but they have fallen into it
themselves. *Selah*
7 My heart is steadfast, O God,
my heart is steadfast.
I will sing and make melody.
8 Awake, my soul!
Awake, O harp and lyre!
I will awake the dawn.
9 I will give thanks to you, O Lord,
among the peoples;
I will sing praises to you among
the nations.
10 For your steadfast love is as high
as the heavens;
your faithfulness extends to the
clouds.

11 Be exalted, O God, above the
heavens.
Let your glory be over all the
earth.

*k* Cn: Heb *rescue* *l* Or *because*
*m* Cn: Heb *are aflame for*

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**Ps 57: Prayer for deliverance from personal enemies** (a lament). **1**: Cry for help. **2–3**: Expression of trust. **3**: *Selah*, see 3.2 n. **4–6**: The psalmist's situation, prayer, and certainty of being heard.

**57.5**: A refrain (compare v. 11). **7–11**: The customary vow (see 7.17 n.) in the form of a thanksgiving sung in anticipation of deliverance (compare 22.22–31). These verses are practically identical with 108.1–5.

## Psalm 58

*To the leader: Do Not Destroy. Of David. A Miktam.*

1 Do you indeed decree what is right, you gods?[n]
Do you judge people fairly?
2 No, in your hearts you devise wrongs;
your hands deal out violence on earth.

3 The wicked go astray from the womb;
they err from their birth, speaking lies.
4 They have venom like the venom of a serpent,
like the deaf adder that stops its ear,
5 so that it does not hear the voice of charmers
or of the cunning enchanter.

6 O God, break the teeth in their mouths;
tear out the fangs of the young lions, O LORD!
7 Let them vanish like water that runs away;
like grass let them be trodden down[o] and wither.
8 Let them be like the snail that dissolves into slime;
like the untimely birth that never sees the sun.
9 Sooner than your pots can feel the heat of thorns,
whether green or ablaze, may he sweep them away!

10 The righteous will rejoice when they see vengeance done;
they will bathe their feet in the blood of the wicked.
11 People will say, "Surely there is a reward for the righteous;
surely there is a God who judges on earth."

## Psalm 59

*To the leader: Do Not Destroy. Of David. A Miktam, when Saul ordered his house to be watched in order to kill him.*

1 Deliver me from my enemies, O my God;
protect me from those who rise up against me.
2 Deliver me from those who work evil;
from the bloodthirsty save me.

3 Even now they lie in wait for my life;
the mighty stir up strife against me.
For no transgression or sin of mine, O LORD,
4 for no fault of mine, they run and make ready.

Rouse yourself, come to my help and see!
5 You, LORD God of hosts, are God of Israel.
Awake to punish all the nations;
spare none of those who treacherously plot evil.
*Selah*

6 Each evening they come back, howling like dogs

*n* Or *mighty lords* *o* Cn: Meaning of Heb uncertain

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**Ps 58: Curse upon enemies** (a lament). The violent language is probably to be explained as a curse that the psalmist utters to counteract the effect of a curse the enemies are believed to have pronounced previously (compare Ps 109.17–19). **1–5**: The character of the enemies. It is unclear whether they are heathen *gods* or "mighty lords" (note *n*); the translation of v. 1 is uncertain (compare 82.1). **6–9**: The curse. **10–11**: Deliverance is certain.

**Ps 59: Prayer for deliverance from personal enemies** (a lament). **1–2**: Cry for help. **3–7**: The psalmist's situation (and prayer, vv. 4b–5). **5**: *Nations,* see 56.7 n. *Selah,* see 3.2 n.

and prowling about the city.
7 There they are, bellowing with their mouths,
with sharp words[p] on their lips—
for "Who," they think,[q] "will hear us?"

8 But you laugh at them, O LORD;
you hold all the nations in derision.
9 O my strength, I will watch for you;
for you, O God, are my fortress.
10 My God in his steadfast love will meet me;
my God will let me look in triumph on my enemies.

11 Do not kill them, or my people may forget;
make them totter by your power, and bring them down,
O Lord, our shield.
12 For the sin of their mouths, the words of their lips,
let them be trapped in their pride.
For the cursing and lies that they utter,
13 consume them in wrath;
consume them until they are no more.
Then it will be known to the ends of the earth
that God rules over Jacob. *Selah*

14 Each evening they come back,
howling like dogs
and prowling about the city.
15 They roam about for food,
and growl if they do not get their fill.

16 But I will sing of your might;
I will sing aloud of your steadfast love in the morning.
For you have been a fortress for me
and a refuge in the day of my distress.
17 O my strength, I will sing praises to you,
for you, O God, are my fortress,
the God who shows me steadfast love.

## Psalm 60

*To the leader: according to the Lily of the Covenant. A Miktam of David; for instruction; when he struggled with Aram-naharaim and with Aram-zobah, and when Joab on his return killed twelve thousand Edomites in the Valley of Salt.*

1 O God, you have rejected us, broken our defenses;
you have been angry; now restore us!
2 You have caused the land to quake; you have torn it open;
repair the cracks in it, for it is tottering.
3 You have made your people suffer hard things;
you have given us wine to drink that made us reel.

4 You have set up a banner for those who fear you,
to rally to it out of bowshot.[r] *Selah*
5 Give victory with your right hand, and answer us,[s]

*p* Heb *with swords* *q* Heb lacks *they think*
*r* Gk Syr Jerome: Heb *because of the truth*
*s* Another reading is *me*

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**59.8–10**: Expression of trust. **11–15**: Appeal for vengeance. **12**: *Cursing*, see Ps 58 n. **16–17**: The vow (see 7.17 n.).

**Ps 60: Prayer for deliverance from national enemies** (a group lament). **1–3**: The people's situation. They have suffered a humiliating defeat, probably by the Edomites (see v. 9). **4–5**: Prayer for deliverance. **4**: *Selah*, see 3.2 n.

so that those whom you love
may be rescued.

6 God has promised in his sanctuary:[t]
"With exultation I will divide up Shechem,
and portion out the Vale of Succoth.
7 Gilead is mine, and Manasseh is mine;
Ephraim is my helmet;
Judah is my scepter.
8 Moab is my washbasin;
on Edom I hurl my shoe;
over Philistia I shout in triumph."

9 Who will bring me to the fortified city?
Who will lead me to Edom?
10 Have you not rejected us, O God?
You do not go out, O God, with our armies.
11 O grant us help against the foe,
for human help is worthless.
12 With God we shall do valiantly;
it is he who will tread down our foes.

## Psalm 61

*To the leader: with stringed instruments. Of David.*

1 Hear my cry, O God;
listen to my prayer.
2 From the end of the earth I call to you,
when my heart is faint.

Lead me to the rock
that is higher than I;
3 for you are my refuge,
a strong tower against the enemy.

4 Let me abide in your tent forever,
find refuge under the shelter of your wings. *Selah*
5 For you, O God, have heard my vows;
you have given me the heritage of those who fear your name.

6 Prolong the life of the king;
may his years endure to all generations!
7 May he be enthroned forever before God;
appoint steadfast love and faithfulness to watch over him!

8 So I will always sing praises to your name,
as I pay my vows day after day.

## Psalm 62

*To the leader: according to Jeduthun. A Psalm of David.*

1 For God alone my soul waits in silence;
from him comes my salvation.
2 He alone is my rock and my salvation,
my fortress; I shall never be shaken.

3 How long will you assail a person,
will you batter your victim, all of you,

*t* Or *by his holiness*

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**60.6–8**: The answer prayed for in v. 5—a divine oracle, probably delivered by a priest or temple prophet. The places referred to are either Hebrew territories or parts of the one-time Hebrew empire under the United Monarchy. The God of Israel lays claim to them all. **9–12**: Prayer for victory. **9**: *Me*, probably the king. *The fortified city*, perhaps Sela, Edom's capital.

**Ps 61**: **Prayer for protection** (a lament). **1–2**: Cry for help. **2**: *From the end of the earth* seems to show that the psalmist did not live in Palestine. **3–5**: Expression of trust. **4**: *Your tent*, see 27.6 n. The psalmist is perhaps preparing to make a pilgrimage. *Selah*, see 3.2 n.

**61.6–7**: Prayer for the king, the guarantor of safety for pilgrims and others. **8**: The vow (see 7.17 n.).

as you would a leaning wall, a tottering fence?
4 Their only plan is to bring down a person of prominence.
They take pleasure in falsehood;
they bless with their mouths,
but inwardly they curse. *Selah*

5 For God alone my soul waits in silence,
for my hope is from him.
6 He alone is my rock and my salvation,
my fortress; I shall not be shaken.
7 On God rests my deliverance and my honor;
my mighty rock, my refuge is in God.

8 Trust in him at all times, O people;
pour out your heart before him;
God is a refuge for us. *Selah*

9 Those of low estate are but a breath,
those of high estate are a delusion;
in the balances they go up;
they are together lighter than a breath.
10 Put no confidence in extortion,
and set no vain hopes on robbery;
if riches increase, do not set your heart on them.

11 Once God has spoken;
twice have I heard this:
that power belongs to God,
12 and steadfast love belongs to you, O Lord.
For you repay to all
according to their work.

## Psalm 63

*A Psalm of David, when he was in the Wilderness of Judah.*

1 O God, you are my God, I seek you,
my soul thirsts for you;
my flesh faints for you,
as in a dry and weary land where there is no water.
2 So I have looked upon you in the sanctuary,
beholding your power and glory.
3 Because your steadfast love is better than life,
my lips will praise you.
4 So I will bless you as long as I live;
I will lift up my hands and call on your name.

5 My soul is satisfied as with a rich feast,[u]
and my mouth praises you with joyful lips
6 when I think of you on my bed,
and meditate on you in the watches of the night;
7 for you have been my help,
and in the shadow of your wings I sing for joy.
8 My soul clings to you;
your right hand upholds me.

9 But those who seek to destroy my life
shall go down into the depths of the earth;

*u* Heb *with fat and fatness*

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**Ps 62: Confidence in God's protection** (a song of trust; see Ps 11 n.). **1–2, 5–7**: God is the psalmist's only help. **3–4**: The psalmist's situation: cursed by enemies. **8–12**: The psalmist's compatriots are instructed to trust in God also.

**Ps 63: Prayer for deliverance from personal enemies** (a lament; though this psalm may also be classified as a song of trust, see vv. 9–10). The psalmist's almost mystical delight in God's presence nearly obscures any sense of need for personal security (compare 73.23–28). **1**: Compare 42.1–2. **6**: See 3.5–6 n. The night was divided into three *watches*. **11**: *The king*, see 61.6–7 n.

10 they shall be given over to the
power of the sword,
they shall be prey for jackals.
11 But the king shall rejoice in God;
all who swear by him shall
exult,
for the mouths of liars will be
stopped.

## Psalm 64

*To the leader. A Psalm of David.*

1 Hear my voice, O God, in my
complaint;
preserve my life from the dread
enemy.
2 Hide me from the secret plots of
the wicked,
from the scheming of evildoers,
3 who whet their tongues like
swords,
who aim bitter words like
arrows,
4 shooting from ambush at the
blameless;
they shoot suddenly and
without fear.
5 They hold fast to their evil
purpose;
they talk of laying snares
secretly,
thinking, "Who can see us?[v]
6 Who can search out our
crimes?[w]
We have thought out a cunningly
conceived plot."
For the human heart and mind
are deep.

7 But God will shoot his arrow at
them;
they will be wounded suddenly.
8 Because of their tongue he will
bring them to ruin;[x]
all who see them will shake
with horror.
9 Then everyone will fear;
they will tell what God has
brought about,
and ponder what he has done.

10 Let the righteous rejoice in the
LORD
and take refuge in him.
Let all the upright in heart glory.

## Psalm 65

*To the leader. A Psalm of David. A Song.*

1 Praise is due to you,
O God, in Zion;
and to you shall vows be
performed,
2 O you who answer prayer!
To you all flesh shall come.
3 When deeds of iniquity
overwhelm us,
you forgive our transgressions.
4 Happy are those whom you
choose and bring near
to live in your courts.
We shall be satisfied with the
goodness of your house,
your holy temple.

5 By awesome deeds you answer us
with deliverance,
O God of our salvation;
you are the hope of all the ends of
the earth
and of the farthest seas.
6 By your[y] strength you established
the mountains;
you are girded with might.
7 You silence the roaring of the
seas,
the roaring of their waves,
the tumult of the peoples.

*v* Syr: Heb *them* *w* Cn: Heb *They search out crimes* *x* Cn: Heb *They will bring him to ruin, their tongue being against them* *y* Gk Jerome: Heb *his*

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**Ps 64: Prayer for deliverance from personal enemies** (a lament). **1–2**: Cry for help. **3–6**: The psalmist's situation. **3**: *Bitter words,* perhaps magical curses (compare Ps 58 n.). **7–9**: Expression of confidence. **10**: Concluding prayer.

**Ps 65: Thanksgiving for a good harvest. 1–5**: It is good to gather at the temple

8 Those who live at earth's farthest
bounds are awed by your
signs;
you make the gateways of the
morning and the evening
shout for joy.

9 You visit the earth and water it,
you greatly enrich it;
the river of God is full of water;
you provide the people with
grain,
for so you have prepared it.
10 You water its furrows abundantly,
settling its ridges,
softening it with showers,
and blessing its growth.
11 You crown the year with your
bounty;
your wagon tracks overflow
with richness.
12 The pastures of the wilderness
overflow,
the hills gird themselves with
joy,
13 the meadows clothe themselves
with flocks,
the valleys deck themselves with
grain,
they shout and sing together for
joy.

## Psalm 66

*To the leader. A Song. A Psalm.*

1 Make a joyful noise to God, all
the earth;
2 sing the glory of his name;
give to him glorious praise.
3 Say to God, "How awesome are
your deeds!
Because of your great power,
your enemies cringe
before you.
4 All the earth worships you;
they sing praises to you,
sing praises to your name."
*Selah*

5 Come and see what God has done:
he is awesome in his deeds
among mortals.
6 He turned the sea into dry land;
they passed through the river
on foot.
There we rejoiced in him,
7 who rules by his might forever,
whose eyes keep watch on the
nations—
let the rebellious not exalt
themselves. *Selah*

8 Bless our God, O peoples,
let the sound of his praise be
heard,
9 who has kept us among the living,
and has not let our feet slip.
10 For you, O God, have tested us;
you have tried us as silver is
tried.
11 You brought us into the net;
you laid burdens on our backs;
12 you let people ride over our heads;
we went through fire and
through water;
yet you have brought us out to a
spacious place.[z]

13 I will come into your house with
burnt offerings;
I will pay you my vows,
14 those that my lips uttered
and my mouth promised when I
was in trouble.
15 I will offer to you burnt offerings
of fatlings,
with the smoke of the sacrifice
of rams;

*z* Cn Compare Gk Syr Jerome Tg: Heb *to a saturation*

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to sing God's praises. **6–8**: It was he who created the world.

**65.9–13**: And it is he who makes the earth fertile. **9**: 104.13. *River of God,* see Ps 46.4 n.

**Ps 66: Liturgy of praise and thanksgiving. 1–12**: Hymn in praise of God's might and his care for his people. **4**: *Selah,* see 3.2 n.

**66.13–20**: An individual presents a thanksgiving sacrifice in fulfillment of a vow (7.17). **13–15**: Announcement of the worship-

I will make an offering of bulls
and goats. *Selah*

16 Come and hear, all you who fear God,
and I will tell what he has done for me.
17 I cried aloud to him,
and he was extolled with my tongue.
18 If I had cherished iniquity in my heart,
the Lord would not have listened.
19 But truly God has listened;
he has given heed to the words of my prayer.

20 Blessed be God,
because he has not rejected my prayer
or removed his steadfast love from me.

## Psalm 67

*To the leader: with stringed instruments. A Psalm. A Song.*

1 May God be gracious to us and bless us
and make his face to shine upon us, *Selah*
2 that your way may be known upon earth,
your saving power among all nations.
3 Let the peoples praise you, O God;
let all the peoples praise you.

4 Let the nations be glad and sing for joy,
for you judge the peoples with equity
and guide the nations upon earth. *Selah*
5 Let the peoples praise you, O God;
let all the peoples praise you.

6 The earth has yielded its increase;
God, our God, has blessed us.
7 May God continue to bless us;
let all the ends of the earth revere him.

## Psalm 68

*To the leader. Of David. A Psalm. A Song.*

1 Let God rise up, let his enemies be scattered;
let those who hate him flee before him.
2 As smoke is driven away, so drive them away;
as wax melts before the fire,
let the wicked perish before God.
3 But let the righteous be joyful;
let them exult before God;
let them be jubilant with joy.

4 Sing to God, sing praises to his name;
lift up a song to him who rides upon the clouds[a]—
his name is the LORD—
be exultant before him.

5 Father of orphans and protector of widows
is God in his holy habitation.
6 God gives the desolate a home to live in;

*a* Or *cast up a highway for him who rides through the deserts*

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er's purpose. **16–19**: The story of the writer's experience (see 18.4–6 n.). **20**: Concluding act of praise.

**Ps 67**: **Thanksgiving for a good harvest** (see v. 6). **1–2**: Prayer that the blessing may continue (compare Num 6.25). *Selah*, see 3.2 n. **3–5**: May other nations know that Israel's God is Lord of all! **6–7**: The occasion of the psalm.

**Ps 68**: **Liturgy for a festival celebration in the temple.** This is the most difficult of the psalms to interpret, and there is no general agreement either as to its meaning as a whole or in many of its details. Some schol-

he leads out the prisoners to prosperity,
but the rebellious live in a parched land.

7 O God, when you went out before your people,
when you marched through the wilderness, *Selah*
8 the earth quaked, the heavens poured down rain
at the presence of God, the God of Sinai,
at the presence of God, the God of Israel.
9 Rain in abundance, O God, you showered abroad;
you restored your heritage when it languished;
10 your flock found a dwelling in it;
in your goodness, O God, you provided for the needy.

11 The Lord gives the command;
great is the company of those[b] who bore the tidings:
12 "The kings of the armies, they flee, they flee!"
The women at home divide the spoil,
13 though they stay among the sheepfolds—
the wings of a dove covered with silver,
its pinions with green gold.
14 When the Almighty[c] scattered kings there,
snow fell on Zalmon.

15 O mighty mountain, mountain of Bashan;
O many-peaked mountain, mountain of Bashan!
16 Why do you look with envy,
O many-peaked mountain,
at the mount that God desired for his abode,
where the LORD will reside forever?

17 With mighty chariotry, twice ten thousand,
thousands upon thousands,
the Lord came from Sinai into the holy place.[d]
18 You ascended the high mount,
leading captives in your train
and receiving gifts from people,
even from those who rebel against the LORD God's abiding there.
19 Blessed be the Lord,
who daily bears us up;
God is our salvation. *Selah*
20 Our God is a God of salvation,
and to GOD, the Lord, belongs escape from death.

21 But God will shatter the heads of his enemies,
the hairy crown of those who walk in their guilty ways.
22 The Lord said,
"I will bring them back from Bashan,
I will bring them back from the depths of the sea,
23 so that you may bathe[e] your feet in blood,

*b* Or *company of the women* *c* Traditional rendering of Heb *Shaddai* *d* Cn: Heb *The Lord among them Sinai in the holy* (place)
*e* Gk Syr Tg: Heb *shatter*

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ars regard it as merely a collection of unrelated fragments. **1–3**: Prayer for God to manifest himself in battle (compare v. 1 with Num 10.35). **4–6**: Praise to God as helper of the helpless.

**68.7–10**: God's care for his people in time past (compare vv. 7–8 with Judg 5.4–5). **7**: *Selah*, see 3.2 n. **11–14**: Announcement of a great victory. **13**: *The wings of a dove . . .*, presumably describes some treasure found among the spoil. **14**: An incident otherwise unknown.

**68.15–16**: Praise of the mount of God (Zion). **15**: *Bashan*, a region east of the Sea of Galilee. **17–18**: God ascends his throne in the temple (compare 47.5). **19–20**: Praise of the God who daily delivers the people.

**68.21**: Expression of certainty that God will give the victory.

so that the tongues of your dogs
may have their share from the foe."

24 Your solemn processions are seen,[f] O God,
the processions of my God, my King, into the sanctuary—
25 the singers in front, the musicians last,
between them girls playing tambourines:
26 "Bless God in the great congregation,
the LORD, O you who are of Israel's fountain!"
27 There is Benjamin, the least of them, in the lead,
the princes of Judah in a body,
the princes of Zebulun, the princes of Naphtali.

28 Summon your might, O God;
show your strength, O God, as you have done for us before.
29 Because of your temple at Jerusalem
kings bear gifts to you.
30 Rebuke the wild animals that live among the reeds,
the herd of bulls with the calves of the peoples.
Trample[g] under foot those who lust after tribute;
scatter the peoples who delight in war.[h]
31 Let bronze be brought from Egypt;
let Ethiopia[i] hasten to stretch out its hands to God.

32 Sing to God, O kingdoms of the earth;
sing praises to the Lord, *Selah*
33 O rider in the heavens, the ancient heavens;
listen, he sends out his voice, his mighty voice.
34 Ascribe power to God,
whose majesty is over Israel;
and whose power is in the skies.
35 Awesome is God in his[j] sanctuary,
the God of Israel;
he gives power and strength to his people.

Blessed be God!

## Psalm 69

*To the leader: according to Lilies. Of David.*

1 Save me, O God,
for the waters have come up to my neck.
2 I sink in deep mire,
where there is no foothold;
I have come into deep waters,
and the flood sweeps over me.
3 I am weary with my crying;
my throat is parched.
My eyes grow dim
with waiting for my God.

4 More in number than the hairs of my head
are those who hate me without cause;
many are those who would destroy me,
my enemies who accuse me falsely.
What I did not steal
must I now restore?

*f* Or *have been seen* *g* Cn: Heb *Trampling*
*h* Meaning of Heb of verse 30 is uncertain
*i* Or *Nubia*; Heb *Cush* *j* Gk: Heb *from your*

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**68.24–27**: A procession enters the temple (see 24.7–10 n.). **27**: The reason for the mention of just these four tribes—the first two from the south, the other two from Galilee—is uncertain. Benjamin was the tribe of Saul; Judah, of David.

**68.28–31**: Prayer for victory against Egypt (*the wild animals . . . among the reeds,* v. 30). **32–35**: Hymn to the God of heaven. **33**: Compare 18.10–13 and 29.3–9.

**Ps 69**: **Prayer for deliverance from personal enemies** (a lament). **1–4**: Cry for

5 O God, you know my folly;
the wrongs I have done are not hidden from you.

6 Do not let those who hope in you be put to shame because of me,
O Lord GOD of hosts;
do not let those who seek you be dishonored because of me,
O God of Israel.
7 It is for your sake that I have borne reproach,
that shame has covered my face.
8 I have become a stranger to my kindred,
an alien to my mother's children.

9 It is zeal for your house that has consumed me;
the insults of those who insult you have fallen on me.
10 When I humbled my soul with fasting,[k]
they insulted me for doing so.
11 When I made sackcloth my clothing,
I became a byword to them.
12 I am the subject of gossip for those who sit in the gate,
and the drunkards make songs about me.

13 But as for me, my prayer is to you, O LORD.
At an acceptable time, O God,
in the abundance of your steadfast love, answer me.
With your faithful help 14 rescue me
from sinking in the mire;
let me be delivered from my enemies
and from the deep waters.

15 Do not let the flood sweep over me,
or the deep swallow me up,
or the Pit close its mouth over me.

16 Answer me, O LORD, for your steadfast love is good;
according to your abundant mercy, turn to me.
17 Do not hide your face from your servant,
for I am in distress—make haste to answer me.
18 Draw near to me, redeem me,
set me free because of my enemies.

19 You know the insults I receive,
and my shame and dishonor;
my foes are all known to you.
20 Insults have broken my heart,
so that I am in despair.
I looked for pity, but there was none;
and for comforters, but I found none.
21 They gave me poison for food,
and for my thirst they gave me vinegar to drink.

22 Let their table be a trap for them,
a snare for their allies.
23 Let their eyes be darkened so that they cannot see,
and make their loins tremble continually.
24 Pour out your indignation upon them,
and let your burning anger overtake them.
25 May their camp be a desolation;

*k* Gk Syr: Heb *I wept, with fasting my soul,* or *I made my soul mourn with fasting*

help. The language in vv. 2–3 is metaphorical. **5**: Confession of sin (compare 32.3–5; 51.3–5).

**69.6**: The prayer continued. **7–21**: The situation: the psalmist may have been, like Haggai and Zechariah, a zealot for the rebuilding of the temple after the Exile (compare v. 9 with vv. 35–36; see also Ezra 4.1–5, 23–24; 5.2–3), and thus have aroused opposition. **9**: Quoted in Jn 2.17. **13–18**: Deep emotions force the writer to interrupt the narrative with a prayer. **21**: Quoted in all the Gospels (Mt 27.34, 48; Mk 15.36; Lk 23.36; Jn 19.29).

**69.22–28**: Curse upon all the enemies (see

let no one live in their tents.
26 For they persecute those whom you have struck down,
and those whom you have wounded, they attack still more.[l]
27 Add guilt to their guilt;
may they have no acquittal from you.
28 Let them be blotted out of the book of the living;
let them not be enrolled among the righteous.
29 But I am lowly and in pain;
let your salvation, O God, protect me.

30 I will praise the name of God with a song;
I will magnify him with thanksgiving.
31 This will please the LORD more than an ox
or a bull with horns and hoofs.
32 Let the oppressed see it and be glad;
you who seek God, let your hearts revive.
33 For the LORD hears the needy,
and does not despise his own that are in bonds.

34 Let heaven and earth praise him,
the seas and everything that moves in them.
35 For God will save Zion
and rebuild the cities of Judah;
and his servants shall live[m] there and possess it;
36 the children of his servants shall inherit it,
and those who love his name shall live in it.

## Psalm 70

*To the leader. Of David, for the memorial offering.*

1 Be pleased, O God, to deliver me.
O LORD, make haste to help me!
2 Let those be put to shame and confusion
who seek my life.
Let those be turned back and brought to dishonor
who desire to hurt me.
3 Let those who say, "Aha, Aha!"
turn back because of their shame.

4 Let all who seek you
rejoice and be glad in you.
Let those who love your salvation
say evermore, "God is great!"
5 But I am poor and needy;
hasten to me, O God!
You are my help and my deliverer;
O LORD, do not delay!

## Psalm 71

1 In you, O LORD, I take refuge;
let me never be put to shame.
2 In your righteousness deliver me and rescue me;
incline your ear to me and save me.
3 Be to me a rock of refuge,
a strong fortress,[n] to save me,
for you are my rock and my fortress.

*l* Gk Syr: Heb *recount the pain of* *m* Syr: Heb *and they shall live* *n* Gk Compare 31.3: Heb *to come continually you have commanded*

Ps 58 n.). **25**: Quoted in Acts 1.20. **29**: Exclamatory prayer.

**69.30–36**: Thanksgiving for a favorable answer. A priest or temple prophet may have delivered an oracle of assurance between v. 29 and v. 30 (see 12.5 n. and 20.5 n.). **30–31**: Like the authors of Pss 40 (vv. 6–8); 50 (vv. 8–13); and 51 (vv. 16–17), the psalmist prefers to offer a hymn of thanksgiving. **35–36**: If these verses are not a later addition, they show the psalm to be post-exilic (compare 51.18–19).

**Ps 70**: **Prayer for deliverance from personal enemies** (a lament). This psalm is practically identical with 40.13–17.

**Ps 71**: **An aged worshiper's prayer for deliverance from personal enemies** (a lament). **1–8**: Cry for help, mingled with ex-

4 Rescue me, O my God, from the hand of the wicked,
from the grasp of the unjust and cruel.
5 For you, O Lord, are my hope,
my trust, O LORD, from my youth.
6 Upon you I have leaned from my birth;
it was you who took me from my mother's womb.
My praise is continually of you.

7 I have been like a portent to many,
but you are my strong refuge.
8 My mouth is filled with your praise,
and with your glory all day long.
9 Do not cast me off in the time of old age;
do not forsake me when my strength is spent.
10 For my enemies speak concerning me,
and those who watch for my life consult together.
11 They say, "Pursue and seize that person
whom God has forsaken,
for there is no one to deliver."

12 O God, do not be far from me;
O my God, make haste to help me!
13 Let my accusers be put to shame and consumed;
let those who seek to hurt me
be covered with scorn and disgrace.
14 But I will hope continually,
and will praise you yet more and more.

15 My mouth will tell of your righteous acts,
of your deeds of salvation all day long,
though their number is past my knowledge.
16 I will come praising the mighty deeds of the Lord GOD,
I will praise your righteousness, yours alone.

17 O God, from my youth you have taught me,
and I still proclaim your wondrous deeds.
18 So even to old age and gray hairs,
O God, do not forsake me,
until I proclaim your might
to all the generations to come.[o]
Your power [19]and your righteousness, O God,
reach the high heavens.

You who have done great things,
O God, who is like you?
20 You who have made me see many troubles and calamities
will revive me again;
from the depths of the earth
you will bring me up again.
21 You will increase my honor,
and comfort me once again.

22 I will also praise you with the harp
for your faithfulness, O my God;
I will sing praises to you with the lyre,
O Holy One of Israel.
23 My lips will shout for joy
when I sing praises to you;

*o* Gk Compare Syr: Heb *to a generation, to all that come*

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pressions of trust. **5–6:** Throughout the whole of previous life, God has never failed.

**71.9–11:** The psalmist's situation: there are violent enemies and age is a disadvantage (compare v. 18).

**71.12–13:** Prayer for vindication. **14–24:** The vow (see 7.17 n.). If the prayer is answered, the psalmist will use a talent for music (v. 22) to celebrate God's saving acts (vv. 15–16) so that future generations will know of them (v. 18). **20:** *From the depths of the earth,* compare 9.13; 30.3.

my soul also, which you have rescued.
24 All day long my tongue will talk of your righteous help,
for those who tried to do me harm have been put to shame, and disgraced.

## Psalm 72

*Of Solomon.*

1 Give the king your justice, O God,
and your righteousness to a king's son.
2 May he judge your people with righteousness,
and your poor with justice.
3 May the mountains yield prosperity for the people,
and the hills, in righteousness.
4 May he defend the cause of the poor of the people,
give deliverance to the needy,
and crush the oppressor.

5 May he live[p] while the sun endures,
and as long as the moon, throughout all generations.
6 May he be like rain that falls on the mown grass,
like showers that water the earth.
7 In his days may righteousness flourish
and peace abound, until the moon is no more.

8 May he have dominion from sea to sea,
and from the River to the ends of the earth.
9 May his foes[q] bow down before him,
and his enemies lick the dust.
10 May the kings of Tarshish and of the isles render him tribute,
may the kings of Sheba and Seba bring gifts.
11 May all kings fall down before him,
all nations give him service.

12 For he delivers the needy when they call,
the poor and those who have no helper.
13 He has pity on the weak and the needy,
and saves the lives of the needy.
14 From oppression and violence he redeems their life;
and precious is their blood in his sight.

15 Long may he live!
May gold of Sheba be given to him.
May prayer be made for him continually,
and blessings invoked for him all day long.
16 May there be abundance of grain in the land;
may it wave on the tops of the mountains;
may its fruit be like Lebanon;

*p* Gk: Heb *may they fear you* *q* Cn: Heb *those who live in the wilderness*

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**Ps 72: Prayer for God's blessing on the king.** The occasion for the psalm may have been a coronation or its annual commemoration. **1–4**: The king is to be the guarantor of justice for the helpless (vv. 12–15). **5–6**: These verses suggest the supernatural aura which surrounded the person of the king in the thought of the ancient Near East (even in Israel he could be called "God's son," see 2.7, possibly even "God," see 45.6). The health, fertility, and success of the nation were bound up inextricably in those of its monarch. **7**: *Righteousness* and *peace,* as frequently elsewhere, mean "right conditions" and "prosperity."

**72.8–11**: The king's ideal universal empire. **8**: *The River,* the Euphrates (1 Kings 4.21). **10**: *Tarshish,* in the western Mediterranean, possibly in Spain. *Sheba and Seba,* in south Arabia.

and may people blossom in the cities
like the grass of the field.
17 May his name endure forever,
his fame continue as long as the sun.
May all nations be blessed in him;[r]
may they pronounce him happy.

18 Blessed be the LORD, the God of Israel,
who alone does wondrous things.
19 Blessed be his glorious name forever;
may his glory fill the whole earth.
Amen and Amen.

20 The prayers of David son of Jesse are ended.

## BOOK III

### Psalm 73

*A Psalm of Asaph.*

1 Truly God is good to the upright,[s]
to those who are pure in heart.
2 But as for me, my feet had almost stumbled;
my steps had nearly slipped.
3 For I was envious of the arrogant;
I saw the prosperity of the wicked.

4 For they have no pain;
their bodies are sound and sleek.
5 They are not in trouble as others are;
they are not plagued like other people.
6 Therefore pride is their necklace;
violence covers them like a garment.
7 Their eyes swell out with fatness;
their hearts overflow with follies.
8 They scoff and speak with malice;
loftily they threaten oppression.
9 They set their mouths against heaven,
and their tongues range over the earth.

10 Therefore the people turn and praise them,[t]
and find no fault in them.[u]
11 And they say, "How can God know?
Is there knowledge in the Most High?"
12 Such are the wicked;
always at ease, they increase in riches.
13 All in vain I have kept my heart clean
and washed my hands in innocence.
14 For all day long I have been plagued,
and am punished every morning.

15 If I had said, "I will talk on in this way,"

*r* Or *bless themselves by him* *s* Or *good to Israel*
*t* Cn: Heb *his people return here* *u* Cn: Heb *abundant waters are drained by them*

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**72.12–14**: The character of the king. **15–17**: The prayer concluded. **18–19**: A doxology (no part of the psalm) marking the end of Book II of the Psalter (see 41.13 n.). **20**: An editorial colophon to one of the collections of psalms now included in the Psalter.

**Ps 73: Meditation on the justice of God** (a wisdom psalm). The problem is the same as that of the book of Job: How can one reconcile the belief that God is just with the apparent inequities in his government of the world? (compare Ps 37). **1**: Both a confession of faith and a thesis to be debated. **2–16**: The psalmist's experience and the grounds for doubt. **2**: The psalmist had nearly lost faith. **3–12**: Cynical, wicked people seemed to grow fat on their crimes (in sharp contradiction of such promises as Ps 1.4–6 or Deut 28.15–19; compare Job ch 21). **11**: Their indifference to morality was grounded in a skeptical attitude toward God (10.4; 14.1). **13–16**: The psalmist's immediate, impulsive reac-

I would have been untrue to the
circle of your children.
16 But when I thought how to
understand this,
it seemed to me a wearisome
task,
17 until I went into the sanctuary
of God;
then I perceived their end.
18 Truly you set them in slippery
places;
you make them fall to ruin.
19 How they are destroyed in a
moment,
swept away utterly by terrors!
20 They are[v] like a dream when one
awakes;
on awaking you despise their
phantoms.

21 When my soul was embittered,
when I was pricked in heart,
22 I was stupid and ignorant;
I was like a brute beast toward
you.
23 Nevertheless I am continually
with you;
you hold my right hand.
24 You guide me with your counsel,
and afterward you will receive
me with honor.[w]
25 Whom have I in heaven but you?
And there is nothing on earth
that I desire other than you.
26 My flesh and my heart may fail,
but God is the strength[x] of my
heart and my portion
forever.

27 Indeed, those who are far from
you will perish;
you put an end to those who
are false to you.
28 But for me it is good to be near
God;
I have made the Lord GOD my
refuge,
to tell of all your works.

## Psalm 74

*A Maskil of Asaph.*

1 O God, why do you cast us off
forever?
Why does your anger smoke
against the sheep of your
pasture?
2 Remember your congregation,
which you acquired long
ago,
which you redeemed to be the
tribe of your heritage.
Remember Mount Zion, where
you came to dwell.
3 Direct your steps to the perpetual
ruins;
the enemy has destroyed
everything in the sanctuary.

*v* Cn: Heb *Lord* *w* Or *to glory* *x* Heb *rock*

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tion. **13**: If wickedness is not punished, why be good? **14**: Efforts to be righteous brought only suffering.

**73.15**: This was what the psalmist was tempted to say, but had refrained from doing so because of the effect it might have on others (39.1). **16**: Private cogitations brought no answer to the problem. **17–28**: It was only on going into the temple to seek God's help that a satisfactory answer came. **17–22**: First of all it became clear that the prosperity of the wicked is only temporary (compare Ps 37).

**73.21–22**: The psalmist's previous attitude had been foolish and obtuse. **23–28**: In the second place, and far more importantly, the writer now realized that the righteous has something that the wicked, however prosperous, could never enjoy—a sense of the nearness of God (compare Ps 63; also 27.4).

**Ps 74**: **Prayer for deliverance from national enemies** (a group lament; compare Ps 44). **1–3**: Cry for help. **4–11**: The foe has devastated and burned the temple. If it were not for the statement in v. 9 that there is no longer any prophet, it would be natural to take the situation as being that of the conquest by the Babylonians in 587 B.C., but at that time, as evidenced by the activity of Jeremiah and Ezekiel, the prophetic movement was at its height. Consequently the situation must be some otherwise unknown event of the post-exilic period (compare Isa 64.11). Some have connected it with the Maccabean age, when there were no prophets (see 1 Macc 4.46;

4 Your foes have roared within your holy place;
they set up their emblems there.
5 At the upper entrance they hacked the wooden trellis with axes.[y]
6 And then, with hatchets and hammers,
they smashed all its carved work.
7 They set your sanctuary on fire;
they desecrated the dwelling place of your name,
bringing it to the ground.
8 They said to themselves, "We will utterly subdue them";
they burned all the meeting places of God in the land.

9 We do not see our emblems;
there is no longer any prophet,
and there is no one among us who knows how long.
10 How long, O God, is the foe to scoff?
Is the enemy to revile your name forever?
11 Why do you hold back your hand;
why do you keep your hand in[z] your bosom?

12 Yet God my King is from of old,
working salvation in the earth.
13 You divided the sea by your might;
you broke the heads of the dragons in the waters.
14 You crushed the heads of Leviathan;
you gave him as food[a] for the creatures of the wilderness.
15 You cut openings for springs and torrents;
you dried up ever-flowing streams.
16 Yours is the day, yours also the night;
you established the luminaries[b] and the sun.
17 You have fixed all the bounds of the earth;
you made summer and winter.

18 Remember this, O LORD, how the enemy scoffs,
and an impious people reviles your name.
19 Do not deliver the soul of your dove to the wild animals;
do not forget the life of your poor forever.

20 Have regard for your[c] covenant,
for the dark places of the land are full of the haunts of violence.
21 Do not let the downtrodden be put to shame;
let the poor and needy praise your name.
22 Rise up, O God, plead your cause;
remember how the impious scoff at you all day long.
23 Do not forget the clamor of your foes,
the uproar of your adversaries that goes up continually.

## Psalm 75

*To the leader: Do Not Destroy. A Psalm of Asaph. A Song.*

1 We give thanks to you, O God;
we give thanks; your name is near.

*y* Cn Compare Gk Syr: Meaning of Heb uncertain *z* Cn: Heb *do you consume your right hand from* *a* Heb *food for the people*
*b* Or *moon*; Heb *light* *c* Gk Syr: Heb *the*

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14.41). **4**: *Emblems,* perhaps military standards.

**74.12–17**: A hymn-like interlude, celebrating God as the creator. The allusion in vv. 13–15 is to one of the popular accounts of creation in which God was said to have subdued the monster of chaos (Leviathan or Rahab), a personification of the restless waters of the sea, before beginning his constructive activity (compare 89.10; Job 3.8 n.; 26.12–13; Isa 27.1; 51.9). **18–23**: Prayer for deliverance. **19**: *Your dove,* Israel.

**Ps 75**: **National thanksgiving for God's mighty acts. 1**: The verse shows that the

People tell of your wondrous deeds.

2 At the set time that I appoint
I will judge with equity.
3 When the earth totters, with all its inhabitants,
it is I who keep its pillars steady. *Selah*
4 I say to the boastful, "Do not boast,"
and to the wicked, "Do not lift up your horn;
5 do not lift up your horn on high,
or speak with insolent neck."

6 For not from the east or from the west
and not from the wilderness comes lifting up;
7 but it is God who executes judgment,
putting down one and lifting up another.
8 For in the hand of the LORD there is a cup
with foaming wine, well mixed;
he will pour a draught from it,
and all the wicked of the earth shall drain it down to the dregs.
9 But I will rejoice[d] forever;
I will sing praises to the God of Jacob.

10 All the horns of the wicked I will cut off,
but the horns of the righteous shall be exalted.

## Psalm 76

*To the leader: with stringed instruments. A Psalm of Asaph. A Song.*

1 In Judah God is known,
his name is great in Israel.
2 His abode has been established in Salem,
his dwelling place in Zion.
3 There he broke the flashing arrows,
the shield, the sword, and the weapons of war. *Selah*

4 Glorious are you, more majestic than the everlasting mountains.[e]
5 The stouthearted were stripped of their spoil;
they sank into sleep;
none of the troops
was able to lift a hand.
6 At your rebuke, O God of Jacob,
both rider and horse lay stunned.

7 But you indeed are awesome!
Who can stand before you when once your anger is roused?
8 From the heavens you uttered judgment;
the earth feared and was still
9 when God rose up to establish judgment,
to save all the oppressed of the earth. *Selah*

10 Human wrath serves only to praise you,
when you bind the last bit of your[f] wrath around you.
11 Make vows to the LORD your God, and perform them;
let all who are around him bring gifts
to the one who is awesome,
12 who cuts off the spirit of princes,

*d* Gk: Heb *declare* *e* Gk: Heb *the mountains of prey* *f* Heb lacks *your*

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basic theme is Israel's corporate (*we*) thankfulness, perhaps for a victory in battle. **2–5**: A divine oracle prophesying judgment for the wicked, probably spoken by a priest or temple prophet. **3**: *Selah,* see 3.2 n. **4–5**: *Horn,* symbol of strength and power.

**75.6–8**: A warning to all that the God of Israel controls the destinies of nations. **8**: *Cup,* see Isa 51.22–23; Jer 25.15; Lk 22.42 n. **9–10**: An individual, perhaps the king (see 60.9 n.) brings the thanksgiving liturgy to a conclusion in an act of praise and faith.

who inspires fear in the kings of the earth.

## Psalm 77

*To the leader: according to Jeduthun. Of Asaph. A Psalm.*

1 I cry aloud to God,
aloud to God, that he may hear me.
2 In the day of my trouble I seek the Lord;
in the night my hand is stretched out without wearying;
my soul refuses to be comforted.
3 I think of God, and I moan;
I meditate, and my spirit faints. *Selah*

4 You keep my eyelids from closing;
I am so troubled that I cannot speak.
5 I consider the days of old,
and remember the years of long ago.
6 I commune[g] with my heart in the night;
I meditate and search my spirit:[h]
7 "Will the Lord spurn forever,
and never again be favorable?
8 Has his steadfast love ceased forever?
Are his promises at an end for all time?
9 Has God forgotten to be gracious?
Has he in anger shut up his compassion?" *Selah*
10 And I say, "It is my grief
that the right hand of the Most High has changed."

11 I will call to mind the deeds of the LORD;
I will remember your wonders of old.
12 I will meditate on all your work,
and muse on your mighty deeds.
13 Your way, O God, is holy.
What god is so great as our God?
14 You are the God who works wonders;
you have displayed your might among the peoples.
15 With your strong arm you redeemed your people,
the descendants of Jacob and Joseph. *Selah*

16 When the waters saw you, O God,
when the waters saw you, they were afraid;
the very deep trembled.
17 The clouds poured out water;
the skies thundered;
your arrows flashed on every side.
18 The crash of your thunder was in the whirlwind;

*g* Gk Syr: Heb *My music* *h* Syr Jerome: Heb *my spirit searches*

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**Ps 76: A song of Zion celebrating God's ultimate victory over the nations** (compare Ps 46). **1–3:** Announcement of God's victory. **2:** *Salem,* a poetical name for Jerusalem (compare Gen 14.18). **3:** Although the verb is past, the reference is almost certainly to the great eschatological conflict of the latter days (see 48.4–8 n.; 46.6, 9). *Selah,* see 3.2 n.

**76.4–9:** Hymn to the victorious God of Israel. **10:** God turns even evil intentions to his own good purposes. **11–12:** The congregation is exhorted to join in worshiping him.

**Ps 77: Prayer for deliverance from personal trouble** (a lament). **1–6:** The psalmist's miserable situation: the nature of the difficulty is not specified. **3:** *Selah,* see 3.2 n. **7–10:** The mental agony is so intense as to raise questions about God's justice and love.

**77.11–15:** For encouragement, the psalmist recalls God's mighty works in the past. **16–20:** Fragment of an ancient hymn praising God for his work in creation (vv. 16–19) and in the history of Israel (v. 20).

your lightnings lit up the world;
the earth trembled and shook.
19 Your way was through the sea,
your path, through the mighty waters;
yet your footprints were unseen.
20 You led your people like a flock
by the hand of Moses and Aaron.

## Psalm 78

*A Maskil of Asaph.*

1 Give ear, O my people, to my teaching;
incline your ears to the words of my mouth.
2 I will open my mouth in a parable;
I will utter dark sayings from of old,
3 things that we have heard and known,
that our ancestors have told us.
4 We will not hide them from their children;
we will tell to the coming generation
the glorious deeds of the LORD, and his might,
and the wonders that he has done.

5 He established a decree in Jacob,
and appointed a law in Israel,
which he commanded our ancestors
to teach to their children;
6 that the next generation might know them,
the children yet unborn,
and rise up and tell them to their children,
7 so that they should set their hope in God,
and not forget the works of God,
but keep his commandments;
8 and that they should not be like their ancestors,
a stubborn and rebellious generation,
a generation whose heart was not steadfast,
whose spirit was not faithful to God.

9 The Ephraimites, armed with[i] the bow,
turned back on the day of battle.
10 They did not keep God's covenant,
but refused to walk according to his law.
11 They forgot what he had done,
and the miracles that he had shown them.
12 In the sight of their ancestors he worked marvels
in the land of Egypt, in the fields of Zoan.
13 He divided the sea and let them pass through it,
and made the waters stand like a heap.
14 In the daytime he led them with a cloud,
and all night long with a fiery light.

*i* Heb *armed with shooting*

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**Ps 78: The story of God's great deeds and his people's faithlessness.** One of a group of psalms (105; 106; 135; 136), composed for use at the major festivals, which simply recite the history of God's dealings with Israel. This psalm emphasizes the disobedience and ingratitude of the people, especially noting the defection of the Ephraimites (vv. 9–11) which led God to reject them in favor of Judah (vv. 67–69). **1–4**: The poet addresses the congregation in the style of the wisdom writers (compare 49.1–4). **2**: Quoted in Mt 13.35. **5–8**: The giving of the law. **6**: Deut 6.7.

**78.9–11**: It is uncertain what incident is referred to. **12–53**: God's miraculous care for his people during the Exodus and the wilderness wanderings, a review of events in Exodus and Numbers, vv. 17–20 and 32–41 being interludes which describe the

15 He split rocks open in the wilderness,
and gave them drink abundantly as from the deep.
16 He made streams come out of the rock,
and caused waters to flow down like rivers.

17 Yet they sinned still more against him,
rebelling against the Most High in the desert.
18 They tested God in their heart
by demanding the food they craved.
19 They spoke against God, saying,
"Can God spread a table in the wilderness?
20 Even though he struck the rock so that water gushed out
and torrents overflowed,
can he also give bread,
or provide meat for his people?"

21 Therefore, when the LORD heard, he was full of rage;
a fire was kindled against Jacob,
his anger mounted against Israel,
22 because they had no faith in God,
and did not trust his saving power.
23 Yet he commanded the skies above,
and opened the doors of heaven;
24 he rained down on them manna to eat,
and gave them the grain of heaven.
25 Mortals ate of the bread of angels;
he sent them food in abundance.
26 He caused the east wind to blow in the heavens,
and by his power he led out the south wind;
27 he rained flesh upon them like dust,
winged birds like the sand of the seas;
28 he let them fall within their camp,
all around their dwellings.
29 And they ate and were well filled,
for he gave them what they craved.
30 But before they had satisfied their craving,
while the food was still in their mouths,
31 the anger of God rose against them
and he killed the strongest of them,
and laid low the flower of Israel.

32 In spite of all this they still sinned;
they did not believe in his wonders.
33 So he made their days vanish like a breath,
and their years in terror.
34 When he killed them, they sought for him;
they repented and sought God earnestly.
35 They remembered that God was their rock,
the Most High God their redeemer.
36 But they flattered him with their mouths;
they lied to him with their tongues.
37 Their heart was not steadfast toward him;
they were not true to his covenant.
38 Yet he, being compassionate,
forgave their iniquity,
and did not destroy them;
often he restrained his anger,
and did not stir up all his wrath.
39 He remembered that they were but flesh,

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characteristic faithlessness of Israel. **12**: *Zoan*, a royal Egyptian store city, is identical with the Rameses of Ex 1.11. **15–16**: Ex 17.6; Num 20.10–13. **21–31**: Ex ch 16; Num ch 11. **24**: Quoted in Jn 6.31. **25**: The manna is fancifully interpreted as *the bread of the angels*.

a wind that passes and does not
come again.
40 How often they rebelled against
him in the wilderness
and grieved him in the desert!
41 They tested God again and again,
and provoked the Holy One of
Israel.
42 They did not keep in mind his
power,
or the day when he redeemed
them from the foe;
43 when he displayed his signs in
Egypt,
and his miracles in the fields of
Zoan.
44 He turned their rivers to blood,
so that they could not drink of
their streams.
45 He sent among them swarms of
flies, which devoured them,
and frogs, which destroyed
them.
46 He gave their crops to the
caterpillar,
and the fruit of their labor to
the locust.
47 He destroyed their vines with hail,
and their sycamores with frost.
48 He gave over their cattle to the
hail,
and their flocks to thunderbolts.
49 He let loose on them his fierce
anger,
wrath, indignation, and distress,
a company of destroying angels.
50 He made a path for his anger;
he did not spare them from
death,
but gave their lives over to the
plague.
51 He struck all the firstborn in
Egypt,
the first issue of their strength in
the tents of Ham.
52 Then he led out his people like
sheep,
and guided them in the
wilderness like a flock.
53 He led them in safety, so that they
were not afraid;
but the sea overwhelmed their
enemies.
54 And he brought them to his holy
hill,
to the mountain that his right
hand had won.
55 He drove out nations before them;
he apportioned them for a
possession
and settled the tribes of Israel in
their tents.

56 Yet they tested the Most High
God,
and rebelled against him.
They did not observe his
decrees,
57 but turned away and were faithless
like their ancestors;
they twisted like a treacherous
bow.
58 For they provoked him to anger
with their high places;
they moved him to jealousy
with their idols.
59 When God heard, he was full of
wrath,
and he utterly rejected Israel.
60 He abandoned his dwelling at
Shiloh,
the tent where he dwelt among
mortals,
61 and delivered his power to
captivity,
his glory to the hand of the foe.
62 He gave his people to the sword,
and vented his wrath on his
heritage.
63 Fire devoured their young men,
and their girls had no marriage
song.
64 Their priests fell by the sword,

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**78.44–51**: The plagues, Ex chs 7–12. **51**: *Ham*, a poetic synonym for Egypt (Gen 10.6).

**78.54–64**: God's care for his people during the conquest and in the days of the Judges; their continued faithlessness. **55**: *Nations*, Deut 7.1. **60–64**: The destruction of the temple at *Shiloh* is mentioned elsewhere only in Jer 7.12–14 and 26.6; the period was that of

and their widows made no lamentation.
65 Then the Lord awoke as from sleep,
like a warrior shouting because of wine.
66 He put his adversaries to rout;
he put them to everlasting disgrace.

67 He rejected the tent of Joseph,
he did not choose the tribe of Ephraim;
68 but he chose the tribe of Judah,
Mount Zion, which he loves.
69 He built his sanctuary like the high heavens,
like the earth, which he has founded forever.
70 He chose his servant David,
and took him from the sheepfolds;
71 from tending the nursing ewes he brought him
to be the shepherd of his people Jacob,
of Israel, his inheritance.
72 With upright heart he tended them,
and guided them with skillful hand.

## Psalm 79

*A Psalm of Asaph.*

1 O God, the nations have come into your inheritance;
they have defiled your holy temple;
they have laid Jerusalem in ruins.
2 They have given the bodies of your servants
to the birds of the air for food,
the flesh of your faithful to the wild animals of the earth.
3 They have poured out their blood like water
all around Jerusalem,
and there was no one to bury them.
4 We have become a taunt to our neighbors,
mocked and derided by those around us.

5 How long, O LORD? Will you be angry forever?
Will your jealous wrath burn like fire?
6 Pour out your anger on the nations
that do not know you,
and on the kingdoms
that do not call on your name.
7 For they have devoured Jacob
and laid waste his habitation.

8 Do not remember against us the iniquities of our ancestors;
let your compassion come speedily to meet us,
for we are brought very low.
9 Help us, O God of our salvation,
for the glory of your name;
deliver us, and forgive our sins,
for your name's sake.
10 Why should the nations say,
"Where is their God?"
Let the avenging of the outpoured blood of your servants
be known among the nations
before our eyes.

11 Let the groans of the prisoners
come before you;

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the events related in 1 Sam 4.1–7.2. **65–66**: Victories over the Philistines in the time of Saul and David. **67–72**: The building of the temple and the establishment of the Davidic dynasty. The passage reflects the tension between North and South which led to the division of the nation into Judah and Israel (Ephraim) and the eventual schism between Jews and Samaritans.

**Ps 79: Prayer for deliverance from national enemies** (a group lament). The occasion is probably the same as that of Ps 74 (see 74.4–11 n.). **1–4**: The people's situation: they are defeated and persecuted. **5–12**: Prayer for

according to your great power
preserve those doomed to die.
12 Return sevenfold into the bosom of our neighbors
the taunts with which they taunted you, O Lord!
13 Then we your people, the flock of your pasture,
will give thanks to you forever;
from generation to generation we will recount your praise.

## Psalm 80

*To the leader: on Lilies, a Covenant. Of Asaph. A Psalm.*

1 Give ear, O Shepherd of Israel,
you who lead Joseph like a flock!
You who are enthroned upon the cherubim, shine forth
2 before Ephraim and Benjamin and Manasseh.
Stir up your might,
and come to save us!

3 Restore us, O God;
let your face shine, that we may be saved.

4 O LORD God of hosts,
how long will you be angry with your people's prayers?
5 You have fed them with the bread of tears,
and given them tears to drink in full measure.
6 You make us the scorn[j] of our neighbors;
our enemies laugh among themselves.

7 Restore us, O God of hosts;
let your face shine, that we may be saved.

8 You brought a vine out of Egypt;
you drove out the nations and planted it.
9 You cleared the ground for it;
it took deep root and filled the land.
10 The mountains were covered with its shade,
the mighty cedars with its branches;
11 it sent out its branches to the sea,
and its shoots to the River.
12 Why then have you broken down its walls,
so that all who pass along the way pluck its fruit?
13 The boar from the forest ravages it,
and all that move in the field feed on it.

14 Turn again, O God of hosts;
look down from heaven, and see;
have regard for this vine,
15 the stock that your right hand planted.[k]
16 They have burned it with fire,
they have cut it down;[l]
may they perish at the rebuke of your countenance.
17 But let your hand be upon the one at your right hand,
the one whom you made strong for yourself.

*j* Syr: Heb *strife* *k* Heb adds from verse 17 *and upon the one whom you made strong for yourself* *l* Cn: Heb *it is cut down*

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deliverance and vengeance. **13**: The vow (see 7.17 n.).

**Ps 80**: **Prayer for deliverance from national enemies** (a group lament). **1–3**: Cry for help. The tribes mentioned show that the psalm is a product of the northern kingdom, Israel (compare 78.67–68). **1**: *Cherubim,* see 1 Sam 4.4. **3**: A refrain (see vv. 7, 19).

**80.8–13**: Israel as a vine, once carefully tended, but now forsaken (compare Isa 5.1–7). **8**: *Nations,* see 78.55 n. **11**: *The River,* the Euphrates (1 Kings 4.21).

**80.14–19**: Prayer for deliverance. **17**: *The one at your right hand* is a personification of Israel.

18 Then we will never turn back from you;
give us life, and we will call on your name.

19 Restore us, O LORD God of hosts;
let your face shine, that we may be saved.

## Psalm 81

*To the leader: according to The Gittith. Of Asaph.*

1 Sing aloud to God our strength;
shout for joy to the God of Jacob.
2 Raise a song, sound the tambourine,
the sweet lyre with the harp.
3 Blow the trumpet at the new moon,
at the full moon, on our festal day.
4 For it is a statute for Israel,
an ordinance of the God of Jacob.
5 He made it a decree in Joseph,
when he went out over[m] the land of Egypt.

I hear a voice I had not known:
6 "I relieved your[n] shoulder of the burden;
your[n] hands were freed from the basket.
7 In distress you called, and I rescued you;
I answered you in the secret place of thunder;
I tested you at the waters of Meribah. *Selah*
8 Hear, O my people, while I admonish you;
O Israel, if you would but listen to me!
9 There shall be no strange god among you;
you shall not bow down to a foreign god.
10 I am the LORD your God,
who brought you up out of the land of Egypt.
Open your mouth wide and I will fill it.

11 "But my people did not listen to my voice;
Israel would not submit to me.
12 So I gave them over to their stubborn hearts,
to follow their own counsels.
13 O that my people would listen to me,
that Israel would walk in my ways!
14 Then I would quickly subdue their enemies,
and turn my hand against their foes.
15 Those who hate the LORD would cringe before him,
and their doom would last forever.
16 I would feed you[o] with the finest of the wheat,
and with honey from the rock I would satisfy you."

## Psalm 82

*A Psalm of Asaph.*

1 God has taken his place in the divine council;

*m* Or *against* *n* Heb *his* *o* Cn Compare verse 16b: Heb *he would feed him*

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**Ps 81: Liturgy for a festival. 1–5a:** Hymn-like summons to worship. **3:** *Festal day,* probably festival of booths (Deut 16.13–15).

**81.5b–16:** A priest or temple prophet delivers a divine oracle in which God reminds his people of what he has done for them in the past (vv. 6–7); his demand for their loyalty (vv. 8–10) and their disobedience to it (vv. 11–12); their future prosperity depends on their willingness now to change their ways (vv. 13–16; compare 95.7b–11). **7:** *The secret place of thunder,* Sinai. *Meribah,* Ex 17.7; Num 20.13. *Selah,* see 3.2 n.

**Ps 82: Liturgy of the LORD's judgment on pagan gods. 1:** Making use of a conception, common to the ancient Near East, that the world is ruled by a council of gods (89.5–

in the midst of the gods he holds judgment:
2 "How long will you judge unjustly
and show partiality to the wicked? *Selah*
3 Give justice to the weak and the orphan;
maintain the right of the lowly and the destitute.
4 Rescue the weak and the needy;
deliver them from the hand of the wicked."

5 They have neither knowledge nor understanding,
they walk around in darkness;
all the foundations of the earth are shaken.

6 I say, "You are gods,
children of the Most High, all of you;
7 nevertheless, you shall die like mortals,
and fall like any prince."[p]

8 Rise up, O God, judge the earth;
for all the nations belong to you!

## Psalm 83

*A Song. A Psalm of Asaph.*

1 O God, do not keep silence;
do not hold your peace or be still, O God!
2 Even now your enemies are in tumult;
those who hate you have raised their heads.
3 They lay crafty plans against your people;
they consult together against those you protect.
4 They say, "Come, let us wipe them out as a nation;
let the name of Israel be remembered no more."
5 They conspire with one accord;
against you they make a covenant—
6 the tents of Edom and the Ishmaelites,
Moab and the Hagrites,
7 Gebal and Ammon and Amalek,
Philistia with the inhabitants of Tyre;
8 Assyria also has joined them;
they are the strong arm of the children of Lot. *Selah*

9 Do to them as you did to Midian,
as to Sisera and Jabin at the Wadi Kishon,
10 who were destroyed at En-dor,
who became dung for the ground.
11 Make their nobles like Oreb and Zeeb,
all their princes like Zebah and Zalmunna,
12 who said, "Let us take the pastures of God
for our own possession."

13 O my God, make them like whirling dust,[q]
like chaff before the wind.
14 As fire consumes the forest,
as the flame sets the mountains ablaze,
15 so pursue them with your tempest

*p* Or *fall as one man, O princes* *q* Or *a tumbleweed*

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7), the poet (presumably a priest or temple prophet) sees, in a vision, the God of Israel standing up in the midst of the council and pronouncing judgment upon all the other members. **2–7**: Because they govern the earth unjustly, they shall all perish like mere human beings (Ezek 28.9). **2**: *Selah*, see 3.2 n. **6**: Quoted in Jn 10.34. **8**: A prayer that the poet's vision may be realized.

**Ps 83: Prayer for deliverance from national enemies** (a lament). **1**: Cry for help. **2–8**: Israel's perilous situation, attacked by a powerful group of foreign allies. **6–7**: These are Israel's near neighbors. **8**: *Children of Lot*, Moabites and Ammonites (Gen 19.36–38; Deut 2.9). *Selah*, see 3.2 n.

**83.9–18**: Prayer for victory. **9–11**: Gideon's decisive victory over Midian is recorded

and terrify them with your hurricane.
16 Fill their faces with shame,
so that they may seek your name, O LORD.
17 Let them be put to shame and dismayed forever;
let them perish in disgrace.
18 Let them know that you alone, whose name is the LORD,
are the Most High over all the earth.

## Psalm 84

*To the leader: according to The Gittith. Of the Korahites. A Psalm.*

1 How lovely is your dwelling place,
O LORD of hosts!
2 My soul longs, indeed it faints for the courts of the LORD;
my heart and my flesh sing for joy
to the living God.

3 Even the sparrow finds a home, and the swallow a nest for herself,
where she may lay her young,
at your altars, O LORD of hosts, my King and my God.
4 Happy are those who live in your house,
ever singing your praise. *Selah*

5 Happy are those whose strength is in you,
in whose heart are the highways to Zion.[r]
6 As they go through the valley of Baca
they make it a place of springs;
the early rain also covers it with pools.
7 They go from strength to strength;
the God of gods will be seen in Zion.

8 O LORD God of hosts, hear my prayer;
give ear, O God of Jacob! *Selah*
9 Behold our shield, O God;
look on the face of your anointed.

10 For a day in your courts is better than a thousand elsewhere.
I would rather be a doorkeeper in the house of my God
than live in the tents of wickedness.
11 For the LORD God is a sun and shield;
he bestows favor and honor.
No good thing does the LORD withhold
from those who walk uprightly.
12 O LORD of hosts,
happy is everyone who trusts in you.

## Psalm 85

*To the leader. Of the Korahites. A Psalm.*

1 LORD, you were favorable to your land;
you restored the fortunes of Jacob.
2 You forgave the iniquity of your people;
you pardoned all their sin. *Selah*
3 You withdrew all your wrath;

*r* Heb lacks *to Zion*

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in Judg chs 6–8; the defeat of *Sisera and Jabin* by Deborah and Barak in Judg chs 4–5. *Oreb and Zeeb,* Judg 7.25. *Zebah and Zalmunna,* Judg 8.21.

**Ps 84: Song praising Zion as the longed-for goal of the pilgrim. 1–2:** Praise for the temple. **3–4:** Envy of the birds and servitors who live there. **4:** *Selah,* see 3.2 n. **84.5–7:** The joys of the pilgrimage. **6:** *Baca,* some unknown, desolate place through which the pilgrims must go. **8–9:** Prayer for the king (see 61.6–7 n.). **9:** *Anointed,* see 2.2 n. **10–12:** The superiority of life in the temple to life anywhere else.

**Ps 85: Prayer for deliverance from national adversity** (a group lament). **1–3:**

you turned from your hot
anger.

4 Restore us again, O God of our
salvation,
and put away your indignation
toward us.
5 Will you be angry with us
forever?
Will you prolong your anger to
all generations?
6 Will you not revive us again,
so that your people may rejoice
in you?
7 Show us your steadfast love,
O LORD,
and grant us your salvation.

8 Let me hear what God the LORD
will speak,
for he will speak peace to his
people,
to his faithful, to those who
turn to him in their
hearts.[s]
9 Surely his salvation is at hand for
those who fear him,
that his glory may dwell in our
land.

10 Steadfast love and faithfulness
will meet;
righteousness and peace will kiss
each other.
11 Faithfulness will spring up from
the ground,
and righteousness will look
down from the sky.
12 The LORD will give what is good,
and our land will yield its
increase.
13 Righteousness will go before him,
and will make a path for his
steps.

*Prayer for the restoration of God's favor*

## Psalm 86

*A Prayer of David.*

1 Incline your ear, O LORD, and
answer me,
for I am poor and needy.
2 Preserve my life, for I am devoted
to you;
save your servant who trusts
in you.
You are my God; 3be gracious to
me, O Lord,
for to you do I cry all day long.
4 Gladden the soul of your servant,
for to you, O Lord, I lift up my
soul.
5 For you, O Lord, are good and
forgiving,
abounding in steadfast love to
all who call on you.
6 Give ear, O LORD, to my prayer;
listen to my cry of supplication.
7 In the day of my trouble I call
on you,
for you will answer me.

8 There is none like you among the
gods, O Lord,
nor are there any works like
yours.
9 All the nations you have made
shall come
and bow down before you,
O Lord,
and shall glorify your name.
10 For you are great and do
wondrous things;
you alone are God.
11 Teach me your way, O LORD,
that I may walk in your truth;
give me an undivided heart to
revere your name.

[s] Gk: Heb *but let them not turn back to folly*

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God's favor toward his people in time past. **4–7**: Prayer that God's favor may be manifested again in their present difficulties (perhaps poor crops; compare v. 12).

**85.8–13**: A priest or temple prophet delivers an oracle of assurance.

**Ps 86: Prayer for deliverance from personal enemies** (a lament). **1–7**: Cry for help.

**86.8–10**: God is praised for his power. **11**: Prayer for guidance. **12–13**: Thanksgiving, spoken in confident anticipation of deliver-

12 I give thanks to you, O Lord my God, with my whole heart,
and I will glorify your name forever.
13 For great is your steadfast love toward me;
you have delivered my soul from the depths of Sheol.

14 O God, the insolent rise up against me;
a band of ruffians seeks my life,
and they do not set you before them.
15 But you, O Lord, are a God merciful and gracious,
slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love and faithfulness.
16 Turn to me and be gracious to me;
give your strength to your servant;
save the child of your serving girl.
17 Show me a sign of your favor,
so that those who hate me may see it and be put to shame,
because you, LORD, have helped me and comforted me.

## Psalm 87

*Of the Korahites. A Psalm. A Song.*

1 On the holy mount stands the city he founded;
2 the LORD loves the gates of Zion more than all the dwellings of Jacob.

3 Glorious things are spoken of you,
O city of God. *Selah*

4 Among those who know me I mention Rahab and Babylon;
Philistia too, and Tyre, with Ethiopia[t]—
"This one was born there," they say.

5 And of Zion it shall be said,
"This one and that one were born in it";
for the Most High himself will establish it.
6 The LORD records, as he registers the peoples,
"This one was born there."
*Selah*

7 Singers and dancers alike say,
"All my springs are in you."

## Psalm 88

*A Song. A Psalm of the Korahites. To the leader: according to Mahalath Leannoth. A Maskil of Heman the Ezrahite.*

1 O LORD, God of my salvation,
when, at night, I cry out in your presence,
2 let my prayer come before you;
incline your ear to my cry.

3 For my soul is full of troubles,
and my life draws near to Sheol.

*t* Or *Nubia*; Heb *Cush*

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ance. **13**: *Sheol*, the abode of the dead. The psalmist is sure God will not permit the present situation to end in death.

**86.14**: Prayer for preservation from ruthless enemies. **15–17**: Return to the mood of supplication. **16**: *Child of your serving girl*, synonymous with *your servant*.

**Ps 87**: **Song praising Zion as the mother of believers everywhere.** The text of this psalm is damaged and disarranged. **1–3**: The glory of Zion (Jerusalem). **3**: This verse provided the theme for Augustine's *City of God* and was the inspiration of a popular hymn. *Selah*, see 3.2 n. **4**: God's people, the citizens of Zion, are found in every country. *Rahab*, a poetical name for Egypt. **5**: The roll of Zion's citizens is a long and proud one. **6**: As God keeps the census records of the world, he notes with special pleasure the citizens of Zion. **7**: This verse seems to be only a fragment. *Springs*, sources of welfare.

**Ps 88**: **Desperate prayer for healing in sickness** (a lament). **1–2**: Cry for help.

**88.3–9**: The psalmist's situation, probably one of lifelong illness (compare v. 15). **3–4**: *Sheol . . . the Pit*, see 6.5 n. **5–6**: A classic

4 I am counted among those who
go down to the Pit;
I am like those who have no
help,
5 like those forsaken among the
dead,
like the slain that lie in the
grave,
like those whom you remember
no more,
for they are cut off from your
hand.
6 You have put me in the depths of
the Pit,
in the regions dark and deep.
7 Your wrath lies heavy upon me,
and you overwhelm me with all
your waves. *Selah*

8 You have caused my companions
to shun me;
you have made me a thing of
horror to them.
I am shut in so that I cannot
escape;
9 my eye grows dim through
sorrow.
Every day I call on you, O LORD;
I spread out my hands to you.
10 Do you work wonders for the
dead?
Do the shades rise up to praise
you? *Selah*
11 Is your steadfast love declared in
the grave,
or your faithfulness in
Abaddon?
12 Are your wonders known in the
darkness,
or your saving help in the land
of forgetfulness?

13 But I, O LORD, cry out to you;
in the morning my prayer
comes before you.
14 O LORD, why do you cast me off?
Why do you hide your face
from me?
15 Wretched and close to death from
my youth up,
I suffer your terrors; I am
desperate.[u]
16 Your wrath has swept over me;
your dread assaults destroy me.
17 They surround me like a flood all
day long;
from all sides they close in on
me.
18 You have caused friend and
neighbor to shun me;
my companions are in darkness.

## Psalm 89

*A Maskil of Ethan the Ezrahite.*

1 I will sing of your steadfast love,
O LORD,[v] forever;
with my mouth I will proclaim
your faithfulness to all
generations.
2 I declare that your steadfast love is
established forever;
your faithfulness is as firm as
the heavens.

3 You said, "I have made a covenant
with my chosen one,
I have sworn to my servant
David:
4 'I will establish your descendants
forever,
and build your throne for all
generations.' " *Selah*

5 Let the heavens praise your
wonders, O LORD,
your faithfulness in the assembly
of the holy ones.

*u* Meaning of Heb uncertain *v* Gk: Heb *the steadfast love of the* LORD

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description of Sheol (compare vv. 10–12; Job 10.21–22; Isa 38.18–19). **7:** *Selah,* see 3.2 n.

**88.10–18:** Prayer for deliverance, notable for the absence of even a spark of hopefulness. **11:** *Abaddon,* see Job 26.6 n.

**Ps 89: A king prays for deliverance from his enemies. 1–18:** Hymn extolling God's power and faithfulness. **3–4:** His covenant with David recalled (compare vv. 19–37; 2 Sam 7.16). **4:** *Selah,* see 3.2 n.

**89.5–7:** See 82.1 n. **10:** *Rahab,* see 74.12–17 n. **12:** *Tabor,* a mountain in the north of

6 For who in the skies can be
compared to the LORD?
Who among the heavenly beings
is like the LORD,
7 a God feared in the council of the
holy ones,
great and awesome[w] above all
that are around him?
8 O LORD God of hosts,
who is as mighty as you,
O LORD?
Your faithfulness surrounds
you.
9 You rule the raging of the sea;
when its waves rise, you still
them.
10 You crushed Rahab like a carcass;
you scattered your enemies with
your mighty arm.
11 The heavens are yours, the earth
also is yours;
the world and all that is in
it—you have founded
them.
12 The north and the south[x]—you
created them;
Tabor and Hermon joyously
praise your name.
13 You have a mighty arm;
strong is your hand, high your
right hand.
14 Righteousness and justice are the
foundation of your throne;
steadfast love and faithfulness go
before you.
15 Happy are the people who know
the festal shout,
who walk, O LORD, in the light
of your countenance;
16 they exult in your name all day
long,
and extol[y] your righteousness.
17 For you are the glory of their
strength;
by your favor our horn is
exalted.
18 For our shield belongs to the
LORD,
our king to the Holy One of
Israel.

19 Then you spoke in a vision to
your faithful one, and said:
"I have set the crown[z] on one
who is mighty,
I have exalted one chosen from
the people.
20 I have found my servant David;
with my holy oil I have
anointed him;
21 my hand shall always remain with
him;
my arm also shall strengthen
him.
22 The enemy shall not outwit him,
the wicked shall not humble
him.
23 I will crush his foes before him
and strike down those who hate
him.
24 My faithfulness and steadfast love
shall be with him;
and in my name his horn shall
be exalted.
25 I will set his hand on the sea
and his right hand on the rivers.
26 He shall cry to me, 'You are my
Father,
my God, and the Rock of my
salvation!'
27 I will make him the firstborn,
the highest of the kings of the
earth.
28 Forever I will keep my steadfast
love for him,
and my covenant with him will
stand firm.
29 I will establish his line forever,

*w* Gk Syr: Heb *greatly awesome* *x* Or *Zaphon and Yamin* *y* Cn: Heb *are exalted in* *z* Cn: Heb *help*

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Palestine. *Hermon,* the highest mountain of Syria. **17**: *Horn,* see 75.4–5 n. **18**: *Shield,* the king (see 47.9 n.).

**89.19–37**: The terms of the unalterable covenant that God had once established with the Davidic dynasty. **19**: *Faithful one,* David (compare vv. 3–4); alternatively, Nathan (see 2 Sam 7.4). **27**: *The firstborn,* compare 2.7.

and his throne as long as the heavens endure.
30 If his children forsake my law
and do not walk according to my ordinances,
31 if they violate my statutes
and do not keep my commandments,
32 then I will punish their transgression with the rod
and their iniquity with scourges;
33 but I will not remove from him my steadfast love,
or be false to my faithfulness.
34 I will not violate my covenant,
or alter the word that went forth from my lips.
35 Once and for all I have sworn by my holiness;
I will not lie to David.
36 His line shall continue forever,
and his throne endure before me like the sun.
37 It shall be established forever like the moon,
an enduring witness in the skies." *Selah*

38 But now you have spurned and rejected him;
you are full of wrath against your anointed.
39 You have renounced the covenant with your servant;
you have defiled his crown in the dust.
40 You have broken through all his walls;
you have laid his strongholds in ruins.
41 All who pass by plunder him;
he has become the scorn of his neighbors.
42 You have exalted the right hand of his foes;
you have made all his enemies rejoice.
43 Moreover, you have turned back the edge of his sword,
and you have not supported him in battle.
44 You have removed the scepter from his hand,[a]
and hurled his throne to the ground.
45 You have cut short the days of his youth;
you have covered him with shame. *Selah*

46 How long, O LORD? Will you hide yourself forever?
How long will your wrath burn like fire?
47 Remember how short my time is—[b]
for what vanity you have created all mortals!
48 Who can live and never see death?
Who can escape the power of Sheol? *Selah*

49 Lord, where is your steadfast love of old,
which by your faithfulness you swore to David?
50 Remember, O Lord, how your servant is taunted;
how I bear in my bosom the insults of the peoples,[c]
51 with which your enemies taunt, O LORD,
with which they taunted the footsteps of your anointed.

52 Blessed be the LORD forever.
Amen and Amen.

*a* Cn: Heb *removed his cleanness* *b* Meaning of Heb uncertain *c* Cn: Heb *bosom all of many peoples*

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**89.38–45**: The king has been defeated in battle (v. 43), and it seems that God has forsaken the covenant. **38**: *Anointed* (see v. 20; 2.2 n.).

**89.46–51**: Prayer that God will remember his promises and give victory to David's descendant. **48**: *Sheol,* see 6.5 n.; 49.15. **52**: A doxology (no part of the psalm) marking the end of Book III of the Psalter (see 41.13 n.).

**Ps 90: Prayer for deliverance from national adversity** (a group lament). **1–6**: Hymn-like introduction declaring God's

# BOOK IV

## Psalm 90

*A Prayer of Moses, the man of God.*

1 Lord, you have been our dwelling place[d]
in all generations.
2 Before the mountains were brought forth,
or ever you had formed the earth and the world,
from everlasting to everlasting you are God.

3 You turn us[e] back to dust,
and say, "Turn back, you mortals."
4 For a thousand years in your sight are like yesterday when it is past,
or like a watch in the night.

5 You sweep them away; they are like a dream,
like grass that is renewed in the morning;
6 in the morning it flourishes and is renewed;
in the evening it fades and withers.

7 For we are consumed by your anger;
by your wrath we are overwhelmed.
8 You have set our iniquities before you,
our secret sins in the light of your countenance.

9 For all our days pass away under your wrath;
our years come to an end[f] like a sigh.
10 The days of our life are seventy years,
or perhaps eighty, if we are strong;
even then their span[g] is only toil and trouble;
they are soon gone, and we fly away.

11 Who considers the power of your anger?
Your wrath is as great as the fear that is due you.
12 So teach us to count our days
that we may gain a wise heart.

13 Turn, O LORD! How long?
Have compassion on your servants!
14 Satisfy us in the morning with your steadfast love,
so that we may rejoice and be glad all our days.
15 Make us glad as many days as you have afflicted us,
and as many years as we have seen evil.
16 Let your work be manifest to your servants,
and your glorious power to their children.
17 Let the favor of the Lord our God be upon us,
and prosper for us the work of our hands—
O prosper the work of our hands!

## Psalm 91

1 You who live in the shelter of the Most High,
who abide in the shadow of the Almighty,[h]

*d* Another reading is *our refuge*
*e* Heb *humankind*
*f* Syr: Heb *we bring our years to an end*
*g* Cn Compare Gk Syr Jerome Tg: Heb *pride*
*h* Traditional rendering of Heb *Shaddai*

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eternity and the transience of human life (compare Isa 40.6–8). **4:** *Watch,* see 63.6 n. **7–10:** Brevity and sorrow of human existence.

**90.11–12:** Prayer that people may learn wisdom from considering this. **13–17:** Prayer that Israel may be delivered from its difficulties.

2 will say to the LORD, "My refuge
and my fortress;
my God, in whom I trust."
3 For he will deliver you from the
snare of the fowler
and from the deadly pestilence;
4 he will cover you with his
pinions,
and under his wings you will
find refuge;
his faithfulness is a shield and
buckler.
5 You will not fear the terror of the
night,
or the arrow that flies by day,
6 or the pestilence that stalks in
darkness,
or the destruction that wastes at
noonday.

7 A thousand may fall at your side,
ten thousand at your right hand,
but it will not come near you.
8 You will only look with your eyes
and see the punishment of the
wicked.

9 Because you have made the LORD
your refuge,[i]
the Most High your dwelling
place,
10 no evil shall befall you,
no scourge come near your tent.

11 For he will command his angels
concerning you
to guard you in all your ways.
12 On their hands they will bear
you up,
so that you will not dash your
foot against a stone.
13 You will tread on the lion and the
adder,
the young lion and the serpent
you will trample under
foot.

14 Those who love me, I will deliver;
I will protect those who know
my name.
15 When they call to me, I will
answer them;
I will be with them in trouble,
I will rescue them and honor
them.
16 With long life I will satisfy them,
and show them my salvation.

## Psalm 92

*A Psalm. A Song for the Sabbath Day.*

1 It is good to give thanks to the
LORD,
to sing praises to your name,
O Most High;
2 to declare your steadfast love in
the morning,
and your faithfulness by night,
3 to the music of the lute and the
harp,
to the melody of the lyre.
4 For you, O LORD, have made me
glad by your work;
at the works of your hands I
sing for joy.

5 How great are your works,
O LORD!
Your thoughts are very deep!
6 The dullard cannot know,

*i* Cn: Heb *Because you, LORD, are my refuge; you have made*

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**Ps 91: Meditation on God as the protector of the faithful** (a wisdom psalm). **1–13**: Those who trust in the LORD need have no fear of any peril (121.2–8). Some of the dangers mentioned are human foes; others are demonic forces.

**91.11–12**: Quoted in Mt 4.6; Lk 4.10–11. **14–16**: A divine oracle of assurance, probably spoken by a priest or temple prophet.

**Ps 92: Thanksgiving after deliverance from personal enemies. 1–3**: Hymn-like introduction. **2**: *Morning . . . night*, compare the morning and evening sacrifices (Ex 29.38–42). **4**: The occasion (described more explicitly in vv. 10–11) is a desire to give thanks for an answer to the psalmist's prayer for help.

**92.5–9**: The mystery and power of God. **10–11**: The psalmist exults at being vindicated. *Horn*, see 75.4–5 n.

the stupid cannot understand this:
7 though the wicked sprout like grass
and all evildoers flourish,
they are doomed to destruction forever,
8 but you, O LORD, are on high forever.
9 For your enemies, O LORD,
for your enemies shall perish;
all evildoers shall be scattered.

10 But you have exalted my horn like that of the wild ox;
you have poured over me[j] fresh oil.
11 My eyes have seen the downfall of my enemies;
my ears have heard the doom of my evil assailants.

12 The righteous flourish like the palm tree,
and grow like a cedar in Lebanon.
13 They are planted in the house of the LORD;
they flourish in the courts of our God.
14 In old age they still produce fruit;
they are always green and full of sap,
15 showing that the LORD is upright;
he is my rock, and there is no unrighteousness in him.

## Psalm 93

1 The LORD is king, he is robed in majesty;
the LORD is robed, he is girded with strength.
He has established the world; it shall never be moved;
2 your throne is established from of old;
you are from everlasting.

3 The floods have lifted up, O LORD,
the floods have lifted up their voice;
the floods lift up their roaring.
4 More majestic than the thunders of mighty waters,
more majestic than the waves[k] of the sea,
majestic on high is the LORD!

5 Your decrees are very sure;
holiness befits your house, O LORD, forevermore.

## Psalm 94

1 O LORD, you God of vengeance,
you God of vengeance, shine forth!
2 Rise up, O judge of the earth;
give to the proud what they deserve!
3 O LORD, how long shall the wicked,
how long shall the wicked exult?

4 They pour out their arrogant words;

*j* Syr: Meaning of Heb uncertain  *k* Cn: Heb *majestic are the waves*

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**92.12–15**: The rewards of righteousness (1.1–3). **13**: Compare 52.8.

**Ps 93: Hymn extolling God as king.** This psalm begins a collection of hymns (Pss 93; 95–99) dealing with the kingly rule of the God of Israel. They were apparently composed for use in connection with some festival, perhaps the festival of booths, when the theme of God's kingship (or "kingdom") was especially emphasized. Compare Ps 47, which is closely related. **1–2**: The theme is stated. **3–4**: God's rule is based upon his control over the powers of chaos, symbolized by the waters of the sea (74.12–17; 104.7–9; Job 38.8–11). **5**: God is praised because his law offers dependable guidance and his temple is holy.

**Ps 94: A prayer for deliverance from evil people** (a lament). Although this seems to be originally the prayer of an individual (note vv. 16–23), the enemies are described in such general and indefinite terms (vv. 4–7, 20–21) that it was easily adapted to congregational use. **1–3**: Cry for help.

**94.4–7**: The condition of society. The

all the evildoers boast.
5 They crush your people, O LORD,
and afflict your heritage.
6 They kill the widow and the stranger,
they murder the orphan,
7 and they say, "The LORD does not see;
the God of Jacob does not perceive."

8 Understand, O dullest of the people;
fools, when will you be wise?
9 He who planted the ear, does he not hear?
He who formed the eye, does he not see?
10 He who disciplines the nations,
he who teaches knowledge to humankind,
does he not chastise?
11 The LORD knows our thoughts,[l]
that they are but an empty breath.

12 Happy are those whom you discipline, O LORD,
and whom you teach out of your law,
13 giving them respite from days of trouble,
until a pit is dug for the wicked.
14 For the LORD will not forsake his people;
he will not abandon his heritage;
15 for justice will return to the righteous,
and all the upright in heart will follow it.

16 Who rises up for me against the wicked?
Who stands up for me against evildoers?
17 If the LORD had not been my help,
my soul would soon have lived in the land of silence.
18 When I thought, "My foot is slipping,"
your steadfast love, O LORD, held me up.
19 When the cares of my heart are many,
your consolations cheer my soul.
20 Can wicked rulers be allied with you,
those who contrive mischief by statute?
21 They band together against the life of the righteous,
and condemn the innocent to death.
22 But the LORD has become my stronghold,
and my God the rock of my refuge.
23 He will repay them for their iniquity
and wipe them out for their wickedness;
the LORD our God will wipe them out.

## Psalm 95

1 O come, let us sing to the LORD;
let us make a joyful noise to the rock of our salvation!
2 Let us come into his presence with thanksgiving;
let us make a joyful noise to him with songs of praise!

*l* Heb *the thoughts of humankind*

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psalmist sees personal misfortunes as typical of the corruption of the age (compare 10.2–11; Ps 14).

**94.8–15:** In the style of the wisdom writers, the psalmist appeals to the congregation to understand the ways of the LORD.

**94.16:** Prayer for deliverance in the form of a rhetorical question. **17–23:** An expression of confidence, perhaps in response to an oracle of assurance delivered after v. 16 (see 12.5 n.).

**17:** *Land of silence,* Sheol (compare 115.17). **20–21:** The psalmist's enemies were persons in high official position in the state.

**Ps 95: A liturgy of God's kingship.** This brief outline of a service opens with a hymn celebrating God's kingship (vv. 1–7a; see Ps 93 n.) and closes with an oracle, delivered by a priest or temple prophet, warning the congregation against disobeying God's laws (vv. 7b–11; compare 81.6–16). **1–2:**

3 For the LORD is a great God,
and a great King above all gods.
4 In his hand are the depths of the earth;
the heights of the mountains are his also.
5 The sea is his, for he made it,
and the dry land, which his hands have formed.

6 O come, let us worship and bow down,
let us kneel before the LORD, our Maker!
7 For he is our God,
and we are the people of his pasture,
and the sheep of his hand.

O that today you would listen to his voice!
8 Do not harden your hearts, as at Meribah,
as on the day at Massah in the wilderness,
9 when your ancestors tested me,
and put me to the proof, though they had seen my work.
10 For forty years I loathed that generation
and said, "They are a people whose hearts go astray,
and they do not regard my ways."
11 Therefore in my anger I swore,
"They shall not enter my rest."

## Psalm 96

1 O sing to the LORD a new song;
sing to the LORD, all the earth.
2 Sing to the LORD, bless his name;
tell of his salvation from day to day.
3 Declare his glory among the nations,
his marvelous works among all the peoples.
4 For great is the LORD, and greatly to be praised;
he is to be revered above all gods.
5 For all the gods of the peoples are idols,
but the LORD made the heavens.
6 Honor and majesty are before him;
strength and beauty are in his sanctuary.

7 Ascribe to the LORD, O families of the peoples,
ascribe to the LORD glory and strength.
8 Ascribe to the LORD the glory due his name;
bring an offering, and come into his courts.
9 Worship the LORD in holy splendor;
tremble before him, all the earth.

10 Say among the nations, "The LORD is king!
The world is firmly established; it shall never be moved.
He will judge the peoples with equity."
11 Let the heavens be glad, and let the earth rejoice;
let the sea roar, and all that fills it;
12 let the field exult, and everything in it.

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Summons to worship. **3–5**: God's rule based upon the fact that he created the world. **6–7a**: Renewed summons to worship.

**95.7b–11**: Prophetic warning against disobedience. Quoted in Heb 3.7–11; 4.3–11. The declaration that worship without obedience is displeasing to God is a cardinal principle of Old Testament religion (Pss 15; 24.3–6; see 40.6 n.). **8**: *Meribah . . . Massah,* Ex 17.1–7; Num 20.1–13; compare 106.32–33. **10–11**: Num 14.33. *My rest,* the Promised Land.

**Ps 96**: **Hymn celebrating God's kingship. 1–3**: Summons to worship. **4–6**: The LORD is the powerful creator; all other gods are only powerless images (115.3–8).

**96.7–13**: Summons to all nations and to the physical universe to join in his praise. **9**: *Holy splendor* means ceremonial garments. **10**:

Then shall all the trees of the forest sing for joy
13 before the LORD; for he is coming,
for he is coming to judge the earth.
He will judge the world with righteousness,
and the peoples with his truth.

## Psalm 97

1 The LORD is king! Let the earth rejoice;
let the many coastlands be glad!
2 Clouds and thick darkness are all around him;
righteousness and justice are the foundation of his throne.
3 Fire goes before him,
and consumes his adversaries on every side.
4 His lightnings light up the world;
the earth sees and trembles.
5 The mountains melt like wax before the LORD,
before the Lord of all the earth.

6 The heavens proclaim his righteousness;
and all the peoples behold his glory.
7 All worshipers of images are put to shame,
those who make their boast in worthless idols;
all gods bow down before him.
8 Zion hears and is glad,
and the towns[m] of Judah rejoice,
because of your judgments, O God.

9 For you, O LORD, are most high over all the earth;
you are exalted far above all gods.

10 The LORD loves those who hate[n] evil;
he guards the lives of his faithful;
he rescues them from the hand of the wicked.
11 Light dawns[o] for the righteous,
and joy for the upright in heart.
12 Rejoice in the LORD, O you righteous,
and give thanks to his holy name!

## Psalm 98

*A Psalm.*

1 O sing to the LORD a new song,
for he has done marvelous things.
His right hand and his holy arm
have gotten him victory.
2 The LORD has made known his victory;
he has revealed his vindication in the sight of the nations.
3 He has remembered his steadfast love and faithfulness
to the house of Israel.
All the ends of the earth have seen the victory of our God.

4 Make a joyful noise to the LORD, all the earth;

*m* Heb *daughters* *n* Cn: Heb *You who love the* LORD *hate* *o* Gk Syr Jerome: Heb *is sown*

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The kingship of the God of Israel. **13**: Compare Ps 98.4–9.

**Ps 97: Hymn celebrating God's kingship. 1**: Summons to worship the LORD as king. **2–6**: The manifestation of the LORD (18.7–15; 50.1–3). **7**: Idolaters will realize their folly (96.5). **8–9**: Israel's faith will be vindicated.

**97.10–11**: Expression of confidence in the LORD's justice. **12**: Renewed call to worship.

**Ps 98: Hymn proclaiming the future establishment of God's kingship on the earth. 1**: Summons to worship. **2–3**: The LORD's triumph over all the powers that oppose him. Although the verbs are past tense, the reference is to a future event (compare 76.3; also Pss 46; 47; 48.4–8).

**98.4–9**: Summons to all nations and to the physical universe to join in God's praise (96.7–13). The language in this and other of the "kingship" psalms is strikingly similar to that of many passages in Isa chs 40–55 (e.g. 44.23; 52.10; 55.12).

break forth into joyous song
and sing praises.
5 Sing praises to the LORD with the lyre,
with the lyre and the sound of melody.
6 With trumpets and the sound of the horn
make a joyful noise before the King, the LORD.

7 Let the sea roar, and all that fills it;
the world and those who live in it.
8 Let the floods clap their hands;
let the hills sing together for joy
9 at the presence of the LORD, for he is coming
to judge the earth.
He will judge the world with righteousness,
and the peoples with equity.

## Psalm 99

1 The LORD is king; let the peoples tremble!
He sits enthroned upon the cherubim; let the earth quake!
2 The LORD is great in Zion;
he is exalted over all the peoples.
3 Let them praise your great and awesome name.
Holy is he!
4 Mighty King,[p] lover of justice,
you have established equity;
you have executed justice
and righteousness in Jacob.
5 Extol the LORD our God;
worship at his footstool.
Holy is he!
6 Moses and Aaron were among his priests,
Samuel also was among those who called on his name.
They cried to the LORD, and he answered them.
7 He spoke to them in the pillar of cloud;
they kept his decrees,
and the statutes that he gave them.

8 O LORD our God, you answered them;
you were a forgiving God to them,
but an avenger of their wrongdoings.
9 Extol the LORD our God,
and worship at his holy mountain;
for the LORD our God is holy.

## Psalm 100

*A Psalm of thanksgiving.*

1 Make a joyful noise to the LORD, all the earth.
2 Worship the LORD with gladness;
come into his presence with singing.

3 Know that the LORD is God.
It is he that made us, and we are his;[q]
we are his people, and the sheep of his pasture.

4 Enter his gates with thanksgiving,
and his courts with praise.
Give thanks to him, bless his name.

*p* Cn: Heb *And a king's strength* *q* Another reading is *and not we ourselves*

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**Ps 99: Hymn celebrating God's kingship. 1–3:** The LORD God of Israel is the ruler of the earth. **3:** *Holy is he!* is the refrain (see v. 5 and v. 9). **4–5:** God's concern for justice. **6–9:** His fidelity toward his people.

**Ps 100: Hymn calling on all nations to praise the LORD.** While this psalm does not refer specifically to God as king, its mood is similar to that of the preceding "kingship" psalms (see Ps 93 n.) and it may be taken as a doxology for the collection.

5 For the LORD is good;
his steadfast love endures forever,
and his faithfulness to all generations.

## Psalm 101

*Of David. A Psalm.*

1 I will sing of loyalty and of justice;
to you, O LORD, I will sing.
2 I will study the way that is blameless.
When shall I attain it?

I will walk with integrity of heart within my house;
3 I will not set before my eyes anything that is base.

I hate the work of those who fall away;
it shall not cling to me.
4 Perverseness of heart shall be far from me;
I will know nothing of evil.

5 One who secretly slanders a neighbor
I will destroy.
A haughty look and an arrogant heart
I will not tolerate.

6 I will look with favor on the faithful in the land,
so that they may live with me;
whoever walks in the way that is blameless
shall minister to me.

7 No one who practices deceit
shall remain in my house;
no one who utters lies
shall continue in my presence.

8 Morning by morning I will destroy
all the wicked in the land,
cutting off all evildoers
from the city of the LORD.

## Psalm 102

*A prayer of one afflicted, when faint and pleading before the LORD.*

1 Hear my prayer, O LORD;
let my cry come to you.
2 Do not hide your face from me
in the day of my distress.
Incline your ear to me;
answer me speedily in the day when I call.

3 For my days pass away like smoke,
and my bones burn like a furnace.
4 My heart is stricken and withered like grass;
I am too wasted to eat my bread.
5 Because of my loud groaning
my bones cling to my skin.
6 I am like an owl of the wilderness,
like a little owl of the waste places.
7 I lie awake;
I am like a lonely bird on the housetop.
8 All day long my enemies taunt me;
those who deride me use my name for a curse.
9 For I eat ashes like bread,
and mingle tears with my drink,
10 because of your indignation and anger;
for you have lifted me up and thrown me aside.
11 My days are like an evening shadow;
I wither away like grass.

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**Ps 101: A king pledges himself to rule justly.** This psalm may have been used as part of a coronation ceremony.

**Ps 102: Prayer for healing in sickness** (a lament). **1–2**: Cry for help. **3–11** (and **23**): The psalmist's situation: tormented by pain and accused by enemies of being forsaken by God.

12 But you, O LORD, are enthroned forever;
your name endures to all generations.
13 You will rise up and have compassion on Zion,
for it is time to favor it;
the appointed time has come.
14 For your servants hold its stones dear,
and have pity on its dust.
15 The nations will fear the name of the LORD,
and all the kings of the earth your glory.
16 For the LORD will build up Zion;
he will appear in his glory.
17 He will regard the prayer of the destitute,
and will not despise their prayer.

18 Let this be recorded for a generation to come,
so that a people yet unborn may praise the LORD:
19 that he looked down from his holy height,
from heaven the LORD looked at the earth,
20 to hear the groans of the prisoners,
to set free those who were doomed to die;
21 so that the name of the LORD may be declared in Zion,
and his praise in Jerusalem,
22 when peoples gather together,
and kingdoms, to worship the LORD.

23 He has broken my strength in midcourse;
he has shortened my days.
24 "O my God," I say, "do not take me away
at the midpoint of my life,
you whose years endure throughout all generations."

25 Long ago you laid the foundation of the earth,
and the heavens are the work of your hands.
26 They will perish, but you endure;
they will all wear out like a garment.
You change them like clothing,
and they pass away;
27 but you are the same, and your years have no end.
28 The children of your servants shall live secure;
their offspring shall be established in your presence.

## Psalm 103

*Of David.*

1 Bless the LORD, O my soul,
and all that is within me,
bless his holy name.
2 Bless the LORD, O my soul,
and do not forget all his benefits—
3 who forgives all your iniquity,
who heals all your diseases,
4 who redeems your life from the Pit,
who crowns you with steadfast love and mercy,

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**102.12–22**: A hymn of praise to God; the words are perhaps quoted from a familiar song of Zion anticipating the future glory of Jerusalem. **24**: A prayer.

**102.25–28**: The psalmist concludes by again singing a fragment of a hymn, this time one in praise of God's eternity. **25–27**: Quoted in Heb 1.10–12. **27**: *You are the same,* literally, "You are he," compare Isa 43.10, 13, 25.

**Ps 103: Thanksgiving for recovery from sickness.** This might be classified as a hymn, but vv. 1–5 suggest that the words, though general, are intended to express the emotion of a particular individual on a specific occasion. **1–5**: The whole being of the psalmist is summoned to praise God for what he has done; v. 3 and v. 4a show that the reference is to physical healing. **3**: *Forgives all your iniquity,* see 32.1 n. *The Pit,* see 16.10 n. *Your,* the psalmist's. An inner monologue,

5 who satisfies you with good as
long as you live[r]
so that your youth is renewed
like the eagle's.

6 The LORD works vindication
and justice for all who are
oppressed.
7 He made known his ways to
Moses,
his acts to the people of Israel.
8 The LORD is merciful and
gracious,
slow to anger and abounding in
steadfast love.
9 He will not always accuse,
nor will he keep his anger
forever.
10 He does not deal with us
according to our sins,
nor repay us according to our
iniquities.
11 For as the heavens are high above
the earth,
so great is his steadfast love
toward those who fear him;
12 as far as the east is from the west,
so far he removes our
transgressions from us.
13 As a father has compassion for his
children,
so the LORD has compassion for
those who fear him.
14 For he knows how we were made;
he remembers that we are dust.

15 As for mortals, their days are like
grass;
they flourish like a flower of the
field;
16 for the wind passes over it, and it
is gone,
and its place knows it no more.
17 But the steadfast love of the LORD
is from everlasting to
everlasting
on those who fear him,
and his righteousness to
children's children,
18 to those who keep his covenant
and remember to do his
commandments.

19 The LORD has established his
throne in the heavens,
and his kingdom rules over all.
20 Bless the LORD, O you his angels,
you mighty ones who do his
bidding,
obedient to his spoken word.
21 Bless the LORD, all his hosts,
his ministers that do his will.
22 Bless the LORD, all his works,
in all places of his dominion.
Bless the LORD, O my soul.

## Psalm 104

1 Bless the LORD, O my soul.
O LORD my God, you are very
great.
You are clothed with honor and
majesty,
2 wrapped in light as with a
garment.
You stretch out the heavens like
a tent,
3 you set the beams of your[s]
chambers on the waters,
you make the clouds your[s]
chariot,
you ride on the wings of the
wind,

*r* Meaning of Heb uncertain *s* Heb *his*

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the self ("soul") speaking to the self. **5:** *Like the eagle's,* the vigor of the eagle was proverbial (Isa 40.31).

**103.6–18:** The being of God, in his justice, love, and eternity, compared with the frail and transient nature of human beings. **15:** Compare Isa 40.6–8.

**103.19–22:** Conclusion, with a hymn-like summons to all created things to join their voices with that of the psalmist.

**Ps 104: Hymn to God the creator. 1:** Address. The first line was probably added in imitation of the preceding psalm (compare also v. 35). **2–4:** The creation of the heavens. The account is much more mythological than that of Gen ch 1. **2:** *Light,* compare Gen 1.3;

4 you make the winds your[t] messengers,
fire and flame your[t] ministers.

5 You set the earth on its foundations,
so that it shall never be shaken.
6 You cover it with the deep as with a garment;
the waters stood above the mountains.
7 At your rebuke they flee;
at the sound of your thunder they take to flight.
8 They rose up to the mountains,
ran down to the valleys
to the place that you appointed for them.
9 You set a boundary that they may not pass,
so that they might not again cover the earth.

10 You make springs gush forth in the valleys;
they flow between the hills,
11 giving drink to every wild animal;
the wild asses quench their thirst.
12 By the streams[u] the birds of the air have their habitation;
they sing among the branches.
13 From your lofty abode you water the mountains;
the earth is satisfied with the fruit of your work.

14 You cause the grass to grow for the cattle,
and plants for people to use,[v]
to bring forth food from the earth,
15 and wine to gladden the human heart,
oil to make the face shine,
and bread to strengthen the human heart.
16 The trees of the LORD are watered abundantly,
the cedars of Lebanon that he planted.
17 In them the birds build their nests;
the stork has its home in the fir trees.
18 The high mountains are for the wild goats;
the rocks are a refuge for the coneys.
19 You have made the moon to mark the seasons;
the sun knows its time for setting.
20 You make darkness, and it is night,
when all the animals of the forest come creeping out.
21 The young lions roar for their prey,
seeking their food from God.
22 When the sun rises, they withdraw
and lie down in their dens.
23 People go out to their work
and to their labor until the evening.

24 O LORD, how manifold are your works!
In wisdom you have made them all;
the earth is full of your creatures.
25 Yonder is the sea, great and wide,
creeping things innumerable are there,
living things both small and great.
26 There go the ships,

*t* Heb *his* *u* Heb *By them* *v* Or *to cultivate*

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1 Tim 6.16. **3**: See 18.10 n. **4**: Quoted in Heb 1.7.

**104.5–9**: The creation of the earth. **7–9**: God's victory over the waters, the symbol of chaos (see 93.3–4 n.).

**104.10–18**: God's continuing care for the earth and its inhabitants, animal and human. **19**: God's careful demarcation of the limits of months and days. **24**: The poet's exclamation of praise and admiration. **25–26**: The wonders of the sea. **26**: The monster *Leviathan* (see 74.12–17 n.) has become, for this author, merely a harmless, sportive creature of God.

and Leviathan that you formed
to sport in it.

27 These all look to you
to give them their food in due season;
28 when you give to them, they gather it up;
when you open your hand, they are filled with good things.
29 When you hide your face, they are dismayed;
when you take away their breath, they die
and return to their dust.
30 When you send forth your spirit,[w] they are created;
and you renew the face of the ground.

31 May the glory of the LORD endure forever;
may the LORD rejoice in his works—
32 who looks on the earth and it trembles,
who touches the mountains and they smoke.
33 I will sing to the LORD as long as I live;
I will sing praise to my God while I have being.
34 May my meditation be pleasing to him,
for I rejoice in the LORD.
35 Let sinners be consumed from the earth,
and let the wicked be no more.
Bless the LORD, O my soul.
Praise the LORD!

*God's faithfulness to Israel*

## Psalm 105

1 O give thanks to the LORD, call on his name,
make known his deeds among the peoples.
2 Sing to him, sing praises to him;
tell of all his wonderful works.
3 Glory in his holy name;
let the hearts of those who seek the LORD rejoice.
4 Seek the LORD and his strength;
seek his presence continually.
5 Remember the wonderful works he has done,
his miracles, and the judgments he has uttered,
6 O offspring of his servant Abraham,[x]
children of Jacob, his chosen ones.

7 He is the LORD our God;
his judgments are in all the earth.
8 He is mindful of his covenant forever,
of the word that he commanded, for a thousand generations,
9 the covenant that he made with Abraham,
his sworn promise to Isaac,
10 which he confirmed to Jacob as a statute,
to Israel as an everlasting covenant,

*w* Or *your breath* *x* Another reading is *Israel* (compare 1 Chr 16.13)

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**104.27–30**: All living things depend on God at every moment for their existence.
**104.31**: Concluding act of praise. **35**: The psalmist prays for the restoration of the original, intended harmony of creation. Ancient Hebrew culture tended to use personal and concrete words (*sinners . . . wicked*) where we should use the impersonal and abstract ("sin," "wickedness"). *Praise the LORD!* (Hebrew "Hallelujah!") belongs to the beginning of the following psalm (see 105 n.).

**Ps 105: The story of God's great deeds on behalf of his people** (compare Ps 78). This psalm, now paired with Ps 106, was composed for use at one of the major festivals and consists of a recital of the basic events which created the nation of Israel; its mood is one of grateful recollection. Both 105 and 106 at some point in their history were provided with the ritual shout "Hallelujah!" (*Praise the LORD!*) at the beginning and end (see 104.35 n.). **1–6**: Hymn-like introduction summoning the congregation to praise and thanksgiving.
**105.7–11**: The psalmist's theme: God's faithfulness to his covenant with Israel's an-

11 saying, "To you I will give the land of Canaan
as your portion for an inheritance."

12 When they were few in number,
of little account, and strangers in it,
13 wandering from nation to nation,
from one kingdom to another people,
14 he allowed no one to oppress them;
he rebuked kings on their account,
15 saying, "Do not touch my anointed ones;
do my prophets no harm."

16 When he summoned famine against the land,
and broke every staff of bread,
17 he had sent a man ahead of them,
Joseph, who was sold as a slave.
18 His feet were hurt with fetters,
his neck was put in a collar of iron;
19 until what he had said came to pass,
the word of the LORD kept testing him.
20 The king sent and released him;
the ruler of the peoples set him free.
21 He made him lord of his house,
and ruler of all his possessions,
22 to instruct[y] his officials at his pleasure,
and to teach his elders wisdom.

23 Then Israel came to Egypt;
Jacob lived as an alien in the land of Ham.
24 And the LORD made his people very fruitful,
and made them stronger than their foes,
25 whose hearts he then turned to hate his people,
to deal craftily with his servants.

26 He sent his servant Moses,
and Aaron whom he had chosen.
27 They performed his signs among them,
and miracles in the land of Ham.
28 He sent darkness, and made the land dark;
they rebelled[z] against his words.
29 He turned their waters into blood,
and caused their fish to die.
30 Their land swarmed with frogs,
even in the chambers of their kings.
31 He spoke, and there came swarms of flies,
and gnats throughout their country.
32 He gave them hail for rain,
and lightning that flashed through their land.
33 He struck their vines and fig trees,
and shattered the trees of their country.
34 He spoke, and the locusts came,
and young locusts without number;
35 they devoured all the vegetation in their land,
and ate up the fruit of their ground.
36 He struck down all the firstborn in their land,
the first issue of all their strength.

*y* Gk Syr Jerome: Heb *to bind* *z* Cn Compare Gk Syr: Heb *they did not rebel*

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cestors (Gen 15.18–21; 17.1–8; 26.1–5; 28.10–15). **12–41**: The narrative.

**105.12–15**: The story of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. **14**: *Rebuked kings,* Gen 12.17; 20.3. **15**: Only here are the most ancient ancestors of Israel given the title *anointed ones,* presumably because they are called *prophets* (compare Gen 20.7; 1 Kings 19.16).

**105.16–22**: The story of Joseph (Gen chs 37; 39–50).

**105.23–38**: The story of the Exodus (Ex 1.1–15.21). **27**: *Ham,* see 78.51 n.

37 Then he brought Israel[a] out with silver and gold,
and there was no one among their tribes who stumbled.
38 Egypt was glad when they departed,
for dread of them had fallen upon it.
39 He spread a cloud for a covering, and fire to give light by night.
40 They asked, and he brought quails,
and gave them food from heaven in abundance.
41 He opened the rock, and water gushed out;
it flowed through the desert like a river.
42 For he remembered his holy promise,
and Abraham, his servant.

43 So he brought his people out with joy,
his chosen ones with singing.
44 He gave them the lands of the nations,
and they took possession of the wealth of the peoples,
45 that they might keep his statutes and observe his laws.
Praise the LORD!

## Psalm 106

1 Praise the LORD!
O give thanks to the LORD, for he is good;
for his steadfast love endures forever.
2 Who can utter the mighty doings of the LORD,
or declare all his praise?
3 Happy are those who observe justice,
who do righteousness at all times.

4 Remember me, O LORD, when you show favor to your people;
help me when you deliver them;
5 that I may see the prosperity of your chosen ones,
that I may rejoice in the gladness of your nation,
that I may glory in your heritage.

6 Both we and our ancestors have sinned;
we have committed iniquity, have done wickedly.
7 Our ancestors, when they were in Egypt,
did not consider your wonderful works;
they did not remember the abundance of your steadfast love,
but rebelled against the Most High[b] at the Red Sea.[c]
8 Yet he saved them for his name's sake,
so that he might make known his mighty power.
9 He rebuked the Red Sea,[c] and it became dry;
he led them through the deep as through a desert.
10 So he saved them from the hand of the foe,

*a* Heb *them* *b* Cn Compare 78.17, 56: Heb *rebelled at the sea* *c* Or *Sea of Reeds*

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**Ps 106: The story of God's great deeds, with confession of sin and prayer for help.** In contrast to Ps 105, the mood of this psalm is a somber one, stress being laid on the perversity and obtuseness of the people. **1–2**: Call to praise the LORD. **3**: The need for right-doing on the part of his worshipers (105.45). **4–5**: The psalmist prays for a share in Israel's blessings when God restores prosperity to it (compare v. 47).

**106.6**: The theme: Whatever God has done, Israel has always been unfaithful (vv. 7, 13–14, 19, 21, 24–25, 28–29, 32, 34–39, 43); nevertheless he has constantly forgiven its disobedience and shown mercy (vv. 8, 15, 23, 30, 44–46). This thought encourages the psalmist to offer the prayer in v. 47. **7–46**: The narrative.

**106.7–12**: The story of the Exodus (105.23–38). **13–33**: Incidents in the wilder-

and delivered them from the hand of the enemy.
11 The waters covered their adversaries;
not one of them was left.
12 Then they believed his words;
they sang his praise.

13 But they soon forgot his works;
they did not wait for his counsel.
14 But they had a wanton craving in the wilderness,
and put God to the test in the desert;
15 he gave them what they asked,
but sent a wasting disease among them.

16 They were jealous of Moses in the camp,
and of Aaron, the holy one of the LORD.
17 The earth opened and swallowed up Dathan,
and covered the faction of Abiram.
18 Fire also broke out in their company;
the flame burned up the wicked.

19 They made a calf at Horeb
and worshiped a cast image.
20 They exchanged the glory of God[d]
for the image of an ox that eats grass.
21 They forgot God, their Savior,
who had done great things in Egypt,
22 wondrous works in the land of Ham,
and awesome deeds by the Red Sea.[e]

23 Therefore he said he would destroy them—
had not Moses, his chosen one,
stood in the breach before him,
to turn away his wrath from destroying them.

24 Then they despised the pleasant land,
having no faith in his promise.
25 They grumbled in their tents,
and did not obey the voice of the LORD.
26 Therefore he raised his hand and swore to them
that he would make them fall in the wilderness,
27 and would disperse[f] their descendants among the nations,
scattering them over the lands.

28 Then they attached themselves to the Baal of Peor,
and ate sacrifices offered to the dead;
29 they provoked the LORD to anger with their deeds,
and a plague broke out among them.
30 Then Phinehas stood up and interceded,
and the plague was stopped.
31 And that has been reckoned to him as righteousness
from generation to generation forever.

32 They angered the LORD[g] at the waters of Meribah,

*d* Compare Gk Mss: Heb *exchanged their glory*
*e* Or *Sea of Reeds* *f* Syr Compare Ezek 20.23: Heb *cause to fall* *g* Heb *him*

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ness wanderings and at Sinai. **13–15**: The manna and quails (Num 11.4–6, 31–35). **16–18**: Dathan and Abiram's rebellion (Num ch 16).

**106.19–23**: The golden *calf* (Ex ch 32). **19**: *Horeb*, alternative name for Mount Sinai. **24–27**: The refusal to enter Canaan (Num 14.1–35).

**106.28–31**: Apostasy to *the Baal of Peor* (Num 25.1–13). **32–33**: *The waters of Meribah*, Num 20.2–13 (compare Ex 17.1–7).

and it went ill with Moses on their account;
33 for they made his spirit bitter,
and he spoke words that were rash.

34 They did not destroy the peoples,
as the LORD commanded them,
35 but they mingled with the nations
and learned to do as they did.
36 They served their idols,
which became a snare to them.
37 They sacrificed their sons
and their daughters to the demons;
38 they poured out innocent blood,
the blood of their sons and daughters,
whom they sacrificed to the idols of Canaan;
and the land was polluted with blood.
39 Thus they became unclean by their acts,
and prostituted themselves in their doings.

40 Then the anger of the LORD was kindled against his people,
and he abhorred his heritage;
41 he gave them into the hand of the nations,
so that those who hated them ruled over them.
42 Their enemies oppressed them,
and they were brought into subjection under their power.
43 Many times he delivered them,
but they were rebellious in their purposes,
and were brought low through their iniquity.
44 Nevertheless he regarded their distress
when he heard their cry.
45 For their sake he remembered his covenant,
and showed compassion according to the abundance of his steadfast love.
46 He caused them to be pitied
by all who held them captive.

47 Save us, O LORD our God,
and gather us from among the nations,
that we may give thanks to your holy name
and glory in your praise.

48 Blessed be the LORD, the God of Israel,
from everlasting to everlasting.
And let all the people say,
"Amen."
Praise the LORD!

# BOOK V

## Psalm 107

1 O give thanks to the LORD, for he is good;
for his steadfast love endures forever.
2 Let the redeemed of the LORD say so,
those he redeemed from trouble
3 and gathered in from the lands,
from the east and from the west,
from the north and from the south.[h]

*h* Cn: Heb *sea*

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**106.34–39**: Israel's apostasies in the days of the judges (Judg 2.11–19).

**106.47**: Prayer that Israel may be delivered from its present distress. *Gather us from among the nations* suggests that the psalm, in its present form at least, dates from after the Babylonian exile. **48**: A doxology (no original part of the psalm) marking the end of Book IV of the Psalter (see 41.13 n.). *Praise the LORD!* has been illogically attached to this verse rather than the preceding verse (see n. at beginning of Ps 105).

**Ps 107: A group thanksgiving for pilgrims.** This psalm was perhaps sung by groups of pilgrims who came to Jerusalem to celebrate one of the festivals, offering thanks for escape from various dangers. **1–3**: Call for everyone to give thanks. **4–9**: Thanksgiving

4 Some wandered in desert wastes,
finding no way to an inhabited town;
5 hungry and thirsty,
their soul fainted within them.
6 Then they cried to the LORD in their trouble,
and he delivered them from their distress;
7 he led them by a straight way,
until they reached an inhabited town.
8 Let them thank the LORD for his steadfast love,
for his wonderful works to humankind.
9 For he satisfies the thirsty,
and the hungry he fills with good things.

10 Some sat in darkness and in gloom,
prisoners in misery and in irons,
11 for they had rebelled against the words of God,
and spurned the counsel of the Most High.
12 Their hearts were bowed down with hard labor;
they fell down, with no one to help.
13 Then they cried to the LORD in their trouble,
and he saved them from their distress;
14 he brought them out of darkness and gloom,
and broke their bonds asunder.
15 Let them thank the LORD for his steadfast love,
for his wonderful works to humankind.
16 For he shatters the doors of bronze,
and cuts in two the bars of iron.

17 Some were sick[i] through their sinful ways,
and because of their iniquities endured affliction;
18 they loathed any kind of food,
and they drew near to the gates of death.
19 Then they cried to the LORD in their trouble,
and he saved them from their distress;
20 he sent out his word and healed them,
and delivered them from destruction.
21 Let them thank the LORD for his steadfast love,
for his wonderful works to humankind.
22 And let them offer thanksgiving sacrifices,
and tell of his deeds with songs of joy.

23 Some went down to the sea in ships,
doing business on the mighty waters;
24 they saw the deeds of the LORD,
his wondrous works in the deep.
25 For he commanded and raised the stormy wind,
which lifted up the waves of the sea.
26 They mounted up to heaven, they went down to the depths;
their courage melted away in their calamity;
27 they reeled and staggered like drunkards,
and were at their wits' end.
28 Then they cried to the LORD in their trouble,

*i* Cn: Heb *fools*

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of those who traveled across the desert. **8–9**: A refrain (see vv. 15–16, 21–22, 31–32), appropriately varied for each occasion.

**107.10–16**: Thanksgiving of those who had been freed from prison.

**107.17–22**: Thanksgiving of those healed from sickness. **22**: *Thanksgiving sacrifices,* see 7.17 n.

**107.23–32**: Thanksgiving of those who had traveled by sea.

and he brought them out from their distress;
29 he made the storm be still,
and the waves of the sea were hushed.
30 Then they were glad because they had quiet,
and he brought them to their desired haven.
31 Let them thank the LORD for his steadfast love,
for his wonderful works to humankind.
32 Let them extol him in the congregation of the people,
and praise him in the assembly of the elders.

33 He turns rivers into a desert,
springs of water into thirsty ground,
34 a fruitful land into a salty waste,
because of the wickedness of its inhabitants.
35 He turns a desert into pools of water,
a parched land into springs of water.
36 And there he lets the hungry live,
and they establish a town to live in;
37 they sow fields, and plant vineyards,
and get a fruitful yield.
38 By his blessing they multiply greatly,
and he does not let their cattle decrease.

39 When they are diminished and brought low
through oppression, trouble, and sorrow,
40 he pours contempt on princes
and makes them wander in trackless wastes;
41 but he raises up the needy out of distress,
and makes their families like flocks.
42 The upright see it and are glad;
and all wickedness stops its mouth.
43 Let those who are wise give heed to these things,
and consider the steadfast love of the LORD.

## Psalm 108

*A Song. A Psalm of David.*

1 My heart is steadfast, O God, my heart is steadfast;[j]
I will sing and make melody.
Awake, my soul![k]
2 Awake, O harp and lyre!
I will awake the dawn.
3 I will give thanks to you, O LORD, among the peoples,
and I will sing praises to you among the nations.
4 For your steadfast love is higher than the heavens,
and your faithfulness reaches to the clouds.

5 Be exalted, O God, above the heavens,
and let your glory be over all the earth.
6 Give victory with your right hand, and answer me,
so that those whom you love may be rescued.

7 God has promised in his sanctuary:[l]

*j* Heb Mss Gk Syr: MT lacks *my heart is steadfast*
*k* Compare 57.8: Heb *also my soul*
*l* Or *by his holiness*

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**107.33–43**: Part of a hymn praising God for his bounty; it was probably not originally composed to go with the preceding verses, but nevertheless provides a suitable unison conclusion for the thanksgiving liturgy.

**Ps 108: A liturgy of prayer for victory over national enemies.** This liturgy is entirely composed of portions of two other psalms. Verses 1–5 are practically identical with 57.7–11; vv. 6–13, with 60.5–12. For details of interpretation see those psalms.

**Ps 109: Prayer for deliverance from**

"With exultation I will divide
up Shechem,
and portion out the Vale of
Succoth.
8 Gilead is mine; Manasseh is mine;
Ephraim is my helmet;
Judah is my scepter.
9 Moab is my washbasin;
on Edom I hurl my shoe;
over Philistia I shout in
triumph."

10 Who will bring me to the fortified
city?
Who will lead me to Edom?
11 Have you not rejected us,
O God?
You do not go out, O God,
with our armies.
12 O grant us help against the foe,
for human help is worthless.
13 With God we shall do valiantly;
it is he who will tread down
our foes.

## Psalm 109

*To the leader. Of David. A Psalm.*

1 Do not be silent, O God of my
praise.
2 For wicked and deceitful mouths
are opened against me,
speaking against me with lying
tongues.
3 They beset me with words of
hate,
and attack me without cause.
4 In return for my love they
accuse me,
even while I make prayer for
them.[m]
5 So they reward me evil for good,
and hatred for my love.
6 They say,[n] "Appoint a wicked
man against him;
let an accuser stand on his
right.
7 When he is tried, let him be found
guilty;
let his prayer be counted as sin.
8 May his days be few;
may another seize his position.
9 May his children be orphans,
and his wife a widow.
10 May his children wander about
and beg;
may they be driven out of[o] the
ruins they inhabit.
11 May the creditor seize all that
he has;
may strangers plunder the fruits
of his toil.
12 May there be no one to do him a
kindness,
nor anyone to pity his orphaned
children.
13 May his posterity be cut off;
may his name be blotted out in
the second generation.
14 May the iniquity of his father[p] be
remembered before the
LORD,
and do not let the sin of his
mother be blotted out.
15 Let them be before the LORD
continually,
and may his[q] memory be cut
off from the earth.
16 For he did not remember to show
kindness,
but pursued the poor and needy
and the brokenhearted to their
death.

*m* Syr: Heb *I prayer*
*n* Heb lacks *They say*
*o* Gk: Heb *and seek*
*p* Cn: Heb *fathers*
*q* Gk: Heb *their*

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**personal enemies** (a lament). **1**: Cry for help. **2–5**: The psalmist's situation. He has been cursed and falsely accused of crime (compare vv. 22–25). **4–5**: In view of the temper of vv. 6–19, it is important to note that the writer believed love for others to be the proper attitude and was accustomed to pray for them.

**109.6–19**: The curse. It is clear that the purpose of the violent and repellent language of this section is to provide a counter-curse which will be effective against the black-magic curses of the psalmist's enemies (note vv. 17–19). Compare Ps 58. **8**: The second line is quoted in Acts 1.20, though translated differently.

17 He loved to curse; let curses come on him.
He did not like blessing; may it be far from him.
18 He clothed himself with cursing as his coat,
may it soak into his body like water,
like oil into his bones.
19 May it be like a garment that he wraps around himself,
like a belt that he wears every day."

20 May that be the reward of my accusers from the LORD,
of those who speak evil against my life.
21 But you, O LORD my Lord,
act on my behalf for your name's sake;
because your steadfast love is good, deliver me.
22 For I am poor and needy,
and my heart is pierced within me.
23 I am gone like a shadow at evening;
I am shaken off like a locust.
24 My knees are weak through fasting;
my body has become gaunt.
25 I am an object of scorn to my accusers;
when they see me, they shake their heads.

26 Help me, O LORD my God!
Save me according to your steadfast love.
27 Let them know that this is your hand;
you, O LORD, have done it.
28 Let them curse, but you will bless.
Let my assailants be put to shame;[r] may your servant be glad.
29 May my accusers be clothed with dishonor;
may they be wrapped in their own shame as in a mantle.
30 With my mouth I will give great thanks to the LORD;
I will praise him in the midst of the throng.
31 For he stands at the right hand of the needy,
to save them from those who would condemn them to death.

## Psalm 110

*Of David. A Psalm.*

1 The LORD says to my lord,
"Sit at my right hand
until I make your enemies your footstool."

2 The LORD sends out from Zion your mighty scepter.
Rule in the midst of your foes.
3 Your people will offer themselves willingly
on the day you lead your forces
on the holy mountains.[s]
From the womb of the morning,

*r* Gk: Heb *They have risen up and have been put to shame* *s* Another reading is *in holy splendor*

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**109.20–29**: Prayer for deliverance. The poet does not share the popular, primitive belief that a curse would be automatically efficacious apart from the personal intervention of God. **30–31**: The vow (see 7.17 n.).

**Ps 110**: **The LORD promises victory to his king** (a royal psalm, probably composed for a coronation; compare Ps 2). The Hebrew text is unusually corrupt and the interpretation of many details extremely difficult. **1**: The king (*my lord*) is invited by Israel's God (*the LORD*) to ascend the throne. This verse is quoted frequently in the New Testament (e.g. Mt 22.44; Acts 2.34; 1 Cor 15.25; Eph 1.20; Heb 1.3, 13), where the later Jewish belief that it was composed by David in honor of the Messiah is naturally assumed to be correct.

**110.2–7**: The new king, who also bears the dignity of priesthood, will thoroughly defeat his enemies. **3**: The meaning of the second sentence can no longer be recovered with certainty. **4**: Like all early Israelite kings, the new king will have the privileges of a priest (com-

like dew, your youth[t] will
come to you.
4 The LORD has sworn and will not
change his mind,
"You are a priest forever
according to the order of
Melchizedek."[u]

5 The Lord is at your right hand;
he will shatter kings on the day
of his wrath.
6 He will execute judgment among
the nations,
filling them with corpses;
he will shatter heads
over the wide earth.
7 He will drink from the stream by
the path;
therefore he will lift up his
head.

## Psalm 111

1 Praise the LORD!
I will give thanks to the LORD
with my whole heart,
in the company of the upright,
in the congregation.
2 Great are the works of the LORD,
studied by all who delight
in them.
3 Full of honor and majesty is
his work,
and his righteousness endures
forever.
4 He has gained renown by his
wonderful deeds;
the LORD is gracious and
merciful.
5 He provides food for those who
fear him;
he is ever mindful of his
covenant.
6 He has shown his people the
power of his works,
in giving them the heritage of
the nations.
7 The works of his hands are
faithful and just;
all his precepts are trustworthy.
8 They are established forever and
ever,
to be performed with
faithfulness and uprightness.
9 He sent redemption to his people;
he has commanded his covenant
forever.
Holy and awesome is his name.
10 The fear of the LORD is the
beginning of wisdom;
all those who practice it[v] have a
good understanding.
His praise endures forever.

## Psalm 112

1 Praise the LORD!
Happy are those who fear
the LORD,
who greatly delight in his
commandments.
2 Their descendants will be mighty
in the land;
the generation of the upright
will be blessed.
3 Wealth and riches are in their
houses,
and their righteousness endures
forever.

*t* Cn: Heb *the dew of your youth* *u* Or *forever, a rightful king by my edict* *v* Gk Syr: Heb *them*

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pare 2 Sam 8.18; 1 Kings 3.4). In this respect he will be like Melchizedek, the ancient Canaanite priest-king of Jerusalem (Gen 14.18). **7**: The meaning is not clear. The verse may be only a fragment.

**Ps 111**: **Hymn of praise to the LORD for his great deeds,** especially for his fidelity to the covenant. An acrostic psalm, every line beginning with a successive letter of the alphabet. **1**: Like the two following psalms, it begins with the ritual cry, *Praise the LORD!* (Hallelujah!); see 104.35 n. **10**: Job 28.28; Prov 1.7.

**Ps 112**: **The contrasting fate of the righteous and the wicked** (a wisdom psalm). An alphabetical acrostic like Ps 111, and similar in theme to Ps 1. It is, however, more concerned with the rewards of righteousness (vv. 1–9) than the punishment of ungodliness (v. 10). **1**: *Praise the LORD,* see 111.1 n. **9**: Quoted in part in 2 Cor 9.9. *Horn,* see 75.4–5 n.

4 They rise in the darkness as a light
for the upright;
they are gracious, merciful, and
righteous.
5 It is well with those who deal
generously and lend,
who conduct their affairs with
justice.
6 For the righteous will never
be moved;
they will be remembered
forever.
7 They are not afraid of evil tidings;
their hearts are firm, secure in
the LORD.
8 Their hearts are steady, they will
not be afraid;
in the end they will look in
triumph on their foes.
9 They have distributed freely, they
have given to the poor;
their righteousness endures
forever;
their horn is exalted in honor.
10 The wicked see it and are angry;
they gnash their teeth and melt
away;
the desire of the wicked comes
to nothing.

## Psalm 113

1 Praise the LORD!
Praise, O servants of the LORD;
praise the name of the LORD.

2 Blessed be the name of the LORD
from this time on and
forevermore.
3 From the rising of the sun to its
setting
the name of the LORD is to be
praised.
4 The LORD is high above all
nations,
and his glory above the heavens.

5 Who is like the LORD our God,
who is seated on high,
6 who looks far down
on the heavens and the earth?
7 He raises the poor from the dust,
and lifts the needy from the ash
heap,
8 to make them sit with princes,
with the princes of his people.
9 He gives the barren woman a
home,
making her the joyous mother
of children.
Praise the LORD!

## Psalm 114

1 When Israel went out from Egypt,
the house of Jacob from a
people of strange language,
2 Judah became God's[w] sanctuary,
Israel his dominion.

3 The sea looked and fled;
Jordan turned back.
4 The mountains skipped like rams,
the hills like lambs.

5 Why is it, O sea, that you flee?
O Jordan, that you turn back?
6 O mountains, that you skip like
rams?
O hills, like lambs?

*w* Heb *his*

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**Ps 113: Hymn celebrating the LORD as helper of the humble.** Another "Hallelujah!" psalm (see 111.1 n.). In Jewish liturgical tradition, Pss 113–118 constitute the so-called "Egyptian Hallel," used in connection with the great festivals. At the Passover, Pss 113–114 are sung before the meal; 115–118 afterwards (compare Mt 26.30). **1**: Summons to worship. **2–4**: Choral response.

**113.5–9**: Though the LORD is gloriously exalted, he cares for the needy (1 Sam 2.4–8; Lk 1.48–53).

**Ps 114: Hymn in praise of God's great work in creating the nation.** Although its form is unusual, vv. 7–8 show this psalm should be classified as a hymn (see Ps 113 n.). **1–2**: The events of the Exodus recalled. **3–6**: The remarkable natural phenomena which

7 Tremble, O earth, at the presence
of the LORD,
at the presence of the God of
Jacob,
8 who turns the rock into a pool of
water,
the flint into a spring of water.

## Psalm 115

1 Not to us, O LORD, not to us, but
to your name give glory,
for the sake of your steadfast
love and your faithfulness.
2 Why should the nations say,
"Where is their God?"

3 Our God is in the heavens;
he does whatever he pleases.
4 Their idols are silver and gold,
the work of human hands.
5 They have mouths, but do not
speak;
eyes, but do not see.
6 They have ears, but do not hear;
noses, but do not smell.
7 They have hands, but do not feel;
feet, but do not walk;
they make no sound in their
throats.
8 Those who make them are like
them;
so are all who trust in them.

9 O Israel, trust in the LORD!
He is their help and their shield.
10 O house of Aaron, trust in the
LORD!
He is their help and their shield.

11 You who fear the LORD, trust in
the LORD!
He is their help and their shield.

12 The LORD has been mindful of us;
he will bless us;
he will bless the house of Israel;
he will bless the house of
Aaron;
13 he will bless those who fear the
LORD,
both small and great.

14 May the LORD give you increase,
both you and your children.
15 May you be blessed by the LORD,
who made heaven and earth.

16 The heavens are the LORD's
heavens,
but the earth he has given to
human beings.
17 The dead do not praise the LORD,
nor do any that go down into
silence.
18 But we will bless the LORD
from this time on and
forevermore.
Praise the LORD!

## Psalm 116

1 I love the LORD, because he has
heard
my voice and my supplications.
2 Because he inclined his ear to me,
therefore I will call on him as
long as I live.
3 The snares of death encompassed
me;

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accompanied Israel's crossing of the Red Sea and the Jordan. The past events of vv. 3–4 become contemporary in vv. 5–6.

**114.7–8**: The physical world summoned to worship the LORD. *Who turns the rock into a pool,* Ex 17.6; Num 20.11.

**Ps 115: Liturgy contrasting the LORD's power with the impotence of heathen gods.** Perhaps sung antiphonally as follows: **1–2**: A choir ascribes glory to God alone. **3–8**: A soloist proclaims that God is omnipotent; idols have no life at all.

**115.9–11**: The choir therefore asks Israel to trust in the LORD. **10**: *House of Aaron,* the priests. **12–13**: The congregation confidently responds. **14–15**: A priest pronounces a blessing. **16–18**: Concluding hymn of praise. **17**: In early Israel it was believed that the dead in Sheol (*silence*) were separated from God (88.5–6). **18**: *Praise the LORD! Hallelujah!* (see Ps 113 n.).

**Ps 116: Thanksgiving for healing. 1–2**: Address to the congregation. **3–11**: The psalmist's experience (see 18.4–6 n.). **3**: A de-

the pangs of Sheol laid hold
on me;
I suffered distress and anguish.
4 Then I called on the name of
the LORD:
"O LORD, I pray, save my life!"

5 Gracious is the LORD, and
righteous;
our God is merciful.
6 The LORD protects the simple;
when I was brought low, he
saved me.
7 Return, O my soul, to your rest,
for the LORD has dealt
bountifully with you.

8 For you have delivered my soul
from death,
my eyes from tears,
my feet from stumbling.
9 I walk before the LORD
in the land of the living.
10 I kept my faith, even when I said,
"I am greatly afflicted";
11 I said in my consternation,
"Everyone is a liar."

12 What shall I return to the LORD
for all his bounty to me?
13 I will lift up the cup of salvation
and call on the name of the
LORD,
14 I will pay my vows to the LORD
in the presence of all his people.
15 Precious in the sight of the LORD
is the death of his faithful ones.

16 O LORD, I am your servant;
I am your servant, the child of
your serving girl.
You have loosed my bonds.
17 I will offer to you a thanksgiving
sacrifice
and call on the name of the
LORD.
18 I will pay my vows to the LORD
in the presence of all his people,
19 in the courts of the house of
the LORD,
in your midst, O Jerusalem.
Praise the LORD!

## Psalm 117

1 Praise the LORD, all you nations!
Extol him, all you peoples!
2 For great is his steadfast love
toward us,
and the faithfulness of the LORD
endures forever.
Praise the LORD!

## Psalm 118

1 O give thanks to the LORD, for he
is good;
his steadfast love endures
forever!

2 Let Israel say,
"His steadfast love endures
forever."
3 Let the house of Aaron say,
"His steadfast love endures
forever."

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scription of serious illness. *Sheol,* see 6.5 n. **5–8**: Strong emotion leads the psalmist to address God directly in describing the answer to the prayer (v. 8).

**116.8–9**: The recovery described. **10–11**: Even when most profoundly depressed, the psalmist had trusted in God rather than human beings.

**116.12–19**: The fulfillment of the vow described (see 7.17 n.). **13**: A libation is offered (Ex 29.40). **15**: *Precious . . . is the death* means that such a death is rarely allowed to happen. **16**: See 86.16 n. **19**: *Praise the LORD!* Hallelujah! (see Ps 113 n.).

**Ps 117**: **Doxology.** **1**: *Praise the LORD!* Hallelujah! (see Ps 113 n.). **2**: *Praise the LORD!* properly belongs to the following psalm.

**Ps 118**: **Thanksgiving for deliverance in battle.** The last of the "Egyptian Hallel" psalms (see Ps 113 n.). While it is difficult to be sure whether the language of vv. 10–14 is literal or figurative, it is tenable that the speaker is a king who has come to the temple to offer thanks for a victory. **1–4**: Summons to thanksgiving. **2–4**: *Let Israel say,* etc. These are probably actual directions to various groups in the congregation. **3**: *House of Aaron,* see 115.10 n.

4 Let those who fear the LORD say,
"His steadfast love endures forever."

5 Out of my distress I called on the LORD;
the LORD answered me and set me in a broad place.
6 With the LORD on my side I do not fear.
What can mortals do to me?
7 The LORD is on my side to help me;
I shall look in triumph on those who hate me.
8 It is better to take refuge in the LORD
than to put confidence in mortals.
9 It is better to take refuge in the LORD
than to put confidence in princes.

10 All nations surrounded me;
in the name of the LORD I cut them off!
11 They surrounded me, surrounded me on every side;
in the name of the LORD I cut them off!
12 They surrounded me like bees;
they blazed[x] like a fire of thorns;
in the name of the LORD I cut them off!
13 I was pushed hard,[y] so that I was falling,
but the LORD helped me.
14 The LORD is my strength and my might;
he has become my salvation.

15 There are glad songs of victory in the tents of the righteous:
"The right hand of the LORD does valiantly;
16 the right hand of the LORD is exalted;
the right hand of the LORD does valiantly."
17 I shall not die, but I shall live,
and recount the deeds of the LORD.
18 The LORD has punished me severely,
but he did not give me over to death.

19 Open to me the gates of righteousness,
that I may enter through them
and give thanks to the LORD.

20 This is the gate of the LORD;
the righteous shall enter through it.

21 I thank you that you have answered me
and have become my salvation.
22 The stone that the builders rejected
has become the chief cornerstone.
23 This is the LORD's doing;
it is marvelous in our eyes.
24 This is the day that the LORD has made;
let us rejoice and be glad in it.[z]
25 Save us, we beseech you, O LORD!
O LORD, we beseech you, give us success!

*x* Gk: Heb *were extinguished* *y* Gk Syr Jerome: Heb *You pushed me hard* *z* Or *in him*

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**118.5–18:** The psalmist's experience (see 18.4–6 n.). **6:** Quoted in Heb 13.6. **10–13:** The desperateness of the king's situation. **14–18:** God gave him the victory.

**118.19:** He asks to be admitted at the temple gates. The preceding ceremony evidently took place outside. **20:** A voice from within replies that only the qualified may enter (compare Ps 15 and 24.3–6). **21–22:** He answers that God had borne witness to his character by delivering him (18.20–24) when others had given him up. **22–23:** Frequently quoted in the New Testament (e.g. Mt 21.42; Acts 4.11; 1 Pet 2.7). **23–25:** The choir joyously acknowledges what God has done. **25:** *Save us,* in Hebrew, is "Hoshianna" (Hosanna). This verse and the following are alluded to in Mt 21.9 and parallel passages.

26 Blessed is the one who comes in
the name of the LORD.[a]
We bless you from the house of
the LORD.
27 The LORD is God,
and he has given us light.
Bind the festal procession with
branches,
up to the horns of the altar.[b]

28 You are my God, and I will give
thanks to you;
you are my God, I will extol
you.

29 O give thanks to the LORD, for he
is good,
for his steadfast love endures
forever.

## Psalm 119

1 Happy are those whose way is
blameless,
who walk in the law of the
LORD.
2 Happy are those who keep his
decrees,
who seek him with their whole
heart,
3 who also do no wrong,
but walk in his ways.
4 You have commanded your
precepts
to be kept diligently.
5 O that my ways may be steadfast
in keeping your statutes!
6 Then I shall not be put to shame,
having my eyes fixed on all
your commandments.
7 I will praise you with an upright
heart,
when I learn your righteous
ordinances.
8 I will observe your statutes;
do not utterly forsake me.

9 How can young people keep their
way pure?
By guarding it according to
your word.
10 With my whole heart I seek you;
do not let me stray from your
commandments.
11 I treasure your word in my heart,
so that I may not sin against
you.
12 Blessed are you, O LORD;
teach me your statutes.
13 With my lips I declare
all the ordinances of your
mouth.
14 I delight in the way of your
decrees
as much as in all riches.
15 I will meditate on your precepts,
and fix my eyes on your ways.
16 I will delight in your statutes;
I will not forget your word.

17 Deal bountifully with your
servant,
so that I may live and observe
your word.
18 Open my eyes, so that I may
behold
wondrous things out of your
law.
19 I live as an alien in the land;
do not hide your
commandments from me.

*a* Or *Blessed in the name of the* LORD *is the one who comes* *b* Meaning of Heb uncertain

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**118.26–27**: The suppliant is admitted with a choral blessing. (The second sentence of v. 27 is perhaps a liturgical direction.) **28**: He makes his act of thanksgiving. **29**: The choir begins a hymn of praise (compare Ps 136).

**Ps 119**: **Meditation on the law of God.** The length of this psalm is the result of its unusual, and highly artificial, structure. It is an alphabetical acrostic (compare Pss 9–10; 25; 34; 37; 111; 112; 145) in which each stanza consists of eight lines all beginning with the same Hebrew letter; the twenty-two stanzas use all the letters in turn. In addition almost every line contains the word "law" or a synonym (e.g. "testimonies," "ways," "precepts"; compare Ps 19.7–14). The predominant mood of lament suggests that it may have been composed as a prayer for deliverance from trouble, though the language may be merely imitative and the whole a purely

20 My soul is consumed with longing
for your ordinances at all times.
21 You rebuke the insolent, accursed ones,
who wander from your commandments;
22 take away from me their scorn and contempt,
for I have kept your decrees.
23 Even though princes sit plotting against me,
your servant will meditate on your statutes.
24 Your decrees are my delight,
they are my counselors.

25 My soul clings to the dust;
revive me according to your word.
26 When I told of my ways, you answered me;
teach me your statutes.
27 Make me understand the way of your precepts,
and I will meditate on your wondrous works.
28 My soul melts away for sorrow;
strengthen me according to your word.
29 Put false ways far from me;
and graciously teach me your law.
30 I have chosen the way of faithfulness;
I set your ordinances before me.
31 I cling to your decrees, O LORD;
let me not be put to shame.
32 I run the way of your commandments,
for you enlarge my understanding.

33 Teach me, O LORD, the way of your statutes,
and I will observe it to the end.
34 Give me understanding, that I may keep your law
and observe it with my whole heart.
35 Lead me in the path of your commandments,
for I delight in it.
36 Turn my heart to your decrees,
and not to selfish gain.
37 Turn my eyes from looking at vanities;
give me life in your ways.
38 Confirm to your servant your promise,
which is for those who fear you.
39 Turn away the disgrace that I dread,
for your ordinances are good.
40 See, I have longed for your precepts;
in your righteousness give me life.

41 Let your steadfast love come to me, O LORD,
your salvation according to your promise.
42 Then I shall have an answer for those who taunt me,
for I trust in your word.
43 Do not take the word of truth utterly out of my mouth,
for my hope is in your ordinances.
44 I will keep your law continually,
forever and ever.
45 I shall walk at liberty,
for I have sought your precepts.
46 I will also speak of your decrees before kings,
and shall not be put to shame;
47 I find my delight in your commandments,
because I love them.

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literary exercise in honor of the written law. It is a very late composition.

**119.1–8, 9–16**: Prayer for help in observing the law. **1**: *Happy,* see 1.1 n.

**119.17–24**: Prayer for deliverance from enmies.

**119.25–32**: Declaration of fidelity to the law.

**119.33–40**: Prayer to understand the law.

**41–48**: Prayer for an answer to taunters.

48 I revere your commandments,
which I love,
and I will meditate on your
statutes.

49 Remember your word to your
servant,
in which you have made
me hope.
50 This is my comfort in my distress,
that your promise gives me life.
51 The arrogant utterly deride me,
but I do not turn away from
your law.
52 When I think of your ordinances
from of old,
I take comfort, O LORD.
53 Hot indignation seizes me because
of the wicked,
those who forsake your law.
54 Your statutes have been my songs
wherever I make my home.
55 I remember your name in the
night, O LORD,
and keep your law.
56 This blessing has fallen to me,
for I have kept your precepts.

57 The LORD is my portion;
I promise to keep your words.
58 I implore your favor with all my
heart;
be gracious to me according to
your promise.
59 When I think of your ways,
I turn my feet to your decrees;
60 I hurry and do not delay
to keep your commandments.
61 Though the cords of the wicked
ensnare me,
I do not forget your law.
62 At midnight I rise to praise you,
because of your righteous
ordinances.
63 I am a companion of all who fear
you,
of those who keep your
precepts.
64 The earth, O LORD, is full of your
steadfast love;
teach me your statutes.

65 You have dealt well with your
servant,
O LORD, according to your
word.
66 Teach me good judgment and
knowledge,
for I believe in your
commandments.
67 Before I was humbled I went
astray,
but now I keep your word.
68 You are good and do good;
teach me your statutes.
69 The arrogant smear me with lies,
but with my whole heart I keep
your precepts.
70 Their hearts are fat and gross,
but I delight in your law.
71 It is good for me that I was
humbled,
so that I might learn your
statutes.
72 The law of your mouth is better
to me
than thousands of gold and
silver pieces.

73 Your hands have made and
fashioned me;
give me understanding that I
may learn your
commandments.
74 Those who fear you shall see me
and rejoice,
because I have hoped in your
word.
75 I know, O LORD, that your
judgments are right,
and that in faithfulness you have
humbled me.

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**119.49–56**: Expression of confidence during persecution.

**119.57–64**: Declaration of devotion to God.

**119.65–72**: Recognition of the disciplinary value of suffering.

**119.73–80**: Acknowledgment of the justice of God's ways, and prayer for help.

76 Let your steadfast love become my comfort
according to your promise to your servant.
77 Let your mercy come to me, that I may live;
for your law is my delight.
78 Let the arrogant be put to shame, because they have subverted me with guile;
as for me, I will meditate on your precepts.
79 Let those who fear you turn to me,
so that they may know your decrees.
80 May my heart be blameless in your statutes,
so that I may not be put to shame.

81 My soul languishes for your salvation;
I hope in your word.
82 My eyes fail with watching for your promise;
I ask, "When will you comfort me?"
83 For I have become like a wineskin in the smoke,
yet I have not forgotten your statutes.
84 How long must your servant endure?
When will you judge those who persecute me?
85 The arrogant have dug pitfalls for me;
they flout your law.
86 All your commandments are enduring;
I am persecuted without cause; help me!
87 They have almost made an end of me on earth;
but I have not forsaken your precepts.
88 In your steadfast love spare my life,
so that I may keep the decrees of your mouth.

89 The LORD exists forever;
your word is firmly fixed in heaven.
90 Your faithfulness endures to all generations;
you have established the earth, and it stands fast.
91 By your appointment they stand today,
for all things are your servants.
92 If your law had not been my delight,
I would have perished in my misery.
93 I will never forget your precepts,
for by them you have given me life.
94 I am yours; save me,
for I have sought your precepts.
95 The wicked lie in wait to destroy me,
but I consider your decrees.
96 I have seen a limit to all perfection,
but your commandment is exceedingly broad.

97 Oh, how I love your law!
It is my meditation all day long.
98 Your commandment makes me wiser than my enemies,
for it is always with me.
99 I have more understanding than all my teachers,
for your decrees are my meditation.
100 I understand more than the aged,
for I keep your precepts.
101 I hold back my feet from every evil way,
in order to keep your word.
102 I do not turn away from your ordinances,
for you have taught me.
103 How sweet are your words to my taste,

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**119.81–88:** Plea for deliverance from enemies. **89–96:** Faith in God's word. **119.97–104:** The beauty and sweetness of the law.

sweeter than honey to my mouth!
104 Through your precepts I get understanding;
therefore I hate every false way.

105 Your word is a lamp to my feet
and a light to my path.
106 I have sworn an oath and confirmed it,
to observe your righteous ordinances.
107 I am severely afflicted;
give me life, O LORD, according to your word.
108 Accept my offerings of praise, O LORD,
and teach me your ordinances.
109 I hold my life in my hand continually,
but I do not forget your law.
110 The wicked have laid a snare for me,
but I do not stray from your precepts.
111 Your decrees are my heritage forever;
they are the joy of my heart.
112 I incline my heart to perform your statutes
forever, to the end.

113 I hate the double-minded,
but I love your law.
114 You are my hiding place and my shield;
I hope in your word.
115 Go away from me, you evildoers,
that I may keep the commandments of my God.
116 Uphold me according to your promise, that I may live,
and let me not be put to shame in my hope.
117 Hold me up, that I may be safe
and have regard for your statutes continually.
118 You spurn all who go astray from your statutes;
for their cunning is in vain.
119 All the wicked of the earth you count as dross;
therefore I love your decrees.
120 My flesh trembles for fear of you,
and I am afraid of your judgments.

121 I have done what is just and right;
do not leave me to my oppressors.
122 Guarantee your servant's well-being;
do not let the godless oppress me.
123 My eyes fail from watching for your salvation,
and for the fulfillment of your righteous promise.
124 Deal with your servant according to your steadfast love,
and teach me your statutes.
125 I am your servant; give me understanding,
so that I may know your decrees.
126 It is time for the LORD to act,
for your law has been broken.
127 Truly I love your commandments more than gold, more than fine gold.
128 Truly I direct my steps by all your precepts;[c]
I hate every false way.

129 Your decrees are wonderful;
therefore my soul keeps them.
130 The unfolding of your words gives light;

[c] Gk Jerome: Meaning of Heb uncertain

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**119.105–112:** Prayer for help.
**119.113–120:** Expression of confidence and prayers for deliverance.
**119.121–128:** Declaration of juridical innocence and loyalty to the law.
**119.129–136:** Praise of the law and prayer

it imparts understanding to the simple.
131 With open mouth I pant,
because I long for your commandments.
132 Turn to me and be gracious to me,
as is your custom toward those who love your name.
133 Keep my steps steady according to your promise,
and never let iniquity have dominion over me.
134 Redeem me from human oppression,
that I may keep your precepts.
135 Make your face shine upon your servant,
and teach me your statutes.
136 My eyes shed streams of tears
because your law is not kept.

137 You are righteous, O LORD,
and your judgments are right.
138 You have appointed your decrees in righteousness
and in all faithfulness.
139 My zeal consumes me
because my foes forget your words.
140 Your promise is well tried,
and your servant loves it.
141 I am small and despised,
yet I do not forget your precepts.
142 Your righteousness is an everlasting righteousness,
and your law is the truth.
143 Trouble and anguish have come upon me,
but your commandments are my delight.
144 Your decrees are righteous forever;
give me understanding that I may live.

145 With my whole heart I cry;
answer me, O LORD.
I will keep your statutes.
146 I cry to you; save me,
that I may observe your decrees.
147 I rise before dawn and cry for help;
I put my hope in your words.
148 My eyes are awake before each watch of the night,
that I may meditate on your promise.
149 In your steadfast love hear my voice;
O LORD, in your justice preserve my life.
150 Those who persecute me with evil purpose draw near;
they are far from your law.
151 Yet you are near, O LORD,
and all your commandments are true.
152 Long ago I learned from your decrees
that you have established them forever.

153 Look on my misery and rescue me,
for I do not forget your law.
154 Plead my cause and redeem me;
give me life according to your promise.
155 Salvation is far from the wicked,
for they do not seek your statutes.
156 Great is your mercy, O LORD;
give me life according to your justice.
157 Many are my persecutors and my adversaries,
yet I do not swerve from your decrees.
158 I look at the faithless with disgust,
because they do not keep your commands.

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for deliverance from enemies. **137–144**: Acknowledgment of God's justice. **145–152**: Passionate cry to be saved from persecution. **119.153–160**: Prayer for the preservation of the psalmist's life.

159 Consider how I love your precepts;
preserve my life according to your steadfast love.
160 The sum of your word is truth;
and every one of your righteous ordinances endures forever.

161 Princes persecute me without cause,
but my heart stands in awe of your words.
162 I rejoice at your word
like one who finds great spoil.
163 I hate and abhor falsehood,
but I love your law.
164 Seven times a day I praise you
for your righteous ordinances.
165 Great peace have those who love your law;
nothing can make them stumble.
166 I hope for your salvation, O LORD,
and I fulfill your commandments.
167 My soul keeps your decrees;
I love them exceedingly.
168 I keep your precepts and decrees,
for all my ways are before you.

169 Let my cry come before you, O LORD;
give me understanding according to your word.
170 Let my supplication come before you;
deliver me according to your promise.
171 My lips will pour forth praise,
because you teach me your statutes.
172 My tongue will sing of your promise,
for all your commandments are right.
173 Let your hand be ready to help me,
for I have chosen your precepts.
174 I long for your salvation, O LORD,
and your law is my delight.
175 Let me live that I may praise you,
and let your ordinances help me.
176 I have gone astray like a lost sheep; seek out your servant,
for I do not forget your commandments.

## Psalm 120

*A Song of Ascents.*

1 In my distress I cry to the LORD,
that he may answer me:
2 "Deliver me, O LORD,
from lying lips,
from a deceitful tongue."

3 What shall be given to you?
And what more shall be done to you,
you deceitful tongue?
4 A warrior's sharp arrows,
with glowing coals of the broom tree!

5 Woe is me, that I am an alien in Meshech,
that I must live among the tents of Kedar.
6 Too long have I had my dwelling among those who hate peace.
7 I am for peace;
but when I speak,
they are for war.

---

**119.161–168**: The psalmist's piety contrasted with the unjust actions of the persecutors.

**119.169–176**: If delivered, the poet vows to sing the praise of God's law.

**Ps 120**: **An exile's prayer for deliverance from enemies** (a lament). **4**: *The broom tree* produces a specially hot, long-burning fire. **5**: *Meshech . . . Kedar,* remote regions in Asia Minor and north Arabia. The psalmist lives in such a place, far from the land of Israel.

## Psalm 121

*A Song of Ascents.*

1 I lift up my eyes to the hills—
from where will my help come?
2 My help comes from the LORD,
who made heaven and earth.

3 He will not let your foot be moved;
he who keeps you will not slumber.
4 He who keeps Israel
will neither slumber nor sleep.

5 The LORD is your keeper;
the LORD is your shade at your right hand.
6 The sun shall not strike you by day,
nor the moon by night.

7 The LORD will keep you from all evil;
he will keep your life.
8 The LORD will keep
your going out and your coming in
from this time on and forevermore.

## Psalm 122

*A Song of Ascents. Of David.*

1 I was glad when they said to me,
"Let us go to the house of the LORD!"
2 Our feet are standing
within your gates, O Jerusalem.

3 Jerusalem—built as a city
that is bound firmly together.
4 To it the tribes go up,
the tribes of the LORD,
as was decreed for Israel,
to give thanks to the name of the LORD.
5 For there the thrones for judgment were set up,
the thrones of the house of David.

6 Pray for the peace of Jerusalem:
"May they prosper who love you.
7 Peace be within your walls,
and security within your towers."
8 For the sake of my relatives and friends
I will say, "Peace be within you."
9 For the sake of the house of the LORD our God,
I will seek your good.

## Psalm 123

*A Song of Ascents.*

1 To you I lift up my eyes,
O you who are enthroned in the heavens!
2 As the eyes of servants
look to the hand of their master,
as the eyes of a maid
to the hand of her mistress,
so our eyes look to the LORD our God,
until he has mercy upon us.

3 Have mercy upon us, O LORD,
have mercy upon us,
for we have had more than enough of contempt.

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**Ps 121: A liturgy of blessing. 1**: The psalmist asks a rhetorical question. *The hills* may be the "high places" where the baals, the local fertility gods, were worshiped (2 Kings 23.5). **2–8**: A priest answers and pronounces a blessing. **2**: Possibly *my* should be emended to "your" (compare v. 3).

**Ps 122: A song praising Zion as the pilgrim's goal. 1–5**: Arrived in Jerusalem, a group of pilgrims admire its buildings and the unity it symbolizes.

**122.6–9**: They pray for its continuing prosperity.

**Ps 123: Prayer for deliverance from enemies** (a group lament). **1–2**: An act of humble submission to God's will. **3–4**: Prayer for help. The speakers may represent either Israel or some oppressed class or sect within it.

4 Our soul has had more than its fill
of the scorn of those who are at ease,
of the contempt of the proud.

## Psalm 124

*A Song of Ascents. Of David.*

1 If it had not been the LORD who was on our side
—let Israel now say—
2 if it had not been the LORD who was on our side,
when our enemies attacked us,
3 then they would have swallowed us up alive,
when their anger was kindled against us;
4 then the flood would have swept us away,
the torrent would have gone over us;
5 then over us would have gone the raging waters.

6 Blessed be the LORD,
who has not given us as prey to their teeth.
7 We have escaped like a bird from the snare of the fowlers;
the snare is broken,
and we have escaped.

8 Our help is in the name of the LORD,
who made heaven and earth.

## Psalm 125

*A Song of Ascents.*

1 Those who trust in the LORD are like Mount Zion,
which cannot be moved, but abides forever.
2 As the mountains surround Jerusalem,
so the LORD surrounds his people,
from this time on and forevermore.
3 For the scepter of wickedness shall not rest
on the land allotted to the righteous,
so that the righteous might not stretch out
their hands to do wrong.
4 Do good, O LORD, to those who are good,
and to those who are upright in their hearts.
5 But those who turn aside to their own crooked ways
the LORD will lead away with evildoers.
Peace be upon Israel!

## Psalm 126

*A Song of Ascents.*

1 When the LORD restored the fortunes of Zion,[d]
we were like those who dream.
2 Then our mouth was filled with laughter,
and our tongue with shouts of joy;
then it was said among the nations,
"The LORD has done great things for them."
3 The LORD has done great things for us,
and we rejoiced.

4 Restore our fortunes, O LORD,
like the watercourses in the Negeb.

*d* Or *brought back those who returned to Zion*

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**Ps 124: Thanksgiving for a national deliverance. 4–5**: Compare 32.6; 69.1–2, 14–15.

**Ps 125: Prayer for deliverance from national enemies** (a group lament). **1–3**: Expression of confidence. **4–5**: Prayer for help.

**Ps 126: Prayer for deliverance from national misfortune. 1–3**: The joy inspired by God's favor toward his people in former times. **4–6**: Prayer that it may be granted once again. **4**: *Negeb*, the arid region to the south of Palestine.

5 May those who sow in tears
reap with shouts of joy.
6 Those who go out weeping,
bearing the seed for sowing,
shall come home with shouts of joy,
carrying their sheaves.

## Psalm 127

*A Song of Ascents. Of Solomon.*

1 Unless the LORD builds the house,
those who build it labor in vain.
Unless the LORD guards the city,
the guard keeps watch in vain.
2 It is in vain that you rise up early
and go late to rest,
eating the bread of anxious toil;
for he gives sleep to his beloved.[e]

3 Sons are indeed a heritage from the LORD,
the fruit of the womb a reward.
4 Like arrows in the hand of a warrior
are the sons of one's youth.
5 Happy is the man who has
his quiver full of them.
He shall not be put to shame
when he speaks with his enemies in the gate.

## Psalm 128

*A Song of Ascents.*

1 Happy is everyone who fears the LORD,
who walks in his ways.
2 You shall eat the fruit of the labor of your hands;
you shall be happy, and it shall go well with you.
3 Your wife will be like a fruitful vine
within your house;
your children will be like olive shoots
around your table.
4 Thus shall the man be blessed
who fears the LORD.

5 The LORD bless you from Zion.
May you see the prosperity of Jerusalem
all the days of your life.
6 May you see your children's children.
Peace be upon Israel!

## Psalm 129

*A Song of Ascents.*

1 "Often have they attacked me from my youth"
—let Israel now say—
2 "often have they attacked me from my youth,
yet they have not prevailed against me.
3 The plowers plowed on my back;
they made their furrows long."
4 The LORD is righteous;
he has cut the cords of the wicked.
5 May all who hate Zion
be put to shame and turned backward.
6 Let them be like the grass on the housetops
that withers before it grows up,
7 with which reapers do not fill their hands
or binders of sheaves their arms,
8 while those who pass by do not say,

e Or *for he provides for his beloved during sleep*

---

**Ps 127: A safe home and a large family are the LORD's gift** (a wisdom psalm). **1–2**: Anxiety has no place in the life of the faithful (compare Mt 6.25–34). **3–5**: The gift of many stalwart sons makes a father feel secure.

**Ps 128: A large and prosperous family is a reward for devotion to the LORD** (a wisdom psalm). **1**: *Happy*, see 1.1 n.

**Ps 129: Prayer for deliverance from national enemies** (a group lament). **1–4**: God has preserved Israel in spite of all its suffering in the past. **5–8**: May its present enemies be destroyed!

"The blessing of the LORD be
upon you!
We bless you in the name of the
LORD!"

## Psalm 130

*A Song of Ascents.*

1 Out of the depths I cry to you,
O LORD.
2 Lord, hear my voice!
Let your ears be attentive
to the voice of my supplications!

3 If you, O LORD, should mark
iniquities,
Lord, who could stand?
4 But there is forgiveness with you,
so that you may be revered.

5 I wait for the LORD, my soul
waits,
and in his word I hope;
6 my soul waits for the Lord
more than those who watch for
the morning,
more than those who watch for
the morning.

7 O Israel, hope in the LORD!
For with the LORD there is
steadfast love,
and with him is great power to
redeem.
8 It is he who will redeem Israel
from all its iniquities.

## Psalm 131

*A Song of Ascents. Of David.*

1 O LORD, my heart is not lifted up,
my eyes are not raised too high;
I do not occupy myself with
things
too great and too marvelous
for me.
2 But I have calmed and quieted
my soul,
like a weaned child with its
mother;
my soul is like the weaned child
that is with me.[f]

3 O Israel, hope in the LORD
from this time on and
forevermore.

## Psalm 132

*A Song of Ascents.*

1 O LORD, remember in David's
favor
all the hardships he endured;
2 how he swore to the LORD
and vowed to the Mighty One
of Jacob,
3 "I will not enter my house
or get into my bed;
4 I will not give sleep to my eyes
or slumber to my eyelids,
5 until I find a place for the LORD,
a dwelling place for the Mighty
One of Jacob."

6 We heard of it in Ephrathah;
we found it in the fields of Jaar.
7 "Let us go to his dwelling place;
let us worship at his footstool."

8 Rise up, O LORD, and go to your
resting place,

*f* Or *my soul within me is like a weaned child*

---

**Ps 130: Prayer for deliverance from personal trouble** (a lament). **1–2**: Cry for help. The psalmist's trouble is described only in general terms. **3–6**: Because it is God's nature to be merciful, the psalmist eagerly awaits his help.

**130.7–8**: Israel should take the same attitude in its national difficulties.

**Ps 131: Act of humble submission to God's will and guidance** (a song of trust; see Ps 11 n.).

**Ps 132: Liturgy commemorating God's choice of Zion and the Davidic dynasty. 1–5**: God is reminded of David's determination to provide him a sanctuary (2 Sam 7.1–2).

**132.6–10**: These words evidently accompanied a dramatic ceremony that reenacted

you and the ark of your might.
9 Let your priests be clothed with righteousness,
and let your faithful shout for joy.
10 For your servant David's sake
do not turn away the face of your anointed one.

11 The LORD swore to David a sure oath
from which he will not turn back:
"One of the sons of your body
I will set on your throne.
12 If your sons keep my covenant
and my decrees that I shall teach them,
their sons also, forevermore,
shall sit on your throne."

13 For the LORD has chosen Zion;
he has desired it for his habitation:
14 "This is my resting place forever;
here I will reside, for I have desired it.
15 I will abundantly bless its provisions;
I will satisfy its poor with bread.
16 Its priests I will clothe with salvation,
and its faithful will shout for joy.
17 There I will cause a horn to sprout up for David;
I have prepared a lamp for my anointed one.
18 His enemies I will clothe with disgrace,
but on him, his crown will gleam."

## Psalm 133

*A Song of Ascents.*

1 How very good and pleasant it is
when kindred live together in unity!
2 It is like the precious oil on the head,
running down upon the beard,
on the beard of Aaron,
running down over the collar of his robes.
3 It is like the dew of Hermon,
which falls on the mountains of Zion.
For there the LORD ordained his blessing,
life forevermore.

## Psalm 134

*A Song of Ascents.*

1 Come, bless the LORD, all you servants of the LORD,
who stand by night in the house of the LORD!
2 Lift up your hands to the holy place,
and bless the LORD.

3 May the LORD, maker of heaven and earth,
bless you from Zion.

---

the discovery of the ark by David and the procession by which he brought it to the sanctuary (2 Sam 6.2–15). **6**: *Ephrathah,* Bethlehem, David's city. *The fields of Jaar,* Kiriath-jearim, where the ark had been kept from Samuel's time until David became king in Jerusalem (1 Sam 7.1–2; 2 Chr 1.4).

**132.11–18**: A priest or temple prophet recites God's promise concerning Jerusalem and the dynasty.

**Ps 133: The joys of harmony in the family** (a wisdom psalm). **1**: *Kindred,* literally "brothers." This may refer to the situation described in Deut 25.5. **2**: *Aaron,* the ancestor and type of the priests. Anointing with consecrated *oil* was part of the ordination ceremony (Ex 29.7). **3**: *Hermon,* the chief mountain of Syria.

**Ps 134: A liturgy of blessing. 1–2**: The priests are summoned to offer praise to the LORD. **3**: They bless the congregation.

## Psalm 135

1 Praise the LORD!
Praise the name of the LORD;
give praise, O servants of
the LORD,
2 you that stand in the house of
the LORD,
in the courts of the house of
our God.
3 Praise the LORD, for the LORD
is good;
sing to his name, for he is
gracious.
4 For the LORD has chosen Jacob for
himself,
Israel as his own possession.

5 For I know that the LORD is great;
our Lord is above all gods.
6 Whatever the LORD pleases he
does,
in heaven and on earth,
in the seas and all deeps.
7 He it is who makes the clouds rise
at the end of the earth;
he makes lightnings for the rain
and brings out the wind from
his storehouses.

8 He it was who struck down the
firstborn of Egypt,
both human beings and animals;
9 he sent signs and wonders
into your midst, O Egypt,
against Pharaoh and all his
servants.
10 He struck down many nations
and killed mighty kings—
11 Sihon, king of the Amorites,
and Og, king of Bashan,
and all the kingdoms of
Canaan—
12 and gave their land as a heritage,
a heritage to his people Israel.

13 Your name, O LORD, endures
forever,
your renown, O LORD,
throughout all ages.
14 For the LORD will vindicate his
people,
and have compassion on his
servants.

15 The idols of the nations are silver
and gold,
the work of human hands.
16 They have mouths, but they do
not speak;
they have eyes, but they do
not see;
17 they have ears, but they do not
hear,
and there is no breath in their
mouths.
18 Those who make them
and all who trust them
shall become like them.

19 O house of Israel, bless the LORD!
O house of Aaron, bless the
LORD!
20 O house of Levi, bless the LORD!
You that fear the LORD, bless
the LORD!
21 Blessed be the LORD from Zion,
he who resides in Jerusalem.
Praise the LORD!

## Psalm 136

1 O give thanks to the LORD, for he
is good,
for his steadfast love endures
forever.

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**Ps 135: Hymn praising the LORD for his mighty deeds. 1–4:** Call to worship. **5–7:** The LORD's control of nature.

**135.8–12:** His work in the Exodus and the conquest of Canaan. **11:** *Sihon . . . Og,* Num 21.21–35. **13–14:** A lyrical interlude.

**135.15–18:** The LORD's power contrasted with the impotence of heathen gods (compare 115.3–8). **19–21:** Concluding summons to worship. **19:** *House of Aaron . . . Levi,* the priests and their assistants, the Levites.

**Ps 136: Thanksgiving for the LORD's great deeds on behalf of his people.** The second half of each verse is a congregational response. **1–3:** Summons to give thanks.

2 O give thanks to the God of gods,
for his steadfast love endures forever.
3 O give thanks to the Lord of lords,
for his steadfast love endures forever;

4 who alone does great wonders,
for his steadfast love endures forever;
5 who by understanding made the heavens,
for his steadfast love endures forever;
6 who spread out the earth on the waters,
for his steadfast love endures forever;
7 who made the great lights,
for his steadfast love endures forever;
8 the sun to rule over the day,
for his steadfast love endures forever;
9 the moon and stars to rule over the night,
for his steadfast love endures forever;

10 who struck Egypt through their firstborn,
for his steadfast love endures forever;
11 and brought Israel out from among them,
for his steadfast love endures forever;
12 with a strong hand and an outstretched arm,
for his steadfast love endures forever;
13 who divided the Red Sea[g] in two,
for his steadfast love endures forever;
14 and made Israel pass through the midst of it,
for his steadfast love endures forever;
15 but overthrew Pharaoh and his army in the Red Sea,[g]
for his steadfast love endures forever;
16 who led his people through the wilderness,
for his steadfast love endures forever;
17 who struck down great kings,
for his steadfast love endures forever;
18 and killed famous kings,
for his steadfast love endures forever;
19 Sihon, king of the Amorites,
for his steadfast love endures forever;
20 and Og, king of Bashan,
for his steadfast love endures forever;
21 and gave their land as a heritage,
for his steadfast love endures forever;
22 a heritage to his servant Israel,
for his steadfast love endures forever.

23 It is he who remembered us in our low estate,
for his steadfast love endures forever;
24 and rescued us from our foes,
for his steadfast love endures forever;
25 who gives food to all flesh,
for his steadfast love endures forever.

26 O give thanks to the God of heaven,
for his steadfast love endures forever.

*g* Or *Sea of Reeds*

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**136.4–9**: God's work in creation. **136.10–22**: His work in the history of Israel. **10–15**: The Exodus. **16**: The wilderness wanderings. **17–22**: The conquest of Canaan. *Sihon . . . Og*, Num 21.21–35. **23–25**: Recapitulation. **26**: Concluding summons to give thanks.

## Psalm 137

1 By the rivers of Babylon—
there we sat down and there we wept
when we remembered Zion.
2 On the willows[h] there
we hung up our harps.
3 For there our captors
asked us for songs,
and our tormentors asked for mirth, saying,
"Sing us one of the songs of Zion!"

4 How could we sing the LORD's song
in a foreign land?
5 If I forget you, O Jerusalem,
let my right hand wither!
6 Let my tongue cling to the roof of my mouth,
if I do not remember you,
if I do not set Jerusalem
above my highest joy.

7 Remember, O LORD, against the Edomites
the day of Jerusalem's fall,
how they said, "Tear it down!
Tear it down!
Down to its foundations!"
8 O daughter Babylon, you devastator![i]
Happy shall they be who pay you back
what you have done to us!
9 Happy shall they be who take your little ones
and dash them against the rock!

## Psalm 138

*Of David.*

1 I give you thanks, O LORD, with my whole heart;
before the gods I sing your praise;
2 I bow down toward your holy temple
and give thanks to your name for your steadfast love and your faithfulness;
for you have exalted your name and your word
above everything.[j]
3 On the day I called, you answered me,
you increased my strength of soul.[k]

4 All the kings of the earth shall praise you, O LORD,
for they have heard the words of your mouth.
5 They shall sing of the ways of the LORD,
for great is the glory of the LORD.
6 For though the LORD is high, he regards the lowly;
but the haughty he perceives from far away.

7 Though I walk in the midst of trouble,
you preserve me against the wrath of my enemies;

*h* Or *poplars* *i* Or *you who are devastated*
*j* Cn: Heb *you have exalted your word above all your name* *k* Syr Compare Gk Tg: Heb *you made me arrogant in my soul with strength*

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**Ps 137: Prayer for vengeance on Israel's enemies** (a lament). **1–6**: Lament over the holy city. **1–4**: It is difficult to sing the LORD's praise when an exile among foreigners. **1**: *Rivers of Babylon,* streams or canals of the Tigris and Euphrates rivers. **3**: *Songs of Zion,* see 46.4–7 n. **5–6**: The psalmist's solemn pledge.

**137.7–9**: Cry for revenge. **7**: *Edomites,* who helped the Babylonians sack Jerusalem in 587 (586) B.C. (Ob 10–14; 2 Kings 25.8–12). **8**: *Daughter Babylon,* literally, "daughter of Babylon," personification of the Babylonian people.

**Ps 138: Thanksgiving for deliverance from trouble. 1–2**: The psalmist in the temple court to offer thanks. **3**: The psalmist's experience (compare 18.37–45). **4–6**: A hymn of praise. **7–8**: An expression of faith.

you stretch out your hand,
and your right hand delivers me.
8 The LORD will fulfill his purpose for me;
your steadfast love, O LORD, endures forever.
Do not forsake the work of your hands.

## Psalm 139

*To the leader. Of David. A Psalm.*

1 O LORD, you have searched me and known me.
2 You know when I sit down and when I rise up;
you discern my thoughts from far away.
3 You search out my path and my lying down,
and are acquainted with all my ways.
4 Even before a word is on my tongue,
O LORD, you know it completely.
5 You hem me in, behind and before,
and lay your hand upon me.
6 Such knowledge is too wonderful for me;
it is so high that I cannot attain it.

7 Where can I go from your spirit?
Or where can I flee from your presence?
8 If I ascend to heaven, you are there;
if I make my bed in Sheol, you are there.
9 If I take the wings of the morning
and settle at the farthest limits of the sea,
10 even there your hand shall lead me,
and your right hand shall hold me fast.
11 If I say, "Surely the darkness shall cover me,
and the light around me become night,"
12 even the darkness is not dark to you;
the night is as bright as the day,
for darkness is as light to you.

13 For it was you who formed my inward parts;
you knit me together in my mother's womb.
14 I praise you, for I am fearfully and wonderfully made.
Wonderful are your works;
that I know very well.
15 My frame was not hidden from you,
when I was being made in secret,
intricately woven in the depths of the earth.
16 Your eyes beheld my unformed substance.
In your book were written
all the days that were formed for me,
when none of them as yet existed.
17 How weighty to me are your thoughts, O God!
How vast is the sum of them!
18 I try to count them—they are more than the sand;

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**Ps 139: Prayer for deliverance from personal enemies** (a lament). **1–18**: An appeal to the LORD, on the basis of his omniscience and universal power, to save the psalmist from the enemies of them both (see vv. 19–20). **1–6**: Everything the psalmist has ever done or thought is known to God.

**139.7–12**: There could have been no secret crimes, for God is with everyone, everywhere. **8**: *Sheol*, see 88.5–6 n. It is a new thought that God is in Sheol as well as in heaven (see 115.17 n.). **13–16**: God formed the embryo in the womb (poetically called *the depths of the earth*) and knew the psalmist's character from the moment of conception. **16**: *Your book*, compare 40.7 n. **17–18**: Exclamation of wonder.

I come to the end[l]—I am still
with you.

19 O that you would kill the wicked,
O God,
and that the bloodthirsty would
depart from me—
20 those who speak of you
maliciously,
and lift themselves up against
you for evil![m]
21 Do I not hate those who hate you,
O LORD?
And do I not loathe those who
rise up against you?
22 I hate them with perfect hatred;
I count them my enemies.
23 Search me, O God, and know my
heart;
test me and know my thoughts.
24 See if there is any wicked[n] way
in me,
and lead me in the way
everlasting.[o]

## Psalm 140

*To the leader. A Psalm of David.*

1 Deliver me, O LORD, from
evildoers;
protect me from those who are
violent,
2 who plan evil things in their
minds
and stir up wars continually.
3 They make their tongue sharp as a
snake's,
and under their lips is the
venom of vipers. *Selah*

4 Guard me, O LORD, from the
hands of the wicked;
protect me from the violent
who have planned my downfall.
5 The arrogant have hidden a trap
for me,
and with cords they have spread
a net,[p]
along the road they have set
snares for me. *Selah*

6 I say to the LORD, "You are
my God;
give ear, O LORD, to the voice
of my supplications."
7 O LORD, my Lord, my strong
deliverer,
you have covered my head in
the day of battle.
8 Do not grant, O LORD, the desires
of the wicked;
do not further their evil plot.[q]
*Selah*

9 Those who surround me lift up
their heads;[r]
let the mischief of their lips
overwhelm them!
10 Let burning coals fall on them!
Let them be flung into pits, no
more to rise!
11 Do not let the slanderer be
established in the land;
let evil speedily hunt down the
violent!

12 I know that the LORD maintains
the cause of the needy,
and executes justice for the
poor.
13 Surely the righteous shall give
thanks to your name;

*l* Or *I awake* *m* Cn: Meaning of Heb uncertain *n* Heb *hurtful* *o* Or *the ancient way*. Compare Jer 6.16 *p* Or *they have spread cords as a net* *q* Heb adds *they are exalted* *r* Cn Compare Gk: Heb *those who surround me are uplifted in head*; Heb divides verses 8 and 9 differently

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**139.19–24**: Prayer for vindication and deliverance. **21**: The psalmist, a religious leader, does not hesitate to identify personal enemies as God's enemies also.

**Ps 140**: **Prayer for deliverance from personal enemies** (a lament). **1–2**: Cry for help. **3–5**: The psalmist's situation. **3**: The mention of *their tongue* and *lips* probably implies that they have pronounced a curse against the psalmist (compare Pss 58 and 109). *Selah*, see 3.2 n.

**140.6–11**: Prayer for deliverance. **7**: *Covered my head*, given protection. **12–13**: Expression of confidence.

the upright shall live in your presence.

## Psalm 141

*A Psalm of David.*

1 I call upon you, O LORD; come quickly to me;
give ear to my voice when I call to you.
2 Let my prayer be counted as incense before you,
and the lifting up of my hands as an evening sacrifice.

3 Set a guard over my mouth, O LORD;
keep watch over the door of my lips.
4 Do not turn my heart to any evil,
to busy myself with wicked deeds
in company with those who work iniquity;
do not let me eat of their delicacies.

5 Let the righteous strike me; let the faithful correct me.
Never let the oil of the wicked anoint my head,[s]
for my prayer is continually[t] against their wicked deeds.
6 When they are given over to those who shall condemn them,
then they shall learn that my words were pleasant.
7 Like a rock that one breaks apart and shatters on the land,
so shall their bones be strewn at the mouth of Sheol.[u]

8 But my eyes are turned toward you, O GOD, my Lord;
in you I seek refuge; do not leave me defenseless.
9 Keep me from the trap that they have laid for me,
and from the snares of evildoers.
10 Let the wicked fall into their own nets,
while I alone escape.

## Psalm 142

*A Maskil of David. When he was in the cave. A Prayer.*

1 With my voice I cry to the LORD;
with my voice I make supplication to the LORD.
2 I pour out my complaint before him;
I tell my trouble before him.
3 When my spirit is faint,
you know my way.

In the path where I walk
they have hidden a trap for me.
4 Look on my right hand and see—
there is no one who takes notice of me;
no refuge remains to me;
no one cares for me.

5 I cry to you, O LORD;
I say, "You are my refuge,
my portion in the land of the living."
6 Give heed to my cry,
for I am brought very low.

Save me from my persecutors,
for they are too strong for me.

*s* Gk: Meaning of Heb uncertain *t* Cn: Heb *for continually and my prayer* *u* Meaning of Heb of verses 5-7 is uncertain

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**Ps 141: Prayer for deliverance from personal enemies** (a lament). **1–2**: Cry for help. *Evening sacrifice,* Ex 29.38–42; 1 Kings 18.36. **3–7**: A prayer that the writer may never compromise with the wicked, whose destruction is sure. **5**: *Oil,* compare 133.2. **7**: *Sheol,* see 88.3–6 n. **8–10**: Prayer for deliverance.

**Ps 142: Prayer for deliverance from personal enemies** (a lament). **1–3a**: Cry for help. **3b–4**: The psalmist's situation. **5–7**: Prayer for deliverance.

7 Bring me out of prison,
so that I may give thanks to your name.
The righteous will surround me,
for you will deal bountifully with me.

## Psalm 143

*A Psalm of David.*

1 Hear my prayer, O LORD;
give ear to my supplications in your faithfulness;
answer me in your righteousness.
2 Do not enter into judgment with your servant,
for no one living is righteous before you.

3 For the enemy has pursued me,
crushing my life to the ground,
making me sit in darkness like those long dead.
4 Therefore my spirit faints within me;
my heart within me is appalled.

5 I remember the days of old,
I think about all your deeds,
I meditate on the works of your hands.
6 I stretch out my hands to you;
my soul thirsts for you like a parched land. *Selah*

7 Answer me quickly, O LORD;
my spirit fails.
Do not hide your face from me,
or I shall be like those who go down to the Pit.
8 Let me hear of your steadfast love in the morning,
for in you I put my trust.
Teach me the way I should go,
for to you I lift up my soul.

9 Save me, O LORD, from my enemies;
I have fled to you for refuge.[v]
10 Teach me to do your will,
for you are my God.
Let your good spirit lead me on a level path.

11 For your name's sake, O LORD, preserve my life.
In your righteousness bring me out of trouble.
12 In your steadfast love cut off my enemies,
and destroy all my adversaries,
for I am your servant.

## Psalm 144

*Of David.*

1 Blessed be the LORD, my rock,
who trains my hands for war,
and my fingers for battle;
2 my rock[w] and my fortress,
my stronghold and my deliverer,
my shield, in whom I take refuge,
who subdues the peoples[x] under me.

3 O LORD, what are human beings
that you regard them,
or mortals that you think of them?
4 They are like a breath;
their days are like a passing shadow.

*v* One Heb Ms Gk: MT *to you I have hidden*
*w* With 18.2 and 2 Sam 22.2: Heb *my steadfast love*
*x* Heb Mss Syr Aquila Jerome: MT *my people*

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**Ps 143: Prayer for deliverance from personal enemies** (a lament). **1–2**: Cry for vindication. **3–6**: The psalmist's situation. **6**: *Selah*, see 3.2 n.

**143.7–12**: Prayer for deliverance. **7**: *Pit*, see 16.10 n.

**Ps 144: A king prays for deliverance from his enemies** (a royal lament). **1–2**: Praise to God for his protecting power. **3–4**: The weakness and inadequacy of human beings (compare 8.4; 90.5–6; 146.3–4).

**144.5–8**: Prayer for victory (compare 18.6–17). **9–10**: The vow (see 7.17 n.).

5 Bow your heavens, O LORD, and come down;
touch the mountains so that they smoke.
6 Make the lightning flash and scatter them;
send out your arrows and rout them.
7 Stretch out your hand from on high;
set me free and rescue me from the mighty waters,
from the hand of aliens,
8 whose mouths speak lies,
and whose right hands are false.

9 I will sing a new song to you, O God;
upon a ten-stringed harp I will play to you,
10 the one who gives victory to kings,
who rescues his servant David.
11 Rescue me from the cruel sword,
and deliver me from the hand of aliens,
whose mouths speak lies,
and whose right hands are false.

12 May our sons in their youth
be like plants full grown,
our daughters like corner pillars,
cut for the building of a palace.
13 May our barns be filled,
with produce of every kind;
may our sheep increase by thousands,
by tens of thousands in our fields,
14 and may our cattle be heavy with young.
May there be no breach in the walls,[y] no exile,
and no cry of distress in our streets.

15 Happy are the people to whom such blessings fall;
happy are the people whose God is the LORD.

## Psalm 145

*Praise. Of David.*

1 I will extol you, my God and King,
and bless your name forever and ever.
2 Every day I will bless you,
and praise your name forever and ever.
3 Great is the LORD, and greatly to be praised;
his greatness is unsearchable.

4 One generation shall laud your works to another,
and shall declare your mighty acts.
5 On the glorious splendor of your majesty,
and on your wondrous works, I will meditate.
6 The might of your awesome deeds shall be proclaimed,
and I will declare your greatness.
7 They shall celebrate the fame of your abundant goodness,
and shall sing aloud of your righteousness.

8 The LORD is gracious and merciful,
slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love.

[y] Heb lacks *in the walls*

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**144.12–15**: Prayer for a prosperous year, perhaps originally a separate psalm.

**Ps 145: Hymn epitomizing the character of the God of Israel.** An acrostic psalm, each new verse beginning with the next in order of the Hebrew alphabet (see Ps 119 n.); the verse beginning with the Hebrew letter "nun" appears as the third and fourth lines of verse 13 (see note *b*). **1–3**: The psalmist's personal expression of praise. **4–7**: God's wonderful deeds.

**145.8–9**: The love of God (Ex 34.6; Num

9 The LORD is good to all,
and his compassion is over all that he has made.

10 All your works shall give thanks to you, O LORD,
and all your faithful shall bless you.
11 They shall speak of the glory of your kingdom,
and tell of your power,
12 to make known to all people your[z] mighty deeds,
and the glorious splendor of your[a] kingdom.
13 Your kingdom is an everlasting kingdom,
and your dominion endures throughout all generations.

The LORD is faithful in all his words,
and gracious in all his deeds.[b]
14 The LORD upholds all who are falling,
and raises up all who are bowed down.
15 The eyes of all look to you,
and you give them their food in due season.
16 You open your hand,
satisfying the desire of every living thing.
17 The LORD is just in all his ways,
and kind in all his doings.
18 The LORD is near to all who call on him,
to all who call on him in truth.
19 He fulfills the desire of all who fear him;
he also hears their cry, and saves them.
20 The LORD watches over all who love him,
but all the wicked he will destroy.

21 My mouth will speak the praise of the LORD,
and all flesh will bless his holy name forever and ever.

## Psalm 146

1 Praise the LORD!
Praise the LORD, O my soul!
2 I will praise the LORD as long as I live;
I will sing praises to my God all my life long.

3 Do not put your trust in princes,
in mortals, in whom there is no help.
4 When their breath departs, they return to the earth;
on that very day their plans perish.

5 Happy are those whose help is the God of Jacob,
whose hope is in the LORD their God,
6 who made heaven and earth,
the sea, and all that is in them;
who keeps faith forever;
7 who executes justice for the oppressed;
who gives food to the hungry.

The LORD sets the prisoners free;
8 the LORD opens the eyes of the blind.
The LORD lifts up those who are bowed down;
the LORD loves the righteous.

*z* Gk Jerome Syr: Heb *his* *a* Heb *his*
*b* These two lines supplied by Q Ms Gk Syr

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14.18; etc.). **10–13a:** The kingship of God (see Ps 93 n.).

**145.13b–20:** God's providential care for his creatures. **21:** Return to the personal mood of vv. 1–3.

**Ps 146: Hymn praising God for his help.** Pss 146–150 all begin and end with "Hallelujah!" (see Ps 111.1 n.). **1–2:** Personal expression of praise (compare 145.1–3). **3–4:** The inadequacy of human beings (compare 144.3–4).

**146.5–9:** The LORD gives help to all who need it. **10:** Concluding expression of praise.

9 The LORD watches over the strangers;
he upholds the orphan and the widow,
but the way of the wicked he brings to ruin.

10 The LORD will reign forever,
your God, O Zion, for all generations.
Praise the LORD!

## Psalm 147

1 Praise the LORD!
How good it is to sing praises to our God;
for he is gracious, and a song of praise is fitting.
2 The LORD builds up Jerusalem;
he gathers the outcasts of Israel.
3 He heals the brokenhearted,
and binds up their wounds.
4 He determines the number of the stars;
he gives to all of them their names.
5 Great is our Lord, and abundant in power;
his understanding is beyond measure.
6 The LORD lifts up the downtrodden;
he casts the wicked to the ground.

7 Sing to the LORD with thanksgiving;
make melody to our God on the lyre.
8 He covers the heavens with clouds,
prepares rain for the earth,
makes grass grow on the hills.
9 He gives to the animals their food,
and to the young ravens when they cry.
10 His delight is not in the strength of the horse,
nor his pleasure in the speed of a runner;[c]
11 but the LORD takes pleasure in those who fear him,
in those who hope in his steadfast love.

12 Praise the LORD, O Jerusalem!
Praise your God, O Zion!
13 For he strengthens the bars of your gates;
he blesses your children within you.
14 He grants peace[d] within your borders;
he fills you with the finest of wheat.
15 He sends out his command to the earth;
his word runs swiftly.
16 He gives snow like wool;
he scatters frost like ashes.
17 He hurls down hail like crumbs—
who can stand before his cold?
18 He sends out his word, and melts them;
he makes his wind blow, and the waters flow.
19 He declares his word to Jacob,
his statutes and ordinances to Israel.
20 He has not dealt thus with any other nation;
they do not know his ordinances.
Praise the LORD!

## Psalm 148

1 Praise the LORD!
Praise the LORD from the heavens;
praise him in the heights!
2 Praise him, all his angels;
praise him, all his host!

*c* Heb *legs of a person* *d* Or *prosperity*

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**Ps 147: Hymn praising God for his universal power and providential care. 4:** Isa 40.26. **16–18:** Compare Job 37.9–11.

**Ps 148: Hymn calling upon all created things to praise the LORD. 1–6:** All things in heaven called to praise him.

3 Praise him, sun and moon;
praise him, all you shining stars!
4 Praise him, you highest heavens,
and you waters above the heavens!

5 Let them praise the name of the LORD,
for he commanded and they were created.
6 He established them forever and ever;
he fixed their bounds, which cannot be passed.[e]

7 Praise the LORD from the earth,
you sea monsters and all deeps,
8 fire and hail, snow and frost,
stormy wind fulfilling his command!

9 Mountains and all hills,
fruit trees and all cedars!
10 Wild animals and all cattle,
creeping things and flying birds!

11 Kings of the earth and all peoples,
princes and all rulers of the earth!
12 Young men and women alike,
old and young together!

13 Let them praise the name of the LORD,
for his name alone is exalted;
his glory is above earth and heaven.
14 He has raised up a horn for his people,
praise for all his faithful,
for the people of Israel who are close to him.
Praise the LORD!

## Psalm 149

1 Praise the LORD!
Sing to the LORD a new song,
his praise in the assembly of the faithful.
2 Let Israel be glad in its Maker;
let the children of Zion rejoice in their King.
3 Let them praise his name with dancing,
making melody to him with tambourine and lyre.
4 For the LORD takes pleasure in his people;
he adorns the humble with victory.
5 Let the faithful exult in glory;
let them sing for joy on their couches.
6 Let the high praises of God be in their throats
and two-edged swords in their hands,
7 to execute vengeance on the nations
and punishment on the peoples,
8 to bind their kings with fetters
and their nobles with chains of iron,
9 to execute on them the judgment decreed.
This is glory for all his faithful ones.
Praise the LORD!

## Psalm 150

1 Praise the LORD!
Praise God in his sanctuary;
praise him in his mighty firmament![f]

*e* Or *he set a law that cannot pass away*
*f* Or *dome*

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**148.7–10**: All animals, plants, and objects on earth called to praise him. **11–14**: Everyone summoned to join in the chorus. **14**: *Horn,* see 75.4–5 n.

**Ps 149**: **Hymn to accompany a festival dance.** **5**: *On their couches,* the meaning is uncertain; perhaps reclining on couches was part of the festival drama. **6–9**: The dance was evidently of war-like character.

**Ps 150**: **Doxology marking the end of**

2 Praise him for his mighty deeds;
praise him according to his
surpassing greatness!

3 Praise him with trumpet sound;
praise him with lute and harp!
4 Praise him with tambourine and
dance;
praise him with strings and
pipe!
5 Praise him with clanging cymbals;
praise him with loud clashing
cymbals!
6 Let everything that breathes praise
the LORD!
Praise the LORD!

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**the Psalter** (compare 41.13). Verses 3–5 indicate the nature of the instrumental accompaniment to the psalms. **1**: *Praise the LORD!* see Ps 146 n. **3**: *Lute,* a stringed instrument. **6**: The climax of the psalm and a fitting conclusion to the book of Psalms.

# *Proverbs*

The book consists essentially of several collections, as the titles indicate: (1) "The proverbs of Solomon" (1.1–9.18), where 1.1 serves also as the title of the book. (2) "The proverbs of Solomon" (10.1–22.16), and also the Solomonic collection in 25.1–29.27, supposedly preserved by the efforts of the "men of Hezekiah" (25.1). (3) "The words of the wise" (22.17–23.11), a title preserved in the Septuagint but incorporated into the text of the Hebrew at 22.17. (4) "Sayings of the wise" in 24.23–24. (5) "The words of Agur" in 30.1ff., which are followed by a series of numerical sayings. (6) "The words of Lemuel" in 31.1–10. (7) Finally, the acrostic poem on the "good wife," 31.11–31.

While some of the sayings may very well be pre-exilic, the work was edited in the post-exilic period, and 1.1–6 serves as an introduction or key to the whole. The attribution to Solomon is due to his legendary wisdom (1 Kings 4.29–34). The "proverbs" consist of sayings, commands and admonitions, and long poems. The sayings are usually two lines in parallel thought (see "Characteristics of Hebrew Poetry," pp. 392–397). The commands and admonitions usually have a motive clause; the poems are characteristic of chs 1–9. The book is typical of the "wisdom" of the Old Testament (see "The Poetical Books or Writings," pp. 623–624 OT) and also of the ancient Near East, especially Egypt. In fact, most scholars agree that 22.17–23.11 is in some way dependent upon the Instruction of the Egyptian sage, Amen-em-ope (see 22.17 n.).

The purpose of the book (1.1–6) is to transmit the insights whereby a youth might learn to cope with life. These were gathered from the tradition of the elders (e.g. 4.1–4) and from experience and observation (e.g. 6.6–11). Certain key emphases appear in the process of moral formation: honesty, diligence, trustworthiness, docility (the ability to "hear" or obey), control of one's appetites, the cultivation of true and proper speech, the correct attitudes towards riches and poverty, etc. Some sayings are observations, but more often a moral ideal is inculcated (e.g., the contrast between the righteous and the wicked, especially in chs 10–15). The underlying presupposition is that "the fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom" (9.10; 1.7; 15.33).

The long wisdom poems in chs 1–9 differ in style from the short staccato sayings that predominate in the rest of the book. They are strongly hortatory, somewhat in the spirit of Deuteronomy. Chapters 1, 8, and 9 present a personification of Wisdom, a woman preaching to simple youth. She and her proclamation of "life" (8.35) stand in contrast to the "strange woman" or prostitute (7.10), and to Dame Folly (9.13). The sayings in chs 10ff. have not been collected in a haphazard manner. Catchwords, plays on words, alliteration and assonance, and content are at work to create a certain unity. Some sayings have been repeated in other collections (e.g. 21.9 = 25.24).

The teaching of the sages is marked by an optimistic view of retribution. Wisdom (generally equated with righteousness) brings success; folly (or wickedness) brings destruction. This is also the teaching of Deuteronomy and other biblical works. The sages were not, however, unaware of the limitations of wisdom, and of the ambiguities and mysteries of life (3.11–12). There was no wisdom that could prevail against the LORD (21.30), whose work is mysterious and definitive (16.1, 2, 9). But retribution remained a problem, as the books of Job and Qoheleth (Ecclesiastes) demonstrate.

1 The proverbs of Solomon son of David, king of Israel:

2 For learning about wisdom and instruction,
for understanding words of insight,
3 for gaining instruction in wise dealing,
righteousness, justice, and equity;
4 to teach shrewdness to the simple,
knowledge and prudence to the young—
5 let the wise also hear and gain in learning,
and the discerning acquire skill,
6 to understand a proverb and a figure,
the words of the wise and their riddles.

7 The fear of the LORD is the beginning of knowledge;
fools despise wisdom and instruction.

8 Hear, my child, your father's instruction,
and do not reject your mother's teaching;
9 for they are a fair garland for your head,
and pendants for your neck.

10 My child, if sinners entice you,
do not consent.
11 If they say, "Come with us, let us lie in wait for blood;
let us wantonly ambush the innocent;
12 like Sheol let us swallow them alive
and whole, like those who go down to the Pit.
13 We shall find all kinds of costly things;
we shall fill our houses with booty.
14 Throw in your lot among us;
we will all have one purse"—
15 my child, do not walk in their way,
keep your foot from their paths;
16 for their feet run to evil,
and they hurry to shed blood.
17 For in vain is the net baited
while the bird is looking on;
18 yet they lie in wait—to kill themselves!
and set an ambush—for their own lives!
19 Such is the end[a] of all who are greedy for gain;
it takes away the life of its possessors.

20 Wisdom cries out in the street;

*a* Gk: Heb *are the ways*

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**1.1–9.18**: These chapters contain mostly long poems, as opposed to short sayings, which serve as an introduction to the book. The style is hortatory (*hear, my child,* 1.8). The personification of Wisdom, in opposition to Dame Folly (ch 9) and the *loose woman* (2.16), is particularly noteworthy. She threatens and cajoles her followers. See the Introduction concerning the title in 1.1, and also in 10.1 and 25.1.

**1.2–6**: This is a complete sentence in Hebrew, which states the purpose of the sage: to awaken students and provide them with moral formation leading to their maturity. Wisdom is essentially practical, aiming at proper conduct, rather than theoretical. One will *understand a proverb* when one's life style is in harmony with it. **6**: *A figure* is a metaphor, parable, or allegory such as in vv. 20–33. A *riddle* is a comparison or analogy that enforces a lesson when the hearer discerns its intention and is able to complete it (see 25.14; 26.7; 30.18–19).

**1.7**: **A basic wisdom theme:** An attitude of awe and reverence toward God is the necessary preliminary to knowledge—the first stage of enlightenment; compare 9.10; Job 28.28; Sir 1.14. *Fools* are not the stupid, but those whose conduct is reprehensible.

**1.8–19**: **Home-training is a moral safeguard** against the temptations of the wicked. **12**: *Sheol . . . the Pit,* common expressions for death and the place and state of the dead (see Gen 37.35 n.). **17**: This popular proverb affirms that the consequences of crime are too obvious to be missed.

**1.20–33**: **Wisdom personified as a prophetess.** She speaks publicly at the city

in the squares she raises her voice.
21 At the busiest corner she cries out;
at the entrance of the city gates she speaks:
22 "How long, O simple ones, will you love being simple?
How long will scoffers delight in their scoffing
and fools hate knowledge?
23 Give heed to my reproof;
I will pour out my thoughts to you;
I will make my words known to you.
24 Because I have called and you refused,
have stretched out my hand and no one heeded,
25 and because you have ignored all my counsel
and would have none of my reproof,
26 I also will laugh at your calamity;
I will mock when panic strikes you,
27 when panic strikes you like a storm,
and your calamity comes like a whirlwind,
when distress and anguish come upon you.
28 Then they will call upon me, but I will not answer;
they will seek me diligently, but will not find me.
29 Because they hated knowledge
and did not choose the fear of the LORD,
30 would have none of my counsel,
and despised all my reproof,
31 therefore they shall eat the fruit of their way
and be sated with their own devices.
32 For waywardness kills the simple,
and the complacency of fools destroys them;
33 but those who listen to me will be secure
and will live at ease, without dread of disaster."

2 My child, if you accept my words
and treasure up my commandments within you,
2 making your ear attentive to wisdom
and inclining your heart to understanding;
3 if you indeed cry out for insight,
and raise your voice for understanding;
4 if you seek it like silver,
and search for it as for hidden treasures—
5 then you will understand the fear of the LORD
and find the knowledge of God.
6 For the LORD gives wisdom;
from his mouth come knowledge and understanding;
7 he stores up sound wisdom for the upright;
he is a shield to those who walk blamelessly,
8 guarding the paths of justice
and preserving the way of his faithful ones.
9 Then you will understand righteousness and justice
and equity, every good path;
10 for wisdom will come into your heart,
and knowledge will be pleasant to your soul;
11 prudence will watch over you;
and understanding will guard you.
12 It will save you from the way of evil,

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gates where she can find an audience. In language that echoes the prophets (for v. 24 compare Isa 65.2, 12; 66.4; Jer 7.13, 24–27) she pronounces dire threats against those who will not listen (vv. 26–32).

**2.1–22: The fruits of the search for wisdom.** A very compact poem in 22 lines (the number of letters in the Hebrew alphabet) expressing "if" (vv. 1, 4) and "then" (vv. 5, 9).

from those who speak perversely,
13 who forsake the paths of uprightness
to walk in the ways of darkness,
14 who rejoice in doing evil
and delight in the perverseness of evil;
15 those whose paths are crooked,
and who are devious in their ways.

16 You will be saved from the loose[b] woman,
from the adulteress with her smooth words,
17 who forsakes the partner of her youth
and forgets her sacred covenant;
18 for her way[c] leads down to death,
and her paths to the shades;
19 those who go to her never come back,
nor do they regain the paths of life.

20 Therefore walk in the way of the good,
and keep to the paths of the just.
21 For the upright will abide in the land,
and the innocent will remain in it;
22 but the wicked will be cut off from the land,
and the treacherous will be rooted out of it.

3 My child, do not forget my teaching,
but let your heart keep my commandments;
2 for length of days and years of life
and abundant welfare they will give you.
3 Do not let loyalty and faithfulness forsake you;
bind them around your neck,
write them on the tablet of your heart.
4 So you will find favor and good repute
in the sight of God and of people.

5 Trust in the LORD with all your heart,
and do not rely on your own insight.
6 In all your ways acknowledge him,
and he will make straight your paths.
7 Do not be wise in your own eyes;
fear the LORD, and turn away from evil.
8 It will be a healing for your flesh
and a refreshment for your body.

9 Honor the LORD with your substance
and with the first fruits of all your produce;
10 then your barns will be filled with plenty,
and your vats will be bursting with wine.

11 My child, do not despise the LORD's discipline
or be weary of his reproof,
12 for the LORD reproves the one he loves,
as a father the son in whom he delights.

13 Happy are those who find wisdom,

*b* Heb *strange* *c* Cn: Heb *house*

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**2.16**: *Loose woman,* literally, "strange woman"; although the identity is not certain, probably the wife of another (see ch 7). **17**: *Covenant of her God:* Marital faithfulness is a sacred obligation (Gen 2.24; Hos ch 2; Mal 2.14).

**3.1–12**: **Six admonitions** concerning conduct that leads to prosperity. Worthy of note is the idea that suffering is a *discipline,* a sign of divine love (vv. 11–12; see also Heb 12.5–6). **8**: *Body,* Hebrew "navel."

**3.13–18**: **The incomparable value of wis-**

and those who get understanding,
14 for her income is better than silver,
and her revenue better than gold.
15 She is more precious than jewels,
and nothing you desire can compare with her.
16 Long life is in her right hand;
in her left hand are riches and honor.
17 Her ways are ways of pleasantness,
and all her paths are peace.
18 She is a tree of life to those who lay hold of her;
those who hold her fast are called happy.

19 The LORD by wisdom founded the earth;
by understanding he established the heavens;
20 by his knowledge the deeps broke open,
and the clouds drop down the dew.
21 My child, do not let these escape from your sight:
keep sound wisdom and prudence,
22 and they will be life for your soul
and adornment for your neck.
23 Then you will walk on your way securely
and your foot will not stumble.
24 If you sit down,[d] you will not be afraid;
when you lie down, your sleep will be sweet.
25 Do not be afraid of sudden panic,
or of the storm that strikes the wicked;
26 for the LORD will be your confidence
and will keep your foot from being caught.

27 Do not withhold good from those to whom it is due,[e]
when it is in your power to do it.
28 Do not say to your neighbor,
"Go, and come again,
tomorrow I will give it"—when you have it with you.
29 Do not plan harm against your neighbor
who lives trustingly beside you.
30 Do not quarrel with anyone without cause,
when no harm has been done to you.
31 Do not envy the violent
and do not choose any of their ways;
32 for the perverse are an abomination to the LORD,
but the upright are in his confidence.
33 The LORD's curse is on the house of the wicked,
but he blesses the abode of the righteous.
34 Toward the scorners he is scornful,
but to the humble he shows favor.
35 The wise will inherit honor,
but stubborn fools, disgrace.

4 Listen, children, to a father's instruction,
and be attentive, that you may gain[f] insight;
2 for I give you good precepts:
do not forsake my teaching.

*d* Gk: Heb *lie down* *e* Heb *from its owners*
*f* Heb *know*

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**dom:** she brings *life, riches and honors.* **19–20:** Wisdom had a role in creation (8.22–31), which is sustained by water from the deeps (Ex 20.4) and dew from above.

**3.21–35: An admonition followed by six prohibitions,** and a statement about the fate of the righteous and wicked.

**4.1–27: An urgent appeal** to acquire wisdom, after the example of the teacher (vv. 1–7), who describes life in terms of the two

***A paternal exhortation***

3 When I was a son with my father,
tender, and my mother's favorite,
4 he taught me, and said to me,
"Let your heart hold fast my words;
keep my commandments, and live.
5 Get wisdom; get insight: do not forget, nor turn away
from the words of my mouth.
6 Do not forsake her, and she will keep you;
love her, and she will guard you.
7 The beginning of wisdom is this: Get wisdom,
and whatever else you get, get insight.
8 Prize her highly, and she will exalt you;
she will honor you if you embrace her.
9 She will place on your head a fair garland;
she will bestow on you a beautiful crown."

10 Hear, my child, and accept my words,
that the years of your life may be many.
11 I have taught you the way of wisdom;
I have led you in the paths of uprightness.
12 When you walk, your step will not be hampered;
and if you run, you will not stumble.
13 Keep hold of instruction; do not let go;
guard her, for she is your life.
14 Do not enter the path of the wicked,
and do not walk in the way of evildoers.
15 Avoid it; do not go on it;
turn away from it and pass on.
16 For they cannot sleep unless they have done wrong;
they are robbed of sleep unless they have made someone stumble.
17 For they eat the bread of wickedness
and drink the wine of violence.
18 But the path of the righteous is like the light of dawn,
which shines brighter and brighter until full day.
19 The way of the wicked is like deep darkness;
they do not know what they stumble over.
20 My child, be attentive to my words;
incline your ear to my sayings.
21 Do not let them escape from your sight;
keep them within your heart.
22 For they are life to those who find them,
and healing to all their flesh.
23 Keep your heart with all vigilance,
for from it flow the springs of life.
24 Put away from you crooked speech,
and put devious talk far from you.
25 Let your eyes look directly forward,
and your gaze be straight before you.
26 Keep straight the path of your feet,
and all your ways will be sure.
27 Do not swerve to the right or to the left;
turn your foot away from evil.

5 My child, be attentive to my wisdom;

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ways: wisdom's *way* or *path* (vv. 11, 18), and the *path* or *way of the wicked* (vv. 14, 19).

**5.1–23: A warning** (vv. 1–15) to avoid the *loose woman* who leads to *death* (2.16–19; 7.26–27; 9.18) is followed by encouragement to *rejoice* in one's own spouse (v. 15, *cistern*, v. 18, *fountain*).

incline your ear to my understanding,
2 so that you may hold on to prudence,
and your lips may guard knowledge.
3 For the lips of a loose[g] woman drip honey,
and her speech is smoother than oil;
4 but in the end she is bitter as wormwood,
sharp as a two-edged sword.
5 Her feet go down to death;
her steps follow the path to Sheol.
6 She does not keep straight to the path of life;
her ways wander, and she does not know it.

7 And now, my child,[h] listen to me,
and do not depart from the words of my mouth.
8 Keep your way far from her,
and do not go near the door of her house;
9 or you will give your honor to others,
and your years to the merciless,
10 and strangers will take their fill of your wealth,
and your labors will go to the house of an alien;
11 and at the end of your life you will groan,
when your flesh and body are consumed,
12 and you say, "Oh, how I hated discipline,
and my heart despised reproof!
13 I did not listen to the voice of my teachers
or incline my ear to my instructors.
14 Now I am at the point of utter ruin
in the public assembly."
15 Drink water from your own cistern,
flowing water from your own well.
16 Should your springs be scattered abroad,
streams of water in the streets?
17 Let them be for yourself alone,
and not for sharing with strangers.
18 Let your fountain be blessed,
and rejoice in the wife of your youth,
19 a lovely deer, a graceful doe.
May her breasts satisfy you at all times;
may you be intoxicated always by her love.
20 Why should you be intoxicated, my son, by another woman
and embrace the bosom of an adulteress?
21 For human ways are under the eyes of the LORD,
and he examines all their paths.
22 The iniquities of the wicked ensnare them,
and they are caught in the toils of their sin.
23 They die for lack of discipline,
and because of their great folly they are lost.

6 My child, if you have given your pledge to your neighbor,
if you have bound yourself to another,[i]
2 you are snared by the utterance of your lips,[j]
caught by the words of your mouth.
3 So do this, my child, and save yourself,
for you have come into your neighbor's power:
go, hurry,[k] and plead with your neighbor.

*g* Heb *strange* *h* Gk Vg: Heb *children*
*i* Or *a stranger* *j* Cn Compare Gk Syr: Heb *the words of your mouth* *k* Or *humble yourself*

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**6.1–35: Warnings. 1–5:** Do not offer your property as collateral for your neighbor's debts (apparently a source of trouble in Israelite society; see 11.15).

4 Give your eyes no sleep
and your eyelids no slumber;
5 save yourself like a gazelle from
the hunter,[l]
like a bird from the hand of the
fowler.

6 Go to the ant, you lazybones;
consider its ways, and be wise.
7 Without having any chief
or officer or ruler,
8 it prepares its food in summer,
and gathers its sustenance in
harvest.
9 How long will you lie there,
O lazybones?
When will you rise from your
sleep?
10 A little sleep, a little slumber,
a little folding of the hands
to rest,
11 and poverty will come upon you
like a robber,
and want, like an armed
warrior.

12 A scoundrel and a villain
goes around with crooked
speech,
13 winking the eyes, shuffling the
feet,
pointing the fingers,
14 with perverted mind devising evil,
continually sowing discord;
15 on such a one calamity will
descend suddenly;
in a moment, damage beyond
repair.

16 There are six things that the LORD
hates,
seven that are an abomination
to him:
17 haughty eyes, a lying tongue,
and hands that shed innocent
blood,
18 a heart that devises wicked plans,
feet that hurry to run to evil,
19 a lying witness who testifies
falsely,
and one who sows discord in a
family.

20 My child, keep your father's
commandment,
and do not forsake your
mother's teaching.
21 Bind them upon your heart
always;
tie them around your neck.
22 When you walk, they[m] will
lead you;
when you lie down, they[m] will
watch over you;
and when you awake, they[m]
will talk with you.
23 For the commandment is a lamp
and the teaching a light,
and the reproofs of discipline are
the way of life,
24 to preserve you from the wife of
another,[n]
from the smooth tongue of the
adulteress.
25 Do not desire her beauty in your
heart,
and do not let her capture you
with her eyelashes;
26 for a prostitute's fee is only a loaf
of bread,[o]
but the wife of another stalks a
man's very life.
27 Can fire be carried in the bosom
without burning one's clothes?
28 Or can one walk on hot coals
without scorching the feet?
29 So is he who sleeps with his
neighbor's wife;
no one who touches her will go
unpunished.

*l* Cn: Heb *from the hand* *m* Heb *it*
*n* Gk: MT *the evil woman* *o* Cn Compare Gk Syr Vg Tg: Heb *for because of a harlot to a piece of bread*

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**6.6–11**: Avoid laziness (see 24.30–34), as even the ants can tell you. **12–15**: Beware of shady, disreputable characters. **16–19**: A typical numerical saying (30.14–31; Am 1.3–2.8) about seven ugly vices. **20–35**: Another warning against adultery, stressing the penalties one will have to pay (vv. 26, 31–34).

*The false attractions of adultery*

30 Thieves are not despised who
steal only
to satisfy their appetite when
they are hungry.
31 Yet if they are caught, they will
pay sevenfold;
they will forfeit all the goods of
their house.
32 But he who commits adultery has
no sense;
he who does it destroys himself.
33 He will get wounds and dishonor,
and his disgrace will not be
wiped away.
34 For jealousy arouses a husband's
fury,
and he shows no restraint when
he takes revenge.
35 He will accept no compensation,
and refuses a bribe no matter
how great.

7 My child, keep my words
and store up my
commandments with you;
2 keep my commandments and live,
keep my teachings as the apple
of your eye;
3 bind them on your fingers,
write them on the tablet of your
heart.
4 Say to wisdom, "You are my
sister,"
and call insight your intimate
friend,
5 that they may keep you from the
loose[p] woman,
from the adulteress with her
smooth words.

6 For at the window of my house
I looked out through my lattice,
7 and I saw among the simple ones,
I observed among the youths,
a young man without sense,
8 passing along the street near her
corner,
taking the road to her house
9 in the twilight, in the evening,
at the time of night and
darkness.

10 Then a woman comes toward
him,
decked out like a prostitute,
wily of heart.[q]
11 She is loud and wayward;
her feet do not stay at home;
12 now in the street, now in the
squares,
and at every corner she lies
in wait.
13 She seizes him and kisses him,
and with impudent face she says
to him:
14 "I had to offer sacrifices,
and today I have paid my vows;
15 so now I have come out to
meet you,
to seek you eagerly, and I have
found you!
16 I have decked my couch with
coverings,
colored spreads of Egyptian
linen;
17 I have perfumed my bed with
myrrh,
aloes, and cinnamon.
18 Come, let us take our fill of love
until morning;
let us delight ourselves with
love.
19 For my husband is not at home;
he has gone on a long journey.
20 He took a bag of money with
him;
he will not come home until full
moon."

21 With much seductive speech she
persuades him;

*p* Heb *strange* *q* Meaning of Heb uncertain

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**7.1–27: Wisdom as safeguard against adultery.** One is to prefer Lady Wisdom as *sister* and *friend* (terms of endearment, in view of marriage; compare Song 4.9–12). Hence the teacher gives a lengthy description of how easily one can be seduced (vv. 6–27).

with her smooth talk she compels him.
22 Right away he follows her,
and goes like an ox to the slaughter,
or bounds like a stag toward the trap[r]
23 until an arrow pierces its entrails.
He is like a bird rushing into a snare,
not knowing that it will cost him his life.

24 And now, my children, listen to me,
and be attentive to the words of my mouth.
25 Do not let your hearts turn aside to her ways;
do not stray into her paths.
26 for many are those she has laid low,
and numerous are her victims.
27 Her house is the way to Sheol,
going down to the chambers of death.

8 Does not wisdom call,
and does not understanding raise her voice?
2 On the heights, beside the way,
at the crossroads she takes her stand;
3 beside the gates in front of the town,
at the entrance of the portals she cries out:
4 "To you, O people, I call,
and my cry is to all that live.
5 O simple ones, learn prudence;
acquire intelligence, you who lack it.
6 Hear, for I will speak noble things,
and from my lips will come what is right;
7 for my mouth will utter truth;
wickedness is an abomination to my lips.
8 All the words of my mouth are righteous;
there is nothing twisted or crooked in them.
9 They are all straight to one who understands
and right to those who find knowledge.
10 Take my instruction instead of silver,
and knowledge rather than choice gold;
11 for wisdom is better than jewels,
and all that you may desire cannot compare with her.
12 I, wisdom, live with prudence,[s]
and I attain knowledge and discretion.
13 The fear of the LORD is hatred of evil.
Pride and arrogance and the way of evil
and perverted speech I hate.
14 I have good advice and sound wisdom;
I have insight, I have strength.
15 By me kings reign,
and rulers decree what is just;
16 by me rulers rule,
and nobles, all who govern rightly.
17 I love those who love me,
and those who seek me diligently find me.
18 Riches and honor are with me,
enduring wealth and prosperity.
19 My fruit is better than gold, even fine gold,
and my yield than choice silver.
20 I walk in the way of righteousness,

*r* Cn Compare Gk: Meaning of Heb uncertain
*s* Meaning of Heb uncertain

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**8.1–36: Lady Wisdom.** She pronounces a public address (see 1.20–21), proclaiming her worth (vv. 6–11), her authority (vv. 12–16), and her rewards (vv. 17–21). In vv. 22–31 she describes her divine origin (vv. 22, 24, 26) before anything was created (this is asserted repeatedly in vv. 22–30). She was with God as a *master worker* (v. 30), and thus had some

along the paths of justice,
21 endowing with wealth those who love me,
and filling their treasuries.
22 The LORD created me at the beginning[t] of his work,[u]
the first of his acts of long ago.
23 Ages ago I was set up,
at the first, before the beginning of the earth.
24 When there were no depths I was brought forth,
when there were no springs abounding with water.
25 Before the mountains had been shaped,
before the hills, I was brought forth—
26 when he had not yet made earth and fields,[v]
or the world's first bits of soil.
27 When he established the heavens, I was there,
when he drew a circle on the face of the deep,
28 when he made firm the skies above,
when he established the fountains of the deep,
29 when he assigned to the sea its limit,
so that the waters might not transgress his command,
when he marked out the foundations of the earth,
30 then I was beside him, like a master worker;[w]
and I was daily his[x] delight,
rejoicing before him always,
31 rejoicing in his inhabited world
and delighting in the human race.

32 "And now, my children, listen to me:
happy are those who keep my ways.
33 Hear instruction and be wise,
and do not neglect it.
34 Happy is the one who listens to me,
watching daily at my gates,
waiting beside my doors.
35 For whoever finds me finds life
and obtains favor from the LORD;
36 but those who miss me injure themselves;
all who hate me love death."

9 Wisdom has built her house,
she has hewn her seven pillars.
2 She has slaughtered her animals,
she has mixed her wine,
she has also set her table.
3 She has sent out her servant-girls, she calls
from the highest places in the town,
4 "You that are simple, turn in here!"
To those without sense she says,
5 "Come, eat of my bread
and drink of the wine I have mixed.
6 Lay aside immaturity,[y] and live,
and walk in the way of insight."

7 Whoever corrects a scoffer wins abuse;
whoever rebukes the wicked gets hurt.
8 A scoffer who is rebuked will only hate you;
the wise, when rebuked, will love you.

*t* Or *me as the beginning* *u* Heb *way*
*v* Meaning of Heb uncertain *w* Another reading is *little child* *x* Gk: Heb lacks *his*
*y* Or *simpleness*

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unspecified role in the creative activity (Sir 1.9–10; Wis 7.22). Furthermore, she is all *delight, rejoicing* before God and *delighting in* his human creatures.

**8.32–36:** The conclusion of the speech is an offer of *life* in place of *death*.

**9.1–18:** Lady Wisdom invites the unwise, or *simple*, to a banquet (vv. 1–6), while Dame Folly invites them to her *stolen water*. Between the invitations are aphorisms about scoffers and the wise. **10:** See 1.7 n.

9 Give instruction[z] to the wise, and they will become wiser still;
teach the righteous and they will gain in learning.
10 The fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom,
and the knowledge of the Holy One is insight.
11 For by me your days will be multiplied,
and years will be added to your life.
12 If you are wise, you are wise for yourself;
if you scoff, you alone will bear it.

13 The foolish woman is loud;
she is ignorant and knows nothing.
14 She sits at the door of her house,
on a seat at the high places of the town,
15 calling to those who pass by,
who are going straight on their way,
16 "You who are simple, turn in here!"
And to those without sense she says,
17 "Stolen water is sweet,
and bread eaten in secret is pleasant."
18 But they do not know that the dead[a] are there,
that her guests are in the depths of Sheol.

10 The proverbs of Solomon.

A wise child makes a glad father,
but a foolish child is a mother's grief.
2 Treasures gained by wickedness do not profit,
but righteousness delivers from death.
3 The LORD does not let the righteous go hungry,
but he thwarts the craving of the wicked.
4 A slack hand causes poverty,
but the hand of the diligent makes rich.
5 A child who gathers in summer is prudent,
but a child who sleeps in harvest brings shame.
6 Blessings are on the head of the righteous,
but the mouth of the wicked conceals violence.
7 The memory of the righteous is a blessing,
but the name of the wicked will rot.
8 The wise of heart will heed commandments,
but a babbling fool will come to ruin.
9 Whoever walks in integrity walks securely,
but whoever follows perverse ways will be found out.
10 Whoever winks the eye causes trouble,
but the one who rebukes boldly makes peace.[b]
11 The mouth of the righteous is a fountain of life,
but the mouth of the wicked conceals violence.
12 Hatred stirs up strife,
but love covers all offenses.
13 On the lips of one who has understanding wisdom is found,

*z* Heb lacks *instruction* *a* Heb *shades*
*b* Gk: Heb *but a babbling fool will come to ruin*

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**10.1–22.16: A collection of proverbial sayings.** The discrete sayings in this collection are often bound together by catchwords and general context. There is a general equation between wise and righteous on the one hand, fool and wicked on the other. Antithetical parallelism (see "Characteristics of Hebrew Poetry," p. 392) is characteristic of chs 10–15. See the Introduction, p. 802 OT.

**10.2:** An early or unhappy *death* was considered as punishment for sin; hence long life is the portion of the just or wise (3.2; 4.10;

but a rod is for the back of one who lacks sense.

14 The wise lay up knowledge,
but the babbling of a fool brings ruin near.

15 The wealth of the rich is their fortress;
the poverty of the poor is their ruin.

16 The wage of the righteous leads to life,
the gain of the wicked to sin.

17 Whoever heeds instruction is on the path to life,
but one who rejects a rebuke goes astray.

18 Lying lips conceal hatred,
and whoever utters slander is a fool.

19 When words are many, transgression is not lacking,
but the prudent are restrained in speech.

20 The tongue of the righteous is choice silver;
the mind of the wicked is of little worth.

21 The lips of the righteous feed many,
but fools die for lack of sense.

22 The blessing of the LORD makes rich,
and he adds no sorrow with it.[c]

23 Doing wrong is like sport to a fool,
but wise conduct is pleasure to a person of understanding.

24 What the wicked dread will come upon them,
but the desire of the righteous will be granted.

25 When the tempest passes, the wicked are no more,
but the righteous are established forever.

26 Like vinegar to the teeth, and smoke to the eyes,
so are the lazy to their employers.

27 The fear of the LORD prolongs life,
but the years of the wicked will be short.

28 The hope of the righteous ends in gladness,
but the expectation of the wicked comes to nothing.

29 The way of the LORD is a stronghold for the upright,
but destruction for evildoers.

30 The righteous will never be removed,
but the wicked will not remain in the land.

31 The mouth of the righteous brings forth wisdom,
but the perverse tongue will be cut off.

32 The lips of the righteous know what is acceptable,
but the mouth of the wicked what is perverse.

**11** A false balance is an abomination to the LORD,
but an accurate weight is his delight.

2 When pride comes, then comes disgrace;
but wisdom is with the humble.

3 The integrity of the upright guides them,
but the crookedness of the treacherous destroys them.

4 Riches do not profit in the day of wrath,

*c* Or *and toil adds nothing to it*

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9.11; 10.27). The perspective of the writer is this-worldly; it must all happen here before one dies and goes to Sheol; hence God must show justice by rewarding the righteous and the wicked (as in 10.3; see also Ps 37). This doctrine of retribution appears frequently here (compare 11.21) and in the rest of the Bible, but the books of Job and Ecclesiastes are a warning against over-simplification.

**10.15**: As it stands, this is a mere observation about the difference that *wealth* makes, but it should be noted that in 18.11 it is considered to be only an imaginary protection; see also 11.4. **22**: See note *c*; wealth comes from the LORD's blessing, not from hard toil.

**11.1**: Compare Deut 25.13–16.

but righteousness delivers from death.
5 The righteousness of the blameless keeps their ways straight,
but the wicked fall by their own wickedness.
6 The righteousness of the upright saves them,
but the treacherous are taken captive by their schemes.
7 When the wicked die, their hope perishes,
and the expectation of the godless comes to nothing.
8 The righteous are delivered from trouble,
and the wicked get into it instead.
9 With their mouths the godless would destroy their neighbors,
but by knowledge the righteous are delivered.
10 When it goes well with the righteous, the city rejoices;
and when the wicked perish, there is jubilation.
11 By the blessing of the upright a city is exalted,
but it is overthrown by the mouth of the wicked.
12 Whoever belittles another lacks sense,
but an intelligent person remains silent.
13 A gossip goes about telling secrets,
but one who is trustworthy in spirit keeps a confidence.
14 Where there is no guidance, a nation[d] falls,
but in an abundance of counselors there is safety.
15 To guarantee loans for a stranger brings trouble,
but there is safety in refusing to do so.
16 A gracious woman gets honor,
but she who hates virtue is covered with shame.[e]
The timid become destitute,[f]
but the aggressive gain riches.
17 Those who are kind reward themselves,
but the cruel do themselves harm.
18 The wicked earn no real gain,
but those who sow righteousness get a true reward.
19 Whoever is steadfast in righteousness will live,
but whoever pursues evil will die.
20 Crooked minds are an abomination to the LORD,
but those of blameless ways are his delight.
21 Be assured, the wicked will not go unpunished,
but those who are righteous will escape.
22 Like a gold ring in a pig's snout is a beautiful woman without good sense.
23 The desire of the righteous ends only in good;
the expectation of the wicked in wrath.
24 Some give freely, yet grow all the richer;
others withhold what is due, and only suffer want.
25 A generous person will be enriched,
and one who gives water will get water.
26 The people curse those who hold back grain,
but a blessing is on the head of those who sell it.
27 Whoever diligently seeks good seeks favor,

*d* Or *an army* *e* Compare Gk Syr: Heb lacks *but she . . . shame* *f* Gk: Heb lacks *The timid . . . destitute*

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**11.15**: Compare 6.1–5.
**11.24**: One of many paradoxical sayings.
**25**: *Water*, a precious commodity. **26**: *Hold back grain*, for higher prices.

but evil comes to the one who
searches for it.
28 Those who trust in their riches
will wither,[g]
but the righteous will flourish
like green leaves.
29 Those who trouble their
households will inherit
wind,
and the fool will be servant to
the wise.
30 The fruit of the righteous is a tree
of life,
but violence[h] takes lives away.
31 If the righteous are repaid on
earth,
how much more the wicked and
the sinner!

12 Whoever loves discipline loves
knowledge,
but those who hate to be
rebuked are stupid.
2 The good obtain favor from the
LORD,
but those who devise evil he
condemns.
3 No one finds security by
wickedness,
but the root of the righteous
will never be moved.
4 A good wife is the crown of her
husband,
but she who brings shame is
like rottenness in his bones.
5 The thoughts of the righteous
are just;
the advice of the wicked is
treacherous.
6 The words of the wicked are a
deadly ambush,
but the speech of the upright
delivers them.
7 The wicked are overthrown and
are no more,
but the house of the righteous
will stand.

***The dangers of wickedness***

8 One is commended for good
sense,
but a perverse mind is despised.
9 Better to be despised and have a
servant,
than to be self-important and
lack food.
10 The righteous know the needs of
their animals,
but the mercy of the wicked is
cruel.
11 Those who till their land will have
plenty of food,
but those who follow worthless
pursuits have no sense.
12 The wicked covet the proceeds of
wickedness,[i]
but the root of the righteous
bears fruit.
13 The evil are ensnared by the
transgression of their lips,
but the righteous escape from
trouble.
14 From the fruit of the mouth one is
filled with good things,
and manual labor has its reward.
15 Fools think their own way is
right,
but the wise listen to advice.
16 Fools show their anger at once,
but the prudent ignore an insult.
17 Whoever speaks the truth gives
honest evidence,
but a false witness speaks
deceitfully.
18 Rash words are like sword thrusts,
but the tongue of the wise
brings healing.
19 Truthful lips endure forever,
but a lying tongue lasts only a
moment.
20 Deceit is in the mind of those who
plan evil,
but those who counsel peace
have joy.

*g* Cn: Heb *fall* *h* Cn Compare Gk Syr: Heb *a wise man* *i* Or *covet the catch of the wicked*

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**12.1**: The wise cultivate *discipline*, and listen to criticism (see 13.1). **3**: *The root* holds a tree firm, just as righteousness keeps the just person.

**12.9**: The "better" saying is a favorite locution of the sages; see also 15.16–17; 16.8; 17.1, etc. **10**: An oxymoron; what passes for *mercy* with *the wicked* is *cruel*.

21 No harm happens to the
righteous,
but the wicked are filled with
trouble.
22 Lying lips are an abomination to
the LORD,
but those who act faithfully are
his delight.
23 One who is clever conceals
knowledge,
but the mind of a fool[j]
broadcasts folly.
24 The hand of the diligent will rule,
while the lazy will be put to
forced labor.
25 Anxiety weighs down the human
heart,
but a good word cheers it up.
26 The righteous gives good advice
to friends,[k]
but the way of the wicked leads
astray.
27 The lazy do not roast[l] their game,
but the diligent obtain precious
wealth.[l]
28 In the path of righteousness there
is life,
in walking its path there is no
death.

13 A wise child loves discipline,[m]
but a scoffer does not listen to
rebuke.
2 From the fruit of their words
good persons eat good
things,
but the desire of the treacherous
is for wrongdoing.
3 Those who guard their mouths
preserve their lives;
those who open wide their lips
come to ruin.
4 The appetite of the lazy craves,
and gets nothing,
while the appetite of the diligent
is richly supplied.
5 The righteous hate falsehood,
but the wicked act shamefully
and disgracefully.
6 Righteousness guards one whose
way is upright,
but sin overthrows the wicked.
7 Some pretend to be rich, yet have
nothing;
others pretend to be poor, yet
have great wealth.
8 Wealth is a ransom for a person's
life,
but the poor get no threats.
9 The light of the righteous rejoices,
but the lamp of the wicked
goes out.
10 By insolence the heedless make
strife,
but wisdom is with those who
take advice.
11 Wealth hastily gotten[n] will
dwindle,
but those who gather little by
little will increase it.
12 Hope deferred makes the heart
sick,
but a desire fulfilled is a tree
of life.
13 Those who despise the word bring
destruction on themselves,
but those who respect the
commandment will be
rewarded.
14 The teaching of the wise is a
fountain of life,
so that one may avoid the snares
of death.
15 Good sense wins favor,
but the way of the faithless is
their ruin.[o]
16 The clever do all things
intelligently,
but the fool displays folly.

*j* Heb *the heart of fools* *k* Syr: Meaning of Heb uncertain *l* Meaning of Heb uncertain *m* Cn: Heb *A wise child the discipline of his father* *n* Gk Vg: Heb *from vanity* *o* Cn Compare Gk Syr Vg Tg: Heb *is enduring*

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**13.2**: Good words bring good results (see 12.14).
**13.9**: *Light* (a symbol of life, 1 Kings 15.4) *rejoices*, i.e. burns brightly. **12**: *Tree of life*, as in 3.18, a symbol of divine life and immortality in the ancient world, is a metaphor for life itself. **13**: *Word* and *commandment* here mean the teaching of the sages.

*The penalties of folly*

17 A bad messenger brings trouble,
but a faithful envoy, healing.
18 Poverty and disgrace are for the one who ignores instruction,
but one who heeds reproof is honored.
19 A desire realized is sweet to the soul,
but to turn away from evil is an abomination to fools.
20 Whoever walks with the wise becomes wise,
but the companion of fools suffers harm.
21 Misfortune pursues sinners,
but prosperity rewards the righteous.
22 The good leave an inheritance to their children's children,
but the sinner's wealth is laid up for the righteous.
23 The field of the poor may yield much food,
but it is swept away through injustice.
24 Those who spare the rod hate their children,
but those who love them are diligent to discipline them.
25 The righteous have enough to satisfy their appetite,
but the belly of the wicked is empty.

14 The wise woman[p] builds her house,
but the foolish tears it down with her own hands.
2 Those who walk uprightly fear the LORD,
but one who is devious in conduct despises him.
3 The talk of fools is a rod for their backs,[q]
but the lips of the wise preserve them.
4 Where there are no oxen, there is no grain;
abundant crops come by the strength of the ox.
5 A faithful witness does not lie,
but a false witness breathes out lies.
6 A scoffer seeks wisdom in vain,
but knowledge is easy for one who understands.
7 Leave the presence of a fool,
for there you do not find words of knowledge.
8 It is the wisdom of the clever to understand where they go,
but the folly of fools misleads.
9 Fools mock at the guilt offering,[r]
but the upright enjoy God's favor.
10 The heart knows its own bitterness,
and no stranger shares its joy.
11 The house of the wicked is destroyed,
but the tent of the upright flourishes.
12 There is a way that seems right to a person,
but its end is the way to death.[s]
13 Even in laughter the heart is sad,
and the end of joy is grief.
14 The perverse get what their ways deserve,
and the good, what their deeds deserve.[t]
15 The simple believe everything,
but the clever consider their steps.
16 The wise are cautious and turn away from evil,
but the fool throws off restraint and is careless.
17 One who is quick-tempered acts foolishly,
and the schemer is hated.
18 The simple are adorned with[u] folly,

*p* Heb *Wisdom of women* *q* Cn: Heb *a rod of pride* *r* Meaning of Heb uncertain *s* Heb *ways of death* *t* Cn: Heb *from upon him* *u* Or *inherit*

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**14.1**: See 24.3. **12**: Appearances can be deceptive; see 16.25. **20**: A telling observation. **31**: See also 19.17.
**15.8**: Sincerity in worship is essential.

but the clever are crowned with knowledge.
19 The evil bow down before the good,
the wicked at the gates of the righteous.
20 The poor are disliked even by their neighbors,
but the rich have many friends.
21 Those who despise their neighbors are sinners,
but happy are those who are kind to the poor.
22 Do they not err that plan evil?
Those who plan good find loyalty and faithfulness.
23 In all toil there is profit,
but mere talk leads only to poverty.
24 The crown of the wise is their wisdom,[v]
but folly is the garland[w] of fools.
25 A truthful witness saves lives,
but one who utters lies is a betrayer.
26 In the fear of the LORD one has strong confidence,
and one's children will have a refuge.
27 The fear of the LORD is a fountain of life,
so that one may avoid the snares of death.
28 The glory of a king is a multitude of people;
without people a prince is ruined.
29 Whoever is slow to anger has great understanding,
but one who has a hasty temper exalts folly.
30 A tranquil mind gives life to the flesh,
but passion makes the bones rot.
31 Those who oppress the poor insult their Maker,
but those who are kind to the needy honor him.
32 The wicked are overthrown by their evildoing,
but the righteous find a refuge in their integrity.[x]
33 Wisdom is at home in the mind of one who has understanding,
but it is not[y] known in the heart of fools.
34 Righteousness exalts a nation,
but sin is a reproach to any people.
35 A servant who deals wisely has the king's favor,
but his wrath falls on one who acts shamefully.

**15** A soft answer turns away wrath,
but a harsh word stirs up anger.
2 The tongue of the wise dispenses knowledge,[z]
but the mouths of fools pour out folly.
3 The eyes of the LORD are in every place,
keeping watch on the evil and the good.
4 A gentle tongue is a tree of life,
but perverseness in it breaks the spirit.
5 A fool despises a parent's instruction,
but the one who heeds admonition is prudent.
6 In the house of the righteous there is much treasure,
but trouble befalls the income of the wicked.
7 The lips of the wise spread knowledge;
not so the minds of fools.
8 The sacrifice of the wicked is an abomination to the LORD,
but the prayer of the upright is his delight.
9 The way of the wicked is an abomination to the LORD,
but he loves the one who pursues righteousness.
10 There is severe discipline for one who forsakes the way,

*v* Cn Compare Gk: Heb *riches* *w* Cn: Heb *is the folly* *x* Gk Syr: Heb *in their death* *y* Gk Syr: Heb lacks *not* *z* Cn: Heb *makes knowledge good*

but one who hates a rebuke will die.
11 Sheol and Abaddon lie open before the LORD,
how much more human hearts!
12 Scoffers do not like to be rebuked;
they will not go to the wise.
13 A glad heart makes a cheerful countenance,
but by sorrow of heart the spirit is broken.
14 The mind of one who has understanding seeks knowledge,
but the mouths of fools feed on folly.
15 All the days of the poor are hard,
but a cheerful heart has a continual feast.
16 Better is a little with the fear of the LORD
than great treasure and trouble with it.
17 Better is a dinner of vegetables where love is
than a fatted ox and hatred with it.
18 Those who are hot-tempered stir up strife,
but those who are slow to anger calm contention.
19 The way of the lazy is overgrown with thorns,
but the path of the upright is a level highway.
20 A wise child makes a glad father,
but the foolish despise their mothers.
21 Folly is a joy to one who has no sense,
but a person of understanding walks straight ahead.
22 Without counsel, plans go wrong,
but with many advisers they succeed.
23 To make an apt answer is a joy to anyone,
and a word in season, how good it is!
24 For the wise the path of life leads upward,
in order to avoid Sheol below.
25 The LORD tears down the house of the proud,
but maintains the widow's boundaries.
26 Evil plans are an abomination to the LORD,
but gracious words are pure.
27 Those who are greedy for unjust gain make trouble for their households,
but those who hate bribes will live.
28 The mind of the righteous ponders how to answer,
but the mouth of the wicked pours out evil.
29 The LORD is far from the wicked,
but he hears the prayer of the righteous.
30 The light of the eyes rejoices the heart,
and good news refreshes the body.
31 The ear that heeds wholesome admonition
will lodge among the wise.
32 Those who ignore instruction despise themselves,
but those who heed admonition gain understanding.
33 The fear of the LORD is instruction in wisdom,
and humility goes before honor.

16 The plans of the mind belong to mortals,
but the answer of the tongue is from the LORD.
2 All one's ways may be pure in one's own eyes,
but the LORD weighs the spirit.
3 Commit your work to the LORD,

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**15.11**: *Sheol and Abaddon* are the place and state (destruction) of the dead; see 1.12 n.
**15.23**: One of the goals of the sages. **30**: *Light of the eyes,* i.e. of the one who brings *good news.*
**16.1**: Compare v. 9; expressed here is a

and your plans will be established.
4 The LORD has made everything for its purpose,
even the wicked for the day of trouble.
5 All those who are arrogant are an abomination to the LORD;
be assured, they will not go unpunished.
6 By loyalty and faithfulness iniquity is atoned for,
and by the fear of the LORD one avoids evil.
7 When the ways of people please the LORD,
he causes even their enemies to be at peace with them.
8 Better is a little with righteousness than large income with injustice.
9 The human mind plans the way,
but the LORD directs the steps.
10 Inspired decisions are on the lips of a king;
his mouth does not sin in judgment.
11 Honest balances and scales are the LORD's;
all the weights in the bag are his work.
12 It is an abomination to kings to do evil,
for the throne is established by righteousness.
13 Righteous lips are the delight of a king,
and he loves those who speak what is right.
14 A king's wrath is a messenger of death,
and whoever is wise will appease it.
15 In the light of a king's face there is life,
and his favor is like the clouds that bring the spring rain.
16 How much better to get wisdom than gold!
To get understanding is to be chosen rather than silver.
17 The highway of the upright avoids evil;
those who guard their way preserve their lives.
18 Pride goes before destruction,
and a haughty spirit before a fall.
19 It is better to be of a lowly spirit among the poor
than to divide the spoil with the proud.
20 Those who are attentive to a matter will prosper,
and happy are those who trust in the LORD.
21 The wise of heart is called perceptive,
and pleasant speech increases persuasiveness.
22 Wisdom is a fountain of life to one who has it,
but folly is the punishment of fools.
23 The mind of the wise makes their speech judicious,
and adds persuasiveness to their lips.
24 Pleasant words are like a honeycomb,
sweetness to the soul and health to the body.
25 Sometimes there is a way that seems to be right,
but in the end it is the way to death.
26 The appetite of workers works for them;
their hunger urges them on.
27 Scoundrels concoct evil,
and their speech is like a scorching fire.
28 A perverse person spreads strife,

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form of biblical determinism (the Bible honors human responsibility or free will, but does not try to harmonize it with the all-pervasive divine causality). From ch 14 on, several "LORD" sayings begin to appear. **2**: Ultimately we are unable to judge our own motives. **4**: Nothing escapes the LORD's purpose.

**16.10**: *Sin*, err. The ideal king was a just king. **11**: See 11.1. **25**: Also 14.12.

and a whisperer separates close friends.
29 The violent entice their neighbors,
and lead them in a way that is not good.
30 One who winks the eyes plans[a] perverse things;
one who compresses the lips brings evil to pass.
31 Gray hair is a crown of glory;
it is gained in a righteous life.
32 One who is slow to anger is better than the mighty,
and one whose temper is controlled than one who captures a city.
33 The lot is cast into the lap,
but the decision is the LORD's alone.

17 Better is a dry morsel with quiet
than a house full of feasting with strife.
2 A slave who deals wisely will rule over a child who acts shamefully,
and will share the inheritance as one of the family.
3 The crucible is for silver, and the furnace is for gold,
but the LORD tests the heart.
4 An evildoer listens to wicked lips;
and a liar gives heed to a mischievous tongue.
5 Those who mock the poor insult their Maker;
those who are glad at calamity will not go unpunished.
6 Grandchildren are the crown of the aged,
and the glory of children is their parents.
7 Fine speech is not becoming to a fool;
still less is false speech to a ruler.[b]
8 A bribe is like a magic stone in the eyes of those who give it;
wherever they turn they prosper.
9 One who forgives an affront fosters friendship,
but one who dwells on disputes will alienate a friend.
10 A rebuke strikes deeper into a discerning person
than a hundred blows into a fool.
11 Evil people seek only rebellion,
but a cruel messenger will be sent against them.
12 Better to meet a she-bear robbed of its cubs
than to confront a fool immersed in folly.
13 Evil will not depart from the house
of one who returns evil for good.
14 The beginning of strife is like letting out water;
so stop before the quarrel breaks out.
15 One who justifies the wicked and one who condemns the righteous
are both alike an abomination to the LORD.
16 Why should fools have a price in hand
to buy wisdom, when they have no mind to learn?
17 A friend loves at all times,
and kinsfolk are born to share adversity.
18 It is senseless to give a pledge,
to become surety for a neighbor.

*a* Gk Syr Vg Tg: Heb *to plan* *b* Or *a noble person*

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**16.30**: See 6.12–15. **31**: This reflects the idea that the wise and virtuous person lives a long life (*gray hair*). **33**: Nothing happens by chance; even the fall of *the lot* is determined by God.

**17.5**: See 14.31. **8**: *A bribe* works; elsewhere bribery is condemned (17.23).
**17.17**: *Is born for,* to provide help in *adversity* is what *kinsfolk* are for. **18**: See 11.5. **19**: *Builds a high threshold,* an obscure metaphor,

19 One who loves transgression
loves strife;
one who builds a high threshold
invites broken bones.
20 The crooked of mind do not
prosper,
and the perverse of tongue fall
into calamity.
21 The one who begets a fool gets
trouble;
the parent of a fool has no joy.
22 A cheerful heart is a good
medicine,
but a downcast spirit dries up
the bones.
23 The wicked accept a concealed
bribe
to pervert the ways of justice.
24 The discerning person looks to
wisdom,
but the eyes of a fool to the
ends of the earth.
25 Foolish children are a grief to their
father
and bitterness to her who
bore them.
26 To impose a fine on the innocent
is not right,
or to flog the noble for their
integrity.
27 One who spares words is
knowledgeable;
one who is cool in spirit has
understanding.
28 Even fools who keep silent are
considered wise;
when they close their lips, they
are deemed intelligent.

18 The one who lives alone is
self-indulgent,
showing contempt for all who
have sound judgment.[c]
2 A fool takes no pleasure in
understanding,
but only in expressing personal
opinion.
3 When wickedness comes,
contempt comes also;
and with dishonor comes
disgrace.
4 The words of the mouth are deep
waters;
the fountain of wisdom is a
gushing stream.
5 It is not right to be partial to
the guilty,
or to subvert the innocent in
judgment.
6 A fool's lips bring strife,
and a fool's mouth invites a
flogging.
7 The mouths of fools are their ruin,
and their lips a snare to
themselves.
8 The words of a whisperer are like
delicious morsels;
they go down into the inner
parts of the body.
9 One who is slack in work
is close kin to a vandal.
10 The name of the LORD is a strong
tower;
the righteous run into it and
are safe.
11 The wealth of the rich is their
strong city;
in their imagination it is like a
high wall.
12 Before destruction one's heart is
haughty,
but humility goes before honor.
13 If one gives answer before
hearing,
it is folly and shame.
14 The human spirit will endure
sickness;
but a broken spirit—who
can bear?
15 An intelligent mind acquires
knowledge,

[c] Meaning of Heb uncertain

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perhaps indicating pride or ostentation.
**17.24**: *The eyes of a fool* are focused on unreal goals. **27–28**: Silence can be ambiguous.
**18.4**: *Deep waters,* an obscure metaphor (profound, or murky?), and it is not clear if the lines are antithetical or synonymous.
**18.8**: Slander listened to is not soon forgotten.

and the ear of the wise seeks knowledge.
16 A gift opens doors;
it gives access to the great.
17 The one who first states a case seems right,
until the other comes and cross-examines.
18 Casting the lot puts an end to disputes
and decides between powerful contenders.
19 An ally offended is stronger than a city;[d]
such quarreling is like the bars of a castle.
20 From the fruit of the mouth one's stomach is satisfied;
the yield of the lips brings satisfaction.
21 Death and life are in the power of the tongue,
and those who love it will eat its fruits.
22 He who finds a wife finds a good thing,
and obtains favor from the LORD.
23 The poor use entreaties,
but the rich answer roughly.
24 Some[e] friends play at friendship[f]
but a true friend sticks closer than one's nearest kin.

19 Better the poor walking in integrity
than one perverse of speech who is a fool.
2 Desire without knowledge is not good,
and one who moves too hurriedly misses the way.
3 One's own folly leads to ruin,
yet the heart rages against the LORD.
4 Wealth brings many friends,
but the poor are left friendless.
5 A false witness will not go unpunished,
and a liar will not escape.
6 Many seek the favor of the generous,
and everyone is a friend to a giver of gifts.
7 If the poor are hated even by their kin,
how much more are they shunned by their friends!
When they call after them, they are not there.[g]
8 To get wisdom is to love oneself;
to keep understanding is to prosper.
9 A false witness will not go unpunished,
and the liar will perish.
10 It is not fitting for a fool to live in luxury,
much less for a slave to rule over princes.
11 Those with good sense are slow to anger,
and it is their glory to overlook an offense.
12 A king's anger is like the growling of a lion,
but his favor is like dew on the grass.
13 A stupid child is ruin to a father,
and a wife's quarreling is a continual dripping of rain.
14 House and wealth are inherited from parents,
but a prudent wife is from the LORD.
15 Laziness brings on deep sleep;
an idle person will suffer hunger.
16 Those who keep the commandment will live;
those who are heedless of their ways will die.
17 Whoever is kind to the poor lends to the LORD,
and will be repaid in full.

*d* Gk Syr Vg Tg: Meaning of Heb uncertain
*e* Syr Tg: Heb *A man of* *f* Cn Compare Syr Vg Tg: Meaning of Heb uncertain
*g* Meaning of Heb uncertain

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**18.17**: Both sides of a question must be heard. **18**: See 16.33. **19**: *Bars of a castle* prevent reconciliation; text is probably corrupt. **20**: See 13.2.

18 Discipline your children while there is hope;
do not set your heart on their destruction.
19 A violent tempered person will pay the penalty;
if you effect a rescue, you will only have to do it again.[h]
20 Listen to advice and accept instruction,
that you may gain wisdom for the future.
21 The human mind may devise many plans,
but it is the purpose of the LORD that will be established.
22 What is desirable in a person is loyalty,
and it is better to be poor than a liar.
23 The fear of the LORD is life indeed;
filled with it one rests secure and suffers no harm.
24 The lazy person buries a hand in the dish,
and will not even bring it back to the mouth.
25 Strike a scoffer, and the simple will learn prudence;
reprove the intelligent, and they will gain knowledge.
26 Those who do violence to their father and chase away their mother
are children who cause shame and bring reproach.
27 Cease straying, my child, from the words of knowledge,
in order that you may hear instruction.
28 A worthless witness mocks at justice,
and the mouth of the wicked devours iniquity.
29 Condemnation is ready for scoffers,
and flogging for the backs of fools.

20 Wine is a mocker, strong drink a brawler,
and whoever is led astray by it is not wise.
2 The dread anger of a king is like the growling of a lion;
anyone who provokes him to anger forfeits life itself.
3 It is honorable to refrain from strife,
but every fool is quick to quarrel.
4 The lazy person does not plow in season;
harvest comes, and there is nothing to be found.
5 The purposes in the human mind are like deep water,
but the intelligent will draw them out.
6 Many proclaim themselves loyal,
but who can find one worthy of trust?
7 The righteous walk in integrity—
happy are the children who follow them!
8 A king who sits on the throne of judgment
winnows all evil with his eyes.
9 Who can say, "I have made my heart clean;
I am pure from my sin"?
10 Diverse weights and diverse measures
are both alike an abomination to the LORD.
11 Even children make themselves known by their acts,
by whether what they do is pure and right.
12 The hearing ear and the seeing eye—
the LORD has made them both.
13 Do not love sleep, or else you will come to poverty;

*h* Meaning of Heb uncertain

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**19.17**: See 14.31. **21**: See 16.1, 9. **24**: One is too *lazy* even to eat.

**20.8**: *Winnows,* by his sharp judgment. **16**: See 27.13; do not hesitate to exact a pledge; see 6.1–5 n.

open your eyes, and you will
have plenty of bread.
14 "Bad, bad," says the buyer,
then goes away and boasts.
15 There is gold, and abundance of
costly stones;
but the lips informed by
knowledge are a
precious jewel.
16 Take the garment of one who has
given surety for a stranger;
seize the pledge given as surety
for foreigners.
17 Bread gained by deceit is sweet,
but afterward the mouth will be
full of gravel.
18 Plans are established by
taking advice;
wage war by following wise
guidance.
19 A gossip reveals secrets;
therefore do not associate with a
babbler.
20 If you curse father or mother,
your lamp will go out in utter
darkness.
21 An estate quickly acquired in the
beginning
will not be blessed in the end.
22 Do not say, "I will repay evil";
wait for the LORD, and he will
help you.
23 Differing weights are an
abomination to the LORD,
and false scales are not good.
24 All our steps are ordered by the
LORD;
how then can we understand
our own ways?
25 It is a snare for one to say rashly,
"It is holy,"
and begin to reflect only after
making a vow.
26 A wise king winnows the wicked,
and drives the wheel over them.
27 The human spirit is the lamp of
the LORD,
searching every inmost part.
28 Loyalty and faithfulness preserve
the king,
and his throne is upheld by
righteousness.[i]
29 The glory of youths is their
strength,
but the beauty of the aged is
their gray hair.
30 Blows that wound cleanse
away evil;
beatings make clean the
innermost parts.

21 The king's heart is a stream of
water in the hand of
the LORD;
he turns it wherever he will.
2 All deeds are right in the sight of
the doer,
but the LORD weighs the heart.
3 To do righteousness and justice
is more acceptable to the LORD
than sacrifice.
4 Haughty eyes and a proud heart—
the lamp of the wicked—are
sin.
5 The plans of the diligent lead
surely to abundance,
but everyone who is hasty
comes only to want.
6 The getting of treasures by a lying
tongue
is a fleeting vapor and a snare[j]
of death.
7 The violence of the wicked will
sweep them away,
because they refuse to do what
is just.
8 The way of the guilty is crooked,
but the conduct of the pure
is right.
9 It is better to live in a corner of
the housetop
than in a house shared with a
contentious wife.

*i* Gk: Heb *loyalty* *j* Gk: Heb *seekers*

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**20.20**: *Lamp will go out,* a metaphor for misfortune or death (see also 13.9). **24**: See 19.21; Jer 10.23. **25**: See Eccl 5.1–6. **27**: *Lamp,* a divine illumination within human beings.

**21.1**: Even the mind of a *king* is controlled by God. **2**: See 16.2. **3**: See 1 Sam 15.22; Hos 6.6.

10 The souls of the wicked desire evil;
their neighbors find no mercy in their eyes.
11 When a scoffer is punished, the simple become wiser;
when the wise are instructed, they increase in knowledge.
12 The Righteous One observes the house of the wicked;
he casts the wicked down to ruin.
13 If you close your ear to the cry of the poor,
you will cry out and not be heard.
14 A gift in secret averts anger;
and a concealed bribe in the bosom, strong wrath.
15 When justice is done, it is a joy to the righteous,
but dismay to evildoers.
16 Whoever wanders from the way of understanding
will rest in the assembly of the dead.
17 Whoever loves pleasure will suffer want;
whoever loves wine and oil will not be rich.
18 The wicked is a ransom for the righteous,
and the faithless for the upright.
19 It is better to live in a desert land than with a contentious and fretful wife.
20 Precious treasure remains[k] in the house of the wise,
but the fool devours it.
21 Whoever pursues righteousness and kindness
will find life[l] and honor.
22 One wise person went up against a city of warriors
and brought down the stronghold in which they trusted.
23 To watch over mouth and tongue is to keep out of trouble.
24 The proud, haughty person, named "Scoffer,"
acts with arrogant pride.
25 The craving of the lazy person is fatal,
for lazy hands refuse to labor.
26 All day long the wicked covet,[m]
but the righteous give and do not hold back.
27 The sacrifice of the wicked is an abomination;
how much more when brought with evil intent.
28 A false witness will perish,
but a good listener will testify successfully.
29 The wicked put on a bold face,
but the upright give thought to[n] their ways.
30 No wisdom, no understanding, no counsel,
can avail against the LORD.
31 The horse is made ready for the day of battle,
but the victory belongs to the LORD.

22 A good name is to be chosen rather than great riches,
and favor is better than silver or gold.
2 The rich and the poor have this in common:
the LORD is the maker of them all.
3 The clever see danger and hide;
but the simple go on, and suffer for it.
4 The reward for humility and fear of the LORD
is riches and honor and life.
5 Thorns and snares are in the way of the perverse;
the cautious will keep far from them.

*k* Gk: Heb *and oil* *l* Gk: Heb *life and righteousness* *m* Gk: Heb *all day long one covets covetously* *n* Another reading is *establish*

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**21.18**: Obscure; compare 11.8.
**21.30–31**: Such sayings indicate that the sages recognized the limitations of human wisdom, in view of the LORD's own mysterious wisdom. **22.2**: Compare 29.13; the attitude to the poor in Proverbs is complex.

6 Train children in the right way,
and when old, they will not
stray.
7 The rich rules over the poor,
and the borrower is the slave of
the lender.
8 Whoever sows injustice will reap
calamity,
and the rod of anger will fail.
9 Those who are generous are
blessed,
for they share their bread with
the poor.
10 Drive out a scoffer, and strife
goes out;
quarreling and abuse will cease.
11 Those who love a pure heart and
are gracious in speech
will have the king as a friend.
12 The eyes of the LORD keep watch
over knowledge,
but he overthrows the words of
the faithless.
13 The lazy person says, "There is a
lion outside!
I shall be killed in the streets!"
14 The mouth of a loose[o] woman is
a deep pit;
he with whom the LORD is
angry falls into it.
15 Folly is bound up in the heart of
a boy,
but the rod of discipline drives
it far away.
16 Oppressing the poor in order to
enrich oneself,
and giving to the rich, will lead
only to loss.

17 The words of the wise:

Incline your ear and hear my
words,[p]
and apply your mind to my
teaching;
18 for it will be pleasant if you keep
them within you,
if all of them are ready on
your lips.
19 So that your trust may be in
the LORD,
I have made them known to
you today—yes, to you.
20 Have I not written for you thirty
sayings
of admonition and knowledge,
21 to show you what is right and
true,
so that you may give a true
answer to those who
sent you?

22 Do not rob the poor because they
are poor,
or crush the afflicted at the gate;
23 for the LORD pleads their cause
and despoils of life those who
despoil them.
24 Make no friends with those given
to anger,
and do not associate with
hotheads,
25 or you may learn their ways
and entangle yourself in a snare.
26 Do not be one of those who give
pledges,
who become surety for debts.
27 If you have nothing with which
to pay,
why should your bed be taken
from under you?
28 Do not remove the ancient
landmark
that your ancestors set up.
29 Do you see those who are skillful
in their work?
They will serve kings;

*o* Heb *strange* *p* Cn Compare Gk: Heb *Incline your ear, and hear the words of the wise*

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**22.17–24.34: A second collection of proverbial sayings.** See the Introduction; this is another collection, entitled "The Words of the Wise" (v. 17); it has many parallels to the Instruction of the famous Egyptian sage, Amen-em-ope, which has thirty chapters (see 22.20). There is a change in form from the discrete sayings that characterized chs 10–21. The topics are characteristic of (international) wisdom literature: attitude to the poor, offering collateral, discipline of children, table manners, abstemiousness, adultery, etc.

they will not serve common people.

23 When you sit down to eat with a ruler,
observe carefully what[q] is before you,
2 and put a knife to your throat if you have a big appetite.
3 Do not desire the ruler's[r] delicacies,
for they are deceptive food.
4 Do not wear yourself out to get rich;
be wise enough to desist.
5 When your eyes light upon it, it is gone;
for suddenly it takes wings to itself,
flying like an eagle toward heaven.
6 Do not eat the bread of the stingy;
do not desire their delicacies;
7 for like a hair in the throat, so are they.[s]
"Eat and drink!" they say to you;
but they do not mean it.
8 You will vomit up the little you have eaten,
and you will waste your pleasant words.
9 Do not speak in the hearing of a fool,
who will only despise the wisdom of your words.
10 Do not remove an ancient landmark
or encroach on the fields of orphans,
11 for their redeemer is strong;
he will plead their cause against you.
12 Apply your mind to instruction
and your ear to words of knowledge.
13 Do not withhold discipline from your children;
if you beat them with a rod, they will not die.
14 If you beat them with the rod,
you will save their lives from Sheol.
15 My child, if your heart is wise,
my heart too will be glad.
16 My soul will rejoice
when your lips speak what is right.
17 Do not let your heart envy sinners,
but always continue in the fear of the LORD.
18 Surely there is a future,
and your hope will not be cut off.

19 Hear, my child, and be wise,
and direct your mind in the way.
20 Do not be among winebibbers,
or among gluttonous eaters of meat;
21 for the drunkard and the glutton will come to poverty,
and drowsiness will clothe them with rags.

22 Listen to your father who begot you,
and do not despise your mother when she is old.
23 Buy truth, and do not sell it;
buy wisdom, instruction, and understanding.
24 The father of the righteous will greatly rejoice;
he who begets a wise son will be glad in him.
25 Let your father and mother be glad;
let her who bore you rejoice.

26 My child, give me your heart,
and let your eyes observe[t] my ways.
27 For a prostitute is a deep pit;
an adulteress[u] is a narrow well.
28 She lies in wait like a robber
and increases the number of the faithless.

29 Who has woe? Who has sorrow?

*q* Or *who* *r* Heb *his* *s* Meaning of Heb uncertain *t* Another reading is *delight in* *u* Heb *an alien woman*

Who has strife? Who has complaining?
Who has wounds without cause?
Who has redness of eyes?
30 Those who linger late over wine,
those who keep trying mixed wines.
31 Do not look at wine when it is red,
when it sparkles in the cup
and goes down smoothly.
32 At the last it bites like a serpent,
and stings like an adder.
33 Your eyes will see strange things,
and your mind utter perverse things.
34 You will be like one who lies down in the midst of the sea,
like one who lies on the top of a mast.[v]
35 "They struck me," you will say,[w]
"but I was not hurt;
they beat me, but I did not feel it.
When shall I awake?
I will seek another drink."

**24** Do not envy the wicked,
nor desire to be with them;
2 for their minds devise violence,
and their lips talk of mischief.

3 By wisdom a house is built,
and by understanding it is established;
4 by knowledge the rooms are filled
with all precious and pleasant riches.
5 Wise warriors are mightier than strong ones,[x]
and those who have knowledge than those who have strength;
6 for by wise guidance you can wage your war,
and in abundance of counselors there is victory.
7 Wisdom is too high for fools;
in the gate they do not open their mouths.

8 Whoever plans to do evil
will be called a mischief-maker.
9 The devising of folly is sin,
and the scoffer is an abomination to all.

10 If you faint in the day of adversity,
your strength being small;
11 if you hold back from rescuing those taken away to death,
those who go staggering to the slaughter;
12 if you say, "Look, we did not know this"—
does not he who weighs the heart perceive it?
Does not he who keeps watch over your soul know it?
And will he not repay all according to their deeds?

13 My child, eat honey, for it is good,
and the drippings of the honeycomb are sweet to your taste.
14 Know that wisdom is such to your soul;
if you find it, you will find a future,
and your hope will not be cut off.

15 Do not lie in wait like an outlaw against the home of the righteous;
do no violence to the place where the righteous live;

*v* Meaning of Heb uncertain *w* Gk Syr Vg Tg: Heb lacks *you will say* *x* Gk Compare Syr Tg: Heb *A wise man is strength*

**23.29–35:** A vivid description of the effects of drunkenness.

**24.10–12:** A good person should intervene on behalf of victims of violence. **16:** *Seven times,* i.e. any number of times; the righteous will *rise again,* in contrast to *the wicked.* **17:** See Job 31.29.

16 for though they fall seven times,
they will rise again;
but the wicked are overthrown
by calamity.

17 Do not rejoice when your enemies
fall,
and do not let your heart be
glad when they stumble,
18 or else the LORD will see it and be
displeased,
and turn away his anger
from them.

19 Do not fret because of evildoers.
Do not envy the wicked;
20 for the evil have no future;
the lamp of the wicked will
go out.

21 My child, fear the LORD and
the king,
and do not disobey either of
them;[y]
22 for disaster comes from them
suddenly,
and who knows the ruin that
both can bring?

23 These also are sayings of
the wise:

Partiality in judging is not good.
24 Whoever says to the wicked,
"You are innocent,"
will be cursed by peoples,
abhorred by nations;
25 but those who rebuke the wicked
will have delight,
and a good blessing will come
upon them.
26 One who gives an honest answer
gives a kiss on the lips.

27 Prepare your work outside,
get everything ready for you in
the field;
and after that build your house.

28 Do not be a witness against your
neighbor without cause,
and do not deceive with your
lips.
29 Do not say, "I will do to others as
they have done to me;
I will pay them back for what
they have done."

30 I passed by the field of one who
was lazy,
by the vineyard of a stupid
person;
31 and see, it was all overgrown with
thorns;
the ground was covered with
nettles,
and its stone wall was broken
down.
32 Then I saw and considered it;
I looked and received
instruction.
33 A little sleep, a little slumber,
a little folding of the hands
to rest,
34 and poverty will come upon you
like a robber,
and want, like an armed
warrior.

25 These are other proverbs of Solomon that the officials of King Hezekiah of Judah copied.

2 It is the glory of God to conceal
things,
but the glory of kings is to
search things out.
3 Like the heavens for height, like
the earth for depth,
so the mind of kings is
unsearchable.
4 Take away the dross from the
silver,
and the smith has material for
a vessel;

*y* Gk: Heb *do not associate with those who change*

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**24.23**: A title for another and short collection (see Introduction). **29**: See 24.17–18. **30–34**: See 6.6–11.

**25.1–29.27**: Another collection of "Proverbs of Solomon" (1.1; 10.1; see Introduction). **1**: *Officials of King Hezekiah* are scribes of this famous king (715–687 B.C.), and an indication that wisdom was cultivated at the

5 take away the wicked from the presence of the king,
and his throne will be established in righteousness.
6 Do not put yourself forward in the king's presence
or stand in the place of the great;
7 for it is better to be told, "Come up here,"
than to be put lower in the presence of a noble.

What your eyes have seen
8 do not hastily bring into court;
for[z] what will you do in the end,
when your neighbor puts you to shame?
9 Argue your case with your neighbor directly,
and do not disclose another's secret;
10 or else someone who hears you will bring shame upon you,
and your ill repute will have no end.

11 A word fitly spoken
is like apples of gold in a setting of silver.
12 Like a gold ring or an ornament of gold
is a wise rebuke to a listening ear.
13 Like the cold of snow in the time of harvest
are faithful messengers to those who send them;
they refresh the spirit of their masters.
14 Like clouds and wind without rain
is one who boasts of a gift never given.
15 With patience a ruler may be persuaded,
and a soft tongue can break bones.
16 If you have found honey, eat only enough for you,
or else, having too much, you will vomit it.
17 Let your foot be seldom in your neighbor's house,
otherwise the neighbor will become weary of you and hate you.
18 Like a war club, a sword, or a sharp arrow
is one who bears false witness against a neighbor.
19 Like a bad tooth or a lame foot
is trust in a faithless person in time of trouble.
20 Like vinegar on a wound[a]
is one who sings songs to a heavy heart.
Like a moth in clothing or a worm in wood,
sorrow gnaws at the human heart.[b]
21 If your enemies are hungry, give them bread to eat;
and if they are thirsty, give them water to drink;
22 for you will heap coals of fire on their heads,
and the LORD will reward you.
23 The north wind produces rain,
and a backbiting tongue, angry looks.
24 It is better to live in a corner of the housetop
than in a house shared with a contentious wife.
25 Like cold water to a thirsty soul,

*z* Cn: Heb *or else* *a* Gk: Heb *Like one who takes off a garment on a cold day, like vinegar on lye* *b* Gk Syr Tg: Heb lacks *Like a moth . . . human heart*

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royal court. **2–3**: Like God, the king questions but cannot be questioned. **6–7**: See Lk 14.7–11.

**25.7c–10**: A caution against rash accusations. **11**: A goal of the sages: right and timely expressions. **15b**: A "fitly spoken" paradox. **22**: *Coals of fire*, are interpreted as (increased) punishment, or as the remorse and hence conversion of the *enemies*. See also Rom 12.20.

so is good news from a far country.
26 Like a muddied spring or a polluted fountain
are the righteous who give way before the wicked.
27 It is not good to eat much honey,
or to seek honor on top of honor.
28 Like a city breached, without walls,
is one who lacks self-control.

**26** Like snow in summer or rain in harvest,
so honor is not fitting for a fool.
2 Like a sparrow in its flitting, like a swallow in its flying,
an undeserved curse goes nowhere.
3 A whip for the horse, a bridle for the donkey,
and a rod for the back of fools.
4 Do not answer fools according to their folly,
or you will be a fool yourself.
5 Answer fools according to their folly,
or they will be wise in their own eyes.
6 It is like cutting off one's foot and drinking down violence,
to send a message by a fool.
7 The legs of a disabled person hang limp;
so does a proverb in the mouth of a fool.
8 It is like binding a stone in a sling
to give honor to a fool.
9 Like a thornbush brandished by the hand of a drunkard
is a proverb in the mouth of a fool.
10 Like an archer who wounds everybody
is one who hires a passing fool or drunkard.[c]
11 Like a dog that returns to its vomit
is a fool who reverts to his folly.
12 Do you see persons wise in their own eyes?
There is more hope for fools than for them.
13 The lazy person says, "There is a lion in the road!
There is a lion in the streets!"
14 As a door turns on its hinges,
so does a lazy person in bed.
15 The lazy person buries a hand in the dish,
and is too tired to bring it back to the mouth.
16 The lazy person is wiser in self-esteem
than seven who can answer discreetly.
17 Like somebody who takes a passing dog by the ears
is one who meddles in the quarrel of another.
18 Like a maniac who shoots deadly firebrands and arrows,
19 so is one who deceives a neighbor and says, "I am only joking!"
20 For lack of wood the fire goes out,
and where there is no whisperer, quarreling ceases.
21 As charcoal is to hot embers and wood to fire,
so is a quarrelsome person for kindling strife.
22 The words of a whisperer are like delicious morsels;

[c] Meaning of Heb uncertain

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**26.4–5**: The ambiguity of sayings. *According to their folly* can mean "in fools' words" (v. 4) or "as fools deserve" (v. 5). **7**: *A fool* is by definition unable to profit from *a proverb*. **8**: A stone tied in a sling is useless.

**26.9a**: The metaphor is vague; it may indicate uselessness (see vv. 7–8), or the use of a proverb in a hurtful way. **12**: The ambiguity of being *wise*.

**26.22**: See 18.1 n. **27**: A kind of "poetic justice"; see Ps 7.16; Ecc l 10.8.

they go down into the inner parts of the body.
23 Like the glaze[d] covering an earthen vessel
are smooth[e] lips with an evil heart.
24 An enemy dissembles in speaking while harboring deceit within;
25 when an enemy speaks graciously, do not believe it,
for there are seven abominations concealed within;
26 though hatred is covered with guile,
the enemy's wickedness will be exposed in the assembly.
27 Whoever digs a pit will fall into it,
and a stone will come back on the one who starts it rolling.
28 A lying tongue hates its victims,
and a flattering mouth works ruin.

**27** Do not boast about tomorrow,
for you do not know what a day may bring.
2 Let another praise you, and not your own mouth—
a stranger, and not your own lips.
3 A stone is heavy, and sand is weighty,
but a fool's provocation is heavier than both.
4 Wrath is cruel, anger is overwhelming,
but who is able to stand before jealousy?
5 Better is open rebuke
than hidden love.
6 Well meant are the wounds a friend inflicts,
but profuse are the kisses of an enemy.
7 The sated appetite spurns honey,
but to a ravenous appetite even the bitter is sweet.
8 Like a bird that strays from its nest
is one who strays from home.
9 Perfume and incense make the heart glad,
but the soul is torn by trouble.[f]
10 Do not forsake your friend or the friend of your parent;
do not go to the house of your kindred in the day of your calamity.
Better is a neighbor who is nearby than kindred who are far away.
11 Be wise, my child, and make my heart glad,
so that I may answer whoever reproaches me.
12 The clever see danger and hide;
but the simple go on, and suffer for it.
13 Take the garment of one who has given surety for a stranger;
seize the pledge given as surety for foreigners.[g]
14 Whoever blesses a neighbor with a loud voice,
rising early in the morning,
will be counted as cursing.
15 A continual dripping on a rainy day
and a contentious wife are alike;
16 to restrain her is to restrain the wind
or to grasp oil in the right hand.[h]
17 Iron sharpens iron,
and one person sharpens the wits[i] of another.
18 Anyone who tends a fig tree will eat its fruit,
and anyone who takes care of a master will be honored.
19 Just as water reflects the face,
so one human heart reflects another.

*d* Cn: Heb *silver of dross* *e* Gk: Heb *burning* *f* Gk: Heb *the sweetness of a friend is better than one's own counsel* *g* Vg and 20.16: Heb *for a foreign woman* *h* Meaning of Heb uncertain *i* Heb *face*

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**27.6**: *Profuse,* false. **7b**: A paradox, as in 25.15b. **10**: Line b is explained by lines cd. **27.13**: See 20.16 n. **20**: See 15.11 n. Sheol is personified as a dynamic power that devours

20 Sheol and Abaddon are never satisfied,
and human eyes are never satisfied.
21 The crucible is for silver, and the furnace is for gold,
so a person is tested[j] by being praised.
22 Crush a fool in a mortar with a pestle
along with crushed grain,
but the folly will not be driven out.

23 Know well the condition of your flocks,
and give attention to your herds;
24 for riches do not last forever,
nor a crown for all generations.
25 When the grass is gone, and new growth appears,
and the herbage of the mountains is gathered,
26 the lambs will provide your clothing,
and the goats the price of a field;
27 there will be enough goats' milk for your food,
for the food of your household
and nourishment for your servant-girls.

28 The wicked flee when no one pursues,
but the righteous are as bold as a lion.
2 When a land rebels
it has many rulers;
but with an intelligent ruler
there is lasting order.[k]
3 A ruler[l] who oppresses the poor
is a beating rain that leaves no food.
4 Those who forsake the law praise the wicked,
but those who keep the law struggle against them.
5 The evil do not understand justice,
but those who seek the LORD understand it completely.
6 Better to be poor and walk in integrity
than to be crooked in one's ways even though rich.
7 Those who keep the law are wise children,
but companions of gluttons shame their parents.
8 One who augments wealth by exorbitant interest
gathers it for another who is kind to the poor.
9 When one will not listen to the law,
even one's prayers are an abomination.
10 Those who mislead the upright into evil ways
will fall into pits of their own making,
but the blameless will have a goodly inheritance.
11 The rich is wise in self-esteem,
but an intelligent poor person sees through the pose.
12 When the righteous triumph, there is great glory,
but when the wicked prevail, people go into hiding.
13 No one who conceals transgressions will prosper,
but one who confesses and forsakes them will obtain mercy.
14 Happy is the one who is never without fear,
but one who is hard-hearted will fall into calamity.
15 Like a roaring lion or a charging bear
is a wicked ruler over a poor people.
16 A ruler who lacks understanding is a cruel oppressor;

*j* Heb lacks *is tested* *k* Meaning of Heb uncertain *l* Cn: Heb *A poor person*

individuals (see 30.16). **21**: See 17.3, where it is the LORD who tests.

**28.8**: By the law of retribution, the oppressor should not be allowed to profit.

but one who hates unjust gain
will enjoy a long life.
17 If someone is burdened with the
blood of another,
let that killer be a fugitive
until death;
let no one offer assistance.
18 One who walks in integrity will
be safe,
but whoever follows crooked
ways will fall into the Pit.[m]
19 Anyone who tills the land will
have plenty of bread,
but one who follows worthless
pursuits will have plenty
of poverty.
20 The faithful will abound with
blessings,
but one who is in a hurry to be
rich will not go
unpunished.
21 To show partiality is not good—
yet for a piece of bread a person
may do wrong.
22 The miser is in a hurry to get rich
and does not know that loss is
sure to come.
23 Whoever rebukes a person will
afterward find more favor
than one who flatters with
the tongue.
24 Anyone who robs father or
mother
and says, "That is no crime,"
is partner to a thug.
25 The greedy person stirs up strife,
but whoever trusts in the LORD
will be enriched.
26 Those who trust in their own wits
are fools;
but those who walk in wisdom
come through safely.
27 Whoever gives to the poor will
lack nothing,
but one who turns a blind eye
will get many a curse.
28 When the wicked prevail, people
go into hiding;
but when they perish, the
righteous increase.

***The need for wisdom***

29 One who is often reproved, yet
remains stubborn,
will suddenly be broken beyond
healing.
2 When the righteous are in
authority, the people
rejoice;
but when the wicked rule, the
people groan.
3 A child who loves wisdom makes
a parent glad,
but to keep company with
prostitutes is to squander
one's substance.
4 By justice a king gives stability to
the land,
but one who makes heavy
exactions ruins it.
5 Whoever flatters a neighbor
is spreading a net for the
neighbor's feet.
6 In the transgression of the evil
there is a snare,
but the righteous sing and
rejoice.
7 The righteous know the rights of
the poor;
the wicked have no such
understanding.
8 Scoffers set a city aflame,
but the wise turn away wrath.
9 If the wise go to law with fools,
there is ranting and ridicule
without relief.
10 The bloodthirsty hate the
blameless,
and they seek the life of the
upright.
11 A fool gives full vent to anger,
but the wise quietly holds
it back.
12 If a ruler listens to falsehood,
all his officials will be wicked.
13 The poor and the oppressor have
this in common:
the LORD gives light to the eyes
of both.

*m* Syr: Heb *fall all at once*

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**29.13**: See 22.2; Mt 5.45. **24**: Lev 5.1.

14 If a king judges the poor with equity,
his throne will be established forever.
15 The rod and reproof give wisdom,
but a mother is disgraced by a neglected child.
16 When the wicked are in authority, transgression increases,
but the righteous will look upon their downfall.
17 Discipline your children, and they will give you rest;
they will give delight to your heart.
18 Where there is no prophecy, the people cast off restraint,
but happy are those who keep the law.
19 By mere words servants are not disciplined,
for though they understand, they will not give heed.
20 Do you see someone who is hasty in speech?
There is more hope for a fool than for anyone like that.
21 A slave pampered from childhood will come to a bad end.[n]
22 One given to anger stirs up strife, and the hothead causes much transgression.
23 A person's pride will bring humiliation,
but one who is lowly in spirit will obtain honor.
24 To be a partner of a thief is to hate one's own life;
one hears the victim's curse, but discloses nothing.[o]
25 The fear of others[p] lays a snare,
but one who trusts in the LORD is secure.
26 Many seek the favor of a ruler,
but it is from the LORD that one gets justice.
27 The unjust are an abomination to the righteous,
but the upright are an abomination to the wicked.

30 The words of Agur son of Jakeh. An oracle.

Thus says the man: I am weary, O God,
I am weary, O God. How can I prevail?[q]
2 Surely I am too stupid to be human;
I do not have human understanding.
3 I have not learned wisdom,
nor have I knowledge of the holy ones.[r]
4 Who has ascended to heaven and come down?
Who has gathered the wind in the hollow of the hand?
Who has wrapped up the waters in a garment?
Who has established all the ends of the earth?
What is the person's name?
And what is the name of the person's child?
Surely you know!

5 Every word of God proves true;
he is a shield to those who take refuge in him.
6 Do not add to his words,
or else he will rebuke you, and you will be found a liar.

*n* Vg: Meaning of Heb uncertain *o* Meaning of Heb uncertain *p* Or *human fear* *q* Or *I am spent.* Meaning of Heb uncertain *r* Or *Holy One*

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**30.1–4**: ***The words of Agur*** are a title (see Introduction), but the extent of his sayings is uncertain. **1**: *Oracle:* Others understand the Hebrew to mean "from Massa," hence a non-Israelite. The rest of v. 1 is all but untranslatable. **2–3**: The writer acknowledges *human* limitations. **4**: The questions suggest this is a riddle, to which the answer would be "God."

**30.7–9**: The request is for truth, and enough to live on. **11–14**: Four types of sinners—the unfilial, self-satisfied, arrogant, and avaricious.

*Four types of sinners*

7 Two things I ask of you;
do not deny them to me before I die:
8 Remove far from me falsehood and lying;
give me neither poverty nor riches;
feed me with the food that I need,
9 or I shall be full, and deny you,
and say, "Who is the LORD?"
or I shall be poor, and steal,
and profane the name of my God.

10 Do not slander a servant to a master,
or the servant will curse you, and you will be held guilty.

11 There are those who curse their fathers
and do not bless their mothers.
12 There are those who are pure in their own eyes
yet are not cleansed of their filthiness.
13 There are those—how lofty are their eyes,
how high their eyelids lift!—
14 there are those whose teeth are swords,
whose teeth are knives,
to devour the poor from off the earth,
the needy from among mortals.

15 The leech[s] has two daughters;
"Give, give," they cry.
Three things are never satisfied;
four never say, "Enough":
16 Sheol, the barren womb,
the earth ever thirsty for water,
and the fire that never says, "Enough."[s]

17 The eye that mocks a father
and scorns to obey a mother
will be pecked out by the ravens of the valley
and eaten by the vultures.

18 Three things are too wonderful for me;
four I do not understand:
19 the way of an eagle in the sky,
the way of a snake on a rock,
the way of a ship on the high seas,
and the way of a man with a girl.

20 This is the way of an adulteress:
she eats, and wipes her mouth,
and says, "I have done no wrong."

21 Under three things the earth trembles;
under four it cannot bear up:
22 a slave when he becomes king,
and a fool when glutted with food;
23 an unloved woman when she gets a husband,
and a maid when she succeeds her mistress.

24 Four things on earth are small,
yet they are exceedingly wise:
25 the ants are a people without strength,
yet they provide their food in the summer;
26 the badgers are a people without power,
yet they make their homes in the rocks;
27 the locusts have no king,
yet all of them march in rank;
28 the lizard[t] can be grasped in the hand,
yet it is found in kings' palaces.

*s* Meaning of Heb uncertain *t* Or *spider*

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**30.15–16**: A numerical saying about four *things* that *are never satisfied,* to which the *two daughters* of the *leech* seem to be compared.
**18–19**: Four wonders are compared to each other as regards the *way,* a mysterious and irrecoverable way.
**30.20**: *Eats . . . mouth,* a euphemism; this verse seems to be a moralizing interpretation

*The teachings of King Lemuel's mother*

29 Three things are stately in their stride;
four are stately in their gait:
30 the lion, which is mightiest among wild animals
and does not turn back before any;
31 the strutting rooster,[u] the he-goat,
and a king striding before[v] his people.

32 If you have been foolish, exalting yourself,
or if you have been devising evil,
put your hand on your mouth.
33 For as pressing milk produces curds,
and pressing the nose produces blood,
so pressing anger produces strife.

31 The words of King Lemuel. An oracle that his mother taught him:

2 No, my son! No, son of my womb!
No, son of my vows!
3 Do not give your strength to women,
your ways to those who destroy kings.
4 It is not for kings, O Lemuel,
it is not for kings to drink wine,
or for rulers to desire[w] strong drink;
5 or else they will drink and forget what has been decreed,
and will pervert the rights of all the afflicted.
6 Give strong drink to one who is perishing,
and wine to those in bitter distress;
7 let them drink and forget their poverty,
and remember their misery no more.
8 Speak out for those who cannot speak,
for the rights of all the destitute.[x]
9 Speak out, judge righteously,
defend the rights of the poor and needy.

10 A capable wife who can find?
She is far more precious than jewels.
11 The heart of her husband trusts in her,
and he will have no lack of gain.
12 She does him good, and not harm,
all the days of her life.
13 She seeks wool and flax,
and works with willing hands.
14 She is like the ships of the merchant,
she brings her food from far away.
15 She rises while it is still night
and provides food for her household
and tasks for her servant-girls.
16 She considers a field and buys it;
with the fruit of her hands she plants a vineyard.

*u* Gk Syr Tg Compare Vg: Meaning of Heb uncertain *v* Meaning of Heb uncertain *w* Cn: Heb *where* *x* Heb *all children of passing away*

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of v. 19d. **21–23**: Four intolerable situations. **24–28**: Four small creatures that can teach us lessons. **29–31**: Four examples of stateliness.

**31.1–9**: If *Lemuel* is not from Massa (here translated as *oracle;* see 30.1), he is unidentified; the teaching of his *mother* warns him against women and wine, and urges the ideals of justice.

**31.10–31**: An acrostic poem about the *capable wife*. **10**: The "finding" of a wife is a common theme (see 18.22), and so is the "finding" of wisdom (Job 28.12, 20). Is there a relation between the two? Like wisdom, this woman is *more precious than jewels* (so also wisdom in 3.14–15; 8.10). The description seems to stem from a male point of view. There may be a play on "sophia" (Greek for "wisdom") in the Hebrew text of verse 31, which reads "sophiyyah" (*she looks well to*).

17 She girds herself with strength,
and makes her arms strong.
18 She perceives that her merchandise
is profitable.
Her lamp does not go out
at night.
19 She puts her hands to the distaff,
and her hands hold the
spindle.
20 She opens her hand to the poor,
and reaches out her hands to
the needy.
21 She is not afraid for her household
when it snows,
for all her household are clothed
in crimson.
22 She makes herself coverings;
her clothing is fine linen and
purple.
23 Her husband is known in the
city gates,
taking his seat among the elders
of the land.
24 She makes linen garments and sells
them;
she supplies the merchant with
sashes.
25 Strength and dignity are her
clothing,
and she laughs at the time
to come.
26 She opens her mouth with
wisdom,
and the teaching of kindness is
on her tongue.
27 She looks well to the ways of her
household,
and does not eat the bread of
idleness.
28 Her children rise up and call her
happy;
her husband too, and he
praises her:
29 "Many women have done
excellently,
but you surpass them all."
30 Charm is deceitful, and beauty
is vain,
but a woman who fears the
LORD is to be praised.
31 Give her a share in the fruit of her
hands,
and let her works praise her in
the city gates.

# *Ecclesiastes*

The name of the book, and ultimately of the author, derives from the Hebrew *Qoheleth*. In Hebrew the root *qhl* has to do with an assembly or congregation (an "ecclesia," hence the Greek and Latin form, Ecclesiastes). The name, then, would seem to mean "leader of an assembly." The term "Preacher" goes back through Luther (*Prediger*) to Jerome (*concionator*), but the author is not a preacher, nor is this a series of sermons. The editor of the book, perhaps one of the author's students, is responsible for the superscription that identifies him as "son of David" (1.1), and hence the work was attributed to Solomon. But the late language (close to the style of the Mishnah) and the tenor of the work make this attribution virtually impossible; a date around 300 B.C. is likely. (The Mishnah is the part of the Talmud that contains laws and regulations. The collection was formed after the Hebrew Scriptures were largely completed.)

No definitive outline of the book has won a consensus. But there is a clear thematizing in 1.2 and its echo in 12.8, "vanity of vanities." This construction (like the similar "holy of holies") is Hebrew idiom for the superlative—thus, utter vanity. The Hebrew word used, *hebel,* means vapor, something unsubstantial, hence futile or vain, and it occurs 38 times in the Hebrew text of this book. This verdict is applied to several aspects of life: wisdom, toil, joy, etc., and all are found wanting. If Qoheleth cannot find immediate disadvantages, there is always the fact of death. Ultimately the wise man must die like the fool (2.16; 3.20; 9.10). The author of the epilogue in 12.9f. seems to have had a high regard for Qoheleth as a *teacher* (as Qoheleth is rendered in NRSV), though many interpreters regard 12.13–14 as a kind of "correction" to Qoheleth's radical thought. Because "joy" also plays a role in the book (2.26; 3.22; 9.7–9), some have interpreted Qoheleth very positively: enjoy the pleasures of life, the "gift" of God (5.19). These conclusions about joy, however, seem to be doubtful concessions. One never knows if joy will be meted out, or on what basis. The divine generosity cannot be comprehended: "Whether it is love or hate one does not know" (9.1), and "the work of God" is sheer mystery for humans (3.11; 8.17; 11.5). Qoheleth draws a grim picture of life (and death; see 12.1–7), but he held fast to the need of reverence for God (5.7; 7.18). Within the biblical canon his book fulfills a necessary role, warning against human hubris and preserving divine mystery.

1 The words of the Teacher,[a] the son
of David, king in Jerusalem.
2 Vanity of vanities, says the
Teacher,[a]
vanity of vanities! All is vanity.
3 What do people gain from all
the toil
at which they toil under the
sun?
4 A generation goes, and a
generation comes,
but the earth remains forever.
5 The sun rises and the sun
goes down,
and hurries to the place where
it rises.
6 The wind blows to the south,
and goes around to the north;
round and round goes the wind,
and on its circuits the wind
returns.
7 All streams run to the sea,
but the sea is not full;
to the place where the streams
flow,
there they continue to flow.
8 All things[b] are wearisome;
more than one can express;
the eye is not satisfied with seeing,
or the ear filled with hearing.
9 What has been is what will be,
and what has been done is what
will be done;
there is nothing new under
the sun.
10 Is there a thing of which it is said,
"See, this is new"?
It has already been,
in the ages before us.
11 The people of long ago are not
remembered,
nor will there be any
remembrance
of people yet to come
by those who come after them.

12 I, the Teacher,[a] when king over Israel in Jerusalem, 13 applied my mind to seek and to search out by wisdom all that is done under heaven; it is an unhappy business that God has given to human beings to be busy with. 14 I saw all the deeds that are done under the sun; and see, all is vanity and a chasing after wind.[c]

15 What is crooked cannot be made
straight,
and what is lacking cannot
be counted.

16 I said to myself, "I have acquired great wisdom, surpassing all who were over Jerusalem before me; and my mind has had great experience of wisdom and knowledge." 17 And I applied my mind to know wisdom and to know madness and folly. I perceived that this also is but a chasing after wind.[c]

18 For in much wisdom is much
vexation,
and those who increase knowledge
increase sorrow.

2 I said to myself, "Come now, I will make a test of pleasure; enjoy yourself." But again, this also was vanity. 2 I said of laughter, "It is mad," and of pleasure, "What use is it?" 3 I searched with my mind how to cheer my body with wine—my mind still guiding me with wisdom—and how to lay hold on folly,

*a* Heb *Qoheleth*, traditionally rendered *Preacher*
*b* Or *words* *c* Or *a feeding on wind*. See Hos 12.1

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**1.1–11: Title and Thesis.** For the superscription (verse 1) and themes (v. 2, compare 12.8), see the Introduction. The failure of toil (v. 3) is illustrated by a poem that exemplifies monotony and repetitiousness: *generation, sun, wind, streams*. Nothing is achieved, and similarly human desires are left unsatisfied (v. 8). Repetition marks human experience: *nothing new under the sun*, because there is no *remembrance* (v. 11).

**1.12–18: The search for wisdom.** These opening remarks anticipate Qoheleth's judgment about the futility of wisdom (compare 8.17). **18**: Both as a process and as achievement, *in much wisdom is much vexation*.

**2.1–11: The experiment with pleasure.** A preliminary judgment (vv. 1–2) is passed on an experiment that is described in great detail (vv. 3–11).

until I might see what was good for mortals to do under heaven during the few days of their life. 4I made great works; I built houses and planted vineyards for myself; 5I made myself gardens and parks, and planted in them all kinds of fruit trees. 6I made myself pools from which to water the forest of growing trees. 7I bought male and female slaves, and had slaves who were born in my house; I also had great possessions of herds and flocks, more than any who had been before me in Jerusalem. 8I also gathered for myself silver and gold and the treasure of kings and of the provinces; I got singers, both men and women, and delights of the flesh, and many concubines.[d]

9 So I became great and surpassed all who were before me in Jerusalem; also my wisdom remained with me. 10Whatever my eyes desired I did not keep from them; I kept my heart from no pleasure, for my heart found pleasure in all my toil, and this was my reward for all my toil. 11Then I considered all that my hands had done and the toil I had spent in doing it, and again, all was vanity and a chasing after wind,[e] and there was nothing to be gained under the sun.

12 So I turned to consider wisdom and madness and folly; for what can the one do who comes after the king? Only what has already been done. 13Then I saw that wisdom excels folly as light excels darkness.

14 The wise have eyes in their head,
but fools walk in darkness.

Yet I perceived that the same fate befalls all of them. 15Then I said to myself, "What happens to the fool will happen to me also; why then have I been so very wise?" And I said to myself that this also is vanity. 16For there is no enduring remembrance of the wise or of fools, seeing that in the days to come all will have been long forgotten. How can the wise die just like fools? 17So I hated life, because what is done under the sun was grievous to me; for all is vanity and a chasing after wind.[e]

18 I hated all my toil in which I had toiled under the sun, seeing that I must leave it to those who come after me 19—and who knows whether they will be wise or foolish? Yet they will be master of all for which I toiled and used my wisdom under the sun. This also is vanity. 20So I turned and gave my heart up to despair concerning all the toil of my labors under the sun, 21because sometimes one who has toiled with wisdom and knowledge and skill must leave all to be enjoyed by another who did not toil for it. This also is vanity and a great evil. 22What do mortals get from all the toil and strain with which they toil under the sun? 23For all their days are full of pain, and their work is a vexation; even at night their minds do not rest. This also is vanity.

24 There is nothing better for mortals than to eat and drink, and find enjoyment in their toil. This also, I saw, is from the hand of God; 25for apart from him[f] who can eat or who can have enjoyment? 26For to the one who pleases him God gives wisdom and knowledge and joy; but to the sinner he gives the work of gathering and heaping, only to give to one who pleases God. This also is vanity and a chasing after wind.[e]

*d* Meaning of Heb uncertain *e* Or *a feeding on wind.* See Hos 12.1 *f* Gk Syr: Heb *apart from me*

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**2.10–11**: *Pleasure* was achieved, but it is judged as vain.

**2.12–23**: **A judgment on wisdom. 12**: The translation is uncertain. **13–17**: Qoheleth rejects two sayings about the superiority of wisdom (vv. 13–14a), because there is one *fate* for all: death (vv. 14b–16).

**2.24–26**: **The first of Qoheleth's resigned conclusions about joy** (3.12, 22; 5.17–18; 8.15; 9.7–9; 11.7–12). **26**: Joy is a gift of God, but God is quite arbitrary, dispensing it as he pleases. No moral evaluation is intended by *the one who pleases him,* or by *sinner* (i.e. one who misses the mark, a bungler; compare 9.18).

3 For everything there is a season,
and a time for every matter under heaven:
2 a time to be born, and a time to die;
a time to plant, and a time to pluck up what is planted;
3 a time to kill, and a time to heal;
a time to break down, and a time to build up;
4 a time to weep, and a time to laugh;
a time to mourn, and a time to dance;
5 a time to throw away stones, and a time to gather stones together;
a time to embrace, and a time to refrain from embracing;
6 a time to seek, and a time to lose;
a time to keep, and a time to throw away;
7 a time to tear, and a time to sew;
a time to keep silence, and a time to speak;
8 a time to love, and a time to hate;
a time for war, and a time for peace.

9 What gain have the workers from their toil? 10 I have seen the business that God has given to everyone to be busy with. 11 He has made everything suitable for its time; moreover he has put a sense of past and future into their minds, yet they cannot find out what God has done from the beginning to the end. 12 I know that there is nothing better for them than to be happy and enjoy themselves as long as they live; 13 moreover, it is God's gift that all should eat and drink and take pleasure in all their toil. 14 I know that whatever God does endures forever; nothing can be added to it, nor anything taken from it; God has done this, so that all should stand in awe before him. 15 That which is, already has been; that which is to be, already is; and God seeks out what has gone by.[g]

16 Moreover I saw under the sun that in the place of justice, wickedness was there, and in the place of righteousness, wickedness was there as well. 17 I said in my heart, God will judge the righteous and the wicked, for he has appointed a time for every matter, and for every work. 18 I said in my heart with regard to human beings that God is testing them to show that they are but animals. 19 For the fate of humans and the fate of animals is the same; as one dies, so dies the other. They all have the same breath, and humans have no advantage over the animals; for all is vanity. 20 All go to one place; all are from the dust, and all turn to dust again. 21 Who knows whether the human spirit goes upward and the spirit of animals goes downward to the earth? 22 So I saw that there is nothing better than that all should enjoy their work, for that is their lot; who can bring them to see what will be after them?

4 Again I saw all the oppressions that are practiced under the sun. Look, the tears of the oppressed—with no one to comfort them! On the side of their oppressors there was power—with no one to comfort them. 2 And I thought the dead, who have already died, more for-

*g* Heb *what is pursued*

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**3.1–15: Everything has its time, determined by God. 2:** *To be born,* Hebrew "for giving birth."

**3.11:** God has so fashioned the human heart that it cannot understand what God is doing; hence Qoheleth offers another of his resigned conclusions (vv. 12–13; see also 2.26). **14–15:** Human beings can only stand in awe before God's mastery and mystery.

**3.16–22: Human injustice is subject to divine judgment** (compare 11.9). Qoheleth never denies that God is a judge; he denies that one can understand the divine judgment. It is meaningless, since humans and beasts resemble each other in that both have the same *fate,* death. **21:** *Who knows:* This is equivalent to a denial; it does not contradict 12.7. **22:** Since no one survives after death, the only good is to enjoy life (see 2.24).

**4.1–6: Life's oppressions and inequalities.** In view of pitiless oppression, the dead (and even more, those who have never been

tunate than the living, who are still alive; 3but better than both is the one who has not yet been, and has not seen the evil deeds that are done under the sun.

4 Then I saw that all toil and all skill in work come from one person's envy of another. This also is vanity and a chasing after wind.[h]

5 Fools fold their hands
and consume their own flesh.
6 Better is a handful with quiet
than two handfuls with toil,
and a chasing after wind.[h]

7 Again, I saw vanity under the sun: 8the case of solitary individuals, without sons or brothers; yet there is no end to all their toil, and their eyes are never satisfied with riches. "For whom am I toiling," they ask, "and depriving myself of pleasure?" This also is vanity and an unhappy business.

9 Two are better than one, because they have a good reward for their toil. 10For if they fall, one will lift up the other; but woe to one who is alone and falls and does not have another to help. 11Again, if two lie together, they keep warm; but how can one keep warm alone? 12And though one might prevail against another, two will withstand one. A threefold cord is not quickly broken.

13 Better is a poor but wise youth than an old but foolish king, who will no longer take advice. 14One can indeed come out of prison to reign, even though born poor in the kingdom. 15I saw all the living who, moving about under the sun, follow that[i] youth who replaced the king;[j] 16there was no end to all those people whom he led. Yet those who come later will not rejoice in him. Surely this also is vanity and a chasing after wind.[h]

5 [k] Guard your steps when you go to the house of God; to draw near to listen is better than the sacrifice offered by fools; for they do not know how to keep from doing evil.[l] 2[m]Never be rash with your mouth, nor let your heart be quick to utter a word before God, for God is in heaven, and you upon earth; therefore let your words be few.

3 For dreams come with many cares, and a fool's voice with many words.

4 When you make a vow to God, do not delay fulfilling it; for he has no pleasure in fools. Fulfill what you vow. 5It is better that you should not vow than that you should vow and not fulfill it. 6Do not let your mouth lead you into sin, and do not say before the messenger that it was a mistake; why should God be angry at your words, and destroy the work of your hands?

7 With many dreams come vanities and a multitude of words;[n] but fear God.

8 If you see in a province the oppression of the poor and the violation of justice and right, do not be amazed at the matter; for the high official is watched by a higher, and there are yet higher ones over them. 9But all things considered, this is an advantage for a land: a king for a plowed field.[n]

*h* Or *a feeding on wind.* See Hos 12.1
*i* Heb *the second* *j* Heb *him* *k* Ch 4.17 in Heb *l* Cn: Heb *they do not know how to do evil* *m* Ch 5.1 in Heb *n* Meaning of Heb uncertain

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born) are better off than the living, who are given to rivalry and *envy* (v.4). **5–6:** These two sayings more or less cancel each other; neither laziness nor over-achievement is profitable. **5:** *Fold their hands,* i.e. do not work (Prov 6.10; 24.33).

**4.7–12: The value of a friend.** The futility of the solitary person (vv. 7–8) is illustrated by sayings that underscore the advantages of human companionship.

**4.13–16: The impermanence of fame.** This obscure story suggests that fortune and fame are fickle; one ruler is replaced by another.

**5.1–7: Advice on religious observance.** Beware of wordy and insincere piety. **3:** 10.12–13. **4–6:** Vows are to be kept, or disaster can be expected.

**5.8–9: Oppression** is not surprising in view of the need to supervise officials. Hence kingship is an *advantage* to a country; the text of v. 9 is ambiguous.

**5.10–6.9: The topic of possessions. 10–12:** Since desires are insatiable, riches are dan-

10 The lover of money will not be satisfied with money; nor the lover of wealth, with gain. This also is vanity.

11 When goods increase, those who eat them increase; and what gain has their owner but to see them with his eyes?

12 Sweet is the sleep of laborers, whether they eat little or much; but the surfeit of the rich will not let them sleep.

13 There is a grievous ill that I have seen under the sun: riches were kept by their owners to their hurt, 14 and those riches were lost in a bad venture; though they are parents of children, they have nothing in their hands. 15 As they came from their mother's womb, so they shall go again, naked as they came; they shall take nothing for their toil, which they may carry away with their hands. 16 This also is a grievous ill: just as they came, so shall they go; and what gain do they have from toiling for the wind? 17 Besides, all their days they eat in darkness, in much vexation and sickness and resentment.

18 This is what I have seen to be good: it is fitting to eat and drink and find enjoyment in all the toil with which one toils under the sun the few days of the life God gives us; for this is our lot. 19 Likewise all to whom God gives wealth and possessions and whom he enables to enjoy them, and to accept their lot and find enjoyment in their toil—this is the gift of God. 20 For they will scarcely brood over the days of their lives, because God keeps them occupied with the joy of their hearts.

6 There is an evil that I have seen under the sun, and it lies heavy upon humankind: 2 those to whom God gives wealth, possessions, and honor, so that they lack nothing of all that they desire, yet God does not enable them to enjoy these things, but a stranger enjoys them. This is vanity; it is a grievous ill. 3 A man may beget a hundred children, and live many years; but however many are the days of his years, if he does not enjoy life's good things, or has no burial, I say that a stillborn child is better off than he. 4 For it comes into vanity and goes into darkness, and in darkness its name is covered; 5 moreover it has not seen the sun or known anything; yet it finds rest rather than he. 6 Even though he should live a thousand years twice over, yet enjoy no good—do not all go to one place?

7 All human toil is for the mouth, yet the appetite is not satisfied. 8 For what advantage have the wise over fools? And what do the poor have who know how to conduct themselves before the living? 9 Better is the sight of the eyes than the wandering of desire; this also is vanity and a chasing after wind. [o]

10 Whatever has come to be has already been named, and it is known what human beings are, and that they are not able to dispute with those who are stronger. 11 The more words, the more vanity, so how is one the better? 12 For who knows what is good for mortals while they live the few days of their vain life, which they pass like a shadow? For who can tell them what will be after them under the sun?

7 A good name is better than
precious ointment,
and the day of death, than the
day of birth.
2 It is better to go to the house of
mourning
than to go to the house of
feasting;

o Or *a feeding on wind.* See Hos 12.1

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gerous. **13–17**: An example of the uncertainty of relying upon material possessions. **18–20**: A typical conclusion; compare 3.22.

**6.1–6**: Two examples of "evil": a *stranger* can come to enjoy the *possessions* of another (vv. 1–2); the *stillborn* is happier than one who fails to succeed in life (vv. 3–6). **7–9**: The problems begotten of unsatisfied desires.

**6.10–12**: **The human condition.** Things are determined by God, who has the upper hand. We *mortals* have recourse only to *words,* but we know not what is *good,* for we do not know what is to come.

**7.1–22**: **Various comments.** It is difficult to determine if this series of sayings is accepted or rejected (v. 6, *vanity*) by Qoheleth. **1**:

for this is the end of everyone,
and the living will lay it to heart.
3 Sorrow is better than laughter,
for by sadness of countenance the heart is made glad.
4 The heart of the wise is in the house of mourning;
but the heart of fools is in the house of mirth.
5 It is better to hear the rebuke of the wise
than to hear the song of fools.
6 For like the crackling of thorns under a pot,
so is the laughter of fools;
this also is vanity.
7 Surely oppression makes the wise foolish,
and a bribe corrupts the heart.
8 Better is the end of a thing than its beginning;
the patient in spirit are better than the proud in spirit.
9 Do not be quick to anger,
for anger lodges in the bosom of fools.
10 Do not say, "Why were the former days better than these?"
For it is not from wisdom that you ask this.
11 Wisdom is as good as an inheritance,
an advantage to those who see the sun.
12 For the protection of wisdom is like the protection of money,
and the advantage of knowledge is that wisdom gives life to the one who possesses it.
13 Consider the work of God;
who can make straight what he has made crooked?
14 In the day of prosperity be joyful,
and in the day of adversity consider; God has made the one as well as the other, so that mortals may not find out anything that will come after them.

15 In my vain life I have seen everything; there are righteous people who perish in their righteousness, and there are wicked people who prolong their life in their evildoing. 16 Do not be too righteous, and do not act too wise; why should you destroy yourself? 17 Do not be too wicked, and do not be a fool; why should you die before your time? 18 It is good that you should take hold of the one, without letting go of the other; for the one who fears God shall succeed with both.

19 Wisdom gives strength to the wise more than ten rulers that are in a city.

20 Surely there is no one on earth so righteous as to do good without ever sinning.

21 Do not give heed to everything that people say, or you may hear your servant cursing you; 22 your heart knows that many times you have yourself cursed others.

23 All this I have tested by wisdom; I said, "I will be wise," but it was far from me. 24 That which is, is far off, and deep, very deep; who can find it out? 25 I turned my mind to know and to search out and to seek wisdom and the sum of things, and to know that wickedness is folly and that foolishness is madness. 26 I found more bitter than death the woman who is a trap, whose heart is snares and nets, whose hands are fetters; one who pleases God escapes her, but the sinner is taken by her. 27 See, this is what I found, says

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Reputation (*a good name*) is never secure until *death* (*ointment* for burial).

**7.5–7**: Wisdom is better than folly, but *oppression* can make a fool of the wise person. **11–14**: *Wisdom* has its advantages, but it cannot affect the *work of God*.

**7.15–18**: Two admonitions dealing with retribution. Because theories of retribution are failures, even contradictory, one should hold on to both—but the God-fearer has the best chance.

**7.23–8.9**: **The meaning of existence is hidden.** After confessing his failure to attain wisdom, Qoheleth warns against the woman *who is a trap* (compare Prov 7). Although this is usually interpreted as misogynistic, the condemnation of both male and female appears in v. 29.

the Teacher,[p] adding one thing to another to find the sum, [28]which my mind has sought repeatedly, but I have not found. One man among a thousand I found, but a woman among all these I have not found. [29]See, this alone I found, that God made human beings straightforward, but they have devised many schemes.

8 Who is like the wise man?
And who knows the
interpretation of a thing?
Wisdom makes one's face shine,
and the hardness of one's
countenance is changed.

2 Keep[q] the king's command because of your sacred oath. [3]Do not be terrified; go from his presence, do not delay when the matter is unpleasant, for he does whatever he pleases. [4]For the word of the king is powerful, and who can say to him, "What are you doing?" [5]Whoever obeys a command will meet no harm, and the wise mind will know the time and way. [6]For every matter has its time and way, although the troubles of mortals lie heavy upon them. [7]Indeed, they do not know what is to be, for who can tell them how it will be? [8]No one has power over the wind[r] to restrain the wind,[r] or power over the day of death; there is no discharge from the battle, nor does wickedness deliver those who practice it. [9]All this I observed, applying my mind to all that is done under the sun, while one person exercises authority over another to the other's hurt.

10 Then I saw the wicked buried; they used to go in and out of the holy place, and were praised in the city where they had done such things.[s] This also is vanity. [11]Because sentence against an evil deed is not executed speedily, the human heart is fully set to do evil. [12]Though sinners do evil a hundred times and prolong their lives, yet I know that it will be well with those who fear God, because they stand in fear before him, [13]but it will not be well with the wicked, neither will they prolong their days like a shadow, because they do not stand in fear before God.

14 There is a vanity that takes place on earth, that there are righteous people who are treated according to the conduct of the wicked, and there are wicked people who are treated according to the conduct of the righteous. I said that this also is vanity. [15]So I commend enjoyment, for there is nothing better for people under the sun than to eat, and drink, and enjoy themselves, for this will go with them in their toil through the days of life that God gives them under the sun.

16 When I applied my mind to know wisdom, and to see the business that is done on earth, how one's eyes see sleep neither day nor night, [17]then I saw all the work of God, that no one can find out what is happening under the sun. However much they may toil in seeking, they will not find it out; even though those who are wise claim to know, they cannot find it out.

9 All this I laid to heart, examining it all, how the righteous and the wise and their deeds are in the hand of God;

*p* *Qoheleth*, traditionally rendered *Preacher*
*q* Heb *I keep* *r* Or *breath* *s* Meaning of Heb uncertain

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**8.1–4**: The saying in v. 1 about *the wise man* is conditioned by the careful way in which he must deal with royalty.

**8.5–9**: The traditional wisdom given in v. 5 (*the wise mind will know the time and the way*) is severely modified by human ignorance, especially of *what is to be*, and by death: but neither does *wickedness* profit!

**8.10–17**: **Retribution.** Qoheleth describes the failure of retribution for the *wicked* (vv. 10–12a). He knows what the traditional teaching calls for (vv. 12b–13), but things do not work out that way (v. 14). Hence he repeats his familiar conclusion (v. 15), but denies that any one, even the *wise*, can know *the work of God* (vv. 16–17).

**9.1–6**: **A judgment about life.** One cannot distinguish *love or hate* on the part of God, since *the same fate comes to all*. While the hope of the *living* is suggested by the proverb in v. 4, there seems to be irony in the next verse: What do *the living know?* Only *that they will die!* This is hardly an advantage over the *dead* whose lot is described in vv. 5–6.

whether it is love or hate one does not know. Everything that confronts them [2]is vanity,[t] since the same fate comes to all, to the righteous and the wicked, to the good and the evil,[u] to the clean and the unclean, to those who sacrifice and those who do not sacrifice. As are the good, so are the sinners; those who swear are like those who shun an oath. [3]This is an evil in all that happens under the sun, that the same fate comes to everyone. Moreover, the hearts of all are full of evil; madness is in their hearts while they live, and after that they go to the dead. [4]But whoever is joined with all the living has hope, for a living dog is better than a dead lion. [5]The living know that they will die, but the dead know nothing; they have no more reward, and even the memory of them is lost. [6]Their love and their hate and their envy have already perished; never again will they have any share in all that happens under the sun.

7 Go, eat your bread with enjoyment, and drink your wine with a merry heart; for God has long ago approved what you do. [8]Let your garments always be white; do not let oil be lacking on your head. [9]Enjoy life with the wife whom you love, all the days of your vain life that are given you under the sun, because that is your portion in life and in your toil at which you toil under the sun. [10]Whatever your hand finds to do, do with your might; for there is no work or thought or knowledge or wisdom in Sheol, to which you are going.

11 Again I saw that under the sun the race is not to the swift, nor the battle to the strong, nor bread to the wise, nor riches to the intelligent, nor favor to the skillful; but time and chance happen to them all. [12]For no one can anticipate the time of disaster. Like fish taken in a cruel net, and like birds caught in a snare, so mortals are snared at a time of calamity, when it suddenly falls upon them.

13 I have also seen this example of wisdom under the sun, and it seemed great to me. [14]There was a little city with few people in it. A great king came against it and besieged it, building great siegeworks against it. [15]Now there was found in it a poor wise man, and he by his wisdom delivered the city. Yet no one remembered that poor man. [16]So I said, "Wisdom is better than might; yet the poor man's wisdom is despised, and his words are not heeded."

[17] The quiet words of the wise are
more to be heeded
than the shouting of a ruler
among fools.
[18] Wisdom is better than weapons
of war,
but one bungler destroys much
good.

10 Dead flies make the perfumer's
ointment give off a foul
odor;
so a little folly outweighs
wisdom and honor.
[2] The heart of the wise inclines to
the right,
but the heart of a fool to the
left.
[3] Even when fools walk on the
road, they lack sense,
and show to everyone that they
are fools.
[4] If the anger of the ruler rises
against you, do not leave
your post,

*t* Syr Compare Gk: Heb *Everything that confronts them 2is everything* *u* Gk Syr Vg: Heb lacks *and the evil*

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**9.7–12: Qoheleth offers another of his conclusions:** *Enjoy life* to the full, since there is nothing *in Sheol*. But *under the sun* (vv. 11–12) it is *time and chance* that ensnare *mortals*.

**9.13–18: Wisdom and might.** The story of the one who *by his wisdom delivered the city* is nullified by the way he was treated (vv. 13–16). Similarly, the power of wisdom can be undone by *one bungler* (v. 18).

**10.1–20: A series of observations. 1:** This continues the idea of the vulnerability of wisdom expressed in 9.16. **2–3:** Although Qoheleth criticizes traditional wisdom, folly is not an option! (see vv. 12–15).

for calmness will undo great offenses.

5 There is an evil that I have seen under the sun, as great an error as if it proceeded from the ruler: 6folly is set in many high places, and the rich sit in a low place. 7I have seen slaves on horseback, and princes walking on foot like slaves.

8 Whoever digs a pit will fall into it;
and whoever breaks through a wall will be bitten by a snake.
9 Whoever quarries stones will be hurt by them;
and whoever splits logs will be endangered by them.
10 If the iron is blunt, and one does not whet the edge,
then more strength must be exerted;
but wisdom helps one to succeed.
11 If the snake bites before it is charmed,
there is no advantage in a charmer.

12 Words spoken by the wise bring them favor,
but the lips of fools consume them.
13 The words of their mouths begin in foolishness,
and their talk ends in wicked madness;
14 yet fools talk on and on.
No one knows what is to happen,
and who can tell anyone what the future holds?
15 The toil of fools wears them out,
for they do not even know the way to town.
16 Alas for you, O land, when your king is a servant,[v]
and your princes feast in the morning!
17 Happy are you, O land, when your king is a nobleman,
and your princes feast at the proper time—
for strength, and not for drunkenness!
18 Through sloth the roof sinks in,
and through indolence the house leaks.
19 Feasts are made for laughter;
wine gladdens life,
and money meets every need.
20 Do not curse the king, even in your thoughts,
or curse the rich, even in your bedroom;
for a bird of the air may carry your voice,
or some winged creature tell the matter.

11 Send out your bread upon the waters,
for after many days you will get it back.
2 Divide your means seven ways, or even eight,
for you do not know what disaster may happen on earth.
3 When clouds are full,
they empty rain on the earth;
whether a tree falls to the south or to the north,
in the place where the tree falls, there it will lie.
4 Whoever observes the wind will not sow;

[v] Or *a child*

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**10.4–7**: One must deal calmly with a king (compare Prov 16.4), but this does not always bring success (vv. 5–7). **8–11**: Accidents can happen (vv. 8–9), but the use of wisdom and talent may lessen their chances (vv. 10–11). **12–15**: See 5.3; 10.2–3.

**10.16–20**: Reflections concerning royalty.

**11.1–6**: **Sayings about the future and its uncertainty.** **1**: Take a chance (*send out your bread:* probably a commercial venture); you may receive a profit. **2**: But don't put all your eggs in one basket. **3–4**: Whether one counts on the future (*clouds . . . rain*), or realizes that it is impenetrable (*there* the tree *will*

and whoever regards the clouds
will not reap.

5 Just as you do not know how the breath comes to the bones in the mother's womb, so you do not know the work of God, who makes everything.

6 In the morning sow your seed, and at evening do not let your hands be idle; for you do not know which will prosper, this or that, or whether both alike will be good.

7 Light is sweet, and it is pleasant for the eyes to see the sun.

8 Even those who live many years should rejoice in them all; yet let them remember that the days of darkness will be many. All that comes is vanity.

9 Rejoice, young man, while you are young, and let your heart cheer you in the days of your youth. Follow the inclination of your heart and the desire of your eyes, but know that for all these things God will bring you into judgment.

10 Banish anxiety from your mind, and put away pain from your body; for youth and the dawn of life are vanity.

12 Remember your creator in the days of your youth, before the days of trouble come, and the years draw near when you will say, "I have no pleasure in them"; 2before the sun and the light and the moon and the stars are darkened and the clouds return with[w] the rain; 3in the day when the guards of the house tremble, and the strong men are bent, and the women who grind cease working because they are few, and those who look through the windows see dimly; 4when the doors on the street are shut, and the sound of the grinding is low, and one rises up at the sound of a bird, and all the daughters of song are brought low; 5when one is afraid of heights, and terrors are in the road; the almond tree blossoms, the grasshopper drags itself along[x] and desire fails; because all must go to their eternal home, and the mourners will go about the streets; 6before the silver cord is snapped,[y] and the golden bowl is broken, and the pitcher is broken at the fountain, and the wheel broken at the cistern, 7and the dust returns to the earth as it was, and the breath[z] returns to God who gave it. 8Vanity of vanities, says the Teacher;[a] all is vanity.

9 Besides being wise, the Teacher[a] also taught the people knowledge, weighing and studying and arranging many proverbs. 10The Teacher[a] sought to find pleasing words, and he wrote words of truth plainly.

11 The sayings of the wise are like goads, and like nails firmly fixed are the collected sayings that are given by one shepherd.[b] 12Of anything beyond these, my child, beware. Of making many

*w* Or *after*; Heb *'ahar* *x* Or *is a burden* *y* Syr Vg Compare Gk: Heb *is removed* *z* Or *the spirit* *a* *Qoheleth*, traditionally rendered *Preacher* *b* Meaning of Heb uncertain

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*lie*), one must act (v. 4). **5**: The unfathomable work of God (see also 3.11; 8.17). **6**: Despite one's ignorance, one must act.

**11.7–12.8: Conclusion. 11.7–10**: Qoheleth recommends joy and zest in life, but he does not remove the cloud: the coming *days of darkness . . . vanity . . . judgment . . . vanity*.

**12.1–7**: This famous description of the approach of old age and death (*the days of trouble*) is difficult to interpret. There is a suggestion of the approach of winter (of life) in v. 3 and the deterioration of a house (v. 4). But an allegorical approach has also been suggested: the *strong men* are the legs; the *guards* are the arms; the *women who grind* are the teeth; the *windows* are the eyes; etc. In any case, the difficulties of old age seem to be reflected in vv. 4–5 (the *grasshopper* may be an image of one using crutches) and the picture of death is portrayed by the metaphors of v. 6. **7**: For the picture, see Gen 2.7; the body returns to the dust, and the *breath* of life is God's breath (not the "soul"), which sustains all living things (Ps 104.29–30).

**12.9–14: Epilogue. 8**: This is a deliberate repetition, or inclusion, of 1.2, the theme of the book. **9–12**: The author of these lines characterizes Qoheleth as a teacher with great literary style (*pleasing words*). He comments favorably on *the sayings of the wise*, as *given by one shepherd* (perhaps God), and advises his readers that they now have enough wisdom

books there is no end, and much study is a weariness of the flesh.

13 The end of the matter; all has been heard. Fear God, and keep his commandments; for that is the whole duty of everyone. 14 For God will bring every deed into judgment, including[c] every secret thing, whether good or evil.

*c* Or *into the judgment on*

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*books* (including the present one), and no more need be added (v. 12). **13–14**: Some have conjectured that this final comment was added by an "orthodox" editor. But it is not hostile to Qoheleth; it goes beyond him, bringing in the *commandments*, and affirming *judgment* more positively than he ever does (compare 11.9; 3.17).

# *The Song of Solomon*

This book, known also as the Song of Songs (see 1.1) or the Canticle (of Canticles), contains love poems, or songs, of Israel. The main speakers are a man and a woman, with the Daughters of Jerusalem serving as a foil for the woman's declarations (1.5, etc.). The work is dramatic, but not a drama with pre-arranged acts. Its unity is that of dialogue, though some have divided it into many unrelated poems. The most telling signs of unity are the frequent repetitions of words, such as 2.6–7 (compare 8.3–4; 3.5) and 2.8 (compare 2.17; 8.14), and also of scenes (e.g., 3.1–5; 5.2–8). Throughout the eight chapters a delicate mood of love and devotion is sustained. The woman (to whom most of the lines are to be attributed) and the man (portrayed both as king and shepherd) express their love for each other in poems that reflect desire, admiration, and boasting. Each delights in describing the physical charms of the other (4.1–7; 7.1–8). The only reference to marriage is in 3.11 (Solomon's wedding day). The term "bride" (4.8–5.1) is to be taken as part of the normal love language (as also "sister," 4.9, and 10) to designate the beloved. It is possible that these songs were originally oral compositions that came to be used in weddings. Here they have been assembled as a "book" of the Bible, perhaps by the Israelite sages because they underscore important values (mutuality and fidelity in love; compare Prov 5.15–20).

Both Jewish and Christian tradition found another level of meaning in the work: the love between God and God's people. Accordingly, the main characters would be the Lord and Israel (as for example in the Targum, the Aramaic paraphrase of the Hebrew Scriptures that was used in the synagogues for those who no longer understood Hebrew; the Song is the scroll that is read at the Passover festival), or Christ and the Church or the individual soul (as in the writings of Origen and Bernard of Clairvaux). The closest comparisons for the Song are the love poems of ancient Egypt. Allusions to divine marriage (as in Mesopotamian literature) are perhaps made in a few verses, but these belong to the prehistory of the text. As it stands, the collection of poems deals with human sexual love. It is impossible to date the Song with any certainty. The attribution to Solomon as author (1.1) is due to the mention of his name in 3.9, 11; 8.11–12, and perhaps to the claim made in 1 Kings 4.32.

*Love songs of the woman and the man*

1 The Song of Songs, which is Solomon's.

2 Let him kiss me with the kisses of his mouth!
For your love is better than wine,
3 your anointing oils are fragrant,
your name is perfume poured out;
therefore the maidens love you.
4 Draw me after you, let us make haste.
The king has brought me into his chambers.
We will exult and rejoice in you;
we will extol your love more than wine;
rightly do they love you.

5 I am black and beautiful,
O daughters of Jerusalem,
like the tents of Kedar,
like the curtains of Solomon.
6 Do not gaze at me because I am dark,
because the sun has gazed on me.
My mother's sons were angry with me;
they made me keeper of the vineyards,
but my own vineyard I have not kept!
7 Tell me, you whom my soul loves,
where you pasture your flock,
where you make it lie down at noon;
for why should I be like one who is veiled
beside the flocks of your companions?
8 If you do not know,
O fairest among women,
follow the tracks of the flock,
and pasture your kids
beside the shepherds' tents.

9 I compare you, my love,
to a mare among Pharaoh's chariots.
10 Your cheeks are comely with ornaments,
your neck with strings of jewels.
11 We will make you ornaments of gold,
studded with silver.

12 While the king was on his couch,
my nard gave forth its fragrance.
13 My beloved is to me a bag of myrrh
that lies between my breasts.
14 My beloved is to me a cluster of henna blossoms
in the vineyards of En-gedi.

15 Ah, you are beautiful, my love;
ah, you are beautiful;
your eyes are doves.
16 Ah, you are beautiful, my beloved,
truly lovely.
Our couch is green;
17 the beams of our house are cedar,
our rafters[a] are pine.

2 I am a rose[b] of Sharon,
a lily of the valleys.

*a* Meaning of Heb uncertain *b* Heb *crocus*

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**1.1**: **Title.** The repetition of *song* is Hebrew idiom for the superlative: the greatest song (compare "king of kings"). On *Solomon,* see the Introduction.

**1.2–8**: **The woman's song.** The woman yearns for her lover, who is portrayed as a *king* (vv. 2–4), explains her color to the *daughters* (vv. 5–6), and seeks a rendezvous with her lover, who is now described as a shepherd (vv. 7–8).

**1.9–2.7**: **The man's song.** The man praises her adornment(vv. 8–11), while she delights in his presence (vv. 12–14). An exchange of compliments follows (1.15–2.3). **14**: *En-gedi* is an oasis on the western side of the Dead Sea.

**2.1**: The flower of Sharon is probably the crocus that grows in the coastal plain of Sharon; the *lily* is the lotus flower.

**2.4–7**: The woman proclaims her love-sickness and delivers an adjuration about love to the daughters (see 3.5; 5.8; 8.4).

2 As a lily among brambles,
so is my love among maidens.

3 As an apple tree among the trees of the wood,
so is my beloved among young men.
With great delight I sat in his shadow,
and his fruit was sweet to my taste.
4 He brought me to the banqueting house,
and his intention toward me was love.
5 Sustain me with raisins,
refresh me with apples;
for I am faint with love.
6 O that his left hand were under my head,
and that his right hand embraced me!
7 I adjure you, O daughters of Jerusalem,
by the gazelles or the wild does:
do not stir up or awaken love until it is ready!

8 The voice of my beloved!
Look, he comes,
leaping upon the mountains,
bounding over the hills.
9 My beloved is like a gazelle or a young stag.
Look, there he stands behind our wall,
gazing in at the windows,
looking through the lattice.
10 My beloved speaks and says to me:
"Arise, my love, my fair one, and come away;
11 for now the winter is past,
the rain is over and gone.
12 The flowers appear on the earth;
the time of singing has come,
and the voice of the turtledove is heard in our land.
13 The fig tree puts forth its figs,
and the vines are in blossom;
they give forth fragrance.
Arise, my love, my fair one, and come away.
14 O my dove, in the clefts of the rock,
in the covert of the cliff,
let me see your face,
let me hear your voice;
for your voice is sweet,
and your face is lovely.
15 Catch us the foxes,
the little foxes,
that ruin the vineyards—
for our vineyards are in blossom."

16 My beloved is mine and I am his;
he pastures his flock among the lilies.
17 Until the day breathes
and the shadows flee,
turn, my beloved, be like a gazelle
or a young stag on the cleft mountains.[c]

3 Upon my bed at night
I sought him whom my soul loves;
I sought him, but found him not;
I called him, but he gave no answer.[d]
2 "I will rise now and go about the city,
in the streets and in the squares;

*c* Or *on the mountains of Bether*: meaning of Heb uncertain *d* Gk: Heb lacks this line

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**2.8–17: The lover's spring visit.** The woman reminisces about a springtime visit and invitation from her lover. To his request to *hear* her *voice* (v. 14), she replies with the enigmatic line about the *little foxes* (v. 15), and invites him to the *mountains*, i.e. herself (v. 17).

**3.1–5: The woman's dream.** The woman tells the *daughters* (v. 5; see also 2.7) of a successful search (in dream or fantasy) for her lover; compare 5.2–8.

I will seek him whom my soul loves."
I sought him, but found him not.
3 The sentinels found me,
as they went about in the city.
"Have you seen him whom my soul loves?"
4 Scarcely had I passed them,
when I found him whom my soul loves.
I held him, and would not let him go
until I brought him into my mother's house,
and into the chamber of her that conceived me.
5 I adjure you, O daughters of Jerusalem,
by the gazelles or the wild does:
do not stir up or awaken love
until it is ready!

6 What is that coming up from the wilderness,
like a column of smoke,
perfumed with myrrh and frankincense,
with all the fragrant powders of the merchant?
7 Look, it is the litter of Solomon!
Around it are sixty mighty men
of the mighty men of Israel,
8 all equipped with swords
and expert in war,
each with his sword at his thigh
because of alarms by night.
9 King Solomon made himself a palanquin
from the wood of Lebanon.
10 He made its posts of silver,
its back of gold, its seat of purple;
its interior was inlaid with love.[e]
Daughters of Jerusalem,
11 come out.
Look, O daughters of Zion,
at King Solomon,
at the crown with which his mother crowned him
on the day of his wedding,
on the day of the gladness of his heart.

4 How beautiful you are, my love,
how very beautiful!
Your eyes are doves
behind your veil.
Your hair is like a flock of goats,
moving down the slopes of Gilead.
2 Your teeth are like a flock of shorn ewes
that have come up from the washing,
all of which bear twins,
and not one among them is bereaved.
3 Your lips are like a crimson thread,
and your mouth is lovely.
Your cheeks are like halves of a pomegranate
behind your veil.
4 Your neck is like the tower of David,
built in courses;
on it hang a thousand bucklers,
all of them shields of warriors.
5 Your two breasts are like two fawns,
twins of a gazelle,
that feed among the lilies.
6 Until the day breathes
and the shadows flee,

[e] Meaning of Heb uncertain

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**3.6–11: A wedding procession.** Description of an ornate wedding procession. **11:** *King Solomon,* probably to be identified with the "king" of 1.4, 12.

**4.1–5.1: The man's praise and invitation.** There are several units: the man describes the physical charms of the woman (4.1–7; see also 6.5–7; 7.1–5); he invites her to make herself accessible (v. 8; compare 2.14), by leaving the *mountains;* he declares the effect her presence has upon him (4.9–11; compare 6.5); he utters the garden song (4.12–5.1).

I will hasten to the mountain of myrrh
and the hill of frankincense.
7 You are altogether beautiful, my love;
there is no flaw in you.
8 Come with me from Lebanon, my bride;
come with me from Lebanon.
Depart[f] from the peak of Amana,
from the peak of Senir and Hermon,
from the dens of lions,
from the mountains of leopards.

9 You have ravished my heart, my sister, my bride,
you have ravished my heart with a glance of your eyes,
with one jewel of your necklace.
10 How sweet is your love, my sister, my bride!
how much better is your love than wine,
and the fragrance of your oils than any spice!
11 Your lips distill nectar, my bride;
honey and milk are under your tongue;
the scent of your garments is like the scent of Lebanon.
12 A garden locked is my sister, my bride,
a garden locked, a fountain sealed.
13 Your channel[g] is an orchard of pomegranates
with all choicest fruits,
henna with nard,
14 nard and saffron, calamus and cinnamon,
with all trees of frankincense,
myrrh and aloes,
with all chief spices—
15 a garden fountain, a well of living water,
and flowing streams from Lebanon.

16 Awake, O north wind,
and come, O south wind!
Blow upon my garden
that its fragrance may be wafted abroad.
Let my beloved come to his garden,
and eat its choicest fruits.

5 I come to my garden, my sister, my bride;
I gather my myrrh with my spice,
I eat my honeycomb with my honey,
I drink my wine with my milk.

Eat, friends, drink,
and be drunk with love.

2 I slept, but my heart was awake.
Listen! my beloved is knocking.
"Open to me, my sister, my love,
my dove, my perfect one;
for my head is wet with dew,
my locks with the drops of the night."
3 I had put off my garment;
how could I put it on again?
I had bathed my feet;
how could I soil them?
4 My beloved thrust his hand into the opening,
and my inmost being yearned for him.
5 I arose to open to my beloved,

*f* Or *Look* *g* Meaning of Heb uncertain

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**4.9**: *My sister, my bride,* characteristic of this section; *sister* is a term of endearment in Egyptian love-poetry; *bride* anticipates the man's intention. **12**: The metaphors of *garden* and *fountain* (see v. 15) designate the life-giving qualities of the woman, and also her fidelity (*locked, sealed*).

**5.1**: The man replies to the woman's invitation (4.16), and an unidentified voice (*Eat, friends*) encourages them in their love.

**5.2–6.3**: **The woman's search.** Two questions (5.9; 6.1) unite this section. **5.2–8**: The woman relates another dream, similar to 3.1–5, but she fails to find her lover.

and my hands dripped with myrrh,
my fingers with liquid myrrh,
upon the handles of the bolt.
6 I opened to my beloved,
but my beloved had turned and was gone.
My soul failed me when he spoke.
I sought him, but did not find him;
I called him, but he gave no answer.
7 Making their rounds in the city
the sentinels found me;
they beat me, they wounded me,
they took away my mantle,
those sentinels of the walls.
8 I adjure you, O daughters of Jerusalem,
if you find my beloved,
tell him this:
I am faint with love.

9 What is your beloved more than another beloved,
O fairest among women?
What is your beloved more than another beloved,
that you thus adjure us?

10 My beloved is all radiant and ruddy,
distinguished among ten thousand.
11 His head is the finest gold;
his locks are wavy,
black as a raven.
12 His eyes are like doves
beside springs of water,
bathed in milk,
fitly set.[h]
13 His cheeks are like beds of spices,
yielding fragrance.
His lips are lilies,
distilling liquid myrrh.
14 His arms are rounded gold,
set with jewels.
His body is ivory work,[h]
encrusted with sapphires.[i]
15 His legs are alabaster columns,
set upon bases of gold.
His appearance is like Lebanon,
choice as the cedars.
16 His speech is most sweet,
and he is altogether desirable.
This is my beloved and this is my friend,
O daughters of Jerusalem.

6 Where has your beloved gone,
O fairest among women?
Which way has your beloved turned,
that we may seek him with you?

2 My beloved has gone down to his garden,
to the beds of spices,
to pasture his flock in the gardens,
and to gather lilies.
3 I am my beloved's and my beloved is mine;
he pastures his flock among the lilies.

4 You are beautiful as Tirzah, my love,
comely as Jerusalem,
terrible as an army with banners.
5 Turn away your eyes from me,
for they overwhelm me!
Your hair is like a flock of goats,
moving down the slopes of Gilead.

*h* Meaning of Heb uncertain *i* Heb *lapis lazuli*

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**5.9–16**: In answer to the query of the daughters she describes his physical charms.
**6.1–3**: When they too wish to seek him, she tells them that he has never really been lost, but has always been with his *garden*, herself.

**6.4–10**: **The man's song of praise.** He praises her captivating beauty (compare 4. 1–3, 9), which is acknowledged even by the royal harem; she is unique (vv. 8– 9). **4**: *Tirzah* was an early capital of the Northern Kingdom; see 1 Kings 15.33.

6 Your teeth are like a flock of ewes,
that have come up from the washing;
all of them bear twins,
and not one among them is bereaved.
7 Your cheeks are like halves of a pomegranate
behind your veil.
8 There are sixty queens and eighty concubines,
and maidens without number.
9 My dove, my perfect one, is the only one,
the darling of her mother,
flawless to her that bore her.
The maidens saw her and called her happy;
the queens and concubines also, and they praised her.
10 "Who is this that looks forth like the dawn,
fair as the moon, bright as the sun,
terrible as an army with banners?"

11 I went down to the nut orchard,
to look at the blossoms of the valley,
to see whether the vines had budded,
whether the pomegranates were in bloom.
12 Before I was aware, my fancy set me
in a chariot beside my prince.[j]

13[k] Return, return, O Shulammite!
Return, return, that we may look upon you.
Why should you look upon the Shulammite,
as upon a dance before two armies?[l]

7 How graceful are your feet in sandals,
O queenly maiden!
Your rounded thighs are like jewels,
the work of a master hand.
2 Your navel is a rounded bowl
that never lacks mixed wine.
Your belly is a heap of wheat,
encircled with lilies.
3 Your two breasts are like two fawns,
twins of a gazelle.
4 Your neck is like an ivory tower.
Your eyes are pools in Heshbon,
by the gate of Bath-rabbim.
Your nose is like a tower of Lebanon,
overlooking Damascus.
5 Your head crowns you like Carmel,
and your flowing locks are like purple;
a king is held captive in the tresses.[m]

6 How fair and pleasant you are,
O loved one, delectable maiden![n]
7 You are stately[o] as a palm tree,
and your breasts are like its clusters.
8 I say I will climb the palm tree
and lay hold of its branches.

*j* Cn: Meaning of Heb uncertain *k* Ch 7.1 in Heb *l* Or *dance of Mahanaim* *m* Meaning of Heb uncertain *n* Syr: Heb *in delights* *o* Heb *This your stature is*

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**6.11–12: The woman visits the garden.** The woman seems to be referring to an encounter in *the nut orchard* with her lover (*my prince*), but the meaning of v. 12 is uncertain.

**6.13–8.4: Praise of the woman and her promise of love.** Unidentified persons want to look at the *Shulammite* (in context this mysterious term designates the woman), but she seems to put them off (6.13b). Another description of her physical charms (see also 4.1–7) is uttered (7.1–6), presumably by the lover, who expresses his passionate desires in vv. 7–9. She responds with a declaration of her love (7.10–8.4), ending with the adjuration to the *daughters* (see 2.6–7).

O may your breasts be like
clusters of the vine,
and the scent of your breath like
apples,
9 and your kisses[p] like the best wine
that goes down[q] smoothly,
gliding over lips and teeth.[r]

10 I am my beloved's,
and his desire is for me.
11 Come, my beloved,
let us go forth into the fields,
and lodge in the villages;
12 let us go out early to the
vineyards,
and see whether the vines have
budded,
whether the grape blossoms have
opened
and the pomegranates are
in bloom.
There I will give you my love.
13 The mandrakes give forth
fragrance,
and over our doors are all
choice fruits,
new as well as old,
which I have laid up for you,
O my beloved.

8 O that you were like a brother
to me,
who nursed at my mother's
breast!
If I met you outside, I would
kiss you,
and no one would despise me.
2 I would lead you and bring you
into the house of my mother,
and into the chamber of the one
who bore me.[s]
I would give you spiced wine
to drink,
the juice of my pomegranates.
3 O that his left hand were under
my head,
and that his right hand
embraced me!
4 I adjure you, O daughters of
Jerusalem,
do not stir up or awaken love
until it is ready!

5 Who is that coming up from the
wilderness,
leaning upon her beloved?

Under the apple tree I awakened
you.
There your mother was in labor
with you;
there she who bore you was in
labor.

6 Set me as a seal upon your heart,
as a seal upon your arm;
for love is strong as death,
passion fierce as the grave.
Its flashes are flashes of fire,
a raging flame.
7 Many waters cannot quench love,
neither can floods drown it.
If one offered for love
all the wealth of one's house,
it would be utterly scorned.

8 We have a little sister,
and she has no breasts.
What shall we do for our sister,
on the day when she is
spoken for?
9 If she is a wall,
we will build upon her a
battlement of silver;
but if she is a door,
we will enclose her with boards
of cedar.
10 I was a wall,

*p* Heb *palate* *q* Heb *down for my lover*
*r* Gk Syr Vg: Heb *lips of sleepers* *s* Gk Syr: Heb *my mother; she* (or *you*) *will teach me*

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**8.5–14: The lovers' vows and their final exchange.** This consists of separate units: a reference to a past encounter (v. 5); the stirring words about the power of *love* (vv. 6–7); the reminiscence by the woman of the futile concern of her brothers (vv. 8–10; compare 1.6); a boast concerning the *vineyard*, i.e. the woman, more valuable than Solomon's harem (vv. 11–12); a final exchange between the lovers (vv. 13–14, echoing 2.14, 17).

and my breasts were like
towers;
then I was in his eyes
as one who brings[t] peace.
11 Solomon had a vineyard at
Baal-hamon;
he entrusted the vineyard to
keepers;
each one was to bring for its
fruit a thousand pieces of
silver.
12 My vineyard, my very own, is
for myself;
you, O Solomon, may have the
thousand,
and the keepers of the fruit two
hundred!

13 O you who dwell in the gardens,
my companions are listening for
your voice;
let me hear it.

14 Make haste, my beloved,
and be like a gazelle
or a young stag
upon the mountains of spices!

*t* Or *finds*

# *The Prophetical Books*

"The Prophets" constitutes the second part of the Hebrew Scriptures, following after the Torah ("law" or "teaching"). These two elements of the canon of sacred writings together constitute "the law and the prophets." In the arrangement of the Hebrew Scriptures, however, "the Prophets" includes the two sections of "Former Prophets" (Joshua, Judges, Samuel, and Kings) and "Latter Prophets" (Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, and the Twelve). See the "Introduction to the Old Testament" (pp. xxxi–xxxiii OT) and the essay on "The Historical Books" (pp. 267–269 OT) for discussion of the Former Prophets and of the formation of the different collections of the Hebrew Scriptures. The book of Daniel, though grouped in English Bibles with the prophets, is in the Hebrew Scriptures part of the third division of "the Writings." In addition, it contains elements of a different type from the books of classic prophecy, namely apocalyptic; see the essays on "The Poetical Books or 'Writings' " (pp. 623–624 OT) and on "Apocalyptic Literature" (pp. 362–363 NT) for further discussion of Daniel. The following explication is concerned primarily with the collections of prophetic material that in the Hebrew Scriptures are called the Latter Prophets.

This prophetic canon stands in a tense relation to the Torah, sometimes complementing its teaching, and sometimes protesting against it. Whereas the Torah provides the foundation for biblical faith, the prophetic materials mark the move into the tensions of present-tense faith, and into an anticipation of a future outworking of God's powerful purpose. Thus the prophetic materials tilt the horizon of biblical faith towards a yet-unfulfilled future.

## I. THE FORMATION OF THE PROPHETIC BOOKS

§1. There is no doubt that behind the prophetic literature were powerful, generative personalities called prophets. About some of the prophets (as, for instance, Jeremiah), we know a great deal. About many others we know nothing. We can conclude that they were, over a long period of time, passionate, extraordinary persons who refused a domesticated view of reality, and who dared to voice their peculiar discernment of their life among God's people under God's rule. They are a diverse lot and regularly mediate their faith and their urgings through their own lives and their own experiences. In various ways they are skillful users of language, having the capacity to shape perception of public reality in a rich variety of images and metaphors. Because they are imaginative and sometimes irreverent in their utterances, the speech of the prophets is daring and unpredictable, and often confronts and even affronts the present-day reader, much as it would have done to the original hearers. The prophets voice a restlessness about social reality that bespeaks the restless rule of God, and the opening of social reality for God's new possibilities.

These are no ordinary persons, though it is difficult to understand the roots of their extraordinariness. They reflect a peculiar psychodynamic that resists any easy explanation. Although they are highly individualized, they are persons who were capable of transcending themselves, in order to be available for a purpose larger than their own, and therefore to voice a message other than their own. As "messengers," the prophets are understood to be vehicles and channels for a word other than their own. They claimed to be and were perceived to be channels for the sovereign speech of God, albeit expressed through their own personal experiences.

The prophets are generative personalities. They did not, however, operate alone or in a social vacuum. They were deeply engaged in the socio-economic, political issues of their day. Moreover, they are regularly partisan figures, taking up pronounced and often unpopular positions in the conflicts of their communities. Thus they were partisan advocates for various social policies and social interests, and no doubt had important allies and supporters, as well as vigorous adversaries. Consequently, prophetic religion in this literary corpus is no easy or innocent enterprise, but demands a theological passion that carries with it determined and partisan sociopolitical advocacy. The prophets characteristically advocate just social relations and pure worship of God that together constitute an alternative to dominant modes of social relations and religion.

The prophets do not simply mirror the world around them; rather they exercise enormous imagination both in their discernment and in their articulation. They see what others do not see, and they dare to utter what others would not dare to utter. The prophets are not simply social analysts who issue moral and religious urgings; they are also artists who redescribe reality and who construe social experience in new and venturesome categories. For that reason much of the prophetic speech is couched in images and metaphors that require imaginative reception by the hearers.

§2. These generative personalities who evidence a remarkable extraordinariness, who voice partisan positions, and who redescribe reality in daring speech leave behind them a powerful and enduring influence. On the one hand, their powerful influence brings about the preservation of their words and the remembrance of their acts. Around these awesome figures there must have been loyal friends, allies, and disciples who remembered and cherished their words and who regarded them as having enduring authority and pertinence. It is this residue of remembered words that became the core of the several prophetic books.

On the other hand, the prophets not only left their words behind them; they also left behind a vision of reality that continued to inform and empower others after them. These others continued the rhetorical, interpretive tradition of the generative personalities, so that in the wake of the prophetic person, the prophetic tradition continued with new prophetic speech that was faithful to and congruent with the originary personality. Thus not all the speech in a prophetic book comes from the prophetic personality, but much of it comes from the ongoing interpretive tradition derived from that personality. The derivative prophetic tradition continues to be powerful and passionate, and continues to claim the authority of the original person. Consequently, all the words in a collection, even those from a derivative tradition, are ascribed to the prophet himself.

As the prophetic books now stand, they are not "authored" (in any modern sense) by the prophetic personality, but are shaped through a sustained, elongated editorial process by many hands who selected materials, arranged and juxtaposed materials to create a literary corpus. By such editorial work, oral speech became literary deposit. Through this process it is clear that we are no longer dealing with a prophetic person, but the person has now been superseded by the

prophetic book, which now claims authority. The various prophetic books stand in various relations to the prophetic personalities behind them.

§3. The words of the prophetic personality have become a prophetic book through a traditioning process (see "Modern Approaches to Biblical Study," pp. 388–392). In the end, prophetic books have come to be regarded as "holy books," i.e. books of sacred scripture having enduring authority for a religious community. Clearly the initial prophetic person did not intend to create scripture, but scripture has resulted through the ongoing theological reflection of the religious community. On the one hand, this process of making a holy text (i.e. canonization) consists in the recognition that the literature has ongoing normative authority. The community finds the literature to be enduringly true. That is, words uttered in one context are found to be compelling and powerful in many subsequent contexts, and are therefore adjudged to be "oracles of God." On the other hand, this process of shaping the prophetic book is not done around literary motifs or historical events, but around theological themes and convictions. Thus the literature, begun with a concrete personality, in the end is thematized in a more or less intentional way around governing theological convictions of the community. The various pieces of rhetoric are pressed into the service of the theological community, which both adapts to its own norms and finds its norms changed by them. Characteristically the prophetic books are thematized around the notion of God's passionate purpose, God's severe judgment, and God's enduring promise. The prophet urges that the listening community come to terms with God's powerful identity that cannot be overridden or nullified.

## II. THEMES OF PROPHETIC FAITH

We may identify three central aspects of the theological content of the prophetic books.

§1. The prophetic books are rooted in an older tradition of faith. The prophets and the ongoing prophetic tradition do not work *de novo,* but proceed from a remembered theological and textual tradition. Canonically, as the prophets come after the Torah, we may say that the prophets operate from the affirmations and convictions of the Torah. As the Bible is now put together, there is no doubt that the teaching of the prophetic books depends upon the Torah.

That general rootage, however, is enormously variegated, given the diversity of prophetic traditions. We may identify several dominant traditions that lie behind the prophets. First, the covenant tradition of Moses contributes decisively to the dominant patterns and structures of prophetic proclamation. This contribution includes not only the saving tradition of the exodus, which is variously taken up by the prophets, but also the ethical tradition of command, and the liturgical practice of covenant blessing and covenant curse.

Second, the prophets are variously informed by the priestly traditions of ancient Israel, with their concern for the reality of sin and guilt, right sacrifice, and the urgency of purification and cleanness. There is a modern propensity to contrast priestly and prophetic; against that propensity, however, it is clear that all of these traditions are present in and active for the prophets.

Third, the sapiential (wisdom) tradition reflected in the book of Proverbs is operative in the prophets. This tradition is focused on the disciplined discernment of life and especially of nonhuman life. The sapiential tradition is evident in the prophets through a variety of images and analogies held together by an affirmation of the coherence of creation under the rule of God.

§2. The prophets have a passionate and determined conviction about the future of their people. They are not, however, prognosticators, predictors, or fortune-tellers. Rather, they are convinced that the world is morally coherent and that God's purposes for the future of the world

are powerful and will prevail. Moreover, the prophets, because they are rooted in the trusted traditions just identified, believe that God's intention for the future is indeed identifiable and can be known. The future is not a blind fate, nor a capricious intervention, nor an inscrutable mystery. The future can be reliably expected, given who God is and what God has willed and promised. When God's intention for the world is mocked or dismissed through arrogant practice and policy, trouble (judgment) is sure to come in the future. Beyond that sure trouble, however, God's resilient intention for well-being (i.e. fertility, peace, justice, righteousness, and joy) is also sure and will be established. The future is known and certain because the character of God is known and reliable.

§3. Situated between the several old, remembered traditions and the sure expectations for the future, the prophets are primarily advocates concerned for present-tense social relations and institutional practices and policies. They are convinced that God holds a righteous purpose for the present that grows out of God's old promises and commands that cannot be resisted. On the one hand, the present-tense life of the community must attend to the moral coherence of all of creation and must live (if it is to live at all) in terms of that moral coherence rooted in God's rule. On the other hand, the prophets are attentive to social pathologies and disorders that create injustice, pain, and suffering, and that lead to the pathos and absence of God. Thus the prophets, rooted in a past and open to God's future, believe that the present moment of life is a critical moment when life-and-death decisions must be made that bespeak loyalty to God and that impinge upon public power and purpose.

The prophetic books provide a resource and ground from which a passionate insistence is voiced in the present and a passionate advocacy is sounded. That insistence and advocacy are daring and radical, frequently subversive of all that is settled. While the books of the prophets as bodies of literature are finished and closed, their powerful voices continue to generate energy and courage and hope for obedience to God, obedience that is often costly and always life-giving.

# *Isaiah*

The prophet Isaiah, the son of Amoz, proclaimed his message to Judah and Jerusalem from 742 until 701 B.C. (some believe until 687 B.C.), that critical period in which the Northern Kingdom was annexed to the Assyrian empire (2 Kings ch 17) while Judah lived uneasily in its shadow as a tributary (2 Chr 28.21). Nothing is known about the early life of the prophet, though it has been conjectured from certain aspects of his message and from Isa 6.1–8 that he may have been a priest.

Only chs 1–39 can be assigned to Isaiah's time, and even they contain later materials (see notes); it is generally accepted that chs 40–66 come from the time of Cyrus of Persia (539 B.C.) and later, as shown by the differences in historical background, literary style, and theological emphases. Chapters 1–39 begin with Isaiah's memoirs (1.1–12.6); they continue with oracles against foreign and domestic enemies (13.1–23.18), followed by the post-exilic "Isaiah Apocalypse" (24.1–27.13). Oracles generally concerned with Judah's intrigue with Egypt, its implications and consequences (28.1–32.20), are followed by a short collection of post-exilic eschatological oracles (33.1–35.10). An historical appendix (36.1–39.8) completes chs 1–39, in which there are other additions and some rearranging of oracles by post-exilic editors.

In the tradition of Amos, Hosea, and Micah, contemporaries whose work he seems to know, Isaiah attacks social injustice as that which is most indicative of Judah's tenuous relationship with God. He exhorts his hearers to place their confidence in their omnipotent God and to lead such public and private lives as manifest this. Thus justice and righteousness, teaching and word, and assurance of divine blessing upon the faithful and punishment upon the faithless are recurrent themes in his message from the Holy One of Israel to a proud and stubborn people.

Chapters 40–66, commonly called Second Isaiah (or Second and Third Isaiah), originated immediately before the fall of Babylon (October 29, 539 B.C.) to the armies of Cyrus, king of Persia, and during the generation following. The anonymous author of the first bipartite section (chs 40–55 [40–48; 49–55]) exults in joyful anticipation of exiled Judah's restoration to Palestine, for which Cyrus is God's precipitating agent (44.28). Second Isaiah emphasizes the significance of historical events in God's plan, a plan that extends from creation to redemption—and beyond. Blindness to God's way is a cardinal sin in Second Isaiah. The author's interest in cosmogony was unique up to his time; it is used to emphasize the concept of God as exclusive creator and lord of all, whose ultimate glorious manifestation will be accompanied by a new creation. A noteworthy feature of his prophecy is the songs of the Servant (see 42.1–4 n.).

This eschatological hope is shared with the author, or authors, of the second bipartite section (chs 56–66 [56–59 and 63–66; 60–62]). The contents of this section (sometimes called Third Isaiah) suggest a date between 530 and 510 B.C., perhaps contemporary with Haggai and Zechariah (520–518); chapters 60–62 may be later. Other concepts are also shared. Jacob and Israel have primarily religious, albeit national, significance. God's concern for the exiles in chs 40–55 is paralleled by the comforting assurance to Zion's afflicted in chs 56–66. But the direct "I—thou" relationship of Second Isaiah gives way to a more transcendent concept. In chs 56–66 one is confronted by the sobering realities of life in the restored community. The Servant-motif vanishes, and there is growing emphasis on cultic matters.

Together these theologically significant sections present a moving vision of the assured hope of God's people in a world whose times are in God's hands.

***The wickedness of Judah***

1 The vision of Isaiah son of Amoz, which he saw concerning Judah and Jerusalem in the days of Uzziah, Jotham, Ahaz, and Hezekiah, kings of Judah.

2 Hear, O heavens, and listen,
O earth;
for the LORD has spoken:
I reared children and brought them up,
but they have rebelled against me.
3 The ox knows its owner,
and the donkey its master's crib;
but Israel does not know,
my people do not understand.

4 Ah, sinful nation,
people laden with iniquity,
offspring who do evil,
children who deal corruptly,
who have forsaken the LORD,
who have despised the Holy One of Israel,
who are utterly estranged!

5 Why do you seek further beatings?
Why do you continue to rebel?
The whole head is sick,
and the whole heart faint.
6 From the sole of the foot even to the head,
there is no soundness in it,
but bruises and sores
and bleeding wounds;
they have not been drained, or bound up,
or softened with oil.

7 Your country lies desolate,
your cities are burned with fire;
in your very presence
aliens devour your land;
it is desolate, as overthrown by foreigners.
8 And daughter Zion is left
like a booth in a vineyard,
like a shelter in a cucumber field,
like a besieged city.
9 If the LORD of hosts
had not left us a few survivors,
we would have been like Sodom,
and become like Gomorrah.

10 Hear the word of the LORD,
you rulers of Sodom!
Listen to the teaching of our God,
you people of Gomorrah!
11 What to me is the multitude of your sacrifices?
says the LORD;
I have had enough of burnt offerings of rams
and the fat of fed beasts;
I do not delight in the blood of bulls,
or of lambs, or of goats.

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**1.1–5.24: Oracles against rebellious Judah. 1.1: Superscription.** *Vision of Isaiah* (6.1–13; Jer ch 1; Ezek chs 1–3) identifies Isa chs 1–39 as God's message to Judah through the prophet. The name *Isaiah* means "The LORD [Yahweh] gives salvation." The latter part of the verse beginning with "in the days of" may be an editorial expansion.

**1.2–31: First series of oracles,** serving as a kind of prologue. **2–3:** Poetic exhortation reminiscent of God's address to the heavenly host in 40.1–2. *Children,* compare Jer 3.19–22. The biblical word *know* implies a profound, identifying comprehension of the right relationship with God; it is a recurring prophetic theme (Jer 1.5; Hos 2.20; 4.1, 6; 5.4).

**1.4–9:** An appeal to a people heedless of the significance of Judah's devastation by Tiglath-Pileser III (734–733 B.C.; 7.1–2) or Sennacherib (701 B.C.; 36.1) and Jerusalem's isolation. **4:** Note the poetic parallelism: *nation, people; offspring, children.* The expression, *Holy One of Israel* (5.19, 24; 10.20; 12.6; 17.7; 29.19; 30.11, 12, 15; 37.23), emphasizes God's unapproachable separateness, which he has bridged by his gracious election of Israel as his people (Hos 8.1; Jer 3.20).

**1.10–20:** God's pronouncement concerning Judah's religious superficiality (Am 5.21–24; Jer 6.20). Judah may repent and return (Jer 7.5–7); the alternative is destruction (Jer 7.22–34). **10:** *Teaching,* the Hebrew word is "torah," which is frequently translated "law." On *Sodom* and *Gomorrah* see Gen 18.16–19.28; Jer 23.14; Ezek 16.46–58. **14:** *My soul,* a Hebrew idiom which in this context means "I" (compare Lev 26.11, 30). **16–17:** Compare Ex 22.21, 22; Am 5.6–7. **18:** *Argue,* as one argues a case before a judge (Job

12 When you come to appear
before me,[a]
who asked this from your hand?
Trample my courts no more;
13 bringing offerings is futile;
incense is an abomination to
me.
New moon and sabbath and
calling of convocation—
I cannot endure solemn
assemblies with iniquity.
14 Your new moons and your
appointed festivals
my soul hates;
they have become a burden to me,
I am weary of bearing them.
15 When you stretch out your hands,
I will hide my eyes from you;
even though you make many
prayers,
I will not listen;
your hands are full of blood.
16 Wash yourselves; make yourselves
clean;
remove the evil of your doings
from before my eyes;
cease to do evil,
17 learn to do good;
seek justice,
rescue the oppressed,
defend the orphan,
plead for the widow.

18 Come now, let us argue it out,
says the LORD:
though your sins are like scarlet,
they shall be like snow;
though they are red like crimson,
they shall become like wool.
19 If you are willing and obedient,
you shall eat the good of the
land;
20 but if you refuse and rebel,
you shall be devoured by the
sword;
for the mouth of the LORD has
spoken.

21 How the faithful city
has become a whore!
She that was full of justice,
righteousness lodged in her—
but now murderers!
22 Your silver has become dross,
your wine is mixed with water.
23 Your princes are rebels
and companions of thieves.
Everyone loves a bribe
and runs after gifts.
They do not defend the orphan,
and the widow's cause does not
come before them.

24 Therefore says the Sovereign, the
LORD of hosts, the Mighty
One of Israel:
Ah, I will pour out my wrath on
my enemies,
and avenge myself on my foes!
25 I will turn my hand against you;
I will smelt away your dross as
with lye
and remove all your alloy.
26 And I will restore your judges as
at the first,
and your counselors as at the
beginning.
Afterward you shall be called the
city of righteousness,
the faithful city.

27 Zion shall be redeemed by justice,
and those in her who repent, by
righteousness.
28 But rebels and sinners shall be
destroyed together,
and those who forsake the LORD
shall be consumed.

*a* Or *see my face*

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23.7). *Scarlet* for wickedness (garments of Babylon, Rev 17.4); *like snow,* white for purity (Rev 19.8).

**1.21–23**: Lamentation over Jerusalem. **21**: *Whore,* Jer 3.6–10; Ezek chs 16 and 23. *Justice* and *righteousness* express Isaiah's ideal for the people of God. **24**: *Mighty One of Israel* recalls Israel's patriarchal traditions (49.26; Gen 49.24; Ps 132.2, 5). **25**: *As with lye,* or "thoroughly." **26**: Isaiah frequently uses symbolic names (7.14; 8.1; 9.6; see also Jer 33.16; Ezek 48.35 n.). There will be a new creation; compare Am 9.11; Rev 3.12; 21.1–4.

29 For you shall be ashamed of the oaks
in which you delighted;
and you shall blush for the gardens
that you have chosen.
30 For you shall be like an oak
whose leaf withers,
and like a garden without water.
31 The strong shall become like tinder,
and their work[b] like a spark;
they and their work shall burn together,
with no one to quench them.

2 The word that Isaiah son of Amoz saw concerning Judah and Jerusalem.

2 In days to come
the mountain of the LORD's house
shall be established as the highest of the mountains,
and shall be raised above the hills;
all the nations shall stream to it.
3 Many peoples shall come and say,
"Come, let us go up to the mountain of the LORD,
to the house of the God of Jacob;
that he may teach us his ways
and that we may walk in his paths."
For out of Zion shall go forth instruction,
and the word of the LORD from Jerusalem.
4 He shall judge between the nations,
and shall arbitrate for many peoples;
they shall beat their swords into plowshares,
and their spears into pruning hooks;
nation shall not lift up sword against nation,
neither shall they learn war any more.

5 O house of Jacob,
come, let us walk
in the light of the LORD!
6 For you have forsaken the ways of[c] your people,
O house of Jacob.
Indeed they are full of diviners[d] from the east
and of soothsayers like the Philistines,
and they clasp hands with foreigners.
7 Their land is filled with silver and gold,
and there is no end to their treasures;
their land is filled with horses,
and there is no end to their chariots.
8 Their land is filled with idols;

*b* Or *its makers* *c* Heb lacks *the ways of*
*d* Cn: Heb lacks *of diviners*

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**1.29–31**: Judah is faithless; the comparison is based on one of Isaiah's rare references to pagan religious practices; compare 57.5; Jer 2.27; Ezek 6.1–14.

**2.1**: **Second superscription,** perhaps for chs 2–4. *Word* connotes "message" (Jer 7.1; 11.1). **2–5**: **The new age,** involving the elevation of Zion, the acknowledgment of the nations, and the age of peace. This oracle (vv. 2–4) is also found in Mic 4.1–4. **3**: *Instruction,* i.e. "teaching" (1.10). **4**: The age of peace will follow the judgment of the LORD (compare 5.25; 30.27–28). **5**: Compare v. 3, paraphrased in Mic 4.5.

**2.6–22**: **The day of the LORD.** This is probably to be taken as three stanzas, vv. 6–11, 12–17, 18–22. The first two have a similar conclusion (compare vv. 11, 17), and it is suggested that the third ended similarly, for the present v. 22 is missing in the Septuagint and is grammatically corrupt. **6–11**: Judgment on idolatry. **6**: *Diviners* were forbidden in Israel (Ex 22.18; Lev 20.27; Deut 18.10–11; compare 8.19; 1 Sam 28.8–25; Ezek 13.9). The situation fits Uzziah's reign (2 Kings 15.1–7; 2 Chr ch 26). **7**: Judah's prosperity (Deut 17.16–17; 1 Kings 10.14–29). **11**: *In that day,* the day of the LORD, in which God judges

they bow down to the work of their hands,
to what their own fingers have made.
9 And so people are humbled,
and everyone is brought low—
do not forgive them!
10 Enter into the rock,
and hide in the dust
from the terror of the LORD,
and from the glory of his majesty.
11 The haughty eyes of people shall be brought low,
and the pride of everyone shall be humbled;
and the LORD alone will be exalted on that day.
12 For the LORD of hosts has a day
against all that is proud and lofty,
against all that is lifted up and high;[e]
13 against all the cedars of Lebanon, lofty and lifted up;
and against all the oaks of Bashan;
14 against all the high mountains,
and against all the lofty hills;
15 against every high tower,
and against every fortified wall;
16 against all the ships of Tarshish,
and against all the beautiful craft.[f]
17 The haughtiness of people shall be humbled,
and the pride of everyone shall be brought low;
and the LORD alone will be exalted on that day.
18 The idols shall utterly pass away.
19 Enter the caves of the rocks
and the holes of the ground,
from the terror of the LORD,
and from the glory of his majesty,
when he rises to terrify the earth.
20 On that day people will throw away
to the moles and to the bats
their idols of silver and their idols of gold,
which they made for themselves to worship,
21 to enter the caverns of the rocks
and the clefts in the crags,
from the terror of the LORD,
and from the glory of his majesty,
when he rises to terrify the earth.
22 Turn away from mortals,
who have only breath in their nostrils,
for of what account are they?

3 For now the Sovereign, the LORD of hosts,
is taking away from Jerusalem and from Judah
support and staff—
all support of bread,
and all support of water—
2 warrior and soldier,
judge and prophet,
diviner and elder,
3 captain of fifty
and dignitary,
counselor and skillful magician
and expert enchanter.
4 And I will make boys their princes,
and babes shall rule over them.
5 The people will be oppressed,
everyone by another

*e* Cn Compare Gk: Heb *low* *f* Compare Gk: Meaning of Heb uncertain

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his enemies and manifests his glory, is a recurring prophetic theme (13.6; Am 5.18–20; Jer 17.16–18; Ezek 30.3; Joel 1.15).

**2.12–17**: Pride and punishment. **13**: *Lebanon, Bashan,* Ezek 27.5–6; Jer 22.20. **16**: *Ships of Tarshish,* the phrase may mean "refinery fleet" (see 1 Kings 10.22 n.; Jer 10.9 n.).

**2.18–22**: Judgment on idolatry. **19**: The innumerable *caves* in Palestine's limestone hills are age-old places of refuge.

**3.1–15**: **Anarchy in Jerusalem. 1–7**: Without leaders, society breaks down. **1**: *Support and staff,* everything which supports life, including food and drink (economic resources), and perhaps also the functionaries in vv. 2–3. **2–3**: Offices deemed necessary for

and everyone by a neighbor;
the youth will be insolent to the elder,
and the base to the honorable.

6 Someone will even seize a relative, a member of the clan, saying,
"You have a cloak;
you shall be our leader,
and this heap of ruins
shall be under your rule."
7 But the other will cry out on that day, saying,
"I will not be a healer;
in my house there is neither bread nor cloak;
you shall not make me leader of the people."
8 For Jerusalem has stumbled
and Judah has fallen,
because their speech and their deeds are against the LORD,
defying his glorious presence.

9 The look on their faces bears witness against them;
they proclaim their sin like Sodom,
they do not hide it.
Woe to them!
For they have brought evil on themselves.
10 Tell the innocent how fortunate they are,
for they shall eat the fruit of their labors.
11 Woe to the guilty! How unfortunate they are,
for what their hands have done shall be done to them.
12 My people—children are their oppressors,
and women rule over them.
O my people, your leaders mislead you,
and confuse the course of your paths.

13 The LORD rises to argue his case;
he stands to judge the peoples.
14 The LORD enters into judgment with the elders and princes of his people:
It is you who have devoured the vineyard;
the spoil of the poor is in your houses.
15 What do you mean by crushing my people,
by grinding the face of the poor? says the Lord GOD of hosts.

16 The LORD said:
Because the daughters of Zion are haughty
and walk with outstretched necks,
glancing wantonly with their eyes,
mincing along as they go,
tinkling with their feet;
17 the Lord will afflict with scabs
the heads of the daughters of Zion,
and the LORD will lay bare their secret parts.

18 In that day the Lord will take away the finery of the anklets, the headbands, and the crescents; 19 the pendants, the bracelets, and the scarfs; 20 the headdresses, the armlets, the sashes, the perfume boxes, and the amulets; 21 the signet rings and nose rings; 22 the festal robes, the mantles, the cloaks, and the handbags; 23 the garments of gauze, the linen garments, the turbans, and the veils.
24 Instead of perfume there will be a stench;

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the continuity and stability of the state. **4**: The inexperienced and naive will rule. **5–6**: Civil unrest will become open violence.

**3.8–12**: A commentary on vv. 1–7. Judah's brazen sinfulness and rejection of God's leadership has ruined the people.

**3.13–15**: God will judge the corrupt judges. *Elders,* primary administrators of justice (Ex 19.7; Josh 20.4; Deut 21.19–21). *Princes,* royal appointees (1 Kings 4.2; 2 Kings 10.1; Jer 34.19). *Vineyard,* see 5.1–7.

**3.16–4.1**: **The humiliation of Jerusalem's women** (Am 4.1–3). **3.18–24**: Detailed expansion of v. 17. **25–4.1**: War's decima-

and instead of a sash, a rope;
and instead of well-set hair,
baldness;
and instead of a rich robe, a
binding of sackcloth;
instead of beauty, shame.[g]
25 Your men shall fall by the sword
and your warriors in battle.
26 And her gates shall lament and
mourn;
ravaged, she shall sit upon the
ground.

4 Seven women shall take hold of one
man in that day, saying,
"We will eat our own bread and
wear our own clothes;
just let us be called by your name;
take away our disgrace."

2 On that day the branch of the LORD shall be beautiful and glorious, and the fruit of the land shall be the pride and glory of the survivors of Israel. 3 Whoever is left in Zion and remains in Jerusalem will be called holy, everyone who has been recorded for life in Jerusalem, 4 once the Lord has washed away the filth of the daughters of Zion and cleansed the bloodstains of Jerusalem from its midst by a spirit of judgment and by a spirit of burning. 5 Then the LORD will create over the whole site of Mount Zion and over its places of assembly a cloud by day and smoke and the shining of a flaming fire by night. Indeed over all the glory there will be a canopy. 6 It will serve as a pavilion, a shade by day from the heat, and a refuge and a shelter from the storm and rain.

5 Let me sing for my beloved
my love-song concerning his
vineyard:
My beloved had a vineyard
on a very fertile hill.
2 He dug it and cleared it of stones,
and planted it with choice vines;
he built a watchtower in the midst
of it,
and hewed out a wine vat in it;
he expected it to yield grapes,
but it yielded wild grapes.

3 And now, inhabitants of Jerusalem
and people of Judah,
judge between me
and my vineyard.
4 What more was there to do for
my vineyard
that I have not done in it?
When I expected it to yield grapes,
why did it yield wild grapes?

5 And now I will tell you
what I will do to my vineyard.
I will remove its hedge,
and it shall be devoured;
I will break down its wall,
and it shall be trampled down.
6 I will make it a waste;
it shall not be pruned or hoed,

[g] Q Ms: MT lacks *shame*

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tion of the male population forces the women to resort to desperate measures to preserve themselves and their self-respect. *Our disgrace* summarizes 3.16–4.1.

**4.2–6: Jerusalem's restoration.** **2**: *Branch,* the righteous remnant (3.10; compare the Messiah as Branch in 11.1; Jer 23.5); *fruit of the land,* a "return to paradise." **3**: *Recorded for life,* compare Ex 32.32; Mal 3.16; Dan 12.1; Rev 20.12, 15. **5**: *Smoke* and *flaming fire,* the signs of God's presence among his people at the Exodus (Ex 13.21–22; 40.34–38).

**5.1–7: Song of the vineyard** (Hos 10.1; Jer 2.21; Ezek 19.10–14), an allegory. This unique didactic poem may have been composed for a celebration of the festival of booths during Jotham's reign, the prophet imitating a vintage festival song. **1a**: Introduction to the poem. **2**: *Choice vines,* the Hebrew word ("soreq") means either red grapes, or grapes native to the valley of Sorek, west of Jerusalem.

**5.3–4** Judah's only possible answer would be judgment against the vineyard. Judah is asked to pass judgment on herself, much as Nathan through a parable had David pass judgment on himself (2 Sam 12.1–12). **7**: *Justice,* the faithful application of God's will to daily living. *Righteousness,* the living, dynamic relationship between the nation and God wherein the nation is spiritually and morally acceptable to God (1.27; 9.7; 16.5; 28.17).

and it shall be overgrown with
briers and thorns;
I will also command the clouds
that they rain no rain upon it.

7 For the vineyard of the LORD of hosts
is the house of Israel,
and the people of Judah
are his pleasant planting;
he expected justice,
but saw bloodshed;
righteousness,
but heard a cry!

8 Ah, you who join house to house,
who add field to field,
until there is room for no one but you,
and you are left to live alone
in the midst of the land!

9 The LORD of hosts has sworn in my hearing:
Surely many houses shall be desolate,
large and beautiful houses,
without inhabitant.

10 For ten acres of vineyard shall yield but one bath,
and a homer of seed shall yield a mere ephah.[h]

11 Ah, you who rise early in the morning
in pursuit of strong drink,
who linger in the evening
to be inflamed by wine,

12 whose feasts consist of lyre and harp,
tambourine and flute and wine,
but who do not regard the deeds of the LORD,
or see the work of his hands!

13 Therefore my people go into exile without knowledge;
their nobles are dying of hunger,
and their multitude is parched with thirst.

14 Therefore Sheol has enlarged its appetite
and opened its mouth beyond measure;
the nobility of Jerusalem[i] and her multitude go down,
her throng and all who exult in her.

15 People are bowed down, everyone is brought low,
and the eyes of the haughty are humbled.

16 But the LORD of hosts is exalted by justice,
and the Holy God shows himself holy by righteousness.

17 Then the lambs shall graze as in their pasture,
fatlings and kids[j] shall feed among the ruins.

18 Ah, you who drag iniquity along with cords of falsehood,
who drag sin along as with cart ropes,

19 who say, "Let him make haste,
let him speed his work
that we may see it;
let the plan of the Holy One of Israel hasten to fulfillment,
that we may know it!"

*h* The Heb *bath*, *homer*, and *ephah* are measures of quantity
*i* Heb *her nobility*
*j* Cn Compare Gk: Heb *aliens*

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Righteousness and justice are naturally coupled (1.21) and grow out of the covenant relationship, the existence of which is assumed (Ex chs 19–20). *A cry*, from the oppressed.

**5.8–24a: Six reproaches** (vv. 8, 11, 18, 20, 21, 22; perhaps 10.1–4 is a seventh). Compare Am 5.7, 18; 6.1; Jer 22.13. **8–10:** Against covetousness (Mic 2.1–5, 8–9; Ex 20.17). *Bath*, about 6 U.S. gallons; *homer*, 6.5 bushels (see Ezek 45.11 n.); *ephah*, about two-thirds of a bushel.

**5.11–12:** Against carousing (Am 6.4–6). **13–17:** *Knowledge*, compare *know*, 1.3. The severity of Judah's punishment will require the enlargement of *Sheol* (the underworld, 14.9–18). **16:** In all he does, God is just and right.

**5.18–19:** Against mocking God. **20:**

20 Ah, you who call evil good
and good evil,
who put darkness for light
and light for darkness,
who put bitter for sweet
and sweet for bitter!
21 Ah, you who are wise in your
own eyes,
and shrewd in your own sight!
22 Ah, you who are heroes in
drinking wine
and valiant at mixing drink,
23 who acquit the guilty for a bribe,
and deprive the innocent of their
rights!
24 Therefore, as the tongue of fire
devours the stubble,
and as dry grass sinks down in
the flame,
so their root will become rotten,
and their blossom go up like
dust;
for they have rejected the
instruction of the LORD
of hosts,
and have despised the word of
the Holy One of Israel.

25 Therefore the anger of the LORD
was kindled against his
people,
and he stretched out his hand
against them and struck
them;
the mountains quaked,
and their corpses were like refuse
in the streets.
For all this his anger has not
turned away,
and his hand is stretched
out still.

26 He will raise a signal for a nation
far away,
and whistle for a people at the
ends of the earth;
Here they come, swiftly, speedily!
27 None of them is weary, none
stumbles,
none slumbers or sleeps,
not a loincloth is loose,
not a sandal-thong broken;
28 their arrows are sharp,
all their bows bent,
their horses' hoofs seem like flint,
and their wheels like the
whirlwind.
29 Their roaring is like a lion,
like young lions they roar;
they growl and seize their prey,
they carry it off, and no one
can rescue.
30 They will roar over it on that day,
like the roaring of the sea.
And if one look to the land—
only darkness and distress;
and the light grows dark with
clouds.

6 In the year that King Uzziah died, I saw the Lord sitting on a throne, high and lofty; and the hem of his robe filled the temple. 2 Seraphs were in attendance above him; each had six wings: with two they covered their faces, and with two they covered their feet, and with two they flew. 3 And one called to another and said:

"Holy, holy, holy is the LORD of
hosts;
the whole earth is full of his
glory."

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Against moral depravity (32.5; Prov 17.15). **21**: Against conceit. **22–23**: Against bravado and bribery.

**5.24b–30**: **A judgment.** These verses are probably displaced; for v. 25b compare 9.12b, 17b, 21b, 10.4b (see 9.8–10.4 n.). *Instruction,* here also in the sense of "teaching" (see 2.3 n.). The Assyrians (*a nation far away;* Jer 5.15, referring to Babylon) will be the executors of God's judgment.

**6.1–13**: **The call of Isaiah.** God's appearance is described in the setting of the Jerusalem temple (compare the description of the enthroned deity in 1 Kings 22.19–23; Ezek 1.4–2.1). **1**: *Year,* 742 B.C. **2**: *Seraphs,* possibly griffin-like creatures; compare the cherubim, also associated with the glory of the LORD (Ezek ch 1). **3**: Thrice-*holy* for emphasis (Jer 7.4). **5**: Before the holy God, a sinful person cannot stand (Ex 33.18–20).

4 The pivots[k] on the thresholds shook at
the voices of those who called, and the
house filled with smoke. 5 And I said:
"Woe is me! I am lost, for I am a man of
unclean lips, and I live among a people of
unclean lips; yet my eyes have seen the
King, the LORD of hosts!"

6 Then one of the seraphs flew to me,
holding a live coal that had been taken
from the altar with a pair of tongs. 7 The
seraph[l] touched my mouth with it and
said: "Now that this has touched your
lips, your guilt has departed and your sin
is blotted out." 8 Then I heard the voice
of the Lord saying, "Whom shall I send,
and who will go for us?" And I said,
"Here am I; send me!" 9 And he said, "Go
and say to this people:

'Keep listening, but do not
comprehend;
keep looking, but do not
understand.'
10 Make the mind of this people dull,
and stop their ears,
and shut their eyes,
so that they may not look with
their eyes,
and listen with their ears,
and comprehend with their minds,
and turn and be healed."
11 Then I said, "How long,
O Lord?" And he said:
"Until cities lie waste
without inhabitant,
and houses without people,
and the land is utterly desolate;
12 until the LORD sends everyone
far away,
and vast is the emptiness in the
midst of the land.
13 Even if a tenth part remain in it,
it will be burned again,
like a terebinth or an oak
whose stump remains standing
when it is felled."[k]
The holy seed is its stump.

7 In the days of Ahaz son of Jotham
son of Uzziah, king of Judah, King
Rezin of Aram and King Pekah son of
Remaliah of Israel went up to attack Jerusalem, but could not mount an attack
against it. 2 When the house of David
heard that Aram had allied itself with
Ephraim, the heart of Ahaz[m] and the
heart of his people shook as the trees of
the forest shake before the wind.

3 Then the LORD said to Isaiah, Go
out to meet Ahaz, you and your son
Shear-jashub,[n] at the end of the conduit
of the upper pool on the highway to the
Fuller's Field, 4 and say to him, Take
heed, be quiet, do not fear, and do not let
your heart be faint because of these two
smoldering stumps of firebrands, because of the fierce anger of Rezin and
Aram and the son of Remaliah. 5 Because
Aram—with Ephraim and the son of
Remaliah—has plotted evil against you,
saying, 6 Let us go up against Judah and
cut off Jerusalem[o] and conquer it for
ourselves and make the son of Tabeel
king in it; 7 therefore thus says the Lord
GOD:

It shall not stand,
and it shall not come to pass.
8 For the head of Aram is Damascus,

*k* Meaning of Heb uncertain *l* Heb *He*
*m* Heb *his heart* *n* That is *A remnant shall return* *o* Heb *cut it off*

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**6.6–8**: Cleansed by God's forgiving act, Isaiah may now speak for God. **9–12**: Compare Jer 1.10, 13–19. Verses 9b–10 are quoted in Mt 13.10–15; compare Mk 4.12; Lk 8.10; Jn 12.39–41; Acts 28.26–27. **13**: The last part of the verse is obscure and textually corrupt and perhaps should be restored to read, ". . . . like the terebinth [of the goddess] and the oak of Asherah, cast out with the pillar of the high places," that is, like the destroyed furnishings of a pagan high place.

**7.1–8.15: Isaiah and the Syro Ephraimite War** (734–733 B.C.). For the historical background see 2 Kings 16.1–20. **7.1–9: Sign of Shear-jashub. 1**: *Aram,* Syria. **2**: The continuation of the Davidic monarchy was threatened (see v. 6). **3**: *Shear-jashub,* "A remnant shall return"; assuming the worst eventuality, God's promise to David (2 Sam 7.8–16) will be preserved in the remnant (10.20–23). *Upper pool,* reservoir south of the Pool of Siloam. **6**: *Son of Tabeel,* perhaps a prince of Judah whose mother came from Tabeel, a region of northern Transjordan. **8–**

and the head of Damascus is
Rezin.
(Within sixty-five years Ephraim will
be shattered, no longer a people.)
9 The head of Ephraim is Samaria,
and the head of Samaria is the
son of Remaliah.
If you do not stand firm in faith,
you shall not stand at all.

10 Again the LORD spoke to Ahaz, saying, 11 Ask a sign of the LORD your God; let it be deep as Sheol or high as heaven. 12 But Ahaz said, I will not ask, and I will not put the LORD to the test. 13 Then Isaiah[p] said: "Hear then, O house of David! Is it too little for you to weary mortals, that you weary my God also? 14 Therefore the Lord himself will give you a sign. Look, the young woman[q] is with child and shall bear a son, and shall name him Immanuel.[r] 15 He shall eat curds and honey by the time he knows how to refuse the evil and choose the good. 16 For before the child knows how to refuse the evil and choose the good, the land before whose two kings you are in dread will be deserted. 17 The LORD will bring on you and on your people and on your ancestral house such days as have not come since the day that Ephraim departed from Judah—the king of Assyria."

18 On that day the LORD will whistle for the fly that is at the sources of the streams of Egypt, and for the bee that is in the land of Assyria. 19 And they will all come and settle in the steep ravines, and in the clefts of the rocks, and on all the thornbushes, and on all the pastures.

20 On that day the Lord will shave with a razor hired beyond the River—with the king of Assyria—the head and the hair of the feet, and it will take off the beard as well.

21 On that day one will keep alive a young cow and two sheep, 22 and will eat curds because of the abundance of milk that they give; for everyone that is left in the land shall eat curds and honey.

23 On that day every place where there used to be a thousand vines, worth a thousand shekels of silver, will become briers and thorns. 24 With bow and arrows one will go there, for all the land will be briers and thorns; 25 and as for all the hills that used to be hoed with a hoe, you will not go there for fear of briers and thorns; but they will become a place where cattle are let loose and where sheep tread.

8 Then the LORD said to me, Take a large tablet and write on it in common characters, "Belonging to Maher-shalal-hash-baz,"[s] 2 and have it attested[t] for me by reliable witnesses, the priest Uriah and Zechariah son of Jeberechiah. 3 And I went to the prophetess, and she conceived and bore a son. Then the LORD said to me, Name him Maher-shalal-hash-baz; 4 for before the child knows how to call "My father" or "My mother," the wealth of Damascus and the spoil of Samaria will be carried away by the king of Assyria.

*p* Heb *he* *q* Gk *the virgin* *r* That is *God is with us* *s* That is *The spoil speeds, the prey hastens* *t* Q Ms Gk Syr: MT *and I caused to be attested*

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**9a**: These words are intended to reduce Ahaz's panic (v. 2); behind Aram and Ephraim are simply—two men.

**7.10–17**: **Sign of Immanuel. 13**: This expresses Isaiah's impatience. **14**: The sign is *Immanuel,* "God with us"; a second (compare vv. 3–9) assurance to the frightened, wavering Ahaz. *Young woman,* Hebrew " 'almah," feminine of " 'elem," young man (1 Sam 17.56; 20.22); the word appears in Gen 24.43; Ex 2.8; Ps 68.25, and elsewhere, where it is translated "young woman," "girl," "maiden." **15**: *Curds, honey,* simple foods for a child being weaned; *good and evil,* age of moral discrimination. **18–25**: **Four threats** amplifying v. 17. **20**: *Feet,* see Ex 4.25 n.

**8.1–4**: **The sign of Maher-shalal-hash-baz,** "The spoil speeds, the prey hastes"; Isaiah's third assurance to Ahaz. **1**: *Tablet,* of wood. **2**: *Uriah,* 2 Kings 16.10–16. *Zechariah,* perhaps Ahaz's father-in-law (2 Kings 18.2). **3**: *Prophetess,* Isaiah's wife.

5 The LORD spoke to me again: 6Because this people has refused the waters of Shiloah that flow gently, and melt in fear before[n] Rezin and the son of Remaliah; 7therefore, the Lord is bringing up against it the mighty flood waters of the River, the king of Assyria and all his glory; it will rise above all its channels and overflow all its banks; 8it will sweep on into Judah as a flood, and, pouring over, it will reach up to the neck; and its outspread wings will fill the breadth of your land, O Immanuel.

9 Band together, you peoples, and be dismayed;
listen, all you far countries;
gird yourselves and be dismayed;
gird yourselves and be dismayed!
10 Take counsel together, but it shall be brought to naught;
speak a word, but it will not stand,
for God is with us.[v]

11 For the LORD spoke thus to me while his hand was strong upon me, and warned me not to walk in the way of this people, saying: 12Do not call conspiracy all that this people calls conspiracy, and do not fear what it fears, or be in dread. 13But the LORD of hosts, him you shall regard as holy; let him be your fear, and let him be your dread. 14He will become a sanctuary, a stone one strikes against; for both houses of Israel he will become a rock one stumbles over—a trap and a snare for the inhabitants of Jerusalem. 15And many among them shall stumble; they shall fall and be broken; they shall be snared and taken.

16 Bind up the testimony, seal the teaching among my disciples. 17I will wait for the LORD, who is hiding his face from the house of Jacob, and I will hope in him. 18See, I and the children whom the LORD has given me are signs and portents in Israel from the LORD of hosts, who dwells on Mount Zion. 19Now if people say to you, "Consult the ghosts and the familiar spirits that chirp and mutter; should not a people consult their gods, the dead on behalf of the living, 20for teaching and for instruction?" surely, those who speak like this will have no dawn! 21They will pass through the land,[w] greatly distressed and hungry; when they are hungry, they will be enraged and will curse[x] their king and their gods. They will turn their faces upward, 22or they will look to the earth, but will see only distress and darkness, the gloom of anguish; and they will be thrust into thick darkness.[y]

9[z] But there will be no gloom for those who were in anguish. In the former time he brought into contempt the land of Zebulun and the land of Naphtali, but in the latter time he will make glorious the way of the sea, the land beyond the Jordan, Galilee of the nations.

2[a] The people who walked in darkness

*u* Cn: Meaning of Heb uncertain
*v* Heb *immanu el* *w* Heb *it* *x* Or *curse by*
*y* Meaning of Heb uncertain *z* Ch 8.23 in Heb *a* Ch 9.1 in Heb

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**8.5–10**: Oracle of Shiloah and the Euphrates; Judah also is included in Assyria's sweep. *Shiloah,* a conduit flanking Ophel from the spring Gihon (see 1 Kings 1.33 n.) to the reservoir (7.3), is contrasted with the *River,* the great Euphrates. Ahaz's mighty ally, Assyria, will inundate tiny Judah, God's people. **9–10**: God is with his people (see 7.14 n.) to deliver them (Ps 46, esp. vv. 7, 11).

**8.11–22: The testimony and the teaching. 11–15**: God's ways are not the ways of human beings (55.8–9). **16**: *Bind, seal,* as one binds and seals a scroll (Jer 32.10). **18**: *Signs,* 7.3, 14; 8.1. **19–20**: Condemnation of superstition (2.6). For necromancy (consultation of the dead), see 1 Sam 28.7 n.

**9.1**: **Transitional verse** from doom to promise. *Zebulun, Naphtali,* and Issachar constituted later *Galilee;* these areas were annexed by Assyria in 733 B.C. (2 Kings 15.29). *Way of the sea,* one of the provinces set up by Assyria, around the sea-coast city of Dor south of Mount Carmel.

**9.2–7: The messianic king** (compare 11.1–9). Filled with borrowed phrases referring to the Davidic monarchy, this passage may have originally celebrated the accession of a Judean king, perhaps Hezekiah; in its

have seen a great light;
those who lived in a land of deep darkness—
on them light has shined.
3 You have multiplied the nation,
you have increased its joy;
they rejoice before you
as with joy at the harvest,
as people exult when dividing plunder.
4 For the yoke of their burden,
and the bar across their shoulders,
the rod of their oppressor,
you have broken as on the day of Midian.
5 For all the boots of the tramping warriors
and all the garments rolled in blood
shall be burned as fuel for the fire.
6 For a child has been born for us,
a son given to us;
authority rests upon his shoulders;
and he is named
Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God,
Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.
7 His authority shall grow continually,
and there shall be endless peace
for the throne of David and his kingdom.
He will establish and uphold it
with justice and with righteousness
from this time onward and forevermore.
The zeal of the LORD of hosts will do this.

8 The Lord sent a word against Jacob,
and it fell on Israel;
9 and all the people knew it—
Ephraim and the inhabitants of Samaria—
but in pride and arrogance of heart they said:
10 "The bricks have fallen,
but we will build with dressed stones;
the sycamores have been cut down,
but we will put cedars in their place."
11 So the LORD raised adversaries[b] against them,
and stirred up their enemies,
12 the Arameans on the east and the Philistines on the west,
and they devoured Israel with open mouth.
For all this his anger has not turned away;
his hand is stretched out still.

13 The people did not turn to him who struck them,
or seek the LORD of hosts.
14 So the LORD cut off from Israel head and tail,
palm branch and reed in one day—
15 elders and dignitaries are the head,

*b* Cn: Heb *the adversaries of Rezin*

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present context it describes the coming Messiah as the ideal king. **4**: *Midian,* Judg 7.15–25. **6**: *Authority,* symbol of power (see 22.21). *Mighty God,* divine in might. *Everlasting Father,* continuing fatherly love and care. *Prince of Peace,* the king who brings peace and prosperity. The king represents the best qualities of Israel's heroes (Ezek 37.25).

**9.8–10.4**: **Ephraim's judgment an object lesson for Judah** (five stanzas, including 5.24b–30; with the same refrain, 9.12, 17, 21; 10.4; 5.25; compare Jer 3.6–10; Ezek 16.44–58). **8–12**: Punishment for pride and unrepented wickedness. **8**: *Word,* more than a statement; it includes the potential and fact of accomplishment (55.10–11; Jer 23.18–20). **10**: *Bricks, sycamore,* for ordinary houses; *dressed stone, cedar* for palaces (Jer 22.7, 23).

**9.13–17**: Corrupt leaders misled their people (Jer 6.14). **18–21**: Moral decay consumes like a forest fire (Hos 7.6); civil war breaks out (2 Kings 15.23–31; 16.5). **20**: *The flesh of their*

and prophets who teach lies are the tail;
16 for those who led this people led them astray,
and those who were led by them were left in confusion.
17 That is why the Lord did not have pity on[c] their young people,
or compassion on their orphans and widows;
for everyone was godless and an evildoer,
and every mouth spoke folly.
For all this his anger has not turned away;
his hand is stretched out still.

18 For wickedness burned like a fire,
consuming briers and thorns;
it kindled the thickets of the forest,
and they swirled upward in a column of smoke.
19 Through the wrath of the LORD of hosts
the land was burned,
and the people became like fuel for the fire;
no one spared another.
20 They gorged on the right, but still were hungry,
and they devoured on the left, but were not satisfied;
they devoured the flesh of their own kindred;[d]
21 Manasseh devoured Ephraim, and Ephraim Manasseh,
and together they were against Judah.
For all this his anger has not turned away;
his hand is stretched out still.

10 Ah, you who make iniquitous decrees,
who write oppressive statutes,
2 to turn aside the needy from justice
and to rob the poor of my people of their right,
that widows may be your spoil,
and that you may make the orphans your prey!
3 What will you do on the day of punishment,
in the calamity that will come from far away?
To whom will you flee for help,
and where will you leave your wealth,
4 so as not to crouch among the prisoners
or fall among the slain?
For all this his anger has not turned away;
his hand is stretched out still.

5 Ah, Assyria, the rod of my anger—
the club in their hands is my fury!
6 Against a godless nation I send him,
and against the people of my wrath I command him,
to take spoil and seize plunder,
and to tread them down like the mire of the streets.
7 But this is not what he intends,
nor does he have this in mind;
but it is in his heart to destroy,
and to cut off nations not a few.
8 For he says:
"Are not my commanders all kings?
9 Is not Calno like Carchemish?
Is not Hamath like Arpad?
Is not Samaria like Damascus?
10 As my hand has reached to the kingdoms of the idols

*c* Q Ms: MT *rejoice over* *d* Or *arm*

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*own kindred;* on cannibalism, see Jer 19.9. Some treat this passage as a proverb. **10.1–4:** Justice is miscarried (3.13–15; Jer 8.8).

**10.5–19: Woe, O Assyria!** Unaware that they were serving as God's instrument, the powerful Assyrians were doomed by their pride to destruction (Jer 25.8–14; 50.23). **9:** In northern Syria, Tiglath-Pileser III captured

whose images were greater than
those of Jerusalem and
Samaria,
11 shall I not do to Jerusalem and
her idols
what I have done to Samaria
and her images?"

12 When the Lord has finished all his work on Mount Zion and on Jerusalem, he[e] will punish the arrogant boasting of the king of Assyria and his haughty pride. 13For he says:

"By the strength of my hand I
have done it,
and by my wisdom, for I have
understanding;
I have removed the boundaries of
peoples,
and have plundered their
treasures;
like a bull I have brought down
those who sat on thrones.
14 My hand has found, like a nest,
the wealth of the peoples;
and as one gathers eggs that have
been forsaken,
so I have gathered all the earth;
and there was none that moved a
wing,
or opened its mouth, or
chirped."

15 Shall the ax vaunt itself over the
one who wields it,
or the saw magnify itself against
the one who handles it?
As if a rod should raise the one
who lifts it up,
or as if a staff should lift the one
who is not wood!
16 Therefore the Sovereign, the LORD
of hosts,
will send wasting sickness
among his stout warriors,
and under his glory a burning will
be kindled,
like the burning of fire.
17 The light of Israel will become
a fire,
and his Holy One a flame;
and it will burn and devour
his thorns and briers in one day.
18 The glory of his forest and his
fruitful land
the LORD will destroy, both soul
and body,
and it will be as when an invalid
wastes away.
19 The remnant of the trees of his
forest will be so few
that a child can write them
down.

20 On that day the remnant of Israel and the survivors of the house of Jacob will no more lean on the one who struck them, but will lean on the LORD, the Holy One of Israel, in truth. 21A remnant will return, the remnant of Jacob, to the mighty God. 22For though your people Israel were like the sand of the sea, only a remnant of them will return. De-

[e] Heb *I*

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*Calno* (742 B.C.), *Carchemish, Hamath* (738), *Arpad* (741), southern Syria, *Damascus* (732). Menahem of Israel paid him tribute (2 Kings 15.19–20). **10–11**: To Assyria, the LORD was another idol.

**10.12**: Prose summation of vv. 5–11, 13–19. **13–14**: Assyria's boast. *Removed the boundaries,* to discourage rebellion, Assyria transplanted subject peoples.

**10.15**: Rhetorical question recalling v. 5 (45.9). **16–19**: Light of Israel, God's majestic glory (2.10; 29.6; Ezek 1.26–28). God will ravage Assyria like a forest fire.

**10.20–23: Only a remnant will return.** **21**: *A remnant will return,* in Hebrew this is the same as the name of Isaiah's son Shear-jashub; in 7.3–4 it stands in an oracle of encouragement, but here in an oracle of doom. **22**: *Sand of the sea* recalls God's oath to the patriarchs (Gen 22.17; compare Rom 9.27). In Isaiah (4.2–3; 6.13; 7.3; 28.5–6; 37.4; 37.31–32; compare Mic 4.7; 5.2–9; Zeph 2.7) *remnant* refers to those remaining after Judah's punishment, from whom a great people will arise. During the Exile the remnant was the deported people (Ezek 6.8–10; Jer 23.3; 31.7), whom God would bring back and make great. After the Exile Jewish faithlessness evoked again the pre-exilic concept (Zech 8.11; Hag 1.12; Zech 14.2).

struction is decreed, overflowing with righteousness. 23For the Lord GOD of hosts will make a full end, as decreed, in all the earth.[f]

24 Therefore thus says the Lord GOD of hosts: O my people, who live in Zion, do not be afraid of the Assyrians when they beat you with a rod and lift up their staff against you as the Egyptians did. 25For in a very little while my indignation will come to an end, and my anger will be directed to their destruction. 26The LORD of hosts will wield a whip against them, as when he struck Midian at the rock of Oreb; his staff will be over the sea, and he will lift it as he did in Egypt. 27On that day his burden will be removed from your shoulder, and his yoke will be destroyed from your neck.

He has gone up from Rimmon,[g]
28 he has come to Aiath;
he has passed through Migron,
at Michmash he stores his baggage;
29 they have crossed over the pass,
at Geba they lodge for the night;
Ramah trembles,
Gibeah of Saul has fled.
30 Cry aloud, O daughter Gallim!
Listen, O Laishah!
Answer her, O Anathoth!
31 Madmenah is in flight,
the inhabitants of Gebim flee for safety.
32 This very day he will halt at Nob,
he will shake his fist
at the mount of daughter Zion,
the hill of Jerusalem.

33 Look, the Sovereign, the LORD of hosts,
will lop the boughs with terrifying power;
the tallest trees will be cut down,
and the lofty will be brought low.
34 He will hack down the thickets of the forest with an ax,
and Lebanon with its majestic trees[h] will fall.

11 A shoot shall come out from the stump of Jesse,
and a branch shall grow out of his roots.
2 The spirit of the LORD shall rest on him,
the spirit of wisdom and understanding,
the spirit of counsel and might,
the spirit of knowledge and the fear of the LORD.
3 His delight shall be in the fear of the LORD.

He shall not judge by what his eyes see,
or decide by what his ears hear;
4 but with righteousness he shall judge the poor,
and decide with equity for the meek of the earth;
he shall strike the earth with the rod of his mouth,
and with the breath of his lips he shall kill the wicked.
5 Righteousness shall be the belt around his waist,
and faithfulness the belt around his loins.

*f* Or *land* *g* Cn: Heb *and his yoke from your neck, and a yoke will be destroyed because of fatness* *h* Cn Compare Gk Vg: Heb *with a majestic one*

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**10.24–27c: Oracle of promise.** *Oreb,* Judg 7.25; *rod,* Ex 14.16.

**10.27d–32: The approach of the Assyrians.** The invader (Tiglath-Pileser III or Sennacherib, 1.4–9 n.) approached from the north toward the outskirts of Jerusalem (Jer 6.1–3). This may be a "traditional" description of the northern invasion route; for a southern route, see Mic 1.10–15.

**10:33–34: The LORD, the forester, will cut down Assyria.**

**11.1–9: The messianic king** (compare 9.2–7). For the occasion of the original oracle, see 9.2–7 n. **1–3a:** The Messiah will manifest the characteristics of those who were great in Israel. **1:** *Jesse,* David's father (1 Sam 16.1–20). **2:** To these six "Gifts of the Spirit" the Septuagint adds "piety." **3b–5:** Wisdom and justice (5.7) were traditionally associated in the ideal king (1 Kings ch 3; Ps 72).

6 The wolf shall live with the lamb,
the leopard shall lie down with the kid,
the calf and the lion and the fatling together,
and a little child shall lead them.
7 The cow and the bear shall graze,
their young shall lie down together;
and the lion shall eat straw like the ox.
8 The nursing child shall play over the hole of the asp,
and the weaned child shall put its hand on the adder's den.
9 They will not hurt or destroy on all my holy mountain;
for the earth will be full of the knowledge of the LORD
as the waters cover the sea.

10 On that day the root of Jesse shall stand as a signal to the peoples; the nations shall inquire of him, and his dwelling shall be glorious.

11 On that day the Lord will extend his hand yet a second time to recover the remnant that is left of his people, from Assyria, from Egypt, from Pathros, from Ethiopia,[i] from Elam, from Shinar, from Hamath, and from the coastlands of the sea.

12 He will raise a signal for the nations,
and will assemble the outcasts of Israel,
and gather the dispersed of Judah from the four corners of the earth.
13 The jealousy of Ephraim shall depart,
the hostility of Judah shall be cut off;
Ephraim shall not be jealous of Judah,
and Judah shall not be hostile towards Ephraim.
14 But they shall swoop down on the backs of the Philistines in the west,
together they shall plunder the people of the east.
They shall put forth their hand against Edom and Moab,
and the Ammonites shall obey them.
15 And the LORD will utterly destroy the tongue of the sea of Egypt;
and will wave his hand over the River
with his scorching wind;
and will split it into seven channels,
and make a way to cross on foot;
16 so there shall be a highway from Assyria
for the remnant that is left of his people,
as there was for Israel when they came up from the land of Egypt.

12 You will say in that day:
I will give thanks to you, O LORD,
for though you were angry with me,
your anger turned away,
and you comforted me.

*i* Or *Nubia*; Heb *Cush*

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**11.6–8**: His reign will be "paradise regained"; the disorder of nature will be restored to its pristine harmony (Ezek 47.1–12). **9**: *My holy mountain,* 65.25; Ezek 20.40.

**11.10–16**: **The messianic age.** **10**: *Root* is a person, not the dynasty (v. 1). **11–16**: Restored and reunited Israel takes vengeance against her oppressors. The terminology and mood of vv. 11–16 indicate a post-exilic date. **11**: *Pathros,* Upper Egypt; *Shinar,* Babylonia; *coastlands,* Aegean seacoast and islands. **15**: *The tongue of the sea,* the Red Sea (Ex ch 14); *River,* Euphrates.

**12.1–6**: **Two songs** conclude Section I of the book of Isaiah. (*a*) **1–3**: Song of deliverance (compare Ps 116). **1a** and **4a** are liturgical rubrics. **2b**: Ex 15.2; Ps 118.14. (*b*) **4–6**: Song of thanksgiving. *Shout aloud and sing for joy,* compare Zeph 3.14. *In your midst,* God in his temple. *Holy One,* see 1.4.

*Thanksgiving and praise*

2 Surely God is my salvation;
I will trust, and will not be afraid,
for the LORD GOD[j] is my strength and my might;
he has become my salvation.

3 With joy you will draw water from the wells of salvation. 4 And you will say in that day:
Give thanks to the LORD,
call on his name;
make known his deeds among the nations;
proclaim that his name is exalted.

5 Sing praises to the LORD, for he has done gloriously;
let this be known[k] in all the earth.
6 Shout aloud and sing for joy,
O royal[l] Zion,
for great in your midst is the Holy One of Israel.

13 The oracle concerning Babylon that Isaiah son of Amoz saw.

2 On a bare hill raise a signal,
cry aloud to them;
wave the hand for them to enter the gates of the nobles.
3 I myself have commanded my consecrated ones,
have summoned my warriors, my proudly exulting ones,
to execute my anger.

4 Listen, a tumult on the mountains as of a great multitude!
Listen, an uproar of kingdoms, of nations gathering together!
The LORD of hosts is mustering an army for battle.
5 They come from a distant land, from the end of the heavens,
the LORD and the weapons of his indignation,
to destroy the whole earth.

6 Wail, for the day of the LORD is near;
it will come like destruction from the Almighty![m]
7 Therefore all hands will be feeble, and every human heart will melt,
8 and they will be dismayed.
Pangs and agony will seize them;
they will be in anguish like a woman in labor.
They will look aghast at one another;
their faces will be aflame.
9 See, the day of the LORD comes, cruel, with wrath and fierce anger,
to make the earth a desolation,
and to destroy its sinners from it.
10 For the stars of the heavens and their constellations will not give their light;
the sun will be dark at its rising, and the moon will not shed its light.
11 I will punish the world for its evil,

*j* Heb *for Yah, the* LORD *k* Or *this is made known* *l* Or *O inhabitant of* *m* Traditional rendering of Heb *Shaddai*

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**13.1–23.18: Oracles against foreign nations** (compare Jer chs 46–51; Ezek chs 25–32); each is introduced by the word "oracle."

**13.1–22: Oracle against Babylon.** This is clearly subsequent to Isaiah, when Babylon, whose power is here assumed, superseded Assyria; vv. 17–22 suggest a time after Nebuchadrezzar's death in 562 B.C. **2:** *Gates of the nobles,* perhaps the name of one of Babylon's city gates (Jer 19.2). **3:** *My consecrated ones,* perhaps Persian soldiers serving God's purposes (10.5–6; 45.1–4). **5:** *Distant land,* perhaps Persia. *The whole earth,* the Babylonian empire.

**13.6–16:** The cataclysmic fall of Babylon, attended by portents in the heavens and civil disorder, is seen as the *day of the* LORD (compare 2.11). Before the Exile, the day of the LORD marked the punishment of Israel (Am 8.9–10; Jer 30.5–7); after the Exile, it referred to the punishment of Israel's oppressors, and was again a day of hope for Israel (Am 5.18).

and the wicked for their iniquity;
I will put an end to the pride of the arrogant,
and lay low the insolence of tyrants.
12 I will make mortals more rare than fine gold,
and humans than the gold of Ophir.
13 Therefore I will make the heavens tremble,
and the earth will be shaken out of its place,
at the wrath of the LORD of hosts in the day of his fierce anger.
14 Like a hunted gazelle,
or like sheep with no one to gather them,
all will turn to their own people,
and all will flee to their own lands.
15 Whoever is found will be thrust through,
and whoever is caught will fall by the sword.
16 Their infants will be dashed to pieces
before their eyes;
their houses will be plundered,
and their wives ravished.
17 See, I am stirring up the Medes against them,
who have no regard for silver
and do not delight in gold.
18 Their bows will slaughter the young men;
they will have no mercy on the fruit of the womb;
their eyes will not pity children.
19 And Babylon, the glory of kingdoms,
the splendor and pride of the Chaldeans,
will be like Sodom and Gomorrah
when God overthrew them.
20 It will never be inhabited
or lived in for all generations;
Arabs will not pitch their tents there,
shepherds will not make their flocks lie down there.
21 But wild animals will lie down there,
and its houses will be full of howling creatures;
there ostriches will live,
and there goat-demons will dance.
22 Hyenas will cry in its towers,
and jackals in the pleasant palaces;
its time is close at hand,
and its days will not be prolonged.

14 But the LORD will have compassion on Jacob and will again choose Israel, and will set them in their own land; and aliens will join them and attach themselves to the house of Jacob. 2 And the nations will take them and bring them to their place, and the house of Israel will possess the nations[n] as male and female slaves in the LORD's land; they will take captive those who were their captors, and rule over those who oppressed them.

3 When the LORD has given you rest from your pain and turmoil and the hard service with which you were made to serve, 4 you will take up this taunt against the king of Babylon:

How the oppressor has ceased!
How his insolence[o] has ceased!

*n* Heb *them* *o* Q Ms Compare Gk Syr Vg: Meaning of MT uncertain

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**13.17–19:** *Medes,* people northwest of Persia who earlier were Babylon's allies against Assyria. **20–22:** Busy Babylon will become a wasteland inhabited only by animals (Jer 50.35–40). *Goat-demons,* see 34.14; Lev 17.7.

**14.1–2: The return from Exile.** *Aliens,* proselytes to Judaism, referred to in post-exilic prophecy (Zech 8.20–22). **3–23: "How are the mighty fallen!"** A mocking dirge against a tyrant; the tyrant may be a king (Nebuchadrezzar?), or a nation (Babylon?) whose fall would precede Judah's restoration. **3–4a:** Prose introduction.

**14.4b–8:** After the tyrant's fall, peace settles over the oppressed peoples. **8:** Assyrian and Babylonian kings used great quantities of

5 The LORD has broken the staff of the wicked,
the scepter of rulers,
6 that struck down the peoples in wrath
with unceasing blows,
that ruled the nations in anger
with unrelenting persecution.
7 The whole earth is at rest and quiet;
they break forth into singing.
8 The cypresses exult over you,
the cedars of Lebanon, saying,
"Since you were laid low,
no one comes to cut us down."
9 Sheol beneath is stirred up
to meet you when you come;
it rouses the shades to greet you,
all who were leaders of the earth;
it raises from their thrones
all who were kings of the nations.
10 All of them will speak
and say to you:
"You too have become as weak as we!
You have become like us!"
11 Your pomp is brought down to Sheol,
and the sound of your harps;
maggots are the bed beneath you,
and worms are your covering.

12 How you are fallen from heaven,
O Day Star, son of Dawn!
How you are cut down to the ground,
you who laid the nations low!
13 You said in your heart,
"I will ascend to heaven;
I will raise my throne
above the stars of God;
I will sit on the mount of assembly
on the heights of Zaphon;[p]
14 I will ascend to the tops of the clouds,
I will make myself like the Most High."
15 But you are brought down to Sheol,
to the depths of the Pit.
16 Those who see you will stare at you,
and ponder over you:
"Is this the man who made the earth tremble,
who shook kingdoms,
17 who made the world like a desert
and overthrew its cities,
who would not let his prisoners go home?"
18 All the kings of the nations lie in glory,
each in his own tomb;
19 but you are cast out, away from your grave,
like loathsome carrion,[q]
clothed with the dead, those pierced by the sword,
who go down to the stones of the Pit,
like a corpse trampled underfoot.
20 You will not be joined with them in burial,
because you have destroyed your land,
you have killed your people.

May the descendants of evildoers
nevermore be named!
21 Prepare slaughter for his sons

*p* Or *assembly in the far north* *q* Cn Compare Gk: Heb *like a loathed branch*

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*cedars* for their palaces. **9–11**: The tyrant joins earlier rulers in *Sheol* (see 5.14–17 n.; Ezek 32.17–22).

**14.12–15**: From aspirations for divinity (compare Gen 11.4–8), he falls to the anonymity of Sheol. Canaanite mythological background is reflected in *Day Star* and *Dawn* (Hebrew "Helal" and "Shahar," names of deities), *mount of assembly* (of the gods, and located at Jebel 'Aqra, north of Ugarit), and *Most High*, a title also applied to Baal Shamaim (Lord of Heaven).

**14.15**: *The Pit*, an alternative designation of the underworld (Ezek 31.15–18). **16–19**: He will have no greatness in death. **20–21**: Ignominy and hatred are his fate and heritage.

because of the guilt of their father.[r]
Let them never rise to possess the earth
or cover the face of the world with cities.

22 I will rise up against them, says the LORD of hosts, and will cut off from Babylon name and remnant, offspring and posterity, says the LORD. 23 And I will make it a possession of the hedgehog, and pools of water, and I will sweep it with the broom of destruction, says the LORD of hosts.

24 The LORD of hosts has sworn:
As I have designed, so shall it be;
and as I have planned, so shall it come to pass:
25 I will break the Assyrian in my land,
and on my mountains trample him under foot;
his yoke shall be removed from them,
and his burden from their shoulders.
26 This is the plan that is planned concerning the whole earth;
and this is the hand that is stretched out over all the nations.
27 For the LORD of hosts has planned, and who will annul it?
His hand is stretched out, and who will turn it back?

28 In the year that King Ahaz died this oracle came:

29 Do not rejoice, all you Philistines, that the rod that struck you is broken,
for from the root of the snake will come forth an adder,
and its fruit will be a flying fiery serpent.
30 The firstborn of the poor will graze,
and the needy lie down in safety;
but I will make your root die of famine,
and your remnant I[s] will kill.
31 Wail, O gate; cry, O city;
melt in fear, O Philistia, all of you!
For smoke comes out of the north,
and there is no straggler in its ranks.

32 What will one answer the messengers of the nation?
"The LORD has founded Zion,
and the needy among his people will find refuge in her."

15 An oracle concerning Moab.
Because Ar is laid waste in a night,
Moab is undone;
because Kir is laid waste in a night,
Moab is undone.
2 Dibon[t] has gone up to the temple,
to the high places to weep;
over Nebo and over Medeba
Moab wails.
On every head is baldness,
every beard is shorn;
3 in the streets they bind on sackcloth;

*r* Syr Compare Gk: Heb *fathers* *s* Q Ms Vg: MT *he* *t* Cn: Heb *the house and Dibon*

**14.22–23**: Prose conclusion.

**14.24–27**: **Against Assyria** (17.12–14; 30.27–33; 37.22–29); no power on earth can prevent God from accomplishing his purposes. **28–32**: **Against Philistia** (715 B.C.; Jer ch 47; Am 1.6–8). Though momentarily it appears that Philistia is secure, the foe *out of the north* (Jer 1.13–15) will shortly destroy her, too.

**15.1–16.14**: **Against Moab** (Ezek 25.8–11; Am 2.1–3). Moab (Gen 19.30–37) lies prostrate under the invader's (probably Assyria) heel (vv. 1–9).

on the housetops and in the squares
everyone wails and melts in tears.
4 Heshbon and Elealeh cry out,
their voices are heard as far as Jahaz;
therefore the loins of Moab quiver;[u]
his soul trembles.
5 My heart cries out for Moab;
his fugitives flee to Zoar,
to Eglath-shelishiyah.
For at the ascent of Luhith
they go up weeping;
on the road to Horonaim
they raise a cry of destruction;
6 the waters of Nimrim
are a desolation;
the grass is withered, the new growth fails,
the verdure is no more.
7 Therefore the abundance they have gained
and what they have laid up
they carry away
over the Wadi of the Willows.
8 For a cry has gone
around the land of Moab;
the wailing reaches to Eglaim,
the wailing reaches to Beer-elim.
9 For the waters of Dibon[v] are full of blood;
yet I will bring upon Dibon[v] even more—
a lion for those of Moab who escape,
for the remnant of the land.

16 Send lambs
to the ruler of the land,
from Sela, by way of the desert,
to the mount of daughter Zion.
2 Like fluttering birds,
like scattered nestlings,
so are the daughters of Moab
at the fords of the Arnon.
3 "Give counsel,
grant justice;
make your shade like night
at the height of noon;
hide the outcasts,
do not betray the fugitive;
4 let the outcasts of Moab
settle among you;
be a refuge to them
from the destroyer."

When the oppressor is no more,
and destruction has ceased,
and marauders have vanished from the land,
5 then a throne shall be established in steadfast love
in the tent of David,
and on it shall sit in faithfulness
a ruler who seeks justice
and is swift to do what is right.

6 We have heard of the pride of Moab
—how proud he is!—
of his arrogance, his pride, and his insolence;
his boasts are false.
7 Therefore let Moab wail,
let everyone wail for Moab.
Mourn, utterly stricken,
for the raisin cakes of Kir-hareseth.

8 For the fields of Heshbon languish,
and the vines of Sibmah,
whose clusters once made drunk
the lords of the nations,
reached to Jazer
and strayed to the desert;
their shoots once spread abroad
and crossed over the sea.

*u* Cn Compare Gk Syr: Heb *the armed men of Moab cry aloud* *v* Q Ms Vg Compare Syr: MT *Dimon*

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**16.1–5**: Moabite refugees, appealing to the mercies of the crown, seek sanctuary in Judah; since the thought seems out of place here, the passage may be an insertion. *Lambs,* a gift; compare earlier tribute Moab paid Judah (2 Kings 3.4).

**16.6–12**: A description of the disaster, especially the destruction of the vineyards (par-

9 Therefore I weep with the
weeping of Jazer
for the vines of Sibmah;
I drench you with my tears,
O Heshbon and Elealeh;
for the shout over your fruit
harvest
and your grain harvest
has ceased.
10 Joy and gladness are taken away
from the fruitful field;
and in the vineyards no songs
are sung,
no shouts are raised;
no treader treads out wine in
the presses;
the vintage-shout is hushed.[w]
11 Therefore my heart throbs like a
harp for Moab,
and my very soul for Kir-heres.
12 When Moab presents himself,
when he wearies himself upon the high
place, when he comes to his sanctuary to
pray, he will not prevail.
13 This was the word that the LORD
spoke concerning Moab in the past.
14 But now the LORD says, In three years,
like the years of a hired worker, the glory
of Moab will be brought into contempt,
in spite of all its great multitude; and
those who survive will be very few and
feeble.

17 An oracle concerning Damascus.
See, Damascus will cease to be
a city,
and will become a heap of ruins.
2 Her towns will be deserted
forever;[x]
they will be places for flocks,
which will lie down, and no one
will make them afraid.
3 The fortress will disappear from
Ephraim,
and the kingdom from
Damascus;
and the remnant of Aram will be
like the glory of the children
of Israel,
says the LORD of hosts.

4 On that day
the glory of Jacob will be
brought low,
and the fat of his flesh will
grow lean.
5 And it shall be as when reapers
gather standing grain
and their arms harvest the ears,
and as when one gleans the ears
of grain
in the Valley of Rephaim.
6 Gleanings will be left in it,
as when an olive tree is
beaten—
two or three berries
in the top of the highest bough,
four or five
on the branches of a fruit tree,
says the LORD God of
Israel.

7 On that day people will regard their
Maker, and their eyes will look to the
Holy One of Israel; 8 they will not have
regard for the altars, the work of their
hands, and they will not look to what
their own fingers have made, either the
sacred poles[y] or the altars of incense.
9 On that day their strong cities will
be like the deserted places of the Hivites

*w* Gk: Heb *I have hushed* *x* Cn Compare Gk: Heb *the cities of Aroer are deserted*
*y* Heb *Asherim*

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allel, Jer 48.29–33). *Kir-hareseth* and *Kir-heres,* the same as Kir, 15.1. **13–14**: In a short time, despite intervening prosperity, Moab will again be devastated.

**17.1–6: Against the Syro-Ephraimite alliance** (about 734 B.C.–see 2 Kings 16.1–20 n.; Isa 7.1–8.4). Two stanzas (1–3, 4–6) reaffirm the ultimate defeat of *Damascus* and *Ephraim*. *The glory of . . . Israel* refers to Samaria; *Rephaim,* valley northwest of Jerusalem (2 Sam 5.18).

**17.7–11: Against idolatry. 7–8**: Eventually people will return to God (1.29–31). *Sacred poles,* cult images of Asherah (6.13 n.). **9–11**: Those who forsake God for idols will be displaced as Israel displaced the *Hivites* and *Amorites,* original inhabitants of Palestine

and the Amorites,[z] which they deserted because of the children of Israel, and there will be desolation.

10 For you have forgotten the God of your salvation,
and have not remembered the Rock of your refuge;
therefore, though you plant pleasant plants
and set out slips of an alien god,
11 though you make them grow on the day that you plant them,
and make them blossom in the morning that you sow;
yet the harvest will flee away
in a day of grief and incurable pain.

12 Ah, the thunder of many peoples,
they thunder like the thundering of the sea!
Ah, the roar of nations,
they roar like the roaring of mighty waters!
13 The nations roar like the roaring of many waters,
but he will rebuke them, and they will flee far away,
chased like chaff on the mountains before the wind
and whirling dust before the storm.
14 At evening time, lo, terror!
Before morning, they are no more.
This is the fate of those who despoil us,
and the lot of those who plunder us.

18 Ah, land of whirring wings
beyond the rivers of Ethiopia,[a]
2 sending ambassadors by the Nile
in vessels of papyrus on the waters!
Go, you swift messengers,
to a nation tall and smooth,
to a people feared near and far,
a nation mighty and conquering,
whose land the rivers divide.

3 All you inhabitants of the world,
you who live on the earth,
when a signal is raised on the mountains, look!
When a trumpet is blown, listen!
4 For thus the LORD said to me:
I will quietly look from my dwelling
like clear heat in sunshine,
like a cloud of dew in the heat of harvest.
5 For before the harvest, when the blossom is over
and the flower becomes a ripening grape,
he will cut off the shoots with pruning hooks,
and the spreading branches he will hew away.
6 They shall all be left
to the birds of prey of the mountains
and to the animals of the earth.
And the birds of prey will summer on them,
and all the animals of the earth will winter on them.

7 At that time gifts will be brought to

*z* Cn Compare Gk: Heb *places of the wood and the highest bough* *a* Or *Nubia*; Heb *Cush*

(Deut 7.1). *Plants, slips,* plants dedicated to Tammuz (compare Ezek 8.14–18). **12–14**: The appearance of a potentially destructive storm (perhaps Assyria's onslaught of 701 B.C.) is dispelled by God who defends his people.

**18.1–20.6: Concerning Egypt and Ethiopia. 18.1–7: Concerning Ethiopia.** The occasion may be the invitation of Egypt and Ethiopia to participate in an anti-Assyrian plot, about 714 B.C. Using the figure of harvest, Isaiah cautions that since God determines the course of events human beings must wait. When ready, God will signal the beginning of revolt. *Land the rivers divide,* Egypt divided by the Nile.

the LORD of hosts from[b] a people tall and smooth, from a people feared near and far, a nation mighty and conquering, whose land the rivers divide, to Mount Zion, the place of the name of the LORD of hosts.

19 An oracle concerning Egypt.

See, the LORD is riding on a swift cloud
and comes to Egypt;
the idols of Egypt will tremble at his presence,
and the heart of the Egyptians will melt within them.
2 I will stir up Egyptians against Egyptians,
and they will fight, one against the other,
neighbor against neighbor,
city against city, kingdom against kingdom;
3 the spirit of the Egyptians within them will be emptied out,
and I will confound their plans;
they will consult the idols and the spirits of the dead
and the ghosts and the familiar spirits;
4 I will deliver the Egyptians into the hand of a hard master;
a fierce king will rule over them,
says the Sovereign, the LORD of hosts.

5 The waters of the Nile will be dried up,
and the river will be parched and dry;
6 its canals will become foul,
and the branches of Egypt's Nile will diminish and dry up,
reeds and rushes will rot away.
7 There will be bare places by the Nile,
on the brink of the Nile;
and all that is sown by the Nile will dry up,
be driven away, and be no more.
8 Those who fish will mourn;
all who cast hooks in the Nile will lament,
and those who spread nets on the water will languish.
9 The workers in flax will be in despair,
and the carders and those at the loom will grow pale.
10 Its weavers will be dismayed,
and all who work for wages will be grieved.

11 The princes of Zoan are utterly foolish;
the wise counselors of Pharaoh give stupid counsel.
How can you say to Pharaoh,
"I am one of the sages,
a descendant of ancient kings"?
12 Where now are your sages?
Let them tell you and make known
what the LORD of hosts has planned against Egypt.
13 The princes of Zoan have become fools,
and the princes of Memphis are deluded;
those who are the cornerstones of its tribes
have led Egypt astray.
14 The LORD has poured into them[c] a spirit of confusion;

*b* Q Ms Gk Vg: MT *of* *c* Gk Compare Tg: Heb *it*

**19.1–15**: **Against Egypt** (compare Ezek chs 29–32). **1–4**: God's judgment is seen in civil turbulence. The *hard master* of v. 4 may be Pianchi, the founder of the Twenty-fifth (Ethiopian) Dynasty, begun about 714 B.C.

**19.5–10**: *The Nile,* Egypt's lifeline, will dry up, destroying her economy. People have no control over natural catastrophes.

**19.11–15**: Isaiah taunts Egypt; if she, with her vaunted wisdom, can devise schemes effecting national destinies, how could she have overlooked God's plan for herself? For *Zoan* and Memphis see Ezek 30.13–19 n. *Palm* and *reed* represent rulers and the ruled (9.14).

and they have made Egypt stagger
in all its doings
as a drunkard staggers around
in vomit.
15 Neither head nor tail, palm branch
or reed,
will be able to do anything for
Egypt.

16 On that day the Egyptians will be like women, and tremble with fear before the hand that the LORD of hosts raises against them. 17 And the land of Judah will become a terror to the Egyptians; everyone to whom it is mentioned will fear because of the plan that the LORD of hosts is planning against them.

18 On that day there will be five cities in the land of Egypt that speak the language of Canaan and swear allegiance to the LORD of hosts. One of these will be called the City of the Sun.

19 On that day there will be an altar to the LORD in the center of the land of Egypt, and a pillar to the LORD at its border. 20 It will be a sign and a witness to the LORD of hosts in the land of Egypt; when they cry to the LORD because of oppressors, he will send them a savior, and will defend and deliver them. 21 The LORD will make himself known to the Egyptians; and the Egyptians will know the LORD on that day, and will worship with sacrifice and burnt offering, and they will make vows to the LORD and perform them. 22 The LORD will strike Egypt, striking and healing; they will return to the LORD, and he will listen to their supplications and heal them.

23 On that day there will be a highway from Egypt to Assyria, and the Assyrian will come into Egypt, and the Egyptian into Assyria, and the Egyptians will worship with the Assyrians.

24 On that day Israel will be the third with Egypt and Assyria, a blessing in the midst of the earth, 25 whom the LORD of hosts has blessed, saying, "Blessed be Egypt my people, and Assyria the work of my hands, and Israel my heritage."

20 In the year that the commander-in-chief, who was sent by King Sargon of Assyria, came to Ashdod and fought against it and took it— 2 at that time the LORD had spoken to Isaiah son of Amoz, saying, "Go, and loose the sackcloth from your loins and take your sandals off your feet," and he had done so, walking naked and barefoot. 3 Then the LORD said, "Just as my servant Isaiah has walked naked and barefoot for three years as a sign and a portent against Egypt and Ethiopia,[d] 4 so shall the king of Assyria lead away the Egyptians as captives and the Ethiopians[e] as exiles, both the young and the old, naked and barefoot, with buttocks uncovered, to the shame of Egypt. 5 And they shall be dismayed and confounded because of Ethiopia[d] their hope and of Egypt their boast. 6 In that day the inhabitants of this coastland will say, 'See, this is what has happened to those in whom we hoped and to whom we fled for help and deliverance from the king of Assyria! And we, how shall we escape?' "

21 The oracle concerning the wilderness of the sea.

*d* Or *Nubia*; Heb *Cush* *e* Or *Nubians*; Heb *Cushites*

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**19.16–25: Conversion of Egypt and Assyria** (five paragraphs, each beginning with *On that day*). **16–17**: A later nationalistic paragraph emphasizing Judah's (and God's) eventual overthrow of Egypt (v. 12). **18**: *Language of Canaan,* Jewish settlements in Egypt from the early sixth century on are known (Jer 44.1). *City of the sun,* perhaps Heliopolis (compare Jer 43.13); a city by this name was in Egypt (it is now a suburb of Cairo). **19–22**: Egyptian proselytes will be treated as Israel, with punishment and mercy (*striking* and *healing*). **23, 24–25**: Israel will become the mediator and blessing for the nations (Gen 12.3).

**20.1–6: Against Egypt.** Egypt failed to defend a co-conspirator, *Ashdod,* against Sargon's devastating attack, 711 B.C. Isaiah, naked like a prisoner, warns Egypt of its approaching captivity. **2**: Apparently *sackcloth* was customarily worn by prophets (2 Kings 1.8; Zech 13.4–6).

**21.1–10: Against Babylon** (13.1). **1**: *Wil-*

As whirlwinds in the Negeb
sweep on,
it comes from the desert,
from a terrible land.
2 A stern vision is told to me;
the betrayer betrays,
and the destroyer destroys.
Go up, O Elam,
lay siege, O Media;
all the sighing she has caused
I bring to an end.
3 Therefore my loins are filled
with anguish;
pangs have seized me,
like the pangs of a woman
in labor;
I am bowed down so that I
cannot hear,
I am dismayed so that I
cannot see.
4 My mind reels, horror has
appalled me;
the twilight I longed for
has been turned for me into
trembling.
5 They prepare the table,
they spread the rugs,
they eat, they drink.
Rise up, commanders,
oil the shield!
6 For thus the Lord said to me:
"Go, post a lookout,
let him announce what he sees.
7 When he sees riders, horsemen
in pairs,
riders on donkeys, riders
on camels,
let him listen diligently,
very diligently."
8 Then the watcher[f] called out:
"Upon a watchtower I stand,
O Lord,
continually by day,
and at my post I am stationed
throughout the night.
9 Look, there they come, riders,
horsemen in pairs!"
Then he responded,
"Fallen, fallen is Babylon;
and all the images of her gods
lie shattered on the ground."
10 O my threshed and winnowed
one,
what I have heard from the
LORD of hosts,
the God of Israel, I announce
to you.

11 The oracle concerning Dumah.

One is calling to me from Seir,
"Sentinel, what of the night?
Sentinel, what of the night?"
12 The sentinel says:
"Morning comes, and also
the night.
If you will inquire, inquire;
come back again."

13 The oracle concerning the
desert plain.

In the scrub of the desert plain
you will lodge,
O caravans of Dedanites.
14 Bring water to the thirsty,
meet the fugitive with bread,

*f* Q Ms: MT *a lion*

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*derness of the sea:* this description is completely obscure. The beginning of the poem should perhaps be emended to read, "Words like whirlwinds sweeping through the Negeb, coming from the desert . . ." *Negeb,* southern Palestine. **2–5**: Prepare for the attack! *Elam,* Jer 49.34–39. *Media* aided Persia against Babylon (13.17–19). *Oil the shield,* to preserve the leather's suppleness. **6–10**: The prophet (a sentinel; Ezek 3.17) awaits the news of Babylon's fall (Jer 51.33; Rev 18.2). **9**: *On the ground,* perhaps implying "to the underworld" (see Jer 17.12, 13 n.).

**21.11–12**: **Concerning Edom,** who shared Ashdod's fate (20.1). The prophet suggests a time of deliverance (*morning*) followed by renewed oppression (*night*). *Dumah,* a town in Arabia; the word also means "silence" and here may be a symbolic name for Edom (*Seir,* Gen 32.3).

**21.13–17**: **Concerning Arabia.** *Dedanites* in northern Arabia (Ezek 25.13); *Tema* an oasis in northwestern Arabia (Jer 25.23); *Kedar* in northern Arabia, apparently the aggressor (Jer 49.28).

O inhabitants of the land
of Tema.
15 For they have fled from the
swords,
from the drawn sword,
from the bent bow,
and from the stress of battle.
16 For thus the Lord said to me:
Within a year, according to the years of
a hired worker, all the glory of Kedar
will come to an end; 17 and the remaining
bows of Kedar's warriors will be few; for
the LORD, the God of Israel, has spoken.

22 The oracle concerning the valley of vision.

What do you mean that you have
gone up,
all of you, to the housetops,
2 you that are full of shoutings,
tumultuous city, exultant town?
Your slain are not slain by
the sword,
nor are they dead in battle.
3 Your rulers have all fled together;
they were captured without the
use of a bow.[g]
All of you who were found were
captured,
though they had fled far away.[h]
4 Therefore I said:
Look away from me,
let me weep bitter tears;
do not try to comfort me
for the destruction of my
beloved people.

5 For the Lord GOD of hosts has
a day
of tumult and trampling and
confusion
in the valley of vision,
a battering down of walls
and a cry for help to the
mountains.
6 Elam bore the quiver
with chariots and cavalry,[i]
and Kir uncovered the shield.
7 Your choicest valleys were full of
chariots,
and the cavalry took their stand
at the gates.
8 He has taken away the covering
of Judah.

On that day you looked to the weapons of the House of the Forest, 9 and you saw that there were many breaches in the city of David, and you collected the waters of the lower pool. 10 You counted the houses of Jerusalem, and you broke down the houses to fortify the wall. 11 You made a reservoir between the two walls for the water of the old pool. But you did not look to him who did it, or have regard for him who planned it long ago.

12 In that day the Lord GOD of hosts
called to weeping and
mourning,
to baldness and putting on
sackcloth;
13 but instead there was joy and
festivity,

*g* Or *without their bows* *h* Gk Syr Vg: Heb *fled from far away* *i* Meaning of Heb uncertain

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**22.1–14: Warning to Jerusalem of approaching destruction.** The occasion may have been Sargon's expedition of 711 B.C. (20.1), which by-passed Judah, or the period of civil strife in Assyria following Sargon's death (705 B.C.). **1:** *Valley of vision,* the title is taken from v. 5 and the reference perhaps to the valley of Hinnom (compare Jer 7.30–34; 32.35). **4:** *My beloved people,* Jerusalem. **5–8a:** The *day* of the Lord GOD is described as a day of invasion (2.11; 13.6). *Elam* (21.2) and *Kir* (region in southern Babylonia), supplying mercenaries in Assyria's army. *Choicest valleys,* such as Valley of Rephaim and the King's Valley (17.5; 2 Sam 18.18).

**22.8b–11:** Military preparedness does not replace faithfulness to God. *House,* the royal palace (Jer 22.13–14). *The city of David* was the oldest (southeastern) section of Jerusalem (2 Sam 5.7). *Collected the waters* may refer to the excavation of Hezekiah's tunnel (2 Kings 20.20; 2 Chr 32.3–5). **12–14:** The words of the revelers are turned against them (5.11–12).

killing oxen and slaughtering sheep,
eating meat and drinking wine.
"Let us eat and drink,
for tomorrow we die."
14 The LORD of hosts has revealed himself in my ears:
Surely this iniquity will not be forgiven you until you die,
says the Lord GOD of hosts.

15 Thus says the Lord GOD of hosts: Come, go to this steward, to Shebna, who is master of the household, and say to him: 16 What right do you have here? Who are your relatives here, that you have cut out a tomb here for yourself, cutting a tomb on the height, and carving a habitation for yourself in the rock? 17 The LORD is about to hurl you away violently, my fellow. He will seize firm hold on you, 18 whirl you round and round, and throw you like a ball into a wide land; there you shall die, and there your splendid chariots shall lie, O you disgrace to your master's house! 19 I will thrust you from your office, and you will be pulled down from your post.

20 On that day I will call my servant Eliakim son of Hilkiah, 21 and will clothe him with your robe and bind your sash on him. I will commit your authority to his hand, and he shall be a father to the inhabitants of Jerusalem and to the house of Judah. 22 I will place on his shoulder the key of the house of David; he shall open, and no one shall shut; he shall shut, and no one shall open. 23 I will fasten him like a peg in a secure place, and he will become a throne of honor to his ancestral house. 24 And they will hang on him the whole weight of his ancestral house, the offspring and issue, every small vessel, from the cups to all the flagons. 25 On that day, says the LORD of hosts, the peg that was fastened in a secure place will give way; it will be cut down and fall, and the load that was on it will perish, for the LORD has spoken.

**23** The oracle concerning Tyre.

Wail, O ships of Tarshish,
for your fortress is destroyed.[j]
When they came in from Cyprus
they learned of it.
2 Be still, O inhabitants of the coast,
O merchants of Sidon,
your messengers crossed over the sea[k]
3 and were on the mighty waters;
your revenue was the grain of Shihor,
the harvest of the Nile;
you were the merchant of the nations.
4 Be ashamed, O Sidon, for the sea has spoken,
the fortress of the sea, saying:
"I have neither labored nor given birth,
I have neither reared young men nor brought up young women."
5 When the report comes to Egypt,
they will be in anguish over the report about Tyre.
6 Cross over to Tarshish—
wail, O inhabitants of the coast!
7 Is this your exultant city
whose origin is from days of old,
whose feet carried her
to settle far away?

*j* Cn Compare verse 14: Heb *for it is destroyed, without houses* *k* Q Ms: MT *crossing over the sea, they replenished you*

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**22.15–25: Against Shebna** (Jer 20.1–6). Hezekiah's major-domo apparently arrogated improper status to himself, and may have been an instigator in the anti-Assyrian plot preceding 711 B.C. (18.1–7 n.). Verses 24–25 suggest that Eliakim (36.3), a welcome replacement, failed to fulfill expectations.

**23.1–18: The oracle concerning Sidon** (vv. 1–4, 12–14) is combined with a later one against Tyre (vv. 5–11, 15–18). **1a:** Superscription for the chapter. **1b–c:** *Tarshish,* see Jer 10.9 n. There were Phoenician colonies in *Cyprus.* **3:** *Shihor,* the "waters of Horus," near Zoan. **4:** Ruined Sidon is barren like the sea without sailors (*young men*).

**23.5–11:** Fallen Tyre's commercial empire reacts with alarm. With this section compare Ezek ch 26; 27.1–9, 25–36; ch 28.

8 Who has planned this
against Tyre, the bestower
of crowns,
whose merchants were princes,
whose traders were the honored
of the earth?
9 The LORD of hosts has planned
it—
to defile the pride of all glory,
to shame all the honored of the
earth.
10 Cross over to your own land,
O ships of[l] Tarshish;
this is a harbor[m] no more.
11 He has stretched out his hand over
the sea,
he has shaken the kingdoms;
the LORD has given command
concerning Canaan
to destroy its fortresses.
12 He said:
You will exult no longer,
O oppressed virgin daughter
Sidon;
rise, cross over to Cyprus—
even there you will have no
rest.

13 Look at the land of the Chaldeans!
This is the people; it was not Assyria.
They destined Tyre for wild animals.
They erected their siege towers, they
tore down her palaces, they made her a
ruin.[n]
14 Wail, O ships of Tarshish,
for your fortress is destroyed.
15 From that day Tyre will be forgotten
for seventy years, the lifetime of one
king. At the end of seventy years, it will
happen to Tyre as in the song about the
prostitute:
16 Take a harp,
go about the city,
you forgotten prostitute!
Make sweet melody,
sing many songs,
that you may be remembered.
17 At the end of seventy years, the LORD
will visit Tyre, and she will return to her
trade, and will prostitute herself with all
the kingdoms of the world on the face of
the earth. 18 Her merchandise and her
wages will be dedicated to the LORD; her
profits[o] will not be stored or hoarded,
but her merchandise will supply abun-
dant food and fine clothing for those
who live in the presence of the LORD.

24 Now the LORD is about to lay
waste the earth and make
it desolate,
and he will twist its surface and
scatter its inhabitants.
2 And it shall be, as with the
people, so with the priest;
as with the slave, so with his
master;
as with the maid, so with her
mistress;
as with the buyer, so with
the seller;
as with the lender, so with the
borrower;

*l* Cn Compare Gk: Heb *like the Nile, daughter*
*m* Cn: Heb *restraint* *n* Meaning of Heb uncertain *o* Heb *it*

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**23.15–18**: A late addition; compare the restoration in the late oracles in Jer 48.47; 49.6, 39. *Seventy years,* Jer 25.11. **17**: *Prostitute herself,* do anything for gain. **18**: Even these sordid treasures will finally be dedicated to God (18.7; 45.14).

**Chs 24–27**: **The "Isaiah Apocalypse."** These chapters, unrelated to their context, are frequently called the "Isaiah Apocalypse" because of their use of eschatological themes found in later apocalyptic writings (universal judgment, eschatological banquet, heavenly signs, and the like). One may regard the section as a transitional form between traditional prophetic and apocalyptic materials, dating between 540 and 425 B.C. The chapters contain a variety of types of materials, e.g. eschatological prophecy in four sections (24.1–6, 16b–23; 25.6–10a; 26.20–27.1), four apocalyptic poems of deliverance (24.7–16a; 25.1–5; 26.1–6; 27.2–11), oracles of doom and triumph (26.20–27.1; 27.12–13; compare 25.10b–12), and a processional and an apocalyptic psalm (26.1–6; 27.2–11).

**24.1–6**: **Universal judgment** (compare vv. 16b–23). A picture of total destruction; compare the flood of Noah. **1**: *Twist,* by *earthquake.* **2**: Expansion of Hos 4.9. **3**: *This word,*

as with the creditor, so with
the debtor.
3 The earth shall be utterly laid
waste and utterly despoiled;
for the LORD has spoken
this word.

4 The earth dries up and withers,
the world languishes and
withers;
the heavens languish together
with the earth.
5 The earth lies polluted
under its inhabitants;
for they have transgressed laws,
violated the statutes,
broken the everlasting covenant.
6 Therefore a curse devours
the earth,
and its inhabitants suffer for
their guilt;
therefore the inhabitants of the
earth dwindled,
and few people are left.
7 The wine dries up,
the vine languishes,
all the merry-hearted sigh.
8 The mirth of the timbrels is
stilled,
the noise of the jubilant
has ceased,
the mirth of the lyre is stilled.
9 No longer do they drink wine
with singing;
strong drink is bitter to those
who drink it.
10 The city of chaos is broken down,
every house is shut up so that
no one can enter.
11 There is an outcry in the streets
for lack of wine;
all joy has reached its eventide;
the gladness of the earth is
banished.
12 Desolation is left in the city,
the gates are battered into ruins.
13 For thus it shall be on the earth
and among the nations,
as when an olive tree is beaten,
as at the gleaning when the
grape harvest is ended.

14 They lift up their voices, they sing
for joy;
they shout from the west over
the majesty of the LORD.
15 Therefore in the east give glory to
the LORD;
in the coastlands of the sea
glorify the name of the
LORD, the God of Israel.
16 From the ends of the earth we
hear songs of praise,
of glory to the Righteous One.
But I say, I pine away,
I pine away. Woe is me!
For the treacherous deal
treacherously,
the treacherous deal very
treacherously.

17 Terror, and the pit, and the snare
are upon you, O inhabitant of
the earth!
18 Whoever flees at the sound of
the terror
shall fall into the pit;
and whoever climbs out of the pit
shall be caught in the snare.
For the windows of heaven are
opened,
and the foundations of the earth
tremble.
19 The earth is utterly broken,
the earth is torn asunder,

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vv. 1–2. **5**: *Laws . . . statutes . . . covenant,* Isa 42.22–25. *Everlasting covenant,* perhaps a reference to the promise to Noah (Gen 9.1–17; compare Isa 54.9).

**24.7–16a: Deliverance after destruction. 7–12:** Happiness of the vintage festivals is stilled. **10**: *City of chaos,* a general picture of human society destined for God's judgment. **13–16a**: The coming triumph. *It,* the scattered Jewish remnant (19.24; Ezek 38.12), which praises God, *the Righteous One,* for saving and vindicating Israel.

**24.16b–23: Universal judgement. 16b–18b**: This continues vv. 1–6. **17–18b**: This appears in Jer 48.43–44. **18c–23**: Reflection of Canaanite and Babylonian mythological background. *Windows of heaven,* source of downpours (Gen 7.11).

the earth is violently shaken.
20 The earth staggers like a drunkard,
it sways like a hut;
its transgression lies heavy upon it,
and it falls, and will not rise again.

21 On that day the LORD will punish
the host of heaven in heaven,
and on earth the kings of the earth.
22 They will be gathered together
like prisoners in a pit;
they will be shut up in a prison,
and after many days they will be punished.
23 Then the moon will be abashed,
and the sun ashamed;
for the LORD of hosts will reign
on Mount Zion and in Jerusalem,
and before his elders he will manifest his glory.

25 O LORD, you are my God;
I will exalt you, I will praise your name;
for you have done wonderful things,
plans formed of old, faithful and sure.
2 For you have made the city a heap,
the fortified city a ruin;
the palace of aliens is a city no more,
it will never be rebuilt.
3 Therefore strong peoples will glorify you;
cities of ruthless nations will fear you.
4 For you have been a refuge to the poor,
a refuge to the needy in their distress,
a shelter from the rainstorm and a shade from the heat.
When the blast of the ruthless was like a winter rainstorm,
5 the noise of aliens like heat in a dry place,
you subdued the heat with the shade of clouds;
the song of the ruthless was stilled.

6 On this mountain the LORD of hosts will make for all peoples
a feast of rich food, a feast of well-aged wines,
of rich food filled with marrow, of well-aged wines strained clear.
7 And he will destroy on this mountain
the shroud that is cast over all peoples,
the sheet that is spread over all nations;
8 he will swallow up death forever.
Then the Lord GOD will wipe away the tears from all faces,
and the disgrace of his people he will take away from all the earth,
for the LORD has spoken.
9 It will be said on that day,
Lo, this is our God; we have waited for him, so that he might save us.

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**24.21–22**: *Host of heaven,* rebellious astral deities (Zeph 1.5; Jer 19.13) imprisoned in the *pit* (Isa 14.15; Rev 20.1–3). *Many days,* compare Rev 20.3, 7. **23**: *Moon . . . abashed, . . . sun ashamed* after losing their divine status (Jer 8.2; Deut 17.3). *Elders,* as with Moses (Ex 24.9–11, 12–16; compare Rev 4.4, 10–11).

**25.1–5**: **Psalm of thanksgiving** (compare Ps 145). **2**: Identity of *the city* uncertain. **4**: *Poor,* the helpless (perhaps Jews) contrasted with *strong peoples* (v. 3).

**25.6–10a**: **Third eschatological section. 6**: *This mountain,* Zion. Cultic *feast,* (1 Sam 9.13), later a part of the Messianic expectation (Lk 14.15–24). **7–8**: *Destroy . . . shroud . . . sheet* (of mourning, or perhaps ignorance), *swallow up death,* phrases reminiscent of Canaanite mythology.

This is the LORD for whom we
have waited;
let us be glad and rejoice in his
salvation.
10 For the hand of the LORD will rest
on this mountain.

The Moabites shall be trodden
down in their place
as straw is trodden down in a
dung-pit.
11 Though they spread out their
hands in the midst of it,
as swimmers spread out their
hands to swim,
their pride will be laid low
despite the struggle[p] of
their hands.
12 The high fortifications of his walls
will be brought down,
laid low, cast to the ground,
even to the dust.

26 On that day this song will be
sung in the land of Judah:
We have a strong city;
he sets up victory
like walls and bulwarks.
2 Open the gates,
so that the righteous nation that
keeps faith
may enter in.
3 Those of steadfast mind you keep
in peace—
in peace because they trust
in you.
4 Trust in the LORD forever,
for in the LORD GOD[q]
you have an everlasting rock.
5 For he has brought low
the inhabitants of the height;
the lofty city he lays low.
He lays it low to the ground,
casts it to the dust.
6 The foot tramples it,
the feet of the poor,
the steps of the needy.

7 The way of the righteous is level;
O Just One, you make smooth
the path of the righteous.
8 In the path of your judgments,
O LORD, we wait for you;
your name and your renown
are the soul's desire.
9 My soul yearns for you in
the night,
my spirit within me earnestly
seeks you.
For when your judgments are in
the earth,
the inhabitants of the world
learn righteousness.
10 If favor is shown to the wicked,
they do not learn righteousness;
in the land of uprightness they
deal perversely
and do not see the majesty of
the LORD.
11 O LORD, your hand is lifted up,
but they do not see it.
Let them see your zeal for your
people, and be ashamed.
Let the fire for your adversaries
consume them.
12 O LORD, you will ordain peace
for us,
for indeed, all that we have
done, you have done for us.
13 O LORD our God,
other lords besides you have
ruled over us,

*p* Meaning of Heb uncertain *q* Heb *in Yah, the* LORD

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**25.10b–12: Oracle of doom. 10b**: The mention of *Moab* is unexpected, but anti-Moabite feeling was high in the post-exilic period.

**26.1–6: Song of victory** (24.7–16a; 25.1–5), a processional psalm, sung on entering Jerusalem, the *strong city* (v. 1; compare Ps 24.7–10), celebrating God's *victory* (salvation) over the enemies of Judah, the *righteous nation*. **5**: *Low . . . height,* a familiar antithesis: the proud are abased, the humble exalted (Ps 147.6; Lk 1.52).

**26.7–19: Apocalyptic psalm. 7**: Proverb of confidence in God's help (Ps 9.19; 18.25–27; 34.21–22). **8**: Compare Rev 22.20. God's chastisements are designed to benefit those chastized. **10–14**: In good times or bad the wicked fail to note God's guiding hand, but God and the righteous will ultimately defeat them. **14**: Compare v. 19.

but we acknowledge your
name alone.
14 The dead do not live;
shades do not rise—
because you have punished and
destroyed them,
and wiped out all memory
of them.
15 But you have increased the nation,
O LORD,
you have increased the nation;
you are glorified;
you have enlarged all the
borders of the land.

16 O LORD, in distress they sought
you,
they poured out a prayer[r]
when your chastening was
on them.
17 Like a woman with child,
who writhes and cries out in
her pangs
when she is near her time,
so were we because of you,
O LORD;
18 we were with child, we
writhed,
but we gave birth only to wind.
We have won no victories on
earth,
and no one is born to inhabit
the world.
19 Your dead shall live, their
corpses[s] shall rise.
O dwellers in the dust, awake
and sing for joy!
For your dew is a radiant dew,
and the earth will give birth to
those long dead.[t]

20 Come, my people, enter your
chambers,
and shut your doors behind
you;
hide yourselves for a little while
until the wrath is past.
21 For the LORD comes out from
his place
to punish the inhabitants of the
earth for their iniquity;
the earth will disclose the blood
shed on it,
and will no longer cover its
slain.

27 On that day the LORD with his cruel and great and strong sword will punish Leviathan the fleeing serpent, Leviathan the twisting serpent, and he will kill the dragon that is in the sea.

2 On that day:
A pleasant vineyard, sing about it!
3 I, the LORD, am its keeper;
every moment I water it.
I guard it night and day
so that no one can harm it;
4 I have no wrath.
If it gives me thorns and briers,
I will march to battle against it.
I will burn it up.
5 Or else let it cling to me for
protection,
let it make peace with me,
let it make peace with me.

6 In days to come[u] Jacob shall
take root,
Israel shall blossom and put
forth shoots,
and fill the whole world
with fruit.

*r* Meaning of Heb uncertain *s* Cn Compare Syr Tg: Heb *my corpse* *t* Heb *to the shades* *u* Heb *Those to come*

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**26.16–19**: Without God, the people were in agony and helpless before their oppressors. Though as dead, they will be raised up by God, whose *radiant dew* will illumine the gloom of despair.

**26.20–27.1**: **Fourth eschatological section,** following logically the preceding petition, returns to the theme of judgment, and prepares for the return of the exiles referred to in 27.12–13. **20–21**: The people should await God's victory.

**27.1**: *Leviathan,* mythological sea monster, parallel with *dragon,* Hebrew "tannin" (compare Ps 74.13–14).

**27.2–11**: **Fourth apocalyptic poem of deliverance. 2–5**: God's vineyard; compare 5.1–7, where the same figure is used in another sense.

7 Has he struck them down as he
struck down those who
struck them?
Or have they been killed as their
killers were killed?
8 By expulsion,[v] by exile you
struggled against them;
with his fierce blast he removed
them in the day of the
east wind.
9 Therefore by this the guilt of
Jacob will be expiated,
and this will be the full fruit of
the removal of his sin:
when he makes all the stones of
the altars
like chalkstones crushed
to pieces,
no sacred poles[w] or incense
altars will remain standing.
10 For the fortified city is solitary,
a habitation deserted and
forsaken, like the
wilderness;
the calves graze there,
there they lie down, and strip its
branches.
11 When its boughs are dry, they
are broken;
women come and make a fire
of them.
For this is a people without
understanding;
therefore he that made them
will not have compassion
on them,
he that formed them will show
them no favor.

12 On that day the LORD will thresh from the channel of the Euphrates to the Wadi of Egypt, and you will be gathered one by one, O people of Israel. 13 And on that day a great trumpet will be blown, and those who were lost in the land of Assyria and those who were driven out to the land of Egypt will come and worship the LORD on the holy mountain at Jerusalem.

28 Ah, the proud garland of the
drunkards of Ephraim,
and the fading flower of its
glorious beauty,
which is on the head of those
bloated with rich food, of
those overcome with wine!
2 See, the Lord has one who is
mighty and strong;
like a storm of hail, a destroying
tempest,
like a storm of mighty,
overflowing waters;
with his hand he will hurl them
down to the earth.
3 Trampled under foot will be
the proud garland of the
drunkards of Ephraim.
4 And the fading flower of its
glorious beauty,
which is on the head of those
bloated with rich food,
will be like a first-ripe fig before
the summer;
whoever sees it, eats it up
as soon as it comes to hand.

5 In that day the LORD of hosts will
be a garland of glory,
and a diadem of beauty, to the
remnant of his people;

*v* Meaning of Heb uncertain *w* Heb *Asherim*

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**27.7–11**: Israel (*Jacob*) will be blessed after all semblance of idolatry has been removed. The enemy will be vanquished, his *city* destroyed (vv. 10–11; 24.10; 26.5).

**27.12–13**: **Concluding oracle of doom and triumph. 12**: The figure of an eschatological harvest symbolizes the separation of the wicked from the righteous (Joel 3.13; Mt 13.39; Rev 14.15–16). *Wadi of Egypt,* Wadi el-'Arish, fifty miles southwest of Gaza. **13**: *The great trumpet,* which summoned Israel for solemn convocations (Num 10.2–10; Joel 2.15), will signal the final assembly of God's elect (Mt 24.31; 1 Thess 4.16).

**28.1–35.10**: **Oracles concerning Judah and Ephraim. 28.1–13**: **Against religious leaders. 1–4**: An oracle concerning *Ephraim* (Samaria), pronounced before Assyria's onslaught (2 Kings 17.5) and introducing the longer (and later) oracle concerning Judah

6 and a spirit of justice to the one
who sits in judgment,
and strength to those who turn
back the battle at the gate.

7 These also reel with wine
and stagger with strong drink;
the priest and the prophet reel
with strong drink,
they are confused with wine,
they stagger with strong drink;
they err in vision,
they stumble in giving
judgment.
8 All tables are covered with
filthy vomit;
no place is clean.

9 "Whom will he teach knowledge,
and to whom will he explain
the message?
Those who are weaned from milk,
those taken from the breast?
10 For it is precept upon precept,
precept upon precept,
line upon line, line upon line,
here a little, there a little."[x]

11 Truly, with stammering lip
and with alien tongue
he will speak to this people,
12 to whom he has said,
"This is rest;
give rest to the weary;
and this is repose";
yet they would not hear.
13 Therefore the word of the LORD
will be to them,
"Precept upon precept, precept
upon precept,
line upon line, line upon line,
here a little, there a little;"[x]
in order that they may go, and fall
backward,
and be broken, and snared,
and taken.

14 Therefore hear the word of the
LORD, you scoffers
who rule this people in
Jerusalem.
15 Because you have said, "We have
made a covenant with
death,
and with Sheol we have an
agreement;
when the overwhelming scourge
passes through
it will not come to us;
for we have made lies our refuge,
and in falsehood we have taken
shelter";
16 therefore thus says the Lord GOD,
See, I am laying in Zion a
foundation stone,
a tested stone,
a precious cornerstone, a sure
foundation:
"One who trusts will not
panic."
17 And I will make justice the line,
and righteousness the plummet;
hail will sweep away the refuge
of lies,
and waters will overwhelm the
shelter.
18 Then your covenant with death
will be annulled,

*x* Meaning of Heb of this verse uncertain

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(for the occasion see 22.1–14 n.). **1**: *Garland,* walls of Samaria (Am 3.9, 15). **4**: *First-ripe fig,* just as quickly will Samaria be consumed. **5–6**: A later interpolation; here *garland* is God's blessing of the remnant.

**28.7–13**: This section continues vv. 1–4, but is directed against Judah. The unrestrained hedonism of Samaria was paralleled in Judah, whose intemperate religious leaders were incapable of responsible guidance (Jer 13.12–14). *Priest* and *prophet,* presumably Isaiah's opponents (Jer 26.7–9), resented (compare vv. 9–10) Isaiah's condescending attitude. *Tables,* for sacrificial feast (1 Sam 9.12–13).

**28.11–13**: If the people reject Isaiah, others (the Assyrians) will address them (Jer 5.15).

**28.14–22**: **Against civil leaders. 14–15**: The *scoffers* have forsaken God, their only defender, to seek foreign military aid against Assyria (vv. 15–16; 30.1–7). **16–17a**: The symbolic name of the foundation stone (v. 16d; 1.26) proclaims salvation for those who trust God. *Justice* and *righteousness* (1.21; 5.16) will characterize the new Jerusalem. **17b–22**: The faithless will be destroyed by the

and your agreement with Sheol
will not stand;
when the overwhelming scourge
passes through
you will be beaten down by it.
19 As often as it passes through, it
will take you;
for morning by morning it will
pass through,
by day and by night;
and it will be sheer terror to
understand the message.
20 For the bed is too short to stretch
oneself on it,
and the covering too narrow to
wrap oneself in it.
21 For the LORD will rise up as on
Mount Perazim,
he will rage as in the valley of
Gibeon
to do his deed—strange is his
deed!—
and to work his work—alien is
his work!
22 Now therefore do not scoff,
or your bonds will be made
stronger;
for I have heard a decree of
destruction
from the Lord GOD of hosts
upon the whole land.

23 Listen, and hear my voice;
Pay attention, and hear my
speech.
24 Do those who plow for sowing
plow continually?
Do they continually open and
harrow their ground?
25 When they have leveled its
surface,
do they not scatter dill, sow
cummin,
and plant wheat in rows
and barley in its proper place,
and spelt as the border?
26 For they are well instructed;
their God teaches them.

27 Dill is not threshed with a
threshing sledge,
nor is a cart wheel rolled over
cummin;
but dill is beaten out with a stick,
and cummin with a rod.
28 Grain is crushed for bread,
but one does not thresh it
forever;
one drives the cart wheel and
horses over it,
but does not pulverize it.
29 This also comes from the LORD
of hosts;
he is wonderful in counsel,
and excellent in wisdom.

**29** Ah, Ariel, Ariel,
the city where David
encamped!
Add year to year;
let the festivals run their round.
2 Yet I will distress Ariel,
and there shall be moaning and
lamentation,
and Jerusalem[y] shall be to me
like an Ariel.[z]
3 And like David[a] I will encamp
against you;
I will besiege you with towers
and raise siegeworks against
you.
4 Then deep from the earth you
shall speak,

*y* Heb *she* *z* Probable meaning, *altar hearth*; compare Ezek 43.15 *a* Gk: Meaning of Heb uncertain

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storm of God's wrath. **20**: A proverb describing an irremediable situation. **21**: *Perazim,* 2 Sam 5.17–21; *Gibeon,* Josh 10.10.

**28.23–29**: **Parable of the farmers,** patterned on contemporary wisdom literature. God, like a farmer, conducts his affairs according to plan (compare vv. 16–17a). **25**: *Spelt,* less valuable than wheat. **27**: *Dill* and *cummin,* spices, too soft to thresh with a sledge.

**29.1–8**: **Judah's eventual restoration. 1**: *Ariel,* probably meaning "altar hearth," an allusion to Jerusalem. **2**: *Like an Ariel,* "like an altar-hearth": the entire city will be a burnt offering.

from low in the dust your
words shall come;
your voice shall come from the
ground like the voice of
a ghost,
and your speech shall whisper
out of the dust.

5 But the multitude of your foes[b]
shall be like small dust,
and the multitude of tyrants like
flying chaff.
And in an instant, suddenly,
6 you will be visited by the LORD
of hosts
with thunder and earthquake and
great noise,
with whirlwind and tempest,
and the flame of a
devouring fire.
7 And the multitude of all the
nations that fight against
Ariel,
all that fight against her and her
stronghold, and who
distress her,
shall be like a dream, a vision
of the night.
8 Just as when a hungry person
dreams of eating
and wakes up still hungry,
or a thirsty person dreams of
drinking
and wakes up faint, still thirsty,
so shall the multitude of all the
nations be
that fight against Mount Zion.

9 Stupefy yourselves and be in a
stupor,
blind yourselves and be blind!
Be drunk, but not from wine;
stagger, but not from strong
drink!

10 For the LORD has poured out
upon you
a spirit of deep sleep;
he has closed your eyes, you
prophets,
and covered your heads, you
seers.

11 The vision of all this has become for you like the words of a sealed document. If it is given to those who can read, with the command, "Read this," they say, "We cannot, for it is sealed." 12 And if it is given to those who cannot read, saying, "Read this," they say, "We cannot read."

13 The Lord said:
Because these people draw near
with their mouths
and honor me with their lips,
while their hearts are far
from me,
and their worship of me is a
human commandment
learned by rote;
14 so I will again do
amazing things with this people,
shocking and amazing.
The wisdom of their wise shall
perish,
and the discernment of the
discerning shall be hidden.

15 Ha! You who hide a plan too deep
for the LORD,
whose deeds are in the dark,
and who say, "Who sees us?
Who knows us?"
16 You turn things upside down!
Shall the potter be regarded as
the clay?

*b* Cn: Heb *strangers*

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**29.9–24: Spiritual insensibility;** miscellaneous oracles. **9–12:** An independent section, related in thought to vv. 1–8 and 13–14. **9–10:** As drunkards, Jerusalem's leaders are incapable of moral discrimination. **11–12:** Explanatory later prose addition. *Sealed document,* a scroll (Jer 32.9–15).

**29.13–14:** A new relationship with God, based on a positive response to his acts (Ex 19.4–6), will replace Judah's superficial traditionalism (ironically called *wisdom* and *discernment;* compare 1 Cor 1.19). **15–16:** Judah's leaders have usurped God's prerogatives by plotting against Assyria (45.9; Jer 18.1–6; Rom 9.20–21; Mt 10.24).

Shall the thing made say of its maker,
"He did not make me";
or the thing formed say of the one who formed it,
"He has no understanding"?

17 Shall not Lebanon in a very little while
become a fruitful field,
and the fruitful field be regarded as a forest?
18 On that day the deaf shall hear the words of a scroll,
and out of their gloom and darkness
the eyes of the blind shall see.
19 The meek shall obtain fresh joy in the LORD,
and the neediest people shall exult in the Holy One of Israel.
20 For the tyrant shall be no more,
and the scoffer shall cease to be;
all those alert to do evil shall be cut off—
21 those who cause a person to lose a lawsuit,
who set a trap for the arbiter in the gate,
and without grounds deny justice to the one in the right.

22 Therefore thus says the LORD, who redeemed Abraham, concerning the house of Jacob:

No longer shall Jacob be ashamed,
no longer shall his face grow pale.
23 For when he sees his children,
the work of my hands, in his midst,
they will sanctify my name;
they will sanctify the Holy One of Jacob,
and will stand in awe of the God of Israel.
24 And those who err in spirit will come to understanding,
and those who grumble will accept instruction.

30 Oh, rebellious children, says the LORD,
who carry out a plan, but not mine;
who make an alliance, but against my will,
adding sin to sin;
2 who set out to go down to Egypt without asking for my counsel,
to take refuge in the protection of Pharaoh,
and to seek shelter in the shadow of Egypt;
3 Therefore the protection of Pharaoh shall become your shame,
and the shelter in the shadow of Egypt your humiliation.
4 For though his officials are at Zoan
and his envoys reach Hanes,
5 everyone comes to shame
through a people that cannot profit them,
that brings neither help nor profit,
but shame and disgrace.

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**29.17–24**: Two later stanzas based on materials from chs 40–66 and reflecting that period. **17–21**: Israel's suffering will soon be completed (35.1–2; 41.17). **19**: *Holy One of Israel,* see 1.4 n.; 41.14, 16, 20, and elsewhere. **22–24**: Abraham's God will restore repentant Israel, who will accept God's instruction (Ezek 36.22–32). Compare the references to *Abraham* in 41.8; 51.2. This kind of reference is later than Isaiah's time.

**30.1–7**: **Concerning the embassy sent to Egypt** (about 703 B.C.) soliciting support against Assyria, *a plan* which Isaiah considered rebellion against God (28.14–22; 29.15–16). **1–5**: Since the pact is against God's wishes, it will fail. *Zoan,* see Ezek 30.13–19 n.; *Hanes* (Anusis), fifty miles south of Memphis. **6a**: Obscure, perhaps emend to read, "They carry, through the heat of the Negeb, . . ." **7b**: Obscure, perhaps emend to read, "Rahab, who shall be destroyed." *Rahab,* a mythological sea dragon vanquished in cosmic combat (26.20–27.1; Job 26.12).

6 An oracle concerning the animals of the Negeb.
Through a land of trouble and distress,
of lioness and roaring[c] lion,
of viper and flying serpent,
they carry their riches on the backs of donkeys,
and their treasures on the humps of camels,
to a people that cannot profit them.
7 For Egypt's help is worthless and empty,
therefore I have called her,
"Rahab who sits still."[d]

8 Go now, write it before them on a tablet,
and inscribe it in a book,
so that it may be for the time to come
as a witness forever.
9 For they are a rebellious people,
faithless children,
children who will not hear the instruction of the LORD;
10 who say to the seers, "Do not see";
and to the prophets, "Do not prophesy to us what is right;
speak to us smooth things,
prophesy illusions,
11 leave the way, turn aside from the path,
let us hear no more about the Holy One of Israel."
12 Therefore thus says the Holy One of Israel:
Because you reject this word,
and put your trust in oppression and deceit,
and rely on them;
13 therefore this iniquity shall become for you
like a break in a high wall,
bulging out, and about to collapse,
whose crash comes suddenly, in an instant;
14 its breaking is like that of a potter's vessel
that is smashed so ruthlessly
that among its fragments not a sherd is found
for taking fire from the hearth,
or dipping water out of the cistern.

15 For thus said the Lord GOD, the Holy One of Israel:
In returning and rest you shall be saved;
in quietness and in trust shall be your strength.
But you refused 16 and said,
"No! We will flee upon horses"—
therefore you shall flee!
and, "We will ride upon swift steeds"—
therefore your pursuers shall be swift!
17 A thousand shall flee at the threat of one,
at the threat of five you shall flee,
until you are left
like a flagstaff on the top of a mountain,
like a signal on a hill.

18 Therefore the LORD waits to be gracious to you;

*c* Cn: Heb *from them* *d* Meaning of Heb uncertain

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**30.8–17**: **Judah's connivance with Egypt** against Assyria. **8–11**: Isaiah is to preserve his oracles in writing in preparation for their ultimate fulfillment (8.16–18). *Tablet,* see 8.1 n. *Book,* a scroll (see 29.11 n.). *Faithless children,* those who deny their status (1.2–4). *Instruction,* Hebrew "torah," see 1.10 n. *Smooth things,* pleasant, though false (Jer 28.8–9). **12–14**: Sentence of judgment; this should probably follow vv. 15–17, since *this word* (v. 12b) is recorded in v. 15. Judah's perverseness is a basic flaw which, under pressure, will burst and all will be lost.

**30.15–17**: Instead of demonstrating victorious faith, Judah seeks more tangible military devices, but these will be no source of strength (7.3–9; 10.20–21).

**30.18–26**: **Hope for the afflicted.** A later

therefore he will rise up to show
mercy to you.
For the LORD is a God of justice;
blessed are all those who wait
for him.

19 Truly, O people in Zion, inhabitants of Jerusalem, you shall weep no more. He will surely be gracious to you at the sound of your cry; when he hears it, he will answer you. 20 Though the Lord may give you the bread of adversity and the water of affliction, yet your Teacher will not hide himself any more, but your eyes shall see your Teacher. 21 And when you turn to the right or when you turn to the left, your ears shall hear a word behind you, saying, "This is the way; walk in it." 22 Then you will defile your silver-covered idols and your gold-plated images. You will scatter them like filthy rags; you will say to them, "Away with you!"

23 He will give rain for the seed with which you sow the ground, and grain, the produce of the ground, which will be rich and plenteous. On that day your cattle will graze in broad pastures; 24 and the oxen and donkeys that till the ground will eat silage, which has been winnowed with shovel and fork. 25 On every lofty mountain and every high hill there will be brooks running with water—on a day of the great slaughter, when the towers fall. 26 Moreover the light of the moon will be like the light of the sun, and the light of the sun will be sevenfold, like the light of seven days, on the day when the LORD binds up the injuries of his people, and heals the wounds inflicted by his blow.

27 See, the name of the LORD comes
from far away,
burning with his anger, and in
thick rising smoke;[e]
his lips are full of indignation,
and his tongue is like a
devouring fire;
28 his breath is like an overflowing
stream
that reaches up to the neck—
to sift the nations with the sieve of
destruction,
and to place on the jaws of the
peoples a bridle that leads
them astray.

29 You shall have a song as in the night when a holy festival is kept; and gladness of heart, as when one sets out to the sound of the flute to go to the mountain of the LORD, to the Rock of Israel. 30 And the LORD will cause his majestic voice to be heard and the descending blow of his arm to be seen, in furious anger and a flame of devouring fire, with a cloudburst and tempest and hailstones. 31 The Assyrian will be terror-stricken at the voice of the LORD, when he strikes with his rod. 32 And every stroke of the staff of punishment that the LORD lays upon him will be to the sound of timbrels and lyres; battling with brandished arm he will fight with him. 33 For his burning place[f] has long been prepared; truly it is made ready for the king,[g] its pyre made deep and wide, with fire and wood in abundance; the breath of the LORD, like a stream of sulfur, kindles it.

31 Alas for those who go down to
Egypt for help
and who rely on horses,

*e* Meaning of Heb uncertain *f* Or *Topheth*
*g* Or *Molech*

(perhaps Exilic) addition. Judah is not condemned for faithlessness, but encouraged to have patience under trial. Verses 19–26 are a commentary on v. 18 and include familiar, though later, imagery (Jer 31.10–14; Ezek 34.25–30). **20**: *Teacher,* with some Hebrew manuscripts, but probably to be read "teachers," i.e. prophets.

**30.27–33: Oracle against Assyria** (about 701 B.C.; see chs 36–37). The text is combined with a song of deliverance. **27–28, 30**: Like an approaching thunderstorm, God's fury will burst over Judah's enemies. **33**: *Burning place,* Topheth (see 2 Kings 23.10 n.). *For the king,* i.e. Molech (see Lev 18.21 n.).

**31.1–3: Against Egypt** (see 30.1–7). **1**: Judah's limited treasury precluded extensive military expenditures; her terrain was unfa-

who trust in chariots because they are many
and in horsemen because they are very strong,
but do not look to the Holy One of Israel
or consult the LORD!
2 Yet he too is wise and brings disaster;
he does not call back his words,
but will rise against the house of the evildoers,
and against the helpers of those who work iniquity.
3 The Egyptians are human, and not God;
their horses are flesh, and not spirit.
When the LORD stretches out his hand,
the helper will stumble, and the one helped will fall,
and they will all perish together.

4 For thus the LORD said to me,
As a lion or a young lion growls over its prey,
and—when a band of shepherds is called out against it—
is not terrified by their shouting or daunted at their noise,
so the LORD of hosts will come down
to fight upon Mount Zion and upon its hill.
5 Like birds hovering overhead, so the LORD of hosts
will protect Jerusalem;
he will protect and deliver it,
he will spare and rescue it.

6 Turn back to him whom you[h] have deeply betrayed, O people of Israel. 7 For on that day all of you shall throw away your idols of silver and idols of gold, which your hands have sinfully made for you.
8 "Then the Assyrian shall fall by a sword, not of mortals;
and a sword, not of humans, shall devour him;
he shall flee from the sword,
and his young men shall be put to forced labor.
9 His rock shall pass away in terror,
and his officers desert the standard in panic,"
says the LORD, whose fire is in Zion,
and whose furnace is in Jerusalem.

32 See, a king will reign in righteousness,
and princes will rule with justice.
2 Each will be like a hiding place from the wind,
a covert from the tempest,
like streams of water in a dry place,
like the shade of a great rock in a weary land.
3 Then the eyes of those who have sight will not be closed,
and the ears of those who have hearing will listen.
4 The minds of the rash will have good judgment,
and the tongues of stammerers will speak readily and distinctly.
5 A fool will no longer be called noble,

*h* Heb *they*

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vorable for Egyptian chariots. **3**: Perhaps a reference to the crossing of the Red Sea (Ex 14.26–31).

**31.4–9**: **Against Sennacherib** (29.1–8; 37.21–25). **4–5**: God will defend Jerusalem. **6–7**: A later addition (compare 2.20). **8–9**: God's *sword* will destroy Assyria (Ezek ch 21). *Fire, furnace,* a reference to the temple altar.

**32.1–8**: **The coming age of justice** (probably a later addition). Patterned on wisdom literature (28.23–29), this non-messianic oracle describes Judah's coming rulers as people of integrity, patience and high-mindedness (Prov 8.15–21). Fools will no longer receive attention (compare Prov 15.2, 7, 14, etc.).

nor a villain said to be
honorable.
6 For fools speak folly,
and their minds plot iniquity:
to practice ungodliness,
to utter error concerning
the LORD,
to leave the craving of the hungry
unsatisfied,
and to deprive the thirsty of
drink.
7 The villainies of villains are evil;
they devise wicked devices
to ruin the poor with lying words,
even when the plea of the needy
is right.
8 But those who are noble plan
noble things,
and by noble things they stand.

9 Rise up, you women who are at
ease, hear my voice;
you complacent daughters, listen
to my speech.
10 In little more than a year
you will shudder, you
complacent ones;
for the vintage will fail,
the fruit harvest will not come.
11 Tremble, you women who are
at ease,
shudder, you complacent ones;
strip, and make yourselves bare,
and put sackcloth on your loins.
12 Beat your breasts for the pleasant
fields,
for the fruitful vine,
13 for the soil of my people
growing up in thorns and briers;
yes, for all the joyous houses
in the jubilant city.
14 For the palace will be forsaken,
the populous city deserted;
the hill and the watchtower
will become dens forever,
the joy of wild asses,
a pasture for flocks;
15 until a spirit from on high is
poured out on us,
and the wilderness becomes a
fruitful field,
and the fruitful field is deemed
a forest.
16 Then justice will dwell in the
wilderness,
and righteousness abide in the
fruitful field.
17 The effect of righteousness will
be peace,
and the result of righteousness,
quietness and trust forever.
18 My people will abide in a peaceful
habitation,
in secure dwellings, and in quiet
resting places.
19 The forest will disappear
completely,[i]
and the city will be utterly
laid low.
20 Happy will you be who sow
beside every stream,
who let the ox and the donkey
range freely.

33 Ah, you destroyer,
who yourself have not been
destroyed;
you treacherous one,
with whom no one has dealt
treacherously!
When you have ceased to destroy,

*i* Cn: Heb *And it will hail when the forest comes down*

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**32.9–14: Against the complacency of Judah's women** (3.16–4.1) who now celebrate vintage festival but in another year will bemoan Judah's desolation. **11–12a**: Typical signs of mourning (Jer 4.7–8; 16.1–9).

**32.15–20: The age of the Spirit** (11.2) **will see the transformation of all creation.** The outpouring of the Spirit will produce a condition wherein human beings may enjoy true happiness (compare Jer 31.31–34). The section was probably added later (see 29.17–24).

**33.1–24: A prophetic liturgy,** an independent post-exilic addition, consisting of entreaties and oracles (compare Pss 85; 46), perhaps used in the temple service, led by a prophet (Jer 14.20; 18.20). **1–6**: First section. **1**: A prophetic reproach; *destroyer,* used of Babylon in 21.2, here unidentified. **2**: A congregational prayer. *Our arm,* source of

you will be destroyed;
and when you have stopped
dealing treacherously,
you will be dealt with
treacherously.

2 O LORD, be gracious to us; we
wait for you.
Be our arm every morning,
our salvation in the time of
trouble.
3 At the sound of tumult, peoples
fled;
before your majesty, nations
scattered.
4 Spoil was gathered as the
caterpillar gathers;
as locusts leap, they leaped[j]
upon it.
5 The LORD is exalted, he dwells
on high;
he filled Zion with justice and
righteousness;
6 he will be the stability of your
times,
abundance of salvation, wisdom,
and knowledge;
the fear of the LORD is Zion's
treasure.[k]

7 Listen! the valiant[j] cry in the
streets;
the envoys of peace weep
bitterly.
8 The highways are deserted,
travelers have quit the road.
The treaty is broken,
its oaths[l] are despised,
its obligation[m] is disregarded.
9 The land mourns and languishes;
Lebanon is confounded and
withers away;
Sharon is like a desert;
and Bashan and Carmel shake
off their leaves.

10 "Now I will arise," says the LORD,
"now I will lift myself up;
now I will be exalted.
11 You conceive chaff, you bring
forth stubble;
your breath is a fire that will
consume you.
12 And the peoples will be as if
burned to lime,
like thorns cut down, that are
burned in the fire."

13 Hear, you who are far away, what
I have done;
and you who are near,
acknowledge my might.
14 The sinners in Zion are afraid;
trembling has seized the godless:
"Who among us can live with the
devouring fire?
Who among us can live with
everlasting flames?"
15 Those who walk righteously and
speak uprightly,
who despise the gain of
oppression,
who wave away a bribe instead of
accepting it,
who stop their ears from
hearing of bloodshed
and shut their eyes from looking
on evil,
16 they will live on the heights;
their refuge will be the
fortresses of rocks;
their food will be supplied, their
water assured.

17 Your eyes will see the king in his
beauty;
they will behold a land that
stretches far away.

*j* Meaning of Heb uncertain *k* Heb *his treasure*; meaning of Heb uncertain *l* Q Ms: MT *cities* *m* Or *everyone*

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strength. **3–6**: Promise of God's victory and restoration of Zion.

**33.7–16**: Second section. **7–9**: A congregational lament. The conditions (insecurity, distrust) are as critical as if normally forested and fruitful regions became barren. **10–13**: God commands the nations to acknowledge his might. **14–16**: God's wrath will destroy both *the sinners in Zion* and Zion's external enemies. **15–16**: See Ps 15 and 24.3–5.

**33.17–24**: Third section. **17–20**: The unpleasant past (28.11–13) will become a mem-

18 Your mind will muse on the terror:
"Where is the one who counted?
Where is the one who weighed the tribute?
Where is the one who counted the towers?"
19 No longer will you see the insolent people,
the people of an obscure speech that you cannot comprehend,
stammering in a language that you cannot understand.
20 Look on Zion, the city of our appointed festivals!
Your eyes will see Jerusalem,
a quiet habitation, an immovable tent,
whose stakes will never be pulled up,
and none of whose ropes will be broken.
21 But there the LORD in majesty will be for us
a place of broad rivers and streams,
where no galley with oars can go,
nor stately ship can pass.
22 For the LORD is our judge, the LORD is our ruler,
the LORD is our king; he will save us.

23 Your rigging hangs loose;
it cannot hold the mast firm in its place,
or keep the sail spread out.

Then prey and spoil in abundance will be divided;
even the lame will fall to plundering.
24 And no inhabitant will say, "I am sick";
the people who live there will be forgiven their iniquity.

34 Draw near, O nations, to hear;
O peoples, give heed!
Let the earth hear, and all that fills it;
the world, and all that comes from it.
2 For the LORD is enraged against all the nations,
and furious against all their hordes;
he has doomed them, has given them over for slaughter.
3 Their slain shall be cast out,
and the stench of their corpses shall rise;
the mountains shall flow with their blood.
4 All the host of heaven shall rot away,
and the skies roll up like a scroll.
All their host shall wither
like a leaf withering on a vine,
or fruit withering on a fig tree.

5 When my sword has drunk its fill in the heavens,
lo, it will descend upon Edom,
upon the people I have doomed to judgment.
6 The LORD has a sword; it is sated with blood,
it is gorged with fat,
with the blood of lambs and goats,
with the fat of the kidneys of rams.
For the LORD has a sacrifice in Bozrah,

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ory in the peaceful reign of the Messianic king. **21–24**: The land will be amply watered (Ezek 47.1–12), not for war fleets but to satisfy the people's needs.

**34.1–17**: **The terrible end of God's enemies,** another post-exilic addition. Compare Ezek chs 38–39. **4**: For the destruction and fall of *the host of heaven,* synonymous with God's earthly enemies, see 24.21. **5**: The destruction of Edom (see Jer 49.7–22) illustrates the fate of all of God's enemies, as in Ob 15–16. **6**: For the *sword* of the LORD, see Ezek ch 21. *Sacrifice,* compare Ezek 39.17–20. The animals named are those usually sacrificed. *Bozrah,* see Jer 49.7–22 n.

**34.8**: *Day,* see 13.6; 27.2. **9–17**: Aftermath

a great slaughter in the land of Edom.
7 Wild oxen shall fall with them,
and young steers with the mighty bulls.
Their land shall be soaked with blood,
and their soil made rich with fat.

8 For the LORD has a day of vengeance,
a year of vindication by Zion's cause.[n]
9 And the streams of Edom[o] shall be turned into pitch,
and her soil into sulfur;
her land shall become burning pitch.
10 Night and day it shall not be quenched;
its smoke shall go up forever.
From generation to generation it shall lie waste;
no one shall pass through it forever and ever.
11 But the hawk[p] and the hedgehog[p] shall possess it;
the owl[p] and the raven shall live in it.
He shall stretch the line of confusion over it,
and the plummet of chaos over[q] its nobles.
12 They shall name it No Kingdom There,
and all its princes shall be nothing.
13 Thorns shall grow over its strongholds,
nettles and thistles in its fortresses.
It shall be the haunt of jackals,
an abode for ostriches.
14 Wildcats shall meet with hyenas,
goat-demons shall call to each other;
there too Lilith shall repose,
and find a place to rest.
15 There shall the owl nest
and lay and hatch and brood in its shadow;
there too the buzzards shall gather,
each one with its mate.
16 Seek and read from the book of the LORD:
Not one of these shall be missing;
none shall be without its mate.
For the mouth of the LORD has commanded,
and his spirit has gathered them.
17 He has cast the lot for them,
his hand has portioned it out to them with the line;
they shall possess it forever,
from generation to generation they shall live in it.

35 The wilderness and the dry land shall be glad,
the desert shall rejoice and blossom;
like the crocus 2it shall blossom abundantly,
and rejoice with joy and singing.
The glory of Lebanon shall be given to it,
the majesty of Carmel and Sharon.
They shall see the glory of the LORD,
the majesty of our God.

*n* Or *of recompense by Zion's defender*
*o* Heb *her streams* *p* Identification uncertain
*q* Heb lacks *over*

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of God's assault. **9–10**: Edom suffers the punishment of Sodom and Gomorrah (13.19; Gen 19.24). **11**: Her desolation will be as the primordial chaos (Jer 4.23–28). **12**: *No Kingdom There,* a mocking name suggesting the end of all who oppose God. **13–15**: *Lilith,* the storm demon found in abandoned places, and wild animals (13.19–22) haunt her ruins. **16**: *The book of the LORD,* compare 4.3.

**35.1–10**: **Zion restored.** This probably belonged originally to chs 40–66. **1–6a**: All creation will see God's glory; the helpless exiles (*feeble knees* of exhausted prisoners; *blind; speechless*) will receive new courage and hope.

3 Strengthen the weak hands,
and make firm the feeble knees.
4 Say to those who are of a fearful heart,
"Be strong, do not fear!
Here is your God.
He will come with vengeance,
with terrible recompense.
He will come and save you."

5 Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened,
and the ears of the deaf unstopped;
6 then the lame shall leap like a deer,
and the tongue of the speechless sing for joy.
For waters shall break forth in the wilderness,
and streams in the desert;
7 the burning sand shall become a pool,
and the thirsty ground springs of water;
the haunt of jackals shall become a swamp,[r]
the grass shall become reeds and rushes.

8 A highway shall be there,
and it shall be called the Holy Way;
the unclean shall not travel on it,[s]
but it shall be for God's people;[t]
no traveler, not even fools, shall go astray.
9 No lion shall be there,
nor shall any ravenous beast come up on it;
they shall not be found there,
but the redeemed shall walk there.
10 And the ransomed of the LORD shall return,
and come to Zion with singing;
everlasting joy shall be upon their heads;
they shall obtain joy and gladness,
and sorrow and sighing shall flee away.

36 In the fourteenth year of King Hezekiah, King Sennacherib of Assyria came up against all the fortified cities of Judah and captured them. 2The king of Assyria sent the Rabshakeh from Lachish to King Hezekiah at Jerusalem, with a great army. He stood by the conduit of the upper pool on the highway to the Fuller's Field. 3And there came out to him Eliakim son of Hilkiah, who was in charge of the palace, and Shebna the secretary, and Joah son of Asaph, the recorder.

4 The Rabshakeh said to them, "Say to Hezekiah: Thus says the great king, the king of Assyria: On what do you base this confidence of yours? 5Do you think that mere words are strategy and power for war? On whom do you now rely, that you have rebelled against me? 6See, you are relying on Egypt, that broken reed of a staff, which will pierce the hand of anyone who leans on it. Such is Pharaoh king of Egypt to all who rely on him. 7But if you say to me, 'We rely on the LORD our God,' is it not he whose high places and altars Hezekiah has removed, saying to Judah and to Jerusalem, 'You shall worship before this altar'? 8Come now, make a wager with my master the king of Assyria: I will give you two thousand horses, if you are able on your

*r* Cn: Heb *in the haunt of jackals is her resting place*
*s* Or *pass it by* *t* Cn: Heb *for them*

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**35.8–10**: On *the Holy Way,* through a land like paradise (11.6–9), they will *come to Zion* to sing the praises of God, their deliverer.

**36.1–39.8**: **Historical appendix,** duplicated in 2 Kings 18.13–20.19, except for 38.9–20.

**36.1–22**: **The attack of Sennacherib** (701 B.C.), see 2 Kings 18.13–27. **1**: *All the fortified cities,* forty-six according to Sennacherib's account. **2**: *Rabshakeh,* Assyrian title meaning "chief steward." **3**: *Eliakim, Shebna,* compare 22.15–25. **6**: Compare 31.1–3; Ezek 29.6. **7**: A reference to Hezekiah's reform, 2 Kings 18.4.

part to set riders on them. [9]How then can you repulse a single captain among the least of my master's servants, when you rely on Egypt for chariots and for horsemen? [10]Moreover, is it without the LORD that I have come up against this land to destroy it? The LORD said to me, Go up against this land, and destroy it."

11 Then Eliakim, Shebna, and Joah said to the Rabshakeh, "Please speak to your servants in Aramaic, for we understand it; do not speak to us in the language of Judah within the hearing of the people who are on the wall." [12]But the Rabshakeh said, "Has my master sent me to speak these words to your master and to you, and not to the people sitting on the wall, who are doomed with you to eat their own dung and drink their own urine?"

13 Then the Rabshakeh stood and called out in a loud voice in the language of Judah, "Hear the words of the great king, the king of Assyria! [14]Thus says the king: 'Do not let Hezekiah deceive you, for he will not be able to deliver you. [15]Do not let Hezekiah make you rely on the LORD by saying, The LORD will surely deliver us; this city will not be given into the hand of the king of Assyria.' [16]Do not listen to Hezekiah; for thus says the king of Assyria: 'Make your peace with me and come out to me; then everyone of you will eat from your own vine and your own fig tree and drink water from your own cistern, [17]until I come and take you away to a land like your own land, a land of grain and wine, a land of bread and vineyards. [18]Do not let Hezekiah mislead you by saying, The LORD will save us. Has any of the gods of the nations saved their land out of the hand of the king of Assyria? [19]Where are the gods of Hamath and Arpad? Where are the gods of Sepharvaim? Have they delivered Samaria out of my hand? [20]Who among all the gods of these countries have saved their countries out of my hand, that the LORD should save Jerusalem out of my hand?' "

21 But they were silent and answered him not a word, for the king's command was, "Do not answer him." [22]Then Eliakim son of Hilkiah, who was in charge of the palace, and Shebna the secretary, and Joah son of Asaph, the recorder, came to Hezekiah with their clothes torn, and told him the words of the Rabshakeh.

**37** When King Hezekiah heard it, he tore his clothes, covered himself with sackcloth, and went into the house of the LORD. [2]And he sent Eliakim, who was in charge of the palace, and Shebna the secretary, and the senior priests, covered with sackcloth, to the prophet Isaiah son of Amoz. [3]They said to him, "Thus says Hezekiah, This day is a day of distress, of rebuke, and of disgrace; children have come to the birth, and there is no strength to bring them forth. [4]It may be that the LORD your God heard the words of the Rabshakeh, whom his master the king of Assyria has sent to mock the living God, and will rebuke the words that the LORD your God has heard; therefore lift up your prayer for the remnant that is left."

5 When the servants of King Hezekiah came to Isaiah, [6]Isaiah said to them, "Say to your master, 'Thus says the LORD: Do not be afraid because of the words that you have heard, with which the servants of the king of Assyria have reviled me. [7]I myself will put a spirit in him, so that he shall hear a rumor, and

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**36.11**: *Aramaic* was the current diplomatic language. **12**: The results of the projected siege. **13–20**: A speech intended to demoralize Jerusalem's defenders. **19**: *Hamath, Arpad,* see 10.9 n.; *Sepharvaim* (Sibraim, Ezek 47.16), a town between Hamath and Damascus, near Homs; *Samaria,* now an Assyrian province (2 Kings 17.5–6, 24).

**37.1–35**: **Hezekiah consults Isaiah.** See 2 Kings ch 19. **1**: *Tore his clothes, covered himself with sackcloth,* signs of mourning and despair (15.3; Joel 2.12). For recourse to the temple in national crises, see Neh ch 9; Joel 1.13–14. **2**: The delegation to Isaiah recalls the consultation of prophets by earlier kings (1 Kings 22.8–28; 2 Kings 1.9–17; 3.11–27). **5–7**: Isaiah's reply reassures Hezekiah. *Rumor* of internal problems at home.

return to his own land; I will cause him to fall by the sword in his own land.'"

8 The Rabshakeh returned, and found the king of Assyria fighting against Libnah; for he had heard that the king had left Lachish. 9Now the king[u] heard concerning King Tirhakah of Ethiopia,[v] "He has set out to fight against you." When he heard it, he sent messengers to Hezekiah, saying, 10"Thus shall you speak to King Hezekiah of Judah: Do not let your God on whom you rely deceive you by promising that Jerusalem will not be given into the hand of the king of Assyria. 11See, you have heard what the kings of Assyria have done to all lands, destroying them utterly. Shall you be delivered? 12Have the gods of the nations delivered them, the nations that my predecessors destroyed, Gozan, Haran, Rezeph, and the people of Eden who were in Telassar? 13Where is the king of Hamath, the king of Arpad, the king of the city of Sepharvaim, the king of Hena, or the king of Ivvah?"

14 Hezekiah received the letter from the hand of the messengers and read it; then Hezekiah went up to the house of the LORD and spread it before the LORD. 15And Hezekiah prayed to the LORD, saying: 16"O LORD of hosts, God of Israel, who are enthroned above the cherubim, you are God, you alone, of all the kingdoms of the earth; you have made heaven and earth. 17Incline your ear, O LORD, and hear; open your eyes, O LORD, and see; hear all the words of Sennacherib, which he has sent to mock the living God. 18Truly, O LORD, the kings of Assyria have laid waste all the nations and their lands, 19and have hurled their gods into the fire, though they were no gods, but the work of human hands—wood and stone—and so they were destroyed. 20So now, O LORD our God, save us from his hand, so that all the kingdoms of the earth may know that you alone are the LORD."

21 Then Isaiah son of Amoz sent to Hezekiah, saying: "Thus says the LORD, the God of Israel: Because you have prayed to me concerning King Sennacherib of Assyria, 22this is the word that the LORD has spoken concerning him:

She despises you, she scorns you—
virgin daughter Zion;
she tosses her head—behind your back,
daughter Jerusalem.

23 "Whom have you mocked and reviled?
Against whom have you raised your voice
and haughtily lifted your eyes?
Against the Holy One of Israel!
24 By your servants you have mocked the Lord,
and you have said, 'With my many chariots
I have gone up the heights of the mountains,
to the far recesses of Lebanon;
I felled its tallest cedars,
its choicest cypresses;
I came to its remotest height,
its densest forest.
25 I dug wells
and drank waters,

*u* Heb *he* *v* Or *Nubia*; Heb *Cush*

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**37.8–20**: A second account of Sennacherib's challenge to Hezekiah. **8**: *Libnah,* ten miles north of Lachish. **9**: *Tirhakah,* 2 Kings 19.9. **12**: Places in Mesopotamia: *Gozan,* on west tributary of Khabur River, east of Haran; *Haran,* on upper Balikh River (Gen 11.27–32); *Rezeph,* between Nineveh and northern Khabur; *Eden,* Bit Adini, on middle Euphrates (Ezek 27.23); *Telassar,* on middle Euphrates.

**37.14**: *Letter,* i.e. scroll. **16**: *Enthroned . . .,* temple imagery (1 Kings 8.6–7; Ezek 1.4–28). **17–20**: This recalls Sennacherib's claim, vv. 11–13; *no gods,* Jer 10.1–16. **21**: See vv. 33–35. **22–29**: Isaiah's challenge to Sennacherib (10.5–19).

**37.22–29**: Isaiah taunts Sennacherib, reminding him that he has defied God, who has determined history's course and will frustrate Sennacherib's plans. **27–28**: It is preferable

I dried up with the sole of my foot
all the streams of Egypt.'

26 "Have you not heard
that I determined it long ago?
I planned from days of old
what now I bring to pass,
that you should make fortified cities
crash into heaps of ruins,
27 while their inhabitants, shorn of strength,
are dismayed and confounded;
they have become like plants of the field
and like tender grass,
like grass on the housetops,
blighted[w] before it is grown.

28 "I know your rising up[x] and your sitting down,
your going out and coming in,
and your raging against me.
29 Because you have raged against me
and your arrogance has come to my ears,
I will put my hook in your nose
and my bit in your mouth;
I will turn you back on the way
by which you came.

30 "And this shall be the sign for you: This year eat what grows of itself, and in the second year what springs from that; then in the third year sow, reap, plant vineyards, and eat their fruit. 31 The surviving remnant of the house of Judah shall again take root downward, and bear fruit upward; 32 for from Jerusalem a remnant shall go out, and from Mount Zion a band of survivors. The zeal of the LORD of hosts will do this.

33 "Therefore thus says the LORD concerning the king of Assyria: He shall not come into this city, shoot an arrow there, come before it with a shield, or cast up a siege ramp against it. 34 By the way that he came, by the same he shall return; he shall not come into this city, says the LORD. 35 For I will defend this city to save it, for my own sake and for the sake of my servant David."

36 Then the angel of the LORD set out and struck down one hundred eighty-five thousand in the camp of the Assyrians; when morning dawned, they were all dead bodies. 37 Then King Sennacherib of Assyria left, went home, and lived at Nineveh. 38 As he was worshiping in the house of his god Nisroch, his sons Adrammelech and Sharezer killed him with the sword, and they escaped into the land of Ararat. His son Esar-haddon succeeded him.

38 In those days Hezekiah became sick and was at the point of death. The prophet Isaiah son of Amoz came to him, and said to him, "Thus says the LORD: Set your house in order, for you shall die; you shall not recover." 2 Then Hezekiah turned his face to the wall, and prayed to the LORD: 3 "Remember now, O LORD, I implore you, how I have walked before you in faithfulness with a whole heart, and have done what is good in your sight." And Hezekiah wept bitterly.

4 Then the word of the LORD came to Isaiah: 5 "Go and say to Hezekiah, Thus

*w* With 2 Kings 19.26: Heb *field* *x* Q Ms Gk: MT lacks *your rising up*

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to read with the Dead Sea Scroll of Isaiah, ". . . housetops which is parched by the east wind; your rising and your sitting down I know . . ."

**37.30–32**: A second assurance to Hezekiah (see vv. 5–7), of which the sign will be a return to normal conditions by the third year. These verses belong between v. 35 and v. 36. *Remnant*, see 10.22 n. **33–35**: A third word of assurance to Hezekiah (compare v. 21). Verse 35 recalls Nathan's words to David (2 Sam 7.12–17).

**37.36–38**: **Devastation of Sennacherib's army. 36**: *Angel*, a figure and explanation for a plague (Ex 12.29; 2 Sam 24.15–17).

**38.1–22**: **Hezekiah's illness and recovery.** See 2 Kings ch 20. **3**: The form of Hezekiah's prayer for recovery is found in the

says the LORD, the God of your ancestor David: I have heard your prayer, I have seen your tears; I will add fifteen years to your life. 6I will deliver you and this city out of the hand of the king of Assyria, and defend this city.

7 "This is the sign to you from the LORD, that the LORD will do this thing that he has promised: 8See, I will make the shadow cast by the declining sun on the dial of Ahaz turn back ten steps." So the sun turned back on the dial the ten steps by which it had declined. *y*

9 A writing of King Hezekiah of Judah, after he had been sick and had recovered from his sickness:

10 I said: In the noontide of my days
I must depart;
I am consigned to the gates of Sheol
for the rest of my years.
11 I said, I shall not see the LORD
in the land of the living;
I shall look upon mortals no more
among the inhabitants of the world.
12 My dwelling is plucked up and removed from me
like a shepherd's tent;
like a weaver I have rolled up my life;
he cuts me off from the loom;
from day to night you bring me to an end; *y*
13 I cry for help *z* until morning;
like a lion he breaks all my bones;
from day to night you bring me to an end. *y*
14 Like a swallow or a crane *y* I clamor,
I moan like a dove.
My eyes are weary with looking upward.
O Lord, I am oppressed; be my security!
15 But what can I say? For he has spoken to me,
and he himself has done it.
All my sleep has fled *a*
because of the bitterness of my soul.

16 O Lord, by these things people live,
and in all these is the life of my spirit. *y*
Oh, restore me to health and make me live!
17 Surely it was for my welfare
that I had great bitterness;
but you have held back *b* my life
from the pit of destruction,
for you have cast all my sins
behind your back.
18 For Sheol cannot thank you,
death cannot praise you;
those who go down to the Pit cannot hope
for your faithfulness.
19 The living, the living, they thank you,
as I do this day;
fathers make known to children
your faithfulness.

*y* Meaning of Heb uncertain *z* Cn: Meaning of Heb uncertain *a* Cn Compare Syr: Heb *I will walk slowly all my years* *b* Cn Compare Gk Vg: Heb *loved*

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Psalms (compare Ps 6). **8**: *Dial,* literally "stairs" or "steps." Following the text of one ancient Hebrew manuscript (among the Dead Sea Scrolls) one may translate: " '. . . Behold, I shall turn back the shadow of the steps down which the sun has moved on the steps of the roof chamber of Ahaz your father. I will cause the sun to move backwards ten steps.' And the sun moved back ten steps on the steps down which the shadow had descended."

**38.9–20**: This song, traditionally ascribed to Hezekiah, is a liturgical thanksgiving for use when presenting in the temple a thank-offering for personal deliverance (Ps 32; 1 Sam 2.1–10; Jon 2.2–9). **9**: *Writing,* Hebrew "miktab," read "Miktam," as in Pss 56–60.

**38.16ab**: Corrupted text; emend to read, "O LORD, with thee are the days of my life, thine alone is the life of my spirit." **17**: God's saving power is shown in recovery from illness and forgiveness of sins (Lk 5.17–26). **21–22**: These verses belong between vv. 6–7.

20 The LORD will save me,
and we will sing to stringed instruments[c]
all the days of our lives,
at the house of the LORD.

21 Now Isaiah had said, "Let them take a lump of figs, and apply it to the boil, so that he may recover." 22Hezekiah also had said, "What is the sign that I shall go up to the house of the LORD?"

**39** At that time King Merodach-baladan son of Baladan of Babylon sent envoys with letters and a present to Hezekiah, for he heard that he had been sick and had recovered. 2Hezekiah welcomed them; he showed them his treasure house, the silver, the gold, the spices, the precious oil, his whole armory, all that was found in his storehouses. There was nothing in his house or in all his realm that Hezekiah did not show them. 3Then the prophet Isaiah came to King Hezekiah and said to him, "What did these men say? From where did they come to you?" Hezekiah answered, "They have come to me from a far country, from Babylon." 4He said, "What have they seen in your house?" Hezekiah answered, "They have seen all that is in my house; there is nothing in my storehouses that I did not show them."

5 Then Isaiah said to Hezekiah, "Hear the word of the LORD of hosts: 6Days are coming when all that is in your house, and that which your ancestors have stored up until this day, shall be carried to Babylon; nothing shall be left, says the LORD. 7Some of your own sons who are born to you shall be taken away; they shall be eunuchs in the palace of the king of Babylon." 8Then Hezekiah said to Isaiah, "The word of the LORD that you have spoken is good." For he thought, "There will be peace and security in my days."

**40** Comfort, O comfort my people,
says your God.
2 Speak tenderly to Jerusalem,
and cry to her
that she has served her term,
that her penalty is paid,
that she has received from the LORD's hand
double for all her sins.

3 A voice cries out:
"In the wilderness prepare the way of the LORD,
make straight in the desert a highway for our God.
4 Every valley shall be lifted up,
and every mountain and hill be made low;
the uneven ground shall become level,
and the rough places a plain.
5 Then the glory of the LORD shall be revealed,
and all people shall see it together,
for the mouth of the LORD has spoken."

[c] Heb *my stringed instruments*

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**39.1–8: Merodach-baladan's embassy.** See 2 Kings 20.12–19. **2**: The tribute paid Sennacherib (701 B.C.) depleted Hezekiah's treasury (2 Kings 18.14–16), much of which had been derived from Arabian trade (2 Chr 32.27–29). **3–4**: Isaiah suspected intrigue with the Babylonian revolutionary. **5–7**: The description fits the events of 597 B.C.; see 2 Kings 24.10–17. **8**: With this postponement of punishment, compare 1 Kings 21.27–29.

**Chs 40–55: Book of the Consolation of Israel. 40.1–11: The prophet is called to announce God's coming.** The background scene is the council of heaven, from which the voices come. **1–2**: Introduction. *Comfort,* for the Exile is nearly over (for similar repetitions, see 51.9; 52.1; 57.14). *My people . . . your God,* covenant words (Ex 19.4–6; Jer 11.5). *Served her term,* a reference to the Exile. *Double* may reflect Ex 22.7–8, or suggest that God exacted more from his people than was to be expected. **3–5**: Quoted in Lk 3.4–6; see also Mt 3.3; Mk 1.3; Jn 1.23. *The way of the LORD* (common figure in Second Isaiah; 42.16; 43.16, 19; 48.17; 49.11; 51.10), who comes to restore his people (35.1–10). *The glory of the LORD* shall return (Ezek 1.28; 10.18–19; 43.1–5).

6 A voice says, "Cry out!"
And I said, "What shall I cry?"
All people are grass,
their constancy is like the flower of the field.
7 The grass withers, the flower fades,
when the breath of the LORD blows upon it;
surely the people are grass.
8 The grass withers, the flower fades;
but the word of our God will stand forever.
9 Get you up to a high mountain,
O Zion, herald of good tidings;[d]
lift up your voice with strength,
O Jerusalem, herald of good tidings,[e]
lift it up, do not fear;
say to the cities of Judah,
"Here is your God!"
10 See, the Lord GOD comes with might,
and his arm rules for him;
his reward is with him,
and his recompense before him.
11 He will feed his flock like a shepherd;
he will gather the lambs in his arms,
and carry them in his bosom,
and gently lead the mother sheep.

12 Who has measured the waters in the hollow of his hand
and marked off the heavens with a span,
enclosed the dust of the earth in a measure,
and weighed the mountains in scales
and the hills in a balance?
13 Who has directed the spirit of the LORD,
or as his counselor has instructed him?
14 Whom did he consult for his enlightenment,
and who taught him the path of justice?
Who taught him knowledge,
and showed him the way of understanding?
15 Even the nations are like a drop from a bucket,
and are accounted as dust on the scales;
see, he takes up the isles like fine dust.
16 Lebanon would not provide fuel enough,
nor are its animals enough for a burnt offering.
17 All the nations are as nothing before him;
they are accounted by him as less than nothing and emptiness.

18 To whom then will you liken God,
or what likeness compare with him?
19 An idol? —A workman casts it,
and a goldsmith overlays it with gold,
and casts for it silver chains.
20 As a gift one chooses mulberry wood[f]
—wood that will not rot—
then seeks out a skilled artisan
to set up an image that will not topple.

*d* Or *O herald of good tidings to Zion*
*e* Or *O herald of good tidings to Jerusalem*
*f* Meaning of Heb uncertain

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**40.6–8**: The *voice* of God's herald proclaims the immutability of God's word (9.8; 55.8–11) in contrast to all living things. Quoted in 1 Pet 1.24–25. **6a**: Compare Jer 1.4–8. **6b**: See 51.12 n. **7**: *Breath,* wind (Jer 4.11). **9–11**: *"Here is your God"* who comes in celestial grandeur, yet is compassionate (Ezek ch 34). See Acts 10.36; Rom 10.15; Rev 22.7. *Jerusalem,* used for Judah over thirty times in chs 40–55. *Arm,* symbol of power (33.2; 48.14; 51.5, 9; 52.10; 53.1).

**40.12–31**: **Creator of the universe. 12**: *Waters* (seas), *heavens, earth*—the world's three divisions. **13–14**: God is the source of all

21 Have you not known? Have you not heard?
Has it not been told you from the beginning?
Have you not understood from the foundations of the earth?
22 It is he who sits above the circle of the earth,
and its inhabitants are like grasshoppers;
who stretches out the heavens like a curtain,
and spreads them like a tent to live in;
23 who brings princes to naught,
and makes the rulers of the earth as nothing.

24 Scarcely are they planted, scarcely sown,
scarcely has their stem taken root in the earth,
when he blows upon them, and they wither,
and the tempest carries them off like stubble.

25 To whom then will you compare me,
or who is my equal? says the Holy One.
26 Lift up your eyes on high and see:
Who created these?
He who brings out their host and numbers them,
calling them all by name;
because he is great in strength,
mighty in power,
not one is missing.

27 Why do you say, O Jacob,
and speak, O Israel,
"My way is hidden from the LORD,
and my right is disregarded by my God"?
28 Have you not known? Have you not heard?
The LORD is the everlasting God,
the Creator of the ends of the earth.
He does not faint or grow weary;
his understanding is unsearchable.
29 He gives power to the faint,
and strengthens the powerless.
30 Even youths will faint and be weary,
and the young will fall exhausted;
31 but those who wait for the LORD
shall renew their strength,
they shall mount up with wings like eagles,
they shall run and not be weary,
they shall walk and not faint.

41 Listen to me in silence, O coastlands;
let the peoples renew their strength;
let them approach, then let them speak;
let us together draw near for judgment.

2 Who has roused a victor from the east,
summoned him to his service?
He delivers up nations to him,
and tramples kings under foot;

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knowledge and wisdom (Prov 8.22–31; Job 38.2–39.30). **15–17**: Before him all nations must bow. **18–20**: Idols cannot be compared with him (see 42.17; 45.16, 20; Jer 10.1–16).

**40.21–24**: God, the creator, is also Lord of history (44.24–28; 51.9–10). *Circle,* the horizon; *tent,* the vault of heaven (Prov 8.27; Job 22.14).

**40.25–27**: God is incomparable (vv. 18–20) and omniscient. *Created* (Gen 1.1), a word used more often by Second Isaiah than by other Old Testament writers (v. 28; 41.20; 42.5; 43.7, 15; 45.7, 8, 12, 18; 54.16). **26**: *Host* of heaven (3.1). **28–31**: The omnipotent God is concerned for the people he has created. **31**: *Wait* expresses confidence that God will not desert his people; a common concept from this period on (49.23; Ps 25.3; 33.20).

**41.1–42.4**: **The trial of the nations. 1**: The background scene is the law court (a recurrent theme in chs 41–46; 48). The historical background is the victories of Cyrus of Persia. *Coastlands,* Mediterranean lands and islands (frequent in Second Isaiah, 40.15; 42.4; 49.1; 51.5). **2–4**: *Victor from the east,* Cyrus. The God of history is calling Cyrus.

he makes them like dust with his sword,
like driven stubble with his bow.
3 He pursues them and passes on safely,
scarcely touching the path with his feet.
4 Who has performed and done this,
calling the generations from the beginning?
I, the LORD, am first,
and will be with the last.
5 The coastlands have seen and are afraid,
the ends of the earth tremble;
they have drawn near and come.
6 Each one helps the other,
saying to one another, "Take courage!"
7 The artisan encourages the goldsmith,
and the one who smooths with the hammer encourages the one who strikes the anvil,
saying of the soldering, "It is good";
and they fasten it with nails so that it cannot be moved.
8 But you, Israel, my servant,
Jacob, whom I have chosen,
the offspring of Abraham, my friend;
9 you whom I took from the ends of the earth,
and called from its farthest corners,
saying to you, "You are my servant,
I have chosen you and not cast you off";
10 do not fear, for I am with you,
do not be afraid, for I am your God;
I will strengthen you, I will help you,
I will uphold you with my victorious right hand.

11 Yes, all who are incensed against you
shall be ashamed and disgraced;
those who strive against you
shall be as nothing and shall perish.
12 You shall seek those who contend with you,
but you shall not find them;
those who war against you
shall be as nothing at all.
13 For I, the LORD your God,
hold your right hand;
it is I who say to you, "Do not fear,
I will help you."

14 Do not fear, you worm Jacob,
you insect[g] Israel!
I will help you, says the LORD;
your Redeemer is the Holy One of Israel.
15 Now, I will make of you a threshing sledge,
sharp, new, and having teeth;
you shall thresh the mountains and crush them,
and you shall make the hills like chaff.
16 You shall winnow them and the wind shall carry them away,
and the tempest shall scatter them.

*g* Syr: Heb *men of*

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*First . . . last,* 43.10; 44.6; Rev 22.13. **5–7**: The nations are as powerless as their gods (40.19–22).

**41.8–10**: *Israel, my servant* (Jer 30.10; 46.27–28), though punished for faithlessness, will now be restored (44.1–5; 45.4; 48.10). There is a different emphasis on "servant" in the Servant Songs (see 42.1). **11–13**: The nations are judged.

**41.14–16**: With God's help Israel can thresh the mountains into dust. *Redeemer,* the Hebrew term elsewhere may refer to the blood avenger (e.g. Num 35.19), but here it describes the avenger of the oppressed and liberator of the LORD's people (43.14; 44.6; 47.4). *Mountains, hills,* suggests Mesopotamian ziggurats (see Gen 11.4 n.).

**41.17–20**: A rhapsody on God as Lord of

Then you shall rejoice in the LORD;
in the Holy One of Israel you shall glory.

17 When the poor and needy seek water,
and there is none,
and their tongue is parched with thirst,
I the LORD will answer them,
I the God of Israel will not forsake them.
18 I will open rivers on the bare heights,[h]
and fountains in the midst of the valleys;
I will make the wilderness a pool of water,
and the dry land springs of water.
19 I will put in the wilderness the cedar,
the acacia, the myrtle, and the olive;
I will set in the desert the cypress,
the plane and the pine together,
20 so that all may see and know,
all may consider and understand,
that the hand of the LORD has done this,
the Holy One of Israel has created it.

21 Set forth your case, says the LORD;
bring your proofs, says the King of Jacob.
22 Let them bring them, and tell us what is to happen.
Tell us the former things, what they are,
so that we may consider them,
and that we may know their outcome;
or declare to us the things to come.
23 Tell us what is to come hereafter,
that we may know that you are gods;
do good, or do harm,
that we may be afraid and terrified.
24 You, indeed, are nothing
and your work is nothing at all;
whoever chooses you is an abomination.

25 I stirred up one from the north, and he has come,
from the rising of the sun he was summoned by name.[i]
He shall trample[j] on rulers as on mortar,
as the potter treads clay.
26 Who declared it from the beginning, so that we might know,
and beforehand, so that we might say, "He is right"?
There was no one who declared it,
none who proclaimed,
none who heard your words.
27 I first have declared it to Zion,[k]
and I give to Jerusalem a herald of good tidings.
28 But when I look there is no one;
among these there is no counselor
who, when I ask, gives an answer.
29 No, they are all a delusion;
their works are nothing;
their images are empty wind.

*h* Or *trails* *i* Cn Compare Q Ms Gk: MT *and he shall call on my name* *j* Cn: Heb *come* *k* Cn: Heb *First to Zion—Behold, behold them*

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nature (55.13; Ezek 47.12). *Holy One,* v. 16; 40.25; 1.4. **21–24**: The pagan nations are challenged to prove the validity of their claims and their gods. *Former things* (46.9) have a present significance. The nations have no defense. Verses 23–24 contain the first explicit statement against the very existence of the gods of other nations (43.8–13).

**41.25–29**: Second (compare vv. 11–13) judgment against the nations. *From the north . . . the rising of the sun,* from Persia to the northeast (the first phrase earlier referred to Assyria [14.31], and Babylonia [Jer 6.22]). The reference here is again to Cyrus (see vv. 2–4 n.). **29**: Compare v. 24; 40.18–20.

42 Here is my servant, whom I uphold,
my chosen, in whom my soul delights;
I have put my spirit upon him;
he will bring forth justice to the nations.
2 He will not cry or lift up his voice,
or make it heard in the street;
3 a bruised reed he will not break,
and a dimly burning wick he will not quench;
he will faithfully bring forth justice.
4 He will not grow faint or be crushed
until he has established justice in the earth;
and the coastlands wait for his teaching.

5 Thus says God, the LORD,
who created the heavens and stretched them out,
who spread out the earth and what comes from it,
who gives breath to the people upon it
and spirit to those who walk in it:
6 I am the LORD, I have called you in righteousness,
I have taken you by the hand and kept you;
I have given you as a covenant to the people,[l]
a light to the nations,
7 to open the eyes that are blind,
to bring out the prisoners from the dungeon,
from the prison those who sit in darkness.
8 I am the LORD, that is my name;
my glory I give to no other,
nor my praise to idols.
9 See, the former things have come to pass,
and new things I now declare;
before they spring forth,
I tell you of them.

10 Sing to the LORD a new song,
his praise from the end of the earth!
Let the sea roar[m] and all that fills it,
the coastlands and their inhabitants.
11 Let the desert and its towns lift up their voice,
the villages that Kedar inhabits;
let the inhabitants of Sela sing for joy,
let them shout from the tops of the mountains.
12 Let them give glory to the LORD,
and declare his praise in the coastlands.
13 The LORD goes forth like a soldier,
like a warrior he stirs up his fury;
he cries out, he shouts aloud,
he shows himself mighty against his foes.

14 For a long time I have held my peace,

*l* Meaning of Heb uncertain *m* Cn Compare Ps 96.11; 98.7: Heb *Those who go down to the sea*

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**42.1–4: The first Servant Song** (49.1–6; 50.4–11; 52.13–53.12). Scholars hold differing views of the identity of the Servant in these Songs. The position taken here is that the Servant is the nation; others regard him as an individual, and some as both. **The mission of the Servant.** The Servant is Israel (*my chosen;* not Cyrus) who will, with all patience (vv. 3–4a), bring God's *teaching* (1.10) and restore *justice* (5.16) to the nations. *Spirit,* 11.2. See Mt 12.18–21.

**42.5–17: God's glorious victory. 5:** God is creator of all (40.21–22) and source of life (Gen 2.7; Acts 17.24–25). **6–9:** God illumines history. **6–7:** He has called Israel, his covenant people, to bring *light* to the nations groping in the darkness of ignorance (60.1–3; Lk 2.30–32; Acts 13.47; 26.23). **8:** *LORD,* Yahweh, the only God (41.23–24; Deut 4.23–24). **10–13:** Song of victory (Pss 93; 96; 149). *Kedar* (Jer 49.28–29) and *Sela* (see Jer 49.20) represent remote and isolated places; all the world

I have kept still and restrained myself;
now I will cry out like a woman in labor,
I will gasp and pant.
15 I will lay waste mountains and hills,
and dry up all their herbage;
I will turn the rivers into islands,
and dry up the pools.
16 I will lead the blind
by a road they do not know,
by paths they have not known
I will guide them.
I will turn the darkness before them into light,
the rough places into level ground.
These are the things I will do,
and I will not forsake them.
17 They shall be turned back and utterly put to shame—
those who trust in carved images,
who say to cast images,
"You are our gods."

18 Listen, you that are deaf;
and you that are blind, look up and see!
19 Who is blind but my servant,
or deaf like my messenger whom I send?
Who is blind like my dedicated one,
or blind like the servant of the LORD?
20 He sees many things, but does[n] not observe them;
his ears are open, but he does not hear.
21 The LORD was pleased, for the sake of his righteousness,
to magnify his teaching and make it glorious.
22 But this is a people robbed and plundered,
all of them are trapped in holes and hidden in prisons;
they have become a prey with no one to rescue,
a spoil with no one to say, "Restore!"
23 Who among you will give heed to this,
who will attend and listen for the time to come?
24 Who gave up Jacob to the spoiler, and Israel to the robbers?
Was it not the LORD, against whom we have sinned,
in whose ways they would not walk,
and whose law they would not obey?
25 So he poured upon him the heat of his anger
and the fury of war;
it set him on fire all around, but he did not understand;
it burned him, but he did not take it to heart.

43 But now thus says the LORD, he who created you, O Jacob,
he who formed you, O Israel:
Do not fear, for I have redeemed you;
I have called you by name, you are mine.
2 When you pass through the waters, I will be with you;
and through the rivers, they shall not overwhelm you;

*n* Heb *You see many things but do*

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praises God, the victorious warrior (Ex 15.1–18; Judg 5.2–5).

**42.14–17**: God's intervention in history. *Long time,* from creation (v. 5) to redemption (vv. 14–16). **15**: Jer 4.23–28. **16**: *Blind,* (vv. 6–7) recalling God's leading Israel safely through the wilderness (41.17–20; Ex 13.21–22).

**42.18–43.7: Israel, the blind and deaf servant. 18–25**: Israel's judgment. **19–21**: To be *blind* to God's will and way is, for Second Isaiah, Israel's chief sin (compare 6.9–10). **23–25**: God has punished Israel for its sins.

**43.1–7**: Israel's redemption (41.8–13). **1–3b**: God is Israel's creator (44.2, 21, 24) and redeemer (41.14; 48.17; 49.7). *By name,* Israel is God's unique possession (45.3–4; Ex 19.5; 33.17). Through all dangers, God is with his

when you walk through fire you
shall not be burned,
and the flame shall not
consume you.
3 For I am the LORD your God,
the Holy One of Israel, your
Savior.
I give Egypt as your ransom,
Ethiopia[o] and Seba in exchange
for you.
4 Because you are precious in
my sight,
and honored, and I love you,
I give people in return for you,
nations in exchange for your
life.
5 Do not fear, for I am with you;
I will bring your offspring from
the east,
and from the west I will
gather you;
6 I will say to the north, "Give
them up,"
and to the south, "Do not
withhold;
bring my sons from far away
and my daughters from the end
of the earth—
7 everyone who is called by my
name,
whom I created for my glory,
whom I formed and made."

8 Bring forth the people who are
blind, yet have eyes,
who are deaf, yet have ears!
9 Let all the nations gather together,
and let the peoples assemble.
Who among them declared this,
and foretold to us the former
things?
Let them bring their witnesses to
justify them,
and let them hear and say, "It
is true."
10 You are my witnesses, says the
LORD,
and my servant whom I have
chosen,
so that you may know and
believe me
and understand that I am he.
Before me no god was formed,
nor shall there be any after me.
11 I, I am the LORD,
and besides me there is no
savior.
12 I declared and saved and
proclaimed,
when there was no strange god
among you;
and you are my witnesses, says
the LORD.
13 I am God, and also henceforth I
am He;
there is no one who can deliver
from my hand;
I work and who can hinder it?

14 Thus says the LORD,
your Redeemer, the Holy One
of Israel:
For your sake I will send to
Babylon
and break down all the bars,
and the shouting of the
Chaldeans will be turned to
lamentation.[p]
15 I am the LORD, your Holy One,
the Creator of Israel, your King.

*o* Or *Nubia*; Heb *Cush* *p* Meaning of Heb uncertain

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people (Ps 66.12). **3c–7**: God's ransom of Israel includes the nations of Africa (Egypt and Ethiopia) and Arabia (Seba), all of which Cyrus was expected to conquer.

**43.8–13: The servant Israel is the LORD's witness. 8**: Israel is capable of conversion. **9**: Who can defend the nations' claims for their gods? **11–13**: Besides God there is and will be no other god (41.23–24; 48.5).

**43.14–44.5: The redemption and restoration of Israel. 43.14–15**: The apposition of *Redeemer* (v. 1; 54.5; 59.20; Jer 50.34) and *Holy One* (41.14; 47.4; 48.17) is noteworthy. Second Isaiah refers to God as Redeemer more often than do other Old Testament writers. God redeems Israel not for its merits but because of his covenant relationship with Israel. Other nations have kings, but God is Israel's *King* (1 Sam 8.4–9). **16–17**: Allusion to the passage through the Red Sea (Ex 14–15). The "new (and greater) Exodus" is an important theme in Second Isaiah (41.17–20; 42.16; compare Ex 14–15). **18–19**: *New thing,*

***Restoration and protection promised***

16 Thus says the LORD,
who makes a way in the sea,
a path in the mighty waters,
17 who brings out chariot and horse,
army and warrior;
they lie down, they cannot rise,
they are extinguished, quenched
like a wick:
18 Do not remember the former
things,
or consider the things of old.
19 I am about to do a new thing;
now it springs forth, do you not
perceive it?
I will make a way in the
wilderness
and rivers in the desert.
20 The wild animals will honor me,
the jackals and the ostriches;
for I give water in the wilderness,
rivers in the desert,
to give drink to my chosen
people,
21 the people whom I formed
for myself
so that they might declare
my praise.

22 Yet you did not call upon me,
O Jacob;
but you have been weary of me,
O Israel!
23 You have not brought me your
sheep for burnt offerings,
or honored me with your
sacrifices.
I have not burdened you with
offerings,
or wearied you with
frankincense.
24 You have not bought me sweet
cane with money,
or satisfied me with the fat of
your sacrifices.
But you have burdened me with
your sins;
you have wearied me with your
iniquities.

25 I, I am He
who blots out your
transgressions for my own
sake,
and I will not remember
your sins.
26 Accuse me, let us go to trial;
set forth your case, so that you
may be proved right.
27 Your first ancestor sinned,
and your interpreters
transgressed against me.
28 Therefore I profaned the princes of
the sanctuary,
I delivered Jacob to utter
destruction,
and Israel to reviling.

**44** But now hear, O Jacob
my servant,
Israel whom I have chosen!
2 Thus says the LORD who made
you,
who formed you in the womb
and will help you:
Do not fear, O Jacob my servant,
Jeshurun whom I have chosen.
3 For I will pour water on the
thirsty land,
and streams on the dry ground;
I will pour my spirit upon your
descendants,
and my blessing on your
offspring.
4 They shall spring up like a green
tamarisk,
like willows by flowing
streams.

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the return of Israel to Palestine. *A way in the wilderness.* This theme (40.3) is a part of the Exodus story (vv. 16–17). **20–21**: *Water in the wilderness,* see Ex 17.1–7.

**43.22–24**: Israel has ignored and offended God. *Sweet cane,* Ex 30.23; Jer 6.20. **25–28**: The imagery of a lawcourt (41.1); God shows himself gracious, yet just. *First ancestor,* Jacob (Gen ch 27; Hos 12.2–4). *Interpreters,* perhaps other patriarchal figures or prophets (1 Kings 13.11–32).

**44.1–2**: *Jeshurun* (Deut 32.15; 33.5, 26), a poetic name of endearment for Israel; it may mean "dearest upright one." **3–4**: Israel, like

5 This one will say, "I am the
LORD's,"
another will be called by the
name of Jacob,
yet another will write on the
hand, "The LORD's,"
and adopt the name of Israel.

6 Thus says the LORD, the King
of Israel,
and his Redeemer, the LORD
of hosts:
I am the first and I am the last;
besides me there is no god.
7 Who is like me? Let them
proclaim it,
let them declare and set it forth
before me.
Who has announced from of old
the things to come?[q]
Let them tell us[r] what is yet
to be.
8 Do not fear, or be afraid;
have I not told you from of old
and declared it?
You are my witnesses!
Is there any god besides me?
There is no other rock; I know
not one.

9 All who make idols are nothing, and the things they delight in do not profit; their witnesses neither see nor know. And so they will be put to shame. 10 Who would fashion a god or cast an image that can do no good? 11 Look, all its devotees shall be put to shame; the artisans too are merely human. Let them all assemble, let them stand up; they shall be terrified, they shall all be put to shame.

12 The ironsmith fashions it[s] and works it over the coals, shaping it with hammers, and forging it with his strong arm; he becomes hungry and his strength fails, he drinks no water and is faint. 13 The carpenter stretches a line, marks it out with a stylus, fashions it with planes, and marks it with a compass; he makes it in human form, with human beauty, to be set up in a shrine. 14 He cuts down cedars or chooses a holm tree or an oak and lets it grow strong among the trees of the forest. He plants a cedar and the rain nourishes it. 15 Then it can be used as fuel. Part of it he takes and warms himself; he kindles a fire and bakes bread. Then he makes a god and worships it, makes it a carved image and bows down before it. 16 Half of it he burns in the fire; over this half he roasts meat, eats it and is satisfied. He also warms himself and says, "Ah, I am warm, I can feel the fire!" 17 The rest of it he makes into a god, his idol, bows down to it and worships it; he prays to it and says, "Save me, for you are my god!"

18 They do not know, nor do they comprehend; for their eyes are shut, so that they cannot see, and their minds as well, so that they cannot understand. 19 No one considers, nor is there knowledge or discernment to say, "Half of it I burned in the fire; I also baked bread on its coals, I roasted meat and have eaten. Now shall I make the rest of it an abomination? Shall I fall down before a block of wood?" 20 He feeds on ashes; a deluded mind has led him astray, and he cannot save himself or say, "Is not this thing in my right hand a fraud?"

21 Remember these things, O Jacob,
and Israel, for you are my
servant;
I formed you, you are my servant;

*q* Cn: Heb *from my placing an eternal people and things to come* *r* Tg: Heb *them* *s* Cn: Heb *an ax*

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the world of nature, will be transformed. God's *spirit* brings new life. **5**: All people will identify themselves with Israel and Israel's God. *Write on the hand,* compare Deut 6.8.

**44.6–8**: **God's uniqueness** (compare vv. 21–23). **6**: Note the apposition of *Redeemer* (43.14; 60.16) and *LORD of hosts* (first of several references in Second Isaiah; 45.13; 47.4). *First . . . last,* 41.4; Rev 1.8, 17; 2.8; 22.13. **7**: Perhaps a reference to God's promises to the patriarchs (Gen 12.1–3). **8**: *Rock,* 17.10; Deut 32.4, 18; Ps 18.2.

**44.9–20**: **Satire against idolatry** (compare 40.18–20; 41.6–7). **9–11**: An idol is not

O Israel, you will not be
forgotten by me.
22 I have swept away your
transgressions like a cloud,
and your sins like mist;
return to me, for I have redeemed
you.

23 Sing, O heavens, for the LORD has
done it;
shout, O depths of the earth;
break forth into singing,
O mountains,
O forest, and every tree in it!
For the LORD has redeemed Jacob,
and will be glorified in Israel.

24 Thus says the LORD, your
Redeemer,
who formed you in the womb:
I am the LORD, who made all
things,
who alone stretched out the
heavens,
who by myself spread out
the earth;
25 who frustrates the omens of liars,
and makes fools of diviners;
who turns back the wise,
and makes their knowledge
foolish;
26 who confirms the word of his
servant,
and fulfills the prediction of his
messengers;
who says of Jerusalem, "It shall be
inhabited,"
and of the cities of Judah, "They
shall be rebuilt,
and I will raise up their ruins";
27 who says to the deep, "Be dry—
I will dry up your rivers";
28 who says of Cyrus, "He is my
shepherd,
and he shall carry out all my
purpose";
and who says of Jerusalem, "It
shall be rebuilt,"
and of the temple, "Your
foundation shall be laid."

45 Thus says the LORD to his
anointed, to Cyrus,
whose right hand I have grasped
to subdue nations before him
and strip kings of their robes,
to open doors before him—
and the gates shall not be closed:
2 I will go before you
and level the mountains,[t]
I will break in pieces the doors
of bronze
and cut through the bars of
iron,
3 I will give you the treasures of
darkness
and riches hidden in secret
places,
so that you may know that it is I,
the LORD,
the God of Israel, who call you
by your name.
4 For the sake of my servant Jacob,
and Israel my chosen,
I call you by your name,
I surname you, though you do
not know me.

*t* Q Ms Gk: MT *the swellings*

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a god but an image. **13–14**: It is made by human artisans. **14–20**: The same tree is used for fuel and for carving a god; Israel should note this ridiculous inconsistency.

**44.21–23**: **Israel is forgiven and redeemed.** (A reversion to the theme of vv. 6–8). **22**: Like the morning sun, God, the Redeemer (41.14; 63.9), removes the sin which beclouds Israel. **23**: Let all creation praise the LORD! (Compare Jer 51.48; Rev 12.12; 18.20.)

**44.24–45.13**: **The commission of Cyrus. 44.24–28**: An historical-prophetic prologue summarizing the preceding poems, and coming to a climax in God's designating *Cyrus* to be his *shepherd* (term for king, Jer 23.4).

**45.1–7**: Charge to Cyrus, God's *anointed* (i.e. messiah), is universal in scope, just as Israel's mission is to all nations. **1**: The only Old Testament passage in which "messiah" refers to a non-Israelite. **2–3**: God has commissioned Cyrus and will assist him in accomplishing his mission (40.4). **4**: *My servant . . . my chosen*, 41.8; 42.1; 44.1; 49.3, 5, 6. **5–7**: Cyrus is unaware of his charge from

5 I am the LORD, and there is
no other;
besides me there is no god.
I arm you, though you do not
know me,
6 so that they may know, from the
rising of the sun
and from the west, that there is
no one besides me;
I am the LORD, and there is
no other.
7 I form light and create darkness,
I make weal and create woe;
I the LORD do all these things.

8 Shower, O heavens, from above,
and let the skies rain down
righteousness;
let the earth open, that salvation
may spring up,[u]
and let it cause righteousness to
sprout up also;
I the LORD have created it.

9 Woe to you who strive with your
Maker,
earthen vessels with the potter![v]
Does the clay say to the one who
fashions it, "What are you
making"?
or "Your work has no handles"?
10 Woe to anyone who says to a
father, "What are you
begetting?"
or to a woman, "With what are
you in labor?"
11 Thus says the LORD,
the Holy One of Israel, and its
Maker:
Will you question me[w] about my
children,
or command me concerning the
work of my hands?
12 I made the earth,
and created humankind upon it;
it was my hands that stretched out
the heavens,
and I commanded all their host.
13 I have aroused Cyrus[x] in
righteousness,
and I will make all his paths
straight;
he shall build my city
and set my exiles free,
not for price or reward,
says the LORD of hosts.
14 Thus says the LORD:
The wealth of Egypt and the
merchandise of Ethiopia,[y]
and the Sabeans, tall of stature,
shall come over to you and
be yours,
they shall follow you;
they shall come over in chains
and bow down to you.
They will make supplication to
you, saying,
"God is with you alone, and
there is no other;
there is no god besides him."
15 Truly, you are a God who hides
himself,
O God of Israel, the Savior.
16 All of them are put to shame and
confounded,
the makers of idols go in
confusion together.
17 But Israel is saved by the LORD
with everlasting salvation;

*u* Q Ms: MT *that they may bring forth salvation*
*v* Cn: Heb *with the potsherds*, or *with the potters*
*w* Cn: Heb *Ask me of things to come*
*x* Heb *him* *y* Or *Nubia*; Heb *Cush*

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God, who alone determines history's course and will reveal his uniqueness (44.6–8) to all. **8**: A song exulting in the extension of salvation to all.

**45.9–13**: The sovereign power of God. **9–10**: This is the only invective in Second Isaiah; it is directed against those questioning the propriety of Cyrus's messiahship (29.16). **9**: Rom 9.20. **11**: *Children, . . . the work of my hands,* Cyrus and his allies. As Lord of creation and history, God's action should be unquestioned. **12**: 40.12–31; 44.24.

**45.14–25**: **The conversion of the nations** (2.2–4; 42.1–4; 55.3–5; Jer 16.19–21). **14–15**: The nations' wealth will pour into Israel; they will acknowledge Israel's God. Earlier the nations listed here served as Israel's ransom (43.3). **14**: 1 Cor 14.25. **16–17**: Idolmakers are condemned (44.9–20), but Israel is saved.

you shall not be put to shame or confounded
to all eternity.

18 For thus says the LORD,
who created the heavens
(he is God!),
who formed the earth and made it
(he established it;
he did not create it a chaos,
he formed it to be inhabited!):
I am the LORD, and there is
no other.
19 I did not speak in secret,
in a land of darkness;
I did not say to the offspring
of Jacob,
"Seek me in chaos."
I the LORD speak the truth,
I declare what is right.

20 Assemble yourselves and come
together,
draw near, you survivors of the
nations!
They have no knowledge—
those who carry about their
wooden idols,
and keep on praying to a god
that cannot save.
21 Declare and present your case;
let them take counsel together!
Who told this long ago?
Who declared it of old?
Was it not I, the LORD?
There is no other god besides
me,
a righteous God and a Savior;
there is no one besides me.

22 Turn to me and be saved,
all the ends of the earth!
For I am God, and there is
no other.

23 By myself I have sworn,
from my mouth has gone forth
in righteousness
a word that shall not return:
"To me every knee shall bow,
every tongue shall swear."

24 Only in the LORD, it shall be said
of me,
are righteousness and strength;
all who were incensed against him
shall come to him and be
ashamed.
25 In the LORD all the offspring of
Israel
shall triumph and glory.

46 Bel bows down, Nebo stoops,
their idols are on beasts
and cattle;
these things you carry are loaded
as burdens on weary animals.
2 They stoop, they bow down
together;
they cannot save the burden,
but themselves go into
captivity.

3 Listen to me, O house of Jacob,
all the remnant of the house of
Israel,
who have been borne by me from
your birth,
carried from the womb;
4 even to your old age I am he,
even when you turn gray I will
carry you.
I have made, and I will bear;
I will carry and will save.

5 To whom will you liken me and
make me equal,
and compare me, as though we
were alike?

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**45.18–25**: The Creator has revealed himself to Israel. *Chaos,* the state of the world before creation (Gen 1.2). **20–21**: The nations' gods are powerless (44.8; Acts 15.18). **22–25**: Let all nations bow before God and sing his praises! **23**: Compare Rom 14.11; Phil 2.10–11.

**46.1–13**: **The LORD supports Israel. 1–4**: *Bel,* chief god of Babylon, Bel-Marduk; *Nebo,* the Babylonian god Nabu, son of Marduk (Jer 50.2). The gods must be borne and are incapable of protecting their devotees (37.12–13), but God bears (44.2) and protects his devotees. **5–7**: 40.18–20. **7**: Perhaps a ref-

6 Those who lavish gold from the purse,
and weigh out silver in the scales—
they hire a goldsmith, who makes it into a god;
then they fall down and worship!
7 They lift it to their shoulders, they carry it,
they set it in its place, and it stands there;
it cannot move from its place.
If one cries out to it, it does not answer
or save anyone from trouble.

8 Remember this and consider,[z]
recall it to mind, you transgressors,
9 remember the former things of old;
for I am God, and there is no other;
I am God, and there is no one like me,
10 declaring the end from the beginning
and from ancient times things not yet done,
saying, "My purpose shall stand,
and I will fulfill my intention,"
11 calling a bird of prey from the east,
the man for my purpose from a far country.
I have spoken, and I will bring it to pass;
I have planned, and I will do it.

12 Listen to me, you stubborn of heart,
you who are far from deliverance:
13 I bring near my deliverance, it is not far off,
and my salvation will not tarry;
I will put salvation in Zion,
for Israel my glory.

47 Come down and sit in the dust,
virgin daughter Babylon!
Sit on the ground without a throne,
daughter Chaldea!
For you shall no more be called
tender and delicate.
2 Take the millstones and grind meal,
remove your veil,
strip off your robe, uncover your legs,
pass through the rivers.
3 Your nakedness shall be uncovered,
and your shame shall be seen.
I will take vengeance,
and I will spare no one.
4 Our Redeemer—the LORD of hosts is his name—
is the Holy One of Israel.

5 Sit in silence, and go into darkness,
daughter Chaldea!
For you shall no more be called
the mistress of kingdoms.
6 I was angry with my people,
I profaned my heritage;
I gave them into your hand,
you showed them no mercy;
on the aged you made your yoke exceedingly heavy.
7 You said, "I shall be mistress forever,"

[z] Meaning of Heb uncertain

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erence to New Year's festival processions in Babylon (45.20). **8–11**: 45.9–13.

**46.8**: *This,* Israel's history (44.21). **9**: 41.22–29; 42.8–9. **11**: *Bird of prey,* a reference to Cyrus (41.2; 44.28). **12–13**: Only God can save; unbelievers take note!

**47.1–15**: **Lamentation over Babylon. 1–4**: God strips Babylon of her royalty. **1**: *Virgin daughter,* unconquered (used of Jerusalem, 37.22; Israel, Jer 31.4; Egypt, Jer 46.11). **2**: *Grind meal,* do the work of slaves. **3**: Hos 2.9–12; Jer 13.20–27; Nah 3.5. **5–7**: Babylon's pride condemned. She wrongly attributed her strength to herself; it came from God (Jer 27.6–7; 25.12–14).

so that you did not lay these things to heart
or remember their end.

8 Now therefore hear this, you lover of pleasures,
who sit securely,
who say in your heart,
"I am, and there is no one besides me;
I shall not sit as a widow
or know the loss of children"—
9 both these things shall come upon you
in a moment, in one day:
the loss of children and widowhood
shall come upon you in full measure,
in spite of your many sorceries
and the great power of your enchantments.

10 You felt secure in your wickedness;
you said, "No one sees me."
Your wisdom and your knowledge
led you astray,
and you said in your heart,
"I am, and there is no one besides me."
11 But evil shall come upon you,
which you cannot charm away;
disaster shall fall upon you,
which you will not be able to ward off;
and ruin shall come on you suddenly,
of which you know nothing.

12 Stand fast in your enchantments
and your many sorceries,
with which you have labored from your youth;
perhaps you may be able to succeed,
perhaps you may inspire terror.
13 You are wearied with your many consultations;
let those who study[a] the heavens
stand up and save you,
those who gaze at the stars,
and at each new moon predict what[b] shall befall you.

14 See, they are like stubble,
the fire consumes them;
they cannot deliver themselves from the power of the flame.
No coal for warming oneself is this,
no fire to sit before!
15 Such to you are those with whom you have labored,
who have trafficked with you from your youth;
they all wander about in their own paths;
there is no one to save you.

48 Hear this, O house of Jacob,
who are called by the name of Israel,
and who came forth from the loins[c] of Judah;
who swear by the name of the LORD,
and invoke the God of Israel,
but not in truth or right.
2 For they call themselves after the holy city,
and lean on the God of Israel;
the LORD of hosts is his name.

*a* Meaning of Heb uncertain Compare Vg: Heb *from what waters*
*b* Gk Syr
*c* Cn: Heb

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**47.8–9**: Babylon's sense of security is illusory. **8**: *I am . . .*, an arrogant presumption of divinity (42.8; 44.6). **9**: Jer 10.17–22; 15.5–9; Rev 18.8. **10–11**: *Wisdom* and *knowledge* (e.g. divination, astrology, magic; vv. 12–13) fail to reveal her approaching fall (*you know nothing*). **14–15**: Like stubble in a fire, so Babylon will be consumed; both vassals and allies will desert her (Jer 51.58).

**48.1–22**: **Hear and see.** This chapter summarizes the first section of Second Isaiah, which it concludes. It emphasizes the control of God over history and his action within it. **1–2**: The close relationship between God and

3 The former things I declared long ago,
they went out from my mouth and I made them known;
then suddenly I did them and they came to pass.
4 Because I know that you are obstinate,
and your neck is an iron sinew and your forehead brass,
5 I declared them to you from long ago,
before they came to pass I announced them to you,
so that you would not say, "My idol did them,
my carved image and my cast image commanded them."

6 You have heard; now see all this;
and will you not declare it?
From this time forward I make you hear new things,
hidden things that you have not known.
7 They are created now, not long ago;
before today you have never heard of them,
so that you could not say, "I already knew them."
8 You have never heard, you have never known,
from of old your ear has not been opened.
For I knew that you would deal very treacherously,
and that from birth you were called a rebel.

9 For my name's sake I defer my anger,
for the sake of my praise I restrain it for you,
so that I may not cut you off.
10 See, I have refined you, but not like[d] silver;
I have tested you in the furnace of adversity.
11 For my own sake, for my own sake, I do it,
for why should my name[e] be profaned?
My glory I will not give to another.

12 Listen to me, O Jacob,
and Israel, whom I called:
I am He; I am the first,
and I am the last.
13 My hand laid the foundation of the earth,
and my right hand spread out the heavens;
when I summon them,
they stand at attention.

14 Assemble, all of you, and hear!
Who among them has declared these things?
The LORD loves him;
he shall perform his purpose on Babylon,
and his arm shall be against the Chaldeans.
15 I, even I, have spoken and called him,

*d* Cn: Heb *with* *e* Gk Old Latin: Heb *for why should it*

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his undeserving people (*not in truth or right*). **3–5:** God's prophets announced future events to preclude Israel's wrongly ascribing them to other forces (*idol; cast image*). *Former things,* 41.22–29; 43.9–12; 45.21. Israel's obstinacy is frequently deplored (Ex 32.9; Deut 9.13; Jer 5.5; 7.26).

**48.6–8:** *New things,* Israel's deliverance by Cyrus (43.18–19). God's goodness is renewed daily, but Israel's unfaithfulness is almost axiomatic (Ezek 2.6–8; Deut 32.5). **9–10:** The glory of God is the purpose of Israel's salvation (Ezek 20.22). *Furnace,* the Exile; earlier used to refer to the Egyptian bondage (Deut 4.20; Jer 11.4). **12–13:** *I am He . . . the first . . . the last,* emphasizing God's oneness, uniqueness, and eternity (43.10; 44.6; Rev 1.17; 2.8; 22.13).

**48.14–15:** *You,* Israel; *them,* idols; *him,* Cyrus. **16:** *It,* the creation. **17:** *Teaches* and *leads,* description of God's historic relationship with Israel (55.12; Ex 13.18; Deut 29.5; Ps 27.11). **18–19:** Ps 81.13–16. *Sand,* Gen 22.17. **20–22:** The prophet sees Israel's deliverance

I have brought him, and he will
prosper in his way.
16 Draw near to me, hear this!
From the beginning I have not
spoken in secret,
from the time it came to be I
have been there.
And now the Lord GOD has sent
me and his spirit.

17 Thus says the LORD,
your Redeemer, the Holy One
of Israel:
I am the LORD your God,
who teaches you for your
own good,
who leads you in the way you
should go.
18 O that you had paid attention to
my commandments!
Then your prosperity would
have been like a river,
and your success like the waves
of the sea;
19 your offspring would have been
like the sand,
and your descendants like its
grains;
their name would never be cut off
or destroyed from before me.

20 Go out from Babylon, flee from
Chaldea,
declare this with a shout of joy,
proclaim it,
send it forth to the end of the
earth;
say, "The LORD has redeemed
his servant Jacob!"
21 They did not thirst when he led
them through the deserts;
he made water flow for them
from the rock;
he split open the rock and the
water gushed out.
22 "There is no peace," says the
LORD, "for the wicked."

49 Listen to me, O coastlands,
pay attention, you peoples
from far away!
The LORD called me before I
was born,
while I was in my mother's
womb he named me.
2 He made my mouth like a sharp
sword,
in the shadow of his hand he
hid me;
he made me a polished arrow,
in his quiver he hid me away.
3 And he said to me, "You are my
servant,
Israel, in whom I will be
glorified."
4 But I said, "I have labored in vain,
I have spent my strength for
nothing and vanity;
yet surely my cause is with
the LORD,
and my reward with my God."

5 And now the LORD says,
who formed me in the womb to
be his servant,
to bring Jacob back to him,
and that Israel might be
gathered to him,
for I am honored in the sight of
the LORD,
and my God has become my
strength—
6 he says,
"It is too light a thing that you
should be my servant
to raise up the tribes of Jacob
and to restore the survivors of
Israel;
I will give you as a light to the
nations,

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as the Exodus (Ex 17.1–7; Jer 31.10). **22:** 57.21.

**49.1–6: The second Servant Song** (see 42.1–4 n.). **1–3:** The servant (Israel) speaks. **1:** *Listen,* 41.1. *Called . . . named,* Jer 1.5; Gal 1.15. **2:** *Sharp sword,* Eph 6.17; Heb 4.12. **3–4:** In serving God, Israel will be glorified. Though his ministry appears futile, his reward is in God (1 Kings 19.4–18; Jer 15.15–21). **5–6:** The life and mission of old and new Israel are contrasted (compare Acts 13.47; 26.23). *Light,* 42.6.

that my salvation may reach to the end of the earth."

7 Thus says the LORD,
the Redeemer of Israel and his Holy One,
to one deeply despised, abhorred by the nations,
the slave of rulers,
"Kings shall see and stand up,
princes, and they shall prostrate themselves,
because of the LORD, who is faithful,
the Holy One of Israel, who has chosen you."

8 Thus says the LORD:
In a time of favor I have answered you,
on a day of salvation I have helped you;
I have kept you and given you as a covenant to the people,[f]
to establish the land,
to apportion the desolate heritages;
9 saying to the prisoners, "Come out,"
to those who are in darkness, "Show yourselves."
They shall feed along the ways,
on all the bare heights[g] shall be their pasture;
10 they shall not hunger or thirst,
neither scorching wind nor sun shall strike them down,
for he who has pity on them will lead them,
and by springs of water will guide them.
11 And I will turn all my mountains into a road,
and my highways shall be raised up.
12 Lo, these shall come from far away,
and lo, these from the north and from the west,
and these from the land of Syene.[h]

13 Sing for joy, O heavens, and exult, O earth;
break forth, O mountains, into singing!
For the LORD has comforted his people,
and will have compassion on his suffering ones.

14 But Zion said, "The LORD has forsaken me,
my Lord has forgotten me."
15 Can a woman forget her nursing child,
or show no compassion for the child of her womb?
Even these may forget,
yet I will not forget you.
16 See, I have inscribed you on the palms of my hands;
your walls are continually before me.
17 Your builders outdo your destroyers,[i]
and those who laid you waste go away from you.
18 Lift up your eyes all around and see;
they all gather, they come to you.
As I live, says the LORD,
you shall put all of them on like an ornament,

*f* Meaning of Heb uncertain *g* Or *the trails*
*h* Q Ms: MT *Sinim* *i* Or *Your children come swiftly; your destroyers*

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**49.7–26: Return and restoration. 7**: The Servant of the nations is served by them (some take this verse with vv. 1–6). God's historic faithfulness is Israel's assurance. **8–9b**: Though in bondage as in Egypt (48.10), they will be released and restored (compare 2 Cor 6.2). **9c–11**: The imagery of the Exodus (48.20–22) is combined with that of Israel's deliverance (40.3–4, 11). **12**: *Syene,* see Ezek 29.10 n.

**49.13**: Hymn praising God, the Comforter (44.23). **14–16**: God protests his love for Israel (Hos 2.14–23; Jer 31.20). *Inscribed you,* as a tattoo. **18**: As if studded with jewels (Jer

and like a bride you shall bind
them on.

19 Surely your waste and your
desolate places
and your devastated land—
surely now you will be too
crowded for your
inhabitants,
and those who swallowed you
up will be far away.
20 The children born in the time of
your bereavement
will yet say in your hearing:
"The place is too crowded for me;
make room for me to settle."
21 Then you will say in your heart,
"Who has borne me these?
I was bereaved and barren,
exiled and put away—
so who has reared these?
I was left all alone—
where then have these come
from?"

22 Thus says the Lord GOD:
I will soon lift up my hand to the
nations,
and raise my signal to the
peoples;
and they shall bring your sons in
their bosom,
and your daughters shall be
carried on their shoulders.
23 Kings shall be your foster fathers,
and their queens your nursing
mothers.
With their faces to the ground
they shall bow down to
you,
and lick the dust of your feet.
Then you will know that I am the
LORD;
those who wait for me shall not
be put to shame.

24 Can the prey be taken from the
mighty,
or the captives of a tyrant[j] be
rescued?
25 But thus says the LORD:
Even the captives of the mighty
shall be taken,
and the prey of the tyrant be
rescued;
for I will contend with those who
contend with you,
and I will save your children.
26 I will make your oppressors eat
their own flesh,
and they shall be drunk with
their own blood as with
wine.
Then all flesh shall know
that I am the LORD your Savior,
and your Redeemer, the Mighty
One of Jacob.

50 Thus says the LORD:
Where is your mother's bill of
divorce
with which I put her away?
Or which of my creditors is it
to whom I have sold you?
No, because of your sins you
were sold,
and for your transgressions your
mother was put away.
2 Why was no one there when I
came?

*j* Q Ms Syr Vg: MT *of a righteous person*

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2.32), ruined Jerusalem will be repopulated. **20–21**: She (Zion) who had no hope for children will have more inhabitants than room for them (Jer 31.15–17). *Children*, those born during the Exile.

**49.22–23**: A *signal* (fire, 30.17; Jer 6.1) announces, not an invasion (5.26; 13.2; 18.3), but the beginning of Judah's restoration (11.10, 12; 62.10). Those who oppress God's people will become their servants. **24–26**: God will free helpless captive Israel (9.20). All the earth will acknowledge Israel's God (1.24; 60.16).

**50.1–3**: **Covenant, faithfulness, and judgment. 1**: Exiled Israel is neither divorced (Deut 24.1–4) nor irretrievably sold into slavery (52.3; Ex 21.7) but punished for her unfaithfulness (Hos 2.4–9; Jer ch 3; Ezek ch 16). **2–3**: When God appeared in his mighty acts or spoke through his prophets, no one responded.

Why did no one answer when I called?
Is my hand shortened, that it cannot redeem?
Or have I no power to deliver?
By my rebuke I dry up the sea,
I make the rivers a desert;
their fish stink for lack of water,
and die of thirst.[k]
3 I clothe the heavens with blackness,
and make sackcloth their covering.

4 The Lord GOD has given me
the tongue of a teacher,[l]
that I may know how to sustain
the weary with a word.
Morning by morning he wakens—
wakens my ear
to listen as those who are taught.
5 The Lord GOD has opened my ear,
and I was not rebellious,
I did not turn backward.
6 I gave my back to those who struck me,
and my cheeks to those who pulled out the beard;
I did not hide my face
from insult and spitting.

7 The Lord GOD helps me;
therefore I have not been disgraced;
therefore I have set my face
like flint,
and I know that I shall not be put to shame;
8 he who vindicates me is near.
Who will contend with me?
Let us stand up together.
Who are my adversaries?
Let them confront me.
9 It is the Lord GOD who helps me;
who will declare me guilty?
All of them will wear out like a garment;
the moth will eat them up.

10 Who among you fears the LORD
and obeys the voice of his servant,
who walks in darkness
and has no light,
yet trusts in the name of the LORD
and relies upon his God?
11 But all of you are kindlers of fire,
lighters of firebrands.[m]
Walk in the flame of your fire,
and among the brands that you have kindled!
This is what you shall have from my hand:
you shall lie down in torment.

51 Listen to me, you that pursue righteousness,
you that seek the LORD.
Look to the rock from which you were hewn,

*k* Or *die on the thirsty ground* *l* Cn: Heb *of those who are taught* *m* Syr: Heb *you gird yourselves with firebrands*

**50.4–11: The third Servant Song** (see 42.1–4 n.). **4–6:** Taught by God (Jer 1.4–10), the Servant conscientiously brings God's comfort to his fellow Israelites (the *weary*) who treat him despicably (52.13–53.12). Here the prophet may be identifying himself with the Servant (Jer 11.18; compare Lk 2.32; Acts 13.47; 26.23). **7–9:** Using law court terminology, the Servant expresses unshakable confidence that God will vindicate him (Jer 1.18–19; 17.17–18; Ezek 3.7–11; Rom 8.33). **10–11:** God leads his Servant safely through the darkness of his faithless people's rejection; they who walk by their own lights will be punished.

**51.1–16: Salvation for Abraham's children. 1–8:** Past revelation and future salvation. **1–3:** As with his promises to Abraham (Gen 12.1–3), God will fulfill his promised salvation of Zion (49.20–21). **1:** *Rock, quarry,* symbols of Israel's solidarity. **2:** The only reference to *Sarah* in the Old Testament outside of Genesis. **3:** *Eden . . . garden of the LORD;* the symbolism of creation appears often in biblical pictures of the new age. The end-time will be a return to the ideal conditions in Eden (see Ezek 36.35; 47.1–12). **4–6:** Salvation is imminent. **4:** *Teaching* (1.10) and *justice* (42.4) recall First Isaiah (1.21; 5.7). **5:** *Arms,* 40.10. **6:** Mt 24.35.

and to the quarry from which
you were dug.
2 Look to Abraham your father
and to Sarah who bore you;
for he was but one when I called
him,
but I blessed him and made
him many.
3 For the LORD will comfort Zion;
he will comfort all her waste
places,
and will make her wilderness
like Eden,
her desert like the garden of
the LORD;
joy and gladness will be found
in her,
thanksgiving and the voice
of song.

4 Listen to me, my people,
and give heed to me, my nation;
for a teaching will go out from
me,
and my justice for a light to
the peoples.
5 I will bring near my deliverance
swiftly,
my salvation has gone out
and my arms will rule the
peoples;
the coastlands wait for me,
and for my arm they hope.
6 Lift up your eyes to the heavens,
and look at the earth beneath;
for the heavens will vanish like
smoke,
the earth will wear out like a
garment,
and those who live on it will die
like gnats;[n]
but my salvation will be forever,
and my deliverance will never
be ended.

7 Listen to me, you who know
righteousness,
you people who have my
teaching in your hearts;
do not fear the reproach of others,
and do not be dismayed when
they revile you.
8 For the moth will eat them up like
a garment,
and the worm will eat them
like wool;
but my deliverance will be
forever,
and my salvation to all
generations.

9 Awake, awake, put on strength,
O arm of the LORD!
Awake, as in days of old,
the generations of long ago!
Was it not you who cut Rahab in
pieces,
who pierced the dragon?
10 Was it not you who dried up
the sea,
the waters of the great deep;
who made the depths of the sea
a way
for the redeemed to cross over?
11 So the ransomed of the LORD shall
return,
and come to Zion with singing;
everlasting joy shall be upon their
heads;
they shall obtain joy and
gladness,
and sorrow and sighing shall
flee away.

12 I, I am he who comforts you;
why then are you afraid of a
mere mortal who must die,
a human being who fades like
grass?

*n* Or *in like manner*

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**51.9–16**: Prayer of lament and assuring answer (for pattern of vv. 1–8, 9–16, compare 26.8–14, 16–21; 49.14–23, 24–26; Jer 15.10, 15–21). **9–11**: Plea for God's intervention, using the Hebrew version of the primeval combat between God and chaos-monsters (*Rahab*, 30.7; *dragon* [Hebrew, "tannin"], 27.1; Ezek 29.3; *sea* [Hebrew, "yam"], Job 38.8; *deep* [Hebrew, "tehom"], Ezek 26.19; Job 38.16). **12–14**: What mortal can compete with the

*Deliverance draws near*

13 You have forgotten the LORD,
your Maker,
who stretched out the heavens
and laid the foundations of
the earth.
You fear continually all day long
because of the fury of the
oppressor,
who is bent on destruction.
But where is the fury of the
oppressor?
14 The oppressed shall speedily be
released;
they shall not die and go down
to the Pit,
nor shall they lack bread.
15 For I am the LORD your God,
who stirs up the sea so that its
waves roar—
the LORD of hosts is his name.
16 I have put my words in your
mouth,
and hidden you in the shadow
of my hand,
stretching out[o] the heavens
and laying the foundations of
the earth,
and saying to Zion, "You are
my people."

17 Rouse yourself, rouse yourself!
Stand up, O Jerusalem,
you who have drunk at the hand
of the LORD
the cup of his wrath,
who have drunk to the dregs
the bowl of staggering.
18 There is no one to guide her
among all the children she
has borne;
there is no one to take her by
the hand
among all the children she has
brought up.
19 These two things have befallen
you
—who will grieve with you?—
devastation and destruction,
famine and sword—
who will comfort you?[p]
20 Your children have fainted,
they lie at the head of every
street
like an antelope in a net;
they are full of the wrath of
the LORD,
the rebuke of your God.

21 Therefore hear this, you who are
wounded,[q]
who are drunk, but not
with wine:
22 Thus says your Sovereign, the
LORD,
your God who pleads the cause
of his people:
See, I have taken from your hand
the cup of staggering;
you shall drink no more
from the bowl of my wrath.
23 And I will put it into the hand of
your tormentors,
who have said to you,
"Bow down, that we may walk
on you";
and you have made your back like
the ground
and like the street for them to
walk on.

52 Awake, awake,
put on your strength, O Zion!
Put on your beautiful garments,
O Jerusalem, the holy city;
for the uncircumcised and the
unclean

*o* Syr: Heb *planting* *p* Q Ms Gk Syr Vg: MT *how may I comfort you?* *q* Or *humbled*

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omnipotent and eternal God (Ps 90.5)? *Oppressed,* as prisoners. *Pit,* Sheol (14.9–11). **15–16**: *Your God . . . my people* reemphasizes the covenant relationship (43.1). **15**: Jer 31.35.

**51.17–52.12: God's kingship. 17–20**: Jerusalem has drunk deeply of *the cup of* God's *wrath* (Jer 25.15–31) and lies exhausted, depopulated, and destroyed. **21–23**: But now her oppressors will drink of it (41.1–42.4; 45.20–25).

**52.1–2**: Jerusalem is bidden to arise (51.17). *The uncircumcised and the unclean* refers to foreigners (33.19) and ritually unclean Jews. **3–6**: A prose interpolation. *Name* is

shall enter you no more.
2 Shake yourself from the dust,
rise up,
O captive[r] Jerusalem;
loose the bonds from your neck,
O captive daughter Zion!

3 For thus says the LORD: You were sold for nothing, and you shall be redeemed without money. 4For thus says the Lord GOD: Long ago, my people went down into Egypt to reside there as aliens; the Assyrian, too, has oppressed them without cause. 5Now therefore what am I doing here, says the LORD, seeing that my people are taken away without cause? Their rulers howl, says the LORD, and continually, all day long, my name is despised. 6Therefore my people shall know my name; therefore in that day they shall know that it is I who speak; here am I.

7 How beautiful upon the
mountains
are the feet of the messenger
who announces peace,
who brings good news,
who announces salvation,
who says to Zion, "Your God
reigns."
8 Listen! Your sentinels lift up
their voices,
together they sing for joy;
for in plain sight they see
the return of the LORD to Zion.
9 Break forth together into singing,
you ruins of Jerusalem;
for the LORD has comforted his
people,
he has redeemed Jerusalem.
10 The LORD has bared his holy arm
before the eyes of all the
nations;
and all the ends of the earth
shall see
the salvation of our God.

11 Depart, depart, go out from there!
Touch no unclean thing;
go out from the midst of it, purify
yourselves,
you who carry the vessels of
the LORD.
12 For you shall not go out in haste,
and you shall not go in flight;
for the LORD will go before you,
and the God of Israel will be
your rear guard.

13 See, my servant shall prosper;
he shall be exalted and lifted up,
and shall be very high.
14 Just as there were many who were
astonished at him[s]
—so marred was his
appearance, beyond human
semblance,
and his form beyond that of
mortals—
15 so he shall startle[t] many nations;
kings shall shut their mouths
because of him;
for that which had not been told
them they shall see,
and that which they had not
heard they shall
contemplate.

53 Who has believed what we
have heard?
And to whom has the arm of

*r* Cn: Heb *rise up, sit* *s* Syr Tg: Heb *you*
*t* Meaning of Heb uncertain

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more than appellation; it involves the person herself or himself (compare Ex 20.7). God will not allow himself to be viewed with contempt by his people's oppressors: Egypt (Ezek 29.9), Assyria (10.7–11), Babylon (Jer 50.29).

**52.7–8**: Tensely, all creation awaits word of God's decisive victory (Ps 125.2; 2 Sam 18.25–27; Nah 1.15; Rom 10.15). The *sentinels* see the victor returning (40.9). **11–12**: Ritually clean, people and priests return home in peace (Ex 13.21–22).

**52.13–53.12**: **The fourth Servant Song** (see 42.1–4 n.). **52.13–15**: God will exalt his cruelly disfigured Servant (taken here to be Israel) to the numbed astonishment of the world's rulers (49.7, 23). **15**: Rom 15.21.

**53.1–3**: A report beginning with rhetorical questions (40.12; 50.8–10). The Servant's background and appearance (52.14) are un-

the LORD been revealed?
2 For he grew up before him like a young plant,
and like a root out of dry ground;
he had no form or majesty that we should look at him,
nothing in his appearance that we should desire him.
3 He was despised and rejected by others;
a man of suffering[u] and acquainted with infirmity;
and as one from whom others hide their faces[v]
he was despised, and we held him of no account.

4 Surely he has borne our infirmities and carried our diseases;
yet we accounted him stricken, struck down by God, and afflicted.
5 But he was wounded for our transgressions,
crushed for our iniquities;
upon him was the punishment that made us whole,
and by his bruises we are healed.
6 All we like sheep have gone astray;
we have all turned to our own way,
and the LORD has laid on him the iniquity of us all.

7 He was oppressed, and he was afflicted,
yet he did not open his mouth;
like a lamb that is led to the slaughter,
and like a sheep that before its shearers is silent,
so he did not open his mouth.
8 By a perversion of justice he was taken away.
Who could have imagined his future?
For he was cut off from the land of the living,
stricken for the transgression of my people.
9 They made his grave with the wicked
and his tomb[w] with the rich,[x]
although he had done no violence,
and there was no deceit in his mouth.

10 Yet it was the will of the LORD to crush him with pain.[y]
When you make his life an offering for sin,[z]
he shall see his offspring, and shall prolong his days;
through him the will of the LORD shall prosper.
11 Out of his anguish he shall see light;[a]
he shall find satisfaction through his knowledge.
The righteous one,[b] my servant, shall make many righteous,
and he shall bear their iniquities.
12 Therefore I will allot him a portion with the great,

*u* Or *a man of sorrows* *v* Or *as one who hides his face from us* *w* Q Ms: MT *and in his death* *x* Cn: Heb *with a rich person* *y* Or *by disease*; meaning of Heb uncertain *z* Meaning of Heb uncertain *a* Q Mss: MT lacks *light* *b* Or *and he shall find satisfaction. Through his knowledge, the righteous one*

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distinguished; his person, rejected. **1**: John 12.38. **2**: *Young plant*, compare 11.1; *root*, 11.10, compare Jer 23.5; these are sometimes considered Messianic allusions. **3**: Like a leper, he suffers painful loneliness and rejection by the community (Job 19.13–19). **4–6**: By the Servant's vicarious suffering, he restores all people to God (Mt 8.17; 1 Pet 2.24–25). *Whole*, general well-being ("peace," 48.18). **53.7–9**: Unlike Jeremiah (11.18–12.6) or Job, the Servant suffers silently. He is unjustly condemned (compare Lk 22.37), executed, and ignominiously buried (compare Mt 27.57–60). See Acts 8.32–33. **9b**: Some emend to read, "and his tomb with evildoers" (others read "with demons [satyrs]"). **10–12**: The Servant's suffering manifests God's judgment (against sin) and mercy (upon sinful human beings). The Servant brings blessings to many. The poem is taken to describe

and he shall divide the spoil
with the strong;
because he poured out himself
to death,
and was numbered with the
transgressors;
yet he bore the sin of many,
and made intercession for the
transgressors.

54 Sing, O barren one who did
not bear;
burst into song and shout,
you who have not been in
labor!
For the children of the desolate
woman will be more
than the children of her that is
married, says the LORD.
2 Enlarge the site of your tent,
and let the curtains of your
habitations be stretched out;
do not hold back; lengthen
your cords
and strengthen your stakes.
3 For you will spread out to the
right and to the left,
and your descendants will
possess the nations
and will settle the desolate
towns.

4 Do not fear, for you will not be
ashamed;
do not be discouraged, for you
will not suffer disgrace;
for you will forget the shame of
your youth,
and the disgrace of your
widowhood you will
remember no more.
5 For your Maker is your husband,
the LORD of hosts is his name;
the Holy One of Israel is your
Redeemer,
the God of the whole earth he
is called.
6 For the LORD has called you
like a wife forsaken and grieved
in spirit,
like the wife of a man's youth
when she is cast off,
says your God.
7 For a brief moment I abandoned
you,
but with great compassion I will
gather you.
8 In overflowing wrath for a
moment
I hid my face from you,
but with everlasting love I will
have compassion on you,
says the LORD, your Redeemer.

9 This is like the days of Noah to
me:
Just as I swore that the waters
of Noah
would never again go over
the earth,
so I have sworn that I will not be
angry with you
and will not rebuke you.
10 For the mountains may depart
and the hills be removed,
but my steadfast love shall not
depart from you,
and my covenant of peace shall
not be removed,
says the LORD, who has
compassion on you.

11 O afflicted one, storm-tossed, and
not comforted,
I am about to set your stones in
antimony,

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the purpose of God's people, the covenant community.

**54.1–17**: **Song of assurance to Israel. 1–3**: 49.14–21. **1**: *Barren,* exilic Zion, deserted by God, her "husband" (Ezek ch 16); *married,* pre-exilic Zion (62.4; Gal 4.27). **4–8**: God, the faithful husband. **4**: *Shame . . . youth,* pre-exilic infidelity; *widowhood,* the Exile. **6**: God will not irrevocably reject his "wife" (Hos 2.19; 11.8–9). **7**: Reconciliation is imminent (Ps 27.10; 2 Cor 4.17–18). **8**: God's *everlasting love* for his people (43.4; Jer 31.3; a parent's love, 49.14–16; Jer 31.20; a husband's love, Jer 2.2; Ezek 16.8) is unmerited and unwaveringly faithful.

**54.9–10**: The everlasting covenant (Jer 32.40). **9**: Gen 8.21–22; 9.11–17. **10**: Jer 31.35–36; Mk 13.31; *covenant of peace,* 48.18;

and lay your foundations with sapphires.[c]
12 I will make your pinnacles of rubies,
your gates of jewels,
and all your wall of precious stones.
13 All your children shall be taught by the LORD,
and great shall be the prosperity of your children.
14 In righteousness you shall be established;
you shall be far from oppression, for you shall not fear;
and from terror, for it shall not come near you.
15 If anyone stirs up strife,
it is not from me;
whoever stirs up strife with you shall fall because of you.
16 See it is I who have created the smith
who blows the fire of coals,
and produces a weapon fit for its purpose;
I have also created the ravager to destroy.
17 No weapon that is fashioned against you shall prosper,
and you shall confute every tongue that rises against you in judgment.
This is the heritage of the servants of the LORD
and their vindication from me, says the LORD.

55 Ho, everyone who thirsts,
come to the waters;
and you that have no money,
come, buy and eat!
Come, buy wine and milk
without money and without price.
2 Why do you spend your money for that which is not bread,
and your labor for that which does not satisfy?
Listen carefully to me, and eat what is good,
and delight yourselves in rich food.
3 Incline your ear, and come to me;
listen, so that you may live.
I will make with you an everlasting covenant,
my steadfast, sure love for David.
4 See, I made him a witness to the peoples,
a leader and commander for the peoples.
5 See, you shall call nations that you do not know,
and nations that do not know you shall run to you,
because of the LORD your God,
the Holy One of Israel,
for he has glorified you.

6 Seek the LORD while he may be found,
call upon him while he is near;
7 let the wicked forsake their way,
and the unrighteous their thoughts;
let them return to the LORD, that he may have mercy on them,
and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon.

*c* Or *lapis lazuli*

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Ezek 34.25. **11–14**: New Jerusalem (*afflicted one*, compare 51.21) is Paradise restored (Ezek 28.13–19; Jn 6.45; Rev 21.19). **15**; Commentary on v. 14. **17**: No one can assault God's *servants* with impunity (65.13–15).

**55.1–13**: **A hymn of joy and triumph,** celebrating the approaching consummation of Israel's restoration. This concludes the second section of Second Isaiah (see 48.1–22 n.).

**1–2**: Reminiscent of wisdom's invitation to a banquet (Prov 9.3–6; compare Jn 7.37); God's grace cannot be purchased. **3–5**: God's promise to David (2 Sam 7.4–17) continues in the *everlasting covenant* (54.9–10; Jer 33.19–26; compare Jer 31.31–34). Emphasis is on Israel's messianism, not Davidic messianism.

**55.6–9**: A call to repentance (Jer 29.12–14; Mt 3.2) and trust in God's inscrutable grace

8 For my thoughts are not your thoughts,
nor are your ways my ways,
says the LORD.
9 For as the heavens are higher than the earth,
so are my ways higher than your ways
and my thoughts than your thoughts.

10 For as the rain and the snow come down from heaven,
and do not return there until they have watered the earth,
making it bring forth and sprout,
giving seed to the sower and bread to the eater,
11 so shall my word be that goes out from my mouth;
it shall not return to me empty,
but it shall accomplish that which I purpose,
and succeed in the thing for which I sent it.

12 For you shall go out in joy,
and be led back in peace;
the mountains and the hills before you
shall burst into song,
and all the trees of the field shall clap their hands.
13 Instead of the thorn shall come up the cypress;
instead of the brier shall come up the myrtle;
and it shall be to the LORD for a memorial,
for an everlasting sign that shall not be cut off.

56 Thus says the LORD:
Maintain justice, and do what is right,
for soon my salvation will come,
and my deliverance be revealed.

2 Happy is the mortal who does this,
the one who holds it fast,
who keeps the sabbath, not profaning it,
and refrains from doing any evil.

3 Do not let the foreigner joined to the LORD say,
"The LORD will surely separate me from his people";
and do not let the eunuch say,
"I am just a dry tree."
4 For thus says the LORD:
To the eunuchs who keep my sabbaths,
who choose the things that please me
and hold fast my covenant,
5 I will give, in my house and within my walls,
a monument and a name better than sons and daughters;
I will give them an everlasting name
that shall not be cut off.

6 And the foreigners who join themselves to the LORD,
to minister to him, to love the name of the LORD,
and to be his servants,
all who keep the sabbath, and do not profane it,
and hold fast my covenant—

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(Ps 103.11; Rom 11.33–36). **10–11**: As *rain* causes germination and ultimately provides sustenance, so does God's word (see 9.8 n.). **12–13**: The new Exodus (compare 43.16–21; 49.9–11) into an Eden-like land (see 51.3 n.; 41.18, 19; 44.3–4).

**56.1–66.24**: **Miscellaneous post-restoration oracles** (after 538 B.C. This section is sometimes called Third Isaiah; see Introduction, p. 866 OT).

**56.1–8**: **A blessing on all who keep the sabbath** (compare 58.13–14; Jer 17.19–27). **2**: *Happy is the mortal,* compare Ps 1.1; Jer 17.7; Mt 5.2–12. **3**: *Foreigner,* the reference is to the proselyte (see v. 6). **4–5**: God himself will honor faithful *eunuchs.* **6–7**: Faithful proselytes will present acceptable sacrifices; *house of prayer,* Mk 11.17; *for all peoples,* 60.1–14. **8**: God's community includes Israel and proselytes.

7 these I will bring to my holy mountain,
and make them joyful in my house of prayer;
their burnt offerings and their sacrifices
will be accepted on my altar;
for my house shall be called a house of prayer
for all peoples.
8 Thus says the Lord GOD,
who gathers the outcasts of Israel,
I will gather others to them
besides those already gathered.[d]

9 All you wild animals,
all you wild animals in the forest, come to devour!
10 Israel's[e] sentinels are blind,
they are all without knowledge;
they are all silent dogs
that cannot bark;
dreaming, lying down,
loving to slumber.
11 The dogs have a mighty appetite;
they never have enough.
The shepherds also have no understanding;
they have all turned to their own way,
to their own gain, one and all.
12 "Come," they say, "let us[f] get wine;
let us fill ourselves with strong drink.
And tomorrow will be like today,
great beyond measure."

**57** The righteous perish,
and no one takes it to heart;
the devout are taken away,
while no one understands.
For the righteous are taken away from calamity,
2 and they enter into peace;
those who walk uprightly
will rest on their couches.
3 But as for you, come here,
you children of a sorceress,
you offspring of an adulterer and a whore.[g]
4 Whom are you mocking?
Against whom do you open your mouth wide
and stick out your tongue?
Are you not children of transgression,
the offspring of deceit—
5 you that burn with lust among the oaks,
under every green tree;
you that slaughter your children in the valleys,
under the clefts of the rocks?
6 Among the smooth stones of the valley is your portion;
they, they, are your lot;
to them you have poured out a drink offering,
you have brought a grain offering.
Shall I be appeased for these things?
7 Upon a high and lofty mountain
you have set your bed,
and there you went up to offer sacrifice.
8 Behind the door and the doorpost
you have set up your symbol;

*d* Heb *besides his gathered ones* *e* Heb *His*
*f* Q Ms Syr Vg Tg: MT *me* *g* Heb *an adulterer and she plays the whore*

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**56.9–12: Against corrupt leaders. 9:** *Wild animals,* nations (Jer 12.8–9; Ezek 39.17). **10:** *Sentinels,* prophets (Ezek 3.17; 33.7). **11:** *Shepherds,* rulers (Ezek 34.1; Zech 11.4–17).

**57.1–13: Against idolatry. 1–2:** The *righteous* die unnoticed by their hedonistic religious leaders. *Couches,* graves. **3–4:** *You,* i.e. Jerusalem's apostates ("illegitimate children") who abuse the righteous ("legitimate children"; Jer 3.1–20; Ezek 16.1–63). **5–6:** The prophet claims that the old fertility cults persist. *Oaks,* see 6.13 n.; *slaughter your children,* Jer 19.5; *portion, lot,* the gods of the valleys (v. 6), mountains (v. 7), house (v. 8), and other shrines (vv. 9–10), rather than the true God (Jer 10.16). **7–8:** Sexual immorality was characteristic of these cults. **9–10:** *Molech,* see Jer 7.31 n.; *to Sheol,* to the gods of the underworld (14.9–11). All such practices are futile (Jer 2.25).

for, in deserting me,[h] you have
uncovered your bed,
you have gone up to it,
you have made it wide;
and you have made a bargain for
yourself with them,
you have loved their bed,
you have gazed on their
nakedness.[i]
9 You journeyed to Molech[j] with
oil,
and multiplied your perfumes;
you sent your envoys far away,
and sent down even to Sheol.
10 You grew weary from your many
wanderings,
but you did not say, "It is
useless."
You found your desire rekindled,
and so you did not weaken.

11 Whom did you dread and fear
so that you lied,
and did not remember me
or give me a thought?
Have I not kept silent and closed
my eyes,[k]
and so you do not fear me?
12 I will concede your righteousness
and your works,
but they will not help you.
13 When you cry out, let your
collection of idols deliver
you!
The wind will carry them off,
a breath will take them away.
But whoever takes refuge in me
shall possess the land
and inherit my holy mountain.

14 It shall be said,
"Build up, build up, prepare
the way,
remove every obstruction from
my people's way."

15 For thus says the high and
lofty one
who inhabits eternity, whose
name is Holy:
I dwell in the high and holy place,
and also with those who are
contrite and humble in
spirit,
to revive the spirit of the humble,
and to revive the heart of the
contrite.
16 For I will not continually accuse,
nor will I always be angry;
for then the spirits would grow
faint before me,
even the souls that I have made.
17 Because of their wicked
covetousness I was angry;
I struck them, I hid and was
angry;
but they kept turning back to
their own ways.
18 I have seen their ways, but I will
heal them;
I will lead them and repay them
with comfort,
creating for their mourners the
fruit of the lips.[h]
19 Peace, peace, to the far and the
near, says the LORD;
and I will heal them.
20 But the wicked are like the
tossing sea
that cannot keep still;
its waters toss up mire and
mud.
21 There is no peace, says my God,
for the wicked.

58 Shout out, do not hold back!
Lift up your voice like a
trumpet!

*h* Meaning of Heb uncertain *i* Or *their phallus*; Heb *the hand* *j* Or *the king* *k* Gk Vg: Heb *silent even for a long time*

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**57.11–13**: God rebukes the idolators (42.8); their gods are impotent (42.17; Jer 2.20–28). **57.14–21**: **Poem of consolation.** **14**: Compare 40.1–4. **15**: God is both distant and near. **16–21**: God's justifiable wrath is not unending. **17**: Israel continued to sin despite repeated punishments. **18**: Yet the LORD will heal him, by an act of grace. *Mourners*, a reference to those who repent. **19–21**: Israel will have peace, but the wicked will not (48.18; Eph 2.17).

**58.1–14**: **The LORD does not desire fast-**

Announce to my people their rebellion,
to the house of Jacob their sins.
2 Yet day after day they seek me
and delight to know my ways,
as if they were a nation that practiced righteousness
and did not forsake the ordinance of their God;
they ask of me righteous judgments,
they delight to draw near to God.
3 "Why do we fast, but you do not see?
Why humble ourselves, but you do not notice?"
Look, you serve your own interest on your fast day,
and oppress all your workers.
4 Look, you fast only to quarrel and to fight
and to strike with a wicked fist.
Such fasting as you do today
will not make your voice heard on high.
5 Is such the fast that I choose,
a day to humble oneself?
Is it to bow down the head like a bulrush,
and to lie in sackcloth and ashes?
Will you call this a fast,
a day acceptable to the LORD?

6 Is not this the fast that I choose:
to loose the bonds of injustice,
to undo the thongs of the yoke,
to let the oppressed go free,
and to break every yoke?
7 Is it not to share your bread with the hungry,
and bring the homeless poor into your house;
when you see the naked, to cover them,
and not to hide yourself from your own kin?
8 Then your light shall break forth like the dawn,
and your healing shall spring up quickly;
your vindicator[1] shall go before you,
the glory of the LORD shall be your rear guard.
9 Then you shall call, and the LORD will answer;
you shall cry for help, and he will say, Here I am.

If you remove the yoke from among you,
the pointing of the finger, the speaking of evil,
10 if you offer your food to the hungry
and satisfy the needs of the afflicted,
then your light shall rise in the darkness
and your gloom be like the noonday.
11 The LORD will guide you continually,
and satisfy your needs in parched places,
and make your bones strong;
and you shall be like a watered garden,
like a spring of water,
whose waters never fail.

*1* Or *vindication*

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**ing, but kindness and justice;** compare Mic 6.6–8; Jas 1.27. **1–5**: Proper motivation is necessary for the acceptance of fasting. **1**: *Trumpet,* the trumpet was used to announce a fast day (Joel 2.15; compare Ezek 33.3). **3**: *Fast day,* Lev 23.26–32; Jer 36.9. **5**: *Sackcloth,* worn by mourners (Ezek 7.18).

**58.6–9b**: One's relationship to others reveals one's relationship to God (Lk 10.25–37). When appropriate "fruits" are present (social justice, mercy, sharing; Lk 3.8), God will hear (1.10–20; Mt 25.34–40). *Light,* 42.6–7; *rear guard,* 52.12. **9c–12**: God will give his people strength (66.14), abundance (Jer 31.12) and auspicious circumstances for reconstruction (44.26; 61.4). *Pointing of the finger,* gesture of contempt (Prov 6.13). **13–14**: Strict observance of *the sabbath* was increasingly emphasized in post-exilic Judaism (56.2; Mt 12.1–8).

12 Your ancient ruins shall be rebuilt;
you shall raise up the
foundations of many
generations;
you shall be called the repairer of
the breach,
the restorer of streets to live in.

13 If you refrain from trampling the
sabbath,
from pursuing your own
interests on my holy day;
if you call the sabbath a delight
and the holy day of the LORD
honorable;
if you honor it, not going your
own ways,
serving your own interests, or
pursuing your own affairs;[m]
14 then you shall take delight in
the LORD,
and I will make you ride upon
the heights of the earth;
I will feed you with the heritage
of your ancestor Jacob,
for the mouth of the LORD has
spoken.

59 See, the LORD's hand is not too
short to save,
nor his ear too dull to hear.
2 Rather, your iniquities have been
barriers
between you and your God,
and your sins have hidden his face
from you
so that he does not hear.
3 For your hands are defiled
with blood,
and your fingers with iniquity;
your lips have spoken lies,
your tongue mutters
wickedness.
4 No one brings suit justly,
no one goes to law honestly;
they rely on empty pleas, they
speak lies,
conceiving mischief and
begetting iniquity.
5 They hatch adders' eggs,
and weave the spider's web;
whoever eats their eggs dies,
and the crushed egg hatches out
a viper.
6 Their webs cannot serve as
clothing;
they cannot cover themselves
with what they make.
Their works are works of iniquity,
and deeds of violence are in
their hands.
7 Their feet run to evil,
and they rush to shed innocent
blood;
their thoughts are thoughts
of iniquity,
desolation and destruction are in
their highways.
8 The way of peace they do not
know,
and there is no justice in
their paths.
Their roads they have made
crooked;
no one who walks in them
knows peace.

9 Therefore justice is far from us,
and righteousness does not
reach us;
we wait for light, and lo! there is
darkness;
and for brightness, but we walk
in gloom.
10 We grope like the blind along
a wall,
groping like those who have
no eyes;

*m* Heb *or speaking words*

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**59.1–21: Call to national repentance. 1–4:** God is not impotent or deaf; Judah's transgressions have broken the covenant (50.1–2). The people are totally given over to wickedness; injustice and dishonesty are rampant (Rom 3.10–18). **5–8:** Graphic continuation of vv. 3–4. The whole community is contaminated (Mt 23.13–36). Synonyms of "ways" in vv. 7–8 (Rom 3.15–17) describe the blind alleys down which Judah is going.

**59.9–11:** Consequently, Judah gropes in the darkness of social and spiritual depravity

we stumble at noon as in the twilight,
among the vigorous[n] as though we were dead.
11 We all growl like bears;
like doves we moan mournfully.
We wait for justice, but there is none;
for salvation, but it is far from us.
12 For our transgressions before you are many,
and our sins testify against us.
Our transgressions indeed are with us,
and we know our iniquities:
13 transgressing, and denying the LORD,
and turning away from following our God,
talking oppression and revolt,
conceiving lying words and uttering them from the heart.
14 Justice is turned back,
and righteousness stands at a distance;
for truth stumbles in the public square,
and uprightness cannot enter.
15 Truth is lacking,
and whoever turns from evil is despoiled.

The LORD saw it, and it displeased him
that there was no justice.
16 He saw that there was no one,
and was appalled that there was no one to intervene;
so his own arm brought him victory,
and his righteousness upheld him.
17 He put on righteousness like a breastplate,
and a helmet of salvation on his head;
he put on garments of vengeance for clothing,
and wrapped himself in fury as in a mantle.
18 According to their deeds, so will he repay;
wrath to his adversaries, requital to his enemies;
to the coastlands he will render requital.
19 So those in the west shall fear the name of the LORD,
and those in the east, his glory;
for he will come like a pent-up stream
that the wind of the LORD drives on.

20 And he will come to Zion as Redeemer,
to those in Jacob who turn from transgression, says the LORD.
21 And as for me, this is my covenant with them, says the LORD: my spirit that is upon you, and my words that I have put in your mouth, shall not depart out of your mouth, or out of the mouths of your children, or out of the mouths of your children's children, says the LORD, from now on and forever.

60 Arise, shine; for your light has come,

*n* Meaning of Heb uncertain

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(13.10; 50.10–11), fear, and foreboding (38.14). **12–15b**: The community confesses the magnitude of its offenses: rebellion (*transgressing*), faithlessness (*denying*), disobedience (*turning away*); its integrity is wholly corrupted.

**59.15c–17**: With no human helper available, God himself intervened with every means at his command (42.13; compare Eph 6.14–17). **18–20**: God brings judgment upon all his enemies with irresistible fury and might (30.27–28) to redeem repentant *Zion* (Jerusalem; compare Rom 11.26). **21**: A prose oracle assuring Judah of the abiding presence of God's *spirit* and *words* (44.3–5).

**60.1–62.12**: **Poems on the glory of Jerusalem and of God's people,** reminiscent of chapters 40–55. **60.1–22**: **Jerusalem's glori-**

and the glory of the LORD has
risen upon you.
2 For darkness shall cover the earth,
and thick darkness the peoples;
but the LORD will arise upon you,
and his glory will appear
over you.
3 Nations shall come to your light,
and kings to the brightness of
your dawn.

4 Lift up your eyes and look around;
they all gather together, they
come to you;
your sons shall come from
far away,
and your daughters shall be
carried on their nurses'
arms.
5 Then you shall see and be radiant;
your heart shall thrill and
rejoice,[o]
because the abundance of the sea
shall be brought to you,
the wealth of the nations shall
come to you.
6 A multitude of camels shall
cover you,
the young camels of Midian and
Ephah;
all those from Sheba shall come.
They shall bring gold and
frankincense,
and shall proclaim the praise of
the LORD.
7 All the flocks of Kedar shall be
gathered to you,
the rams of Nebaioth shall
minister to you;
they shall be acceptable on my
altar,
and I will glorify my glorious
house.
8 Who are these that fly like a
cloud,
and like doves to their
windows?
9 For the coastlands shall wait
for me,
the ships of Tarshish first,
to bring your children from far
away,
their silver and gold with them,
for the name of the LORD your
God,
and for the Holy One of Israel,
because he has glorified you.
10 Foreigners shall build up your
walls,
and their kings shall minister
to you;
for in my wrath I struck you
down,
but in my favor I have had
mercy on you.
11 Your gates shall always be open;
day and night they shall not
be shut,
so that nations shall bring you
their wealth,
with their kings led in
procession.
12 For the nation and kingdom
that will not serve you shall
perish;
those nations shall be utterly
laid waste.
13 The glory of Lebanon shall come
to you,
the cypress, the plane, and
the pine,
to beautify the place of my
sanctuary;
and I will glorify where my
feet rest.

*o* Heb *be enlarged*

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**ous restoration. 1–3**: Fallen Zion bidden to *arise, shine* (42.6–7), and reflect *the glory of the* LORD (6.3; Ezek 1.4–28; 10.4), which will attract all nations (66.18). **4–5**: Risen Zion welcomes her children home (49.18ab, 22de); her poverty is replaced by wealth (45.14; 61.6). **6–7**: Arabia's riches are brought by camel caravan. *Midian* (see Ex 2.15 n.), *Ephah,* Arab tribes east of Gulf of Aqaba; *Sheba* (Gen 10.7); *Kedar* (21.16); *Nebaioth,* an Arab tribe (Gen 25.13).

**60.8–9**: Some returning exiles (*children*) and wealth from the west arrive by ship (v. 8). *Tarshish* (see Jer 10.9 n.). **10–11**: Destroyed by foreigners (Jer 52.13–16), the new Jerusalem will be built by foreigners (compare Rev 21.24–27). **13–14**: As before (1 Kings 5.8–10) wood from *Lebanon* (41.19)

14 The descendants of those who
oppressed you
shall come bending low to you,
and all who despised you
shall bow down at your feet;
they shall call you the City of
the LORD,
the Zion of the Holy One of
Israel.
15 Whereas you have been forsaken
and hated,
with no one passing through,
I will make you majestic forever,
a joy from age to age.
16 You shall suck the milk of
nations,
you shall suck the breasts
of kings;
and you shall know that I, the
LORD, am your Savior
and your Redeemer, the Mighty
One of Jacob.

17 Instead of bronze I will bring
gold,
instead of iron I will bring
silver;
instead of wood, bronze,
instead of stones, iron.
I will appoint Peace as your
overseer
and Righteousness as your
taskmaster.
18 Violence shall no more be heard in
your land,
devastation or destruction
within your borders;
you shall call your walls Salvation,
and your gates Praise.
19 The sun shall no longer be
your light by day,
nor for brightness shall the moon
give light to you by night;[p]
but the LORD will be your
everlasting light,
and your God will be your
glory.
20 Your sun shall no more go down,
or your moon withdraw itself;
for the LORD will be your
everlasting light,
and your days of mourning shall
be ended.
21 Your people shall all be righteous;
they shall possess the land
forever.
They are the shoot that I planted,
the work of my hands,
so that I might be glorified.
22 The least of them shall become
a clan,
and the smallest one a mighty
nation;
I am the LORD;
in its time I will accomplish
it quickly.

61 The spirit of the Lord GOD is
upon me,
because the LORD has
anointed me;
he has sent me to bring good
news to the oppressed,
to bind up the brokenhearted,
to proclaim liberty to the captives,
and release to the prisoners;
2 to proclaim the year of the
LORD's favor,
and the day of vengeance of
our God;
to comfort all who mourn;
3 to provide for those who mourn
in Zion—

*p* Q Ms Gk Old Latin Tg: MT lacks *by night*

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and wealth from the nations will build the temple and holy *City* (35.1–10; 49.26).

**60.15–16**: Once forsaken (54.6–7), Zion will be exalted (1.24; Ezek 16.1–63). **17–18**: The new Jerusalem will surpass Solomon's city in beauty and tranquillity.

**60.19–20**: God's *glory* will perpetually illumine the joyful city (35.10; Rev 21.4). **21–22**: In the divinely restored city, God will be glorified (9.7; 54.1–2).

**61.1–11**: **The mission to Zion.** This poem recalls the Servant Songs of chs 42–53, especially 50.4–11. **1–3**: Lk 4.16–20; compare Mt 11.5; Lk 7.22. God sends his prophet to bring encouragement to the exiled and oppressed; he will make them mighty oaks (60.21; Jer

to give them a garland instead of ashes,
the oil of gladness instead of mourning,
the mantle of praise instead of a faint spirit.
They will be called oaks of righteousness,
the planting of the LORD, to display his glory.
4 They shall build up the ancient ruins,
they shall raise up the former devastations;
they shall repair the ruined cities,
the devastations of many generations.

5 Strangers shall stand and feed your flocks,
foreigners shall till your land and dress your vines;
6 but you shall be called priests of the LORD,
you shall be named ministers of our God;
you shall enjoy the wealth of the nations,
and in their riches you shall glory.
7 Because their[q] shame was double,
and dishonor was proclaimed as their lot,
therefore they shall possess a double portion;
everlasting joy shall be theirs.

8 For I the LORD love justice,
I hate robbery and wrongdoing;[r]
I will faithfully give them their recompense,
and I will make an everlasting covenant with them.
9 Their descendants shall be known among the nations,
and their offspring among the peoples;
all who see them shall acknowledge
that they are a people whom the LORD has blessed.
10 I will greatly rejoice in the LORD,
my whole being shall exult in my God;
for he has clothed me with the garments of salvation,
he has covered me with the robe of righteousness,
as a bridegroom decks himself with a garland,
and as a bride adorns herself with her jewels.
11 For as the earth brings forth its shoots,
and as a garden causes what is sown in it to spring up,
so the Lord GOD will cause righteousness and praise
to spring up before all the nations.

62 For Zion's sake I will not keep silent,
and for Jerusalem's sake I will not rest,
until her vindication shines out like the dawn,
and her salvation like a burning torch.

*q* Heb *your* *r* Or *robbery with a burnt offering*

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17.8). *Spirit* is strongly emphasized in exilic and post-exilic writings (42.1; 59.21; Ezek 2.2). **2**: *Vengeance,* better, "rescue." **4–5**: 60.10–11. **6–7**: *Priests* (Ex 19.6). *Double portion,* for double punishment (40.2).

**61.8–9**: In Judah, all nations will see God's faithfulness and his blessing. *Justice,* 5.7, 16. *Everlasting covenant,* 54.9–10. **10–11**: The prophet identifies himself with Zion and rejoices in her salvation (compare vv. 1–3), which is as certain as the earth's producing vegetation.

**62.1–12**: **The glory of God's people. 1–3**: The prophet continues to proclaim Zion's approaching vindication. *New name* denotes a change in status (1.26; Jer 33.16; Ezek 48.35; compare Abram, Abraham, Gen 17.5 notes *u* and *v*). *Crown of beauty* (28.1–6). **4–5**: New

2 The nations shall see your
vindication,
and all the kings your glory;
and you shall be called by a
new name
that the mouth of the LORD
will give.
3 You shall be a crown of beauty in
the hand of the LORD,
and a royal diadem in the hand
of your God.
4 You shall no more be termed
Forsaken,[s]
and your land shall no more be
termed Desolate;[t]
but you shall be called My Delight
Is in Her,[u]
and your land Married;[v]
for the LORD delights in you,
and your land shall be married.
5 For as a young man marries a
young woman,
so shall your builder[w] marry
you,
and as the bridegroom rejoices
over the bride,
so shall your God rejoice
over you.
6 Upon your walls, O Jerusalem,
I have posted sentinels;
all day and all night
they shall never be silent.
You who remind the LORD,
take no rest,
7 and give him no rest
until he establishes Jerusalem
and makes it renowned
throughout the earth.
8 The LORD has sworn by his
right hand
and by his mighty arm:
I will not again give your grain
to be food for your enemies,
and foreigners shall not drink
the wine
for which you have labored;
9 but those who garner it shall eat it
and praise the LORD,
and those who gather it shall
drink it
in my holy courts.

10 Go through, go through the gates,
prepare the way for the people;
build up, build up the highway,
clear it of stones,
lift up an ensign over the
peoples.
11 The LORD has proclaimed
to the end of the earth:
Say to daughter Zion,
"See, your salvation comes;
his reward is with him,
and his recompense before
him."
12 They shall be called, "The
Holy People,
The Redeemed of the LORD";
and you shall be called,
"Sought Out,
A City Not Forsaken."

63 "Who is this that comes from
Edom,
from Bozrah in garments
stained crimson?
Who is this so splendidly robed,
marching in his great might?"

"It is I, announcing vindication,
mighty to save."

2 "Why are your robes red,

*s* Heb *Azubah* *t* Heb *Shemamah*
*u* Heb *Hephzibah* *v* Heb *Beulah*
*w* Cn: Heb *your sons*

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status, new names. **6–9**: *Sentinels,* probably prophets (52.8; Ezek ch 33), to remind Jerusalem of her imminent salvation, the certainty of which the LORD's oath (vv. 8–9) underscores. *Right hand* (Ex 15.6, 12). *Mighty arm* (40.10; Deut 7.19). *Foreigners,* invaders, as the Babylonians, and encroachers, as the Edomites (Ob 13).

**62.10–12**: A summary of the eschatological hopes described in chs 60–62. **10b**: 49.22. **11b**: 40.10.

**63.1–6**: **Poem on divine vengeance. 1**: The prophet (sentinel; 62.6 n.) challenges him who approaches. *Edom, Bozrah,* symbolic of God's opponents (34.5–7). **2–3**: Compare Joel 3.13; Rev 14.19–20. **4–6**: *Day of ven-*

and your garments like theirs
who tread the wine press?"

3 "I have trodden the wine press
alone,
and from the peoples no one
was with me;
I trod them in my anger
and trampled them in my
wrath;
their juice spattered on my
garments,
and stained all my robes.
4 For the day of vengeance was in
my heart,
and the year for my redeeming
work had come.
5 I looked, but there was no helper;
I stared, but there was no one
to sustain me;
so my own arm brought me
victory,
and my wrath sustained me.
6 I trampled down peoples in my
anger,
I crushed them in my wrath,
and I poured out their lifeblood
on the earth."

7 I will recount the gracious deeds
of the LORD,
the praiseworthy acts of the
LORD,
because of all that the LORD has
done for us,
and the great favor to the house
of Israel
that he has shown them according
to his mercy,
according to the abundance of
his steadfast love.
8 For he said, "Surely they are
my people,
children who will not deal
falsely";
and he became their savior
9 in all their distress.
It was no messenger[x] or angel
but his presence that saved
them;[y]
in his love and in his pity he
redeemed them;
he lifted them up and carried
them all the days of old.

10 But they rebelled
and grieved his holy spirit;
therefore he became their enemy;
he himself fought against them.
11 Then they[z] remembered the days
of old,
of Moses his servant.[a]
Where is the one who brought
them up out of the sea
with the shepherds of his flock?
Where is the one who put
within them
his holy spirit,
12 who caused his glorious arm
to march at the right hand
of Moses,
who divided the waters before
them
to make for himself an
everlasting name,
13 who led them through the
depths?
Like a horse in the desert,
they did not stumble.
14 Like cattle that go down into
the valley,
the spirit of the LORD gave
them rest.
Thus you led your people,
to make for yourself a glorious
name.

*x* Gk: Heb *anguish* *y* Or *savior.* *9In all their distress he was distressed; the angel of his presence saved them;* *z* Heb *he* *a* Cn: Heb *his people*

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*geance* and *year for my redeeming work* are synchronous.

**63.7–64.12: Psalm of intercession. 63.7–14:** Historical prologue recalling Israel's deliverance from Egypt. Israel is called (v. 8; Ex 4.22–23; 19.3–6), protected (v. 9a; Ex 12.1–32), exalted (v. 9b; Ezek ch 16), delivered (vv. 11–12; Ex 14.9–15.21; Jer 15.1), and safely led through Sinai into Canaan (vv. 13–14). Israel's rebellion necessitated God's opposing them (Jer 5.20–29). **7:** *Steadfast love* expresses God's continuing covenant loyalty despite Israel's faithlessness.

**63.15–16:** The prophet therefore hopefully

15 Look down from heaven and see,
from your holy and glorious habitation.
Where are your zeal and your might?
The yearning of your heart and your compassion?
They are withheld from me.
16 For you are our father,
though Abraham does not know us
and Israel does not acknowledge us;
you, O LORD, are our father;
our Redeemer from of old is your name.
17 Why, O LORD, do you make us stray from your ways
and harden our heart, so that we do not fear you?
Turn back for the sake of your servants,
for the sake of the tribes that are your heritage.
18 Your holy people took possession for a little while;
but now our adversaries have trampled down your sanctuary.
19 We have long been like those whom you do not rule,
like those not called by your name.

64 O that you would tear open the heavens and come down,
so that the mountains would quake at your presence—
2b as when fire kindles brushwood
and the fire causes water to boil—
to make your name known to your adversaries,
so that the nations might tremble at your presence!
3 When you did awesome deeds that we did not expect,
you came down, the mountains quaked at your presence.
4 From ages past no one has heard,
no ear has perceived,
no eye has seen any God besides you,
who works for those who wait for him.
5 You meet those who gladly do right,
those who remember you in your ways.
But you were angry, and we sinned;
because you hid yourself we transgressed.[c]
6 We have all become like one who is unclean,
and all our righteous deeds are like a filthy cloth.
We all fade like a leaf,
and our iniquities, like the wind, take us away.
7 There is no one who calls on your name,
or attempts to take hold of you;
for you have hidden your face from us,
and have delivered[d] us into the hand of our iniquity.
8 Yet, O LORD, you are our Father;
we are the clay, and you are our potter;
we are all the work of your hand.
9 Do not be exceedingly angry, O LORD,
and do not remember iniquity forever.

*b* Ch 64.1 in Heb *c* Meaning of Heb uncertain *d* Gk Syr Old Latin Tg: Heb *melted*

petitions God, whose immortality is contrasted with the mortality of Israel's patriarchs (*Abraham, Israel* [Jacob]). **17–19**: Israel's sinfulness begets sinfulness. The prophet begs God to deliver his forsaken people from their sins and to restore their ruined sanctuary.

**64.1–5b**: A prayer that God should reveal himself in power as in days of old (Ex 19.16–18; Judg 5.4–5; Hab 3.3–15). Human beings cannot approach God (Gen 11.1–9; Ex 33.17–23), but God comes to them (Ex 19–20). **5c–7**: The prophet, in behalf of his people, confesses their sin and hopelessness.

**64.8–12**: In his final petition he pleads that the LORD turn away from his anger and have

Now consider, we are all your people.
10 Your holy cities have become a wilderness,
Zion has become a wilderness,
Jerusalem a desolation.
11 Our holy and beautiful house,
where our ancestors praised you,
has been burned by fire,
and all our pleasant places have become ruins.
12 After all this, will you restrain yourself, O LORD?
Will you keep silent, and punish us so severely?

65 I was ready to be sought out by those who did not ask,
to be found by those who did not seek me.
I said, "Here I am, here I am,"
to a nation that did not call on my name.
2 I held out my hands all day long
to a rebellious people,
who walk in a way that is not good,
following their own devices;
3 a people who provoke me
to my face continually,
sacrificing in gardens
and offering incense on bricks;
4 who sit inside tombs,
and spend the night in secret places;
who eat swine's flesh,
with broth of abominable things in their vessels;
5 who say, "Keep to yourself,
do not come near me, for I am too holy for you."
These are a smoke in my nostrils,
a fire that burns all day long.
6 See, it is written before me:
I will not keep silent, but I will repay;
I will indeed repay into their laps
7 their[e] iniquities and their[e] ancestors' iniquities together,
says the LORD;
because they offered incense on the mountains
and reviled me on the hills,
I will measure into their laps
full payment for their actions.
8 Thus says the LORD:
As the wine is found in the cluster,
and they say, "Do not destroy it,
for there is a blessing in it,"
so I will do for my servants' sake,
and not destroy them all.
9 I will bring forth descendants[f] from Jacob,
and from Judah inheritors[g] of my mountains;
my chosen shall inherit it,
and my servants shall settle there.
10 Sharon shall become a pasture for flocks,
and the Valley of Achor a place for herds to lie down,

*e* Gk Syr: Heb *your* *f* Or *a descendant*
*g* Or *an inheritor*

compassion on desolate Jerusalem and the destroyed temple. **10**: *Your holy cities,* the cities are the LORD's, for the Promised Land is his. **12**: *Will you keep silent . . . ?* Compare Ps 79.5; 85.5–7.

**65.1–25**: **God's answer. 1–2**: Not God, but the people were silent. *Held out my hands,* in a gesture of invitation (Rom 10.20–21). **3**: *Sacrificing in gardens,* an allusion to nature-cult practices. *Offering incense* was peculiarly associated with pagan worship, although also a part of Israelite worship (Jer 1.16). **4**: *Sit inside tombs,* for divination, to consult the dead (29.4). *Spend the night in secret places,* in a shrine to receive visions (compare 1 Kings 3.4–15). To *eat swine's flesh* was forbidden (Deut 14.8). **5**: *I am too holy for you,* sanctified by some idolatrous rite. **6–7**: God has noted their faithlessness (4.3).

**65.8–10**: As good clusters of grapes are separated from the bad, so God will separate the righteous from the unrighteous (Mt 25.32–33). The LORD's *chosen,* his *servants* (44.1), Israel, will inherit the land (57.13). *Sharon,* the northern coastal plain. *Achor,* the desolate region west of the Dead Sea (Josh

for my people who have
sought me.
11 But you who forsake the LORD,
who forget my holy mountain,
who set a table for Fortune
and fill cups of mixed wine for
Destiny;
12 I will destine you to the sword,
and all of you shall bow down
to the slaughter;
because, when I called, you did
not answer,
when I spoke, you did not
listen,
but you did what was evil in
my sight,
and chose what I did not
delight in.
13 Therefore thus says the Lord GOD:
My servants shall eat,
but you shall be hungry;
my servants shall drink,
but you shall be thirsty;
my servants shall rejoice,
but you shall be put to shame;
14 my servants shall sing for gladness
of heart,
but you shall cry out for pain
of heart,
and shall wail for anguish
of spirit.
15 You shall leave your name to my
chosen to use as a curse,
and the Lord GOD will put you
to death;
but to his servants he will give a
different name.
16 Then whoever invokes a blessing
in the land
shall bless by the God of
faithfulness,
and whoever takes an oath in
the land
shall swear by the God of
faithfulness;
because the former troubles are
forgotten
and are hidden from my sight.

17 For I am about to create new
heavens
and a new earth;
the former things shall not be
remembered
or come to mind.
18 But be glad and rejoice forever
in what I am creating;
for I am about to create Jerusalem
as a joy,
and its people as a delight.
19 I will rejoice in Jerusalem,
and delight in my people;
no more shall the sound of
weeping be heard in it,
or the cry of distress.
20 No more shall there be in it
an infant that lives but a
few days,
or an old person who does not
live out a lifetime;
for one who dies at a hundred
years will be considered a
youth,
and one who falls short of a
hundred will be considered
accursed.
21 They shall build houses and
inhabit them;
they shall plant vineyards and
eat their fruit.
22 They shall not build and another
inhabit;
they shall not plant and
another eat;
for like the days of a tree shall the
days of my people be,
and my chosen shall long enjoy
the work of their hands.
23 They shall not labor in vain,
or bear children for calamity;[h]

*h* Or *sudden terror*

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7.24; see Hos 2.15 n.). **11–12:** In the Hebrew text *Fortune* and *Destiny* are Gad and Meni, Syrian gods of fate. **15–16:** Apostates' name, *a curse;* the righteous, a new name (62.2, 4). **65.17–19:** Heaven and earth will be transformed; God will rejoice with Jerusalem (62.5; contrast 64.10); her mourning is over (25.8; 2 Pet 3.13; Rev 21.4). **21–23:** Those in Jerusalem will live in happiness and security. *Tree,* Jer 17.8. *Calamity,* sudden misfortune

for they shall be offspring blessed
by the LORD—
and their descendants as well.
24 Before they call I will answer,
while they are yet speaking I will hear.
25 The wolf and the lamb shall feed together,
the lion shall eat straw like the ox;
but the serpent—its food shall be dust!
They shall not hurt or destroy
on all my holy mountain,
says the LORD.

66 Thus says the LORD:
Heaven is my throne
and the earth is my footstool;
what is the house that you would build for me,
and what is my resting place?
2 All these things my hand has made,
and so all these things are mine, [i]
says the LORD.
But this is the one to whom I will look,
to the humble and contrite in spirit,
who trembles at my word.

3 Whoever slaughters an ox is like one who kills a human being;
whoever sacrifices a lamb, like one who breaks a dog's neck;
whoever presents a grain offering, like one who offers swine's blood; [j]
whoever makes a memorial offering of frankincense, like one who blesses an idol.
These have chosen their own ways,
and in their abominations they take delight;
4 I also will choose to mock [k] them,
and bring upon them what they fear;
because, when I called, no one answered,
when I spoke, they did not listen;
but they did what was evil in my sight,
and chose what did not please me.
5 Hear the word of the LORD,
you who tremble at his word:
Your own people who hate you
and reject you for my name's sake
have said, "Let the LORD be glorified,
so that we may see your joy";
but it is they who shall be put to shame.

6 Listen, an uproar from the city!
A voice from the temple!
The voice of the LORD,
dealing retribution to his enemies!

*i* Gk Syr: Heb *these things came to be*
*j* Meaning of Heb uncertain *k* Or *to punish*

(Jer 15.8). **24–25**: In the new Jerusalem restored, all will be at peace (11.6–9). *My holy mountain,* see 11.9 n.; compare 27.13; 56.7; Joel 3.17.

**66.1–24**: **Concluding oracles. 1–6**: On temple worship. **1–2**: A house made of created materials cannot contain the Creator and Lord of heaven and earth (compare 1 Kings 8.27), nor do mere acts suffice for devout humility (1.10–20). **3–4**: These verses are perhaps best taken as the continuation of the thought in vv. 1–2. The insertion of the word "like" (not in the Hebrew) interprets one possible meaning of these verses. In accord with another interpretation read: "He who slaughters an ox, he who kills a human being . . . ; these have chosen their own ways . . ." The first part of each line describes normally acceptable practice, the second what is not. The "Canaanitish" practices of sacrificing humans (*kills a human being*), dogs (*breaks a dog's neck*), and swine (*offers swine's blood*) are abominations. **5–6**: Vindication for true believers. God has returned to his temple (Ezek 43.1–5). **7–16**: On Jerusalem's restoration.

7 Before she was in labor
she gave birth;
before her pain came upon her
she delivered a son.
8 Who has heard of such a thing?
Who has seen such things?
Shall a land be born in one day?
Shall a nation be delivered in one moment?
Yet as soon as Zion was in labor
she delivered her children.
9 Shall I open the womb and not deliver?
says the LORD;
shall I, the one who delivers, shut the womb?
says your God.

10 Rejoice with Jerusalem, and be glad for her,
all you who love her;
rejoice with her in joy,
all you who mourn over her—
11 that you may nurse and be satisfied
from her consoling breast;
that you may drink deeply with delight
from her glorious bosom.

12 For thus says the LORD:
I will extend prosperity to her like a river,
and the wealth of the nations like an overflowing stream;
and you shall nurse and be carried on her arm,
and dandled on her knees.
13 As a mother comforts her child,
so I will comfort you;
you shall be comforted in Jerusalem.
14 You shall see, and your heart shall rejoice;
your bodies[l] shall flourish like the grass;
and it shall be known that the hand of the LORD is with his servants,
and his indignation is against his enemies.
15 For the LORD will come in fire,
and his chariots like the whirlwind,
to pay back his anger in fury,
and his rebuke in flames of fire.
16 For by fire will the LORD execute judgment,
and by his sword, on all flesh;
and those slain by the LORD shall be many.

17 Those who sanctify and purify themselves to go into the gardens, following the one in the center, eating the flesh of pigs, vermin, and rodents, shall come to an end together, says the LORD.

18 For I know[m] their works and their thoughts, and I am[n] coming to gather all nations and tongues; and they shall come and shall see my glory, 19and I will set a sign among them. From them I will send survivors to the nations, to Tarshish, Put,[o] and Lud—which draw the bow—to Tubal and Javan, to the coastlands far away that have not heard of my fame or seen my glory; and they shall declare my glory among the nations. 20They shall bring all your kindred from all the na-

*l* Heb *bones* *m* Gk Syr: Heb lacks *know*
*n* Gk Syr Vg Tg: Heb *it is* *o* Gk: Heb *Pul*

**66.7–9**: Jerusalem's rebirth is a divinely wrought miracle. **10–11**: Restored "Mother" Jerusalem can provide abundantly for all (49.17–21).

**66.12–14**: Continuation of the vision of Jerusalem's prosperity and comfort. **15–16**: With *fire* (29.6; 64.11) and *sword* (31.8; Ezek ch 21), God will destroy his enemies. **17**: Compare vv. 3–4. *In the center,* perhaps in a pagan procession.

**66.18–24**: The return of Israel and the fate of the wicked. **18–21**: God will reveal his glory to the nations. With Israel, they will assemble in Jerusalem, some Gentiles even becoming priests. **22–23**: A magnificent climax: God's people, like the new creation, will endure forever (Jer 31.34–36) and a mighty chorus of praises will ceaselessly rise to God's throne. **24**: Final reminder of the eternal punishment of the wicked.

tions as an offering to the LORD, on horses, and in chariots, and in litters, and on mules, and on dromedaries, to my holy mountain Jerusalem, says the LORD, just as the Israelites bring a grain offering in a clean vessel to the house of the LORD. 21 And I will also take some of them as priests and as Levites, says the LORD.

22 For as the new heavens and the new earth,
which I will make,
shall remain before me, says the LORD;
so shall your descendants and your name remain.
23 From new moon to new moon,
and from sabbath to sabbath,
all flesh shall come to worship before me,
says the LORD.

24 And they shall go out and look at the dead bodies of the people who have rebelled against me; for their worm shall not die, their fire shall not be quenched, and they shall be an abhorrence to all flesh.

# *Jeremiah*

Jeremiah was the son of Hilkiah, a priest at Anathoth (1.1); as such he may have been a descendant of the priest Abiathar, who was banished by Solomon to Anathoth (1 Kings 2.26, 27). His ministry began in 627 B.C. (1.2) or, by another interpretation, he was born in 627 B.C. (1.5). He died sometime after 587 in Egypt.

The book bearing his name consists essentially of a collection of oracles against Judah and Jerusalem, which he dictated to his aide Baruch (1.4–20.18, from the time of Josiah and Jehoiakim; 21.1–25.14, from the time of Zedekiah); Baruch's memoirs (chs 26–35; 36–45); and a group of oracles against the foreign nations (25.15–38; chs 46–51), together with an introduction (1.1–3) and an historical appendix (ch 52). Some other materials were added when the book was edited sometime after 560 B.C.

The material of the book is not in chronological order. Instead, there are many signs that the book was compiled over a period of time from smaller collections of oracles. One clue to smaller collections may be the first two scrolls of judgment oracles that Jeremiah is said to have dictated to Baruch (ch 36): the second scroll (36.32) could have formed the nucleus for the material now found in 2.1–20.18. Another small collection may have been the hopeful scroll (30.1–3), which in its original form probably contained much of what is now in chs 30–32. But the core of Baruch's memoirs (chs 37–44), dealing with the last few months of Jeremiah's life, does appear to be in chronological order.

The book of Jeremiah is noteworthy in that the present Hebrew text differs substantially from the Greek version (the Septuagint) in both content and order. Thus the Septuagint omits several passages (e.g. 33.14–26) and combines the oracles against the foreign nations into a single section following 25.14, though in a different order. In addition, there are many smaller differences from verse to verse. Remarkably, among the portions of the text of Jeremiah in Hebrew that are found among the Dead Sea Scrolls are not only those that reflect the standard Hebrew text but also those that reflect the text tradition represented by the Septuagint. It is likely, then, that these two text traditions represent the contrasting editorial work on the book of Jeremiah that took place in Egypt (the Septuagint tradition) and in Palestine or Babylon (the traditional Hebrew text).

Unique to the book of Jeremiah is the series of laments of the prophet that begin at 11.18 (see there). For no other prophet in the Hebrew Scriptures do we have a comparable reflection of the spiritual struggle with God. Unique too is the wealth of detail concerning the various trials endured by the prophet throughout his career, from the judicial hearing at the time of his temple sermon in 609 B.C. (ch 26) to the opposition he incurred at the end of his life in Egypt (ch 44).

The prophet Jeremiah was much concerned with rewards and punishment (compare 1.10), the recompense for good and evil, faithfulness and disobedience. He criticizes Judah for its worship of gods other than the LORD, with all the attendant evils in cult and daily life. God's covenant people must return to him. The judgment must come, but the ominous future (later, the unhappy present) would be replaced by a new and more enduring relationship with God.

1 The words of Jeremiah son of Hilkiah, of the priests who were in Anathoth in the land of Benjamin, 2to whom the word of the LORD came in the days of King Josiah son of Amon of Judah, in the thirteenth year of his reign. 3It came also in the days of King Jehoiakim son of Josiah of Judah, and until the end of the eleventh year of King Zedekiah son of Josiah of Judah, until the captivity of Jerusalem in the fifth month.

4 Now the word of the LORD came to me saying,

5 "Before I formed you in the
womb I knew you,
and before you were born I
consecrated you;
I appointed you a prophet to the
nations."

6Then I said, "Ah, Lord GOD! Truly I do not know how to speak, for I am only a boy." 7But the LORD said to me,

"Do not say, 'I am only a boy';
for you shall go to all to whom I
send you,
and you shall speak whatever I
command you.

8 Do not be afraid of them,
for I am with you to deliver you,
says the LORD."

9Then the LORD put out his hand and touched my mouth; and the LORD said to me,

"Now I have put my words in
your mouth.

10 See, today I appoint you over
nations and over kingdoms,
to pluck up and to pull down,
to destroy and to overthrow,
to build and to plant."

11 The word of the LORD came to me, saying, "Jeremiah, what do you see?" And I said, "I see a branch of an almond tree."[a] 12Then the LORD said to me, "You have seen well, for I am watching[b] over my word to perform it." 13The word of the LORD came to me a second time, saying, "What do you see?" And I said, "I see a boiling pot, tilted away from the north."

14 Then the LORD said to me: Out of the north disaster shall break out on all the inhabitants of the land. 15For now I am calling all the tribes of the kingdoms of the north, says the LORD; and they shall come and all of them shall set their thrones at the entrance of the gates of Jerusalem, against all its surrounding walls and against all the cities of Judah. 16And I will utter my judgments against them, for all their wickedness in forsaking me; they have made offerings to other gods, and worshiped the works of their own hands. 17But you, gird up your loins; stand up and tell them everything that I command you. Do not break down before them, or I will break you before them. 18And I for my part have made you today a fortified city, an iron pillar, and a bronze wall, against the whole land—against the kings of Judah, its princes, its priests, and the people of

*a* Heb *shaqed* *b* Heb *shoqed*

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**1.1–3: Superscription. 1:** *Words,* i.e. "history." The name *Jeremiah* may mean "The LORD [Yahweh] exalts." *Priests . . . in Anathoth,* see Introduction. Anathoth is located at modern Ras Kharrubeh about two miles northeast of Jerusalem. **2:** *Thirteenth year of his reign,* 627 B.C. **3:** *Eleventh year of King Zedekiah,* 587 B.C.

**1.4–19: Jeremiah's call and related visions. 4:** *Word of the LORD,* characteristic expression in Jeremiah, emphasizing that his message is God's word. **5:** *Knew,* in the biblical sense, a profound and intimate knowledge. *To the nations,* Assyria, Babylonia, Egypt, Judah.

**1.6–8:** God's support will supplement Jeremiah's inexperience (*a boy*). **9:** Compare 15.19; Mt 10.19–20. **10:** God's word is a dynamic and vital force, not a static and symbolic figure (Isa 55.10–11).

**1.11–12:** Play on words (see notes *a* and *b*) to encourage the hesitant young prophet in the face of certain opposition. **13–14:** *Tilted away from the north:* this translation implies that the pot was spilling its hot contents toward the south, symbolizing the trouble which would come from the north. Another view is that the draft on the fire came from the north. Invaders into Palestine often came from *the north.* **17–19:** An expansion of the thought in vv. 4–8.

the land. 19They will fight against you;
but they shall not prevail against you, for
I am with you, says the LORD, to deliver
you.

2 The word of the LORD came to me,
saying: 2Go and proclaim in the
hearing of Jerusalem, Thus says the
LORD:

I remember the devotion of your
youth,
your love as a bride,
how you followed me in the
wilderness,
in a land not sown.
3 Israel was holy to the LORD,
the first fruits of his harvest.
All who ate of it were held guilty;
disaster came upon them,
says the LORD.

4 Hear the word of the LORD,
O house of Jacob, and all the families of
the house of Israel. 5Thus says the LORD:

What wrong did your ancestors
find in me
that they went far from me,
and went after worthless things,
and became worthless
themselves?
6 They did not say, "Where is
the LORD
who brought us up from the
land of Egypt,
who led us in the wilderness,
in a land of deserts and pits,
in a land of drought and deep
darkness,
in a land that no one passes
through,
where no one lives?"
7 I brought you into a plentiful land
to eat its fruits and its good
things.
But when you entered you defiled
my land,
and made my heritage an
abomination.
8 The priests did not say, "Where is
the LORD?"
Those who handle the law did
not know me;
the rulers[c] transgressed against
me;
the prophets prophesied by
Baal,
and went after things that do
not profit.

9 Therefore once more I accuse you,
says the LORD,
and I accuse your children's
children.
10 Cross to the coasts of Cyprus
and look,
send to Kedar and examine with
care;
see if there has ever been such
a thing.
11 Has a nation changed its gods,
even though they are no gods?
But my people have changed
their glory
for something that does not
profit.
12 Be appalled, O heavens, at this,
be shocked, be utterly desolate,
says the LORD,
13 for my people have committed
two evils:
they have forsaken me,
the fountain of living water,
and dug out cisterns for
themselves,
cracked cisterns
that can hold no water.

c Heb *shepherds*

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**2.1–37: The apostasy of Israel. 1–3:** God defended his *bride* (comparing the Sinai covenant with the marriage vow, see Hos 2.16) against all attempts to violate her (Amalekites, Canaanites, Philistines, etc.).

**2.4–9:** God remained unwaveringly faithful, despite Israel's rebellion. **8:** *Priests, rulers, prophets,* all Judah's leaders have failed to lead.

**10–13:** The LORD calls (upon the heavenly assembly; compare Isa 1.2; Mic 6.1) to witness the folly unprecedented (8.4) in both West (*Cyprus*) and East (*Kedar*) of a people who forsake the *fountain of living water* (Jn 4.10–15; 7.38) for the stagnant water at the bottom of leaky *cisterns*.

14 Is Israel a slave? Is he a homeborn servant?
Why then has he become plunder?
15 The lions have roared against him, they have roared loudly.
They have made his land a waste; his cities are in ruins, without inhabitant.
16 Moreover, the people of Memphis and Tahpanhes
have broken the crown of your head.
17 Have you not brought this upon yourself
by forsaking the LORD your God,
while he led you in the way?
18 What then do you gain by going to Egypt,
to drink the waters of the Nile?
Or what do you gain by going to Assyria,
to drink the waters of the Euphrates?
19 Your wickedness will punish you, and your apostasies will convict you.
Know and see that it is evil and bitter
for you to forsake the LORD your God;
the fear of me is not in you, says the Lord GOD of hosts.

20 For long ago you broke your yoke and burst your bonds,
and you said, "I will not serve!"
On every high hill and under every green tree you sprawled and played the whore.
21 Yet I planted you as a choice vine, from the purest stock.
How then did you turn degenerate and become a wild vine?
22 Though you wash yourself with lye and use much soap,
the stain of your guilt is still before me, says the Lord GOD.
23 How can you say, "I am not defiled,
I have not gone after the Baals"?
Look at your way in the valley; know what you have done—
a restive young camel interlacing her tracks,
24 a wild ass at home in the wilderness,
in her heat sniffing the wind!
Who can restrain her lust?
None who seek her need weary themselves;
in her month they will find her.
25 Keep your feet from going unshod and your throat from thirst.
But you said, "It is hopeless, for I have loved strangers, and after them I will go."

26 As a thief is shamed when caught, so the house of Israel shall be shamed—
they, their kings, their officials, their priests, and their prophets,
27 who say to a tree, "You are my father,"

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**2.14–19**: Israel has forsaken her covenant birthright of responsible freedom to become a slave of Assyria or Babylonia (*the lions*) and Egypt (*Memphis,* the capital of northern Egypt, fourteen miles south of Cairo) bringing disgrace (with v. 16b compare Isa 3.17; 7.20) upon themselves. *Tahpanhes,* Egyptian border fortress, also known as Baal-Zaphon, Greek Daphne, modern Tell Defneh. **16, 18**: Compare v. 36.

**2.20–28**: Unfaithful Israel is compared to a stubborn ox, to a wild vine (Isa 5.1–7; Hos 10.1) germinating from good seed but now inexplicably and irremediably worthless, to a nymphomaniacal prostitute (Hos 4.13) who restlessly seeks satisfaction from anyone and yet denies her guilt in spite of evidence (such as human sacrifice *in the valley*), and to a thief who is remorseful only when confronted by evidence of his wrong-doing (such as the *tree* or Asherah and the *stone* or sacred pillar, both cult furnishings). Let their gods now rescue Israel in her time of need!

and to a stone, "You gave
me birth."
For they have turned their backs
to me,
and not their faces.
But in the time of their trouble
they say,
"Come and save us!"
28 But where are your gods
that you made for yourself?
Let them come, if they can
save you,
in your time of trouble;
for you have as many gods
as you have towns, O Judah.

29 Why do you complain against me?
You have all rebelled against
me,
says the LORD.
30 In vain I have struck down
your children;
they accepted no correction.
Your own sword devoured your
prophets
like a ravening lion.
31 And you, O generation, behold
the word of the LORD![d]
Have I been a wilderness to Israel,
or a land of thick darkness?
Why then do my people say, "We
are free,
we will come to you no more"?
32 Can a girl forget her ornaments,
or a bride her attire?
Yet my people have forgotten me,
days without number.

33 How well you direct your course
to seek lovers!
So that even to wicked women
you have taught your ways.
34 Also on your skirts is found
the lifeblood of the innocent
poor,
though you did not catch them
breaking in.
Yet in spite of all these things[d]
35 you say, "I am innocent;
surely his anger has turned
from me."
Now I am bringing you to
judgment
for saying, "I have not sinned."
36 How lightly you gad about,
changing your ways!
You shall be put to shame
by Egypt
as you were put to shame
by Assyria.
37 From there also you will
come away
with your hands on your head;
for the LORD has rejected those in
whom you trust,
and you will not prosper
through them.

3 If[e] a man divorces his wife
and she goes from him
and becomes another man's wife,
will he return to her?
Would not such a land be greatly
polluted?
You have played the whore with
many lovers;
and would you return to me?
says the LORD.
2 Look up to the bare heights,[f]
and see!
Where have you not been
lain with?
By the waysides you have sat
waiting for lovers,
like a nomad in the wilderness.
You have polluted the land
with your whoring and
wickedness.

*d* Meaning of Heb uncertain *e* Q Ms Gk Syr: MT *Saying, If* *f* Or *the trails*

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**2.29–31**: Israel rejected God's correction and leadership, even killing his prophets (1 Kings 19.10; 2 Kings 21.16). **32**: See vv. 2–3. **33–37**: Undeniable evidence accuses her. In shame and sorrow (*hands on your head*), abandoned by her lovers (*Egypt* and *Assyria*), faithless Israel will stand alone and condemned before God.

**3.1–4.4: Exhortations to repent. 3.1–5**: Judah's sin surpasses anything envisioned by the law (Deut 24.1–4). Though there is a drought in the land (14.1–6) she does not

3 Therefore the showers have been
withheld,
and the spring rain has not
come;
yet you have the forehead of
a whore,
you refuse to be ashamed.
4 Have you not just now called to
me,
"My Father, you are the friend
of my youth—
5 will he be angry forever,
will he be indignant to the
end?"
This is how you have spoken,
but you have done all the evil
that you could.

6 The LORD said to me in the days of King Josiah: Have you seen what she did, that faithless one, Israel, how she went up on every high hill and under every green tree, and played the whore there? 7 And I thought, "After she has done all this she will return to me"; but she did not return, and her false sister Judah saw it. 8 She[g] saw that for all the adulteries of that faithless one, Israel, I had sent her away with a decree of divorce; yet her false sister Judah did not fear, but she too went and played the whore. 9 Because she took her whoredom so lightly, she polluted the land, committing adultery with stone and tree. 10 Yet for all this her false sister Judah did not return to me with her whole heart, but only in pretense, says the LORD.

11 Then the LORD said to me: Faithless Israel has shown herself less guilty than false Judah. 12 Go, and proclaim these words toward the north, and say:

Return, faithless Israel,
says the LORD.
I will not look on you in anger,
for I am merciful,
says the LORD;
I will not be angry forever.
13 Only acknowledge your guilt,
that you have rebelled against
the LORD your God,
and scattered your favors among
strangers under every
green tree,
and have not obeyed my voice,
says the LORD.
14 Return, O faithless children,
says the LORD,
for I am your master;
I will take you, one from a city
and two from a family,
and I will bring you to Zion.

15 I will give you shepherds after my own heart, who will feed you with knowledge and understanding. 16 And when you have multiplied and increased in the land, in those days, says the LORD, they shall no longer say, "The ark of the covenant of the LORD." It shall not come to mind, or be remembered, or missed; nor shall another one be made. 17 At that time Jerusalem shall be called the throne of the LORD, and all nations shall gather to it, to the presence of the LORD in Jerusalem, and they shall no longer stubbornly follow their own evil will. 18 In those days the house of Judah shall join the house of Israel, and together they shall come from the land of the north to the land that I gave your ancestors for a heritage.

19 I thought
how I would set you among
my children,

*g* Q Ms Gk Mss Syr: MT *I*

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abandon her indiscriminate harlotry (2.20); she can expect no re-acceptance (contrast vv. 6–13).

**3.6–11**: Judah (the south) is more guilty than Israel (the north). This prose section is late, intruding on the sequence of poems. **12–14**: Israel is invited to repent and return.

**3.15–18**: Return from exile and reunion of Israel and Judah under faithful rulers. This oracle is probably later than the rest of the section. **15**: *Shepherds*, rulers. **16–17**: Jerusalem will replace the *ark* as the symbol of the *throne of the* LORD (14.21; 17.12).

**3.19–20**: These verses continue vv. 12–14. Judah's unfaithfulness prevented God's achievement of his hope for his people.

and give you a pleasant land,
the most beautiful heritage of all the nations.
And I thought you would call me, My Father,
and would not turn from following me.
20 Instead, as a faithless wife leaves her husband,
so you have been faithless to me, O house of Israel,
says the LORD.

21 A voice on the bare heights[h] is heard,
the plaintive weeping of Israel's children,
because they have perverted their way,
they have forgotten the LORD their God:
22 Return, O faithless children,
I will heal your faithlessness.

"Here we come to you;
for you are the LORD our God.
23 Truly the hills are[i] a delusion,
the orgies on the mountains.
Truly in the LORD our God
is the salvation of Israel.
24 "But from our youth the shameful thing has devoured all for which our ancestors had labored, their flocks and their herds, their sons and their daughters. 25Let us lie down in our shame, and let our dishonor cover us; for we have sinned against the LORD our God, we and our ancestors, from our youth even to this day; and we have not obeyed the voice of the LORD our God."

4 If you return, O Israel,
says the LORD,
if you return to me,
if you remove your abominations from my presence,
and do not waver,
2 and if you swear, "As the LORD lives!"
in truth, in justice, and in uprightness,
then nations shall be blessed[j] by him,
and by him they shall boast.
3 For thus says the LORD to the people of Judah and to the inhabitants of Jerusalem:
Break up your fallow ground,
and do not sow among thorns.
4 Circumcise yourselves to the LORD,
remove the foreskin of your hearts,
O people of Judah and inhabitants of Jerusalem,
or else my wrath will go forth like fire,
and burn with no one to quench it,
because of the evil of your doings.

5 Declare in Judah, and proclaim in Jerusalem, and say:
Blow the trumpet through the land;
shout aloud[k] and say,
"Gather together, and let us go into the fortified cities!"
6 Raise a standard toward Zion,
flee for safety, do not delay,
for I am bringing evil from the north,
and a great destruction.
7 A lion has gone up from its thicket,
a destroyer of nations has set out;

*h* Or *the trails* *i* Gk Syr Vg: Heb *Truly from the hills is* *j* Or *shall bless themselves* *k* Or *shout, take your weapons*: Heb *shout, fill* (your hand)

**3.21–4.4**: From the *heights*, sites of futile idolatry, come cries of repentance (vv. 12–14) and resolve to return to God (Hos 14.2–3). The conditions of repentance are removal of pagan shrines, recognition of God's exclusive claim by swearing in his name only (4.2b), and cleansing of hearts. **3–4**: Compare Hos 10.12; Deut 10.16; Rom 2.25–29.

**4.5–31**: **The foe from the north,** a recurring theme of Jeremiah (1.13–14; 5.15–17; 6.1–5; etc.). **5–12**: Sound the alarm! Muster for the defense (6.1–8)! Like a beast of prey,

he has gone out from his place
to make your land a waste;
your cities will be ruins
without inhabitant.
8 Because of this put on sackcloth,
lament and wail:
"The fierce anger of the LORD
has not turned away from us."

9On that day, says the LORD, courage shall fail the king and the officials; the priests shall be appalled and the prophets astounded. 10Then I said, "Ah, Lord GOD, how utterly you have deceived this people and Jerusalem, saying, 'It shall be well with you,' even while the sword is at the throat!"

11 At that time it will be said to this people and to Jerusalem: A hot wind comes from me out of the bare heights[l] in the desert toward my poor people, not to winnow or cleanse— 12a wind too strong for that. Now it is I who speak in judgment against them.
13 Look! He comes up like clouds,
his chariots like the whirlwind;
his horses are swifter than
eagles—
woe to us, for we are ruined!
14 O Jerusalem, wash your heart
clean of wickedness
so that you may be saved.
How long shall your evil schemes
lodge within you?
15 For a voice declares from Dan
and proclaims disaster from
Mount Ephraim.
16 Tell the nations, "Here they are!"
Proclaim against Jerusalem,
"Besiegers come from a distant
land;
they shout against the cities of
Judah.
17 They have closed in around her
like watchers of a field,
because she has rebelled
against me,
says the LORD.
18 Your ways and your doings
have brought this upon you.
This is your doom; how bitter it
is!
It has reached your very heart."

19 My anguish, my anguish! I writhe
in pain!
Oh, the walls of my heart!
My heart is beating wildly;
I cannot keep silent;
for I[m] hear the sound of the
trumpet,
the alarm of war.
20 Disaster overtakes disaster,
the whole land is laid waste.
Suddenly my tents are destroyed,
my curtains in a moment.
21 How long must I see the standard,
and hear the sound of the
trumpet?
22 "For my people are foolish,
they do not know me;
they are stupid children,
they have no understanding.
They are skilled in doing evil,
but do not know how to do
good."

23 I looked on the earth, and lo, it
was waste and void;
and to the heavens, and they
had no light.

*l* Or *the trails* *m* Another reading is *for you, O my soul,*

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the foe approaches (5.6)! Courage will fail the leaders of the people who have ignored all warnings of impending doom (6.13–15; 14.13–16; 23.16–17). God's judgment will sweep over the land like the *hot wind* (the sirocco), desiccating everything before it (18.17). **13–18**: Swiftly, like the eagle and the stormwind, the chariotry and cavalry of the enemy approach. Communiqués trace this advance from *Dan* (8.16), through *Mount Ephraim* (central Palestine), Benjamin (6.1) into Judah's heartland.

**4.19–22**: Though the people are foolish and stupid (5.2–3), the prophet laments the sudden disaster which has destroyed his beloved land like the striking of a tent (10.19–21).

**4.23–28**: In a vision, the prophet sees the

24 I looked on the mountains, and lo,
they were quaking,
and all the hills moved to
and fro.
25 I looked, and lo, there was no one
at all,
and all the birds of the air
had fled.
26 I looked, and lo, the fruitful land
was a desert,
and all its cities were laid in
ruins
before the LORD, before his
fierce anger.
27 For thus says the LORD: The whole land shall be a desolation; yet I will not make a full end.
28 Because of this the earth shall
mourn,
and the heavens above grow
black;
for I have spoken, I have
purposed;
I have not relented nor will I
turn back.

29 At the noise of horseman and
archer
every town takes to flight;
they enter thickets; they climb
among rocks;
all the towns are forsaken,
and no one lives in them.
30 And you, O desolate one,
what do you mean that you dress
in crimson,
that you deck yourself with
ornaments of gold,
that you enlarge your eyes with
paint?
In vain you beautify yourself.
Your lovers despise you;
they seek your life.
31 For I heard a cry as of a woman
in labor,
anguish as of one bringing forth
her first child,
the cry of daughter Zion gasping
for breath,
stretching out her hands,
"Woe is me! I am fainting before
killers!"

5 Run to and fro through the streets
of Jerusalem,
look around and take note!
Search its squares and see
if you can find one person
who acts justly
and seeks truth—
so that I may pardon Jerusalem.[n]
2 Although they say, "As the LORD
lives,"
yet they swear falsely.
3 O LORD, do your eyes not look
for truth?
You have struck them,
but they felt no anguish;
you have consumed them,
but they refused to take
correction.
They have made their faces harder
than rock;
they have refused to turn back.

4 Then I said, "These are only
the poor,
they have no sense;
for they do not know the way of
the LORD,

*n* Heb *it*

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terrifying results of God's irrevocable judgment (7.16; 15.1–4). As if struck by sudden devastation, the earth has been returned to its primeval state: waste and void (Gen 1.2).

**4.29–31**: Like a rejected prostitute (3.2–3), like a woman in the anguish of childbirth, like a victim helpless before her murderer, Jerusalem, the daughter Zion, stretches out her hands in futile appeal and suffers her death throes—alone.

**5.1–6.30: The corruptions for which judgment is coming. 5.1–9**: Jeremiah is commanded to search carefully for someone faithful (6.9–10). If one could be found, the LORD would pardon (Gen 18.23–33). He seeks among the "little people" (*poor*), but finds none—perhaps they know no better. He seeks among the privileged *rich*, but there is none there either (compare Mt 19.23–25). Therefore beasts of prey will be unleashed

the law of their God.
5 Let me go to the rich[o]
and speak to them;
surely they know the way of the LORD,
the law of their God."
But they all alike had broken the yoke,
they had burst the bonds.

6 Therefore a lion from the forest shall kill them,
a wolf from the desert shall destroy them.
A leopard is watching against their cities;
everyone who goes out of them shall be torn in pieces—
because their transgressions are many,
their apostasies are great.

7 How can I pardon you?
Your children have forsaken me,
and have sworn by those who are no gods.
When I fed them to the full,
they committed adultery
and trooped to the houses of prostitutes.
8 They were well-fed lusty stallions,
each neighing for his neighbor's wife.
9 Shall I not punish them for these things?
says the LORD;
and shall I not bring retribution on a nation such as this?

10 Go up through her vine-rows and destroy,
but do not make a full end;
strip away her branches,
for they are not the LORD's.
11 For the house of Israel and the house of Judah
have been utterly faithless to me,
says the LORD.
12 They have spoken falsely of the LORD,
and have said, "He will do nothing.
No evil will come upon us,
and we shall not see sword or famine."
13 The prophets are nothing but wind,
for the word is not in them.
Thus shall it be done to them!

14 Therefore thus says the LORD, the God of hosts:
Because they[p] have spoken this word,
I am now making my words in your mouth a fire,
and this people wood, and the fire shall devour them.
15 I am going to bring upon you
a nation from far away,
O house of Israel,
says the LORD.
It is an enduring nation,
it is an ancient nation,
a nation whose language you do not know,
nor can you understand what they say.
16 Their quiver is like an open tomb;
all of them are mighty warriors.
17 They shall eat up your harvest and your food;
they shall eat up your sons and your daughters;
they shall eat up your flocks and your herds;
they shall eat up your vines and your fig trees;
they shall destroy with the sword

*o* Or *the great* *p* Heb *you*

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against this wayward people (2.15; 4.7; Hab 1.8). **7–9**: In the face of rampant idolatry (2.11) and immorality (v. 29; 9.9), what alternative does God have?

**5.10–17**: The LORD's choice vineyard has grown wild and must be destroyed (2.20–21; Isa 5.1–7). **12–17**: The judgment. The prophetic words which the people had ignored as *wind* will be revealed as the consuming *word* of God. God is not powerless (Pss 10.4; 14.1)

your fortified cities in which
you trust.

18 But even in those days, says the LORD, I will not make a full end of you. 19 And when your people say, "Why has the LORD our God done all these things to us?" you shall say to them, "As you have forsaken me and served foreign gods in your land, so you shall serve strangers in a land that is not yours."

20 Declare this in the house of Jacob,
proclaim it in Judah:
21 Hear this, O foolish and senseless
people,
who have eyes, but do not see,
who have ears, but do not hear.
22 Do you not fear me? says the
LORD;
Do you not tremble before me?
I placed the sand as a boundary
for the sea,
a perpetual barrier that it cannot
pass;
though the waves toss, they
cannot prevail,
though they roar, they cannot
pass over it.
23 But this people has a stubborn and
rebellious heart;
they have turned aside and
gone away.
24 They do not say in their hearts,
"Let us fear the LORD our God,
who gives the rain in its season,
the autumn rain and the
spring rain,
and keeps for us
the weeks appointed for the
harvest."
25 Your iniquities have turned
these away,
and your sins have deprived you
of good.
26 For scoundrels are found among
my people;
they take over the goods of
others.
Like fowlers they set a trap;[q]
they catch human beings.
27 Like a cage full of birds,
their houses are full of
treachery;
therefore they have become great
and rich,
28 they have grown fat and sleek.
They know no limits in deeds of
wickedness;
they do not judge with justice
the cause of the orphan, to make
it prosper,
and they do not defend the
rights of the needy.
29 Shall I not punish them for these
things?
says the LORD,
and shall I not bring retribution
on a nation such as this?

30 An appalling and horrible thing
has happened in the land:
31 the prophets prophesy falsely,
and the priests rule as the
prophets direct;[r]
my people love to have it so,
but what will you do when the
end comes?

*q* Meaning of Heb uncertain *r* Or *rule by their own authority*

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but will bring upon them the ravages of a vicious invader. **18–19**: A recurring comment (9.12–14; 16.10–13; 22.8–9), modifying Jeremiah's customary warnings of total destruction (vv. 16–17; 13.13–14).

**5.20–29**: Judah's foolish stubbornness has closed her eyes and ears to the manifest acts of God (Prov 1.7; Isa 6.9–10; Mt 13.10–15). **22**: Perhaps a reflection of the ancient myth of a deity's conquest of the mighty monster, the primordial sea (Job 38.8–11; Ps 104.6–9; compare Isa 51.9–10). **24b**: The seven weeks from Passover to Pentecost (Deut 16.9–10) when rain could ruin the harvest (1 Sam 12.16–18). **26–29**: Judah must be punished (v. 9) for her tolerance of those who grow wealthy by defrauding the defenseless (Deut 24.17–18; Am 2.6–7) like fowlers catching hapless birds in nets and putting them in baskets. **29**: Verse 9.

**5.30–31**: The people heartily approve of the perversity of priest and prophet (6.13–15; 23.9–22; Mic 3.5–8).

6 Flee for safety, O children of Benjamin,
from the midst of Jerusalem!
Blow the trumpet in Tekoa,
and raise a signal on Beth-haccherem;
for evil looms out of the north,
and great destruction.
2 I have likened daughter Zion
to the loveliest pasture.[s]
3 Shepherds with their flocks shall come against her.
They shall pitch their tents around her;
they shall pasture, all in their places.
4 "Prepare war against her;
up, and let us attack at noon!"
"Woe to us, for the day declines,
the shadows of evening lengthen!"
5 "Up, and let us attack by night,
and destroy her palaces!"
6 For thus says the LORD of hosts:
Cut down her trees;
cast up a siege ramp against Jerusalem.
This is the city that must be punished;[t]
there is nothing but oppression within her.
7 As a well keeps its water fresh,
so she keeps fresh her wickedness;
violence and destruction are heard within her;
sickness and wounds are ever before me.
8 Take warning, O Jerusalem,
or I shall turn from you in disgust,
and make you a desolation,
an uninhabited land.

9 Thus says the LORD of hosts:
Glean[u] thoroughly as a vine
the remnant of Israel;
like a grape-gatherer, pass your hand again
over its branches.

10 To whom shall I speak and give warning,
that they may hear?
See, their ears are closed,[v]
they cannot listen.
The word of the LORD is to them an object of scorn;
they take no pleasure in it.
11 But I am full of the wrath of the LORD;
I am weary of holding it in.

Pour it out on the children in the street,
and on the gatherings of young men as well;
both husband and wife shall be taken,
the old folk and the very aged.
12 Their houses shall be turned over to others,
their fields and wives together;
for I will stretch out my hand
against the inhabitants of the land,
says the LORD.

13 For from the least to the greatest of them,
everyone is greedy for unjust gain;
and from prophet to priest,
everyone deals falsely.

*s* Or *I will destroy daughter Zion, the loveliest pasture* *t* Or *the city of license* *u* Cn: Heb *They shall glean* *v* Heb *are uncircumcised*

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**6.1–8**: The foe approaches from the north. **1**: *Tekoa,* twelve miles south of Jerusalem; *Beth-haccherem,* modern Ramet Rahel, two miles south of Jerusalem. **3**: *Shepherds with their flocks,* kings with their armies (compare 1.15; 12.10). **4**: *Prepare,* more literally, "sanctify" (see Joel 3.9 note *i*).

**6.9–15**: Jerusalem's obduracy. Jeremiah is to search meticulously for a God-fearing person (5.1), but he finds none (20.7–18; Mic 7.1–2). God will pour out his wrath (Isa 5.25; Ezek 6.14) upon the impenitent people, especially on the leaders who promised material and spiritual well-being (*peace*) when none was to be had (8.10–12; Ezek 13.10–11).

14 They have treated the wound of my people carelessly,
saying, "Peace, peace,"
when there is no peace.
15 They acted shamefully, they committed abomination;
yet they were not ashamed,
they did not know how to blush.
Therefore they shall fall among those who fall;
at the time that I punish them, they shall be overthrown,
says the LORD.
16 Thus says the LORD:
Stand at the crossroads, and look,
and ask for the ancient paths,
where the good way lies; and walk in it,
and find rest for your souls.
But they said, "We will not walk in it."
17 Also I raised up sentinels for you:
"Give heed to the sound of the trumpet!"
But they said, "We will not give heed."
18 Therefore hear, O nations,
and know, O congregation, what will happen to them.
19 Hear, O earth; I am going to bring disaster on this people,
the fruit of their schemes,
because they have not given heed to my words;
and as for my teaching, they have rejected it.
20 Of what use to me is frankincense that comes from Sheba,
or sweet cane from a distant land?
Your burnt offerings are not acceptable,
nor are your sacrifices pleasing to me.
21 Therefore thus says the LORD:
See, I am laying before this people stumbling blocks against which they shall stumble;
parents and children together,
neighbor and friend shall perish.

22 Thus says the LORD:
See, a people is coming from the land of the north,
a great nation is stirring from the farthest parts of the earth.
23 They grasp the bow and the javelin,
they are cruel and have no mercy,
their sound is like the roaring sea;
they ride on horses,
equipped like a warrior for battle,
against you, O daughter Zion!

24 "We have heard news of them, our hands fall helpless;
anguish has taken hold of us,
pain as of a woman in labor.
25 Do not go out into the field, or walk on the road;
for the enemy has a sword,
terror is on every side."

26 O my poor people, put on sackcloth,
and roll in ashes;
make mourning as for an only child,
most bitter lamentation:
for suddenly the destroyer will come upon us.

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**6.16–21**: Jerusalem is without excuse. God gave his covenant and instruction (*paths, my teaching*) and sent his prophets (*sentinels, my words;* compare Hos 9.8) but both were ignored. The finest and rarest offerings (*frankincense, sweet cane*) are no substitute for faithfulness (7.21–23; Am 5.21–24). *Sheba,* southwest Arabia.

**6.22–26**: The foe from the north (4.5–8) strikes terror into the hearts of the people of the invaded land (Am 8.10; Zech 12.10). **25**: *Terror is on every side,* a characteristic expression of Jeremiah to describe all-encompassing danger (20.3, 10; 46.5; 49.29; Lam 2.22).

27 I have made you a tester and a refiner[w] among my people
so that you may know and test their ways.
28 They are all stubbornly rebellious, going about with slanders;
they are bronze and iron, all of them act corruptly.
29 The bellows blow fiercely, the lead is consumed by the fire;
in vain the refining goes on, for the wicked are not removed.
30 They are called "rejected silver," for the LORD has rejected them.

7 The word that came to Jeremiah from the LORD: 2 Stand in the gate of the LORD's house, and proclaim there this word, and say, Hear the word of the LORD, all you people of Judah, you that enter these gates to worship the LORD. 3 Thus says the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel: Amend your ways and your doings, and let me dwell with you[x] in this place. 4 Do not trust in these deceptive words: "This is[y] the temple of the LORD, the temple of the LORD, the temple of the LORD."

5 For if you truly amend your ways and your doings, if you truly act justly one with another, 6 if you do not oppress the alien, the orphan, and the widow, or shed innocent blood in this place, and if you do not go after other gods to your own hurt, 7 then I will dwell with you in this place, in the land that I gave of old to your ancestors forever and ever.

8 Here you are, trusting in deceptive words to no avail. 9 Will you steal, murder, commit adultery, swear falsely, make offerings to Baal, and go after other gods that you have not known, 10 and then come and stand before me in this house, which is called by my name, and say, "We are safe!"—only to go on doing all these abominations? 11 Has this house, which is called by my name, become a den of robbers in your sight? You know, I too am watching, says the LORD. 12 Go now to my place that was in Shiloh, where I made my name dwell at first, and see what I did to it for the wickedness of my people Israel. 13 And now, because you have done all these things, says the LORD, and when I spoke to you persistently, you did not listen, and when I called you, you did not answer, 14 therefore I will do to the house that is called by my name, in which you trust, and to the place that I gave to you and to your ancestors, just what I did to Shiloh. 15 And I will cast you out of my sight, just as I cast out all your kinsfolk, all the offspring of Ephraim.

16 As for you, do not pray for this people, do not raise a cry or prayer on their behalf, and do not intercede with me, for I will not hear you. 17 Do you not see what they are doing in the towns of Judah and in the streets of Jerusalem? 18 The children gather wood, the fathers kindle fire, and the women knead dough, to make cakes for the queen of heaven; and they pour out drink offerings to other gods, to provoke me to anger. 19 Is it

*w* Or *a fortress* *x* Or *and I will let you dwell*
*y* Heb *They are*

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**6.27–30**: Jeremiah, the assayer. One function of the prophetic office was to assay the faithfulness (*silver*) of the people. Jeremiah discovers that there is no precious metal to be found.

**7.1–15**: **The temple sermon** (compare 26.4–6). **4**: The temple's presence was mistakenly interpreted as necessarily assuring God's protection (Isa 31.4; for three-fold emphasis, compare 22.29; Isa 6.3). Jeremiah disagreed (Mic 3.12); a complete moral change was required (vv. 5–6; compare Hos 4.2; Mic 6.8).

**7.10–12**: As *Shiloh* (7.12, eighteen miles north of Jerusalem), the earlier central shrine, was destroyed (around 1050 B.C. in the days of Samuel; compare 1 Sam chs 4–6; Ps 78.56–72), so also *this house,* desecrated by idolatry, will be destroyed (vv. 10, 11; compare Mt 21.13). Immediately following this sermon, Jeremiah was arrested (see 26.8).

**7.16–8.3**: **Abuses in worship. 16–20**: Because of Judah's general apostasy, God forbids Jeremiah to exercise one of the functions of the prophetic office: intercession (7.16; 11.14; 15.1; compare Am 7.2, 5). *Queen of heaven,* see 44.15–28 n.

I whom they provoke? says the LORD. Is it not themselves, to their own hurt? 20Therefore thus says the Lord GOD: My anger and my wrath shall be poured out on this place, on human beings and animals, on the trees of the field and the fruit of the ground; it will burn and not be quenched.

21 Thus says the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel: Add your burnt offerings to your sacrifices, and eat the flesh. 22For in the day that I brought your ancestors out of the land of Egypt, I did not speak to them or command them concerning burnt offerings and sacrifices. 23But this command I gave them, "Obey my voice, and I will be your God, and you shall be my people; and walk only in the way that I command you, so that it may be well with you." 24Yet they did not obey or incline their ear, but, in the stubbornness of their evil will, they walked in their own counsels, and looked backward rather than forward. 25From the day that your ancestors came out of the land of Egypt until this day, I have persistently sent all my servants the prophets to them, day after day; 26yet they did not listen to me, or pay attention, but they stiffened their necks. They did worse than their ancestors did.

27 So you shall speak all these words to them, but they will not listen to you. You shall call to them, but they will not answer you. 28You shall say to them: This is the nation that did not obey the voice of the LORD their God, and did not accept discipline; truth has perished; it is cut off from their lips.

29 Cut off your hair and throw
it away;
raise a lamentation on the bare
heights,[z]
for the LORD has rejected and
forsaken
the generation that provoked
his wrath.

30 For the people of Judah have done evil in my sight, says the LORD; they have set their abominations in the house that is called by my name, defiling it. 31And they go on building the high place[a] of Topheth, which is in the valley of the son of Hinnom, to burn their sons and their daughters in the fire—which I did not command, nor did it come into my mind. 32Therefore, the days are surely coming, says the LORD, when it will no more be called Topheth, or the valley of the son of Hinnom, but the valley of Slaughter: for they will bury in Topheth until there is no more room. 33The corpses of this people will be food for the birds of the air, and for the animals of the earth; and no one will frighten them away. 34And I will bring to an end the sound of mirth and gladness, the voice of the bride and bridegroom in the cities of Judah and in the streets of Jerusalem; for the land shall become a waste.

8 At that time, says the LORD, the bones of the kings of Judah, the bones of its officials, the bones of the priests, the bones of the prophets, and the bones of the inhabitants of Jerusalem shall be brought out of their tombs; 2and they shall be spread before the sun and the moon and all the host of heaven, which they have loved and served, which they have followed, and which they have inquired of and worshiped; and they shall not be gathered or buried; they shall be like dung on the surface of the ground. 3Death shall be preferred to life by all the

*z* Or *the trails* *a* Gk Tg: Heb *high places*

**7.21–28**: Faithfulness, not sacrifice, is required. Sacrifices are acceptable only when the right relationship exists between God and those who sacrifice (6.20; Ps 51.15–19). Until then, worshipers may as well eat the flesh of the *burnt offerings,* customarily incinerated (Lev ch 1), as well as the other offerings (Lev ch 3; 7.11–18).

**7.29–8.3**: The fate of Judah. **29**: *Cut off your hair,* a sign of mourning (16.6; Mic 1.16). **31**: The most gruesome of Israel's aberrations was the sacrifice of children (19.5; 32.35) on the burning platform (*Topheth,* 2 Kings 23.10). Strictly forbidden by God (Lev 18.21), it will eventually be recognized as murder. *Valley of the son of Hinnom,* southwest of the city joining the Kidron valley. **33**: Corpses as carrion were a frightful prospect. **34**: 16.9. **8.1–2**: Jeremiah here uses biting irony.

remnant that remains of this evil family in all the places where I have driven them, says the LORD of hosts.

4 You shall say to them, Thus says the LORD:
When people fall, do they not get up again?
If they go astray, do they not turn back?
5 Why then has this people[b] turned away
in perpetual backsliding?
They have held fast to deceit,
they have refused to return.
6 I have given heed and listened,
but they do not speak honestly;
no one repents of wickedness,
saying, "What have I done!"
All of them turn to their own course,
like a horse plunging headlong into battle.
7 Even the stork in the heavens
knows its times;
and the turtledove, swallow, and crane[c]
observe the time of their coming;
but my people do not know
the ordinance of the LORD.

8 How can you say, "We are wise,
and the law of the LORD is with us,"
when, in fact, the false pen of the scribes
has made it into a lie?
9 The wise shall be put to shame,
they shall be dismayed and taken;
since they have rejected the word of the LORD,
what wisdom is in them?
10 Therefore I will give their wives to others
and their fields to conquerors,
because from the least to the greatest
everyone is greedy for unjust gain;
from prophet to priest
everyone deals falsely.
11 They have treated the wound of my people carelessly,
saying, "Peace, peace,"
when there is no peace.
12 They acted shamefully, they committed abomination;
yet they were not at all ashamed,
they did not know how to blush.
Therefore they shall fall among those who fall;
at the time when I punish them, they shall be overthrown,
says the LORD.
13 When I wanted to gather them, says the LORD,
there are[d] no grapes on the vine,
nor figs on the fig tree;
even the leaves are withered,
and what I gave them has passed away from them.[c]

14 Why do we sit still?
Gather together, let us go into the fortified cities
and perish there;
for the LORD our God has doomed us to perish,
and has given us poisoned water to drink,

*b* One Ms Gk: MT *this people, Jerusalem,*
*c* Meaning of Heb uncertain *d* Or *I will make an end of them, says the* LORD. *There are*

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**8.4–10.25: Miscellaneous oracles. 8.4–7**: Israel's incredible indifference (18.13–17). Anyone who falls naturally gets up; the birds follow their natural instincts; but Israel, God's people, forgets God's law.

**8.8–9**: Word vs. law. Here Jeremiah contrasts his proclaimed *word of the* LORD with the written tradition (*law*) misinterpreted by those who administer it (*scribes;* compare 2.8). **10c–12**: A doublet of 6.13–15. **13**: Judah, like an unfruitful *vine* or *fig tree,* will be destroyed (Lk 13.7).

**8.14–17**: Panic-stricken before the invader, the inhabitants of Judah seek temporary defense in their fortresses, but there is no defense. *Poisoned water* (cup of God's wrath,

because we have sinned against the LORD.

15 We look for peace, but find no good,
for a time of healing, but there is terror instead.

16 The snorting of their horses is heard from Dan;
at the sound of the neighing of their stallions
the whole land quakes.
They come and devour the land and all that fills it,
the city and those who live in it.

17 See, I am letting snakes loose among you,
adders that cannot be charmed,
and they shall bite you,
says the LORD.

18 My joy is gone, grief is upon me,
my heart is sick.

19 Hark, the cry of my poor people from far and wide in the land:
"Is the LORD not in Zion?
Is her King not in her?"
("Why have they provoked me to anger with their images,
with their foreign idols?")

20 "The harvest is past, the summer is ended,
and we are not saved."

21 For the hurt of my poor people I am hurt,
I mourn, and dismay has taken hold of me.

22 Is there no balm in Gilead?
Is there no physician there?
Why then has the health of my poor people
not been restored?

9[e] O that my head were a spring of water,
and my eyes a fountain of tears,
so that I might weep day and night
for the slain of my poor people!

2[f] O that I had in the desert
a traveler's lodging place,
that I might leave my people
and go away from them!
For they are all adulterers,
a band of traitors.

3 They bend their tongues like bows;
they have grown strong in the land for falsehood, and not for truth;
for they proceed from evil to evil,
and they do not know me, says the LORD.

4 Beware of your neighbors,
and put no trust in any of your kin;[g]
for all your kin[h] are supplanters,
and every neighbor goes around like a slanderer.

5 They all deceive their neighbors,
and no one speaks the truth;
they have taught their tongues to speak lies;
they commit iniquity and are too weary to repent.[i]

6 Oppression upon oppression,
deceit[j] upon deceit!
They refuse to know me, says the LORD.

7 Therefore thus says the LORD of hosts:

*e* Ch 8.23 in Heb *f* Ch 9.1 in Heb
*g* Heb *in a brother* *h* Heb *for every brother*
*i* Cn Compare Gk: Heb *they weary themselves with iniquity.* 6*Your dwelling* *j* Cn: Heb *Your dwelling in the midst of deceit*

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9.15; Ps 75.8; Num ch 5). *Dan,* northernmost point in Israel. *Snakes* (Eccl 10.11; Ps 58.4–5; Num 21.4–9).

**8.18–9.1**: Lament over Judah. It distresses Jeremiah to denounce his people. **20**: They were perhaps suffering from drought (ch 14). **22**: *My poor people,* Judah (4.11). *Balm in Gilead,* resin from the Styrax tree, produced especially in the north Transjordan region of Gilead, widely used for medicinal purposes (46.11; Gen 37.25). **9.2–9**: The complete corruption of the people is the basis for this accusation. Here, instead of sympathy, God has nothing but contempt for the lying, deceiving, untrustworthy nation (11.19–23; 12.6; 20.10). A remote stopping place in the desert

I will now refine and test them,
for what else can I do with my sinful people?[k]
8 Their tongue is a deadly arrow;
it speaks deceit through the mouth.
They all speak friendly words to their neighbors,
but inwardly are planning to lay an ambush.
9 Shall I not punish them for these things? says the LORD;
and shall I not bring retribution on a nation such as this?

10 Take up[l] weeping and wailing for the mountains,
and a lamentation for the pastures of the wilderness,
because they are laid waste so that no one passes through,
and the lowing of cattle is not heard;
both the birds of the air and the animals
have fled and are gone.
11 I will make Jerusalem a heap of ruins,
a lair of jackals;
and I will make the towns of Judah a desolation,
without inhabitant.

12 Who is wise enough to understand this? To whom has the mouth of the LORD spoken, so that they may declare it? Why is the land ruined and laid waste like a wilderness, so that no one passes through? 13And the LORD says: Because they have forsaken my law that I set before them, and have not obeyed my voice, or walked in accordance with it, 14but have stubbornly followed their own hearts and have gone after the Baals, as their ancestors taught them. 15Therefore thus says the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel: I am feeding this people with wormwood, and giving them poisonous water to drink. 16I will scatter them among nations that neither they nor their ancestors have known; and I will send the sword after them, until I have consumed them.

17 Thus says the LORD of hosts:
Consider, and call for the mourning women to come;
send for the skilled women to come;
18 let them quickly raise a dirge over us,
so that our eyes may run down with tears,
and our eyelids flow with water.
19 For a sound of wailing is heard from Zion:
"How we are ruined!
We are utterly shamed,
because we have left the land,
because they have cast down our dwellings."

20 Hear, O women, the word of the LORD,
and let your ears receive the word of his mouth;
teach to your daughters a dirge,
and each to her neighbor a lament.
21 "Death has come up into our windows,
it has entered our palaces,
to cut off the children from the streets

*k* Or *my poor people*
*l* Gk Syr: Heb *I will take up*

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would be preferable (1 Kings 19.3–4). **9**: 5.9, 29.

**9.10–22**: Lamentation over Zion. **12–16**: A composite commentary on Jeremiah's oracle in vv. 10–11, 17–22 (compare 5.18–19). *Poisonous water*, 8.14; 23.15; Ezek 23.31–34. Baal worship was a human fabrication, not God's revelation. **10–11, 17–22**: The stillness of death shrouds the ruined land (7.34); only the howl of jackals breaks the silence. As customary in the ancient world, professional *mourning women* are hired to bewail the fate of Zion. **21**: The verse reflects the figure of speech of a Canaanite mythological allusion to the god of death.

and the young men from
the squares."
22 Speak! Thus says the LORD:
"Human corpses shall fall
like dung upon the open field,
like sheaves behind the reaper,
and no one shall gather them."

23 Thus says the LORD: Do not let the wise boast in their wisdom, do not let the mighty boast in their might, do not let the wealthy boast in their wealth; 24but let those who boast boast in this, that they understand and know me, that I am the LORD; I act with steadfast love, justice, and righteousness in the earth, for in these things I delight, says the LORD.

25 The days are surely coming, says the LORD, when I will attend to all those who are circumcised only in the foreskin: 26Egypt, Judah, Edom, the Ammonites, Moab, and all those with shaven temples who live in the desert. For all these nations are uncircumcised, and all the house of Israel is uncircumcised in heart.

10 Hear the word that the LORD speaks to you, O house of Israel.
2Thus says the LORD:
Do not learn the way of the
nations,
or be dismayed at the signs of
the heavens;
for the nations are dismayed
at them.
3 For the customs of the peoples
are false:
a tree from the forest is cut down,
and worked with an ax by the
hands of an artisan;
4 people deck it with silver and
gold;
they fasten it with hammer
and nails
so that it cannot move.
5 Their idols[m] are like scarecrows in
a cucumber field,
and they cannot speak;
they have to be carried,
for they cannot walk.
Do not be afraid of them,
for they cannot do evil,
nor is it in them to do good.

6 There is none like you, O LORD;
you are great, and your name is
great in might.
7 Who would not fear you, O King
of the nations?
For that is your due;
among all the wise ones of the
nations
and in all their kingdoms
there is no one like you.
8 They are both stupid and foolish;
the instruction given by idols
is no better than wood![n]
9 Beaten silver is brought from
Tarshish,
and gold from Uphaz.
They are the work of the artisan
and of the hands of the
goldsmith;
their clothing is blue and purple;
they are all the product of
skilled workers.
10 But the LORD is the true God;
he is the living God and the
everlasting King.
At his wrath the earth quakes,
and the nations cannot endure
his indignation.

*m* Heb *They* *n* Meaning of Heb uncertain

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**9.23–24**: True glory (1 Cor 1.31). The common goals of human beings are nothing (1 Kings 3.10–12) compared with the knowledge of God. **25–26**: Though physically circumcised, her neighbors will share with faithless Israel the lot of those not in right relationship with God (Deut 10.16; Rom 2.25–29). *Those with shaven temples,* Arab tribes (25.23).

**10.1–16**: God and the idols. This passage is an elaboration of an oracle by Jeremiah (compare Isa 44.9–20; Ps 115.3–8). **2**: *Signs of the heavens* (eclipses, comets, astrological observations) are meaningless. **4**: *People deck it with silver and gold,* compare the description of making an idol in Isa 40.18–20; 41.6–7. **5**: *They have to be carried,* this theme is effectively presented in Isa 46.1–7. *Cucumber field,* Isa 1.8. **9**: *Tarshish,* Sardinia, or Tartessus in southern Spain. *Uphaz,* unknown.

11 Thus shall you say to them: The gods who did not make the heavens and the earth shall perish from the earth and from under the heavens.[o]

12 It is he who made the earth by his power,
who established the world by his wisdom,
and by his understanding stretched out the heavens.
13 When he utters his voice, there is a tumult of waters in the heavens,
and he makes the mist rise from the ends of the earth.
He makes lightnings for the rain,
and he brings out the wind from his storehouses.
14 Everyone is stupid and without knowledge;
goldsmiths are all put to shame by their idols;
for their images are false,
and there is no breath in them.
15 They are worthless, a work of delusion;
at the time of their punishment they shall perish.
16 Not like these is the LORD,[p] the portion of Jacob,
for he is the one who formed all things,
and Israel is the tribe of his inheritance;
the LORD of hosts is his name.

17 Gather up your bundle from the ground,
O you who live under siege!
18 For thus says the LORD:
I am going to sling out the inhabitants of the land at this time,
and I will bring distress on them,
so that they shall feel it.

19 Woe is me because of my hurt!
My wound is severe.
But I said, "Truly this is my punishment,
and I must bear it."
20 My tent is destroyed,
and all my cords are broken;
my children have gone from me,
and they are no more;
there is no one to spread my tent again,
and to set up my curtains.
21 For the shepherds are stupid,
and do not inquire of the LORD;
therefore they have not prospered,
and all their flock is scattered.

22 Hear, a noise! Listen, it is coming—
a great commotion from the land of the north
to make the cities of Judah a desolation,
a lair of jackals.

23 I know, O LORD, that the way of human beings is not in their control,
that mortals as they walk cannot direct their steps.
24 Correct me, O LORD, but in just measure;
not in your anger, or you will bring me to nothing.

25 Pour out your wrath on the nations that do not know you,

*o* This verse is in Aramaic *p* Heb lacks *the* LORD

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**10.11**: An Aramaic gloss (unique in Jeremiah). **12–16**: He alone (*the portion of Jacob;* Lam 3.24) is worthy of worship (51.15–19).

**10.17–22**: Prepare to leave! Related to but later than 9.10–22, this passage describes a siege (perhaps in 597 B.C.) which will not be lifted. In Exile, mother Zion will lose her children (Isa 49.14–23; 54.1–3) because of the stupidity of Judah's rulers (*shepherds*). God's role in political events is not to be overlooked. **22b**: 9.11.

**10.23–25**: A prayer. The one who prays cites Prov 20.24 (v. 23, compare Rom 1.18–23) and Ps 79.6–7 (v. 25) to direct God's attention away from Judah and to neighboring nations instead.

and on the peoples that do not
call on your name;
for they have devoured Jacob;
they have devoured him and
consumed him,
and have laid waste his
habitation.

11 The word that came to Jeremiah from the LORD: 2Hear the words of this covenant, and speak to the people of Judah and the inhabitants of Jerusalem. 3You shall say to them, Thus says the LORD, the God of Israel: Cursed be anyone who does not heed the words of this covenant, 4which I commanded your ancestors when I brought them out of the land of Egypt, from the iron-smelter, saying, Listen to my voice, and do all that I command you. So shall you be my people, and I will be your God, 5that I may perform the oath that I swore to your ancestors, to give them a land flowing with milk and honey, as at this day. Then I answered, "So be it, LORD."

6 And the LORD said to me: Proclaim all these words in the cities of Judah, and in the streets of Jerusalem: Hear the words of this covenant and do them. 7For I solemnly warned your ancestors when I brought them up out of the land of Egypt, warning them persistently, even to this day, saying, Obey my voice. 8Yet they did not obey or incline their ear, but everyone walked in the stubbornness of an evil will. So I brought upon them all the words of this covenant, which I commanded them to do, but they did not.

9 And the LORD said to me: Conspiracy exists among the people of Judah and the inhabitants of Jerusalem. 10They have turned back to the iniquities of their ancestors of old, who refused to heed my words; they have gone after other gods to serve them; the house of Israel and the house of Judah have broken the covenant that I made with their ancestors. 11Therefore, thus says the LORD, assuredly I am going to bring disaster upon them that they cannot escape; though they cry out to me, I will not listen to them. 12Then the cities of Judah and the inhabitants of Jerusalem will go and cry out to the gods to whom they make offerings, but they will never save them in the time of their trouble. 13For your gods have become as many as your towns, O Judah; and as many as the streets of Jerusalem are the altars to shame you have set up, altars to make offerings to Baal.

14 As for you, do not pray for this people, or lift up a cry or prayer on their behalf, for I will not listen when they call to me in the time of their trouble. 15What right has my beloved in my house, when she has done vile deeds? Can vows[q] and sacrificial flesh avert your doom? Can you then exult? 16The LORD once called you, "A green olive tree, fair with goodly fruit"; but with the roar of a great tempest he will set fire to it, and its branches will be consumed. 17The LORD of hosts, who planted you, has pronounced evil against you, because of the evil that the house of Israel and the house of Judah have done, provoking me to anger by making offerings to Baal.

18 It was the LORD who made it
known to me, and I knew;
then you showed me their
evil deeds.

*q* Gk: Heb *Can many*

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**11.1–17: Jeremiah and the covenant.** Jeremiah undoubtedly strongly supported Josiah's effort to eradicate practices of foreign worship (2 Kings chs 22–23) and to return to the provisions of the Mosaic covenant (v. 3, *this covenant;* v. 10, *the covenant*). Prophetic preaching was based upon the covenant relationship with God. Typically Deuteronomic is the word *command* used of the covenant (Deut 4.13; 6.17; etc.); note also other familiar Deuteronomic phrases: v. 3, Deut 27.26; v. 4, Deut 4.20; v. 5, Deut 7.12–13; v. 8, Deut 29.19. *Iron-smelter,* Deut 4.20; 1 Kings 8.51; Isa 48.10. Intercession for the apostate people is useless (14.11–12), as are also their rituals. **16:** The *green olive tree* is a symbol of Israel (Hos 14.6).

19 But I was like a gentle lamb
led to the slaughter.
And I did not know it was against me
that they devised schemes, saying,
"Let us destroy the tree with its fruit,
let us cut him off from the land of the living,
so that his name will no longer be remembered!"
20 But you, O LORD of hosts, who judge righteously,
who try the heart and the mind,
let me see your retribution upon them,
for to you I have committed my cause.

21 Therefore thus says the LORD concerning the people of Anathoth, who seek your life, and say, "You shall not prophesy in the name of the LORD, or you will die by our hand"— 22 therefore thus says the LORD of hosts: I am going to punish them; the young men shall die by the sword; their sons and their daughters shall die by famine; 23 and not even a remnant shall be left of them. For I will bring disaster upon the people of Anathoth, the year of their punishment.

12 You will be in the right, O LORD,
when I lay charges against you;
but let me put my case to you.
Why does the way of the guilty prosper?
Why do all who are treacherous thrive?
2 You plant them, and they take root;
they grow and bring forth fruit;
you are near in their mouths
yet far from their hearts.
3 But you, O LORD, know me;
You see me and test me—my heart is with you.
Pull them out like sheep for the slaughter,
and set them apart for the day of slaughter.
4 How long will the land mourn,
and the grass of every field wither?
For the wickedness of those who live in it
the animals and the birds are swept away,
and because people said, "He is blind to our ways."[r]

5 If you have raced with foot-runners and they have wearied you,
how will you compete with horses?
And if in a safe land you fall down,
how will you fare in the thickets of the Jordan?
6 For even your kinsfolk and your own family,
even they have dealt treacherously with you;
they are in full cry after you;
do not believe them,
though they speak friendly words to you.

*r* Gk: Heb *to our future*

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**11.18–12.6: Jeremiah's first personal lament. A plot against the life of Jeremiah.** The first of Jeremiah's six personal laments; the others are 15.10–21; 17.14–18; 18.18–23; 20.7–13; 20.14–18. He learns that he is the unwitting object (*gentle lamb;* compare Isa 53.7) of an assassination plot, and prays the omniscient God for protection (17.10; Ps 26).

**11.21–23:** The origin of the grievance against Jeremiah may be his identification of certain fellow citizens with false prophets and priests. In his characteristic phraseology (5.12; 18.21; 19.15; 23.12) their end is foretold.

**12.1–5:** Against the background of the law court, Jeremiah questions the then nearly universal idea that the wicked always suffer and the righteous always prosper. The wicked, ostensibly faithful, prosper (Job ch 21; Ps 73). After Jeremiah's assertion of integrity (Ps 139.23–24), God, by two proverbs, informs him that the present is but a preparation for a more demanding future.

7 I have forsaken my house,
I have abandoned my heritage;
I have given the beloved of my heart
into the hands of her enemies.
8 My heritage has become to me
like a lion in the forest;
she has lifted up her voice against me—
therefore I hate her.
9 Is the hyena greedy[s] for my heritage at my command?
Are the birds of prey all around her?
Go, assemble all the wild animals;
bring them to devour her.
10 Many shepherds have destroyed my vineyard,
they have trampled down my portion,
they have made my pleasant portion
a desolate wilderness.
11 They have made it a desolation;
desolate, it mourns to me.
The whole land is made desolate,
but no one lays it to heart.
12 Upon all the bare heights[t] in the desert
spoilers have come;
for the sword of the LORD devours
from one end of the land to the other;
no one shall be safe.
13 They have sown wheat and have reaped thorns,
they have tired themselves out but profit nothing.
They shall be ashamed of their[u] harvests
because of the fierce anger of the LORD.

*The story of the linen loincloth*

14 Thus says the LORD concerning all my evil neighbors who touch the heritage that I have given my people Israel to inherit: I am about to pluck them up from their land, and I will pluck up the house of Judah from among them. 15 And after I have plucked them up, I will again have compassion on them, and I will bring them again to their heritage and to their land, everyone of them. 16 And then, if they will diligently learn the ways of my people, to swear by my name, "As the LORD lives," as they taught my people to swear by Baal, then they shall be built up in the midst of my people. 17 But if any nation will not listen, then I will completely uproot it and destroy it, says the LORD.

13 Thus said the LORD to me, "Go and buy yourself a linen loincloth, and put it on your loins, but do not dip it in water." 2 So I bought a loincloth according to the word of the LORD, and put it on my loins. 3 And the word of the LORD came to me a second time, saying, 4 "Take the loincloth that you bought and are wearing, and go now to the Euphrates,[v] and hide it there in a cleft of the rock." 5 So I went, and hid it by the Euphrates,[w] as the LORD commanded me. 6 And after many days the LORD said to me, "Go now to the Euphrates,[v] and take from there the loincloth that I commanded you to hide there." 7 Then I went to the Euphrates,[v] and dug, and I took the loincloth from the place where I had

*s* Cn: Heb *Is the hyena, the bird of prey*
*t* Or *the trails* *u* Heb *your* *v* Or *to Parah*; Heb *perath* *w* Or *by Parah*; Heb *perath*

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**12.7–13: God's lament.** Using several figures (*beloved of my heart,* 11.15; *lion; birds of prey; vineyard,* 5.10; Isa 5.1–7), God laments the necessary ravaging of Judah (*my house,* Hos 9.15; *heritage,* 1 Sam 10.1) by the Babylonian-inspired raids of 601 B.C., led by several puppet rulers (*birds of prey, shepherds*), in reprisal for Jehoiakim's short-lived revolt (2 Kings 24.1–4).

**12.14–17: Judah's neighbors.** If Judah's erstwhile enemies are converted (16.19–21; Ps 87), God will spare them when Judah is restored; otherwise they will be destroyed (25.12–38). **16:** *They,* a reference to the enemies.

**13.1–11: The story of the loincloth.** Jeremiah evidently associated the name of a village near his home town of Anathoth, Parah (Josh 18.23), where there are rocky cliffs (v. 4), with the Hebrew name of the Euphra-

hidden it. But now the loincloth was ruined; it was good for nothing.

8 Then the word of the LORD came to me: 9Thus says the LORD: Just so I will ruin the pride of Judah and the great pride of Jerusalem. 10This evil people, who refuse to hear my words, who stubbornly follow their own will and have gone after other gods to serve them and worship them, shall be like this loincloth, which is good for nothing. 11For as the loincloth clings to one's loins, so I made the whole house of Israel and the whole house of Judah cling to me, says the LORD, in order that they might be for me a people, a name, a praise, and a glory. But they would not listen.

12 You shall speak to them this word: Thus says the LORD, the God of Israel: Every wine-jar should be filled with wine. And they will say to you, "Do you think we do not know that every wine-jar should be filled with wine?" 13Then you shall say to them: Thus says the LORD: I am about to fill all the inhabitants of this land—the kings who sit on David's throne, the priests, the prophets, and all the inhabitants of Jerusalem—with drunkenness. 14And I will dash them one against another, parents and children together, says the LORD. I will not pity or spare or have compassion when I destroy them.

15 Hear and give ear; do not be
haughty,
for the LORD has spoken.
16 Give glory to the LORD your God
before he brings darkness,
and before your feet stumble
on the mountains at twilight;
while you look for light,
he turns it into gloom
and makes it deep darkness.
17 But if you will not listen,
my soul will weep in secret for
your pride;
my eyes will weep bitterly and
run down with tears,
because the LORD's flock has
been taken captive.

18 Say to the king and the queen
mother:
"Take a lowly seat,
for your beautiful crown
has come down from your
head."[x]
19 The towns of the Negeb are shut
up
with no one to open them;
all Judah is taken into exile,
wholly taken into exile.

20 Lift up your eyes and see
those who come from the
north.
Where is the flock that was
given you,
your beautiful flock?
21 What will you say when they set
as head over you
those whom you have trained
to be your allies?
Will not pangs take hold of you,
like those of a woman in labor?
22 And if you say in your heart,

[x] Gk Syr Vg: Meaning of Heb uncertain

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tes (*Perath*). He buried a linen loincloth there to underscore the corrupting effect of Jehoiakim's pro-Babylonian foreign policy (2.18) and the accompanying religious syncretism in Judah (2 Kings 24.1–7).

**13.12–14: The allegory of the wine-jar.** Jeremiah uses a proverb (v. 12a) and the figure of drunkenness (v. 13; compare 25.15–16; Ezek 23.31) to describe the divine judgment.

**13.15–17: The last opportunity** for repentance is offered to wayward Judah; her captivity is imminent (v. 17).

**13.18–19: Exile!** Almost resignedly, Jeremiah notes the deposition of Jehoiachin (2 Kings 24.8, 15), the Babylonian military occupation of Judah (597 B.C.), and the first deportation (Jer 52.28).

**13.20–27: Jerusalem's shame.** Using a common biblical simile for judgment, the ravishing of a woman (Isa 47.2; here the untrustworthy shepherdess), Jeremiah describes the approaching rape (vv. 22, 26) of Jerusalem by Babylon. **20:** *North,* see 1.13–14 n.; 4.6. Her shamelessness and her shame are di-

"Why have these things come upon me?"
it is for the greatness of your iniquity
that your skirts are lifted up,
and you are violated.
23 Can Ethiopians[y] change their skin
or leopards their spots?
Then also you can do good
who are accustomed to do evil.
24 I will scatter you[z] like chaff
driven by the wind from the desert.
25 This is your lot,
the portion I have measured out to you, says the LORD,
because you have forgotten me
and trusted in lies.
26 I myself will lift up your skirts over your face,
and your shame will be seen.
27 I have seen your abominations,
your adulteries and neighings,
your shameless prostitutions
on the hills of the countryside.
Woe to you, O Jerusalem!
How long will it be
before you are made clean?

14 The word of the LORD that came to Jeremiah concerning the drought:
2 Judah mourns
and her gates languish;
they lie in gloom on the ground,
and the cry of Jerusalem goes up.
3 Her nobles send their servants for water;
they come to the cisterns,
they find no water,
they return with their vessels empty.
They are ashamed and dismayed
and cover their heads,
4 because the ground is cracked.
Because there has been no rain on the land
the farmers are dismayed;
they cover their heads.
5 Even the doe in the field forsakes her newborn fawn
because there is no grass.
6 The wild asses stand on the bare heights,[a]
they pant for air like jackals;
their eyes fail
because there is no herbage.

7 Although our iniquities testify against us,
act, O LORD, for your name's sake;
our apostasies indeed are many,
and we have sinned against you.
8 O hope of Israel,
its savior in time of trouble,
why should you be like a stranger in the land,
like a traveler turning aside for the night?
9 Why should you be like someone confused,
like a mighty warrior who cannot give help?
Yet you, O LORD, are in the midst of us,
and we are called by your name;
do not forsake us!

10 Thus says the LORD concerning this people:
Truly they have loved to wander,
they have not restrained their feet;

y Or *Nubians*; Heb *Cushites*  z Heb *them*
a Or *the trails*

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rectly related. **23**: In her present state, she cannot change herself (Hos 5.4; Jn 8.34; compare 3.22).

**14.1–15.9**: **Lament over catastrophic drought and the coming military defeat of Jerusalem. 14.2–6**: By examples drawn from city and country, forest and wilderness, Jeremiah describes the drought.

**14.7–9**: Prostrate on the ground (v. 2), in the words of a prayer for a Day of Repentance, the people confess their sins and, as they are his covenant people, plead with God to remember them.

**14.10–12**: In their need, they remember God; in their prosperity, they forget him. No intercession or ritual acts will avert the divine

therefore the LORD does not
accept them,
now he will remember their
iniquity
and punish their sins.

11 The LORD said to me: Do not pray
for the welfare of this people. 12 Although they fast, I do not hear their cry,
and although they offer burnt offering
and grain offering, I do not accept them;
but by the sword, by famine, and by
pestilence I consume them.

13 Then I said: "Ah, Lord GOD! Here
are the prophets saying to them, 'You
shall not see the sword, nor shall you
have famine, but I will give you true
peace in this place.' " 14 And the LORD
said to me: The prophets are prophesying lies in my name; I did not send them,
nor did I command them or speak to
them. They are prophesying to you a
lying vision, worthless divination, and
the deceit of their own minds. 15 Therefore thus says the LORD concerning the
prophets who prophesy in my name
though I did not send them, and who
say, "Sword and famine shall not come
on this land": By sword and famine those
prophets shall be consumed. 16 And the
people to whom they prophesy shall be
thrown out into the streets of Jerusalem,
victims of famine and sword. There shall
be no one to bury them—themselves,
their wives, their sons, and their daughters. For I will pour out their wickedness
upon them.

17 You shall say to them this word:
Let my eyes run down with tears
night and day,
and let them not cease,
for the virgin daughter—my
people—is struck down
with a very grievous wound.
18 If I go out into the field,
look—those killed by the
sword!
And if I enter the city,
look—those sick with[b] famine!
For both prophet and priest ply
their trade throughout
the land,
and have no knowledge.

19 Have you completely rejected
Judah?
Does your heart loathe Zion?
Why have you struck us down
so that there is no healing for
us?
We look for peace, but find no
good;
for a time of healing, but there
is terror instead.
20 We acknowledge our wickedness,
O LORD,
the iniquity of our ancestors,
for we have sinned against you.
21 Do not spurn us, for your name's
sake;
do not dishonor your glorious
throne;
remember and do not break
your covenant with us.
22 Can any idols of the nations
bring rain?
Or can the heavens give
showers?
Is it not you, O LORD our God?
We set our hope on you,
for it is you who do all this.

15 Then the LORD said to me:
Though Moses and Samuel stood
before me, yet my heart would not turn
toward this people. Send them out of my
sight, and let them go! 2 And when they

*b* Heb *look—the sicknesses of*

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punishment (7.16). **13–16:** *In this place,* in the temple. Jeremiah's effort to excuse the people's heedlessness because of misplaced reliance in the false prophets' beguiling message is rejected. The people have made their decision—the wrong one—and will be punished.

**14.17–18:** Here Jeremiah describes the calamity, using figures of war, drought, unburied dead, hunger, and confused spiritual leaders. **19–22:** More strongly than in vv. 10–12, the people plead their case, casting themselves wholly on God's mercy.

**15.1–4:** Even if the people's greatest in-

say to you, "Where shall we go?" you shall say to them: Thus says the LORD:

Those destined for pestilence, to pestilence,
and those destined for the sword, to the sword;
those destined for famine, to famine,
and those destined for captivity, to captivity.

3 And I will appoint over them four kinds of destroyers, says the LORD: the sword to kill, the dogs to drag away, and the birds of the air and the wild animals of the earth to devour and destroy. 4 I will make them a horror to all the kingdoms of the earth because of what King Manasseh son of Hezekiah of Judah did in Jerusalem.

5 Who will have pity on you, O Jerusalem,
or who will bemoan you?
Who will turn aside to ask about your welfare?
6 You have rejected me, says the LORD,
you are going backward;
so I have stretched out my hand against you and destroyed you—
I am weary of relenting.
7 I have winnowed them with a winnowing fork
in the gates of the land;
I have bereaved them, I have destroyed my people;
they did not turn from their ways.
8 Their widows became more numerous
than the sand of the seas;
I have brought against the mothers of youths
a destroyer at noonday;
I have made anguish and terror fall upon her suddenly.
9 She who bore seven has languished;
she has swooned away;
her sun went down while it was yet day;
she has been shamed and disgraced.
And the rest of them I will give to the sword
before their enemies,
says the LORD.

10 Woe is me, my mother, that you ever bore me, a man of strife and contention to the whole land! I have not lent, nor have I borrowed, yet all of them curse me. 11 The LORD said: Surely I have intervened in your life[c] for good, surely I have imposed enemies on you in a time of trouble and in a time of distress.[d] 12 Can iron and bronze break iron from the north?

13 Your wealth and your treasures I will give as plunder, without price, for all your sins, throughout all your territory. 14 I will make you serve your enemies in a land that you do not know, for in my

*c* Heb *intervened with you* *d* Meaning of Heb uncertain

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tercessors, *Moses* (Ex 32.11–14; Num 14.13–19; one of four references to Moses in prophetic literature [the others are Mic 6.4; Isa 63.11; Mal 4.4]) and *Samuel* (1 Sam 12.17–18), were to plead for them, their sentence of total destruction would not be withdrawn (17.16–17). *King Manasseh,* 2 Kings ch 21.

**15.5–9: Jerusalem's end.** **6**: *Weary of relenting,* compare Am 7.1–9. **7**: *Winnowed them,* a common threshing figure (see Isa 21.10; 27.12; Jer 51.2; Mt 3.12; Lk 3.17). **9**: *She who bore seven,* a sign of favor (Ruth 4.15; 1 Sam 2.5). Jerusalem will be bereaved (compare Hos 9.12).

**15.10–21: Jeremiah's second personal lament,** see 11.18–12.6 n. **10–18**: Jeremiah points to his ostracism and the continued rejection of the life-giving word (v. 16; Ezek 2.8–10; Jn 4.32–34). **15**: With the familiar phrase, *you know* (Pss 40.9; 139), Jeremiah prays to God for retribution against his persecutors. **17**: The *hand* of God, often the symbol of inspiration (Isa 8.11; Ezek 3.14, 22), is here a symbol of burden.

anger a fire is kindled that shall burn forever.

15 O LORD, you know;
remember me and visit me,
and bring down retribution for me on my persecutors.
In your forbearance do not take me away;
know that on your account I suffer insult.
16 Your words were found, and I ate them,
and your words became to me a joy
and the delight of my heart;
for I am called by your name,
O LORD, God of hosts.
17 I did not sit in the company of merrymakers,
nor did I rejoice;
under the weight of your hand I sat alone,
for you had filled me with indignation.
18 Why is my pain unceasing,
my wound incurable,
refusing to be healed?
Truly, you are to me like a deceitful brook,
like waters that fail.

19 Therefore thus says the LORD:
If you turn back, I will take you back,
and you shall stand before me.
If you utter what is precious, and not what is worthless,
you shall serve as my mouth.
It is they who will turn to you,
not you who will turn to them.
20 And I will make you to this people
a fortified wall of bronze;
they will fight against you,
but they shall not prevail over you,
for I am with you
to save you and deliver you,
says the LORD.
21 I will deliver you out of the hand of the wicked,
and redeem you from the grasp of the ruthless.

16 The word of the LORD came to me: 2You shall not take a wife, nor shall you have sons or daughters in this place. 3For thus says the LORD concerning the sons and daughters who are born in this place, and concerning the mothers who bear them and the fathers who beget them in this land: 4They shall die of deadly diseases. They shall not be lamented, nor shall they be buried; they shall become like dung on the surface of the ground. They shall perish by the sword and by famine, and their dead bodies shall become food for the birds of the air and for the wild animals of the earth.

5 For thus says the LORD: Do not enter the house of mourning, or go to lament, or bemoan them; for I have taken away my peace from this people, says the LORD, my steadfast love and mercy. 6Both great and small shall die in this land; they shall not be buried, and no one shall lament for them; there shall be no gashing, no shaving of the head for them. 7No one shall break bread[e] for the mourner, to offer comfort for the dead; nor shall anyone give them the cup of consolation to drink for their fathers or their mothers. 8You shall not go into the house of feasting to sit with them, to eat

*e* Two Mss Gk: MT *break for them*

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**15.19–21**: God applies Jeremiah's own message to himself; God promises no respite from opposition, but promising him constant support (1.18–19), urges Jeremiah to continue as his *mouth* (Ex 4.16).

**16.1–9**: **Jeremiah's life,** a symbol (Hos 1.2–9; Isa 8.3–4). **1–9**: An illustration of 15.17. **1–4**: In view of the impending doom, Jeremiah relinquishes hope for home and family as a sign of the judgment (Ezek 24.15–27; 1 Cor 7.25–40).

**16.5–7**: Israel's faithlessness has nullified God's obligation for covenant loyalty. All symbols of mourning (*gashing,* 41.5; *shaving of the head,* Am 8.10; Isa 22.12; compare Deut 14.1) are as futile as death is comfortless. **8–9**: 25.10.

and drink. 9For thus says the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel: I am going to banish from this place, in your days and before your eyes, the voice of mirth and the voice of gladness, the voice of the bridegroom and the voice of the bride.

10 And when you tell this people all these words, and they say to you, "Why has the LORD pronounced all this great evil against us? What is our iniquity? What is the sin that we have committed against the LORD our God?" 11then you shall say to them: It is because your ancestors have forsaken me, says the LORD, and have gone after other gods and have served and worshiped them, and have forsaken me and have not kept my law; 12and because you have behaved worse than your ancestors, for here you are, every one of you, following your stubborn evil will, refusing to listen to me. 13Therefore I will hurl you out of this land into a land that neither you nor your ancestors have known, and there you shall serve other gods day and night, for I will show you no favor.

14 Therefore, the days are surely coming, says the LORD, when it shall no longer be said, "As the LORD lives who brought the people of Israel up out of the land of Egypt," 15but "As the LORD lives who brought the people of Israel up out of the land of the north and out of all the lands where he had driven them." For I will bring them back to their own land that I gave to their ancestors.

16 I am now sending for many fishermen, says the LORD, and they shall catch them; and afterward I will send for many hunters, and they shall hunt them from every mountain and every hill, and out of the clefts of the rocks. 17For my eyes are on all their ways; they are not hidden from my presence, nor is their iniquity concealed from my sight. 18And[f] I will doubly repay their iniquity and their sin, because they have polluted my land with the carcasses of their detestable idols, and have filled my inheritance with their abominations.

19 O LORD, my strength and my stronghold,
my refuge in the day of trouble,
to you shall the nations come
from the ends of the earth
and say:
Our ancestors have inherited nothing but lies,
worthless things in which there is no profit.
20 Can mortals make for themselves gods?
Such are no gods!

21 "Therefore I am surely going to teach them, this time I am going to teach them my power and my might, and they shall know that my name is the LORD."

17 The sin of Judah is written with an iron pen; with a diamond point it is engraved on the tablet of their hearts, and on the horns of their altars, 2while their children remember their altars and their sacred poles,[g] beside every green tree, and on the high hills, 3on the mountains in the open country. Your wealth and all your treasures I will give for spoil as the price of your sin[h] throughout all your territory. 4By your own act you shall lose the heritage that I gave you, and I will make you serve your

*f* Gk: Heb *And first* *g* Heb *Asherim* *h* Cn: Heb *spoil your high places for sin*

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**16.10–13: Judah's fate.** As Judah has abandoned the true God, so she is condemned to worship false gods in exile (5.19). So Israel too will be alone (5.18–19).

**16.14–15: Israel's homecoming.** Their return, accomplished by God's actions, will be celebrated as the new Exodus (the passage duplicates 23.7–8; probably an editorial inclusion here).

**16.16–18: No refuge for Judah.** Judah cannot escape either Egypt or Babylonia (*fishermen* and *hunters;* Hab 1.14–15).

**16.19–21: Conversion of the heathen** (Isa 45.20–24; Mic 4.1–4). Recognizing the vanity of their idol-worship, all nations will join in worshiping Israel's omnipotent God.

**17.1–4: Judah's sin.** The practice of the Judeans indelibly and openly demonstrates

enemies in a land that you do not know,
for in my anger a fire is kindled[i] that shall burn forever.

5 Thus says the LORD:
Cursed are those who trust in mere mortals
and make mere flesh their strength,
whose hearts turn away from the LORD.
6 They shall be like a shrub in the desert,
and shall not see when relief comes.
They shall live in the parched places of the wilderness,
in an uninhabited salt land.

7 Blessed are those who trust in the LORD,
whose trust is the LORD.
8 They shall be like a tree planted by water,
sending out its roots by the stream.
It shall not fear when heat comes,
and its leaves shall stay green;
in the year of drought it is not anxious,
and it does not cease to bear fruit.

9 The heart is devious above all else;
it is perverse—
who can understand it?
10 I the LORD test the mind
and search the heart,
to give to all according to their ways,
according to the fruit of their doings.

11 Like the partridge hatching what it did not lay,
so are all who amass wealth unjustly;
in mid-life it will leave them,
and at their end they will prove to be fools.

12 O glorious throne, exalted from the beginning,
shrine of our sanctuary!
13 O hope of Israel! O LORD!
All who forsake you shall be put to shame;
those who turn away from you[j] shall be recorded in the underworld,[k]
for they have forsaken the fountain of living water, the LORD.

14 Heal me, O LORD, and I shall be healed;
save me, and I shall be saved;
for you are my praise.
15 See how they say to me,
"Where is the word of the LORD?
Let it come!"
16 But I have not run away from being a shepherd[l] in your service,
nor have I desired the fatal day.
You know what came from my lips;

*i* Two Mss Theodotion: *you kindled*
*j* Heb *me* *k* Or *in the earth*
*l* Meaning of Heb uncertain

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their attitudes. **1**: *Iron pen,* a diamond-tipped stylus (Job 19.24). *Horns of their altar,* Ex 29.12.

**17.5–8**: **Trust in God.** The model is Ps 1. The godless person is like a fruitless desert plant; the godly person is like a fruitful, well-watered tree (Ps 1.3; Prov 3.18).

**17.9–10**: **The heart is devious.** Only God can really understand human beings (Rom 7.18–19); only God can therefore properly judge human beings (1 Sam 16.7; Ps 62.12).

**17.11**: **A proverb,** perhaps referring to Jehoiakim (22.13; 2 Kings 23.35).

**17.12–13**: **God's ways are high.** *Throne,* the ark in the temple (Isa 6.1). *Fountain,* 2.13.

**17.14–18**: **Jeremiah's third personal lament** (see 11.18–12.6 n.). Sick at heart because of his opponents' taunts, Jeremiah prays for healing (Ps 6.2–3). He does not want to see God's day of judgment (Am 5.18; Isa 2.11); but if this be the only means of vindication, let it descend in all its fury.

it was before your face.
17 Do not become a terror to me;
you are my refuge in the day of disaster;
18 Let my persecutors be shamed,
but do not let me be shamed;
let them be dismayed,
but do not let me be dismayed;
bring on them the day of disaster;
destroy them with double destruction!

19 Thus said the LORD to me: Go and stand in the People's Gate, by which the kings of Judah enter and by which they go out, and in all the gates of Jerusalem, 20 and say to them: Hear the word of the LORD, you kings of Judah, and all Judah, and all the inhabitants of Jerusalem, who enter by these gates. 21 Thus says the LORD: For the sake of your lives, take care that you do not bear a burden on the sabbath day or bring it in by the gates of Jerusalem. 22 And do not carry a burden out of your houses on the sabbath or do any work, but keep the sabbath day holy, as I commanded your ancestors. 23 Yet they did not listen or incline their ear; they stiffened their necks and would not hear or receive instruction.

24 But if you listen to me, says the LORD, and bring in no burden by the gates of this city on the sabbath day, but keep the sabbath day holy and do no work on it, 25 then there shall enter by the gates of this city kings[m] who sit on the throne of David, riding in chariots and on horses, they and their officials, the people of Judah and the inhabitants of Jerusalem; and this city shall be inhabited forever. 26 And people shall come from the towns of Judah and the places around Jerusalem, from the land of Benjamin, from the Shephelah, from the hill country, and from the Negeb, bringing burnt offerings and sacrifices, grain offerings and frankincense, and bringing thank offerings to the house of the LORD. 27 But if you do not listen to me, to keep the sabbath day holy, and to carry in no burden through the gates of Jerusalem on the sabbath day, then I will kindle a fire in its gates; it shall devour the palaces of Jerusalem and shall not be quenched.

18 The word that came to Jeremiah from the LORD: 2 "Come, go down to the potter's house, and there I will let you hear my words." 3 So I went down to the potter's house, and there he was working at his wheel. 4 The vessel he was making of clay was spoiled in the potter's hand, and he reworked it into another vessel, as seemed good to him.

5 Then the word of the LORD came to me: 6 Can I not do with you, O house of Israel, just as this potter has done? says the LORD. Just like the clay in the potter's hand, so are you in my hand, O house of Israel. 7 At one moment I may declare concerning a nation or a kingdom, that I will pluck up and break down and destroy it, 8 but if that nation, concerning which I have spoken, turns from its evil, I will change my mind about the disaster that I intended to bring on it. 9 And at another moment I may declare concerning a nation or a kingdom that I will build and plant it, 10 but if it does evil in my sight, not listening to my voice, then I will change my mind about the good that I had intended to do to it. 11 Now, therefore, say to the people of Judah and the inhabitants of Jerusalem: Thus says the LORD: Look, I am a potter shaping evil against you and devising a plan

*m* Cn: Heb *kings and officials*

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**17.19–27: Judah and the sabbath.** Perhaps an insertion from the time of Nehemiah (compare Neh 13.15–22) dealing with the violation of the sabbath (Ex 23.12; compare Mt 12.1–8) as symptomatic of the people's general alienation from God (11.1–8; Am 8.5).

**18.1–12: The allegory of the potter.** Probably in Jerusalem's southern section, Jeremiah watched a *potter* shaping the inanimate clay. So God molds his people (Rom 9.20–24). God does not deal capriciously with them. The design for *evil* can be replaced by

against you. Turn now, all of you from your evil way, and amend your ways and your doings.

12 But they say, "It is no use! We will follow our own plans, and each of us will act according to the stubbornness of our evil will."

13 Therefore thus says the LORD:
Ask among the nations:
Who has heard the like of this?
The virgin Israel has done
a most horrible thing.
14 Does the snow of Lebanon leave
the crags of Sirion?[n]
Do the mountain[o] waters
run dry,[p]
the cold flowing streams?
15 But my people have forgotten me,
they burn offerings to a
delusion;
they have stumbled[q] in their
ways,
in the ancient roads,
and have gone into bypaths,
not the highway,
16 making their land a horror,
a thing to be hissed at forever.
All who pass by it are horrified
and shake their heads.
17 Like the wind from the east,
I will scatter them before
the enemy.
I will show them my back, not
my face,
in the day of their calamity.

18 Then they said, "Come, let us make plots against Jeremiah—for instruction shall not perish from the priest, nor counsel from the wise, nor the word from the prophet. Come, let us bring charges against him,[r] and let us not heed any of his words."

19 Give heed to me, O LORD,
and listen to what my
adversaries say!
20 Is evil a recompense for good?
Yet they have dug a pit for
my life.
Remember how I stood before
you
to speak good for them,
to turn away your wrath
from them.
21 Therefore give their children over
to famine;
hurl them out to the power of
the sword,
let their wives become childless
and widowed.
May their men meet death by
pestilence,
their youths be slain by the
sword in battle.
22 May a cry be heard from their
houses,
when you bring the marauder
suddenly upon them!
For they have dug a pit to
catch me,
and laid snares for my feet.
23 Yet you, O LORD, know
all their plotting to kill me.
Do not forgive their iniquity,
do not blot out their sin from
your sight.

*n* Cn: Heb *of the field* *o* Cn: Heb *foreign*
*p* Cn: Heb *Are . . . plucked up?* *q* Gk Syr Vg: Heb *they made them stumble* *r* Heb *strike him with the tongue*

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the design for *good*—if they repent. But they refuse.

**18.13–17: Faithless Judah is condemned to endless walking.** Judah has committed the nearly incredible folly of forsaking her God (2.10, 32). God will ignore them (2.27–28) and will scatter them as before the east wind (4.11; 13.24; 23.19). *Sirion,* Mount Hermon. *Mountain waters,* perhaps from the Anti-Lebanon Mountains or from Mount Hermon itself, such as the Pharpar and Abanah rivers or the sources of the Jordan. **16:** *A thing to be hissed at,* see Zeph 2.15 n.

**18.18–23: Jeremiah's fourth personal lament** (see 11.18–12.6 n.). *They* (identity unknown) plot against Jeremiah because of his attacks against the leaders (2.8; 8.8). Jeremiah defends his innocence and prays to God for the merciless, total destruction of his enemies and their families. Note the assignment of the instruction to the priests (v. 18).

*The broken earthenware jug*

Let them be tripped up before you;
deal with them while you are angry.

19 Thus said the LORD: Go and buy a potter's earthenware jug. Take with you[s] some of the elders of the people and some of the senior priests, 2and go out to the valley of the son of Hinnom at the entry of the Potsherd Gate, and proclaim there the words that I tell you. 3You shall say: Hear the word of the LORD, O kings of Judah and inhabitants of Jerusalem. Thus says the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel: I am going to bring such disaster upon this place that the ears of everyone who hears of it will tingle. 4Because the people have forsaken me, and have profaned this place by making offerings in it to other gods whom neither they nor their ancestors nor the kings of Judah have known, and because they have filled this place with the blood of the innocent, 5and gone on building the high places of Baal to burn their children in the fire as burnt offerings to Baal, which I did not command or decree, nor did it enter my mind; 6therefore the days are surely coming, says the LORD, when this place shall no more be called Topheth, or the valley of the son of Hinnom, but the valley of Slaughter. 7And in this place I will make void the plans of Judah and Jerusalem, and will make them fall by the sword before their enemies, and by the hand of those who seek their life. I will give their dead bodies for food to the birds of the air and to the wild animals of the earth. 8And I will make this city a horror, a thing to be hissed at; everyone who passes by it will be horrified and will hiss because of all its disasters. 9And I will make them eat the flesh of their sons and the flesh of their daughters, and all shall eat the flesh of their neighbors in the siege, and in the distress with which their enemies and those who seek their life afflict them.

10 Then you shall break the jug in the sight of those who go with you, 11and shall say to them: Thus says the LORD of hosts: So will I break this people and this city, as one breaks a potter's vessel, so that it can never be mended. In Topheth they shall bury until there is no more room to bury. 12Thus will I do to this place, says the LORD, and to its inhabitants, making this city like Topheth. 13And the houses of Jerusalem and the houses of the kings of Judah shall be defiled like the place of Topheth—all the houses upon whose roofs offerings have been made to the whole host of heaven, and libations have been poured out to other gods.

14 When Jeremiah came from Topheth, where the LORD had sent him to prophesy, he stood in the court of the LORD's house and said to all the people: 15Thus says the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel: I am now bringing upon this city and upon all its towns all the disaster that I have pronounced against it, because they have stiffened their necks, refusing to hear my words.

20 Now the priest Pashhur son of Immer, who was chief officer in the house of the LORD, heard Jeremiah prophesying these things. 2Then Pash-

s Syr Tg Compare Gk: Heb lacks *take with you*

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**19.1–20.6: The public persecution of Jeremiah. 1–2**: Jeremiah buys an earthenware jug and goes to the Potsherd Gate (probably the later Dung Gate, Neh 2.13), taking with him some sympathizers. **3–9**: Condemnation of the people for forsaking the LORD and for worshiping idols, and worst of all, for the offering of children to Baal (7.30–32). With a play on the Hebrew words for *jug* (vv. 2, 10) and *make void* (v. 7), Jeremiah announces the people's horrible fate, which will make them resort to cannibalism. **8**: *A thing to be hissed at,* see Zeph 2.15 n.

**19.10–15**: The idol-worshiping city, like the jug, will be irreparably smashed; the specter of death will hover over it as over *Topheth* (see 7.31 n.). *Host of heaven,* 8.2; 2 Kings 21.3–5.

**20.1–6**: To forestall a repetition of this frightful pronouncement, Pashhur of the temple police publicly punishes Jeremiah. On his release (v. 3) he tells Pashhur that *Terror-*

hur struck the prophet Jeremiah, and put him in the stocks that were in the upper Benjamin Gate of the house of the LORD. 3The next morning when Pashhur released Jeremiah from the stocks, Jeremiah said to him, The LORD has named you not Pashhur but "Terror-all-around." 4For thus says the LORD: I am making you a terror to yourself and to all your friends; and they shall fall by the sword of their enemies while you look on. And I will give all Judah into the hand of the king of Babylon; he shall carry them captive to Babylon, and shall kill them with the sword. 5I will give all the wealth of this city, all its gains, all its prized belongings, and all the treasures of the kings of Judah into the hand of their enemies, who shall plunder them, and seize them, and carry them to Babylon. 6And you, Pashhur, and all who live in your house, shall go into captivity, and to Babylon you shall go; there you shall die, and there you shall be buried, you and all your friends, to whom you have prophesied falsely.

7 O LORD, you have enticed me,
and I was enticed;
you have overpowered me,
and you have prevailed.
I have become a laughingstock all
day long;
everyone mocks me.
8 For whenever I speak, I must
cry out,
I must shout, "Violence and
destruction!"
For the word of the LORD has
become for me
a reproach and derision all
day long.
9 If I say, "I will not mention him,
or speak any more in his name,"
then within me there is something
like a burning fire
shut up in my bones;
I am weary with holding it in,
and I cannot.
10 For I hear many whispering:
"Terror is all around!
Denounce him! Let us denounce
him!"
All my close friends
are watching for me to stumble.
"Perhaps he can be enticed,
and we can prevail against him,
and take our revenge on him."
11 But the LORD is with me like a
dread warrior;
therefore my persecutors will
stumble,
and they will not prevail.
They will be greatly shamed,
for they will not succeed.
Their eternal dishonor
will never be forgotten.
12 O LORD of hosts, you test the
righteous,
you see the heart and the mind;
let me see your retribution
upon them,
for to you I have committed
my cause.

13 Sing to the LORD;
praise the LORD!
For he has delivered the life of
the needy
from the hands of evildoers.

14 Cursed be the day
on which I was born!
The day when my mother bore
me,
let it not be blessed!

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*all-around* (6.25; Ps 31.13) will be his name and lot, for he and his family will share the fate of the doomed city (25.8–11).

**20.7–13, 14–18: Jeremiah's fifth and sixth personal laments** (see 11.18–12.6 n.). **7–9**: Almost blasphemously, Jeremiah accuses God of deceiving him and of exerting irresistible power over him. Regardless of its effect, Jeremiah cannot refrain from his proclamation (Am 3.8; 1 Cor 9.16). **10–13**: Though his opponents plot his fall, Jeremiah expresses confidence in God's invincible protection of those who rely on him (*the needy*); he uses excerpts from liturgical hymns (compare Pss 6.9–10; 31.13; 109.30; 140.12–13).

**20.14–18**: In this independent section, Jeremiah curses not God but his own existence (15.10; Job ch 3). In it one glimpses the inner

15 Cursed be the man
who brought the news to my
father, saying,
"A child is born to you, a son,"
making him very glad.
16 Let that man be like the cities
that the LORD overthrew
without pity;
let him hear a cry in the morning
and an alarm at noon,
17 because he did not kill me in
the womb;
so my mother would have been
my grave,
and her womb forever great.
18 Why did I come forth from
the womb
to see toil and sorrow,
and spend my days in shame?

21 This is the word that came to Jeremiah from the LORD, when King Zedekiah sent to him Pashhur son of Malchiah and the priest Zephaniah son of Maaseiah, saying, 2"Please inquire of the LORD on our behalf, for King Nebuchadrezzar of Babylon is making war against us; perhaps the LORD will perform a wonderful deed for us, as he has often done, and will make him withdraw from us."

3 Then Jeremiah said to them: 4Thus you shall say to Zedekiah: Thus says the LORD, the God of Israel: I am going to turn back the weapons of war that are in your hands and with which you are fighting against the king of Babylon and against the Chaldeans who are besieging you outside the walls; and I will bring them together into the center of this city. 5I myself will fight against you with outstretched hand and mighty arm, in anger, in fury, and in great wrath. 6And I will strike down the inhabitants of this city, both human beings and animals; they shall die of a great pestilence. 7Afterward, says the LORD, I will give King Zedekiah of Judah, and his servants, and the people in this city—those who survive the pestilence, sword, and famine—into the hands of King Nebuchadrezzar of Babylon, into the hands of their enemies, into the hands of those who seek their lives. He shall strike them down with the edge of the sword; he shall not pity them, or spare them, or have compassion.

8 And to this people you shall say: Thus says the LORD: See, I am setting before you the way of life and the way of death. 9Those who stay in this city shall die by the sword, by famine, and by pestilence; but those who go out and surrender to the Chaldeans who are besieging you shall live and shall have their lives as a prize of war. 10For I have set my face against this city for evil and not for good, says the LORD: it shall be given into the hands of the king of Babylon, and he shall burn it with fire.

11 To the house of the king of Judah say: Hear the word of the LORD, 12O house of David! Thus says the LORD:

Execute justice in the morning,
and deliver from the hand of the
oppressor
anyone who has been robbed,
or else my wrath will go forth
like fire,
and burn, with no one to
quench it,
because of your evil doings.

13 See, I am against you,
O inhabitant of the valley,

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agony of God's prophet as he confronts the unheeding godlessness of his day.

**21.1–24.10: Oracles from the time of Zedekiah. 21.1–10: Oracle against Zedekiah and Jerusalem. 1–7:** For these verses compare 37.1–10. Although the accounts are similar, they evidently describe separate events. Pashhur, the son of Malchiah, appears also in ch 38. Zephaniah the priest was later executed at Riblah by Nebuchadrezzar (52.24–27). **5a:** Deut 4.34; 5.15. **5b:** Deut 29.28.

**21.8–10:** The only possibility for life is surrender; but Jerusalem will be destroyed (38.17).

**21.11–23.8: Oracles concerning the royal house. 21.11–12:** The king is to administer justice (1 Kings 3.9; Ps 72.1–4); if he does

O rock of the plain,
says the LORD;
you who say, "Who can come
down against us,
or who can enter our places
of refuge?"
14 I will punish you according to the
fruit of your doings,
says the LORD;
I will kindle a fire in its forest,
and it shall devour all that is
around it.

22 Thus says the LORD: Go down to the house of the king of Judah, and speak there this word, 2and say: Hear the word of the LORD, O King of Judah sitting on the throne of David—you, and your servants, and your people who enter these gates. 3Thus says the LORD: Act with justice and righteousness, and deliver from the hand of the oppressor anyone who has been robbed. And do no wrong or violence to the alien, the orphan, and the widow, or shed innocent blood in this place. 4For if you will indeed obey this word, then through the gates of this house shall enter kings who sit on the throne of David, riding in chariots and on horses, they, and their servants, and their people. 5But if you will not heed these words, I swear by myself, says the LORD, that this house shall become a desolation. 6For thus says the LORD concerning the house of the king of Judah:

You are like Gilead to me,
like the summit of Lebanon;
but I swear that I will make you
a desert,
an uninhabited city.[t]
7 I will prepare destroyers
against you,
all with their weapons;
they shall cut down your choicest
cedars
and cast them into the fire.

8 And many nations will pass by this city, and all of them will say one to another, "Why has the LORD dealt in this way with that great city?" 9And they will answer, "Because they abandoned the covenant of the LORD their God, and worshiped other gods and served them."

10 Do not weep for him who is
dead,
nor bemoan him;
weep rather for him who
goes away,
for he shall return no more
to see his native land.

11 For thus says the LORD concerning Shallum son of King Josiah of Judah, who succeeded his father Josiah, and who went away from this place: He shall return here no more, 12but in the place where they have carried him captive he shall die, and he shall never see this land again.

13 Woe to him who builds his house
by unrighteousness,
and his upper rooms by
injustice;
who makes his neighbors work
for nothing,
and does not give them their
wages;

*t* Cn: Heb *uninhabited cities*

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evil, he will incur the wrath of God. **13–14**: Jerusalem claims to be invulnerable to attack. *Forest* suggests royal palace (1 Kings 7.2).

**22.1–5**: Expansion of 21.11–12 (compare 22.3 with 21.12). If the people repent, their destruction will be averted and the Davidic dynasty (*house*) preserved. **6–7**: Parallel to 21.13–14. Foresters (*destroyers*) with axes and saws (*weapons*) will burn the "forest" (cedarwood palace), reducing its once beautiful site to wasteland.

**22.8–9**: A later comment (5.19; Deut 29.23–28; 1 Kings 9.8–9) referring to Jerusalem, not the palace.

**22.10–30: Oracles concerning Jehoahaz, Jehoiakim, and Jehoiachin, kings of Judah. 10–12**: The dead Josiah was better off than *Shallum* (personal name of Jehoahaz; 1 Chr 3.15), who in 609 B.C. was banished (*went away*) to Egypt by Neco (2 Kings 23.33–34; 2 Chr 36.1–4; Ezek 19.4).

**22.13–19**: Jeremiah censures Jehoiakim for irresponsibly expanding his palace (*house*) after Egyptian styles (v. 14). An administration

14 who says, "I will build myself a
spacious house
with large upper rooms,"
and who cuts out windows for it,
paneling it with cedar,
and painting it with vermilion.
15 Are you a king
because you compete in cedar?
Did not your father eat and drink
and do justice and
righteousness?
Then it was well with him.
16 He judged the cause of the poor
and needy;
then it was well.
Is not this to know me?
says the LORD.
17 But your eyes and heart
are only on your dishonest gain,
for shedding innocent blood,
and for practicing oppression
and violence.

18 Therefore thus says the LORD concerning King Jehoiakim son of Josiah of Judah:

They shall not lament for him,
saying,
"Alas, my brother!" or "Alas,
sister!"
They shall not lament for him,
saying,
"Alas, lord!" or "Alas, his
majesty!"
19 With the burial of a donkey he
shall be buried—
dragged off and thrown out
beyond the gates of
Jerusalem.

20 Go up to Lebanon, and cry out,
and lift up your voice in
Bashan;
cry out from Abarim,
for all your lovers are crushed.
21 I spoke to you in your prosperity,
but you said, "I will not listen."
This has been your way from
your youth,
for you have not obeyed
my voice.
22 The wind shall shepherd all your
shepherds,
and your lovers shall go into
captivity;
then you will be ashamed and
dismayed
because of all your wickedness.
23 O inhabitant of Lebanon,
nested among the cedars,
how you will groan[u] when pangs
come upon you,
pain as of a woman in labor!

24 As I live, says the LORD, even if King Coniah son of Jehoiakim of Judah were the signet ring on my right hand, even from there I would tear you off 25and give you into the hands of those who seek your life, into the hands of those of whom you are afraid, even into the hands of King Nebuchadrezzar of Babylon and into the hands of the Chaldeans. 26I will hurl you and the mother who bore you into another country, where you were not born, and there you shall die. 27But they shall not return to the land to which they long to return.
28 Is this man Coniah a despised
broken pot,
a vessel no one wants?
Why are he and his offspring
hurled out
and cast away in a land that
they do not know?
29 O land, land, land,
hear the word of the LORD!

*u* Gk Vg Syr: Heb *will be pitied*

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that will *do justice and righteousness,* not one housed *in cedar* (v. 15), is what makes the king (21.11–12; Mic 3.9–10). Jehoiakim should emulate his *father* Josiah whose death was mourned. His own death will be accompanied by indignities because of his misdeeds (36.30; 2 Kings 24.1–5).

**22.20–23:** From the highest peaks lamentations will rise over the desertion of *Jerusalem* by her allies (*lovers;* 3.1), the exile of her leaders (*shepherds;* 23.1), and her own terror (*inhabitant of Lebanon;* compare 21.13–14). **24–30:** The inexorable punishment of Jehoiachin (*King Coniah*) and his *mother* (13.18) is described by the symbol of authority (*signet ring;* Hag 2.23) and a *broken pot.* The threefold

30 Thus says the LORD:
Record this man as childless,
a man who shall not succeed in his days;
for none of his offspring shall succeed
in sitting on the throne of David,
and ruling again in Judah.

23 Woe to the shepherds who destroy and scatter the sheep of my pasture! says the LORD. 2Therefore thus says the LORD, the God of Israel, concerning the shepherds who shepherd my people: It is you who have scattered my flock, and have driven them away, and you have not attended to them. So I will attend to you for your evil doings, says the LORD. 3Then I myself will gather the remnant of my flock out of all the lands where I have driven them, and I will bring them back to their fold, and they shall be fruitful and multiply. 4I will raise up shepherds over them who will shepherd them, and they shall not fear any longer, or be dismayed, nor shall any be missing, says the LORD.

5 The days are surely coming, says the LORD, when I will raise up for David a righteous Branch, and he shall reign as king and deal wisely, and shall execute justice and righteousness in the land. 6In his days Judah will be saved and Israel will live in safety. And this is the name by which he will be called: "The LORD is our righteousness."

7 Therefore, the days are surely coming, says the LORD, when it shall no longer be said, "As the LORD lives who brought the people of Israel up out of the land of Egypt," 8but "As the LORD lives who brought out and led the offspring of the house of Israel out of the land of the north and out of all the lands where he[v] had driven them." Then they shall live in their own land.

9 Concerning the prophets:
My heart is crushed within me,
all my bones shake;
I have become like a drunkard,
like one overcome by wine,
because of the LORD
and because of his holy words.
10 For the land is full of adulterers;
because of the curse the land mourns,
and the pastures of the wilderness are dried up.
Their course has been evil,
and their might is not right.
11 Both prophet and priest are ungodly;
even in my house I have found their wickedness,
says the LORD.
12 Therefore their way shall be to them
like slippery paths in the darkness,
into which they shall be driven and fall;
for I will bring disaster upon them
in the year of their punishment,
says the LORD.
13 In the prophets of Samaria
I saw a disgusting thing:
they prophesied by Baal
and led my people Israel astray.

[v] Gk: Heb *I*

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address (v. 29a; Isa 6.3; Ezek 21.27) emphasizes the following oracle announcing that no descendant of Jehoiachin shall rule Judah.

**23.1–8: A messianic oracle.** After reproaching Judah's rulers (*shepherds;* 22.22; Ezek ch 34) for scattering Judah (his *flock*), God promises to establish a righteous member (*branch;* Isa 11.1; Zech 3.8) of David's line over a restored Israel (30.9). He will rule responsibly before God as a king (Isa 9.2–7), not as a puppet (like Zedekiah). This messianic expectation differs from the later militant nationalism (16.14–15).

**23.9–40: Oracles concerning the prophets. 9–12:** In the light of God's will, Jeremiah is distraught over the moral delinquency of *priest* and *prophet,* supposedly guardians of Israel's faith. **12:** By their own devices the prophets will be destroyed. **13–15:** In words they are worse than the prophets of Baal in Samaria; and in deeds, worse than the people of Sodom and Gomorrah.

14 But in the prophets of Jerusalem
I have seen a more shocking thing:
they commit adultery and walk in lies;
they strengthen the hands of evildoers,
so that no one turns from wickedness;
all of them have become like Sodom to me,
and its inhabitants like Gomorrah.
15 Therefore thus says the LORD of hosts concerning the prophets:
"I am going to make them eat wormwood,
and give them poisoned water to drink;
for from the prophets of Jerusalem
ungodliness has spread throughout the land."

16 Thus says the LORD of hosts: Do not listen to the words of the prophets who prophesy to you; they are deluding you. They speak visions of their own minds, not from the mouth of the LORD. 17 They keep saying to those who despise the word of the LORD, "It shall be well with you"; and to all who stubbornly follow their own stubborn hearts, they say, "No calamity shall come upon you."

18 For who has stood in the council of the LORD
so as to see and to hear his word?
Who has given heed to his word so as to proclaim it?
19 Look, the storm of the LORD!
Wrath has gone forth,
a whirling tempest;
it will burst upon the head of the wicked.
20 The anger of the LORD will not turn back
until he has executed and accomplished
the intents of his mind.
In the latter days you will understand it clearly.

21 I did not send the prophets,
yet they ran;
I did not speak to them,
yet they prophesied.
22 But if they had stood in my council,
then they would have proclaimed my words to my people,
and they would have turned them from their evil way,
and from the evil of their doings.

23 Am I a God near by, says the LORD, and not a God far off? 24 Who can hide in secret places so that I cannot see them? says the LORD. Do I not fill heaven and earth? says the LORD. 25 I have heard what the prophets have said who prophesy lies in my name, saying, "I have dreamed, I have dreamed!" 26 How long? Will the hearts of the prophets ever turn back—those who prophesy lies, and who prophesy the deceit of their own heart? 27 They plan to make my people forget my name by their dreams that they tell one another, just as their ancestors forgot my name for Baal. 28 Let the prophet who has a dream tell the dream, but let the one who has my word speak

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**23.16–22**: Turning from their deeds to their message, Jeremiah reproves the prophets for their assurance of well-being to those who flout God's word. Obviously they cannot be sent by God or speak for him (for the divine *council,* see 1 Kings 22.19–23; Isa 6.1–7; 40.1–2).

**23.23–32**: God's omnipresence precludes his being unaware of the prophets' misleading his people by their claims of divine revelation through *dreams* (27.9; 29.8; Deut 13.3; compare 2.8b). **29**: God's living word is devastating as *fire* (5.14) and shattering as a *hammer.* With biting sarcasm (*tell the dream,* v. 28; *steal my words,* v. 30) and threefold emphasis (*see,* vv. 30, 31, 32), Jeremiah proclaims God's condemnation of their pretensions.

my word faithfully. What has straw in common with wheat? says the LORD. 29Is not my word like fire, says the LORD, and like a hammer that breaks a rock in pieces? 30See, therefore, I am against the prophets, says the LORD, who steal my words from one another. 31See, I am against the prophets, says the LORD, who use their own tongues and say, "Says the LORD." 32See, I am against those who prophesy lying dreams, says the LORD, and who tell them, and who lead my people astray by their lies and their recklessness, when I did not send them or appoint them; so they do not profit this people at all, says the LORD.

33 When this people, or a prophet, or a priest asks you, "What is the burden of the LORD?" you shall say to them, "You are the burden,[w] and I will cast you off, says the LORD." 34And as for the prophet, priest, or the people who say, "The burden of the LORD," I will punish them and their households. 35Thus shall you say to one another, among yourselves, "What has the LORD answered?" or "What has the LORD spoken?" 36But "the burden of the LORD" you shall mention no more, for the burden is everyone's own word, and so you pervert the words of the living God, the LORD of hosts, our God. 37Thus you shall ask the prophet, "What has the LORD answered you?" or "What has the LORD spoken?" 38But if you say, "the burden of the LORD," thus says the LORD: Because you have said these words, "the burden of the LORD," when I sent to you, saying, You shall not say, "the burden of the LORD," 39therefore, I will surely lift you up[x] and cast you away from my presence, you and the city that I gave to you and your ancestors. 40And I will bring upon you everlasting disgrace and perpetual shame, which shall not be forgotten.

24 The LORD showed me two baskets of figs placed before the temple of the LORD. This was after King Nebuchadrezzar of Babylon had taken into exile from Jerusalem King Jeconiah son of Jehoiakim of Judah, together with the officials of Judah, the artisans, and the smiths, and had brought them to Babylon. 2One basket had very good figs, like first-ripe figs, but the other basket had very bad figs, so bad that they could not be eaten. 3And the LORD said to me, "What do you see, Jeremiah?" I said, "Figs, the good figs very good, and the bad figs very bad, so bad that they cannot be eaten."

4 Then the word of the LORD came to me: 5Thus says the LORD, the God of Israel: Like these good figs, so I will regard as good the exiles from Judah, whom I have sent away from this place to the land of the Chaldeans. 6I will set my eyes upon them for good, and I will bring them back to this land. I will build them up, and not tear them down; I will plant them, and not pluck them up. 7I will give them a heart to know that I am the LORD; and they shall be my people and I will be their God, for they shall return to me with their whole heart.

8 But thus says the LORD: Like the bad figs that are so bad they cannot be eaten, so will I treat King Zedekiah of Judah, his officials, the remnant of Jerusalem who remain in this land, and those who live in the land of Egypt. 9I will make them a horror, an evil thing, to all the

*w* Gk Vg: Heb *What burden* *x* Heb Mss Gk Vg: MT *forget you*

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**23.33**: With bitter irony, Jeremiah uses a play on words. **34–40**: This is a later commentary on v. 33, which it misunderstood, concentrating on the phrase "the burden of the LORD"; it is theologically non-Jeremianic.

**24.1–10**: **The vision of the baskets of figs.** Those remaining in Palestine (and Egypt) after 597 B.C. (*the bad figs*) smugly assumed that they were favored over those deported (*the good figs*), who were considered the objects of God's wrath (29.15–19; Ezek 11.14–15). But the exiles will be returned (29.10–14) and will become a faithful nation, while the others will be destroyed for their wilful indifference to God's chastisement.

kingdoms of the earth—a disgrace, a byword, a taunt, and a curse in all the places where I shall drive them. 10And I will send sword, famine, and pestilence upon them, until they are utterly destroyed from the land that I gave to them and their ancestors.

25 The word that came to Jeremiah concerning all the people of Judah, in the fourth year of King Jehoiakim son of Josiah of Judah (that was the first year of King Nebuchadrezzar of Babylon), 2which the prophet Jeremiah spoke to all the people of Judah and all the inhabitants of Jerusalem: 3For twenty-three years, from the thirteenth year of King Josiah son of Amon of Judah, to this day, the word of the LORD has come to me, and I have spoken persistently to you, but you have not listened. 4And though the LORD persistently sent you all his servants the prophets, you have neither listened nor inclined your ears to hear 5when they said, "Turn now, everyone of you, from your evil way and wicked doings, and you will remain upon the land that the LORD has given to you and your ancestors from of old and forever; 6do not go after other gods to serve and worship them, and do not provoke me to anger with the work of your hands. Then I will do you no harm." 7Yet you did not listen to me, says the LORD, and so you have provoked me to anger with the work of your hands to your own harm.

8 Therefore thus says the LORD of hosts: Because you have not obeyed my words, 9I am going to send for all the tribes of the north, says the LORD, even for King Nebuchadrezzar of Babylon, my servant, and I will bring them against this land and its inhabitants, and against all these nations around; I will utterly destroy them, and make them an object of horror and of hissing, and an everlasting disgrace.[y] 10And I will banish from them the sound of mirth and the sound of gladness, the voice of the bridegroom and the voice of the bride, the sound of the millstones and the light of the lamp. 11This whole land shall become a ruin and a waste, and these nations shall serve the king of Babylon seventy years. 12Then after seventy years are completed, I will punish the king of Babylon and that nation, the land of the Chaldeans, for their iniquity, says the LORD, making the land an everlasting waste. 13I will bring upon that land all the words that I have uttered against it, everything written in this book, which Jeremiah prophesied against all the nations. 14For many nations and great kings shall make slaves of them also; and I will repay them according to their deeds and the work of their hands.

15 For thus the LORD, the God of Israel, said to me: Take from my hand this cup of the wine of wrath, and make all the nations to whom I send you drink it. 16They shall drink and stagger and go out of their minds because of the sword that I am sending among them.

17 So I took the cup from the LORD's hand, and made all the nations to whom the LORD sent me drink it: 18Jerusalem and the towns of Judah, its kings and officials, to make them a desolation and a waste, an object of hissing and of cursing, as they are today; 19Pharaoh king of Egypt, his servants, his officials, and all

*y* Gk Compare Syr: Heb *and everlasting desolations*

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**25.1–14: Babylon, God's instrument for punishment.** This conclusion to Jeremiah's memoirs (36.1–4) was written after Nebuchadrezzar's victory over Neco of Egypt at Carchemish, in June, 605 B.C. Jeremiah's warnings to Judah are near fulfillment. The foe from the north (6.1) will devastate the apostate land. All manifestations of normal daily life will disappear. No one of this faithless generation will see the restoration "seventy years" later (v. 12; compare Num 14.20–24). Though Judah's destruction is her punishment, wanton destruction does not go unpunished; ultimately Babylon herself will succumb to her enemies. **9:** *Hissing,* see Zeph 2.15 n.

**25.15–38: The cup of wrath. 15–29:** The vision originally introduced the now separated section of oracles against the nations (chs 46–51; compare 1.5). All nations, be-

his people; [20]all the mixed people;[z] all the kings of the land of Uz; all the kings of the land of the Philistines—Ashkelon, Gaza, Ekron, and the remnant of Ashdod; [21]Edom, Moab, and the Ammonites; [22]all the kings of Tyre, all the kings of Sidon, and the kings of the coastland across the sea; [23]Dedan, Tema, Buz, and all who have shaven temples; [24]all the kings of Arabia and all the kings of the mixed peoples[z] that live in the desert; [25]all the kings of Zimri, all the kings of Elam, and all the kings of Media; [26]all the kings of the north, far and near, one after another, and all the kingdoms of the world that are on the face of the earth. And after them the king of Sheshach[a] shall drink.

27 Then you shall say to them, Thus says the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel: Drink, get drunk and vomit, fall and rise no more, because of the sword that I am sending among you.

28 And if they refuse to accept the cup from your hand to drink, then you shall say to them: Thus says the LORD of hosts: You must drink! [29]See, I am beginning to bring disaster on the city that is called by my name, and how can you possibly avoid punishment? You shall not go unpunished, for I am summoning a sword against all the inhabitants of the earth, says the LORD of hosts.

30 You, therefore, shall prophesy against them all these words, and say to them:

The LORD will roar from on high,
and from his holy habitation
utter his voice;
he will roar mightily against his fold,
and shout, like those who tread grapes,
against all the inhabitants of the earth.

31 The clamor will resound to the ends of the earth,
for the LORD has an indictment against the nations;
he is entering into judgment with all flesh,
and the guilty he will put to the sword,
says the LORD.

32 Thus says the LORD of hosts:
See, disaster is spreading from nation to nation,
and a great tempest is stirring from the farthest parts of the earth!

33 Those slain by the LORD on that day shall extend from one end of the earth to the other. They shall not be lamented, or gathered, or buried; they shall become dung on the surface of the ground.

34 Wail, you shepherds, and cry out;
roll in ashes, you lords of the flock,
for the days of your slaughter have come—and your dispersions,[z]
and you shall fall like a choice vessel.

35 Flight shall fail the shepherds,
and there shall be no escape for the lords of the flock.

36 Hark! the cry of the shepherds,
and the wail of the lords of the flock!
For the LORD is despoiling their pasture,

[z] Meaning of Heb uncertain [a] *Sheshach* is a cryptogram for *Babel*, Babylon

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cause of their transgressions (Am 1.3–3.2), must suffer God's wrath (vv. 27–29 continue v. 16). The *cup* as a symbol of God's judgment (note its equation with *sword*, v. 29) originated perhaps with Jeremiah (8.14; Isa 51.17; Ps 11.6). **26**: Babylon is written in the Hebrew text as *Sheshach;* this kind of cipher, in which the letters are substituted in reverse order of the Hebrew alphabet, is called "atbash" (see 51.1, 41 n.).

**25.30–31**: The judgment is described in conventional figures: roaring (Am 1.2; Ps 46.6); vintage (Isa 16.9–10; 63.1–3); courtroom (12.1); sword (12.12). **32–33**: Distant foe (6.22) and heavy casualties (8.2; 16.4). **34–38**: The rulers (*shepherds, lords of the flock*)

37 and the peaceful folds are
devastated,
because of the fierce anger of
the LORD.
38 Like a lion he has left his covert;
for their land has become
a waste
because of the cruel sword,
and because of his fierce anger.

26 At the beginning of the reign of King Jehoiakim son of Josiah of Judah, this word came from the LORD: 2Thus says the LORD: Stand in the court of the LORD's house, and speak to all the cities of Judah that come to worship in the house of the LORD; speak to them all the words that I command you; do not hold back a word. 3It may be that they will listen, all of them, and will turn from their evil way, that I may change my mind about the disaster that I intend to bring on them because of their evil doings. 4You shall say to them: Thus says the LORD: If you will not listen to me, to walk in my law that I have set before you, 5and to heed the words of my servants the prophets whom I send to you urgently—though you have not heeded— 6then I will make this house like Shiloh, and I will make this city a curse for all the nations of the earth.

7 The priests and the prophets and all the people heard Jeremiah speaking these words in the house of the LORD. 8And when Jeremiah had finished speaking all that the LORD had commanded him to speak to all the people, then the priests and the prophets and all the people laid hold of him, saying, "You shall die! 9Why have you prophesied in the name of the LORD, saying, 'This house shall be like Shiloh, and this city shall be desolate, without inhabitant'?" And all the people gathered around Jeremiah in the house of the LORD.

10 When the officials of Judah heard these things, they came up from the king's house to the house of the LORD and took their seat in the entry of the New Gate of the house of the LORD. 11Then the priests and the prophets said to the officials and to all the people, "This man deserves the sentence of death because he has prophesied against this city, as you have heard with your own ears."

12 Then Jeremiah spoke to all the officials and all the people, saying, "It is the LORD who sent me to prophesy against this house and this city all the words you have heard. 13Now therefore amend your ways and your doings, and obey the voice of the LORD your God, and the LORD will change his mind about the disaster that he has pronounced against you. 14But as for me, here I am in your hands. Do with me as seems good and right to you. 15Only know for certain that if you put me to death, you will be bringing innocent blood upon yourselves and upon this city and its inhabitants, for in truth the LORD sent me to you to speak all these words in your ears."

16 Then the officials and all the people said to the priests and the prophets, "This man does not deserve the sentence of death, for he has spoken to us in the name of the LORD our God." 17And some of the elders of the land arose and said to all the assembled people, 18"Micah of

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are confused and desperate. **38**: The *lion* is either God, or Nebuchadrezzar (4.7).

**26.1–35.19: Events and prophecies (largely from Baruch's memoirs); predictions of restoration.**

**26.1–24: The temple sermon. 1–6**: The sermon (7.1–15) was delivered perhaps during the Festival of Booths (September–October), 609 B.C. Baruch's summation here contains elements of ch 7 and other sayings of Jeremiah (4.1–2; 18.7–11; 36.3).

**26.7–19**: Jeremiah's arrest and release. Frequently criticized by Jeremiah (2.8; 5.30–31; 6.13–14), priest and prophet alike would suffer from the temple's destruction. The royal officials assemble to hear the case. Jeremiah's dignified defense wins his release; the judges base their decision on a century-old precedent set by Hezekiah (715–687 B.C.) regarding the prophet Micah (Mic 3.12). *New Gate,* perhaps the Benjamin Gate, north of the temple (20.2; 2 Kings 15.35). Avenging of

Moresheth, who prophesied during the days of King Hezekiah of Judah, said to all the people of Judah: 'Thus says the LORD of hosts,

Zion shall be plowed as a field;
Jerusalem shall become a heap of ruins,
and the mountain of the house a wooded height.'

19 Did King Hezekiah of Judah and all Judah actually put him to death? Did he not fear the LORD and entreat the favor of the LORD, and did not the LORD change his mind about the disaster that he had pronounced against them? But we are about to bring great disaster on ourselves!"

20 There was another man prophesying in the name of the LORD, Uriah son of Shemaiah from Kiriath-jearim. He prophesied against this city and against this land in words exactly like those of Jeremiah. 21 And when King Jehoiakim, with all his warriors and all the officials, heard his words, the king sought to put him to death; but when Uriah heard of it, he was afraid and fled and escaped to Egypt. 22 Then King Jehoiakim sent[b] Elnathan son of Achbor and men with him to Egypt, 23 and they took Uriah from Egypt and brought him to King Jehoiakim, who struck him down with the sword and threw his dead body into the burial place of the common people.

24 But the hand of Ahikam son of Shaphan was with Jeremiah so that he was not given over into the hands of the people to be put to death.

**27** In the beginning of the reign of King Zedekiah[c] son of Josiah of Judah, this word came to Jeremiah from the LORD. 2 Thus the LORD said to me: Make yourself a yoke of straps and bars, and put them on your neck. 3 Send word[d] to the king of Edom, the king of Moab, the king of the Ammonites, the king of Tyre, and the king of Sidon by the hand of the envoys who have come to Jerusalem to King Zedekiah of Judah. 4 Give them this charge for their masters: Thus says the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel: This is what you shall say to your masters: 5 It is I who by my great power and my outstretched arm have made the earth, with the people and animals that are on the earth, and I give it to whomever I please. 6 Now I have given all these lands into the hand of King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon, my servant, and I have given him even the wild animals of the field to serve him. 7 All the nations shall serve him and his son and his grandson, until the time of his own land comes; then many nations and great kings shall make him their slave.

8 But if any nation or kingdom will not serve this king, Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon, and put its neck under the yoke of the king of Babylon, then I will punish that nation with the sword, with famine, and with pestilence, says the LORD, until I have completed its[e] destruction by his hand. 9 You, therefore, must not listen to your prophets, your diviners, your dreamers,[f] your soothsayers, or your sorcerers, who are saying to you, "You shall not serve the king of Babylon."

*b* Heb adds *men to Egypt* *c* Another reading is *Jehoiakim* *d* Cn: Heb *send them* *e* Heb *their* *f* Gk Syr Vg: Heb *dreams*

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*innocent blood,* Gen 4.10; 2 Sam 21.1–14; 1 Kings ch 21.

**26.20–24:** Martyrdom of Uriah. Baruch adds this story to illustrate Jeremiah's personal danger and fortunate official support (*Ahikam,* 2 Kings 22.12, 14). As Egypt's vassal (2 Kings 23.34–35), Jehoiakim had no difficulty arresting Uriah (*Elnathan,* 36.12, 25). His execution is unusual in the annals of Israelite prophetism (2 Chr 24.20–22; Mt 23.29–31).

**27.1–28.17: The yoke of the king of Babylon. 27.1–11:** The yoke of Babylon was imposed by God upon Judah and her neighbors (21.1–10; 32.3–5); thus their plans for rebellion are against God's will. The occasion for the conspiracy lay in a revolt within Nebuchadrezzar's army (December 595–January 594 B.C.) and the accession in Egypt of Psammetichus II (594). Perhaps responding to Jeremiah's warning, Zedekiah did not carry out the rebellion, and so Judah was spared during

10 For they are prophesying a lie to you,
with the result that you will be removed
far from your land; I will drive you out,
and you will perish. 11 But any nation
that will bring its neck under the yoke of
the king of Babylon and serve him, I will
leave on its own land, says the LORD, to
till it and live there.

12 I spoke to King Zedekiah of Judah
in the same way: Bring your necks under
the yoke of the king of Babylon, and
serve him and his people, and live.
13 Why should you and your people die
by the sword, by famine, and by pesti-
lence, as the LORD has spoken concerning
any nation that will not serve the king of
Babylon? 14 Do not listen to the words of
the prophets who are telling you not to
serve the king of Babylon, for they are
prophesying a lie to you. 15 I have not
sent them, says the LORD, but they are
prophesying falsely in my name, with
the result that I will drive you out and
you will perish, you and the prophets
who are prophesying to you.

16 Then I spoke to the priests and to
all this people, saying, Thus says the
LORD: Do not listen to the words of your
prophets who are prophesying to you,
saying, "The vessels of the LORD's house
will soon be brought back from Bab-
ylon," for they are prophesying a lie to
you. 17 Do not listen to them; serve the
king of Babylon and live. Why should
this city become a desolation? 18 If indeed
they are prophets, and if the word of the
LORD is with them, then let them inter-
cede with the LORD of hosts, that the
vessels left in the house of the LORD, in
the house of the king of Judah, and in
Jerusalem may not go to Babylon. 19 For
thus says the LORD of hosts concerning
the pillars, the sea, the stands, and the
rest of the vessels that are left in this city,
20 which King Nebuchadnezzar of Bab-
ylon did not take away when he took
into exile from Jerusalem to Babylon
King Jeconiah son of Jehoiakim of Judah,
and all the nobles of Judah and
Jerusalem— 21 thus says the LORD of
hosts, the God of Israel, concerning the
vessels left in the house of the LORD, in
the house of the king of Judah, and in
Jerusalem: 22 They shall be carried to
Babylon, and there they shall stay, until
the day when I give attention to them,
says the LORD. Then I will bring them up
and restore them to this place.

28 In that same year, at the begin-
ning of the reign of King Zedeki-
ah of Judah, in the fifth month of the
fourth year, the prophet Hananiah son of
Azzur, from Gibeon, spoke to me in the
house of the LORD, in the presence of the
priests and all the people, saying, 2 "Thus
says the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel:
I have broken the yoke of the king of
Babylon. 3 Within two years I will bring
back to this place all the vessels of the
LORD's house, which King Nebuchad-
nezzar of Babylon took away from this
place and carried to Babylon. 4 I will also
bring back to this place King Jeconiah
son of Jehoiakim of Judah, and all the
exiles from Judah who went to Babylon,
says the LORD, for I will break the yoke
of the king of Babylon."

5 Then the prophet Jeremiah spoke to
the prophet Hananiah in the presence of
the priests and all the people who were

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Nebuchadrezzar's punitive campaign later that year. The form "Nebuchadnezzar" occurs in Jer 27.6–29.3; elsewhere in Jeremiah "Nebuchadrezzar" appears. The Babylonian form is Nabu-kudurru-usur.

**27.12–15**: Jeremiah repeats his warning: since God has not sent the prophets who are advising Zedekiah (14.14), they are unreliable guides.

**27.16–22**: He cautions the priests and the people against believing the baseless assurances of these prophets that the temple equipment taken as booty in 597 B.C. would be shortly returned. Instead, they should pray that what they have (Jer 52.17; 2 Kings 25.13) will not also be taken to Babylon.

**28.1–17**: Jeremiah and Hananiah. In August 594 B.C., Hananiah faced Jeremiah in the temple and predicted total restoration within two years, breaking Jeremiah's yoke to emphasize his point. Jeremiah recalled that their predecessors had predicted chastisement (Deut 18.20–22; Mic 3.5–12). Because the situation was unchanged, Hananiah's prom-

standing in the house of the LORD; 6and the prophet Jeremiah said, "Amen! May the LORD do so; may the LORD fulfill the words that you have prophesied, and bring back to this place from Babylon the vessels of the house of the LORD, and all the exiles. 7But listen now to this word that I speak in your hearing and in the hearing of all the people. 8The prophets who preceded you and me from ancient times prophesied war, famine, and pestilence against many countries and great kingdoms. 9As for the prophet who prophesies peace, when the word of that prophet comes true, then it will be known that the LORD has truly sent the prophet."

10 Then the prophet Hananiah took the yoke from the neck of the prophet Jeremiah, and broke it. 11And Hananiah spoke in the presence of all the people, saying, "Thus says the LORD: This is how I will break the yoke of King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon from the neck of all the nations within two years." At this, the prophet Jeremiah went his way.

12 Sometime after the prophet Hananiah had broken the yoke from the neck of the prophet Jeremiah, the word of the LORD came to Jeremiah: 13Go, tell Hananiah, Thus says the LORD: You have broken wooden bars only to forge iron bars in place of them! 14For thus says the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel: I have put an iron yoke on the neck of all these nations so that they may serve King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon, and they shall indeed serve him; I have even given him the wild animals. 15And the prophet Jeremiah said to the prophet Hananiah, "Listen, Hananiah, the LORD has not sent you, and you made this people trust in a lie. 16Therefore thus says the LORD: I am going to send you off the face of the earth. Within this year you will be dead, because you have spoken rebellion against the LORD."

17 In that same year, in the seventh month, the prophet Hananiah died.

**29** These are the words of the letter that the prophet Jeremiah sent from Jerusalem to the remaining elders among the exiles, and to the priests, the prophets, and all the people, whom Nebuchadnezzar had taken into exile from Jerusalem to Babylon. 2This was after King Jeconiah, and the queen mother, the court officials, the leaders of Judah and Jerusalem, the artisans, and the smiths had departed from Jerusalem. 3The letter was sent by the hand of Elasah son of Shaphan and Gemariah son of Hilkiah, whom King Zedekiah of Judah sent to Babylon to King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon. It said: 4Thus says the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel, to all the exiles whom I have sent into exile from Jerusalem to Babylon: 5Build houses and live in them; plant gardens and eat what they produce. 6Take wives and have sons and daughters; take wives for your sons, and give your daughters in marriage, that they may bear sons and daughters; multiply there, and do not decrease. 7But seek the welfare of the city where I have sent you into exile, and pray to the LORD on its behalf, for in its welfare you will find your welfare. 8For thus says the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel: Do not let the prophets and the diviners who are among you deceive you, and do not listen to the dreams that they dream,[g] 9for it is a lie that they are prophesying to you in my name; I did not send them, says the LORD.

*g* Cn: Heb *your dreams that you cause to dream*

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ise, though attractive, seemed very doubtful. Later Jeremiah used the symbolism of an iron yoke to emphasize that the Exile would continue (27.7). *Yoke,* placed on the neck of an ox, held on by leather straps.

**29.1–32: Jeremiah's letters to Babylon. 1–23:** Letter to the exiles. The exiles were being misled by the same baseless assurances of speedy return as those in Palestine (ch 27). To counter this Jeremiah sent a letter by *Elasah* (perhaps the brother of Ahikam, 26.24) and *Gemariah* (36.10) to the *elders* of the people (Ezek 8.1; 14.1). His advice was revolutionary. They were to establish homes in Babylonia and even pray for the welfare of the state. God would be with them and would ultimately restore them (*seventy years,* 25.11; 27.7). Two colleagues of Hananiah, Ahab and

10 For thus says the LORD: Only when Babylon's seventy years are completed will I visit you, and I will fulfill to you my promise and bring you back to this place. 11 For surely I know the plans I have for you, says the LORD, plans for your welfare and not for harm, to give you a future with hope. 12 Then when you call upon me and come and pray to me, I will hear you. 13 When you search for me, you will find me; if you seek me with all your heart, 14 I will let you find me, says the LORD, and I will restore your fortunes and gather you from all the nations and all the places where I have driven you, says the LORD, and I will bring you back to the place from which I sent you into exile.

15 Because you have said, "The LORD has raised up prophets for us in Babylon,"— 16 Thus says the LORD concerning the king who sits on the throne of David, and concerning all the people who live in this city, your kinsfolk who did not go out with you into exile: 17 Thus says the LORD of hosts, I am going to let loose on them sword, famine, and pestilence, and I will make them like rotten figs that are so bad they cannot be eaten. 18 I will pursue them with the sword, with famine, and with pestilence, and will make them a horror to all the kingdoms of the earth, to be an object of cursing, and horror, and hissing, and a derision among all the nations where I have driven them, 19 because they did not heed my words, says the LORD, when I persistently sent to you my servants the prophets, but they[h] would not listen, says the LORD. 20 But now, all you exiles whom I sent away from Jerusalem to Babylon, hear the word of the LORD: 21 Thus says the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel, concerning Ahab son of Kolaiah and Zedekiah son of Maaseiah, who are prophesying a lie to you in my name: I am going to deliver them into the hand of King Nebuchadrezzar of Babylon, and he shall kill them before your eyes. 22 And on account of them this curse shall be used by all the exiles from Judah in Babylon: "The LORD make you like Zedekiah and Ahab, whom the king of Babylon roasted in the fire," 23 because they have perpetrated outrage in Israel and have committed adultery with their neighbors' wives, and have spoken in my name lying words that I did not command them; I am the one who knows and bears witness, says the LORD.

24 To Shemaiah of Nehelam you shall say: 25 Thus says the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel: In your own name you sent a letter to all the people who are in Jerusalem, and to the priest Zephaniah son of Maaseiah, and to all the priests, saying, 26 The LORD himself has made you priest instead of the priest Jehoiada, so that there may be officers in the house of the LORD to control any madman who plays the prophet, to put him in the stocks and the collar. 27 So now why have you not rebuked Jeremiah of Anathoth who plays the prophet for you? 28 For he has actually sent to us in Babylon, saying, "It will be a long time; build houses and live in them, and plant gardens and eat what they produce."

29 The priest Zephaniah read this letter in the hearing of the prophet Jeremiah. 30 Then the word of the LORD came to Jeremiah: 31 Send to all the exiles, saying, Thus says the LORD concerning Shemaiah of Nehelam: Because Shemaiah has

*h* Syr: Heb *you*

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Zedekiah (v. 21), were condemned by Jeremiah (compare Ezek ch 13). He predicted their execution; from the Babylonian point of view it would be for political subversion, not for the reason mentioned in v. 23. Verses 21–23 should follow v. 15; vv. 16–20 are an editorial comment on Jeremiah's letter.

**29.24–32**: Jeremiah and Shemaiah. Another "colleague" of Hananiah, Shemaiah, wrote from Babylon a scathing letter to the new temple overseer (compare 20.1), Zephaniah, charging him with dereliction of duty in not arresting Jeremiah for his letter (above). Instead Zephaniah (21.1; 37.3) read the letter to his friend Jeremiah. The latter sent another letter to the exiles, condemning Shemaiah and predicting that neither he nor his descendants would see the day of restoration (20.6).

prophesied to you, though I did not send him, and has led you to trust in a lie, 32therefore thus says the LORD: I am going to punish Shemaiah of Nehelam and his descendants; he shall not have anyone living among this people to see[i] the good that I am going to do to my people, says the LORD, for he has spoken rebellion against the LORD.

30 The word that came to Jeremiah from the LORD: 2Thus says the LORD, the God of Israel: Write in a book all the words that I have spoken to you. 3For the days are surely coming, says the LORD, when I will restore the fortunes of my people, Israel and Judah, says the LORD, and I will bring them back to the land that I gave to their ancestors and they shall take possession of it.

4 These are the words that the LORD spoke concerning Israel and Judah:

5 Thus says the LORD:
We have heard a cry of panic,
of terror, and no peace.
6 Ask now, and see,
can a man bear a child?
Why then do I see every man
with his hands on his loins like
a woman in labor?
Why has every face turned pale?
7 Alas! that day is so great
there is none like it;
it is a time of distress for Jacob;
yet he shall be rescued from it.

8 On that day, says the LORD of hosts, I will break the yoke from off his[j] neck, and I will burst his[j] bonds, and strangers shall no more make a servant of him. 9But they shall serve the LORD their God and David their king, whom I will raise up for them.

10 But as for you, have no fear, my servant Jacob, says the LORD,
and do not be dismayed, O Israel;
for I am going to save you from far away,
and your offspring from the land of their captivity.
Jacob shall return and have quiet and ease,
and no one shall make him afraid.
11 For I am with you, says the LORD, to save you;
I will make an end of all the nations
among which I scattered you,
but of you I will not make an end.
I will chastise you in just measure,
and I will by no means leave you unpunished.

12 For thus says the LORD:
Your hurt is incurable,
your wound is grievous.
13 There is no one to uphold your cause,
no medicine for your wound,
no healing for you.
14 All your lovers have forgotten you;
they care nothing for you;
for I have dealt you the blow of an enemy,
the punishment of a merciless foe,
because your guilt is great,

*i* Gk: Heb *and he shall not see* *j* Cn: Heb *your*

**30.1–31.40: The Book of Consolation.** **30.1–4:** Introduction. Initially collected by Baruch, some parts of chs 30–31 consist of early oracles addressed to the north (*Ephraim,* 31.6, 9, 18, 20; compare 3.12). These are expanded by Jeremiah and addressed to the south just before the fall of Jerusalem in 587 B.C.

**30.5–9:** Oracles concerning Israel. After the travail (6.24) of God's judgment (*that day* [of the LORD], Am 5.18–20), God will break the yoke and a Davidic king will again rule Israel (23.5–6; Hos 3.5). **10–11:** *Have no fear,* common phrase in God's address to his people, Gen 15.1; Isa 35.4; Lk 2.10. *Not make an end,* a remnant will be left (see 4.27; 5.10, 18; compare 46.27–28).

**30.12–17:** Though ostensibly incurably wounded (8.22; 14.17) and deserted (4.30; 13.21) because of her sinfulness, Israel will be healed (Hos 14.4) and her oppressors despoiled (9.25–26; 25.13–14).

because your sins are so
numerous.
15 Why do you cry out over your
hurt?
Your pain is incurable.
Because your guilt is great,
because your sins are so
numerous,
I have done these things to you.
16 Therefore all who devour you
shall be devoured,
and all your foes, everyone of
them, shall go into
captivity;
those who plunder you shall be
plundered,
and all who prey on you I will
make a prey.
17 For I will restore health to you,
and your wounds I will heal,
says the LORD,
because they have called you
an outcast:
"It is Zion; no one cares for
her!"

18 Thus says the LORD:
I am going to restore the fortunes
of the tents of Jacob,
and have compassion on his
dwellings;
the city shall be rebuilt upon its
mound,
and the citadel set on its
rightful site.
19 Out of them shall come
thanksgiving,
and the sound of merrymakers.
I will make them many, and they
shall not be few;
I will make them honored, and
they shall not be disdained.
20 Their children shall be as of old,
their congregation shall be
established before me;
and I will punish all who
oppress them.
21 Their prince shall be one of
their own,
their ruler shall come from their
midst;
I will bring him near, and he shall
approach me,
for who would otherwise dare
to approach me?
says the LORD.
22 And you shall be my people,
and I will be your God.

23 Look, the storm of the LORD!
Wrath has gone forth,
a whirling[k] tempest;
it will burst upon the head of
the wicked.
24 The fierce anger of the LORD will
not turn back
until he has executed and
accomplished
the intents of his mind.
In the latter days you will
understand this.

31 At that time, says the LORD, I will
be the God of all the families of
Israel, and they shall be my people.
2 Thus says the LORD:
The people who survived the
sword
found grace in the wilderness;
when Israel sought for rest,
3 the LORD appeared to him[l]
from far away.[m]
I have loved you with an
everlasting love;
therefore I have continued my
faithfulness to you.
4 Again I will build you, and you
shall be built,

*k* One Ms: Meaning of MT uncertain
*l* Gk: Heb *me* *m* Or *to him long ago*

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**30.18–22**: *The city* (Samaria or Jerusalem) will be *rebuilt upon its mound;* it was customary in antiquity to rebuild on the leveled rubble of the preceding city, producing the present flat-topped hills, called tells. **21**: *I will bring him near* reassures the one who approaches God (Ex 19.21; 33.20; Num 8.19). **22**: 7.23; 11.4; 24.7. **30.23–31.1**: The storm of the LORD. **30.23–24**: = 23.19–20.

**31.1**: This emphasizes the inclusiveness of the term *Israel;* compare 30.22. **2–6**: With a formula taken from the Exodus narrative

O virgin Israel!
Again you shall take[n] your tambourines,
and go forth in the dance of the merrymakers.
5 Again you shall plant vineyards on the mountains of Samaria;
the planters shall plant,
and shall enjoy the fruit.
6 For there shall be a day when sentinels will call
in the hill country of Ephraim:
"Come, let us go up to Zion,
to the LORD our God."

7 For thus says the LORD:
Sing aloud with gladness for Jacob,
and raise shouts for the chief of the nations;
proclaim, give praise, and say,
"Save, O LORD, your people,
the remnant of Israel."
8 See, I am going to bring them from the land of the north,
and gather them from the farthest parts of the earth,
among them the blind and the lame,
those with child and those in labor, together;
a great company, they shall return here.
9 With weeping they shall come,
and with consolations[o] I will lead them back,
I will let them walk by brooks of water,
in a straight path in which they shall not stumble;
for I have become a father to Israel,
and Ephraim is my firstborn.

10 Hear the word of the LORD,
O nations,
and declare it in the coastlands far away;
say, "He who scattered Israel will gather him,
and will keep him as a shepherd a flock."
11 For the LORD has ransomed Jacob,
and has redeemed him from hands too strong for him.
12 They shall come and sing aloud on the height of Zion,
and they shall be radiant over the goodness of the LORD,
over the grain, the wine, and the oil,
and over the young of the flock and the herd;
their life shall become like a watered garden,
and they shall never languish again.
13 Then shall the young women rejoice in the dance,
and the young men and the old shall be merry.
I will turn their mourning into joy,
I will comfort them, and give them gladness for sorrow.
14 I will give the priests their fill of fatness,
and my people shall be satisfied with my bounty,
says the LORD.

15 Thus says the LORD:
A voice is heard in Ramah,
lamentation and bitter weeping.

*n* Or *adorn yourself with* Tg: Heb *supplications*
*o* Gk Compare Vg

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(*found grace* [favor], Ex 33.12–17; compare Jer 23.7–8) and the emphatic historical-theological implications of *everlasting love* and *faithfulness,* God promises the joyful restoration of all Israel, including the renewal of pilgrimages to the Jerusalem temple (*Zion;* 41.5).

**31.7–14**: Homecoming. God will assemble the dispersed in their homeland (Isa 35.5–10; Ps 23.2–3). *Israel . . . Ephraim is my firstborn* (Ex 4.22), as Ephraim is restored, so is all Israel (including Judah; 2.3; 3.19). **10–11**: Praises to God will be raised far (*coastlands,* Ps 72.10–11; Isa 41.1, 5) and near for deliverance (*shepherd,* Isa 40.11; *redeemed,* Isa 48.20). **14**: Bountiful produce of the land will mark the new age of well-being (Isa 58.11).

**31.15–20**: *Rachel,* mother of Joseph and

Rachel is weeping for her children;
she refuses to be comforted for her children,
because they are no more.
16 Thus says the LORD:
Keep your voice from weeping,
and your eyes from tears;
for there is a reward for your work,
says the LORD:
they shall come back from the land of the enemy;
17 there is hope for your future,
says the LORD:
your children shall come back to their own country.

18 Indeed I heard Ephraim pleading:
"You disciplined me, and I took the discipline;
I was like a calf untrained.
Bring me back, let me come back,
for you are the LORD my God.
19 For after I had turned away I repented;
and after I was discovered, I struck my thigh;
I was ashamed, and I was dismayed
because I bore the disgrace of my youth."
20 Is Ephraim my dear son?
Is he the child I delight in?
As often as I speak against him,
I still remember him.
Therefore I am deeply moved for him;
I will surely have mercy on him,
says the LORD.

21 Set up road markers for yourself,
make yourself guideposts;
consider well the highway,
the road by which you went.
Return, O virgin Israel,
return to these your cities.
22 How long will you waver,
O faithless daughter?
For the LORD has created a new thing on the earth:
a woman encompasses[p] a man.

23 Thus says the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel: Once more they shall use these words in the land of Judah and in its towns when I restore their fortunes:
"The LORD bless you, O abode of righteousness,
O holy hill!"
24 And Judah and all its towns shall live there together, and the farmers and those who wander[q] with their flocks.
25 I will satisfy the weary,
and all who are faint I will replenish.
26 Thereupon I awoke and looked, and my sleep was pleasant to me.
27 The days are surely coming, says the LORD, when I will sow the house of Israel and the house of Judah with the seed of humans and the seed of animals.
28 And just as I have watched over them to pluck up and break down, to overthrow, destroy, and bring evil, so I will watch over them to build and to plant, says the LORD. 29 In those days they shall no longer say:
"The parents have eaten sour grapes,
and the children's teeth are set on edge."

*p* Meaning of Heb uncertain *q* Cn Compare Syr Vg Tg: Heb *and they shall wander*

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Benjamin (Gen 30.22; 35.16–20; 1 Sam 10.2), laments their (the northern tribes') exile (*Ramah,* 1 Sam 8.4). Matthew 2.18 depicts unmitigated grief, but here the verse introduces the promise of restoration. **18:** *Ephraim* (Joseph's son, Gen 41.50–52) repents (3.22–25; Hos 6.1–3). **21–22:** Israel is bidden to note the *road markers* on her way to exile so that she can find her way home again. *A new thing,* compare Isa 43.19. *A woman encompasses a man,* she does not have to be protected by a man; compare Isa 11.6–9 for the reversal of the usual in the new age. **23–40:** Restoration and the new covenant. The following oracles are after 587 B.C.

**31.23–30:** As God depopulated and depleted Judah (1.10), he will also restore it (Ezek 36.8–11) and reunite it with Israel (vv. 2–14; Isa 11.11–16). **29–30:** This may reflect the contemporary problem (Deut

30 But all shall die for their own sins; the
teeth of everyone who eats sour grapes
shall be set on edge.

31 The days are surely coming, says
the LORD, when I will make a new cove-
nant with the house of Israel and the
house of Judah. 32 It will not be like the
covenant that I made with their ancestors
when I took them by the hand to bring
them out of the land of Egypt—a cove-
nant that they broke, though I was their
husband,[r] says the LORD. 33 But this is
the covenant that I will make with the
house of Israel after those days, says the
LORD: I will put my law within them,
and I will write it on their hearts; and I
will be their God, and they shall be my
people. 34 No longer shall they teach one
another, or say to each other, "Know the
LORD," for they shall all know me, from
the least of them to the greatest, says the
LORD; for I will forgive their iniquity,
and remember their sin no more.

35 Thus says the LORD,
who gives the sun for light by day
and the fixed order of the moon
and the stars for light
by night,
who stirs up the sea so that its
waves roar—
the LORD of hosts is his name:
36 If this fixed order were ever
to cease
from my presence, says the
LORD,
then also the offspring of Israel
would cease
to be a nation before me
forever.

37 Thus says the LORD:
If the heavens above can be
measured,
and the foundations of the earth
below can be explored,
then I will reject all the offspring
of Israel
because of all they have done,
says the LORD.

38 The days are surely coming, says
the LORD, when the city shall be rebuilt
for the LORD from the tower of Hananel
to the Corner Gate. 39 And the measuring
line shall go out farther, straight to the
hill Gareb, and shall then turn to Goah.
40 The whole valley of the dead bodies
and the ashes, and all the fields as far as
the Wadi Kidron, to the corner of the
Horse Gate toward the east, shall be sa-
cred to the LORD. It shall never again be
uprooted or overthrown.

32 The word that came to Jeremiah
from the LORD in the tenth year
of King Zedekiah of Judah, which was
the eighteenth year of Nebuchadrezzar.
2 At that time the army of the king of
Babylon was besieging Jerusalem, and
the prophet Jeremiah was confined in the
court of the guard that was in the palace
of the king of Judah, 3 where King Zede-
kiah of Judah had confined him. Zedeki-

r Or *master*

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24.16), discussed in some detail by Ezekiel (ch 18).

**31.31–34**: Using the oldest expression for covenant making ("to cut a covenant") and opposing what was an increasingly limited concept of the Sinai covenant, the prophet affirms that God will *make a new covenant* (32.38–40; Heb 8.8–12; 10.16–17) inscribed in the hearts of his people (17.1; Ezek 11.19; Hos 2.20).

**31.35–37**: In this passage, coming from a time after Jeremiah (compare 33.14–26), the seemingly eternal cycle of nature (5.22) is used to emphasize God's assurance of Israel's continued existence (Isa 44.24; 54.9–10). **38–40**: This passage, again coming from after the time of Jeremiah (compare Zech 14.10–11), describes Jerusalem's four corners: northeast (*Hananel,* Neh 3.1), northwest (*Corner Gate,* 2 Kings 14.13), southeast and southwest (*Gareb, Goah,* both unidentified); and southern (Hinnom, 7.31–32) and eastern (Wadi Kidron, 2 Kings 23.4, 6) boundaries. *Horse Gate* (southeast corner), Neh 3.28.

**32.1–44**: **Jeremiah purchases land in Anathoth. 1–5**: For background, see ch 37

ah had said, "Why do you prophesy and say: Thus says the LORD: I am going to give this city into the hand of the king of Babylon, and he shall take it; 4King Zedekiah of Judah shall not escape out of the hands of the Chaldeans, but shall surely be given into the hands of the king of Babylon, and shall speak with him face to face and see him eye to eye; 5and he shall take Zedekiah to Babylon, and there he shall remain until I attend to him, says the LORD; though you fight against the Chaldeans, you shall not succeed?"

6 Jeremiah said, The word of the LORD came to me: 7Hanamel son of your uncle Shallum is going to come to you and say, "Buy my field that is at Anathoth, for the right of redemption by purchase is yours." 8Then my cousin Hanamel came to me in the court of the guard, in accordance with the word of the LORD, and said to me, "Buy my field that is at Anathoth in the land of Benjamin, for the right of possession and redemption is yours; buy it for yourself." Then I knew that this was the word of the LORD.

9 And I bought the field at Anathoth from my cousin Hanamel, and weighed out the money to him, seventeen shekels of silver. 10I signed the deed, sealed it, got witnesses, and weighed the money on scales. 11Then I took the sealed deed of purchase, containing the terms and conditions, and the open copy; 12and I gave the deed of purchase to Baruch son of Neriah son of Mahseiah, in the presence of my cousin Hanamel, in the presence of the witnesses who signed the deed of purchase, and in the presence of all the Judeans who were sitting in the court of the guard. 13In their presence I charged Baruch, saying, 14Thus says the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel: Take these deeds, both this sealed deed of purchase and this open deed, and put them in an earthenware jar, in order that they may last for a long time. 15For thus says the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel: Houses and fields and vineyards shall again be bought in this land.

16 After I had given the deed of purchase to Baruch son of Neriah, I prayed to the LORD, saying: 17Ah Lord GOD! It is you who made the heavens and the earth by your great power and by your outstretched arm! Nothing is too hard for you. 18You show steadfast love to the thousandth generation,[s] but repay the guilt of parents into the laps of their children after them, O great and mighty God whose name is the LORD of hosts, 19great in counsel and mighty in deed; whose eyes are open to all the ways of mortals, rewarding all according to their ways and according to the fruit of their doings. 20You showed signs and wonders in the land of Egypt, and to this day in Israel and among all humankind, and have made yourself a name that continues to this very day. 21You brought your people Israel out of the land of Egypt

*s* Or *to thousands*

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(date: early 587 B.C.). Chronologically the account should follow ch 37. Its being placed here emphasizes the validity of the preceding oracles concerning Judah's restoration. **6–15**: To prevent the loss of family property, Jeremiah's cousin, *Hanamel,* offered to sell his land to Jeremiah (Lev 25.25–28). This is the most detailed account of a business transaction in the Bible (compare Gen 23.1–16). *Seventeen shekels* (about seven ounces) refers to weight, not coins. The official copy of the deed, written on papyrus, was rolled up and sealed; *the open copy* was for easy reference. Similar storage of deeds in earthen jars is known from Elephantine in Egypt. *Baruch,* Jeremiah's secretary, see ch 36. Jeremiah's purchase illustrates his confidence in the future of Judah.

**32.16–44**: This section deals with the theme of the future of Judah; some of it represents an editorial expansion. First is a formal prayer (vv. 16–25). After praising God's omnipotence (10.16; 27.5), his omniscience (17.10), and his wondrous deeds in Israel's behalf (11.5), Jeremiah questions the wisdom of his purchase in view of the circumstances

with signs and wonders, with a strong hand and outstretched arm, and with great terror; 22and you gave them this land, which you swore to their ancestors to give them, a land flowing with milk and honey; 23and they entered and took possession of it. But they did not obey your voice or follow your law; of all you commanded them to do, they did nothing. Therefore you have made all these disasters come upon them. 24See, the siege ramps have been cast up against the city to take it, and the city, faced with sword, famine, and pestilence, has been given into the hands of the Chaldeans who are fighting against it. What you spoke has happened, as you yourself can see. 25Yet you, O Lord GOD, have said to me, "Buy the field for money and get witnesses"—though the city has been given into the hands of the Chaldeans.

26 The word of the LORD came to Jeremiah: 27See, I am the LORD, the God of all flesh; is anything too hard for me? 28Therefore, thus says the LORD: I am going to give this city into the hands of the Chaldeans and into the hand of King Nebuchadrezzar of Babylon, and he shall take it. 29The Chaldeans who are fighting against this city shall come, set it on fire, and burn it, with the houses on whose roofs offerings have been made to Baal and libations have been poured out to other gods, to provoke me to anger. 30For the people of Israel and the people of Judah have done nothing but evil in my sight from their youth; the people of Israel have done nothing but provoke me to anger by the work of their hands, says the LORD. 31This city has aroused my anger and wrath, from the day it was built until this day, so that I will remove it from my sight 32because of all the evil of the people of Israel and the people of Judah that they did to provoke me to anger—they, their kings and their officials, their priests and their prophets, the citizens of Judah and the inhabitants of Jerusalem. 33They have turned their backs to me, not their faces; though I have taught them persistently, they would not listen and accept correction. 34They set up their abominations in the house that bears my name, and defiled it. 35They built the high places of Baal in the valley of the son of Hinnom, to offer up their sons and daughters to Molech, though I did not command them, nor did it enter my mind that they should do this abomination, causing Judah to sin.

36 Now therefore thus says the LORD, the God of Israel, concerning this city of which you say, "It is being given into the hand of the king of Babylon by the sword, by famine, and by pestilence": 37See, I am going to gather them from all the lands to which I drove them in my anger and my wrath and in great indignation; I will bring them back to this place, and I will settle them in safety. 38They shall be my people, and I will be their God. 39I will give them one heart and one way, that they may fear me for all time, for their own good and the good of their children after them. 40I will make an everlasting covenant with them, never to draw back from doing good to them; and I will put the fear of me in their hearts, so that they may not turn from me. 41I will rejoice in doing good to them, and I will plant them in this land in faithfulness, with all my heart and all my soul.

42 For thus says the LORD: Just as I have brought all this great disaster upon this people, so I will bring upon them all the good fortune that I now promise them. 43Fields shall be bought in this

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(vv. 24–25). God's answer (vv. 26–44) summarizes Jeremiah's (and the Deuteronomic) interpretation of the contemporary critical events. After a résumé of Judah's idolatry (incense, wine and oil offered on the rooftops, 19.13; comparative sinfulness of Israel and Judah, 3.6–11; human sacrifices, 7.30–32) and her stubborn indifference to God's warnings (17.21–23), her imminent destruction (in conventional terms: sword, pestilence, and famine, 14.11–12; 21.7) is affirmed. The section concludes with assurances of restoration, first with reference to the new covenant (31.31–34) and then the exchange and holding of property (vv. 42–44).

land of which you are saying, It is a desolation, without human beings or animals; it has been given into the hands of the Chaldeans. 44Fields shall be bought for money, and deeds shall be signed and sealed and witnessed, in the land of Benjamin, in the places around Jerusalem, and in the cities of Judah, of the hill country, of the Shephelah, and of the Negeb; for I will restore their fortunes, says the LORD.

33 The word of the LORD came to Jeremiah a second time, while he was still confined in the court of the guard: 2Thus says the LORD who made the earth,[t] the LORD who formed it to establish it—the LORD is his name: 3Call to me and I will answer you, and will tell you great and hidden things that you have not known. 4For thus says the LORD, the God of Israel, concerning the houses of this city and the houses of the kings of Judah that were torn down to make a defense against the siege ramps and before the sword:[u] 5The Chaldeans are coming in to fight[v] and to fill them with the dead bodies of those whom I shall strike down in my anger and my wrath, for I have hidden my face from this city because of all their wickedness. 6I am going to bring it recovery and healing; I will heal them and reveal to them abundance[u] of prosperity and security. 7I will restore the fortunes of Judah and the fortunes of Israel, and rebuild them as they were at first. 8I will cleanse them from all the guilt of their sin against me, and I will forgive all the guilt of their sin and rebellion against me. 9And this city[w] shall be to me a name of joy, a praise and a glory before all the nations of the earth who shall hear of all the good that I do for them; they shall fear and tremble because of all the good and all the prosperity I provide for it.

10 Thus says the LORD: In this place of which you say, "It is a waste without human beings or animals," in the towns of Judah and the streets of Jerusalem that are desolate, without inhabitants, human or animal, there shall once more be heard 11the voice of mirth and the voice of gladness, the voice of the bridegroom and the voice of the bride, the voices of those who sing, as they bring thank offerings to the house of the LORD:

"Give thanks to the LORD of hosts,
for the LORD is good,
for his steadfast love endures forever!"

For I will restore the fortunes of the land as at first, says the LORD.

12 Thus says the LORD of hosts: In this place that is waste, without human beings or animals, and in all its towns there shall again be pasture for shepherds resting their flocks. 13In the towns of the hill country, of the Shephelah, and of the Negeb, in the land of Benjamin, the places around Jerusalem, and in the towns of Judah, flocks shall again pass under the hands of the one who counts them, says the LORD.

14 The days are surely coming, says the LORD, when I will fulfill the promise I made to the house of Israel and the house of Judah. 15In those days and at that time I will cause a righteous Branch to spring up for David; and he shall execute justice and righteousness in the land. 16In those days Judah will be saved and Jerusalem will live in safety. And this is

*t* Gk: Heb *it* *u* Meaning of Heb uncertain
*v* Cn: Heb *They are coming in to fight against the Chaldeans* *w* Heb *And it*

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**33.1–13: God will rebuild the walls of Jerusalem. 1**: Editorial connection with preceding chapter. **4–5**: In siege defense measures, there was demolition of houses built in the city wall to allow for the military needs of defenders (Isa 22.10). **6–8a**: After punishment (and repentance) will come rebuilding and restoration. **8b–9**: Generalizing expansion.

**33.10–13**: Two proclamations of salvation; vv. 10–11 reverse 7.34.

**33.14–26: A variation of 23.5–6.** This passage is lacking in the Septuagint, and is to be dated probably to 450–400 B.C. **14–18**: There will be not one but a succession of Davidic rulers (2 Sam 7.16; 1 Kings 9.5). The reference to *levitical priests* is unique in Jeremiah (Deut 18.1–5). **16**: The new *name* of Jerusalem

the name by which it will be called: "The LORD is our righteousness."

17 For thus says the LORD: David shall never lack a man to sit on the throne of the house of Israel, 18and the levitical priests shall never lack a man in my presence to offer burnt offerings, to make grain offerings, and to make sacrifices for all time.

19 The word of the LORD came to Jeremiah: 20Thus says the LORD: If any of you could break my covenant with the day and my covenant with the night, so that day and night would not come at their appointed time, 21only then could my covenant with my servant David be broken, so that he would not have a son to reign on his throne, and my covenant with my ministers the Levites. 22Just as the host of heaven cannot be numbered and the sands of the sea cannot be measured, so I will increase the offspring of my servant David, and the Levites who minister to me.

23 The word of the LORD came to Jeremiah: 24Have you not observed how these people say, "The two families that the LORD chose have been rejected by him," and how they hold my people in such contempt that they no longer regard them as a nation? 25Thus says the LORD: Only if I had not established my covenant with day and night and the ordinances of heaven and earth, 26would I reject the offspring of Jacob and of my servant David and not choose any of his descendants as rulers over the offspring of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. For I will restore their fortunes, and will have mercy upon them.

34 The word that came to Jeremiah from the LORD, when King Nebuchadrezzar of Babylon and all his army and all the kingdoms of the earth and all the peoples under his dominion were fighting against Jerusalem and all its cities: 2Thus says the LORD, the God of Israel: Go and speak to King Zedekiah of Judah and say to him: Thus says the LORD: I am going to give this city into the hand of the king of Babylon, and he shall burn it with fire. 3And you yourself shall not escape from his hand, but shall surely be captured and handed over to him; you shall see the king of Babylon eye to eye and speak with him face to face; and you shall go to Babylon. 4Yet hear the word of the LORD, O King Zedekiah of Judah! Thus says the LORD concerning you: You shall not die by the sword; 5you shall die in peace. And as spices were burned[x] for your ancestors, the earlier kings who preceded you, so they shall burn spices[y] for you and lament for you, saying, "Alas, lord!" For I have spoken the word, says the LORD.

6 Then the prophet Jeremiah spoke all these words to Zedekiah king of Judah, in Jerusalem, 7when the army of the king of Babylon was fighting against Jerusalem and against all the cities of Judah that were left, Lachish and Azekah; for these were the only fortified cities of Judah that remained.

8 The word that came to Jeremiah from the LORD, after King Zedekiah had made a covenant with all the people in Jerusalem to make a proclamation of liberty to them— 9that all should set free their Hebrew slaves, male and female, so that no one should hold another Judean in slavery. 10And they obeyed, all the officials and all the people who had en-

*x* Heb *as there was burning* *y* Heb *shall burn*

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(see Isa 1.26 n.). **22:** A reinterpretation of Gen 22.17–18.

**33.23–26:** As night follows day (31.35–37; Gen 1.5; 8.22), God's promise to the patriarchs (compare Rom 4.13) and David will be kept.

**34.1–7: Warning to Zedekiah.** The siege of Jerusalem (January 588 B.C.) was but weeks away; only *Lachish* (twenty-three miles southwest of Jerusalem) and *Azekah* (eleven miles north of Lachish) held out. Warning Zedekiah of Jerusalem's imminent destruction and his own captivity, Jeremiah assured Zedekiah of a peaceful death and appropriate funeral rites (but compare 52.8–11).

**34.8–22: Manumission of slaves and perfidy of the Jerusalemites.** Probably to simplify the problem of the domestic food

tered into the covenant that all would set free their slaves, male or female, so that they would not be enslaved again; they obeyed and set them free. 11But afterward they turned around and took back the male and female slaves they had set free, and brought them again into subjection as slaves. 12The word of the LORD came to Jeremiah from the LORD: 13Thus says the LORD, the God of Israel: I myself made a covenant with your ancestors when I brought them out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of slavery, saying, 14"Every seventh year each of you must set free any Hebrews who have been sold to you and have served you six years; you must set them free from your service." But your ancestors did not listen to me or incline their ears to me. 15You yourselves recently repented and did what was right in my sight by proclaiming liberty to one another, and you made a covenant before me in the house that is called by my name; 16but then you turned around and profaned my name when each of you took back your male and female slaves, whom you had set free according to their desire, and you brought them again into subjection to be your slaves. 17Therefore, thus says the LORD: You have not obeyed me by granting a release to your neighbors and friends; I am going to grant a release to you, says the LORD—a release to the sword, to pestilence, and to famine. I will make you a horror to all the kingdoms of the earth. 18And those who transgressed my covenant and did not keep the terms of the covenant that they made before me, I will make like[z] the calf when they cut it in two and passed between its parts: 19the officials of Judah, the officials of Jerusalem, the eunuchs, the priests, and all the people of the land who passed between the parts of the calf 20shall be handed over to their enemies and to those who seek their lives. Their corpses shall become food for the birds of the air and the wild animals of the earth. 21And as for King Zedekiah of Judah and his officials, I will hand them over to their enemies and to those who seek their lives, to the army of the king of Babylon, which has withdrawn from you. 22I am going to command, says the LORD, and will bring them back to this city; and they will fight against it, and take it, and burn it with fire. The towns of Judah I will make a desolation without inhabitant.

35 The word that came to Jeremiah from the LORD in the days of King Jehoiakim son of Josiah of Judah: 2Go to the house of the Rechabites, and speak with them, and bring them to the house of the LORD, into one of the chambers; then offer them wine to drink. 3So I took Jaazaniah son of Jeremiah son of Habazziniah, and his brothers, and all his

*z* Cn: Heb lacks *like*

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supply, to make more people available for Jerusalem's defense, and to propitiate the LORD, Zedekiah proclaimed the manumission of all slaves. But when the Egyptian army approached (37.6–15), causing the Babylonians temporarily to lift the siege, the manumission was rescinded.

**34.13–22**: Making reference to Ex 21.2 and Deut 15.12, Jeremiah condemned this perfidy as one more example of notorious faithlessness. He assured the people of punishment like that implied in their covenant ritual (v. 18; Gen 15.9–17); the transgressor should suffer the same fate as the slaughtered animal, a practice known from non-biblical sources also. The use of the ancient formula "cut a covenant" is noteworthy here (in vv. 8, 13, 15, etc., "made" is literally "cut"; see 31.31 n.) rather than the Deuteronomic formula "command a covenant."

**35.1–19: The symbol of the Rechabites.** The Rechabites were a religious order, similar to the nazirites (Num 6.1–21), founded by Jonadab, son of Rechab, during the reign of Jehu (842–815 B.C.). Religiously devoted, they assisted Jehu in the purge accompanying the revolt against the dynasty of Omri (2 Kings 10.15–28). They held that the more sophisticated sedentary life in Canaan jeopardized the purity of the worship of the LORD. Consequently, returning to desert ways, they lived in tents, were shepherds, and abstained from wine. Jeremiah's association with them does not imply acceptance of their position,

sons, and the whole house of the Rechabites. 4I brought them to the house of the LORD into the chamber of the sons of Hanan son of Igdaliah, the man of God, which was near the chamber of the officials, above the chamber of Maaseiah son of Shallum, keeper of the threshold. 5Then I set before the Rechabites pitchers full of wine, and cups; and I said to them, "Have some wine." 6But they answered, "We will drink no wine, for our ancestor Jonadab son of Rechab commanded us, 'You shall never drink wine, neither you nor your children; 7nor shall you ever build a house, or sow seed; nor shall you plant a vineyard, or even own one; but you shall live in tents all your days, that you may live many days in the land where you reside.' 8We have obeyed the charge of our ancestor Jonadab son of Rechab in all that he commanded us, to drink no wine all our days, ourselves, our wives, our sons, or our daughters, 9and not to build houses to live in. We have no vineyard or field or seed; 10but we have lived in tents, and have obeyed and done all that our ancestor Jonadab commanded us. 11But when King Nebuchadrezzar of Babylon came up against the land, we said, 'Come, and let us go to Jerusalem for fear of the army of the Chaldeans and the army of the Arameans.' That is why we are living in Jerusalem."

12 Then the word of the LORD came to Jeremiah: 13Thus says the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel: Go and say to the people of Judah and the inhabitants of Jerusalem, Can you not learn a lesson and obey my words? says the LORD. 14The command has been carried out that Jonadab son of Rechab gave to his descendants to drink no wine; and they drink none to this day, for they have obeyed their ancestor's command. But I myself have spoken to you persistently, and you have not obeyed me. 15I have sent to you all my servants the prophets, sending them persistently, saying, "Turn now everyone of you from your evil way, and amend your doings, and do not go after other gods to serve them, and then you shall live in the land that I gave to you and your ancestors." But you did not incline your ear or obey me. 16The descendants of Jonadab son of Rechab have carried out the command that their ancestor gave them, but this people has not obeyed me. 17Therefore, thus says the LORD, the God of hosts, the God of Israel: I am going to bring on Judah and on all the inhabitants of Jerusalem every disaster that I have pronounced against them; because I have spoken to them and they have not listened, I have called to them and they have not answered.

18 But to the house of the Rechabites Jeremiah said: Thus says the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel: Because you have obeyed the command of your ancestor Jonadab, and kept all his precepts, and done all that he commanded you, 19therefore thus says the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel: Jonadab son of Rechab shall not lack a descendant to stand before me for all time.

36 In the fourth year of King Jehoiakim son of Josiah of Judah, this word came to Jeremiah from the LORD: 2Take a scroll and write on it all the words that I have spoken to you against Israel and Judah and all the nations, from the day I spoke to you, from the days of Josiah until today. 3It may be that when the house of Judah hears of all the disasters that I intend to do to them, all of them may turn from their evil ways, so that I may forgive their iniquity and their sin.

4 Then Jeremiah called Baruch son of Neriah, and Baruch wrote on a scroll at

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but only the approbation of their faithfulness to their principles, in contrast to Judah's faithlessness. The occasion is probably the crisis of 601 B.C. (see 12.7–13 n.). *Maaseiah,* perhaps the father of Zephaniah (compare 21.1).

**36.1–32: Jehoiakim burns a scroll of Jeremiah, and Jeremiah dictates another.**

**1–4:** In the light of portentous contemporary events (25.1–14), Jeremiah commissioned *Baruch son of Neriah* and brother of Seraiah (32.12; 51.59), to transcribe his oracles (*words of the* LORD) on a papyrus scroll. *Fourth year,*

Jeremiah's dictation all the words of the LORD that he had spoken to him. 5And Jeremiah ordered Baruch, saying, "I am prevented from entering the house of the LORD; 6so you go yourself, and on a fast day in the hearing of the people in the LORD's house you shall read the words of the LORD from the scroll that you have written at my dictation. You shall read them also in the hearing of all the people of Judah who come up from their towns. 7It may be that their plea will come before the LORD, and that all of them will turn from their evil ways, for great is the anger and wrath that the LORD has pronounced against this people." 8And Baruch son of Neriah did all that the prophet Jeremiah ordered him about reading from the scroll the words of the LORD in the LORD's house.

9 In the fifth year of King Jehoiakim son of Josiah of Judah, in the ninth month, all the people in Jerusalem and all the people who came from the towns of Judah to Jerusalem proclaimed a fast before the LORD. 10Then, in the hearing of all the people, Baruch read the words of Jeremiah from the scroll, in the house of the LORD, in the chamber of Gemariah son of Shaphan the secretary, which was in the upper court, at the entry of the New Gate of the LORD's house.

11 When Micaiah son of Gemariah son of Shaphan heard all the words of the LORD from the scroll, 12he went down to the king's house, into the secretary's chamber; and all the officials were sitting there: Elishama the secretary, Delaiah son of Shemaiah, Elnathan son of Achbor, Gemariah son of Shaphan, Zedekiah son of Hananiah, and all the officials. 13And Micaiah told them all the words that he had heard, when Baruch read the scroll in the hearing of the people. 14Then all the officials sent Jehudi son of Nethaniah son of Shelemiah son of Cushi to say to Baruch, "Bring the scroll that you read in the hearing of the people, and come." So Baruch son of Neriah took the scroll in his hand and came to them. 15And they said to him, "Sit down and read it to us." So Baruch read it to them. 16When they heard all the words, they turned to one another in alarm, and said to Baruch, "We certainly must report all these words to the king." 17Then they questioned Baruch, "Tell us now, how did you write all these words? Was it at his dictation?" 18Baruch answered them, "He dictated all these words to me, and I wrote them with ink on the scroll." 19Then the officials said to Baruch, "Go and hide, you and Jeremiah, and let no one know where you are."

20 Leaving the scroll in the chamber of Elishama the secretary, they went to the court of the king; and they reported all the words to the king. 21Then the king sent Jehudi to get the scroll, and he took it from the chamber of Elishama the secretary; and Jehudi read it to the king and all the officials who stood beside the king. 22Now the king was sitting in his winter apartment (it was the ninth month), and there was a fire burning in the brazier before him. 23As Jehudi read three or four columns, the king[a] would cut them off with a penknife and throw them into the fire in the brazier, until the entire scroll was consumed in the fire that was in the brazier. 24Yet neither the king, nor any of his servants who heard

*a* Heb *he*

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605 B.C. **5–10:** For an unknown reason, Jeremiah was barred from the temple; so, on the occasion of a fast proclaimed by Jehoiakim because of Nebuchadrezzar's advance against Ashkelon (in November, 604 B.C.), he instructed Baruch to read the scroll in his stead. *Shaphan,* a friend of Jeremiah (26.24).

**36.11–19:** Baruch was asked to re-read the scroll before an assembly of royal officials. Deeply impressed, they resolved to inform Jehoiakim. Sensing the possibility of repercussions, they instructed Baruch and Jeremiah to go into hiding.

**36.20–26:** Jehoiakim ordered the scroll brought from the court scribe's office. Despite protests from some officials, he burned

all these words, was alarmed, nor did they tear their garments. 25 Even when Elnathan and Delaiah and Gemariah urged the king not to burn the scroll, he would not listen to them. 26 And the king commanded Jerahmeel the king's son and Seraiah son of Azriel and Shelemiah son of Abdeel to arrest the secretary Baruch and the prophet Jeremiah. But the LORD hid them.

27 Now, after the king had burned the scroll with the words that Baruch wrote at Jeremiah's dictation, the word of the LORD came to Jeremiah: 28 Take another scroll and write on it all the former words that were in the first scroll, which King Jehoiakim of Judah has burned. 29 And concerning King Jehoiakim of Judah you shall say: Thus says the LORD, You have dared to burn this scroll, saying, Why have you written in it that the king of Babylon will certainly come and destroy this land, and will cut off from it human beings and animals? 30 Therefore thus says the LORD concerning King Jehoiakim of Judah: He shall have no one to sit upon the throne of David, and his dead body shall be cast out to the heat by day and the frost by night. 31 And I will punish him and his offspring and his servants for their iniquity; I will bring on them, and on the inhabitants of Jerusalem, and on the people of Judah, all the disasters with which I have threatened them—but they would not listen.

32 Then Jeremiah took another scroll and gave it to the secretary Baruch son of Neriah, who wrote on it at Jeremiah's dictation all the words of the scroll that King Jehoiakim of Judah had burned in the fire; and many similar words were added to them.

37 Zedekiah son of Josiah, whom King Nebuchadrezzar of Babylon made king in the land of Judah, succeeded Coniah son of Jehoiakim. 2 But neither he nor his servants nor the people of the land listened to the words of the LORD that he spoke through the prophet Jeremiah.

3 King Zedekiah sent Jehucal son of Shelemiah and the priest Zephaniah son of Maaseiah to the prophet Jeremiah saying, "Please pray for us to the LORD our God." 4 Now Jeremiah was still going in and out among the people, for he had not yet been put in prison. 5 Meanwhile, the army of Pharaoh had come out of Egypt; and when the Chaldeans who were besieging Jerusalem heard news of them, they withdrew from Jerusalem.

6 Then the word of the LORD came to the prophet Jeremiah: 7 Thus says the LORD, God of Israel: This is what the two of you shall say to the king of Judah, who sent you to me to inquire of me: Pharaoh's army, which set out to help you, is going to return to its own land, to Egypt. 8 And the Chaldeans shall return and fight against this city; they shall take it and burn it with fire. 9 Thus says the LORD: Do not deceive yourselves, saying, "The Chaldeans will surely go away from us," for they will not go away. 10 Even if you defeated the whole army of Chaldeans who are fighting against you, and there remained of them only wounded men in their tents, they would rise up and burn this city with fire.

11 Now when the Chaldean army

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it as it was read, three or four columns at a time. Irritated by its contents, Jehoiakim ordered the arrest of Jeremiah and Baruch. *Penknife*, a knife used to sharpen the point of the scribes' reed pens.

**36.27–32**: Using the destruction of the scroll as a symbol, Jeremiah announced the ignominious death of Jehoiakim (22.18–19; 2 Kings 24.6–15) and dictated an expanded copy of the scroll (probably contained largely in chs 1–25).

**37.1–44.30**: **The sufferings of Jeremiah before, during, and after the fall of Jerusalem.**

**37.1–38.28**: **Jeremiah, Zedekiah, and the siege. 37.1–2**: Editorial transition from ch 36 to 37. **3–10**: Shortly after his accession (spring, 588 B.C.), an army of Pharaoh Hophra (Apries) came up from Egypt to relieve besieged Jerusalem (34.21). The inhabitants concluded that a deliverance as in the days of Hezekiah (2 Kings 19.32–37) had occurred, but Jeremiah warned them that such optimism was wholly unwarranted.

had withdrawn from Jerusalem at the approach of Pharaoh's army, 12 Jeremiah set out from Jerusalem to go to the land of Benjamin to receive his share of property[b] among the people there. 13 When he reached the Benjamin Gate, a sentinel there named Irijah son of Shelemiah son of Hananiah arrested the prophet Jeremiah saying, "You are deserting to the Chaldeans." 14 And Jeremiah said, "That is a lie; I am not deserting to the Chaldeans." But Irijah would not listen to him, and arrested Jeremiah and brought him to the officials. 15 The officials were enraged at Jeremiah, and they beat him and imprisoned him in the house of the secretary Jonathan, for it had been made a prison. 16 Thus Jeremiah was put in the cistern house, in the cells, and remained there many days.

17 Then King Zedekiah sent for him, and received him. The king questioned him secretly in his house, and said, "Is there any word from the LORD?" Jeremiah said, "There is!" Then he said, "You shall be handed over to the king of Babylon." 18 Jeremiah also said to King Zedekiah, "What wrong have I done to you or your servants or this people, that you have put me in prison? 19 Where are your prophets who prophesied to you, saying, 'The king of Babylon will not come against you and against this land'? 20 Now please hear me, my lord king: be good enough to listen to my plea, and do not send me back to the house of the secretary Jonathan to die there." 21 So King Zedekiah gave orders, and they committed Jeremiah to the court of the guard; and a loaf of bread was given him daily from the bakers' street, until all the bread of the city was gone. So Jeremiah remained in the court of the guard.

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

7 Ebed-melech the Ethiopian,[c] a eunuch in the king's house, heard that they had put Jeremiah into the cistern. The king happened to be sitting at the Benjamin Gate, 8 So Ebed-melech left the king's house and spoke to the king,

*b* Meaning of Heb uncertain *c* Or *Nubian*; Heb *Cushite*

**37.11–15**: Leaving the city by the Benjamin Gate (20.2), Jeremiah was arrested on suspicion of desertion (38.18–19), perhaps based on oracles such as 21.1–10. **12**: *To receive his share;* see 32.6–15, which may suggest the occasion. **16–21**: In a secret interview, Zedekiah sought reassurance for his ill-advised revolt, but in vain (21.2). He modified Jeremiah's imprisonment to house arrest, and guaranteed him a minimum food ration as long as there were supplies.

**38.1–13**: Jeremiah's continued insistence on surrender to Nebuchadrezzar was dangerous for Zedekiah's pro-Egyptian counselors (*Gedaliah son of Pashhur,* 20.1; *Jucal* = Jehucal, 37.3; *Pashhur,* 21.1). They persuaded the vacillating Zedekiah that Jeremiah was subverting the war effort (there is similar phraseology in a letter written eighteen months earlier, found in the excavations at Lachish). **6**: The *cistern* was nearly dry, indicating a time shortly before Nebuchadrezzar's final assault August 587 B.C. (52.5–7). Ironically, Jeremiah was delivered from murder at the hands of his countrymen by a foreign court official (who was not necessarily a *eunuch* physically, v. 7).

9"My lord king, these men have acted wickedly in all they did to the prophet Jeremiah by throwing him into the cistern to die there of hunger, for there is no bread left in the city." 10Then the king commanded Ebed-melech the Ethiopian,[d] "Take three men with you from here, and pull the prophet Jeremiah up from the cistern before he dies." 11So Ebed-melech took the men with him and went to the house of the king, to a wardrobe of[e] the storehouse, and took from there old rags and worn-out clothes, which he let down to Jeremiah in the cistern by ropes. 12Then Ebed-melech the Ethiopian[d] said to Jeremiah, "Just put the rags and clothes between your armpits and the ropes." Jeremiah did so. 13Then they drew Jeremiah up by the ropes and pulled him out of the cistern. And Jeremiah remained in the court of the guard.

14 King Zedekiah sent for the prophet Jeremiah and received him at the third entrance of the temple of the LORD. The king said to Jeremiah, "I have something to ask you; do not hide anything from me." 15Jeremiah said to Zedekiah, "If I tell you, you will put me to death, will you not? And if I give you advice, you will not listen to me." 16So King Zedekiah swore an oath in secret to Jeremiah, "As the LORD lives, who gave us our lives, I will not put you to death or hand you over to these men who seek your life."

17 Then Jeremiah said to Zedekiah, "Thus says the LORD, the God of hosts, the God of Israel, If you will only surrender to the officials of the king of Babylon, then your life shall be spared, and this city shall not be burned with fire, and you and your house shall live. 18But if you do not surrender to the officials of the king of Babylon, then this city shall be handed over to the Chaldeans, and they shall burn it with fire, and you yourself shall not escape from their hand." 19King Zedekiah said to Jeremiah, "I am afraid of the Judeans who have deserted to the Chaldeans, for I might be handed over to them and they would abuse me." 20Jeremiah said, "That will not happen. Just obey the voice of the LORD in what I say to you, and it shall go well with you, and your life shall be spared. 21But if you are determined not to surrender, this is what the LORD has shown me— 22a vision of all the women remaining in the house of the king of Judah being led out to the officials of the king of Babylon and saying,

'Your trusted friends have
seduced you
and have overcome you;
Now that your feet are stuck in
the mud,
they desert you.'

23All your wives and your children shall be led out to the Chaldeans, and you yourself shall not escape from their hand, but shall be seized by the king of Babylon; and this city shall be burned with fire."

24 Then Zedekiah said to Jeremiah, "Do not let anyone else know of this conversation, or you will die. 25If the officials should hear that I have spoken with you, and they should come and say to you, 'Just tell us what you said to the king; do not conceal it from us, or we will put you to death. What did the king say to you?' 26then you shall say to them, 'I was presenting my plea to the king not to send me back to the house of Jonathan to die there.' " 27All the officials did come to Jeremiah and questioned him; and he answered them in the very words

*d* Or *Nubian*; Heb *Cushite* *e* Cn: Heb *to under*

**38.14–28**: Uncertain and fearful, Zedekiah again (37.17–20) summoned Jeremiah for a private interview (location of *third entrance* is unknown). Justifiably suspicious, Jeremiah exacted an oath from Zedekiah for his safety. He repeated his counsel of "surrender and live" (20.1–16; 21.4–10; 27.1–11) and emphasized it by relating a vision depicting the capture of the royal household and the burning of Jerusalem (*in the mud* recalls Jeremiah's own recent experience, 38.6). Jeremiah assured Zedekiah of safety from Judean deserters (39.9), if he surrendered. Zedekiah characteristically hesitated, exacted a promise of secrecy from Jeremiah, and returned him to house arrest (37.21).

the king had commanded. So they stopped questioning him, for the conversation had not been overheard. 28And Jeremiah remained in the court of the guard until the day that Jerusalem was taken.

39 In the ninth year of King Zedekiah of Judah, in the tenth month, King Nebuchadrezzar of Babylon and all his army came against Jerusalem and besieged it; 2in the eleventh year of Zedekiah, in the fourth month, on the ninth day of the month, a breach was made in the city. 3When Jerusalem was taken,[f] all the officials of the king of Babylon came and sat in the middle gate: Nergal-sharezer, Samgar-nebo, Sarsechim the Rabsaris, Nergal-sharezer the Rabmag, with all the rest of the officials of the king of Babylon. 4When King Zedekiah of Judah and all the soldiers saw them, they fled, going out of the city at night by way of the king's garden through the gate between the two walls; and they went toward the Arabah. 5But the army of the Chaldeans pursued them, and overtook Zedekiah in the plains of Jericho; and when they had taken him, they brought him up to King Nebuchadrezzar of Babylon, at Riblah, in the land of Hamath; and he passed sentence on him. 6The king of Babylon slaughtered the sons of Zedekiah at Riblah before his eyes; also the king of Babylon slaughtered all the nobles of Judah. 7He put out the eyes of Zedekiah, and bound him in fetters to take him to Babylon. 8The Chaldeans burned the king's house and the houses of the people, and broke down the walls of Jerusalem. 9Then Nebuzaradan the captain of the guard exiled to Babylon the rest of the people who were left in the city, those who had deserted to him, and the people who remained. 10Nebuzaradan the captain of the guard left in the land of Judah some of the poor people who owned nothing, and gave them vineyards and fields at the same time.

11 King Nebuchadrezzar of Babylon gave command concerning Jeremiah through Nebuzaradan, the captain of the guard, saying, 12"Take him, look after him well and do him no harm, but deal with him as he may ask you." 13So Nebuzaradan the captain of the guard, Nebushazban the Rabsaris, Nergal-sharezer the Rabmag, and all the chief officers of the king of Babylon sent 14and took Jeremiah from the court of the guard. They entrusted him to Gedaliah son of Ahikam son of Shaphan to be brought home. So he stayed with his own people.

15 The word of the LORD came to Jeremiah while he was confined in the court of the guard: 16Go and say to Ebed-melech the Ethiopian:[g] Thus says the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel: I am going to fulfill my words against this city for evil and not for good, and they shall be accomplished in your presence on that day. 17But I will save you on that day, says the LORD, and you shall not be handed over to those whom you dread. 18For I will surely save you, and you shall not fall by the sword; but you shall have your life as a prize of war, because you have trusted in me, says the LORD.

40 The word that came to Jeremiah from the LORD after Nebuzaradan the captain of the guard had let him go from Ramah, when he took him bound in fetters along with all the captives of Jerusalem and Judah who were

*f* This clause has been transposed from 38.28
*g* Or *Nubian*; Heb *Cushite*

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**39.1–40.6: Jeremiah and the fall of Jerusalem. 39.1–14**: Verses 1–10 summarize 52.4–16 (2 Kings 25.1–12) adding the names of Babylonian officials (v. 3). Alternative reading of v. 3: ". . . Nergal-sharezer the Simmagir, Nebushazban the chief court official, Nergal-sharezer the Rabmag . . ." Simmagir and Rabmag are titles of Babylonian officials. According to 52.6–14, the sack of Jerusalem (v. 8) occurred a month after its capture.

**39.15–18**: This oracle, assuring Ebed-melech of his personal safety because of his trust in God, is evidently a continuation of 38.27.

**40.1–6**: Ramah (31.15) was a transit point

being exiled to Babylon. 2The captain of the guard took Jeremiah and said to him, "The LORD your God threatened this place with this disaster; 3and now the LORD has brought it about, and has done as he said, because all of you sinned against the LORD and did not obey his voice. Therefore this thing has come upon you. 4Now look, I have just released you today from the fetters on your hands. If you wish to come with me to Babylon, come, and I will take good care of you; but if you do not wish to come with me to Babylon, you need not come. See, the whole land is before you; go wherever you think it good and right to go. 5If you remain,[h] then return to Gedaliah son of Ahikam son of Shaphan, whom the king of Babylon appointed governor of the towns of Judah, and stay with him among the people; or go wherever you think it right to go." So the captain of the guard gave him an allowance of food and a present, and let him go. 6Then Jeremiah went to Gedaliah son of Ahikam at Mizpah, and stayed with him among the people who were left in the land.

7 When all the leaders of the forces in the open country and their troops heard that the king of Babylon had appointed Gedaliah son of Ahikam governor in the land, and had committed to him men, women, and children, those of the poorest of the land who had not been taken into exile to Babylon, 8they went to Gedaliah at Mizpah—Ishmael son of Nethaniah, Johanan son of Kareah, Seraiah son of Tanhumeth, the sons of Ephai the Netophathite, Jezaniah son of the Maacathite, they and their troops. 9Gedaliah son of Ahikam son of Shaphan swore to them and their troops, saying, "Do not be afraid to serve the Chaldeans. Stay in the land and serve the king of Babylon, and it shall go well with you. 10As for me, I am staying at Mizpah to represent you before the Chaldeans who come to us; but as for you, gather wine and summer fruits and oil, and store them in your vessels, and live in the towns that you have taken over." 11Likewise, when all the Judeans who were in Moab and among the Ammonites and in Edom and in other lands heard that the king of Babylon had left a remnant in Judah and had appointed Gedaliah son of Ahikam son of Shaphan as governor over them, 12then all the Judeans returned from all the places to which they had been scattered and came to the land of Judah, to Gedaliah at Mizpah; and they gathered wine and summer fruits in great abundance.

13 Now Johanan son of Kareah and all the leaders of the forces in the open country came to Gedaliah at Mizpah 14and said to him, "Are you at all aware that Baalis king of the Ammonites has sent Ishmael son of Nethaniah to take your life?" But Gedaliah son of Ahikam would not believe them. 15Then Johanan son of Kareah spoke secretly to Gedaliah at Mizpah, "Please let me go and kill Ishmael son of Nethaniah, and no one else will know. Why should he take your life, so that all the Judeans who are gathered around you would be scattered, and

*h* Syr: Meaning of Heb uncertain

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for deportees. For reasons unknown, Jeremiah was allowed to choose exile or residence in Judah. Choosing the latter, he was placed in the custody of Gedaliah, the newly-appointed governor of Judah with whose family Jeremiah had long been friendly (26.24; 36.10).

**40.7–41.18: The third revolt. 40.7–12:** Gedaliah, a member of a prominent Judean family (2 Kings 22.12–14), assured his countrymen that he would represent them before the Babylonians (*Chaldeans*) and urged them to return to their fields and cities. Benjamin seems to have been largely spared (32.1–8; Neh ch 7) and *Mizpah* (probably present-day Nebi Samwil, five miles northwest of Jerusalem) became the provincial capital.

**40.13–41.3:** After a time (perhaps only two months) and with encouragement from Baalis of Ammon (for political reasons), Ishmael, a member of the royal family (as Gedaliah was not) and a super-patriot, plotted Gedaliah's assassination. When told of it, Gedaliah discredited the report; nevertheless he, his entourage, and the Babylonian garrison in Mizpah, were slain.

*Gedaliah is assassinated*

the remnant of Judah would perish?" 16But Gedaliah son of Ahikam said to Johanan son of Kareah, "Do not do such a thing, for you are telling a lie about Ishmael."

41 In the seventh month, Ishmael son of Nethaniah son of Elishama, of the royal family, one of the chief officers of the king, came with ten men to Gedaliah son of Ahikam, at Mizpah. As they ate bread together there at Mizpah, 2Ishmael son of Nethaniah and the ten men with him got up and struck down Gedaliah son of Ahikam son of Shaphan with the sword and killed him, because the king of Babylon had appointed him governor in the land. 3Ishmael also killed all the Judeans who were with Gedaliah at Mizpah, and the Chaldean soldiers who happened to be there.

4 On the day after the murder of Gedaliah, before anyone knew of it, 5eighty men arrived from Shechem and Shiloh and Samaria, with their beards shaved and their clothes torn, and their bodies gashed, bringing grain offerings and incense to present at the temple of the LORD. 6And Ishmael son of Nethaniah came out from Mizpah to meet them, weeping as he came. As he met them, he said to them, "Come to Gedaliah son of Ahikam." 7When they reached the middle of the city, Ishmael son of Nethaniah and the men with him slaughtered them, and threw them[i] into a cistern. 8But there were ten men among them who said to Ishmael, "Do not kill us, for we have stores of wheat, barley, oil, and honey hidden in the fields." So he refrained, and did not kill them along with their companions.

9 Now the cistern into which Ishmael had thrown all the bodies of the men whom he had struck down was the large cistern[j] that King Asa had made for defense against King Baasha of Israel; Ishmael son of Nethaniah filled that cistern with those whom he had killed. 10Then Ishmael took captive all the rest of the people who were in Mizpah, the king's daughters and all the people who were left at Mizpah, whom Nebuzaradan, the captain of the guard, had committed to Gedaliah son of Ahikam. Ishmael son of Nethaniah took them captive and set out to cross over to the Ammonites.

11 But when Johanan son of Kareah and all the leaders of the forces with him heard of all the crimes that Ishmael son of Nethaniah had done, 12they took all their men and went to fight against Ishmael son of Nethaniah. They came upon him at the great pool that is in Gibeon. 13And when all the people who were with Ishmael saw Johanan son of Kareah and all the leaders of the forces with him, they were glad. 14So all the people whom Ishmael had carried away captive from Mizpah turned around and came back, and went to Johanan son of Kareah. 15But Ishmael son of Nethaniah escaped from Johanan with eight men, and went to the Ammonites. 16Then Johanan son of Kareah and all the leaders of the forces with him took all the rest of the people whom Ishmael son of Nethaniah had carried away captive[k] from Mizpah after he had slain Gedaliah son of Ahikam—soldiers, women, children, and eunuchs, whom Johanan brought back from Gibeon.[l] 17And they set out, and stopped at Geruth Chimham near Bethlehem, intending to go to Egypt 18because of the

*i* Syr: Heb lacks *and threw them*; compare verse 9 *j* Gk: Heb *whom he had killed by the hand of Gedaliah* *k* Cn: Heb *whom he recovered from Ishmael son of Nethaniah* *l* Meaning of Heb uncertain

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**41.4–10:** The next day Ishmael intercepted a group from the north on a pilgrimage to Jerusalem. Luring them into Mizpah, he slaughtered all but ten who bought their lives with *stores* of food. After casting the bodies into an old cistern (1 Kings 15.22), the assassins took the remaining people in Mizpah and headed for Ammon. **11–18:** An avenging group under Johanan overtook Ishmael at Gibeon (28.1; 2 Sam 2.13). In the melee, Ishmael and eight conspirators escaped to Ammon (40.14), but their captives were freed. Fearing Babylonian reprisals Johanan's group turned toward Egypt, encamping en route at *Geruth Chimham* (perhaps "Chimham's Inn") near Bethlehem.

Chaldeans; for they were afraid of them, because Ishmael son of Nethaniah had killed Gedaliah son of Ahikam, whom the king of Babylon had made governor over the land.

42 Then all the commanders of the forces, and Johanan son of Kareah and Azariah[m] son of Hoshaiah, and all the people from the least to the greatest, approached [2]the prophet Jeremiah and said, "Be good enough to listen to our plea, and pray to the LORD your God for us—for all this remnant. For there are only a few of us left out of many, as your eyes can see. [3]Let the LORD your God show us where we should go and what we should do." [4]The prophet Jeremiah said to them, "Very well: I am going to pray to the LORD your God as you request, and whatever the LORD answers you I will tell you; I will keep nothing back from you." [5]They in their turn said to Jeremiah, "May the LORD be a true and faithful witness against us if we do not act according to everything that the LORD your God sends us through you. [6]Whether it is good or bad, we will obey the voice of the LORD our God to whom we are sending you, in order that it may go well with us when we obey the voice of the LORD our God."

7 At the end of ten days the word of the LORD came to Jeremiah. [8]Then he summoned Johanan son of Kareah and all the commanders of the forces who were with him, and all the people from the least to the greatest, [9]and said to them, "Thus says the LORD, the God of Israel, to whom you sent me to present your plea before him: [10]If you will only remain in this land, then I will build you up and not pull you down; I will plant you, and not pluck you up; for I am sorry for the disaster that I have brought upon you. [11]Do not be afraid of the king of Babylon, as you have been; do not be afraid of him, says the LORD, for I am with you, to save you and to rescue you from his hand. [12]I will grant you mercy, and he will have mercy on you and restore you to your native soil. [13]But if you continue to say, 'We will not stay in this land,' thus disobeying the voice of the LORD your God [14]and saying, 'No, we will go to the land of Egypt, where we shall not see war, or hear the sound of the trumpet, or be hungry for bread, and there we will stay,' [15]then hear the word of the LORD, O remnant of Judah. Thus says the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel: If you are determined to enter Egypt and go to settle there, [16]then the sword that you fear shall overtake you there, in the land of Egypt; and the famine that you dread shall follow close after you into Egypt; and there you shall die. [17]All the people who have determined to go to Egypt to settle there shall die by the sword, by famine, and by pestilence; they shall have no remnant or survivor from the disaster that I am bringing upon them.

18 "For thus says the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel: Just as my anger and my wrath were poured out on the inhabitants of Jerusalem, so my wrath will be poured out on you when you go to Egypt. You shall become an object of execration and horror, of cursing and ridicule. You shall see this place no more. [19]The LORD has said to you, O remnant of Judah, Do not go to Egypt. Be well aware that I have warned you today [20]that you have made a fatal mistake. For you yourselves sent me to the LORD your God, saying, 'Pray for us to the LORD our God, and whatever the LORD our God says, tell us and we will

*m* Gk: Heb *Jezaniah*

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**42.1–43.7: Flight to Egypt. 42.1–6:** Jeremiah was evidently one of the captives freed by Johanan (41.16). He was asked to intercede (15.11) for the group, who were uncertain what they should do and where they should go. To remain could mean reprisals from Babylon (52.30); to flee would mean safety, though with a *de facto* admission of guilt. **7–22:** After ten days, Jeremiah brought the reply: to remain was God's will (29.1–14; 32.6–15) and they would receive God's blessing; to flee would only bring suffering upon the fugitives.

do it.' 21So I have told you today, but you have not obeyed the voice of the LORD your God in anything that he sent me to tell you. 22Be well aware, then, that you shall die by the sword, by famine, and by pestilence in the place where you desire to go and settle."

43 When Jeremiah finished speaking to all the people all these words of the LORD their God, with which the LORD their God had sent him to them, 2Azariah son of Hoshaiah and Johanan son of Kareah and all the other insolent men said to Jeremiah, "You are telling a lie. The LORD our God did not send you to say, 'Do not go to Egypt to settle there'; 3but Baruch son of Neriah is inciting you against us, to hand us over to the Chaldeans, in order that they may kill us or take us into exile in Babylon." 4So Johanan son of Kareah and all the commanders of the forces and all the people did not obey the voice of the LORD, to stay in the land of Judah. 5But Johanan son of Kareah and all the commanders of the forces took all the remnant of Judah who had returned to settle in the land of Judah from all the nations to which they had been driven— 6the men, the women, the children, the princesses, and everyone whom Nebuzaradan the captain of the guard had left with Gedaliah son of Ahikam son of Shaphan; also the prophet Jeremiah and Baruch son of Neriah. 7And they came into the land of Egypt, for they did not obey the voice of the LORD. And they arrived at Tahpanhes.

8 Then the word of the LORD came to Jeremiah in Tahpanhes: 9Take some large stones in your hands, and bury them in the clay pavement[n] that is at the entrance to Pharaoh's palace in Tahpanhes. Let the Judeans see you do it, 10and say to them, Thus says the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel: I am going to send and take my servant King Nebuchadrezzar of Babylon, and he[o] will set his throne above these stones that I have buried, and he will spread his royal canopy over them. 11He shall come and ravage the land of Egypt, giving

those who are destined for pestilence, to pestilence,
and those who are destined for captivity, to captivity,
and those who are destined for the sword, to the sword.

12He[p] shall kindle a fire in the temples of the gods of Egypt; and he shall burn them and carry them away captive; and he shall pick clean the land of Egypt, as a shepherd picks his cloak clean of vermin; and he shall depart from there safely. 13He shall break the obelisks of Heliopolis, which is in the land of Egypt; and the temples of the gods of Egypt he shall burn with fire.

44 The word that came to Jeremiah for all the Judeans living in the land of Egypt, at Migdol, at Tahpanhes, at Memphis, and in the land of Pathros,

*n* Meaning of Heb uncertain *o* Gk Syr: Heb *I*
*p* Gk Syr Vg: Heb *I*

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**43.1–7:** Apparently the tension in the camp during the ten days that followed allowed those who favored the flight to prevail over the good intentions of those who wished to abide by Jeremiah's oracle. Jeremiah was accused of being unduly influenced by Baruch, and his oracle was not regarded as God's word. It has been suggested that 42.19–22 should come between verses 3 and 4 as Jeremiah's response to Azariah and his colleagues, since 42.19–22 may indicate that the decision had already been made to go to Egypt; Jeremiah reminded them of their earlier resolve and the danger of disobeying the LORD's will. They decided to go to Egypt, taking Jeremiah and Baruch with them, perhaps to assure themselves of the continuing availability of oracles from God. **7:** *Tahpanhes,* see 2.14–19 n.

**43.8–44.30: Jeremiah in Egypt. 43.8–13:** This oracle is intended to show that Egypt is no safe refuge from Nebuchadrezzar (*my servant,* 25.9; 27.6), who led a successful raid against Amasis (Ahmosis II) in 568/567 B.C., some years later than this oracle (46.13–26). *Picks his cloak clean,* literally "delouse," illustrates Jeremiah's low opinion of Egypt. *Heliopolis* (also called On; Gen 41.45), six miles northeast of Cairo; ancient center of the worship of sun-god Re (see Isa 19.18 n.). *Obelisks,*

2Thus says the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel: You yourselves have seen all the disaster that I have brought on Jerusalem and on all the towns of Judah. Look at them; today they are a desolation, without an inhabitant in them, 3because of the wickedness that they committed, provoking me to anger, in that they went to make offerings and serve other gods that they had not known, neither they, nor you, nor your ancestors. 4Yet I persistently sent to you all my servants the prophets, saying, "I beg you not to do this abominable thing that I hate!" 5But they did not listen or incline their ear, to turn from their wickedness and make no offerings to other gods. 6So my wrath and my anger were poured out and kindled in the towns of Judah and in the streets of Jerusalem; and they became a waste and a desolation, as they still are today. 7And now thus says the LORD God of hosts, the God of Israel: Why are you doing such great harm to yourselves, to cut off man and woman, child and infant, from the midst of Judah, leaving yourselves without a remnant? 8Why do you provoke me to anger with the works of your hands, making offerings to other gods in the land of Egypt where you have come to settle? Will you be cut off and become an object of cursing and ridicule among all the nations of the earth? 9Have you forgotten the crimes of your ancestors, of the kings of Judah, of their[q] wives, your own crimes and those of your wives, which they committed in the land of Judah and in the streets of Jerusalem? 10They have shown no contrition or fear to this day, nor have they walked in my law and my statutes that I set before you and before your ancestors.

11 Therefore thus says the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel: I am determined to bring disaster on you, to bring all Judah to an end. 12I will take the remnant of Judah who are determined to come to the land of Egypt to settle, and they shall perish, everyone; in the land of Egypt they shall fall; by the sword and by famine they shall perish; from the least to the greatest, they shall die by the sword and by famine; and they shall become an object of execration and horror, of cursing and ridicule. 13I will punish those who live in the land of Egypt, as I have punished Jerusalem, with the sword, with famine, and with pestilence, 14so that none of the remnant of Judah who have come to settle in the land of Egypt shall escape or survive or return to the land of Judah. Although they long to go back to live there, they shall not go back, except some fugitives.

15 Then all the men who were aware that their wives had been making offerings to other gods, and all the women who stood by, a great assembly, all the people who lived in Pathros in the land of Egypt, answered Jeremiah: 16"As for the word that you have spoken to us in the name of the LORD, we are not going to listen to you. 17Instead, we will do everything that we have vowed, make offerings to the queen of heaven and pour out libations to her, just as we and our ancestors, our kings and our officials, used to do in the towns of Judah and in the streets of Jerusalem. We used to have plenty of food, and prospered, and saw no misfortune. 18But from the time we stopped making offerings to the queen of heaven and pouring out liba-

*q* Heb *his*

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monuments, slightly tapered square granite shafts, capped by a pyramidion.

**44.1–14**: This oracle, addressed to the Jewish diaspora in Egypt, is Jeremiah's warning against repeating the mistakes of their fathers in Judah and suffering the consequences (compare 42.14–18). **1**: *Migdol,* just north of present day Tell el-Heir, east of Tahpanhes (43.7). *Memphis,* 2.16. *Pathros,* "Land of the South," upper (i.e. southern) Egypt, where perhaps there was already by this time a Jewish colony at Elephantine, known from discoveries of Aramaic papyri dating from the fifth century B.C.

**44.15–28**: The refugees return to the worship of the *queen of heaven* (7.16–20), which was the Babylonian-Assyrian goddess Ishtar, goddess of the star Venus (compare the Ca-

tions to her, we have lacked everything and have perished by the sword and by famine." 19And the women said,[r] "Indeed we will go on making offerings to the queen of heaven and pouring out libations to her; do you think that we made cakes for her, marked with her image, and poured out libations to her without our husbands' being involved?"

20 Then Jeremiah said to all the people, men and women, all the people who were giving him this answer: 21"As for the offerings that you made in the towns of Judah and in the streets of Jerusalem, you and your ancestors, your kings and your officials, and the people of the land, did not the LORD remember them? Did it not come into his mind? 22The LORD could no longer bear the sight of your evil doings, the abominations that you committed; therefore your land became a desolation and a waste and a curse, without inhabitant, as it is to this day. 23It is because you burned offerings, and because you sinned against the LORD and did not obey the voice of the LORD or walk in his law and in his statutes and in his decrees, that this disaster has befallen you, as is still evident today."

24 Jeremiah said to all the people and all the women, "Hear the word of the LORD, all you Judeans who are in the land of Egypt, 25Thus says the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel: You and your wives have accomplished in deeds what you declared in words, saying, 'We are determined to perform the vows that we have made, to make offerings to the queen of heaven and to pour out libations to her.' By all means, keep your vows and make your libations! 26Therefore hear the word of the LORD, all you Judeans who live in the land of Egypt: Lo, I swear by my great name, says the LORD, that my name shall no longer be pronounced on the lips of any of the people of Judah in all the land of Egypt, saying, 'As the Lord GOD lives.' 27I am going to watch over them for harm and not for good; all the people of Judah who are in the land of Egypt shall perish by the sword and by famine, until not one is left. 28And those who escape the sword shall return from the land of Egypt to the land of Judah, few in number; and all the remnant of Judah, who have come to the land of Egypt to settle, shall know whose words will stand, mine or theirs! 29This shall be the sign to you, says the LORD, that I am going to punish you in this place, in order that you may know that my words against you will surely be carried out: 30Thus says the LORD, I am going to give Pharaoh Hophra, king of Egypt, into the hands of his enemies, those who seek his life, just as I gave King Zedekiah of Judah into the hand of King Nebuchadrezzar of Babylon, his enemy who sought his life."

45 The word that the prophet Jeremiah spoke to Baruch son of Neriah, when he wrote these words in a scroll at the dictation of Jeremiah, in the fourth year of King Jehoiakim son of Josiah of Judah: 2Thus says the LORD, the God of Israel, to you, O Baruch: 3You said, "Woe is me! The LORD has added sorrow to my pain; I am weary with my groaning, and I find no rest." 4Thus you

r Compare Syr: Heb lacks *And the women said*

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naanite Astarte, Greek Aphrodite, Roman Venus). First introduced, presumably, by Manasseh (2 Kings 21.1–18), suppressed by Josiah (2 Kings 23.4–14), and restored by Jehoiakim (2 Kings 23.36–24.7), the cult was especially popular among women, who had an inferior role in the cult of the LORD. Offerings included wine and star-shaped or crescent-shaped cakes or figurines bearing the *image* of the goddess. The cult persisted into the Christian centuries, and features of it were incorporated by the early Syrian church in the veneration of the Virgin.

**44.29–30**: *Pharaoh Hophra* (Apries, 588–569 B.C.; 37.5) was assassinated by Ahmosis II (Amasis, 569–526 B.C.), a former court official, co-regent for three years, and founder of the Twenty-seventh (Libyan) Dynasty. For similar *signs,* see Isa 7.11–17; Ex 3.12.

**45.1–5**: **God's word to Baruch.** *Baruch* ends his memoirs by recalling God's assurance to him of physical deliverance, given in

shall say to him, "Thus says the LORD: I am going to break down what I have built, and pluck up what I have planted—that is, the whole land. 5And you, do you seek great things for yourself? Do not seek them; for I am going to bring disaster upon all flesh, says the LORD; but I will give you your life as a prize of war in every place to which you may go."

46 The word of the LORD that came to the prophet Jeremiah concerning the nations.

2 Concerning Egypt, about the army of Pharaoh Neco, king of Egypt, which was by the river Euphrates at Carchemish and which King Nebuchadrezzar of Babylon defeated in the fourth year of King Jehoiakim son of Josiah of Judah:

3 Prepare buckler and shield,
and advance for battle!
4 Harness the horses;
mount the steeds!
Take your stations with your helmets,
whet your lances,
put on your coats of mail!
5 Why do I see them terrified?
They have fallen back;
their warriors are beaten down,
and have fled in haste.
They do not look back—
terror is all around!
says the LORD.
6 The swift cannot flee away,
nor can the warrior escape;
in the north by the river Euphrates
they have stumbled and fallen.

7 Who is this, rising like the Nile,
like rivers whose waters surge?
8 Egypt rises like the Nile,
like rivers whose waters surge.
It said, Let me rise, let me cover the earth,
let me destroy cities and their inhabitants.
9 Advance, O horses,
and dash madly, O chariots!
Let the warriors go forth:
Ethiopia[s] and Put who carry the shield,
the Ludim, who draw[t] the bow.
10 That day is the day of the Lord GOD of hosts,
a day of retribution,
to gain vindication from his foes.
The sword shall devour and be sated,
and drink its fill of their blood.
For the Lord GOD of hosts holds a sacrifice
in the land of the north by the river Euphrates.
11 Go up to Gilead, and take balm,
O virgin daughter Egypt!
In vain you have used many medicines;
there is no healing for you.
12 The nations have heard of your shame,
and the earth is full of your cry;
for warrior has stumbled against warrior;
both have fallen together.

13 The word that the LORD spoke to the prophet Jeremiah about the coming

*s* Or *Nubia*; Heb *Cush* *t* Cn: Heb *who grasp, who draw*

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the fourth year of Jehoiakim (605 B.C., compare 36.1). For *your life as a prize of war* see 39.18.

**46.1–51.64: Oracles against foreign nations** (compare Isa chs 13–23; Ezek chs 25–32). **46.1**: Introduction (1.2; 14.1); continues 25.15–38.

**46.2–28: Against Egypt. 2–12:** In May or June 605 B.C. Crown Prince Nebuchadrezzar of Babylon defeated Neco II of Egypt at Carchemish, on the northern Euphrates sixty miles west of Haran (Gen11.31), the last capital of Assyria, and pursued him to the borders of Egypt. Like the Nile, Egypt was preparing to inundate the lands to the north. Instead she was grievously wounded, driven back, and humiliated before the nations. **9**: *Put,* Cyrene. *The Ludim,* the Lydians (in Asia Minor, Ezek 30.5).

**46.13–26**: This oracle may date from

of King Nebuchadrezzar of Babylon to attack the land of Egypt:

14 Declare in Egypt, and proclaim
in Migdol;
proclaim in Memphis and
Tahpanhes;
Say, "Take your stations and
be ready,
for the sword shall devour those
around you."
15 Why has Apis fled?[u]
Why did your bull not stand?
—because the LORD thrust
him down.
16 Your multitude stumbled[v] and
fell,
and one said to another,[w]
"Come, let us go back to our
own people
and to the land of our birth,
because of the destroying
sword."
17 Give Pharaoh, king of Egypt,
the name
"Braggart who missed his
chance."

18 As I live, says the King,
whose name is the LORD of
hosts,
one is coming
like Tabor among the
mountains,
and like Carmel by the sea.
19 Pack your bags for exile,
sheltered daughter Egypt!
For Memphis shall become a
waste,
a ruin, without inhabitant.

20 A beautiful heifer is Egypt—
a gadfly from the north lights
upon her.
21 Even her mercenaries in her midst
are like fatted calves;
they too have turned and fled
together,
they did not stand;
for the day of their calamity has
come upon them,
the time of their punishment.

22 She makes a sound like a snake
gliding away;
for her enemies march in force,
and come against her with axes,
like those who fell trees.
23 They shall cut down her forest,
says the LORD,
though it is impenetrable,
because they are more numerous
than locusts;
they are without number.
24 Daughter Egypt shall be put
to shame;
she shall be handed over to a
people from the north.

25 The LORD of hosts, the God of Israel, said: See, I am bringing punishment upon Amon of Thebes, and Pharaoh, and Egypt and her gods and her kings, upon Pharaoh and those who trust in him. 26I will hand them over to those who seek their life, to King Nebuchadrezzar of Babylon and his officers. Afterward Egypt shall be inhabited as in the days of old, says the LORD.

27 But as for you, have no fear, my
servant Jacob,
and do not be dismayed,
O Israel;
for I am going to save you from
far away,
and your offspring from the
land of their captivity.

*u* Gk: Heb *Why was it swept away*
*v* Gk: Meaning of Heb uncertain *w* Gk: Heb *and fell one to another and they said*

588 B.C., when Egypt attempted to relieve the siege of Jerusalem (37.7). The poetic section refers to lower Egypt (*Memphis*); the prose to upper Egypt (*Thebes*). **15:** *Apis*, bull-god of (southern) Egypt. *Tabor*, great mountain rising above the plain of Jezreel (Esdraelon; Josh 19.22).

**46.18:** *Carmel*, mountain at the end of the plain of Jezreel, projecting into the Mediterranean (Josh 19.26).

**46.27–28:** A doublet of 30.10–11, which here contrasts the destruction of Egypt (except 26b) and the reconstruction of all Israel.

Jacob shall return and have quiet
and ease,
and no one shall make him
afraid.
28 As for you, have no fear, my
servant Jacob,
says the LORD,
for I am with you.
I will make an end of all the
nations
among which I have banished
you,
but I will not make an end
of you!
I will chastise you in just measure,
and I will by no means leave
you unpunished.

47 The word of the LORD that came to the prophet Jeremiah concerning the Philistines, before Pharaoh attacked Gaza:

2 Thus says the LORD:
See, waters are rising out of
the north
and shall become an
overflowing torrent;
they shall overflow the land and
all that fills it,
the city and those who live in
it.
People shall cry out,
and all the inhabitants of the
land shall wail.
3 At the noise of the stamping of
the hoofs of his stallions,
at the clatter of his chariots, at
the rumbling of their
wheels,
parents do not turn back for
children,
so feeble are their hands,
4 because of the day that is coming
to destroy all the Philistines,
to cut off from Tyre and Sidon
every helper that remains.
For the LORD is destroying the
Philistines,
the remnant of the coastland
of Caphtor.
5 Baldness has come upon Gaza,
Ashkelon is silenced.
O remnant of their power![x]
How long will you gash
yourselves?
6 Ah, sword of the LORD!
How long until you are quiet?
Put yourself into your scabbard,
rest and be still!
7 How can it[y] be quiet,
when the LORD has given it
an order?
Against Ashkelon and against the
seashore—
there he has appointed it.

48 Concerning Moab.

Thus says the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel:
Alas for Nebo, it is laid waste!
Kiriathaim is put to shame, it
is taken;
the fortress is put to shame and
broken down;
2 the renown of Moab is no
more.
In Heshbon they planned evil
against her:

x Gk: Heb *their valley* y Gk Vg: Heb *you*

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**47.1–7**: **Against the Philistines.** Dissimilar from other oracles against the Philistines (Isa 14.29–31; Ezek 25.15–17), this oracle may be associated with Nebuchadrezzar's sack of Ashkelon in 604 B.C. (vv. 5, 7; 36.9). The Phoenician cities, Tyre and Sidon, were perhaps allied also with the Philistines (27.3). The Philistines were related to the Indo-European inhabitants of Crete (*Caphtor,* see Judg 13.1 n.; 2 Sam 8.18 n.). **5**: For similar signs of lamentation, compare 16.6; 41.5.

**48.1–47**: **Against Moab.** This long chapter appears to be a sequence of three oracles, vv. 1–13, vv. 14–38, and vv. 39–45. Each of them has been expanded by later editors, especially vv. 14–38, that has been expanded by material from Isa 15–16. A possible date for vv. 1–13 would be the threat from Nebuchadrezzar in 605 B.C.; for vv. 14–38, 601 B.C. (see 12.7–13 n.); for vv. 39–45, 594 B.C. (compare 27.1–3).

**48.1–10**: The advance of the enemy (per-

"Come, let us cut her off from being a nation!"
You also, O Madmen, shall be brought to silence;[z]
the sword shall pursue you.

3 Hark! a cry from Horonaim,
"Desolation and great destruction!"
4 "Moab is destroyed!"
her little ones cry out.
5 For at the ascent of Luhith
they go[a] up weeping bitterly;
for at the descent of Horonaim
they have heard the distressing cry of anguish.
6 Flee! Save yourselves!
Be like a wild ass[b] in the desert!

7 Surely, because you trusted in your strongholds[c] and your treasures,
you also shall be taken;
Chemosh shall go out into exile,
with his priests and his attendants.
8 The destroyer shall come upon every town,
and no town shall escape;
the valley shall perish,
and the plain shall be destroyed,
as the LORD has spoken.

9 Set aside salt for Moab,
for she will surely fall;
her towns shall become a desolation,
with no inhabitant in them.
10 Accursed is the one who is slack in doing the work of the LORD; and accursed is the one who keeps back the sword from bloodshed.

11 Moab has been at ease from his youth,
settled like wine[d] on its dregs;
he has not been emptied from vessel to vessel,
nor has he gone into exile;
therefore his flavor has remained
and his aroma is unspoiled.
12 Therefore, the time is surely coming, says the LORD, when I shall send to him decanters to decant him, and empty his vessels, and break his[e] jars in pieces.
13 Then Moab shall be ashamed of Chemosh, as the house of Israel was ashamed of Bethel, their confidence.

14 How can you say, "We are heroes and mighty warriors"?
15 The destroyer of Moab and his towns has come up,
and the choicest of his young men have gone down to slaughter,
says the King, whose name is the LORD of hosts.
16 The calamity of Moab is near at hand
and his doom approaches swiftly.
17 Mourn over him, all you his neighbors,
and all who know his name;
say, "How the mighty scepter is broken,
the glorious staff!"

18 Come down from glory,
and sit on the parched ground,
enthroned daughter Dibon!
For the destroyer of Moab has come up against you;
he has destroyed your strongholds.
19 Stand by the road and watch,
you inhabitant of Aroer!

*z* The place-name *Madmen* sounds like the Hebrew verb *to be silent* *a* Cn: Heb *he goes*
*b* Gk Aquila: Heb *like Aroer* *c* Gk: Heb *works*
*d* Heb lacks *like wine* *e* Gk Aquila: Heb *their*

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haps Nebuchadrezzar), against which Moab is defenseless. **7**: For *Chemosh,* chief god of Moab, see Judg 11.24 n. **13**: Though Moab was not on the main trade-route or invasion-route, she will not escape; her heroes will quail before the enemy. Perhaps here *Bethel* is the name of a contemporary god of Aramaic origin, not the city.

Ask the man fleeing and the
woman escaping;
say, "What has happened?"
20 Moab is put to shame, for it is
broken down;
wail and cry!
Tell it by the Arnon,
that Moab is laid waste.

21 Judgment has come upon the tableland, upon Holon, and Jahzah, and Mephaath, 22and Dibon, and Nebo, and Beth-diblathaim, 23and Kiriathaim, and Beth-gamul, and Beth-meon, 24and Kerioth, and Bozrah, and all the towns of the land of Moab, far and near. 25The horn of Moab is cut off, and his arm is broken, says the LORD.

26 Make him drunk, because he magnified himself against the LORD; let Moab wallow in his vomit; he too shall become a laughingstock. 27Israel was a laughingstock for you, though he was not caught among thieves; but whenever you spoke of him you shook your head!

28 Leave the towns, and live on
the rock,
O inhabitants of Moab!
Be like the dove that nests
on the sides of the mouth of
a gorge.
29 We have heard of the pride of
Moab—
he is very proud—
of his loftiness, his pride, and his
arrogance,
and the haughtiness of his heart.
30 I myself know his insolence, says
the LORD;
his boasts are false,
his deeds are false.
31 Therefore I wail for Moab;
I cry out for all Moab;
for the people of Kir-heres I
mourn.
32 More than for Jazer I weep for
you,
O vine of Sibmah!
Your branches crossed over the
sea,
reached as far as Jazer;[f]
upon your summer fruits and
your vintage
the destroyer has fallen.
33 Gladness and joy have been
taken away
from the fruitful land of Moab;
I have stopped the wine from the
wine presses;
no one treads them with shouts
of joy;
the shouting is not the shout
of joy.

34 Heshbon and Elealeh cry out;[g] as far as Jahaz they utter their voice, from Zoar to Horonaim and Eglath-shelishiyah. For even the waters of Nimrim have become desolate. 35And I will bring to an end in Moab, says the LORD, those who offer sacrifice at a high place and make offerings to their gods. 36Therefore my heart moans for Moab like a flute, and my heart moans like a flute for the people of Kir-heres; for the riches they gained have perished.

37 For every head is shaved and every beard cut off; on all the hands there are gashes, and on the loins sackcloth. 38On all the housetops of Moab and in the squares there is nothing but lamentation; for I have broken Moab like a vessel that no one wants, says the LORD. 39How it is broken! How they wail! How Moab has turned his back in shame! So Moab has become a derision and a horror to all his neighbors.

40 For thus says the LORD:
Look, he shall swoop down like
an eagle,
and spread his wings against
Moab;

*f* Two Mss and Isa 16.8: MT *the sea of Jazer*
*g* Cn: Heb *From the cry of Heshbon to Elealeh*

**48.18–28**: As Moab had spitefully derided Judah, may she now choke on her own spite! The desert is no safe refuge; as the wild dove (Ezek 7.16), she must take to the rocks.

**48.29–38**: Moab, once so proud, is humiliated before her conqueror. As a broken pot is discarded, so smitten Moab is accounted worthless.

41 the towns[h] shall be taken
and the strongholds seized.
The hearts of the warriors of Moab, on that day,
shall be like the heart of a woman in labor.
42 Moab shall be destroyed as a people,
because he magnified himself against the LORD.
43 Terror, pit, and trap
are before you, O inhabitants of Moab!
says the LORD.
44 Everyone who flees from the terror
shall fall into the pit,
and everyone who climbs out of the pit
shall be caught in the trap.
For I will bring these things[i] upon Moab
in the year of their punishment,
says the LORD.

45 In the shadow of Heshbon fugitives stop exhausted;
for a fire has gone out from Heshbon,
a flame from the house of Sihon;
it has destroyed the forehead of Moab,
the scalp of the people of tumult.[j]
46 Woe to you, O Moab!
The people of Chemosh have perished,
for your sons have been taken captive,
and your daughters into captivity.
47 Yet I will restore the fortunes of Moab
in the latter days, says the LORD.
Thus far is the judgment on Moab.

49 Concerning the Ammonites.
Thus says the LORD:
Has Israel no sons?
Has he no heir?
Why then has Milcom dispossessed Gad,
and his people settled in its towns?
2 Therefore, the time is surely coming,
says the LORD,
when I will sound the battle alarm against Rabbah of the Ammonites;
it shall become a desolate mound,
and its villages shall be burned with fire;
then Israel shall dispossess those who dispossessed him,
says the LORD.

3 Wail, O Heshbon, for Ai is laid waste!
Cry out, O daughters[k] of Rabbah!
Put on sackcloth,
lament, and slash yourselves with whips![l]
For Milcom shall go into exile,
with his priests and his attendants.

*h* Or *Kerioth* *i* Gk Syr: Heb *bring upon it* *j* Or *of Shaon* *k* Or *villages* *l* Cn: Meaning of Heb uncertain

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**48.39–45**: God's judgment against Moab. **47**: After thoroughgoing devastation (23.12; Isa 24.17–18) Moab will be restored.

**49.1–6**: **Against Ammon.** The occasion for this comparatively mild oracle may be the Ammonite sponsorship of Ishmael by King Baalis (40.13–14), perhaps in the autumn of 587 B.C. Ammon, the northern "brother" of Moab (Gen 19.30–38), had previously occupied Transjordanian territory claimed by Israel (Judg 10.6–12.6; 2 Kings 15.29) and was Israelite territory under David (2 Sam 12.26–31; Am 1.13–14 perhaps reflects their war for independence). Ammon too must suffer for its idolatry and violence. *Milcom*, Ammonite national god (1 Kings 11.5, 33); *Rabbah*, capital of Ammon.

4 Why do you boast in your strength?
Your strength is ebbing,
O faithless daughter.
You trusted in your treasures, saying,
"Who will attack me?"
5 I am going to bring terror upon you,
says the Lord GOD of hosts,
from all your neighbors,
and you will be scattered, each headlong,
with no one to gather the fugitives.
6 But afterward I will restore the fortunes of the Ammonites, says the LORD.

7 Concerning Edom.

Thus says the LORD of hosts:
Is there no longer wisdom in Teman?
Has counsel perished from the prudent?
Has their wisdom vanished?
8 Flee, turn back, get down low, inhabitants of Dedan!
For I will bring the calamity of Esau upon him,
the time when I punish him.
9 If grape-gatherers came to you, would they not leave gleanings?
If thieves came by night, even they would pillage only what they wanted.
10 But as for me, I have stripped Esau bare,
I have uncovered his hiding places,
and he is not able to conceal himself.
His offspring are destroyed, his kinsfolk and his neighbors; and he is no more.
11 Leave your orphans, I will keep them alive;
and let your widows trust in me.
12 For thus says the LORD: If those who do not deserve to drink the cup still have to drink it, shall you be the one to go unpunished? You shall not go unpunished; you must drink it. 13For by myself I have sworn, says the LORD, that Bozrah shall become an object of horror and ridicule, a waste, and an object of cursing; and all her towns shall be perpetual wastes.
14 I have heard tidings from the LORD,
and a messenger has been sent among the nations:
"Gather yourselves together and come against her,
and rise up for battle!"
15 For I will make you least among the nations,
despised by humankind.
16 The terror you inspire
and the pride of your heart have deceived you,
you who live in the clefts of the rock,[m]
who hold the height of the hill.
Although you make your nest as high as the eagle's,
from there I will bring you down,
says the LORD.
17 Edom shall become an object of horror; everyone who passes by it will be horrified and will hiss because of all its disasters. 18As when Sodom and Gomorrah and their neighbors were over-

*m* Or *of Sela*

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**49.7–22: Against Edom.** After 587 B.C. the relationship between Israel and "brother" Edom (Deut 23.7–8) deteriorated to consistent Jewish vengefulness because of Edom's occupation of southern Judah (Lam 4.21–22; Ezek 25.12–14), an occupation caused by pressure from Arab tribes. Verses 7–8, 10–11, 18–22 appear to be original to Jeremiah. Verse 9 is a variation of Ob 5, and vv. 14–16 are a variation of Ob 1–4. The occasion for Jeremiah's oracle may have been 594 B.C. (see 27.3). *Teman,* modern Tawilan, about three miles east of Sela (Petra). *Bozrah,* a great fortress city in northern Edom.

**49.17**: *Hiss,* see Zeph 2.15 n.

thrown, says the LORD, no one shall live there, nor shall anyone settle in it. [19]Like a lion coming up from the thickets of the Jordan against a perennial pasture, I will suddenly chase Edom[n] away from it; and I will appoint over it whomever I choose.[o] For who is like me? Who can summon me? Who is the shepherd who can stand before me? [20]Therefore hear the plan that the LORD has made against Edom and the purposes that he has formed against the inhabitants of Teman: Surely the little ones of the flock shall be dragged away; surely their fold shall be appalled at their fate. [21]At the sound of their fall the earth shall tremble; the sound of their cry shall be heard at the Red Sea.[p] [22]Look, he shall mount up and swoop down like an eagle, and spread his wings against Bozrah, and the heart of the warriors of Edom in that day shall be like the heart of a woman in labor.

23 Concerning Damascus.

Hamath and Arpad are
confounded,
for they have heard bad news;
they melt in fear, they are
troubled like the sea[q]
that cannot be quiet.
[24] Damascus has become feeble, she
turned to flee,
and panic seized her;
anguish and sorrows have taken
hold of her,
as of a woman in labor.
[25] How the famous city is forsaken,[r]
the joyful town![s]
[26] Therefore her young men shall fall
in her squares,
and all her soldiers shall be
destroyed in that day,
says the LORD of hosts.
[27] And I will kindle a fire at the wall
of Damascus,
and it shall devour the
strongholds of Ben-hadad.

28 Concerning Kedar and the kingdoms of Hazor that King Nebuchadrezzar of Babylon defeated.

Thus says the LORD:
Rise up, advance against Kedar!
Destroy the people of the east!
[29] Take their tents and their flocks,
their curtains and all their
goods;
carry off their camels for
yourselves,
and a cry shall go up: "Terror is
all around!"
[30] Flee, wander far away, hide in
deep places,
O inhabitants of Hazor!
says the LORD.
For King Nebuchadrezzar of
Babylon
has made a plan against you
and formed a purpose against
you.

[31] Rise up, advance against a nation
at ease,
that lives secure,
says the LORD,

*n* Heb *him* *o* Or *and I will single out the choicest of his rams*: Meaning of Heb uncertain *p* Or *Sea of Reeds* *q* Cn: Heb *there is trouble in the sea* *r* Vg: Heb *is not forsaken* *s* Syr Vg Tg: Heb *the town of my joy*

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**49.19–21**: Editorial revision of 50.44–46.

**49.23–27**: **Against Damascus.** The occasion for this composite oracle (compare v. 27; Am 1.4) may have been the raids by the Syrians after 601 B.C. (2 Kings 24.2). Damascus lost its independence with the capture of *Arpad* by Tiglath-Pileser III in 740 B.C., *Hamath* in 738, and Damascus in 732 (Isa 10.9; 37.13). *Ben-hadad,* 1 Kings 15.18, 20.

**49.28–33**: **Against Kedar and Hazor.** In mid-winter 599/598 B.C. Nebuchadrezzar led a successful expedition against the Arab tribes in the desert east of Syria-Palestine, which may have been the occasion for this oracle (9.26; 25.23–24). *Kedar* is a collective term for nomadic or semi-nomadic Arabs (2.10); *Hazor* is not the city in Galilee (Josh 11.1) but a collective term for sedentary Arabs, who lived at oases. Neither group had fortresses, and neither would escape attack from the wide-ranging Nebuchadrezzar.

that has no gates or bars,
that lives alone.
32 Their camels shall become booty,
their herds of cattle a spoil.
I will scatter to every wind
those who have shaven temples,
and I will bring calamity
against them from every side,
says the LORD.
33 Hazor shall become a lair of
jackals,
an everlasting waste;
no one shall live there,
nor shall anyone settle in it.

34 The word of the LORD that came to the prophet Jeremiah concerning Elam, at the beginning of the reign of King Zedekiah of Judah.

35 Thus says the LORD of hosts: I am going to break the bow of Elam, the mainstay of their might; 36 and I will bring upon Elam the four winds from the four quarters of heaven; and I will scatter them to all these winds, and there shall be no nation to which the exiles from Elam shall not come. 37 I will terrify Elam before their enemies, and before those who seek their life; I will bring disaster upon them, my fierce anger, says the LORD. I will send the sword after them, until I have consumed them; 38 and I will set my throne in Elam, and destroy their king and officials, says the LORD.

39 But in the latter days I will restore the fortunes of Elam, says the LORD.

**50** The word that the LORD spoke concerning Babylon, concerning the land of the Chaldeans, by the prophet Jeremiah:

2 Declare among the nations
and proclaim,
set up a banner and proclaim,
do not conceal it, say:
Babylon is taken,
Bel is put to shame,
Merodach is dismayed.
Her images are put to shame,
her idols are dismayed.
3 For out of the north a nation has
come up against her; it shall make her
land a desolation, and no one shall live in
it; both human beings and animals shall
flee away.

4 In those days and in that time, says the LORD, the people of Israel shall come, they and the people of Judah together; they shall come weeping as they seek the LORD their God. 5 They shall ask the way to Zion, with faces turned toward it, and they shall come and join[t] themselves to the LORD by an everlasting covenant that will never be forgotten.

6 My people have been lost sheep;
their shepherds have led them astray,
turning them away on the mountains;
from mountain to hill they have gone,
they have forgotten their fold. 7 All who
found them have devoured them, and

*t* Gk: Heb *toward it. Come! They shall join*

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**49.34–39: Against Elam.** There is some evidence that Nebuchadrezzar attacked Elam, east of Babylonia, in the winter of 596 B.C.; if so, that attack might have been an occasion for this oracle. *Zedekiah* became king in March 597, when Jehoiachin was deposed. *Bow of Elam* reflects the prowess of Elamite archers (Isa 22.6). **39:** This verse (like 46.26; 48.47; and 49.6) is probably an editorial addition.

**50.1–51.64: Against Babylon.** This collection of oracles contains two main themes: the fall of Babylon (sometimes represented as accomplished, sometimes represented as still in the future) and the return of the exiles (compare 24.6; 29.10). The attitude toward Babylon is somewhat harsher (50.14, 24) than one finds elsewhere in the book (27.6; 43.10), but is not unprecedented (e.g. 25.12–14). The oracles concerning Judah (Israel) are here marked with the letters (*a*) to (*f*). **50.1:** *By the prophet Jeremiah,* literally "by the hand of Jeremiah the prophet," an idiom found also in the superscriptions in Hag 1.1; Mal 1.1; contrast Jer 46.1; 49.34. **2–3:** The downfall of Babylon. The nation *out of the north,* patterned on Jeremiah's expression (4.6), may or may not refer to Cyrus and Persia, before whom Babylon fell in October 539 B.C. *Bel* (Baal), 51.44; Isa 46.1, originally chief god of Nippur, later identified in Babylon with the great cosmic god Marduk (*Merodach*).

**50.4–5, 6–7:** (*a*) An apostrophe on Israel's homecoming (31.7–9) and guilt (2.20; 23.1–2).

their enemies have said, "We are not guilty, because they have sinned against the LORD, the true pasture, the LORD, the hope of their ancestors."

8 Flee from Babylon, and go out of the land of the Chaldeans, and be like male goats leading the flock. 9For I am going to stir up and bring against Babylon a company of great nations from the land of the north; and they shall array themselves against her; from there she shall be taken. Their arrows are like the arrows of a skilled warrior who does not return empty-handed. 10Chaldea shall be plundered; all who plunder her shall be sated, says the LORD.

11 Though you rejoice, though you exult,
O plunderers of my heritage,
though you frisk about like a heifer on the grass,
and neigh like stallions,
12 your mother shall be utterly shamed,
and she who bore you shall be disgraced.
Lo, she shall be the last of the nations,
a wilderness, dry land, and a desert.
13 Because of the wrath of the LORD she shall not be inhabited,
but shall be an utter desolation;
everyone who passes by Babylon shall be appalled
and hiss because of all her wounds.
14 Take up your positions around Babylon,
all you that bend the bow;
shoot at her, spare no arrows,
for she has sinned against the LORD.
15 Raise a shout against her from all sides,
"She has surrendered;
her bulwarks have fallen,
her walls are thrown down."
For this is the vengeance of the LORD:
take vengeance on her,
do to her as she has done.
16 Cut off from Babylon the sower,
and the wielder of the sickle in time of harvest;
because of the destroying sword
all of them shall return to their own people,
and all of them shall flee to their own land.

17 Israel is a hunted sheep driven away by lions. First the king of Assyria devoured it, and now at the end King Nebuchadrezzar of Babylon has gnawed its bones. 18Therefore, thus says the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel: I am going to punish the king of Babylon and his land, as I punished the king of Assyria. 19I will restore Israel to its pasture, and it shall feed on Carmel and in Bashan, and on the hills of Ephraim and in Gilead its hunger shall be satisfied. 20In those days and at that time, says the LORD, the iniquity of Israel shall be sought, and there shall be none; and the sins of Judah, and none shall be found; for I will pardon the remnant that I have spared.

21 Go up to the land of Merathaim;[u]
go up against her,
and attack the inhabitants of Pekod[v]
and utterly destroy the last of them,[w]
says the LORD;

*u* Or *of Double Rebellion* *v* Or *of Punishment*
*w* Tg: Heb *destroy after them*

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**50.8–16:** The residents are urged to flee before Babylon's approaching doom (13.14) and desolation (18.16). Not only is the city destroyed, but more damaging, in a way, is the destruction of food production. **13:** *Hiss,* see Zeph 2.15 n.

**50.17–20:** (*b*) Though successively subject to Assyria and Babylonia, Israel will be restored (31.4–5; 33.8) and Babylon, as Assyria earlier, will be destroyed (25.12).

**50.21–32:** God's judgment against Babylon. *Merathaim,* "Double Rebellion" is a play

do all that I have commanded
you.
22 The noise of battle is in the land,
and great destruction!
23 How the hammer of the whole
earth
is cut down and broken!
How Babylon has become
a horror among the nations!
24 You set a snare for yourself and
you were caught,
O Babylon,
but you did not know it;
you were discovered and seized,
because you challenged the LORD.
25 The LORD has opened his armory,
and brought out the weapons of
his wrath,
for the Lord GOD of hosts has a
task to do
in the land of the Chaldeans.
26 Come against her from every
quarter;
open her granaries;
pile her up like heaps of grain, and
destroy her utterly;
let nothing be left of her.
27 Kill all her bulls,
let them go down to the
slaughter.
Alas for them, their day has come,
the time of their punishment!

28 Listen! Fugitives and refugees from the land of Babylon are coming to declare in Zion the vengeance of the LORD our God, vengeance for his temple.

29 Summon archers against Babylon, all who bend the bow. Encamp all around her; let no one escape. Repay her according to her deeds; just as she has done, do to her—for she has arrogantly defied the LORD, the Holy One of Israel. 30Therefore her young men shall fall in her squares, and all her soldiers shall be destroyed on that day, says the LORD.

31 I am against you, O arrogant one,
says the Lord GOD of hosts;
for your day has come,
the time when I will punish
you.
32 The arrogant one shall stumble
and fall,
with no one to raise him up,
and I will kindle a fire in his cities,
and it will devour everything
around him.

33 Thus says the LORD of hosts: The people of Israel are oppressed, and so too are the people of Judah; all their captors have held them fast and refuse to let them go. 34Their Redeemer is strong; the LORD of hosts is his name. He will surely plead their cause, that he may give rest to the earth, but unrest to the inhabitants of Babylon.

35 A sword against the Chaldeans,
says the LORD,
and against the inhabitants of
Babylon,
and against her officials and
her sages!
36 A sword against the diviners,
so that they may become fools!
A sword against her warriors,
so that they may be destroyed!
37 A sword against her[x] horses and
against her[x] chariots,
and against all the foreign
troops in her midst,
so that they may become
women!
A sword against all her treasures,
that they may be plundered!
38 A drought[y] against her waters,
that they may be dried up!

*x* Cn: Heb *his* *y* Another reading is *A sword*

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on the name of southern Babylonia, *mât marrâti,* "Land of the Lagoons." *Pekod,* "Punishment," is a play on the name *Puqûdu,* an east Babylonian tribe (Ezek 23.23). The writer derides Babylon as a smashed hammer and a captured bird (compare 5.26–27). He sees the destruction of the temple as an affront to God which must and will be avenged (21.14; Am 2.2).

**50.33–34:** (*c*) While Israel is helpless, God, her *Redeemer* (Isa 47.4), will deliver her and discomfit her oppressors. **35–37:** The or-

For it is a land of images,
and they go mad over idols.

39 Therefore wild animals shall live
with hyenas in Babylon,[z] and ostriches
shall inhabit her; she shall never again be
peopled, or inhabited for all generations.
40 As when God overthrew Sodom and
Gomorrah and their neighbors, says the
LORD, so no one shall live there, nor shall
anyone settle in her.

41 Look, a people is coming from
the north;
a mighty nation and many kings
are stirring from the farthest
parts of the earth.
42 They wield bow and spear,
they are cruel and have
no mercy.
The sound of them is like the
roaring sea;
they ride upon horses,
set in array as a warrior for battle,
against you, O daughter
Babylon!

43 The king of Babylon heard news
of them,
and his hands fell helpless;
anguish seized him,
pain like that of a woman
in labor.

44 Like a lion coming up from the
thickets of the Jordan against a perennial
pasture, I will suddenly chase them away
from her; and I will appoint over her
whomever I choose.[a] For who is like
me? Who can summon me? Who is the
shepherd who can stand before me?
45 Therefore hear the plan that the LORD
has made against Babylon, and the pur-
poses that he has formed against the land
of the Chaldeans: Surely the little ones of
the flock shall be dragged away; surely
their[b] fold shall be appalled at their fate.
46 At the sound of the capture of Babylon
the earth shall tremble, and her cry shall
be heard among the nations.

51 Thus says the LORD:
I am going to stir up a
destructive wind[c]
against Babylon
and against the inhabitants of
Leb-qamai;[d]
2 and I will send winnowers to
Babylon,
and they shall winnow her.
They shall empty her land
when they come against her
from every side
on the day of trouble.
3 Let not the archer bend his bow,
and let him not array himself in
his coat of mail.
Do not spare her young men;
utterly destroy her entire army.
4 They shall fall down slain in the
land of the Chaldeans,
and wounded in her streets.
5 Israel and Judah have not been
forsaken
by their God, the LORD of
hosts,
though their land is full of guilt
before the Holy One of Israel.

*z* Heb lacks *in Babylon* *a* Or *and I will single out the choicest of her rams*: Meaning of Heb uncertain *b* Syr Gk Tg Compare 49.20: Heb lacks *their* *c* Or *stir up the spirit of a destroyer* *d* *Leb-qamai* is a cryptogram for *Kasdim*, Chaldea

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acle of the sword. **38–40**: Babylon will lie as a desert, unproductive, and inhabited only by wild animals (Isa 34.13–14).

**50.41–46**: Babylon, once the foe from the north (6.22–24), now stands in dread anticipation of a foe from the north. As Edom could not escape her punishment (49.19–21), neither can Babylon. There is no king (*shepherd*) who can successfully defy God.

**51.1–64: God's judgment against Babylon. 1–4**: As grain is winnowed, so will Babylon be cut down and winnowed (see 15.7 n.). *Leb-qamai* is an atbash cipher (see 25.26 n.) for "Chaldea." **5–10**: (*d*) A note reminding Israel that while they have hope, Babylon's case is hopeless (50.33–34). Babylon was the golden cup from which the nations would drink of God's wrath (see 25.15–29 n.), but now that cup is smashed; she stands desolate (46.11; Ezek 27.27) as God delivers his people.

6 Flee from the midst of Babylon,
save your lives, each of you!
Do not perish because of her guilt,
for this is the time of the LORD's vengeance;
he is repaying her what is due.
7 Babylon was a golden cup in the LORD's hand,
making all the earth drunken;
the nations drank of her wine,
and so the nations went mad.
8 Suddenly Babylon has fallen and is shattered;
wail for her!
Bring balm for her wound;
perhaps she may be healed.
9 We tried to heal Babylon,
but she could not be healed.
Forsake her, and let each of us go to our own country;
for her judgment has reached up to heaven
and has been lifted up even to the skies.
10 The LORD has brought forth our vindication;
come, let us declare in Zion
the work of the LORD our God.

11 Sharpen the arrows!
Fill the quivers!
The LORD has stirred up the spirit of the kings of the Medes, because his purpose concerning Babylon is to destroy it, for that is the vengeance of the LORD, vengeance for his temple.
12 Raise a standard against the walls of Babylon;
make the watch strong;
post sentinels;
prepare the ambushes;
for the LORD has both planned and done
what he spoke concerning the inhabitants of Babylon.
13 You who live by mighty waters,
rich in treasures,
your end has come,
the thread of your life is cut.
14 The LORD of hosts has sworn by himself:
Surely I will fill you with troops like a swarm of locusts,
and they shall raise a shout of victory over you.

15 It is he who made the earth by his power,
who established the world by his wisdom,
and by his understanding stretched out the heavens.
16 When he utters his voice there is a tumult of waters in the heavens,
and he makes the mist rise from the ends of the earth.
He makes lightnings for the rain,
and he brings out the wind from his storehouses.
17 Everyone is stupid and without knowledge;
goldsmiths are all put to shame by their idols;
for their images are false,
and there is no breath in them.
18 They are worthless, a work of delusion;
at the time of their punishment they shall perish.
19 Not like these is the LORD,[e] the portion of Jacob,
for he is the one who formed all things,
and Israel is the tribe of his inheritance;
the LORD of hosts is his name.

20 You are my war club, my weapon of battle:

*e* Heb lacks *the LORD*

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**51.11–19:** Terse military commands precede the attack by the *Medes;* either a reference to Media which, lying northeast of Babylonia, participated in the overthrow of Assyria and was a threat to Babylonia during this period, or an oblique reference to Persia. The phrase *mighty waters* refers to the Euphrates and the network of canals around Babylon. In connection with God's judgment on Babylon, the writer appends the oracle against the idols from 10.12–16 (50.38).

**51.20–23:** This oracle of the hammer ad-

with you I smash nations;
with you I destroy kingdoms;
21 with you I smash the horse and its rider;
with you I smash the chariot and the charioteer;
22 with you I smash man and woman;
with you I smash the old man and the boy;
with you I smash the young man and the girl;
23 with you I smash shepherds and their flocks;
with you I smash farmers and their teams;
with you I smash governors and deputies.

24 I will repay Babylon and all the inhabitants of Chaldea before your very eyes for all the wrong that they have done in Zion, says the LORD.

25 I am against you, O destroying mountain,
says the LORD,
that destroys the whole earth;
I will stretch out my hand against you,
and roll you down from the crags,
and make you a burned-out mountain.
26 No stone shall be taken from you for a corner
and no stone for a foundation,
but you shall be a perpetual waste,
says the LORD.

27 Raise a standard in the land,
blow the trumpet among the nations;
prepare the nations for war against her,
summon against her the kingdoms,
Ararat, Minni, and Ashkenaz;
appoint a marshal against her,
bring up horses like bristling locusts.
28 Prepare the nations for war against her,
the kings of the Medes, with their governors and deputies,
and every land under their dominion.
29 The land trembles and writhes,
for the LORD's purposes against Babylon stand,
to make the land of Babylon a desolation,
without inhabitant.
30 The warriors of Babylon have given up fighting,
they remain in their strongholds;
their strength has failed,
they have become women;
her buildings are set on fire,
her bars are broken.
31 One runner runs to meet another,
and one messenger to meet another,
to tell the king of Babylon
that his city is taken from end to end:
32 the fords have been seized,
the marshes have been burned with fire,
and the soldiers are in panic.
33 For thus says the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel:
Daughter Babylon is like a threshing floor

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dresses the destroying enemy of Babylon. **24–26**: As did Assyria (Isa 10.5, 15), so too Babylon will fall. *Destroying mountain* may reflect the great ziggurat or temple tower of Babylon, thrusting its shrine into the heavens, and here symbolizing Babylon itself. *Burned-out mountain,* perhaps "mountain of burnt bricks" (Gen 11.3).

**51.27–33**: As Babylon subdued the nations (25.15–26) so the nations will gather against Babylon. *Ararat,* ancient Urartu, modern Armenia, north of Lake Van. *Minni,* Mannaeans living south of Lake Urmia. *Ashkenaz,* the Scythians—all defeated by the Medes in the early sixth century. Desolate Babylon (4.6–7) is as barren as a threshing floor thoroughly cleaned before the harvest.

**51.34–40**: (*e*) Again Jerusalem's deliver-

at the time when it is trodden;
yet a little while
and the time of her harvest
will come.

34 "King Nebuchadrezzar of Babylon
has devoured me,
he has crushed me;
he has made me an empty vessel,
he has swallowed me like
a monster;
he has filled his belly with my
delicacies,
he has spewed me out.
35 May my torn flesh be avenged on
Babylon,"
the inhabitants of Zion shall say.
"May my blood be avenged on
the inhabitants of Chaldea,"
Jerusalem shall say.
36 Therefore thus says the LORD:
I am going to defend your cause
and take vengeance for you.
I will dry up her sea
and make her fountain dry;
37 and Babylon shall become a heap
of ruins,
a den of jackals,
an object of horror and of hissing,
without inhabitant.

38 Like lions they shall roar together;
they shall growl like lions'
whelps.
39 When they are inflamed, I will set
out their drink
and make them drunk, until
they become merry
and then sleep a perpetual sleep
and never wake, says the LORD.
40 I will bring them down like lambs
to the slaughter,
like rams and goats.

41 How Sheshach[f] is taken,
the pride of the whole earth
seized!
How Babylon has become
an object of horror among the
nations!
42 The sea has risen over Babylon;
she has been covered by its
tumultuous waves.
43 Her cities have become an object
of horror,
a land of drought and a desert,
a land in which no one lives,
and through which no mortal
passes.
44 I will punish Bel in Babylon,
and make him disgorge what he
has swallowed.
The nations shall no longer stream
to him;
the wall of Babylon has fallen.

45 Come out of her, my people!
Save your lives, each of you,
from the fierce anger of the
LORD!
46 Do not be fainthearted or fearful
at the rumors heard in
the land—
one year one rumor comes,
the next year another,
rumors of violence in the land
and of ruler against ruler.

47 Assuredly, the days are coming
when I will punish the images
of Babylon;
her whole land shall be put to
shame,
and all her slain shall fall in
her midst.
48 Then the heavens and the earth,
and all that is in them,
shall shout for joy over Babylon;
for the destroyers shall come
against them out of
the north,
says the LORD.

*f Sheshach* is a cryptogram for *Babel*, Babylon

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ance is viewed as a mighty act of God (50.34); he will make Babylonia a desert (9.10); the once mighty lion will become drunk (25.15–16) and fall into a helpless, permanent sleep. *Hissing*, see Zeph 2.15 n.

**51.41–43**: Babylon (written *Sheshach*, an atbash cipher; see 25.26 n.), will be inundated by the waves of her attackers (46.7–8; Isa 8.7–8); when the flood recedes, she will be a trackless wasteland. **44–49**: In antiquity, the fall of a land was viewed as the defeat of its god(s) (Isa 37.12).

49 Babylon must fall for the slain of Israel,
as the slain of all the earth have fallen because of Babylon.

50 You survivors of the sword,
go, do not linger!
Remember the LORD in a distant land,
and let Jerusalem come into your mind:
51 We are put to shame, for we have heard insults;
dishonor has covered our face,
for aliens have come
into the holy places of the LORD's house.

52 Therefore the time is surely coming, says the LORD,
when I will punish her idols,
and through all her land
the wounded shall groan.
53 Though Babylon should mount up to heaven,
and though she should fortify her strong height,
from me destroyers would come upon her,
says the LORD.

54 Listen!—a cry from Babylon!
A great crashing from the land of the Chaldeans!
55 For the LORD is laying Babylon waste,
and stilling her loud clamor.
Their waves roar like mighty waters,
the sound of their clamor resounds;
56 for a destroyer has come against her,
against Babylon;
her warriors are taken,
their bows are broken;
for the LORD is a God of recompense,
he will repay in full.
57 I will make her officials and her sages drunk,
also her governors, her deputies, and her warriors;
they shall sleep a perpetual sleep and never wake,
says the King, whose name is the LORD of hosts.

58 Thus says the LORD of hosts:
The broad wall of Babylon shall be leveled to the ground,
and her high gates
shall be burned with fire.
The peoples exhaust themselves for nothing,
and the nations weary themselves only for fire.[g]

59 The word that the prophet Jeremiah commanded Seraiah son of Neriah son of Mahseiah, when he went with King Zedekiah of Judah to Babylon, in the fourth year of his reign. Seraiah was the quartermaster. 60 Jeremiah wrote in a[h] scroll all the disasters that would come on Babylon, all these words that are written concerning Babylon. 61 And Jeremiah said to Seraiah: "When you come to Babylon, see that you read all these words, 62 and say, 'O LORD, you yourself threatened to destroy this place so that neither human beings nor animals shall live in it, and it shall be desolate forever.' 63 When you finish reading this scroll, tie a stone to it, and throw it into

*g* Gk Syr Compare Hab 2.13: Heb *and the nations for fire, and they are weary* *h* Or *one*

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**51.50–58:** (*f*) The doubts raised by the destruction of the temple (a problem which Ezekiel also considers) should be allayed by God's assurance of certain punishment for Babylon which desecrated the holy places.

**51.59–64:** The oracles are written in a book and taken to Babylon. Though we know of no journey of Zedekiah, he may have gone to renew his fealty after the abortive plot of 594 B.C. (chs 27–28) became known to Nebuchadrezzar. *Seraiah,* brother of Baruch (32.12). **63:** By a symbolic act the oracle against Babylon is emphasized; this oracle may have been the causative factor for the composition of 50.1–51.58. Though for a time God endowed Babylon with great pow-

the middle of the Euphrates, 64and say, 'Thus shall Babylon sink, to rise no more, because of the disasters that I am bringing on her.' "[i]

Thus far are the words of Jeremiah.

52 Zedekiah was twenty-one years old when he began to reign; he reigned eleven years in Jerusalem. His mother's name was Hamutal daughter of Jeremiah of Libnah. 2He did what was evil in the sight of the LORD, just as Jehoiakim had done. 3Indeed, Jerusalem and Judah so angered the LORD that he expelled them from his presence.

Zedekiah rebelled against the king of Babylon. 4And in the ninth year of his reign, in the tenth month, on the tenth day of the month, King Nebuchadrezzar of Babylon came with all his army against Jerusalem, and they laid siege to it; they built siegeworks against it all around. 5So the city was besieged until the eleventh year of King Zedekiah. 6On the ninth day of the fourth month the famine became so severe in the city that there was no food for the people of the land. 7Then a breach was made in the city wall;[j] and all the soldiers fled and went out from the city by night by the way of the gate between the two walls, by the king's garden, though the Chaldeans were all around the city. They went in the direction of the Arabah. 8But the army of the Chaldeans pursued the king, and overtook Zedekiah in the plains of Jericho; and all his army was scattered, deserting him. 9Then they captured the king, and brought him up to the king of Babylon at Riblah in the land of Hamath, and he passed sentence on him. 10The king of Babylon killed the sons of Zedekiah before his eyes, and also killed all the officers of Judah at Riblah. 11He put out the eyes of Zedekiah, and bound him in fetters, and the king of Babylon took him to Babylon, and put him in prison until the day of his death.

12 In the fifth month, on the tenth day of the month—which was the nineteenth year of King Nebuchadrezzar, king of Babylon—Nebuzaradan the captain of the bodyguard who served the king of Babylon, entered Jerusalem. 13He burned the house of the LORD, the king's house, and all the houses of Jerusalem; every great house he burned down. 14All the army of the Chaldeans, who were with the captain of the guard, broke down all the walls around Jerusalem. 15Nebuzaradan the captain of the guard carried into exile some of the poorest of the people and the rest of the people who were left in the city and the deserters who had defected to the king of Babylon, together with the rest of the artisans. 16But Nebuzaradan the captain of the guard left some of the poorest people of the land to be vinedressers and tillers of the soil.

17 The pillars of bronze that were in the house of the LORD, and the stands and the bronze sea that were in the house of the LORD, the Chaldeans broke in pieces, and carried all the bronze to Babylon. 18They took away the pots, the shovels,

*i* Gk: Heb *on her. And they shall weary themselves*
*j* Heb lacks *wall*

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er, he did so that it might accomplish his purposes, not that it should be established as a great power forever.

**52.1–34**: **Historical appendix.** Though largely a duplicate of 2 Kings 24.18–25.30, this historical section, together with 39.1–10 and 40.7–43.7, provides much important complementary information (for similar historical additions, see Isa chs 36–39). **1–3**: Reign of Zedekiah (2 Kings 24.18–20; 597–587 B.C.). For details on the contemporary religious situation, see Ezek ch 8. **4–27**: Siege and fall of Jerusalem (39.1–10; 2 Kings 24.20b–25.26). **4–11**: January 588 B.C. to August 587. The last scene enacted before Zedekiah, the rebellious vassal (37.1; Ezek 17.18–21), at Nebuchadrezzar's headquarters at *Riblah* (in the central valley northeast of Byblos) was the slaughter of his sons and court officials. Then he was blinded and taken to Babylon to die in prison.

**52.12–16**: August 587 B.C. The reasons for the actions of Nebuzaradan, Nebuchadrezzar's field general, are unknown.

**52.17–23**: A detailed description of the booty taken from the temple.

the snuffers, the basins, the ladles, and all the vessels of bronze used in the temple service. 19The captain of the guard took away the small bowls also, the firepans, the basins, the pots, the lampstands, the ladles, and the bowls for libation, both those of gold and those of silver. 20As for the two pillars, the one sea, the twelve bronze bulls that were under the sea, and the stands,[k] which King Solomon had made for the house of the LORD, the bronze of all these vessels was beyond weighing. 21As for the pillars, the height of the one pillar was eighteen cubits, its circumference was twelve cubits; it was hollow and its thickness was four fingers. 22Upon it was a capital of bronze; the height of the capital was five cubits; latticework and pomegranates, all of bronze, encircled the top of the capital. And the second pillar had the same, with pomegranates. 23There were ninety-six pomegranates on the sides; all the pomegranates encircling the latticework numbered one hundred.

24 The captain of the guard took the chief priest Seraiah, the second priest Zephaniah, and the three guardians of the threshold; 25and from the city he took an officer who had been in command of the soldiers, and seven men of the king's council who were found in the city; the secretary of the commander of the army who mustered the people of the land; and sixty men of the people of the land who were found inside the city. 26Then Nebuzaradan the captain of the guard took them, and brought them to the king of Babylon at Riblah. 27And the king of Babylon struck them down, and put them to death at Riblah in the land of Hamath. So Judah went into exile out of its land.

28 This is the number of the people whom Nebuchadrezzar took into exile: in the seventh year, three thousand twenty-three Judeans; 29in the eighteenth year of Nebuchadrezzar he took into exile from Jerusalem eight hundred thirty-two persons; 30in the twenty-third year of Nebuchadrezzar, Nebuzaradan the captain of the guard took into exile of the Judeans seven hundred forty-five persons; all the persons were four thousand six hundred.

31 In the thirty-seventh year of the exile of King Jehoiachin of Judah, in the twelfth month, on the twenty-fifth day of the month, King Evil-merodach of Babylon, in the year he began to reign, showed favor to King Jehoiachin of Judah and brought him out of prison; 32he spoke kindly to him, and gave him a seat above the seats of the other kings who were with him in Babylon. 33So Jehoiachin put aside his prison clothes, and every day of his life he dined regularly at the king's table. 34For his allowance, a regular daily allowance was given him by the king of Babylon, as long as he lived, up to the day of his death.

*k* Cn: Heb *that were under the stands*

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**52.24–27**: 2 Kings 25.18–21. *Seraiah*, perhaps the same as in 36.26; otherwise unknown. *Zephaniah*, 21.1; 29.29. **28–30**: The first two deportations listed here coincide with the surrender of Jehoiachin (597 B.C.; 2 Kings 24.12–16) and the suppression of Zedekiah's revolt (587 B.C.). The occasion for the third deportation (582 B.C.) is not known. **31–34**: 2 Kings 25.27–30. The presence of this material proves that the editing of Jeremiah's material was later than 560 B.C. Jehoiachin's restoration may well have been viewed by his contemporaries as the beginning of Judah's restoration (23.5–6).

# *Lamentations*

Lamentations is a small psalter of communal laments over Jerusalem, following its destruction by the Babylonians in 587 (586) B.C. These psalms have been traditionally ascribed to Jeremiah because of 2 Chr 35.25, but those laments were for the death of Josiah, not for the desolation of Jerusalem. The thought and diction are sufficiently unlike Jeremiah's to make his authorship unlikely. The first four chapters are alphabetic acrostics (with a stanza for each of the twenty-two letters of the Hebrew alphabet), and the fifth has the same number of verses as the alphabet. All were composed or adapted for public recitation on days of fasting and mourning (Joel 2.15–17; Zech 7.2–3), notably that of the ninth of Ab (August), which commemorated the disaster of 587 (586).

Chapters 1, 2, and 4 are in form dirges over the dead city. The elegy's limping 3:2 meter (three beats followed by two beats) is recognizable even in translation, together with the exclamatory "How . . ." in the opening line as an expression of grief (2 Sam 1.25, 27; Isa 1.21). In ch 3 the sadness of the desolate people and reflection upon the meaning of the disaster are voiced by an individual. Chapter 5 in its form and language recalls the liturgies for use in time of national trouble, such as Pss 74 and 79. The common theme of all the poems is the agony of the people, the apparent desertion of Zion by God, and the hope that God will yet restore a humbled and repentant Israel.

Lamentations may be the work of one or several authors, speaking out of the dreadful situation of the inhabitants of Jerusalem following the overthrow of the city.

*The deserted city of Zion*

1 How lonely sits the city
that once was full of people!
How like a widow she has
become,
she that was great among the
nations!
She that was a princess among the
provinces
has become a vassal.

2 She weeps bitterly in the night,
with tears on her cheeks;
among all her lovers
she has no one to comfort her;
all her friends have dealt
treacherously with her,
they have become her enemies.

3 Judah has gone into exile with
suffering
and hard servitude;
she lives now among the nations,
and finds no resting place;
her pursuers have all overtaken her
in the midst of her distress.

4 The roads to Zion mourn,
for no one comes to the
festivals;
all her gates are desolate,
her priests groan;
her young girls grieve,[a]
and her lot is bitter.

5 Her foes have become the masters,
her enemies prosper,
because the LORD has made
her suffer
for the multitude of her
transgressions;
her children have gone away,
captives before the foe.

6 From daughter Zion has departed
all her majesty.
Her princes have become like stags
that find no pasture;
they fled without strength
before the pursuer.

7 Jerusalem remembers,
in the days of her affliction and
wandering,
all the precious things
that were hers in days of old.
When her people fell into the hand
of the foe,
and there was no one to help
her,
the foe looked on mocking
over her downfall.

8 Jerusalem sinned grievously,
so she has become a mockery;
all who honored her despise her,
for they have seen her
nakedness;
she herself groans,
and turns her face away.

9 Her uncleanness was in her skirts;
she took no thought of her
future;
her downfall was appalling,
with none to comfort her.
"O LORD, look at my affliction,
for the enemy has triumphed!"

10 Enemies have stretched out
their hands
over all her precious things;
she has even seen the nations
invade her sanctuary,
those whom you forbade
to enter your congregation.

11 All her people groan
as they search for bread;
they trade their treasures for food
to revive their strength.
Look, O LORD, and see
how worthless I have become.

12 Is it nothing to you,[a] all you who
pass by?
Look and see
if there is any sorrow like my
sorrow,

[a] Meaning of Heb uncertain

**1.1–11a: A lament over Zion.** 6: *Daughter Zion,* the city is personified as a maiden.

**1.11b–22: A lament uttered by Zion.** 17: The lament is briefly interrupted.

which was brought upon me,
which the LORD inflicted
on the day of his fierce anger.

13 From on high he sent fire;
it went deep into my bones;
he spread a net for my feet;
he turned me back;
he has left me stunned,
faint all day long.

14 My transgressions were bound[b]
into a yoke;
by his hand they were fastened
together;
they weigh on my neck,
sapping my strength;
the Lord handed me over
to those whom I cannot
withstand.

15 The LORD has rejected
all my warriors in the midst
of me;
he proclaimed a time against me
to crush my young men;
the Lord has trodden as in a
wine press
the virgin daughter Judah.

16 For these things I weep;
my eyes flow with tears;
for a comforter is far from me,
one to revive my courage;
my children are desolate,
for the enemy has prevailed.

17 Zion stretches out her hands,
but there is no one to
comfort her;
the LORD has commanded against
Jacob
that his neighbors should
become his foes;
Jerusalem has become
a filthy thing among them.

18 The LORD is in the right,
for I have rebelled against
his word;
but hear, all you peoples,
and behold my suffering;
my young women and young men
have gone into captivity.

19 I called to my lovers
but they deceived me;
my priests and elders
perished in the city
while seeking food
to revive their strength.

20 See, O LORD, how distressed I am;
my stomach churns,
my heart is wrung within me,
because I have been very
rebellious.
In the street the sword bereaves;
in the house it is like death.

21 They heard how I was groaning,
with no one to comfort me.
All my enemies heard of my
trouble;
they are glad that you have
done it.
Bring on the day you have
announced,
and let them be as I am.

22 Let all their evil doing come
before you;
and deal with them
as you have dealt with me
because of all my transgressions;
for my groans are many
and my heart is faint.

2 How the Lord in his anger
has humiliated[b] daughter Zion!
He has thrown down from heaven
to earth

*b* Meaning of Heb uncertain

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**1.18–22**: Zion's confession of sin is followed by an appeal to *bring on the day* when the enemies will be punished (see 3.64–66).

**2.1–22**: **The people's agony and their cry to God for mercy. 1**: *Footstool,* i.e. the temple. **6**: *Booth,* "tabernacle," i.e. the tem-

the splendor of Israel;
he has not remembered his footstool
in the day of his anger.

2 The Lord has destroyed without mercy
all the dwellings of Jacob;
in his wrath he has broken down
the strongholds of daughter Judah;
he has brought down to the ground in dishonor
the kingdom and its rulers.

3 He has cut down in fierce anger
all the might of Israel;
he has withdrawn his right hand from them
in the face of the enemy;
he has burned like a flaming fire in Jacob,
consuming all around.

4 He has bent his bow like an enemy,
with his right hand set like a foe;
he has killed all in whom we took pride
in the tent of daughter Zion;
he has poured out his fury like fire.

5 The Lord has become like an enemy;
he has destroyed Israel.
He has destroyed all its palaces,
laid in ruins its strongholds,
and multiplied in daughter Judah
mourning and lamentation.

6 He has broken down his booth like a garden,
he has destroyed his tabernacle;
the LORD has abolished in Zion
festival and sabbath,
and in his fierce indignation has spurned
king and priest.

7 The Lord has scorned his altar,
disowned his sanctuary;
he has delivered into the hand of the enemy
the walls of her palaces;
a clamor was raised in the house of the LORD
as on a day of festival.

8 The LORD determined to lay in ruins
the wall of daughter Zion;
he stretched the line;
he did not withhold his hand from destroying;
he caused rampart and wall to lament;
they languish together.

9 Her gates have sunk into the ground;
he has ruined and broken her bars;
her king and princes are among the nations;
guidance is no more,
and her prophets obtain
no vision from the LORD.

10 The elders of daughter Zion
sit on the ground in silence;
they have thrown dust on their heads
and put on sackcloth;
the young girls of Jerusalem
have bowed their heads to the ground.

11 My eyes are spent with weeping;
my stomach churns;
my bile is poured out on the ground
because of the destruction of my people,

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ple. **7**: *Clamor* of battle in place of the shout of acclamation in worship.

**2.8**: *Line*, a measuring line (Job 38.5). **9**: *Among the nations*, i.e. in exile. *Guidance* or teaching given by priests (Jer 18.18; Mal 2.5–8).

because infants and babes faint
in the streets of the city.

12 They cry to their mothers,
"Where is bread and wine?"
as they faint like the wounded
in the streets of the city,
as their life is poured out
on their mothers' bosom.

13 What can I say for you, to what compare you,
O daughter Jerusalem?
To what can I liken you, that I may comfort you,
O virgin daughter Zion?
For vast as the sea is your ruin;
who can heal you?

14 Your prophets have seen for you
false and deceptive visions;
they have not exposed your iniquity
to restore your fortunes,
but have seen oracles for you
that are false and misleading.

15 All who pass along the way
clap their hands at you;
they hiss and wag their heads
at daughter Jerusalem;
"Is this the city that was called
the perfection of beauty,
the joy of all the earth?"

16 All your enemies
open their mouths against you;
they hiss, they gnash their teeth,
they cry: "We have devoured her!
Ah, this is the day we longed for;
at last we have seen it!"

17 The LORD has done what he purposed,
he has carried out his threat;
as he ordained long ago,
he has demolished without pity;
he has made the enemy rejoice over you,
and exalted the might of your foes.

18 Cry aloud[c] to the Lord!
O wall of daughter Zion!
Let tears stream down like a torrent
day and night!
Give yourself no rest,
your eyes no respite!

19 Arise, cry out in the night,
at the beginning of the watches!
Pour out your heart like water
before the presence of the Lord!
Lift your hands to him
for the lives of your children,
who faint for hunger
at the head of every street.

20 Look, O LORD, and consider!
To whom have you done this?
Should women eat their offspring,
the children they have borne?
Should priest and prophet be killed
in the sanctuary of the Lord?

21 The young and the old are lying
on the ground in the streets;
my young women and my young men
have fallen by the sword;
in the day of your anger you have killed them,
slaughtering without mercy.

22 You invited my enemies from all around
as if for a day of festival;
and on the day of the anger of the LORD
no one escaped or survived;
those whom I bore and reared
my enemy has destroyed.

*c* Cn: Heb *Their heart cried*

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**2.14**: *Deceptive visions* of victory (Jer 23.25–27). **15**: *Clap their hands,* or "slap their hands," in derision. **17**: *His threat* to punish disobedience (see 1 Kings 9.6–9). **20**: 2 Kings 6.28–29. **22**: Am 5.18–20.

*God's steadfast love endures*

3 I am one who has seen affliction
under the rod of God's [d] wrath;
2 he has driven and brought me
into darkness without any light;
3 against me alone he turns
his hand,
again and again, all day long.

4 He has made my flesh and my
skin waste away,
and broken my bones;
5 he has besieged and enveloped me
with bitterness and tribulation;
6 he has made me sit in darkness
like the dead of long ago.

7 He has walled me about so that I
cannot escape;
he has put heavy chains on me;
8 though I call and cry for help,
he shuts out my prayer;
9 he has blocked my ways with
hewn stones,
he has made my paths crooked.

10 He is a bear lying in wait for me,
a lion in hiding;
11 he led me off my way and tore
me to pieces;
he has made me desolate;
12 he bent his bow and set me
as a mark for his arrow.

13 He shot into my vitals
the arrows of his quiver;
14 I have become the laughingstock
of all my people,
the object of their taunt-songs
all day long.
15 He has filled me with bitterness,
he has sated me with
wormwood.

16 He has made my teeth grind
on gravel,
and made me cower in ashes;
17 my soul is bereft of peace;
I have forgotten what
happiness is;
18 so I say, "Gone is my glory,
and all that I had hoped for
from the LORD."

19 The thought of my affliction and
my homelessness
is wormwood and gall!
20 My soul continually thinks of it
and is bowed down within me.
21 But this I call to mind,
and therefore I have hope:

22 The steadfast love of the LORD
never ceases, [e]
his mercies never come to an
end;
23 they are new every morning;
great is your faithfulness.
24 "The LORD is my portion," says
my soul,
"therefore I will hope in him."

25 The LORD is good to those who
wait for him,
to the soul that seeks him.
26 It is good that one should wait
quietly
for the salvation of the LORD.
27 It is good for one to bear
the yoke in youth,
28 to sit alone in silence
when the Lord has imposed it,
29 to put one's mouth to the dust
(there may yet be hope),

*d* Heb *his* *e* Syr Tg: Heb LORD, *we are not cut off*

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**3.1–66: An acrostic in three parts,** with three verses to each letter of the alphabet.

**3.1–18: A psalm of personal distress and trust in God** (compare Ps 56). The distress is expressed in terms recalling Job's complaints against God; v. 1, compare Job 9.34; v. 2, compare Job 19.8; v. 3, compare Job 7.18; v. 4, compare Job 7.5; 30.30; v. 5, compare Job 19.6, 12; v. 6, compare Job 23.16–17; v. 7, compare Job 19.8; v. 8, compare Job 30.20; v. 9, compare Job 19.8; vv. 10–11, compare Job 16.9; vv. 12–13, compare Job 16.12–13; v. 14, compare Job 30.9; v. 15, compare Job 9.18; vv. 16–18, compare Job 19.10; 30.19.

**3.19–51: A sage counsels submission and penitence in acknowledgment of God's righteousness and mercy.**

**3.29:** *One's mouth in the dust,* i.e. in self-abasement. **33:** *Willingly,* lit., "from his

30 to give one's cheek to the smiter,
and be filled with insults.

31 For the Lord will not
reject forever.
32 Although he causes grief, he will
have compassion
according to the abundance of
his steadfast love;
33 for he does not willingly afflict
or grieve anyone.

34 When all the prisoners of the land
are crushed under foot,
35 when human rights are perverted
in the presence of the Most
High,
36 when one's case is subverted
—does the Lord not see it?

37 Who can command and have
it done,
if the Lord has not ordained it?
38 Is it not from the mouth of the
Most High
that good and bad come?
39 Why should any who draw breath
complain
about the punishment of
their sins?

40 Let us test and examine our ways,
and return to the LORD.
41 Let us lift up our hearts as well as
our hands
to God in heaven.
42 We have transgressed and rebelled,
and you have not forgiven.

43 You have wrapped yourself with
anger and pursued us,
killing without pity;
44 you have wrapped yourself with
a cloud
so that no prayer can pass
through.

45 You have made us filth and
rubbish
among the peoples.

46 All our enemies
have opened their mouths
against us;
47 panic and pitfall have come
upon us,
devastation and destruction.
48 My eyes flow with rivers of tears
because of the destruction of
my people.

49 My eyes will flow without
ceasing,
without respite,
50 until the LORD from heaven
looks down and sees.
51 My eyes cause me grief
at the fate of all the young
women in my city.

52 Those who were my enemies
without cause
have hunted me like a bird;
53 they flung me alive into a pit
and hurled stones on me;
54 water closed over my head;
I said, "I am lost."

55 I called on your name, O LORD,
from the depths of the pit;
56 you heard my plea, "Do not close
your ear
to my cry for help, but give
me relief!"
57 You came near when I called
on you;
you said, "Do not fear!"

58 You have taken up my cause,
O Lord,
you have redeemed my life.
59 You have seen the wrong done to
me, O LORD;

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heart." **38**: *Good and bad,* compare Isa 45.7; Am 3.6.

**3.40**: *Us,* i.e. the nation Israel. **48**: See 2.11; Jer 9.1.

**3.52–66**: **An individual psalm pleading God's past mercies and praying for vindication and the requiting of the enemy** (compare 5.1–22). The sentiment of v. 59 is in contrast to that of v. 39 in the previous section. **54**: Symbol of drowning, see Jon 2.3–6.

judge my cause.
60 You have seen all their malice,
all their plots against me.

61 You have heard their taunts,
O LORD,
all their plots against me.
62 The whispers and murmurs of my
assailants
are against me all day long.
63 Whether they sit or rise—see,
I am the object of their
taunt-songs.

64 Pay them back for their deeds,
O LORD,
according to the work of their
hands!
65 Give them anguish of heart;
your curse be on them!
66 Pursue them in anger and
destroy them
from under the LORD's heavens.

4 How the gold has grown dim,
how the pure gold is changed!
The sacred stones lie scattered
at the head of every street.

2 The precious children of Zion,
worth their weight in fine
gold—
how they are reckoned as
earthen pots,
the work of a potter's hands!

3 Even the jackals offer the breast
and nurse their young,
but my people has become cruel,
like the ostriches in the
wilderness.

4 The tongue of the infant sticks
to the roof of its mouth for
thirst;
the children beg for food,
but no one gives them anything.

5 Those who feasted on delicacies
perish in the streets;
those who were brought up
in purple
cling to ash heaps.

6 For the chastisement[f] of my
people has been greater
than the punishment[g] of
Sodom,
which was overthrown in a
moment,
though no hand was laid on it.[h]

7 Her princes were purer than snow,
whiter than milk;
their bodies were more ruddy
than coral,
their hair[h] like sapphire.[i]

8 Now their visage is blacker
than soot;
they are not recognized in
the streets.
Their skin has shriveled on
their bones;
it has become as dry as wood.

9 Happier were those pierced by
the sword
than those pierced by hunger,
whose life drains away, deprived
of the produce of the field.

10 The hands of compassionate
women
have boiled their own children;
they became their food
in the destruction of my people.

*f* Or *iniquity* *g* Or *sin* *h* Meaning of Heb uncertain *i* Or *lapis lazuli*

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**3.64–66**: These verses recall the cries against the enemies of the persecuted righteous in the Psalms; see Pss 3.7; 17.13, 14; 35.26; 59.11–13; compare Jer 11.20–23; 18.21, 22.

**4.1–22**: **The horrors of the siege and sack of Jerusalem. 1–2**: *Gold . . . sacred stones,* the temple treasures; but the people are more precious to God. **3**: Jerusalem can no longer care for the children.

**4.4–5, 9–10**: See 2 Kings 25.3. **12**: See Isa chs 36–37. **13–16**: Judah's religious leaders had been moral lepers.

11 The LORD gave full vent to
his wrath;
he poured out his hot anger,
and kindled a fire in Zion
that consumed its foundations.

12 The kings of the earth did
not believe,
nor did any of the inhabitants
of the world,
that foe or enemy could enter
the gates of Jerusalem.

13 It was for the sins of her prophets
and the iniquities of her priests,
who shed the blood of the
righteous
in the midst of her.

14 Blindly they wandered through
the streets,
so defiled with blood
that no one was able
to touch their garments.

15 "Away! Unclean!" people shouted
at them;
"Away! Away! Do not touch!"
So they became fugitives and
wanderers;
it was said among the nations,
"They shall stay here no
longer."

16 The LORD himself has scattered
them,
he will regard them no more;
no honor was shown to the
priests,
no favor to the elders.

17 Our eyes failed, ever watching
vainly for help;
we were watching eagerly
for a nation that could not save.

18 They dogged our steps
so that we could not walk in
our streets;
our end drew near; our days were
numbered;
for our end had come.

19 Our pursuers were swifter
than the eagles in the heavens;
they chased us on the mountains,
they lay in wait for us in the
wilderness.

20 The LORD's anointed, the breath of
our life,
was taken in their pits—
the one of whom we said, "Under
his shadow
we shall live among the
nations."

21 Rejoice and be glad, O daughter
Edom,
you that live in the land of Uz;
but to you also the cup shall pass;
you shall become drunk and
strip yourself bare.

22 The punishment of your iniquity,
O daughter Zion, is
accomplished,
he will keep you in exile
no longer;
but your iniquity, O daughter
Edom, he will punish,
he will uncover your sins.

5 Remember, O LORD, what has
befallen us;
look, and see our disgrace!
2 Our inheritance has been turned
over to strangers,
our homes to aliens.
3 We have become orphans,
fatherless;

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**4.17–20**: Jerusalem is again personified; compare 1.12–16. **17**: *A nation that could not save,* Egypt (Jer 37.5–10). **20**: *The LORD's anointed,* king Zedekiah (2 Kings 25.4–6). *Pits,* hunters' traps.

**4.21–22**: Unlike chs 1–3, which end with a prayer for mercy and deliverance, ch 4 ends with a vow or prophecy that *Edom* too will suffer for treachery to Israel (see Ob 8–14).

**5.1–22: A community psalm of lament and petition for restoration** (like Pss 44; 74; 79; 80). **1–14**: The misery of Judah's people

our mothers are like widows.
4 We must pay for the water
we drink;
the wood we get must be
bought.
5 With a yoke[j] on our necks we are
hard driven;
we are weary, we are given
no rest.
6 We have made a pact with[k] Egypt
and Assyria,
to get enough bread.
7 Our ancestors sinned; they are
no more,
and we bear their iniquities.
8 Slaves rule over us;
there is no one to deliver us
from their hand.
9 We get our bread at the peril of
our lives,
because of the sword in the
wilderness.
10 Our skin is black as an oven
from the scorching heat
of famine.
11 Women are raped in Zion,
virgins in the towns of Judah.
12 Princes are hung up by
their hands;
no respect is shown to the
elders.
13 Young men are compelled to
grind,
and boys stagger under loads
of wood.
14 The old men have left the city
gate,
the young men their music.
15 The joy of our hearts has ceased;
our dancing has been turned
to mourning.
16 The crown has fallen from
our head;
woe to us, for we have sinned!
17 Because of this our hearts are sick,
because of these things our eyes
have grown dim:
18 because of Mount Zion, which
lies desolate;
jackals prowl over it.

19 But you, O LORD, reign forever;
your throne endures to all
generations.
20 Why have you forgotten us
completely?
Why have you forsaken us these
many days?
21 Restore us to yourself, O LORD,
that we may be restored;
renew our days as of old—
22 unless you have utterly rejected
us,
and are angry with us beyond
measure.

*j* Symmachus: Heb lacks *With a yoke*
*k* Heb *have given the hand to*

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under the heel of Babylon. **8:** *Slaves rule,* important posts were sometimes given to slaves of the king. **10:** *Black as an oven,* or "burned as in an oven."

**5.15–18:** The Davidic monarchy is no more, and the temple site is desolate. **16:** *Crown,* a double reference to the garland of the dancers and to the king's crown. **19–22:** A plea for divine remembrance and mercy (compare Pss 74.1–2; 79.5–8; 80.1–7).

# *Ezekiel*

Ezekiel was a priest whose ministry to his fellow exiles extended from 593 (1.2) to perhaps 563 B.C., if the enigmatic "thirtieth year" in 1.1 is taken as the thirtieth year after his call and as the date of the initial compilation of the book of Ezekiel by the prophet himself. The latest dated oracle included in the book is of the year 571 B.C. (29.17). The book of Ezekiel has the most thoroughgoing chronological notations of any of the books of the prophets, with only three dates out of order (26.1; 29.17; 33.21). The dates do not necessarily apply to all the oracles following a given date, and the chronological position of undated oracles may be ascertained from the nature of their contents. The capture and destruction of Jerusalem in 587 B.C. was a decisive factor in Ezekiel's ministry. The oracles of warning (chs 1–24) are to be dated before the fall of Jerusalem. The oracles of hope (chs 33–48) belong after the fall of Jerusalem. The oracles against the foreign nations (chs 25–32) belong to the middle period of Ezekiel's ministry (587 to 585 B.C.; but 29.17–21 dates from 571 B.C.).

The original collection was rewritten and expanded by an editor, but Ezekiel's distinctive prose and poetry may be recognized throughout the book. The text has suffered much in transmission; as a consequence, the interpretation is frequently uncertain.

There was no other prophet in Israel whose words and actions expressed a personality so distinctive as Ezekiel's. In his vision reports, such as that of the throne chariot of the LORD (ch 1) or of the abominations in the temple of Jerusalem (ch 8), his use of language and symbolism is peculiar. His symbolic actions, such as his eating a scroll (2.8–3.3) or his forgoing the customary rites of mourning at the death of his wife (24.15–27), seem bizarre. His long allegories of erring Israel and Judah (chs 16 and 23) are repellent, at least to our taste. But there is no way to know whether the strange modes of presentation that he employed were due to his double role as both priest and prophet, or whether Ezekiel's personality was confounded by the disorienting experience of being exiled to Babylon. In the innovativeness with which he employed the language of vision, he laid the groundwork for the symbolic universe of apocalypticism. But he made it clear that no matter how specific his description of godly matters was, there was no human language that could do them justice ("This was the appearance of the likeness of the glory of the LORD," 1.28).

As a prophet to the exiles, Ezekiel assured his hearers of the abiding presence of God among them. He constantly emphasized the LORD's role in the events of the day, so that Israel and the nations "will know that I am the LORD" (a refrain that occurs many times throughout the book). He underscored the integrity of the individual and each one's personal responsibility to God (see e.g. ch 18). To a helpless and hopeless people he brought hope of restoration to homeland and temple by their just and holy God. In Ezekiel we have an unparalleled synthesis of the terrestrial and celestial in Israel's religion, truly fitting for one whose ministry marks the transition from pre-exilic Israelite religion to post-exilic Judaism.

1 In the thirtieth year, in the fourth month, on the fifth day of the month, as I was among the exiles by the river Chebar, the heavens were opened, and I saw visions of God. 2On the fifth day of the month (it was the fifth year of the exile of King Jehoiachin), 3the word of the LORD came to the priest Ezekiel son of Buzi, in the land of the Chaldeans by the river Chebar; and the hand of the LORD was on him there.

4 As I looked, a stormy wind came out of the north: a great cloud with brightness around it and fire flashing forth continually, and in the middle of the fire, something like gleaming amber. 5In the middle of it was something like four living creatures. This was their appearance: they were of human form. 6Each had four faces, and each of them had four wings. 7Their legs were straight, and the soles of their feet were like the sole of a calf's foot; and they sparkled like burnished bronze. 8Under their wings on their four sides they had human hands. And the four had their faces and their wings thus: 9their wings touched one another; each of them moved straight ahead, without turning as they moved. 10As for the appearance of their faces: the four had the face of a human being, the face of a lion on the right side, the face of an ox on the left side, and the face of an eagle; 11such were their faces. Their wings were spread out above; each creature had two wings, each of which touched the wing of another, while two covered their bodies. 12Each moved straight ahead; wherever the spirit would go, they went, without turning as they went. 13In the middle of[a] the living creatures there was something that looked like burning coals of fire, like torches moving to and fro among the living creatures; the fire was bright, and lightning issued from the fire. 14The living creatures darted to and fro, like a flash of lightning.

15 As I looked at the living creatures, I saw a wheel on the earth beside the living creatures, one for each of the four of them.[b] 16As for the appearance of the wheels and their construction: their appearance was like the gleaming of beryl; and the four had the same form, their construction being something like a wheel within a wheel. 17When they moved, they moved in any of the four directions without veering as they moved. 18Their rims were tall and awesome, for the rims of all four were full of eyes all around. 19When the living creatures moved, the wheels moved beside them; and when the living creatures rose from the earth, the wheels rose. 20Wherever the spirit would go, they went, and the wheels rose along with them; for the spirit of the living creatures was in the wheels. 21When they moved, the others

*a* Gk OL: Heb *And the appearance of* *b* Heb *of their faces*

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**1.1–3.27: The call of Ezekiel. 1.1–3: Superscription.** *The thirtieth year,* perhaps the thirtieth year after Ezekiel's call, and if so, the date of the initial composition of the book, 563 B.C. (compare Jer 36.1–3). *Fifth day* of the *fourth month . . . , fifth year of the exile* would be July 31, 593 B.C. This is reckoned from a lunar calendar, with the year beginning in the spring. The name *Ezekiel* means "God strengthens." *Chebar,* a canal which is mentioned also in the Babylonian records, flowing southeast from its fork above Babylon, through Nippur, and rejoining the Euphrates near Erech. *Hand of the* LORD expresses Ezekiel's sense of divine compulsion (3.14, 22; 8.1; 33.22; 37.1; 40.1).

**1.4–28a: The throne chariot vision.** Compare the imagery in 1 Kings 22.19–22; Isa 6.1–9. **4:** *Out of the north,* a literary figure drawn from Canaanite mythology, according to which the gods lived in the north. *Stormy wind* (1 Kings 19.11), *cloud* (Ex 19.16), and *fire* (1 Kings 19.11–12) are all elements in the theophany (manifestation) of God. **5:** The *living creatures* (Rev 4.7) are cherubim, guardians of God's throne (see Ex 25.10–22; 1 Kings 6.23–28), namely winged human-headed lions or oxen, symbolizing mobility, intelligence, and strength.

**1.15–21:** *The four wheels* (compare the four faces of the creatures) symbolize omnidirectional mobility. **18:** *Full of eyes,* symbolic of the all-seeing nature of God (Rev 4.6, 8).

**1.22:** In ancient cosmology, the firmament

moved; when they stopped, the others stopped; and when they rose from the earth, the wheels rose along with them; for the spirit of the living creatures was in the wheels.

22 Over the heads of the living creatures there was something like a dome, shining like crystal,[c] spread out above their heads. 23 Under the dome their wings were stretched out straight, one toward another; and each of the creatures had two wings covering its body. 24 When they moved, I heard the sound of their wings like the sound of mighty waters, like the thunder of the Almighty,[d] a sound of tumult like the sound of an army; when they stopped, they let down their wings. 25 And there came a voice from above the dome over their heads; when they stopped, they let down their wings.

26 And above the dome over their heads there was something like a throne, in appearance like sapphire;[e] and seated above the likeness of a throne was something that seemed like a human form. 27 Upward from what appeared like the loins I saw something like gleaming amber, something that looked like fire enclosed all around; and downward from what looked like the loins I saw something that looked like fire, and there was a splendor all around. 28 Like the bow in a cloud on a rainy day, such was the appearance of the splendor all around. This was the appearance of the likeness of the glory of the LORD.

When I saw it, I fell on my face, and I heard the voice of someone speaking.

2 He said to me: O mortal,[f] stand up on your feet, and I will speak with you. 2 And when he spoke to me, a spirit entered into me and set me on my feet; and I heard him speaking to me. 3 He said to me, Mortal, I am sending you to the people of Israel, to a nation[g] of rebels who have rebelled against me; they and their ancestors have transgressed against me to this very day. 4 The descendants are impudent and stubborn. I am sending you to them, and you shall say to them, "Thus says the Lord GOD." 5 Whether they hear or refuse to hear (for they are a rebellious house), they shall know that there has been a prophet among them. 6 And you, O mortal, do not be afraid of them, and do not be afraid of their words, though briers and thorns surround you and you live among scorpions; do not be afraid of their words, and do not be dismayed at their looks, for they are a rebellious house. 7 You shall speak my words to them, whether they hear or refuse to hear; for they are a rebellious house.

8 But you, mortal, hear what I say to you; do not be rebellious like that rebellious house; open your mouth and eat what I give you. 9 I looked, and a hand was stretched out to me, and a written scroll was in it. 10 He spread it before me; it had writing on the front and on the back, and written on it were words of lamentation and mourning and woe.

3 He said to me, O mortal, eat what is offered to you; eat this scroll, and go, speak to the house of Israel. 2 So I

*c* Gk: Heb *like the awesome crystal*
*d* Traditional rendering of Heb *Shaddai*
*e* Or *lapis lazuli* *f* Or *son of man*; Heb *ben adam* (and so throughout the book when Ezekiel is addressed) *g* Syr: Heb *to nations*

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separated the waters above the earth from the earth (Gen 1.6–8).

**1.26–28:** Thus the LORD was enthroned above his creatures; compare the LORD enthroned above the cherubim in Ex 37.9 (on the ark); 1 Sam 4.4.

**1.28b–3.27: The five commissions. 1.28b–2.8a:** The first commission. The nonmessianic term *mortal* (literally "son of man") occurs ninety-three times in Ezekiel; it emphasizes the prophet's finite dependence and insignificance before God's infinite power and glory (Ps 8.4). **2.2:** The *Spirit* is identified with "Spirit of the LORD" (11.5; 37.1; Isa 61.1). **5:** *Rebellious house*, a designation of Judah, whose apostasy was the cause of the exile (Jer 2.29; 3.13). **6–7:** Compare the LORD's encouragement of the prophet in Jer 1.6–8, 16–19.

**2.8b–3.3:** So that he will speak only what the LORD has written, Ezekiel is told to eat a papyrus *scroll* filled with words of woe (com-

opened my mouth, and he gave me the scroll to eat. 3He said to me, Mortal, eat this scroll that I give you and fill your stomach with it. Then I ate it; and in my mouth it was as sweet as honey.

4 He said to me: Mortal, go to the house of Israel and speak my very words to them. 5For you are not sent to a people of obscure speech and difficult language, but to the house of Israel— 6not to many peoples of obscure speech and difficult language, whose words you cannot understand. Surely, if I sent you to them, they would listen to you. 7But the house of Israel will not listen to you, for they are not willing to listen to me; because all the house of Israel have a hard forehead and a stubborn heart. 8See, I have made your face hard against their faces, and your forehead hard against their foreheads. 9Like the hardest stone, harder than flint, I have made your forehead; do not fear them or be dismayed at their looks, for they are a rebellious house. 10He said to me: Mortal, all my words that I shall speak to you receive in your heart and hear with your ears; 11then go to the exiles, to your people, and speak to them. Say to them, "Thus says the Lord GOD"; whether they hear or refuse to hear.

12 Then the spirit lifted me up, and as the glory of the LORD rose[h] from its place, I heard behind me the sound of loud rumbling; 13it was the sound of the wings of the living creatures brushing against one another, and the sound of the wheels beside them, that sounded like a loud rumbling. 14The spirit lifted me up and bore me away; I went in bitterness in the heat of my spirit, the hand of the LORD being strong upon me. 15I came to the exiles at Tel-abib, who lived by the river Chebar.[i] And I sat there among them, stunned, for seven days.

16 At the end of seven days, the word of the LORD came to me: 17Mortal, I have made you a sentinel for the house of Israel; whenever you hear a word from my mouth, you shall give them warning from me. 18If I say to the wicked, "You shall surely die," and you give them no warning, or speak to warn the wicked from their wicked way, in order to save their life, those wicked persons shall die for their iniquity; but their blood I will require at your hand. 19But if you warn the wicked, and they do not turn from their wickedness, or from their wicked way, they shall die for their iniquity; but you will have saved your life. 20Again, if the righteous turn from their righteousness and commit iniquity, and I lay a stumbling block before them, they shall die; because you have not warned them, they shall die for their sin, and their righteous deeds that they have done shall not be remembered; but their blood I will require at your hand. 21If, however, you warn the righteous not to sin, and they do not sin, they shall surely live, because they took warning; and you will have saved your life.

22 Then the hand of the LORD was upon me there; and he said to me, Rise up, go out into the valley, and there I will speak with you. 23So I rose up and went out into the valley; and the glory of the LORD stood there, like the glory that I had seen by the river Chebar; and I fell on my face. 24The spirit entered into me, and set me on my feet; and he spoke with

*h* Cn: Heb *and blessed be the glory of the* LORD
*i* Two Mss Syr: Heb *Chebar, and to where they lived.* Another reading is *Chebar, and I sat where they sat*

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pare Jer 15.16; Zech 5.1–4; Rev 10.8–11). *Sweet,* Ps 19.10.

**3.4–9**: Second commission. Ezekiel's determination to prophesy (Jer 1.18) must be stronger than Israel's refusal to hear (Am 7.10–17; Jer 20.7–18). **10–15**: Third commission. An editorial reduplication of the preceding materials, emphasizing the mission to the exiles (2.4–5). *Tel-abib* (derived from Babylonian "til abubi," "mound of the deluge"), Jewish settlement near Nippur, not far from the Chebar canal.

**3.16–21**: Fourth commission. This *sentinel* passage (Jer 6.17; Hos 9.8) is an application of Ezekiel's doctrine of personal responsibility (18.1–32) to the prophetic office (33.7–16). **22–27**: Fifth commission. *The valley* is the southern Tigris-Euphrates valley (37.1; Gen

me and said to me: Go, shut yourself inside your house. 25 As for you, mortal, cords shall be placed on you, and you shall be bound with them, so that you cannot go out among the people; 26 and I will make your tongue cling to the roof of your mouth, so that you shall be speechless and unable to reprove them; for they are a rebellious house. 27 But when I speak with you, I will open your mouth, and you shall say to them, "Thus says the Lord GOD"; let those who will hear, hear; and let those who refuse to hear, refuse; for they are a rebellious house.

4 And you, O mortal, take a brick and set it before you. On it portray a city, Jerusalem; 2 and put siegeworks against it, and build a siege wall against it, and cast up a ramp against it; set camps also against it, and plant battering rams against it all around. 3 Then take an iron plate and place it as an iron wall between you and the city; set your face toward it, and let it be in a state of siege, and press the siege against it. This is a sign for the house of Israel.

4 Then lie on your left side, and place the punishment of the house of Israel upon it; you shall bear their punishment for the number of the days that you lie there. 5 For I assign to you a number of days, three hundred ninety days, equal to the number of the years of their punishment; and so you shall bear the punishment of the house of Israel. 6 When you have completed these, you shall lie down a second time, but on your right side, and bear the punishment of the house of Judah; forty days I assign you, one day for each year. 7 You shall set your face toward the siege of Jerusalem, and with your arm bared you shall prophesy against it. 8 See, I am putting cords on you so that you cannot turn from one side to the other until you have completed the days of your siege.

9 And you, take wheat and barley, beans and lentils, millet and spelt; put them into one vessel, and make bread for yourself. During the number of days that you lie on your side, three hundred ninety days, you shall eat it. 10 The food that you eat shall be twenty shekels a day by weight; at fixed times you shall eat it. 11 And you shall drink water by measure, one-sixth of a hin; at fixed times you shall drink. 12 You shall eat it as a barley-cake, baking it in their sight on human dung. 13 The LORD said, "Thus shall the people of Israel eat their bread, unclean, among the nations to which I will drive them." 14 Then I said, "Ah Lord GOD! I have never defiled myself; from my youth up until now I have never eaten what died of itself or was torn by animals, nor has carrion flesh come into my mouth." 15 Then he said to me, "See, I will let you have cow's dung instead of human dung, on which you may prepare your bread."

16 Then he said to me, Mortal, I am going to break the staff of bread in Jerusalem; they shall eat bread by weight and

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11.2). Ezekiel's *speechless* state may refer to his apparent inability to speak of anything but the doom of Judah and Jerusalem for the following seven and one-half years (24.26–27; 33.21–22).

**4.1–5.17: Symbolic actions describing the coming siege of Jerusalem. 4.1–3:** A sun-dried *brick* (common in Babylonia) with a relief drawing of Jerusalem under siege, and *an iron plate,* a griddle, symbolizing God's role in Jerusalem's fall (Jer 21.5).

**4.4–8:** As a symbol of the years of the punishment of Israel (exact significance unknown), the prophet is directed to lie on his left side *three-hundred ninety days,* and as a symbol of the years of the punishment of Judah to lie on his right side *forty days* (compare the forty years in the wilderness, Num 14.33; Jer 25.11–12). The actual performance of this command seems most unlikely.

**4.9–17:** Unclean food and rationing reflect the rigors of the siege during which the people even practiced cannibalism (Jer 19.9; Lam 4.10). **9:** Mixing the grains indicates scarcity of foodstuffs, not uncleanness. **12:** *Human dung* was considered unclean (Deut 23.12–14). Dried *cow dung* (v. 15) was and is common fuel in the East. **14:** Compare Lev 17.10–16. **16:** *Staff of bread,* 5.16. Jerusalem's water during the siege came from cisterns and two springs, Gihon in the Kidron Valley and En-rogel to the south (2 Kings 20.20).

with fearfulness; and they shall drink water by measure and in dismay. 17 Lacking bread and water, they will look at one another in dismay, and waste away under their punishment.

5 And you, O mortal, take a sharp sword; use it as a barber's razor and run it over your head and your beard; then take balances for weighing, and divide the hair. 2 One third of the hair you shall burn in the fire inside the city, when the days of the siege are completed; one third you shall take and strike with the sword all around the city;[j] and one third you shall scatter to the wind, and I will unsheathe the sword after them. 3 Then you shall take from these a small number, and bind them in the skirts of your robe. 4 From these, again, you shall take some, throw them into the fire and burn them up; from there a fire will come out against all the house of Israel.

5 Thus says the Lord GOD: This is Jerusalem; I have set her in the center of the nations, with countries all around her. 6 But she has rebelled against my ordinances and my statutes, becoming more wicked than the nations and the countries all around her, rejecting my ordinances and not following my statutes. 7 Therefore thus says the Lord GOD: Because you are more turbulent than the nations that are all around you, and have not followed my statutes or kept my ordinances, but have acted according to the ordinances of the nations that are all around you; 8 therefore thus says the Lord GOD: I, I myself, am coming against you; I will execute judgments among you in the sight of the nations. 9 And because of all your abominations, I will do to you what I have never yet done, and the like of which I will never do again. 10 Surely, parents shall eat their children in your midst, and children shall eat their parents; I will execute judgments on you, and any of you who survive I will scatter to every wind. 11 Therefore, as I live, says the Lord GOD, surely, because you have defiled my sanctuary with all your detestable things and with all your abominations—therefore I will cut you down;[k] my eye will not spare, and I will have no pity. 12 One third of you shall die of pestilence or be consumed by famine among you; one third shall fall by the sword around you; and one third I will scatter to every wind and will unsheathe the sword after them.

13 My anger shall spend itself, and I will vent my fury on them and satisfy myself; and they shall know that I, the LORD, have spoken in my jealousy, when I spend my fury on them. 14 Moreover I will make you a desolation and an object of mocking among the nations around you, in the sight of all that pass by. 15 You shall be[l] a mockery and a taunt, a warning and a horror, to the nations around you, when I execute judgments on you in anger and fury, and with furious punishments—I, the LORD, have spoken— 16 when I loose against you[m] my deadly arrows of famine, arrows for destruction, which I will let loose to destroy you, and when I bring more and more famine upon you, and break your staff of bread. 17 I will send famine and wild animals against you, and they will rob you of your children; pestilence and bloodshed shall pass through you; and I will bring the sword upon you. I, the LORD, have spoken.

6 The word of the LORD came to me: 2 O mortal, set your face toward the mountains of Israel, and prophesy

*j* Heb *it* *k* Another reading is *I will withdraw*
*l* Gk Syr Vg Tg: Heb *It shall be* *m* Heb *them*

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**5.1–17**: Shorn hair as a symbol of the fate awaiting the people of Jerusalem. The *sword* is appropriately used as a *razor* to convey the idea of military defeat.

**5.5**: *Center of the nations,* Jerusalem, the holy city, was designated as the geographical center of the earth (see 38.12, "center [literally, navel] of the earth"), as later Rome was looked upon as the navel of the earth.

**5.14**: 36.34; compare Jer 24.9–10. **17**: 14.21.

**6.1–14**: **Oracle against the mountains.**

against them, 3and say, You mountains of Israel, hear the word of the Lord GOD! Thus says the Lord GOD to the mountains and the hills, to the ravines and the valleys: I, I myself will bring a sword upon you, and I will destroy your high places. 4Your altars shall become desolate, and your incense stands shall be broken; and I will throw down your slain in front of your idols. 5I will lay the corpses of the people of Israel in front of their idols; and I will scatter your bones around your altars. 6Wherever you live, your towns shall be waste and your high places ruined, so that your altars will be waste and ruined,[n] your idols broken and destroyed, your incense stands cut down, and your works wiped out. 7The slain shall fall in your midst; then you shall know that I am the LORD.

8 But I will spare some. Some of you shall escape the sword among the nations and be scattered through the countries. 9Those of you who escape shall remember me among the nations where they are carried captive, how I was crushed by their wanton heart that turned away from me, and their wanton eyes that turned after their idols. Then they will be loathsome in their own sight for the evils that they have committed, for all their abominations. 10And they shall know that I am the LORD; I did not threaten in vain to bring this disaster upon them.

11 Thus says the Lord GOD: Clap your hands and stamp your foot, and say, Alas for all the vile abominations of the house of Israel! For they shall fall by the sword, by famine, and by pestilence. 12Those far off shall die of pestilence; those nearby shall fall by the sword; and any who are left and are spared shall die of famine. Thus I will spend my fury upon them. 13And you shall know that I am the LORD, when their slain lie among their idols around their altars, on every high hill, on all the mountain tops, under every green tree, and under every leafy oak, wherever they offered pleasing odor to all their idols. 14I will stretch out my hand against them, and make the land desolate and waste, throughout all their settlements, from the wilderness to Riblah.[o] Then they shall know that I am the LORD.

7 The word of the LORD came to me: 2You, O mortal, thus says the Lord GOD to the land of Israel:

An end! The end has come
upon the four corners of the land.
3 Now the end is upon you,
I will let loose my anger upon you;
I will judge you according to your ways,
I will punish you for all your abominations.
4 My eye will not spare you, I will have no pity.
I will punish you for your ways,
while your abominations are among you.
Then you shall know that I am the LORD.
5 Thus says the Lord GOD:
Disaster after disaster! See, it comes.

*n* Syr Vg Tg: Heb *and be made guilty*
*o* Another reading is *Diblah*

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Compare 36.1–15. The address to the mountains is figurative for the *high places,* funerary cairns used as open-air pagan sanctuaries. The cultic equipment at these sanctuaries included *incense stands* and statues or other representations (such as the oak or other trees; v. 13; Hos 4.13) of fertility goddesses such as Asherah and Anath. *Idols* (v. 4) translates Ezekiel's characteristic term "gillulim" (literally, "dung balls"), found thirty-nine times in Ezekiel, compared with nine times in the rest of the Old Testament. *Works* (v. 6) may refer to the sacred pillars or standing stones, which may have been commemorative monuments (Ex 23.24; Deut 7.5). **14**: *From the wilderness to Riblah* (the wilderness of south Judah and Riblah in central Syria) was the maximum extent of Israelite territory (47.16; 1 Kings 8.65).

**7.1–27: Oracles on the approaching judgment. 1–4**: The theme, *the end,* is reminiscent of Am 8.2; it is the sequel to the judgments of chs 4–6. **3**: Compare Ps 78.49.

6 An end has come, the end
has come.
It has awakened against you; see,
it comes!
7 Your doom[p] has come to you,
O inhabitant of the land.
The time has come, the day
is near—
of tumult, not of reveling on
the mountains.
8 Soon now I will pour out my
wrath upon you;
I will spend my anger
against you.
I will judge you according to
your ways,
and punish you for all your
abominations.
9 My eye will not spare; I will have
no pity.
I will punish you according to
your ways,
while your abominations are
among you.
Then you shall know that it is I the LORD
who strike.
10 See, the day! See, it comes!
Your doom[p] has gone out.
The rod has blossomed, pride has
budded.
11 Violence has grown into a rod
of wickedness.
None of them shall remain,
not their abundance, not their
wealth;
no pre-eminence among them.[p]
12 The time has come, the day
draws near;
let not the buyer rejoice, nor the
seller mourn,
for wrath is upon all their
multitude.
13For the sellers shall not return to what
has been sold as long as they remain
alive. For the vision concerns all their
multitude; it shall not be revoked. Because of their iniquity, they cannot maintain their lives.[p]
14 They have blown the horn and
made everything ready;
but no one goes to battle,
for my wrath is upon all their
multitude.
15 The sword is outside, pestilence
and famine are inside;
those in the field die by
the sword;
those in the city—famine and
pestilence devour them.
16 If any survivors escape,
they shall be found on the
mountains
like doves of the valleys,
all of them moaning over
their iniquity.
17 All hands shall grow feeble,
all knees turn to water.
18 They shall put on sackcloth,
horror shall cover them.
Shame shall be on all faces,
baldness on all their heads.
19 They shall fling their silver into
the streets,
their gold shall be treated as
unclean.
Their silver and gold cannot save them
on the day of the wrath of the LORD.
They shall not satisfy their hunger or fill
their stomachs with it. For it was the
stumbling block of their iniquity.
20From their[q] beautiful ornament, in
which they took pride, they made their
abominable images, their detestable
things; therefore I will make of it an unclean thing to them.
21 I will hand it over to strangers
as booty,
to the wicked of the earth
as plunder;
they shall profane it.

*p* Meaning of Heb uncertain
*q* Syr Symmachus: Heb *its*

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**7.7**: *The day* (Joel 1.15; Mal 4.1; Heb 10.25) is "the day of the LORD" (Am 5.18–20; Isa 2.11, 12–17).

**7.10–23a**: As Jerusalem's end approaches, people will sell at a loss to recover what they can, and the buyers will have little prospect of retaining their purchases. The trumpet calls to the defense, but instead of battle-dress one sees only signs of mourning (Jer 16.6–9; Isa 15.2). The gold and silver they had cast into idols cannot nourish the body, just as the idols themselves are useless (Jer 2.26–28;

22 I will avert my face from them,
so that they may profane my
treasured[r] place;
the violent shall enter it,
they shall profane it.
23 Make a chain![s]
For the land is full of bloody
crimes;
the city is full of violence.
24 I will bring the worst of the
nations
to take possession of their
houses.
I will put an end to the arrogance
of the strong,
and their holy places shall be
profaned.
25 When anguish comes, they will
seek peace,
but there shall be none.
26 Disaster comes upon disaster,
rumor follows rumor;
they shall keep seeking a vision
from the prophet;
instruction shall perish from
the priest,
and counsel from the elders.
27 The king shall mourn,
the prince shall be wrapped
in despair,
and the hands of the people of
the land shall tremble.
According to their way I will deal
with them;
according to their own
judgments I will judge
them.
And they shall know that I am the LORD.

8 In the sixth year, in the sixth month, on the fifth day of the month, as I sat in my house, with the elders of Judah sitting before me, the hand of the Lord GOD fell upon me there. 2I looked, and there was a figure that looked like a human being;[t] below what appeared to be its loins it was fire, and above the loins it was like the appearance of brightness, like gleaming amber. 3It stretched out the form of a hand, and took me by a lock of my head; and the spirit lifted me up between earth and heaven, and brought me in visions of God to Jerusalem, to the entrance of the gateway of the inner court that faces north, to the seat of the image of jealousy, which provokes to jealousy. 4And the glory of the God of Israel was there, like the vision that I had seen in the valley.

5 Then God[u] said to me, "O mortal, lift up your eyes now in the direction of the north." So I lifted up my eyes toward the north, and there, north of the altar gate, in the entrance, was this image of jealousy. 6He said to me, "Mortal, do you see what they are doing, the great abominations that the house of Israel are committing here, to drive me far from my sanctuary? Yet you will see still greater abominations."

7 And he brought me to the entrance of the court; I looked, and there was a hole in the wall. 8Then he said to me, "Mortal, dig through the wall"; and when I dug through the wall, there was an entrance. 9He said to me, "Go in, and see the vile abominations that they are committing here." 10So I went in and looked; there, portrayed on the wall all around, were all kinds of creeping things, and loathsome animals, and all the idols of the house of Israel. 11Before them stood seventy of the elders of the house of Israel, with Jaazaniah son of Shaphan standing among them. Each

r Or *secret*  s Meaning of Heb uncertain
t Gk: Heb *like fire*  u Heb *he*

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10.1–16; Zeph 1.18) except as booty for the conqueror. **22:** *My treasured place,* the temple. **23b–27:** The confusion and brutality of the invasion and siege. *Peace* recalls Jer 6.14; see also Ezek 22.28; the distraught leadership is reminiscent of Jer 4.9–10; 13.13.

**8.1–11.25: The temple visions.**

**8.1–18: The vision of idolatry** (September 17, 592 B.C.). **1–4:** The gateway to the inner court was the third gate leading north from the palace complex into the temple precincts (1 Kings 7.12; 2 Kings 20.4). The *seat . . .* was perhaps a niche for a figured slab.

**8.7–13:** The description may suggest the worship of Osiris, since the wall-paintings recall those of the Egyptian Book of the

had his censer in his hand, and the fragrant cloud of incense was ascending. 12Then he said to me, "Mortal, have you seen what the elders of the house of Israel are doing in the dark, each in his room of images? For they say, 'The LORD does not see us, the LORD has forsaken the land.' " 13He said also to me, "You will see still greater abominations that they are committing."

14 Then he brought me to the entrance of the north gate of the house of the LORD; women were sitting there weeping for Tammuz. 15Then he said to me, "Have you seen this, O mortal? You will see still greater abominations than these."

16 And he brought me into the inner court of the house of the LORD; there, at the entrance of the temple of the LORD, between the porch and the altar, were about twenty-five men, with their backs to the temple of the LORD, and their faces toward the east, prostrating themselves to the sun toward the east. 17Then he said to me, "Have you seen this, O mortal? Is it not bad enough that the house of Judah commits the abominations done here? Must they fill the land with violence, and provoke my anger still further? See, they are putting the branch to their nose! 18Therefore I will act in wrath; my eye will not spare, nor will I have pity; and though they cry in my hearing with a loud voice, I will not listen to them."

9 Then he cried in my hearing with a loud voice, saying, "Draw near, you executioners of the city, each with his destroying weapon in his hand." 2And six men came from the direction of the upper gate, which faces north, each with his weapon for slaughter in his hand; among them was a man clothed in linen, with a writing case at his side. They went in and stood beside the bronze altar.

3 Now the glory of the God of Israel had gone up from the cherub on which it rested to the threshold of the house. The LORD called to the man clothed in linen, who had the writing case at his side; 4and said to him, "Go through the city, through Jerusalem, and put a mark on the foreheads of those who sigh and groan over all the abominations that are committed in it." 5To the others he said in my hearing, "Pass through the city after him, and kill; your eye shall not spare, and you shall show no pity. 6Cut down old men, young men and young women, little children and women, but touch no one who has the mark. And begin at my sanctuary." So they began with the elders who were in front of the house. 7Then he said to them, "Defile the house, and fill the courts with the slain. Go!" So they went out and killed in the city. 8While they were killing, and I was left alone, I fell prostrate on my face and cried out, "Ah Lord GOD! will you destroy all who remain of Israel as you pour out your wrath upon Jerusalem?" 9He said to me, "The guilt of the house of Israel and Judah is exceedingly great; the land is full of bloodshed and the city full of perversity; for they say, 'The LORD has forsaken the land, and the LORD does not see.' 10As for me, my eye will not spare, nor will I have pity, but

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Dead, but the prophet may have in mind a variety of Babylonian worship.

**8.14–15**: *Tammuz*, the Sumero-Accadian vegetation god; the weeping was for his descent into the underworld, coinciding with the annual decline of vegetation.

**8.16–18**: This may reflect the Egyptian worship of the sun-god, who was thought to bring forth all vegetation, or the worship of Tammuz-Adonis (compare Isa 17.10). The *branch*, or vine-sprout, may be a symbol in the cult rites, or it may be a reference to an obscene gesture.

**9.1–11: The punishment of the guilty.**
**1–2**: From the *north* (see 1.4 n.) came the divine *executioners* (compare the temple guards, or "watchmen," in 2 Kings 11.18, designated by the same Hebrew word) and *a man clothed in linen*, who functioned as the LORD's scribe, as did Nabu in the Babylonian pantheon. *Linen*, a ritually clean fabric, was worn by priests (Lev 6.10) and angels (Dan 10.5). **4**: The *mark* was the Hebrew letter "tau," made like an **X** (compare Rev 7.3–4). **6**: The *elders* are those of 8.16. **8**: *All who remain*, those remaining in Palestine after 597 B.C.

I will bring down their deeds upon their heads."

11 Then the man clothed in linen, with the writing case at his side, brought back word, saying, "I have done as you commanded me."

10 Then I looked, and above the dome that was over the heads of the cherubim there appeared above them something like a sapphire,[v] in form resembling a throne. 2He said to the man clothed in linen, "Go within the wheelwork underneath the cherubim; fill your hands with burning coals from among the cherubim, and scatter them over the city." He went in as I looked on. 3Now the cherubim were standing on the south side of the house when the man went in; and a cloud filled the inner court. 4Then the glory of the LORD rose up from the cherub to the threshold of the house; the house was filled with the cloud, and the court was full of the brightness of the glory of the LORD. 5The sound of the wings of the cherubim was heard as far as the outer court, like the voice of God Almighty[w] when he speaks.

6 When he commanded the man clothed in linen, "Take fire from within the wheelwork, from among the cherubim," he went in and stood beside a wheel. 7And a cherub stretched out his hand from among the cherubim to the fire that was among the cherubim, took some of it and put it into the hands of the man clothed in linen, who took it and went out. 8The cherubim appeared to have the form of a human hand under their wings.

9 I looked, and there were four wheels beside the cherubim, one beside each cherub; and the appearance of the wheels was like gleaming beryl. 10And as for their appearance, the four looked alike, something like a wheel within a wheel. 11When they moved, they moved in any of the four directions without veering as they moved; but in whatever direction the front wheel faced, the others followed without veering as they moved. 12Their entire body, their rims, their spokes, their wings, and the wheels—the wheels of the four of them—were full of eyes all around. 13As for the wheels, they were called in my hearing "the wheelwork." 14Each one had four faces: the first face was that of the cherub, the second face was that of a human being, the third that of a lion, and the fourth that of an eagle.

15 The cherubim rose up. These were the living creatures that I saw by the river Chebar. 16When the cherubim moved, the wheels moved beside them; and when the cherubim lifted up their wings to rise up from the earth, the wheels at their side did not veer. 17When they stopped, the others stopped, and when they rose up, the others rose up with them; for the spirit of the living creatures was in them.

18 Then the glory of the LORD went out from the threshold of the house and stopped above the cherubim. 19The cherubim lifted up their wings and rose up from the earth in my sight as they went out with the wheels beside them. They stopped at the entrance of the east gate of the house of the LORD; and the glory of the God of Israel was above them.

20 These were the living creatures

*v* Or *lapis lazuli* *w* Traditional rendering of Heb *El Shaddai*

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**10.1–22** and **11.22–25**: **The LORD leaves his temple,** and instructs the scribe to get coals from the fire between the cherubim (1.13) and to scatter them over the city (compare Gen 19.1–29; Rev 8.5). **1**: *Cherubim,* see 1.5 n. **3–4**: The *cloud* of *the glory of the* LORD recalls Ex 16.10; Num 10.34. The expression *the glory of the* LORD appears nineteen times in Ezekiel in the sense of the objective overpowering majesty of God, not so much an attribute as an expression for God himself (Lev 9.23; Num 20.6).

**10.9–17**: A description of the throne-chariot of God (see 1.5–21). **19**: *East gate,* the main processional gate into the temple precinct (Pss 118.19–20; 24.7, 9). Here God in his throne chariot paused a moment and then forsook his sanctuary, desecrated by pagan rites and superficial worship. The departure continues in 11.22–25.

that I saw underneath the God of Israel by the river Chebar; and I knew that they were cherubim. 21 Each had four faces, each four wings, and underneath their wings something like human hands. 22 As for what their faces were like, they were the same faces whose appearance I had seen by the river Chebar. Each one moved straight ahead.

11 The spirit lifted me up and brought me to the east gate of the house of the LORD, which faces east. There, at the entrance of the gateway, were twenty-five men; among them I saw Jaazaniah son of Azzur, and Pelatiah son of Benaiah, officials of the people. 2 He said to me, "Mortal, these are the men who devise iniquity and who give wicked counsel in this city; 3 they say, 'The time is not near to build houses; this city is the pot, and we are the meat.' 4 Therefore prophesy against them; prophesy, O mortal."

5 Then the spirit of the LORD fell upon me, and he said to me, "Say, Thus says the LORD: This is what you think, O house of Israel; I know the things that come into your mind. 6 You have killed many in this city, and have filled its streets with the slain. 7 Therefore thus says the Lord GOD: The slain whom you have placed within it are the meat, and this city is the pot; but you shall be taken out of it. 8 You have feared the sword; and I will bring the sword upon you, says the Lord GOD. 9 I will take you out of it and give you over to the hands of foreigners, and execute judgments upon you. 10 You shall fall by the sword; I will judge you at the border of Israel. And you shall know that I am the LORD. 11 This city shall not be your pot, and you shall not be the meat inside it; I will judge you at the border of Israel. 12 Then you shall know that I am the LORD, whose statutes you have not followed, and whose ordinances you have not kept, but you have acted according to the ordinances of the nations that are around you."

13 Now, while I was prophesying, Pelatiah son of Benaiah died. Then I fell down on my face, cried with a loud voice, and said, "Ah Lord GOD! will you make a full end of the remnant of Israel?"

14 Then the word of the LORD came to me: 15 Mortal, your kinsfolk, your own kin, your fellow exiles,[x] the whole house of Israel, all of them, are those of whom the inhabitants of Jerusalem have said, "They have gone far from the LORD; to us this land is given for a possession." 16 Therefore say: Thus says the Lord GOD: Though I removed them far away among the nations, and though I scattered them among the countries, yet I have been a sanctuary to them for a little while[y] in the countries where they have gone. 17 Therefore say: Thus says the Lord GOD: I will gather you from the peoples, and assemble you out of the countries where you have been scattered, and I will give you the land of Israel. 18 When they come there, they will remove from it all its detestable things and all its abominations. 19 I will give them

*x* Gk Syr: Heb *people of your kindred* *y* Or *to some extent*

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**11.1–25**: **Judgment and promise. 1–13**: *Jaazaniah* and *Pelatiah* are otherwise unknown. *Wicked counsel* perhaps refers to the plot between Egypt and Zedekiah's pro-Egyptian counselors against Nebuchadrezzar (Jer 27.1–3; 37.5, 7, 11). Encouraged by the negotiations, they assure the populace of the city's security and urge them to continue domestic construction. Accusing the leaders of gross violence (ch 22; Jer 34.8–16), Ezekiel tells them that the city's walls (the *pot;* 24.1–14) will not protect them, but they will be taken to *the border of Israel,* there to be judged (at Riblah?; Jer 52.24–27).

**11.13**: Ezekiel added this note when these oracles were transcribed (1.1).

**11.14–21**: This passage condemns the attitude which maintained that the exiles had borne God's punishment and their property now belonged to those who remained. Ezekiel warns them that God is with his exiled people and will restore them, while they, the presumptuous idolators, will be punished (Jer 24.1–10). New *heart,* Jer 32.37–41.

one[z] heart, and put a new spirit within them; I will remove the heart of stone from their flesh and give them a heart of flesh, 20so that they may follow my statutes and keep my ordinances and obey them. Then they shall be my people, and I will be their God. 21But as for those whose heart goes after their detestable things and their abominations,[a] I will bring their deeds upon their own heads, says the Lord GOD.

22 Then the cherubim lifted up their wings, with the wheels beside them; and the glory of the God of Israel was above them. 23And the glory of the LORD ascended from the middle of the city, and stopped on the mountain east of the city. 24The spirit lifted me up and brought me in a vision by the spirit of God into Chaldea, to the exiles. Then the vision that I had seen left me. 25And I told the exiles all the things that the LORD had shown me.

12 The word of the LORD came to me: 2Mortal, you are living in the midst of a rebellious house, who have eyes to see but do not see, who have ears to hear but do not hear; 3for they are a rebellious house. Therefore, mortal, prepare for yourself an exile's baggage, and go into exile by day in their sight; you shall go like an exile from your place to another place in their sight. Perhaps they will understand, though they are a rebellious house. 4You shall bring out your baggage by day in their sight, as baggage for exile; and you shall go out yourself at evening in their sight, as those do who go into exile. 5Dig through the wall in their sight, and carry the baggage through it. 6In their sight you shall lift the baggage on your shoulder, and carry it out in the dark; you shall cover your face, so that you may not see the land; for I have made you a sign for the house of Israel.

7 I did just as I was commanded. I brought out my baggage by day, as baggage for exile, and in the evening I dug through the wall with my own hands; I brought it out in the dark, carrying it on my shoulder in their sight.

8 In the morning the word of the LORD came to me: 9Mortal, has not the house of Israel, the rebellious house, said to you, "What are you doing?" 10Say to them, "Thus says the Lord GOD: This oracle concerns the prince in Jerusalem and all the house of Israel in it." 11Say, "I am a sign for you: as I have done, so shall it be done to them; they shall go into exile, into captivity." 12And the prince who is among them shall lift his baggage on his shoulder in the dark, and shall go out; he[b] shall dig through the wall and carry it through; he shall cover his face, so that he may not see the land with his eyes. 13I will spread my net over him, and he shall be caught in my snare; and I will bring him to Babylon, the land of the Chaldeans, yet he shall not see it; and he shall die there. 14I will scatter to every wind all who are around him, his helpers and all his troops; and I will unsheathe the sword behind them. 15And they shall know that I am the LORD, when I disperse them among the nations and scatter them through the countries. 16But I will let a few of them escape from the sword, from famine and pestilence, so that they may tell of all their abominations among

*z* Another reading is *a new* *a* Cn: Heb *And to the heart of their detestable things and their abominations their heart goes* *b* Gk Syr: Heb *they*

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**11.22–25**: See 10.1–22. **23**: *The mountain east of the city* is the Mount of Olives.

**12.1–20**: **Symbols of the Exile. 1–16**: Ezekiel is commanded to symbolize by appropriate actions the collecting of whatever goods the exiles could carry (Jer 10.17) and the leaving of the city in the cool of the evening through its breached wall. *Dig through the wall* indicates a Babylonian locale in which mud-brick ("adobe") houses were common. Many scholars conclude this oracle has been revised to refer to Zedekiah (the *prince*) who left Jerusalem by night, was captured (17.20), taken to Riblah and blinded (*may not see*, vv. 6, 12; Jer 39.1–10).

**12.14**: Seems to reflect 5.2, 10, 12. **15–16**: 14.21–23.

the nations where they go; then they shall know that I am the LORD.

17 The word of the LORD came to me: 18Mortal, eat your bread with quaking, and drink your water with trembling and with fearfulness; 19and say to the people of the land, Thus says the Lord GOD concerning the inhabitants of Jerusalem in the land of Israel: They shall eat their bread with fearfulness, and drink their water in dismay, because their land shall be stripped of all it contains, on account of the violence of all those who live in it. 20The inhabited cities shall be laid waste, and the land shall become a desolation; and you shall know that I am the LORD.

21 The word of the LORD came to me: 22Mortal, what is this proverb of yours about the land of Israel, which says, "The days are prolonged, and every vision comes to nothing"? 23Tell them therefore, "Thus says the Lord GOD: I will put an end to this proverb, and they shall use it no more as a proverb in Israel." But say to them, The days are near, and the fulfillment of every vision. 24For there shall no longer be any false vision or flattering divination within the house of Israel. 25But I the LORD will speak the word that I speak, and it will be fulfilled. It will no longer be delayed; but in your days, O rebellious house, I will speak the word and fulfill it, says the Lord GOD.

26 The word of the LORD came to me: 27Mortal, the house of Israel is saying, "The vision that he sees is for many years ahead; he prophesies for distant times." 28Therefore say to them, Thus says the Lord GOD: None of my words will be delayed any longer, but the word that I speak will be fulfilled, says the Lord GOD.

13 The word of the LORD came to me: 2Mortal, prophesy against the prophets of Israel who are prophesying; say to those who prophesy out of their own imagination: "Hear the word of the LORD!" 3Thus says the Lord GOD, Alas for the senseless prophets who follow their own spirit, and have seen nothing! 4Your prophets have been like jackals among ruins, O Israel. 5You have not gone up into the breaches, or repaired a wall for the house of Israel, so that it might stand in battle on the day of the LORD. 6They have envisioned falsehood and lying divination; they say, "Says the LORD," when the LORD has not sent them, and yet they wait for the fulfillment of their word! 7Have you not seen a false vision or uttered a lying divination, when you have said, "Says the LORD," even though I did not speak?

8 Therefore thus says the Lord GOD: Because you have uttered falsehood and envisioned lies, I am against you, says the Lord GOD. 9My hand will be against the prophets who see false visions and utter lying divinations; they shall not be in the council of my people, nor be enrolled in the register of the house of Israel, nor shall they enter the land of Israel; and you shall know that I am the Lord GOD. 10Because, in truth, because they have misled my people, saying, "Peace," when there is no peace; and because, when the people build a wall, these prophets[c] smear whitewash on it. 11Say

[c] Heb *they*

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**12.17–20**: The people's terror at the approaching invasion (4.9–11, 16–17; Jer 4.19–21).

**12.21–14.23**: **Of prophets and people.** **12.21–28**: A condemnation of the popular attitude that prophetic visions could be safely ignored (Hos 12.10; Jer 14.14–15; 23.28–29), and a correction of the impression that the fulfillment of prophecies of destruction such as those of Jeremiah was distant (Jer 5.12–13; 17.15). **27**: Compare Isa 22.13; 1 Cor 15.32.

**13.1–16**: Against false prophets. The absence of objective criteria (Jer 28.8–9) resulted in the perennial problem of identifying the true prophet (1 Kings ch 22; Mic 3.5; Isa 9.15; Jer chs 14–15; with this passage, compare Jer 23.9–32). *Divination* (Ex 28.30; 1 Sam 28.6) played practically no role among the great prophets of Israel, but was common in contemporary non-Israelite prophetism, and apparently also in Israel. The false prophets' message (Jer chs 28–29) was like whitewash on a mud-brick wall (12.5) which provided no protection against the storm. **9**: *Register,* Ezra ch 2; Ex 32.32–33.

to those who smear whitewash on it that it shall fall. There will be a deluge of rain,[d] great hailstones will fall, and a stormy wind will break out. 12When the wall falls, will it not be said to you, "Where is the whitewash you smeared on it?" 13Therefore thus says the Lord GOD: In my wrath I will make a stormy wind break out, and in my anger there shall be a deluge of rain, and hailstones in wrath to destroy it. 14I will break down the wall that you have smeared with whitewash, and bring it to the ground, so that its foundation will be laid bare; when it falls, you shall perish within it; and you shall know that I am the LORD. 15Thus I will spend my wrath upon the wall, and upon those who have smeared it with whitewash; and I will say to you, The wall is no more, nor those who smeared it— 16the prophets of Israel who prophesied concerning Jerusalem and saw visions of peace for it, when there was no peace, says the Lord GOD.

17 As for you, mortal, set your face against the daughters of your people, who prophesy out of their own imagination; prophesy against them 18and say, Thus says the Lord GOD: Woe to the women who sew bands on all wrists, and make veils for the heads of persons of every height, in the hunt for human lives! Will you hunt down lives among my people, and maintain your own lives? 19You have profaned me among my people for handfuls of barley and for pieces of bread, putting to death persons who should not die and keeping alive persons who should not live, by your lies to my people, who listen to lies.

20 Therefore thus says the Lord GOD: I am against your bands with which you hunt lives;[e] I will tear them from your arms, and let the lives go free, the lives that you hunt down like birds. 21I will tear off your veils, and save my people from your hands; they shall no longer be prey in your hands; and you shall know that I am the LORD. 22Because you have disheartened the righteous falsely, although I have not disheartened them, and you have encouraged the wicked not to turn from their wicked way and save their lives; 23therefore you shall no longer see false visions or practice divination; I will save my people from your hand. Then you will know that I am the LORD.

14 Certain elders of Israel came to me and sat down before me. 2And the word of the LORD came to me: 3Mortal, these men have taken their idols into their hearts, and placed their iniquity as a stumbling block before them; shall I let myself be consulted by them? 4Therefore speak to them, and say to them, Thus says the Lord GOD: Any of those of the house of Israel who take their idols into their hearts and place their iniquity as a stumbling block before them, and yet come to the prophet—I the LORD will answer those who come with the multitude of their idols, 5in order that I may take hold of the hearts of the house of Israel, all of whom are estranged from me through their idols.

6 Therefore say to the house of Israel, Thus says the Lord GOD: Repent and turn away from your idols; and turn away your faces from all your abominations. 7For any of those of the house of Israel, or of the aliens who reside in Israel, who separate themselves from me, taking their idols into their hearts and placing their iniquity as a stumbling

*d* Heb *rain and you* *e* Gk Syr: Heb *lives for birds*

**13.17–23:** Against prophetesses. The reference here is to sorceresses and mediums (vv. 18, 20; 1 Sam 28.7–25), who were probably outside the cult of Yahweh, which provided few opportunities for participation of women (Miriam, Ex 15.20; Deborah, Judg 4.4; Huldah, 2 Kings 22.14 are widely scattered Old Testament examples; compare 1 Cor 14.34). The significance of *bands* and *veils* is unknown.

**14.1–11:** Against idolators. Religious duplicity was so reprehensible to God that God himself would punish anyone guilty of it. *Idols,* see 6.14 n. *Aliens* probably refers to proselytes who were considered equal with Israelites (47.22; Lev 17.8).

block before them, and yet come to a prophet to inquire of me by him, I the LORD will answer them myself. 8I will set my face against them; I will make them a sign and a byword and cut them off from the midst of my people; and you shall know that I am the LORD.

9 If a prophet is deceived and speaks a word, I, the LORD, have deceived that prophet, and I will stretch out my hand against him, and will destroy him from the midst of my people Israel. 10And they shall bear their punishment—the punishment of the inquirer and the punishment of the prophet shall be the same— 11so that the house of Israel may no longer go astray from me, nor defile themselves any more with all their transgressions. Then they shall be my people, and I will be their God, says the Lord GOD.

12 The word of the LORD came to me: 13Mortal, when a land sins against me by acting faithlessly, and I stretch out my hand against it, and break its staff of bread and send famine upon it, and cut off from it human beings and animals, 14even if Noah, Daniel,*f* and Job, these three, were in it, they would save only their own lives by their righteousness, says the Lord GOD. 15If I send wild animals through the land to ravage it, so that it is made desolate, and no one may pass through because of the animals; 16even if these three men were in it, as I live, says the Lord GOD, they would save neither sons nor daughters; they alone would be saved, but the land would be desolate. 17Or if I bring a sword upon that land and say, "Let a sword pass through the land," and I cut off human beings and animals from it; 18though these three men were in it, as I live, says the Lord GOD, they would save neither sons nor daughters, but they alone would be saved. 19Or if I send a pestilence into that land, and pour out my wrath upon it with blood, to cut off humans and animals from it; 20even if Noah, Daniel,*f* and Job were in it, as I live, says the Lord GOD, they would save neither son nor daughter; they would save only their own lives by their righteousness.

21 For thus says the Lord GOD: How much more when I send upon Jerusalem my four deadly acts of judgment, sword, famine, wild animals, and pestilence, to cut off humans and animals from it! 22Yet, survivors shall be left in it, sons and daughters who will be brought out; they will come out to you. When you see their ways and their deeds, you will be consoled for the evil that I have brought upon Jerusalem, for all that I have brought upon it. 23They shall console you, when you see their ways and their deeds; and you shall know that it was not without cause that I did all that I have done in it, says the Lord GOD.

15 The word of the LORD came to me:

2 O mortal, how does the wood of
the vine surpass all
other wood—
the vine branch that is among
the trees of the forest?
3 Is wood taken from it to make
anything?
Does one take a peg from it on
which to hang any object?
4 It is put in the fire for fuel;
when the fire has consumed
both ends of it
and the middle of it is charred,
is it useful for anything?

*f* Or, as otherwise read, *Danel*

**14.12–23:** Against false hopes. One would be saved only if righteous; righteousness is non-transferable and non-cumulative (33.12). Noah and Job are known in the Bible for their righteousness, as is Daniel. Ezekiel's reference to Daniel (see 28.3 n.), however, suggests the Canaanite Danel (so spelled in Ezekiel also) rather than the biblical Daniel. There were undoubtedly cycles of literature associated with these patriarchs of which we now know very little.

**15.1–8: Allegory of the vine.** Vines and vineyards are common figures (Judg 9.8–15; Isa 5.1–7; Jer 2.21) but the reference to the *wood* is unique. The wood of the vine is good only when it produces satisfactorily; other-

5 When it was whole it was used
for nothing;
how much less—when the fire
has consumed it,
and it is charred—
can it ever be used for anything!

6 Therefore thus says the Lord GOD:
Like the wood of the vine among the
trees of the forest, which I have given to
the fire for fuel, so I will give up the
inhabitants of Jerusalem. 7I will set my
face against them; although they escape
from the fire, the fire shall still consume
them; and you shall know that I am the
LORD, when I set my face against them.
8And I will make the land desolate, be-
cause they have acted faithlessly, says the
Lord GOD.

16 The word of the LORD came to
me: 2Mortal, make known to Je-
rusalem her abominations, 3and say,
Thus says the Lord GOD to Jerusalem:
Your origin and your birth were in the
land of the Canaanites; your father was
an Amorite, and your mother a Hittite.
4As for your birth, on the day you were
born your navel cord was not cut, nor
were you washed with water to cleanse
you, nor rubbed with salt, nor wrapped
in cloths. 5No eye pitied you, to do any
of these things for you out of compassion
for you; but you were thrown out in the
open field, for you were abhorred on the
day you were born.

6 I passed by you, and saw you flail-
ing about in your blood. As you lay in
your blood, I said to you, "Live! 7and
grow up[g] like a plant of the field." You
grew up and became tall and arrived at
full womanhood;[h] your breasts were
formed, and your hair had grown; yet
you were naked and bare.

8 I passed by you again and looked on
you; you were at the age for love. I
spread the edge of my cloak over you,
and covered your nakedness: I pledged
myself to you and entered into a cove-
nant with you, says the Lord GOD, and
you became mine. 9Then I bathed you
with water and washed off the blood
from you, and anointed you with oil. 10I
clothed you with embroidered cloth and
with sandals of fine leather; I bound you
in fine linen and covered you with rich
fabric.[i] 11I adorned you with orna-
ments: I put bracelets on your arms, a
chain on your neck, 12a ring on your
nose, earrings in your ears, and a beauti-
ful crown upon your head. 13You were
adorned with gold and silver, while your
clothing was of fine linen, rich fabric,[i]
and embroidered cloth. You had choice
flour and honey and oil for food. You
grew exceedingly beautiful, fit to be a
queen. 14Your fame spread among the
nations on account of your beauty, for it
was perfect because of my splendor that
I had bestowed on you, says the Lord
GOD.

15 But you trusted in your beauty,
and played the whore because of your
fame, and lavished your whorings on

*g* Gk Syr: Heb *Live! I made you a myriad*
*h* Cn: Heb *ornament of ornaments* *i* Meaning of Heb uncertain

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wise, even as fuel, it is practically useless. This is a figure for Judah; unproductive Judah must be destroyed (compare Jn 15.1–11).

**16.1–63: The allegory of the unfaithful wife. 1–7**: Jerusalem, the foundling. Ezekiel uses a folk-tale as an allegory. Jerusalem's ancestry was pagan and not related to the covenant. The *Canaanites* were the Semitic-speaking residents in Palestine before the Israelite invasion in the thirteenth century B.C., probably largely a part of the Amorite irruption into the Fertile Crescent in the early second millennium B.C. The *Hittites* were an Armenoid people living in Palestine with the Canaanites (Gen ch 23; Josh 3.10; compare 2 Sam 11.3). Unwanted and denied the common Palestinian amenities at birth, she, like female children in pagan antiquity, constituted a financial liability and was abandoned to die. By God's help, however, she grew into full maidenhood.

**16.8–14**: The maiden. She was adopted (by marriage) into God's covenant (compare 2 Sam 5.6–10) and became queen, receiving lavish adornment and generous nourishment (Jerusalem in Israel's golden age under Solomon).

**16.15–22**: The degenerate. The word *whorings* is used here in a double sense, referring both to the actual practice of cult prosti-

any passer-by.[j] 16 You took some of your garments, and made for yourself colorful shrines, and on them played the whore; nothing like this has ever been or ever shall be.[k] 17 You also took your beautiful jewels of my gold and my silver that I had given you, and made for yourself male images, and with them played the whore; 18 and you took your embroidered garments to cover them, and set my oil and my incense before them. 19 Also my bread that I gave you—I fed you with choice flour and oil and honey—you set it before them as a pleasing odor; and so it was, says the Lord GOD. 20 You took your sons and your daughters, whom you had borne to me, and these you sacrificed to them to be devoured. As if your whorings were not enough! 21 You slaughtered my children and delivered them up as an offering to them. 22 And in all your abominations and your whorings you did not remember the days of your youth, when you were naked and bare, flailing about in your blood.

23 After all your wickedness (woe, woe to you! says the Lord GOD), 24 you built yourself a platform and made yourself a lofty place in every square; 25 at the head of every street you built your lofty place and prostituted your beauty, offering yourself to every passer-by, and multiplying your whoring. 26 You played the whore with the Egyptians, your lustful neighbors, multiplying your whoring, to provoke me to anger. 27 Therefore I stretched out my hand against you, reduced your rations, and gave you up to the will of your enemies, the daughters of the Philistines, who were ashamed of your lewd behavior. 28 You played the whore with the Assyrians, because you were insatiable; you played the whore with them, and still you were not satisfied. 29 You multiplied your whoring with Chaldea, the land of merchants; and even with this you were not satisfied.

30 How sick is your heart, says the Lord GOD, that you did all these things, the deeds of a brazen whore; 31 building your platform at the head of every street, and making your lofty place in every square! Yet you were not like a whore, because you scorned payment. 32 Adulterous wife, who receives strangers instead of her husband! 33 Gifts are given to all whores; but you gave your gifts to all your lovers, bribing them to come to you from all around for your whorings. 34 So you were different from other women in your whorings: no one solicited you to play the whore; and you gave payment, while no payment was given to you; you were different.

35 Therefore, O whore, hear the word of the LORD: 36 Thus says the Lord GOD, Because your lust was poured out and your nakedness uncovered in your whoring with your lovers, and because of all your abominable idols, and because of the blood of your children that you gave to them, 37 therefore, I will gather

*j* Heb adds *let it be his* *k* Meaning of Heb uncertain

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tution and to Jerusalem's unfaithfulness (Hos 4.13–14), which became widespread in the days of Manasseh (687–642 B.C.; 2 Kings 21.1–18) and Zedekiah (ch 8). She used her *garments* to make shrines and on them indulged in her promiscuity (Am 2.7–8). She fashioned her jewelry into idols (Judg 8.24–27) and amulets. God's gifts were used as offerings to other gods.

**16.23–34**: Jerusalem is condemned for her religious infidelity and her proclivity toward foreign alliances—a major cause of her degeneration. But she was worse than a common prostitute who is paid for her services; Jerusalem invited her lovers and paid them (Isa 30.6; Hos ch 2; 8.9; Jer chs 2–3).

**16.35–43**: Her lovers will turn against her and strip her. God himself will divorce her and expose her to be stoned (Deut 22.21, 24). Her beauty will be destroyed and she will again find herself ignoble and ignored. **44–52**: This section expands on the preceding theme, showing Jerusalem to be so much worse than her "elder sister" *Samaria* and the "younger sister" *Sodom* (Jer 3.6–11), both of whom were destroyed, that they *appear righteous* by comparison.

all your lovers, with whom you took pleasure, all those you loved and all those you hated; I will gather them against you from all around, and will uncover your nakedness to them, so that they may see all your nakedness. 38 I will judge you as women who commit adultery and shed blood are judged, and bring blood upon you in wrath and jealousy. 39 I will deliver you into their hands, and they shall throw down your platform and break down your lofty places; they shall strip you of your clothes and take your beautiful objects and leave you naked and bare. 40 They shall bring up a mob against you, and they shall stone you and cut you to pieces with their swords. 41 They shall burn your houses and execute judgments on you in the sight of many women; I will stop you from playing the whore, and you shall also make no more payments. 42 So I will satisfy my fury on you, and my jealousy shall turn away from you; I will be calm, and will be angry no longer. 43 Because you have not remembered the days of your youth, but have enraged me with all these things; therefore, I have returned your deeds upon your head, says the Lord GOD.

Have you not committed lewdness beyond all your abominations? 44 See, everyone who uses proverbs will use this proverb about you, "Like mother, like daughter." 45 You are the daughter of your mother, who loathed her husband and her children; and you are the sister of your sisters, who loathed their husbands and their children. Your mother was a Hittite and your father an Amorite. 46 Your elder sister is Samaria, who lived with her daughters to the north of you; and your younger sister, who lived to the south of you, is Sodom with her daughters. 47 You not only followed their ways, and acted according to their abominations; within a very little time you were more corrupt than they in all your ways. 48 As I live, says the Lord GOD, your sister Sodom and her daughters have not done as you and your daughters have done. 49 This was the guilt of your sister Sodom: she and her daughters had pride, excess of food, and prosperous ease, but did not aid the poor and needy. 50 They were haughty, and did abominable things before me; therefore I removed them when I saw it. 51 Samaria has not committed half your sins; you have committed more abominations than they, and have made your sisters appear righteous by all the abominations that you have committed. 52 Bear your disgrace, you also, for you have brought about for your sisters a more favorable judgment; because of your sins in which you acted more abominably than they, they are more in the right than you. So be ashamed, you also, and bear your disgrace, for you have made your sisters appear righteous.

53 I will restore their fortunes, the fortunes of Sodom and her daughters and the fortunes of Samaria and her daughters, and I will restore your own fortunes along with theirs, 54 in order that you may bear your disgrace and be ashamed of all that you have done, becoming a consolation to them. 55 As for your sisters, Sodom and her daughters shall return to their former state, Samaria and her daughters shall return to their former state, and you and your daughters shall return to your former state. 56 Was not your sister Sodom a byword in your mouth in the day of your pride, 57 before your wickedness was uncovered? Now you are a mockery to the daughters of Aram[1] and all her neighbors, and to the daughters of the Philistines, those all around who despise you. 58 You must bear the penalty of your lewdness and your abominations, says the LORD.

59 Yes, thus says the Lord GOD: I will deal with you as you have done, you

*1* Another reading is *Edom*

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**16.53–63:** *Aram* (v. 57) should probably be read as "Edom"; the Edomites occupied Judahite territory after 587 B.C. (Lam 4.21–22). This reference is evidence for the revision of the oracle. All three "sisters" will be restored (Jer 12.14–17) and a new covenant es-

who have despised the oath, breaking the covenant; 60yet I will remember my covenant with you in the days of your youth, and I will establish with you an everlasting covenant. 61Then you will remember your ways, and be ashamed when I[m] take your sisters, both your elder and your younger, and give them to you as daughters, but not on account of my[n] covenant with you. 62I will establish my covenant with you, and you shall know that I am the LORD, 63in order that you may remember and be confounded, and never open your mouth again because of your shame, when I forgive you all that you have done, says the Lord GOD.

17 The word of the LORD came to me: 2O mortal, propound a riddle, and speak an allegory to the house of Israel. 3Say: Thus says the Lord GOD:

A great eagle, with great wings
and long pinions,
rich in plumage of many colors,
came to the Lebanon.
He took the top of the cedar,
4 broke off its topmost shoot;
he carried it to a land of trade,
set it in a city of merchants.
5 Then he took a seed from the land,
placed it in fertile soil;
a plant[o] by abundant waters,
he set it like a willow twig.
6 It sprouted and became a vine
spreading out, but low;
its branches turned toward him,
its roots remained where it stood.
So it became a vine;
it brought forth branches,
put forth foliage.
7 There was another great eagle,
with great wings and much plumage.
And see! This vine stretched out
its roots toward him;
it shot out its branches toward him,
so that he might water it.
From the bed where it was planted
8 it was transplanted
to good soil by abundant waters,
so that it might produce branches
and bear fruit
and become a noble vine.
9Say: Thus says the Lord GOD:
Will it prosper?
Will he not pull up its roots,
cause its fruit to rot[o] and wither,
its fresh sprouting leaves to fade?
No strong arm or mighty army will be needed
to pull it from its roots.
10 When it is transplanted, will it thrive?
When the east wind strikes it,
will it not utterly wither,
wither on the bed where it grew?

11 Then the word of the LORD came to me: 12Say now to the rebellious house: Do you not know what these things mean? Tell them: The king of Babylon came to Jerusalem, took its king and its officials, and brought them back with him to Babylon. 13He took one of the royal offspring and made a covenant with him, putting him under oath (he

*m* Syr: Heb *you* *n* Heb lacks *my* *o* Meaning of Heb uncertain

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tablished (Jer 31.31–34). **62:** *I will establish my covenant* (see also v. 60), this phrase is characteristic of the "P" source in the Pentateuch (see Gen 6.18; 9.9, 11; 17.7, 19, etc.).

**17.1–21: The allegory of the eagles.** Dramatis personae: *great eagle,* Nebuchadrezzar; *the top of the cedar,* house of David (Jer 22.5–6, 23); *topmost shoot,* Jehoiachin; *land of trade,* Babylonia; *city of merchants,* Babylon; *seed from the land,* Zedekiah; *another great eagle,* Psammetichus II (594–588 B.C.), who engaged Zedekiah and other western states in anti-Babylonian intrigue (Jer ch 27). **5:** *Planted it,* i.e. made him king.

**17.9–10:** Zedekiah will be unable long to resist Nebuchadrezzar (*the east wind*), though

had taken away the chief men of the land), 14so that the kingdom might be humble and not lift itself up, and that by keeping his covenant it might stand. 15But he rebelled against him by sending ambassadors to Egypt, in order that they might give him horses and a large army. Will he succeed? Can one escape who does such things? Can he break the covenant and yet escape? 16As I live, says the Lord GOD, surely in the place where the king resides who made him king, whose oath he despised, and whose covenant with him he broke—in Babylon he shall die. 17Pharaoh with his mighty army and great company will not help him in war, when ramps are cast up and siege walls built to cut off many lives. 18Because he despised the oath and broke the covenant, because he gave his hand and yet did all these things, he shall not escape. 19Therefore thus says the Lord GOD: As I live, I will surely return upon his head my oath that he despised, and my covenant that he broke. 20I will spread my net over him, and he shall be caught in my snare; I will bring him to Babylon and enter into judgment with him there for the treason he has committed against me. 21All the pick[p] of his troops shall fall by the sword, and the survivors shall be scattered to every wind; and you shall know that I, the LORD, have spoken.

22 Thus says the Lord GOD:
I myself will take a sprig
from the lofty top of a cedar;
I will set it out.
I will break off a tender one
from the topmost of its
young twigs;
I myself will plant it
on a high and lofty mountain.
23 On the mountain height of Israel
I will plant it,
in order that it may produce
boughs and bear fruit,
and become a noble cedar.
Under it every kind of bird
will live;
in the shade of its branches
will nest
winged creatures of every kind.
24 All the trees of the field shall
know
that I am the LORD.
I bring low the high tree,
I make high the low tree;
I dry up the green tree
and make the dry tree flourish.
I the LORD have spoken;
I will accomplish it.

18 The word of the LORD came to me: 2What do you mean by repeating this proverb concerning the land of Israel, "The parents have eaten sour grapes, and the children's teeth are set on edge"? 3As I live, says the Lord GOD, this proverb shall no more be used by you in Israel. 4Know that all lives are mine; the life of the parent as well as the life of the child is mine: it is only the person who sins that shall die.

5 If a man is righteous and does what is lawful and right— 6if he does not eat upon the mountains or lift up his eyes to the idols of the house of Israel, does not defile his neighbor's wife or approach a woman during her menstrual period,

*p* Another reading is *fugitives*

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the siege lasted nineteen months (Jer ch 52). **17**: *Pharaoh* has been added through editorial revision; read, "and not with a mighty army . . . shall he [Nebuchadrezzar] deal with him . . ." (Jer 37.3–11). Both Jeremiah and Ezekiel felt that Zedekiah should honor his oath of fealty to Nebuchadrezzar; his revolt was seen as rebellion against God's design (Jer 27.6–7).

**17.22–24**: **Allegory of the cedar,** a messianic allegory. For similar imagery, see 31.1–9; for the Messiah as a *branch* compare Jer 23.5–6; Zech 3.8; *lofty mountain,* Mount Zion (Mic 4.1).

**18.1–32**: **Individual responsibility. 1–4**: It is human to blame someone else for one's plight; the exiles did this, blaming their ancestors for their misfortunes (Jer 31.27–30), presumably based on the covenant provision in Ex 20.5. Ezekiel points out that the blame rests directly upon themselves. This discussion parallels the provision regarding three generations in Ex 20.5.

**18.5–9**: First generation. *Eat upon the mountains,* sacred meals in pagan high places (6.1–14). The list includes moral and religious provisions; note the strong legalistic

7 does not oppress anyone, but restores to
the debtor his pledge, commits no rob-
bery, gives his bread to the hungry and
covers the naked with a garment, 8 does
not take advance or accrued interest,
withholds his hand from iniquity, exe-
cutes true justice between contending
parties, 9 follows my statutes, and is care-
ful to observe my ordinances, acting
faithfully—such a one is righteous; he
shall surely live, says the Lord GOD.

10 If he has a son who is violent, a
shedder of blood, 11 who does any of
these things (though his father[q] does
none of them), who eats upon the moun-
tains, defiles his neighbor's wife, 12 op-
presses the poor and needy, commits
robbery, does not restore the pledge, lifts
up his eyes to the idols, commits abomi-
nation, 13 takes advance or accrued inter-
est; shall he then live? He shall not. He
has done all these abominable things; he
shall surely die; his blood shall be upon
himself.

14 But if this man has a son who sees
all the sins that his father has done, con-
siders, and does not do likewise, 15 who
does not eat upon the mountains or lift
up his eyes to the idols of the house of
Israel, does not defile his neighbor's
wife, 16 does not wrong anyone, exacts
no pledge, commits no robbery, but
gives his bread to the hungry and covers
the naked with a garment, 17 withholds
his hand from iniquity,[r] takes no ad-
vance or accrued interest, observes my
ordinances, and follows my statutes; he
shall not die for his father's iniquity; he
shall surely live. 18 As for his father, be-
cause he practiced extortion, robbed his
brother, and did what is not good among
his people, he dies for his iniquity.

19 Yet you say, "Why should not the
son suffer for the iniquity of the father?"
When the son has done what is lawful
and right, and has been careful to observe
all my statutes, he shall surely live. 20 The
person who sins shall die. A child shall
not suffer for the iniquity of a parent, nor
a parent suffer for the iniquity of a child;
the righteousness of the righteous shall
be his own, and the wickedness of the
wicked shall be his own.

21 But if the wicked turn away from
all their sins that they have committed
and keep all my statutes and do what is
lawful and right, they shall surely live;
they shall not die. 22 None of the trans-
gressions that they have committed shall
be remembered against them; for the
righteousness that they have done they
shall live. 23 Have I any pleasure in the
death of the wicked, says the Lord GOD,
and not rather that they should turn from
their ways and live? 24 But when the right-
eous turn away from their righteousness
and commit iniquity and do the same
abominable things that the wicked do,
shall they live? None of the righteous
deeds that they have done shall be re-
membered; for the treachery of which
they are guilty and the sin they have
committed, they shall die.

25 Yet you say, "The way of the Lord
is unfair." Hear now, O house of Israel:
Is my way unfair? Is it not your ways that
are unfair? 26 When the righteous turn
away from their righteousness and com-
mit iniquity, they shall die for it; for the
iniquity that they have committed they
shall die. 27 Again, when the wicked turn
away from the wickedness they have
committed and do what is lawful and
right, they shall save their life. 28 Because
they considered and turned away from
all the transgressions that they had com-
mitted, they shall surely live; they shall
not die. 29 Yet the house of Israel says,

*q* Heb *he* *r* Gk: Heb *the poor*

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emphasis: if anyone is "careful to observe my ordinances such a one is righteous." **10–13**: Second generation. *Shedder of blood,* a murderer. A life opposite to that of the father is represented.

**18.14–18**: Third generation. Again a reversal from the father's life. **19–20**: Summation: neither the righteousness nor the iniquities of a previous generation are transferable to the next.

**18.21–24**: Within one's life the same principle of non-extension pertains.

**18.25–29**: Objection to this principle is a misunderstanding of God's justice. **30–32**:

"The way of the Lord is unfair." O house of Israel, are my ways unfair? Is it not your ways that are unfair?

30 Therefore I will judge you, O house of Israel, all of you according to your ways, says the Lord GOD. Repent and turn from all your transgressions; otherwise iniquity will be your ruin.[s] 31 Cast away from you all the transgressions that you have committed against me, and get yourselves a new heart and a new spirit! Why will you die, O house of Israel? 32 For I have no pleasure in the death of anyone, says the Lord GOD. Turn, then, and live.

19 As for you, raise up a lamentation for the princes of Israel, 2 and say:

What a lioness was your mother
among lions!
She lay down among young lions,
rearing her cubs.
3 She raised up one of her cubs;
he became a young lion,
and he learned to catch prey;
he devoured humans.
4 The nations sounded an alarm
against him;
he was caught in their pit;
and they brought him with hooks
to the land of Egypt.
5 When she saw that she was
thwarted,
that her hope was lost,
she took another of her cubs
and made him a young lion.
6 He prowled among the lions;
he became a young lion,
and he learned to catch prey;
he devoured people.
7 And he ravaged their
strongholds,[t]
and laid waste their towns;
the land was appalled, and all
in it,
at the sound of his roaring.
8 The nations set upon him
from the provinces all around;
they spread their net over him;
he was caught in their pit.
9 With hooks they put him in a
cage,
and brought him to the king
of Babylon;
they brought him into custody,
so that his voice should be heard
no more
on the mountains of Israel.
10 Your mother was like a vine in
a vineyard[u]
transplanted by the water,
fruitful and full of branches
from abundant water.
11 Its strongest stem became
a ruler's scepter;[v]
it towered aloft
among the thick boughs;
it stood out in its height
with its mass of branches.
12 But it was plucked up in fury,
cast down to the ground;
the east wind dried it up;
its fruit was stripped off,
its strong stem was withered;
the fire consumed it.
13 Now it is transplanted into
the wilderness,
into a dry and thirsty land.
14 And fire has gone out from
its stem,

*s* Or *so that they shall not be a stumbling block of iniquity to you* *t* Heb *his widows* *u* Cn: Heb *in your blood* *v* Heb *Its strongest stems became rulers' scepters*

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Because God is just, Israel's only hope is to repent and renew their covenant with him (v. 23; 36.24–32; Lam 3.33).

**19.1–14: Two laments. 1–9:** The *lioness* is Judah (Gen 49.9; symbol of Judah in 1 Kings 10.18–20 and found on Israelite seals). The first whelp is Jehoahaz, who was taken to Egypt (Jer 22.10–12; 2 Kings 23.30–34). Although some identify the second whelp as Jehoiachin (Jer 22.24–30; 2 Kings 24.8–16), it is more likely to be Zedekiah, likewise exiled to Babylon (Jer 39.7); both Jehoahaz and Zedekiah had the same mother, Hamutal (2 Kings 23.31; 24.18).

**19.10–14:** The *vine* is Judah (Isa 5.1–7; Jer 2.21). The *strongest stem* is Zedekiah (17.13) who was stripped (Jer 6.9) by *the east wind* (Nebuchadrezzar) and taken to Babylon (*transplanted;* Jer 52.1–11).

has consumed its branches
and fruit,
so that there remains in it no
strong stem,
no scepter for ruling.

This is a lamentation, and it is used as a lamentation.

20 In the seventh year, in the fifth month, on the tenth day of the month, certain elders of Israel came to consult the LORD, and sat down before me. 2And the word of the LORD came to me: 3Mortal, speak to the elders of Israel, and say to them: Thus says the Lord GOD: Why are you coming? To consult me? As I live, says the Lord GOD, I will not be consulted by you. 4Will you judge them, mortal, will you judge them? Then let them know the abominations of their ancestors, 5and say to them: Thus says the Lord GOD: On the day when I chose Israel, I swore to the offspring of the house of Jacob—making myself known to them in the land of Egypt—I swore to them, saying, I am the LORD your God. 6On that day I swore to them that I would bring them out of the land of Egypt into a land that I had searched out for them, a land flowing with milk and honey, the most glorious of all lands. 7And I said to them, Cast away the detestable things your eyes feast on, every one of you, and do not defile yourselves with the idols of Egypt; I am the LORD your God. 8But they rebelled against me and would not listen to me; not one of them cast away the detestable things their eyes feasted on, nor did they forsake the idols of Egypt.

Then I thought I would pour out my wrath upon them and spend my anger against them in the midst of the land of Egypt. 9But I acted for the sake of my name, that it should not be profaned in the sight of the nations among whom they lived, in whose sight I made myself known to them in bringing them out of the land of Egypt. 10So I led them out of the land of Egypt and brought them into the wilderness. 11I gave them my statutes and showed them my ordinances, by whose observance everyone shall live. 12Moreover I gave them my sabbaths, as a sign between me and them, so that they might know that I the LORD sanctify them. 13But the house of Israel rebelled against me in the wilderness; they did not observe my statutes but rejected my ordinances, by whose observance everyone shall live; and my sabbaths they greatly profaned.

Then I thought I would pour out my wrath upon them in the wilderness, to make an end of them. 14But I acted for the sake of my name, so that it should not be profaned in the sight of the nations, in whose sight I had brought them out. 15Moreover I swore to them in the wilderness that I would not bring them into the land that I had given them, a land flowing with milk and honey, the most glorious of all lands, 16because they rejected my ordinances and did not observe my statutes, and profaned my sabbaths; for their heart went after their idols. 17Nevertheless my eye spared them, and I did not destroy them or make an end of them in the wilderness.

18 I said to their children in the wil-

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**20.1–44: The fall and rise of Israel** (compare Ps 106). **1–4**: Setting: August 14, 591 B.C. *Elders* of the Exile, 14.1–11. **5–8**: Apostasy in Egypt, where Israel served idols (Josh 24.14). There is some chronological confusion: God's promise to Israel was traditionally in a Palestinian setting (Gen 28.13–15); his revelation, *I am the LORD your God,* in the wilderness (Ex 20.2).

**20.9–26**: Apostasy in the wilderness. *For the sake of my name* (36.22; Jer 14.7; Ps 106.8) expresses the important concept that Israel's delivery from Egypt, the wilderness, and eventually from the Exile, was not accomplished because of Israel's intrinsic worth, but to demonstrate to all who would see that God is faithful and he alone is God (v. 44; Num 14.13–19). **12–13**: Of interest is the picture here of the institution of the *sabbaths* in the wilderness period (Ex 31.13); compare the emphasis on the divine institution of the sabbath at creation in the "P" source in Genesis (Gen 2.1–3). The proper observance of the sabbath (see Jer 17.19–27 n.) became increas-

derness, Do not follow the statutes of your parents, nor observe their ordinances, nor defile yourselves with their idols. 19I the LORD am your God; follow my statutes, and be careful to observe my ordinances, 20and hallow my sabbaths that they may be a sign between me and you, so that you may know that I the LORD am your God. 21But the children rebelled against me; they did not follow my statutes, and were not careful to observe my ordinances, by whose observance everyone shall live; they profaned my sabbaths.

Then I thought I would pour out my wrath upon them and spend my anger against them in the wilderness. 22But I withheld my hand, and acted for the sake of my name, so that it should not be profaned in the sight of the nations, in whose sight I had brought them out. 23Moreover I swore to them in the wilderness that I would scatter them among the nations and disperse them through the countries, 24because they had not executed my ordinances, but had rejected my statutes and profaned my sabbaths, and their eyes were set on their ancestors' idols. 25Moreover I gave them statutes that were not good and ordinances by which they could not live. 26I defiled them through their very gifts, in their offering up all their firstborn, in order that I might horrify them, so that they might know that I am the LORD.

27 Therefore, mortal, speak to the house of Israel and say to them, Thus says the Lord GOD: In this again your ancestors blasphemed me, by dealing treacherously with me. 28For when I had brought them into the land that I swore to give them, then wherever they saw any high hill or any leafy tree, there they offered their sacrifices and presented the provocation of their offering; there they sent up their pleasing odors, and there they poured out their drink offerings. 29(I said to them, What is the high place to which you go? So it is called Bamah[w] to this day.) 30Therefore say to the house of Israel, Thus says the Lord GOD: Will you defile yourselves after the manner of your ancestors and go astray after their detestable things? 31When you offer your gifts and make your children pass through the fire, you defile yourselves with all your idols to this day. And shall I be consulted by you, O house of Israel? As I live, says the Lord GOD, I will not be consulted by you.

32 What is in your mind shall never happen—the thought, "Let us be like the nations, like the tribes of the countries, and worship wood and stone."

33 As I live, says the Lord GOD, surely with a mighty hand and an outstretched arm, and with wrath poured out, I will be king over you. 34I will bring you out from the peoples and gather you out of the countries where you are scattered, with a mighty hand and an outstretched arm, and with wrath poured out; 35and I will bring you into the wilderness of the peoples, and there I will enter into judgment with you face to face. 36As I entered into judgment with your ancestors in the wilderness of the land of Egypt, so I will enter into judgment with you, says the Lord GOD. 37I will make you pass under the staff, and will bring you within the bond of the covenant. 38I will purge out the rebels among you, and those who transgress against me; I will bring them out of the

*w* That is *High Place*

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ingly important in post-exilic Judaism (Mt 12.1–8; Jn 9.13–16). **25–26:** This seems to contradict Jer 7.31, Lev 18.21, and the nature of God himself. One may interpret it as God's allowing his people to degenerate to this level so that they might conclusively learn his superiority to any deity made by human hands (Jer 19.4–6); these events, however, post-date the wilderness period.

**20.27–29:** Apostasy in Canaan. The emphasis is on the fertility cult associated with the high places (6.1–7; 16.15–22). **30–31:** In view of their constant faithlessness, they should not presume to approach God now.

**20.32–39:** As in the Sinai wilderness (Num 14.13–25), the unfaithful will be purged in the Syrian *wilderness*. But Israel will be preserved as God's people.

land where they reside as aliens, but they shall not enter the land of Israel. Then you shall know that I am the LORD.

39 As for you, O house of Israel, thus says the Lord GOD: Go serve your idols, everyone of you now and hereafter, if you will not listen to me; but my holy name you shall no more profane with your gifts and your idols.

40 For on my holy mountain, the mountain height of Israel, says the Lord GOD, there all the house of Israel, all of them, shall serve me in the land; there I will accept them, and there I will require your contributions and the choicest of your gifts, with all your sacred things. 41 As a pleasing odor I will accept you, when I bring you out from the peoples, and gather you out of the countries where you have been scattered; and I will manifest my holiness among you in the sight of the nations. 42 You shall know that I am the LORD, when I bring you into the land of Israel, the country that I swore to give to your ancestors. 43 There you shall remember your ways and all the deeds by which you have polluted yourselves; and you shall loathe yourselves for all the evils that you have committed. 44 And you shall know that I am the LORD, when I deal with you for my name's sake, not according to your evil ways, or corrupt deeds, O house of Israel, says the Lord GOD.

45[x] The word of the LORD came to me: 46 Mortal, set your face toward the south, preach against the south, and prophesy against the forest land in the Negeb; 47 say to the forest of the Negeb, Hear the word of the LORD: Thus says the Lord GOD, I will kindle a fire in you, and it shall devour every green tree in you and every dry tree; the blazing flame shall not be quenched, and all faces from south to north shall be scorched by it. 48 All flesh shall see that I the LORD have kindled it; it shall not be quenched. 49 Then I said, "Ah Lord GOD! they are saying of me, 'Is he not a maker of allegories?' "

21 [y] The word of the LORD came to me: 2 Mortal, set your face toward Jerusalem and preach against the sanctuaries; prophesy against the land of Israel 3 and say to the land of Israel, Thus says the LORD: I am coming against you, and will draw my sword out of its sheath, and will cut off from you both righteous and wicked. 4 Because I will cut off from you both righteous and wicked, therefore my sword shall go out of its sheath against all flesh from south to north; 5 and all flesh shall know that I the LORD have drawn my sword out of its sheath; it shall not be sheathed again. 6 Moan therefore, mortal; moan with breaking heart and bitter grief before their eyes. 7 And when they say to you, "Why do you moan?" you shall say, "Because of the news that has come. Every heart will melt and all hands will be feeble, every spirit will faint and all knees will turn to water. See, it comes and it will be fulfilled," says the Lord GOD.

8 And the word of the LORD came to me: 9 Mortal, prophesy and say: Thus says the Lord; Say:

A sword, a sword is sharpened,
it is also polished;
10 it is sharpened for slaughter,
honed to flash like lightning!

x Ch 21.1 in Heb  y Ch 21.6 in Heb

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**20.40–44**: After the new Exodus (Jer 23.7–8) God will restore his people to Zion (17.22–24) and their sacrifices will again be acceptable (Ps 51.15–19).

**20.45–49**: **Oracle against the south** (i.e. Judah), which will be consumed by the invader from the north (Jer 5.14–17). One should read "south," not *Negeb*, in vv. 46–47.

**21.1–32**: **Oracles on the sword,** one of four conventional instruments of God's judgment (14.21; Isa 34.5; Rev 6.8; compare 6.11 and Jeremiah's three, Jer 14.12; compare Jer 5.6). **1–7**: God draws his sword. Because of its heterodoxy (*sanctuaries;* ch 20), Judah (*all flesh,* v. 4) will be cut down; everyone (*all flesh,* v. 5) will see the terrifying judgment (Jer 4.9).

**21.8–17**: Song of the sword (Jer 50.35–37). God's judgment is irrevocable. His flashing sword reaps its grim toll across the land (6.3). **12**: *Strike the thigh,* a sign of mourning (Jer 31.19).

How can we make merry?
You have despised the rod,
and all discipline.[z]
11 The sword[a] is given to be
polished,
to be grasped in the hand;
it is sharpened, the sword is
polished,
to be placed in the slayer's hand.
12 Cry and wail, O mortal,
for it is against my people;
it is against all Israel's princes;
they are thrown to the sword,
together with my people.
Ah! Strike the thigh!
13 For consider: What! If you despise the rod, will it not happen?[z] says the Lord GOD.
14 And you, mortal, prophesy;
strike hand to hand.
Let the sword fall twice, thrice;
it is a sword for killing.
A sword for great slaughter—
it surrounds them;
15 therefore hearts melt
and many stumble.
At all their gates I have set
the point[z] of the sword.
Ah! It is made for flashing,
it is polished[b] for slaughter.
16 Attack to the right!
Engage to the left!
—wherever your edge is directed.
17 I too will strike hand to hand,
I will satisfy my fury;
I the LORD have spoken.

18 The word of the LORD came to me: 19 Mortal, mark out two roads for the sword of the king of Babylon to come; both of them shall issue from the same land. And make a signpost, make it for a fork in the road leading to a city; 20 mark out the road for the sword to come to Rabbah of the Ammonites or to Judah and to[c] Jerusalem the fortified. 21 For the king of Babylon stands at the parting of the way, at the fork in the two roads, to use divination; he shakes the arrows, he consults the teraphim,[d] he inspects the liver. 22 Into his right hand comes the lot for Jerusalem, to set battering rams, to call out for slaughter, for raising the battle cry, to set battering rams against the gates, to cast up ramps, to build siege towers. 23 But to them it will seem like a false divination; they have sworn solemn oaths; but he brings their guilt to remembrance, bringing about their capture.

24 Therefore thus says the Lord GOD: Because you have brought your guilt to remembrance, in that your transgressions are uncovered, so that in all your deeds your sins appear—because you have come to remembrance, you shall be taken in hand.[e]
25 As for you, vile, wicked prince
of Israel,
you whose day has come,
the time of final punishment,
26 thus says the Lord GOD:
Remove the turban, take off
the crown;
things shall not remain as
they are.
Exalt that which is low,
abase that which is high.
27 A ruin, a ruin, a ruin—
I will make it!
(Such has never occurred.)
Until he comes whose right it is;
to him I will give it.

28 As for you, mortal, prophesy, and say, Thus says the Lord GOD concerning

*z* Meaning of Heb uncertain *a* Heb *It*
*b* Tg: Heb *wrapped up* *c* Gk Syr: Heb *Judah in* *d* Or *the household gods* *e* Or *be taken captive*

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**21.18–24**: The sword of Nebuchadrezzar. Perhaps from Riblah (compare 2 Kings 25.6), Nebuchadrezzar determines which rebel to attack first by using divination: belomancy (i.e. casting of arrows with names of projected victims on the heads); consultation of teraphim, an oracular device the use of which is unclear (Hos 3.4); and hepatoscopy (analytical observation of the configurations and markings of sheep livers). The sword is about to fall—on Jerusalem! *Rabbah,* Ammonite capital (Jer 49.3).

**21.25–27**: The sword will cut down Zedekiah, Judah's king (Jer 21.7).

**21.28–32**: The sword against Ammon (v. 20). With familiar phraseology (compare

the Ammonites, and concerning their reproach; say:

A sword, a sword! Drawn for slaughter,
polished to consume,[f] to flash like lightning.
29 Offering false visions for you,
divining lies for you,
they place you over the necks of the vile, wicked ones—
those whose day has come,
the time of final punishment.
30 Return it to its sheath!
In the place where you were created,
in the land of your origin,
I will judge you.
31 I will pour out my indignation upon you,
with the fire of my wrath I will blow upon you.
I will deliver you into brutish hands,
those skillful to destroy.
32 You shall be fuel for the fire,
your blood shall enter the earth;
you shall be remembered no more,
for I the LORD have spoken.

22 The word of the LORD came to me: 2You, mortal, will you judge, will you judge the bloody city? Then declare to it all its abominable deeds. 3You shall say, Thus says the Lord GOD: A city! Shedding blood within itself; its time has come; making its idols, defiling itself. 4You have become guilty by the blood that you have shed, and defiled by the idols that you have made; you have brought your day near, the appointed time of your years has come. Therefore I have made you a disgrace before the nations, and a mockery to all the countries. 5Those who are near and those who are far from you will mock you, you infamous one, full of tumult.

6 The princes of Israel in you, everyone according to his power, have been bent on shedding blood. 7Father and mother are treated with contempt in you; the alien residing within you suffers extortion; the orphan and the widow are wronged in you. 8You have despised my holy things, and profaned my sabbaths. 9In you are those who slander to shed blood, those in you who eat upon the mountains, who commit lewdness in your midst. 10In you they uncover their fathers' nakedness; in you they violate women in their menstrual periods. 11One commits abomination with his neighbor's wife; another lewdly defiles his daughter-in-law; another in you defiles his sister, his father's daughter. 12In you, they take bribes to shed blood; you take both advance interest and accrued interest, and make gain of your neighbors by extortion; and you have forgotten me, says the Lord GOD.

13 See, I strike my hands together at the dishonest gain you have made, and at the blood that has been shed within you. 14Can your courage endure, or can your hands remain strong in the days when I shall deal with you? I the LORD have spoken, and I will do it. 15I will scatter you among the nations and disperse you through the countries, and I will purge your filthiness out of you. 16And I[g] shall be profaned through you in the sight of the nations; and you shall know that I am the LORD.

*f* Cn: Heb *to contain* *g* Gk Syr Vg: Heb *you*

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v. 28 with v. 8), Judah's co-conspirators, the Ammonites, will also succumb to the sword of God's wrath (25.1–7). This oracle, as also vv. 18–24, may come from the time of the assassination of Gedaliah (Jer 40.13–41.18).

**22.1–31: Oracles of indictment. 1–16:** This writ of indictment contains a catalogue of sins (18.5–18) including idolatry (6.2–14; 14.3–5), injustice (18.12), violence (7.23), slander (Jer 6.28), adultery and fornication (18.6; Jer 3.1–4), and extortion—a list reminiscent of the regulations in the Holiness Code, Lev chs 17–26. In scorn and anger (*strike my hands together,* 6.11; 21.14, 17) God will wreak punishment upon this *bloody city* (Nah 3.1, there referring to Nineveh).

17 The word of the LORD came to me:
18 Mortal, the house of Israel has become dross to me; all of them, silver,[h] bronze, tin, iron, and lead. In the smelter they have become dross. 19 Therefore thus says the Lord GOD: Because you have all become dross, I will gather you into the midst of Jerusalem. 20 As one gathers silver, bronze, iron, lead, and tin into a smelter, to blow the fire upon them in order to melt them; so I will gather you in my anger and in my wrath, and I will put you in and melt you. 21 I will gather you and blow upon you with the fire of my wrath, and you shall be melted within it. 22 As silver is melted in a smelter, so you shall be melted in it; and you shall know that I the LORD have poured out my wrath upon you.

23 The word of the LORD came to me:
24 Mortal, say to it: You are a land that is not cleansed, not rained upon in the day of indignation. 25 Its princes[i] within it are like a roaring lion tearing the prey; they have devoured human lives; they have taken treasure and precious things; they have made many widows within it. 26 Its priests have done violence to my teaching and have profaned my holy things; they have made no distinction between the holy and the common, neither have they taught the difference between the unclean and the clean, and they have disregarded my sabbaths, so that I am profaned among them. 27 Its officials within it are like wolves tearing the prey, shedding blood, destroying lives to get dishonest gain. 28 Its prophets have smeared whitewash on their behalf, seeing false visions and divining lies for them, saying, "Thus says the Lord GOD," when the LORD has not spoken. 29 The people of the land have practiced extortion and committed robbery; they have oppressed the poor and needy, and have extorted from the alien without redress. 30 And I sought for anyone among them who would repair the wall and stand in the breach before me on behalf of the land, so that I would not destroy it; but I found no one. 31 Therefore I have poured out my indignation upon them; I have consumed them with the fire of my wrath; I have returned their conduct upon their heads, says the Lord GOD.

23 The word of the LORD came to me: 2 Mortal, there were two women, the daughters of one mother; 3 they played the whore in Egypt; they played the whore in their youth; their breasts were caressed there, and their virgin bosoms were fondled. 4 Oholah was the name of the elder and Oholibah the name of her sister. They became mine, and they bore sons and daughters. As for their names, Oholah is Samaria, and Oholibah is Jerusalem.

5 Oholah played the whore while she was mine; she lusted after her lovers the

*h* Transposed from the end of the verse; compare verse 20 *i* Gk: Heb *indignation.* 25 *A conspiracy of its prophets*

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**22.17–22**: The judgment will be like a smelter in which base metals are removed; so Judah must endure the rigorous refining process and be purified of her baseness (Isa 1.22–25; Jer 6.27–30).

**22.23–31**: This oracle seems to come after Jerusalem's fall (587 B.C.; v. 31) and describes Judah's sinfulness in retrospect. All classes of Judean society were corrupt (Jer 8.8–10): princes, priests (Jer 2.8; Zeph 3.4), nobles (Mic 7.3), prophets (13.10–16), and people (12.19); and all must be punished (Jer 6.27).

**23.1–49**: **The allegory of the sisters, Oholah and Oholibah** (compare ch 16). **1–4**: Introduction. Israel's apostasy began in Egypt (20.5–9). The word-play *Oholah,* "her [own] tent," (i.e. Samaria), and *Oholibah,* "my tent [is] in her" (i.e. Jerusalem), suggests that though Samaria had a sanctuary (tent), THE sanctuary was in Jerusalem, thus emphasizing the enormity of Judah's apostasy. On the marrying of sisters, see Gen 31.41; Lev 18.18.

**23.5–10**: Oholah. Like Hosea (8.9–10), Isaiah (7.1–9), and Jeremiah (4.30; same word for "lovers" in Ezek 23.9), Ezekiel viewed foreign alliances as disloyalty to God, though alternatives were not always politically available. Jehu (842–815 B.C.) surrendered to Shalmaneser III of Assyria; Jehoahaz (815–801) paid tribute to Adad-Nirari III, as did Menahem (745–738) to Tiglath-Pileser III (2 Kings 15.19–29) and Hoshea (732–724) to Shalmaneser V (2 Kings 17.1–14).

Assyrians, warriors[j] [6]clothed in blue, governors and commanders, all of them handsome young men, mounted horsemen. [7]She bestowed her favors upon them, the choicest men of Assyria all of them; and she defiled herself with all the idols of everyone for whom she lusted. [8]She did not give up her whorings that she had practiced since Egypt; for in her youth men had lain with her and fondled her virgin bosom and poured out their lust upon her. [9]Therefore I delivered her into the hands of her lovers, into the hands of the Assyrians, for whom she lusted. [10]These uncovered her nakedness; they seized her sons and her daughters; and they killed her with the sword. Judgment was executed upon her, and she became a byword among women.

11 Her sister Oholibah saw this, yet she was more corrupt than she in her lusting and in her whorings, which were worse than those of her sister. [12]She lusted after the Assyrians, governors and commanders, warriors[j] clothed in full armor, mounted horsemen, all of them handsome young men. [13]And I saw that she was defiled; they both took the same way. [14]But she carried her whorings further; she saw male figures carved on the wall, images of the Chaldeans portrayed in vermilion, [15]with belts around their waists, with flowing turbans on their heads, all of them looking like officers—a picture of Babylonians whose native land was Chaldea. [16]When she saw them she lusted after them, and sent messengers to them in Chaldea. [17]And the Babylonians came to her into the bed of love, and they defiled her with their lust; and after she defiled herself with them, she turned from them in disgust. [18]When she carried on her whorings so openly and flaunted her nakedness, I turned in disgust from her, as I had turned from her sister. [19]Yet she increased her whorings, remembering the days of her youth, when she played the whore in the land of Egypt [20]and lusted after her paramours there, whose members were like those of donkeys, and whose emission was like that of stallions. [21]Thus you longed for the lewdness of your youth, when the Egyptians[k] fondled your bosom and caressed[l] your young breasts.

22 Therefore, O Oholibah, thus says the Lord GOD: I will rouse against you your lovers from whom you turned in disgust, and I will bring them against you from every side: [23]the Babylonians and all the Chaldeans, Pekod and Shoa and Koa, and all the Assyrians with them, handsome young men, governors and commanders all of them, officers and warriors,[m] all of them riding on horses. [24]They shall come against you from the north[n] with chariots and wagons and a host of peoples; they shall set themselves against you on every side with buckler, shield, and helmet, and I will commit the judgment to them, and they shall judge you according to their ordinances. [25]I will direct my indignation against you,

*j* Meaning of Heb uncertain *k* Two Mss: MT *from Egypt* *l* Cn: Heb *for the sake of* *m* Compare verses 6 and 12: Heb *officers and called ones* *n* Gk: Meaning of Heb uncertain

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**23.11–21**: Oholibah. Judah, like Samaria, was tributary to Assyria, Ahaz (735–715 B.C.) to Tiglath-Pileser III (2 Kings 16.7–9), Hezekiah (715–687) to Sennacherib (2 Kings 18.1–36), and Manasseh (687–642) to Esarhaddon. Judah made alliances with Babylon; Hezekiah with Merodach-Baladan (2 Kings 20.12–21), Jehoiakim and Zedekiah with Nebuchadrezzar (2 Kings 24.1; compare Jer 22.18–23; 2 Kings 24.17; compare Jer 27.1–22) as well as with Egypt (2 Kings 23.35), and in both instances probably others not known to us (Hos 7.11). The prophets' objections were based on the inherent, and demonstrated, dangers of syncretism and apostasy (2 Kings 16.7–19).

**23.22–35**: Such faithlessness, religious and political, will be punished. *The Babylonians,* their Aramean mercenaries (*Pekod,* Jer 50.21; *Shoa* and *Koa*), and *Assyrian* auxiliaries will devastate the land (*strip you; leave you naked*). *From the north,* the usual invasion route from Mesopotamia into Palestine (Jer 4.6; 6.1; 25.9). The oracle of the cup of wrath (vv. 32–34; Jer 25.15–29; Hab 2.16) assigns Samaria's fate to Jerusalem.

in order that they may deal with you in fury. They shall cut off your nose and your ears, and your survivors shall fall by the sword. They shall seize your sons and your daughters, and your survivors shall be devoured by fire. 26They shall also strip you of your clothes and take away your fine jewels. 27So I will put an end to your lewdness and your whoring brought from the land of Egypt; you shall not long for them, or remember Egypt any more. 28For thus says the Lord GOD: I will deliver you into the hands of those whom you hate, into the hands of those from whom you turned in disgust; 29and they shall deal with you in hatred, and take away all the fruit of your labor, and leave you naked and bare, and the nakedness of your whorings shall be exposed. Your lewdness and your whorings 30have brought this upon you, because you played the whore with the nations, and polluted yourself with their idols. 31You have gone the way of your sister; therefore I will give her cup into your hand. 32Thus says the Lord GOD:

You shall drink your sister's cup,
deep and wide;
you shall be scorned and derided,
it holds so much.
33 You shall be filled with
drunkenness and sorrow.
A cup of horror and desolation
is the cup of your sister
Samaria;
34 you shall drink it and drain it out,
and gnaw its sherds,
and tear out your breasts;

for I have spoken, says the Lord GOD. 35Therefore thus says the Lord GOD: Because you have forgotten me and cast me behind your back, therefore bear the consequences of your lewdness and whorings.

36 The LORD said to me: Mortal, will you judge Oholah and Oholibah? Then declare to them their abominable deeds. 37For they have committed adultery, and blood is on their hands; with their idols they have committed adultery; and they have even offered up to them for food the children whom they had borne to me. 38Moreover this they have done to me: they have defiled my sanctuary on the same day and profaned my sabbaths. 39For when they had slaughtered their children for their idols, on the same day they came into my sanctuary to profane it. This is what they did in my house.

40 They even sent for men to come from far away, to whom a messenger was sent, and they came. For them you bathed yourself, painted your eyes, and decked yourself with ornaments; 41you sat on a stately couch, with a table spread before it on which you had placed my incense and my oil. 42The sound of a raucous multitude was around her, with many of the rabble brought in drunken from the wilderness; and they put bracelets on the arms[o] of the women, and beautiful crowns upon their heads.

43 Then I said, Ah, she is worn out with adulteries, but they carry on their sexual acts with her. 44For they have gone in to her, as one goes in to a whore. Thus they went in to Oholah and to Oholibah, wanton women. 45But righteous judges shall declare them guilty of adultery and of bloodshed; because they are adulteresses and blood is on their hands.

46 For thus says the Lord GOD: Bring up an assembly against them, and make them an object of terror and of plunder. 47The assembly shall stone them and with their swords they shall cut them down; they shall kill their sons and their daughters, and burn up their houses. 48Thus will I put an end to lewdness in the land, so that all women may take warning and not commit lewdness as you have done. 49They shall repay you for your lewdness, and you shall bear the

*o* Heb *hands*

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**23.36–49**: As the adulteress is stoned (Lev 20.10), so the adultery (i.e. human sacrifice, pagan worship, profanation of the sabbath) of Samaria and Judah (Jer 4.30) has been and will be punished—with death.

penalty for your sinful idolatry; and you shall know that I am the Lord GOD.

24 In the ninth year, in the tenth month, on the tenth day of the month, the word of the LORD came to me: 2Mortal, write down the name of this day, this very day. The king of Babylon has laid siege to Jerusalem this very day. 3And utter an allegory to the rebellious house and say to them, Thus says the Lord GOD:

Set on the pot, set it on,
pour in water also;
4 put in it the pieces,
all the good pieces, the thigh
and the shoulder;
fill it with choice bones.
5 Take the choicest one of the flock,
pile the logs[p] under it;
boil its pieces,[q]
seethe[r] also its bones in it.

6 Therefore thus says the Lord GOD:
Woe to the bloody city,
the pot whose rust is in it,
whose rust has not gone out of
it!
Empty it piece by piece,
making no choice at all.[s]
7 For the blood she shed is inside it;
she placed it on a bare rock;
she did not pour it out on the
ground,
to cover it with earth.
8 To rouse my wrath, to take
vengeance,
I have placed the blood she shed
on a bare rock,
so that it may not be covered.
9Therefore thus says the Lord GOD:
Woe to the bloody city!
I will even make the pile great.
10 Heap up the logs, kindle the fire;
boil the meat well, mix in
the spices,
let the bones be burned.
11 Stand it empty upon the coals,
so that it may become hot, its
copper glow,
its filth melt in it, its rust
be consumed.
12 In vain I have wearied myself;[t]
its thick rust does not depart.
To the fire with its rust![u]
13 Yet, when I cleansed you in your
filthy lewdness,
you did not become clean from
your filth;
you shall not again be cleansed
until I have satisfied my fury
upon you.

14I the LORD have spoken; the time is coming, I will act. I will not refrain, I will not spare, I will not relent. According to your ways and your doings I will judge you, says the Lord GOD.

15 The word of the LORD came to me: 16Mortal, with one blow I am about to take away from you the delight of your eyes; yet you shall not mourn or weep, nor shall your tears run down. 17Sigh, but not aloud; make no mourning for the dead. Bind on your turban, and put your sandals on your feet; do not cover your upper lip or eat the bread of mourners.[v]

*p* Compare verse 10: Heb *the bones* *q* Two Mss: Heb *its boilings* *r* Cn: Heb *its bones seethe* *s* Heb *piece, no lot has fallen on it* *t* Cn: Meaning of Heb uncertain *u* Meaning of Heb uncertain *v* Vg Tg: Heb *of men*

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**24.1–27: The beginning of the end.**

**24.1–14: The allegory of the pot** (Jer 1.13–19) combines two themes, a *pot* boiling meat until it is completely destroyed and a pot full of *rust* heated until all the impurity is burned off. In the *pot* (i.e. Jerusalem, 11.3–12) everyone, the good and bad (21.4; Mic 3.2–3), will be boiled as the besiegers heap wood (siege equipment) around it. The contents will be thoroughly boiled, the pot emptied (i.e. after the siege), and the bones burned (a reference to the sacking of the city). Verses 6 and 11 introduce the theme of corrosion, referring to Jerusalem's bloody past (22.2–12; Gen 4.10–11). Recalling the theme of refining (22.17–22), this corrosion must be burned out

**1**: The date of the oracle is January 15, 588 B.C.

**24.15–27: Oracle at the death of Ezekiel's wife.** Ezekiel was instructed to forego the customary rites of mourning (Jer 16.5–9; Mic 1.8) as a sign to the people that the loss of cherished persons and things would bring a numbing, inexpressible grief (compare Jer 16.1–4).

18So I spoke to the people in the morning, and at evening my wife died. And on the next morning I did as I was commanded.

19 Then the people said to me, "Will you not tell us what these things mean for us, that you are acting this way?" 20Then I said to them: The word of the LORD came to me: 21Say to the house of Israel, Thus says the Lord GOD: I will profane my sanctuary, the pride of your power, the delight of your eyes, and your heart's desire; and your sons and your daughters whom you left behind shall fall by the sword. 22And you shall do as I have done; you shall not cover your upper lip or eat the bread of mourners.[w] 23Your turbans shall be on your heads and your sandals on your feet; you shall not mourn or weep, but you shall pine away in your iniquities and groan to one another. 24Thus Ezekiel shall be a sign to you; you shall do just as he has done. When this comes, then you shall know that I am the Lord GOD.

25 And you, mortal, on the day when I take from them their stronghold, their joy and glory, the delight of their eyes and their heart's affection, and also[x] their sons and their daughters, 26on that day, one who has escaped will come to you to report to you the news. 27On that day your mouth shall be opened to the one who has escaped, and you shall speak and no longer be silent. So you shall be a sign to them; and they shall know that I am the LORD.

25 The word of the LORD came to me: 2Mortal, set your face toward the Ammonites and prophesy against them. 3Say to the Ammonites, Hear the word of the Lord GOD: Thus says the Lord GOD, Because you said, "Aha!" over my sanctuary when it was profaned, and over the land of Israel when it was made desolate, and over the house of Judah when it went into exile; 4therefore I am handing you over to the people of the east for a possession. They shall set their encampments among you and pitch their tents in your midst; they shall eat your fruit, and they shall drink your milk. 5I will make Rabbah a pasture for camels and Ammon a fold for flocks. Then you shall know that I am the LORD. 6For thus says the Lord GOD: Because you have clapped your hands and stamped your feet and rejoiced with all the malice within you against the land of Israel, 7therefore I have stretched out my hand against you, and will hand you over as plunder to the nations. I will cut you off from the peoples and will make you perish out of the countries; I will destroy you. Then you shall know that I am the LORD.

8 Thus says the Lord GOD: Because Moab[y] said, The house of Judah is like all the other nations, 9therefore I will lay open the flank of Moab from the towns[z] on its frontier, the glory of the country, Beth-jeshimoth, Baal-meon, and Kiriathaim. 10I will give it along with Ammon to the people of the east as a possession. Thus Ammon shall be remembered

*w* Vg Tg: Heb *of men* *x* Heb lacks *and also*
*y* Gk Old Latin: Heb *Moab and Seir*
*z* Heb *towns from its towns*

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**24.25–27**: When word of the fall of Jerusalem reached Ezekiel (33.21–22), his tongue would be loosed (3.24–27), and he would proclaim a new message.

**25.1–32.32: Oracles against the nations.** Compare Isa chs 13–23; Jer chs 46–51. Seven nations (Ammon, Moab, Edom, Philistia, Tyre, Sidon, and Egypt; compare Deut 7.1) will be punished before Israel is restored (36.5–7).

**25.1–17**: **Oracles against Ammon, Moab, Edom, and Philistia. 1–7**: Against Ammon (21.28–32; Am 1.13–15; Jer 49.1–6). Ammon, which had seized one-time Israelite territory (Jer 49.1), is to be occupied by *the people of the east* (Isa 11.14), i.e. Arab tribes, whose expansion during this period pushed the Edomites into southern Judah (vv. 12–14). Centuries later this Arab expansion produced the Nabatean empire (compare 2 Cor 11.32).

**25.8–11**: Against Moab. Compare Jer

no more among the nations, [11]and I will execute judgments upon Moab. Then they shall know that I am the LORD.

12 Thus says the Lord GOD: Because Edom acted revengefully against the house of Judah and has grievously offended in taking vengeance upon them, [13]therefore thus says the Lord GOD, I will stretch out my hand against Edom, and cut off from it humans and animals, and I will make it desolate; from Teman even to Dedan they shall fall by the sword. [14]I will lay my vengeance upon Edom by the hand of my people Israel; and they shall act in Edom according to my anger and according to my wrath; and they shall know my vengeance, says the Lord GOD.

15 Thus says the Lord GOD: Because with unending hostilities the Philistines acted in vengeance, and with malice of heart took revenge in destruction; [16]therefore thus says the Lord GOD, I will stretch out my hand against the Philistines, cut off the Cherethites, and destroy the rest of the seacoast. [17]I will execute great vengeance on them with wrathful punishments. Then they shall know that I am the LORD, when I lay my vengeance on them.

**26** In the eleventh year, on the first day of the month, the word of the LORD came to me: [2]Mortal, because Tyre said concerning Jerusalem,

"Aha, broken is the gateway of the peoples;
it has swung open to me;
I shall be replenished,
now that it is wasted,"

[3]therefore, thus says the Lord GOD:

See, I am against you, O Tyre!
I will hurl many nations against you,
as the sea hurls its waves.
[4] They shall destroy the walls of Tyre
and break down its towers.
I will scrape its soil from it
and make it a bare rock.
[5] It shall become, in the midst of the sea,
a place for spreading nets.
I have spoken, says the Lord GOD.
It shall become plunder for the nations,
[6] and its daughter-towns in the country
shall be killed by the sword.
Then they shall know that I am the LORD.

7 For thus says the Lord GOD: I will bring against Tyre from the north King Nebuchadrezzar of Babylon, king of kings, together with horses, chariots, cavalry, and a great and powerful army.

[8] Your daughter-towns in the country
he shall put to the sword.
He shall set up a siege wall against you,
cast up a ramp against you,
and raise a roof of shields against you.
[9] He shall direct the shock of his battering rams against your walls
and break down your towers with his axes.

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48.1–47. The Arab expansion would also envelop Moab. **12–14**: Against Edom. Compare Isa ch 34; Jer 49.7–22.

**25.15–17**: Against Philistia. Compare Jer ch 47. *The Cherethites,* who lived between Gerar and Sharuhen (1 Sam 30.14), were perhaps originally Cretans (Jer 47.4).

**26.1–28.19: Oracles against Tyre.**

**26.1–21: Tyre is to be destroyed by Nebuchadrezzar.** Note the four divisions of the oracle, each with the introductory "Thus says the Lord GOD" (vv. 3, 7, 15, 19). **1–6**: Announcement of the judgment. For its failure to aid its ally Jerusalem (Jer 27.3), and because of its inordinate pride (28.2–10), Tyre is to fall. **4**: *Rock,* in Hebrew a play on the word "Tyre," which could also be read as "rock."

**26.7–14**: With mighty siege works, Nebuchadrezzar will besiege the city, which lay a half mile off-shore on an island, and he will occupy its suburbs (*daughter-towns*) on the mainland. Nebuchadrezzar's thirteen-year siege of Tyre apparently began shortly after Jerusalem's fall (*the eleventh year* of v. 1 should perhaps be read "the twelfth year" with the

10 His horses shall be so many
that their dust shall cover you.
At the noise of cavalry, wheels,
and chariots
your very walls shall shake,
when he enters your gates
like those entering a
breached city.
11 With the hoofs of his horses
he shall trample all your streets.
He shall put your people to
the sword,
and your strong pillars shall fall
to the ground.
12 They will plunder your riches
and loot your merchandise;
they shall break down your walls
and destroy your fine houses.
Your stones and timber and soil
they shall cast into the water.
13 I will silence the music of
your songs;
the sound of your lyres shall be
heard no more.
14 I will make you a bare rock;
you shall be a place for
spreading nets.
You shall never again be rebuilt,
for I the LORD have spoken,
says the Lord GOD.

15 Thus says the Lord GOD to Tyre: Shall not the coastlands shake at the sound of your fall, when the wounded groan, when slaughter goes on within you? 16Then all the princes of the sea shall step down from their thrones; they shall remove their robes and strip off their embroidered garments. They shall clothe themselves with trembling, and shall sit on the ground; they shall tremble every moment, and be appalled at you.

17And they shall raise a lamentation over you, and say to you:
How you have vanished[a] from
the seas,
O city renowned,
once mighty on the sea,
you and your inhabitants,[b]
who imposed your[c] terror
on all the mainland![d]
18 Now the coastlands tremble
on the day of your fall;
the coastlands by the sea
are dismayed at your passing.

19 For thus says the Lord GOD: When I make you a city laid waste, like cities that are not inhabited, when I bring up the deep over you, and the great waters cover you, 20then I will thrust you down with those who descend into the Pit, to the people of long ago, and I will make you live in the world below, among primeval ruins, with those who go down to the Pit, so that you will not be inhabited or have a place[e] in the land of the living. 21I will bring you to a dreadful end, and you shall be no more; though sought for, you will never be found again, says the Lord GOD.

27 The word of the LORD came to me: 2Now you, mortal, raise a lamentation over Tyre, 3and say to Tyre, which sits at the entrance to the sea, merchant of the peoples on many coastlands, Thus says the Lord GOD:
O Tyre, you have said,
"I am perfect in beauty."

*a* Gk OL Aquila: Heb *have vanished, O inhabited one,* *b* Heb *it and its inhabitants* *c* Heb *their* *d* Cn: Heb *its inhabitants* *e* Gk: Heb *I will give beauty*

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Septuagint; namely 586 B.C.), and ended in a negotiated settlement (29.18). Tyre finally fell to Alexander the Great in 332 B.C. **14:** Compare vv. 4–5.

**26.15–18:** Lamentation of *the princes of the sea,* perhaps cities in trade alliance with Tyre.

**26.19–21:** The waters of the primordial deep (Gen 1.2) will cover the wasted city, which will *descend into the Pit* (Sheol, see 31.15–18; Isa 14.15), the abode of the dead.

**27.1–36: Lamentation over Tyre.** The good ship Tyre was constructed of the best materials (*I am perfect;* compare 28.2–10). Royal *purple* dye was the chief export product of Phoenicia; the word "Phoenicia" comes from the Greek word for "purple" (the word "Canaan" may also mean "purple"). *Senir* is Mount Hermon (Deut 3.9). *Bashan* is east of the Sea of Galilee. *Elishah* is probably Cyprus. *Arvad,* like Tyre, was an island city, two miles off-shore, 120 miles north of Tyre. *Gebal,* later known as Byblos, was 70 miles

4 Your borders are in the heart of the seas;
your builders made perfect your beauty.
5 They made all your planks of fir trees from Senir;
they took a cedar from Lebanon to make a mast for you.
6 From oaks of Bashan they made your oars;
they made your deck of pines[f] from the coasts of Cyprus, inlaid with ivory.
7 Of fine embroidered linen from Egypt was your sail, serving as your ensign;
blue and purple from the coasts of Elishah was your awning.
8 The inhabitants of Sidon and Arvad were your rowers;
skilled men of Zemer[g] were within you, they were your pilots.
9 The elders of Gebal and its artisans were within you, caulking your seams;
all the ships of the sea with their mariners were within you, to barter for your wares.
10 Paras[h] and Lud and Put were in your army, your mighty warriors;
they hung shield and helmet in you;
they gave you splendor.
11 Men of Arvad and Helech[i] were on your walls all around;
men of Gamad were at your towers.
They hung their quivers all around your walls;
they made perfect your beauty.
12 Tarshish did business with you out of the abundance of your great wealth; silver, iron, tin, and lead they exchanged for your wares. 13 Javan, Tubal, and Meshech traded with you; they exchanged human beings and vessels of bronze for your merchandise. 14 Beth-togarmah exchanged for your wares horses, war horses, and mules. 15 The Rhodians[j] traded with you; many coastlands were your own special markets; they brought you in payment ivory tusks and ebony. 16 Edom[k] did business with you because of your abundant goods; they exchanged for your wares turquoise, purple, embroidered work, fine linen, coral, and rubies. 17 Judah and the land of Israel traded with you; they exchanged for your merchandise wheat from Minnith, millet,[l] honey, oil, and balm. 18 Damascus traded with you for your abundant goods—because of your great wealth of every kind—wine of Helbon, and white wool. 19 Vedan and Javan from Uzal[l] entered into trade for your wares; wrought iron, cassia, and sweet cane were bartered for

*f* Or *boxwood* *g* Cn Compare Gen 10.18: Heb *your skilled men, O Tyre* *h* Or *Persia* *i* Or *and your army* *j* Gk: Heb *The Dedanites* *k* Another reading is *Aram* *l* Meaning of Heb uncertain

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north of Tyre. **10–25a**: A (mostly prose) intrusion into the lament over Tyre. **10–11**: Tyre's mercenaries included those from *Lud*, identified with Lydia in Asia Minor (Gen 10.13; Jer 46.9 n.). *Put*, to be identified with Libya (30.5). *Helech*, possibly Cilicia. The identity of *Gamad* is uncertain; perhaps the word should be read Gomerim, i.e. the Cimmerians in Cappadocia.

**27.12–15a**: Tyre's commercial empire is described generally from west to east (*Tarshish*, Sardinia, or Tartessus in southern Spain; *Javan*, Ionians, i.e. Greeks, Gen 10.2; *Tubal*, Assyrian "Tabal," a people settled in what is now southern Turkey, east of the Anti-Taurus mountains; *Meshech*, Assyrian "Mushku," west of the Anti-Taurus mountains; *Beth-togarmah*, Assyrian "Tilgarimmu," in what is now central Turkey, east of the southernmost Halys River, east of Tubal), from south to north (*Helbon*, famed wine center thirteen miles north of Damascus), from southwest to northeast (*Uzal*, modern Sana in Yemen; *Dedan*, in west central Arabia; *Sheba*, in southwest Arabia; *Haran*, on the Balikh River in Mesopotamia, Gen 11.31–32; *Eden*, in Assyrian records Bit-Adini, the Beth-eden of Am 1.5, and *Canneh* southeast of Haran; *Asshur*, south of Nineveh; *Chilmad*, an unidentified Mesopotamian

your merchandise. 20Dedan traded with you in saddlecloths for riding. 21Arabia and all the princes of Kedar were your favored dealers in lambs, rams, and goats; in these they did business with you. 22The merchants of Sheba and Raamah traded with you; they exchanged for your wares the best of all kinds of spices, and all precious stones, and gold. 23Haran, Canneh, Eden, the merchants of Sheba, Asshur, and Chilmad traded with you. 24These traded with you in choice garments, in clothes of blue and embroidered work, and in carpets of colored material, bound with cords and made secure; in these they traded with you.[m] 25The ships of Tarshish traveled for you in your trade.

So you were filled and heavily laden
in the heart of the seas.
26 Your rowers have brought you into the high seas.
The east wind has wrecked you in the heart of the seas.
27 Your riches, your wares, your merchandise,
your mariners and your pilots,
your caulkers, your dealers in merchandise,
and all your warriors within you,
with all the company that is with you,
sink into the heart of the seas on the day of your ruin.
28 At the sound of the cry of your pilots
the countryside shakes,
29 and down from their ships come all that handle the oar.
The mariners and all the pilots of the sea
stand on the shore
30 and wail aloud over you,
and cry bitterly.
They throw dust on their heads and wallow in ashes;
31 they make themselves bald for you,
and put on sackcloth,
and they weep over you in bitterness of soul,
with bitter mourning.
32 In their wailing they raise a lamentation for you,
and lament over you:
"Who was ever destroyed[n] like Tyre
in the midst of the sea?
33 When your wares came from the seas,
you satisfied many peoples;
with your abundant wealth and merchandise
you enriched the kings of the earth.
34 Now you are wrecked by the seas,
in the depths of the waters;
your merchandise and all your crew
have sunk with you.
35 All the inhabitants of the coastlands
are appalled at you;
and their kings are horribly afraid,
their faces are convulsed.
36 The merchants among the peoples hiss at you;
you have come to a dreadful end
and shall be no more forever."

28 The word of the LORD came to me: 2Mortal, say to the prince of Tyre, Thus says the Lord GOD:

*m* Cn: Heb *in your market* *n* Tg Vg: Heb *like silence*

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city). *Sweet cane* (Jer 6.20) was used for oil and sacrifice.

**27.25b–36:** This section continues vv. 1–9. The sinking of the ship by the *east wind* (19.12; Jer 18.17). The sudden end of the great commercial city brings fear and lamentation to seamen, merchants, and inhabitants of the coastlands.

**28.1–10: Oracle against Tyre,** apparently using mythological themes, including the Canaanite story of Danel (see 14.12–23 n.) in which Danel is the wise judge of widows and orphans. Pride leads to self-deification. Thus the prince of Tyre sat *in the seat of the gods* (compare Isa 14.13–14); but he will be slain by *the most terrible of the nations,* Babylonia

Because your heart is proud
and you have said, "I am a god;
I sit in the seat of the gods,
in the heart of the seas,"
yet you are but a mortal, and
no god,
though you compare your mind
with the mind of a god.
3 You are indeed wiser than
Daniel;[o]
no secret is hidden from you;
4 by your wisdom and your
understanding
you have amassed wealth
for yourself,
and have gathered gold and silver
into your treasuries.
5 By your great wisdom in trade
you have increased your wealth,
and your heart has become
proud in your wealth.
6 Therefore thus says the Lord GOD:
Because you compare your mind
with the mind of a god,
7 therefore, I will bring strangers
against you,
the most terrible of the nations;
they shall draw their swords
against the beauty of
your wisdom
and defile your splendor.
8 They shall thrust you down to
the Pit,
and you shall die a violent death
in the heart of the seas.
9 Will you still say, "I am a god,"
in the presence of those who
kill you,
though you are but a mortal, and
no god,
in the hands of those who
wound you?
10 You shall die the death of the
uncircumcised
by the hand of foreigners;
for I have spoken, says the
Lord GOD.

11 Moreover the word of the LORD
came to me: 12 Mortal, raise a lamentation over the king of Tyre, and say to him, Thus says the Lord GOD:
You were the signet of
perfection,[p]
full of wisdom and perfect in
beauty.
13 You were in Eden, the garden
of God;
every precious stone was your
covering,
carnelian, chrysolite, and
moonstone,
beryl, onyx, and jasper,
sapphire,[q] turquoise, and emerald;
and worked in gold were your
settings
and your engravings.[p]
On the day that you were created
they were prepared.
14 With an anointed cherub as
guardian I placed you;[p]
you were on the holy mountain
of God;
you walked among the stones
of fire.
15 You were blameless in your ways
from the day that you were
created,
until iniquity was found in you.
16 In the abundance of your trade
you were filled with violence,
and you sinned;
so I cast you as a profane thing
from the mountain of God,
and the guardian cherub drove
you out
from among the stones of fire.

*o* Or, as otherwise read, *Danel* *p* Meaning of Heb uncertain *q* Or *lapis lazuli*

(30.10–11), and come to an ignominious end (*the death of the uncircumcised*) in Sheol (31.14–18).

**28.11–19: Lamentation over the king of Tyre,** based on a variant version of the Eden story. The primal human being, created perfect, dwelt in Eden, with a covering of precious stones (compare the twelve precious stones of the ephod in Ex 28.17–20 and the description of the heavenly Jerusalem in Rev 4.1–6; 21.15–21). But pride and idolatry led to banishment by the guardian cherub (Gen 3.24). **16:** *The mountain of God* in Canaanite myth was Mount Sapon, modern Jebel Aqra', north of Ugarit.

17 Your heart was proud because of your beauty;
you corrupted your wisdom for the sake of your splendor.
I cast you to the ground;
I exposed you before kings,
to feast their eyes on you.
18 By the multitude of your iniquities,
in the unrighteousness of your trade,
you profaned your sanctuaries.
So I brought out fire from within you;
it consumed you,
and I turned you to ashes on the earth
in the sight of all who saw you.
19 All who know you among the peoples
are appalled at you;
you have come to a dreadful end
and shall be no more forever.

20 The word of the LORD came to me: 21 Mortal, set your face toward Sidon, and prophesy against it, 22 and say, Thus says the Lord GOD:

I am against you, O Sidon,
and I will gain glory in your midst.
They shall know that I am the LORD
when I execute judgments in it,
and manifest my holiness in it;
23 for I will send pestilence into it,
and bloodshed into its streets;
and the dead shall fall in its midst,
by the sword that is against it on every side.
And they shall know that I am the LORD.

24 The house of Israel shall no longer find a pricking brier or a piercing thorn among all their neighbors who have treated them with contempt. And they shall know that I am the Lord GOD.

25 Thus says the Lord GOD: When I gather the house of Israel from the peoples among whom they are scattered, and manifest my holiness in them in the sight of the nations, then they shall settle on their own soil that I gave to my servant Jacob. 26 They shall live in safety in it, and shall build houses and plant vineyards. They shall live in safety, when I execute judgments upon all their neighbors who have treated them with contempt. And they shall know that I am the LORD their God.

29 In the tenth year, in the tenth month, on the twelfth day of the month, the word of the LORD came to me: 2 Mortal, set your face against Pharaoh king of Egypt, and prophesy against him and against all Egypt; 3 speak, and say, Thus says the Lord GOD:

I am against you,
Pharaoh king of Egypt,
the great dragon sprawling in the midst of its channels,
saying, "My Nile is my own;
I made it for myself."
4 I will put hooks in your jaws,
and make the fish of your channels stick to your scales.
I will draw you up from your channels,
with all the fish of your channels
sticking to your scales.
5 I will fling you into the wilderness,
you and all the fish of your channels;
you shall fall in the open field,

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**28.20–23: Oracle against Sidon,** north of Tyre, an ally of Jerusalem against Nebuchadrezzar (Jer 27.3). **22–23**: Compare 20.41; 36.23.

**28.24–26**: **Restoration of Israel.** An editorial addition, concluding the first section of the oracles concerning foreign nations. **24**: Compare Num 33.55. **25–26**: Compare 34.28; Jer 23.6; Lev 25.19.

**29.1–32.32: Against Egypt.**

**29.1–16: Against Pharaoh** (January 7, 587 B.C.). Hophra's attack against Nebuchadrezzar in the spring of 588 had failed to relieve Jerusalem (vv. 6–9; Jer 37.1–10). Hophra is depicted as the great sea dragon (Hebrew "tannin"; Isa 27.1; Job ch 41) whom God will catch and let his body become carrion (32.1–8). *His channels,* the Nile delta and canals. *Fish of your*

and not be gathered and buried.
To the animals of the earth and to the birds of the air
I have given you as food.
6 Then all the inhabitants of Egypt shall know
that I am the LORD
because you[r] were a staff of reed to the house of Israel;
7 when they grasped you with the hand, you broke,
and tore all their shoulders;
and when they leaned on you, you broke,
and made all their legs unsteady.[s]

8 Therefore, thus says the Lord GOD: I will bring a sword upon you, and will cut off from you human being and animal; 9and the land of Egypt shall be a desolation and a waste. Then they shall know that I am the LORD.

Because you[t] said, "The Nile is mine, and I made it," 10therefore, I am against you, and against your channels, and I will make the land of Egypt an utter waste and desolation, from Migdol to Syene, as far as the border of Ethiopia.[u] 11No human foot shall pass through it, and no animal foot shall pass through it; it shall be uninhabited forty years. 12I will make the land of Egypt a desolation among desolated countries; and her cities shall be a desolation forty years among cities that are laid waste. I will scatter the Egyptians among the nations, and disperse them among the countries.

13 Further, thus says the Lord GOD: At the end of forty years I will gather the Egyptians from the peoples among whom they were scattered; 14and I will restore the fortunes of Egypt, and bring them back to the land of Pathros, the land of their origin; and there they shall be a lowly kingdom. 15It shall be the most lowly of the kingdoms, and never again exalt itself above the nations; and I will make them so small that they will never again rule over the nations. 16The Egyptians[v] shall never again be the reliance of the house of Israel; they will recall their iniquity, when they turned to them for aid. Then they shall know that I am the Lord GOD.

17 In the twenty-seventh year, in the first month, on the first day of the month, the word of the LORD came to me: 18Mortal, King Nebuchadrezzar of Babylon made his army labor hard against Tyre; every head was made bald and every shoulder was rubbed bare; yet neither he nor his army got anything from Tyre to pay for the labor that he had expended against it. 19Therefore thus says the Lord GOD: I will give the land of Egypt to King Nebuchadrezzar of Babylon; and he shall carry off its wealth and despoil it and plunder it; and it shall be the wages for his army. 20I have given him the land of Egypt as his payment for which he labored, because they worked for me, says the Lord GOD.

21 On that day I will cause a horn to sprout up for the house of Israel, and I will open your lips among them. Then they shall know that I am the LORD.

30 The word of the LORD came to me: 2Mortal, prophesy, and say, Thus says the Lord GOD:

Wail, "Alas for the day!"
3 For a day is near,

*r* Gk Syr Vg: Heb *they*
*s* Syr: Heb *stand*
*t* Gk Syr Vg: Heb *he*
*u* Or *Nubia*; Heb *Cush*
*v* Heb *It*

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*channels*, the Egyptians and their mercenaries. **10:** *Migdol* (southwest of Pelusium, 30.15; Jer 44.1) and *Syene* (Aswan, at the First Cataract of the Nile) are the northern and southern limits of Egypt. **11:** *Forty years*, 4.6; Num 14.33. **14:** *Pathros*, see Jer 44.1 n.

**29.17–21: Egypt as "wages" for Nebuchadrezzar.** This is Ezekiel's latest dated oracle, April 26, 571 B.C., shortly after Ahmosis II forced Hophra to make him co-regent. Nebuchadrezzar will get sufficient booty from Egypt to compensate for his lack of booty from the siege of Tyre (26.7; Jer 46.2–26). *Horn* may refer to the re-establishment of the Davidic line in Israel (Ps 132.17).

**30.1–26: The doom of Egypt. 1–5:** The day of the LORD since the time of Amos (Am 5.18–20) was God's judgment day (15.5; Isa

the day of the LORD is near;
it will be a day of clouds,
a time of doom[w] for the nations.
4 A sword shall come upon Egypt,
and anguish shall be in Ethiopia,[x]
when the slain fall in Egypt,
and its wealth is carried away,
and its foundations are torn down.
5 Ethiopia,[x] and Put, and Lud, and all Arabia, and Libya,[y] and the people of the allied land[z] shall fall with them by the sword.

6 Thus says the LORD:
Those who support Egypt shall fall,
and its proud might shall come down;
from Migdol to Syene
they shall fall within it by the sword,
says the Lord GOD.
7 They shall be desolated among other desolated countries,
and their cities shall lie among cities laid waste.
8 Then they shall know that I am the LORD,
when I have set fire to Egypt,
and all who help it are broken.
9 On that day, messengers shall go out from me in ships to terrify the unsuspecting Ethiopians;[a] and anguish shall come upon them on the day of Egypt's doom;[b] for it is coming!

10 Thus says the Lord GOD:
I will put an end to the hordes of Egypt,
by the hand of King Nebuchadrezzar of Babylon.
11 He and his people with him, the most terrible of the nations,
shall be brought in to destroy the land;
and they shall draw their swords against Egypt,
and fill the land with the slain.
12 I will dry up the channels,
and will sell the land into the hand of evildoers;
I will bring desolation upon the land and everything in it
by the hand of foreigners;
I the LORD have spoken.

13 Thus says the Lord GOD:
I will destroy the idols
and put an end to the images in Memphis;
there shall no longer be a prince in the land of Egypt;
so I will put fear in the land of Egypt.
14 I will make Pathros a desolation,
and will set fire to Zoan,
and will execute acts of judgment on Thebes.
15 I will pour my wrath upon Pelusium,
the stronghold of Egypt,
and cut off the hordes of Thebes.
16 I will set fire to Egypt;
Pelusium shall be in great agony;
Thebes shall be breached,
and Memphis face adversaries by day.
17 The young men of On and of Pi-beseth shall fall by the sword;

*w* Heb lacks *of doom* *x* Or *Nubia*; Heb *Cush*
*y* Compare Gk Syr Vg: Heb *Cub* *z* Meaning of Heb uncertain *a* Or *Nubians*; Heb *Cush*
*b* Heb *the day of Egypt*

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2.12; Jer 30.7; Zeph 1.14–18); later it became the day of Israel's restoration and remained doomsday for the Gentiles. *Sword,* 21.3–17. *Put and Lud,* see 27.10–11 n.

**30.6–9**: Egypt's mercenaries (27.10–11) will collapse before the onslaught; Egypt will be reduced to ashes (28.18). *Migdol* to *Syene,* see 29.10 n. **10–12**: Nebuchadrezzar (26.7), king of *the most terrible of the nations* (28.7), is God's instrument (Jer 27.6).

**30.13–19**: All Egypt will be destroyed. *Memphis,* the ancient capital of lower Egypt. *Pathros,* see Jer 44.1 n. *Zoan,* in the Greek period Tanis, in the northeast delta region.

and the cities themselves[c] shall
go into captivity.
18 At Tehaphnehes the day shall
be dark,
when I break there the
dominion of Egypt,
and its proud might shall come to
an end;
the city[d] shall be covered by
a cloud,
and its daughter-towns shall go
into captivity.
19 Thus I will execute acts of
judgment on Egypt.
Then they shall know that I am
the LORD.

20 In the eleventh year, in the first month, on the seventh day of the month, the word of the LORD came to me: 21 Mortal, I have broken the arm of Pharaoh king of Egypt; it has not been bound up for healing or wrapped with a bandage, so that it may become strong to wield the sword. 22 Therefore thus says the Lord GOD: I am against Pharaoh king of Egypt, and will break his arms, both the strong arm and the one that was broken; and I will make the sword fall from his hand. 23 I will scatter the Egyptians among the nations, and disperse them throughout the lands. 24 I will strengthen the arms of the king of Babylon, and put my sword in his hand; but I will break the arms of Pharaoh, and he will groan before him with the groans of one mortally wounded. 25 I will strengthen the arms of the king of Babylon, but the arms of Pharaoh shall fall. And they shall know that I am the LORD, when I put my sword into the hand of the king of Babylon. He shall stretch it out against the land of Egypt, 26 and I will scatter the Egyptians among the nations and disperse them throughout the countries. Then they shall know that I am the LORD.

31 In the eleventh year, in the third month, on the first day of the month, the word of the LORD came to me: 2 Mortal, say to Pharaoh king of Egypt and to his hordes:

Whom are you like in your
greatness?
3 Consider Assyria, a cedar
of Lebanon,
with fair branches and forest
shade,
and of great height,
its top among the clouds.[e]
4 The waters nourished it,
the deep made it grow tall,
making its rivers flow[f]
around the place it was planted,
sending forth its streams
to all the trees of the field.
5 So it towered high
above all the trees of the field;
its boughs grew large
and its branches long,
from abundant water in
its shoots.
6 All the birds of the air
made their nests in its boughs;
under its branches all the animals
of the field
gave birth to their young;
and in its shade
all great nations lived.
7 It was beautiful in its greatness,
in the length of its branches;
for its roots went down
to abundant water.

*c* Heb *and they* *d* Heb *she* *e* Gk: Heb *thick boughs* *f* Gk: Heb *rivers going*

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*Thebes* is present-day Karnak (Jer 46.25). *Pelusium,* east of Zoan. *On* is Heliopolis (see Jer 43.13 n.). *Pi-beseth,* Bubastis. *Tehaphnehes,* Tahpanhes (see Jer 2.14–19 n.).

**30.20–26:** April 29, 587 B.C. Nebuchadrezzar had broken one arm of Hophra the year before (see 29.1–16 n.); the next time, he will break both arms.

**31.1–18: Allegory of the cedar** (compare ch 17). Date, June 21, 587 B.C. Ezekiel uses an ancient Babylonian myth to emphasize that, as with Tyre (28.1–5), the cause for Egypt's fall was pride (and political unreliability, 29.6–9). **4:** *The deep* (Hebrew "tehom;" compare Tiamat, the Babylonian dragon of the watery chaos; see Isa 51.9–11 n.), ancient mythological opponent of the gods, nourished the tree so that it reached into the heav-

8 The cedars in the garden of God
could not rival it,
nor the fir trees equal its
boughs;
the plane trees were as nothing
compared with its branches;
no tree in the garden of God
was like it in beauty.
9 I made it beautiful
with its mass of branches,
the envy of all the trees of Eden
that were in the garden of God.

10 Therefore thus says the Lord GOD: Because it[g] towered high and set its top among the clouds,[h] and its heart was proud of its height, 11I gave it into the hand of the prince of the nations; he has dealt with it as its wickedness deserves. I have cast it out. 12Foreigners from the most terrible of the nations have cut it down and left it. On the mountains and in all the valleys its branches have fallen, and its boughs lie broken in all the watercourses of the land; and all the peoples of the earth went away from its shade and left it.

13 On its fallen trunk settle
all the birds of the air,
and among its boughs lodge
all the wild animals.

14All this is in order that no trees by the waters may grow to lofty height or set their tops among the clouds,[h] and that no trees that drink water may reach up to them in height.

For all of them are handed over
to death,
to the world below;
along with all mortals,
with those who go down to
the Pit.

15 Thus says the Lord GOD: On the day it went down to Sheol I closed the deep over it and covered it; I restrained its rivers, and its mighty waters were checked. I clothed Lebanon in gloom for it, and all the trees of the field fainted because of it. 16I made the nations quake at the sound of its fall, when I cast it down to Sheol with those who go down to the Pit; and all the trees of Eden, the choice and best of Lebanon, all that were well watered, were consoled in the world below. 17They also went down to Sheol with it, to those killed by the sword, along with its allies,[i] those who lived in its shade among the nations.

18 Which among the trees of Eden was like you in glory and in greatness? Now you shall be brought down with the trees of Eden to the world below; you shall lie among the uncircumcised, with those who are killed by the sword. This is Pharaoh and all his horde, says the Lord GOD.

**32** In the twelfth year, in the twelfth month, on the first day of the month, the word of the LORD came to me: 2Mortal, raise a lamentation over Pharaoh king of Egypt, and say to him:

You consider yourself a lion
among the nations,
but you are like a dragon in
the seas;
you thrash about in your streams,
trouble the water with your
feet,
and foul your[j] streams.

3 Thus says the Lord GOD:

*g* Syr Vg: Heb *you* *h* Gk: Heb *thick boughs*
*i* Heb *its arms* *j* Heb *their*

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ens and sheltered all life. **7–9**: The splendor of the great cedar, Egypt, was incomparable (28.11–19), surpassing those *in the garden of God* (thus rivaling God, Gen 11.1–9).

**31.10–18**: But God will cut it down; the life it sheltered will be dispersed, and it will go down to Sheol (28.8–10) where it will lie not with the honored dead, *the trees of Eden,* but with those who died untimely, violent, or dishonorable deaths. Later the great world tree, or tree of life, became a motif in Near Eastern (e.g. Persian) apocalypticism.

**32.1–16: Lament over Pharaoh.** The date is March 3, 585 B.C. Though Pharaoh thought himself *a lion* (symbol of royal power, see 19.1–9 n.; compare the lion-bodied sphinx), he is only a sea monster whom God will capture with a net (12.13), as Marduk captured Tiamat (see 31.4 n.), and will expose on land for carrion (29.1–16). Verses 7–8 recall the day of the LORD (see 30.1–5 n.; Isa 13.10; Joel 2.2) in which God overcomes all that oppose him. The recurring *sword* of God (vv. 10–12; 21.1–32; 30.25; compare

In an assembly of many peoples
I will throw my net over you;
and I[k] will haul you up in my dragnet.
4 I will throw you on the ground,
on the open field I will fling you,
and will cause all the birds of the air to settle on you,
and I will let the wild animals of the whole earth gorge themselves with you.
5 I will strew your flesh on the mountains,
and fill the valleys with your carcass.[l]
6 I will drench the land with your flowing blood
up to the mountains,
and the watercourses will be filled with you.
7 When I blot you out, I will cover the heavens,
and make their stars dark;
I will cover the sun with a cloud,
and the moon shall not give its light.
8 All the shining lights of the heavens
I will darken above you,
and put darkness on your land,
says the Lord GOD.
9 I will trouble the hearts of many peoples,
as I carry you captive[m] among the nations,
into countries you have not known.
10 I will make many peoples appalled at you;
their kings shall shudder because of you.
When I brandish my sword before them,
they shall tremble every moment
for their lives, each one of them, on the day of your downfall.
11 For thus says the Lord GOD:
The sword of the king of Babylon shall come against you.
12 I will cause your hordes to fall
by the swords of mighty ones,
all of them most terrible among the nations.
They shall bring to ruin the pride of Egypt,
and all its hordes shall perish.
13 I will destroy all its livestock
from beside abundant waters;
and no human foot shall trouble them any more,
nor shall the hoofs of cattle trouble them.
14 Then I will make their waters clear,
and cause their streams to run like oil, says the Lord GOD.
15 When I make the land of Egypt desolate
and when the land is stripped of all that fills it,
when I strike down all who live in it,
then they shall know that I am the LORD.
16 This is a lamentation; it shall be chanted.
The women of the nations shall chant it.
Over Egypt and all its hordes they shall chant it,
says the Lord GOD.

17 In the twelfth year, in the first month,[n] on the fifteenth day of the month, the word of the LORD came to me:

18 Mortal, wail over the hordes of Egypt,
and send them down,

*k* Gk Vg: Heb *they* *l* Symmachus Syr Vg: Heb *your height* *m* Gk: Heb *bring your destruction* *n* Gk: Heb lacks *in the first month*

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Lev 26.33; Isa 34.5–6; Jer 12.12) recalls the sword-wielding Baal depicted in statues found by archaeologists. Egypt will become a lifeless wasteland (Jer 4.23–28), mourned by professional mourning women (Jer 9.17–18).

**32.17–32: Egypt in the underworld**

with Egypt[o] and the daughters of
majestic nations,
to the world below,
with those who go down to
the Pit.
19 "Whom do you surpass in beauty?
Go down! Be laid to rest with
the uncircumcised!"
20 They shall fall among those who are killed by the sword. Egypt[p] has been handed over to the sword; carry away both it and its hordes. 21 The mighty chiefs shall speak of them, with their helpers, out of the midst of Sheol: "They have come down, they lie still, the uncircumcised, killed by the sword."

22 Assyria is there, and all its company, their graves all around it, all of them killed, fallen by the sword. 23 Their graves are set in the uttermost parts of the Pit. Its company is all around its grave, all of them killed, fallen by the sword, who spread terror in the land of the living.

24 Elam is there, and all its hordes around its grave; all of them killed, fallen by the sword, who went down uncircumcised into the world below, who spread terror in the land of the living. They bear their shame with those who go down to the Pit. 25 They have made Elam[o] a bed among the slain with all its hordes, their graves all around it, all of them uncircumcised, killed by the sword; for terror of them was spread in the land of the living, and they bear their shame with those who go down to the Pit; they are placed among the slain.

26 Meshech and Tubal are there, and all their multitude, their graves all around them, all of them uncircumcised, killed by the sword; for they spread terror in the land of the living. 27 And they do not lie with the fallen warriors of long ago[q] who went down to Sheol with their weapons of war, whose swords were laid under their heads, and whose shields[r] are upon their bones; for the terror of the warriors was in the land of the living. 28 So you shall be broken and lie among the uncircumcised, with those who are killed by the sword.

29 Edom is there, its kings and all its princes, who for all their might are laid with those who are killed by the sword; they lie with the uncircumcised, with those who go down to the Pit.

30 The princes of the north are there, all of them, and all the Sidonians, who have gone down in shame with the slain, for all the terror that they caused by their might; they lie uncircumcised with those who are killed by the sword, and bear their shame with those who go down to the Pit.

31 When Pharaoh sees them, he will be consoled for all his hordes—Pharaoh and all his army, killed by the sword, says the Lord GOD. 32 For he[s] spread terror in the land of the living; therefore he shall be laid to rest among the uncircumcised, with those who are slain by the sword—Pharaoh and all his multitude, says the Lord GOD.

33 The word of the LORD came to me: 2 O Mortal, speak to your people and say to them, If I bring the sword upon a land, and the people of the land take one of their number as their sentinel; 3 and if the sentinel sees the sword coming upon the land and blows the trumpet and warns the people; 4 then

*o* Heb *it* *p* Heb *It* *q* Gk Old Latin: Heb *of the uncircumcised* *r* Cn: Heb *iniquities* *s* Cn: Heb *I*

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(April 27, 586 B.C.). Like Tyre (28.10), Egypt will join those in that section of the underworld reserved for the uncircumcised and those who are executed or who die violent or untimely deaths. They do not enjoy the status of the honored war-dead, who were properly buried (v. 27). In its dishonorable demise Egypt will join others who were objects of God's wrath (Isa 14.9–11), such as *Assyria* (Nah chs 1–3); *Elam* (Jer 49.34–39); *Meshech* and *Tubal* (see 27.12–25a n.; Gen 10.2 n.); *Edom* (25.12–14); *Sidon* (28.20–23); *princes of the north* (v. 30), unnamed rulers in Phoenicia and Syria.

**33.1–39.29: Oracles of restoration.**

**33.1–20: Responsibility. 1–9:** The prophet as sentinel (3.16–21; Isa 21.6; Jer 6.17) applies Ezekiel's doctrine of individual respon-

if any who hear the sound of the trumpet do not take warning, and the sword comes and takes them away, their blood shall be upon their own heads. 5They heard the sound of the trumpet and did not take warning; their blood shall be upon themselves. But if they had taken warning, they would have saved their lives. 6But if the sentinel sees the sword coming and does not blow the trumpet, so that the people are not warned, and the sword comes and takes any of them, they are taken away in their iniquity, but their blood I will require at the sentinel's hand.

7 So you, mortal, I have made a sentinel for the house of Israel; whenever you hear a word from my mouth, you shall give them warning from me. 8If I say to the wicked, "O wicked ones, you shall surely die," and you do not speak to warn the wicked to turn from their ways, the wicked shall die in their iniquity, but their blood I will require at your hand. 9But if you warn the wicked to turn from their ways, and they do not turn from their ways, the wicked shall die in their iniquity, but you will have saved your life.

10 Now you, mortal, say to the house of Israel, Thus you have said: "Our transgressions and our sins weigh upon us, and we waste away because of them; how then can we live?" 11Say to them, As I live, says the Lord GOD, I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked, but that the wicked turn from their ways and live; turn back, turn back from your evil ways; for why will you die, O house of Israel? 12And you, mortal, say to your people, The righteousness of the righteous shall not save them when they transgress; and as for the wickedness of the wicked, it shall not make them stumble when they turn from their wickedness; and the righteous shall not be able to live by their righteousness[t] when they sin. 13Though I say to the righteous that they shall surely live, yet if they trust in their righteousness and commit iniquity, none of their righteous deeds shall be remembered; but in the iniquity that they have committed they shall die. 14Again, though I say to the wicked, "You shall surely die," yet if they turn from their sin and do what is lawful and right— 15if the wicked restore the pledge, give back what they have taken by robbery, and walk in the statutes of life, committing no iniquity—they shall surely live, they shall not die. 16None of the sins that they have committed shall be remembered against them; they have done what is lawful and right, they shall surely live.

17 Yet your people say, "The way of the Lord is not just," when it is their own way that is not just. 18When the righteous turn from their righteousness, and commit iniquity, they shall die for it.[u] 19And when the wicked turn from their wickedness, and do what is lawful and right, they shall live by it.[u] 20Yet you say, "The way of the Lord is not just." O house of Israel, I will judge all of you according to your ways!

21 In the twelfth year of our exile, in the tenth month, on the fifth day of the month, someone who had escaped from Jerusalem came to me and said, "The city has fallen." 22Now the hand of the LORD had been upon me the evening before the fugitive came; but he had opened my mouth by the time the fugitive came to me in the morning; so my mouth was opened, and I was no longer unable to speak.

23 The word of the LORD came to me: 24Mortal, the inhabitants of these waste

*t* Heb *by it* *u* Heb *them*

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sibility. Death (vv. 8–9) may refer to premature death as contrasted with blessed longevity.

**33.10–20**: On individual responsibility. This oracle re-emphasizes 14.12–23 and 18.5–32.

**33.21–33**: **Miscellanea. 21–22**: January 19, 586 B.C. (read "eleventh" for *twelfth*). A few months after the fall of Jerusalem, word reached Ezekiel and his tongue was loosed (3.24–27). Perhaps these two verses, which are unrelated to this context, should follow 24.27.

places in the land of Israel keep saying, "Abraham was only one man, yet he got possession of the land; but we are many; the land is surely given us to possess." 25 Therefore say to them, Thus says the Lord GOD: You eat flesh with the blood, and lift up your eyes to your idols, and shed blood; shall you then possess the land? 26 You depend on your swords, you commit abominations, and each of you defiles his neighbor's wife; shall you then possess the land? 27 Say this to them, Thus says the Lord GOD: As I live, surely those who are in the waste places shall fall by the sword; and those who are in the open field I will give to the wild animals to be devoured; and those who are in strongholds and in caves shall die by pestilence. 28 I will make the land a desolation and a waste, and its proud might shall come to an end; and the mountains of Israel shall be so desolate that no one will pass through. 29 Then they shall know that I am the LORD, when I have made the land a desolation and a waste because of all their abominations that they have committed.

30 As for you, mortal, your people who talk together about you by the walls, and at the doors of the houses, say to one another, each to a neighbor, "Come and hear what the word is that comes from the LORD." 31 They come to you as people come, and they sit before you as my people, and they hear your words, but they will not obey them. For flattery is on their lips, but their heart is set on their gain. 32 To them you are like a singer of love songs,[v] one who has a beautiful voice and plays well on an instrument; they hear what you say, but they will not do it. 33 When this comes—and come it will!—then they shall know that a prophet has been among them.

34 The word of the LORD came to me: 2 Mortal, prophesy against the shepherds of Israel: prophesy, and say to them—to the shepherds: Thus says the Lord GOD: Ah, you shepherds of Israel who have been feeding yourselves! Should not shepherds feed the sheep? 3 You eat the fat, you clothe yourselves with the wool, you slaughter the fatlings; but you do not feed the sheep. 4 You have not strengthened the weak, you have not healed the sick, you have not bound up the injured, you have not brought back the strayed, you have not sought the lost, but with force and harshness you have ruled them. 5 So they were scattered, because there was no shepherd; and scattered, they became food for all the wild animals. 6 My sheep were scattered, they wandered over all the mountains and on every high hill; my sheep were scattered over all the face of the earth, with no one to search or seek for them.

7 Therefore, you shepherds, hear the word of the LORD: 8 As I live, says the Lord GOD, because my sheep have become a prey, and my sheep have become food for all the wild animals, since there was no shepherd; and because my shepherds have not searched for my sheep, but the shepherds have fed themselves, and have not fed my sheep; 9 therefore, you shepherds, hear the word of the LORD: 10 Thus says the Lord GOD, I am against the shepherds; and I will demand my sheep at their hand, and put a stop to their feeding the sheep; no longer shall the shepherds feed themselves. I will rescue my sheep from their mouths, so that they may not be food for them.

11 For thus says the Lord GOD: I myself will search for my sheep, and will

[v] Cn: Heb *like a love song*

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**33.23–29**: Expansion on the problem of possession of Palestinian property formerly belonging to deportees. Note the three scourges in v. 27 (14.21; 21.3–5).

**33.30–33**: Consistent with human nature, the people heard what they wanted to hear. But the day approaches when they will be reminded that with the words of God's love were also the words of God's justice (Jer 5.12–13). *Song*, oracles may have been chanted (2 Kings 3.15).

**34.1–31**: **The shepherds of Israel. 1–10**: The shepherds (i.e. kings) had misused their people (Jer 23.13–17) and scattered them (Jer 10.21; 23.1–4). This oracle applies the doctrine of individual responsibility (18.5–32) to

seek them out. 12As shepherds seek out their flocks when they are among their scattered sheep, so I will seek out my sheep. I will rescue them from all the places to which they have been scattered on a day of clouds and thick darkness. 13I will bring them out from the peoples and gather them from the countries, and will bring them into their own land; and I will feed them on the mountains of Israel, by the watercourses, and in all the inhabited parts of the land. 14I will feed them with good pasture, and the mountain heights of Israel shall be their pasture; there they shall lie down in good grazing land, and they shall feed on rich pasture on the mountains of Israel. 15I myself will be the shepherd of my sheep, and I will make them lie down, says the Lord GOD. 16I will seek the lost, and I will bring back the strayed, and I will bind up the injured, and I will strengthen the weak, but the fat and the strong I will destroy. I will feed them with justice.

17 As for you, my flock, thus says the Lord GOD: I shall judge between sheep and sheep, between rams and goats: 18Is it not enough for you to feed on the good pasture, but you must tread down with your feet the rest of your pasture? When you drink of clear water, must you foul the rest with your feet? 19And must my sheep eat what you have trodden with your feet, and drink what you have fouled with your feet?

20 Therefore, thus says the Lord GOD to them: I myself will judge between the fat sheep and the lean sheep. 21Because you pushed with flank and shoulder, and butted at all the weak animals with your horns until you scattered them far and wide, 22I will save my flock, and they shall no longer be ravaged; and I will judge between sheep and sheep.

23 I will set up over them one shepherd, my servant David, and he shall feed them: he shall feed them and be their shepherd. 24And I, the LORD, will be their God, and my servant David shall be prince among them; I, the LORD, have spoken.

25 I will make with them a covenant of peace and banish wild animals from the land, so that they may live in the wild and sleep in the woods securely. 26I will make them and the region around my hill a blessing; and I will send down the showers in their season; they shall be showers of blessing. 27The trees of the field shall yield their fruit, and the earth shall yield its increase. They shall be secure on their soil; and they shall know that I am the LORD, when I break the bars of their yoke, and save them from the hands of those who enslaved them. 28They shall no more be plunder for the nations, nor shall the animals of the land devour them; they shall live in safety, and no one shall make them afraid. 29I will provide for them a splendid vegetation so that they shall no more be consumed with hunger in the land, and no longer suffer the insults of the nations. 30They shall know that I, the LORD their God, am with them, and that they, the house of Israel, are my people, says the

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the rulers, who are also subject to God's law (2 Sam 12.1–15). *Wild animals,* Judah's attackers, especially Babylonia.

**34.11–16**: God is the Good Shepherd (Isa 40.11; Jer 31.10) who will gather the dispersed and injured flock. This passage suggests a return to theocracy (Hos 8.4; 1 Sam 8.7).

**34.17–22**: Sheep, good and bad, are found in the flock; the bad must be separated out and punished (Mt 25.31–32). The figure may have a double meaning and refer also to the nations which oppress Israel.

**34.23–24**: God will place his *servant David* (2 Sam 3.18), i.e. a restored monarchy, over his people (37.22–25; Jer 23.5–6). *One shepherd,* see Hos 1.11; Jn 10.16.

**34.25–31**: Using the oldest term for covenant making (see Jer 31.31–34), the prophet affirms that God will make a *covenant of peace* (37.26; Heb 13.20). God, again resident on Mount Zion (*my hill*), will preserve the proper sequence of seasons (Gen 8.21–22), assuring his people of continuous prosperity (Am 9.13–14), free from fear of destruction within (*wild animals,* Lev 26.6) and without (*plunder for the nations*).

Lord GOD. 31You are my sheep, the sheep of my pasture[w] and I am your God, says the Lord GOD.

35 The word of the LORD came to me: 2Mortal, set your face against Mount Seir, and prophesy against it, 3and say to it, Thus says the Lord GOD:

I am against you, Mount Seir;
I stretch out my hand
against you
to make you a desolation and
a waste.
4 I lay your towns in ruins;
you shall become a desolation,
and you shall know that I am
the LORD.

5Because you cherished an ancient enmity, and gave over the people of Israel to the power of the sword at the time of their calamity, at the time of their final punishment; 6therefore, as I live, says the Lord GOD, I will prepare you for blood, and blood shall pursue you; since you did not hate bloodshed, bloodshed shall pursue you. 7I will make Mount Seir a waste and a desolation; and I will cut off from it all who come and go. 8I will fill its mountains with the slain; on your hills and in your valleys and in all your watercourses those killed with the sword shall fall. 9I will make you a perpetual desolation, and your cities shall never be inhabited. Then you shall know that I am the LORD.

10 Because you said, "These two nations and these two countries shall be mine, and we will take possession of them,"—although the LORD was there— 11therefore, as I live, says the Lord GOD, I will deal with you according to the anger and envy that you showed because of your hatred against them; and I will make myself known among you,[x] when I judge you. 12You shall know that I, the LORD, have heard all the abusive speech that you uttered against the mountains of Israel, saying, "They are laid desolate, they are given us to devour." 13And you magnified yourselves against me with your mouth, and multiplied your words against me; I heard it. 14Thus says the Lord GOD: As the whole earth rejoices, I will make you desolate. 15As you rejoiced over the inheritance of the house of Israel, because it was desolate, so I will deal with you; you shall be desolate, Mount Seir, and all Edom, all of it. Then they shall know that I am the LORD.

36 And you, mortal, prophesy to the mountains of Israel, and say: O mountains of Israel, hear the word of the LORD. 2Thus says the Lord GOD: Because the enemy said of you, "Aha!" and, "The ancient heights have become our possession," 3therefore prophesy, and say: Thus says the Lord GOD: Because they made you desolate indeed, and crushed you from all sides, so that you became the possession of the rest of the nations, and you became an object of gossip and slander among the people; 4therefore, O mountains of Israel, hear the word of the Lord GOD: Thus says the Lord GOD to the mountains and the hills, the watercourses and the valleys, the desolate wastes and the deserted towns, which have become a source of plunder and an object of derision to the rest of the

*w* Gk OL: Heb *pasture, you are people*
*x* Gk: Heb *them*

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**35.1–15: The oracle against Edom** is an editorial expansion of an oracle of Ezekiel, using Ezekiel's phraseology (compare vv. 1–3 with 6.1–3). Properly belonging with 25.12–14, it was placed here to be contrasted with ch 36 (especially 36.5), forming the prelude to Israel's restoration. It reflects the growing intensity of Jewish hatred for Edom subsequent to Edom's occupation of southern Judah (Jer 49.7–22). In contrast with Egypt (29.13–16), Edom will remain forever desolate. *Mount Seir* is the plateau rising east of the Arabah in which Sela, the Edomite capital, was located.

**36.1–39.29: The new Israel.**

**36.1–38: Prophecy to the mountains of Israel; the restoration of Israel. 1–7:** Mountains of Israel, the highlands, represent all Israel (Deut 3.25). This oracle reverses ch 6; though dispossessed by *Edom* (35.1–15) and surrounding nations (Neh 2.19), Israel will be restored to her heritage (Mal 1.2–5).

nations all around; [5]therefore thus says the Lord GOD: I am speaking in my hot jealousy against the rest of the nations, and against all Edom, who, with wholehearted joy and utter contempt, took my land as their possession, because of its pasture, to plunder it. [6]Therefore prophesy concerning the land of Israel, and say to the mountains and hills, to the watercourses and valleys, Thus says the Lord GOD: I am speaking in my jealous wrath, because you have suffered the insults of the nations; [7]therefore thus says the Lord GOD: I swear that the nations that are all around you shall themselves suffer insults.

8 But you, O mountains of Israel, shall shoot out your branches, and yield your fruit to my people Israel; for they shall soon come home. [9]See now, I am for you; I will turn to you, and you shall be tilled and sown; [10]and I will multiply your population, the whole house of Israel, all of it; the towns shall be inhabited and the waste places rebuilt; [11]and I will multiply human beings and animals upon you. They shall increase and be fruitful; and I will cause you to be inhabited as in your former times, and will do more good to you than ever before. Then you shall know that I am the LORD. [12]I will lead people upon you—my people Israel—and they shall possess you, and you shall be their inheritance. No longer shall you bereave them of children.

13 Thus says the Lord GOD: Because they say to you, "You devour people, and you bereave your nation of children," [14]therefore you shall no longer devour people and no longer bereave your nation of children, says the Lord GOD; [15]and no longer will I let you hear the insults of the nations, no longer shall you bear the disgrace of the peoples; and no longer shall you cause your nation to stumble, says the Lord GOD.

16 The word of the LORD came to me: [17]Mortal, when the house of Israel lived on their own soil, they defiled it with their ways and their deeds; their conduct in my sight was like the uncleanness of a woman in her menstrual period. [18]So I poured out my wrath upon them for the blood that they had shed upon the land, and for the idols with which they had defiled it. [19]I scattered them among the nations, and they were dispersed through the countries; in accordance with their conduct and their deeds I judged them. [20]But when they came to the nations, wherever they came, they profaned my holy name, in that it was said of them, "These are the people of the LORD, and yet they had to go out of his land." [21]But I had concern for my holy name, which the house of Israel had profaned among the nations to which they came.

22 Therefore say to the house of Israel, Thus says the Lord GOD: It is not for your sake, O house of Israel, that I am about to act, but for the sake of my holy name, which you have profaned among the nations to which you came. [23]I will sanctify my great name, which has been profaned among the nations, and which you have profaned among them; and the nations shall know that I am the LORD, says the Lord GOD, when through you I display my holiness before their eyes. [24]I will take you from the nations, and gather you from all the countries, and bring you into your own land. [25]I will sprinkle clean water upon you, and you shall be clean from all your uncleannesses, and

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**36.8–15**: The land will surpass its pristine productivity (*in your former times,* in the years just after the Exodus; Hos 11.1–4; Jer 2.1–3). **14**: *No longer devour people,* the hilltops will not serve again as fertility cult sanctuaries (6.1–14; Deut 12.1–3, 29–31), perhaps involving human sacrifices.

**36.16–21**: The land was defiled by Israel's offering of pagan sacrifices, thereby profaning God's name (Lev 18.21; 20.3). **17**: *Uncleanness,* see Lev 15.19–30.

**36.22–32**: As in ch 20, God reminds Israel that he will restore them, his people (Ex 6.7; Lev 20.24), for the sake of his name; like Ezekiel (12.6; 24.27) they will be a sign for all nations. **25–26**: God will *cleanse* them (compare Ex 30.17–21), inasmuch as human beings cannot make themselves clean. Again,

from all your idols I will cleanse you. 26A new heart I will give you, and a new spirit I will put within you; and I will remove from your body the heart of stone and give you a heart of flesh. 27I will put my spirit within you, and make you follow my statutes and be careful to observe my ordinances. 28Then you shall live in the land that I gave to your ancestors; and you shall be my people, and I will be your God. 29I will save you from all your uncleannesses, and I will summon the grain and make it abundant and lay no famine upon you. 30I will make the fruit of the tree and the produce of the field abundant, so that you may never again suffer the disgrace of famine among the nations. 31Then you shall remember your evil ways, and your dealings that were not good; and you shall loathe yourselves for your iniquities and your abominable deeds. 32It is not for your sake that I will act, says the Lord GOD; let that be known to you. Be ashamed and dismayed for your ways, O house of Israel.

33 Thus says the Lord GOD: On the day that I cleanse you from all your iniquities, I will cause the towns to be inhabited, and the waste places shall be rebuilt. 34The land that was desolate shall be tilled, instead of being the desolation that it was in the sight of all who passed by. 35And they will say, "This land that was desolate has become like the garden of Eden; and the waste and desolate and ruined towns are now inhabited and fortified." 36Then the nations that are left all around you shall know that I, the LORD, have rebuilt the ruined places, and replanted that which was desolate; I, the LORD, have spoken, and I will do it.

37 Thus says the Lord GOD: I will also let the house of Israel ask me to do this for them: to increase their population like a flock. 38Like the flock for sacrifices,[y] like the flock at Jerusalem during her appointed festivals, so shall the ruined towns be filled with flocks of people. Then they shall know that I am the LORD.

37 The hand of the LORD came upon me, and he brought me out by the spirit of the LORD and set me down in the middle of a valley; it was full of bones. 2He led me all around them; there were very many lying in the valley, and they were very dry. 3He said to me, "Mortal, can these bones live?" I answered, "O Lord GOD, you know." 4Then he said to me, "Prophesy to these bones, and say to them: O dry bones, hear the word of the LORD. 5Thus says the Lord GOD to these bones: I will cause breath[z] to enter you, and you shall live. 6I will lay sinews on you, and will cause flesh to come upon you, and cover you with skin, and put breath[z] in you, and you shall live; and you shall know that I am the LORD."

7 So I prophesied as I had been commanded; and as I prophesied, suddenly there was a noise, a rattling, and the bones came together, bone to its bone. 8I looked, and there were sinews on them, and flesh had come upon them, and skin had covered them; but there was no breath in them. 9Then he said to me, "Prophesy to the breath, prophesy, mortal, and say to the breath:[a] Thus says the Lord GOD: Come from the four winds, O breath,[a] and breathe upon these slain, that they may live." 10I prophesied as he commanded me, and the breath came into them, and they lived, and stood on their feet, a vast multitude.

11 Then he said to me, "Mortal, these bones are the whole house of Israel. They say, 'Our bones are dried up, and our

*y* Heb *flock of holy things* *z* Or *spirit*
*a* Or *wind* or *spirit*

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the *new heart* will be created by God's spirit (ch 37; Isa 44.3; Rom 8.3–6).

**36.33–36**: The skeptical nations (v. 20) will recognize Israel's restoration (Jer 31.23–28) as God's act. **37–38**: *Like a flock,* see ch 34.

**37.1–14**: **Vision of the valley of dry bones. 1**: *Valley,* "plain" in 3.22; 8.4. The *bones* are the exiles, who have no more hope of resuscitating the kingdom of Israel than of putting flesh on a skeleton and calling it to life. **9**: Hebrew "rûah" means "spirit, breath, wind"; thus there is a constant word-play

hope is lost; we are cut off completely.' 12Therefore prophesy, and say to them, Thus says the Lord GOD: I am going to open your graves, and bring you up from your graves, O my people; and I will bring you back to the land of Israel. 13And you shall know that I am the LORD, when I open your graves, and bring you up from your graves, O my people. 14I will put my spirit within you, and you shall live, and I will place you on your own soil; then you shall know that I, the LORD, have spoken and will act, says the LORD."

15 The word of the LORD came to me: 16Mortal, take a stick and write on it, "For Judah, and the Israelites associated with it"; then take another stick and write on it, "For Joseph (the stick of Ephraim) and all the house of Israel associated with it"; 17and join them together into one stick, so that they may become one in your hand. 18And when your people say to you, "Will you not show us what you mean by these?" 19say to them, Thus says the Lord GOD: I am about to take the stick of Joseph (which is in the hand of Ephraim) and the tribes of Israel associated with it; and I will put the stick of Judah upon it,[b] and make them one stick, in order that they may be one in my hand. 20When the sticks on which you write are in your hand before their eyes, 21then say to them, Thus says the Lord GOD: I will take the people of Israel from the nations among which they have gone, and will gather them from every quarter, and bring them to their own land. 22I will make them one nation in the land, on the mountains of Israel; and one king shall be king over them all. Never again shall they be two nations, and never again shall they be divided into two kingdoms. 23They shall never again defile themselves with their idols and their detestable things, or with any of their transgressions. I will save them from all the apostasies into which they have fallen,[c] and will cleanse them. Then they shall be my people, and I will be their God.

24 My servant David shall be king over them; and they shall all have one shepherd. They shall follow my ordinances and be careful to observe my statutes. 25They shall live in the land that I gave to my servant Jacob, in which your ancestors lived; they and their children and their children's children shall live there forever; and my servant David shall be their prince forever. 26I will make a covenant of peace with them; it shall be an everlasting covenant with them; and I will bless[d] them and multiply them, and will set my sanctuary among them forevermore. 27My dwelling place shall be with them; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people. 28Then the nations shall know that I the LORD sanctify Israel, when my sanctuary is among them forevermore.

38 The word of the LORD came to me: 2Mortal, set your face toward Gog, of the land of Magog, the chief prince of Meshech and Tubal. Prophesy against him 3and say: Thus says the Lord GOD: I am against you,

*b* Heb *I will put them upon it* *c* Another reading is *from all the settlements in which they have sinned* *d* Tg: Heb *give*

here. *Four winds* may refer to God's omnipresence (1.17). **14**: This vision, which refers to the re-establishment of Israel, is indirectly an anticipation of the doctrine of resurrection.

**37.15–28: Oracle of the two sticks** (Zech 11.7–14) envisions the re-unification of the long-divided land and the establishment of a united Israel, ruled by one king; then the situation earlier predicted will prevail (34.28): law-abiding living (11.20) in the promised land (28.25) under the Davidic king (34.23–24); the covenant of peace (34.25); and the re-established central sanctuary (45.1–8). **25**: *Prince*, the king (compare 12.10; 34.24).

**38.1–39.29: The Gog and Magog oracles** describe in apocalyptic language the coming of the foe from the north (38.15; Jer 6.22) against God's people living peacefully in the promised land (38.8, 11–12). After a cataclysmic battle the aggressor forces will be completely defeated, and God will be acknowledged by all nations as the undisputed

O Gog, chief prince of Meshech and Tubal; [4]I will turn you around and put hooks into your jaws, and I will lead you out with all your army, horses and horsemen, all of them clothed in full armor, a great company, all of them with shield and buckler, wielding swords. [5]Persia, Ethiopia,[e] and Put are with them, all of them with buckler and helmet; [6]Gomer and all its troops; Beth-togarmah from the remotest parts of the north with all its troops—many peoples are with you.

7 Be ready and keep ready, you and all the companies that are assembled around you, and hold yourselves in reserve for them. [8]After many days you shall be mustered; in the latter years you shall go against a land restored from war, a land where people were gathered from many nations on the mountains of Israel, which had long lain waste; its people were brought out from the nations and now are living in safety, all of them. [9]You shall advance, coming on like a storm; you shall be like a cloud covering the land, you and all your troops, and many peoples with you.

10 Thus says the Lord GOD: On that day thoughts will come into your mind, and you will devise an evil scheme. [11]You will say, "I will go up against the land of unwalled villages; I will fall upon the quiet people who live in safety, all of them living without walls, and having no bars or gates"; [12]to seize spoil and carry off plunder; to assail the waste places that are now inhabited, and the people who were gathered from the nations, who are acquiring cattle and goods, who live at the center[f] of the earth. [13]Sheba and Dedan and the merchants of Tarshish and all its young warriors[g] will say to you, "Have you come to seize spoil? Have you assembled your horde to carry off plunder, to carry away silver and gold, to take away cattle and goods, to seize a great amount of booty?"

14 Therefore, mortal, prophesy, and say to Gog: Thus says the Lord GOD: On that day when my people Israel are living securely, you will rouse yourself[h] [15]and come from your place out of the remotest parts of the north, you and many peoples with you, all of them riding on horses, a great horde, a mighty army; [16]you will come up against my people Israel, like a cloud covering the earth. In the latter days I will bring you against my land, so that the nations may know me, when through you, O Gog, I display my holiness before their eyes.

17 Thus says the Lord GOD: Are you he of whom I spoke in former days by my servants the prophets of Israel, who in those days prophesied for years that I would bring you against them? [18]On that day, when Gog comes against the land of Israel, says the Lord GOD, my wrath shall be aroused. [19]For in my jealousy and in my blazing wrath I declare:

*e* Or *Nubia*; Heb *Cush* *f* Heb *navel*
*g* Heb *young lions* *h* Gk: Heb *will you not know?*

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victor (38.23; 39.21–29; 36.22–23). Since the foe from the north in Jeremiah (Jer 25.9) and Ezekiel (Ezek 26.7) was Babylon, it is probable that the foe here described is a grandiose surrogate for Babylon. The conflict is that preceding the fall of Babylon, and the victory includes Israel's restoration to its land (34.11–16; 36.8–38; Jer 31.23–28). The limited scope and goal of these oracles has been expanded to cosmic proportions by the writer of Rev 20.7–10.

**38.1–9**: *Gog*, king of *Magog*, both unidentified, though general location is in the north. *Meshech, Tubal, Put*, see 27.10–25a n. *Cush*, Ethiopia. *Gomer*, Assyrian "Gimirrai," Cimmerians in central Asia Minor (Gen 10.2–3). *Beth-togarmah*, see 27.10–25a n. Though people and places in apocalyptic literature can often be identified, they are part of the literary equipment and should rarely be taken literally. *In the latter years* corresponds to "in the latter days" (Hos 3.5; Jer 30.24) before the re-establishment of David's line (34.23–24; Jer 23.5–6).

**38.10–23**: The plot against God's defenseless people is doomed to defeat. God will marshal all the forces of nature against Gog (Ps 18.7–15; Isa 24.18–20; 30.27–33; Joel 2.28–32). **12**: *Center*, see 5.5 n. **13**: *Sheba*, 27.22. *Dedan*, 25.13. *Tarshish*, see Jer 10.9 n.

On that day there shall be a great shaking in the land of Israel; 20the fish of the sea, and the birds of the air, and the animals of the field, and all creeping things that creep on the ground, and all human beings that are on the face of the earth, shall quake at my presence, and the mountains shall be thrown down, and the cliffs shall fall, and every wall shall tumble to the ground. 21I will summon the sword against Gog[i] in[j] all my mountains, says the Lord GOD; the swords of all will be against their comrades. 22With pestilence and bloodshed I will enter into judgment with him; and I will pour down torrential rains and hailstones, fire and sulfur, upon him and his troops and the many peoples that are with him. 23So I will display my greatness and my holiness and make myself known in the eyes of many nations. Then they shall know that I am the LORD.

**39** And you, mortal, prophesy against Gog, and say: Thus says the Lord GOD: I am against you, O Gog, chief prince of Meshech and Tubal! 2I will turn you around and drive you forward, and bring you up from the remotest parts of the north, and lead you against the mountains of Israel. 3I will strike your bow from your left hand, and will make your arrows drop out of your right hand. 4You shall fall upon the mountains of Israel, you and all your troops and the peoples that are with you; I will give you to birds of prey of every kind and to the wild animals to be devoured. 5You shall fall in the open field; for I have spoken, says the Lord GOD. 6I will send fire on Magog and on those who live securely in the coastlands; and they shall know that I am the LORD.

7 My holy name I will make known among my people Israel; and I will not let my holy name be profaned any more; and the nations shall know that I am the LORD, the Holy One in Israel. 8It has come! It has happened, says the Lord GOD. This is the day of which I have spoken.

9 Then those who live in the towns of Israel will go out and make fires of the weapons and burn them—bucklers and shields, bows and arrows, handpikes and spears—and they will make fires of them for seven years. 10They will not need to take wood out of the field or cut down any trees in the forests, for they will make their fires of the weapons; they will despoil those who despoiled them, and plunder those who plundered them, says the Lord GOD.

11 On that day I will give to Gog a place for burial in Israel, the Valley of the Travelers[k] east of the sea; it shall block the path of the travelers, for there Gog and all his horde will be buried; it shall be called the Valley of Hamon-gog.[l] 12Seven months the house of Israel shall spend burying them, in order to cleanse the land. 13All the people of the land shall bury them; and it will bring them honor on the day that I show my glory, says the Lord GOD. 14They will set apart men to pass through the land regularly and bury any invaders[m] who remain on the face of the land, so as to cleanse it; for seven months they shall make their search. 15As the searchers[m] pass through the land, anyone who sees a human bone shall set up a sign by it, until the buriers have buried it in the Valley of Hamon-gog.[l] 16(A city Hamonah[n] is there also.) Thus they shall cleanse the land.

17 As for you, mortal, thus says the Lord GOD: Speak to the birds of every kind and to all the wild animals: Assemble and come, gather from all around to

*i* Heb *him* *j* Heb *to* or *for* *k* Or *of the Abarim* *l* That is, *the Horde of Gog* *m* Heb *travelers* *n* That is *The Horde*

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**39.1–20: Gog's defeat.** The magnitude of the opposing forces, and thus of God's victory, is emphasized by the huge quantities of war material (enough *wood* for fuel for *seven years*) and by the *seven months* required to remove the enemy dead to the region east of the Dead Sea. The slaughter of those who dared oppose God and oppress his people is regarded as a sacrifice to God's glory.

the sacrificial feast that I am preparing for you, a great sacrificial feast on the mountains of Israel, and you shall eat flesh and drink blood. 18 You shall eat the flesh of the mighty, and drink the blood of the princes of the earth—of rams, of lambs, and of goats, of bulls, all of them fatlings of Bashan. 19 You shall eat fat until you are filled, and drink blood until you are drunk, at the sacrificial feast that I am preparing for you. 20 And you shall be filled at my table with horses and charioteers,[o] with warriors and all kinds of soldiers, says the Lord GOD.

21 I will display my glory among the nations; and all the nations shall see my judgment that I have executed, and my hand that I have laid on them. 22 The house of Israel shall know that I am the LORD their God, from that day forward. 23 And the nations shall know that the house of Israel went into captivity for their iniquity, because they dealt treacherously with me. So I hid my face from them and gave them into the hand of their adversaries, and they all fell by the sword. 24 I dealt with them according to their uncleanness and their transgressions, and hid my face from them.

25 Therefore thus says the Lord GOD: Now I will restore the fortunes of Jacob, and have mercy on the whole house of Israel; and I will be jealous for my holy name. 26 They shall forget[p] their shame, and all the treachery they have practiced against me, when they live securely in their land with no one to make them afraid, 27 when I have brought them back from the peoples and gathered them from their enemies' lands, and through them have displayed my holiness in the sight of many nations. 28 Then they shall know that I am the LORD their God because I sent them into exile among the nations, and then gathered them into their own land. I will leave none of them behind; 29 and I will never again hide my face from them, when I pour out my spirit upon the house of Israel, says the Lord GOD.

40 In the twenty-fifth year of our exile, at the beginning of the year, on the tenth day of the month, in the fourteenth year after the city was struck down, on that very day, the hand of the LORD was upon me, and he brought me there. 2 He brought me, in visions of God, to the land of Israel, and set me down upon a very high mountain, on which was a structure like a city to the south. 3 When he brought me there, a man was there, whose appearance shone like bronze, with a linen cord and a measuring reed in his hand; and he was standing in the gateway. 4 The man said to me, "Mortal, look closely and listen attentively, and set your mind upon all that I shall show you, for you were brought here in order that I might show it to you; declare all that you see to the house of Israel."

5 Now there was a wall all around the outside of the temple area. The length of the measuring reed in the man's hand was six long cubits, each being a cubit and a handbreadth in length; so he mea-

*o* Heb *chariots* *p* Another reading is *They shall bear*

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**39.21–29**: Conclusion of the oracles—the victory and restoration told in familiar terms (5.8; 28.26; 34.30).

**40.1–48.35**: **The vision of the restored temple and land.** This section is really a continuation of the theme of chs 33–39, but because of its unified description of Israel's religious and political restoration it may be separated from the less homogeneous preceding section. The temple, though somewhat idealized, is the Solomonic temple, in which Ezekiel probably served as priest before his exile (1.3) and which was destroyed in 587 B.C.

**40.1–47**: **The temple area, gates, outer and inner courts. 1–5**: April 28, 573 B.C. On the twenty-fifth anniversary of his exile, Ezekiel is transported in a vision (compare 8.2–3) to the temple mountain (*very high mountain,* 17.22; Mic 4.1). **3**: The *reed* was about ten feet, four inches long.

**40.5**: The *long cubit* was about 20.68 inches; the ordinary cubit was about 17.5 inches. The equal height and width of the outer retaining

sured the thickness of the wall, one reed; and the height, one reed. 6Then he went into the gateway facing east, going up its steps, and measured the threshold of the gate, one reed deep.[q] There were 7recesses, and each recess was one reed wide and one reed deep; and the space between the recesses, five cubits; and the threshold of the gate by the vestibule of the gate at the inner end was one reed deep. 8Then he measured the inner vestibule of the gateway, one cubit. 9Then he measured the vestibule of the gateway, eight cubits; and its pilasters, two cubits; and the vestibule of the gate was at the inner end. 10There were three recesses on either side of the east gate; the three were of the same size; and the pilasters on either side were of the same size. 11Then he measured the width of the opening of the gateway, ten cubits; and the width of the gateway, thirteen cubits. 12There was a barrier before the recesses, one cubit on either side; and the recesses were six cubits on either side. 13Then he measured the gate from the back[r] of the one recess to the back[r] of the other, a width of twenty-five cubits, from wall to wall.[s] 14He measured[t] also the vestibule, twenty cubits; and the gate next to the pilaster on every side of the court.[u] 15From the front of the gate at the entrance to the end of the inner vestibule of the gate was fifty cubits. 16The recesses and their pilasters had windows, with shutters[u] on the inside of the gateway all around, and the vestibules also had windows on the inside all around; and on the pilasters were palm trees.

17 Then he brought me into the outer court; there were chambers there, and a pavement, all around the court; thirty chambers fronted on the pavement. 18The pavement ran along the side of the gates, corresponding to the length of the gates; this was the lower pavement. 19Then he measured the distance from the inner front of[v] the lower gate to the outer front of the inner court, one hundred cubits.[w]

20 Then he measured the gate of the outer court that faced north—its depth and width. 21Its recesses, three on either side, and its pilasters and its vestibule were of the same size as those of the first gate; its depth was fifty cubits, and its width twenty-five cubits. 22Its windows, its vestibule, and its palm trees were of the same size as those of the gate that faced toward the east. Seven steps led up to it; and its vestibule was on the inside.[x] 23Opposite the gate on the north, as on the east, was a gate to the inner court; he measured from gate to gate, one hundred cubits.

24 Then he led me toward the south, and there was a gate on the south; and he measured its pilasters and its vestibule; they had the same dimensions as the others. 25There were windows all around in it and in its vestibule, like the windows of the others; its depth was fifty cubits, and its width twenty-five cubits. 26There were seven steps leading up to it; its ves-

*q* Heb *deep, and one threshold, one reed deep*
*r* Gk: Heb *roof* *s* Heb *opening facing opening*
*t* Heb *made* *u* Meaning of Heb uncertain
*v* Compare Gk: Heb *from before* *w* Heb adds *the east and the north* *x* Gk: Heb *before them*

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wall corresponds to the symmetry of the enclosure itself (42.16–20). **6–16**: The detailed description of the east or processional gate (10.19) makes it possible to compare it with Solomonic gateways found at Megiddo, Gezer, and Hazor, all having the same design and essentially the same dimensions. After ascending seven steps (vv. 22, 26) one came to the temple gate which had a double entrance vestibule, the second narrower than the first, and closed off from the interior by doors. The wall joined the gate at the entrance vestibules; the remainder of the gate extended into the outer court. The interior had three chambers, or guardrooms, on either side separated by heavy piers. Passing the last pier, one entered the outer court, or possibly first into an inner vestibule and then the outer court. The side chambers had back doors opening into the outer court. The windows, as the temple itself, were of Phoenician, or Tyrian, design, narrowing inwards. Palm trees were a common Near Eastern decorative motif. **17–19**: The thirty chambers were probably for the use of people and Levites worshiping in the outer court.

tibule was on the inside.[y] It had palm trees on its pilasters, one on either side. 27There was a gate on the south of the inner court; and he measured from gate to gate toward the south, one hundred cubits.

28 Then he brought me to the inner court by the south gate, and he measured the south gate; it was of the same dimensions as the others. 29Its recesses, its pilasters, and its vestibule were of the same size as the others; and there were windows all around in it and in its vestibule; its depth was fifty cubits, and its width twenty-five cubits. 30There were vestibules all around, twenty-five cubits deep and five cubits wide. 31Its vestibule faced the outer court, and palm trees were on its pilasters, and its stairway had eight steps.

32 Then he brought me to the inner court on the east side, and he measured the gate; it was of the same size as the others. 33Its recesses, its pilasters, and its vestibule were of the same dimensions as the others; and there were windows all around in it and in its vestibule; its depth was fifty cubits, and its width twenty-five cubits. 34Its vestibule faced the outer court, and it had palm trees on its pilasters, on either side; and its stairway had eight steps.

35 Then he brought me to the north gate, and he measured it; it had the same dimensions as the others. 36Its recesses, its pilasters, and its vestibule were of the same size as the others;[z] and it had windows all around. Its depth was fifty cubits, and its width twenty-five cubits. 37Its vestibule[a] faced the outer court, and it had palm trees on its pilasters, on either side; and its stairway had eight steps.

38 There was a chamber with its door in the vestibule of the gate,[b] where the burnt offering was to be washed. 39And in the vestibule of the gate were two tables on either side, on which the burnt offering and the sin offering and the guilt offering were to be slaughtered. 40On the outside of the vestibule[c] at the entrance of the north gate were two tables; and on the other side of the vestibule of the gate were two tables. 41Four tables were on the inside, and four tables on the outside of the side of the gate, eight tables, on which the sacrifices were to be slaughtered. 42There were also four tables of hewn stone for the burnt offering, a cubit and a half long, and one cubit and a half wide, and one cubit high, on which the instruments were to be laid with which the burnt offerings and the sacrifices were slaughtered. 43There were pegs, one handbreadth long, fastened all around the inside. And on the tables the flesh of the offering was to be laid.

44 On the outside of the inner gateway there were chambers for the singers in the inner court, one[d] at the side of the north gate facing south, the other at the side of the east gate facing north. 45He said to me, "This chamber that faces south is for the priests who have charge of the temple, 46and the chamber that faces north is for the priests who have charge of the altar; these are the descendants of Zadok, who alone among the descendants of Levi may come near to the LORD to minister to him." 47He measured the court, one hundred cubits deep, and one hundred cubits wide, a square; and the altar was in front of the temple.

48 Then he brought me to the vesti-

*y* Gk: Heb *before them* *z* One Ms: Compare verses 29 and 33: MT lacks *were of the same size as the others* *a* Gk Vg Compare verses 26, 31, 34: Heb *pilasters* *b* Cn: Heb *at the pilasters of the gates* *c* Cn: Heb *to him who goes up* *d* Heb lacks *one*

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**40.20–27:** Northern and southern gates were similar to the east gate.

**40.28–37:** Eight steps above the outer court were the gates leading to the inner court corresponding to those leading to the outer court. The temple was built on a succession of terraces.

**40.38–43:** At the east gate leading to the inner court were the facilities for the preparation of the sacrifices (Lev 1.1–7.38).

**40.44–47:** On the north and south sides of the square inner court were buildings for the use of the Zadokite priests (43.19; 44.15–16).

**40.48–41.26: The temple arrange-**

bule of the temple and measured the pilasters of the vestibule, five cubits on either side; and the width of the gate was fourteen cubits; and the sidewalls of the gate were three cubits[e] on either side. 49The depth of the vestibule was twenty cubits, and the width twelve[f] cubits; ten steps led up[g] to it; and there were pillars beside the pilasters on either side.

41 Then he brought me to the nave, and measured the pilasters; on each side six cubits was the width of the pilasters.[h] 2The width of the entrance was ten cubits; and the sidewalls of the entrance were five cubits on either side. He measured the length of the nave, forty cubits, and its width, twenty cubits. 3Then he went into the inner room and measured the pilasters of the entrance, two cubits; and the width of the entrance, six cubits; and the sidewalls[i] of the entrance, seven cubits. 4He measured the depth of the room, twenty cubits, and its width, twenty cubits, beyond the nave. And he said to me, This is the most holy place.

5 Then he measured the wall of the temple, six cubits thick; and the width of the side chambers, four cubits, all around the temple. 6The side chambers were in three stories, one over another, thirty in each story. There were offsets[j] all around the wall of the temple to serve as supports for the side chambers, so that they should not be supported by the wall of the temple. 7The passageway[k] of the side chambers widened from story to story; for the structure was supplied with a stairway all around the temple. For this reason the structure became wider from story to story. One ascended from the bottom story to the uppermost story by way of the middle one. 8I saw also that the temple had a raised platform all around; the foundations of the side chambers measured a full reed of six long cubits. 9The thickness of the outer wall of the side chambers was five cubits; and the free space between the side chambers of the temple 10and the chambers of the court was a width of twenty cubits all around the temple on every side. 11The side chambers opened onto the area left free, one door toward the north, and another door toward the south; and the width of the part that was left free was five cubits all around.

12 The building that was facing the temple yard on the west side was seventy cubits wide; and the wall of the building was five cubits thick all around, and its depth ninety cubits.

13 Then he measured the temple, one hundred cubits deep; and the yard and the building with its walls, one hundred cubits deep; 14also the width of the east front of the temple and the yard, one hundred cubits.

15 Then he measured the depth of the building facing the yard at the west, together with its galleries[l] on either side, one hundred cubits.

*e* Gk: Heb *and the width of the gate was three cubits*
*f* Gk: Heb *eleven* *g* Gk: Heb *and by steps that went up* *h* Compare Gk: Heb *tent*
*i* Gk: Heb *width* *j* Gk Compare 1 Kings 6.6: Heb *they entered* *k* Cn: Heb *it was surrounded*
*l* Cn: Meaning of Heb uncertain

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**ments. 40.48–49**: The temple was ten steps (about ten feet; see 41.8) above the level of the inner court. In front of the vestibule were Solomon's free-standing pillars (1 Kings 7.15–22).

**41.1–4**: The tripartite temple division is known also from the thirteenth century Canaanite temple at Hazor and the eighth century temple at Tell Tainat (Hattina) in northern Syria. *The vestibule* (40.48–49) was 35½ by 20½ feet; *the nave* (41.1–2), 35½ by 71 feet; and *the inner room* (41.3–4), or *most holy place,* which Ezekiel did not enter (Lev 16.1–34), 35½ by 35½ feet (1 Kings 6.1–8.66; Ex 26.31–37). **5–11**: The three tiers of thirty chambers per tier on the sides of the temple (1 Kings 6.5–10) were probably for equipment for the temple services, storage, and the temple treasures (1 Kings 14.26; 2 Kings 14.14).

**41.12–15a**: The purpose of the auxiliary building is unknown; earlier it may have served as a stable for sacred horses, now removed (2 Kings 23.11).

**41.15b–26**: The windows were like those in the gates (40.16); for the decorative motifs, see 1 Kings 6.29–30; on the *cherubim,* see 1.5 n. **22**: The *table* (perhaps for the bread

The nave of the temple and the inner room and the outer[m] vestibule [16]were paneled,[n] and, all around, all three had windows with recessed[o] frames. Facing the threshold the temple was paneled with wood all around, from the floor up to the windows (now the windows were covered), [17]to the space above the door, even to the inner room, and on the outside. And on all the walls all around in the inner room and the nave there was a pattern.[p] [18]It was formed of cherubim and palm trees, a palm tree between cherub and cherub. Each cherub had two faces: [19]a human face turned toward the palm tree on the one side, and the face of a young lion turned toward the palm tree on the other side. They were carved on the whole temple all around; [20]from the floor to the area above the door, cherubim and palm trees were carved on the wall.[q]

21 The doorposts of the nave were square. In front of the holy place was something resembling [22]an altar of wood, three cubits high, two cubits long, and two cubits wide;[r] its corners, its base,[s] and its walls were of wood. He said to me, "This is the table that stands before the LORD." [23]The nave and the holy place had each a double door. [24]The doors had two leaves apiece, two swinging leaves for each door. [25]On the doors of the nave were carved cherubim and palm trees, such as were carved on the walls; and there was a canopy of wood in front of the vestibule outside. [26]And there were recessed windows and palm trees on either side, on the sidewalls of the vestibule.[t]

42 Then he led me out into the outer court, toward the north, and he brought me to the chambers that were opposite the temple yard and opposite the building on the north. [2]The length of the building that was on the north side[u] was[v] one hundred cubits, and the width fifty cubits. [3]Across the twenty cubits that belonged to the inner court, and facing the pavement that belonged to the outer court, the chambers rose[w] gallery[x] by gallery[x] in three stories. [4]In front of the chambers was a passage on the inner side, ten cubits wide and one hundred cubits deep,[y] and its[z] entrances were on the north. [5]Now the upper chambers were narrower, for the galleries[x] took more away from them than from the lower and middle chambers in the building. [6]For they were in three stories, and they had no pillars like the pillars of the outer[a] court; for this reason the upper chambers were set back from the ground more than the lower and the middle ones. [7]There was a wall outside parallel to the chambers, toward the outer court, opposite the chambers, fifty cubits long. [8]For the chambers on the outer court were fifty cubits long, while those opposite the temple were one hundred cubits long. [9]At the foot of these chambers ran a passage that one entered from the east in order to enter them from the outer court. [10]The width of the passage[b] was fixed by the wall of the court.

On the south[c] also, opposite the va-

*m* Gk: Heb *of the court* *n* Gk: Heb *the thresholds* *o* Cn Compare Gk 1 Kings 6.4: Meaning of Heb uncertain *p* Heb *measures* *q* Cn Compare verse 25: Heb *and the wall* *r* Gk: Heb lacks *two cubits wide* *s* Gk: Heb *length* *t* Cn: Heb *vestibule. And the side chambers of the temple and the canopies* *u* Gk: Heb *door* *v* Gk: Heb *before the length* *w* Heb lacks *the chambers rose* *x* Meaning of Heb uncertain *y* Gk Syr: Heb *a way of one cubit* *z* Heb *their* *a* Gk: Heb lacks *outer* *b* Heb lacks *of the passage* *c* Gk: Heb *east*

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of the Presence), see 1 Kings 6.20–22; Lev 24.5–9.

**42.1–14: The priests' chambers.** The description is unclear. Perhaps the three stories of chambers were arranged terrace-fashion against the north and south terrace-walls retaining the inner court, with staircases leading to the upper stories and halls on each level into which the chamber doors opened. A second, smaller, apartment-building was opposite, on the outer court side. In them the priests were to store their share of the sacrifices (44.28–31; Lev 2.1–10; 7.7–10), eat their meals, and leave the garments they wore for the services before entering the outer court.

*The divine glory returns to the temple*

cant area and opposite the building, there were chambers [11] with a passage in front of them; they were similar to the chambers on the north, of the same length and width, with the same exits[d] and arrangements and doors. [12] So the entrances of the chambers to the south were entered through the entrance at the head of the corresponding passage, from the east, along the matching wall.[e]

13 Then he said to me, "The north chambers and the south chambers opposite the vacant area are the holy chambers, where the priests who approach the LORD shall eat the most holy offerings; there they shall deposit the most holy offerings—the grain offering, the sin offering, and the guilt offering—for the place is holy. [14] When the priests enter the holy place, they shall not go out of it into the outer court without laying there the vestments in which they minister, for these are holy; they shall put on other garments before they go near to the area open to the people."

15 When he had finished measuring the interior of the temple area, he led me out by the gate that faces east, and measured the temple area all around. [16] He measured the east side with the measuring reed, five hundred cubits by the measuring reed. [17] Then he turned and measured[f] the north side, five hundred cubits by the measuring reed. [18] Then he turned and measured[f] the south side, five hundred cubits by the measuring reed. [19] Then he turned to the west side and measured, five hundred cubits by the measuring reed. [20] He measured it on the four sides. It had a wall around it, five hundred cubits long and five hundred cubits wide, to make a separation between the holy and the common.

43 Then he brought me to the gate, the gate facing east. [2] And there, the glory of the God of Israel was coming from the east; the sound was like the sound of mighty waters; and the earth shone with his glory. [3] The[g] vision I saw was like the vision that I had seen when he came to destroy the city, and[h] like the vision that I had seen by the river Chebar; and I fell upon my face. [4] As the glory of the LORD entered the temple by the gate facing east, [5] the spirit lifted me up, and brought me into the inner court; and the glory of the LORD filled the temple.

6 While the man was standing beside me, I heard someone speaking to me out of the temple. [7] He said to me: Mortal, this is the place of my throne and the place for the soles of my feet, where I will reside among the people of Israel forever. The house of Israel shall no more defile my holy name, neither they nor their kings, by their whoring, and by the corpses of their kings at their death.[i] [8] When they placed their threshold by my threshold and their doorposts beside my doorposts, with only a wall between me and them, they were defiling my holy name by their abominations that they committed; therefore I have consumed them in my anger. [9] Now let them put away their idolatry and the corpses of their kings far from me, and I will reside among them forever.

10 As for you, mortal, describe the temple to the house of Israel, and let them measure the pattern; and let them

*d* Heb *and all their exits* *e* Meaning of Heb uncertain *f* Gk: Heb *measuring reed all around. He measured* *g* Gk: Heb *Like the vision* *h* Syr: Heb *and the visions* *i* Or *on their high places*

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**42.15–20: The total temple area** was five hundred cubits square (861.63 feet square; see 40.5 n.).

**43.1–12: Return of the glory of God.** As God on his throne-chariot had forsaken the temple by the east gate (10.18–19; 11.22–23), so he returns from the same direction and re-consecrates the purified temple by his Presence (Ex 40.34–38; 1 Kings 8.10–11). *Sound of many waters,* 1.24; Rev 14.2; 19.6. Like the brightness of the sun, *the earth shone with his glory* (Isa 60.1–3).

**43.6–12:** The restored temple is to be restricted to purely religious uses, as commanded by God; especially discouraged is any influence from the crown (ch 8; 1 Kings 7.1–12; 11.33; Am 7.13).

be ashamed of their iniquities. 11 When they are ashamed of all that they have done, make known to them the plan of the temple, its arrangement, its exits and its entrances, and its whole form—all its ordinances and its entire plan and all its laws; and write it down in their sight, so that they may observe and follow the entire plan and all its ordinances. 12 This is the law of the temple: the whole territory on the top of the mountain all around shall be most holy. This is the law of the temple.

13 These are the dimensions of the altar by cubits (the cubit being one cubit and a handbreadth): its base shall be one cubit high,[j] and one cubit wide, with a rim of one span around its edge. This shall be the height of the altar: 14 From the base on the ground to the lower ledge, two cubits, with a width of one cubit; and from the smaller ledge to the larger ledge, four cubits, with a width of one cubit; 15 and the altar hearth, four cubits; and from the altar hearth projecting upward, four horns. 16 The altar hearth shall be square, twelve cubits long by twelve wide. 17 The ledge also shall be square, fourteen cubits long by fourteen wide, with a rim around it half a cubit wide, and its surrounding base, one cubit. Its steps shall face east.

18 Then he said to me: Mortal, thus says the Lord GOD: These are the ordinances for the altar: On the day when it is erected for offering burnt offerings upon it and for dashing blood against it, 19 you shall give to the levitical priests of the family of Zadok, who draw near to me to minister to me, says the Lord GOD, a bull for a sin offering. 20 And you shall take some of its blood, and put it on the four horns of the altar, and on the four corners of the ledge, and upon the rim all around; thus you shall purify it and make atonement for it. 21 You shall also take the bull of the sin offering, and it shall be burnt in the appointed place belonging to the temple, outside the sacred area.

22 On the second day you shall offer a male goat without blemish for a sin offering; and the altar shall be purified, as it was purified with the bull. 23 When you have finished purifying it, you shall offer a bull without blemish and a ram from the flock without blemish. 24 You shall present them before the LORD, and the priests shall throw salt on them and offer them up as a burnt offering to the LORD. 25 For seven days you shall provide daily a goat for a sin offering; also a bull and a ram from the flock, without blemish, shall be provided. 26 Seven days shall they make atonement for the altar and cleanse it, and so consecrate it. 27 When these days are over, then from the eighth day onward the priests shall offer upon the altar your burnt offerings and your offerings of well-being; and I will accept you, says the Lord GOD.

44 Then he brought me back to the outer gate of the sanctuary, which faces east; and it was shut. 2 The LORD said to me: This gate shall remain shut; it shall not be opened, and no one shall enter by it; for the LORD, the God of Israel, has entered by it; therefore it shall remain shut. 3 Only the prince, because he is a prince, may sit in it to eat food before the LORD; he shall enter by

*j* Gk: Heb lacks *high*

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**43.13–27: The altar of burnt offering. 13–17**: The altar was built in three superimposed squares of sixteen, fourteen, and twelve cubits respectively, resting on a foundation platform, "the bosom of the earth," with steps on the east leading to the *altar hearth*, "the mountain of God," like the Mesopotamian ziggurats (see Gen 11.4 n.). The total height of the altar is twelve cubits (20.68 feet).

**43.18–26**: On the analogy of earlier consecratory rites (Ex 29.36–37; 40.1–38; Lev 8.14–15), the priests of Zadok (44.5–31) are to dedicate the altar.

**44.1–31: Temple ordinances. 1–5**: The outer east gate should remain closed, perhaps symbolizing its consecration by God's entrance and God's continued presence (43.7). The prince (see 37.15–28 n.) apparently entered from the temple side for the ceremonial meal (Lev 7.15; Deut 12.7), and thus the gate remained closed (compare 46.1).

way of the vestibule of the gate, and shall go out by the same way.

4 Then he brought me by way of the north gate to the front of the temple; and I looked, and lo! the glory of the LORD filled the temple of the LORD; and I fell upon my face. 5The LORD said to me: Mortal, mark well, look closely, and listen attentively to all that I shall tell you concerning all the ordinances of the temple of the LORD and all its laws; and mark well those who may be admitted to[k] the temple and all those who are to be excluded from the sanctuary. 6Say to the rebellious house,[l] to the house of Israel, Thus says the Lord GOD: O house of Israel, let there be an end to all your abominations 7in admitting foreigners, uncircumcised in heart and flesh, to be in my sanctuary, profaning my temple when you offer to me my food, the fat and the blood. You[m] have broken my covenant with all your abominations. 8And you have not kept charge of my sacred offerings; but you have appointed foreigners[n] to act for you in keeping my charge in my sanctuary.

9 Thus says the Lord GOD: No foreigner, uncircumcised in heart and flesh, of all the foreigners who are among the people of Israel, shall enter my sanctuary. 10But the Levites who went far from me, going astray from me after their idols when Israel went astray, shall bear their punishment. 11They shall be ministers in my sanctuary, having oversight at the gates of the temple, and serving in the temple; they shall slaughter the burnt offering and the sacrifice for the people, and they shall attend on them and serve them. 12Because they ministered to them before their idols and made the house of Israel stumble into iniquity, therefore I have sworn concerning them, says the Lord GOD, that they shall bear their punishment. 13They shall not come near to me, to serve me as priest, nor come near any of my sacred offerings, the things that are most sacred; but they shall bear their shame, and the consequences of the abominations that they have committed. 14Yet I will appoint them to keep charge of the temple, to do all its chores, all that is to be done in it.

15 But the levitical priests, the descendants of Zadok, who kept the charge of my sanctuary when the people of Israel went astray from me, shall come near to me to minister to me; and they shall attend me to offer me the fat and the blood, says the Lord GOD. 16It is they who shall enter my sanctuary, it is they who shall approach my table, to minister to me, and they shall keep my charge. 17When they enter the gates of the inner court, they shall wear linen vestments; they shall have nothing of wool on them, while they minister at the gates of the inner court, and within. 18They shall have linen turbans on their heads, and linen undergarments on their loins; they shall not bind themselves with anything that causes sweat. 19When they go out into the outer court to the people, they shall remove the vestments in which they have been ministering, and lay them in

*k* Cn: Heb *the entrance of* *l* Gk: Heb lacks *house* *m* Gk Syr Vg: Heb *They*
*n* Heb lacks *foreigners*

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**44.6–9**: No more foreigners may serve in the temple (Josh 9.23; Num 31.30, 47), *uncircumcised in heart and flesh* (compare Deut 30.6; Lev 26.41; Jer 4.4). **10–14**: Because they had been party to Israel's apostasy, the Levites are demoted from being priests to temple servants (compare Deut 17.18–18.8).

**44.15–31**: The priesthood. Solomon elevated *Zadok* to be chief priest after Abiathar's defection and banishment (2 Sam 15.24–29; 1 Kings 1.7–8; 2.26–27). 1 Chr 6.50–53 and 24.31 trace the lineage back to Eleazar, Aaron's son. Their present status is perhaps derived from Hilkiah's role in Josiah's reform (2 Kings 22.11–14; 23.4, 24). **16**: *My table,* the table in the nave (41.22) or the altar. **17**: *Linen vestments,* see 9.2 n. **19**: The care of the vestments, compare 42.14; Hag 2.10–12. **20**: The care of the *hair,* Lev 21.5; Deut 14.1–2. **21**: No *wine* before service, Lev 10.9. **22**: Proper marriage, Lev 21.7, 13–15. **23**: Teaching of the people, Lev 10.11. **24**: *Judges,* Deut 21.1–5. **25**: Defilement by a dead person, Lev 21.1–3.

the holy chambers; and they shall put on other garments, so that they may not communicate holiness to the people with their vestments. 20They shall not shave their heads or let their locks grow long; they shall only trim the hair of their heads. 21No priest shall drink wine when he enters the inner court. 22They shall not marry a widow, or a divorced woman, but only a virgin of the stock of the house of Israel, or a widow who is the widow of a priest. 23They shall teach my people the difference between the holy and the common, and show them how to distinguish between the unclean and the clean. 24In a controversy they shall act as judges, and they shall decide it according to my judgments. They shall keep my laws and my statutes regarding all my appointed festivals, and they shall keep my sabbaths holy. 25They shall not defile themselves by going near to a dead person; for father or mother, however, and for son or daughter, and for brother or unmarried sister they may defile themselves. 26After he has become clean, they shall count seven days for him. 27On the day that he goes into the holy place, into the inner court, to minister in the holy place, he shall offer his sin offering, says the Lord GOD.

28 This shall be their inheritance: I am their inheritance; and you shall give them no holding in Israel; I am their holding. 29They shall eat the grain offering, the sin offering, and the guilt offering; and every devoted thing in Israel shall be theirs. 30The first of all the first fruits of all kinds, and every offering of all kinds from all your offerings, shall belong to the priests; you shall also give to the priests the first of your dough, in order that a blessing may rest on your house. 31The priests shall not eat of anything, whether bird or animal, that died of itself or was torn by animals.

45 When you allot the land as an inheritance, you shall set aside for the LORD a portion of the land as a holy district, twenty-five thousand cubits long and twenty[o] thousand cubits wide; it shall be holy throughout its entire extent. 2Of this, a square plot of five hundred by five hundred cubits shall be for the sanctuary, with fifty cubits for an open space around it. 3In the holy district you shall measure off a section twenty-five thousand cubits long and ten thousand wide, in which shall be the sanctuary, the most holy place. 4It shall be a holy portion of the land; it shall be for the priests, who minister in the sanctuary and approach the LORD to minister to him; and it shall be both a place for their houses and a holy place for the sanctuary. 5Another section, twenty-five thousand cubits long and ten thousand cubits wide, shall be for the Levites who minister at the temple, as their holding for cities to live in.[p]

6 Alongside the portion set apart as the holy district you shall assign as a holding for the city an area five thousand cubits wide, and twenty-five thousand cubits long; it shall belong to the whole house of Israel.

7 And to the prince shall belong the land on both sides of the holy district and the holding of the city, alongside the holy district and the holding of the city, on the west and on the east, corresponding in length to one of the tribal portions, and extending from the western to the

*o* Gk: Heb *ten* *p* Gk: Heb *as their holding, twenty chambers*

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**44.28**: No *inheritance,* Josh 13.14; Num 18.20–32. **29–30**: Eating sacrifices and *first fruits,* Lev 2.3–10; 6.14–18; Deut 18.3–5. **31**: Eating of unslaughtered meat, Lev 7.24.

**45.1–9**: **The distribution of land** (continued in 47.13–48.35) is completely idealistic. The *holy district* is divided into two sections, each 25,000 by 10,000 cubits; the northern section is for the Levites, the southern for the Zadokite priests. The latter included the five hundred cubit square section for the temple area plus an enclosure-space fifty cubits deep not mentioned earlier (42.20). The 25,000 by 5,000 cubit property of Jerusalem south of the holy district (v. 6) made with the holy district (v. 1) an area 25,000 cubits (8.3 miles) square.

eastern boundary [8]of the land. It is to be his property in Israel. And my princes shall no longer oppress my people; but they shall let the house of Israel have the land according to their tribes.

9 Thus says the Lord GOD: Enough, O princes of Israel! Put away violence and oppression, and do what is just and right. Cease your evictions of my people, says the Lord GOD.

10 You shall have honest balances, an honest ephah, and an honest bath.[q] [11]The ephah and the bath shall be of the same measure, the bath containing one-tenth of a homer, and the ephah one-tenth of a homer; the homer shall be the standard measure. [12]The shekel shall be twenty gerahs. Twenty shekels, twenty-five shekels, and fifteen shekels shall make a mina for you.

13 This is the offering that you shall make: one-sixth of an ephah from each homer of wheat, and one-sixth of an ephah from each homer of barley, [14]and as the fixed portion of oil,[r] one-tenth of a bath from each cor (the cor,[s] like the homer, contains ten baths); [15]and one sheep from every flock of two hundred, from the pastures of Israel. This is the offering for grain offerings, burnt offerings, and offerings of well-being, to make atonement for them, says the Lord GOD. [16]All the people of the land shall join with the prince in Israel in making this offering. [17]But this shall be the obligation of the prince regarding the burnt offerings, grain offerings, and drink offerings, at the festivals, the new moons, and the sabbaths, all the appointed festivals of the house of Israel: he shall provide the sin offerings, grain offerings, the burnt offerings, and the offerings of well-being, to make atonement for the house of Israel.

18 Thus says the Lord GOD: In the first month, on the first day of the month, you shall take a young bull without blemish, and purify the sanctuary. [19]The priest shall take some of the blood of the sin offering and put it on the doorposts of the temple, the four corners of the ledge of the altar, and the posts of the gate of the inner court. [20]You shall do the same on the seventh day of the month for anyone who has sinned through error or ignorance; so you shall make atonement for the temple.

21 In the first month, on the fourteenth day of the month, you shall celebrate the festival of the passover, and for seven days unleavened bread shall be eaten. [22]On that day the prince shall provide for himself and all the people of the land a young bull for a sin offering. [23]And during the seven days of the festival he shall provide as a burnt offering to the LORD seven young bulls and seven rams without blemish, on each of the seven days; and a male goat daily for a sin offering. [24]He shall provide as a grain offering an ephah for each bull, an ephah for each ram, and a hin of oil to each ephah. [25]In the seventh month, on the fifteenth day of the month and for the seven days of the festival, he shall make the same provision for sin offerings, burnt offerings, and grain offerings, and for the oil.

**46** Thus says the Lord GOD: The gate of the inner court that faces east shall remain closed on the six working days; but on the sabbath day it shall be opened and on the day of the new moon it shall be opened. [2]The prince shall enter by the vestibule of the gate from outside, and shall take his stand by

*q* A Heb measure of volume *r* Cn: Heb *oil, the bath the oil* *s* Vg: Heb *homer*

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**45.10–17**: **Weights and measures.** For present-day equivalents of *ephah, bath, homer, shekel, gerah,* and *mina,* see pp. 424–425. **13–17**: The people will bring token gifts to the prince, who, as their representative, will offer them to God.

**45.18–25**: **Festival regulations:** *passover* (Ex 23.15; Deut 16.1–8; Lev 23.4–8) and booths (the reference in v. 25; see Ex 23.16; Deut 16.13–15; Lev 23.33–36); omitted are the festival of first fruits (Ex 23.16; Deut 16.9–12; Lev 23.15–21) and the day of atonement (Lev 23.26–32). **24**: *A hin,* see p. 425.

**46.1–18**: **Regulations regarding the prince. 1–8**: The prince (see 37.15–28 n.) shall bring his offerings (45.13–16) through

the post of the gate. The priests shall offer his burnt offering and his offerings of well-being, and he shall bow down at the threshold of the gate. Then he shall go out, but the gate shall not be closed until evening. 3The people of the land shall bow down at the entrance of that gate before the LORD on the sabbaths and on the new moons. 4The burnt offering that the prince offers to the LORD on the sabbath day shall be six lambs without blemish and a ram without blemish; 5and the grain offering with the ram shall be an ephah, and the grain offering with the lambs shall be as much as he wishes to give, together with a hin of oil to each ephah. 6On the day of the new moon he shall offer a young bull without blemish, and six lambs and a ram, which shall be without blemish; 7as a grain offering he shall provide an ephah with the bull and an ephah with the ram, and with the lambs as much as he wishes, together with a hin of oil to each ephah. 8When the prince enters, he shall come in by the vestibule of the gate, and he shall go out by the same way.

9 When the people of the land come before the LORD at the appointed festivals, whoever enters by the north gate to worship shall go out by the south gate; and whoever enters by the south gate shall go out by the north gate: they shall not return by way of the gate by which they entered, but shall go out straight ahead. 10When they come in, the prince shall come in with them; and when they go out, he shall go out.

11 At the festivals and the appointed seasons the grain offering with a young bull shall be an ephah, and with a ram an ephah, and with the lambs as much as one wishes to give, together with a hin of oil to an ephah. 12When the prince provides a freewill offering, either a burnt offering or offerings of well-being as a freewill offering to the LORD, the gate facing east shall be opened for him; and he shall offer his burnt offering or his offerings of well-being as he does on the sabbath day. Then he shall go out, and after he has gone out the gate shall be closed.

13 He shall provide a lamb, a yearling, without blemish, for a burnt offering to the LORD daily; morning by morning he shall provide it. 14And he shall provide a grain offering with it morning by morning regularly, one-sixth of an ephah, and one-third of a hin of oil to moisten the choice flour, as a grain offering to the LORD; this is the ordinance for all time. 15Thus the lamb and the grain offering and the oil shall be provided, morning by morning, as a regular burnt offering.

16 Thus says the Lord GOD: If the prince makes a gift to any of his sons out of his inheritance,[t] it shall belong to his sons, it is their holding by inheritance. 17But if he makes a gift out of his inheritance to one of his servants, it shall be his to the year of liberty; then it shall revert to the prince; only his sons may keep a gift from his inheritance. 18The prince shall not take any of the inheritance of the people, thrusting them out of their holding; he shall give his sons their inheritance out of his own holding, so that none of my people shall be dispossessed of their holding.

19 Then he brought me through the entrance, which was at the side of the gate, to the north row of the holy cham-

*t* Gk: Heb *it is his inheritance*

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the *gate . . . that faces east* of the *inner court* to its inner vestibule where he will stand (2 Kings 11.14) by the ritually cleansed doorway (45.18–19), while the priests offer the sacrifices on the altar directly ahead. The people stand in the outer court. For the sacrifices, see Ex 29.38–42; Num 28.3–15. *New moons,* first day of the month; note the increasingly strong emphasis on the sabbath.

**46.9–10:** The great festival crowds require regulations for controlled egress.

**46.11–15:** When the prince makes a *freewill offering* (Lev 22.18–23), the east gate (v. 1) will also be opened. The prince must also provide for daily sacrifices (Ex 29.38–42; 1 Kings 18.29; 2 Kings 16.15).

**46.16–18:** Crown property could not be disposed of permanently. When given to a

bers for the priests; and there I saw a place at the extreme western end of them. 20He said to me, "This is the place where the priests shall boil the guilt offering and the sin offering, and where they shall bake the grain offering, in order not to bring them out into the outer court and so communicate holiness to the people."

21 Then he brought me out to the outer court, and led me past the four corners of the court; and in each corner of the court there was a court— 22in the four corners of the court were small[u] courts, forty cubits long and thirty wide; the four were of the same size. 23On the inside, around each of the four courts[v] was a row of masonry, with hearths made at the bottom of the rows all around. 24Then he said to me, "These are the kitchens where those who serve at the temple shall boil the sacrifices of the people."

**47** Then he brought me back to the entrance of the temple; there, water was flowing from below the threshold of the temple toward the east (for the temple faced east); and the water was flowing down from below the south end of the threshold of the temple, south of the altar. 2Then he brought me out by way of the north gate, and led me around on the outside to the outer gate that faces toward the east;[w] and the water was coming out on the south side.

3 Going on eastward with a cord in his hand, the man measured one thousand cubits, and then led me through the water; and it was ankle-deep. 4Again he measured one thousand, and led me through the water; and it was knee-deep. Again he measured one thousand, and led me through the water; and it was up to the waist. 5Again he measured one thousand, and it was a river that I could not cross, for the water had risen; it was deep enough to swim in, a river that could not be crossed. 6He said to me, "Mortal, have you seen this?"

Then he led me back along the bank of the river. 7As I came back, I saw on the bank of the river a great many trees on the one side and on the other. 8He said to me, "This water flows toward the eastern region and goes down into the Arabah; and when it enters the sea, the sea of stagnant waters, the water will become fresh. 9Wherever the river goes,[x] every living creature that swarms will live, and there will be very many fish, once these waters reach there. It will become fresh; and everything will live where the river goes. 10People will stand fishing beside the sea[y] from En-gedi to En-eglaim; it will be a place for the spreading of nets; its fish will be of a great many kinds, like the fish of the Great Sea. 11But its swamps and marshes will not become fresh; they are to be left for salt. 12On the banks, on both sides of the river, there will grow all kinds of trees for food. Their leaves will not wither nor their fruit fail, but they will bear fresh fruit every month, because the water for them flows from the sanctuary. Their fruit will be for food, and their leaves for healing."

13 Thus says the Lord GOD: These are the boundaries by which you shall divide

*u* Gk Syr Vg: Meaning of Heb uncertain
*v* Heb *the four of them* *w* Meaning of Heb uncertain *x* Gk Syr Vg Tg: Heb *the two rivers go* *y* Heb *it*

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non-relative, it had to be returned on the *year of liberty* (jubilee year, Lev 25.8–17).

**46.19–20: The priests' quarters,** see 42.1–14. *Communicate holiness,* see 42.14; 44.19. **21–24:** The temple kitchens, for the common-meal sacrifices.

**47.1–12: The sacred river.** This figure, known from Ugaritic (Canaanite) and Mesopotamian sources, is also found in Joel 3.18; Zech 14.8; and Rev ch 22. From the throne of God (the temple; 43.7) issue the waters of life by which the saline waters of the Dead Sea become fresh, and in the desolate wilderness of Judah fruit trees flourish, making a new Paradise, as it were, and the inhabitants of the land will benefit. **8:** *Arabah,* the valley south of the Dead Sea. **10:** *En-gedi to En-eglaim* ('Ain Feshkha, about one and one-half miles south of Khirbet Qumran), northwest coast of the Dead Sea.

**47.13–20: Israel's boundaries** (Num 34.1–12): north, apparently that of David's

the land for inheritance among the twelve tribes of Israel. Joseph shall have two portions. 14 You shall divide it equally; I swore to give it to your ancestors, and this land shall fall to you as your inheritance.

15 This shall be the boundary of the land: On the north side, from the Great Sea by way of Hethlon to Lebo-hamath, and on to Zedad,[z] 16 Berothah, Sibraim (which lies between the border of Damascus and the border of Hamath), as far as Hazer-hatticon, which is on the border of Hauran. 17 So the boundary shall run from the sea to Hazar-enon, which is north of the border of Damascus, with the border of Hamath to the north.[a] This shall be the north side.

18 On the east side, between Hauran and Damascus; along the Jordan between Gilead and the land of Israel; to the eastern sea and as far as Tamar.[b] This shall be the east side.

19 On the south side, it shall run from Tamar as far as the waters of Meribath-kadesh, from there along the Wadi of Egypt[c] to the Great Sea. This shall be the south side.

20 On the west side, the Great Sea shall be the boundary to a point opposite Lebo-hamath. This shall be the west side.

21 So you shall divide this land among you according to the tribes of Israel. 22 You shall allot it as an inheritance for yourselves and for the aliens who reside among you and have begotten children among you. They shall be to you as citizens of Israel; with you they shall be allotted an inheritance among the tribes of Israel. 23 In whatever tribe aliens reside, there you shall assign them their inheritance, says the Lord GOD.

48 These are the names of the tribes: Beginning at the northern border, on the Hethlon road,[d] from Lebo-hamath, as far as Hazar-enon (which is on the border of Damascus, with Hamath to the north), and[e] extending from the east side to the west,[f] Dan, one portion. 2 Adjoining the territory of Dan, from the east side to the west, Asher, one portion. 3 Adjoining the territory of Asher, from the east side to the west, Naphtali, one portion. 4 Adjoining the territory of Naphtali, from the east side to the west, Manasseh, one portion. 5 Adjoining the territory of Manasseh, from the east side to the west, Ephraim, one portion. 6 Adjoining the territory of Ephraim, from the east side to the west, Reuben, one portion. 7 Adjoining the territory of Reuben, from the east side to the west, Judah, one portion.

8 Adjoining the territory of Judah, from the east side to the west, shall be the portion that you shall set apart, twenty-five thousand cubits in width, and in length equal to one of the tribal portions, from the east side to the west, with the sanctuary in the middle of it. 9 The portion that you shall set apart for the LORD

*z* Gk: Heb *Lebo-zedad, 16 Hamath* *a* Meaning of Heb uncertain *b* Compare Syr: Heb *you shall measure* *c* Heb lacks *of Egypt* *d* Compare 47.15: Heb *by the side of the way* *e* Cn: Heb *and they shall be his* *f* Gk Compare verses 2-8: Heb *the east side the west*

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empire in north Syria (2 Sam 8.5–12; Num 34.7–9); east, *Hazar-enon,* between Damascus and Palmyra, to the Dead Sea (Num 34.10–12); south, along the southern Negeb to *the Wadi of Egypt* (Num 34.3–5); west, the Mediterranean Sea (Num 34.6). *Sibraim,* the same as Sepharvaim (see Isa 36.19 n.).

**47.21–23: Equal allotment.** Proselytes (*aliens*) and Jews should be treated alike (Num 15.29; Lev 19.33–34).

**48.1–29: The allotment of the land.** All tribes receive equal allotments west of the Jordan, with Ephraim and Manasseh each given a portion and Levi, as the priestly tribe (see Josh 14.3–4), omitted. This division of the country ignores geographical reality. **1–7:** Seven tribes north of the holy district, with Judah immediately contiguous to it. **1:** *Hethlon,* Heitala, east of Tripoli (47.15). *Lebo-hamath,* territory between Riblah and Kadesh on the Orontes River.

**48.8–22:** The properties of the Zadokite priests and the Levites, like that of the prince on either side, were to be held in perpetuity (45.1–9). The size of Jerusalem, with the surrounding open area, was exactly ten times

shall be twenty-five thousand cubits in length, and twenty[g] thousand in width. 10These shall be the allotments of the holy portion: the priests shall have an allotment measuring twenty-five thousand cubits on the northern side, ten thousand cubits in width on the western side, ten thousand in width on the eastern side, and twenty-five thousand in length on the southern side, with the sanctuary of the LORD in the middle of it. 11This shall be for the consecrated priests, the descendants[h] of Zadok, who kept my charge, who did not go astray when the people of Israel went astray, as the Levites did. 12It shall belong to them as a special portion from the holy portion of the land, a most holy place, adjoining the territory of the Levites. 13Alongside the territory of the priests, the Levites shall have an allotment twenty-five thousand cubits in length and ten thousand in width. The whole length shall be twenty-five thousand cubits and the width twenty[i] thousand. 14They shall not sell or exchange any of it; they shall not transfer this choice portion of the land, for it is holy to the LORD.

15 The remainder, five thousand cubits in width and twenty-five thousand in length, shall be for ordinary use for the city, for dwellings and for open country. In the middle of it shall be the city; 16and these shall be its dimensions: the north side four thousand five hundred cubits, the south side four thousand five hundred, the east side four thousand five hundred, and the west side four thousand five hundred. 17The city shall have open land: on the north two hundred fifty cubits, on the south two hundred fifty, on the east two hundred fifty, on the west two hundred fifty. 18The remainder of the length alongside the holy portion shall be ten thousand cubits to the east, and ten thousand to the west, and it shall be alongside the holy portion. Its produce shall be food for the workers of the city. 19The workers of the city, from all the tribes of Israel, shall cultivate it. 20The whole portion that you shall set apart shall be twenty-five thousand cubits square, that is, the holy portion together with the property of the city.

21 What remains on both sides of the holy portion and of the property of the city shall belong to the prince. Extending from the twenty-five thousand cubits of the holy portion to the east border, and westward from the twenty-five thousand cubits to the west border, parallel to the tribal portions, it shall belong to the prince. The holy portion with the sanctuary of the temple in the middle of it, 22and the property of the Levites and of the city, shall be in the middle of that which belongs to the prince. The portion of the prince shall lie between the territory of Judah and the territory of Benjamin.

23 As for the rest of the tribes: from the east side to the west, Benjamin, one portion. 24Adjoining the territory of Benjamin, from the east side to the west, Simeon, one portion. 25Adjoining the territory of Simeon, from the east side to the west, Issachar, one portion. 26Adjoining the territory of Issachar, from the east side to the west, Zebulun, one portion. 27Adjoining the territory of Zebulun, from the east side to the west, Gad, one portion. 28And adjoining the territory of Gad to the south, the boundary shall run from Tamar to the waters of Meribath-kadesh, from there along the Wadi of Egypt[j] to the Great Sea. 29This is the land that you shall allot as an inheritance among the tribes of Israel, and these are their portions, says the Lord GOD.

*g* Compare 45.1: Heb *ten* *h* One Ms Gk: Heb *of the descendants* *i* Gk: Heb *ten* *j* Heb lacks *of Egypt*

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that of the temple (42.20), i.e. 5,000 cubits square (1.6 miles). **15:** *Ordinary use,* see 22.26; 42.20; 44.23.

**48.23–29:** Five tribes south of Jerusalem and the holy district beginning with Benjamin.

**48.30–35: The new Jerusalem.** Three gates on each of the city's four sides, with

30 These shall be the exits of the city: On the north side, which is to be four thousand five hundred cubits by measure, 31 three gates, the gate of Reuben, the gate of Judah, and the gate of Levi, the gates of the city being named after the tribes of Israel. 32 On the east side, which is to be four thousand five hundred cubits, three gates, the gate of Joseph, the gate of Benjamin, and the gate of Dan. 33 On the south side, which is to be four thousand five hundred cubits by measure, three gates, the gate of Simeon, the gate of Issachar, and the gate of Zebulun. 34 On the west side, which is to be four thousand five hundred cubits, three gates,[k] the gate of Gad, the gate of Asher, and the gate of Naphtali. 35 The circumference of the city shall be eighteen thousand cubits. And the name of the city from that time on shall be, The LORD is There.

*k* One Ms Gk Syr: MT *their gates three*

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each gate named after a tribe, including Levi, and with Ephraim and Manasseh combined in Joseph (compare Rev 21.12–14). **35**: The new city receives a new name (Isa 62.2), "The LORD is there" (Yahweh-shammah); for other names see Jer 3.17; Zech 8.3; Isa 1.26 n.; 60.14 (compare Jer 23.6).

# *Daniel*

The six stories and four dream-visions of the book of Daniel make up the only apocalyptic book in the Hebrew Scriptures. Other examples of the genre are 1 Enoch, Syriac Baruch, and the New Testament book of Revelation (see "Apocalyptic Literature," pp. 362–363 NT). These apocalypses come from times of national or community tribulation, and are not actual history, but, through symbols and signs, are interpretations of current history with its background and predictions of a future where tribulations and sorrows will give place to triumph and peace. The Apocalyptists usually set forth their messages under the name of some ancient worthy, e.g. Adam, Enoch, Noah, Abraham, or some other figure of note.

This book appears under the name of Daniel, or Danel, a worthy twice referred to in Ezekiel (Ezek 14.14; 28.3), and whose name appears also in the North Canaanite clay-tablet texts found at Ras Shamra. The author was a pious Jew living under the persecution of Antiochus Epiphanes, 167–164 B.C. (see "Survey of . . . Bible Lands," §19). To encourage his suffering fellow-believers he tells six stories, set in earlier days in Babylon just before and just after the Persian conquest, which illustrate how faithful Jews, loyally practicing their religion, were enabled by divine aid to triumph over their enemies. These were traditional tales, which were already written down and collected in the late third or early second century B.C. Then in four visions he ventures to interpret current history and predict the coming consummation when the faithful Jews will have ultimate victory. The section from 2.4b to 7.28 is written in Aramaic, though the remainder is in Hebrew.

1 In the third year of the reign of King Jehoiakim of Judah, King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon came to Jerusalem and besieged it. 2 The Lord let King Jehoiakim of Judah fall into his power, as well as some of the vessels of the house of God. These he brought to the land of Shinar,[a] and placed the vessels in the treasury of his gods.

3 Then the king commanded his palace master Ashpenaz to bring some of the Israelites of the royal family and of the nobility, 4 young men without physical defect and handsome, versed in every branch of wisdom, endowed with knowledge and insight, and competent to serve in the king's palace; they were to be taught the literature and language of the Chaldeans. 5 The king assigned them a daily portion of the royal rations of food and wine. They were to be educated for three years, so that at the end of that time they could be stationed in the king's court. 6 Among them were Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah, from the tribe of Judah. 7 The palace master gave them other names: Daniel he called Belteshazzar, Hananiah he called Shadrach, Mishael he called Meshach, and Azariah he called Abednego.

8 But Daniel resolved that he would not defile himself with the royal rations of food and wine; so he asked the palace master to allow him not to defile himself. 9 Now God allowed Daniel to receive favor and compassion from the palace master. 10 The palace master said to Daniel, "I am afraid of my lord the king; he has appointed your food and your drink. If he should see you in poorer condition than the other young men of your own age, you would endanger my head with the king." 11 Then Daniel asked the guard whom the palace master had appointed over Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah: 12 "Please test your servants for ten days. Let us be given vegetables to eat and water to drink. 13 You can then compare our appearance with the appearance of the young men who eat the royal rations, and deal with your servants according to what you observe." 14 So he agreed to this proposal and tested them for ten days. 15 At the end of ten days it was observed that they appeared better and fatter than all the young men who had been eating the royal rations. 16 So the guard continued to withdraw their royal rations and the wine they were to drink, and gave them vegetables. 17 To these four young men God gave knowledge and skill in every aspect of literature and wisdom; Daniel also had insight into all visions and dreams.

18 At the end of the time that the king had set for them to be brought in, the palace master brought them into the presence of Nebuchadnezzar, 19 and the king spoke with them. And among them all, no one was found to compare with Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah; therefore they were stationed in the king's court. 20 In every matter of wisdom and understanding concerning which the king inquired of them, he found them ten times better than all the magicians and enchanters in his whole

*a* Gk Theodotion: Heb adds *to the house of his own gods*

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**1.1–21**: **Daniel and his friends.** A story to teach how faithful observance of the law is rewarded. **1**: The *third year* of Jehoiakim was 606 B.C. There is no other record of a siege of Jerusalem at this time. *Nebuchadnezzar* is a Jewish form of the name Nabuchadrezzar, who in 597 B.C. carried away temple treasure and captives to Babylon (2 Kings 24.10–15), in v. 2 called by the ancient name *Shinar* (Gen 10.10; Isa 11.11). **2**: *His gods* at Babylon included Marduk and Nebo. **3–5**: Promising young men among the captives were trained for *three years* to be royal pages. **6**: As such they were given Babylonian names and provided with food and drink from the royal table.

**1.8**: *Defile himself*, i.e. by eating food not permitted by Jewish dietary laws. **10**: *Poorer condition*, lit. "your faces looking sorrowful."

**1.20**: *Magicians and enchanters* here probably stand merely as names for court sages whose learning and wisdom were surpassed by that divinely given to Daniel and his friends (v. 17). **21**: The *first year* of *King Cyrus* at Babylon was 538 B.C. (Ezra 1.1), almost seventy years after Daniel's coming to Babylon.

kingdom. 21 And Daniel continued there until the first year of King Cyrus.

2 In the second year of Nebuchadnezzar's reign, Nebuchadnezzar dreamed such dreams that his spirit was troubled and his sleep left him. 2 So the king commanded that the magicians, the enchanters, the sorcerers, and the Chaldeans be summoned to tell the king his dreams. When they came in and stood before the king, 3 he said to them, "I have had such a dream that my spirit is troubled by the desire to understand it." 4 The Chaldeans said to the king (in Aramaic),[b] "O king, live forever! Tell your servants the dream, and we will reveal the interpretation." 5 The king answered the Chaldeans, "This is a public decree: if you do not tell me both the dream and its interpretation, you shall be torn limb from limb, and your houses shall be laid in ruins. 6 But if you do tell me the dream and its interpretation, you shall receive from me gifts and rewards and great honor. Therefore tell me the dream and its interpretation." 7 They answered a second time, "Let the king first tell his servants the dream, then we can give its interpretation." 8 The king answered, "I know with certainty that you are trying to gain time, because you see I have firmly decreed: 9 if you do not tell me the dream, there is but one verdict for you. You have agreed to speak lying and misleading words to me until things take a turn. Therefore, tell me the dream, and I shall know that you can give me its interpretation." 10 The Chaldeans answered the king, "There is no one on earth who can reveal what the king demands! In fact no king, however great and powerful, has ever asked such a thing of any magician or enchanter or Chaldean. 11 The thing that the king is asking is too difficult, and no one can reveal it to the king except the gods, whose dwelling is not with mortals."

12 Because of this the king flew into a violent rage and commanded that all the wise men of Babylon be destroyed. 13 The decree was issued, and the wise men were about to be executed; and they looked for Daniel and his companions, to execute them. 14 Then Daniel responded with prudence and discretion to Arioch, the king's chief executioner, who had gone out to execute the wise men of Babylon; 15 he asked Arioch, the royal official, "Why is the decree of the king so urgent?" Arioch then explained the matter to Daniel. 16 So Daniel went in and requested that the king give him time and he would tell the king the interpretation.

17 Then Daniel went to his home and informed his companions, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah, 18 and told them to seek mercy from the God of heaven concerning this mystery, so that Daniel and his companions with the rest of the wise men of Babylon might not perish. 19 Then the mystery was revealed to Daniel in a vision of the night, and Daniel blessed the God of heaven.

20 Daniel said:

"Blessed be the name of God from
age to age,

*b* The text from this point to the end of chapter 7 is in Aramaic

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**2.1–49: Nebuchadnezzar's dream.** A story to teach the feebleness of human wisdom compared with that conferred by God. **1**: *Second year* is a slip (Daniel has already been at court for three years, 1.5, 18). **2**: *Chaldeans* here means not an ethnic group but a caste of wise men. In ancient as in modern times it was believed that important matters were revealed in *dreams* (Gen 20.3; 41.1–32; Mt 27.19).

**2.4–11**: Cuneiform tablets on divination through dreams are still extant. If the king would *tell* the dream they could consult dream-books and find the interpretation, but asking them to *tell* the dream itself was unheard of and *difficult* beyond human skill. **11**: The word *gods* is used, since these Chaldeans were polytheists.

**2.14**: On the ground of 1.20, Daniel and his friends were counted among the court's *wise men*. In what follows, Daniel represents the ideal sage. **18–19**: This is a *mystery,* but through prayer even mysteries may be *revealed* by God's wisdom (v. 30).

for wisdom and power are his.
21 He changes times and seasons,
deposes kings and sets up kings;
he gives wisdom to the wise
and knowledge to those who
have understanding.
22 He reveals deep and hidden things;
he knows what is in the
darkness,
and light dwells with him.
23 To you, O God of my ancestors,
I give thanks and praise,
for you have given me wisdom
and power,
and have now revealed to me
what we asked of you,
for you have revealed to us
what the king ordered."

24 Therefore Daniel went to Arioch, whom the king had appointed to destroy the wise men of Babylon, and said to him, "Do not destroy the wise men of Babylon; bring me in before the king, and I will give the king the interpretation."

25 Then Arioch quickly brought Daniel before the king and said to him: "I have found among the exiles from Judah a man who can tell the king the interpretation." 26 The king said to Daniel, whose name was Belteshazzar, "Are you able to tell me the dream that I have seen and its interpretation?" 27 Daniel answered the king, "No wise men, enchanters, magicians, or diviners can show to the king the mystery that the king is asking, 28 but there is a God in heaven who reveals mysteries, and he has disclosed to King Nebuchadnezzar what will happen at the end of days. Your dream and the visions of your head as you lay in bed were these: 29 To you, O king, as you lay in bed, came thoughts of what would be hereafter, and the revealer of mysteries disclosed to you what is to be. 30 But as for me, this mystery has not been revealed to me because of any wisdom that I have more than any other living being, but in order that the interpretation may be known to the king and that you may understand the thoughts of your mind.

31 "You were looking, O king, and lo! there was a great statue. This statue was huge, its brilliance extraordinary; it was standing before you, and its appearance was frightening. 32 The head of that statue was of fine gold, its chest and arms of silver, its middle and thighs of bronze, 33 its legs of iron, its feet partly of iron and partly of clay. 34 As you looked on, a stone was cut out, not by human hands, and it struck the statue on its feet of iron and clay and broke them in pieces. 35 Then the iron, the clay, the bronze, the silver, and the gold, were all broken in pieces and became like the chaff of the summer threshing floors; and the wind carried them away, so that not a trace of them could be found. But the stone that struck the statue became a great mountain and filled the whole earth.

36 "This was the dream; now we will tell the king its interpretation. 37 You, O king, the king of kings—to whom the God of heaven has given the kingdom, the power, the might, and the glory, 38 into whose hand he has given human beings, wherever they live, the wild animals of the field, and the birds of the air, and whom he has established as ruler over them all—you are the head of gold. 39 After you shall arise another kingdom inferior to yours, and yet a third kingdom of bronze, which shall rule over the whole earth. 40 And there shall be a fourth kingdom, strong as iron; just as iron crushes and smashes everything,[c] it shall crush and shatter all these. 41 As you

[c] Gk Theodotion Syr Vg: Aram adds *and like iron that crushes*

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**2.26**: *Belteshazzar,* as 1.7; 4.8, 9. **28**: *End of days* is an idiomatic expression meaning "a future time."

**2.32–33**: *Legs,* i.e. the lower legs, the upper legs being the *thighs*. **34–35**: The image was of human construction, but the *stone* was quarried supernaturally. This could become a *mountain* filling the *whole earth* because the earth was pictured as a disk beneath the heavenly vault.

**2.36–45**: For this writer the five kingdoms are the Babylonian, Median, Persian,

saw the feet and toes partly of potter's clay and partly of iron, it shall be a divided kingdom; but some of the strength of iron shall be in it, as you saw the iron mixed with the clay. 42As the toes of the feet were part iron and part clay, so the kingdom shall be partly strong and partly brittle. 43As you saw the iron mixed with clay, so will they mix with one another in marriage,[d] but they will not hold together, just as iron does not mix with clay. 44And in the days of those kings the God of heaven will set up a kingdom that shall never be destroyed, nor shall this kingdom be left to another people. It shall crush all these kingdoms and bring them to an end, and it shall stand forever; 45just as you saw that a stone was cut from the mountain not by hands, and that it crushed the iron, the bronze, the clay, the silver, and the gold. The great God has informed the king what shall be hereafter. The dream is certain, and its interpretation trustworthy."

46 Then King Nebuchadnezzar fell on his face, worshiped Daniel, and commanded that a grain offering and incense be offered to him. 47The king said to Daniel, "Truly, your God is God of gods and Lord of kings and a revealer of mysteries, for you have been able to reveal this mystery!" 48Then the king promoted Daniel, gave him many great gifts, and made him ruler over the whole province of Babylon and chief prefect over all the wise men of Babylon. 49Daniel made a request of the king, and he appointed Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego over the affairs of the province of Babylon. But Daniel remained at the king's court.

3 King Nebuchadnezzar made a golden statue whose height was sixty cubits and whose width was six cubits; he set it up on the plain of Dura in the province of Babylon. 2Then King Nebuchadnezzar sent for the satraps, the prefects, and the governors, the counselors, the treasurers, the justices, the magistrates, and all the officials of the provinces, to assemble and come to the dedication of the statue that King Nebuchadnezzar had set up. 3So the satraps, the prefects, and the governors, the counselors, the treasurers, the justices, the magistrates, and all the officials of the provinces, assembled for the dedication of the statue that King Nebuchadnezzar had set up. When they were standing before the statue that Nebuchadnezzar had set up, 4the herald proclaimed aloud, "You are commanded, O peoples, nations, and languages, 5that when you hear the sound of the horn, pipe, lyre, trigon, harp, drum, and entire musical ensemble, you are to fall down and worship the golden statue that King Nebuchadnezzar has set up. 6Whoever does not fall down and worship shall immediately be thrown into a furnace of blazing fire." 7Therefore, as soon as all the peoples heard the sound of the horn, pipe, lyre, trigon, harp, drum, and entire musical ensemble, all the peoples, nations, and languages fell down and worshiped the golden statue that King Nebuchadnezzar had set up.

8 Accordingly, at this time certain Chaldeans came forward and denounced the Jews. 9They said to King Nebuchadnezzar, "O king, live forever! 10You, O king, have made a decree, that everyone who hears the sound of the horn, pipe, lyre, trigon, harp, drum, and entire

*d* Aram *by human seed*

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Greek, and the coming universal kingdom of God. **41**: The declining strength of the fourth kingdom means the divided kingdoms of the Seleucids and Ptolemies (see "Survey of . . . Bible Lands," §19) whose rulers, though they intermarried, did not hold together.

**2.46–49**: That the king *worshiped* Daniel, recognized his God, and *promoted* him and his friends anticipates the future triumph of the God of the Jews.

**3.1–30**: **The three youths in the fiery furnace.** A story to show how martyrdom is preferable to apostasy. **1**: Huge *statues* of deities were common in ancient times. This one was gold-plated. *Dura* is unidentifiable. **2–4**: Ceremonies of *dedication* are well attested (1 Kings 8.63; 2 Chr 7.9; Neh 12.27; and title of Ps 30), at which *officials* were expected to appear, for they represented the various *peoples, nations, languages* of the kingdom. **5**: The

musical ensemble, shall fall down and worship the golden statue, 11 and whoever does not fall down and worship shall be thrown into a furnace of blazing fire. 12 There are certain Jews whom you have appointed over the affairs of the province of Babylon: Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego. These pay no heed to you, O king. They do not serve your gods and they do not worship the golden statue that you have set up."

13 Then Nebuchadnezzar in furious rage commanded that Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego be brought in; so they brought those men before the king. 14 Nebuchadnezzar said to them, "Is it true, O Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, that you do not serve my gods and you do not worship the golden statue that I have set up? 15 Now if you are ready when you hear the sound of the horn, pipe, lyre, trigon, harp, drum, and entire musical ensemble to fall down and worship the statue that I have made, well and good.[e] But if you do not worship, you shall immediately be thrown into a furnace of blazing fire, and who is the god that will deliver you out of my hands?"

16 Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego answered the king, "O Nebuchadnezzar, we have no need to present a defense to you in this matter. 17 If our God whom we serve is able to deliver us from the furnace of blazing fire and out of your hand, O king, let him deliver us.[f] 18 But if not, be it known to you, O king, that we will not serve your gods and we will not worship the golden statue that you have set up."

19 Then Nebuchadnezzar was so filled with rage against Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego that his face was distorted. He ordered the furnace heated up seven times more than was customary, 20 and ordered some of the strongest guards in his army to bind Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego and to throw them into the furnace of blazing fire. 21 So the men were bound, still wearing their tunics,[g] their trousers,[g] their hats, and their other garments, and they were thrown into the furnace of blazing fire. 22 Because the king's command was urgent and the furnace was so overheated, the raging flames killed the men who lifted Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego. 23 But the three men, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, fell down, bound, into the furnace of blazing fire.

24 Then King Nebuchadnezzar was astonished and rose up quickly. He said to his counselors, "Was it not three men that we threw bound into the fire?" They answered the king, "True, O king." 25 He replied, "But I see four men unbound, walking in the middle of the fire, and they are not hurt; and the fourth has the appearance of a god."[h] 26 Nebuchadnezzar then approached the door of the furnace of blazing fire and said, "Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, servants of the Most High God, come out! Come here!" So Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego came out from the fire. 27 And the satraps, the prefects, the governors, and the king's counselors gathered together and saw that the fire had not had any power over the bodies of those men; the hair of their heads was not singed, their tunics[g] were not harmed, and not even the smell of fire came from them. 28 Nebuchadnezzar said, "Blessed be the God of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-

*e* Aram lacks *well and good* *f* Or *If our God whom we serve is able to deliver us, he will deliver us from the furnace of blazing fire and out of your hand, O king.* *g* Meaning of Aram word uncertain *h* Aram *a son of the gods*

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*trigon* was a stringed instrument. **6**: Punishment by burning alive was not uncommon (Gen 38.24; Josh 7.15). The *furnace* was the local kiln-type oven, with openings at top and at ground level.

**3.19**: The *seven times* is merely rhetorical. **21**: Usually victims were stripped; the binding and clothing here heightens the miracle of their deliverance. **22**: They were cast in at the top opening, flames from which *killed* the soldiers. The king was looking into the ground level opening and saw where they fell.

**3.25**: *The appearance of a god,* i.e. a celestial being (v. 28). **26**: They emerged from the ground level opening. **29**: This dismember-

nego, who has sent his angel and delivered his servants who trusted in him. They disobeyed the king's command and yielded up their bodies rather than serve and worship any god except their own God. 29Therefore I make a decree: Any people, nation, or language that utters blasphemy against the God of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego shall be torn limb from limb, and their houses laid in ruins; for there is no other god who is able to deliver in this way." 30Then the king promoted Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego in the province of Babylon.

4 [i] King Nebuchadnezzar to all peoples, nations, and languages that live throughout the earth: May you have abundant prosperity! 2The signs and wonders that the Most High God has worked for me I am pleased to recount.

3 How great are his signs,
how mighty his wonders!
His kingdom is an everlasting kingdom,
and his sovereignty is from generation to generation.

4[j] I, Nebuchadnezzar, was living at ease in my home and prospering in my palace. 5I saw a dream that frightened me; my fantasies in bed and the visions of my head terrified me. 6So I made a decree that all the wise men of Babylon should be brought before me, in order that they might tell me the interpretation of the dream. 7Then the magicians, the enchanters, the Chaldeans, and the diviners came in, and I told them the dream, but they could not tell me its interpretation. 8At last Daniel came in before me—he who was named Belteshazzar after the name of my god, and who is endowed with a spirit of the holy gods[k]—and I told him the dream: 9"O Belteshazzar, chief of the magicians, I know that you are endowed with a spirit of the holy gods[k] and that no mystery is too difficult for you. Hear[l] the dream that I saw; tell me its interpretation.

10[m] Upon my bed this is what I saw;
there was a tree at the center of the earth,
and its height was great.
11 The tree grew great and strong,
its top reached to heaven,
and it was visible to the ends of the whole earth.
12 Its foliage was beautiful,
its fruit abundant,
and it provided food for all.
The animals of the field found shade under it,
the birds of the air nested in its branches,
and from it all living beings were fed.

13 "I continued looking, in the visions of my head as I lay in bed, and there was a holy watcher, coming down from heaven. 14He cried aloud and said:

'Cut down the tree and chop off its branches,
strip off its foliage and scatter its fruit.
Let the animals flee from beneath it
and the birds from its branches.
15 But leave its stump and roots in the ground,

*i* Ch 3.31 in Aram *j* Ch 4.1 in Aram *k* Or *a holy, divine spirit* *l* Theodotion: Aram *The visions of* *m* Theodotion Syr Compare Gk: Aram adds *The visions of my head*

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ment of person and property was not uncommon punishment (2.5).

**4.1–37: Nebuchadnezzar's madness.** A story to show how helpless is the greatest heathen power against Israel's God. **1:** Many ancient monarchs imagined they ruled *throughout the earth.*

**4.6:** As in 2.2 court sages are expected to be skilled interpreters of dreams. **9:** For Daniel's office compare 2.48; 5.11. What the *spirit of the holy gods* (v. 18; 5.11) means is quite obscure. **10:** *Tree,* see Ezek 31.3–14. It is the world-tree at the center of the earth disk, whose branches touch the heavenly vault and stretch in all directions to where this vault touches the rim of the disk (see 2.34 n.).

**4.13, 17, 23:** The *watcher* was a celestial being (see, in the pseudepigraphic literature, 1 Enoch 12.2, 3; Jubilees 4.15), who *cried aloud* to his attendants (v. 14); such celestial

with a band of iron and bronze,
in the tender grass of the field.
Let him be bathed with the dew
of heaven,
and let his lot be with the
animals of the field
in the grass of the earth.
16 Let his mind be changed from that
of a human,
and let the mind of an animal be
given to him.
And let seven times pass
over him.
17 The sentence is rendered by decree
of the watchers,
the decision is given by order of
the holy ones,
in order that all who live
may know
that the Most High is sovereign
over the kingdom of
mortals;
he gives it to whom he will
and sets over it the lowliest of
human beings.'

18 "This is the dream that I, King Nebuchadnezzar, saw. Now you, Belteshazzar, declare the interpretation, since all the wise men of my kingdom are unable to tell me the interpretation. You are able, however, for you are endowed with a spirit of the holy gods."[n]

19 Then Daniel, who was called Belteshazzar, was severely distressed for a while. His thoughts terrified him. The king said, "Belteshazzar, do not let the dream or the interpretation terrify you." Belteshazzar answered, "My lord, may the dream be for those who hate you, and its interpretation for your enemies! 20 The tree that you saw, which grew great and strong, so that its top reached to heaven and was visible to the end of the whole earth, 21 whose foliage was beautiful and its fruit abundant, and which provided food for all, under which animals of the field lived, and in whose branches the birds of the air had nests— 22 it is you, O king! You have grown great and strong. Your greatness has increased and reaches to heaven, and your sovereignty to the ends of the earth. 23 And whereas the king saw a holy watcher coming down from heaven and saying, 'Cut down the tree and destroy it, but leave its stump and roots in the ground, with a band of iron and bronze, in the grass of the field; and let him be bathed with the dew of heaven, and let his lot be with the animals of the field, until seven times pass over him'— 24 this is the interpretation, O king, and it is a decree of the Most High that has come upon my lord the king: 25 You shall be driven away from human society, and your dwelling shall be with the wild animals. You shall be made to eat grass like oxen, you shall be bathed with the dew of heaven, and seven times shall pass over you, until you have learned that the Most High has sovereignty over the kingdom of mortals, and gives it to whom he will. 26 As it was commanded to leave the stump and roots of the tree, your kingdom shall be re-established for you from the time that you learn that Heaven is sovereign. 27 Therefore, O king, may my counsel be acceptable to you: atone for[o] your sins with righteousness, and your iniquities with

*n* Or *a holy, divine spirit* *o* Aram *break off*

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beings, as a kind of heavenly council, execute the *sentence* given by God (v. 17). **16:** The *seven times* means a conventional number of years. **19:** *Distressed,* i.e. embarrassed and perplexed, so he uses a stereotyped formula of aversion. **22:** The tree is *you,* for a tree not uncommonly symbolized a man (Pss 1.3; 37.35; Jer 17.8).

**4.25:** The king will suffer temporarily from "insania zoanthropia," a form of insanity in which a man acts like a beast (v. 33). History knows of no such affliction affecting Nebuchadnezzar. One of Nebuchadnezzar's successors, Nabonidus, was absent from Babylon for several years and neglected his duties. A Jewish document found among the Dead Sea Scrolls ("The Prayer of Nabonidus") says that Nabonidus was smitten for seven years, but was restored with the help of a Jewish diviner. The story of Nebuchadnezzar's madness may have arisen from this tradition.

mercy to the oppressed, so that your prosperity may be prolonged."

28 All this came upon King Nebuchadnezzar. 29 At the end of twelve months he was walking on the roof of the royal palace of Babylon, 30 and the king said, "Is this not magnificent Babylon, which I have built as a royal capital by my mighty power and for my glorious majesty?" 31 While the words were still in the king's mouth, a voice came from heaven: "O King Nebuchadnezzar, to you it is declared: The kingdom has departed from you! 32 You shall be driven away from human society, and your dwelling shall be with the animals of the field. You shall be made to eat grass like oxen, and seven times shall pass over you, until you have learned that the Most High has sovereignty over the kingdom of mortals and gives it to whom he will." 33 Immediately the sentence was fulfilled against Nebuchadnezzar. He was driven away from human society, ate grass like oxen, and his body was bathed with the dew of heaven, until his hair grew as long as eagles' feathers and his nails became like birds' claws.

34 When that period was over, I, Nebuchadnezzar, lifted my eyes to heaven, and my reason returned to me.

I blessed the Most High,
and praised and honored the one who lives forever.
For his sovereignty is an everlasting sovereignty,
and his kingdom endures from generation to generation.
35 All the inhabitants of the earth are accounted as nothing,
and he does what he wills with the host of heaven
and the inhabitants of the earth.
There is no one who can stay his hand
or say to him, "What are you doing?"

36 At that time my reason returned to me; and my majesty and splendor were restored to me for the glory of my kingdom. My counselors and my lords sought me out, I was re-established over my kingdom, and still more greatness was added to me. 37 Now I, Nebuchadnezzar, praise and extol and honor the King of heaven,

for all his works are truth,
and his ways are justice;
and he is able to bring low those who walk in pride.

5 King Belshazzar made a great festival for a thousand of his lords, and he was drinking wine in the presence of the thousand.

2 Under the influence of the wine, Belshazzar commanded that they bring in the vessels of gold and silver that his father Nebuchadnezzar had taken out of the temple in Jerusalem, so that the king and his lords, his wives, and his concubines might drink from them. 3 So they brought in the vessels of gold and silver[p] that had been taken out of the temple, the house of God in Jerusalem, and the king and his lords, his wives, and his concubines drank from them. 4 They drank the wine and praised the gods of gold and silver, bronze, iron, wood, and stone.

5 Immediately the fingers of a human

*p* Theodotion Vg: Aram lacks *and silver*

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**4.30**: Nebuchadnezzar had a reputation as a builder. **36**: His *counselors* were his ministers of state, his *lords* his courtiers.

**5.1–31**: **Belshazzar's festival.** A story to show that divine punishment is visited on sacrilege. **1**: *King Belshazzar,* son of Nabonidus, the last Neo-Babylonian ruler, was only viceroy during his father's absences. *Great festival* probably means a state banquet. **2**: For the *vessels* see 1.2; Ezra 1.7–11. *His father,* i.e. his predecessor, for three kings ruled between Nebuchadnezzar and Nabonidus. From vv. 11, 13, 18, 22, however, we see that this writer thought Nebuchadnezzar was his real father. **4**: During the drinking, libations were poured out to heathen deities.

**5.5**: This sacrilege brought forth *the fingers of a human hand* writing a message of doom. **7**: The *writing,* we learn from v. 25, was Aramaic, but the message was cryptic and needed *interpretation.*

hand appeared and began writing on the plaster of the wall of the royal palace, next to the lampstand. The king was watching the hand as it wrote. 6Then the king's face turned pale, and his thoughts terrified him. His limbs gave way, and his knees knocked together. 7The king cried aloud to bring in the enchanters, the Chaldeans, and the diviners; and the king said to the wise men of Babylon, "Whoever can read this writing and tell me its interpretation shall be clothed in purple, have a chain of gold around his neck, and rank third in the kingdom." 8Then all the king's wise men came in, but they could not read the writing or tell the king the interpretation. 9Then King Belshazzar became greatly terrified and his face turned pale, and his lords were perplexed.

10 The queen, when she heard the discussion of the king and his lords, came into the banqueting hall. The queen said, "O king, live forever! Do not let your thoughts terrify you or your face grow pale. 11There is a man in your kingdom who is endowed with a spirit of the holy gods.[q] In the days of your father he was found to have enlightenment, understanding, and wisdom like the wisdom of the gods. Your father, King Nebuchadnezzar, made him chief of the magicians, enchanters, Chaldeans, and diviners,[r] 12because an excellent spirit, knowledge, and understanding to interpret dreams, explain riddles, and solve problems were found in this Daniel, whom the king named Belteshazzar. Now let Daniel be called, and he will give the interpretation."

13 Then Daniel was brought in before the king. The king said to Daniel, "So you are Daniel, one of the exiles of Judah, whom my father the king brought from Judah? 14I have heard of you that a spirit of the gods[s] is in you, and that enlightenment, understanding, and excellent wisdom are found in you. 15Now the wise men, the enchanters, have been brought in before me to read this writing and tell me its interpretation, but they were not able to give the interpretation of the matter. 16But I have heard that you can give interpretations and solve problems. Now if you are able to read the writing and tell me its interpretation, you shall be clothed in purple, have a chain of gold around your neck, and rank third in the kingdom."

17 Then Daniel answered in the presence of the king, "Let your gifts be for yourself, or give your rewards to someone else! Nevertheless I will read the writing to the king and let him know the interpretation. 18O king, the Most High God gave your father Nebuchadnezzar kingship, greatness, glory, and majesty. 19And because of the greatness that he gave him, all peoples, nations, and languages trembled and feared before him. He killed those he wanted to kill, kept alive those he wanted to keep alive, honored those he wanted to honor, and degraded those he wanted to degrade. 20But when his heart was lifted up and his spirit was hardened so that he acted proudly, he was deposed from his kingly throne, and his glory was stripped from him. 21He was driven from human society, and his mind was made like that of an animal. His dwelling was with the wild asses, he was fed grass like oxen, and his body was bathed with the dew of heaven, until he learned that the Most High God has sovereignty over the kingdom of mortals, and sets over it whomever he will. 22And you, Belshazzar his son, have not humbled your heart, even though you knew all this! 23You have exalted yourself against the Lord of heaven! The vessels of his temple have been brought in before you, and you and your lords, your wives and your concubines have been drinking wine from them. You have praised the gods of silver and gold, of bronze, iron, wood, and stone, which do not see or hear or know; but

*q* Or *a holy, divine spirit* *r* Aram adds *the king your father* *s* Or *a divine spirit*

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**5.10–11:** The *queen* was the queen-mother.

the God in whose power is your very breath, and to whom belong all your ways, you have not honored.

24 "So from his presence the hand was sent and this writing was inscribed. 25And this is the writing that was inscribed: MENE, MENE, TEKEL, and PARSIN. 26This is the interpretation of the matter: MENE, God has numbered the days of[t] your kingdom and brought it to an end; 27TEKEL, you have been weighed on the scales and found wanting; 28PERES,[u] your kingdom is divided and given to the Medes and Persians."

29 Then Belshazzar gave the command, and Daniel was clothed in purple, a chain of gold was put around his neck, and a proclamation was made concerning him that he should rank third in the kingdom.

30 That very night Belshazzar, the Chaldean king, was killed. 31[v]And Darius the Mede received the kingdom, being about sixty-two years old.

6 It pleased Darius to set over the kingdom one hundred twenty satraps, stationed throughout the whole kingdom, 2and over them three presidents, including Daniel; to these the satraps gave account, so that the king might suffer no loss. 3Soon Daniel distinguished himself above all the other presidents and satraps because an excellent spirit was in him, and the king planned to appoint him over the whole kingdom. 4So the presidents and the satraps tried to find grounds for complaint against Daniel in connection with the kingdom. But they could find no grounds for complaint or any corruption, because he was faithful, and no negligence or corruption could be found in him. 5The men said, "We shall not find any ground for complaint against this Daniel unless we find it in connection with the law of his God."

6 So the presidents and satraps conspired and came to the king and said to him, "O King Darius, live forever! 7All the presidents of the kingdom, the prefects and the satraps, the counselors and the governors are agreed that the king should establish an ordinance and enforce an interdict, that whoever prays to anyone, divine or human, for thirty days, except to you, O king, shall be thrown into a den of lions. 8Now, O king, establish the interdict and sign the document, so that it cannot be changed, according to the law of the Medes and the Persians, which cannot be revoked." 9Therefore King Darius signed the document and interdict.

10 Although Daniel knew that the document had been signed, he continued

*t* Aram lacks *the days of* *u* The singular of *Parsin* *v* Ch 6.1 in Aram

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**5.25–28**: All three words represent weights, *mene* a mina, *tekel* a shekel, *parsin* two half-minas, but they may also be read as the verbs "to number," "to weigh," and "to divide." So the meaning may be that Evil-merodach, who succeeded Nebuchadnezzar, weighs a mina, his successor Neriglissar also a mina, his successor Labashi-Marduk only a shekel, Nabonidus and Belshazzar half a mina each, but that now by the judgment of numbering, weighing, and dividing the Neo-Babylonian kingdom is to be conquered by the Medo-Persians. **31**: No such person as *Darius the Mede* is known to history, but there were three Persian kings named Darius. It was Cyrus who overthrew the Neo-Babylonian power. Cyrus's general, Gobyras, was about *sixty-two* when he occupied Babylon.

**6.1–28**: **Daniel in the lions' den.** A story to show how God will deliver his faithful servants. **1**: Darius I of Persia set up the satrapies (i.e. provinces, each governed by a satrap), but *Darius* here means the Mede of 5.31. Jewish tradition increased the twenty-odd satrapies into over one hundred and twenty (Esth 1.1; 8.9).

**6.2–5**: Each satrap had a military chief and a civil secretary, these being the *three presidents*. The king, however, planned to appoint Daniel as grand vizier. From this pinnacle jealous officials seek to topple him, using his religion as their lever. **7**: Their request is that for a month the king should be treated as divine. From vv. 17, 23, 24 it appears that the *den* was thought of as a pit. **8**: For the unchangeableness of Medo-Persian law see Esth 1.19; 8.8.

**6.10**: Daniel had a roof-chamber with windows allowing him to face Jerusalem in

to go to his house, which had windows in its upper room open toward Jerusalem, and to get down on his knees three times a day to pray to his God and praise him, just as he had done previously. 11 The conspirators came and found Daniel praying and seeking mercy before his God. 12 Then they approached the king and said concerning the interdict, "O king! Did you not sign an interdict, that anyone who prays to anyone, divine or human, within thirty days except to you, O king, shall be thrown into a den of lions?" The king answered, "The thing stands fast, according to the law of the Medes and Persians, which cannot be revoked." 13 Then they responded to the king, "Daniel, one of the exiles from Judah, pays no attention to you, O king, or to the interdict you have signed, but he is saying his prayers three times a day."

14 When the king heard the charge, he was very much distressed. He was determined to save Daniel, and until the sun went down he made every effort to rescue him. 15 Then the conspirators came to the king and said to him, "Know, O king, that it is a law of the Medes and Persians that no interdict or ordinance that the king establishes can be changed."

16 Then the king gave the command, and Daniel was brought and thrown into the den of lions. The king said to Daniel, "May your God, whom you faithfully serve, deliver you!" 17 A stone was brought and laid on the mouth of the den, and the king sealed it with his own signet and with the signet of his lords, so that nothing might be changed concerning Daniel. 18 Then the king went to his palace and spent the night fasting; no food was brought to him, and sleep fled from him.

19 Then, at break of day, the king got up and hurried to the den of lions. 20 When he came near the den where Daniel was, he cried out anxiously to Daniel, "O Daniel, servant of the living God, has your God whom you faithfully serve been able to deliver you from the lions?" 21 Daniel then said to the king, "O king, live forever! 22 My God sent his angel and shut the lions' mouths so that they would not hurt me, because I was found blameless before him; and also before you, O king, I have done no wrong." 23 Then the king was exceedingly glad and commanded that Daniel be taken up out of the den. So Daniel was taken up out of the den, and no kind of harm was found on him, because he had trusted in his God. 24 The king gave a command, and those who had accused Daniel were brought and thrown into the den of lions—they, their children, and their wives. Before they reached the bottom of the den the lions overpowered them and broke all their bones in pieces.

25 Then King Darius wrote to all peoples and nations of every language throughout the whole world: "May you have abundant prosperity! 26 I make a decree, that in all my royal dominion people should tremble and fear before the God of Daniel:

For he is the living God,
  enduring forever.
His kingdom shall never be
    destroyed,
  and his dominion has no end.
27 He delivers and rescues,
  he works signs and wonders in
    heaven and on earth;
for he has saved Daniel
  from the power of the lions."

28 So this Daniel prospered during the reign of Darius and the reign of Cyrus the Persian.

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prayer (1 Kings 8.44, 48). For the three daily prayers see Ps 55.17, and for kneeling 2 Chr 6.13; Ezra 9.5; Acts 20.36. **14**: The monarch sees through the conspiracy but is helpless.

**6.22**: For shutting the lions' mouths see 1 Macc 2.60; Heb 11.33. **24**: Well recognized family solidarity is involved here, as punishment falls also on the families of the accusers (compare Num 16.25–33; Josh 7.24; 2 Sam 21.6, 9; Esth 9.13). **28**: Cyrus was the first foreign king to rule over Babylon, beginning in 538 B.C., but this writer obviously thinks of his *Darius* the Mede as preceding him.

7 In the first year of King Belshazzar of Babylon, Daniel had a dream and visions of his head as he lay in bed. Then he wrote down the dream:[w] 2I,[x] Daniel, saw in my vision by night the four winds of heaven stirring up the great sea, 3and four great beasts came up out of the sea, different from one another. 4The first was like a lion and had eagles' wings. Then, as I watched, its wings were plucked off, and it was lifted up from the ground and made to stand on two feet like a human being; and a human mind was given to it. 5Another beast appeared, a second one, that looked like a bear. It was raised up on one side, had three tusks[y] in its mouth among its teeth and was told, "Arise, devour many bodies!" 6After this, as I watched, another appeared, like a leopard. The beast had four wings of a bird on its back and four heads; and dominion was given to it. 7After this I saw in the visions by night a fourth beast, terrifying and dreadful and exceedingly strong. It had great iron teeth and was devouring, breaking in pieces, and stamping what was left with its feet. It was different from all the beasts that preceded it, and it had ten horns. 8I was considering the horns, when another horn appeared, a little one coming up among them; to make room for it, three of the earlier horns were plucked up by the roots. There were eyes like human eyes in this horn, and a mouth speaking arrogantly.

9 As I watched,

thrones were set in place,
and an Ancient One[z] took his throne,
his clothing was white as snow,
and the hair of his head like pure wool;
his throne was fiery flames,
and its wheels were burning fire.
10 A stream of fire issued
and flowed out from his presence.
A thousand thousands served him,
and ten thousand times ten thousand stood attending him.
The court sat in judgment,
and the books were opened.

11I watched then because of the noise of the arrogant words that the horn was speaking. And as I watched, the beast was put to death, and its body destroyed and given over to be burned with fire. 12As for the rest of the beasts, their dominion was taken away, but their lives were prolonged for a season and a time. 13As I watched in the night visions,

I saw one like a human being[a] coming with the clouds of heaven.
And he came to the Ancient One[b] and was presented before him.

*w* Q Ms Theodotion: MT adds *the beginning of the words; he said* *x* Theodotion: Aram *Daniel answered and said, "I* *y* Or *ribs* *z* Aram *an Ancient of Days* *a* Aram *one like a son of man* *b* Aram *the Ancient of Days*

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**7.1–28: The vision of the four beasts.** A vision of the passing of kingdoms to make way for the kingdom of God. **1:** *The first year,* i.e. 554 B.C., when he began to act as viceroy for his father. **2:** The *great sea* is a traditional symbol of chaos, often associated with dragons and monsters (Isa 51.9–10; Isa 27.1; Job 26.12; Rev 13.1). In accord with the view that there were four kingdoms (see ch 2), *four winds* appropriately introduce the beasts symbolizing these kingdoms.

**7.4–8:** The winged lion represents the Babylonian empire, the bear the Medes, the four-headed winged leopard the Persians, the dragon-like beast the Greeks, whose ten horns represent the ten rulers who succeeded Alexander. The *little* horn (compare 8.9) is Antiochus Epiphanes, who gained his throne by uprooting others.

**7.9–14:** The divine judgment. God, the *Ancient One,* appears on his fiery throne surrounded by his court (1 Kings 22.19); the record books are examined and judgment is given. **11–12:** The Greek empire is singled out for destruction. **13–14:** God will then give the *one like a human being* a universal and *everlasting dominion.* This figure represents the faithful Jews, and should probably be identified as the archangel Michael (see 10.13, 21; 12.1), although he was traditionally identified as the messiah.

14 To him was given dominion
and glory and kingship,
that all peoples, nations, and languages
should serve him.
His dominion is an everlasting dominion
that shall not pass away,
and his kingship is one
that shall never be destroyed.

15 As for me, Daniel, my spirit was troubled within me,[c] and the visions of my head terrified me. 16 I approached one of the attendants to ask him the truth concerning all this. So he said that he would disclose to me the interpretation of the matter: 17 "As for these four great beasts, four kings shall arise out of the earth. 18 But the holy ones of the Most High shall receive the kingdom and possess the kingdom forever—forever and ever."

19 Then I desired to know the truth concerning the fourth beast, which was different from all the rest, exceedingly terrifying, with its teeth of iron and claws of bronze, and which devoured and broke in pieces, and stamped what was left with its feet; 20 and concerning the ten horns that were on its head, and concerning the other horn, which came up and to make room for which three of them fell out—the horn that had eyes and a mouth that spoke arrogantly, and that seemed greater than the others. 21 As I looked, this horn made war with the holy ones and was prevailing over them, 22 until the Ancient One[d] came; then judgment was given for the holy ones of the Most High, and the time arrived when the holy ones gained possession of the kingdom.

23 This is what he said: "As for the fourth beast,
there shall be a fourth kingdom on earth
that shall be different from all the other kingdoms;
it shall devour the whole earth,
and trample it down, and break it to pieces.

24 As for the ten horns,
out of this kingdom ten kings shall arise,
and another shall arise after them.
This one shall be different from the former ones,
and shall put down three kings.

25 He shall speak words against the Most High,
shall wear out the holy ones of the Most High,
and shall attempt to change the sacred seasons and the law;
and they shall be given into his power
for a time, two times,[e] and half a time.

26 Then the court shall sit in judgment,
and his dominion shall be taken away,
to be consumed and totally destroyed.

27 The kingship and dominion
and the greatness of the kingdoms under the whole heaven
shall be given to the people of the holy ones of the Most High;
their kingdom shall be an everlasting kingdom,
and all dominions shall serve and obey them."

28 Here the account ends. As for me, Daniel, my thoughts greatly terrified

*c* Aram *troubled in its sheath* *d* Aram *the Ancient of Days* *e* Aram *a time, times*

**7.16**: At the seer's request an angel gives the *interpretation*. **21**: "Holy ones" are angels (compare 8.13). Here they represent the righteous Jews persecuted by Antiochus Epiphanes.

**7.25–28**: Catalogue of Antiochus' enormities with prediction of their end after three and a half years (i.e. *a time, two times, and half a time;* compare 8.14; 9.27; 12.7, 11, 12). After his end the expected kingdom will be established.

me, and my face turned pale; but I kept the matter in my mind.

8 In the third year of the reign of King Belshazzar a vision appeared to me, Daniel, after the one that had appeared to me at first. 2In the vision I was looking and saw myself in Susa the capital, in the province of Elam,[f] and I was by the river Ulai.[g] 3I looked up and saw a ram standing beside the river.[h] It had two horns. Both horns were long, but one was longer than the other, and the longer one came up second. 4I saw the ram charging westward and northward and southward. All beasts were powerless to withstand it, and no one could rescue from its power; it did as it pleased and became strong.

5 As I was watching, a male goat appeared from the west, coming across the face of the whole earth without touching the ground. The goat had a horn[i] between its eyes. 6It came toward the ram with the two horns that I had seen standing beside the river,[h] and it ran at it with savage force. 7I saw it approaching the ram. It was enraged against it and struck the ram, breaking its two horns. The ram did not have power to withstand it; it threw the ram down to the ground and trampled upon it, and there was no one who could rescue the ram from its power. 8Then the male goat grew exceedingly great; but at the height of its power, the great horn was broken, and in its place there came up four prominent horns toward the four winds of heaven.

9 Out of one of them came another[j] horn, a little one, which grew exceedingly great toward the south, toward the east, and toward the beautiful land. 10It grew as high as the host of heaven. It threw down to the earth some of the host and some of the stars, and trampled on them. 11Even against the prince of the host it acted arrogantly; it took the regular burnt offering away from him and overthrew the place of his sanctuary. 12Because of wickedness, the host was given over to it together with the regular burnt offering;[k] it cast truth to the ground, and kept prospering in what it did. 13Then I heard a holy one speaking, and another holy one said to the one that spoke, "For how long is this vision concerning the regular burnt offering, the transgression that makes desolate, and the giving over of the sanctuary and host to be trampled?"[k] 14And he answered him,[l] "For two thousand three hundred evenings and mornings; then the sanctuary shall be restored to its rightful state."

15 When I, Daniel, had seen the vision, I tried to understand it. Then someone appeared standing before me, having the appearance of a man, 16and I heard a human voice by the Ulai, calling, "Gabriel, help this man understand the vision." 17So he came near where I stood; and when he came, I became frightened

*f* Gk Theodotion: MT Q Ms repeat *in the vision I was looking* *g* Or *the Ulai Gate* *h* Or *gate* *i* Theodotion: Gk *one horn*; Heb *a horn of vision* *j* Cn Compare 7.8: Heb *one* *k* Meaning of Heb uncertain *l* Gk Theodotion Syr Vg: Heb *me*

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**8.1–27: The vision of the ram and the male goat. 1–2:** The vision is dated two years later than the previous one (7.1), placing the seer in *Susa,* the winter capital of the Persian kings. The *Ulai* is the Eulaeus. **3–4:** The two-horned ram is the Medo-Persian empire (v. 20), the advance of the Persians being irresistible.

**8.5–7:** The male goat from the west is Alexander the Great (v. 21), who overthrew the Persian empire. **8:** Alexander's empire was divided, the four *prominent* leaders being Cassander, Lysimachus, Seleucus, and Ptolemy.

**8.9–14:** From the Seleucids sprang Antiochus Epiphanes who in 167 B.C. conquered Palestine, violated the *sanctuary,* and prohibited worship there (vv. 23–25; see "Survey of . . . Bible Lands," §19). The angels comment and calculate that this will continue about three and a half years (*two thousand three hundred evenings and mornings* are one thousand, one hundred and fifty days; see 7.25–28 n.). *The sanctuary* was *restored* on 25th Chislev (December 14th) 164 B.C., only three years after it was desecrated.

**8.16:** *A human voice* i.e. a celestial being speaking human language. **17:** *The end,* compare v. 19; 11.35; 12.4, 9, 13. **23–24:** The shameless insolence, "double talk," and ruthlessness of Antiochus were notorious. *The*

and fell prostrate. But he said to me, "Understand, O mortal,[m] that the vision is for the time of the end."

18 As he was speaking to me, I fell into a trance, face to the ground; then he touched me and set me on my feet. 19He said, "Listen, and I will tell you what will take place later in the period of wrath; for it refers to the appointed time of the end. 20As for the ram that you saw with the two horns, these are the kings of Media and Persia. 21The male goat[n] is the king of Greece, and the great horn between its eyes is the first king. 22As for the horn that was broken, in place of which four others arose, four kingdoms shall arise from his[o] nation, but not with his power.

23 At the end of their rule,
when the transgressions have reached their full measure,
a king of bold countenance shall arise,
skilled in intrigue.
24 He shall grow strong in power,[p]
shall cause fearful destruction,
and shall succeed in what he does.
He shall destroy the powerful and the people of the holy ones.
25 By his cunning
he shall make deceit prosper under his hand,
and in his own mind he shall be great.
Without warning he shall destroy many
and shall even rise up against the Prince of princes.
But he shall be broken, and not by human hands.

26The vision of the evenings and the mornings that has been told is true. As for you, seal up the vision, for it refers to many days from now."

27 So I, Daniel, was overcome and lay sick for some days; then I arose and went about the king's business. But I was dismayed by the vision and did not understand it.

9 In the first year of Darius son of Ahasuerus, by birth a Mede, who became king over the realm of the Chaldeans— 2in the first year of his reign, I, Daniel, perceived in the books the number of years that, according to the word of the LORD to the prophet Jeremiah, must be fulfilled for the devastation of Jerusalem, namely, seventy years.

3 Then I turned to the Lord God, to seek an answer by prayer and supplication with fasting and sackcloth and ashes. 4I prayed to the LORD my God and made confession, saying,

"Ah, Lord, great and awesome God, keeping covenant and steadfast love with those who love you and keep your commandments, 5we have sinned and done wrong, acted wickedly and rebelled, turning aside from your commandments and ordinances. 6We have not listened to your servants the prophets, who spoke in your name to our kings, our princes, and our ancestors, and to all the people of the land.

7 "Righteousness is on your side, O Lord, but open shame, as at this day, falls on us, the people of Judah, the inhabitants of Jerusalem, and all Israel, those who are near and those who are far

*m* Heb *son of man* *n* Or *shaggy male goat*
*o* Gk Theodotion Vg: Heb *the* *p* Theodotion and one Gk Ms: Heb repeats (from 8.22) *but not with his power*

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*people of the holy ones* are the godly Jews (7.25, 27). **25**: *The Prince of princes* is God, to whom Antiochus' self-deification (11.36) was an affront, and by whom he was *broken* (2 Macc 9.5).

**8.26–27**: Since Daniel is pictured as being in Susa in 552 B.C., and the vision concerns events of 164, the account is to be preserved for that time, for naturally Daniel did *not understand it*.

**9.1–27**: **The prophecy of the seventy weeks,** expounding a prophecy of Jeremiah. **1**: According to this writer's chronology the *first year* of *Darius* the Mede was 538 B.C. *Ahasuerus* means Xerxes, a fictitious parent for a fictitious Darius. **2**: The *seventy years* are referred to in Jer 25.11, 12; 29.10. **4–19**: With Daniel's prayer of confession compare Neh chs 1 and 9.

away, in all the lands to which you have driven them, because of the treachery that they have committed against you. 8Open shame, O LORD, falls on us, our kings, our officials, and our ancestors, because we have sinned against you. 9To the Lord our God belong mercy and forgiveness, for we have rebelled against him, 10and have not obeyed the voice of the LORD our God by following his laws, which he set before us by his servants the prophets.

11 "All Israel has transgressed your law and turned aside, refusing to obey your voice. So the curse and the oath written in the law of Moses, the servant of God, have been poured out upon us, because we have sinned against you. 12He has confirmed his words, which he spoke against us and against our rulers, by bringing upon us a calamity so great that what has been done against Jerusalem has never before been done under the whole heaven. 13Just as it is written in the law of Moses, all this calamity has come upon us. We did not entreat the favor of the LORD our God, turning from our iniquities and reflecting on his[q] fidelity. 14So the LORD kept watch over this calamity until he brought it upon us. Indeed, the LORD our God is right in all that he has done; for we have disobeyed his voice.

15 "And now, O Lord our God, who brought your people out of the land of Egypt with a mighty hand and made your name renowned even to this day—we have sinned, we have done wickedly. 16O Lord, in view of all your righteous acts, let your anger and wrath, we pray, turn away from your city Jerusalem, your holy mountain; because of our sins and the iniquities of our ancestors, Jerusalem and your people have become a disgrace among all our neighbors. 17Now therefore, O our God, listen to the prayer of your servant and to his supplication, and for your own sake, Lord,[r] let your face shine upon your desolated sanctuary. 18Incline your ear, O my God, and hear. Open your eyes and look at our desolation and the city that bears your name. We do not present our supplication before you on the ground of our righteousness, but on the ground of your great mercies. 19O Lord, hear; O Lord, forgive; O Lord, listen and act and do not delay! For your own sake, O my God, because your city and your people bear your name!"

20 While I was speaking, and was praying and confessing my sin and the sin of my people Israel, and presenting my supplication before the LORD my God on behalf of the holy mountain of my God— 21while I was speaking in prayer, the man Gabriel, whom I had seen before in a vision, came to me in swift flight at the time of the evening sacrifice. 22He came[s] and said to me, "Daniel, I have now come out to give you wisdom and understanding. 23At the beginning of your supplications a word went out, and I have come to declare it, for you are greatly beloved. So consider the word and understand the vision:

24 "Seventy weeks are decreed for your people and your holy city: to finish the transgression, to put an end to sin, and to atone for iniquity, to bring in everlasting righteousness, to seal both vision and prophet, and to anoint a most holy place.[t] 25Know therefore and understand: from the time that the word went out to restore and rebuild Jerusalem until the time of an anointed prince, there shall be seven weeks; and for sixty-two weeks it shall be built again with streets

*q* Heb *your* *r* Theodotion Vg Compare Syr: Heb *for the Lord's sake* *s* Gk Syr: Heb *He made to understand* *t* Or *thing* or *one*

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**9.11**: For this *curse* see Deut 28.15–45. **13**: For what was *written* see Lev 26.14–22. **17**: The *desolated* sanctuary is a hint of Antiochus' "abomination that desolates" (v. 27; 8.13; see 11.29–31 n.).

**9.21**: Gabriel is called *the man* because he appeared in human form (8.15). **24**: Jeremiah's seventy years (see v. 2 n.) mean *seventy weeks,* or 490 years (i.e. 70 × 7 years), after which the final kingdom will come, fulfilling both *vision and prophet.*

**9.25–27**: The *anointed prince* is either

and moat, but in a troubled time. 26 After the sixty-two weeks, an anointed one shall be cut off and shall have nothing, and the troops of the prince who is to come shall destroy the city and the sanctuary. Its[u] end shall come with a flood, and to the end there shall be war. Desolations are decreed. 27 He shall make a strong covenant with many for one week, and for half of the week he shall make sacrifice and offering cease; and in their place[v] shall be an abomination that desolates, until the decreed end is poured out upon the desolator."

10 In the third year of King Cyrus of Persia a word was revealed to Daniel, who was named Belteshazzar. The word was true, and it concerned a great conflict. He understood the word, having received understanding in the vision.

2 At that time I, Daniel, had been mourning for three weeks. 3 I had eaten no rich food, no meat or wine had entered my mouth, and I had not anointed myself at all, for the full three weeks. 4 On the twenty-fourth day of the first month, as I was standing on the bank of the great river (that is, the Tigris), 5 I looked up and saw a man clothed in linen, with a belt of gold from Uphaz around his waist. 6 His body was like beryl, his face like lightning, his eyes like flaming torches, his arms and legs like the gleam of burnished bronze, and the sound of his words like the roar of a multitude. 7 I, Daniel, alone saw the vision; the people who were with me did not see the vision, though a great trembling fell upon them, and they fled and hid themselves. 8 So I was left alone to see this great vision. My strength left me, and my complexion grew deathly pale, and I retained no strength. 9 Then I heard the sound of his words; and when I heard the sound of his words, I fell into a trance, face to the ground.

10 But then a hand touched me and roused me to my hands and knees. 11 He said to me, "Daniel, greatly beloved, pay attention to the words that I am going to speak to you. Stand on your feet, for I have now been sent to you." So while he was speaking this word to me, I stood up trembling. 12 He said to me, "Do not fear, Daniel, for from the first day that you set your mind to gain understanding and to humble yourself before your God, your words have been heard, and I have come because of your words. 13 But the prince of the kingdom of Persia opposed me twenty-one days. So Michael, one of the chief princes, came to help me, and I left him there with the prince of the kingdom of Persia,[w] 14 and have come to help you understand what is to happen to your people at the end of days. For there is a further vision for those days."

15 While he was speaking these words to me, I turned my face toward

*u* Or *His* *v* Cn: Meaning of Heb uncertain
*w* Gk Theodotion: Heb *I was left there with the kings of Persia*

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Zerubabbel or Joshua (Ezra 3.2). The one cut off (v. 26) is Onias III (2 Macc 4.34, Dan 11.22). The *prince who is to come* is doubtless Antiochus, who wrought such *desolations,* made *a covenant* with the Hellenizing Jews, and desecrated the temple. *Seven weeks,* i.e. forty-nine years. *Sixty-two weeks,* i.e. 434 years. *One week,* i.e. seven years. *Half of the week,* i.e. three and one-half years; see 7.25–28 n.

**10.1–21: A vision of the last days** (which continues through 12.13, ch 10 being prologue, ch 11 the vision, ch 12 the epilogue). **1**: *The third year of King Cyrus,* 535 B.C. For the first *conflict* see v. 13. **4**: *Tigris* is a gloss on *great river,* for Babylon is on the Euphrates.

**10.5**: The *man* was a celestial being, probably Gabriel, in human form, but having angelic splendor. *Uphaz,* see Jer 10.9. **7**: His companions did not see the vision but were affected by the supernatural presence, as in Acts 9.7.

**10.12–14**: *Michael . . . came to help,* as in 9.21–23 Gabriel is God's response to supplication. Conflict in heaven among the angelic patrons of the nations had delayed his coming three weeks, and he got away because *Michael,* the Jews' patron angel (v. 21), had helped him against the patron angel of Persia. In vv. 20–21 he says he must return, when he expects to be involved with the patron angel of Greece also.

the ground and was speechless. 16Then one in human form touched my lips, and I opened my mouth to speak, and said to the one who stood before me, "My lord, because of the vision such pains have come upon me that I retain no strength. 17How can my lord's servant talk with my lord? For I am shaking,[x] no strength remains in me, and no breath is left in me."

18 Again one in human form touched me and strengthened me. 19He said, "Do not fear, greatly beloved, you are safe. Be strong and courageous!" When he spoke to me, I was strengthened and said, "Let my lord speak, for you have strengthened me." 20Then he said, "Do you know why I have come to you? Now I must return to fight against the prince of Persia, and when I am through with him, the prince of Greece will come. 21But I am to tell you what is inscribed in the book of truth. There is no one with me who contends against these princes except Michael, your

11 prince. 1As for me, in the first year of Darius the Mede, I stood up to support and strengthen him.

2 "Now I will announce the truth to you. Three more kings shall arise in Persia. The fourth shall be far richer than all of them, and when he has become strong through his riches, he shall stir up all against the kingdom of Greece. 3Then a warrior king shall arise, who shall rule with great dominion and take action as he pleases. 4And while still rising in power, his kingdom shall be broken and divided toward the four winds of heaven, but not to his posterity, nor according to the dominion with which he ruled; for his kingdom shall be uprooted and go to others besides these.

5 "Then the king of the south shall grow strong, but one of his officers shall grow stronger than he and shall rule a realm greater than his own realm. 6After some years they shall make an alliance, and the daughter of the king of the south shall come to the king of the north to ratify the agreement. But she shall not retain her power, and his offspring shall not endure. She shall be given up, she and her attendants and her child and the one who supported her.

"In those times 7a branch from her roots shall rise up in his place. He shall come against the army and enter the fortress of the king of the north, and he shall take action against them and prevail. 8Even their gods, with their idols and with their precious vessels of silver and gold, he shall carry off to Egypt as spoils of war. For some years he shall refrain from attacking the king of the north; 9then the latter shall invade the realm of the king of the south, but will return to his own land.

10 "His sons shall wage war and assemble a multitude of great forces, which shall advance like a flood and pass through, and again shall carry the war as far as his fortress. 11Moved with rage, the king of the south shall go out and do battle against the king of the north, who shall muster a great multitude, which shall, however, be defeated by his enemy. 12When the multitude has been car-

x Gk: Heb *from now*

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**11.1–12.13: Interpretation of the vision of history unfolding. 11.1:** The angel proceeds to unfold history. **2:** If the *three more* are those after Cyrus they are probably Cambyses, Darius I, and Xerxes I, who warred with the Greeks. Some suggest that Darius III, the last king of Persia, is the *fourth;* others believe Artaxerxes is meant. **3:** The *warrior king* is Alexander the Great. **4:** For his kingdom broken into four, see 8.8 n. None of his successors were of *his posterity*.

**11.5–6:** The kings of *the south* are the Ptolemies, those of *the north* the Seleucids. Here the *king* is Ptolemy I, and the officer who was *stronger* is Seleucus I. The *alliance* was that of about 250 B.C., when Ptolemy II gave his daughter Bernice to Antiochus II; but Bernice, her *attendants,* her *child,* and her husband fell, owing to the plotting of Laodice, mother of Seleucus II. **7–8:** The *branch* is Ptolemy III, who captured the *fortress* of Seleucia and brought back immense booty. **9:** A reference to the campaign of Seleucus II against Egypt in 242 B.C., which came to disaster.

**11.10:** *His sons* were Seleucus III and Antiochus III, the latter of whom attacked Egypt.

ried off, his heart shall be exalted, and he shall overthrow tens of thousands, but he shall not prevail. 13For the king of the north shall again raise a multitude, larger than the former, and after some years[y] he shall advance with a great army and abundant supplies.

14 "In those times many shall rise against the king of the south. The lawless among your own people shall lift themselves up in order to fulfill the vision, but they shall fail. 15Then the king of the north shall come and throw up siegeworks, and take a well-fortified city. And the forces of the south shall not stand, not even his picked troops, for there shall be no strength to resist. 16But he who comes against him shall take the actions he pleases, and no one shall withstand him. He shall take a position in the beautiful land, and all of it shall be in his power. 17He shall set his mind to come with the strength of his whole kingdom, and he shall bring terms of peace[z] and perform them. In order to destroy the kingdom,[a] he shall give him a woman in marriage; but it shall not succeed or be to his advantage. 18Afterward he shall turn to the coastlands, and shall capture many. But a commander shall put an end to his insolence; indeed,[b] he shall turn his insolence back upon him. 19Then he shall turn back toward the fortresses of his own land, but he shall stumble and fall, and shall not be found.

20 "Then shall arise in his place one who shall send an official for the glory of the kingdom; but within a few days he shall be broken, though not in anger or in battle. 21In his place shall arise a contemptible person on whom royal majesty had not been conferred; he shall come in without warning and obtain the kingdom through intrigue. 22Armies shall be utterly swept away and broken before him, and the prince of the covenant as well. 23And after an alliance is made with him, he shall act deceitfully and become strong with a small party. 24Without warning he shall come into the richest parts[c] of the province and do what none of his predecessors had ever done, lavishing plunder, spoil, and wealth on them. He shall devise plans against strongholds, but only for a time. 25He shall stir up his power and determination against the king of the south with a great army, and the king of the south shall wage war with a much greater and stronger army. But he shall not succeed, for plots shall be devised against him 26by those who eat of the royal rations. They shall break him, his army shall be swept away, and many shall fall slain. 27The two kings, their minds bent on evil, shall sit at one table and exchange lies. But it shall not succeed, for there remains an end at the time appointed. 28He shall return to his land with great wealth, but his heart shall be set against the holy covenant. He shall work his will, and return to his own land.

*y* Heb *and at the end of the times years*
*z* Gk: Heb *kingdom, and upright ones with him*
*a* Heb *it* *b* Meaning of Heb uncertain
*c* Or *among the richest men*

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**11–13**: Ptolemy IV sent armies through Palestine and defeated Antiochus at Raphia, but Antiochus in turn crushed the Egyptians at Banias.

**11.14**: A reference to the Egyptian insurrections under the child king, Ptolemy V. **15–17**: Antiochus III campaigned against Egypt, taking possession of Palestine, then made peace with Egypt, sealing it by marrying his daughter to the youthful Ptolemy. **18–19**: Antiochus undertook a campaign to capture the *coastlands* of Asia Minor, but, checked by the Roman *commander,* he started plundering on his return journey and died at Elymais.

**11.20**: Seleucus IV succeeded him and, to help pay the Roman indemnity, sent to Jerusalem an *official,* Heliodorus, to seize the temple treasure. He failed and died ingloriously. **21–45**: These verses concern Antiochus IV Epiphanes, the *contemptible person* who attained power by guile. **22–24**: His southern campaign, during which he deposed *the prince,* i.e. the high-priest Onias III, by *alliance* appointed Jason as high-priest, and let his troops plunder Palestine. **25–28**: His Egyptian campaign. In 169 he invaded Egypt and captured Ptolemy VI. Troubles at home forced him to leave Egypt, and on his way back with great booty, he sacked Jerusalem and plundered the treasury.

29 "At the time appointed he shall return and come into the south, but this time it shall not be as it was before. 30 For ships of Kittim shall come against him, and he shall lose heart and withdraw. He shall be enraged and take action against the holy covenant. He shall turn back and pay heed to those who forsake the holy covenant. 31 Forces sent by him shall occupy and profane the temple and fortress. They shall abolish the regular burnt offering and set up the abomination that makes desolate. 32 He shall seduce with intrigue those who violate the covenant; but the people who are loyal to their God shall stand firm and take action. 33 The wise among the people shall give understanding to many; for some days, however, they shall fall by sword and flame, and suffer captivity and plunder. 34 When they fall victim, they shall receive a little help, and many shall join them insincerely. 35 Some of the wise shall fall, so that they may be refined, purified, and cleansed,[d] until the time of the end, for there is still an interval until the time appointed.

36 "The king shall act as he pleases. He shall exalt himself and consider himself greater than any god, and shall speak horrendous things against the God of gods. He shall prosper until the period of wrath is completed, for what is determined shall be done. 37 He shall pay no respect to the gods of his ancestors, or to the one beloved by women; he shall pay no respect to any other god, for he shall consider himself greater than all. 38 He shall honor the god of fortresses instead of these; a god whom his ancestors did not know he shall honor with gold and silver, with precious stones and costly gifts. 39 He shall deal with the strongest fortresses by the help of a foreign god. Those who acknowledge him he shall make more wealthy, and shall appoint them as rulers over many, and shall distribute the land for a price.

40 "At the time of the end the king of the south shall attack him. But the king of the north shall rush upon him like a whirlwind, with chariots and horsemen, and with many ships. He shall advance against countries and pass through like a flood. 41 He shall come into the beautiful land, and tens of thousands shall fall victim, but Edom and Moab and the main part of the Ammonites shall escape from his power. 42 He shall stretch out his hand against the countries, and the land of Egypt shall not escape. 43 He shall become ruler of the treasures of gold and of silver, and all the riches of Egypt; and the Libyans and the Ethiopians[e] shall follow in his train. 44 But reports from the east and the north shall alarm him, and he shall go out with great fury to bring ruin and complete destruction to many. 45 He shall pitch his palatial tents between the sea and the beautiful holy mountain. Yet he shall come to his end, with no one to help him.

12 "At that time Michael, the great prince, the protector of your people, shall arise. There shall be a time of

*d* Heb *made them white* *e* Or *Nubians*; Heb *Cushites*

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**11.29–31:** The second campaign against Egypt, when Romans (*Kittim:* the name comes from "Citium," Cyprus, and is applied to any westerners) forced him to withdraw. Being *enraged* he attacked Jerusalem again in 167 B.C., setting up the *abomination that makes desolate,* i.e. a heathen altar in the temple (see "Survey of . . . Bible Lands," §19).

**11.32–35:** The resistance movement. Some Hellenizing Jews sided with Antiochus, forsaking the *covenant,* but the *wise,* though persecuted, maintained resistance. The *little help* may refer to the Maccabees, Mattathias and his son, Judas Maccabeus (1 Macc ch 2).

**36–39:** Antiochus' march towards his doom. He abandoned *the gods of his ancestors* and the Tammuz-Adonis cult, being interested in Zeus Olympius and claiming divine honors for himself.

**11.40–45:** Predictions that Ptolemy will provoke another war with disastrous results, so that Antiochus will conquer Libya to the west of Egypt and Ethiopia to the south, but on his way back will perish somewhere along the coastal route. None of these predictions was fulfilled.

**12.1–13: The final consummation. 1:** These campaigns of Antiochus only intro-

anguish, such as has never occurred since nations first came into existence. But at that time your people shall be delivered, everyone who is found written in the book. 2Many of those who sleep in the dust of the earth[f] shall awake, some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt. 3Those who are wise shall shine like the brightness of the sky,[g] and those who lead many to righteousness, like the stars forever and ever. 4But you, Daniel, keep the words secret and the book sealed until the time of the end. Many shall be running back and forth, and evil[h] shall increase."

5 Then I, Daniel, looked, and two others appeared, one standing on this bank of the stream and one on the other. 6One of them said to the man clothed in linen, who was upstream, "How long shall it be until the end of these wonders?" 7The man clothed in linen, who was upstream, raised his right hand and his left hand toward heaven. And I heard him swear by the one who lives forever that it would be for a time, two times, and half a time,[i] and that when the shattering of the power of the holy people comes to an end, all these things would be accomplished. 8I heard but could not understand; so I said, "My lord, what shall be the outcome of these things?" 9He said, "Go your way, Daniel, for the words are to remain secret and sealed until the time of the end. 10Many shall be purified, cleansed, and refined, but the wicked shall continue to act wickedly. None of the wicked shall understand, but those who are wise shall understand. 11From the time that the regular burnt offering is taken away and the abomination that desolates is set up, there shall be one thousand two hundred ninety days. 12Happy are those who persevere and attain the thousand three hundred thirty-five days. 13But you, go your way,[j] and rest; you shall rise for your reward at the end of the days."

*f* Or *the land of dust* *g* Or *dome*
*h* Cn Compare Gk: Heb *knowledge* *i* Heb *a time, times, and a half* *j* Gk Theodotion: Heb adds *to the end*

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duce the great tribulation which precedes the end of the age. *Michael,* see 10.12–14 n. **2**: The first clear reference to resurrection in the Bible. Not all are raised, but those who are raised will find everlasting reward or punishment. **4**: Knowledge of these matters is to be kept secret *until the end.*

**12.6–7**: When will the end be? One angelic response to Daniel's question: it will be in three and a half years (see 7.25–28 n.). **8–12**: Two new and variant calculations setting the end somewhat later, i.e. 1,290 days and 1,335 days, perhaps added after the three and one-half years (1,150 days) had passed. **13**: The promise that Daniel will have a place in that final consummation.

# *Hosea*

The book of Hosea stands first in that part of the Latter Prophets called the Book of the Twelve, also known as the Minor Prophets because of the brevity of the books in comparison with Isaiah, Jeremiah, and Ezekiel (see Introduction to the Old Testament, p. xxxi OT). By the second century B.C. these twelve constituted a unit (see Sir 49.10). See xxi.

Hosea's ministry to the northern kingdom followed closely upon that of Amos (see Introduction to Amos). While Amos had spoken as a southerner to a prosperous Israel enjoying an era of peace, Hosea spoke as a native to his own people who were suffering from war with Assyria and in virtual anarchy. Four Israelite kings had been assassinated within fourteen years after the death of Jeroboam II. After the Assyrian conquest of 733–732, which resulted in the fall of Damascus, Samaria itself soon fell to the Assyrians (721).

Not all aspects of Hosea's life are clear. It can best be reconstructed, however, from the first three chapters by observing that Hosea deals with Gomer as the LORD deals with Israel; the prophet's personal life is an embodiment of God's redeeming love. Accordingly the sensitive prophet, obedient to his call to take "a wife of whoredom," married the prostitute Gomer. She bore three children, of whom Hosea was presumably not the father (2.4–5), and then left him. But Hosea brought her back publicly (3.1–5) and took her again to himself.

Hosea's ministry dramatizes his message. Although the book is divided into two uneven parts (chs 1–3; 4–14) and presents serious textual difficulties, it is thoroughly unified by the dominant theme of divine compassion and the love that will not let Israel go. At the heart of Hosea's preaching is a gospel of redeeming love.

1 The word of the LORD that came to Hosea son of Beeri, in the days of Kings Uzziah, Jotham, Ahaz, and Hezekiah of Judah, and in the days of King Jeroboam son of Joash of Israel.

2 When the LORD first spoke through Hosea, the LORD said to Hosea, "Go, take for yourself a wife of whoredom and have children of whoredom, for the land commits great whoredom by forsaking the LORD." 3So he went and took Gomer daughter of Diblaim, and she conceived and bore him a son.

4 And the LORD said to him, "Name him Jezreel;[a] for in a little while I will punish the house of Jehu for the blood of Jezreel, and I will put an end to the kingdom of the house of Israel. 5On that day I will break the bow of Israel in the valley of Jezreel."

6 She conceived again and bore a daughter. Then the LORD said to him, "Name her Lo-ruhamah,[b] for I will no longer have pity on the house of Israel or forgive them. 7But I will have pity on the house of Judah, and I will save them by the LORD their God; I will not save them by bow, or by sword, or by war, or by horses, or by horsemen."

8 When she had weaned Lo-ruhamah, she conceived and bore a son. 9Then the LORD said, "Name him Lo-ammi,[c] for you are not my people and I am not your God."[d]

10[e] Yet the number of the people of Israel shall be like the sand of the sea, which can be neither measured nor numbered; and in the place where it was said to them, "You are not my people," it shall be said to them, "Children of the living God." 11The people of Judah and the people of Israel shall be gathered together, and they shall appoint for themselves one head; and they shall take possession of[f] the land, for great shall be the day of Jezreel.

2[g] Say to your brother,[h] Ammi,[i] and to your sister,[j] Ruhamah.[k]

2 Plead with your mother, plead—
for she is not my wife,
and I am not her husband—

*a* That is *God sows* *b* That is *Not pitied*
*c* That is *Not my people* *d* Heb *I am not yours*
*e* Ch 2.1 in Heb *f* Heb *rise up from*
*g* Ch 2.3 in Heb *h* Gk: Heb *brothers*
*i* That is *My people* *j* Gk Vg: Heb *sisters*
*k* That is *Pitied*

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**1.1: Superscription.** The conviction that *the word of the LORD* comes to a prophet (Joel 1.1; Mic 1.1; Zeph 1.1; Hag 1.1; Zech 1.1) is fundamental to Hebrew prophecy; it asserts that the prophet's inspiration and authority are not self-generated, but come from God, whose will is disclosed through the prophet (Ezek 2.3–5; 3.10–11; Am 3.7; Zech 1.6), whose personal agent the prophet is (Ex 4.15–16; Isa 6.8), and whom alone the prophet must obey (1 Kings ch 13; Am 7.14–17; Acts 4.18–20). *Hosea* means "salvation" or "deliverance." *Kings . . . of Judah,* see Isa 1.1 n., and Mic 1.1 n. Hosea prophesied not only during the reign of Jeroboam II (786–746 B.C.; see Introduction to Amos), but also after his death.

**1.2–3.5: Hosea's disciplinary actions against his unfaithful wife and her children and his redemptive love for them exemplify God's dealings with harlotrous Israel.** They form a living basis for his preaching during the reign of Jeroboam II.

**1.2–9: Hosea marries the prostitute Gomer and gives her children prophetically significant names** (Isa 7.3; 8.3) at the LORD's command. **2:** *For the land . . .* expresses the essence of Israel's sin and its need of redemption. **4–5:** *Jezreel,* meaning "God sows," points backward to the sin of the house of *Jehu* (1 Kings 19.15–17; 2 Kings chs 9–10) and forward to Israel's restoration (Hos 2.21–23). Jeroboam II belonged to the dynasty of Jehu.

**1.6:** Because of Israel's sin the LORD will *no longer have pity,* and the name of the second child (Hebrew *Lo-ruhamah,* see note *b*) will be a living reminder of this. **7:** This verse, which exempts *Judah,* is a later addition. **8–9:** The name of the third child (Hebrew *Lo-ammi,* see note *c*) signifies the breaking of the covenant relationship between the LORD and Israel (Ex 6.7; 19.5; compare Isa 40.1; Jer 31.31–34).

**1.10–2.1: Israel's punishment is not final;** afterwards it *shall be like the sand of the sea* (compare Gen 22.17) and again be God's *children* (compare Rom 9.25–26). Though these words may have been uttered at a different time, the thought is genuinely Hosean (see 14.4–7).

**2.2–13: Israel will suffer public shame and personal privation like a harlot,** be-

that she put away her whoring
from her face,
and her adultery from between
her breasts,
3 or I will strip her naked
and expose her as in the day she
was born,
and make her like a wilderness,
and turn her into a parched
land,
and kill her with thirst.
4 Upon her children also I will
have no pity,
because they are children of
whoredom.
5 For their mother has played
the whore;
she who conceived them has
acted shamefully.
For she said, "I will go after
my lovers;
they give me my bread and
my water,
my wool and my flax, my oil
and my drink."
6 Therefore I will hedge up her[1]
way with thorns;
and I will build a wall
against her,
so that she cannot find her
paths.
7 She shall pursue her lovers,
but not overtake them;
and she shall seek them,
but shall not find them.
Then she shall say, "I will go
and return to my first husband,
for it was better with me then
than now."
8 She did not know
that it was I who gave her
the grain, the wine, and the oil,
and who lavished upon her silver
and gold that they used for
Baal.
9 Therefore I will take back
my grain in its time,
and my wine in its season;
and I will take away my wool and
my flax,
which were to cover her
nakedness.
10 Now I will uncover her shame
in the sight of her lovers,
and no one shall rescue her out
of my hand.
11 I will put an end to all her mirth,
her festivals, her new moons,
her sabbaths,
and all her appointed festivals.
12 I will lay waste her vines and her
fig trees,
of which she said,
"These are my pay,
which my lovers have given
me."
I will make them a forest,
and the wild animals shall
devour them.
13 I will punish her for the festival
days of the Baals,
when she offered incense to
them
and decked herself with her ring
and jewelry,
and went after her lovers,
and forgot me, says the LORD.

14 Therefore, I will now allure her,
and bring her into the
wilderness,
and speak tenderly to her.

*l* Gk Syr: Heb *your*

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cause it has adulterated the worship of the LORD with Canaanite Baalism. **3**: Isa 47.2–3; Ezek 16.37–39; Rev 17.16. **5**: Jer 2.23–25; 3.1–2. Israel's *lovers* and their gifts refer to the immoral fertility rites of Canaanite religion.

**2.7**: Hosea takes the metaphor of marriage from the cult of Baal, and boldly calls the LORD *husband*. **8**: The LORD, the universal Creator, is the giver of all good gifts, though Israel may fail to acknowledge this (Gen 1.29–30; Deut 7.13; Jas 1.17). **9**: Am 4.6–8. **11**: Isa 1.12–17; Am 5.21–24. **13**: *Baals,* see v. 16 n. *Incense* was peculiarly associated with pagan worship (Jer 44.8, 17). *Decked herself,* compare Isa 3.16–22.

**2.14–23**: **The LORD will allure Israel back,** renew his covenant with her, and betroth her to himself forever. **14**: The *wilderness* signifies Israel's early years after the Exodus when it was faithful to the covenant (Ex

15 From there I will give her her vineyards,
and make the Valley of Achor a door of hope.
There she shall respond as in the days of her youth,
as at the time when she came out of the land of Egypt.
16 On that day, says the LORD, you will call me, "My husband," and no longer will you call me, "My Baal."[m] 17 For I will remove the names of the Baals from her mouth, and they shall be mentioned by name no more. 18 I will make for you[n] a covenant on that day with the wild animals, the birds of the air, and the creeping things of the ground; and I will abolish[o] the bow, the sword, and war from the land; and I will make you lie down in safety. 19 And I will take you for my wife forever; I will take you for my wife in righteousness and in justice, in steadfast love, and in mercy. 20 I will take you for my wife in faithfulness; and you shall know the LORD.
21 On that day I will answer, says the LORD,
I will answer the heavens
and they shall answer the earth;
22 and the earth shall answer the grain, the wine, and the oil,
and they shall answer Jezreel;[p]
23 and I will sow him[q] for myself in the land.
And I will have pity on Lo-ruhamah,[r]
and I will say to Lo-ammi,[s]
"You are my people";
and he shall say, "You are my God."

3 The LORD said to me again, "Go, love a woman who has a lover and is an adulteress, just as the LORD loves the people of Israel, though they turn to other gods and love raisin cakes." 2 So I bought her for fifteen shekels of silver and a homer of barley and a measure of wine.[t] 3 And I said to her, "You must remain as mine for many days; you shall not play the whore, you shall not have intercourse with a man, nor I with you." 4 For the Israelites shall remain many days without king or prince, without sacrifice or pillar, without ephod or teraphim. 5 Afterward the Israelites shall return and seek the LORD their God, and David their king; they shall come in awe to the LORD and to his goodness in the latter days.

4 Hear the word of the LORD,
O people of Israel;

*m* That is, *"My master"* *n* Heb *them* *o* Heb *break* *p* That is *God sows* *q* Cn: Heb *her* *r* That is *Not pitied* *s* That is *Not my people* *t* Gk: Heb *a homer of barley and a lethech of barley*

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chs 19–24; Jer 2.2–3; compare Ezek 20.33–38). **15**: When entering the Promised Land, Israel sinned at *the Valley of Achor* (Josh 7.20–26; Isa 65.10). **16**: *Baal,* often used as a proper name of the leading Canaanite deity, means "master," "lord."

**2.17–23**: The conclusion of the chapter promises the removal of the *Baals,* the establishment of a universal *covenant* (Lev 26.6; Job 5.23; Isa 11.6–9; Ezek 34.25–31), the abolition of *war* (Ps 46.9; Isa 2.4), and betrothal to the LORD in *steadfast love* and *faithfulness.*

**3.1–5**: **The restoration of Gomer.** Hosea buys back his adulterous wife, disciplines her, and affirms his devotion. In a like manner the LORD will restore Israel. **1**: *Just as the LORD loves the people of Israel, though they turn to other gods;* these words disclose the central message of this book: divine love necessitates both Israel's temporary chastisement and its ultimate redemption. *Raisin cakes* were used in pagan festivals (Isa 16.7; Jer 7.18). **2**: *Shekel,* about eleven grams; *homer,* about six and one-half bushels. From whom Hosea *bought her* is not indicated. True redemption is costly (Ps 49.7–8; 1 Cor 6.19–20; 7.23; Gal 4.4–5); Hosea redeemed his wife by love and for a price. **4**: During the period of corrective punishment Israel will be deprived of civil and ceremonial institutions. *Pillar,* Gen 31.45. *Ephod,* see Judg 8.24–28 n.; 1 Sam 2.18 n. *Teraphim,* household gods (Gen 31.19). **5**: The phrase *and David their king* is probably a later Judean addition.

**4.1–14.9**: **Because of constant rebellion, the judgment of the LORD is upon Israel;** yet it will eventually be restored. These themes are elaborated in a series of discourses written after the death of Jeroboam II. The lack of clear order may in part reflect the style of the prophet and may in part be due to later editorial rearrangement.

for the LORD has an indictment
against the inhabitants
of the land.
There is no faithfulness or loyalty,
and no knowledge of God in
the land.
2 Swearing, lying, and murder,
and stealing and adultery
break out;
bloodshed follows bloodshed.
3 Therefore the land mourns,
and all who live in it languish;
together with the wild animals
and the birds of the air,
even the fish of the sea are
perishing.

4 Yet let no one contend,
and let none accuse,
for with you is my contention,
O priest.[u]
5 You shall stumble by day;
the prophet also shall stumble
with you by night,
and I will destroy your mother.
6 My people are destroyed for lack
of knowledge;
because you have rejected
knowledge,
I reject you from being a priest
to me.
And since you have forgotten the
law of your God,
I also will forget your children.

7 The more they increased,
the more they sinned against
me;
they changed[v] their glory
into shame.
8 They feed on the sin of my
people;
they are greedy for their
iniquity.
9 And it shall be like people,
like priest;
I will punish them for their
ways,
and repay them for their deeds.
10 They shall eat, but not be satisfied;
they shall play the whore, but
not multiply;
because they have forsaken
the LORD
to devote themselves to
11 whoredom.

Wine and new wine
take away the understanding.
12 My people consult a piece of
wood,
and their divining rod gives
them oracles.
For a spirit of whoredom has led
them astray,
and they have played the whore,
forsaking their God.
13 They sacrifice on the tops of the
mountains,
and make offerings upon
the hills,
under oak, poplar, and terebinth,
because their shade is good.

Therefore your daughters play
the whore,
and your daughters-in-law
commit adultery.
14 I will not punish your daughters
when they play the whore,
nor your daughters-in-law when
they commit adultery;

*u* Cn: Meaning of Heb uncertain *v* Ancient Heb tradition: MT *I will change*

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**4.1–8.14: All Israel has forgotten the LORD and has sought help from other gods and other nations. 4.1–3:** *The LORD has an indictment against* Israel because they love neither God nor their fellow Israelites (Mic 6.2). *Faithfulness, loyalty* (steadfast love), and *knowledge of God* are major theological terms in Hosea (2.19–20; 4.6; 5.4, 7; 6.3, 6; 10.12; 11.3–4, 12b; 12.6). **4–6:** The controversy is first of all with the priest and prophet; for, having rejected the knowledge and teaching of God, they have destroyed the people.

**4.7–14:** Sin has infected them all, *like people, like priest.* **13:** A reference to high-place sanctuaries and their sacred trees (Jer 2.20). **14:** *Temple prostitutes,* see Gen 38.15 n.; Deut 23.17 n. **15:** *Beth-aven* is Bethel (Am 5.5).

for the men themselves go aside
with whores,
and sacrifice with temple
prostitutes;
thus a people without
understanding comes to
ruin.

15 Though you play the whore,
O Israel,
do not let Judah become guilty.
Do not enter into Gilgal,
or go up to Beth-aven,
and do not swear, "As the
LORD lives."
16 Like a stubborn heifer,
Israel is stubborn;
can the LORD now feed them
like a lamb in a broad pasture?

17 Ephraim is joined to idols—
let him alone.
18 When their drinking is ended, they
indulge in sexual orgies;
they love lewdness more than
their glory.[w]
19 A wind has wrapped them[x] in
its wings,
and they shall be ashamed
because of their altars.[y]

5 Hear this, O priests!
Give heed, O house of Israel!
Listen, O house of the king!
For the judgment pertains to
you;
for you have been a snare at
Mizpah,
and a net spread upon Tabor,
2 and a pit dug deep in Shittim;[z]
but I will punish all of them.

3 I know Ephraim,
and Israel is not hidden from
me;
for now, O Ephraim, you have
played the whore;
Israel is defiled.
4 Their deeds do not permit them
to return to their God.
For the spirit of whoredom is
within them,
and they do not know the
LORD.

5 Israel's pride testifies against him;
Ephraim[a] stumbles in his guilt;
Judah also stumbles with them.
6 With their flocks and herds they
shall go
to seek the LORD,
but they will not find him;
he has withdrawn from them.
7 They have dealt faithlessly with
the LORD;
for they have borne illegitimate
children.
Now the new moon shall
devour them along with
their fields.

8 Blow the horn in Gibeah,
the trumpet in Ramah.
Sound the alarm at Beth-aven;
look behind you, Benjamin!
9 Ephraim shall become a desolation
in the day of punishment;
among the tribes of Israel
I declare what is sure.
10 The princes of Judah have become
like those who remove the
landmark;
on them I will pour out
my wrath like water.
11 Ephraim is oppressed, crushed in
judgment,

*w* Cn Compare Gk: Meaning of Heb uncertain
*x* Heb *her* *y* Gk Syr: Heb *sacrifices*
*z* Cn: Meaning of Heb uncertain *a* Heb *Israel and Ephraim*

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**5.1–2**: Israel's leaders have been a snare, so God will chastise all of them. *Tabor,* Mount Tabor, where there seems to have been a sanctuary (compare Deut 33.19; Judg 4.6). *Mizpah,* either the city in Transjordan (Judg 10.17) or north of Jerusalem (1 Sam 7.5). **3–4**: The spirit of whoredom is so confirmed within them that they cannot return to their God.

**5.5b**: 1.7. **6**: Contrast Jer 29.13. **7**: *Illegitimate children,* offspring faithless to the LORD. *New moon,* perhaps referring to the new moon festivals. **8–14**: In the day of punishment the LORD will become the enemy of

because he was determined to
go after vanity.[b]
12 Therefore I am like maggots to
Ephraim,
and like rottenness to the house
of Judah.
13 When Ephraim saw his sickness,
and Judah his wound,
then Ephraim went to Assyria,
and sent to the great king.[c]
But he is not able to cure you
or heal your wound.
14 For I will be like a lion to
Ephraim,
and like a young lion to the
house of Judah.
I myself will tear and go away;
I will carry off, and no one
shall rescue.
15 I will return again to my place
until they acknowledge their
guilt and seek my face.
In their distress they will beg
my favor:

6 "Come, let us return to the LORD;
for it is he who has torn, and he
will heal us;
he has struck down, and he will
bind us up.
2 After two days he will revive us;
on the third day he will raise
us up,
that we may live before him.
3 Let us know, let us press on to
know the LORD;
his appearing is as sure as
the dawn;
he will come to us like the
showers,
like the spring rains that water
the earth."
4 What shall I do with you,
O Ephraim?
What shall I do with you,
O Judah?
Your love is like a morning cloud,
like the dew that goes
away early.
5 Therefore I have hewn them by
the prophets,
I have killed them by the words
of my mouth,
and my[d] judgment goes forth as
the light.
6 For I desire steadfast love and not
sacrifice,
the knowledge of God rather
than burnt offerings.

7 But at[e] Adam they transgressed
the covenant;
there they dealt faithlessly
with me.
8 Gilead is a city of evildoers,
tracked with blood.
9 As robbers lie in wait[f] for
someone,
so the priests are banded
together;[g]
they murder on the road to
Shechem,
they commit a monstrous
crime.
10 In the house of Israel I have seen a
horrible thing;
Ephraim's whoredom is there,
Israel is defiled.

11 For you also, O Judah, a harvest
is appointed.

When I would restore the fortunes
of my people,

*b* Gk: Meaning of Heb uncertain *c* Cn: Heb *to a king who will contend* *d* Gk Syr: Heb *your* *e* Cn: Heb *like* *f* Cn: Meaning of Heb uncertain *g* Syr: Heb *are a company*

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Israel (Am 9.2–4). This section refers to the Syro-Ephraimitic War (2 Kings 15.27–30). **10:** *Remove the landmark,* Deut 19.14; Prov 22.28.

**5.15–6.3:** If Israel will but return to the LORD, God will heal and revive Israel. **6.3:** *Spring rains,* the later rains, Deut 11.14. **4–6:** What the LORD really desires is *steadfast love* and *knowledge* of God (4.1–3). **6:** This verse epitomizes much of Hosea's message (2.19–20; compare Mt 9.13; 12.7). *Love and not sacrifice,* compare Am 5.23, 24; Mic 6.6–8.

**6.7–11:** By its harlotry Ephraim has transgressed the Sinaitic covenant (Ex 24.3–8; Deut 5.1–3). **7:** *Adam,* geographical allusion uncertain; compare Josh 3.16.

7 [1]when I would heal Israel,
the corruption of Ephraim is revealed,
and the wicked deeds of Samaria;
for they deal falsely,
the thief breaks in,
and the bandits raid outside.
2 But they do not consider
that I remember all their wickedness.
Now their deeds surround them,
they are before my face.
3 By their wickedness they make the king glad,
and the officials by their treachery.
4 They are all adulterers;
they are like a heated oven,
whose baker does not need to stir the fire,
from the kneading of the dough until it is leavened.
5 On the day of our king the officials
became sick with the heat of wine;
he stretched out his hand with mockers.
6 For they are kindled[h] like an oven, their heart burns within them;
all night their anger smolders;
in the morning it blazes like a flaming fire.
7 All of them are hot as an oven,
and they devour their rulers.
All their kings have fallen;
none of them calls upon me.

8 Ephraim mixes himself with the peoples;
Ephraim is a cake not turned.
9 Foreigners devour his strength,
but he does not know it;
gray hairs are sprinkled upon him,
but he does not know it.
10 Israel's pride testifies against[i] him;
yet they do not return to the LORD their God,
or seek him, for all this.

11 Ephraim has become like a dove,
silly and without sense;
they call upon Egypt, they go to Assyria.
12 As they go, I will cast my net over them;
I will bring them down like birds of the air;
I will discipline them according to the report made to their assembly.[j]
13 Woe to them, for they have strayed from me!
Destruction to them, for they have rebelled against me!
I would redeem them,
but they speak lies against me.

14 They do not cry to me from the heart,
but they wail upon their beds;
they gash themselves for grain and wine;
they rebel against me.
15 It was I who trained and strengthened their arms,
yet they plot evil against me.
16 They turn to that which does not profit;[k]
they have become like a defective bow;
their officials shall fall by the sword

*h* Gk Syr: Heb *brought near* *i* Or *humbles*
*j* Meaning of Heb uncertain *k* Cn: Meaning of Heb uncertain

**7.1–7**: Because of its wicked deeds, Samaria will also be punished. **4**: The time between the kneading of the dough and its fermentation is apparently when the oven was the hottest. **5**: *The day of our king,* perhaps at the celebration of enthronement. **8–10**: Ephraim is a half-baked cake. **11–13**: Ephraim is like a silly dove. *Call upon Egypt . . . ,* seek alliances.

**7.14–16**: Because they turn to Baal the Israelites shall bear the consequences. *Gash themselves,* Deut 14.1; 1 Kings 18.28. *Babbling,* i.e. the negotiations conducted in the Egyptian language.

because of the rage of their
tongue.
So much for their babbling in the
land of Egypt.

8 Set the trumpet to your lips!
One like a vulture[l] is over the
house of the LORD,
because they have broken my
covenant,
and transgressed my law.
2 Israel cries to me,
"My God, we—Israel—know
you!"
3 Israel has spurned the good;
the enemy shall pursue him.

4 They made kings, but not
through me;
they set up princes, but without
my knowledge.
With their silver and gold they
made idols
for their own destruction.
5 Your calf is rejected, O Samaria.
My anger burns against them.
How long will they be incapable
of innocence?
6 For it is from Israel,
an artisan made it;
it is not God.
The calf of Samaria
shall be broken to pieces.[m]

7 For they sow the wind,
and they shall reap the
whirlwind.
The standing grain has no heads,
it shall yield no meal;
if it were to yield,
foreigners would devour it.
8 Israel is swallowed up;
now they are among the nations
as a useless vessel.

9 For they have gone up to Assyria,
a wild ass wandering alone;
Ephraim has bargained
for lovers.
10 Though they bargain with
the nations,
I will now gather them up.
They shall soon writhe
under the burden of kings
and princes.

11 When Ephraim multiplied altars
to expiate sin,
they became to him altars for
sinning.
12 Though I write for him the
multitude of my
instructions,
they are regarded as a strange
thing.
13 Though they offer choice
sacrifices,[n]
though they eat flesh,
the LORD does not accept them.
Now he will remember their
iniquity,
and punish their sins;
they shall return to Egypt.
14 Israel has forgotten his Maker,
and built palaces;
and Judah has multiplied fortified
cities;
but I will send a fire upon
his cities,
and it shall devour his
strongholds.

9 Do not rejoice, O Israel!
Do not exult[o] as other nations
do;

*l* Meaning of Heb uncertain *m* Or *shall go up in flames* *n* Cn: Meaning of Heb uncertain *o* Gk: Heb *To exultation*

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**8.1**: *The trumpet* warns of the approach of the enemy (compare Jer 6.1; Neh 4.18–20; Joel 2.1). *Vulture,* an eagle, the Assyrian army (Jer 49.22). **4**: Probably an allusion to the rapid succession of kings after Jeroboam II (see Introduction). **5**: *Your calf,* see 1 Kings 12.28, 29. *An artisan made it,* compare Isa 40.19, 20.

**8.7–10**: As punishment for political defection, Israel shall be without king and princes. **11–14**: As punishment for religious defection, Israel *shall return to Egypt* (compare 9.3, 6). **14**: Reliance on palaces and walled cities alone is sin. *Fire,* Am 1.4, 7.

**9.1–11.12: Israel has rejected the LORD and must undergo punishment that will bring loss of king, children, places of**

for you have played the whore,
departing from your God.
You have loved a prostitute's pay
on all threshing floors.
2 Threshing floor and wine vat shall not feed them,
and the new wine shall fail them.
3 They shall not remain in the land of the LORD;
but Ephraim shall return to Egypt,
and in Assyria they shall eat unclean food.

4 They shall not pour drink offerings of wine to the LORD,
and their sacrifices shall not please him.
Such sacrifices shall be like mourners' bread;
all who eat of it shall be defiled;
for their bread shall be for their hunger only;
it shall not come to the house of the LORD.

5 What will you do on the day of appointed festival,
and on the day of the festival of the LORD?
6 For even if they escape destruction,
Egypt shall gather them,
Memphis shall bury them.
Nettles shall possess their precious things of silver;[p]
thorns shall be in their tents.

7 The days of punishment have come,
the days of recompense have come;
Israel cries,[q]
"The prophet is a fool,
the man of the spirit is mad!"
Because of your great iniquity,
your hostility is great.
8 The prophet is a sentinel for my God over Ephraim,
yet a fowler's snare is on all his ways,
and hostility in the house of his God.
9 They have deeply corrupted themselves
as in the days of Gibeah;
he will remember their iniquity,
he will punish their sins.

10 Like grapes in the wilderness,
I found Israel.
Like the first fruit on the fig tree,
in its first season,
I saw your ancestors.
But they came to Baal-peor,
and consecrated themselves to a thing of shame,
and became detestable like the thing they loved.
11 Ephraim's glory shall fly away like a bird—
no birth, no pregnancy, no conception!
12 Even if they bring up children,
I will bereave them until no one is left.
Woe to them indeed
when I depart from them!
13 Once I saw Ephraim as a young palm planted in a lovely meadow,[p]
but now Ephraim must lead out his children for slaughter.
14 Give them, O LORD—

*p* Meaning of Heb uncertain *q* Cn Compare Gk: Heb *shall know*

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**worship, and country. 9.1–17:** Israel is destined for prey and slaughter and to be deprived of land and cultus (2.11; 8.11–14; 11.5). **1:** *Prostitute's pay,* Gen 38.17; Mic 1.7. **4:** *Mourners' bread,* unclean because of association with the dead.

**9.6:** *Memphis,* the capital of Lower Egypt. **7:** *Man of the spirit,* that is, the prophet (see Mic 3.8 n.). **8:** *Sentinel,* compare Ezek 33.6–8. **9:** 1 Sam ch 10.

**9.10–17:** *In the wilderness* Israel covenanted with the LORD, but in Canaan it *consecrated* itself to the fertility god Baal; therefore the LORD will make it barren. **10:** *Baal-peor,* Num

what will you give?
Give them a miscarrying womb
and dry breasts.

15 Every evil of theirs began at
Gilgal;
there I came to hate them.
Because of the wickedness of
their deeds
I will drive them out of
my house.
I will love them no more;
all their officials are rebels.

16 Ephraim is stricken,
their root is dried up,
they shall bear no fruit.
Even though they give birth,
I will kill the cherished offspring
of their womb.
17 Because they have not listened
to him,
my God will reject them;
they shall become wanderers
among the nations.

10 Israel is a luxuriant vine
that yields its fruit.
The more his fruit increased
the more altars he built;
as his country improved,
he improved his pillars.
2 Their heart is false;
now they must bear their guilt.
The LORD[r] will break down
their altars,
and destroy their pillars.

3 For now they will say:
"We have no king,
for we do not fear the LORD,
and a king—what could he do
for us?"
4 They utter mere words;
with empty oaths they make
covenants;
so litigation springs up like
poisonous weeds
in the furrows of the field.
5 The inhabitants of Samaria
tremble
for the calf[s] of Beth-aven.
Its people shall mourn for it,
and its idolatrous priests shall
wail[t] over it,
over its glory that has departed
from it.
6 The thing itself shall be carried to
Assyria
as tribute to the great king.[u]
Ephraim shall be put to shame,
and Israel shall be ashamed of
his idol.[v]

7 Samaria's king shall perish
like a chip on the face of
the waters.
8 The high places of Aven, the sin
of Israel,
shall be destroyed.
Thorn and thistle shall grow up
on their altars.
They shall say to the mountains,
Cover us,
and to the hills, Fall on us.

9 Since the days of Gibeah you have
sinned, O Israel;
there they have continued.
Shall not war overtake them in
Gibeah?
10 I will come[w] against the wayward
people to punish them;
and nations shall be gathered
against them
when they are punished[x] for
their double iniquity.

*r* Heb *he* *s* Gk Syr: Heb *calves* *t* Cn: Heb *exult* *u* Cn: Heb *to a king who will contend* *v* Cn: Heb *counsel* *w* Cn Compare Gk: Heb *In my desire* *x* Gk: Heb *bound*

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25.1–18. **15:** *Gilgal,* 4.15. *Drive them out of my house,* as a husband his faithless wife.

**10.1–2:** In Canaan Israel *increased* in sin as it increased in prosperity. *Pillars,* Ex 23.24.

**10.3–10:** Samaria's *king shall perish,* for it *sinned* by establishing the monarchy in the days of Saul. **5:** *Calf,* 8.5. **8:** Am 9.1; Lk 23.30; Rev 6.16. *Aven* means "Wickedness," a reference to Bethel. **9:** *Gibeah,* see Judg ch 19.

11 Ephraim was a trained heifer
that loved to thresh,
and I spared her fair neck;
but I will make Ephraim break the ground;
Judah must plow;
Jacob must harrow for himself.
12 Sow for yourselves righteousness;
reap steadfast love;
break up your fallow ground;
for it is time to seek the LORD,
that he may come and rain righteousness upon you.

13 You have plowed wickedness,
you have reaped injustice,
you have eaten the fruit of lies.
Because you have trusted in your power
and in the multitude of your warriors,
14 therefore the tumult of war shall rise against your people,
and all your fortresses shall be destroyed,
as Shalman destroyed Beth-arbel on the day of battle
when mothers were dashed in pieces with their children.
15 Thus it shall be done to you, O Bethel,
because of your great wickedness.
At dawn the king of Israel shall be utterly cut off.

11 When Israel was a child, I loved him,
and out of Egypt I called my son.
2 The more I[y] called them,
the more they went from me;[z]
they kept sacrificing to the Baals,
and offering incense to idols.

3 Yet it was I who taught Ephraim to walk,
I took them up in my[a] arms;
but they did not know that I healed them.
4 I led them with cords of human kindness,
with bands of love.
I was to them like those who lift infants to their cheeks.[b]
I bent down to them and fed them.

5 They shall return to the land of Egypt,
and Assyria shall be their king,
because they have refused to return to me.
6 The sword rages in their cities,
it consumes their oracle-priests,
and devours because of their schemes.
7 My people are bent on turning away from me.
To the Most High they call,
but he does not raise them up at all.[c]

8 How can I give you up, Ephraim?
How can I hand you over, O Israel?
How can I make you like Admah?
How can I treat you like Zeboiim?
My heart recoils within me;
my compassion grows warm and tender.
9 I will not execute my fierce anger;
I will not again destroy Ephraim;

*y* Gk: Heb *they* *z* Gk: Heb *them* *a* Gk Syr Vg: Heb *his* *b* Or *who ease the yoke on their jaws* *c* Meaning of Heb uncertain

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**10.11–12**: Repentance will bring *righteousness*. **12**: Compare 6.3; Isa 44.3; 45.8; 55.10; Jer 4.3; 2 Cor 9.10). **13–15**: Rebellious Israel shall hear *the tumult of war*. **14**: *Shalman . . . Beth-arbel*, the allusion is unknown and the text uncertain.

**11.1–7**: The LORD as a loving and patient parent, must now chastise disobedient and willful children with exile (v. 5). **1**: Ex 4.22; Mt 2.15. **3**: Jer 31.1–3.

**11.8–9**: In this striking soliloquy *compassion* restrains the divine anger; such is the nature of superhuman love. *Admah, Zeboiim*, cities destroyed along with Sodom and Go-

for I am God and no mortal,
the Holy One in your midst,
and I will not come in wrath.[d]

10 They shall go after the LORD,
who roars like a lion;
when he roars,
his children shall come
trembling from the west.
11 They shall come trembling like
birds from Egypt,
and like doves from the land of
Assyria;
and I will return them to their
homes, says the LORD.

12[e] Ephraim has surrounded me
with lies,
and the house of Israel with
deceit;
but Judah still walks[f] with God,
and is faithful to the Holy One.

12 Ephraim herds the wind,
and pursues the east wind all
day long;
they multiply falsehood and
violence;
they make a treaty with Assyria,
and oil is carried to Egypt.

2 The LORD has an indictment
against Judah,
and will punish Jacob according
to his ways,
and repay him according to
his deeds.
3 In the womb he tried to supplant
his brother,
and in his manhood he strove
with God.
4 He strove with the angel and
prevailed,
he wept and sought his favor;
he met him at Bethel,
and there he spoke with him.[g]
5 The LORD the God of hosts,
the LORD is his name!
6 But as for you, return to your
God,
hold fast to love and justice,
and wait continually for
your God.

7 A trader, in whose hands are false
balances,
he loves to oppress.
8 Ephraim has said, "Ah, I am rich,
I have gained wealth for myself;
in all of my gain
no offense has been found in me
that would be sin."[d]
9 I am the LORD your God
from the land of Egypt;
I will make you live in tents
again,
as in the days of the appointed
festival.

10 I spoke to the prophets;
it was I who multiplied visions,
and through the prophets I will
bring destruction.
11 In Gilead[h] there is iniquity,
they shall surely come to
nothing.
In Gilgal they sacrifice bulls,
so their altars shall be like
stone heaps
on the furrows of the field.
12 Jacob fled to the land of Aram,

*d* Meaning of Heb uncertain *e* Ch 12.1 in Heb *f* Heb *roams* or *rules* *g* Gk Syr: Heb *us* *h* Compare Syr: Heb *Gilead*

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morrah (Gen ch 19; Deut 29.23). **10**: Contrast 5.14. **11**: *Doves,* contrast 7.11. *Egypt* and *Assyria,* contrast 9.3. **12**: *But Judah still . . .* , some regard the last part of this verse as a Judean gloss (compare 1.7).

**12.1–14.9**: **Rebellion and restoration.** Although the LORD led Israel by the prophets, it turned to Baal and died. Yet the LORD is the savior. When Israel acknowledges God, Israel will be restored to abundant life because of God's love.

**12.2–6**: Israel should hold fast to God's love and justice, as Jacob strove with the angel at the Jabbok River (Gen 32.24). **3**: *Tried to supplant his brother,* Gen 25.26. **4**: *Strove with the angel,* Gen 32.22–30. *He met him at Bethel,* Gen 28.11–17; 35.5–8. **9**: As a punishment, the LORD will again make Israel *live in tents,* as in the wilderness during the Exodus.

**12.10–14**: Because Israel spurned the prophets, it will be held responsible for its *bitter offense* (Am 3.2; compare Gal 6.7). **12**:

there Israel served for a wife,
and for a wife he guarded sheep.[i]
13 By a prophet the LORD brought Israel up from Egypt,
and by a prophet he was guarded.
14 Ephraim has given bitter offense,
so his Lord will bring his crimes down on him
and pay him back for his insults.

13 When Ephraim spoke, there was trembling;
he was exalted in Israel;
but he incurred guilt through Baal and died.
2 And now they keep on sinning
and make a cast image for themselves,
idols of silver made according to their understanding,
all of them the work of artisans.
"Sacrifice to these," they say.[j]
People are kissing calves!
3 Therefore they shall be like the morning mist
or like the dew that goes away early,
like chaff that swirls from the threshing floor
or like smoke from a window.

4 Yet I have been the LORD your God
ever since the land of Egypt;
you know no God but me,
and besides me there is no savior.
5 It was I who fed[k] you in the wilderness,
in the land of drought.
6 When I fed[l] them, they were satisfied;
they were satisfied, and their heart was proud;
therefore they forgot me.
7 So I will become like a lion to them,
like a leopard I will lurk beside the way.
8 I will fall upon them like a bear robbed of her cubs,
and will tear open the covering of their heart;
there I will devour them like a lion,
as a wild animal would mangle them.

9 I will destroy you, O Israel;
who can help you?[m]
10 Where now is[n] your king, that he may save you?
Where in all your cities are your rulers,
of whom you said,
"Give me a king and rulers"?
11 I gave you a king in my anger,
and I took him away in my wrath.

12 Ephraim's iniquity is bound up;
his sin is kept in store.
13 The pangs of childbirth come for him,
but he is an unwise son;
for at the proper time he does not present himself
at the mouth of the womb.

14 Shall I ransom them from the power of Sheol?

*i* Heb lacks *sheep* *j* Cn Compare Gk: Heb *To these they say sacrifices of people* *k* Gk Syr: Heb *knew* *l* Cn: Heb *according to their pasture* *m* Gk Syr: Heb *for in me is your help* *n* Gk Syr Vg: Heb *I will be*

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Perhaps by a Judean editor; i.e. the cults of Gilead and Gilgal are as worthless as that of Bethel.

**13.1–3**: Through the sin of Canaanite idolatry, Israel died (2.13; compare Rom 6.23; 8.13). **2**: *People are kissing calves,* at Dan and Bethel. *Morning mist,* compare 6.4.

**13.4–13**: Because they forgot their savior, the LORD will rend and destroy the Israelites, and neither king nor princes will save them. **4**: Ex 20.2; Isa 45.21. **14–16**: The LORD will not redeem this rebellious people from Death; Samaria shall bear its guilt. **14**: Quoted in 1 Cor 15.55.

Shall I redeem them from Death?
O Death, where are[o] your plagues?
O Sheol, where is[o] your destruction?
Compassion is hidden from my eyes.

15 Although he may flourish among rushes,[p]
the east wind shall come, a blast from the LORD,
rising from the wilderness;
and his fountain shall dry up,
his spring shall be parched.
It shall strip his treasury of every precious thing.
16[q] Samaria shall bear her guilt,
because she has rebelled against her God;
they shall fall by the sword,
their little ones shall be dashed in pieces,
and their pregnant women ripped open.

14 Return, O Israel, to the LORD your God,
for you have stumbled because of your iniquity.
2 Take words with you
and return to the LORD;
say to him,
"Take away all guilt;
accept that which is good,
and we will offer
the fruit[r] of our lips.
3 Assyria shall not save us;
we will not ride upon horses;
we will say no more, 'Our God,'
to the work of our hands.
In you the orphan finds mercy."

4 I will heal their disloyalty;
I will love them freely,
for my anger has turned from them.
5 I will be like the dew to Israel;
he shall blossom like the lily,
he shall strike root like the forests of Lebanon.[s]
6 His shoots shall spread out;
his beauty shall be like the olive tree,
and his fragrance like that of Lebanon.
7 They shall again live beneath my[t] shadow,
they shall flourish as a garden;[u]
they shall blossom like the vine,
their fragrance shall be like the wine of Lebanon.

8 O Ephraim, what have I[v] to do with idols?
It is I who answer and look after you.[w]
I am like an evergreen cypress;
your faithfulness[x] comes from me.
9 Those who are wise understand these things;
those who are discerning know them.
For the ways of the LORD are right,
and the upright walk in them,
but transgressors stumble in them.

*o* Gk Syr: Heb *I will be* *p* Or *among brothers* *q* Ch 14.1 in Heb *r* Gk Syr: Heb *bulls* *s* Cn: Heb *like Lebanon* *t* Heb *his* *u* Cn: Heb *they shall grow grain* *v* Or *What more has Ephraim* *w* Heb *him* *x* Heb *your fruit*

**14.1–3**: *Israel* may still return to the LORD, for with God there is mercy (Ps 130.7–8; Isa 55.6–9). **3**: The futility of foreign alliances and idols. *Horses,* i.e. we will no longer depend on an alliance with Egypt (2 Kings 18.24; Isa 36.9).

**14.4–7**: And because God loves freely, Israel will be healed and brought back to fruitful life (Isa 54.5–8). **8**: The LORD alone guides and sustains Israel (2.8). **9**: A later postscript, in the style of wisdom literature (compare Prov 4.11–12; see also Eccl 12.9–14 n.).

# *Joel*

Of Joel himself nothing is known except that he was the son of Pethuel (1.1). Like Obadiah, even his name ("the LORD is God") is not unique, for he shares it with a dozen other Old Testament figures. From his book it appears that he lived in Judah during the Persian period of Jewish history (539–331 B.C.). He was not only well acquainted with the temple at Jerusalem, but was so much interested in its priesthood and services that, like Haggai and Zechariah, he can be considered a "cultic prophet," that is, a prophet who could exercise his ministry within the life of the temple, even using liturgical forms, and whose message may have been transmitted through priestly circles. As such, Joel helps to mark a notable change in Old Testament prophecy. Taking the characteristic forms of classical prophecy, he expands their apocalyptic and liturgical dimensions.

The dates of Joel's ministry cannot be determined with precision. The majority of historical references in his book, the absence of any mention of the Assyrians or Babylonians, and the heavy borrowing from earlier prophets point to the period from about 400 to 350 B.C.

Joel viewed a locust plague that ravished the country as God's judgment on the people and called them to repentance (1.2–2.27). Using this catastrophe as a dire warning, Joel went on to depict the advent of the day of the LORD and its final judgments and blessings (2.28–3.21).

1 The word of the LORD that came to Joel son of Pethuel:

2 Hear this, O elders,
give ear, all inhabitants of the land!
Has such a thing happened in your days,
or in the days of your ancestors?
3 Tell your children of it,
and let your children tell their children,
and their children another generation.

4 What the cutting locust left,
the swarming locust has eaten.
What the swarming locust left,
the hopping locust has eaten,
and what the hopping locust left,
the destroying locust has eaten.

5 Wake up, you drunkards, and weep;
and wail, all you wine-drinkers,
over the sweet wine,
for it is cut off from your mouth.
6 For a nation has invaded my land,
powerful and innumerable;
its teeth are lions' teeth,
and it has the fangs of a lioness.
7 It has laid waste my vines,
and splintered my fig trees;
it has stripped off their bark and thrown it down;
their branches have turned white.

8 Lament like a virgin dressed in sackcloth
for the husband of her youth.
9 The grain offering and the drink offering are cut off
from the house of the LORD.
The priests mourn,
the ministers of the LORD.
10 The fields are devastated,
the ground mourns;
for the grain is destroyed,
the wine dries up,
the oil fails.

11 Be dismayed, you farmers,
wail, you vinedressers,
over the wheat and the barley;
for the crops of the field are ruined.
12 The vine withers,
the fig tree droops.
Pomegranate, palm, and apple—
all the trees of the field are dried up;
surely, joy withers away
among the people.

13 Put on sackcloth and lament, you priests;
wail, you ministers of the altar.
Come, pass the night in sackcloth,
you ministers of my God!
Grain offering and drink offering
are withheld from the house of your God.

14 Sanctify a fast,
call a solemn assembly.
Gather the elders
and all the inhabitants of the land
to the house of the LORD your God,
and cry out to the LORD.

15 Alas for the day!
For the day of the LORD is near,
and as destruction from the Almighty[a] it comes.

*a* Traditional rendering of Heb *Shaddai*

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**1.1–2.27: The locust plague.**

**1.1: Superscription.** *The word of the LORD . . .*, see Hos 1.1 n. *Pethuel* does not occur elsewhere. **2–7:** The land is devastated by a swarm of locusts, described as a nation with lions' teeth (v. 6; compare 2.4–9; Rev 9.7–8).

**1.8–14:** The whole community is called upon to lament and return to the LORD. **13–14:** *Ministers of the altar* of burnt offering, who serve in the inner court (see Ezek 43.18–27). *A fast,* 2 Kings 18.6; Jer 36.6; Jon 3.5.

**1.15–20:** The lament. **15:** This calamitous day portends the final day of the LORD which

16 Is not the food cut off
before our eyes,
joy and gladness
from the house of our God?

17 The seed shrivels under the clods,[b]
the storehouses are desolate;
the granaries are ruined
because the grain has failed.
18 How the animals groan!
The herds of cattle wander about
because there is no pasture for them;
even the flocks of sheep are dazed.[c]

19 To you, O LORD, I cry.
For fire has devoured
the pastures of the wilderness,
and flames have burned
all the trees of the field.
20 Even the wild animals cry to you
because the watercourses are dried up,
and fire has devoured
the pastures of the wilderness.

2 Blow the trumpet in Zion;
sound the alarm on my holy mountain!
Let all the inhabitants of the land tremble,
for the day of the LORD is coming, it is near—
2 a day of darkness and gloom,
a day of clouds and thick darkness!
Like blackness spread upon the mountains
a great and powerful army comes;
their like has never been from of old,
nor will be again after them
in ages to come.

3 Fire devours in front of them,
and behind them a flame burns.
Before them the land is like the garden of Eden,
but after them a desolate wilderness,
and nothing escapes them.

4 They have the appearance of horses,
and like war-horses they charge.
5 As with the rumbling of chariots,
they leap on the tops of the mountains,
like the crackling of a flame of fire devouring the stubble,
like a powerful army
drawn up for battle.

6 Before them peoples are in anguish,
all faces grow pale.[b]
7 Like warriors they charge,
like soldiers they scale the wall.
Each keeps to its own course,
they do not swerve from[d] their paths.
8 They do not jostle one another,
each keeps to its own track;
they burst through the weapons
and are not halted.
9 They leap upon the city,
they run upon the walls;
they climb up into the houses,
they enter through the windows like a thief.

10 The earth quakes before them,
the heavens tremble.

*b* Meaning of Heb uncertain *c* Compare Gk Syr Vg: Meaning of Heb uncertain *d* Gk Syr Vg: Heb *they do not take a pledge along*

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comes as destruction from the Almighty (Zeph 1.14–18). **19–20**: *Fire* and *flames* epitomize the most severe destruction.

**2.1–11**: The cry of alarm at the approaching catastrophe. **1**: The priests blow the ram's horn ("shofar") to warn of the imminent danger (Hos 5.8; Am 3.6; Zeph 1.16; Rev 8.6–13).

**2.4–9**: The locusts, which symbolize that dreadful day, approach with the relentless and

The sun and the moon are darkened,
and the stars withdraw their shining.
11 The LORD utters his voice at the head of his army;
how vast is his host!
Numberless are those who obey his command.
Truly the day of the LORD is great;
terrible indeed—who can endure it?

12 Yet even now, says the LORD,
return to me with all your heart,
with fasting, with weeping, and with mourning;
13 rend your hearts and not your clothing.
Return to the LORD, your God,
for he is gracious and merciful,
slow to anger, and abounding in steadfast love,
and relents from punishing.
14 Who knows whether he will not turn and relent,
and leave a blessing behind him,
a grain offering and a drink offering
for the LORD, your God?

15 Blow the trumpet in Zion;
sanctify a fast;
call a solemn assembly;
16 gather the people.
Sanctify the congregation;
assemble the aged;
gather the children,
even infants at the breast.
Let the bridegroom leave his room,
and the bride her canopy.

17 Between the vestibule and the altar
let the priests, the ministers of the LORD, weep.
Let them say, "Spare your people, O LORD,
and do not make your heritage a mockery,
a byword among the nations.
Why should it be said among the peoples,
'Where is their God?' "

18 Then the LORD became jealous for his land,
and had pity on his people.
19 In response to his people the LORD said:
I am sending you
grain, wine, and oil,
and you will be satisfied;
and I will no more make you
a mockery among the nations.

20 I will remove the northern army far from you,
and drive it into a parched and desolate land,
its front into the eastern sea,
and its rear into the western sea;
its stench and foul smell will rise up.
Surely he has done great things!

21 Do not fear, O soil;
be glad and rejoice,
for the LORD has done great things!

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devastating force of a powerful *army* (2.25; Rev 9.7–10). **6**: Nah 2.10. **10**: At the time of the divine visitation the sun, moon, and stars refuse to shine (Am 8.9). **11**: Rev 6.17.

**2.12–17**: A call to repentance, by which total calamity may yet be averted. **13**: The pleas to *rend your hearts* and *return to the LORD* express the preaching of the classical prophets, placed here in a cultic context. *Gracious and merciful . . .* is a frequent designation of the LORD, rooted in Israel's ancient formulations of faith (Ex 34.6; Neh 9.17, 31; Ps 86.15). **14**: Characteristically Joel regards temple offerings as *a blessing*. **15**: 1.14. **17**: *Between the vestibule* (1 Kings 6.3) *and the altar* of burnt offering (2 Chr 4.1); this was in the inner court of the priests.

**2.18–27**: God's gracious answer promises the remission of the plague (vv. 20, 25), the return of fertility (vv. 19, 21–24), and the restoration of the covenant (vv. 26–27). **18**: *Jealous* includes the meaning zealous (Deut 4.24). **20**: *The northern army* refers to the destructive agent, probably the locusts. *The eastern sea,*

22 Do not fear, you animals of
the field,
for the pastures of the
wilderness are green;
the tree bears its fruit,
the fig tree and vine give their
full yield.

23 O children of Zion, be glad
and rejoice in the LORD your
God;
for he has given the early rain[e]
for your vindication,
he has poured down for you
abundant rain,
the early and the later rain,
as before.
24 The threshing floors shall be full
of grain,
the vats shall overflow with
wine and oil.

25 I will repay you for the years
that the swarming locust has
eaten,
the hopper, the destroyer, and the
cutter,
my great army, which I sent
against you.

26 You shall eat in plenty and be
satisfied,
and praise the name of the LORD
your God,
who has dealt wondrously
with you.
And my people shall never again
be put to shame.
27 You shall know that I am in the
midst of Israel,
and that I, the LORD, am your
God and there is no other.
And my people shall never again be
put to shame.

28[f] Then afterward
I will pour out my spirit on
all flesh;
your sons and your daughters shall
prophesy,
your old men shall dream
dreams,
and your young men shall
see visions.
29 Even on the male and female
slaves,
in those days, I will pour out
my spirit.

30 I will show portents in the heavens
and on the earth, blood and fire and columns of smoke. 31 The sun shall be
turned to darkness, and the moon to
blood, before the great and terrible day
of the LORD comes. 32 Then everyone
who calls on the name of the LORD shall
be saved; for in Mount Zion and in Jerusalem there shall be those who escape, as
the LORD has said, and among the survivors shall be those whom the LORD calls.

3 [g] For then, in those days and at that
time, when I restore the fortunes of
Judah and Jerusalem, 2 I will gather all the
nations and bring them down to the valley of Jehoshaphat, and I will enter into
judgment with them there, on account of
my people and my heritage Israel, be-

*e* Meaning of Heb uncertain *f* Ch 3.1 in Heb
*g* Ch 4.1 in Heb

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the Dead Sea. *The western sea,* the Mediterranean Sea. **27**: By God's gifts of abundance the LORD's people will know that the LORD alone is their God (Isa 45.5, 6, 18; Ezek 36.11; 39.28) and dwells in their midst (3.17, 21).

**2.28–3.21**: **The day of the LORD. 2.28–32**: The outpouring of the spirit and the signs foretelling the great day. **28–29**: For Joel *all flesh* meant primarily the Jews (3.2, 17, 19–21; Ezek 39.29); for Peter at Pentecost it included all nations (Acts 2.17). **30–31**: *The heavens* and *the earth* will warn of *the great and terrible day* (Mk 13.24; Rev 6.12). **31**: Here *blood* indicates color. **32**: Those who worship the LORD (Gen 4.26; 12.8; Ps 116.13) will be delivered (Acts 2.21; Rom 10.13). **32b**: Ob 17.

**3.1–3**: The day of judgment on all the nations. The trial will be held in *the valley of Jehoshaphat* ("the LORD judges"), called *the valley of decision* in v. 14 (Jer 25.31). Joel probably had no exact spot in mind, although the context (2.32; 3.1, 16, 17, 21) points to the general area of Jerusalem, and tradition lo-

cause they have scattered them among the nations. They have divided my land. 3and cast lots for my people, and traded boys for prostitutes, and sold girls for wine, and drunk it down.

4 What are you to me, O Tyre and Sidon, and all the regions of Philistia? Are you paying me back for something? If you are paying me back, I will turn your deeds back upon your own heads swiftly and speedily. 5For you have taken my silver and my gold, and have carried my rich treasures into your temples.[h] 6You have sold the people of Judah and Jerusalem to the Greeks, removing them far from their own border. 7But now I will rouse them to leave the places to which you have sold them, and I will turn your deeds back upon your own heads. 8I will sell your sons and your daughters into the hand of the people of Judah, and they will sell them to the Sabeans, to a nation far away; for the LORD has spoken.

9 Proclaim this among the nations:
Prepare war,[i]
stir up the warriors.
Let all the soldiers draw near,
let them come up.
10 Beat your plowshares into swords,
and your pruning hooks into spears;
let the weakling say, "I am a warrior."

11 Come quickly,[j]
all you nations all around,
gather yourselves there.
Bring down your warriors,
O LORD.

12 Let the nations rouse themselves,
and come up to the valley of Jehoshaphat;
for there I will sit to judge
all the neighboring nations.

13 Put in the sickle,
for the harvest is ripe.
Go in, tread,
for the wine press is full.
The vats overflow,
for their wickedness is great.

14 Multitudes, multitudes,
in the valley of decision!
For the day of the LORD is near
in the valley of decision.
15 The sun and the moon are darkened,
and the stars withdraw their shining.

16 The LORD roars from Zion,
and utters his voice from Jerusalem,
and the heavens and the earth shake.
But the LORD is a refuge for his people,
a stronghold for the people of Israel.

17 So you shall know that I, the LORD your God,
dwell in Zion, my holy mountain.
And Jerusalem shall be holy,

*h* Or *palaces* *i* Heb *sanctify war* *j* Meaning of Heb uncertain

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cates it in the Kidron valley. **3a:** Ob 11. **4–8:** *Tyre* (Isa ch 23; Ezek 26.1–28.19; Am 1.9–10; Zech 9.3–4), *Sidon* (Ezek 28.20–26; Zech 9.2), *and Philistia* (Isa 14.29–31; Jer ch 47; Ezek 25.15–17; Am 1.6–8; Zeph 2.4–7; Zech 9.5–7) will receive their recompense first (this prose paragraph may be a later addition).

**3.6–8:** Because the Philistines and Phoenicians sold Israelites as slaves to Gentiles (Ezek 27.13; Am 1.6, 9), their children will be sold to the *Sabeans,* famous traders from southwest Arabia.

**3.9–12:** The holy war between the LORD's warriors and all the nations round about (compare Ezek chs 38–39). **10:** The picture in Isa 2.4 and Mic 4.3 is reversed.

**3.13–17:** *The day of the LORD is near.* **13:** The inordinate wickedness of the Gentiles is compared to the harvest which is ripe and vats which overflow (Isa 63.1–6; Mt 3.10–12; Mk 4.29; Rev 14.15–20). **16:** Am 1.2. **17:** Jerusalem shall now be holy, as the LORD's earthly tabernacle (Isa 1.24–28; 52.1; Zech 8.3; 14.21; Rev 21.2–3, 27).

and strangers shall never again
pass through it.

18 In that day
the mountains shall drip sweet
wine,
the hills shall flow with milk,
and all the stream beds of Judah
shall flow with water;
a fountain shall come forth from
the house of the LORD
and water the Wadi Shittim.

19 Egypt shall become a desolation
and Edom a desolate wilderness,
because of the violence done to the
people of Judah,
in whose land they have shed
innocent blood.
20 But Judah shall be inhabited
forever,
and Jerusalem to all generations.
21 I will avenge their blood, and I
will not clear the guilty,[k]
for the LORD dwells in Zion.

*k* Gk Syr: Heb *I will hold innocent their blood that I have not held innocent*

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**3.18–21**: The divine blessings bestowed *in that day* include the paradisaical fertility of the land, the destruction of Israel's ancient enemies, and the restoration of Judah. **18**: *Mountains,* Am 9.13; *fountain,* Ezek 47.1–12 n. **19**: *Edom,* Ob 11 n. **20–21**: Isa 12.6; Zech 2.10–12.

# *Amos*

During the long and peaceful reign of Jeroboam II (786–746 B.C.) Israel attained a height of territorial expansion and national prosperity never again reached. The military security and economic affluence which characterized this age were taken by many Israelites as signs of the LORD's special favor that they felt they deserved because of their extravagant support of the official shrines.

Into this scene stepped the prophet Amos, probably sometime during the decade 760–750 B.C. A native of the small Judean village of Tekoa, Amos was called by God from a shepherd's task (7.14–15) to the difficult mission of preaching harsh words in a smooth season. He denounced Israel, as well as its neighbors, for reliance upon military might, and for grave injustice in social dealings, abhorrent immorality, and shallow, meaningless piety. Amos's forceful, uncompromising preaching brought him into conflict with the religious authorities of his day. His personal confrontation with the priest Amaziah (7.10–17) remains one of the unforgettable scenes in Hebrew prophecy.

Expelled from the royal sanctuary at Bethel and commanded not to prophesy there again, Amos perhaps returned to Judah and wrote down the essence of his public preaching in substantially its present form. The book falls into three parts: chs 1–2, oracles against Israel's neighbors; chs 3–6, indictment of Israel itself for sin and injustice; and chs 7–9, visions of Israel's coming doom. Amos became the first in a brilliant succession of prophets whose words, now preserved in written form, have left their indelible stamp on later thought about God and human history.

1 The words of Amos, who was among the shepherds of Tekoa, which he saw concerning Israel in the days of King Uzziah of Judah and in the days of King Jeroboam son of Joash of Israel, two years[a] before the earthquake.
2 And he said:
The LORD roars from Zion,
and utters his voice from Jerusalem;
the pastures of the shepherds wither,
and the top of Carmel dries up.

3 Thus says the LORD:
For three transgressions of Damascus,
and for four, I will not revoke the punishment;[b]
because they have threshed Gilead with threshing sledges of iron.
4 So I will send a fire on the house of Hazael,
and it shall devour the strongholds of Ben-hadad.
5 I will break the gate bars of Damascus,
and cut off the inhabitants from the Valley of Aven,
and the one who holds the scepter from Beth-eden;
and the people of Aram shall go into exile to Kir,
says the LORD.

6 Thus says the LORD:
For three transgressions of Gaza,
and for four, I will not revoke the punishment;[b]
because they carried into exile entire communities,
to hand them over to Edom.
7 So I will send a fire on the wall of Gaza,
fire that shall devour its strongholds.
8 I will cut off the inhabitants from Ashdod,
and the one who holds the scepter from Ashkelon;
I will turn my hand against Ekron,
and the remnant of the Philistines shall perish,
says the Lord GOD.

9 Thus says the LORD:
For three transgressions of Tyre,
and for four, I will not revoke the punishment;[b]
because they delivered entire communities over to Edom,
and did not remember the covenant of kinship.
10 So I will send a fire on the wall of Tyre,
fire that shall devour its strongholds.

*a* Or *during two years* *b* Heb *cause it to return*

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**1.1: Superscription.** *He saw,* see Nah 1.1 n. *King Uzziah* reigned over the southern kingdom from 783 to 742 B.C. The *earthquake,* mentioned again in Zech 14.5, cannot be precisely dated.

**1.2–2.16: Indictment of neighboring peoples, Israel, and Judah.** Amos applies the same demanding standards to Israel's neighbors and to Israel. **1.2**: This verse occurs in similar form in Joel 3.16 (compare Jer 25.30). Some scholars consider it an editorial addition. It sounds the solemn theme of the whole section. **3, 6, 9, etc.**: *Thus says the LORD* and the conclusion *says the LORD* (Hebrew, "the oracle of Yahweh") are standard formulas identifying prophetic oracles. The expression *for three transgressions . . . and for four* indicates "more than enough" (Job 33.14; Prov 30.18). Here *transgression* means rebellion. **3–5**: Against Damascus (compare Isa 17.1–3; Jer 49.23–27; Zech 9.1–4). *Damascus* was the capital of Syria (*Aram*); *Hazael* and *Ben-hadad* III were rulers (2 Kings 13.3); and *Kir* is called the place of Syrian origins (Am 9.7) and exile (2 Kings 16.9). *The Valley of Aven,* perhaps to be read "the Valley of On," may be between the Lebanon and Anti-Lebanon ranges. *Beth-eden* is the Bit-idini of the Assyrian records, by the Euphrates. The Syrian conquest of *Gilead,* 2 Kings 10.32–33.

**1.6–8**: Against Philistia. Four Philistine cities are condemned because of their slave traffic with Edom (2 Chr 21.16–17; Joel 3.4–8; Zeph 2.4–7). **9–10**: Against Tyre (see Joel 3.4–8). *Covenant of kinship,* compare 1 Kings 9.13.

11 Thus says the LORD:
For three transgressions of Edom,
and for four, I will not revoke the punishment;[c]
because he pursued his brother with the sword
and cast off all pity;
he maintained his anger perpetually,[d]
and kept his wrath[e] forever.
12 So I will send a fire on Teman,
and it shall devour the strongholds of Bozrah.

13 Thus says the LORD:
For three transgressions of the Ammonites,
and for four, I will not revoke the punishment;[c]
because they have ripped open pregnant women in Gilead
in order to enlarge their territory.
14 So I will kindle a fire against the wall of Rabbah,
fire that shall devour its strongholds,
with shouting on the day of battle,
with a storm on the day of the whirlwind;
15 then their king shall go into exile,
he and his officials together,
says the LORD.

2 Thus says the LORD:
For three transgressions of Moab,
and for four, I will not revoke the punishment;[c]
because he burned to lime
the bones of the king of Edom.
2 So I will send a fire on Moab,
and it shall devour the strongholds of Kerioth,
and Moab shall die amid uproar,
amid shouting and the sound of the trumpet;
3 I will cut off the ruler from its midst,
and will kill all its officials with him,
says the LORD.

4 Thus says the LORD:
For three transgressions of Judah,
and for four, I will not revoke the punishment;[c]
because they have rejected the law of the LORD,
and have not kept his statutes,
but they have been led astray by the same lies
after which their ancestors walked.
5 So I will send a fire on Judah,
and it shall devour the strongholds of Jerusalem.

6 Thus says the LORD:
For three transgressions of Israel,
and for four, I will not revoke the punishment;[c]
because they sell the righteous for silver,
and the needy for a pair of sandals—
7 they who trample the head of the poor into the dust of the earth,

*c* Heb *cause it to return* *d* Syr Vg: Heb *and his anger tore perpetually* *e* Gk Syr Vg: Heb *and his wrath kept*

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**1.11–12**: Against Edom. This oracle, recalling later oracles against Edom (see Introduction to Obadiah), is regarded by many as secondary. *Brother,* that is, Judah, Mal 1.2. **13–15**: Against the Ammonites (Zeph 2.8–11), who are to be punished because of inhuman atrocities against Israelites in Transjordan in *Gilead*.

**2.1–3**: Against Moab, Israel's ancient enemy to the south-east of the Jordan (Isa 15.1–16.14). *Burned to lime,* perhaps involving a desecration (compare 2 Kings 23.16–20; Isa 33.12). **4–5**: Against Judah. In part because of its language, many consider this oracle a later addition, but it is consistent with Amos's view that all nations stand accountable before God.

**2.6–16**: Against Israel. Using the same literary form, Amos shows that Israel and her neighbors are judged by the same standards.

and push the afflicted out of the way;
father and son go in to the same girl,
so that my holy name is profaned;
8 they lay themselves down beside every altar
on garments taken in pledge;
and in the house of their God they drink
wine bought with fines they imposed.

9 Yet I destroyed the Amorite before them,
whose height was like the height of cedars,
and who was as strong as oaks;
I destroyed his fruit above,
and his roots beneath.
10 Also I brought you up out of the land of Egypt,
and led you forty years in the wilderness,
to possess the land of the Amorite.
11 And I raised up some of your children to be prophets
and some of your youths to be nazirites.[f]
Is it not indeed so, O people of Israel?
says the LORD.

12 But you made the nazirites[f] drink wine,
and commanded the prophets, saying, "You shall not prophesy."

13 So, I will press you down in your place,
just as a cart presses down when it is full of sheaves.[g]
14 Flight shall perish from the swift,
and the strong shall not retain their strength,
nor shall the mighty save their lives;
15 those who handle the bow shall not stand,
and those who are swift of foot shall not save themselves,
nor shall those who ride horses save their lives;
16 and those who are stout of heart among the mighty
shall flee away naked in that day,
says the LORD.

3 Hear this word that the LORD has spoken against you, O people of Israel, against the whole family that I brought up out of the land of Egypt:
2 You only have I known
of all the families of the earth;
therefore I will punish you
for all your iniquities.

3 Do two walk together
unless they have made an appointment?
4 Does a lion roar in the forest,
when it has no prey?
Does a young lion cry out from its den,
if it has caught nothing?
5 Does a bird fall into a snare on the earth,
when there is no trap for it?
Does a snare spring up from the ground,
when it has taken nothing?

*f* That is, *those separated* or *those consecrated*
*g* Meaning of Heb uncertain

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**7–8**: *Same girl,* cult prostitutes. **9**: *Amorite,* the pre-Israelite inhabitants of Canaan (see Ezek 16.3). **11**: *Nazirites,* Num 6.2 n.; Judg 13.5 n.

**3.1–6.14**: **Israel's sinfulness and God's punishment.** Three sections, each with the same opening exhortation (3.1; 4.1; 5.1).

**3.1–15**: **The privileges of election create a greater responsibility** (Lk 12.48b). Because Israel had been favored above *all the families of the earth* (Ex 19.4–6; Deut 7.6), the neighboring nations are assembled to witness her chastisement. **3–8**: The call to prophesy cannot be resisted. **6**: Israel's God is operative in history, sending calamity (*disaster*) as corrective discipline (Job 2.10; Isa 45.7).

6 Is a trumpet blown in a city,
and the people are not afraid?
Does disaster befall a city,
unless the LORD has done it?
7 Surely the Lord GOD does
nothing,
without revealing his secret
to his servants the prophets.
8 The lion has roared;
who will not fear?
The Lord GOD has spoken;
who can but prophesy?

9 Proclaim to the strongholds
in Ashdod,
and to the strongholds in the
land of Egypt,
and say, "Assemble yourselves on
Mount[h] Samaria,
and see what great tumults are
within it,
and what oppressions are in
its midst."
10 They do not know how to do
right, says the LORD,
those who store up violence and
robbery in their
strongholds.
11 Therefore thus says the Lord GOD:
An adversary shall surround
the land,
and strip you of your defense;
and your strongholds shall be
plundered.

12 Thus says the LORD: As the shepherd rescues from the mouth of the lion two legs, or a piece of an ear, so shall the people of Israel who live in Samaria be rescued, with the corner of a couch and part[i] of a bed.

13 Hear, and testify against the house
of Jacob,
says the Lord GOD, the God
of hosts:
14 On the day I punish Israel for its
transgressions,
I will punish the altars of
Bethel,
and the horns of the altar shall
be cut off
and fall to the ground.
15 I will tear down the winter house
as well as the summer
house;
and the houses of ivory shall
perish,
and the great houses[j] shall come
to an end,
says the LORD.

4 Hear this word, you cows
of Bashan
who are on Mount Samaria,
who oppress the poor, who crush
the needy,
who say to their husbands,
"Bring something to
drink!"
2 The Lord GOD has sworn by
his holiness:
The time is surely coming
upon you,
when they shall take you away
with hooks,
even the last of you with
fishhooks.
3 Through breaches in the wall you
shall leave,

*h* Gk Syr: Heb *the mountains of* *i* Meaning of Heb uncertain *j* Or *many houses*

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**3.7**: The Old Testament concept of revelation is grounded in the conviction that the God who is sovereign over creation and history discloses a transcendent purpose to *his servants the prophets* (2.11; Gen 18.17–19; Ex 4.15–16; Jer 7.25; Dan 9.10; Lk 1.70). **12**: Although a few may be rescued from the catastrophe (5.3), the burden of Amos's message is the thoroughness of the divine punishment (9.1). **15**: Houses of ivory, see 1 Kings 22.39 n.

**4.1–13: Israel's luxurious excesses and vain piety.** Israel has not heeded the LORD's repeated warnings. **1–3**: The wealthy and greedy women of *Samaria*, being as guilty as their husbands, will also be punished (compare Isa 3.16–26). *Cows of Bashan*, Ps 22.12. **4–5**: Israel's love of manifold public rites at the chief sanctuaries is satirized.

**4.6–12**: Having ignored the LORD's repeated warnings through nature and history, Israel must now prepare to meet its God, who

each one straight ahead;
and you shall be flung out into Harmon,[k]
says the LORD.

4 Come to Bethel—and transgress;
to Gilgal—and multiply transgression;
bring your sacrifices every morning,
your tithes every three days;
5 bring a thank offering of leavened bread,
and proclaim freewill offerings, publish them;
for so you love to do, O people of Israel!
says the Lord GOD.

6 I gave you cleanness of teeth in all your cities,
and lack of bread in all your places,
yet you did not return to me,
says the LORD.

7 And I also withheld the rain from you
when there were still three months to the harvest;
I would send rain on one city,
and send no rain on another city;
one field would be rained upon,
and the field on which it did not rain withered;
8 so two or three towns wandered to one town
to drink water, and were not satisfied;
yet you did not return to me,
says the LORD.

9 I struck you with blight and mildew;
I laid waste[l] your gardens and your vineyards;
the locust devoured your fig trees and your olive trees;
yet you did not return to me,
says the LORD.

10 I sent among you a pestilence after the manner of Egypt;
I killed your young men with the sword;
I carried away your horses;[m]
and I made the stench of your camp go up into your nostrils;
yet you did not return to me,
says the LORD.

11 I overthrew some of you,
as when God overthrew Sodom and Gomorrah,
and you were like a brand snatched from the fire;
yet you did not return to me,
says the LORD.

12 Therefore thus I will do to you, O Israel;
because I will do this to you,
prepare to meet your God, O Israel!

13 For lo, the one who forms the mountains, creates the wind,
reveals his thoughts to mortals,
makes the morning darkness,
and treads on the heights of the earth—
the LORD, the God of hosts, is his name!

5 Hear this word that I take up over you in lamentation, O house of Israel:

*k* Meaning of Heb uncertain *l* Cn: Heb *the multitude of* *m* Heb *with the captivity of your horses*

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is characterized by patient love and inexorable justice. **6**: *Cleanness of teeth,* i.e. a famine. **13**: This doxology, like those in 5.8–9 and 9.5–6, with which it shares the refrain *the* LORD . . . *is his name,* may be a later addition.

**5.1–6.14: The horror and finality of Israel's deserved punishment. 5.1–3**: A lament for the fallen and forsaken nation. *Marched out a thousand,* a reference to military forces.

2 Fallen, no more to rise,
is maiden Israel;
forsaken on her land,
with no one to raise her up.

3 For thus says the Lord GOD:
The city that marched out
a thousand
shall have a hundred left,
and that which marched out
a hundred
shall have ten left.[n]

4 For thus says the LORD to the
house of Israel:
Seek me and live;
5 but do not seek Bethel,
and do not enter into Gilgal
or cross over to Beer-sheba;
for Gilgal shall surely go into
exile,
and Bethel shall come to
nothing.

6 Seek the LORD and live,
or he will break out against the
house of Joseph like fire,
and it will devour Bethel, with
no one to quench it.
7 Ah, you that turn justice to
wormwood,
and bring righteousness to
the ground!

8 The one who made the Pleiades
and Orion,
and turns deep darkness into
the morning,
and darkens the day into night,
who calls for the waters of the
sea,
and pours them out on the
surface of the earth,
the LORD is his name,
9 who makes destruction flash out
against the strong,
so that destruction comes upon
the fortress.

10 They hate the one who reproves
in the gate,
and they abhor the one who
speaks the truth.
11 Therefore because you trample
on the poor
and take from them levies
of grain,
you have built houses of
hewn stone,
but you shall not live in them;
you have planted pleasant
vineyards,
but you shall not drink
their wine.
12 For I know how many are your
transgressions,
and how great are your sins—
you who afflict the righteous, who
take a bribe,
and push aside the needy in
the gate.
13 Therefore the prudent will keep
silent in such a time;
for it is an evil time.

14 Seek good and not evil,
that you may live;
and so the LORD, the God of
hosts, will be with you,
just as you have said.
15 Hate evil and love good,
and establish justice in the gate;
it may be that the LORD, the God
of hosts,
will be gracious to the remnant
of Joseph.

16 Therefore thus says the LORD, the
God of hosts, the Lord:
In all the squares there shall be
wailing;
and in all the streets they shall
say, "Alas! alas!"
They shall call the farmers to
mourning,

*n* Heb adds *to the house of Israel*

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**5.4–7, 14–15:** There is yet time to seek the LORD and live. **8–9:** The second doxology (see 4.13 n.).

**5.10–13, 16–17:** Amos warns Israel again about the nature and effect of its transgressions. **18–20:** *The day of the LORD,* in which

and those skilled in lamentation,
to wailing;
17 in all the vineyards there shall
be wailing,
for I will pass through the midst
of you,
says the LORD.

18 Alas for you who desire the day
of the LORD!
Why do you want the day of
the LORD?
It is darkness, not light;
19 as if someone fled from a lion,
and was met by a bear;
or went into the house and rested
a hand against the wall,
and was bitten by a snake.
20 Is not the day of the LORD
darkness, not light,
and gloom with no brightness
in it?

21 I hate, I despise your festivals,
and I take no delight in your
solemn assemblies.
22 Even though you offer me your
burnt offerings and grain
offerings,
I will not accept them;
and the offerings of well-being of
your fatted animals
I will not look upon.
23 Take away from me the noise of
your songs;
I will not listen to the melody
of your harps.
24 But let justice roll down like
waters,
and righteousness like an
ever-flowing stream.

25 Did you bring to me sacrifices and
offerings the forty years in the wilder-
ness, O house of Israel? 26 You shall take
up Sakkuth your king, and Kaiwan your
star-god, your images,[o] which you
made for yourselves; 27 therefore I will
take you into exile beyond Damascus,
says the LORD, whose name is the God of
hosts.

6 Alas for those who are at ease
in Zion,
and for those who feel secure on
Mount Samaria,
the notables of the first of the
nations,
to whom the house of Israel
resorts!
2 Cross over to Calneh, and see;
from there go to Hamath
the great;
then go down to Gath of the
Philistines.
Are you better[p] than these
kingdoms?
Or is your[q] territory greater
than their[r] territory,
3 O you that put far away the
evil day,
and bring near a reign of
violence?

4 Alas for those who lie on beds
of ivory,
and lounge on their couches,
and eat lambs from the flock,
and calves from the stall;
5 who sing idle songs to the sound
of the harp,

*o* Heb *your images, your star-god* *p* Or *Are they better* *q* Heb *their* *r* Heb *your*

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Israelites piously expected to be vindicated against their enemies, will be darkness and gloom (Am 8.9–14; see Zeph 1.14–18 n.). Amos's profound reinterpretation of this popular concept is among his most significant contributions.

**5.21–27**: The LORD delights not in an abundance of festivals and sacrifices but in *justice* and *righteousness*. Verse 24 expresses the heart of Amos's preaching. **25**: In the desert Israel had a pure, direct relation with God which rendered sacrifices unnecessary (Jer 2.2–3; Hos 2.14–20; 9.10). **26**: *Sakkuth* and *Kaiwan* designate known Assyrian deities (Acts 7.42–43).

**6.1–7**: The Israelites, who feel themselves secure in their false confidence and lie upon beds of ivory in luxurious self-indulgence, will be the first of those whom God will send into exile. **2**: Compare Isa 10.9–11; 2 Chr

and like David improvise on
instruments of music;
6 who drink wine from bowls,
and anoint themselves with the
finest oils,
but are not grieved over the
ruin of Joseph!
7 Therefore they shall now be the
first to go into exile,
and the revelry of the loungers
shall pass away.

8 The Lord GOD has sworn by
himself
(says the LORD, the God of hosts):
I abhor the pride of Jacob
and hate his strongholds;
and I will deliver up the city
and all that is in it.

9 If ten people remain in one house, they shall die. 10And if a relative, one who burns the dead,[s] shall take up the body to bring it out of the house, and shall say to someone in the innermost parts of the house, "Is anyone else with you?" the answer will come, "No." Then the relative[t] shall say, "Hush! We must not mention the name of the LORD."

11 See, the LORD commands,
and the great house shall be
shattered to bits,
and the little house to pieces.
12 Do horses run on rocks?
Does one plow the sea with
oxen?[u]
But you have turned justice
into poison
and the fruit of righteousness
into wormwood—
13 you who rejoice in Lo-debar,[v]
who say, "Have we not by our
own strength
taken Karnaim[w] for ourselves?"
14 Indeed, I am raising up against
you a nation,
O house of Israel, says the
LORD, the God of hosts,
and they shall oppress you from
Lebo-hamath
to the Wadi Arabah.

7 This is what the Lord GOD showed me: he was forming locusts at the time the latter growth began to sprout (it was the latter growth after the king's mowings). 2When they had finished eating the grass of the land, I said,
"O Lord GOD, forgive, I beg you!
How can Jacob stand?
He is so small!"
3 The LORD relented concerning
this;
"It shall not be," said the LORD.

4 This is what the Lord GOD showed me: the Lord GOD was calling for a shower of fire,[x] and it devoured the great deep and was eating up the land. 5Then I said,
"O Lord GOD, cease, I beg you!
How can Jacob stand?
He is so small!"
6 The LORD relented concerning
this;
"This also shall not be," said the
Lord GOD.

*s* Or *who makes a burning for him* *t* Heb *he* *u* Or *Does one plow them with oxen* *v* Or *in a thing of nothingness* *w* Or *horns* *x* Or *for a judgment by fire*

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26.6. *Calneh* and *Hamath,* important commercial centers in Syria, represent wealth and security. **5**: *David,* 1 Chr 23.5; Neh 12.36. **6.8–14**: Because Israel has turned faith into pride (Isa 28.1; Hos 5.5; Am 8.7) and justice into poison, it will be thoroughly punished. **9–10**: The sequel to siege or pestilence. *Not mention the name of the LORD,* perhaps out of fear of further judgment. **13**: *Lo-debar . . . Karnaim,* two towns east of the Jordan recovered for Israel by Jeroboam II (2 Kings 14.25). **14**: From *Lebo-hamath* to the *Wadi Arabah,* the farthest extent of Israelite territory (see 2 Kings 14.25).

**7.1–9.15**: **Five visions of God's judgment, and a prophecy of restoration. 7.1–9**: The first three visions. **1–3**: Judgment by locusts (Joel 1.2–7 n.). **4–6**: Judgment by fire (see 1.4). The judgments are halted when Amos pleads. **7–9**: *Plumb line* (2 Kings 21.13–

***Amaziah complains to the king***

7 This is what he showed me: the Lord was standing beside a wall built with a plumb line, with a plumb line in his hand. 8And the LORD said to me, "Amos, what do you see?" And I said, "A plumb line." Then the Lord said,

"See, I am setting a plumb line
in the midst of my people Israel;
I will never again pass them by;
9 the high places of Isaac shall be
made desolate,
and the sanctuaries of Israel shall
be laid waste,
and I will rise against the house
of Jeroboam with the
sword."

10 Then Amaziah, the priest of Bethel, sent to King Jeroboam of Israel, saying, "Amos has conspired against you in the very center of the house of Israel; the land is not able to bear all his words. 11For thus Amos has said,

'Jeroboam shall die by the sword,
and Israel must go into exile
away from his land.' "

12And Amaziah said to Amos, "O seer, go, flee away to the land of Judah, earn your bread there, and prophesy there; 13but never again prophesy at Bethel, for it is the king's sanctuary, and it is a temple of the kingdom."

14 Then Amos answered Amaziah, "I am[y] no prophet, nor a prophet's son; but I am[y] a herdsman, and a dresser of sycamore trees, 15and the LORD took me from following the flock, and the LORD said to me, 'Go, prophesy to my people Israel.'

16 "Now therefore hear the word of
the LORD.
You say, 'Do not prophesy against
Israel,
and do not preach against the
house of Isaac.'
17 Therefore thus says the LORD:
'Your wife shall become a
prostitute in the city,
and your sons and your
daughters shall fall by
the sword,
and your land shall be parceled
out by line;
you yourself shall die in an
unclean land,
and Israel shall surely go into
exile away from its land.' "

8 This is what the Lord GOD showed me—a basket of summer fruit.[z] 2He said, "Amos, what do you see?" And I said, "A basket of summer fruit."[z] Then the LORD said to me,

"The end[a] has come upon my
people Israel;
I will never again pass them by.
3 The songs of the temple[b] shall
become wailings in
that day,"
says the Lord GOD;
"the dead bodies shall be many,
cast out in every place. Be
silent!"

4 Hear this, you that trample on
the needy,
and bring to ruin the poor of
the land,

*y* Or *was* *z* Heb *qayits* *a* Heb *qets*
*b* Or *palace*

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15). The people are found warped beyond correction; God decrees an irrevocable sentence of destruction.

**7.10–17**: **Amos and Amaziah.** A prose biographical incident, introduced here perhaps because of the threat against the house of Jeroboam in v. 9. Amaziah was the official priest of the royal sanctuary at Bethel. **12**: *Earn your bread,* literally "eat bread." **14**: Amos asserts that he is not a professional prophet (1 Sam 9.6–10; Mic 3.5–8, 11) or a member of a prophetic guild (2 Kings 2.3 n.; 1 Sam 10.5; 1 Kings 22.6), but simply one whom the LORD took and sent to prophesy to the people (3.3–8; 2 Sam 7.8).

**8.1–3**: **Fourth vision.** *A basket of* ripe *summer fruit* symbolizes the immediacy of Israel's *end.*

**8.4–14**: **The indictment of Israel** and the coming of the day of mourning (see 5.18–20 n.). **5–6**: The merchants are impatient for the holy days to pass so they can resume their

5 saying, "When will the new moon
be over
so that we may sell grain;
and the sabbath,
so that we may offer wheat
for sale?
We will make the ephah small and
the shekel great,
and practice deceit with false
balances,
6 buying the poor for silver
and the needy for a pair of
sandals,
and selling the sweepings of
the wheat."

7 The LORD has sworn by the pride
of Jacob:
Surely I will never forget any of
their deeds.
8 Shall not the land tremble on
this account,
and everyone mourn who lives
in it,
and all of it rise like the Nile,
and be tossed about and sink
again, like the Nile of
Egypt?

9 On that day, says the Lord GOD,
I will make the sun go down
at noon,
and darken the earth in
broad daylight.
10 I will turn your feasts into
mourning,
and all your songs into
lamentation;
I will bring sackcloth on all loins,
and baldness on every head;
I will make it like the mourning
for an only son,
and the end of it like a
bitter day.

11 The time is surely coming, says
the Lord GOD,
when I will send a famine on
the land;
not a famine of bread, or a thirst
for water,
but of hearing the words of
the LORD.
12 They shall wander from sea to sea,
and from north to east;
they shall run to and fro, seeking
the word of the LORD,
but they shall not find it.

13 In that day the beautiful young
women and the young men
shall faint for thirst.
14 Those who swear by Ashimah
of Samaria,
and say, "As your god lives,
O Dan,"
and, "As the way of Beer-sheba
lives"—
they shall fall, and never
rise again.

9 I saw the LORD standing beside[c] the
altar, and he said:
Strike the capitals until the
thresholds shake,
and shatter them on the heads of
all the people;[d]
and those who are left I will kill
with the sword;
not one of them shall flee away,
not one of them shall escape.

2 Though they dig into Sheol,
from there shall my hand
take them;
though they climb up to heaven,
from there I will bring
them down.
3 Though they hide themselves on
the top of Carmel,

*c* Or *on* *d* Heb *all of them*

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fraudulent business (Isa 1.13–17; Lev 19.35–36; Deut 25.13–16). **10:** *It,* i.e. the earth (see vv. 8 and 9c). **13–14:** The patron deities of pagan shrines, from farthest north (*Dan*) to farthest south (*Beer-sheba*), will be of no help in that day.

**9.1–4: Fifth vision.** The last pronouncement is the most dreadful. **1:** *Thresholds shake,*

from there I will search out and take them;
and though they hide from my sight at the bottom of the sea,
there I will command the sea-serpent, and it shall bite them.
4 And though they go into captivity in front of their enemies,
there I will command the sword, and it shall kill them;
and I will fix my eyes on them for harm and not for good.

5 The Lord, God of hosts,
he who touches the earth and it melts,
and all who live in it mourn,
and all of it rises like the Nile,
and sinks again, like the Nile of Egypt;
6 who builds his upper chambers in the heavens,
and founds his vault upon the earth;
who calls for the waters of the sea,
and pours them out upon the surface of the earth—
the Lord is his name.

7 Are you not like the Ethiopians[e] to me,
O people of Israel? says the Lord.
Did I not bring Israel up from the land of Egypt,
and the Philistines from Caphtor and the Arameans from Kir?
8 The eyes of the Lord God are upon the sinful kingdom,
and I will destroy it from the face of the earth
—except that I will not utterly destroy the house of Jacob,
says the Lord.

9 For lo, I will command,
and shake the house of Israel among all the nations
as one shakes with a sieve,
but no pebble shall fall to the ground.
10 All the sinners of my people shall die by the sword,
who say, "Evil shall not overtake or meet us."

11 On that day I will raise up the booth of David that is fallen,
and repair its[f] breaches,
and raise up its[g] ruins,
and rebuild it as in the days of old;
12 in order that they may possess the remnant of Edom
and all the nations who are called by my name,
says the Lord who does this.

*e* Or *Nubians*; Heb *Cushites* *f* Gk: Heb *their* *g* Gk: Heb *his*

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see Isa 6.4. **2**: *Sheol,* the place of the dead (Job 10.19–22; Isa 14.11, 15), which offers no hiding place from God (Ps 139.7–12). **3**: *Sea-serpent,* mythological dragon inhabiting the deep sea (Job 41.1–34 n.).

**9.5–6**: **The third doxology,** see 4.13 n. The Lord of nature and history (9.1–4) is also the Creator.

**9.7–10**: **Israel has no claim to special privilege in the moral realm,** for the Lord will destroy every sinful kingdom. Here Amos's universalism (see 1.2–2.16 n.) complements the doctrine of election (3.2). **7**: *Caphtor,* see Judg 13.1 n. *Kir,* see 1.5 n.

**9.11–15**: **Prophecies of the restoration of the Davidic dynasty** (vv. 11–12) **and the glorious age to come** (vv. 13–15). This section, so affirmative in its emphasis, is generally considered a later addition. It expands, however, genuine elements in Amos's own thought (compare 3.12; 5.3, 4, 6, 11–15) and also evidences a basic connection: the full prophetic word contains both judgment and salvation (see Introduction to Micah). **11–12**: Note the use of this passage by James at the meeting of the apostles and the elders of the church at Jerusalem in Acts 15.16–17. **13**: See Joel 3.18–21 n. *Shall overtake,* Lev 26.5.

13 The time is surely coming, says the LORD,
when the one who plows shall overtake the one who reaps,
and the treader of grapes the one who sows the seed;
the mountains shall drip sweet wine,
and all the hills shall flow with it.
14 I will restore the fortunes of my people Israel,
and they shall rebuild the ruined cities and inhabit them;
they shall plant vineyards and drink their wine,
and they shall make gardens and eat their fruit.
15 I will plant them upon their land,
and they shall never again be plucked up
out of the land that I have given them,
says the LORD your God.

# *Obadiah*

Nothing is known of the person of the prophet Obadiah; even his name is not distinctive (see v. 1 n.). The problems of date and composition of his brief work, the shortest book in the Old Testament, are not easily solved. Some of the oracles in the book were spoken, or written, soon after Jerusalem fell to the Babylonians in 587 (586) B.C. Obadiah may not himself have written all of the present book, but may have drawn upon collections of sayings transmitted orally among prophetic circles. This could account for the similarity between vv. 1–9 and Jer 49.7–22. But the work is dominated by the theme of justice and judgment, and may well be the product of one voice.

Verses 1–14 indict the Edomites for outrageous and hostile actions when their Israelite kinfolk were in peril. Starting from these recent events in the experience of his people, Obadiah, like Joel (see Introduction to Joel), moves on to portray their future consummation. Verses 15–18 announce the day of the LORD's recompense upon the nations for their shameful behavior. A final section (vv. 19–21) proclaims the return of Israel's exiles to the Promised Land, their dominion over Edom, and the LORD's universal sovereignty.

*Pillage and slaughter will repay Edom's cruelty*

1 The vision of Obadiah.

Thus says the Lord GOD
concerning Edom:
We have heard a report from
the LORD,
and a messenger has been sent
among the nations:
"Rise up! Let us rise against it
for battle!"
2 I will surely make you least
among the nations;
you shall be utterly despised.
3 Your proud heart has deceived
you,
you that live in the clefts of
the rock,[a]
whose dwelling is in the
heights.
You say in your heart,
"Who will bring me down to
the ground?"
4 Though you soar aloft like
the eagle,
though your nest is set among
the stars,
from there I will bring you
down,
says the LORD.

5 If thieves came to you,
if plunderers by night
—how you have been
destroyed!—
would they not steal only what
they wanted?
If grape-gatherers came to you,
would they not leave gleanings?
6 How Esau has been pillaged,
his treasures searched out!
7 All your allies have deceived you,
they have driven you to
the border;
your confederates have prevailed
against you;
those who ate[b] your bread have
set a trap for you—
there is no understanding of it.
8 On that day, says the LORD,
I will destroy the wise out
of Edom,
and understanding out of
Mount Esau.
9 Your warriors shall be shattered,
O Teman,
so that everyone from Mount
Esau will be cut off.
10 For the slaughter and violence
done to your brother Jacob,
shame shall cover you,
and you shall be cut off forever.
11 On the day that you stood aside,
on the day that strangers carried
off his wealth,
and foreigners entered his gates
and cast lots for Jerusalem,
you too were like one of them.
12 But you should not have gloated[c]
over[d] your brother
on the day of his misfortune;
you should not have rejoiced over
the people of Judah
on the day of their ruin;
you should not have boasted

*a* Or *clefts of Sela* *b* Cn: Heb lacks *those who ate* *c* Heb *But do not gloat* (and similarly through verse 14) *d* Heb *on the day of*

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**1: Introduction.** *Vision,* see Nah 1.1 n. *Obadiah,* meaning "Servant of the LORD," is the name of twelve different persons in the Old Testament. *Edom,* southeast of Palestine. **2–4**: The humbling of Edom. The non-Israelite *nations,* the Gentiles, will share in the spectacle. **3**: The same Hebrew word means *rock* and Sela, an Edomite fortress also called Teman (v. 9) and Petra. **4**: *Says the LORD,* see Am 1.3 n.

**5–7: The pillaging and betrayal of Edom.** **6**: *Esau,* Jacob's twin, was the father of the Edomites (Gen 25.30; 36.1). **8–11**: The destruction of Edom. **8**: Compare Zeph 1.9, 10; 3.16; Hag 2.23. Edom was renowned for its wisdom (Jer 49.7). **10–11**: *Jacob* was the father of the Israelites (Gen 49.2; Isa 43.1). By failing to help his *brother* in his adversity, Edom became as guilty as the *foreigners* who *entered his gates.* Obadiah shares this bitterness against Edom with other writers of the sixth and fifth centuries B.C. (Ps 137.7; Isa 34.5–7; 63.1–6; Lam 4.21; Ezek 25.12–14; Mal 1.2–5; see also, from an earlier period, Am 1.11–12). **12–14**: Eight-fold indictment of Edom, cast in a very forceful, repetitive style.

on the day of distress.
13 You should not have entered the gate of my people
on the day of their calamity;
you should not have joined in the gloating over Judah's[e] disaster
on the day of his calamity;
you should not have looted his goods
on the day of his calamity.
14 You should not have stood at the crossings
to cut off his fugitives;
you should not have handed over his survivors
on the day of distress.

15 For the day of the LORD is near against all the nations.
As you have done, it shall be done to you;
your deeds shall return on your own head.
16 For as you have drunk on my holy mountain,
all the nations around you shall drink;
they shall drink and gulp down,[f]
and shall be as though they had never been.
17 But on Mount Zion there shall be those that escape,
and it shall be holy;
and the house of Jacob shall take possession of those who dispossessed them.
18 The house of Jacob shall be a fire,
the house of Joseph a flame,
and the house of Esau stubble;
they shall burn them and consume them,
and there shall be no survivor of the house of Esau;
for the LORD has spoken.
19 Those of the Negeb shall possess Mount Esau,
and those of the Shephelah the land of the Philistines;
they shall possess the land of Ephraim and the land of Samaria,
and Benjamin shall possess Gilead.
20 The exiles of the Israelites who are in Halah[g]
shall possess[h] Phoenicia as far as Zarephath;
and the exiles of Jerusalem who are in Sepharad
shall possess the towns of the Negeb.
21 Those who have been saved[i] shall go up to Mount Zion
to rule Mount Esau;
and the kingdom shall be the LORD's.

*e* Heb *his* *f* Meaning of Heb uncertain
*g* Cn: Heb *in this army* *h* Cn: Meaning of Heb uncertain *i* Or *Saviors*

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**15–18: The day of the LORD's judgment** *against all the nations,* especially Edom. But Israel shall be saved. **15:** *The day of the LORD,* see Am 5.18 n. **16:** *You,* i.e. the Israelites. Compare Jer 25.15–29. **17:** Joel 2.32.

**19–21: The division of the land, and the LORD's kingship. 19:** *Negeb* is the arid south; *Shephelah,* the western foothills. *Gilead* is in Transjordan. **20:** *Halah* (the Hebrew text is uncertain) is in northern Mesopotamia (2 Kings 17.6); *Zarephath,* a town in southern Phoenicia (1 Kings 17.9). *Sepharad,* perhaps in Asia Minor. **21:** The immediate reference of this verse is political: Israel will dominate Edom. But it carries also a broader theological reference: power belongs to the LORD, who shall reign over all (Pss 22.28; 47; 99.1–2).

# *Jonah*

The book of Jonah is unique among the prophetic books. It contains no collection of oracles in verse against Israel and foreign nations, but presents a prose narrative about the prophet himself. Instead of portraying a prophet who is an obedient servant of the LORD, calling his people to repentance, it features a recalcitrant prophet who flees from his mission and sulks when his hearers repent.

The book is a didactic narrative that has taken older material from the realm of popular legend and put it to new, more consequential use. Its two parts, chs 1–2 and 3–4, are now united by having in common a central character (Jonah), a similar plot (the ironical conversion of the heathen), and an identical theme (the breadth of God's saving love).

The principal figure of this artful story is an obscure Galilean prophet from Gath-hepher who counseled Jeroboam II (786–746 B.C.) in a successful conflict with the Syrians (2 Kings 14.25) and with whom some of the earlier traditional material was probably associated. Its author, however, probably lived in the post-exilic period because he shows the influence of Jeremiah and Second Isaiah, and opposes the type of a narrow sectarianism and exclusivism. Although the linguistic evidence is indecisive, a date sometime in the fifth or fourth century B.C. seems indicated.

With skill and finesse this little book calls Israel to repentance and reminds it of its mission to preach to all the nations the wideness of God's mercy and forgiveness (Gen 12.1–3; Isa 42.6–7; 49.6). In spirit, therefore, the book remains truly prophetic and justifies its place in the Book of the Twelve Prophets.

1 Now the word of the LORD came to Jonah son of Amittai, saying, 2"Go at once to Nineveh, that great city, and cry out against it; for their wickedness has come up before me." 3But Jonah set out to flee to Tarshish from the presence of the LORD. He went down to Joppa and found a ship going to Tarshish; so he paid his fare and went on board, to go with them to Tarshish, away from the presence of the LORD.

4 But the LORD hurled a great wind upon the sea, and such a mighty storm came upon the sea that the ship threatened to break up. 5Then the mariners were afraid, and each cried to his god. They threw the cargo that was in the ship into the sea, to lighten it for them. Jonah, meanwhile, had gone down into the hold of the ship and had lain down, and was fast asleep. 6The captain came and said to him, "What are you doing sound asleep? Get up, call on your god! Perhaps the god will spare us a thought so that we do not perish."

7 The sailors[a] said to one another, "Come, let us cast lots, so that we may know on whose account this calamity has come upon us." So they cast lots, and the lot fell on Jonah. 8Then they said to him, "Tell us why this calamity has come upon us. What is your occupation? Where do you come from? What is your country? And of what people are you?" 9"I am a Hebrew," he replied. "I worship the LORD, the God of heaven, who made the sea and the dry land." 10Then the men were even more afraid, and said to him, "What is this that you have done!" For the men knew that he was fleeing from the presence of the LORD, because he had told them so.

11 Then they said to him, "What shall we do to you, that the sea may quiet down for us?" For the sea was growing more and more tempestuous. 12He said to them, "Pick me up and throw me into the sea; then the sea will quiet down for you; for I know it is because of me that this great storm has come upon you." 13Nevertheless the men rowed hard to bring the ship back to land, but they could not, for the sea grew more and more stormy against them. 14Then they cried out to the LORD, "Please, O LORD, we pray, do not let us perish on account of this man's life. Do not make us guilty of innocent blood; for you, O LORD, have done as it pleased you." 15So they picked Jonah up and threw him into the sea; and the sea ceased from its raging. 16Then the men feared the LORD even more, and they offered a sacrifice to the LORD and made vows.

17[b] But the LORD provided a large fish to swallow up Jonah; and Jonah was in the belly of the fish three days and three nights.

2 Then Jonah prayed to the LORD his God from the belly of the fish, 2saying,

"I called to the LORD out of my
distress,
and he answered me;

*a* Heb *They* *b* Ch 2.1 in Heb

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**1.1–16: Jonah's first call to preach to Nineveh** (the capital of the Assyrians, who destroyed Samaria in 722–721), although unheeded, results in the conversion of the heathen sailors. **1–3:** Jonah rebels against the divine commission and attempts to flee from God. **1:** *The word of the LORD,* Hos 1.1 n. The word Jonah means "dove." **2:** For the *wickedness* of the Assyrian capital, *Nineveh,* see Nah ch 3. **3:** *Tarshish,* probably in southern Spain (Isa 23.1–12; Ezek 27.12, 25), represents the farthest point to which Jonah could sail.

**1.4–16:** The LORD procures Jonah's recall. God causes a great tempest; for *the LORD, the God of heaven,* rules *the sea and the dry land* (Pss 65.5–7; 107.23–32; 139.7–12; Mk 4.35–41; Acts ch 27). **16:** Jonah becomes a missionary of his God in spite of himself.

**1.17–2.10: Jonah is miraculously saved** and returned to *dry land.* The fish merely serves as a sea-going vehicle to deposit Jonah back where he started (see 2.10). Like the tempest, the east wind, the plant, and the worm, it is an obedient agent of God's purpose. **17:** Mt 12.38–41.

**2.1–10: Jonah's prayer and its answer.** This psalm of thanksgiving (instead of an expected petition for help) may originally have been independent of the prose narrative. But it now serves to express Jonah's thanks for his

out of the belly of Sheol I cried,
and you heard my voice.
3 You cast me into the deep,
into the heart of the seas,
and the flood surrounded me;
all your waves and your billows
passed over me.
4 Then I said, 'I am driven away
from your sight;
how[c] shall I look again
upon your holy temple?'
5 The waters closed in over me;
the deep surrounded me;
weeds were wrapped around
my head
6 at the roots of the mountains.
I went down to the land
whose bars closed upon me
forever;
yet you brought up my life from
the Pit,
O LORD my God.
7 As my life was ebbing away,
I remembered the LORD;
and my prayer came to you,
into your holy temple.
8 Those who worship vain idols
forsake their true loyalty.
9 But I with the voice of
thanksgiving
will sacrifice to you;
what I have vowed I will pay.
Deliverance belongs to the
LORD!"
10 Then the LORD spoke to the fish, and it spewed Jonah out upon the dry land.

3 The word of the LORD came to Jonah a second time, saying, 2 "Get up, go to Nineveh, that great city, and proclaim to it the message that I tell you." 3 So Jonah set out and went to Nineveh, according to the word of the LORD. Now Nineveh was an exceedingly large city, a three days' walk across. 4 Jonah began to go into the city, going a day's walk. And he cried out, "Forty days more, and Nineveh shall be overthrown!" 5 And the people of Nineveh believed God; they proclaimed a fast, and everyone, great and small, put on sackcloth.

6 When the news reached the king of Nineveh, he rose from his throne, removed his robe, covered himself with sackcloth, and sat in ashes. 7 Then he had a proclamation made in Nineveh: "By the decree of the king and his nobles: No human being or animal, no herd or flock, shall taste anything. They shall not feed, nor shall they drink water. 8 Human beings and animals shall be covered with sackcloth, and they shall cry mightily to God. All shall turn from their evil ways and from the violence that is in their hands. 9 Who knows? God may relent and change his mind; he may turn from his fierce anger, so that we do not perish."

10 When God saw what they did, how they turned from their evil ways, God changed his mind about the calamity that he had said he would bring upon them; and he did not do it.

4 But this was very displeasing to Jonah, and he became angry. 2 He prayed to the LORD and said, "O LORD! Is not this what I said while I was still in my own country? That is why I fled to

*c* Theodotion: Heb *surely*

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deliverance (v. 9). **2**: Pss 18.6; 120.1. *Sheol,* or *Pit* (v. 6), is the region of darkness and death (Ps 88.3–12). **3a**: Ps 88.6. **3b**: Ps 42.7. **6**: *Land,* of the departed, Sheol.

**3.1–4.11**: **Jonah's second call to preach to Nineveh,** although reluctantly and grudgingly obeyed, results in the wholesale conversion of the heathen city. **3**: *Exceedingly large city;* excavations have revealed a city about three miles in length and somewhat less than one and one-half miles wide. The message of the story, not the size of the city, is of primary import. **5–10**: Again Jonah is a successful missionary in spite of himself.

**3.6**: *Sackcloth* and *ashes,* traditional signs of mourning and repentance (2 Sam 3.31; Job 42.6; Dan 9.3; Mt 11.21). **7–9**: The reaction of *the king of Nineveh* is modelled on Jer 18.8–9. He sets a better example than Jonah (4.1). **10**: Repentance and deliverance are themes dominating the story of Jonah and its use in the New Testament (Mt 12.38–41; Lk 11.29–32).

**4.1–4**: Jonah is not only disobedient but

Tarshish at the beginning; for I knew that you are a gracious God and merciful, slow to anger, and abounding in steadfast love, and ready to relent from punishing. 3And now, O LORD, please take my life from me, for it is better for me to die than to live." 4And the LORD said, "Is it right for you to be angry?" 5Then Jonah went out of the city and sat down east of the city, and made a booth for himself there. He sat under it in the shade, waiting to see what would become of the city.

6 The LORD God appointed a bush,[d] and made it come up over Jonah, to give shade over his head, to save him from his discomfort; so Jonah was very happy about the bush. 7But when dawn came up the next day, God appointed a worm that attacked the bush, so that it withered. 8When the sun rose, God prepared a sultry east wind, and the sun beat down on the head of Jonah so that he was faint and asked that he might die. He said, "It is better for me to die than to live."

9 But God said to Jonah, "Is it right for you to be angry about the bush?" And he said, "Yes, angry enough to die." 10Then the LORD said, "You are concerned about the bush, for which you did not labor and which you did not grow; it came into being in a night and perished in a night. 11And should I not be concerned about Nineveh, that great city, in which there are more than a hundred and twenty thousand persons who do not know their right hand from their left, and also many animals?"

*d* Heb *qiqayon*, possibly *the castor bean plant*

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bigoted; the reason for his flight was that he did not want to see the Assyrians spared by *a gracious God* (compare Ex 34.6–7). Literary artistry is apparent in the death wish and question of the Lord in vv. 3–4 and 9. **11**: God has concern for every creature in the universe, even *animals*. The divine love extends beyond any covenant.

# *Micah*

The superscription to this book indicates that Micah was a younger contemporary of Isaiah. The characteristics of the era in which Micah spoke were similar, therefore, to those seen in the ministries of Hosea and Isaiah. The prosperous half-century of peace enjoyed by the northern kingdom of Israel was ended by the death of Jeroboam II and the westward advance of the Assyrians. In 731 B.C. the fall of Damascus marked the end of Syria's freedom; a brief decade later brought the same fate to Israel and its capital at Samaria. Although the kingdom of Judah was spared at that time from the Assyrian yoke, the anti-Assyrian policies of Hezekiah brought Sennacherib of Assyria to Judah in 701 B.C., and Judah was left a weak vassal state.

But unlike Isaiah, Micah was neither of noble descent nor a native of the capital city. He came, rather, from the common people, being a citizen of the small village of Moresheth in the Judean foothills southwest of Jerusalem. Therefore Micah looked upon the corruptions and pretensions of the capital through different eyes. Perhaps it was this difference that accounts for Micah's prophecy of the fall of Jerusalem (3.9–12), a major note distinguishing him from his contemporaries and for which he was long remembered (Jer 26.18).

Micah stands solidly with Amos, Hosea, and Isaiah as a fierce champion of pure worship of the LORD and of social justice, and he shares with them both the word of judgment against God's own people (1.2–3.12; 6.1–7.7) and the promise of divine forgiveness and hope in a future restoration. The latter theme of the prophet comes to us in an expanded and edited post-exilic form in 4.1–5.15. The picture of the restored Jerusalem in 7.8–20 comes from the post-exilic period.

1 The word of the LORD that came to Micah of Moresheth in the days of Kings Jotham, Ahaz, and Hezekiah of Judah, which he saw concerning Samaria and Jerusalem.

2 Hear, you peoples, all of you;
listen, O earth, and all that is in it;
and let the Lord GOD be a witness against you,
the Lord from his holy temple.
3 For lo, the LORD is coming out of his place,
and will come down and tread upon the high places of the earth.
4 Then the mountains will melt under him
and the valleys will burst open,
like wax near the fire,
like waters poured down a steep place.
5 All this is for the transgression of Jacob
and for the sins of the house of Israel.
What is the transgression of Jacob?
Is it not Samaria?
And what is the high place[a] of Judah?
Is it not Jerusalem?
6 Therefore I will make Samaria a heap in the open country,
a place for planting vineyards.
I will pour down her stones into the valley,
and uncover her foundations.
7 All her images shall be beaten to pieces,
all her wages shall be burned with fire,
and all her idols I will lay waste;
for as the wages of a prostitute she gathered them,
and as the wages of a prostitute they shall again be used.

8 For this I will lament and wail;
I will go barefoot and naked;
I will make lamentation like the jackals,
and mourning like the ostriches.
9 For her wound[b] is incurable.
It has come to Judah;
it has reached to the gate of my people,
to Jerusalem.

10 Tell it not in Gath,
weep not at all;
in Beth-leaphrah
roll yourselves in the dust.
11 Pass on your way,
inhabitants of Shaphir,
in nakedness and shame;
the inhabitants of Zaanan
do not come forth;
Beth-ezel is wailing
and shall remove its support from you.
12 For the inhabitants of Maroth
wait anxiously for good,
yet disaster has come down from the LORD
to the gate of Jerusalem.
13 Harness the steeds to the chariots,
inhabitants of Lachish;
it was the beginning of sin
to daughter Zion,
for in you were found

*a* Heb *what are the high places* *b* Gk Syr Vg: Heb *wounds*

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**1.1: Superscription.** *The word of the* LORD *. . . which he saw,* see Hos 1.1 n. and Nah 1.1 n. *Jotham* reigned over Judah from 750 to 735 B.C.; *Ahaz* from 735 to 715; and *Hezekiah* from 715 to 687.

**1.2–3.12: Threats directed against Samaria and Jerusalem because of the corruption of their religious and political leaders** form the first major section of Micah's book. **1.2–7:** Samaria will be destroyed when the LORD comes in judgment to punish *the house of Israel* for its *transgression*. This oracle is to be dated before 721 B.C. **2:** Compare Isa 1.2; Hab 2.20.

**1.8–16:** In a series of forceful literary puns on the names of the areas to be devastated, the prophet laments that the *wound* of his people *is incurable* and that God *will again bring a conqueror* even *to the gate of Jerusalem*. This *lament,* perhaps acted out by the prophet him-

the transgressions of Israel.
14 Therefore you shall give
parting gifts
to Moresheth-gath;
the houses of Achzib shall be
a deception
to the kings of Israel.
15 I will again bring a conqueror
upon you,
inhabitants of Mareshah;
the glory of Israel
shall come to Adullam.
16 Make yourselves bald and cut off
your hair
for your pampered children;
make yourselves as bald as
the eagle,
for they have gone from you
into exile.

2 Alas for those who devise
wickedness
and evil deeds[c] on their beds!
When the morning dawns, they
perform it,
because it is in their power.
2 They covet fields, and seize them;
houses, and take them away;
they oppress householder
and house,
people and their inheritance.
3 Therefore thus says the LORD:
Now, I am devising against this
family an evil
from which you cannot remove
your necks;
and you shall not walk haughtily,
for it will be an evil time.
4 On that day they shall take up a
taunt song against you,
and wail with bitter
lamentation,
and say, "We are utterly ruined;
the LORD[d] alters the inheritance
of my people;
how he removes it from me!
Among our captors[e] he parcels
out our fields."
5 Therefore you will have no one to
cast the line by lot
in the assembly of the LORD.

6 "Do not preach"—thus they
preach—
"one should not preach of
such things;
disgrace will not overtake us."
7 Should this be said, O house
of Jacob?
Is the LORD's patience
exhausted?
Are these his doings?
Do not my words do good
to one who walks uprightly?
8 But you rise up against my
people[f] as an enemy;
you strip the robe from the
peaceful,[g]
from those who pass by trustingly
with no thought of war.
9 The women of my people you
drive out
from their pleasant houses;
from their young children you
take away
my glory forever.
10 Arise and go;
for this is no place to rest,
because of uncleanness that
destroys
with a grievous destruction.[h]
11 If someone were to go about
uttering empty falsehoods,
saying, "I will preach to you of
wine and strong drink,"

*c* Cn: Heb *work evil* *d* Heb *he* *e* Cn: Heb *the rebellious* *f* Cn: Heb *But yesterday my people rose* *g* Cn: Heb *from before a garment* *h* Meaning of Heb uncertain

self, *barefoot* and *naked* (v. 8), may refer to the campaign of 701 B.C. **16:** *Cut off your hair,* a common rite of mourning (Jer 7.29).

**2.1–11:** Because of their uncleanness, which Micah depicts with clarity (v. 2) and bitter realism (v. 11), the Israelites must experience a grievous destruction, for the LORD will hold the nation responsible for its social and moral abuses. **1–2:** Ps 36.4; Isa 5.8–12; 32.7; Am 8.4. **3:** *An evil time,* Jer 18.11; compare Am 5.13. **4:** *A taunt song,* compare Hab 2.6. **5:** *Cast the line by lot,* on a piece of land, thus acquiring title to it (Josh 18.6; Ps 16.6). **6:** Micah quotes the popular preaching of the false prophets (Isa 30.10; Jer 5.31; Am 2.12).

such a one would be the
preacher for this people!

12 I will surely gather all of you,
O Jacob,
I will gather the survivors
of Israel;
I will set them together
like sheep in a fold,
like a flock in its pasture;
it will resound with people.
13 The one who breaks out will go
up before them;
they will break through and
pass the gate,
going out by it.
Their king will pass on before
them,
the LORD at their head.

3 And I said:
Listen, you heads of Jacob
and rulers of the house of Israel!
Should you not know justice?—
2 you who hate the good and love
the evil,
who tear the skin off my people,[i]
and the flesh off their bones;
3 who eat the flesh of my people,
flay their skin off them,
break their bones in pieces,
and chop them up like meat[j] in
a kettle,
like flesh in a caldron.

4 Then they will cry to the LORD,
but he will not answer them;
he will hide his face from them at
that time,
because they have acted
wickedly.

5 Thus says the LORD concerning
the prophets
who lead my people astray,
who cry "Peace"
when they have something to
eat,
but declare war against those
who put nothing into their
mouths.
6 Therefore it shall be night to you,
without vision,
and darkness to you, without
revelation.
The sun shall go down upon
the prophets,
and the day shall be black
over them;
7 the seers shall be disgraced,
and the diviners put to shame;
they shall all cover their lips,
for there is no answer from
God.
8 But as for me, I am filled
with power,
with the spirit of the LORD,
and with justice and might,
to declare to Jacob his
transgression
and to Israel his sin.

9 Hear this, you rulers of the house
of Jacob
and chiefs of the house of Israel,
who abhor justice

*i* Heb *from them* *j* Gk: Heb *as*

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**2.12–13**: This picture of the restored remnant of all Israel, which presupposes the capture of the country and its destruction, was probably contributed by an exilic or post-exilic editor.

**3.1–4**: The avaricious and irresponsible deeds of Israel's *rulers*. **2–3**: Compare Isa 5.20. Micah here uses the figures of a butcher and wild beast. **4**: Futile *cry to the LORD,* compare Isa 1.15.

**3.5–8**: The mercenary prophets and seers, who prostitute their solemn office, shall be cut off from God, the source of true revelation and well-being. **7**: *Seers,* see 1 Sam 9.9. *Shall . . . cover their lips,* as a sign of mourning (Lev 13.45; Ezek 27.17, 22). **8**: In contrast with the false officials, Micah's call has imbued him with power, justice, and might, because it filled him with *the spirit of the LORD* (Isa 11.2; 61.1; Ezek 2.2).

**3.9–12**: The first section reaches its climax with Micah's bold assertion that, because of corruption which permeates all of its rulers, Jerusalem and the temple itself shall be destroyed. **9**: This recalls Am 5.6–7. **10**: Compare Hab 2.12. **12**: This was quoted at the trial of Jeremiah (Jer 26.18).

and pervert all equity,
10 who build Zion with blood
and Jerusalem with wrong!
11 Its rulers give judgment for a bribe,
its priests teach for a price,
its prophets give oracles for money;
yet they lean upon the LORD and say,
"Surely the LORD is with us!
No harm shall come upon us."
12 Therefore because of you
Zion shall be plowed as a field;
Jerusalem shall become a heap of ruins,
and the mountain of the house a wooded height.

4 In days to come
the mountain of the LORD's house
shall be established as the highest of the mountains,
and shall be raised up above the hills.
Peoples shall stream to it,
2 and many nations shall come and say:
"Come, let us go up to the mountain of the LORD,
to the house of the God of Jacob;
that he may teach us his ways
and that we may walk in his paths."
For out of Zion shall go forth instruction,
and the word of the LORD from Jerusalem.
3 He shall judge between many peoples,
and shall arbitrate between strong nations far away;
they shall beat their swords into plowshares,
and their spears into pruning hooks;
nation shall not lift up sword against nation,
neither shall they learn war any more;
4 but they shall all sit under their own vines and under their own fig trees,
and no one shall make them afraid;
for the mouth of the LORD of hosts has spoken.

5 For all the peoples walk,
each in the name of its god,
but we will walk in the name of the LORD our God
forever and ever.

6 In that day, says the LORD,
I will assemble the lame
and gather those who have been driven away,
and those whom I have afflicted.
7 The lame I will make the remnant,
and those who were cast off, a strong nation;
and the LORD will reign over them in Mount Zion
now and forevermore.

8 And you, O tower of the flock,
hill of daughter Zion,
to you it shall come,
the former dominion shall come,

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**4.1–5.15: Prophecies of Israel's glorious future and the restoration of the Davidic kingdom** constitute the second major section of the book. Though many scholars date the origin of these prophecies in the post-exilic period, they are quite possibly based on genuine oracles from Micah, edited in their present form after the Exile. **4.1–5**: The exaltation of Jerusalem as a center of worship by the nations; the new age of peace. Verses 1–3 are duplicated in Isa 2.2–4. Here, as sometimes elsewhere in the prophetic books, the author of a passage may be unknown, as with Isa chs 40–66. **1**: *The mountain of the LORD's house,* Mount Zion. *Highest of the mountains,* compare Ezek 40.2. **4**: Compare Zech 3.10. **5**: Compare Isa 2.5.

**4.6–8**: The LORD's gracious exaltation of the lame and rejected, for whom he will restore his kingdom (Isa 40.9–11; Ezek 34.11–16; 37.24–28; Zeph 3.19; Jn 10.7–16).

the sovereignty of daughter
Jerusalem.

9 Now why do you cry aloud?
Is there no king in you?
Has your counselor perished,
that pangs have seized you like a
woman in labor?
10 Writhe and groan,[k] O daughter
Zion,
like a woman in labor;
for now you shall go forth from
the city
and camp in the open country;
you shall go to Babylon.
There you shall be rescued,
there the LORD will redeem you
from the hands of your enemies.

11 Now many nations
are assembled against you,
saying, "Let her be profaned,
and let our eyes gaze upon
Zion."
12 But they do not know
the thoughts of the LORD;
they do not understand his plan,
that he has gathered them as
sheaves to the threshing
floor.
13 Arise and thresh,
O daughter Zion,
for I will make your horn iron
and your hoofs bronze;
you shall beat in pieces many
peoples,
and shall[l] devote their gain to
the LORD,
their wealth to the Lord of the
whole earth.

5 [m]Now you are walled around with
a wall;[n]
siege is laid against us;
with a rod they strike the ruler
of Israel
upon the cheek.

2[o] But you, O Bethlehem of
Ephrathah,
who are one of the little clans
of Judah,
from you shall come forth for me
one who is to rule in Israel,
whose origin is from of old,
from ancient days.
3 Therefore he shall give them up
until the time
when she who is in labor has
brought forth;
then the rest of his kindred shall
return
to the people of Israel.
4 And he shall stand and feed his
flock in the strength of
the LORD,
in the majesty of the name of
the LORD his God.
And they shall live secure, for
now he shall be great
to the ends of the earth;
5 and he shall be the one of peace.

If the Assyrians come into
our land
and tread upon our soil,[p]
we will raise against them seven
shepherds
and eight installed as rulers.
6 They shall rule the land of Assyria
with the sword,

*k* Meaning of Heb uncertain *l* Gk Syr Tg: Heb *and I will* *m* Ch 4.14 in Heb
*n* Cn Compare Gk: Meaning of Heb uncertain
*o* Ch 5.1 in Heb *p* Gk: Heb *in our palaces*

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**4.9–5.1**: In three poetic units the humiliation and travail that Israel must experience in the near future (see "now" in 4.9, 11, and 5.1) are contrasted with the final triumph. **4.9**: Compare 5.3 and Jer 8.19. **10**: The reference to exile in Babylon is a later addition (Isa 48.20; 52.9–12).

**5.2–6**: The shepherd king who is to be ruler of Israel will be born not in Jerusalem, but, like David, in Bethlehem, among the insignificant clans of Judah. **2**: *Bethlehem,* Gen 35.19; Ruth 4.11; 1 Sam 17.12. *Me,* refers to God. *From of old* could mean from the days of David, rather than pre-existence from the beginning of time. The New Testament interprets this statement as referring to the birth of Jesus (Mt 2.6; compare also Jn 7.40–43).

and the land of Nimrod with
the drawn sword;[q]
they[r] shall rescue us from the
Assyrians
if they come into our land
or tread within our border.

7 Then the remnant of Jacob,
surrounded by many peoples,
shall be like dew from the LORD,
like showers on the grass,
which do not depend upon people
or wait for any mortal.
8 And among the nations the
remnant of Jacob,
surrounded by many peoples,
shall be like a lion among the
animals of the forest,
like a young lion among the
flocks of sheep,
which, when it goes through,
treads down
and tears in pieces, with no one
to deliver.
9 Your hand shall be lifted up over
your adversaries,
and all your enemies shall be
cut off.

10 In that day, says the LORD,
I will cut off your horses from
among you
and will destroy your chariots;
11 and I will cut off the cities of
your land
and throw down all your
strongholds;
12 and I will cut off sorceries from
your hand,
and you shall have no more
soothsayers;
13 and I will cut off your images
and your pillars from among
you,
and you shall bow down no more
to the work of your hands;
14 and I will uproot your sacred
poles[s] from among you
and destroy your towns.
15 And in anger and wrath I will
execute vengeance
on the nations that did not
obey.

6 Hear what the LORD says:
Rise, plead your case before
the mountains,
and let the hills hear your voice.
2 Hear, you mountains, the
controversy of the LORD,
and you enduring foundations
of the earth;
for the LORD has a controversy
with his people,
and he will contend with Israel.

3 "O my people, what have I done
to you?
In what have I wearied you?
Answer me!
4 For I brought you up from the
land of Egypt,
and redeemed you from the
house of slavery;
and I sent before you Moses,
Aaron, and Miriam.
5 O my people, remember now
what King Balak of Moab
devised,

*q* Cn: Heb *in its entrances* *r* Heb *he*
*s* Heb *Asherim*

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**5.6**: *The land of Nimrod,* synonymous with Assyria (Gen 10.9–11).

**5.7–9**: Then *the remnant* shall be a blessing upon those who receive them and a curse upon those who reject them (Gen 12.2–3; Gal 3.8).

**5.10–15**: *And in that day* the LORD will abolish war in Israel (4.3), purify its worship, and punish disobedient nations. **10**: Zech 9.10. **13–14**: *Pillars* and *sacred poles,* pagan cult-objects (see Ex 34.13 n.).

**6.1–7.7**: **A series of laments, threats, and denunciations, directed against all classes of Israelites,** forms the third major section. As extensions of themes sounded in the first section (1.2–3.12), these oracles, if not Micah's, are consonant with his thought.

**6.1–8**: The LORD has a *controversy* with this people because they have forgotten the saving acts of old and what it means *to walk humbly with your God* (Isa 3.13; Hos 4.1–3; 12.2). **5**: Num 22.1–6; 25.1–5; Josh 4.19–24. **8**: In this

what Balaam son of Beor answered him,
and what happened from Shittim to Gilgal,
that you may know the saving acts of the LORD."

6 "With what shall I come before the LORD,
and bow myself before God on high?
Shall I come before him with burnt offerings,
with calves a year old?
7 Will the LORD be pleased with thousands of rams,
with ten thousands of rivers of oil?
Shall I give my firstborn for my transgression,
the fruit of my body for the sin of my soul?"
8 He has told you, O mortal, what is good;
and what does the LORD require of you
but to do justice, and to love kindness,
and to walk humbly with your God?

9 The voice of the LORD cries to the city
(it is sound wisdom to fear your name):
Hear, O tribe and assembly of the city![t]
10 Can I forget[u] the treasures of wickedness in the house of the wicked,
and the scant measure that is accursed?
11 Can I tolerate wicked scales
and a bag of dishonest weights?
12 Your[v] wealthy are full of violence;
your[w] inhabitants speak lies,
with tongues of deceit in their mouths.
13 Therefore I have begun[x] to strike you down,
making you desolate because of your sins.
14 You shall eat, but not be satisfied,
and there shall be a gnawing hunger within you;
you shall put away, but not save,
and what you save, I will hand over to the sword.
15 You shall sow, but not reap;
you shall tread olives, but not anoint yourselves with oil;
you shall tread grapes, but not drink wine.
16 For you have kept the statutes of Omri[y]
and all the works of the house of Ahab,
and you have followed their counsels.
Therefore I will make you a desolation, and your[z] inhabitants an object of hissing;
so you shall bear the scorn of my people.

7 Woe is me! For I have become like one who,
after the summer fruit has been gathered,
after the vintage has been gleaned,
finds no cluster to eat;
there is no first-ripe fig for which I hunger.

*t* Cn Compare Gk: Heb *tribe, and who has appointed it yet?* *u* Cn: Meaning of Heb uncertain *v* Heb *Whose* *w* Heb *whose* *x* Gk Syr Vg: Heb *have made sick* *y* Gk Syr Vg Tg: Heb *the statutes of Omri are kept* *z* Heb *its*

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single sentence the prophet sums up the legal, ethical, and covenantal requirements of religion, and sounds major notes of Amos (Am 5.24), Hosea (Hos 2.19–20; 6.6), and Isaiah (Isa 7.9; 30.15).

**6.9–16**: Jerusalem, which is as wicked as was Samaria (see v. 16), must be destroyed. **16**: *Object of hissing,* see Zeph 2.15 n.

**7.1–7**: Not only the prince and the judge, but the best and most upright of Jerusalem's

*The total corruption of the people*

2 The faithful have disappeared from the land,
and there is no one left who is upright;
they all lie in wait for blood,
and they hunt each other with nets.
3 Their hands are skilled to do evil;
the official and the judge ask for a bribe,
and the powerful dictate what they desire;
thus they pervert justice.[a]
4 The best of them is like a brier,
the most upright of them a thorn hedge.
The day of their[b] sentinels, of their[b] punishment, has come;
now their confusion is at hand.
5 Put no trust in a friend,
have no confidence in a loved one;
guard the doors of your mouth
from her who lies in your embrace;
6 for the son treats the father with contempt,
the daughter rises up against her mother,
the daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law;
your enemies are members of your own household.
7 But as for me, I will look to the LORD,
I will wait for the God of my salvation;
my God will hear me.

8 Do not rejoice over me, O my enemy;
when I fall, I shall rise;
when I sit in darkness,
the LORD will be a light to me.
9 I must bear the indignation of the LORD,
because I have sinned against him,
until he takes my side
and executes judgment for me.
He will bring me out to the light;
I shall see his vindication.
10 Then my enemy will see,
and shame will cover her who said to me,
"Where is the LORD your God?"
My eyes will see her downfall;[c]
now she will be trodden down
like the mire of the streets.

11 A day for the building of your walls!
In that day the boundary shall be far extended.
12 In that day they will come to you
from Assyria to[d] Egypt,
and from Egypt to the River,
from sea to sea and from mountain to mountain.
13 But the earth will be desolate
because of its inhabitants,
for the fruit of their doings.

14 Shepherd your people with your staff,
the flock that belongs to you,
which lives alone in a forest
in the midst of a garden land;
let them feed in Bashan and Gilead
as in the days of old.
15 As in the days when you came out of the land of Egypt,
show us[e] marvelous things.
16 The nations shall see and be ashamed

*a* Cn: Heb *they weave it* *b* Heb *your*
*c* Heb lacks *downfall* *d* One Ms: MT *Assyria and cities of* *e* Cn: Heb *I will show him*

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inhabitants, were corrupt, and the enemies of the godly were neighbors and kinfolk close at hand. There was no basis for mutual confidence. **1**: *Woe is me!* The speaker is feminine, probably Samaria personified.

**7.8–20: God will show his steadfast love to Israel, and shame will cover her enemies.** This final section was probably written in the early post-exilic period; compare Ps 137; Isa chs 33; 40–66. **8–10**: The prophet speaks as Israel. **9**: Jer 10.19. **10**: *My enemy,* Heb. feminine, apparently referring to Damascus. *Where is . . . your God?* Ps 79.10; Joel 2.17. **11–13**: Addressed to Jerusalem.

of all their might;
they shall lay their hands on their mouths;
their ears shall be deaf;
17 they shall lick dust like a snake,
like the crawling things of the earth;
they shall come trembling out of their fortresses;
they shall turn in dread to the LORD our God,
and they shall stand in fear of you.

18 Who is a God like you, pardoning iniquity
and passing over the transgression
of the remnant of your[f] possession?
He does not retain his anger forever,
because he delights in showing clemency.
19 He will again have compassion upon us;
he will tread our iniquities under foot.
You will cast all our[g] sins into the depths of the sea.
20 You will show faithfulness to Jacob
and unswerving loyalty to Abraham,
as you have sworn to our ancestors
from the days of old.

*f* Heb *his* *g* Gk Syr Vg Tg: Heb *their*

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**7.14**: A prayer to God. Compare Jer 50.19. **15**: The LORD speaks. **16–17**: The nations will be dumb, deaf, and humbled. Israel speaks. **7.18–20**: Compare Ex 34.6–7; Ps 103.8–10. **20**: Gen 12.1–3; 17.6–8; Lk 1.55.

# *Nahum*

As is typical of Hebrew prophecy, Nahum's words were prompted by the dramatic events of international history. The proud Assyrian empire, whose power had for centuries been felt and feared from Mesopotamia to the Mediterranean, crumbled quickly after the death of Asshurbanipal (about 630 B.C.). Under the combined assaults of the vigorous Medes from north of Persia and the Chaldeans from southern Babylonia, the ancient capital city of Asshur fell in 614 B.C. When the renowned Nineveh was destroyed in 612, Assyrian domination of the Near East was ended.

The fervent reaction to the overthrow of Assyria, expressed by the peoples long subjected to its yoke, is nowhere more clearly seen than in the book of Nahum. The core of the book is a superb, vivid poem extolling Nineveh's destruction, which Nahum felt to be inevitable. The prophet spells out the reason for the Assyrian downfall in unequivocal terms: it is the LORD's judgment upon an unscrupulous, defiant nation.

This basic theme makes clear that Nahum's thought is passionately partisan. It asserts boldly that the LORD is the avenger of cruelty and immorality. But it fails, perhaps only because of a resolute singleness of purpose, to indicate the consequences of this divine justice for Israel itself.

The date of Nahum's triumphal ode lies close to the event it foretells, probably between 626 and 612 B.C. Its author is identified only by his name; even the location of Elkosh (1.1) is uncertain.

1 An oracle concerning Nineveh. The book of the vision of Nahum of Elkosh.

2 A jealous and avenging God is the LORD,
the LORD is avenging and wrathful;
the LORD takes vengeance on his adversaries
and rages against his enemies.
3 The LORD is slow to anger but great in power,
and the LORD will by no means clear the guilty.

His way is in whirlwind and storm,
and the clouds are the dust of his feet.
4 He rebukes the sea and makes it dry,
and he dries up all the rivers;
Bashan and Carmel wither,
and the bloom of Lebanon fades.
5 The mountains quake before him,
and the hills melt;
the earth heaves before him,
the world and all who live in it.

6 Who can stand before his indignation?
Who can endure the heat of his anger?
His wrath is poured out like fire,
and by him the rocks are broken in pieces.
7 The LORD is good,
a stronghold in a day of trouble;
he protects those who take refuge in him,
8 even in a rushing flood.
He will make a full end of his adversaries,[a]
and will pursue his enemies into darkness.
9 Why do you plot against the LORD?
He will make an end;
no adversary will rise up twice.
10 Like thorns they are entangled,
like drunkards they are drunk;
they are consumed like dry straw.
11 From you one has gone out
who plots evil against the LORD,
one who counsels wickedness.

12 Thus says the LORD,
"Though they are at full strength and many,[b]
they will be cut off and pass away.
Though I have afflicted you,
I will afflict you no more.
13 And now I will break off his yoke from you
and snap the bonds that bind you."

14 The LORD has commanded concerning you:
"Your name shall be perpetuated no longer;

*a* Gk: Heb *of her place* *b* Meaning of Heb uncertain

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**1.1: Title.** *Oracle,* literally "burden," is a technical term describing the prophetic word (Isa 13.1; Jer 23.33–40 n.; Hab 1.1; Zech 9.1; Mal 1.1). The prophet "saw" this word (Am 1.1; Mic 1.1; Hab 1.1) as a *vision* (Ob 1). *Elkosh* may be a village in Galilee, known to Jerome as Elkesi, but more probably was located in SW Judah.

**1.2–14: The coming of the avenging LORD.** An incomplete acrostic psalm, probably inserted either by Nahum or an editor to introduce the prophet's own poem on Nineveh's fall (mainly 1.15–3.19). Now in some disorder, it runs at least through v. 9, but its precise relation to the main poem is unclear. **2:** *Jealous,* see Ex 34.14 n. **3b:** Isa 29.6.

**1.4:** *Bashan, Carmel,* and *Lebanon* were regions famous for their fertility. **9:** *You,* perhaps the Israelites. **11:** *Counsels wickedness;* alternate translation, "a wicked counselor," which may refer to a specific person (the same word, "wicked," later transliterated "Belial," is used in v. 15), such as Sennacherib. The *you* refers to Israel's enemy.

**1.12–13:** The LORD assures Israel of deliverance. **12:** *They,* i.e. the days of your affliction. **14:** The announcement of Nineveh's end.

from the house of your gods I will
cut off
the carved image and the
cast image.
I will make your grave, for you
are worthless."

15[c] Look! On the mountains the feet
of one
who brings good tidings,
who proclaims peace!
Celebrate your festivals, O Judah,
fulfill your vows,
for never again shall the wicked
invade you;
they are utterly cut off.

2 A shatterer[d] has come up
against you.
Guard the ramparts;
watch the road;
gird your loins;
collect all your strength.

2 (For the LORD is restoring the
majesty of Jacob,
as well as the majesty of Israel,
though ravagers have ravaged
them
and ruined their branches.)

3 The shields of his warriors are red;
his soldiers are clothed in
crimson.
The metal on the chariots flashes
on the day when he musters
them;
the chargers[e] prance.
4 The chariots race madly through
the streets,
they rush to and fro through
the squares;
their appearance is like torches,
they dart like lightning.
5 He calls his officers;
they stumble as they come
forward;
they hasten to the wall,
and the mantelet[f] is set up.
6 The river gates are opened,
the palace trembles.
7 It is decreed[f] that the city[g]
be exiled,
its slave women led away,
moaning like doves
and beating their breasts.
8 Nineveh is like a pool
whose waters[h] run away.
"Halt! Halt!"—
but no one turns back.
9 "Plunder the silver,
plunder the gold!
There is no end of treasure!
An abundance of every precious
thing!"

10 Devastation, desolation, and
destruction!
Hearts faint and knees tremble,
all loins quake,
all faces grow pale!
11 What became of the lions' den,
the cave[i] of the young lions,
where the lion goes,
and the lion's cubs, with no one
to disturb them?
12 The lion has torn enough for
his whelps

*c* Ch 2.1 in Heb *d* Cn: Heb *scatterer*
*e* Cn Compare Gk Syr: Heb *cypresses*
*f* Meaning of Heb uncertain *g* Heb *it*
*h* Cn Compare Gk: Heb *a pool, from the days that she has become, and they* *i* Cn: Heb *pasture*

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**1.15–3.19: The sack of Nineveh.** The LORD's punishment of the defiant Assyrians and Israel's proclamation of the good news. **1.15:** Isa 40.9; 52.7; Rom 10.15. Read here 2.2.

**2.1–13:** The assault upon Nineveh. The plundering of its treasures and the terror of its inhabitants will come because the LORD of hosts is against that rapacious city (Isa 5.26–30; Jer 5.15–17). **1:** Nahum is so thoroughly convinced of the LORD's destruction of Nineveh that he can say that the enemy *has* already *come up*. **2:** *Jacob* refers to the northern kingdom (see Am 6.8; 8.7); *Israel* refers to the southern kingdom, regarded as the remnant of Israel after the fall of the northern kingdom (see Mic 1.13–15).

**2.7:** The poem anticipates that the women of Nineveh will be led away as humiliated slaves (see also Isa 47.2–3). **11:** *Lion* often symbolizes the destroyer (Isa 5.29; Jer 4.7; Hos 5.14; Mic 5.8).

and strangled prey for his lionesses;
he has filled his caves with prey
and his dens with torn flesh.

13 See, I am against you, says the LORD of hosts, and I will burn your[j] chariots in smoke, and the sword shall devour your young lions; I will cut off your prey from the earth, and the voice of your messengers shall be heard no more.

3 Ah! City of bloodshed,
utterly deceitful, full of booty—
no end to the plunder!
2 The crack of whip and rumble
of wheel,
galloping horse and bounding
chariot!
3 Horsemen charging,
flashing sword and glittering
spear,
piles of dead,
heaps of corpses,
dead bodies without end—
they stumble over the bodies!
4 Because of the countless
debaucheries of
the prostitute,
gracefully alluring, mistress
of sorcery,
who enslaves[k] nations through her
debaucheries,
and peoples through her
sorcery,
5 I am against you,
says the LORD of hosts,
and will lift up your skirts over
your face;
and I will let nations look on your
nakedness
and kingdoms on your shame.
6 I will throw filth at you
and treat you with contempt,
and make you a spectacle.
7 Then all who see you will shrink
from you and say,
"Nineveh is devastated; who will
bemoan her?"
Where shall I seek comforters
for you?

8 Are you better than Thebes[l]
that sat by the Nile,
with water around her,
her rampart a sea,
water her wall?
9 Ethiopia[m] was her strength,
Egypt too, and that without
limit;
Put and the Libyans were her[n]
helpers.

10 Yet she became an exile,
she went into captivity;
even her infants were dashed
in pieces
at the head of every street;
lots were cast for her nobles,
all her dignitaries were bound
in fetters.
11 You also will be drunken,
you will go into hiding;[o]
you will seek
a refuge from the enemy.
12 All your fortresses are like fig
trees
with first-ripe figs—
if shaken they fall
into the mouth of the eater.
13 Look at your troops:
they are women in your midst.
The gates of your land
are wide open to your foes;
fire has devoured the bars of
your gates.

*j* Heb *her* *k* Heb *sells* *l* Heb *No-amon*
*m* Or *Nubia*; Heb *Cush* *n* Gk: Heb *your*
*o* Meaning of Heb uncertain

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**3.1–19**: The arrogant Assyrian empire will pass away and its capital, a city of rapine and blood, will fall because the LORD is against it. **4**: The LORD condemns Nineveh for treacherous and deceitful dealings with other nations. Compare Jeremiah's indictment of Jerusalem (Jer 5.1–3, 26–31) and the judgment against Babylon (Rome) in Rev 17.1–6; 18.1–24. **5–7**: Such immorality is an offense to God and to the nations and will not go unpunished.

**3.8**: The Egyptian capital *Thebes* (Hebrew, No-amon) had been captured by the Assyrians themselves in 663 B.C. **10**: Ps 137.8–9.

14 Draw water for the siege,
strengthen your forts;
trample the clay,
tread the mortar,
take hold of the brick mold!
15 There the fire will devour you,
the sword will cut you off.
It will devour you like the locust.

Multiply yourselves like the locust,
multiply like the grasshopper!
16 You increased your merchants
more than the stars of the heavens.
The locust sheds its skin and flies away.
17 Your guards are like grasshoppers,
your scribes like swarms[p]
of locusts
settling on the fences
on a cold day—
when the sun rises, they fly away;
no one knows where they have gone.

18 Your shepherds are asleep,
O king of Assyria;
your nobles slumber.
Your people are scattered on the mountains
with no one to gather them.
19 There is no assuaging your hurt,
your wound is mortal.
All who hear the news about you
clap their hands over you.
For who has ever escaped
your endless cruelty?

*p* Meaning of Heb uncertain

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**3.14–15**: Nahum's warnings are satirical. for Nineveh is already doomed. **15**: *Locust* indicates both vast multitudes and destructive swarms. **18**: *Shepherds,* ruling officials (compare Zech 11.4–17 n.). **19**: *Clap their hands,* in derision (Lam 2.15; Job 27.23). *Who has ever escaped,* compare Isa 37.10–13.

# *Habakkuk*

In the present book of Habakkuk at least three distinct literary forms can be recognized. The section 1.2–2.5 is constructed as a dialogue between the prophet and God; the next section (2.6–20), consisting of five woes against a wicked nation, is cast in classical prophetic style; and ch 3 is a lengthy poem, similar in structure to the Psalms and in its final form obviously meant for liturgical use. Moreover, various historical allusions discernible in the three sections point to different periods. These materials, therefore, may not originally have been a unit. But they are connected by the common theme of theodicy (justification of the ways of God) and now appear as the work of a Hebrew prophet who lived during the height of Babylonian power, most likely in the decade 608–598 B.C.

Although a certain Habakkuk appears in the apocryphal story of Bel and the Dragon, nothing is known about the life of the Old Testament prophet, not even his father's name. His thought, however, is laid bare by the searching questions he asks.

The author is confronting honestly the profoundly disturbing problem of why a just God is "silent when the wicked swallow those more righteous than they" (1.13). To this perennial question the prophet receives an answer that is eternally valid: God is still sovereign, and in God's own way and at the proper time will deal with the wicked; "but the righteous shall live by their faith" (2.4).

*The prophet's complaint*

1 The oracle that the prophet Habakkuk saw.

2 O LORD, how long shall I cry
for help,
and you will not listen?
Or cry to you "Violence!"
and you will not save?
3 Why do you make me see
wrongdoing
and look at trouble?
Destruction and violence are
before me;
strife and contention arise.
4 So the law becomes slack
and justice never prevails.
The wicked surround the
righteous—
therefore judgment comes forth
perverted.

5 Look at the nations, and see!
Be astonished! Be astounded!
For a work is being done in
your days
that you would not believe if
you were told.
6 For I am rousing the Chaldeans,
that fierce and impetuous nation,
who march through the breadth of
the earth
to seize dwellings not their
own.
7 Dread and fearsome are they;
their justice and dignity proceed
from themselves.
8 Their horses are swifter than
leopards,
more menacing than wolves
at dusk;
their horses charge.
Their horsemen come from
far away;
they fly like an eagle swift
to devour.
9 They all come for violence,
with faces pressing[a] forward;
they gather captives like sand.
10 At kings they scoff,
and of rulers they make sport.
They laugh at every fortress,
and heap up earth to take it.
11 Then they sweep by like the wind;
they transgress and become
guilty;
their own might is their god!

12 Are you not from of old,
O LORD my God, my Holy
One?
You[b] shall not die.
O LORD, you have marked them
for judgment;
and you, O Rock, have
established them for
punishment.
13 Your eyes are too pure to
behold evil,

*a* Meaning of Heb uncertain *b* Ancient Heb tradition: MT *We*

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**1.1: Title.** *Oracle,* see Nah 1.1 n.

**1.2–2.5: A dialogue in two cycles** (1.2–11; 1.12–2.5), between the prophet and God, raising the question of the LORD's just government of the world.

**1.2–11: The first cycle. 2–4:** Habakkuk protests that God neither hears nor acts (compare Ps 22.1–2) and thereby negates *law* and *justice.* This section may originally have been concerned with unrighteous members of the Israelite community; in its present context it is directed against the Chaldeans (vv. 6–11, 15–17). **2:** Ps 13.1–2; Jer 14.9; Rev 6.9–10. **3:** Jer 20.8, 10. **4:** Ps 119.126; Isa 59.12–14; Jer 12.1–4.

**1.5–11:** The LORD replies that the Chaldeans, wicked as they are, are the instrument of God's own choosing (Isa 10.5–27; 41.2–3; 42.24; 44.28; 45.1–6; Jer 5.14–19; 27.6–7; ch 51). **5:** Quoted in Acts 13.41. **6:** The *Chaldeans,* or neo-Babylonians, ruled the ancient Near East from 612 to 539 B.C. (see Introduction to Nahum). **7–11:** This tyrannical nation administers a *justice* all its own and worships its own *might.*

**1.12–2.5: The second cycle.** Habakkuk asks how long the Holy One will look on while the faithless persecute those more righteous than they; he then takes his *stand* to receive the LORD's answer. **12:** *Rock,* a metaphor frequently applied to God (Deut 32.4, 18, 30, 31; 2 Sam 23.3; Pss 18.2, 31; 92.15; 95.1; Isa 30.29; and elsewhere). **13:** The heart of Habakkuk's problem (see Ps 5.4–6).

and you cannot look on
wrongdoing;
why do you look on the
treacherous,
and are silent when the wicked
swallow
those more righteous than they?
14 You have made people like the
fish of the sea,
like crawling things that have
no ruler.

15 The enemy[c] brings all of them up
with a hook;
he drags them out with his net,
he gathers them in his seine;
so he rejoices and exults.
16 Therefore he sacrifices to his net
and makes offerings to his seine;
for by them his portion is lavish,
and his food is rich.
17 Is he then to keep on emptying
his net,
and destroying nations without
mercy?

2 I will stand at my watchpost,
and station myself on the
rampart;
I will keep watch to see what he
will say to me,
and what he[d] will answer
concerning my complaint.
2 Then the LORD answered me
and said:
Write the vision;
make it plain on tablets,
so that a runner may read it.
3 For there is still a vision for the
appointed time;
it speaks of the end, and does
not lie.
If it seems to tarry, wait for it;
it will surely come, it will
not delay.
4 Look at the proud!
Their spirit is not right in them,
but the righteous live by
their faith.[e]
5 Moreover, wealth[f] is treacherous;
the arrogant do not endure.
They open their throats wide
as Sheol;
like Death they never have
enough.
They gather all nations for
themselves,
and collect all peoples as
their own.

6 Shall not everyone taunt such people and, with mocking riddles, say about them,
"Alas for you who heap up what
is not your own!"
How long will you load
yourselves with goods
taken in pledge?
7 Will not your own creditors
suddenly rise,
and those who make you
tremble wake up?
Then you will be booty for
them.
8 Because you have plundered many
nations,

*c* Heb *He* *d* Syr: Heb *I* *e* Or *faithfulness*
*f* Other Heb Mss read *wine*

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**2.1**: The *watchpost* indicates both the prophet's eager desire for, and confidence in, the LORD's reply (Pss 5.3; 130.5–6; Isa 21.8; Hos 9.8). **2–5**: The LORD responds with the assurance that although the prophet may not see its final issue, the divine justice is inexorable and will come in due time; in the meanwhile the *righteous* must *live* faithfully. **2**: The LORD's answer is to be as *plain* as a highway sign (Isa 8.1; Rev 1.19). **3**: Num 23.19; Dan 8.19; 2 Pet 3.8–10; Heb 10.37. **4**: The heart of the matter is that the *righteous* who are faithful to God have power to *live* but the *proud* (i.e. unrighteous) *do not endure*. Here the contrast is primarily between Israelites and Chaldeans; but the verse has, properly, received wider application (Rom 1.17; Gal 3.11; Heb 10.38–39).

**2.6–20**: **The five woes.** These are directed against a nation that plunders *peoples*, obtains *gain* by violence, builds towns *with blood*, shamelessly degrades its *neighbors*, and *trusts* in *idols*. Applied originally to the Assyrians, Babylonians, or Macedonians, the woes

all that survive of the peoples
shall plunder you—
because of human bloodshed, and violence to the earth,
to cities and all who live in them.

9 "Alas for you who get evil gain for your houses,
setting your nest on high
to be safe from the reach of harm!"
10 You have devised shame for your house
by cutting off many peoples;
you have forfeited your life.
11 The very stones will cry out from the wall,
and the plaster[g] will respond from the woodwork.

12 "Alas for you who build a town by bloodshed,
and found a city on iniquity!"
13 Is it not from the LORD of hosts
that peoples labor only to feed the flames,
and nations weary themselves for nothing?
14 But the earth will be filled
with the knowledge of the glory of the LORD,
as the waters cover the sea.

15 "Alas for you who make your neighbors drink,
pouring out your wrath[h] until they are drunk,
in order to gaze on their nakedness!"
16 You will be sated with contempt instead of glory.
Drink, you yourself, and stagger![i]
The cup in the LORD's right hand will come around to you,
and shame will come upon your glory!
17 For the violence done to Lebanon will overwhelm you;
the destruction of the animals will terrify you—[j]
because of human bloodshed and violence to the earth,
to cities and all who live in them.

18 What use is an idol
once its maker has shaped it—
a cast image, a teacher of lies?
For its maker trusts in what has been made,
though the product is only an idol that cannot speak!
19 Alas for you who say to the wood, "Wake up!"
to silent stone, "Rouse yourself!"
Can it teach?
See, it is gold and silver plated,
and there is no breath in it at all.

20 But the LORD is in his holy temple;
let all the earth keep silence before him!

3 A prayer of the prophet Habakkuk according to Shigionoth.

2 O LORD, I have heard of your renown,
and I stand in awe, O LORD, of your work.
In our own time revive it;

*g* Or *beam* *h* Or *poison* *i* Q Ms Gk: MT *be uncircumcised* *j* Gk Syr: Meaning of Heb uncertain

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have universal reference, indicting all human tyranny. **14**: Isa 11.9. **20**: Ps 11.4; Zeph 1.7; Zech 2.13.

**3.1–19**: **Habakkuk's prayer.** This is really a hymn, extolling the marching forth of the LORD in victory *to save* his *people* (v. 13). This magnificent poem exhibits the characteristics of a psalm, including liturgical directions, and was probably added later, possibly from the circles of cultic prophecy (see Introduction to

in our own time make it known;
in wrath may you remember mercy.

3 God came from Teman,
the Holy One from Mount Paran. *Selah*
His glory covered the heavens,
and the earth was full of his praise.
4 The brightness was like the sun;
rays came forth from his hand,
where his power lay hidden.
5 Before him went pestilence,
and plague followed close behind.
6 He stopped and shook the earth;
he looked and made the nations tremble.
The eternal mountains were shattered;
along his ancient pathways
the everlasting hills sank low.
7 I saw the tents of Cushan under affliction;
the tent-curtains of the land of Midian trembled.
8 Was your wrath against the rivers,[k] O LORD?
Or your anger against the rivers,[k]
or your rage against the sea,[l]
when you drove your horses,
your chariots to victory?
9 You brandished your naked bow,
sated[m] were the arrows at your command.[n] *Selah*
You split the earth with rivers.
10 The mountains saw you,
and writhed;
a torrent of water swept by;
the deep gave forth its voice.
The sun[o] raised high its hands;
11 the moon[p] stood still in its exalted place,
at the light of your arrows speeding by,
at the gleam of your flashing spear.
12 In fury you trod the earth,
in anger you trampled nations.
13 You came forth to save your people,
to save your anointed.
You crushed the head of the wicked house,
laying it bare from foundation to roof.[n] *Selah*
14 You pierced with their[pp] own arrows the head[q] of his warriors,[r]
who came like a whirlwind to scatter us,[s]
gloating as if ready to devour the poor who were in hiding.
15 You trampled the sea with your horses,
churning the mighty waters.

16 I hear, and I tremble within;
my lips quiver at the sound.
Rottenness enters into my bones,
and my steps tremble[t] beneath me.
I wait quietly for the day of calamity
to come upon the people who attack us.

17 Though the fig tree does not blossom,
and no fruit is on the vines;
though the produce of the olive fails,

*k* Or *against River* *l* Or *against Sea*
*m* Cn: Heb *oaths* *n* Meaning of Heb uncertain *o* Heb *It* *p* Heb *sun, moon*
*pp* Heb *his* *q* Or *leader* *r* Vg Compare Gk Syr: Meaning of Heb uncertain *s* Heb *me*
*t* Cn Compare Gk: Meaning of Heb uncertain

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Joel). *Shigionoth, Selah,* and *choirmaster* are technical terms in the Psalter (Pss 7, title; 4, title).

**3.3, 7:** God appears from the region of Sinai and marches toward Edom, as at the Exodus (Deut 33.2; Judg 5.4). **8b:** Deut 33.26.

**3.13:** *Anointed* indicates either the king or the nation. **13:** *Your anointed,* i.e. the king of

and the fields yield no food;
though the flock is cut off from the fold,
and there is no herd in the stalls,
18 yet I will rejoice in the LORD;
I will exult in the God of my salvation.
19 GOD, the Lord, is my strength;
he makes my feet like the feet of a deer,
and makes me tread upon the heights.[u]

To the leader: with stringed[v] instruments.

*u* Heb *my heights* *v* Heb *my stringed*

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Judah. **18**: The psalm reaches its height by rejoicing in the LORD as the saving God (Pss 25.5; 27.1; 68.19–20) and thus exhibits a clear thematic connection with chs 1–2 (see also 3.12–14, 16).

# *Zephaniah*

The superscription to Zephaniah's book traces his ancestry back to Hezekiah and dates his ministry in the reign of Josiah (640–609 B.C.). Since the name Hezekiah is uncommon in the Old Testament, here it perhaps refers to the famous Judean king (715–687 B.C.), who was favorably influenced by the preaching of Isaiah and Micah. Zephaniah's intimate knowledge of Jerusalem and its court circles, his failure to denounce the king personally, and the absence of any concern with the poor of the land, may support the inference that he was of royal descent.

His condemnation of the corrupt practices and religious perversions (1.4–6, 8, 9, 12; 3.1–3, 7), officially legislated against by Deuteronomy, suggests that Zephaniah prophesied before Josiah's reforms of 621 B.C. (2 Kings ch 23). The allusion to imminent threat from the north (see 1.10 n.), perhaps the barbaric Scythian hordes, further suggests the decade about 630 for Zephaniah's public ministry.

The book can be divided into three sections: Chapters 1.2–2.3 proclaim doom on Judah for its religious syncretism, in the form of the destructive day of the LORD, which is "near and hastening fast." Chapter 2 (vv. 4–15) extends the divine judgment to other nations (especially Israel's ancient enemies), which are also guilty; however, a humble seeking after righteousness may mitigate the wrath of that day. Chapter 3, after condemning Jerusalem (vv. 1–7), promises comfort and consolation to those who wait patiently for the LORD and serve God "with one accord." The inhabitants of Jerusalem shall rejoice that the LORD their King is in their midst to save them and gather them home (3.20).

*The coming judgment on Judah*

1 The word of the LORD that came to Zephaniah son of Cushi son of Gedaliah son of Amariah son of Hezekiah, in the days of King Josiah son of Amon of Judah.

2 I will utterly sweep away
everything
from the face of the earth, says
the LORD.
3 I will sweep away humans and
animals;
I will sweep away the birds of
the air
and the fish of the sea.
I will make the wicked stumble.[a]
I will cut off humanity
from the face of the earth, says
the LORD.
4 I will stretch out my hand against
Judah,
and against all the inhabitants of
Jerusalem;
and I will cut off from this place
every remnant of Baal
and the name of the idolatrous
priests;[b]
5 those who bow down on the roofs
to the host of the heavens;
those who bow down and swear
to the LORD,
but also swear by Milcom;[c]
6 those who have turned back from
following the LORD,
who have not sought the LORD
or inquired of him.
7 Be silent before the Lord GOD!
For the day of the LORD is
at hand;
the LORD has prepared a sacrifice,
he has consecrated his guests.
8 And on the day of the LORD's
sacrifice
I will punish the officials and the
king's sons
and all who dress themselves in
foreign attire.
9 On that day I will punish
all who leap over the threshold,
who fill their master's house
with violence and fraud.

10 On that day, says the LORD,
a cry will be heard from the
Fish Gate,
a wail from the Second Quarter,
a loud crash from the hills.
11 The inhabitants of the Mortar
wail,
for all the traders have perished;
all who weigh out silver are
cut off.
12 At that time I will search
Jerusalem with lamps,
and I will punish the people
who rest complacently[d] on
their dregs,
those who say in their hearts,

*a* Cn: Heb *sea, and those who cause the wicked to stumble* *b* Compare Gk: Heb *the idolatrous priests with the priests* *c* Gk Mss Syr Vg: Heb *Malcam* (or, *their king*) *d* Heb *who thicken*

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**1.1: Superscription:** *The word of the* LORD, see Hos 1.1 n. Three others in the Old Testament are named *Zephaniah* (2 Kings 25.18; 1 Chr 6.36; Zech 6.10, 14). Elsewhere *Cushi* means "Ethiopian" or "Cushite."

**1.2–6: The threat of universal destruction** caused by Judah's religious syncretism. Zephaniah vigorously condemns the adulteration of the pure worship of the LORD with elements of Canaanite (*Baal*), Ammonite (*Milcom*), and Assyrian (*host of the heavens*) religions. **2–3:** *Humans, humanity,* and *earth* are alliterative in Hebrew, as in Gen ch 2 (see Gen 2.7 n.), suggesting the negation of creation. *Says the* LORD, see Am 1.3 n.

**1.7–9: Court officials and royal family will be punished** *on the day of the* LORD's *sacrifice.* **7:** *Prepared a sacrifice,* i.e. a slaughter of sinners. **9:** *Leap over the threshold,* a pagan religious practice (1 Sam 5.5 n.).

**1.10–13: Merchants and traders will be cut off** and the religiously indifferent will be desolate *on that day.* **10:** The enemy will approach Jerusalem from the north, first through *the Fish Gate* (Neh 3.1–6; 12.39; compare Jer 1.13–16). *Second Quarter,* a section of Jerusalem (2 Kings 22.14). **11:** *Traders,* literally, "people of Canaan." **12:** *Rest complacently* (literally "thicken," note *d*) *on their dregs,* a figure drawn from wine-making to portray indolence. If the wine is not stirred up while it is fermenting, it becomes thick and lacks strength (see also Jer 48.11).

"The LORD will not do good,
nor will he do harm."
13 Their wealth shall be plundered,
and their houses laid waste.
Though they build houses,
they shall not inhabit them;
though they plant vineyards,
they shall not drink wine
from them.

14 The great day of the LORD is near,
near and hastening fast;
the sound of the day of the LORD
is bitter,
the warrior cries aloud there.
15 That day will be a day of wrath,
a day of distress and anguish,
a day of ruin and devastation,
a day of darkness and gloom,
a day of clouds and thick
darkness,
16 a day of trumpet blast and
battle cry
against the fortified cities
and against the lofty
battlements.

17 I will bring such distress upon
people
that they shall walk like
the blind;
because they have sinned against
the LORD,
their blood shall be poured out
like dust,
and their flesh like dung.
18 Neither their silver nor their gold
will be able to save them
on the day of the LORD's wrath;
in the fire of his passion
the whole earth shall be
consumed;
for a full, a terrible end
he will make of all the
inhabitants of the earth.

2 Gather together, gather,
O shameless nation,
2 before you are driven away
like the drifting chaff,[e]
before there comes upon you
the fierce anger of the LORD,
before there comes upon you
the day of the LORD's wrath.
3 Seek the LORD, all you humble of
the land,
who do his commands;
seek righteousness, seek humility;
perhaps you may be hidden
on the day of the LORD's wrath.
4 For Gaza shall be deserted,
and Ashkelon shall become a
desolation;
Ashdod's people shall be driven
out at noon,
and Ekron shall be uprooted.

5 Ah, inhabitants of the seacoast,
you nation of the Cherethites!
The word of the LORD is
against you,
O Canaan, land of the
Philistines;
and I will destroy you until no
inhabitant is left.
6 And you, O seacoast, shall be
pastures,
meadows for shepherds
and folds for flocks.
7 The seacoast shall become the
possession
of the remnant of the house
of Judah,

*e* Cn Compare Gk Syr: Heb *before a decree is born; like chaff a day has passed away*

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**1.14–18: The day of the LORD is at hand,** a day of *wrath* and *ruin,* of *distress* and *devastation.* On this day neither *silver nor gold* shall *save* sinners from the *fire* of the LORD's zeal. Zephaniah elaborates the preaching of Amos (Am 5.18–20; 8.9–14) that the day of the LORD will be darkness and not light, woe and not weal (Isa 45.7) upon Israel as well as the Gentiles (see also Isa 13.9–16; Ezek 7.19; Joel 1.15; 2.1–2). **18:** *End,* compare Ezek 7.2–7.

**2.1–3: The humble of the land who seek the LORD in righteousness** *may be hidden* from God's *fierce anger.* **3:** *Seek,* Isa 55.6–9; Am 5.6–7. *Humble,* compare 3.12–13.

**2.4–15: Against the nations. 4–7:** The Philistines shall be desolated because *the word*

on which they shall pasture,
and in the houses of Ashkelon
they shall lie down at evening.
For the LORD their God will be
mindful of them
and restore their fortunes.

8 I have heard the taunts of Moab
and the revilings of the
Ammonites,
how they have taunted my people
and made boasts against
their territory.
9 Therefore, as I live, says the LORD
of hosts,
the God of Israel,
Moab shall become like Sodom
and the Ammonites like
Gomorrah,
a land possessed by nettles and
salt pits,
and a waste forever.
The remnant of my people shall
plunder them,
and the survivors of my nation
shall possess them.
10 This shall be their lot in return for
their pride,
because they scoffed and boasted
against the people of the LORD
of hosts.
11 The LORD will be terrible
against them;
he will shrivel all the gods of
the earth,
and to him shall bow down,
each in its place,
all the coasts and islands of
the nations.

12 You also, O Ethiopians,[f]
shall be killed by my sword.

13 And he will stretch out his hand
against the north,
and destroy Assyria;
and he will make Nineveh a
desolation,
a dry waste like the desert.
14 Herds shall lie down in it,
every wild animal;[g]
the desert owl[h] and the
screech owl[h]
shall lodge on its capitals;
the owl[i] shall hoot at the
window,
the raven[j] croak on the
threshold;
for its cedar work will be
laid bare.
15 Is this the exultant city
that lived secure,
that said to itself,
"I am, and there is no one else"?
What a desolation it has become,
a lair for wild animals!
Everyone who passes by it
hisses and shakes the fist.

3 Ah, soiled, defiled,
oppressing city!
2 It has listened to no voice;
it has accepted no correction.
It has not trusted in the LORD;
it has not drawn near to its
God.

3 The officials within it
are roaring lions;
its judges are evening wolves
that leave nothing until
the morning.
4 Its prophets are reckless,
faithless persons;
its priests have profaned what
is sacred,

*f* Or *Nubians*; Heb *Cushites* *g* Tg Compare Gk: Heb *nation* *h* Meaning of Heb uncertain *i* Cn: Heb *a voice* *j* Gk Vg: Heb *desolation*

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*of the* LORD is against them (see Joel 3.4–8). **8–11**: The Moabites and Ammonites, traditional enemies of Israel who lived in Transjordan, shall be annihilated, becoming *like Sodom* and *Gomorrah* (Isa chs 15–16; 25.10–12; Jer 48.1–49.6; Ezek 25.8–11; Am 1.13–2.3). **9**: Gen 19.24–28, 30–38.

**2.12–15**: The Ethiopians shall be slain, and the Assyrians humiliated because of their arrogance (Isa 10.5–34). **12**: Isa ch 18. **14**: The Hebrew text is uncertain. **15**: See Nah 3.4 n. *Hisses,* to ward off a similar fate (Jer 18.16).

**3.1–7**: **Woe to Jerusalem,** because the *officials, judges, prophets,* and *priests* are *corrupt*

they have done violence to
the law.
5 The LORD within it is righteous;
he does no wrong.
Every morning he renders his
judgment,
each dawn without fail;
but the unjust knows no shame.

6 I have cut off nations;
their battlements are in ruins;
I have laid waste their streets
so that no one walks in them;
their cities have been made
desolate,
without people, without
inhabitants.
7 I said, "Surely the city[k] will
fear me,
it will accept correction;
it will not lose sight[l]
of all that I have brought
upon it."
But they were the more eager
to make all their deeds corrupt.

8 Therefore wait for me, says
the LORD,
for the day when I arise as
a witness.
For my decision is to gather
nations,
to assemble kingdoms,
to pour out upon them my
indignation,
all the heat of my anger;
for in the fire of my passion
all the earth shall be consumed.

9 At that time I will change the
speech of the peoples
to a pure speech,
that all of them may call on the
name of the LORD
and serve him with one accord.
10 From beyond the rivers of
Ethiopia[m]
my suppliants, my scattered
ones,
shall bring my offering.

11 On that day you shall not be put
to shame
because of all the deeds by
which you have rebelled
against me;
for then I will remove from
your midst
your proudly exultant ones,
and you shall no longer be
haughty
in my holy mountain.
12 For I will leave in the midst of
you
a people humble and lowly.
They shall seek refuge in the name
of the LORD—
13 the remnant of Israel;
they shall do no wrong
and utter no lies,
nor shall a deceitful tongue
be found in their mouths.
Then they will pasture and
lie down,
and no one shall make them
afraid.

14 Sing aloud, O daughter Zion;
shout, O Israel!
Rejoice and exult with all
your heart,
O daughter Jerusalem!
15 The LORD has taken away the
judgments against you,

*k* Heb *it* *l* Gk Syr: Heb *its dwelling will not be cut off* *m* Or *Nubia*; Heb *Cush*

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and do not fear the *righteous* LORD, though God has continually warned them (compare Am 4.6–12).

**3.8–13: The nations will be converted and a righteous remnant will be left in Israel. 9**: The gift of *a pure speech* symbolizes fidelity (Isa 6.5–7), removes the curse of Babel (Gen 11.1–9), and, for Christians, anticipates Pentecost (Acts 2.1–11). **13**: Ezek 34.13–16; Zech 8.3, 16.

**3.14–20: The glorious gospel of salvation,** promising the joy of restoration to Jerusalem. This passage is generally held to be a later addition. **14–15**: These verses resemble a psalm of the enthronement of the LORD (compare Pss 47; 97). **14**: Zech 9.9. **15**: Isa 12.6;

*A song of joy*

he has turned away your
enemies.
The king of Israel, the LORD, is in
your midst;
you shall fear disaster no more.
16 On that day it shall be said to
Jerusalem:
Do not fear, O Zion;
do not let your hands grow
weak.
17 The LORD, your God, is in
your midst,
a warrior who gives victory;
he will rejoice over you with
gladness,
he will renew you[n] in his love;
he will exult over you with
loud singing
18 as on a day of festival.[o]
I will remove disaster from you,[p]
so that you will not bear
reproach for it.
19 I will deal with all your oppressors
at that time.
And I will save the lame
and gather the outcast,
and I will change their shame
into praise
and renown in all the earth.
20 At that time I will bring you
home,
at the time when I gather you;
for I will make you renowned
and praised
among all the peoples of
the earth,
when I restore your fortunes
before your eyes, says the LORD.

*n* Gk Syr: Heb *he will be silent* *o* Gk Syr: Meaning of Heb uncertain *p* Cn: Heb *I will remove from you; they were*

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40.2; 41.10. **17**: Ex 15.3; Isa 12.2; 62.5. **19–20**: The major elements of post-exilic eschatology are found here: destruction of the enemy (Ob 15, 16; Mic 5.9; Zech 12.9), ingathering of the exiles (Mic 4.6–7; Zech 10.8–12), and return to the Holy Land (Isa 62.1–5; Zech 8.7–8). By making Israel *renowned* (literally "a name") *and praised among all the peoples of the earth,* the LORD fulfills the longstanding promise to the patriarchs (Gen 12.2–3).

# *Haggai*

When Cyrus conquered Babylon, he not only published a decree (538 B.C.) allowing the captive Jews to return to Palestine but also encouraged them to rebuild the temple at Jerusalem (Ezra 1.1–4). It is possible that under Sheshbazzar's leadership rebuilding was immediately attempted. By 520 B.C., however, no significant progress was evident. A successful effort was then begun, and the new temple was completed in the spring of 515 B.C.

Assisted by Zechariah (see Introduction to Zechariah), the man principally responsible for this major accomplishment was the prophet Haggai. In five addresses, dating from the sixth through the ninth months of 520 B.C., Haggai exhorted Zerubbabel the governor and Joshua the high priest, the joint leaders of the Judean community, to assume official leadership in the reconstruction of the temple, and urged the priests to purify the cultic worship. These twin projects were, first of all, urgent practical steps toward unifying the disrupted religious life of the community. But Haggai saw them also as necessary preparations for the messianic age. Upon the completion of these enterprises, the wonderful era foreseen by earlier prophets would come; for God would bless this people with fruitfulness and prosperity, overthrow the Gentiles, and establish Zerubbabel as the messianic king on the throne of David.

*The command to rebuild the temple*

1 In the second year of King Darius, in the sixth month, on the first day of the month, the word of the LORD came by the prophet Haggai to Zerubbabel son of Shealtiel, governor of Judah, and to Joshua son of Jehozadak, the high priest: 2Thus says the LORD of hosts: These people say the time has not yet come to rebuild the LORD's house. 3Then the word of the LORD came by the prophet Haggai, saying: 4Is it a time for you yourselves to live in your paneled houses, while this house lies in ruins? 5Now therefore thus says the LORD of hosts: Consider how you have fared. 6You have sown much, and harvested little; you eat, but you never have enough; you drink, but you never have your fill; you clothe yourselves, but no one is warm; and you that earn wages earn wages to put them into a bag with holes.

7 Thus says the LORD of hosts: Consider how you have fared. 8Go up to the hills and bring wood and build the house, so that I may take pleasure in it and be honored, says the LORD. 9You have looked for much, and, lo, it came to little; and when you brought it home, I blew it away. Why? says the LORD of hosts. Because my house lies in ruins, while all of you hurry off to your own houses. 10Therefore the heavens above you have withheld the dew, and the earth has withheld its produce. 11And I have called for a drought on the land and the hills, on the grain, the new wine, the oil, on what the soil produces, on human beings and animals, and on all their labors.

12 Then Zerubbabel son of Shealtiel, and Joshua son of Jehozadak, the high priest, with all the remnant of the people, obeyed the voice of the LORD their God, and the words of the prophet Haggai, as the LORD their God had sent him; and the people feared the LORD. 13Then Haggai, the messenger of the LORD, spoke to the people with the LORD's message, saying, I am with you, says the LORD. 14And the LORD stirred up the spirit of Zerubbabel son of Shealtiel, governor of Judah, and the spirit of Joshua son of Jehozadak, the high priest, and the spirit of all the remnant of the people; and they came and worked on the house of the LORD of hosts, their God, 15on the twenty-fourth day of the month, in the sixth month.

2 In the second year of King Darius, 1in the seventh month, on the twenty-first day of the month, the word of the LORD came by the prophet Haggai, saying: 2Speak now to Zerubbabel son of Shealtiel, governor of Judah, and to Joshua son of Jehozadak, the high priest, and to the remnant of the people, and say, 3Who is left among you that saw this house in its former glory? How does it look to you now? Is it not in your sight as nothing? 4Yet now take courage, O Zerubbabel, says the LORD; take courage, O Joshua, son of Jehozadak, the high priest; take courage, all you people of the land, says the LORD; work, for I am with you, says the LORD of hosts, 5according to the promise that I made you when you came out of Egypt. My spirit abides among you; do not fear. 6For thus says the LORD of hosts: Once again, in a

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**1.1–15a: Because the people have neglected the temple, God has punished them. 1:** *Darius* was king of the Persian empire from 521 to 485 B.C. *In the second year . . . in the sixth month,* mid-August to mid-September 520 B.C. *Haggai* means "festal." *Zerubbabel,* the grandson of Jehoiachin (2 Kings 24.8–17; 1 Chr 3.17), was a royal descent from David; as the Persian-appointed governor of Judah, he shared authority with *Joshua,* the high priest, who also had come from Babylon. **4:** The temple had been plundered and burned in 587 B.C. (2 Kings 25.8–17). **5–11:** The poor conditions in Judah were God's punishment for the neglect of the Temple. **15a:** It is best to regard this as the date for the oracle in 2.15–19, which originally may have stood at this point.

**1.15b–2.9: The new temple to be more splendid than the old. 2.1:** *The seventh month,* mid-September to mid-October. **3:** A few of the people then present may have seen Solomon's temple before its destruction. **5:** Haggai sees God's *spirit* standing in Israel's midst and is reminded of the Exodus (Ex 13.21–22; 14.19–20). **6:** Referred to and par-

little while, I will shake the heavens and the earth and the sea and the dry land; 7and I will shake all the nations, so that the treasure of all nations shall come, and I will fill this house with splendor, says the LORD of hosts. 8The silver is mine, and the gold is mine, says the LORD of hosts. 9The latter splendor of this house shall be greater than the former, says the LORD of hosts; and in this place I will give prosperity, says the LORD of hosts.

10 On the twenty-fourth day of the ninth month, in the second year of Darius, the word of the LORD came by the prophet Haggai, saying: 11Thus says the LORD of hosts: Ask the priests for a ruling: 12If one carries consecrated meat in the fold of one's garment, and with the fold touches bread, or stew, or wine, or oil, or any kind of food, does it become holy? The priests answered, "No." 13Then Haggai said, "If one who is unclean by contact with a dead body touches any of these, does it become unclean?" The priests answered, "Yes, it becomes unclean." 14Haggai then said, So is it with this people, and with this nation before me, says the LORD; and so with every work of their hands; and what they offer there is unclean. 15But now, consider what will come to pass from this day on. Before a stone was placed upon a stone in the LORD's temple, 16how did you fare?[a] When one came to a heap of twenty measures, there were but ten; when one came to the wine vat to draw fifty measures, there were but twenty. 17I struck you and all the products of your toil with blight and mildew and hail; yet you did not return to me, says the LORD. 18Consider from this day on, from the twenty-fourth day of the ninth month. Since the day that the foundation of the LORD's temple was laid, consider: 19Is there any seed left in the barn? Do the vine, the fig tree, the pomegranate, and the olive tree still yield nothing? From this day on I will bless you.

20 The word of the LORD came a second time to Haggai on the twenty-fourth day of the month: 21Speak to Zerubbabel, governor of Judah, saying, I am about to shake the heavens and the earth, 22and to overthrow the throne of kingdoms; I am about to destroy the strength of the kingdoms of the nations, and overthrow the chariots and their riders; and the horses and their riders shall fall, every one by the sword of a comrade. 23On that day, says the LORD of hosts, I will take you, O Zerubbabel my servant, son of Shealtiel, says the LORD, and make you like a signet ring; for I have chosen you, says the LORD of hosts.

*a* Gk: Heb *since they were*

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tially quoted in Heb 12.26. **7**: *Treasures of all nations;* compare Isa 40.14; 60.6; 61.6.

**2.10–14**: **The offering made by a defiled people is unclean. 10**: *The ninth month,* mid-November to mid-December. **14**: The people condemned here may be the Samaritans, who opposed the work of the post-exilic community (Ezra 4.1–5; Neh 4.7–8).

**2.15–19**: **When the foundation of the temple is laid, God will bless this needy, obedient people.** This section may have stood after 1.1–14. *The twenty-fourth day* (v. 18; see 1.15a n.) probably marks the laying of the foundation stone. **12–13**: From a ritual point of view, the *unclean* is more "contagious" than the consecrated, or clean. **17**: See Am 4.9. **18**: *Ninth,* probably error for "sixth" or a gloss. **19**: Good harvests were signs of God's favor; see Ps 128.

**2.20–23**: **When the LORD establishes the kingdom, Zerubbabel will be the messiah. 21**: Compare 2.6; Joel 3.16. **22**: *Overthrow the chariots,* God will again redeem this people, as at the Exodus (Ex 15.1). Haggai links Israel's earlier traditions with the coming messianic age. **23**: *My servant,* Num 12.7–8; 2 Sam 3.18; Isa 42.1; Jer 27.6; see Zech 3.8 n. *Signet ring,* compare Jer 22.24.

# *Zechariah*

Zechariah, whose prophecies date from 520 to 518 B.C. and are found in chapters 1–8, was contemporary with Haggai (Ezra 5.1; 6.14). He shared Haggai's zeal for a rebuilt temple, a purified community, and the coming of the messianic age (see Introduction to Haggai). Like Haggai also, Zechariah forms a link between earlier prophecy (especially Ezekiel) and mature apocalyptic thought (Dan chs 7–12). But Zechariah differs from his contemporary in the form and presentation of his message, employing the literary style of night visions and dialogues between God, seer, and interpreting angel. With him, therefore, both the form and imagery of Jewish apocalyptic thought are significantly developed.

Chapters 9–14, which nowhere claim to be from Zechariah, portray nothing of the early Persian period but speak rather of the Greeks (9.13). Instead of Joshua and Zerubbabel, unnamed shepherds lead the community. Instead of peace and rebuilding, there are expectations of universal warfare and the siege of Jerusalem. Style, vocabulary, and theological ideas differentiate these chapters from Zechariah's work. Although they may contain some earlier bits, they were written during the Greek period, principally in the fourth and third centuries B.C., by unknown authors. Since the eschatological and messianic themes found in the first section are here further elaborated, the authors are spiritual disciples of Zechariah. The pictures of the messianic Prince of Peace and the Good Shepherd smitten for the flock are used in the New Testament in order to describe the person and work of Jesus Christ.

1 In the eighth month, in the second year of Darius, the word of the LORD came to the prophet Zechariah son of Berechiah son of Iddo, saying: 2The LORD was very angry with your ancestors. 3Therefore say to them, Thus says the LORD of hosts: Return to me, says the LORD of hosts, and I will return to you, says the LORD of hosts. 4Do not be like your ancestors, to whom the former prophets proclaimed, "Thus says the LORD of hosts, Return from your evil ways and from your evil deeds." But they did not hear or heed me, says the LORD. 5Your ancestors, where are they? And the prophets, do they live forever? 6But my words and my statutes, which I commanded my servants the prophets, did they not overtake your ancestors? So they repented and said, "The LORD of hosts has dealt with us according to our ways and deeds, just as he planned to do."

7 On the twenty-fourth day of the eleventh month, the month of Shebat, in the second year of Darius, the word of the LORD came to the prophet Zechariah son of Berechiah son of Iddo; and Zechariah[a] said, 8In the night I saw a man riding on a red horse! He was standing among the myrtle trees in the glen; and behind him were red, sorrel, and white horses. 9Then I said, "What are these, my lord?" The angel who talked with me said to me, "I will show you what they are." 10So the man who was standing among the myrtle trees answered, "They are those whom the LORD has sent to patrol the earth." 11Then they spoke to the angel of the LORD who was standing among the myrtle trees, "We have patrolled the earth, and lo, the whole earth remains at peace." 12Then the angel of the LORD said, "O LORD of hosts, how long will you withhold mercy from Jerusalem and the cities of Judah, with which you have been angry these seventy years?" 13Then the LORD replied with gracious and comforting words to the angel who talked with me. 14So the angel who talked with me said to me, Proclaim this message: Thus says the LORD of hosts; I am very jealous for Jerusalem and for Zion. 15And I am extremely angry with the nations that are at ease; for while I was only a little angry, they made the disaster worse. 16Therefore, thus says the LORD, I have returned to Jerusalem with compassion; my house shall be built in it, says the LORD of hosts, and the measuring line shall be stretched out over Jerusalem. 17Proclaim further: Thus says the LORD of hosts: My cities shall again overflow with prosperity; the LORD will again comfort Zion and again choose Jerusalem.

18[b] And I looked up and saw four horns. 19I asked the angel who talked

*a* Heb *and he* *b* Ch 2.1 in Heb

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**1.1–6: Introduction: a call to repentance.** **1**: The first of three dates (see also 1.7; 7.1): mid-October to mid-November 520 B.C. *Zechariah,* meaning "The LORD is renowned," was the *son of* the priest *Iddo* (Ezra 5.1; 6.14; Neh 12.16). The presence of the phrase *son of Berechiah* is due probably to a scribal confusion with the son of Jeberechiah in Isa 8.2, with whom Zechariah the son of Jehoiada (2 Chr 24.20–22) is also confused in Mt 23.35. Zechariah had prophetic and priestly interests (see Introduction to Joel). **4**: The *prophets* had continually invited repentance (Isa 1.16–20; 30.15; 55.6–9; Jer 3.12, 22; 4.3–4; Hos 10.12; 14.1–7; Am 5.4, 6, 14). **6**: Both law (*statutes*) and prophecy (*words*) continue to be valid. *So they repented . . .*, perhaps an editorial addition (contrast 7.11).

**1.7–6.15: The word of the LORD to Zechariah in a series of eight "night visions."** There is a standard pattern: (*a*) vision, (*b*) question, (*c*) answer. **1.7**: Mid-January to mid-February, 519 B.C.

**1.8–17: The first vision: divine horsemen patrolling the earth.** **9**: *My lord,* i.e. *the angel.* **10**: Job 1.6–7; 2.1–2. **11**: *Remains at peace,* the catastrophic Day of Judgment has not yet appeared (compare v. 15; Hag 2.6). **12**: The *seventy years* refer without precision to the period from 587 to 519 B.C. (Jer 25.11; 29.10). **15**: Ps 123.4; Am 6.1. **17**: 8.3; Isa 44.26; 51.3; 54.8–10; Jer 31.38–39.

**1.18–21: The second vision: four horns and four smiths.** The *four horns* symbolize the powerful nations of the world (compare Ps 75.4, 5; Dan 7.19–27) which the *blacksmiths*

with me, "What are these?" And he answered me, "These are the horns that have scattered Judah, Israel, and Jerusalem." 20Then the LORD showed me four blacksmiths. 21And I asked, "What are they coming to do?" He answered, "These are the horns that scattered Judah, so that no head could be raised; but these have come to terrify them, to strike down the horns of the nations that lifted up their horns against the land of Judah to scatter its people."[c]

2[d] I looked up and saw a man with a measuring line in his hand. 2Then I asked, "Where are you going?" He answered me, "To measure Jerusalem, to see what is its width and what is its length." 3Then the angel who talked with me came forward, and another angel came forward to meet him, 4and said to him, "Run, say to that young man: Jerusalem shall be inhabited like villages without walls, because of the multitude of people and animals in it. 5For I will be a wall of fire all around it, says the LORD, and I will be the glory within it."

6 Up, up! Flee from the land of the north, says the LORD; for I have spread you abroad like the four winds of heaven, says the LORD. 7Up! Escape to Zion, you that live with daughter Babylon. 8For thus said the LORD of hosts (after his glory[e] sent me) regarding the nations that plundered you: Truly, one who touches you touches the apple of my eye.[f] 9See now, I am going to raise[g] my hand against them, and they shall become plunder for their own slaves. Then you will know that the LORD of hosts has sent me. 10Sing and rejoice, O daughter Zion! For lo, I will come and dwell in your midst, says the LORD. 11Many nations shall join themselves to the LORD on that day, and shall be my people; and I will dwell in your midst. And you shall know that the LORD of hosts has sent me to you. 12The LORD will inherit Judah as his portion in the holy land, and will again choose Jerusalem.

13 Be silent, all people, before the LORD; for he has roused himself from his holy dwelling.

3 Then he showed me the high priest Joshua standing before the angel of the LORD, and Satan[h] standing at his right hand to accuse him. 2And the LORD said to Satan,[h] "The LORD rebuke you, O Satan![h] The LORD who has chosen Jerusalem rebuke you! Is not this man a brand plucked from the fire?" 3Now Joshua was dressed with filthy clothes as he stood before the angel. 4The angel said to those who were standing before him, "Take off his filthy clothes." And to him he said, "See, I have taken your guilt away from you, and I will clothe you with festal apparel." 5And I said, "Let them put a clean turban on his

*c* Heb *it* *d* Ch 2.5 in Heb *e* Cn: Heb *after glory he* *f* Heb *his eye* *g* Or *wave* *h* Or *the Accuser*; Heb *the Adversary*

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(the LORD's agents of destruction) will scatter (Isa 54.16–17; Hag 2.21–22).

**2.1–5: The third vision: a man going to measure Jerusalem. 1**: *Measuring line,* see Ezek 40.3–4; Rev 11.1; 21.15–17. This measurement, as in Ezek 41.13, is part of the restoration, but the presence of the LORD, as at the Exodus, is what will afford true protection. **5**: God is Jerusalem's guard and glory (Isa 4.5 n.; Ezek 43.2–5).

**2.6–13: An appeal to the exiles. 6**: Babylonia is the *land of the north* (6.6, 8; Jer 3.18; 46.20; compare Jer 51.45–49). **8**: *Apple of my eye* indicates special favor and affection (Deut 32.10; see Ps 17.8 n.). **10**: Isa 54.1–3; 65.18–19; Zeph 3.14; Ezek 43.6–9. **11**: 8.20–23. Jerusalem will be the religious center of the world. **12**: This is the only Old Testament reference to Palestine as *the holy land.* The concept reappears in the Apocrypha (Wisdom of Solomon 12.3; 2 Macc 1.7). **13**: Hab 2.20; Zeph 1.7.

**3.1–10: The fourth vision: Joshua and Satan. 1**: *Joshua,* see Hag 1.1 n. In the Old Testament *Satan* (literally, "the Adversary") is not the incarnation of evil but a functionary of the heavenly court who accuses mortals of wrong (1 Chr 21.1; see Job 1.6–8 n.). God then acquits ("justifies") or condemns the defendant. **3–4**: *Filthy clothes* represent the sin of both priest and people. **5**: The *clean turban* (Ex 28.4) and *apparel* (Lev 8.1–9) symbolize ritual purity, in preparation for the advent of the Messiah. **7**: *Access,* to the heavenly courts;

head." So they put a clean turban on his head and clothed him with the apparel; and the angel of the LORD was standing by.

6 Then the angel of the LORD assured Joshua, saying 7"Thus says the LORD of hosts: If you will walk in my ways and keep my requirements, then you shall rule my house and have charge of my courts, and I will give you the right of access among those who are standing here. 8Now listen, Joshua, high priest, you and your colleagues who sit before you! For they are an omen of things to come: I am going to bring my servant the Branch. 9For on the stone that I have set before Joshua, on a single stone with seven facets, I will engrave its inscription, says the LORD of hosts, and I will remove the guilt of this land in a single day. 10On that day, says the LORD of hosts, you shall invite each other to come under your vine and fig tree."

4 The angel who talked with me came again, and wakened me, as one is wakened from sleep. 2He said to me, "What do you see?" And I said, "I see a lampstand all of gold, with a bowl on the top of it; there are seven lamps on it, with seven lips on each of the lamps that are on the top of it. 3And by it there are two olive trees, one on the right of the bowl and the other on its left." 4I said to the angel who talked with me, "What are these, my lord?" 5Then the angel who talked with me answered me, "Do you not know what these are?" I said, "No, my lord." 6He said to me, "This is the word of the LORD to Zerubbabel: Not by might, nor by power, but by my spirit, says the LORD of hosts. 7What are you, O great mountain? Before Zerubbabel you shall become a plain; and he shall bring out the top stone amid shouts of 'Grace, grace to it!' "

8 Moreover the word of the LORD came to me, saying, 9"The hands of Zerubbabel have laid the foundation of this house; his hands shall also complete it. Then you will know that the LORD of hosts has sent me to you. 10For whoever has despised the day of small things shall rejoice, and shall see the plummet in the hand of Zerubbabel.

"These seven are the eyes of the LORD, which range through the whole earth." 11Then I said to him, "What are these two olive trees on the right and the left of the lampstand?" 12And a second time I said to him, "What are these two branches of the olive trees, which pour out the oil[i] through the two golden pipes?" 13He said to me, "Do you not know what these are?" I said, "No, my lord." 14Then he said, "These are the two anointed ones who stand by the Lord of the whole earth."

5 Again I looked up and saw a flying scroll. 2And he said to me, "What do you see?" I answered, "I see a flying scroll; its length is twenty cubits, and its width ten cubits." 3Then he said to me, "This is the curse that goes out over the face of the whole land; for everyone who

*i* Cn: Heb *gold*

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Joshua will present Jerusalem's prayers to heaven. **8**: *The Branch,* a Davidic figure who is to usher in the messianic age (compare Ps 132.17; Isa 4.2; 11.1; Jer 23.5; 33.15), here refers to Zerubbabel (see 6.9–15 n.). **9**: *Stone* may symbolize Joshua's high-priesthood (Ex 28.9–12; see Zech 6.9–15 n.). **10**: Mic 4.4.

**4.1–14**: **The fifth vision: a golden lampstand and two olive trees.** This vision emphasizes the important positions held by Joshua and Zerubbabel (v. 14) in the restored Jewish community. **2**: Contrast Ex 25.31–40. The stand with seven lamps signifies God's presence in *the whole earth* (v. 10b; compare Rev 5.6).

**4.3, 11–14**: Rev 11.4. The *two olive trees* may provide oil for the lamps (v. 12), or merely flank them. **6–10a**: Through God's spirit, Zerubbabel will complete the temple. **12**: Perhaps a gloss; no pipes have been previously mentioned. **14**: *Anointed,* literally, "sons of oil," is not the usual designation for "messiah."

**5.1–4**: **The sixth vision: a flying scroll.** **1**: The *scroll* represents the word of God materialized (Ezek 2.9–3.3; Rev 10.8–11; see Jer 36.1–3). **2**: A cubit, about eighteen inches. **3**: The *curse* is to purify both civil and cultic life (compare Deut 27.14–26).

steals shall be cut off according to the writing on one side, and everyone who swears falsely[j] shall be cut off according to the writing on the other side. 4I have sent it out, says the LORD of hosts, and it shall enter the house of the thief, and the house of anyone who swears falsely by my name; and it shall abide in that house and consume it, both timber and stones."

5 Then the angel who talked with me came forward and said to me, "Look up and see what this is that is coming out." 6I said, "What is it?" He said, "This is a basket[k] coming out." And he said, "This is their iniquity[l] in all the land." 7Then a leaden cover was lifted, and there was a woman sitting in the basket![k] 8And he said, "This is Wickedness." So he thrust her back into the basket,[k] and pressed the leaden weight down on its mouth. 9Then I looked up and saw two women coming forward. The wind was in their wings; they had wings like the wings of a stork, and they lifted up the basket[k] between earth and sky. 10Then I said to the angel who talked with me, "Where are they taking the basket?"[k] 11He said to me, "To the land of Shinar, to build a house for it; and when this is prepared, they will set the basket[k] down there on its base."

6 And again I looked up and saw four chariots coming out from between two mountains—mountains of bronze. 2The first chariot had red horses, the second chariot black horses, 3the third chariot white horses, and the fourth chariot dappled gray[m] horses. 4Then I said to the angel who talked with me, "What are these, my lord?" 5The angel answered me, "These are the four winds[n] of heaven going out, after presenting themselves before the Lord of all the earth. 6The chariot with the black horses goes toward the north country, the white ones go toward the west country,[o] and the dappled ones go toward the south country." 7When the steeds came out, they were impatient to get off and patrol the earth. And he said, "Go, patrol the earth." So they patrolled the earth. 8Then he cried out to me, "Lo, those who go toward the north country have set my spirit at rest in the north country."

9 The word of the LORD came to me: 10Collect silver and gold[p] from the exiles—from Heldai, Tobijah, and Jedaiah—who have arrived from Babylon; and go the same day to the house of Josiah son of Zephaniah. 11Take the silver and gold and make a crown,[q] and set it on the head of the high priest Joshua son of Jehozadak; 12say to him: Thus says the LORD of hosts: Here is a man whose name is Branch: for he shall branch out in his place, and he shall build the temple of the LORD. 13It is he that shall build the temple of the LORD; he shall bear royal honor, and shall sit upon his throne and rule. There shall be a priest by his throne, with peaceful understanding between the two of them. 14And the crown[r] shall be in the care of Heldai,[s]

*j* The word *falsely* added from verse 4
*k* Heb *ephah* *l* Gk Compare Syr: Heb *their eye* *m* Compare Gk: Meaning of Heb uncertain *n* Or *spirits* *o* Cn: Heb *go after them* *p* Cn Compare verse 11: Heb lacks *silver and gold* *q* Gk Mss Syr Tg: Heb *crowns* *r* Gk Syr: Heb *crowns* *s* Syr Compare verse 10: Heb *Helem*

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**5.5–11: The seventh vision: a woman in a basket.** Judah will be purified by sending its sin, personified as a woman in a basket (literally, "ephah"), to Babylon, where the basket will be worshiped. **6:** *Basket,* here a container with the capacity of an ephah, about six gallons. **11:** *Shinar,* Babylonia (Gen 10.10; 11.2, 9; Dan 1.2). *House* here means temple. *On its base,* as though the basket were an image.

**6.1–8: The eighth vision: four chariots.** Although details are not clear, this vision probably refers to the inauguration of the messianic age with its judgment upon all the earth. **1–3:** See Rev 6.2–8. **8:** *North country,* Babylonia, see 2.6 n.

**6.9–15: The crowning of the messianic leader.** This section abounds with difficulties. Originally it probably directed the crowning of Zerubbabel as messianic king, but was revised to refer to Joshua. **11:** Zerubbabel should be read for, or perhaps along with, *Joshua.* **12:** *Branch* is a messianic designa-

Tobijah, Jedaiah, and Josiah[t] son of Zephaniah, as a memorial in the temple of the LORD.

15 Those who are far off shall come and help to build the temple of the LORD; and you shall know that the LORD of hosts has sent me to you. This will happen if you diligently obey the voice of the LORD your God.

7 In the fourth year of King Darius, the word of the LORD came to Zechariah on the fourth day of the ninth month, which is Chislev. 2Now the people of Bethel had sent Sharezer and Regem-melech and their men, to entreat the favor of the LORD, 3and to ask the priests of the house of the LORD of hosts and the prophets, "Should I mourn and practice abstinence in the fifth month, as I have done for so many years?" 4Then the word of the LORD of hosts came to me: 5Say to all the people of the land and the priests: When you fasted and lamented in the fifth month and in the seventh, for these seventy years, was it for me that you fasted? 6And when you eat and when you drink, do you not eat and drink only for yourselves? 7Were not these the words that the LORD proclaimed by the former prophets, when Jerusalem was inhabited and in prosperity, along with the towns around it, and when the Negeb and the Shephelah were inhabited?

8 The word of the LORD came to Zechariah, saying: 9Thus says the LORD of hosts: Render true judgments, show kindness and mercy to one another; 10do not oppress the widow, the orphan, the alien, or the poor; and do not devise evil in your hearts against one another. 11But they refused to listen, and turned a stubborn shoulder, and stopped their ears in order not to hear. 12They made their hearts adamant in order not to hear the law and the words that the LORD of hosts had sent by his spirit through the former prophets. Therefore great wrath came from the LORD of hosts. 13Just as, when I[u] called, they would not hear, so, when they called, I would not hear, says the LORD of hosts, 14and I scattered them with a whirlwind among all the nations that they had not known. Thus the land they left was desolate, so that no one went to and fro, and a pleasant land was made desolate.

8 The word of the LORD of hosts came to me, saying: 2Thus says the LORD of hosts: I am jealous for Zion with great jealousy, and I am jealous for her with great wrath. 3Thus says the LORD: I will return to Zion, and will dwell in the midst of Jerusalem; Jerusalem shall be called the faithful city, and the mountain of the LORD of hosts shall be called the holy mountain. 4Thus says the LORD of hosts: Old men and old women shall again sit in the streets of Jerusalem, each with staff in hand because of their great age. 5And the streets of the city shall be full of boys and girls playing in its streets. 6Thus says the LORD of hosts: Even though it seems impossible to the remnant of this people in these days, should it also seem impossible to me,

*t* Syr Compare verse 10: Heb *Hen* *u* Heb *he*

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tion (see 3.8 n.; Hag 2.20–23). **15**: The new age will see the return of the exiles, conversion of the Gentiles, and completion of the temple (8.20–23; Ob 19–21; Mic 2.12; 4.1–5, 6–8; Zeph 3.9–10, 20; Mal 1.11). This verse is probably an addition.

**7.1–14**: **An answer to an inquiry about fasting.** **1**: Mid-November to mid-December 518 B.C. **5**: The temple at Jerusalem was burned *in the fifth month* and Gedaliah the governor was murdered *in the seventh* (2 Kings 25.8–9, 25). *These seventy years,* see 1.12 n. **9–10**: This is the essence of prophetic moral teaching (Isa 1.16–17; 55.6–9; 58.6–12; Jer 7.5–7; Am 5.14–15, 21–24; Mic 6.8). **12**: Neh 9.3; Jer 5.3; 7.25–26; 11.10; Dan 9.11–14. **13**: Isa 1.15; Jer 7.13–15.

**8.1–23**: **The LORD will return to Zion and do good to Jerusalem and Judah.** Ten sections introduced by the words, *Thus says the LORD of hosts* (except in v. 3 where the words "of hosts" are not present). All of them deal with the messianic era. **2**: Joel 2.18 n. **3**: Isa 1.26; 11.9; 62.11–12; Jer 31.23. **4–5**: Isa 65.19–20. **7**: *East country* and *west country,* i.e. from all the lands of the dispersion. **8**: The

says the LORD of hosts? 7Thus says the LORD of hosts: I will save my people from the east country and from the west country; 8and I will bring them to live in Jerusalem. They shall be my people and I will be their God, in faithfulness and in righteousness.

9 Thus says the LORD of hosts: Let your hands be strong—you that have recently been hearing these words from the mouths of the prophets who were present when the foundation was laid for the rebuilding of the temple, the house of the LORD of hosts. 10For before those days there were no wages for people or for animals, nor was there any safety from the foe for those who went out or came in, and I set them all against one other. 11But now I will not deal with the remnant of this people as in the former days, says the LORD of hosts. 12For there shall be a sowing of peace; the vine shall yield its fruit, the ground shall give its produce, and the skies shall give their dew; and I will cause the remnant of this people to possess all these things. 13Just as you have been a cursing among the nations, O house of Judah and house of Israel, so I will save you and you shall be a blessing. Do not be afraid, but let your hands be strong.

14 For thus says the LORD of hosts: Just as I purposed to bring disaster upon you, when your ancestors provoked me to wrath, and I did not relent, says the LORD of hosts, 15so again I have purposed in these days to do good to Jerusalem and to the house of Judah; do not be afraid. 16These are the things that you shall do: Speak the truth to one another, render in your gates judgments that are true and make for peace, 17do not devise evil in your hearts against one another, and love no false oath; for all these are things that I hate, says the LORD.

18 The word of the LORD of hosts came to me, saying: 19Thus says the LORD of hosts: The fast of the fourth month, and the fast of the fifth, and the fast of the seventh, and the fast of the tenth, shall be seasons of joy and gladness, and cheerful festivals for the house of Judah: therefore love truth and peace.

20 Thus says the LORD of hosts: Peoples shall yet come, the inhabitants of many cities; 21the inhabitants of one city shall go to another, saying, "Come, let us go to entreat the favor of the LORD, and to seek the LORD of hosts; I myself am going." 22Many peoples and strong nations shall come to seek the LORD of hosts in Jerusalem, and to entreat the favor of the LORD. 23Thus says the LORD of hosts: In those days ten men from nations of every language shall take hold of a Jew, grasping his garment and saying, "Let us go with you, for we have heard that God is with you."

# 9

An Oracle.

The word of the LORD is against
the land of Hadrach
and will rest upon Damascus.
For to the LORD belongs the
capital[v] of Aram,[w]
as do all the tribes of Israel;
2 Hamath also, which borders on it,
Tyre and Sidon, though they
are very wise.

*v* Heb *eye* *w* Cn: Heb *of Adam* (or *of humankind*)

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covenant shall be reaffirmed (Ex 6.7; Jer 31.33). **9**: Hag 1.6–11; 2.4–9, 15–19. **13**: Jer 29.18; Gen 12.2–3. **14–17**: God still demands right living (see 7.9–10 n.; Eph 4.25–32; 1 Thess 5.12–22).

**8.18–19**: These fasts commemorated the fall and humiliation of Jerusalem. In *the fourth month* the Babylonians breached the walls of Jerusalem, and in *the tenth* month they had begun the siege (2 Kings 25.1–4; Jer 39.2; 52.4–7); for the other months, see 7.5 n. **20–23**: The prophecy of Zechariah ends on a note of universalism (compare 2.11; Isa 2.3; 45.14, 24).

**9.1–11.17**: **The restoration of Israel; the day of the LORD.**

**9.1–8**: **The shattering of Israel's enemies foreshadows the messianic era** (see Zeph 3.14–20 n.); here may be a reflection of Alexander the Great's conquests after 333 B.C. **1–6**: These cities of Syria (*Aram*) and *Philistia* fall within the ideal limits of the

3 Tyre has built itself a rampart,
and heaped up silver like dust,
and gold like the dirt of the streets.
4 But now, the Lord will strip it of its possessions
and hurl its wealth into the sea,
and it shall be devoured by fire.

5 Ashkelon shall see it and be afraid;
Gaza too, and shall writhe in anguish;
Ekron also, because its hopes are withered.
The king shall perish from Gaza;
Ashkelon shall be uninhabited;
6 a mongrel people shall settle in Ashdod,
and I will make an end of the pride of Philistia.
7 I will take away its blood from its mouth,
and its abominations from between its teeth;
it too shall be a remnant for our God;
it shall be like a clan in Judah,
and Ekron shall be like the Jebusites.
8 Then I will encamp at my house as a guard,
so that no one shall march to and fro;
no oppressor shall again overrun them,
for now I have seen with my own eyes.

9 Rejoice greatly, O daughter Zion!
Shout aloud, O daughter Jerusalem!
Lo, your king comes to you;
triumphant and victorious is he,
humble and riding on a donkey,
on a colt, the foal of a donkey.
10 He[x] will cut off the chariot from Ephraim
and the war-horse from Jerusalem;
and the battle bow shall be cut off,
and he shall command peace to the nations;
his dominion shall be from sea to sea,
and from the River to the ends of the earth.

11 As for you also, because of the blood of my covenant with you,
I will set your prisoners free from the waterless pit.
12 Return to your stronghold,
O prisoners of hope;
today I declare that I will restore to you double.
13 For I have bent Judah as my bow;
I have made Ephraim its arrow.
I will arouse your sons, O Zion, against your sons, O Greece,
and wield you like a warrior's sword.

14 Then the LORD will appear over them,
and his arrow go forth like lightning;
the Lord GOD will sound the trumpet

*x* Gk: Heb *I*

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promised land (Gen 15.18–21; Ex 23.31). **7**: When converted, the Philistines will observe Jewish dietary laws (compare Gen 9.4; Lev 11.2–47; Deut 14.3–21). *Jebusites*, 2 Sam 5.6–9 n.

**9.9–10**: **The Prince of Peace.** **9**: Not two animals (Mt 21.5) but one (Jn 12.14–15) young animal is meant. The *triumphant* king comes as a *humble* and peaceful monarch. **10**: Pss 46.8–10; 72.8; Isa 11.6–9; 57.19; Hos 2.18; Mic 4.1–4; compare Eph 2.14–18.

**9.11–17**: **The ingathering of dispersed Israelites.** **11**: *Blood of my covenant*, Ex 24.8; Mk 14.24; Heb 9.20–22. *Waterless pit*, a dungeon. **12**: Isa 40.1–2, 9–10; 61.7. **13**: *Judah* and *Ephraim*, the southern and northern kingdoms. *Greece*, Hebrew "yawan" (Gen 10.2–4), may be taken literally or as a symbol of foreigners in the eschatological battle. **14**: *Them*, i.e. Judah. **16–17**: Ezek 34.25–31 n.; Jer 31.12–14.

and march forth in the whirlwinds of the south.
15 The LORD of hosts will protect them,
and they shall devour and tread down the slingers;[y]
they shall drink their blood[z] like wine,
and be full like a bowl,
drenched like the corners of the altar.

16 On that day the LORD their God will save them
for they are the flock of his people;
for like the jewels of a crown they shall shine on his land.
17 For what goodness and beauty are his!
Grain shall make the young men flourish,
and new wine the young women.

**10** Ask rain from the LORD in the season of the spring rain,
from the LORD who makes the storm clouds,
who gives showers of rain to you,[a]
the vegetation in the field to everyone.
2 For the teraphim[b] utter nonsense,
and the diviners see lies;
the dreamers tell false dreams,
and give empty consolation.
Therefore the people wander like sheep;
they suffer for lack of a shepherd.

3 My anger is hot against the shepherds,
and I will punish the leaders;[c]
for the LORD of hosts cares for his flock, the house of Judah,
and will make them like his proud war-horse.
4 Out of them shall come the cornerstone,
out of them the tent peg,
out of them the battle bow,
out of them every commander.
5 Together they shall be like warriors in battle,
trampling the foe in the mud of the streets;
they shall fight, for the LORD is with them,
and they shall put to shame the riders on horses.

6 I will strengthen the house of Judah,
and I will save the house of Joseph.
I will bring them back because I have compassion on them,
and they shall be as though I had not rejected them;
for I am the LORD their God and I will answer them.
7 Then the people of Ephraim shall become like warriors,
and their hearts shall be glad as with wine.
Their children shall see it and rejoice,
their hearts shall exult in the LORD.

8 I will signal for them and gather them in,
for I have redeemed them,
and they shall be as numerous as they were before.

*y* Cn: Heb *the slingstones* *z* Gk: Heb *shall drink* *a* Heb *them* *b* Or *household gods* *c* Or *male goats*

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**10.1–2: The LORD alone controls nature,** and gives rain. **1:** 14.17; Joel 2.18–27; Am 4.7–8. **2:** *Teraphim,* see Ezek 21.18–24 n.
**10.3–12: The LORD alone controls history,** and will gather in the redeemed. **6–7:** Both Israel and Judah will be saved. **6:** 8.7–8; Isa 41.17–20; 54.8. **8–12:** The restoration. **8:** Isa 43.1–7, 14–21; Jer 23.3. **10:** Deut 30.1–5; Hos 11.11. **12:** 14.9; Mic 4.5. *Them,* i.e. Judah and Ephraim.

9 Though I scattered them among the nations,
yet in far countries they shall remember me,
and they shall rear their children and return.
10 I will bring them home from the land of Egypt,
and gather them from Assyria;
I will bring them to the land of Gilead and to Lebanon,
until there is no room for them.
11 They[d] shall pass through the sea of distress,
and the waves of the sea shall be struck down,
and all the depths of the Nile dried up.
The pride of Assyria shall be laid low,
and the scepter of Egypt shall depart.
12 I will make them strong in the LORD,
and they shall walk in his name,
says the LORD.

11 Open your doors, O Lebanon,
so that fire may devour your cedars!
2 Wail, O cypress, for the cedar has fallen,
for the glorious trees are ruined!
Wail, oaks of Bashan,
for the thick forest has been felled!
3 Listen, the wail of the shepherds,
for their glory is despoiled!
Listen, the roar of the lions,
for the thickets of the Jordan are destroyed!

4 Thus said the LORD my God: Be a shepherd of the flock doomed to slaughter. 5 Those who buy them kill them and go unpunished; and those who sell them say, "Blessed be the LORD, for I have become rich"; and their own shepherds have no pity on them. 6 For I will no longer have pity on the inhabitants of the earth, says the LORD. I will cause them, every one, to fall each into the hand of a neighbor, and each into the hand of the king; and they shall devastate the earth, and I will deliver no one from their hand.

7 So, on behalf of the sheep merchants, I became the shepherd of the flock doomed to slaughter. I took two staffs; one I named Favor, the other I named Unity, and I tended the sheep. 8 In one month I disposed of the three shepherds, for I had become impatient with them, and they also detested me. 9 So I said, "I will not be your shepherd. What is to die, let it die; what is to be destroyed, let it be destroyed; and let those that are left devour the flesh of one another!" 10 I took my staff Favor and broke it, annulling the covenant that I had made with all the peoples. 11 So it was annulled on that day, and the sheep merchants, who were watching me, knew that it was the word of the LORD. 12 I then said to them, "If it seems right to you, give me my wages; but if not, keep them." So they weighed out as my wages thirty shekels of silver. 13 Then the LORD said to me, "Throw it into the treasury"[e]—this lordly price at which I was valued by them. So I took the thirty shekels of silver and threw them into the treasury[e] in the house of the LORD. 14 Then I broke my second staff Unity, annulling the family ties between Judah and Israel.

15 Then the LORD said to me: Take

*d* Gk: Heb *He* *e* Syr: Heb *it to the potter*

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**11.1–3**: **The fall of the tyrants.** *Cedars, shepherds,* and *lions* refer to the rulers. **1**: Lebanon's cedars were proverbial symbols of strength (Ezek 31.2–9). **2**: *Oaks of Bashan,* Isa 2.13; Ezek 27.6; compare Ps 22.12; Am 4.1. **3**: *Thickets of the Jordan,* Jer 12.5 n.

**11.4–17**: **The two shepherds.** Because of their sins, God allows the Israelites to be abused by their rulers and breaks the covenant with them. **4–14**: The prophet portrays a good shepherd rejected by his sheep. **5**: *Those who buy* and *sell* are the Ptolemaic overlords; *their own shepherds* are native appointees. **8**: *The three shepherds,* probably contemporary officials, cannot now be identified. **12–13**: *Thirty shekels,* the price of a slave (Ex

once more the implements of a worthless shepherd. 16For I am now raising up in the land a shepherd who does not care for the perishing, or seek the wandering,[f] or heal the maimed, or nourish the healthy,[g] but devours the flesh of the fat ones, tearing off even their hoofs.

17 Oh, my worthless shepherd,
who deserts the flock!
May the sword strike his arm
and his right eye!
Let his arm be completely
withered,
his right eye utterly blinded!

# 12

An Oracle.

The word of the LORD concerning Israel: Thus says the LORD, who stretched out the heavens and founded the earth and formed the human spirit within: 2See, I am about to make Jerusalem a cup of reeling for all the surrounding peoples; it will be against Judah also in the siege against Jerusalem. 3On that day I will make Jerusalem a heavy stone for all the peoples; all who lift it shall grievously hurt themselves. And all the nations of the earth shall come together against it. 4On that day, says the LORD, I will strike every horse with panic, and its rider with madness. But on the house of Judah I will keep a watchful eye, when I strike every horse of the peoples with blindness. 5Then the clans of Judah shall say to themselves, "The inhabitants of Jerusalem have strength through the LORD of hosts, their God."

6 On that day I will make the clans of Judah like a blazing pot on a pile of wood, like a flaming torch among sheaves; and they shall devour to the right and to the left all the surrounding peoples, while Jerusalem shall again be inhabited in its place, in Jerusalem.

7 And the LORD will give victory to the tents of Judah first, that the glory of the house of David and the glory of the inhabitants of Jerusalem may not be exalted over that of Judah. 8On that day the LORD will shield the inhabitants of Jerusalem so that the feeblest among them on that day shall be like David, and the house of David shall be like God, like the angel of the LORD, at their head. 9And on that day I will seek to destroy all the nations that come against Jerusalem.

10 And I will pour out a spirit of compassion and supplication on the house of David and the inhabitants of Jerusalem, so that, when they look on the one[h] whom they have pierced, they shall mourn for him, as one mourns for an only child, and weep bitterly over him, as one weeps over a firstborn. 11On that day the mourning in Jerusalem will be as great as the mourning for Hadad-rimmon in the plain of Megiddo. 12The land shall mourn, each family by itself; the family of the house of David by itself, and their wives by themselves; the family of the house of Nathan by itself, and their wives by themselves; 13the family of the house of Levi by itself, and their wives by themselves; the family of the Shimeites by itself, and their wives by them-

*f* Syr Compare Gk Vg: Heb *the youth*
*g* Meaning of Heb uncertain
*h* Heb *on me*

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21.32; compare Mt 26.15; 27.9). *Lordly price* is ironic. **14**: Perhaps a reference to the division between Jews and Samaritans. **15–17**: The prophet portrays a worthless shepherd who exploits the sheep (Ezek 34.2–10; Mic 3.1–7; Jn 10.1, 8–13).

**12.1–14.21**: **The coming great day of the LORD,** when Jerusalem shall be cleansed from sin, the covenant re-established, and God will reign over all the earth.

**12.1–13.6**: **Jerusalem shall lament its sin and be purged of idolatry. 12.1**: Isa 42.5. **2**: Ps 75.8; Isa 51.17–23. **7–8**: The ideal king will be from *the house of David*. **10–14**: With the picture of Jerusalem mourning over a prophet or king whom it has martyred compare Isa 52.13–53.12; Mt 23.37; Jn 19.34–37; Rev 1.7. **10**: *Only child* and *firstborn,* see Lk 2.7; Jn 1.14, 18. **11**: *Hadad-rimmon,* a popular fertility god whose seasonal death was widely mourned (compare Ezek 8.14; Hos 7.14). **12**: *Nathan,* David's son (2 Sam 5.14). **13**: Compare Num 3.21.

selves; 14and all the families that are left, each by itself, and their wives by themselves.

13 On that day a fountain shall be opened for the house of David and the inhabitants of Jerusalem, to cleanse them from sin and impurity.

2 On that day, says the LORD of hosts, I will cut off the names of the idols from the land, so that they shall be remembered no more; and also I will remove from the land the prophets and the unclean spirit. 3And if any prophets appear again, their fathers and mothers who bore them will say to them, "You shall not live, for you speak lies in the name of the LORD"; and their fathers and their mothers who bore them shall pierce them through when they prophesy. 4On that day the prophets will be ashamed, every one, of their visions when they prophesy; they will not put on a hairy mantle in order to deceive, 5but each of them will say, "I am no prophet, I am a tiller of the soil; for the land has been my possession[i] since my youth." 6And if anyone asks them, "What are these wounds on your chest?"[j] the answer will be "The wounds I received in the house of my friends."

7 "Awake, O sword, against my
shepherd,
against the man who is my
associate,"
says the LORD of hosts.
Strike the shepherd, that the sheep
may be scattered;
I will turn my hand against
the little ones.

8 In the whole land, says the LORD,
two-thirds shall be cut off
and perish,
and one-third shall be left alive.
9 And I will put this third into
the fire,
refine them as one refines silver,
and test them as gold is tested.
They will call on my name,
and I will answer them.
I will say, "They are my people";
and they will say, "The LORD is
our God."

14 See, a day is coming for the LORD, when the plunder taken from you will be divided in your midst. 2For I will gather all the nations against Jerusalem to battle, and the city shall be taken and the houses looted and the women raped; half the city shall go into exile, but the rest of the people shall not be cut off from the city. 3Then the LORD will go forth and fight against those nations as when he fights on a day of battle. 4On that day his feet shall stand on the Mount of Olives, which lies before Jerusalem on the east; and the Mount of Olives shall be split in two from east to west by a very wide valley; so that one half of the Mount shall withdraw northward, and the other half southward. 5And you shall flee by the valley of the LORD's mountain,[k] for the valley between the mountains shall reach to Azal;[l] and you shall flee as you fled from the earthquake

*i* Cn: Heb *for humankind has caused me to possess*
*j* Heb *wounds between your hands* *k* Heb *my mountains* *l* Meaning of Heb uncertain

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**13.1**: Ps 46.4; Ezek 47.1–12; Joel 3.18; Jn 4.10–14; 7.38; Rev 21.6; 22.1–2. **2–6**: Professional prophecy, fallen into disrepute, will cease. **2**: Hos 2.17; Zeph 1.4; 3.4. **3**: Jer 23.9–22. **4**: 2 Kings 1.8. **5**: Am 7.14. **6**: Compare 1 Kings 18.28.

**13.7–9**: **God's shepherd, smitten for the sheep.** A separate messianic oracle (Mt 26.31; Mk 14.27), closely linked with chs 9–11. After the death of the shepherd, a remnant of his flock will be purified and saved. **7**: *Man,* here the shepherd-king. **8**: Isa 6.13. **9**: *Refines,* Isa 1.25–26; 48.10. *My people . . . our God,* signifies the re-establishing of the covenant (Hos 2.21–23).

**14.1–21**: **The final warfare and the final victory** (Isa 66.15–23; Ezek chs 38–39; Joel 3.9–21; Mk 13.7–27; Rev chs 20–22). An eschatological description in which Jerusalem suffers (v. 2), but will be defended by the LORD, who will become *king over all the earth* (v. 9), worshiped in *Jerusalem* where *the nations* will come in pilgrimage (v. 16). **5**: See Am 1.1 n.

in the days of King Uzziah of Judah. Then the LORD my God will come, and all the holy ones with him.

6 On that day there shall not be[m] either cold or frost.[n] 7 And there shall be continuous day (it is known to the LORD), not day and not night, for at evening time there shall be light.

8 On that day living waters shall flow out from Jerusalem, half of them to the eastern sea and half of them to the western sea; it shall continue in summer as in winter.

9 And the LORD will become king over all the earth; on that day the LORD will be one and his name one.

10 The whole land shall be turned into a plain from Geba to Rimmon south of Jerusalem. But Jerusalem shall remain aloft on its site from the Gate of Benjamin to the place of the former gate, to the Corner Gate, and from the Tower of Hananel to the king's wine presses. 11 And it shall be inhabited, for never again shall it be doomed to destruction; Jerusalem shall abide in security.

12 This shall be the plague with which the LORD will strike all the peoples that wage war against Jerusalem: their flesh shall rot while they are still on their feet; their eyes shall rot in their sockets, and their tongues shall rot in their mouths. 13 On that day a great panic from the LORD shall fall on them, so that each will seize the hand of a neighbor, and the hand of the one will be raised against the hand of the other; 14 even Judah will fight at Jerusalem. And the wealth of all the surrounding nations shall be collected—gold, silver, and garments in great abundance. 15 And a plague like this plague shall fall on the horses, the mules, the camels, the donkeys, and whatever animals may be in those camps.

16 Then all who survive of the nations that have come against Jerusalem shall go up year after year to worship the King, the LORD of hosts, and to keep the festival of booths.[o] 17 If any of the families of the earth do not go up to Jerusalem to worship the King, the LORD of hosts, there will be no rain upon them. 18 And if the family of Egypt do not go up and present themselves, then on them shall[p] come the plague that the LORD inflicts on the nations that do not go up to keep the festival of booths.[o] 19 Such shall be the punishment of Egypt and the punishment of all the nations that do not go up to keep the festival of booths.[o]

20 On that day there shall be inscribed on the bells of the horses, "Holy to the LORD." And the cooking pots in the house of the LORD shall be as holy as[q] the bowls in front of the altar; 21 and every cooking pot in Jerusalem and Judah shall be sacred to the LORD of hosts, so that all who sacrifice may come and use them to boil the flesh of the sacrifice. And there shall no longer be traders[r] in the house of the LORD of hosts on that day.

*m* Cn: Heb *there shall not be light* *n* Compare Gk Syr Vg Tg: Meaning of Heb uncertain
*o* Or *tabernacles*; Heb *succoth* *p* Gk Syr: Heb *shall not* *q* Heb *shall be like*
*r* Or *Canaanites*

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**14.6–7**: Isa 24.23; Rev 22.5. **8**: 13.1. *Eastern sea,* the Dead Sea. *Western sea,* the Mediterranean Sea (Joel 2.20). **9**: Deut 6.4; Ps 99.1–5; Mal 1.11; Rev 11.15–18; 15.3–4. **10–11**: Compare 2 Kings 23.8; Jer 31.38–40. **12–15**: 14.3; Ex 7.4–5.

**14.16–19**: *Booths,* Lev 23.33–36 n. Originally a nature festival (note *rain*), in the postexilic period this feast was probably associated with renewing the covenant and celebrating the rule of God. **17**: Ex 34.21–24; Jn 7.2. **18–19**: Compare Isa ch 19; Jer ch 46; Ezek chs 29–32. **20–21**: Lev 27.30–33; Joel 3.17; Rev 21.27. **21b**: The meaning of this sentence is not clear. Either no *traders* will be needed because everything will be holy, or nothing will be permitted that defiles pure worship (Jn 2.16).

# *Malachi*

Nothing is known about the person of Malachi. Even his name, which means "My messenger," may be only an appellation, based on 3.1 (compare 2.7). The book, however, presents a substantial amount of information about its author's viewpoints. Living probably in the period 500–450 B.C., this prophetic voice was devoted to the temple and held a high view of the priesthood and its responsibilities. He speaks frequently of the covenant (2.4, 5, 8, 10, 14; 3.1) and shows great respect for the priestly "instruction" (*torah,* 2.6–9). Instead of adopting the oracular style normally used by earlier prophets, Malachi employs a distinctive question-and-answer method of stating his argument. Nevertheless, his emphases upon sin, judgment, and repentance and upon the advent of the day of the LORD (3.1–5, 7; 4.1–3, 6) mark him as a prophet, and he may best be understood as a "cultic prophet" (see Introduction to Joel).

One central theme dominates Malachi's thought: fidelity to the LORD's covenant and its teachings. From this standpoint he both condemns the priests for corrupting worship and misleading the people (1.6–2.9; 3.3–4) and charges his brethren to remain faithful to their wives from the community of covenant and thus have "godly offspring" (2.13–16). In exhorting Israel to faithfulness, Malachi gives also striking descriptions of the worship of the LORD by the Gentiles (1.11, 14b), the ideal priest (2.5–7), and the blessing of obedience (3.10–12, 16–17; 4.2–3). He asserts, further, that all members of the community are begotten by the same God (2.10) and adds to the concept of the day of the LORD (Zeph 1.14–18) the figure of the appointed forerunner (3.1–4; compare 4.5–6). The messenger who "prepares the way" (3.1) and the sending of Elijah (4.5) suggested to New Testament writers (Mt 11.7–15; Lk 1.16–17) a connection with the coming of the Messiah.

*Corruption of the priesthood*

1 An oracle. The word of the LORD to Israel by Malachi.[a]

2 I have loved you, says the LORD. But you say, "How have you loved us?" Is not Esau Jacob's brother? says the LORD. Yet I have loved Jacob 3but I have hated Esau; I have made his hill country a desolation and his heritage a desert for jackals. 4If Edom says, "We are shattered but we will rebuild the ruins," the LORD of hosts says: They may build, but I will tear down, until they are called the wicked country, the people with whom the LORD is angry forever. 5Your own eyes shall see this, and you shall say, "Great is the LORD beyond the borders of Israel!"

6 A son honors his father, and servants their master. If then I am a father, where is the honor due me? And if I am a master, where is the respect due me? says the LORD of hosts to you, O priests, who despise my name. You say, "How have we despised your name?" 7By offering polluted food on my altar. And you say, "How have we polluted it?"[b] By thinking that the LORD's table may be despised. 8When you offer blind animals in sacrifice, is that not wrong? And when you offer those that are lame or sick, is that not wrong? Try presenting that to your governor; will he be pleased with you or show you favor? says the LORD of hosts. 9And now implore the favor of God, that he may be gracious to us. The fault is yours. Will he show favor to any of you? says the LORD of hosts. 10Oh, that someone among you would shut the temple[c] doors, so that you would not kindle fire on my altar in vain! I have no pleasure in you, says the LORD of hosts, and I will not accept an offering from your hands. 11For from the rising of the sun to its setting my name is great among the nations, and in every place incense is offered to my name, and a pure offering; for my name is great among the nations, says the LORD of hosts. 12But you profane it when you say that the Lord's table is polluted, and the food for it[d] may be despised. 13"What a weariness this is," you say, and you sniff at me,[e] says the LORD of hosts. You bring what has been taken by violence or is lame or sick, and this you bring as your offering! Shall I accept that from your hand? says the LORD. 14Cursed be the cheat who has a male in the flock and vows to give it, and yet sacrifices to the Lord what is blemished; for I am a great King, says the LORD of hosts, and my name is reverenced among the nations.

2 And now, O priests, this command is for you. 2If you will not listen, if you will not lay it to heart to give glory to my name, says the LORD of hosts, then I will send the curse on you and I will curse your blessings; indeed I have already cursed them,[f] because you do not lay it to heart. 3I will rebuke your offspring, and spread dung on your faces, the dung of your offerings, and I will put you out of my presence.[g]

4 Know, then, that I have sent this command to you, that my covenant with

*a* Or *by my messenger* *b* Gk: Heb *you* *c* Heb lacks *temple* *d* Compare Syr Tg: Heb *its fruit, its food* *e* Another reading is *at it* *f* Heb *it* *g* Cn Compare Gk Syr: Heb *and he shall bear you to it*

**1.1: Superscription:** Compare Zech 9.1; 12.1. *Oracle,* see Nah 1.1 n. *The word of the LORD,* see Hos 1.1 n.

**1.2–5: God loves Israel. 2:** *Esau, Jacob's* twin *brother,* was the ancestor of the Edomites (Gen 25.24–26, 30; 36.1). **2–3:** Rom 9.13. In biblical idiom, love and hatred here designate preference, not emotional outburst. **2–5:** Isa ch 34; 63.1–6; Jer 49.7–22; Ezek 25.12–14; Am 1.11–12; see Introduction to Obadiah.

**1.6–2.9: The priests have despised their God and their solemn vocation. 1.6:** Ex 20.12; Prov 30.11. **8:** *Blind* or *lame* animals were unacceptable for sacrifice (Lev 22.17–25; Deut 15.21). **10:** *Shut the temple doors* to halt vain worship (Isa 1.13; Am 5.21–24). **11:** In contrast with Judah's present corrupt practices, the Gentiles render a *pure offering* to the LORD (compare v. 14b; Ps 102.15; Joel 2.28; Zeph 3.9–10).

**2.3:** Ex 29.14; Nah 3.6. **4:** *Levi* was the priestly tribe (Num 3.45; 18.21–24; Deut 33.8–11). **5:** Num 25.12–13. **7:** Lev 10.11; Deut 21.5. **8–9:** Mic 3.11; Mt 23.1–36.

Levi may hold, says the LORD of hosts. 5My covenant with him was a covenant of life and well-being, which I gave him; this called for reverence, and he revered me and stood in awe of my name. 6True instruction was in his mouth, and no wrong was found on his lips. He walked with me in integrity and uprightness, and he turned many from iniquity. 7For the lips of a priest should guard knowledge, and people should seek instruction from his mouth, for he is the messenger of the LORD of hosts. 8But you have turned aside from the way; you have caused many to stumble by your instruction; you have corrupted the covenant of Levi, says the LORD of hosts, 9and so I make you despised and abased before all the people, inasmuch as you have not kept my ways but have shown partiality in your instruction.

10 Have we not all one father? Has not one God created us? Why then are we faithless to one another, profaning the covenant of our ancestors? 11Judah has been faithless, and abomination has been committed in Israel and in Jerusalem; for Judah has profaned the sanctuary of the LORD, which he loves, and has married the daughter of a foreign god. 12May the LORD cut off from the tents of Jacob anyone who does this—any to witness[h] or answer, or to bring an offering to the LORD of hosts.

13 And this you do as well: You cover the LORD's altar with tears, with weeping and groaning because he no longer regards the offering or accepts it with favor at your hand. 14You ask, "Why does he not?" Because the LORD was a witness between you and the wife of your youth, to whom you have been faithless, though she is your companion and your wife by covenant. 15Did not one God make her?[i] Both flesh and spirit are his.[j] And what does the one God[k] desire? Godly offspring. So look to yourselves, and do not let anyone be faithless to the wife of his youth. 16For I hate[l] divorce, says the LORD, the God of Israel, and covering one's garment with violence, says the LORD of hosts. So take heed to yourselves and do not be faithless.

17 You have wearied the LORD with your words. Yet you say, "How have we wearied him?" By saying, "All who do evil are good in the sight of the LORD, and he delights in them." Or by asking, "Where is the God of justice?"

3 See, I am sending my messenger to prepare the way before me, and the Lord whom you seek will suddenly come to his temple. The messenger of the covenant in whom you delight—indeed, he is coming, says the LORD of hosts. 2But who can endure the day of his coming, and who can stand when he appears?

For he is like a refiner's fire and like fullers' soap; 3he will sit as a refiner and purifier of silver, and he will purify the descendants of Levi and refine them like gold and silver, until they present offerings to the LORD in righteousness.[m] 4Then the offering of Judah and

*h* Cn Compare Gk: Heb *arouse* *i* Or *Has he not made one?* *j* Cn: Heb *and a remnant of spirit was his* *k* Heb *he* *l* Cn: Heb *he hates* *m* Or *right offerings to the* LORD

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**2.10–16: God hates divorce and demands marital fidelity. 10**: Common derivation from and loyalty to the same God bespeaks unity and solidarity in the community of covenant (v. 15; compare Deut 32.6, 18; Isa 63.16; 64.8; Jer 31.1–3; Hos 11.1; Eph 4.6). **11**: *The daughter of a foreign god* refers to heathen women. **14–16**: Marriage is a sacred *covenant*, honored by members of the community of covenant (Gen 2.24; Ezek 16.8; Hos 2.19; Mk 10.2–9; Eph 5.21–33).

**2.17–3.5: The LORD will send a messenger to prepare for the coming of the day of judgment. 2.17**: Job 21.7–16; Hab 1.2–4, 13.

**3.1–4**: The *messenger* or angel (Gen 16.7; 22.11; Ex 3.2; Isa 63.9) will prepare for *the day of* God's *coming* (Isa 40.3; Mt 11.10; Mk 1.2; Lk 1.17, 76; 7.27) first by purifying the priesthood. **2**: Mt 3.10–12. **5**: God will appear for *judgment* against the wicked and godless (Zeph 1.14–18; 3.1–8; Mk 13.14–37; 2 Thess 2.1–12).

Jerusalem will be pleasing to the LORD as in the days of old and as in former years.

5 Then I will draw near to you for judgment; I will be swift to bear witness against the sorcerers, against the adulterers, against those who swear falsely, against those who oppress the hired workers in their wages, the widow and the orphan, against those who thrust aside the alien, and do not fear me, says the LORD of hosts.

6 For I the LORD do not change; therefore you, O children of Jacob, have not perished. 7Ever since the days of your ancestors you have turned aside from my statutes and have not kept them. Return to me, and I will return to you, says the LORD of hosts. But you say, "How shall we return?"

8 Will anyone rob God? Yet you are robbing me! But you say, "How are we robbing you?" In your tithes and offerings! 9You are cursed with a curse, for you are robbing me—the whole nation of you! 10Bring the full tithe into the storehouse, so that there may be food in my house, and thus put me to the test, says the LORD of hosts; see if I will not open the windows of heaven for you and pour down for you an overflowing blessing. 11I will rebuke the locust[n] for you, so that it will not destroy the produce of your soil; and your vine in the field shall not be barren, says the LORD of hosts. 12Then all nations will count you happy, for you will be a land of delight, says the LORD of hosts.

13 You have spoken harsh words against me, says the LORD. Yet you say, "How have we spoken against you?" 14You have said, "It is vain to serve God. What do we profit by keeping his command or by going about as mourners before the LORD of hosts? 15Now we count the arrogant happy; evildoers not only prosper, but when they put God to the test they escape."

16 Then those who revered the LORD spoke with one another. The LORD took note and listened, and a book of remembrance was written before him of those who revered the LORD and thought on his name. 17They shall be mine, says the LORD of hosts, my special possession on the day when I act, and I will spare them as parents spare their children who serve them. 18Then once more you shall see the difference between the righteous and the wicked, between one who serves God and one who does not serve him.

4[o] See, the day is coming, burning like an oven, when all the arrogant and all evildoers will be stubble; the day that comes shall burn them up, says the LORD of hosts, so that it will leave them neither root nor branch. 2But for you who revere my name the sun of righteousness shall rise, with healing in its wings. You shall go out leaping like calves from the stall. 3And you shall tread down the wicked, for they will be ashes under the soles of your feet, on the day when I act, says the LORD of hosts.

*n* Heb *devourer* *o* Ch 4.1-6 are Ch 3.19-24 in Heb

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**3.6–12: If the people will return to God with a full measure of devotion, God will bless them. 6**: Num 23.19; Heb 13.8; Jas 1.17. **8–9**: The *tithes* required by the law (Lev 27.30; Num 18.21–24) were being withheld; therefore the *curse* of crop failure resulted (v. 11). **10**: Deut 28.2–12; Ezek 34.25–31. *Storehouse,* i.e. the public storehouse for offerings of grain, wine, oil, etc. (Neh 13.10–13). **12**: Isa 61.6–9; 62.4.

**3.13–4.3: When the day of judgment comes, the true worshipers will be spared. 3.14**: Job 21.15; Isa 58.3. **16**: *A book of remembrance,* compare Ex 32.32–34; Ps 69.28; Isa 4.3; 65.6; Dan 7.10; 12.1; Rev 20.12; 21.27.

**4.1**: Compare 3.2–5. **2**: *The sun of* God's *righteousness* symbolizes health and vindication (2 Sam 23.4; Ps 84.11; Isa 60.1).

**4.4–6: Two appendices:** the first (v. 4) exhorts obedience to the teaching of Moses; the second (vv. 5–6) identifies the forerunner with *Elijah.* Standing at the very end of the prophetic corpus, these two appendices serve to link *the teaching* and *the prophet.* **4**: *Horeb,* Mount Sinai (Deut 5.1–3), is also the place

4 Remember the teaching of my servant Moses, the statutes and ordinances that I commanded him at Horeb for all Israel.

5 Lo, I will send you the prophet Elijah before the great and terrible day of the LORD comes. 6He will turn the hearts of parents to their children and the hearts of children to their parents, so that I will not come and strike the land with a curse.[p]

*p* Or *a ban of utter destruction*

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where God was revealed to Elijah (1 Kings 19.1–18). **5**: A commentary on 3.1. For an expansion of this tradition, see Mt 11.7–15; 17.10–13; Mk 6.14–16; compare Ecclesiasticus 18.10 **6**: *Turn the hearts . . .* applied specifically to John the Baptist in Lk 1.17.

# NOTES

# THE NEW COVENANT COMMONLY CALLED THE NEW TESTAMENT OF OUR LORD AND SAVIOR JESUS CHRIST

*New Revised Standard Version*

# *Introduction to the New Testament*

The New Testament comprises the twenty-seven books that constitute the second of the two portions into which the Bible is naturally divided. A more appropriate word than "testament" to designate the character of these books is "covenant." This is the word that the Bible uses in referring to the relationship that God established with his people. In a sublime passage written more than five hundred years before Christ, the prophet Jeremiah predicted that the covenant relation of God with his people, instituted through Moses on Mount Sinai, would give place in the future to a more inward and personal one (Jer 31. 31–34). In accord with this prophecy the Apostle Paul regarded the Christian dispensation as based on a new covenant, which he contrasted with the old covenant enshrined in the books of Moses (2 Cor 3.6–15). Another early Christian writer, doubtless thinking of the words of Jesus when he instituted the Last Supper (Mt 26.28; Mk 14.24; 1 Cor 11.25), declared that by his sacrificial death Christ became the mediator of a new covenant (Heb 9.15–20; compare 10.16). It is quite understandable, therefore, that the two collections of documents that belong respectively to the two dispensations of God's dealings with his people have been brought together in one volume as "The Holy Bible, containing the Old and New Testaments."

Unlike the books of the Old Testament, which originated during a period extending over many centuries, the books of the New Testament were written within a period of somewhat less than one hundred years. These books fall into four different literary forms. Four of them are "Gospels" because they tell the "gospel" (a word derived from the Anglo-Saxon *gōd-spell,* meaning "good tidings") of Jesus Christ, that is, his birth, baptism, ministry of teaching and healing, death, and resurrection. Church history is represented in the Acts of the Apostles, which is an account of the spread of the Christian faith during the first thirty or so years after the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. Twenty-one of the books of the New Testament are in the form of letters. The last book of the New Testament is an apocalypse (see pp. 362–363 NT), that is, a revelation (Greek *apokalypsis*) or disclosure of God's will for the future.

Jesus himself left no literary remains; information regarding his words and works comes from his immediate followers (the apostles) and their disciples. At first this information was circulated orally. As far as we know today, the first attempt to produce a written Gospel was made by John Mark, who according to tradition was a disciple of the Apostle Peter. This Gospel, along with a collection of sayings of Jesus and several other special sources, formed the basis of the Gospels attributed to Matthew and Luke. The reasons for regarding the Gospel of Mark as one of the sources of Matthew and Luke include the following facts. (1) Apart from details Mark contains very little that is not in Matthew or in Luke. (2) When Mark and Matthew differ as to sequence of matter, Luke agrees with Mark, and when Mark and Luke differ as to sequence, Matthew agrees with Mark. (3) Matthew and Luke never agree as to sequence against Mark.

Because these three Gospels have so much in common, they are generally called the Synoptic Gospels (from the Greek word *synoptikos,* viewing together).

In contrast to the Synoptics, which narrate mainly Jesus' public teaching and ministry to the crowds in Galilee, the Gospel according to John contains information regarding Jesus' early Judean ministry as well as extensive discourses to the disciples concerning the union of the Christian with Christ (chs 14–17). John presents no parables in the Synoptic sense, and he frequently weaves the words of Jesus so closely with his own interpretation of them that it is difficult to find the break between the two. (For further information concerning the genre of the gospels, see pp. viii–x NT.)

The letters in the New Testament were written by various teachers in the primitive church to congregations and to individuals in order to provide further instruction in the Christian faith and to correct certain abuses and disorders that had arisen. The letter-form happily combines the advantages inherent in both conversation and treatise. By their nature letters permit the writer to communicate with the recipients in a personal and indeed affectionate manner; at the same time, they also allow the writer to treat abstract subjects with accuracy and fullness.

The New Testament letters fall into two main groups, those attributed to Paul and those attributed to other writers. Within each group the present sequence seems to have been determined in accordance with the length of the letters, the longest standing first. The present titles of the letters were not part of the original documents, and would not have been needed until the individual letters had been gathered into a collection. (For further information on ancient letter-writing, see pp. 204–205 NT.)

The language in which the books of the New Testament were written was the *koine* or common Greek of the time. This form of Greek, which lacks many of the subtle refinements of classical Greek of an earlier period, was known and used by most of the peoples of the Roman Empire to whom the first Christian missionaries carried the gospel. Noticeably different grades of koine Greek are found in the several New Testament documents. The most highly literary as regards sentence structure and vocabulary are the Letter to the Hebrews and the two books written by Luke (the Gospel and the Acts). Those that are the furthest removed from classical Greek standards and closest to colloquial Greek are the Gospel of Mark and the book of Revelation. Furthermore, since all the authors represented in the New Testament appear to have been either Jews or Jewish proselytes before becoming Christians, it is natural that their use of koine Greek was colored by their familiarity with the special characteristics of the Greek translation of the Hebrew Old Testament (the Septuagint). Here and there the Gospels and the first half of Acts preserve in Greek certain turns of expression that reflect an underlying Aramaic idiom, which was the mother tongue of Jesus and his disciples. Aramaic is a Semitic language related to Hebrew.

The original manuscripts of the several books of the New Testament have long since disappeared. Three sources of information exist today for our knowledge of the text of the New Testament. They are Greek manuscripts, early translations into other languages (primarily Syriac, Latin, and Coptic), and quotations from the New Testament made by early ecclesiastical writers. The total number of Greek manuscripts of all or part of the New Testament is close to five thousand. Not quite one-half of this number are manuscripts that contain only the four Gospels. There are fifty-nine manuscripts that contain all twenty-seven books of the New Testament. Of the five thousand, the most important are, in general, the oldest; more than three hundred, written on papyrus or parchment, date from the second to the eighth century. In evaluating the significance of this rich store of manuscripts, it should be recalled that the writings of many ancient

classical authors have survived in only a few copies (or even in only one), and that not infrequently these copies date from the late Middle Ages, separated from the time of the composition of the originals by more than a thousand years.

Before the invention of printing with movable type (about A.D. 1450–1456) all literary works had to be copied by hand. Owing to the rapid expansion of the early church and the growing demand for additional copies of the Christian Scriptures, sometimes speed in the preparation of manuscripts seemed to be of greater importance than strict accuracy of detail. Consequently unintentional errors, inevitable in all transcription, were multiplied in what was copied. At other times alterations were deliberately made; for example, scribes would occasionally improve the grammar and style, correct real or imagined errors in history and geography, adjust quotations from the Old Testament in accordance with current copies of the Greek Septuagint translation, and harmonize differing accounts in the Synoptic Gospels. Thus, not only inadvertence but also well-intentioned efforts resulted in the creation of thousands of divergencies among the manuscripts of the New Testament. It should be added, however, that the great majority of these variant readings involve inconsequential details, such as alternative spellings, differing order of words, and interchange of synonyms. Among the relatively few variants that involve the essential meaning of the text, modern scholars are usually able to determine with more or less probability what the original text was. In deciding among the variant readings scholars usually give preference to those that are preserved in the older manuscripts, as well as those supported by witnesses that are widely separated geographically. Preference is also often given to the shorter reading, for scribes were much more prone to make additions than deliberately to omit. Another scribal tendency was the harmonization of divergent accounts. In general, the reading is preferred that best explains the rise of the other reading(s). (For examples of various kinds of additions to the text, see Mt 6.13 note *j;* 23.13 note *q;* Mk 9.43 note *u;* 16.8 note *r;* Lk 17.35 note *l;* 24.12 note *b;* Jn 5.3 note *i;* 8.11 note *k;* Acts 8.36 note *n.*)

As long as copies of the books of the New Testament were written on scrolls, practical difficulties of length prevented the collection of many of the books of the New Testament into one scroll. Early in the second century, however, the adoption by many Christians of the codex or leaf-form of manuscript permitted the gathering, for example, of all of the Gospels or all of Paul's letters into one volume. This process of assembling various books in a single codex was accompanied by the development of the idea of the canon of the New Testament.

The word "canon" is a Greek word borrowed from a Semitic root, meaning a stalk or a reed, which could be used for measuring. By extension the word came to denote a rule, norm, or list (of books). Why, how, and when the present books of the New Testament were finally gathered into one collection are questions difficult to answer because of the lack of explicit information. It is possible, however, to reconstruct some of the influences that must have contributed to the emergence of the canon of the New Testament.

The Bible of the earliest Christians was the Old Testament (2 Tim 3.15–17). Of equal authority to these writings were the remembered words of Jesus (Acts 20.35; 1 Cor 7.10, 12; 9.14; 1 Tim 5.18). Parallel with the oral circulation of Jesus' teaching were apostolic interpretations of his person and significance for the life of the church. It is natural that when the gospels and the apostolic letters were written, incorporating these two kinds of authoritative materials, they would be treasured, circulated, and read in services of worship (Col 4.16; 1 Thess 5.27; Rev 1.3).

At first a local church would have only a few apostolic letters and perhaps one or two gospels. During the course of the second century most churches came to acknowledge a canon that included the present four Gospels, the Acts, thirteen letters of Paul, 1 Peter, and 1 John. Seven

books still lacked general recognition: Hebrews, James, 2 Peter, 2 and 3 John, Jude, and Revelation. On the other hand, certain writings, such as the Letter of Barnabas or the *Shepherd* of Hermas, were accepted as Scripture by several ecclesiastical writers, though rejected by the majority. During the third century there was a sifting of the disputed books; certain of them came to be acknowledged as canonical and others were rejected as apocryphal. The fourth century was marked by authoritative pronouncements first by bishops of provincial churches and later by synods or councils. St. Athanasius in his Festal Letter for A.D. 367 was the first to name the twenty-seven books of the New Testament as exclusively canonical. Not all Christian communities, however, were willing at first to follow the Athanasian list. In the East, for example, the Armenian Church accepted the Third Letter of Paul to the Corinthians, and in the West many Latin manuscripts contained the spurious Letter to the Laodiceans. (Strangely enough, this brief letter follows Galatians in all eighteen German Bibles printed prior to Luther's translation of the Greek New Testament.)

Various external circumstances assisted in the process of canonization of the New Testament books. The emergence of heretical sects with their own sacred books made it imperative for the church to determine the limits of the canon. Likewise, when Christians were persecuted for their faith it became a matter of the utmost importance to know which books could be renounced and which were essential to the faith.

The tests of canonicity that were most frequently applied seem to have been apostolic authorship, or at least apostolic content, and general harmony with the Old Testament and the rest of the New Testament. Prior, however, to the issuing of pronouncements by church councils was the intuitive insight of individual Christians who had discerned the inherent significance of the canonical books. In the most basic sense neither individuals nor councils created the canon, but only came to recognize and acknowledge the self-authenticating quality of these writings, which imposed themselves as canonical upon the church. (For further discussion reference may be made to B. M. Metzger, *The Canon of the New Testament: Its Origin, Development, and Significance* [Oxford University Press, 1987].)

# *Chronological Tables of Rulers during New Testament Times*

ROMAN EMPERORS

| | |
|---|---|
| 27 B.C.–A.D. 14 | Augustus |
| A.D. 14–37 | Tiberius |
| A.D. 37–41 | Caligula |
| A.D. 41–54 | Claudius |
| A.D. 54–68 | Nero |
| A.D. 68–69 | Galba; Otho; Vitellius |
| A.D. 69–79 | Vespasian |
| A.D. 79–81 | Titus |
| A.D. 81–96 | Domitian |

HERODIAN RULERS

| | |
|---|---|
| 37–4 B.C. | Herod the Great, king of the Jews |
| 4 B.C.–A.D. 6 | Archelaus, ethnarch of Judea |
| 4 B.C.–A.D. 39 | Herod Antipas, tetrarch of Galilee and Perea |
| 4 B.C.–A.D. 34 | Philip, tetrarch of Ituraea, Trachonitis, etc. |
| A.D. 37–44 | Herod Agrippa I, from 37 to 44 king over the former tetrarchy of Philip, and from 41 to 44 over Judea, Galilee, and Perea |
| A.D. 53–about 100 | Herod Agrippa II, king over the former tetrarchy of Philip and Lysanias, and from 56 (or 61) over parts of Galilee and Perea |

PROCURATORS OF JUDEA AFTER THE REIGN OF ARCHELAUS TO THE REIGN OF HEROD AGRIPPA I

| | |
|---|---|
| A.D. 6–8 | Coponius |
| A.D. 9–12 | M. Ambivius |
| A.D. 12–15 | Annius Rufus |
| A.D. 15–26 | Valerius Gratus |
| A.D. 26–36 | Pontius Pilate |
| A.D. 37 | Marullus |
| A.D. 37–41 | Herennius Capito |

PROCURATORS OF PALESTINE FROM THE REIGN OF HEROD AGRIPPA I TO THE JEWISH REVOLT

| | |
|---|---|
| A.D. 44–about 46 | Cuspius Fadus |
| A.D. about 46–48 | Tiberius Alexander |
| A.D. 48–52 | Ventidius Cumanus |
| A.D. 52–60 | M. Antonius Felix |
| A.D. 60–62 | Porcius Festus |
| A.D. 62–64 | Clodius Albinus |
| A.D. 64–66 | Gessius Florus |

# *The Narrative Books—Gospels and Acts*

## THE GOSPELS

### 1. *Their Literary Genre*

What is a gospel? To what literary genre do the four gospels of the New Testament belong? Of course there are differences among the four, particularly between the three Synoptic Gospels on the one hand and the Gospel according to John on the other, but to what type of ancient literature would a second-century librarian in Alexandria have assigned a gospel if a manuscript copy had been presented to a library?

Scholars have given various answers to such questions, depending upon the kinds and styles of contemporary Jewish and Hellenistic literature with which the gospels are compared. Some have pointed out similarities between the Christian gospels and Graeco-Roman biographies, such as those that report the lives of Epictetus, Apollonius, and Socrates. Seeking to refine still further the broad category of biography, other scholars have argued that the gospels belong to a certain species of biography called aretalogy. An aretalogy, as defined by the dictionary, is "a narrative of the miraculous deeds of a god or hero." According to this understanding, the gospels are held to advance Jesus as a wonder-working divine man. It must be acknowledged, however, that since we have no complete text surviving from the past that is specifically labeled aretalogy, to attempt to clarify the gospels by grouping them with a type of writing that has no known surviving examples is far from illuminating.

Still others have regarded the Synoptic Gospels as examples of ancient laudatory (or encomium) biography, of which many examples survive, such as Xenophon's *Agesilaus,* Isocrates' *Evagoras,* Tacitus' *Agricola,* and Lucian's *Life of Demonax.* The purpose of this kind of literature is to praise the greatness and merit of the person who is the subject of the document.

Scholars who do not wish to go so far afield to seek for examples have preferred to look to a Jewish milieu for clues to the genre of the canonical gospels. Certainly some of the gospel pericopes—the individual incidents of which the gospels are composed—bear a closer stylistic resemblance to the rabbinic stories preserved in ancient Jewish sources than to any other body of literature. Furthermore, the all-inclusive role of Moses as he is presented in the book of Exodus, culminating as the mediator of the covenant, or as he is presented in Philo's *Life of Moses,* obviously presents certain similarities with the life of Jesus. Still others have found an Old Testament model in the cycle of Elisha stories.

It must, however, be concluded that none of these proposed models—nor even a combination of models, such as aretalogical biography—provides a suitable literary category for classifying the gospel genre. The canonical gospels are not romances or folk-tales; they purport to retell actual events. They are not biographies; they concentrate on the public career of Jesus with little

or no attention given to his environment, training, and development of character. They are not simply memoirs of a teacher, philosopher, or wise man; the ministry of Jesus embraced not merely word and example but action. And as regards this action, the gospels do not give a neutral account of what happened; rather they tell of the work of God in the career of Jesus, and they present their story as an offer of salvation for all who will believe. In short, the gospels represent a genre all their own because they present the tradition of Jesus from the viewpoint of faith in him as redeemer. Hence it was the intention of the four evangelists that their gospels be understood not only as narrative, but at the same time and especially as proclamation.

## 2. *The Origin of the Gospels*

The gospels, like the other New Testament books and most of the rest of the Bible, are the literary productions of a believing community. They are not telling a story for its entertainment value, though they will use literary techniques such as suspense, metaphor, characterization, and so on. Nor are they simply stenographic reports of words and deeds. They are written with the aim of changing the reader or of building up the community's faith. The story they have to tell is intended to make a difference in the reader's life.

That story, most scholars now agree, was put together over a period of several decades and in several stages. (1) During the time of oral transmission, the teachings of Jesus, and individual stories about him, were communicated among his followers by word of mouth. Of these stories, the most lengthy and important would have been the so-called "Passion Narratives" or accounts covering the week or so leading up to his death, and the subsequent accounts of his resurrection; there would have been other stories as well, such as those of healings and confrontations with the authorities. It was also during this time that some of the materials were re-told in Greek, the common language outside of Palestine, instead of the Aramaic that Jesus and his first followers spoke. (2) Subsequently written collections were assembled, consisting of selections of these teachings and stories. Included among such accounts would have been a complete Passion Narrative, or a collection of short sayings, or some parables. (3) Finally, the four evangelists collected these materials, both oral and written, and combined them into the gospels that we have today.

The literary relationship among the first three gospels—Matthew, Mark, and Luke—is also of interest. These three are called the "Synoptic Gospels" because they "view together" (*synoptikos* in Greek) the events of Jesus' life. Many of the sayings, parables, and incidents appear in more than one gospel, often in similar or virtually identical words. Among various explanations for this, the most widely held view holds (*a*) that Matthew and Luke depended on Mark for the general outline and many of the incidents of Jesus' ministry; (*b*) that they also had a separate list of sayings of Jesus, which scholars have called "Q" (for the German *Quelle*, "source"); and (*c*) that they each had additional materials (for instance, the story of the wise men from the East in Matthew ch 2, or the parable of the Good Samaritan in Luke ch 10). It is generally agreed that John derives largely from a different tradition, since most of the incidents and their treatment in his gospel differ from those in the Synoptics.

Each of the four gospel writers had his own point of view and special reading public, and these would have guided the selection, arrangement, and synthesis of the many units handed down concerning the life, deeds, sayings, death, and resurrection of Jesus the Messiah. Yet all four gospels show the same basic intention: they are addressed to readers in order to minister to their faith. In fact, two of the gospels contain expressions of their author's intentions. The prologue of Luke's gospel states that it was written so that Theophilus would "know the truth

concerning the things about which you have been instructed" (Luke 1.4). A similar expression of intention stands near the close of the Fourth Gospel: These things "are written so that you may come to believe that Jesus is the Messiah, the Son of God, and that through believing you may have life in his name" (John 20.31).

Thus, even if in literary form or shape the gospels are not in all respects a novelty, the distinctive purpose of the four authors accounts for the special nature of their literary work. They were not memorializing the deeds and words of a revered but deceased master; they were explaining the universal significance of the life and death of someone whom they proclaimed to be still alive and knowable. In a word, they were evangelizing—and consequently, for good reason, they came to be known in the church as the four Evangelists.

## THE ACTS OF THE APOSTLES

Inasmuch as the book of Acts forms the second part of a two-volume work, of which the Gospel according to Luke is the first part, it is natural to look for literary correspondences between the two. Apparently the authors of Matthew, Mark, and John saw no need for a second volume, one that contained an account of the growth of the church in order to complement their gospel. Luke-Acts reflects the conviction that both the story of Jesus and the story of the apostolic church are incomplete without the other as complement.

The thread of the narrative in the Gospel according to Luke runs from the birth of John the Baptist, soon followed by the birth of Jesus, through the events of the latter's ministry of healing and teaching to the climax of his arrest, trial, crucifixion. The gospel narrative concludes with the resurrection and ascension of the Lord. It is at this point that the book of Acts picks up the narrative by recounting in greater detail the ascension of Jesus, with the subsequent coming of the Holy Spirit upon the waiting church. There follows an account of the planting and extension of the church by the establishment of radiating centers at certain salient points throughout a significant part of the Roman Empire, beginning at Jerusalem and ending at Rome. Thus it was not the purpose of the writer to produce full-scale biographies of Peter or Paul or other apostles; these characters are described only insofar as necessary in showing how the church was formed, how it broadened to receive Gentiles, and how it extended from Jerusalem to Rome. So, too, it was evidently not Luke's aim to write all that he knew of the history of any local church, at Jerusalem or Antioch or Philippi, but only to show how the witnessing of Christian messengers resulted in the establishment of such societies, and how they aided in fulfilling the task laid upon them to be witnesses "in Jerusalem, in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth" (Acts 1.8).

Thus Luke's historical art and technique produced two volumes that present a unified narrative because the major human characters—John the Baptist, Jesus, the apostles, and Paul—share in a mission that expresses a single controlling purpose: fulfilling the purpose of God. Since God's purpose repeatedly encounters rejection, the narrative is loaded with tension. When the book of Acts is compared with other ancient historical narratives (or even with historical novels), Luke's masterful command of the "dramatic episode style" is obvious. His artistic technique holds the reader's attention, focused on the sequence of individual events, some of which involved threats and dangers plotted against the messengers of the gospel. As a result the narrative throbs with life, and the reader is enabled to discern a unified action with a specific goal—the proclamation of the gospel to Jew and Gentile alike. (See also the Introduction to the Acts of the Apostles, p. 160 NT.)

# *The Gospel According to*
# *Matthew*

The Gospel according to Matthew is a manual of Christian teaching in which Jesus Christ, Lord of the new-yet-old community, the church, is described particularly as the fulfiller and the fulfillment of God's will disclosed in the Old Testament. Jesus is set forth as Israel's royal Messiah (1.1; 19.28) in whom God's purpose culminates and by whose words and life his followers, the true Israel (25.34), may gain divine forgiveness and fellowship.

The accounts of Jesus' deeds and words, drawn from Christian sources both oral and written, are arranged in a generally biographical order: chs 1–2, Birth of Jesus; 3.1–12, Activity of John the Baptist; 3.13–4.11, Baptism and temptation of Jesus; 4.12–18.35, Jesus' preaching and teaching in Galilee; chs 19–20, Journey to Jerusalem; chs 21–27, The last week, concluding with Jesus' crucifixion and burial; ch 28, The resurrection; Jesus' commission to his disciples.

Within this natural framework the accounts of what Jesus said or did are grouped by common subject matter. The five discourses of Jesus, a noteworthy feature of this Gospel (see 7.28 n.), are Matthew's collections of teachings on specific themes: chs 5–7, The Sermon on the Mount; ch 10, Instructions for missionary disciples; ch 13, The parables of the kingdom of Heaven; ch 18, On sincere discipleship; chs 24–25, On the end of the present age. The author seems to have deliberately built his gospel around these five great discourses as though his object was especially to show the fullness of Jesus' teaching.

Much of the material peculiar to this Gospel is concerned with the Jews or with the fulfillment of Old Testament prophecies. All of the Gospels mention Jesus' Davidic lineage, but Matthew emphasizes this relationship by referring to it much more often than does any of the other Evangelists. In addition to what he has in common with one or more of the other Gospels, he includes also the testimony of the two blind men (9.27), the multitude (12.23), the Canaanite woman (15.22), the crowds at the triumphant entry into Jerusalem (21.9), and the children in the temple (21.15). In short, the special aim of Matthew is to show that Jesus is the legitimate heir to the royal house of David.

In this connection the author's frequent appeal to the fulfillment of prophecy is a noteworthy feature of this Gospel. All four evangelists cite Old Testament prophecies that they regard as having been fulfilled in the person and work of Jesus, but Matthew includes nine additional such prophetic proof-texts, all of which are characterized by a certain verbal literalism that would make special appeal to readers having a Jewish background (1.22–23; 2.15; 2.17–18; 2.23; 4.14–16; 8.17; 12.17–21; 13.35; 21.4–5; 27.9–10).

This Gospel is anonymous. The unknown Christian teacher who prepared it during the last third of the first century may have used as one of his sources a collection of Jesus' sayings that the apostle Matthew, according to second-century writers, is said to have drawn up. In time a title containing Matthew's name, and signifying apostolic authority, came to identify the whole.

For the literary genre of the gospels, see pp. viii–x NT.

1 An account of the genealogy[a] of Jesus the Messiah,[b] the son of David, the son of Abraham.

2 Abraham was the father of Isaac,
and Isaac the father of Jacob, and Jacob
the father of Judah and his brothers, 3and
Judah the father of Perez and Zerah by
Tamar, and Perez the father of Hezron,
and Hezron the father of Aram, 4and
Aram the father of Aminadab, and
Aminadab the father of Nahshon, and
Nahshon the father of Salmon, 5and Sal-
mon the father of Boaz by Rahab, and
Boaz the father of Obed by Ruth, and
Obed the father of Jesse, 6and Jesse the
father of King David.

And David was the father of Solomon
by the wife of Uriah, 7and Solomon the
father of Rehoboam, and Rehoboam the
father of Abijah, and Abijah the father of
Asaph,[c] 8and Asaph[c] the father of Je-
hoshaphat, and Jehoshaphat the father of
Joram, and Joram the father of Uzziah,
9and Uzziah the father of Jotham, and
Jotham the father of Ahaz, and Ahaz the
father of Hezekiah, 10and Hezekiah the
father of Manasseh, and Manasseh the
father of Amos,[d] and Amos[d] the father
of Josiah, 11and Josiah the father of Jech-
oniah and his brothers, at the time of the
deportation to Babylon.

12 And after the deportation to Bab-
ylon: Jechoniah was the father of Salathi-
el, and Salathiel the father of Zerubbabel,
13and Zerubbabel the father of Abiud,
and Abiud the father of Eliakim, and Eli-
akim the father of Azor, 14and Azor the
father of Zadok, and Zadok the father of
Achim, and Achim the father of Eliud,
15and Eliud the father of Eleazar, and
Eleazar the father of Matthan, and Mat-
than the father of Jacob, 16and Jacob the
father of Joseph the husband of Mary, of
whom Jesus was born, who is called the
Messiah.[e]

17 So all the generations from Abra-
ham to David are fourteen generations;
and from David to the deportation to
Babylon, fourteen generations; and from
the deportation to Babylon to the Messi-
ah,[e] fourteen generations.

18 Now the birth of Jesus the Messi-
ah[b] took place in this way. When his
mother Mary had been engaged to Jo-
seph, but before they lived together, she
was found to be with child from the
Holy Spirit. 19Her husband Joseph, be-
ing a righteous man and unwilling to ex-
pose her to public disgrace, planned to
dismiss her quietly. 20But just when he
had resolved to do this, an angel of the
Lord appeared to him in a dream and
said, "Joseph, son of David, do not be
afraid to take Mary as your wife, for the
child conceived in her is from the Holy
Spirit. 21She will bear a son, and you are
to name him Jesus, for he will save his
people from their sins." 22All this took
place to fulfill what had been spoken by
the Lord through the prophet:

23 "Look, the virgin shall conceive
and bear a son,

*a* Or *birth* *b* Or *Jesus Christ* *c* Other ancient authorities read *Asa* *d* Other ancient authorities read *Amon* *e* Or *the Christ*

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**1.1–17: Jesus' royal descent** (Lk 3.23–38) is traced through *King David* (22.41–45; Rom 1.3) back to Abraham the patriarch (Gal 3.16). **1:** *Messiah,* Hebrew word meaning "anointed one," translated into Greek as "Christos." **3–6:** Ruth 4.18–22; 1 Chr 2.1–15. **8:** For the sake of the pattern (v. 17) the names of Ahaziah, Joash, and Amaziah (1 Chr 3.11–12) have been omitted; such omission was quite consistent with Jewish practice in forming genealogies. **11:** *The deportation,* 2 Kings 24.8–16; Jer 27.20. **12:** *Jechoniah,* or Jehoiachin (2 Kings 24.6; 1 Chr 3.16). *Salathiel* apparently transmitted the line of legal descent from *Jechoniah* to *Zerubbabel* (Ezra 3.2; Hag 2.2; Lk 3.27), although the Chronicler traces it through Pedaiah (1 Chr 3.16–19). **13–16:** The persons from *Abiud* to *Jacob* are otherwise unknown. **17:** The device of making three groups of names is an aid to memory. *Fourteen* is the sum of the numerical value of the three letters in the name David in Hebrew (DWD).

**1.18–2.23: Jesus' birth and infancy** (Lk 1.26–2.40). **20:** *Angel,* see Heb 1.14 n. **21:** The Hebrew and Aramaic forms of *Jesus* and *he will save* are similar. The point could be suggested by translating, "You shall call his name 'Savior' because he will save." **22–23:** See Isa 7.14 n.

and they shall name him
Emmanuel,"
which means, "God is with us." 24 When Joseph awoke from sleep, he did as the angel of the Lord commanded him; he took her as his wife, 25 but had no marital relations with her until she had borne a son;[f] and he named him Jesus.

2 In the time of King Herod, after Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea, wise men[g] from the East came to Jerusalem, 2 asking, "Where is the child who has been born king of the Jews? For we observed his star at its rising,[h] and have come to pay him homage." 3 When King Herod heard this, he was frightened, and all Jerusalem with him; 4 and calling together all the chief priests and scribes of the people, he inquired of them where the Messiah[i] was to be born. 5 They told him, "In Bethlehem of Judea; for so it has been written by the prophet:

6 'And you, Bethlehem, in the land
of Judah,
are by no means least among
the rulers of Judah;
for from you shall come a ruler
who is to shepherd[j] my
people Israel.' "

7 Then Herod secretly called for the wise men[g] and learned from them the exact time when the star had appeared. 8 Then he sent them to Bethlehem, saying, "Go and search diligently for the child; and when you have found him, bring me word so that I may also go and pay him homage." 9 When they had heard the king, they set out; and there, ahead of them, went the star that they had seen at its rising,[h] until it stopped over the place where the child was. 10 When they saw that the star had stopped,[k] they were overwhelmed with joy. 11 On entering the house, they saw the child with Mary his mother; and they knelt down and paid him homage. Then, opening their treasure chests, they offered him gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh. 12 And having been warned in a dream not to return to Herod, they left for their own country by another road.

13 Now after they had left, an angel of the Lord appeared to Joseph in a dream and said, "Get up, take the child and his mother, and flee to Egypt, and remain there until I tell you; for Herod is about to search for the child, to destroy him." 14 Then Joseph[l] got up, took the child and his mother by night, and went to Egypt, 15 and remained there until the death of Herod. This was to fulfill what had been spoken by the Lord through the prophet, "Out of Egypt I have called my son."

16 When Herod saw that he had been tricked by the wise men,[g] he was infuriated, and he sent and killed all the children in and around Bethlehem who were two years old or under, according to the time that he had learned from the wise men.[g] 17 Then was fulfilled what had been spoken through the prophet Jeremiah:

18 "A voice was heard in Ramah,
wailing and loud lamentation,
Rachel weeping for her children;
she refused to be consoled,
because they are no more."

19 When Herod died, an angel of the Lord suddenly appeared in a dream to Joseph in Egypt and said, 20 "Get up, take

*f* Other ancient authorities read *her firstborn son*
*g* Or *astrologers*; Gk *magi* *h* Or *in the East*
*i* Or *the Christ* *j* Or *rule* *k* Gk *saw the star*
*l* Gk *he*

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**2.1–12: The wise men** (Magi). **1:** The *wise men,* a learned class in ancient Persia. **2:** Jer 23.5; Num 24.17. **3:** Herod's fears were aroused that his own children might be excluded from the throne. **5:** Jn 7.42. **6:** Mic 5.2. **11:** *Frankincense and myrrh,* aromatic gum resins obtained from shrubs found in tropical countries of the East.

**2.13–23: Escape to Egypt and return. 15:** *Out of Egypt . . .* , a quotation from Hos 11.1, where the reference is to Israel (compare Ex 4.22). **18:** Quoted from Jer 31.15. *Rachel,* wife of Jacob, died in childbirth and according to Gen 35.16–20 was buried near Bethlehem. *Ramah,* north of Jerusalem, was the scene of national grief (Jer 40.1) inflicted by an enemy.

**2.19:** *Herod* the Great *died* early in 4 B.C. **22:**

the child and his mother, and go to the land of Israel, for those who were seeking the child's life are dead." 21Then Joseph[m] got up, took the child and his mother, and went to the land of Israel. 22But when he heard that Archelaus was ruling over Judea in place of his father Herod, he was afraid to go there. And after being warned in a dream, he went away to the district of Galilee. 23There he made his home in a town called Nazareth, so that what had been spoken through the prophets might be fulfilled, "He will be called a Nazorean."

3 In those days John the Baptist appeared in the wilderness of Judea, proclaiming, 2"Repent, for the kingdom of heaven has come near."[n] 3This is the one of whom the prophet Isaiah spoke when he said,

"The voice of one crying out in the wilderness:
'Prepare the way of the Lord,
make his paths straight.' "

4Now John wore clothing of camel's hair with a leather belt around his waist, and his food was locusts and wild honey. 5Then the people of Jerusalem and all Judea were going out to him, and all the region along the Jordan, 6and they were baptized by him in the river Jordan, confessing their sins.

7 But when he saw many Pharisees and Sadducees coming for baptism, he said to them, "You brood of vipers! Who warned you to flee from the wrath to come? 8Bear fruit worthy of repentance. 9Do not presume to say to yourselves, 'We have Abraham as our ancestor'; for I tell you, God is able from these stones to raise up children to Abraham. 10Even now the ax is lying at the root of the trees; every tree therefore that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire.

11 "I baptize you with[o] water for repentance, but one who is more powerful than I is coming after me; I am not worthy to carry his sandals. He will baptize you with[o] the Holy Spirit and fire. 12His winnowing fork is in his hand, and he will clear his threshing floor and will gather his wheat into the granary; but the chaff he will burn with unquenchable fire."

13 Then Jesus came from Galilee to John at the Jordan, to be baptized by

*m* Gk *he* *n* Or *is at hand* *o* Or *in*

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*Archelaus,* who was almost as cruel as his father Herod, reigned from 4 B.C. to A.D. 6 and was replaced by a Roman procurator. **2.23**: There is a similarity in sound and possibly in meaning between the Aramaic word for *Nazareth* and the Hebrew word translated *branch* (Isa 11.1). *Nazareth* was situated in a secluded valley in lower Galilee, a little north of the Esdraelon plain.

**3.1–12**: **Activity of John the Baptist** (Mk 1.1–8; Lk 3.1–18; Jn 1.6–8, 19–28). **1**: *John* resembled the Old Testament prophets (compare v. 4 with 2 Kings 1.8; Zech 13.4). Christian faith understood him to fulfill Isa 40.3; Mal 3.1; 4.5 (see 3.3; 17.10–12). His influence outside Christianity is attested by Acts 18.25; 19.1–7. *Those days,* namely, when Jesus began his public life. *The wilderness of Judea* lay east and southeast of Jerusalem. **2**: *Repent,* literally "return," meant to come back to the way of life charted by the covenant between God and Israel (Ex 19.3–6; 24.3–8; Jer 31.31–34). *The kingdom,* see 4.17 n. **3**: Isa 40.3. **6**: See Mk 1.4 n.

**3.7**: *Pharisees* and *Sadducees* formed two major divisions among the Jews (for differences between them, see 22.23 n. and Acts 23.6–10). A third Jewish sect in Palestine was the Essenes (see Josephus, *B.J.*II.viii.2–13); their beliefs and practices are reflected in the Dead Sea Scrolls found at Qumran. *The wrath to come,* God's judgment (1 Thess 1.10). **8–10**: See Lk 3.7–9 n.; Jn 8.33. **11–12**: See Lk 12.49 n.; Acts 2.17–21; 19.1–7; 18.24–26.

**3.13–17**: **Jesus' baptism** (Mk 1.9–11; Lk 3.21–22; Jn 1.31–34). **13–15**: Jesus recognized John's authority and identified himself with those who responded in faith to John's call. **16–17**: A description of the surge of certainty and self-understanding that came to Jesus at his baptism. The language, akin to Old Testament speech, portrays a spiritual experience which words cannot adequately describe. *My Son, the Beloved,* see Mk 1.11 n.

**4.1–11**: **Jesus' temptation** (Mk 1.12–13; Lk 4.1–13; Heb 2.18; 4.15). The accounts illustrate Jesus' habitual refusal to allow his

him. 14John would have prevented him, saying, "I need to be baptized by you, and do you come to me?" 15But Jesus answered him, "Let it be so now; for it is proper for us in this way to fulfill all righteousness." Then he consented. 16And when Jesus had been baptized, just as he came up from the water, suddenly the heavens were opened to him and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove and alighting on him. 17And a voice from heaven said, "This is my Son, the Beloved,[p] with whom I am well pleased."

4 Then Jesus was led up by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted by the devil. 2He fasted forty days and forty nights, and afterwards he was famished. 3The tempter came and said to him, "If you are the Son of God, command these stones to become loaves of bread." 4But he answered, "It is written,

'One does not live by bread alone,
but by every word that comes
from the mouth of God.' "

5 Then the devil took him to the holy city and placed him on the pinnacle of the temple, 6saying to him, "If you are the Son of God, throw yourself down; for it is written,

'He will command his angels
concerning you,'
and 'On their hands they will
bear you up,
so that you will not dash your
foot against a stone.' "

7Jesus said to him, "Again it is written, 'Do not put the Lord your God to the test.' "

8 Again, the devil took him to a very high mountain and showed him all the kingdoms of the world and their splendor; 9and he said to him, "All these I will give you, if you will fall down and worship me." 10Jesus said to him, "Away with you, Satan! for it is written,

'Worship the Lord your God,
and serve only him.' "

11Then the devil left him, and suddenly angels came and waited on him.

12 Now when Jesus[q] heard that John had been arrested, he withdrew to Galilee. 13He left Nazareth and made his home in Capernaum by the sea, in the territory of Zebulun and Naphtali, 14so that what had been spoken through the prophet Isaiah might be fulfilled:

15 "Land of Zebulun, land of
Naphtali,
on the road by the sea, across
the Jordan, Galilee of the
Gentiles—
16 the people who sat in darkness
have seen a great light,
and for those who sat in the
region and shadow of death
light has dawned."

17From that time Jesus began to proclaim, "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven has come near."[r]

*p* Or *my beloved Son* *q* Gk *he* *r* Or *is at hand*

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sense of mission to be influenced by concern for his safety or for merely practical interests. **1**: *The devil, tempter* (v. 3), and *Satan* (v. 10) are names for evil conceived as a personal will actively hostile to God (see Lk 13.11, 16 n.). **2**: *Forty,* compare Ex 34.28; 1 Kings 19.8. **3**: *If you are the Son of God;* but see the declaration in 3.17. **4**: Deut 8.3.

**4.5**: *The holy city,* Jerusalem. The *pinnacle* mentioned in the next clause most likely overlooked the temple courts and the deep valley of the Kidron below. **6**: Ps 91.11–12. **7**: Deut 6.16. **10**: Deut 6.13.

**4.12–25**: **Beginnings of Jesus' activity in Galilee. 12–17**: Mk 1.14–15; Lk 4.14–15. **13**: *Capernaum,* on the northwest coast of the Sea of Galilee. **15–16**: Isa 9.1–2. **16**: *The people who sat in darkness,* those who suffered most from the Assyrian invasions. **17**: *From that time,* the arrest of John (v. 12). *The kingdom of heaven* is Matthew's usual way of expressing the equivalent phrase, "the kingdom of God," found in parallel accounts in the other gospels. In asserting that God's *kingdom has come near* Jesus meant that all God's past dealings with his creation were coming to climax and fruition. Jesus taught both the present reality of God's rule (Lk 10.18; 11.20; 17.21) and its future realization (Mt 6.10). See Mk 1.15 n.

18 As he walked by the Sea of Galilee, he saw two brothers, Simon, who is called Peter, and Andrew his brother, casting a net into the sea—for they were fishermen. 19 And he said to them, "Follow me, and I will make you fish for people." 20 Immediately they left their nets and followed him. 21 As he went from there, he saw two other brothers, James son of Zebedee and his brother John, in the boat with their father Zebedee, mending their nets, and he called them. 22 Immediately they left the boat and their father, and followed him.

23 Jesus[s] went throughout Galilee, teaching in their synagogues and proclaiming the good news[t] of the kingdom and curing every disease and every sickness among the people. 24 So his fame spread throughout all Syria, and they brought to him all the sick, those who were afflicted with various diseases and pains, demoniacs, epileptics, and paralytics, and he cured them. 25 And great crowds followed him from Galilee, the Decapolis, Jerusalem, Judea, and from beyond the Jordan.

5 When Jesus[u] saw the crowds, he went up the mountain; and after he sat down, his disciples came to him. 2 Then he began to speak, and taught them, saying:

3 "Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

4 "Blessed are those who mourn, for they will be comforted.

5 "Blessed are the meek, for they will inherit the earth.

6 "Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they will be filled.

7 "Blessed are the merciful, for they will receive mercy.

8 "Blessed are the pure in heart, for they will see God.

9 "Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called children of God.

10 "Blessed are those who are persecuted for righteousness' sake, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

11 "Blessed are you when people revile you and persecute you and utter all kinds of evil against you falsely[v] on my account. 12 Rejoice and be glad, for your reward is great in heaven, for in the same way they persecuted the prophets who were before you.

13 "You are the salt of the earth; but if salt has lost its taste, how can its saltiness be restored? It is no longer good for anything, but is thrown out and trampled under foot.

14 "You are the light of the world. A city built on a hill cannot be hid. 15 No one after lighting a lamp puts it under the bushel basket, but on the lampstand, and

*s* Gk *He* *t* Gk *gospel* *u* Gk *he* *v* Other ancient authorities lack *falsely*

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**4.18–22**: Mk 1.16–20; Lk 5.1–11; Jn 1.35–42. **24**: *Demoniacs,* persons controlled in body or will, or in both, by evil forces (Mt 8.16, 28; 9.32; 15.22; Mk 5.15; see Lk 13.11, 16 n.). *Demons,* see Lk 4.33 n. **25**: *Decapolis,* see Mk 5.20 n.

**5.1–7.27**: **The Sermon on the Mount** sounds the keynote of the new age that Jesus came to introduce. Internal analysis and comparison with Luke's Gospel suggest that the Evangelist (in accord with his habit of synthesis) has inserted into this account of the Sermon portions of Jesus' teaching given on other occasions. **1**: *He sat down,* the usual position of Jewish rabbis while teaching (compare Lk 4.20–21).

**5.3–12**: **The Beatitudes** (Lk 6.17, 20–23) proclaim God's favor toward those who aspire to live under his rule. **3**: *Poor in spirit,* those who feel a deep sense of spiritual poverty (Isa 66.2). **4**: *Comforted,* the word implies strengthening as well as consolation.

**5.5**: Ps 37.11. **6**: Isa 55.1–2; Jn 4.14; 6.48–51. **7**: *Will receive mercy,* on the day of judgment. **8**: Purity of *heart* is single-mindedness or sincerity, freedom from mixed motives; it is not synonymous with chastity, but includes it (Ps 24.4; Heb 12.14). *See God,* 1 Cor 13.12; 1 Jn 3.2; Rev 22.4.

**5.9**: *Peacemakers* are not merely "peaceable," but those who work earnestly to "make" peace. *Will be called children of God,* will be acknowledged as such by God. **10**: 1 Pet 3.14; 4.14. **12**: 2 Chr 36.15–16; Mt 23.37; Acts 7.52.

**5.13–16**: **The witness of the disciples.** **13**: Mk 9.49–50; Lk 14.34–35. **14**: Phil 2.15; Jn 8.12. **15**: See Mk 4.21 n. **16**: 1 Pet 2.12.

it gives light to all in the house. 16In the same way, let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father in heaven.

17 "Do not think that I have come to abolish the law or the prophets; I have come not to abolish but to fulfill. 18For truly I tell you, until heaven and earth pass away, not one letter,[w] not one stroke of a letter, will pass from the law until all is accomplished. 19Therefore, whoever breaks[x] one of the least of these commandments, and teaches others to do the same, will be called least in the kingdom of heaven; but whoever does them and teaches them will be called great in the kingdom of heaven. 20For I tell you, unless your righteousness exceeds that of the scribes and Pharisees, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven.

21 "You have heard that it was said to those of ancient times, 'You shall not murder'; and 'whoever murders shall be liable to judgment.' 22But I say to you that if you are angry with a brother or sister,[y] you will be liable to judgment; and if you insult[z] a brother or sister,[a] you will be liable to the council; and if you say, 'You fool,' you will be liable to the hell[b] of fire. 23So when you are offering your gift at the altar, if you remember that your brother or sister[c] has something against you, 24leave your gift there before the altar and go; first be reconciled to your brother or sister,[c] and then come and offer your gift. 25Come to terms quickly with your accuser while you are on the way to court[d] with him, or your accuser may hand you over to the judge, and the judge to the guard, and you will be thrown into prison. 26Truly I tell you, you will never get out until you have paid the last penny.

27 "You have heard that it was said, 'You shall not commit adultery.' 28But I say to you that everyone who looks at a woman with lust has already committed adultery with her in his heart. 29If your right eye causes you to sin, tear it out and throw it away; it is better for you to lose one of your members than for your whole body to be thrown into hell.[b] 30And if your right hand causes you to sin, cut it off and throw it away; it is better for you to lose one of your members than for your whole body to go into hell.[b]

31 "It was also said, 'Whoever divorces his wife, let him give her a certificate of divorce.' 32But I say to you that anyone who divorces his wife, except on the ground of unchastity, causes her to commit adultery; and whoever marries a divorced woman commits adultery.

33 "Again, you have heard that it was said to those of ancient times, 'You shall not swear falsely, but carry out the vows you have made to the Lord.' 34But I say to you, Do not swear at all, either by

*w* Gk *one iota* *x* Or *annuls* *y* Gk *a brother*; other ancient authorities add *without cause* *z* Gk *say Raca to* (an obscure term of abuse) *a* Gk *a brother* *b* Gk *Gehenna* *c* Gk *your brother* *d* Gk lacks *to court*

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**5.17–20: The relation of Jesus' message to the Jewish law** was a great concern to followers with a Jewish background. **17:** *The prophets* in the Hebrew Scriptures comprise the books of Joshua, Judges, Samuel, Kings, Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, and the twelve minor prophets (see Lk 24.27 n., 44 n.). Many Jews esteemed the prophets less than the law; hence the word *or* here. **18:** Mk 13.31; Lk 16.17. **19:** *Breaks,* or "sets aside." *Teaches,* Jas 3.1. **20:** *Righteousness,* one's acceptance of God's requirements and one's being accepted by God (Lk 18.10–14).

**5.21–48: Illustrations of the true understanding of the Law. 21:** The *judgment,* a local Jewish court established in every town or city in accordance with the command in Deut 16.18. **22:** *Council,* the Sanhedrin, comprising seventy members. **25–26:** Lk 12.57–59. **26:** *Penny,* see Lk 12.59 n.

**5.27:** Ex 20.14; Deut 5.18. *Adultery* carried the death penalty (Lev 20.10; Deut 22.22). **29–30:** Mk 9.43–48; Mt 18.8–9. **31:** *It was also said,* Deut 24.1–4. **32:** The expression *except . . . unchastity* occurs also in 19.9; it is absent from the accounts in Mk 10.11–12 and Lk 16.18 (compare also Rom 7.2–3; 1 Cor 7.10–11).

**5.33–37:** Lev 19.12; Num 30.2; Deut 23.21; Mt 23.16–22; Jas 5.12. **35:** Isa 66.1.

heaven, for it is the throne of God, [35]or by the earth, for it is his footstool, or by Jerusalem, for it is the city of the great King. [36]And do not swear by your head, for you cannot make one hair white or black. [37]Let your word be 'Yes, Yes' or 'No, No'; anything more than this comes from the evil one.[e]

38 "You have heard that it was said, 'An eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth.' [39]But I say to you, Do not resist an evildoer. But if anyone strikes you on the right cheek, turn the other also; [40]and if anyone wants to sue you and take your coat, give your cloak as well; [41]and if anyone forces you to go one mile, go also the second mile. [42]Give to everyone who begs from you, and do not refuse anyone who wants to borrow from you.

43 "You have heard that it was said, 'You shall love your neighbor and hate your enemy.' [44]But I say to you, Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you, [45]so that you may be children of your Father in heaven; for he makes his sun rise on the evil and on the good, and sends rain on the righteous and on the unrighteous. [46]For if you love those who love you, what reward do you have? Do not even the tax collectors do the same? [47]And if you greet only your brothers and sisters,[f] what more are you doing than others? Do not even the Gentiles do the same? [48]Be perfect, therefore, as your heavenly Father is perfect.

6 "Beware of practicing your piety before others in order to be seen by them; for then you have no reward from your Father in heaven.

2 "So whenever you give alms, do not sound a trumpet before you, as the hypocrites do in the synagogues and in the streets, so that they may be praised by others. Truly I tell you, they have received their reward. [3]But when you give alms, do not let your left hand know what your right hand is doing, [4]so that your alms may be done in secret; and your Father who sees in secret will reward you.[g]

5 "And whenever you pray, do not be like the hypocrites; for they love to stand and pray in the synagogues and at the street corners, so that they may be seen by others. Truly I tell you, they have received their reward. [6]But whenever you pray, go into your room and shut the door and pray to your Father who is in secret; and your Father who sees in secret will reward you.[g]

7 "When you are praying, do not heap up empty phrases as the Gentiles do; for they think that they will be heard because of their many words. [8]Do not be like them, for your Father knows what you need before you ask him.

9 "Pray then in this way:

*e* Or *evil* *f* Gk *your brothers* *g* Other ancient authorities add *openly*

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**5.38**: Ex 21.23–24; Lev 24.19–20; Deut 19.21. Though this principle controlled retaliation in primitive society, it did not justify it. **39–42**: Lk 6.29–30; Rom 12.17; 1 Cor 6.7; 1 Pet 2.19; 3.9. **40**: To give the *cloak,* a long outer garment, was a proof of greater self-denial than to give the *coat* (inner tunic; see 10.10 n.). **41**: Soldiers could compel civilians to carry their baggage; to go a *second mile* would relieve another from the burden. **44–48**: Lk 6.27–28, 32–36. **45**: To be *children of* God is to pattern attitudes after God's. The words *children of* commonly mean persons who show the quality named or trait of character implied (see 23.31 n.; Lk 6.35; 10.6; Jn 8.39–47). **48**: *Be perfect,* in love to all (Col 3.14; 1 Jn 4.19).

**6.1–34**: **Teachings in practical piety;** Jesus emphasizes a sincere response to God that identifies oneself with his purposes. **1**: 23.5. **2**: Giving *alms* was considered by Judaism to be the foremost act of piety. *Have received their reward,* i.e. the praise of others.

**6.5**: *Have received their reward,* i.e. the acts done to win the applause of others have no reward beyond that. Lk 18.10–14.

**6.9–13**: The Lord's Prayer (compare Lk 11.2–4) falls into two parts: after the opening invocation, there are three petitions concerning God's glory, followed by those concerning our needs. The phrase, *on earth as it is in heaven* (v. 10), belongs to each of the first three petitions. On the basis of David's prayer (1 Chr 29.11–13) the early church added an appropriate concluding doxology (see note *j*). **9**: Isa 63.16; 64.8. **12**: *As we also,* i.e.

Our Father in heaven,
hallowed be your name.
10 Your kingdom come.
Your will be done,
on earth as it is in heaven.
11 Give us this day our daily
bread.[h]
12 And forgive us our debts,
as we also have forgiven
our debtors.
13 And do not bring us to the time
of trial,[i]
but rescue us from the
evil one.[j]

14 For if you forgive others their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you; 15 but if you do not forgive others, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses.

16 "And whenever you fast, do not look dismal, like the hypocrites, for they disfigure their faces so as to show others that they are fasting. Truly I tell you, they have received their reward. 17 But when you fast, put oil on your head and wash your face, 18 so that your fasting may be seen not by others but by your Father who is in secret; and your Father who sees in secret will reward you.[k]

19 "Do not store up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust[l] consume and where thieves break in and steal; 20 but store up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust[l] consumes and where thieves do not break in and steal. 21 For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.

22 "The eye is the lamp of the body. So, if your eye is healthy, your whole body will be full of light; 23 but if your eye is unhealthy, your whole body will be full of darkness. If then the light in you is darkness, how great is the darkness!

24 "No one can serve two masters; for a slave will either hate the one and love the other, or be devoted to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and wealth.[m]

25 "Therefore I tell you, do not worry about your life, what you will eat or what you will drink,[n] or about your body, what you will wear. Is not life more than food, and the body more than clothing? 26 Look at the birds of the air; they neither sow nor reap nor gather into barns, and yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not of more value than they? 27 And can any of you by worrying add a single hour to your span of life?[o] 28 And why do you worry about clothing? Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow; they neither toil nor spin, 29 yet I tell you, even Solomon in all his glory was not clothed like one of these. 30 But if God so clothes the grass of the field, which is alive today and tomorrow is thrown into the oven, will he not much more clothe you—you of little faith? 31 Therefore do not worry, saying, 'What will we eat?' or 'What will we drink?' or 'What will we wear?' 32 For it is the Gentiles who strive for all these things; and indeed your heavenly Father knows that you need all these things. 33 But strive first for the kingdom of God[p] and his[q] righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well.

34 "So do not worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will bring worries of

*h* Or *our bread for tomorrow* *i* Or *us into temptation* *j* Or *from evil*. Other ancient authorities add, in some form, *For the kingdom and the power and the glory are yours forever. Amen.* *k* Other ancient authorities add *openly* *l* Gk *eating* *m* Gk *mammon* *n* Other ancient authorities lack *or what you will drink* *o* Or *add one cubit to your height* *p* Other ancient authorities lack *of God* *q* Or *its*

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we cannot ask for ourselves what we deny to others. **13**: 2 Thess 3.3; Jas 1.13. **14–15**: 18.35; Mk 11.25–26; Eph 4.32; Col 3.13.

**6.16–18**: Acceptable fasting (Isa 58.5). Especially pious Jews used to fast twice a week (see Lk 18.12 n.). **19–21**: The uselessness of trusting in worldly goods (Jas 5.2–3). *Moth*, in antiquity a large part of riches often consisted of costly garments especially liable to destruction by moths.

**6.22–23**: Lk 11.34–36. **24**: Lk 16.13.

**6.25–33**: Lk 12.22–31. **25**: Lk 10.41; 12.11; Phil 4.6. **29**: 1 Kings 10.4–7. **30**: *You of little faith* are unwilling to rest in the assurance that God cares about your lives (8.26; 14.31; 16.8). **33**: Mk 10.29–30; Lk 18.29–30.

its own. Today's trouble is enough for today.

7 "Do not judge, so that you may not be judged. 2For with the judgment you make you will be judged, and the measure you give will be the measure you get. 3Why do you see the speck in your neighbor's[r] eye, but do not notice the log in your own eye? 4Or how can you say to your neighbor,[s] 'Let me take the speck out of your eye,' while the log is in your own eye? 5You hypocrite, first take the log out of your own eye, and then you will see clearly to take the speck out of your neighbor's[r] eye.

6 "Do not give what is holy to dogs; and do not throw your pearls before swine, or they will trample them under foot and turn and maul you.

7 "Ask, and it will be given you; search, and you will find; knock, and the door will be opened for you. 8For everyone who asks receives, and everyone who searches finds, and for everyone who knocks, the door will be opened. 9Is there anyone among you who, if your child asks for bread, will give a stone? 10Or if the child asks for a fish, will give a snake? 11If you then, who are evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father in heaven give good things to those who ask him!

12 "In everything do to others as you would have them do to you; for this is the law and the prophets.

13 "Enter through the narrow gate; for the gate is wide and the road is easy[t] that leads to destruction, and there are many who take it. 14For the gate is narrow and the road is hard that leads to life, and there are few who find it.

15 "Beware of false prophets, who come to you in sheep's clothing but inwardly are ravenous wolves. 16You will know them by their fruits. Are grapes gathered from thorns, or figs from thistles? 17In the same way, every good tree bears good fruit, but the bad tree bears bad fruit. 18A good tree cannot bear bad fruit, nor can a bad tree bear good fruit. 19Every tree that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire. 20Thus you will know them by their fruits.

21 "Not everyone who says to me, 'Lord, Lord,' will enter the kingdom of heaven, but only the one who does the will of my Father in heaven. 22On that day many will say to me, 'Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in your name, and cast out demons in your name, and do many deeds of power in your name?' 23Then I will declare to them, 'I never knew you; go away from me, you evildoers.'

24 "Everyone then who hears these words of mine and acts on them will be like a wise man who built his house on rock. 25The rain fell, the floods came, and the winds blew and beat on that

*r* Gk *brother's* *s* Gk *brother* *t* Other ancient authorities read *for the road is wide and easy*

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**7.1–29: Illustrations of the practical meaning of Jesus' message. 1–5:** Judgment of others (Lk 6.37–38, 41–42; Mk 4.24; Rom 2.1; 14.10). **6:** Concerning discrimination in judging. *What is holy,* i.e. the flesh of Jewish sacrifices. **7–11:** Encouragement to prayer (6.8; Mk 11.23–24; Jn 15.7; 1 Jn 3.22; 5.14). **9–10:** That is, a round *stone* like a loaf of *bread,* and a dried *fish* resembling a *snake.*

**7.12:** Others had formulated a negative Golden Rule that counsels inaction ("Do not do to others . . ."); the positive form here requires active contribution to the welfare and happiness of others. Lk 6.31; Mt 22.39–40; Rom 13.8–10. **13–14:** Lk 13.23–24; Jer 21.8; Ps 1; Deut 30.19; Jn 10.7; 14.6.

**7.15–20:** Lk 6.43–45. **15:** 24.11, 24; Ezek 22.27; 1 Jn 4.1; Jn 10.12. *Sheep* often symbolize a group of followers in a religious sense (Ezek 34.1–24; Lk 12.32). **16:** 3.8; 12.33–35; Lk 6.43–45. **19:** 3.10; Lk 13.6–9; Jas 3.10–12. **22:** *That day,* the day of judgment. Jesus speaks as the divine judge.

**7.24–27:** Lk 6.47–49; Jas 1.22–25. **28:** *When Jesus had finished saying these things,* this (or a similar) formula marks the conclusion of each of the five main discourses in the gospel (see Introduction and 11.1; 13.53; 19.1; 26.1). **29:** *Not as their scribes,* Jesus speaks on his own responsibility without appeal to traditional authority (Mk 1.22; 11.18; Lk 4.32).

house, but it did not fall, because it had been founded on rock. 26And everyone who hears these words of mine and does not act on them will be like a foolish man who built his house on sand. 27The rain fell, and the floods came, and the winds blew and beat against that house, and it fell—and great was its fall!"

28 Now when Jesus had finished saying these things, the crowds were astounded at his teaching, 29for he taught them as one having authority, and not as their scribes.

8 When Jesus[u] had come down from the mountain, great crowds followed him; 2and there was a leper[v] who came to him and knelt before him, saying, "Lord, if you choose, you can make me clean." 3He stretched out his hand and touched him, saying, "I do choose. Be made clean!" Immediately his leprosy[v] was cleansed. 4Then Jesus said to him, "See that you say nothing to anyone; but go, show yourself to the priest, and offer the gift that Moses commanded, as a testimony to them."

5 When he entered Capernaum, a centurion came to him, appealing to him 6and saying, "Lord, my servant is lying at home paralyzed, in terrible distress." 7And he said to him, "I will come and cure him." 8The centurion answered, "Lord, I am not worthy to have you come under my roof; but only speak the word, and my servant will be healed. 9For I also am a man under authority, with soldiers under me; and I say to one, 'Go,' and he goes, and to another, 'Come,' and he comes, and to my slave, 'Do this,' and the slave does it." 10When Jesus heard him, he was amazed and said to those who followed him, "Truly I tell you, in no one[w] in Israel have I found such faith. 11I tell you, many will come from east and west and will eat with Abraham and Isaac and Jacob in the kingdom of heaven, 12while the heirs of the kingdom will be thrown into the outer darkness, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth." 13And to the centurion Jesus said, "Go; let it be done for you according to your faith." And the servant was healed in that hour.

14 When Jesus entered Peter's house, he saw his mother-in-law lying in bed with a fever; 15he touched her hand, and the fever left her, and she got up and began to serve him. 16That evening they brought to him many who were possessed with demons; and he cast out the spirits with a word, and cured all who were sick. 17This was to fulfill what had been spoken through the prophet Isaiah, "He took our infirmities and bore our diseases."

18 Now when Jesus saw great crowds around him, he gave orders to go over to the other side. 19A scribe then approached and said, "Teacher, I will follow you wherever you go." 20And Jesus said to him, "Foxes have holes, and birds of the air have nests; but the Son of Man has nowhere to lay his head." 21Another of his disciples said to him, "Lord, first let me go and bury my father." 22But

*u* Gk *he* *v* The terms *leper* and *leprosy* can refer to several diseases *w* Other ancient authorities read *Truly I tell you, not even*

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**8.1–9.38: Events in Galilee. 8.2–4**: Mk 1.40–44; Lk 5.12–14. *Leprosy,* a skin disorder of an uncertain nature. Several diseases were possibly referred to by this name (see Lev 13.1–59 n.; Num 5.1–4). Its presence excluded the sufferer from associating with others. *Make me clean,* the leper seeks not merely healing but the freedom to rejoin the Jewish community. **4**: Lev 14.2–32. **5–13**: Lk 7.1–10; Jn 4.46–53. The *centurion,* a non-Jewish military officer in command of from fifty to one hundred soldiers, is convinced that diseases are as obedient to Jesus as soldiers are to him. **10**: *Faith* refers to the centurion's trust and recognition of Jesus' power (v. 13; Mk 11.23 n., 24 n.). **11–12**: See Lk 14.15 n.; Isa 49.12; 59.19; Mt 13.42, 50; 22.13; 24.51; 25.30.

**8.14–17**: Mk 1.29–34; Lk 4.38–41. **16**: *Demons,* see 4.24 n.; 12.22 n; Lk 4.33 n.; 7.33 n.; 13.16 n. **17**: Isa 53.4.

**8.18–22**: Mk 4.35; Lk 8.22; 9.57–60. **18**: *The other side,* the eastern shore of the Sea of Galilee. **20**: *Son of Man,* see Mk 2.10 n. **22**: *Follow me,* Jesus implies that obedience to his call must take precedence over every other

Jesus said to him, "Follow me, and let the dead bury their own dead."

23 And when he got into the boat, his disciples followed him. 24 A windstorm arose on the sea, so great that the boat was being swamped by the waves; but he was asleep. 25 And they went and woke him up, saying, "Lord, save us! We are perishing!" 26 And he said to them, "Why are you afraid, you of little faith?" Then he got up and rebuked the winds and the sea; and there was a dead calm. 27 They were amazed, saying, "What sort of man is this, that even the winds and the sea obey him?"

28 When he came to the other side, to the country of the Gadarenes,[x] two demoniacs coming out of the tombs met him. They were so fierce that no one could pass that way. 29 Suddenly they shouted, "What have you to do with us, Son of God? Have you come here to torment us before the time?" 30 Now a large herd of swine was feeding at some distance from them. 31 The demons begged him, "If you cast us out, send us into the herd of swine." 32 And he said to them, "Go!" So they came out and entered the swine; and suddenly, the whole herd rushed down the steep bank into the sea and perished in the water. 33 The swineherds ran off, and on going into the town, they told the whole story about what had happened to the demoniacs. 34 Then the whole town came out to meet Jesus; and when they saw him, they begged him to leave their neighborhood.

9 1 And after getting into a boat he crossed the sea and came to his own town.

2 And just then some people were carrying a paralyzed man lying on a bed. When Jesus saw their faith, he said to the paralytic, "Take heart, son; your sins are forgiven." 3 Then some of the scribes said to themselves, "This man is blaspheming." 4 But Jesus, perceiving their thoughts, said, "Why do you think evil in your hearts? 5 For which is easier, to say, 'Your sins are forgiven,' or to say, 'Stand up and walk'? 6 But so that you may know that the Son of Man has authority on earth to forgive sins"—he then said to the paralytic—"Stand up, take your bed and go to your home." 7 And he stood up and went to his home. 8 When the crowds saw it, they were filled with awe, and they glorified God, who had given such authority to human beings.

9 As Jesus was walking along, he saw a man called Matthew sitting at the tax booth; and he said to him, "Follow me." And he got up and followed him.

10 And as he sat at dinner[y] in the house, many tax collectors and sinners came and were sitting[z] with him and his disciples. 11 When the Pharisees saw this, they said to his disciples, "Why does your teacher eat with tax collectors and sinners?" 12 But when he heard this, he said, "Those who are well have no need of a physician, but those who are sick. 13 Go and learn what this means, 'I desire mercy, not sacrifice.' For I have come to call not the righteous but sinners."

14 Then the disciples of John came to him, saying, "Why do we and the Pharisees fast often,[a] but your disciples do not

*x* Other ancient authorities read *Gergesenes*; others, *Gerasenes* *y* Gk *reclined* *z* Gk *were reclining* *a* Other ancient authorities lack *often*

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duty or love (compare 10.37). *Let the dead,* i.e. the spiritually dead, who are not alive to the greater demands of the kingdom of God.

**8.23–27**: Mk 4.36–41; Lk 8.22–24. **25**: See Lk 8.24 n.

**8.28–34**: Mk 5.1–20; Lk 8.26–39. *Gadarenes,* the inhabitants of the city, or of the surrounding district, of Gadara, the capital of Perea. **31**: See v. 16 n. and Mk 5.13 n.

**9.1–8**: Healing a paralytic (Mk 2.1–12; Lk 5.17–26). **1**: *His own town,* Capernaum. **8**: 7.28–29.

**9.9–13**: Mk 2.13–17; Lk 5.27–32. **10**: *The house,* presumably Matthew's house (see v. 9). Lk 7.34; 15.1–2. **13**: Hos 6.6; Mt 12.7; 15.2–6. Jesus uses a biblical quotation to challenge a conventional religious idea (see Lk 5.32 n.).

**9.14–17**: Mk 2.18–22; Lk 5.33–39. **15**: Jesus recognizes the principle of fasting, but

fast?" [15]And Jesus said to them, "The wedding guests cannot mourn as long as the bridegroom is with them, can they? The days will come when the bridegroom is taken away from them, and then they will fast. [16]No one sews a piece of unshrunk cloth on an old cloak, for the patch pulls away from the cloak, and a worse tear is made. [17]Neither is new wine put into old wineskins; otherwise, the skins burst, and the wine is spilled, and the skins are destroyed; but new wine is put into fresh wineskins, and so both are preserved."

18 While he was saying these things to them, suddenly a leader of the synagogue[b] came in and knelt before him, saying, "My daughter has just died; but come and lay your hand on her, and she will live." [19]And Jesus got up and followed him, with his disciples. [20]Then suddenly a woman who had been suffering from hemorrhages for twelve years came up behind him and touched the fringe of his cloak, [21]for she said to herself, "If I only touch his cloak, I will be made well." [22]Jesus turned, and seeing her he said, "Take heart, daughter; your faith has made you well." And instantly the woman was made well. [23]When Jesus came to the leader's house and saw the flute players and the crowd making a commotion, [24]he said, "Go away; for the girl is not dead but sleeping." And they laughed at him. [25]But when the crowd had been put outside, he went in and took her by the hand, and the girl got up. [26]And the report of this spread throughout that district.

27 As Jesus went on from there, two blind men followed him, crying loudly, "Have mercy on us, Son of David!" [28]When he entered the house, the blind men came to him; and Jesus said to them, "Do you believe that I am able to do this?" They said to him, "Yes, Lord." [29]Then he touched their eyes and said, "According to your faith let it be done to you." [30]And their eyes were opened. Then Jesus sternly ordered them, "See that no one knows of this." [31]But they went away and spread the news about him throughout that district.

32 After they had gone away, a demoniac who was mute was brought to him. [33]And when the demon had been cast out, the one who had been mute spoke; and the crowds were amazed and said, "Never has anything like this been seen in Israel." [34]But the Pharisees said, "By the ruler of the demons he casts out the demons."[c]

35 Then Jesus went about all the cities and villages, teaching in their synagogues, and proclaiming the good news of the kingdom, and curing every disease and every sickness. [36]When he saw the crowds, he had compassion for them, because they were harassed and helpless, like sheep without a shepherd. [37]Then he said to his disciples, "The harvest is plentiful, but the laborers are few; [38]therefore ask the Lord of the harvest to send out laborers into his harvest."

10 Then Jesus[d] summoned his twelve disciples and gave them

*b* Gk lacks *of the synagogue* *c* Other ancient authorities lack this verse *d* Gk *he*

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denies that it fits the circumstances of his life. **16–17**: The two pictorial sayings defend the practices of John's disciples and the practices of his own disciples; Jesus insists that the two ways should not be joined.

**9.18–26**: Mk 5.21–43; Lk 8.40–56. **21**: The Greek word here translated *be made well* (also v. 22; Mk 5.23, 28, 34; 10.52; Lk 8.36, 48, 50; 17.19; 18.42) carries with it the idea of rescue from impending destruction or from a superior power. **22**: Mk 11.23 n., 24 n. **23**: Jer 9.17–18. *Flute players,* hired mourners. **24**: Jesus speaks in the perspective of the kingdom of God in which physical death is not finally destructive of a person's existence but is a temporary cessation of personal activity (and analogous to sleeping). Verse 18 and the crowd's attitude clearly assert the fact of physical death.

**9.27–31**: 20.29–34. **29**: 9.22 n. **30**: 8.4. **32–34**: 12.22–24; Lk 11.14–15. **34**: See 12.24 n.; Mk 3.22 n.; Jn 7.20.

**9.35–38**: 4.23–25. **36**: Mk 6.34; Mt 14.14; 15.32; Num 27.17; Ezek 34.1–6; Zech 10.2.

**10.1–11.1**: **Commissioning and instruction of the Twelve. 10.1–4**: Mk 6.7; 3.13–

authority over unclean spirits, to cast them out, and to cure every disease and every sickness. 2These are the names of the twelve apostles: first, Simon, also known as Peter, and his brother Andrew; James son of Zebedee, and his brother John; 3Philip and Bartholomew; Thomas and Matthew the tax collector; James son of Alphaeus, and Thaddaeus;[e] 4Simon the Cananaean, and Judas Iscariot, the one who betrayed him.

5 These twelve Jesus sent out with the following instructions: "Go nowhere among the Gentiles, and enter no town of the Samaritans, 6but go rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel. 7As you go, proclaim the good news, 'The kingdom of heaven has come near.'[f] 8Cure the sick, raise the dead, cleanse the lepers,[g] cast out demons. You received without payment; give without payment. 9Take no gold, or silver, or copper in your belts, 10no bag for your journey, or two tunics, or sandals, or a staff; for laborers deserve their food. 11Whatever town or village you enter, find out who in it is worthy, and stay there until you leave. 12As you enter the house, greet it. 13If the house is worthy, let your peace come upon it; but if it is not worthy, let your peace return to you. 14If anyone will not welcome you or listen to your words, shake off the dust from your feet as you leave that house or town. 15Truly I tell you, it will be more tolerable for the land of Sodom and Gomorrah on the day of judgment than for that town.

16 "See, I am sending you out like sheep into the midst of wolves; so be wise as serpents and innocent as doves. 17Beware of them, for they will hand you over to councils and flog you in their synagogues; 18and you will be dragged before governors and kings because of me, as a testimony to them and the Gentiles. 19When they hand you over, do not worry about how you are to speak or what you are to say; for what you are to say will be given to you at that time; 20for it is not you who speak, but the Spirit of your Father speaking through you. 21Brother will betray brother to death, and a father his child, and children will rise against parents and have them put to death; 22and you will be hated by all because of my name. But the one who endures to the end will be saved. 23When they persecute you in one town, flee to the next; for truly I tell you, you will not have gone through all the towns of Israel before the Son of Man comes.

24 "A disciple is not above the teacher, nor a slave above the master; 25it is enough for the disciple to be like the teacher, and the slave like the master. If they have called the master of the house Beelzebul, how much more will they malign those of his household!

26 "So have no fear of them; for nothing is covered up that will not be uncovered, and nothing secret that will not become known. 27What I say to you in the dark, tell in the light; and what you hear whispered, proclaim from the housetops. 28Do not fear those who kill the body but cannot kill the soul; rather fear

*e* Other ancient authorities read *Lebbaeus*, or *Lebbaeus called Thaddaeus* *f* Or *is at hand*
*g* The terms *leper* and *leprosy* can refer to several diseases

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19; Lk 9.1; 6.12–16. **1**: *Unclean spirits,* see Mk 1.23 n.

**10.5–15**: Mk 6.8–11; Lk 9.2–5; 10.3–12. **5**: 15.21–28; Lk 9.52; Jn 4.9. **6**: 15.24. **7**: The primary message. Through acceptance, or at least openness to this message and its bearer, healing would follow (see 4.17 n.; 4.23; 9.21, 35). **9**: Lk 22.35–36. **10**: *Tunic,* a short-sleeved garment of knee-length, held in at the waist by a girdle (Mk 1.6). *Deserve,* 1 Cor 9.14. **12**: *Greet it,* the usual form was, "Peace be to this house." **15**: Life and death depend on one's response to God's kingdom. *Sodom and Gomorrah* illustrate God's judgment on wickedness (Gen 18.16–33; ch 19).

**10.16–25**: 24.9, 13; Mk 13.9–13; Lk 21.12–17, 19. **20**: Jn 16.7–11. **21**: 10.35–36; Lk 12.52–53. **22**: *Because of my name,* "because of me and my cause." **23**: The words stress the urgency of the disciples' task. **25**: Lk 6.40; Jn 13.16; 15.20; Mt 9.34; 12.24; Mk 3.22.

**10.26–33**: Lk 12.2–9. **27**: *Proclaim from the housetops,* unlike the Essenes, Jesus was opposed to secret doctrines revealed only to initiates. **28**: Heb 10.31. **29–33**: 6.26–33. **29**: See Lk 12.6 n. **31**: 12.12.

him who can destroy both soul and body in hell. [h] [29]Are not two sparrows sold for a penny? Yet not one of them will fall to the ground apart from your Father. [30]And even the hairs of your head are all counted. [31]So do not be afraid; you are of more value than many sparrows.

32 "Everyone therefore who acknowledges me before others, I also will acknowledge before my Father in heaven; [33]but whoever denies me before others, I also will deny before my Father in heaven.

34 "Do not think that I have come to bring peace to the earth; I have not come to bring peace, but a sword.

[35] For I have come to set a man
against his father,
and a daughter against her mother,
and a daughter-in-law against her
mother-in-law;
[36] and one's foes will be members of
one's own household.

[37]Whoever loves father or mother more than me is not worthy of me; and whoever loves son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me; [38]and whoever does not take up the cross and follow me is not worthy of me. [39]Those who find their life will lose it, and those who lose their life for my sake will find it.

40 "Whoever welcomes you welcomes me, and whoever welcomes me welcomes the one who sent me. [41]Whoever welcomes a prophet in the name of a prophet will receive a prophet's reward; and whoever welcomes a righteous person in the name of a righteous person will receive the reward of the righteous; [42]and whoever gives even a cup of cold water to one of these little ones in the name of a disciple—truly I tell you, none of these will lose their reward."

11 Now when Jesus had finished instructing his twelve disciples, he went on from there to teach and proclaim his message in their cities.

2 When John heard in prison what the Messiah [i] was doing, he sent word by his [j] disciples [3]and said to him, "Are you the one who is to come, or are we to wait for another?" [4]Jesus answered them, "Go and tell John what you hear and see: [5]the blind receive their sight, the lame walk, the lepers [k] are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead are raised, and the poor have good news brought to them. [6]And blessed is anyone who takes no offense at me."

7 As they went away, Jesus began to speak to the crowds about John: "What did you go out into the wilderness to look at? A reed shaken by the wind? [8]What then did you go out to see? Someone [l] dressed in soft robes? Look, those who wear soft robes are in royal palaces. [9]What then did you go out to see? A

*h* Gk *Gehenna* *i* Or *the Christ* *j* Other ancient authorities read *two of his* *k* The terms *leper* and *leprosy* can refer to several diseases *l* Or *Why then did you go out? To see someone*

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**10.32–33**: Jesus claims to mediate God's will; a favorable response to him is a response to God (compare vv. 40–42).

**10.34–36**: Lk 12.51–53. **35**: Mic 7.6. **37–39**: 16.24–25; Mk 8.34–35; Lk 9.23–24; 14.26–27; 17.33. **37**: Compare the stronger form of expression in Lk 14.26. **38**: A *cross*, a Roman means of execution, was carried by the condemned to the scene of death. Jesus sees that the acceptance of his message with its promise also brings seeming destruction (v. 34). Only those who in faith accept the threat of destruction will find life (v. 39; 5.11–12; 16.24; Mk 8.34–35; 10.29–31; Lk 9.24–25; 14.27; 17.33; Jn 12.25). **41**: *In the name of a prophet*, out of respect for the office and work of a prophet. **42**: *Little ones*, see 18.6 n. **11.1**: *Finished*, see 7.28 n.

**11.2–12.50**: **Narratives illustrating the authority claimed by Jesus. 11.2–19**: Jesus and John (Lk 7.18–35; 16.16). **2**: *In prison*, at Machaerus, a fortified place about five miles east of the Dead Sea. **4–5**: Jesus performs the works of the predicted Messiah (Isa 29.18–19; 35.5–6; 61.1; compare Lk 4.18–19). **6**: Jesus invites John to answer his own question, basing his decision on what he hears of Jesus' activities interpreted in comparison with Isaiah's words (compare Lk 4.17–21).

**11.7–15**: John was important because he

prophet?[m] Yes, I tell you, and more than a prophet. 10This is the one about whom it is written,

'See, I am sending my messenger
ahead of you,
who will prepare your way
before you.'

11Truly I tell you, among those born of women no one has arisen greater than John the Baptist; yet the least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he. 12From the days of John the Baptist until now the kingdom of heaven has suffered violence,[n] and the violent take it by force. 13For all the prophets and the law prophesied until John came; 14and if you are willing to accept it, he is Elijah who is to come. 15Let anyone with ears[o] listen!

16 "But to what will I compare this generation? It is like children sitting in the marketplaces and calling to one another,

17 'We played the flute for you, and
you did not dance;
we wailed, and you did not
mourn.'

18For John came neither eating nor drinking, and they say, 'He has a demon'; 19the Son of Man came eating and drinking, and they say, 'Look, a glutton and a drunkard, a friend of tax collectors and sinners!' Yet wisdom is vindicated by her deeds."[p]

20 Then he began to reproach the cities in which most of his deeds of power had been done, because they did not repent. 21"Woe to you, Chorazin! Woe to you, Bethsaida! For if the deeds of power done in you had been done in Tyre and Sidon, they would have repented long ago in sackcloth and ashes. 22But I tell you, on the day of judgment it will be more tolerable for Tyre and Sidon than for you. 23And you, Capernaum,

will you be exalted to heaven?
No, you will be brought down
to Hades.

For if the deeds of power done in you had been done in Sodom, it would have remained until this day. 24But I tell you that on the day of judgment it will be more tolerable for the land of Sodom than for you."

25 At that time Jesus said, "I thank[q] you, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because you have hidden these things from the wise and the intelligent and have revealed them to infants; 26yes, Father, for such was your gracious will.[r] 27All things have been handed over to me by my Father; and no one knows the Son except the Father, and no one knows the Father except the Son and anyone to whom the Son chooses to reveal him.

28 "Come to me, all you that are weary and are carrying heavy burdens, and I will give you rest. 29Take my yoke upon you, and learn from me; for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. 30For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light."

12 At that time Jesus went through the grainfields on the sabbath; his disciples were hungry, and they began to pluck heads of grain and to eat. 2When the Pharisees saw it, they said to him,

*m* Other ancient authorities read *Why then did you go out? To see a prophet?* *n* Or *has been coming violently* *o* Other ancient authorities add *to hear* *p* Other ancient authorities read *children* *q* Or *praise* *r* Or *for so it was well-pleasing in your sight*

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introduced the new manifestation (or "coming") of God's kingdom. **10:** From Mal 3.1; compare Mk 1.2. **12:** *The violent* are the eager, ardent multitudes. **14:** Mal 4.5; Lk 1.17; Mk 9.11–13. Biblical prophecy depends on human acceptance of God's terms for fulfillment. If John's message were accepted, his activity would become that foretold in Elijah's name. Jesus seems not to have expected the literal return of *Elijah* (17.10–13; Mk 9.9–13).

**11.18:** See Lk 7.33 n. **19:** That is, divine *wisdom* is proved right by its results. **21:** *Chorazin,* two and a half miles north of Capernaum, on the coast of the Sea of Galilee. *Bethsaida,* near the northern extremity of the Sea of Galilee. *Tyre and Sidon,* Phoenician cities on the coast of the Mediterranean Sea. **23:** Isa 14.13, 15. **25–30:** Lk 10.21–22.

**11.25:** 9.13; 10.42; see 16.17 n; Lk 10.21–22; 24.16. **27:** Jesus claimed a special relation to God which he could share with others (Jn

"Look, your disciples are doing what is not lawful to do on the sabbath." 3He said to them, "Have you not read what David did when he and his companions were hungry? 4He entered the house of God and ate the bread of the Presence, which it was not lawful for him or his companions to eat, but only for the priests. 5Or have you not read in the law that on the sabbath the priests in the temple break the sabbath and yet are guiltless? 6I tell you, something greater than the temple is here. 7But if you had known what this means, 'I desire mercy and not sacrifice,' you would not have condemned the guiltless. 8For the Son of Man is lord of the sabbath."

9 He left that place and entered their synagogue; 10a man was there with a withered hand, and they asked him, "Is it lawful to cure on the sabbath?" so that they might accuse him. 11He said to them, "Suppose one of you has only one sheep and it falls into a pit on the sabbath; will you not lay hold of it and lift it out? 12How much more valuable is a human being than a sheep! So it is lawful to do good on the sabbath." 13Then he said to the man, "Stretch out your hand." He stretched it out, and it was restored, as sound as the other. 14But the Pharisees went out and conspired against him, how to destroy him.

15 When Jesus became aware of this, he departed. Many crowds[s] followed him, and he cured all of them, 16and he ordered them not to make him known. 17This was to fulfill what had been spoken through the prophet Isaiah:

18 "Here is my servant, whom I have chosen,
my beloved, with whom my soul is well pleased.
I will put my Spirit upon him,
and he will proclaim justice to the Gentiles.
19 He will not wrangle or cry aloud,
nor will anyone hear his voice in the streets.
20 He will not break a bruised reed
or quench a smoldering wick
until he brings justice to victory.
21 And in his name the Gentiles will hope."

22 Then they brought to him a demoniac who was blind and mute; and he cured him, so that the one who had been mute could speak and see. 23All the crowds were amazed and said, "Can this be the Son of David?" 24But when the Pharisees heard it, they said, "It is only by Beelzebul, the ruler of the demons, that this fellow casts out the demons."

*s* Other ancient authorities lack *crowds*

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3.35; 13.3). **29**: The rabbis spoke of the *yoke* of the Law. Jesus regarded his claim as more demanding and more rewarding (5.17–20).

**12.1–14**: **Jesus and sabbath laws** (Mk 2.23–3.6; Lk 6.1–11). **1**: Deut 23.25. **2**: The objection rested on the traditional interpretation that plucking grain by hand was an activity forbidden by Ex 20.8–11. **3–4**: 1 Sam 21.1–6; Lev 24.5–9. **4**: *Bread of the Presence,* twelve loaves of bread continually kept on a table in the holy place of the temple. They were a symbol of communion with God. **5**: Num 28.9–10. **6**: Since no penalty was exacted from those who set aside provisions of the Law for the sake of some human need or some more significant service to God, Jesus' disciples eat because of their need and serve him who is greater than the institutions of the Law (see vv. 41–42). **7**: Hos 6.6; Mt 9.13. **8**: Jesus claims, by virtue of his mission as the Messiah, authority over another's obedience to God (11.27; Jn 5.1–18). **11–12**: The rabbis agreed with the principle of attending to accidental injury and danger on the sabbath, but they thought that chronic conditions should wait (Lk 13.14). For Jesus it was important to restore a person to useful life. **12**: 10.31.

**12.15–21**: **Work of healing** (Mk 3.7–12; Lk 6.17–19; 4.40). **17–21**: Isa 42.1–4. **20**: *Smoldering wick,* a lamp wick whose flame has almost gone out.

**12.22–37**: **Sources of Jesus' power** (Mk 3.20–30; Lk 11.14–23; 12.10). **22–24**: The dumbness here said to be caused by demonic possession is said in Lk 11.14 to describe the demon itself. The biblical writers speak either of *curing* the victim or casting out the demon (v. 24; 9.32–33; Lk 11.14–15). **23**: *Son of David,* a title of the Messiah (21.9). **24**: The issue is how to account for Jesus' manifest power. The Pharisees attribute it to evil forces hostile to humankind (see Lk 7.33 n.). *Beelzebul,* see

25 He knew what they were thinking and said to them, "Every kingdom divided against itself is laid waste, and no city or house divided against itself will stand. 26 If Satan casts out Satan, he is divided against himself; how then will his kingdom stand? 27 If I cast out demons by Beelzebul, by whom do your own exorcists[t] cast them out? Therefore they will be your judges. 28 But if it is by the Spirit of God that I cast out demons, then the kingdom of God has come to you. 29 Or how can one enter a strong man's house and plunder his property, without first tying up the strong man? Then indeed the house can be plundered. 30 Whoever is not with me is against me, and whoever does not gather with me scatters. 31 Therefore I tell you, people will be forgiven for every sin and blasphemy, but blasphemy against the Spirit will not be forgiven. 32 Whoever speaks a word against the Son of Man will be forgiven, but whoever speaks against the Holy Spirit will not be forgiven, either in this age or in the age to come.

33 "Either make the tree good, and its fruit good; or make the tree bad, and its fruit bad; for the tree is known by its fruit. 34 You brood of vipers! How can you speak good things, when you are evil? For out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaks. 35 The good person brings good things out of a good treasure, and the evil person brings evil things out of an evil treasure. 36 I tell you, on the day of judgment you will have to give an account for every careless word you utter; 37 for by your words you will be justified, and by your words you will be condemned."

38 Then some of the scribes and Pharisees said to him, "Teacher, we wish to see a sign from you." 39 But he answered them, "An evil and adulterous generation asks for a sign, but no sign will be given to it except the sign of the prophet Jonah. 40 For just as Jonah was three days and three nights in the belly of the sea monster, so for three days and three nights the Son of Man will be in the heart of the earth. 41 The people of Nineveh will rise up at the judgment with this generation and condemn it, because they repented at the proclamation of Jonah, and see, something greater than Jonah is here! 42 The queen of the South will rise up at the judgment with this generation and condemn it, because she came from the ends of the earth to listen to the wisdom of Solomon, and see, something greater than Solomon is here!

43 "When the unclean spirit has gone out of a person, it wanders through waterless regions looking for a resting place, but it finds none. 44 Then it says, 'I will return to my house from which I came.' When it comes, it finds it empty, swept, and put in order. 45 Then it goes and brings along seven other spirits more evil than itself, and they enter and live there; and the last state of that person is worse than the first. So will it be also with this evil generation."

46 While he was still speaking to the crowds, his mother and his brothers

*t* Gk *sons*

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2 Kings 1.2 n.; Mk 3.22 n. **27**: *Your own exorcists,* your disciples (compare 1 Pet 5.13). Exorcising demons was not limited to Jesus and his followers (7.22–23; Mk 9.38; Acts 19.13–19). **28**: Lk 4.18–20. **31–32**: The unforgivable sin is the utter rebellion against God that denies him as the doer of his own acts (Lk 12.10). **32**: Mk 3.28–30.

**12.33–36**: 7.16–20; Mk 7.14–23; Lk 6.43–45. **33**: *Make,* recognize that fruit and tree will be alike (Jas 3.11–12). **36**: *Careless,* useless; *barren* in Jas 2.20. **37**: Compare Rom 2.6.

**12.38–42**: **Request for a sign** (Lk 11.16, 29–32). **39**: *Adulterous* was used by Old Testament prophets to describe Israel's turning away from God (Jer 3.8; Ezek 23.37; Hos 2.2–10). *Sign,* compare v. 40. **41**: Jon 3.5; Mt 11.20–24; 12.6. **42**: *The queen of the South,* the queen of Sheba (1 Kings 10.1–10; 2 Chr 9.1–9).

**12.43–45**: **The return of the unclean spirit** (Lk 11.24–26; see Mk 1.23 n.). **43**: Waterless places, or deserts, supposed to be the favorite abode of demons (compare Isa 13.21–22; 34.14). **44**: *My house,* the person previously possessed by the demon. *Empty,* though evil has been temporarily expelled, nothing good has been put in its place.

were standing outside, wanting to speak to him. 47Someone told him, "Look, your mother and your brothers are standing outside, wanting to speak to you."[u] 48But to the one who had told him this, Jesus[v] replied, "Who is my mother, and who are my brothers?" 49And pointing to his disciples, he said, "Here are my mother and my brothers! 50For whoever does the will of my Father in heaven is my brother and sister and mother."

13 That same day Jesus went out of the house and sat beside the sea. 2Such great crowds gathered around him that he got into a boat and sat there, while the whole crowd stood on the beach. 3And he told them many things in parables, saying: "Listen! A sower went out to sow. 4And as he sowed, some seeds fell on the path, and the birds came and ate them up. 5Other seeds fell on rocky ground, where they did not have much soil, and they sprang up quickly, since they had no depth of soil. 6But when the sun rose, they were scorched; and since they had no root, they withered away. 7Other seeds fell among thorns, and the thorns grew up and choked them. 8Other seeds fell on good soil and brought forth grain, some a hundredfold, some sixty, some thirty. 9Let anyone with ears[w] listen!"

10 Then the disciples came and asked him, "Why do you speak to them in parables?" 11He answered, "To you it has been given to know the secrets[x] of the kingdom of heaven, but to them it has not been given. 12For to those who have, more will be given, and they will have an abundance; but from those who have nothing, even what they have will be taken away. 13The reason I speak to them in parables is that 'seeing they do not perceive, and hearing they do not listen, nor do they understand.' 14With them indeed is fulfilled the prophecy of Isaiah that says:

'You will indeed listen, but never understand,
and you will indeed look, but never perceive.
15 For this people's heart has grown dull,
and their ears are hard of hearing,
and they have shut their eyes;
so that they might not look with their eyes,
and listen with their ears,
and understand with their heart and turn—
and I would heal them.'

16But blessed are your eyes, for they see, and your ears, for they hear. 17Truly I tell you, many prophets and righteous people longed to see what you see, but did not see it, and to hear what you hear, but did not hear it.

*u* Other ancient authorities lack verse 47
*v* Gk *he* *w* Other ancient authorities add *to hear* *x* Or *mysteries*

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**12.46–50: Jesus' true family** (Mk 3.31–35; Lk 8.19–21).

**13.1–52: Teaching in parables** (Mk 4.1–34; Lk 8.4–18; 13.18–21). **1**: *The sea,* of Galilee. **3**: *Parables* are stories describing situations in everyday life which, as Jesus used them, convey a spiritual meaning. In general the teaching of each parable relates to a single point, and apart from this the details may, or may not, have a particular meaning. Jesus used this method of teaching because: (*a*) it gave vivid, memorable expression to his teachings; (*b*) it led those who heard to reflect on his words and bear responsibility for their decision to accept or oppose his claim; (*c*) it probably reduced specific grounds for contention by hostile listeners. **3b–8: The sower,** explained in vv. 18–23 (see Mk 4.1–9). **11**: The disciples heard and accepted the message about God's kingdom and by their faith had access to deeper understanding (see Mk 4.11 n.). **12**: 25.29; Mk 4.24–25; Lk 8.18; 19.26. **13**: The parables do not obscure truth but present it; the hearers receive the message through their physical senses but do not comprehend (see 11.25 n.). **14–15**: Isa 6.9–10; Mk 8.18; see Acts 28.26 n. **16–17**: See Lk 10.23–24 n. **17**: *See . . . hear,* Jesus' message about God's kingdom.

18 "Hear then the parable of the sower. 19 When anyone hears the word of the kingdom and does not understand it, the evil one comes and snatches away what is sown in the heart; this is what was sown on the path. 20 As for what was sown on rocky ground, this is the one who hears the word and immediately receives it with joy; 21 yet such a person has no root, but endures only for a while, and when trouble or persecution arises on account of the word, that person immediately falls away.[y] 22 As for what was sown among thorns, this is the one who hears the word, but the cares of the world and the lure of wealth choke the word, and it yields nothing. 23 But as for what was sown on good soil, this is the one who hears the word and understands it, who indeed bears fruit and yields, in one case a hundredfold, in another sixty, and in another thirty."

24 He put before them another parable: "The kingdom of heaven may be compared to someone who sowed good seed in his field; 25 but while everybody was asleep, an enemy came and sowed weeds among the wheat, and then went away. 26 So when the plants came up and bore grain, then the weeds appeared as well. 27 And the slaves of the householder came and said to him, 'Master, did you not sow good seed in your field? Where, then, did these weeds come from?' 28 He answered, 'An enemy has done this.' The slaves said to him, 'Then do you want us to go and gather them?' 29 But he replied, 'No; for in gathering the weeds you would uproot the wheat along with them. 30 Let both of them grow together until the harvest; and at harvest time I will tell the reapers, Collect the weeds first and bind them in bundles to be burned, but gather the wheat into my barn.' "

31 He put before them another parable: "The kingdom of heaven is like a mustard seed that someone took and sowed in his field; 32 it is the smallest of all the seeds, but when it has grown it is the greatest of shrubs and becomes a tree, so that the birds of the air come and make nests in its branches."

33 He told them another parable: "The kingdom of heaven is like yeast that a woman took and mixed in with[z] three measures of flour until all of it was leavened."

34 Jesus told the crowds all these things in parables; without a parable he told them nothing. 35 This was to fulfill what had been spoken through the prophet:[a]

"I will open my mouth to speak
in parables;
I will proclaim what has been
hidden from the foundation
of the world."[b]

36 Then he left the crowds and went into the house. And his disciples approached him, saying, "Explain to us the parable of the weeds of the field." 37 He answered, "The one who sows the good seed is the Son of Man; 38 the field is the world, and the good seed are the children of the kingdom; the weeds are the children of the evil one, 39 and the enemy who sowed them is the devil; the harvest is the end of the age, and the reapers are angels. 40 Just as the weeds are collected and burned up with fire, so will it be at the end of the age. 41 The Son of Man will send his angels, and they will collect out

*y* Gk *stumbles* *z* Gk *hid in* *a* Other ancient authorities read *the prophet Isaiah*
*b* Other ancient authorities lack *of the world*

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**13.18–23**: Response to Jesus' message affected by the circumstances of human life. **22**: 19.23.

**13.24–30**: **Weeds in the wheat.** God allows good and evil to exist together until the close of human history (vv. 36–43).

**13.31–32**: **The mustard seed** (Lk 13.18–19). The beginnings of God's kingdom are small, but it has an inherent nature that will grow to its intended end, startlingly different in size from its beginning. **32**: Dan 4.12.

**13.33–43**: **Yeast** (Lk 13.20–21). God's rule, like *yeast* working in a hidden way, will pervade one's life, giving it a new quality. **35**: *The prophet,* i.e. Asaph the seer (2 Chr 29.30), named as the author of Ps 78, from which (v. 2) the quotation is taken. **42**: See Lk 12.49 n. **43**: Dan 12.3.

of his kingdom all causes of sin and all evildoers, 42and they will throw them into the furnace of fire, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth. 43Then the righteous will shine like the sun in the kingdom of their Father. Let anyone with ears[c] listen!

44 "The kingdom of heaven is like treasure hidden in a field, which someone found and hid; then in his joy he goes and sells all that he has and buys that field.

45 "Again, the kingdom of heaven is like a merchant in search of fine pearls; 46on finding one pearl of great value, he went and sold all that he had and bought it.

47 "Again, the kingdom of heaven is like a net that was thrown into the sea and caught fish of every kind; 48when it was full, they drew it ashore, sat down, and put the good into baskets but threw out the bad. 49So it will be at the end of the age. The angels will come out and separate the evil from the righteous 50and throw them into the furnace of fire, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.

51 "Have you understood all this?" They answered, "Yes." 52And he said to them, "Therefore every scribe who has been trained for the kingdom of heaven is like the master of a household who brings out of his treasure what is new and what is old." 53When Jesus had finished these parables, he left that place.

54 He came to his hometown and began to teach the people[d] in their synagogue, so that they were astounded and said, "Where did this man get this wisdom and these deeds of power? 55Is not this the carpenter's son? Is not his mother called Mary? And are not his brothers James and Joseph and Simon and Judas? 56And are not all his sisters with us? Where then did this man get all this?" 57And they took offense at him. But Jesus said to them, "Prophets are not without honor except in their own country and in their own house." 58And he did not do many deeds of power there, because of their unbelief.

14 At that time Herod the ruler[e] heard reports about Jesus; 2and he said to his servants, "This is John the Baptist; he has been raised from the dead, and for this reason these powers are at work in him." 3For Herod had arrested John, bound him, and put him in prison on account of Herodias, his brother Philip's wife,[f] 4because John had been telling him, "It is not lawful for you to have her." 5Though Herod[g] wanted to put him to death, he feared the crowd, because they regarded him as a prophet. 6But when Herod's birthday came, the daughter of Herodias danced before the company, and she pleased Herod 7so much that he promised on oath to grant her whatever she might ask. 8Prompted by her mother, she said, "Give me the head of John the Baptist here on a platter." 9The king was grieved, yet out of regard for his oaths and for the guests, he commanded it to be given; 10he sent and

*c* Other ancient authorities add *to hear*
*d* Gk *them* *e* Gk *tetrarch* *f* Other ancient authorities read *his brother's wife* *g* Gk *he*

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**13.44–46: Hidden treasure and the pearl of great value. 44**: Some people respond in whole-hearted dedication to Jesus' message without any other thought than to have what it yields. **45–46**: Some people dedicate themselves to God's kingdom because, being able to judge the value of other claims being made on them, they value it more.

**13.47–52: The dragnet. 52**: *Scribe,* an expert in the Mosaic law, having become a disciple of Jesus, is able to preserve past insights and enlarge them.

**13.53–17.27: Events of decisive acceptance or rejection of Jesus. 13.53–58: Rejection at home. 53**: *Finished,* see 7.28 n. **54**: *His hometown,* Nazareth (Lk 4.16, 23). **55–56**: *Mother . . . brothers . . . sisters,* the two latter terms may possibly refer to relatives other than siblings; see also 12.46–50; Mk 3.31–32; 6.3; Lk 8.19–20; Jn 2.12; 7.3, 5; Acts 1.14; 1 Cor 9.5; Gal 1.19. **58**: See Mk 6.5–6 n.

**14.1–12: Death of John** (Mk 6.14–29; Lk 9.7–9). **1**: *Herod* Antipas, son of Herod the Great. **3**: *Philip,* not the ruler mentioned in Lk 3.1, but a half-brother of *Herod* Antipas. **4**: Lev 18.16; 20.21. **6**: *The daughter* was Salome (Josephus, *Ant.*x.viii.5.4). **10**: *The prison,* see 11.2 n.

had John beheaded in the prison. 11 The head was brought on a platter and given to the girl, who brought it to her mother. 12 His disciples came and took the body and buried it; then they went and told Jesus.

13 Now when Jesus heard this, he withdrew from there in a boat to a deserted place by himself. But when the crowds heard it, they followed him on foot from the towns. 14 When he went ashore, he saw a great crowd; and he had compassion for them and cured their sick. 15 When it was evening, the disciples came to him and said, "This is a deserted place, and the hour is now late; send the crowds away so that they may go into the villages and buy food for themselves." 16 Jesus said to them, "They need not go away; you give them something to eat." 17 They replied, "We have nothing here but five loaves and two fish." 18 And he said, "Bring them here to me." 19 Then he ordered the crowds to sit down on the grass. Taking the five loaves and the two fish, he looked up to heaven, and blessed and broke the loaves, and gave them to the disciples, and the disciples gave them to the crowds. 20 And all ate and were filled; and they took up what was left over of the broken pieces, twelve baskets full. 21 And those who ate were about five thousand men, besides women and children.

22 Immediately he made the disciples get into the boat and go on ahead to the other side, while he dismissed the crowds. 23 And after he had dismissed the crowds, he went up the mountain by himself to pray. When evening came, he was there alone, 24 but by this time the boat, battered by the waves, was far from the land,[h] for the wind was against them. 25 And early in the morning he came walking toward them on the sea. 26 But when the disciples saw him walking on the sea, they were terrified, saying, "It is a ghost!" And they cried out in fear. 27 But immediately Jesus spoke to them and said, "Take heart, it is I; do not be afraid."

28 Peter answered him, "Lord, if it is you, command me to come to you on the water." 29 He said, "Come." So Peter got out of the boat, started walking on the water, and came toward Jesus. 30 But when he noticed the strong wind,[i] he became frightened, and beginning to sink, he cried out, "Lord, save me!" 31 Jesus immediately reached out his hand and caught him, saying to him, "You of little faith, why did you doubt?" 32 When they got into the boat, the wind ceased. 33 And those in the boat worshiped him, saying, "Truly you are the Son of God."

34 When they had crossed over, they came to land at Gennesaret. 35 After the people of that place recognized him, they sent word throughout the region and brought all who were sick to him, 36 and begged him that they might touch even the fringe of his cloak; and all who touched it were healed.

15 Then Pharisees and scribes came to Jesus from Jerusalem and said, 2 "Why do your disciples break the tradition of the elders? For they do not wash their hands before they eat." 3 He answered them, "And why do you break the commandment of God for the sake of

*h* Other ancient authorities read *was out on the sea* *i* Other ancient authorities read *the wind*

**14.13–21: Five thousand fed** (Mk 6.30–44; Lk 9.10–17; Jn 6.1–13). **13:** After John's death Jesus faced a new stage in his life (compare his reaction to John's imprisonment, Mk 1.14–15). **14:** 20.25–28. **21:** According to custom the *women and children* would stand or sit separate from the men.

**14.22–36: Jesus walks on water** (Mk 6.45–52; Jn 6.15–21). **24:** *Was far from the land,* Greek literally "was many stadia from the land"; a stadion was about one-eighth of a mile. **25:** *Early in the morning,* Greek literally "in the fourth watch of the night" (the fourth watch was from 3 to 6 A.M.). **26:** Lk 24.37. **33:** Mk 6.51–52. **34:** *Gennesaret,* a district on the northwestern shore of the Sea of Galilee, which was also called the Lake of Gennesaret.

**15.1–20: Tradition of the elders** (Mk 7.1–23). **2:** *The tradition of the elders,* the rabbinical exposition of the Law of Moses. *They*

your tradition? 4For God said,[j] 'Honor your father and your mother,' and, 'Whoever speaks evil of father or mother must surely die.' 5But you say that whoever tells father or mother, 'Whatever support you might have had from me is given to God,'[k] then that person need not honor the father.[l] 6So, for the sake of your tradition, you make void the word[m] of God. 7You hypocrites! Isaiah prophesied rightly about you when he said:

8 'This people honors me with
their lips,
but their hearts are far from me;
9 in vain do they worship me,
teaching human precepts as
doctrines.' "

10 Then he called the crowd to him and said to them, "Listen and understand: 11it is not what goes into the mouth that defiles a person, but it is what comes out of the mouth that defiles." 12Then the disciples approached and said to him, "Do you know that the Pharisees took offense when they heard what you said?" 13He answered, "Every plant that my heavenly Father has not planted will be uprooted. 14Let them alone; they are blind guides of the blind.[n] And if one blind person guides another, both will fall into a pit." 15But Peter said to him, "Explain this parable to us." 16Then he said, "Are you also still without understanding? 17Do you not see that whatever goes into the mouth enters the stomach, and goes out into the sewer? 18But what comes out of the mouth proceeds from the heart, and this is what defiles. 19For out of the heart come evil intentions, murder, adultery, fornication, theft, false witness, slander. 20These are what defile a person, but to eat with unwashed hands does not defile."

21 Jesus left that place and went away to the district of Tyre and Sidon. 22Just then a Canaanite woman from that region came out and started shouting, "Have mercy on me, Lord, Son of David; my daughter is tormented by a demon." 23But he did not answer her at all. And his disciples came and urged him, saying, "Send her away, for she keeps shouting after us." 24He answered, "I was sent only to the lost sheep of the house of Israel." 25But she came and knelt before him, saying, "Lord, help me." 26He answered, "It is not fair to take the children's food and throw it to the dogs." 27She said, "Yes, Lord, yet even the dogs eat the crumbs that fall from their masters' table." 28Then Jesus answered her, "Woman, great is your faith! Let it be done for you as you wish." And her daughter was healed instantly.

29 After Jesus had left that place, he passed along the Sea of Galilee, and he went up the mountain, where he sat down. 30Great crowds came to him, bringing with them the lame, the maimed, the blind, the mute, and many others. They put them at his feet, and he cured them, 31so that the crowd was

*j* Other ancient authorities read *commanded, saying* *k* Or *is an offering* *l* Other ancient authorities add *or the mother* *m* Other ancient authorities read *law*; others, *commandment*
*n* Other ancient authorities lack *of the blind*

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*do not wash,* see Lk 11.38 n. **4**: Ex 20.12; Deut 5.16; Ex 21.17; Lev 20.9. **7–9**: Isa 29.13 (see Mk 7.6–7 n.).

**15.10–20**: The teaching here depends on the principle in the Law that certain physical conditions can and do render an individual unfit to share in the worship of the community. **11**: *Defiles,* renders unfit to share in public ritual (Acts 10.14–15; 1 Tim 4.3). **13**: Isa 60.21. **14**: Lk 6.39; Mt 23.16, 24. **19–20**: Violations of the rights and interests of another hinder worship (5.23–24).

**15.21–28**: **The Canaanite woman** (Mk 7.24–30). **21**: *Jesus . . . went* northwesterly from upper Galilee into Phoenicia, *the district of Tyre and Sidon.* **22**: The woman, though a Gentile, speaks to Jesus as the Jewish Messiah. **24**: 10.6, 23. Jesus consistently said that his primary mission was to call Jews back to God. The Gentile woman's claim must be based on her own personal acceptance of his message. The distinction is between his mission and his willingness to respond to faith wherever found. **26–27**: See Mk 7.27 n. **27**: The woman accepts Jesus' mission and as a Gentile asks his help.

**15.29–31**: **Healings** (Mk 7.31–37).

amazed when they saw the mute speaking, the maimed whole, the lame walking, and the blind seeing. And they praised the God of Israel.

32 Then Jesus called his disciples to him and said, "I have compassion for the crowd, because they have been with me now for three days and have nothing to eat; and I do not want to send them away hungry, for they might faint on the way." 33The disciples said to him, "Where are we to get enough bread in the desert to feed so great a crowd?" 34Jesus asked them, "How many loaves have you?" They said, "Seven, and a few small fish." 35Then ordering the crowd to sit down on the ground, 36he took the seven loaves and the fish; and after giving thanks he broke them and gave them to the disciples, and the disciples gave them to the crowds. 37And all of them ate and were filled; and they took up the broken pieces left over, seven baskets full. 38Those who had eaten were four thousand men, besides women and children. 39After sending away the crowds, he got into the boat and went to the region of Magadan.[o]

16 The Pharisees and Sadducees came, and to test Jesus[p] they asked him to show them a sign from heaven. 2He answered them, "When it is evening, you say, 'It will be fair weather, for the sky is red.' 3And in the morning, 'It will be stormy today, for the sky is red and threatening.' You know how to interpret the appearance of the sky, but you cannot interpret the signs of the times.[q] 4An evil and adulterous generation asks for a sign, but no sign will be given to it except the sign of Jonah." Then he left them and went away.

5 When the disciples reached the other side, they had forgotten to bring any bread. 6Jesus said to them, "Watch out, and beware of the yeast of the Pharisees and Sadducees." 7They said to one another, "It is because we have brought no bread." 8And becoming aware of it, Jesus said, "You of little faith, why are you talking about having no bread? 9Do you still not perceive? Do you not remember the five loaves for the five thousand, and how many baskets you gathered? 10Or the seven loaves for the four thousand, and how many baskets you gathered? 11How could you fail to perceive that I was not speaking about bread? Beware of the yeast of the Pharisees and Sadducees!" 12Then they understood that he had not told them to beware of the yeast of bread, but of the teaching of the Pharisees and Sadducees.

13 Now when Jesus came into the district of Caesarea Philippi, he asked his disciples, "Who do people say that the Son of Man is?" 14And they said, "Some say John the Baptist, but others Elijah, and still others Jeremiah or one of the

*o* Other ancient authorities read *Magdala* or *Magdalan* *p* Gk *him* *q* Other ancient authorities lack *2When it is . . . of the times*

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**15.32–39: Four thousand fed** (see Mk 8.1–10 n.). **39:** *Magadan* was apparently on the west side of the Sea of Galilee.

**16.1–4: Demand for signs** (Mk 8.11–13; Lk 11.16, 29; 12.54–56). **3:** *The signs of the times* may refer to 15.29–31; compare 11.2–6. **4:** See 12.39 n., 40; Jon 3.4–5.

**16.5–12: Yeast of the Pharisees** (Mk 8.14–21; Lk 12.1). **5:** *The other side,* the eastern shore of the Sea of Galilee. **6:** *Yeast,* see Mk 8.15 n. **9:** 14.17–21. **10:** 15.34–38.

**16.13–23: Peter's confession** (Mk 8.27–33; Lk 9.18–22). **13:** See Mk 8.27 n. *Son of Man* here is equivalent to "I." **14:** *Elijah,* believed by Jews to be a forerunner of the Messiah. **16:** Peter asserts that Jesus is the Messiah, not merely one of the prophets (v. 14). He identifies Jesus with the figure of Mal 3.1–4 (compare Mk 1.2; Mt 1.16; Jn 1.49; 11.27). **17:** *Simon* was Peter's personal name. *Flesh and blood,* human beings (1 Cor 15.50; Gal 1.16; Eph 6.12). *Revealed,* understanding spiritual realities involves God's disclosure (see 11.25 n.; Lk 24.16; 1 Cor 1.18–25; 2.6–16). **18:** The Greek text involves a play on two words, "Petros" ("Peter") and "petra" ("rock"). Palestinian Aramaic, which Jesus usually spoke, used the same word for both proper name and common noun: "You are 'Kepha' [Cephas; compare 1 Cor 15.5; Gal 2.9], and on this 'kepha' [rock] I will build . . ." For the view that all the apostles also form the foun-

prophets." 15He said to them, "But who do you say that I am?" 16Simon Peter answered, "You are the Messiah,[r] the Son of the living God." 17And Jesus answered him, "Blessed are you, Simon son of Jonah! For flesh and blood has not revealed this to you, but my Father in heaven. 18And I tell you, you are Peter,[s] and on this rock[t] I will build my church, and the gates of Hades will not prevail against it. 19I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven, and whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven." 20Then he sternly ordered the disciples not to tell anyone that he was[u] the Messiah.[r]

21 From that time on, Jesus began to show his disciples that he must go to Jerusalem and undergo great suffering at the hands of the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed, and on the third day be raised. 22And Peter took him aside and began to rebuke him, saying, "God forbid it, Lord! This must never happen to you." 23But he turned and said to Peter, "Get behind me, Satan! You are a stumbling block to me; for you are setting your mind not on divine things but on human things."

24 Then Jesus told his disciples, "If any want to become my followers, let them deny themselves and take up their cross and follow me. 25For those who want to save their life will lose it, and those who lose their life for my sake will find it. 26For what will it profit them if they gain the whole world but forfeit their life? Or what will they give in return for their life?

27 "For the Son of Man is to come with his angels in the glory of his Father, and then he will repay everyone for what has been done. 28Truly I tell you, there are some standing here who will not taste death before they see the Son of Man coming in his kingdom."

17 Six days later, Jesus took with him Peter and James and his brother John and led them up a high mountain, by themselves. 2And he was transfigured before them, and his face shone like the sun, and his clothes became dazzling white. 3Suddenly there appeared to them Moses and Elijah, talking with him. 4Then Peter said to Jesus, "Lord, it is good for us to be here; if you wish, I[v] will make three dwellings[w] here, one for you, one for Moses, and one for Elijah." 5While he was still speaking, suddenly a bright cloud overshadowed them, and from the cloud a voice said, "This is my Son, the Beloved;[x] with him I am well pleased; listen to him!" 6When the disciples heard this, they fell to the ground and were overcome by fear. 7But Jesus came and touched them, saying, "Get up and do not be afraid." 8And when they looked up, they saw no one except Jesus himself alone.

9 As they were coming down the mountain, Jesus ordered them, "Tell no one about the vision until after the Son of Man has been raised from the dead."

*r* Or *the Christ* *s* Gk *Petros* *t* Gk *petra*
*u* Other ancient authorities add *Jesus* *v* Other ancient authorities read *we* *w* Or *tents*
*x* Or *my beloved Son*

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dation of the church, see Eph 2.20; Rev 21.14. *Church,* see Gal 1.13 n. **19:** *The keys of the kingdom* are a symbol of Peter's power as the leader of the church. *Bind* and *loose* are technical rabbinic terms meaning "forbid" and "permit" some action about which a question has arisen. Later the authority of binding and loosing was also conferred upon all the apostles (18.18). **20:** See Mk 8.30 n. **21:** See Lk 9.22 n. **22–23:** See Mk 8.32 n., 33 n.

**16.24–28: On discipleship** (Mk 8.34–9.1; Lk 9.23–27). **24:** See 10.38 n. **25:** See Mk 8.35 n. **26:** Here *life* is not merely physical existence, but the higher or spiritual life, the real self (compare Lk 9.25; 12.15). **27:** Ps 62.12; Mt 10.33; Lk 12.8–9; Rom 2.6; 1 Jn 2.28; Rev 22.12. **28:** See Mk 9.1 n.; 1 Cor 16.22; 1 Thess 4.15–18; Jas 5.7; Rev 1.7.

**17.1–8: The transfiguration.** See notes on the parallel passages, Mk 9.2–8; Lk 9.28–36. **1:** *Six days later,* after Peter's confession (16.16). *A high mountain,* probably Mount Hermon, near Caesarea Philippi. It is 9,000 feet high.

**17.9–13: Prophecies about Elijah** (Mk 9.9–13). **9:** See Mk 8.30 n.

10 And the disciples asked him, "Why, then, do the scribes say that Elijah must come first?" 11 He replied, "Elijah is indeed coming and will restore all things; 12 but I tell you that Elijah has already come, and they did not recognize him, but they did to him whatever they pleased. So also the Son of Man is about to suffer at their hands." 13 Then the disciples understood that he was speaking to them about John the Baptist.

14 When they came to the crowd, a man came to him, knelt before him, 15 and said, "Lord, have mercy on my son, for he is an epileptic and he suffers terribly; he often falls into the fire and often into the water. 16 And I brought him to your disciples, but they could not cure him." 17 Jesus answered, "You faithless and perverse generation, how much longer must I be with you? How much longer must I put up with you? Bring him here to me." 18 And Jesus rebuked the demon,[y] and it[z] came out of him, and the boy was cured instantly. 19 Then the disciples came to Jesus privately and said, "Why could we not cast it out?" 20 He said to them, "Because of your little faith. For truly I tell you, if you have faith the size of a[a] mustard seed, you will say to this mountain, 'Move from here to there,' and it will move; and nothing will be impossible for you."[b]

22 As they were gathering[c] in Galilee, Jesus said to them, "The Son of Man is going to be betrayed into human hands, 23 and they will kill him, and on the third day he will be raised." And they were greatly distressed.

24 When they reached Capernaum, the collectors of the temple tax[d] came to Peter and said, "Does your teacher not pay the temple tax?"[d] 25 He said, "Yes, he does." And when he came home, Jesus spoke of it first, asking, "What do you think, Simon? From whom do kings of the earth take toll or tribute? From their children or from others?" 26 When Peter[e] said, "From others," Jesus said to him, "Then the children are free. 27 However, so that we do not give offense to them, go to the sea and cast a hook; take the first fish that comes up; and when you open its mouth, you will find a coin;[f] take that and give it to them for you and me."

18 At that time the disciples came to Jesus and asked, "Who is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven?" 2 He called a child, whom he put among them, 3 and said, "Truly I tell you, unless you change and become like children, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven. 4 Whoever becomes humble like this child is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven. 5 Whoever welcomes one such child in my name welcomes me.

6 "If any of you put a stumbling block before one of these little ones who believe in me, it would be better for you if a great millstone were fastened around your neck and you were drowned in the

*y* Gk *it* or *him* *z* Gk *the demon* *a* Gk *faith as a grain of* *b* Other ancient authorities add verse 21, *But this kind does not come out except by prayer and fasting* *c* Other ancient authorities read *living* *d* Gk *didrachma* *e* Gk *he* *f* Gk *stater*; the stater was worth two didrachmas

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**17.10**: See 11.14 n. **12**: *Elijah has already come,* in the person of John the Baptist.

**17.14–21**: **An epileptic child healed** (Mk 9.14–29; Lk 9.37–42). **15**: To be *epileptic* was attributed to the baleful influences of the moon, a demonic force (compare Ps 121.6). **20**: *Little faith* as distinguished from unbelief (13.58). Jesus' saying is in figurative language; faith is concerned with God's will, not with moving mountains (compare 21.21–22; Mk 11.22–23; Lk 17.6; 1 Cor 13.2; Jas 1.6).

**17.22–23**: **The Passion foretold a second time** (Mk 9.30–32; Lk 9.43–45). Compare 16.21; 20.17–19. **22**: *Were gathering,* for the pilgrimage to Jerusalem for the Passover.

**17.24–27**: **Money for the temple tax. 24**: The half-shekel tax was paid by Jewish males annually in March for the upkeep of the temple. On the value see 26.15 n. (Ex 30.13; 38.26). **27**: The *coin* (Greek "stater") was exactly enough (two didrachmas) to pay for both.

**18.1–35**: **Sayings on humility and forgiveness. 1–5**: True greatness (Mk 9.33–37; Lk 9.46–48). **3**: *Change and become like children,* turn away from self-chosen goals and

depth of the sea. 7Woe to the world because of stumbling blocks! Occasions for stumbling are bound to come, but woe to the one by whom the stumbling block comes!

8 "If your hand or your foot causes you to stumble, cut it off and throw it away; it is better for you to enter life maimed or lame than to have two hands or two feet and to be thrown into the eternal fire. 9And if your eye causes you to stumble, tear it out and throw it away; it is better for you to enter life with one eye than to have two eyes and to be thrown into the hell[g] of fire.

10 "Take care that you do not despise one of these little ones; for, I tell you, in heaven their angels continually see the face of my Father in heaven.[h] 12What do you think? If a shepherd has a hundred sheep, and one of them has gone astray, does he not leave the ninety-nine on the mountains and go in search of the one that went astray? 13And if he finds it, truly I tell you, he rejoices over it more than over the ninety-nine that never went astray. 14So it is not the will of your[i] Father in heaven that one of these little ones should be lost.

15 "If another member of the church[j] sins against you,[k] go and point out the fault when the two of you are alone. If the member listens to you, you have regained that one.[l] 16But if you are not listened to, take one or two others along with you, so that every word may be confirmed by the evidence of two or three witnesses. 17If the member refuses to listen to them, tell it to the church; and if the offender refuses to listen even to the church, let such a one be to you as a Gentile and a tax collector. 18Truly I tell you, whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven. 19Again, truly I tell you, if two of you agree on earth about anything you ask, it will be done for you by my Father in heaven. 20For where two or three are gathered in my name, I am there among them."

21 Then Peter came and said to him, "Lord, if another member of the church[m] sins against me, how often should I forgive? As many as seven times?" 22Jesus said to him, "Not seven times, but, I tell you, seventy-seven[n] times.

23 "For this reason the kingdom of heaven may be compared to a king who wished to settle accounts with his slaves. 24When he began the reckoning, one who owed him ten thousand talents[o] was brought to him; 25and, as he could not pay, his lord ordered him to be sold, together with his wife and children and all his possessions, and payment to be made. 26So the slave fell on his knees before him, saying, 'Have patience with me, and I will pay you everything.' 27And out of pity for him, the lord of that slave released him and forgave him the debt. 28But that same slave, as he went out, came upon one of his fellow slaves who owed him a hundred denarii;[p] and seizing him by the throat, he

*g* Gk *Gehenna* *h* Other ancient authorities add verse 11, *For the Son of Man came to save the lost* *i* Other ancient authorities read *my* *j* Gk *If your brother* *k* Other ancient authorities lack *against you* *l* Gk *the brother* *m* Gk *if my brother* *n* Or *seventy times seven* *o* A talent was worth more than fifteen years' wages of a laborer *p* The denarius was the usual day's wage for a laborer

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relate oneself to God as to a father. Childlike relations to a parent, not childish behavior, are in view. Mk 10.15; Lk 18.17; 1 Pet 2.2. **6**: *Little ones,* disciples of Jesus, whom he calls "children" (Mk 10.24; compare Mt 11.25).

**18.7–9**: **Warnings of hell** (Mk 9.42–48; Lk 17.1–2). **8–9**: In vivid language Jesus speaks of the terrible danger in yielding to temptation (5.29–30).

**18.10–14**: **The lost sheep** (Lk 15.3–7). **10**: *Little ones,* see v. 6 n. *Angels,* see Acts 12.15 n.

**18.15–20**: **Discipline among followers** (Lk 17.3). 1 Cor 6.1–6; Gal 6.1; Jas 5.19–20; Lev 19.17. **15**: *Alone,* solitary reproof is more gracious than reproof given in public. **16**: Deut 19.15. **18**: See 16.19 n.; Jn 20.21–23 n.

**18.21–35**: **Forgiveness. 21–22**: Lk 17.4. Forgiveness is beyond calculating. **23**: 25.19. **25**: *To be sold,* this was permitted by the law of Moses (Lev 25.39; 2 Kings 4.1). **26**: 8.2;

said, 'Pay what you owe.' [29]Then his fellow slave fell down and pleaded with him, 'Have patience with me, and I will pay you.' [30]But he refused; then he went and threw him into prison until he would pay the debt. [31]When his fellow slaves saw what had happened, they were greatly distressed, and they went and reported to their lord all that had taken place. [32]Then his lord summoned him and said to him, 'You wicked slave! I forgave you all that debt because you pleaded with me. [33]Should you not have had mercy on your fellow slave, as I had mercy on you?' [34]And in anger his lord handed him over to be tortured until he would pay his entire debt. [35]So my heavenly Father will also do to every one of you, if you do not forgive your brother or sister[q] from your heart."

19 When Jesus had finished saying these things, he left Galilee and went to the region of Judea beyond the Jordan. [2]Large crowds followed him, and he cured them there.

3 Some Pharisees came to him, and to test him they asked, "Is it lawful for a man to divorce his wife for any cause?" [4]He answered, "Have you not read that the one who made them at the beginning 'made them male and female,' [5]and said, 'For this reason a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh'? [6]So they are no longer two, but one flesh. Therefore what God has joined together, let no one separate." [7]They said to him, "Why then did Moses command us to give a certificate of dismissal and to divorce her?" [8]He said to them, "It was because you were so hard-hearted that Moses allowed you to divorce your wives, but from the beginning it was not so. [9]And I say to you, whoever divorces his wife, except for unchastity, and marries another commits adultery."[r]

10 His disciples said to him, "If such is the case of a man with his wife, it is better not to marry." [11]But he said to them, "Not everyone can accept this teaching, but only those to whom it is given. [12]For there are eunuchs who have been so from birth, and there are eunuchs who have been made eunuchs by others, and there are eunuchs who have made themselves eunuchs for the sake of the kingdom of heaven. Let anyone accept this who can."

13 Then little children were being brought to him in order that he might lay his hands on them and pray. The disciples spoke sternly to those who brought them; [14]but Jesus said, "Let the little children come to me, and do not stop them; for it is to such as these that the kingdom of heaven belongs." [15]And he laid his hands on them and went on his way.

16 Then someone came to him and said, "Teacher, what good deed must I do to have eternal life?" [17]And he said to him, "Why do you ask me about what is good? There is only one who is good. If you wish to enter into life, keep the com-

*q* Gk *brother* *r* Other ancient authorities read *except on the ground of unchastity, causes her to commit adultery*; others add at the end of the verse *and he who marries a divorced woman commits adultery*

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17.14. **32–33**: Lk 7.41–43. **34**: *To be tortured,* in order to discover whether the debtor was concealing any money or other valuables.

**19.1–20.34**: **From Galilee to Jerusalem** (Mk 10.1–52; Lk 18.15–19.27). **1**: Jesus took the Perean route from Galilee to Jerusalem, east of the Jordan, thus avoiding Samaria, whose hostile inhabitants sometimes attacked Jewish pilgrim bands.

**19.1–12**: **Marriage and divorce** (Mk 10.1–12). **1**: *Finished,* see 7.28 n. **3**: The Mosaic law gives no answer to this question and the rabbis differed in their opinions. **4–6**: Gen 1.27; 2.24. Jesus appeals to God's purpose of unity in marriage as shown in the account of creation. **7**: Deut 24.1–4. **8**: See Mk 10.5 n. **9**: See 5.32 n.; Lk 16.18; 1 Cor 7.10–13. **11–12**: Jesus recognizes a place for voluntary celibacy in the service of God's kingdom (compare 1 Cor 7.1–9).

**19.13–15**: **Blessing the children** (Mk 10.13–16; Lk 18.15–17). **14**: See Mk 10.15 n.; compare Mt 18.2–4; 1 Cor 14.20.

**19.16–30**: **The rich young man** (Mk

mandments." 18He said to him, "Which ones?" And Jesus said, "You shall not murder; You shall not commit adultery; You shall not steal; You shall not bear false witness; 19Honor your father and mother; also, You shall love your neighbor as yourself." 20The young man said to him, "I have kept all these;[s] what do I still lack?" 21Jesus said to him, "If you wish to be perfect, go, sell your possessions, and give the money[t] to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven; then come, follow me." 22When the young man heard this word, he went away grieving, for he had many possessions.

23 Then Jesus said to his disciples, "Truly I tell you, it will be hard for a rich person to enter the kingdom of heaven. 24Again I tell you, it is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for someone who is rich to enter the kingdom of God." 25When the disciples heard this, they were greatly astounded and said, "Then who can be saved?" 26But Jesus looked at them and said, "For mortals it is impossible, but for God all things are possible."

27 Then Peter said in reply, "Look, we have left everything and followed you. What then will we have?" 28Jesus said to them, "Truly I tell you, at the renewal of all things, when the Son of Man is seated on the throne of his glory, you who have followed me will also sit on twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel. 29And everyone who has left houses or brothers or sisters or father or mother or children or fields, for my name's sake, will receive a hundredfold,[u] and will inherit eternal life. 30But many who are first will be last, and the last will be first.

20 "For the kingdom of heaven is like a landowner who went out early in the morning to hire laborers for his vineyard. 2After agreeing with the laborers for the usual daily wage,[v] he sent them into his vineyard. 3When he went out about nine o'clock, he saw others standing idle in the marketplace; 4and he said to them, 'You also go into the vineyard, and I will pay you whatever is right.' So they went. 5When he went out again about noon and about three o'clock, he did the same. 6And about five o'clock he went out and found others standing around; and he said to them, 'Why are you standing here idle all day?' 7They said to him, 'Because no one has hired us.' He said to them, 'You also go into the vineyard.' 8When evening came, the owner of the vineyard said to his manager, 'Call the laborers and give them their pay, beginning with the last and then going to the first.' 9When those

*s* Other ancient authorities add *from my youth*
*t* Gk lacks *the money* *u* Other ancient authorities read *manifold* *v* Gk *a denarius*

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10.17–31; Lk 18.18–30). **16**: Lk 10.25; Lev 18.5. The question concerns the way of life which Jesus will guarantee as satisfying God (see Lk 18.26 n.). **17**: Jesus replies that the good way of life is obedience to God's will (15.2–3, 6). *Keep the commandments,* the tense in Greek implies not a single action but a continued process. **18**: Ex 20.12–16; Deut 5.16–20; Rom 13.9; Jas 2.11. **19**: Lev 19.18; Mt 22.39; Rom 13.8; Jas 2.8–9. **21**: Jesus consistently turned people's attention from concern over their own religious standing, calling them to involve themselves in the basic, vital interests of others. Neither wealth, poverty, nor formal piety was so important as sharing in the working out of God's life-giving design for all people (5.23–24, 43–48; 6.33). Eternal life will be found through utter dependence on God, not through a ritual that wealth makes possible (see Lk 12.33 n.; Acts 2.44–45; 4.34, 35). **24**: See Mk 10.25 n. **26**: *For God all things are possible,* Gen 18.14; Jer 32.17.

**19.27**: *We,* not like that rich man. **28**: *The renewal of all things* refers to the consummation of God's purpose (compare Rom 8.18–25). **29**: *Inherit eternal life* means *enter the kingdom of God* (vv. 23, 24), and *inherit the kingdom* (25.34). **30**: 20.16; Mk 10.31; Lk 13.30.

**20.1–16**: **Laborers in the vineyard.** **1**: *Early,* approximately six a.m. **3**: *Others,* who had not been there earlier. **8**: Lev 19.13; Deut 24.14–15. **9**: *The usual daily wage,* Greek literally "a denarius." Smaller coins existed (see Lk 12.59 n.); therefore payment could have been made on an hourly basis.

hired about five o'clock came, each of them received the usual daily wage.[w] [10]Now when the first came, they thought they would receive more; but each of them also received the usual daily wage.[w] [11]And when they received it, they grumbled against the landowner, [12]saying, 'These last worked only one hour, and you have made them equal to us who have borne the burden of the day and the scorching heat.' [13]But he replied to one of them, 'Friend, I am doing you no wrong; did you not agree with me for the usual daily wage?[w] [14]Take what belongs to you and go; I choose to give to this last the same as I give to you. [15]Am I not allowed to do what I choose with what belongs to me? Or are you envious because I am generous?'[x] [16]So the last will be first, and the first will be last."[y]

17 While Jesus was going up to Jerusalem, he took the twelve disciples aside by themselves, and said to them on the way, [18]"See, we are going up to Jerusalem, and the Son of Man will be handed over to the chief priests and scribes, and they will condemn him to death; [19]then they will hand him over to the Gentiles to be mocked and flogged and crucified; and on the third day he will be raised."

20 Then the mother of the sons of Zebedee came to him with her sons, and kneeling before him, she asked a favor of him. [21]And he said to her, "What do you want?" She said to him, "Declare that these two sons of mine will sit, one at your right hand and one at your left, in your kingdom." [22]But Jesus answered, "You do not know what you are asking. Are you able to drink the cup that I am about to drink?"[z] They said to him, "We are able." [23]He said to them, "You will indeed drink my cup, but to sit at my right hand and at my left, this is not mine to grant, but it is for those for whom it has been prepared by my Father."

24 When the ten heard it, they were angry with the two brothers. [25]But Jesus called them to him and said, "You know that the rulers of the Gentiles lord it over them, and their great ones are tyrants over them. [26]It will not be so among you; but whoever wishes to be great among you must be your servant, [27]and whoever wishes to be first among you must be your slave; [28]just as the Son of Man came not to be served but to serve, and to give his life a ransom for many."

29 As they were leaving Jericho, a large crowd followed him. [30]There were two blind men sitting by the roadside. When they heard that Jesus was passing by, they shouted, "Lord,[a] have mercy on us, Son of David!" [31]The crowd sternly ordered them to be quiet; but they shouted even more loudly, "Have mercy on us, Lord, Son of David!" [32]Jesus stood still and called them, saying, "What do you want me to do for you?" [33]They said to him, "Lord, let our eyes be opened." [34]Moved with compas-

*w* Gk *a denarius* *x* Gk *is your eye evil because I am good?* *y* Other ancient authorities add *for many are called but few are chosen* *z* Other ancient authorities add *or to be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with?* *a* Other ancient authorities lack *Lord*

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**20.14**: The point of the parable is the willingness of the owner to exceed conventional practices, and his freedom to do so within the limits of agreement. **15**: The first sentence is not a statement of economic theory except as it claims the right to enter into differing contracts. The second sentence expresses the sense of the Greek text, which is literally translated in note *x*. **16**: Compare 19.30.

**20.17–19**: **The Passion foretold a third time** (Mk 10.32–34; Lk 18.31–34); a prophecy remarkable for its detailed character; compare 16.21; 17.22.

**20.20–28**: **James and John seek honor** (Mk 10.35–45; Lk 22.24–27). **20**: *The mother,* Salome (see 27.56 and Mk 15.40). **22**: *Cup,* see Lk 22.42 n. **23**: Acts 12.2; Rev 1.9; Mt 13.11. **24**: *They were angry,* being afraid of losing something themselves. **26**: See Mk 9.35. **28**: 26.39; 1 Tim 2.5–6; Jn 13.15–16; Titus 2.14; 1 Pet 1.18. The thought seems to be based on Isa ch 53.

**20.29–34**: **Two blind men of Jericho** (Mk 10.46–52; Lk 18.35–43). Jesus responds not to the Messianic title *Son of David* (v. 30) but to the cry of need (v. 34; compare 15.22–28).

sion, Jesus touched their eyes. Immediately they regained their sight and followed him.

21 When they had come near Jerusalem and had reached Bethphage, at the Mount of Olives, Jesus sent two disciples, 2saying to them, "Go into the village ahead of you, and immediately you will find a donkey tied, and a colt with her; untie them and bring them to me. 3If anyone says anything to you, just say this, 'The Lord needs them.' And he will send them immediately.[b]" 4This took place to fulfill what had been spoken through the prophet, saying,

5 "Tell the daughter of Zion,
Look, your king is coming to you,
humble, and mounted on a donkey,
and on a colt, the foal of a donkey."

6The disciples went and did as Jesus had directed them; 7they brought the donkey and the colt, and put their cloaks on them, and he sat on them. 8A very large crowd[c] spread their cloaks on the road, and others cut branches from the trees and spread them on the road. 9The crowds that went ahead of him and that followed were shouting,

"Hosanna to the Son of David!
Blessed is the one who comes in the name of the Lord!
Hosanna in the highest heaven!"

10When he entered Jerusalem, the whole city was in turmoil, asking, "Who is this?" 11The crowds were saying, "This is the prophet Jesus from Nazareth in Galilee."

12 Then Jesus entered the temple[d] and drove out all who were selling and buying in the temple, and he overturned the tables of the money changers and the seats of those who sold doves. 13He said to them, "It is written,

'My house shall be called a house of prayer';
but you are making it a den of robbers."

14 The blind and the lame came to him in the temple, and he cured them. 15But when the chief priests and the scribes saw the amazing things that he did, and heard[e] the children crying out in the temple, "Hosanna to the Son of David," they became angry 16and said to him, "Do you hear what these are saying?" Jesus said to them, "Yes; have you never read,

'Out of the mouths of infants and nursing babies
you have prepared praise for yourself'?"

17He left them, went out of the city to Bethany, and spent the night there.

18 In the morning, when he returned to the city, he was hungry. 19And seeing a fig tree by the side of the road, he went to it and found nothing at all on it but leaves. Then he said to it, "May no fruit

*b* Or *'The Lord needs them and will send them back immediately.'* *c* Or *Most of the crowd*
*d* Other ancient authorities add *of God*
*e* Gk lacks *heard*

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**21.1–27.66: The last week** (Mk 11.1–15.47; Lk 19.28–23.56).

**21.1–11: Palm Sunday** (Mk 11.1–10; Lk 19.28–38; Jn 12.12–18). **1**: See Mk 11.1 n. **3**: *And he will send them,* most probably the owner was a secret disciple of Jesus. **5**: Isa 62.11; Zech 9.9. The Hebrew text refers not to two animals but to one. The reference to the two in v. 7 may have arisen through misunderstanding the form of Hebrew poetic expression in Zech 9.9. **8**: Tokens of honor (2 Kings 9.13). **9**: Ps 118.26. *Hosanna,* originally a Hebrew invocation addressed to God, meaning, "O save!"; later it was used as a cry of joyous acclamation. **11**: The identification reflects an unchanged attitude toward Jesus. His parable (see Mk 11.1 n.) is seen and not understood (Jn 6.14; 7.40; Acts 3.22; Mk 6.15; Lk 13.33).

**21.12–17: Cleansing the temple** (Mk 11.11, 15–19; Lk 19.45–48; Jn 2.13–17). **12**: The animals for sale were acceptable for sacrifice; the money changers converted Gentile coins into Jewish money that could properly be presented in the temple (Ex 30.13; Lev 1.14). **13**: Isa 56.7; Jer 7.11. **15**: Lk 19.39; Mt 21.9. *Hosanna,* see v. 9 n. **16**: Ps 8.2.

**21.18–22: Fig tree cursed** (Mk 11.12–14, 20–25). See Mk 11.13 n. **19**: The leaves of the

ever come from you again!" And the fig tree withered at once. 20 When the disciples saw it, they were amazed, saying, "How did the fig tree wither at once?" 21 Jesus answered them, "Truly I tell you, if you have faith and do not doubt, not only will you do what has been done to the fig tree, but even if you say to this mountain, 'Be lifted up and thrown into the sea,' it will be done. 22 Whatever you ask for in prayer with faith, you will receive."

23 When he entered the temple, the chief priests and the elders of the people came to him as he was teaching, and said, "By what authority are you doing these things, and who gave you this authority?" 24 Jesus said to them, "I will also ask you one question; if you tell me the answer, then I will also tell you by what authority I do these things. 25 Did the baptism of John come from heaven, or was it of human origin?" And they argued with one another, "If we say, 'From heaven,' he will say to us, 'Why then did you not believe him?' 26 But if we say, 'Of human origin,' we are afraid of the crowd; for all regard John as a prophet." 27 So they answered Jesus, "We do not know." And he said to them, "Neither will I tell you by what authority I am doing these things.

28 "What do you think? A man had two sons; he went to the first and said, 'Son, go and work in the vineyard today.' 29 He answered, 'I will not'; but later he changed his mind and went. 30 The father[f] went to the second and said the same; and he answered, 'I go, sir'; but he did not go. 31 Which of the two did the will of his father?" They said, "The first." Jesus said to them, "Truly I tell you, the tax collectors and the prostitutes are going into the kingdom of God ahead of you. 32 For John came to you in the way of righteousness and you did not believe him, but the tax collectors and the prostitutes believed him; and even after you saw it, you did not change your minds and believe him.

33 "Listen to another parable. There was a landowner who planted a vineyard, put a fence around it, dug a wine press in it, and built a watchtower. Then he leased it to tenants and went to another country. 34 When the harvest time had come, he sent his slaves to the tenants to collect his produce. 35 But the tenants seized his slaves and beat one, killed another, and stoned another. 36 Again he sent other slaves, more than the first; and they treated them in the same way. 37 Finally he sent his son to them, saying, 'They will respect my son.' 38 But when the tenants saw the son, they said to themselves, 'This is the heir; come, let us kill him and get his inheritance.' 39 So they seized him, threw him out of the vineyard, and killed him. 40 Now when the owner of the vineyard comes, what will he do to those tenants?" 41 They said to him, "He will put those wretches to a miserable death, and lease the vineyard to other tenants who will give him the produce at the harvest time."

42 Jesus said to them, "Have you never read in the scriptures:

'The stone that the builders
rejected
has become the cornerstone;[g]
this was the Lord's doing,
and it is amazing in our eyes'?

*f* Gk *He* *g* Or *keystone*

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fig tree normally appear after the fruit. **21**: See 17.20 n.

**21.23–32**: **Jesus' authority** (Mk 11.27–33; Lk 20.1–8). Jn 2.18–22. **23**: *By what authority?* Jesus had not been ordained as a rabbi. **26**: 11.9; 14.5; Lk 1.76. **27**: Jesus declined to answer because his listeners declined to heed. **28–32**: 20.1; 21.33; Lk 15.11–32. **32**: Lk 7.29–30. *The way of righteousness* led to reconciliation with God by faith.

**21.33–46**: **Parable of the vineyard** (Mk 12.1–12; Lk 20.9–19). **33**: Compare Isa 5.1–7, which forms the background of Jesus' parable. **34**: 22.3. **41**: 8.11; Acts 13.46; 18.6; 28.28.

**21.42**: Jesus agrees with his listeners' an-

43Therefore I tell you, the kingdom of God will be taken away from you and given to a people that produces the fruits of the kingdom. [h] 44The one who falls on this stone will be broken to pieces; and it will crush anyone on whom it falls." [i]

45 When the chief priests and the Pharisees heard his parables, they realized that he was speaking about them. 46They wanted to arrest him, but they feared the crowds, because they regarded him as a prophet.

22 Once more Jesus spoke to them in parables, saying: 2"The kingdom of heaven may be compared to a king who gave a wedding banquet for his son. 3He sent his slaves to call those who had been invited to the wedding banquet, but they would not come. 4Again he sent other slaves, saying, 'Tell those who have been invited: Look, I have prepared my dinner, my oxen and my fat calves have been slaughtered, and everything is ready; come to the wedding banquet.' 5But they made light of it and went away, one to his farm, another to his business, 6while the rest seized his slaves, mistreated them, and killed them. 7The king was enraged. He sent his troops, destroyed those murderers, and burned their city. 8Then he said to his slaves, 'The wedding is ready, but those invited were not worthy. 9Go therefore into the main streets, and invite everyone you find to the wedding banquet.' 10Those slaves went out into the streets and gathered all whom they found, both good and bad; so the wedding hall was filled with guests.

11 "But when the king came in to see the guests, he noticed a man there who was not wearing a wedding robe, 12and he said to him, 'Friend, how did you get in here without a wedding robe?' And he was speechless. 13Then the king said to the attendants, 'Bind him hand and foot, and throw him into the outer darkness, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.' 14For many are called, but few are chosen."

15 Then the Pharisees went and plotted to entrap him in what he said. 16So they sent their disciples to him, along with the Herodians, saying, "Teacher, we know that you are sincere, and teach the way of God in accordance with truth, and show deference to no one; for you do not regard people with partiality. 17Tell us, then, what you think. Is it lawful to pay taxes to the emperor, or not?" 18But Jesus, aware of their malice, said, "Why are you putting me to the test, you hypocrites? 19Show me the coin used for the tax." And they brought him a denarius. 20Then he said to them, "Whose head is this, and whose title?" 21They answered, "The emperor's." Then he said to them, "Give therefore to the emperor the things that are the emperor's, and to God the things that are God's." 22When they heard this, they were amazed; and they left him and went away.

23 The same day some Sadducees came to him, saying there is no resurrection; [j] and they asked him a question, saying, 24"Teacher, Moses said, 'If a man dies childless, his brother shall marry the

*h* Gk *the fruits of it* *i* Other ancient authorities lack verse 44 *j* Other ancient authorities read *who say that there is no resurrection*

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swer (v. 41) and quotes Ps 118.22–23 to support his teaching (Acts 4.11; 1 Pet 2.7).

**22.1–14: The marriage feast** (Lk 14.16–24). **3:** 21.34. **10:** 13.47. **13:** 8.12.

**22.15–22: Paying taxes to Caesar** (Mk 12.13–17; Lk 20.20–26). **15:** Mk 3.6; 8.15. **16:** *Herodians,* Mk 3.6 n. In asking Jesus for a pronouncement affecting all Jews, his enemies thought to bring him into conflict with sectarian views. **17:** If Jesus approved paying taxes he would offend the nationalistic parties; if he disapproved payment he could be reported as disloyal to the empire. **21:** Rom 13.7; 1 Pet 2.17.

**22.23–33: Question about the resurrection** (Mk 12.18–27; Lk 20.27–40). **23:** Belief in the *resurrection* was held by the Pharisees in Jesus' day, but rejected by the Sadducees (Acts 4.1–2; 23.6–10). **24:** Deut 25.5.

widow, and raise up children for his brother.' 25Now there were seven brothers among us; the first married, and died childless, leaving the widow to his brother. 26The second did the same, so also the third, down to the seventh. 27Last of all, the woman herself died. 28In the resurrection, then, whose wife of the seven will she be? For all of them had married her."

29 Jesus answered them, "You are wrong, because you know neither the scriptures nor the power of God. 30For in the resurrection they neither marry nor are given in marriage, but are like angels[k] in heaven. 31And as for the resurrection of the dead, have you not read what was said to you by God, 32'I am the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob'? He is God not of the dead, but of the living." 33And when the crowd heard it, they were astounded at his teaching.

34 When the Pharisees heard that he had silenced the Sadducees, they gathered together, 35and one of them, a lawyer, asked him a question to test him. 36"Teacher, which commandment in the law is the greatest?" 37He said to him, " 'You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind.' 38This is the greatest and first commandment. 39And a second is like it: 'You shall love your neighbor as yourself.' 40On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets."

41 Now while the Pharisees were gathered together, Jesus asked them this question: 42"What do you think of the Messiah?[l] Whose son is he?" They said to him, "The son of David." 43He said to them, "How is it then that David by the Spirit[m] calls him Lord, saying,

44 'The Lord said to my Lord,
"Sit at my right hand,
until I put your enemies under
your feet" '?

45If David thus calls him Lord, how can he be his son?" 46No one was able to give him an answer, nor from that day did anyone dare to ask him any more questions.

23 Then Jesus said to the crowds and to his disciples, 2"The scribes and the Pharisees sit on Moses' seat; 3therefore, do whatever they teach you and follow it; but do not do as they do, for they do not practice what they teach. 4They tie up heavy burdens, hard to bear,[n] and lay them on the shoulders of others; but they themselves are unwilling to lift a finger to move them. 5They do all their deeds to be seen by others; for they make their phylacteries broad and their fringes long. 6They love to have the place of honor at banquets and the best seats in the synagogues, 7and to be greeted with respect in the marketplaces, and to have people call them rabbi. 8But you are not to be called rabbi, for you have one teacher, and you are all students.[o] 9And call no one your father on earth, for

*k* Other ancient authorities add *of God*
*l* Or *Christ* *m* Gk *in spirit* *n* Other ancient authorities lack *hard to bear* *o* Gk *brothers*

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**22.29**: The Sadducees fail to see God's purpose and do not trust his *power*. **31–32**: Ex 3.6. The idea here is that those who are related to God in faith have life even though physically dead; resurrection is the divine act by which they will achieve the fullness of life intended in creation and lost through sin and death (see Lk 20.34–36 n.).

**22.34–40**: **The great commandment** (Mk 12.28–34; Lk 10.25–28). **37**: Deut 6.5. **39**: Lev 19.18; compare Mt 19.19; Rom 13.9; Gal 5.14; Jas 2.8. **40**: The Law contains many ways of applying to life the principle of love.

**22.41–46**: **David's son** (Mk 12.35–37; Lk 20.41–44). **44**: The first *Lord* refers to God, the second *Lord* is taken here to refer to the Messiah (see Ps 110.1; Acts 2.34–35; Heb 1.13; 10.12–13).

**23.1–36**: **Woe to scribes and Pharisees.** **4**: *Heavy burdens,* minute and perplexing interpretations of the law. Lk 11.46; Mt 11.28–30; Acts 15.10. **5**: 6.1; 5.16; Ex 13.9; Deut 6.8. *Phylacteries,* little leather boxes worn on the left arm and forehead, containing strips of parchment bearing the text of Ex 13.9, 16; Deut 6.4–9; 11.18–20. *Fringes,* see Mk 6.56 n.

you have one Father—the one in heaven. 10Nor are you to be called instructors, for you have one instructor, the Messiah.[p] 11The greatest among you will be your servant. 12All who exalt themselves will be humbled, and all who humble themselves will be exalted.

13 "But woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you lock people out of the kingdom of heaven. For you do not go in yourselves, and when others are going in, you stop them.[q] 15Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you cross sea and land to make a single convert, and you make the new convert twice as much a child of hell[r] as yourselves.

16 "Woe to you, blind guides, who say, 'Whoever swears by the sanctuary is bound by nothing, but whoever swears by the gold of the sanctuary is bound by the oath.' 17You blind fools! For which is greater, the gold or the sanctuary that has made the gold sacred? 18And you say, 'Whoever swears by the altar is bound by nothing, but whoever swears by the gift that is on the altar is bound by the oath.' 19How blind you are! For which is greater, the gift or the altar that makes the gift sacred? 20So whoever swears by the altar, swears by it and by everything on it; 21and whoever swears by the sanctuary, swears by it and by the one who dwells in it; 22and whoever swears by heaven, swears by the throne of God and by the one who is seated upon it.

23 "Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you tithe mint, dill, and cummin, and have neglected the weightier matters of the law: justice and mercy and faith. It is these you ought to have practiced without neglecting the others. 24You blind guides! You strain out a gnat but swallow a camel!

25 "Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you clean the outside of the cup and of the plate, but inside they are full of greed and self-indulgence. 26You blind Pharisee! First clean the inside of the cup,[s] so that the outside also may become clean.

27 "Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you are like whitewashed tombs, which on the outside look beautiful, but inside they are full of the bones of the dead and of all kinds of filth. 28So you also on the outside look righteous to others, but inside you are full of hypocrisy and lawlessness.

29 "Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you build the tombs of the prophets and decorate the graves of the righteous, 30and you say, 'If we had lived in the days of our ancestors, we would not have taken part with them in shedding the blood of the prophets.' 31Thus you testify against yourselves that you are descendants of those who murdered the prophets. 32Fill up, then, the measure of your ancestors. 33You snakes, you brood of vipers! How can

*p* Or *the Christ* *q* Other authorities add here (or after verse 12) verse 14, *Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you devour widows' houses and for the sake of appearance you make long prayers; therefore you will receive the greater condemnation*
*r* Gk *Gehenna* *s* Other ancient authorities add *and of the plate*

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**6–7**: Mk 12.38–39; Lk 11.43; 14.7–11; 20.46. **8**: Jas 3.1. **12**: Lk 14.11; 18.14; Mt 18.4; 1 Pet 5.6.

**23.13**: Seven "woes" follow; the denunciations are an indictment of some, not all, Pharisees. Lk 11.52. **15**: Acts 2.10; 6.5; 13.43.

**23.16**: 5.33–37; 15.14. **17**: Ex 30.29. **21**: 1 Kings 8.13; Ps 26.8. **23–24**: Lk 11.42; Lev 27.30; Mic 6.8. *Strain out a gnat* which had fallen into the wine that was to be drunk. **23.25–26**: Lk 11.39–41; Mk 7.4. **27–28**: Tombs were *whitewashed* before Passover so that Jewish travelers might not unwittingly touch them and become ceremonially unclean. Lk 11.44; Acts 23.3; Ps 5.9. **28**: See Lk 20.20 n. **29–32**: Lk 11.47–48; Acts 7.51–53. **30**: *Blood of the prophets,* only one such murder is mentioned in the Hebrew Scriptures (2 Chr 24.20–22), but Jewish legend had added others to the list of national martyrs. **31**: The scribes and Pharisees would admit to being *descendants of those who murdered the prophets;* Jesus insists that their attitudes are also similar (v. 28). **33**: 3.7; Lk 3.7.

you escape being sentenced to hell?[t] 34Therefore I send you prophets, sages, and scribes, some of whom you will kill and crucify, and some you will flog in your synagogues and pursue from town to town, 35so that upon you may come all the righteous blood shed on earth, from the blood of righteous Abel to the blood of Zechariah son of Barachiah, whom you murdered between the sanctuary and the altar. 36Truly I tell you, all this will come upon this generation.

37 "Jerusalem, Jerusalem, the city that kills the prophets and stones those who are sent to it! How often have I desired to gather your children together as a hen gathers her brood under her wings, and you were not willing! 38See, your house is left to you, desolate.[u] 39For I tell you, you will not see me again until you say, 'Blessed is the one who comes in the name of the Lord.' "

**24** As Jesus came out of the temple and was going away, his disciples came to point out to him the buildings of the temple. 2Then he asked them, "You see all these, do you not? Truly I tell you, not one stone will be left here upon another; all will be thrown down."

3 When he was sitting on the Mount of Olives, the disciples came to him privately, saying, "Tell us, when will this be, and what will be the sign of your coming and of the end of the age?" 4Jesus answered them, "Beware that no one leads you astray. 5For many will come in my name, saying, 'I am the Messiah!'[v] and they will lead many astray. 6And you will hear of wars and rumors of wars; see that you are not alarmed; for this must take place, but the end is not yet. 7For nation will rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom, and there will be famines[w] and earthquakes in various places: 8all this is but the beginning of the birth pangs.

9 "Then they will hand you over to be tortured and will put you to death, and you will be hated by all nations because of my name. 10Then many will fall away,[x] and they will betray one another and hate one another. 11And many false prophets will arise and lead many astray. 12And because of the increase of lawlessness, the love of many will grow cold. 13But the one who endures to the end will be saved. 14And this good news[y] of the kingdom will be proclaimed throughout the world, as a testimony to all the nations; and then the end will come.

*t* Gk *Gehenna* *u* Other ancient authorities lack *desolate* *v* Or *the Christ* *w* Other ancient authorities add *and pestilences* *x* Or *stumble* *y* Or *gospel*

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**23.34–36:** Lk 11.49–51. **34:** See Lk 11.49 n.; Mt 10.17, 23; 2 Chr 36.15–16. *Prophets, sages, and scribes* are terms of Jewish origin applied here to Christian missionaries. **35:** Gen 4.8; Heb 11.4; 2 Chr 24.20–22; Zech 1.1. The identifying words *son of Barachiah* (not in Lk 11.51) probably were mistakenly added to the text of Matthew at an early date because of confusion over which *Zechariah* was meant. The meaning of the sentence is to indicate the sweep of time from the first to the last victim of murder mentioned in the Old Testament (2 Chronicles stands last in the order of books in the Hebrew Bible).

**23.37–39: Lament over Jerusalem** (Lk 13.34–35). **37:** The words *how often* suggest repeated efforts, made perhaps during an earlier Judean ministry (see Lk 4.44 n.). **38:** *Your house,* the city itself. 1 Kings 9.7; Jer 12.7; 22.5. **39:** 21.9; Ps 118.26.

**24.1–3: Destruction of the temple foretold** (Mk 13.1–2; Lk 21.5–7). **1:** These verses, together with the discourse that follows, seem to merge teachings about an immediate destruction of Jerusalem with details associated in Scripture with the end of human history. These teachings were set down by the Evangelist in the light of events between A.D. 30 and 70. It is difficult to be certain what the original form of Jesus' words was. **3:** Lk 17.20–21; Mt 13.39, 40, 49; 16.27.

**24.4–51: On the end of the age** (Mk 13.3–37; Lk 21.8–36). **5:** 1 Jn 2.18. **6–7:** Rev 6.3–8, 12–17. **8:** *The birth pangs* signal the imminence of the new age, which was announced at the beginning of Jesus' public ministry as *come near* (4.17), but is to be realized only after a period of witness to Jesus' message (v. 14). Verses 5–14 seem to include a larger community of followers than the

15 "So when you see the desolating
sacrilege standing in the holy place, as
was spoken of by the prophet Daniel (let
the reader understand), 16then those in
Judea must flee to the mountains; 17the
one on the housetop must not go down
to take what is in the house; 18the one in
the field must not turn back to get a coat.
19Woe to those who are pregnant and to
those who are nursing infants in those
days! 20Pray that your flight may not be
in winter or on a sabbath. 21For at that
time there will be great suffering, such as
has not been from the beginning of the
world until now, no, and never will be.
22And if those days had not been cut
short, no one would be saved; but for the
sake of the elect those days will be cut
short. 23Then if anyone says to you,
'Look! Here is the Messiah!'[z] or 'There
he is!'—do not believe it. 24For false
messiahs[a] and false prophets will appear
and produce great signs and omens, to
lead astray, if possible, even the elect.
25Take note, I have told you beforehand.
26So, if they say to you, 'Look! He is in
the wilderness,' do not go out. If they
say, 'Look! He is in the inner rooms,' do
not believe it. 27For as the lightning
comes from the east and flashes as far as
the west, so will be the coming of the
Son of Man. 28Wherever the corpse is,
there the vultures will gather.

29 "Immediately after the suffering of
those days
the sun will be darkened,
and the moon will not give
its light;
the stars will fall from heaven,
and the powers of heaven will
be shaken.
30Then the sign of the Son of Man will
appear in heaven, and then all the tribes
of the earth will mourn, and they will see
'the Son of Man coming on the clouds of
heaven' with power and great glory.
31And he will send out his angels with a
loud trumpet call, and they will gather
his elect from the four winds, from one
end of heaven to the other.

32 "From the fig tree learn its lesson:
as soon as its branch becomes tender and
puts forth its leaves, you know that sum-
mer is near. 33So also, when you see all
these things, you know that he[b] is near,
at the very gates. 34Truly I tell you, this
generation will not pass away until all
these things have taken place. 35Heaven
and earth will pass away, but my words
will not pass away.

36 "But about that day and hour no
one knows, neither the angels of heaven,
nor the Son,[c] but only the Father. 37For
as the days of Noah were, so will be the
coming of the Son of Man. 38For as in
those days before the flood they were
eating and drinking, marrying and giv-
ing in marriage, until the day Noah en-
tered the ark, 39and they knew nothing
until the flood came and swept them all
away, so too will be the coming of the
Son of Man. 40Then two will be in the
field; one will be taken and one will be
left. 41Two women will be grinding
meal together; one will be taken and one
will be left. 42Keep awake therefore, for
you do not know on what day[d] your
Lord is coming. 43But understand this: if

*z* Or *the Christ* *a* Or *christs* *b* Or *it*
*c* Other ancient authorities lack *nor the Son*
*d* Other ancient authorities read *at what hour*

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original disciples. **9**: 10.17–18, 22; Jn 15.18; 16.2. **13**: 10.22; Rev 2.7. **14**: 28.19; Rom 10.18.

**24.15**: Dan 9.27; 11.31; 12.11; see Mk 13.14 n. **17–18**: Lk 17.31. **21**: Dan 12.1; Joel 2.2. **28**: See Lk 17.37 n.; Job 39.30.

**24.29–31**: The language here is drawn from the Old Testament; God's victory over sin is to be established by the Son of Man whom he sends (Rev 8.12; Isa 13.10; 34.4; Ezek 32.7; Joel 2.10–11; Zeph 1.15). **30**: 16.27; Dan 7.13; Rev 1.7. **31**: 1 Cor 15.52; 1 Thess 4.16; Isa 27.13; Zech 2.10; 9.14. **34**: 10.23; 16.28. The normal meaning of *this generation* would be "people of our time," and the words would refer to a period of 20–30 years. What Jesus meant, however, is uncertain. **35**: 5.18; Lk 16.17.

**24.36**: Acts 1.6–7. **37–39**: Lk 17.26–27; Gen 6.5–8; 7.6–24. **40–41**: Lk 17.34–35. **42**: Mk 13.35; Lk 12.40; 21.34–46; Mt 25.13. **43–51**: Lk 12.39–46. **43**: 1 Thess 5.2; Rev 3.3.

the owner of the house had known in what part of the night the thief was coming, he would have stayed awake and would not have let his house be broken into. 44Therefore you also must be ready, for the Son of Man is coming at an unexpected hour.

45 "Who then is the faithful and wise slave, whom his master has put in charge of his household, to give the other slaves[e] their allowance of food at the proper time? 46Blessed is that slave whom his master will find at work when he arrives. 47Truly I tell you, he will put that one in charge of all his possessions. 48But if that wicked slave says to himself, 'My master is delayed,' 49and he begins to beat his fellow slaves, and eats and drinks with drunkards, 50the master of that slave will come on a day when he does not expect him and at an hour that he does not know. 51He will cut him in pieces[f] and put him with the hypocrites, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.

25 "Then the kingdom of heaven will be like this. Ten bridesmaids[g] took their lamps and went to meet the bridegroom.[h] 2Five of them were foolish, and five were wise. 3When the foolish took their lamps, they took no oil with them; 4but the wise took flasks of oil with their lamps. 5As the bridegroom was delayed, all of them became drowsy and slept. 6But at midnight there was a shout, 'Look! Here is the bridegroom! Come out to meet him.' 7Then all those bridesmaids[g] got up and trimmed their lamps. 8The foolish said to the wise, 'Give us some of your oil, for our lamps are going out.' 9But the wise replied, 'No! there will not be enough for you and for us; you had better go to the dealers and buy some for yourselves.' 10And while they went to buy it, the bridegroom came, and those who were ready went with him into the wedding banquet; and the door was shut. 11Later the other bridesmaids[g] came also, saying, 'Lord, lord, open to us.' 12But he replied, 'Truly I tell you, I do not know you.' 13Keep awake therefore, for you know neither the day nor the hour.[i]

14 "For it is as if a man, going on a journey, summoned his slaves and entrusted his property to them; 15to one he gave five talents,[j] to another two, to another one, to each according to his ability. Then he went away. 16The one who had received the five talents went off at once and traded with them, and made five more talents. 17In the same way, the one who had the two talents made two more talents. 18But the one who had received the one talent went off and dug a hole in the ground and hid his master's money. 19After a long time the master of those slaves came and settled accounts with them. 20Then the one who had received the five talents came forward, bringing five more talents, saying, 'Master, you handed over to me five talents; see, I have made five more talents.' 21His master said to him, 'Well done, good and trustworthy slave; you have been trustworthy in a few things, I will put you in charge of many things; enter into the joy of your master.' 22And the one with the two talents also came forward, saying, 'Master, you handed over to me two talents; see, I have made two more talents.' 23His master said to him, 'Well done, good and trustworthy slave;

*e* Gk *to give them* *f* Or *cut him off*
*g* Gk *virgins* *h* Other ancient authorities add *and the bride* *i* Other ancient authorities add *in which the Son of Man is coming* *j* A talent was worth more than fifteen years' wages of a laborer

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**25.1–46: Teachings on the coming of the kingdom. 1–13: The parable of the wise and foolish bridesmaids** is based on the Palestinian custom that *the bridegroom* fetched his bride from her parents' home to his own. **1**: Lk 12.35–38; Mk 13.34. **2**: 7.24–27. **10**: Rev 19.9. **11–12**: Lk 13.25; Mt 7.21–23. **13**: 24.42; Mk 13.35; Lk 12.40.

**25.14–30: Parable of the talents.** Lk 19.12–27. **15**: On the value of this *talent* see note *j*. **21**: Lk 16.10. **29**: The statement, *From those who have nothing . . . taken away,* illustrates Jesus' way of speaking in two settings at once: as the master's servant had his original talent, yet had earned nothing by it, so individuals can have their earthly existence

you have been trustworthy in a few things, I will put you in charge of many things; enter into the joy of your master.' 24Then the one who had received the one talent also came forward, saying, 'Master, I knew that you were a harsh man, reaping where you did not sow, and gathering where you did not scatter seed; 25so I was afraid, and I went and hid your talent in the ground. Here you have what is yours.' 26But his master replied, 'You wicked and lazy slave! You knew, did you, that I reap where I did not sow, and gather where I did not scatter? 27Then you ought to have invested my money with the bankers, and on my return I would have received what was my own with interest. 28So take the talent from him, and give it to the one with the ten talents. 29For to all those who have, more will be given, and they will have an abundance; but from those who have nothing, even what they have will be taken away. 30As for this worthless slave, throw him into the outer darkness, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.'

31 "When the Son of Man comes in his glory, and all the angels with him, then he will sit on the throne of his glory. 32All the nations will be gathered before him, and he will separate people one from another as a shepherd separates the sheep from the goats, 33and he will put the sheep at his right hand and the goats at the left. 34Then the king will say to those at his right hand, 'Come, you that are blessed by my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world; 35for I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you welcomed me, 36I was naked and you gave me clothing, I was sick and you took care of me, I was in prison and you visited me.' 37Then the righteous will answer him, 'Lord, when was it that we saw you hungry and gave you food, or thirsty and gave you something to drink? 38And when was it that we saw you a stranger and welcomed you, or naked and gave you clothing? 39And when was it that we saw you sick or in prison and visited you?' 40And the king will answer them, 'Truly I tell you, just as you did it to one of the least of these who are members of my family,[k] you did it to me.' 41Then he will say to those at his left hand, 'You that are accursed, depart from me into the eternal fire prepared for the devil and his angels; 42for I was hungry and you gave me no food, I was thirsty and you gave me nothing to drink, 43I was a stranger and you did not welcome me, naked and you did not give me clothing, sick and in prison and you did not visit me.' 44Then they also will answer, 'Lord, when was it that we saw you hungry or thirsty or a stranger or naked or sick or in prison, and did not take care of you?' 45Then he will answer them, 'Truly I tell you, just as you did not do it to one of the least of these, you did not do it to me.' 46And these will go away into eternal punishment, but the righteous into eternal life."

26 When Jesus had finished saying all these things, he said to his disciples, 2"You know that after two days the Passover is coming, and the Son of Man will be handed over to be crucified."

3 Then the chief priests and the elders

*k* Gk *these my brothers*

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and all that derives from it, yet lack merit in the final judgment (v. 30). **30**: *Worthless,* without value to his master.

**25.31–46**: **The Great Judgment. 31**: 16.27; 19.28. **32**: Ezek 34.17. *The nations,* probably those who do not know the God of Israel (compare Rom 2.13–16). **34**: Lk 12.32; Mt 5.3; Rev 13.8; 17.8. **35–36**: Isa 58.7; Jas 1.27; 2.15–16; Heb 13.2; 2 Tim 1.16. **40**: 10.42; Mk 9.41; Heb 6.10; Prov 19.17. **41**: Mk 9.48; Rev 20.10. **46**: Dan 12.2; Jn 5.29. *Go away . . . into eternal life* expresses the same idea as *inherit the kingdom* (v. 34).

**26.1–27.66**: **Jesus' death** (Mk 14.1–15.47; Lk 22.1–23.56; Jn 13.1–19.42). **26.1**: *Finished,* see 7.28 n. **2–5**: Mk 14.1–2; Lk 22.1–2; Jn 11.47–53. **2**: *The Passover* commemorated the escape from Egypt under Moses (Ex 12.1–

of the people gathered in the palace of the high priest, who was called Caiaphas, 4and they conspired to arrest Jesus by stealth and kill him. 5But they said, "Not during the festival, or there may be a riot among the people."

6 Now while Jesus was at Bethany in the house of Simon the leper,[l] 7a woman came to him with an alabaster jar of very costly ointment, and she poured it on his head as he sat at the table. 8But when the disciples saw it, they were angry and said, "Why this waste? 9For this ointment could have been sold for a large sum, and the money given to the poor." 10But Jesus, aware of this, said to them, "Why do you trouble the woman? She has performed a good service for me. 11For you always have the poor with you, but you will not always have me. 12By pouring this ointment on my body she has prepared me for burial. 13Truly I tell you, wherever this good news[m] is proclaimed in the whole world, what she has done will be told in remembrance of her."

14 Then one of the twelve, who was called Judas Iscariot, went to the chief priests 15and said, "What will you give me if I betray him to you?" They paid him thirty pieces of silver. 16And from that moment he began to look for an opportunity to betray him.

17 On the first day of Unleavened Bread the disciples came to Jesus, saying, "Where do you want us to make the preparations for you to eat the Passover?" 18He said, "Go into the city to a certain man, and say to him, 'The Teacher says, My time is near; I will keep the Passover at your house with my disciples.' " 19So the disciples did as Jesus had directed them, and they prepared the Passover meal.

20 When it was evening, he took his place with the twelve;[n] 21and while they were eating, he said, "Truly I tell you, one of you will betray me." 22And they became greatly distressed and began to say to him one after another, "Surely not I, Lord?" 23He answered, "The one who has dipped his hand into the bowl with me will betray me. 24The Son of Man goes as it is written of him, but woe to that one by whom the Son of Man is betrayed! It would have been better for that one not to have been born." 25Judas, who betrayed him, said, "Surely not I, Rabbi?" He replied, "You have said so."

26 While they were eating, Jesus took a loaf of bread, and after blessing it he broke it, gave it to the disciples, and said, "Take, eat; this is my body." 27Then he took a cup, and after giving thanks he gave it to them, saying, "Drink from it,

*l* The terms *leper* and *leprosy* can refer to several diseases *m* Or *gospel* *n* Other ancient authorities add *disciples*

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20). **3:** Joseph *Caiaphas,* son-in-law of Annas, was appointed high priest in A.D. 26 by the Roman procurator Valerius Gratus.

**26.6–13:** Mk 14.3–9; Jn 12.1–8. A similar event is reported in Lk 7.36–50. **6:** The identity of this Simon is unknown. **7:** Jn 12.3; see Lk 7.37 n., 46. **10:** The *good service* is what is good and fitting under the circumstances of impending death. The same Greek words are translated "good works" in 5.16. **12:** Jn 19.40. The woman's act won higher praise from Jesus than any other mentioned in the New Testament.

**26.14–16:** Mk 14.10–11; Lk 22.3–6. **14:** See Mk 14.10 n. **15:** Ex 21.32; Zech 11.12. The value of the *thirty pieces of silver* is uncertain. Matthew's quotation refers to silver shekels; at four denarii to the shekel this was one hundred and twenty days' wages (20.2).

**26.17–29: The Last Supper. 17–19:** Mk 14.12–16; Lk 22.7–13. **17:** *Eat the Passover,* i.e. the paschal lamb (Ex 12.18–27; Deut 16.5–8). **18:** Lk 22.10 n., 11 n.; Jn 7.6; 12.23; 13.1; 17.1. **19:** 21.6; Deut 16.5–8. **20–25:** Mk 14.17–21; Lk 22.14, 21–23; Jn 13.21–30. **24:** Ps 41.9; Lk 24.25; 1 Cor 15.3; Acts 17.2–3; Mt 18.7. **25:** Judas' question is phrased to imply that the answer will be in the negative. *You have said so,* a common form of assent in Palestine.

**26.26–29:** Mk 14.22–25; Lk 22.15–20; 1 Cor 10.16; 11.23–26; Mt 14.19; 15.36; see Lk 22.17 n. **28:** Heb 9.20; Mt 20.28; Mk 1.4; Ex 24.6–8; see Mk 14.24 n. In the background of Jesus' words are several important ideas of Jewish religion: one's sins lead to death; God has rescued his people, as from Egypt, and may be trusted to deliver from death itself; in mercy God forgives those who

all of you; 28for this is my blood of the[o] covenant, which is poured out for many for the forgiveness of sins. 29I tell you, I will never again drink of this fruit of the vine until that day when I drink it new with you in my Father's kingdom."

30 When they had sung the hymn, they went out to the Mount of Olives.

31 Then Jesus said to them, "You will all become deserters because of me this night; for it is written,

'I will strike the shepherd,
and the sheep of the flock will
be scattered.'

32But after I am raised up, I will go ahead of you to Galilee." 33Peter said to him, "Though all become deserters because of you, I will never desert you." 34Jesus said to him, "Truly I tell you, this very night, before the cock crows, you will deny me three times." 35Peter said to him, "Even though I must die with you, I will not deny you." And so said all the disciples.

36 Then Jesus went with them to a place called Gethsemane; and he said to his disciples, "Sit here while I go over there and pray." 37He took with him Peter and the two sons of Zebedee, and began to be grieved and agitated. 38Then he said to them, "I am deeply grieved, even to death; remain here, and stay awake with me." 39And going a little farther, he threw himself on the ground and prayed, "My Father, if it is possible, let this cup pass from me; yet not what I want but what you want." 40Then he came to the disciples and found them sleeping; and he said to Peter, "So, could you not stay awake with me one hour? 41Stay awake and pray that you may not come into the time of trial;[p] the spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak." 42Again he went away for the second time and prayed, "My Father, if this cannot pass unless I drink it, your will be done." 43Again he came and found them sleeping, for their eyes were heavy. 44So leaving them again, he went away and prayed for the third time, saying the same words. 45Then he came to the disciples and said to them, "Are you still sleeping and taking your rest? See, the hour is at hand, and the Son of Man is betrayed into the hands of sinners. 46Get up, let us be going. See, my betrayer is at hand."

47 While he was still speaking, Judas, one of the twelve, arrived; with him was a large crowd with swords and clubs, from the chief priests and the elders of the people. 48Now the betrayer had given them a sign, saying, "The one I will kiss is the man; arrest him." 49At once he came up to Jesus and said, "Greetings, Rabbi!" and kissed him. 50Jesus said to him, "Friend, do what you are here to do." Then they came and laid hands on Jesus and arrested him. 51Suddenly, one of those with Jesus put his hand on his sword, drew it, and struck the slave of the high priest, cutting off his ear. 52Then Jesus said to him, "Put your sword back into its place; for all who take the sword will perish by the sword. 53Do you think that I cannot appeal to my Fa-

*o* Other ancient authorities add *new*
*p* Or *into temptation*

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obey him; God will make a new covenant (Jer 31.31–34). **29**: See Lk 14.15; 22.18, 30; Rev 19.9.

**26.30–56**: **Gethsemane.** **30–35**: Mk 14.26–31; Lk 22.31–34, 39; Jn 14.31; 18.1; 13.36–38. **30**: *The hymn* would be Pss 115–118, the second part of the Hallel Psalms. *To the Mount of Olives,* on the east of Jerusalem. **31**: Zech 13.7; Jn 16.32. **32**: 28.7, 10, 16. **34**: *Before the cock crows,* before dawn.

**26.36–46**: Mk 14.32–42; Lk 22.40–46. **38**: Jn 12.27; Heb 5.7–8; Ps 42.6. *I am,* Greek literally "My soul is." **39**: Ezek 23.31–34; Jn 18.11; Mt 20.22. Jesus does not desire death but accepts God's will even including death. *Cup,* see Lk 22.42 n. **41**: 6.13; Lk 11.4. *The time of trial,* when one's best intentions may give way. **42**: Jn 4.34; 5.30; 6.38. **45**: 26.18 n.; Jn 12.23; 13.1; 17.1. **47–56**: Mk 14.43–52; Lk 22.47–53; Jn 18.2–11.

**26.47**: *A large crowd,* evidently considerable resistance was expected. **50**: *Friend,* "comrade." The synoptic gospels do not report Judas' movements on this night (compare Jn 13.30; 18.3). **51**: Jn 18.10. **52**: Gen 9.6; Rev 13.10. **53**: *Twelve legions,* 72,000. **54**:

ther, and he will at once send me more than twelve legions of angels? 54 But how then would the scriptures be fulfilled, which say it must happen in this way?" 55 At that hour Jesus said to the crowds, "Have you come out with swords and clubs to arrest me as though I were a bandit? Day after day I sat in the temple teaching, and you did not arrest me. 56 But all this has taken place, so that the scriptures of the prophets may be fulfilled." Then all the disciples deserted him and fled.

57 Those who had arrested Jesus took him to Caiaphas the high priest, in whose house the scribes and the elders had gathered. 58 But Peter was following him at a distance, as far as the courtyard of the high priest; and going inside, he sat with the guards in order to see how this would end. 59 Now the chief priests and the whole council were looking for false testimony against Jesus so that they might put him to death, 60 but they found none, though many false witnesses came forward. At last two came forward 61 and said, "This fellow said, 'I am able to destroy the temple of God and to build it in three days.' " 62 The high priest stood up and said, "Have you no answer? What is it that they testify against you?" 63 But Jesus was silent. Then the high priest said to him, "I put you under oath before the living God, tell us if you are the Messiah,[q] the Son of God." 64 Jesus said to him, "You have said so. But I tell you,

From now on you will see the
Son of Man
seated at the right hand of
Power
and coming on the clouds
of heaven."

65 Then the high priest tore his clothes and said, "He has blasphemed! Why do we still need witnesses? You have now heard his blasphemy. 66 What is your verdict?" They answered, "He deserves death." 67 Then they spat in his face and struck him; and some slapped him, 68 saying, "Prophesy to us, you Messiah![q] Who is it that struck you?"

69 Now Peter was sitting outside in the courtyard. A servant-girl came to him and said, "You also were with Jesus the Galilean." 70 But he denied it before all of them, saying, "I do not know what you are talking about." 71 When he went out to the porch, another servant-girl saw him, and she said to the bystanders, "This man was with Jesus of Nazareth."[r] 72 Again he denied it with an oath, "I do not know the man." 73 After a little while the bystanders came up and said to Peter, "Certainly you are also one of them, for your accent betrays you." 74 Then he began to curse, and he swore an oath, "I do not know the man!" At that moment the cock crowed. 75 Then Peter remembered what Jesus had said: "Before the cock crows, you will deny me three times." And he went out and wept bitterly.

27 When morning came, all the chief priests and the elders of the people conferred together against Jesus in order to bring about his death. 2 They bound him, led him away, and handed him over to Pilate the governor.

3 When Judas, his betrayer, saw that Jesus[s] was condemned, he repented and brought back the thirty pieces of silver to the chief priests and the elders. 4 He said,

*q* Or *Christ* *r* Gk *the Nazorean* *s* Gk *he*

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Faith in God cannot claim his promise (4.6) so as to counteract his purpose. **55**: Lk 19.47; Jn 18.19–21.

**26.57–75: Jesus before Caiaphas.** **57**: The reference is to the Jewish supreme court (the Sanhedrin; see Jn 11.47 n.). **59**: See Mk 14.55 n. **61**: 24.2; 27.40; Acts 6.14; Jn 2.19. **63**: 27.11; Jn 18.33. **64**: *You have said so,* see 26.25 n. *The Son of Man,* 16.28; Dan 7.13; Ps 110.1. **26.65**: Num 14.6; Acts 14.14; Lev 24.16. **66**: Lev 24.16. **68**: *Prophesy,* at this moment Jesus was blindfolded (Lk 22.64). **73**: Peter spoke with a Galilean accent differing from the Judean; see Acts 2.7. **75**: Compare v. 34.

**27.1–26: Jesus before Pilate.** **1–2**: Mk 15.1; Lk 23.1; Jn 18.28–32. Jewish law required that the Sanhedrin take formal action by daylight. Apparently 26.57–68 describes a pre-dawn hearing. **3–10**: Acts 1.16–20. The

"I have sinned by betraying innocent[t] blood." But they said, "What is that to us? See to it yourself." 5Throwing down the pieces of silver in the temple, he departed; and he went and hanged himself. 6But the chief priests, taking the pieces of silver, said, "It is not lawful to put them into the treasury, since they are blood money." 7After conferring together, they used them to buy the potter's field as a place to bury foreigners. 8For this reason that field has been called the Field of Blood to this day. 9Then was fulfilled what had been spoken through the prophet Jeremiah,[u] "And they took[v] the thirty pieces of silver, the price of the one on whom a price had been set,[w] on whom some of the people of Israel had set a price, 10and they gave[x] them for the potter's field, as the Lord commanded me."

11 Now Jesus stood before the governor; and the governor asked him, "Are you the King of the Jews?" Jesus said, "You say so." 12But when he was accused by the chief priests and elders, he did not answer. 13Then Pilate said to him, "Do you not hear how many accusations they make against you?" 14But he gave him no answer, not even to a single charge, so that the governor was greatly amazed.

15 Now at the festival the governor was accustomed to release a prisoner for the crowd, anyone whom they wanted. 16At that time they had a notorious prisoner, called Jesus[y] Barabbas. 17So after they had gathered, Pilate said to them, "Whom do you want me to release for you, Jesus[y] Barabbas or Jesus who is called the Messiah?"[z] 18For he realized that it was out of jealousy that they had handed him over. 19While he was sitting on the judgment seat, his wife sent word to him, "Have nothing to do with that innocent man, for today I have suffered a great deal because of a dream about him." 20Now the chief priests and the elders persuaded the crowds to ask for Barabbas and to have Jesus killed. 21The governor again said to them, "Which of the two do you want me to release for you?" And they said, "Barabbas." 22Pilate said to them, "Then what should I do with Jesus who is called the Messiah?"[z] All of them said, "Let him be crucified!" 23Then he asked, "Why, what evil has he done?" But they shouted all the more, "Let him be crucified!"

24 So when Pilate saw that he could do nothing, but rather that a riot was beginning, he took some water and washed his hands before the crowd, saying, "I am innocent of this man's blood;[a] see to it yourselves." 25Then the people as a whole answered, "His blood be on us and on our children!" 26So he released Barabbas for them; and after flogging Jesus, he handed him over to be crucified.

27 Then the soldiers of the governor took Jesus into the governor's headquarters,[b] and they gathered the whole cohort around him. 28They stripped him and put a scarlet robe on him, 29and after twisting some thorns into a crown, they put it on his head. They put a reed in his right hand and knelt before him and mocked him, saying, "Hail, King of the Jews!" 30They spat on him, and took the

*t* Other ancient authorities read *righteous* *u* Other ancient authorities read *Zechariah* or *Isaiah* *v* Or *I took* *w* Or *the price of the precious One* *x* Other ancient authorities read *I gave* *y* Other ancient authorities lack *Jesus* *z* Or *the Christ* *a* Other ancient authorities read *this righteous blood*, or *this righteous man's blood* *b* Gk *the praetorium*

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details of Judas' end are obscure. Each account connects him in death with a cemetery for foreigners in Jerusalem. **6**: See Deut 23.18 for scruples about ill-gotten gains for sacred purposes. **9–10**: Zech 11.12–13; Jer 18.1–3; 32.6–15.

**27.11–14**: Mk 15.2–5; Lk 23.2–5; Jn 18.29–19.16. **14**: Lk 23.9; Mt 26.62; Mk 14.60; 1 Tim 6.13. **15–26**: Mk 15.6–15; Lk 23.18–25; Jn 18.38–40; 19.4–16. **19**: Lk 23.4. **21**: Acts 3.13–14. **24**: Deut 21.6–9; Ps 26.6. **25**: Acts 5.28; Josh 2.19. **26**: Scourging with a multithonged whip ordinarily preceded execution.

**27.27–44**: **The crucifixion. 27–31**: Mk 15.16–20; Jn 19.1–3. **27**: *The cohort* at full strength numbered about five hundred men.

reed and struck him on the head. 31 After mocking him, they stripped him of the robe and put his own clothes on him. Then they led him away to crucify him.

32 As they went out, they came upon a man from Cyrene named Simon; they compelled this man to carry his cross. 33 And when they came to a place called Golgotha (which means Place of a Skull), 34 they offered him wine to drink, mixed with gall; but when he tasted it, he would not drink it. 35 And when they had crucified him, they divided his clothes among themselves by casting lots;[c] 36 then they sat down there and kept watch over him. 37 Over his head they put the charge against him, which read, "This is Jesus, the King of the Jews."

38 Then two bandits were crucified with him, one on his right and one on his left. 39 Those who passed by derided[d] him, shaking their heads 40 and saying, "You who would destroy the temple and build it in three days, save yourself! If you are the Son of God, come down from the cross." 41 In the same way the chief priests also, along with the scribes and elders, were mocking him, saying, 42 "He saved others; he cannot save himself.[e] He is the King of Israel; let him come down from the cross now, and we will believe in him. 43 He trusts in God; let God deliver him now, if he wants to; for he said, 'I am God's Son.'" 44 The bandits who were crucified with him also taunted him in the same way.

45 From noon on, darkness came over the whole land[f] until three in the afternoon. 46 And about three o'clock Jesus cried with a loud voice, "Eli, Eli, lema sabachthani?" that is, "My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?" 47 When some of the bystanders heard it, they said, "This man is calling for Elijah." 48 At once one of them ran and got a sponge, filled it with sour wine, put it on a stick, and gave it to him to drink. 49 But the others said, "Wait, let us see whether Elijah will come to save him."[g] 50 Then Jesus cried again with a loud voice and breathed his last.[h] 51 At that moment the curtain of the temple was torn in two, from top to bottom. The earth shook, and the rocks were split. 52 The tombs also were opened, and many bodies of the saints who had fallen asleep were raised. 53 After his resurrection they came out of the tombs and entered the holy city and appeared to many. 54 Now when the centurion and those with him, who were keeping watch over Jesus, saw the earthquake and what took place, they were terrified and said, "Truly this man was God's Son!"[i]

55 Many women were also there, looking on from a distance; they had followed Jesus from Galilee and had provided for him. 56 Among them were Mary Magdalene, and Mary the mother of

*c* Other ancient authorities add *in order that what had been spoken through the prophet might be fulfilled, "They divided my clothes among themselves, and for my clothing they cast lots."*
*d* Or *blasphemed* *e* Or *is he unable to save himself?* *f* Or *earth* *g* Other ancient authorities add *And another took a spear and pierced his side, and out came water and blood* *h* Or *gave up his spirit* *i* Or *a son of God*

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**32–44**: Mk 15.21–32; Lk 23.26, 33–43; Jn 19.17–24. **32**: The procession included Jesus, two other prisoners, a centurion, and a few soldiers. *Simon,* see Mk 15.21 n. **34**: *Gall,* any bitter liquid, possibly the myrrh of Mk 15.23. **35**: *They divided his clothes,* see Jn 19.23 n.; Ps 22.18. **37**: Indication of the offense was customary. Since the Romans recognized the ruling Herods, it seems implied that Jesus was alleged to be a pretender and revolutionary. **39**: Ps 22.7–8; 109.25. **40**: 26.61; Acts 6.14; Jn 2.19. **42–43**: The taunts stress religious aspects of Jesus' works and words. *Israel* (rather than *the Jews,* v. 37) refers to the religious community rather than the political state. **43**: Ps 22.8.

**27.45–66: The death of Jesus. 45–56**: Mk 15.33–41; Lk 23.44–49; Jn 19.28–37. **46**: *Eli . . . sabachthani,* quoted from Ps 22.1. **47**: *Elijah* (similar in sound to *Eli*) was expected to usher in the final period (Mal 4.5–6; Mt 27.49). **48**: Ps 69.21. The motive in offering the *sour wine* may have been to revive him and hence prolong the ordeal. **51**: Heb 9.8; 10.19; Ex 26.31–35; Mt 28.2; see Mk 15.38 n. **56**: *James,* possibly the James of 10.3; Lk 24.10; Acts 1.13.

James and Joseph, and the mother of the sons of Zebedee.

57 When it was evening, there came a rich man from Arimathea, named Joseph, who was also a disciple of Jesus. 58He went to Pilate and asked for the body of Jesus; then Pilate ordered it to be given to him. 59So Joseph took the body and wrapped it in a clean linen cloth 60and laid it in his own new tomb, which he had hewn in the rock. He then rolled a great stone to the door of the tomb and went away. 61Mary Magdalene and the other Mary were there, sitting opposite the tomb.

62 The next day, that is, after the day of Preparation, the chief priests and the Pharisees gathered before Pilate 63and said, "Sir, we remember what that impostor said while he was still alive, 'After three days I will rise again.' 64Therefore command the tomb to be made secure until the third day; otherwise his disciples may go and steal him away, and tell the people, 'He has been raised from the dead,' and the last deception would be worse than the first." 65Pilate said to them, "You have a guard[j] of soldiers; go, make it as secure as you can."[k] 66So they went with the guard and made the tomb secure by sealing the stone.

28 After the sabbath, as the first day of the week was dawning, Mary Magdalene and the other Mary went to see the tomb. 2And suddenly there was a great earthquake; for an angel of the Lord, descending from heaven, came and rolled back the stone and sat on it. 3His appearance was like lightning, and his clothing white as snow. 4For fear of him the guards shook and became like dead men. 5But the angel said to the women, "Do not be afraid; I know that you are looking for Jesus who was crucified. 6He is not here; for he has been raised, as he said. Come, see the place where he[l] lay. 7Then go quickly and tell his disciples, 'He has been raised from the dead,[m] and indeed he is going ahead of you to Galilee; there you will see him.' This is my message for you." 8So they left the tomb quickly with fear and great joy, and ran to tell his disciples. 9Suddenly Jesus met them and said, "Greetings!" And they came to him, took hold of his feet, and worshiped him. 10Then Jesus said to them, "Do not be afraid; go and tell my brothers to go to Galilee; there they will see me."

11 While they were going, some of the guard went into the city and told the chief priests everything that had happened. 12After the priests[n] had assembled with the elders, they devised a plan to give a large sum of money to the soldiers, 13telling them, "You must say, 'His disciples came by night and stole him away while we were asleep.' 14If this comes to the governor's ears, we will satisfy him and keep you out of trouble." 15So they took the money and did as they were directed. And this story is still told among the Jews to this day.

16 Now the eleven disciples went to Galilee, to the mountain to which Jesus

*j* Or *Take a guard* *k* Gk *you know how*
*l* Other ancient authorities read *the Lord*
*m* Other ancient authorities lack *from the dead*
*n* Gk *they*

**27.57–61**: Mk 15.42–47; Lk 23.50–56; Jn 19.38–42; Acts 13.29. **58**: Bodies of the executed were normally denied burial. **60**: See Mk 16.3–5 n.; Acts 13.29. **61**: 27.56.

**27.62**: *Next day,* the sabbath (Mk 15.42). **65**: *You have a guard,* permission to use the Temple police, under the authority of the Sanhedrin; or, *Take a guard,* i.e. granting them a squad of Roman soldiers.

**28.1–10**: **The first Easter** (Mk 16.1–8; Lk 24.1–11; Jn 20.1–10). **3**: *Lightning,* Dan 10.6. **4**: *The guards,* 27.62–66. **7**: 26.32; 28.16; Jn 21.1–23; 1 Cor 15.3–4, 12, 20. **8**: Compare Lk 24.9, 22–23; the sequence of events cannot be worked out. Each account is a separate summary of early Christian testimony to the fact of Jesus' resurrection. **9**: Jn 20.14–18.

**28.11–15**: **Bribing the guard. 11**: 27.62–66. **12**: *Large* enough to persuade *the soldiers* to invent a story contrary to the truth, at their own peril. **14**: *We will satisfy him,* in the same way they had persuaded the soldiers—by bribes. **15**: *This day,* i.e. the time when the Gospel according to Matthew was written.

**28.16–20**: **Jesus' commission to his disciples. 17**: 1 Cor 15.5–6; Jn 21.1–23; Lk

had directed them. 17When they saw him, they worshiped him; but some doubted. 18And Jesus came and said to them, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. 19Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, 20and teaching them to obey everything that I have commanded you. And remember, I am with you always, to the end of the age."[o]

*o* Other ancient authorities add *Amen*

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24.11. *Worshiped,* Greek literally "prostrated themselves in worship"; they had not done this before the crucifixion. **18**: 11.27; Lk 10.22; Phil 2.9; Eph 1.20–22. *All authority,* compare Dan 7.14. **19**: *All nations,* contrast 10.5, and compare Mk 16.15; Lk 24.47; Acts 1.8. According to Hebrew usage *in the name of* means in the possession and protection of (Ps 124.8). **20**: *I am with you,* 18.20; Acts 18.10.

# *The Gospel According to*
# *Mark*

The Gospel according to Mark is generally recognized as the earliest attempt to reduce the apostolic tradition concerning Jesus the Messiah to written form (see pp. ix–x NT). The Evangelist presents Jesus as the Son of God (1.1, 11; 5.7; 9.7; 14.61–62; 15.39) whose ministry was characterized by a succession of mighty works that, to those who had eyes to see, were signs of the presence of God's power and kingdom.

This Gospel, the shortest of the four, is largely a collection of narratives that depict Jesus as being almost constantly active; a favorite word in Mark is the Greek word meaning *immediately* or *at once* or *then,* which occurs about forty times in sixteen chapters. On the other hand, Mark records fewer words of Jesus than does any of the other Gospels; it contains one collection of sayings in the form of a discourse (ch 13) and a few parables (e.g. ch 4).

The main divisions are the following: 1.1–13, Opening events of Jesus' public life (John the Baptist; baptism and temptation of Jesus); 1.14–9.50, Jesus' preaching, teaching, and healing ministry in Galilee; ch 10, Journey to Jerusalem; chs 11–15, The last week, concluding with Jesus' crucifixion and burial; 16.1–8, The resurrection.

The style of the Marcan narrative is vivid and concrete, with an obvious concern for detail. The Evangelist notes, for example, the stunned reaction of the crowds (1.27f.; 2.12) and the fear and amazement of the disciples (9.6; 10.24, 32), as well as the pity, anger mingled with grief, and godly sorrow (or exasperation) experienced by Jesus (1.41; 3.5; 8.12).

In the earliest Greek manuscripts and versions (Latin, Syriac, Coptic, Armenian) the author's account breaks off suddenly with the words "for they were afraid" (16.8). Later manuscripts provide as a more suitable close for the book either a shorter or a longer ending, or sometimes both (see note *r* at 16.8). Whether Mark was prevented by death from completing his Gospel, or whether the original copy was accidentally mutilated, losing a portion at the close, no one can say.

Mark's ordering of the story of Jesus, beginning with the preaching of John the Baptist, preserves to some extent the form of the first Christian missionary message. The early disciples reinforced their claim that Jesus was the divinely appointed Messiah (8.29) by retelling significant moments from his days in Galilee and the last week of his life (compare Peter's account in Acts 10.34–43).

Although the Gospel is anonymous, an ancient tradition may well be correct in ascribing it to John Mark (mentioned in Acts 12.12; 15.37), who is said to have composed it at Rome as a summary of Peter's preaching (compare 1 Pet 5.13). The presence in this Gospel of several Latinisms, as well as Aramaic words and phrases (3.17; 5.41; 7.34; 14.36; 15.34) that are translated into Greek, points to a Gentile circle of readers living perhaps in Italy.

The date of writing, though uncertain, was probably prior to the fall of Jerusalem in A.D. 70. The persecution of Christians by Nero following the disastrous fire that destroyed half the city of Rome during the summer of A.D. 64 may account for the addition of the phrase "with persecutions" in 10.30 (a phrase not found in the Matthean and Lucan parallels).

For the literary genre of the gospels, see pp. viii–x NT.

1 The beginning of the good news[a] of
Jesus Christ, the Son of God.[b]
2 As it is written in the prophet Isaiah,[c]
"See, I am sending my messenger
ahead of you,[d]
who will prepare your way;
3 the voice of one crying out in the
wilderness:
'Prepare the way of the Lord,
make his paths straight,' "
4 John the baptizer appeared[e] in the wilderness, proclaiming a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins. 5 And people from the whole Judean countryside and all the people of Jerusalem were going out to him, and were baptized by him in the river Jordan, confessing their sins. 6 Now John was clothed with camel's hair, with a leather belt around his waist, and he ate locusts and wild honey. 7 He proclaimed, "The one who is more powerful than I is coming after me; I am not worthy to stoop down and untie the thong of his sandals. 8 I have baptized you with[f] water; but he will baptize you with[f] the Holy Spirit."

9 In those days Jesus came from Nazareth of Galilee and was baptized by John in the Jordan. 10 And just as he was coming up out of the water, he saw the heavens torn apart and the Spirit descending like a dove on him. 11 And a voice came from heaven, "You are my Son, the Beloved;[g] with you I am well pleased."

12 And the Spirit immediately drove him out into the wilderness. 13 He was in the wilderness forty days, tempted by Satan; and he was with the wild beasts; and the angels waited on him.

14 Now after John was arrested, Jesus came to Galilee, proclaiming the good news[a] of God, 15 and saying, "The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God has come near;[i] repent, and believe in the good news."[a]

16 As Jesus passed along the Sea of Galilee, he saw Simon and his brother Andrew casting a net into the sea—for they were fishermen. 17 And Jesus said to them, "Follow me and I will make you fish for people." 18 And immediately they left their nets and followed him. 19 As he went a little farther, he saw James son of Zebedee and his brother John, who were in their boat mending the nets. 20 Immediately he called them; and they left their father Zebedee in the boat with the hired men, and followed him.

21 They went to Capernaum; and when the sabbath came, he entered the

*a* Or *gospel* *b* Other ancient authorities lack *the Son of God* *c* Other ancient authorities read *in the prophets* *d* Gk *before your face* *e* Other ancient authorities read *John was baptizing* *f* Or *in* *g* Or *my beloved Son* *h* Other ancient authorities read *of the kingdom* *i* Or *is at hand*

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**1.1–8**: **Activity of John the Baptist** (Mt 3.1–12; Lk 3.1–20; Jn 1.6, 15, 19–28). **1**: *The good news* begins with John's call to repentance. **2**: Mal 3.1 (God is the speaker); Mt 11.10; Lk 7.27. **3**: Isa 40.3. **4**: Acts 13.24. John called people to baptism *with water,* thereby symbolizing recognition and confession of sin together with acceptance of God's judgment and forgiveness. **8**: Baptism *with the Holy Spirit* would draw people into spiritual communion with God (Acts 2.17–21; Joel 2.28–29).

**1.9–11**: **Jesus' baptism** (Mt 3.13–17; Lk 3.21–22; Jn 1.29–34). **11**: *Beloved,* similar in meaning to *chosen* (Isa 42.1), refers to an act of will rather than of feeling (Ps 2.7; Lk 9.35; 2 Pet 1.17).

**1.12–13**: **Jesus' temptation** (Mt 4.1–11; Lk 4.1–13).

**1.14–39**: **Beginnings of Jesus' activity in Galilee. 14–15**: Mt 4.12–17; Lk 4.14–15. **15**: Jesus' message summarized. The whole of Mark is an expansion of this verse. *Repent,* return to God's way; *believe the good news,* accept the message (see Mt 4.17 n.). **16–20**: Mt 4.18–22; Lk 5.1–11; Jn 1.35–42. **16**: *Sea of Galilee,* other names are Sea of Tiberias and Lake of Gennesaret. It is 12¾ miles long by 7½ miles wide.

**1.21–22**: Mt 7.28–29; Lk 4.31–32. **22**: *One having authority . . . not as the scribes,* Jesus spoke without citing various spiritual authorities in support of his teaching. **23–28**: Lk 4.33–37. **23**: The *spirit,* or demon, was called *unclean* because the effect of the condition was to separate people from the worship of God. **27**: See Mt 7.29 n.

synagogue and taught. 22They were astounded at his teaching, for he taught them as one having authority, and not as the scribes. 23Just then there was in their synagogue a man with an unclean spirit, 24and he cried out, "What have you to do with us, Jesus of Nazareth? Have you come to destroy us? I know who you are, the Holy One of God." 25But Jesus rebuked him, saying, "Be silent, and come out of him!" 26And the unclean spirit, convulsing him and crying with a loud voice, came out of him. 27They were all amazed, and they kept on asking one another, "What is this? A new teaching—with authority! He[j] commands even the unclean spirits, and they obey him." 28At once his fame began to spread throughout the surrounding region of Galilee.

29 As soon as they[k] left the synagogue, they entered the house of Simon and Andrew, with James and John. 30Now Simon's mother-in-law was in bed with a fever, and they told him about her at once. 31He came and took her by the hand and lifted her up. Then the fever left her, and she began to serve them.

32 That evening, at sundown, they brought to him all who were sick or possessed with demons. 33And the whole city was gathered around the door. 34And he cured many who were sick with various diseases, and cast out many demons; and he would not permit the demons to speak, because they knew him.

35 In the morning, while it was still very dark, he got up and went out to a deserted place, and there he prayed. 36And Simon and his companions hunted for him. 37When they found him, they said to him, "Everyone is searching for you." 38He answered, "Let us go on to the neighboring towns, so that I may proclaim the message there also; for that is what I came out to do." 39And he went throughout Galilee, proclaiming the message in their synagogues and casting out demons.

40 A leper[l] came to him begging him, and kneeling[m] he said to him, "If you choose, you can make me clean." 41Moved with pity,[n] Jesus[o] stretched out his hand and touched him, and said to him, "I do choose. Be made clean!" 42Immediately the leprosy[l] left him, and he was made clean. 43After sternly warning him he sent him away at once, 44saying to him, "See that you say nothing to anyone; but go, show yourself to the priest, and offer for your cleansing what Moses commanded, as a testimony to them." 45But he went out and began to proclaim it freely, and to spread the word, so that Jesus[o] could no longer go into a town openly, but stayed out in the country; and people came to him from every quarter.

2 When he returned to Capernaum after some days, it was reported that he was at home. 2So many gathered around that there was no longer room for them, not even in front of the door; and he was speaking the word to them.

*j* Or *A new teaching! With authority he*
*k* Other ancient authorities read *he*
*l* The terms *leper* and *leprosy* can refer to several diseases
*m* Other ancient authorities lack *kneeling*
*n* Other ancient authorities read *anger*
*o* Gk *he*

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**1.29–34**: Mt 8.14–17; Lk 4.38–41. **32**: The sabbath ended at sunset. **33**: *The door,* of Peter's house. **34**: See vv. 43–44 n.

**1.35–39**: Mt 4.23–25; Lk 4.42–44. **35**: See Lk 3.21 n. **38**: He *came out* from Capernaum (2.1).

**1.40–9.50**: **Ministry and controversy, chiefly in Galilee. 1.40–45**: Mt 8.2–4; Lk 5.12–16. **43–44**: Jesus wished the healing to carry with it a spiritual obligation. He apparently feared that rumors of miracles would gather the curious and foster cries for help only in physical terms, thus hindering his message (v. 45).

**2.1–12**: **Healing a paralytic** (Mt 9.1–8; Lk 5.17–26). **2**: *The word* was everything he had to say to people about God's purposes. **4**: Dwelling houses in Palestine usually had a flight of stone steps built on the outside and leading to *the roof,* which was flat and made probably of sticks and packed earth. **7**: The Jewish leaders sense in Jesus' words (v. 5) either some claim of his own or the assertion of a way of forgiveness different from that

3 Then some people[p] came, bringing to him a paralyzed man, carried by four of them. 4 And when they could not bring him to Jesus because of the crowd, they removed the roof above him; and after having dug through it, they let down the mat on which the paralytic lay. 5 When Jesus saw their faith, he said to the paralytic, "Son, your sins are forgiven." 6 Now some of the scribes were sitting there, questioning in their hearts, 7 "Why does this fellow speak in this way? It is blasphemy! Who can forgive sins but God alone?" 8 At once Jesus perceived in his spirit that they were discussing these questions among themselves; and he said to them, "Why do you raise such questions in your hearts? 9 Which is easier, to say to the paralytic, 'Your sins are forgiven,' or to say, 'Stand up and take your mat and walk'? 10 But so that you may know that the Son of Man has authority on earth to forgive sins"—he said to the paralytic— 11 "I say to you, stand up, take your mat and go to your home." 12 And he stood up, and immediately took the mat and went out before all of them; so that they were all amazed and glorified God, saying, "We have never seen anything like this!"

13 Jesus[q] went out again beside the sea; the whole crowd gathered around him, and he taught them. 14 As he was walking along, he saw Levi son of Alphaeus sitting at the tax booth, and he said to him, "Follow me." And he got up and followed him.

15 And as he sat at dinner[r] in Levi's[s] house, many tax collectors and sinners were also sitting[t] with Jesus and his disciples—for there were many who followed him. 16 When the scribes of[u] the Pharisees saw that he was eating with sinners and tax collectors, they said to his disciples, "Why does he eat[v] with tax collectors and sinners?" 17 When Jesus heard this, he said to them, "Those who are well have no need of a physician, but those who are sick; I have come to call not the righteous but sinners."

18 Now John's disciples and the Pharisees were fasting; and people[p] came and said to him, "Why do John's disciples and the disciples of the Pharisees fast, but your disciples do not fast?" 19 Jesus said to them, "The wedding guests cannot fast while the bridegroom is with them, can they? As long as they have the bridegroom with them, they cannot fast. 20 The days will come when the bridegroom is taken away from them, and then they will fast on that day.

21 "No one sews a piece of unshrunk cloth on an old cloak; otherwise, the patch pulls away from it, the new from the old, and a worse tear is made. 22 And no one puts new wine into old wine-

*p* Gk *they* *q* Gk *He* *r* Gk *reclined* *s* Gk *his* *t* Gk *reclining* *u* Other ancient authorities read *and* *v* Other ancient authorities add *and drink*

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taught by the scribes. **10**: *Son of Man*, a title which Jesus used of himself, probably seemed to his listeners to carry either of two meanings: (*a*) that Jesus called himself a typical human being in accordance with the common meaning of *son of* (see Mt 5.45 n.); or (*b*) that Jesus (contrary to the humble conditions of his daily life) linked himself to the prophesied figure of Dan 7.13–14 who was popularly regarded as the coming Messiah (see Acts 7.56 n.). Jesus nowhere fully discloses his own understanding of the term (but see 8.32 n.). However, each meaning by itself, as well as both together (see Mt 25.29 n.), could have appealed to him. It was also characteristic of him to speak in such a way as to oblige his hearers to determine their own personal attitudes toward him as part of the process of understanding his words (see Mt 13.3 n.).

**2.13–17**: **The call of Levi** (Mt 9.9–13; Lk 5.27–32). **13**: *The sea*, of Galilee. **14**: *Levi*, Matthew. This experience was not necessarily Matthew's first contact with Jesus (v. 15). **16**: *Sinners* here means Jews who do not observe the dietary and other laws. **17**: See Lk 5.32 n.

**2.18–22**: **Fasting** (Mt 9.14–17; Lk 5.33–39). **18**: *John's*, i.e. the Baptist's *disciples*. The Pharisees fasted on Mondays and Thursdays. **19–20**: Isa 62.5; Lk 17.22. The implication is that Jesus comes as a *bridegroom* for his followers (the bride). Fasting was inappropriate to a wedding, and to joyous association with himself (see Jn 3.27–29 n.).

skins; otherwise, the wine will burst the skins, and the wine is lost, and so are the skins; but one puts new wine into fresh wineskins."[w]

23 One sabbath he was going through the grainfields; and as they made their way his disciples began to pluck heads of grain. 24The Pharisees said to him, "Look, why are they doing what is not lawful on the sabbath?" 25And he said to them, "Have you never read what David did when he and his companions were hungry and in need of food? 26He entered the house of God, when Abiathar was high priest, and ate the bread of the Presence, which it is not lawful for any but the priests to eat, and he gave some to his companions." 27Then he said to them, "The sabbath was made for humankind, and not humankind for the sabbath; 28so the Son of Man is lord even of the sabbath."

3 Again he entered the synagogue, and a man was there who had a withered hand. 2They watched him to see whether he would cure him on the sabbath, so that they might accuse him. 3And he said to the man who had the withered hand, "Come forward." 4Then he said to them, "Is it lawful to do good or to do harm on the sabbath, to save life or to kill?" But they were silent. 5He looked around at them with anger; he was grieved at their hardness of heart and said to the man, "Stretch out your hand." He stretched it out, and his hand was restored. 6The Pharisees went out and immediately conspired with the Herodians against him, how to destroy him.

7 Jesus departed with his disciples to the sea, and a great multitude from Galilee followed him; 8hearing all that he was doing, they came to him in great numbers from Judea, Jerusalem, Idumea, beyond the Jordan, and the region around Tyre and Sidon. 9He told his disciples to have a boat ready for him because of the crowd, so that they would not crush him; 10for he had cured many, so that all who had diseases pressed upon him to touch him. 11Whenever the unclean spirits saw him, they fell down before him and shouted, "You are the Son of God!" 12But he sternly ordered them not to make him known.

13 He went up the mountain and called to him those whom he wanted, and they came to him. 14And he appointed twelve, whom he also named apostles,[x] to be with him, and to be sent out to proclaim the message, 15and to have authority to cast out demons. 16So he appointed the twelve:[y] Simon (to whom he gave the name Peter); 17James son of Zebedee and John the brother of James (to whom he gave the name Boanerges, that is, Sons of Thunder); 18and Andrew, and Philip, and Bartholomew, and Matthew, and Thomas, and James son of Al-

*w* Other ancient authorities lack *but one puts new wine into fresh wineskins* *x* Other ancient authorities lack *whom he also named apostles* *y* Other ancient authorities lack *So he appointed the twelve*

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**2.23–3.6: Jesus and sabbath laws** (Mt 12.1–14; Lk 6.1–11). **2.24**: The Pharisees attack Jesus by attacking his disciples (vv. 16, 18). **26**: *Abiathar* was *high priest* during David's reign (2 Sam 15.35); his father Ahimelech was priest at the time David ate the consecrated bread (1 Sam 21.1–6). **27**: Ex 23.12; Deut 5.14. **3.3–4**: Jesus, acting by the principle stated in 2.27, equated acts to meet human need with acts *lawful . . . on the sabbath*. **6**: *Herodians*, apparently a group supporting the royal family. Nothing definite is known about them, but probably their interests were secular. The Pharisees sought allies wherever they might be found (12.13).

**3.7–12: Work of healing** (Mt 4.24–25; 12.15–21; Lk 6.17–19; 4.41). **7–8**: 1.28, 38, 45. Jesus' fame has spread. **10**: 5.29, 34; 6.54–56. **12**: 1.43–44.

**3.13–19a: The Twelve chosen** (Mt 10.1–4; Lk 6.12–16). Jesus invited the Twelve to live intimately with him, adopting his way of life as well as his message. Spiritual strength came through the community he established (see 6.7–13 n.). **13**: Lk 6.12. **18**: This *Alphaeus* was apparently not identical with Levi's father (2.14). *Simon the Cananaean* belonged to a Jewish patriotic group also called Zealots (Lk 6.15; Acts 1.13).

phaeus, and Thaddaeus, and Simon the Cananaean, [19] and Judas Iscariot, who betrayed him.

Then he went home; [20] and the crowd came together again, so that they could not even eat. [21] When his family heard it, they went out to restrain him, for people were saying, "He has gone out of his mind." [22] And the scribes who came down from Jerusalem said, "He has Beelzebul, and by the ruler of the demons he casts out demons." [23] And he called them to him, and spoke to them in parables, "How can Satan cast out Satan? [24] If a kingdom is divided against itself, that kingdom cannot stand. [25] And if a house is divided against itself, that house will not be able to stand. [26] And if Satan has risen up against himself and is divided, he cannot stand, but his end has come. [27] But no one can enter a strong man's house and plunder his property without first tying up the strong man; then indeed the house can be plundered.

28 "Truly I tell you, people will be forgiven for their sins and whatever blasphemies they utter; [29] but whoever blasphemes against the Holy Spirit can never have forgiveness, but is guilty of an eternal sin"— [30] for they had said, "He has an unclean spirit."

31 Then his mother and his brothers came; and standing outside, they sent to him and called him. [32] A crowd was sitting around him; and they said to him, "Your mother and your brothers and sisters[z] are outside, asking for you." [33] And he replied, "Who are my mother and my brothers?" [34] And looking at those who sat around him, he said, "Here are my mother and my brothers! [35] Whoever does the will of God is my brother and sister and mother."

4 Again he began to teach beside the sea. Such a very large crowd gathered around him that he got into a boat on the sea and sat there, while the whole crowd was beside the sea on the land. [2] He began to teach them many things in parables, and in his teaching he said to them: [3] "Listen! A sower went out to sow. [4] And as he sowed, some seed fell on the path, and the birds came and ate it up. [5] Other seed fell on rocky ground, where it did not have much soil, and it sprang up quickly, since it had no depth of soil. [6] And when the sun rose, it was scorched; and since it had no root, it withered away. [7] Other seed fell among thorns, and the thorns grew up and choked it, and it yielded no grain. [8] Other seed fell into good soil and brought forth grain, growing up and increasing and yielding thirty and sixty and a hundredfold." [9] And he said, "Let anyone with ears to hear listen!"

10 When he was alone, those who were around him along with the twelve asked him about the parables. [11] And he said to them, "To you has been given the secret[a] of the kingdom of God, but for those outside, everything comes in parables; [12] in order that

'they may indeed look, but not perceive,
and may indeed listen, but not understand;
so that they may not turn again
and be forgiven.' "

*z* Other ancient authorities lack *and sisters*
*a* Or *mystery*

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**3.19b–35: Questions about Jesus' power** (Mt 12.22–37; Lk 11.14–23; 12.10; 6.43–45). **21**: *His family* (perhaps his mother and his brothers, v. 31) were concerned both for his safety, amidst the intense emotions rising round him, and his sanity. **22**: The Pharisees attribute his acts to demonic power (see Lk 7.33 n.; Jn 10.20). *Beelzebul,* a pagan god (see 2 Kings 1.2 n.) identified here with Satan. **24–27**: Inner division is destructive. **29**: Mt 12.31–32 n. **31–35**: *Brothers,* see Mt 13.55 n.

**4.1–34: Teaching in parables** (Mt ch 13; Lk 8.4–18; 13.18–21). On Jesus' use of parables, see Mt 13.3 n. **3**: The *sower* scattered seed broadcast. **5**: The rock lay just below the surface of the ground. **11**: *Has been given,* i.e. by God. Jesus distinguished between his followers' spiritual opportunities and those of others who were *outside,* i.e. those who do not belong to the elect (Lk 10.23–24). **12**: An adaptation of Isa 6.9–10.

**4.13–20**: See Mt 13.18–23 n. **21**: *A bushel,*

13 And he said to them, "Do you not understand this parable? Then how will you understand all the parables? 14 The sower sows the word. 15 These are the ones on the path where the word is sown: when they hear, Satan immediately comes and takes away the word that is sown in them. 16 And these are the ones sown on rocky ground: when they hear the word, they immediately receive it with joy. 17 But they have no root, and endure only for a while; then, when trouble or persecution arises on account of the word, immediately they fall away.[b] 18 And others are those sown among the thorns: these are the ones who hear the word, 19 but the cares of the world, and the lure of wealth, and the desire for other things come in and choke the word, and it yields nothing. 20 And these are the ones sown on the good soil: they hear the word and accept it and bear fruit, thirty and sixty and a hundredfold."

21 He said to them, "Is a lamp brought in to be put under the bushel basket, or under the bed, and not on the lampstand? 22 For there is nothing hidden, except to be disclosed; nor is anything secret, except to come to light. 23 Let anyone with ears to hear listen!" 24 And he said to them, "Pay attention to what you hear; the measure you give will be the measure you get, and still more will be given you. 25 For to those who have, more will be given; and from those who have nothing, even what they have will be taken away."

26 He also said, "The kingdom of God is as if someone would scatter seed on the ground, 27 and would sleep and rise night and day, and the seed would sprout and grow, he does not know how. 28 The earth produces of itself, first the stalk, then the head, then the full grain in the head. 29 But when the grain is ripe, at once he goes in with his sickle, because the harvest has come."

30 He also said, "With what can we compare the kingdom of God, or what parable will we use for it? 31 It is like a mustard seed, which, when sown upon the ground, is the smallest of all the seeds on earth; 32 yet when it is sown it grows up and becomes the greatest of all shrubs, and puts forth large branches, so that the birds of the air can make nests in its shade."

33 With many such parables he spoke the word to them, as they were able to hear it; 34 he did not speak to them except in parables, but he explained everything in private to his disciples.

35 On that day, when evening had come, he said to them, "Let us go across to the other side." 36 And leaving the crowd behind, they took him with them in the boat, just as he was. Other boats were with him. 37 A great windstorm arose, and the waves beat into the boat, so that the boat was already being swamped. 38 But he was in the stern, asleep on the cushion; and they woke him up and said to him, "Teacher, do you not care that we are perishing?" 39 He woke up and rebuked the wind, and said to the sea, "Peace! Be still!" Then the wind ceased, and there was a dead calm. 40 He said to them, "Why are you afraid? Have you still no faith?" 41 And they were filled with great awe and said to one

*b* Or *stumble*

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(Greek "modios"), a pan or container holding about eight quarts (Mt 5.15; Lk 8.16; 11.33). **22**: Mt 10.26; Lk 8.17; 12.2. **24–25**: Mt 7.2; 13.12; Lk 6.38.

**4.26–29**: **The seed growing secretly** (Mt 13.24–30). The growth of God's kingdom in the world is beyond human understanding or control. Yet people may recognize its progress and play a part in it. **29**: Joel 3.13.

**4.30–34**: **The mustard seed** (see Mt 13.31–32 n.; Lk 13.18–19). **32**: Dan 4.12, 21; Ezek 17.23; 31.6. **33–34**: Mt 13.34–35.

**4.35–41**: **Wind and sea calmed** (Mt 8.18, 23–27; Lk 8.22–25). Jesus' authority is shown to extend to the world of natural forces. **38**: *Teacher,* see Lk 8.24 n. **40**: *Faith* trusts God to achieve his purpose, even through apparent destruction (Mt 6.25–33; 10.38 n.; Mk 14.35–36).

another, "Who then is this, that even the wind and the sea obey him?"

5 They came to the other side of the sea, to the country of the Gerasenes.[c] 2And when he had stepped out of the boat, immediately a man out of the tombs with an unclean spirit met him. 3He lived among the tombs; and no one could restrain him any more, even with a chain; 4for he had often been restrained with shackles and chains, but the chains he wrenched apart, and the shackles he broke in pieces; and no one had the strength to subdue him. 5Night and day among the tombs and on the mountains he was always howling and bruising himself with stones. 6When he saw Jesus from a distance, he ran and bowed down before him; 7and he shouted at the top of his voice, "What have you to do with me, Jesus, Son of the Most High God? I adjure you by God, do not torment me." 8For he had said to him, "Come out of the man, you unclean spirit!" 9Then Jesus[d] asked him, "What is your name?" He replied, "My name is Legion; for we are many." 10He begged him earnestly not to send them out of the country. 11Now there on the hillside a great herd of swine was feeding; 12and the unclean spirits[e] begged him, "Send us into the swine; let us enter them." 13So he gave them permission. And the unclean spirits came out and entered the swine; and the herd, numbering about two thousand, rushed down the steep bank into the sea, and were drowned in the sea.

14 The swineherds ran off and told it in the city and in the country. Then people came to see what it was that had happened. 15They came to Jesus and saw the demoniac sitting there, clothed and in his right mind, the very man who had had the legion; and they were afraid. 16Those who had seen what had happened to the demoniac and to the swine reported it. 17Then they began to beg Jesus[f] to leave their neighborhood. 18As he was getting into the boat, the man who had been possessed by demons begged him that he might be with him. 19But Jesus[d] refused, and said to him, "Go home to your friends, and tell them how much the Lord has done for you, and what mercy he has shown you." 20And he went away and began to proclaim in the Decapolis how much Jesus had done for him; and everyone was amazed.

21 When Jesus had crossed again in the boat[g] to the other side, a great crowd gathered around him; and he was by the sea. 22Then one of the leaders of the synagogue named Jairus came and, when he saw him, fell at his feet 23and begged him repeatedly, "My little daughter is at the point of death. Come and lay your hands on her, so that she may be made well, and live." 24So he went with him.

And a large crowd followed him and pressed in on him. 25Now there was a woman who had been suffering from hemorrhages for twelve years. 26She had endured much under many physicians, and had spent all that she had; and she was no better, but rather grew worse. 27She had heard about Jesus, and came up behind him in the crowd and touched his cloak, 28for she said, "If I but touch his clothes, I will be made well." 29Immedi-

*c* Other ancient authorities read *Gergesenes*; others, *Gadarenes* *d* Gk *he* *e* Gk *they* *f* Gk *him* *g* Other ancient authorities lack *in the boat*

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**5.1–43: Preaching tour. 1–20: The Gerasene demoniac** (Mt 8.28–34; Lk 8.26–39). **7**: 1.24. **9**: A legion, a major unit in the Roman army, consisted of four thousand to six thousand men. Jesus would have the man witness in an area where he was known. **13**: Since *swine* were unclean animals, it was considered fitting for *unclean spirits* to enter them. **20**: *Decapolis*, a federation of about ten cities in eastern Palestine.

**5.21–43: Jairus' daughter raised** (Mt 9.18–26; Lk 8.40–56). **23**: See Mt 9.21 n. **25**: Lev 15.25–30. **28**: 5.23. **30**: Lk 5.17. **34**: *Has made you well*, see Mt 9.21 n. **36**: 4.40. **39**: *Them*, i.e. the professional mourners who were present on such occasions. *Not dead but sleeping*, see Mt 9.24 n. **41**: The phrase *talitha cum* preserves the actual (as distinct from translated) Aramaic words of Jesus (see 2 Kings 18.26 n.).

ately her hemorrhage stopped; and she felt in her body that she was healed of her disease. 30 Immediately aware that power had gone forth from him, Jesus turned about in the crowd and said, "Who touched my clothes?" 31 And his disciples said to him, "You see the crowd pressing in on you; how can you say, 'Who touched me?' " 32 He looked all around to see who had done it. 33 But the woman, knowing what had happened to her, came in fear and trembling, fell down before him, and told him the whole truth. 34 He said to her, "Daughter, your faith has made you well; go in peace, and be healed of your disease."

35 While he was still speaking, some people came from the leader's house to say, "Your daughter is dead. Why trouble the teacher any further?" 36 But overhearing[h] what they said, Jesus said to the leader of the synagogue, "Do not fear, only believe." 37 He allowed no one to follow him except Peter, James, and John, the brother of James. 38 When they came to the house of the leader of the synagogue, he saw a commotion, people weeping and wailing loudly. 39 When he had entered, he said to them, "Why do you make a commotion and weep? The child is not dead but sleeping." 40 And they laughed at him. Then he put them all outside, and took the child's father and mother and those who were with him, and went in where the child was. 41 He took her by the hand and said to her, "Talitha cum," which means, "Little girl, get up!" 42 And immediately the girl got up and began to walk about (she was twelve years of age). At this they were overcome with amazement. 43 He strictly ordered them that no one should know this, and told them to give her something to eat.

6 He left that place and came to his hometown, and his disciples followed him. 2 On the sabbath he began to teach in the synagogue, and many who heard him were astounded. They said, "Where did this man get all this? What is this wisdom that has been given to him? What deeds of power are being done by his hands! 3 Is not this the carpenter, the son of Mary[i] and brother of James and Joses and Judas and Simon, and are not his sisters here with us?" And they took offense[j] at him. 4 Then Jesus said to them, "Prophets are not without honor, except in their hometown, and among their own kin, and in their own house." 5 And he could do no deed of power there, except that he laid his hands on a few sick people and cured them. 6 And he was amazed at their unbelief.

Then he went about among the villages teaching. 7 He called the twelve and began to send them out two by two, and gave them authority over the unclean spirits. 8 He ordered them to take nothing for their journey except a staff; no bread, no bag, no money in their belts; 9 but to wear sandals and not to put on two tunics. 10 He said to them, "Wherever you enter a house, stay there until you leave the place. 11 If any place will not welcome you and they refuse to hear you, as you leave, shake off the dust that is on your feet as a testimony against them." 12 So they went out and proclaimed that all should repent. 13 They cast out many demons, and anointed with oil many who were sick and cured them.

14 King Herod heard of it, for Jesus'[k]

*h* Or *ignoring*; other ancient authorities read *hearing* *i* Other ancient authorities read *son of the carpenter and of Mary* *j* Or *stumbled* *k* Gk *his*

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**6.1–6: Rejection at home** (Mt 13.53–58; Lk 4.16–30). **3**: See Mt 13.55 n. **5–6**: Jesus required faith on the part of those who sought healing for themselves or for others (occasional apparent exceptions occur; e.g. Jn 5.13).

**6.7–13: Commissioning and instruction of the Twelve** (Mt 10.1, 9–11, 14; Lk 9.1–6). See 3.13–19 n. **7**: The disciples share Jesus' *authority* over malign, destructive forces (vv. 7–9); his refusal to engage in self-seeking (v. 10), or violence (v. 11); his message (v. 12; 1.14–15); and his sympathy for human suffering (v. 13). **9**: *Tunics*, see Mt 10.10 n. **12**: 1.14–15. **13**: Jas 5.14; Isa 1.6; Lk 10.34.

name had become known. Some were[l] saying, "John the baptizer has been raised from the dead; and for this reason these powers are at work in him." [15]But others said, "It is Elijah." And others said, "It is a prophet, like one of the prophets of old." [16]But when Herod heard of it, he said, "John, whom I beheaded, has been raised."

17 For Herod himself had sent men who arrested John, bound him, and put him in prison on account of Herodias, his brother Philip's wife, because Herod[m] had married her. [18]For John had been telling Herod, "It is not lawful for you to have your brother's wife." [19]And Herodias had a grudge against him, and wanted to kill him. But she could not, [20]for Herod feared John, knowing that he was a righteous and holy man, and he protected him. When he heard him, he was greatly perplexed;[n] and yet he liked to listen to him. [21]But an opportunity came when Herod on his birthday gave a banquet for his courtiers and officers and for the leaders of Galilee. [22]When his daughter Herodias[o] came in and danced, she pleased Herod and his guests; and the king said to the girl, "Ask me for whatever you wish, and I will give it." [23]And he solemnly swore to her, "Whatever you ask me, I will give you, even half of my kingdom." [24]She went out and said to her mother, "What should I ask for?" She replied, "The head of John the baptizer." [25]Immediately she rushed back to the king and requested, "I want you to give me at once the head of John the Baptist on a platter." [26]The king was deeply grieved; yet out of regard for his oaths and for the guests, he did not want to refuse her. [27]Immediately the king sent a soldier of the guard with orders to bring John's[p] head. He went and beheaded him in the prison, [28]brought his head on a platter, and gave it to the girl. Then the girl gave it to her mother. [29]When his disciples heard about it, they came and took his body, and laid it in a tomb.

30 The apostles gathered around Jesus, and told him all that they had done and taught. [31]He said to them, "Come away to a deserted place all by yourselves and rest a while." For many were coming and going, and they had no leisure even to eat. [32]And they went away in the boat to a deserted place by themselves. [33]Now many saw them going and recognized them, and they hurried there on foot from all the towns and arrived ahead of them. [34]As he went ashore, he saw a great crowd; and he had compassion for them, because they were like sheep without a shepherd; and he began to teach them many things. [35]When it grew late, his disciples came to him and said, "This is a deserted place, and the hour is now very late; [36]send them away so that they may go into the surrounding country and villages and buy something for themselves to eat." [37]But he answered them, "You give them something to eat." They said to him, "Are we to go and buy two hundred denarii[q] worth of bread, and give it to them to eat?" [38]And he said to them, "How many loaves have you? Go and see." When they had found out, they said, "Five, and two fish." [39]Then he ordered them to get all the people to sit down in groups on the green grass. [40]So they sat down in groups of hundreds and of fifties. [41]Taking the five

*l* Other ancient authorities read *He was*
*m* Gk *he* *n* Other ancient authorities read *he did many things* *o* Other ancient authorities read *the daughter of Herodias herself* *p* Gk *his*
*q* The denarius was the usual day's wage for a laborer

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**6.14–29**: **Death of John** (Mt 14.1–12; Lk 9.7–9). **14**: *Herod* Antipas, son of Herod the Great, was tetrarch of Galilee, and only by courtesy could he be called *King*.

**6.17**: *In prison,* at Machaerus, east of the Dead Sea, on the Nabataean border (see Josephus, *Ant.* XVIII.109–119). **20**: Mt 21.26. **22**: *His daughter Herodias,* the manuscripts here differ; see note *o*. Contrary to Josephus (see Mt 14.6 n.) the daughter of Herodias may also have been named Herodias. **27**: *In the prison,* at Machaerus, where a fort and prison had been built. It was about five miles east of the Dead Sea.

loaves and the two fish, he looked up to heaven, and blessed and broke the loaves, and gave them to his disciples to set before the people; and he divided the two fish among them all. 42And all ate and were filled; 43and they took up twelve baskets full of broken pieces and of the fish. 44Those who had eaten the loaves numbered five thousand men.

45 Immediately he made his disciples get into the boat and go on ahead to the other side, to Bethsaida, while he dismissed the crowd. 46After saying farewell to them, he went up on the mountain to pray.

47 When evening came, the boat was out on the sea, and he was alone on the land. 48When he saw that they were straining at the oars against an adverse wind, he came towards them early in the morning, walking on the sea. He intended to pass them by. 49But when they saw him walking on the sea, they thought it was a ghost and cried out; 50for they all saw him and were terrified. But immediately he spoke to them and said, "Take heart, it is I; do not be afraid." 51Then he got into the boat with them and the wind ceased. And they were utterly astounded, 52for they did not understand about the loaves, but their hearts were hardened.

53 When they had crossed over, they came to land at Gennesaret and moored the boat. 54When they got out of the boat, people at once recognized him, 55and rushed about that whole region and began to bring the sick on mats to wherever they heard he was. 56And wherever he went, into villages or cities or farms, they laid the sick in the marketplaces, and begged him that they might touch even the fringe of his cloak; and all who touched it were healed.

7 Now when the Pharisees and some of the scribes who had come from Jerusalem gathered around him, 2they noticed that some of his disciples were eating with defiled hands, that is, without washing them. 3(For the Pharisees, and all the Jews, do not eat unless they thoroughly wash their hands,[r] thus observing the tradition of the elders; 4and they do not eat anything from the market unless they wash it;[s] and there are also many other traditions that they observe, the washing of cups, pots, and bronze kettles.[t]) 5So the Pharisees and the scribes asked him, "Why do your disciples not live[u] according to the tradition of the elders, but eat with defiled hands?" 6He said to them, "Isaiah prophesied rightly about you hypocrites, as it is written,

'This people honors me with
their lips,
but their hearts are far from me;
7 in vain do they worship me,
teaching human precepts as
doctrines.'

*r* Meaning of Gk uncertain *s* Other ancient authorities read *and when they come from the marketplace, they do not eat unless they purify themselves* *t* Other ancient authorities add *and beds* *u* Gk *walk*

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**6.30–44: Five thousand fed** (Mt 14.13–21; Lk 9.10–17; Jn 6.1–13; compare Mk 8.1–10). **34**: *Sheep without a shepherd,* a familiar picture of aimlessness (Num 27.17; 1 Kings 22.17; Ezek 34.5). **44**: *Men,* see Mt 14.21 n.

**6.45–52: Jesus walks on water** (Mt 14.22–33; Jn 6.15–21). **45**: *Bethsaida,* a fishing village at the north end of the Sea of Galilee. **48**: *Early in the morning,* Greek literally "about the fourth watch of the night" (the fourth watch was from 3 to 6 A.M.). *He intended to pass them by* describes the way Jesus appeared to his disciples. **52**: The disciples miss the true import of Jesus' acts through lack of faith (Mk 3.5; 8.17; Jn 12.40; Rom 11.7, 25; 2 Cor 3.14; Eph 4.18; but compare Mt 14.33).

**6.53–56: Belief in Jesus' power to heal** (Mt 14.34–36). Compare Mt 4.24; Mk 1.32–34; 3.10; Lk 4.40–41; 6.18, 19. **56**: *Fringe,* the blue twisted threads at the four corners of male garments, as a reminder to obey God's commandments (Num 15.38–40; Deut 22.12). That Jesus wore this fringe indicates his observance of the Law.

**7.1–23: Tradition of the elders** (Mt 15.1–20). Whereas the common people were moved by elemental needs, and Jesus was aroused to compassion for human suffering (6.53–56), the religious leaders were concerned with details of ritual. **3**: See Lk 11.38 n. **4**: Mt 23.25; Lk 11.39. **5**: Gal 1.14. **6–7**: Isa 29.13, according to the Septuagint.

8 You abandon the commandment of God and hold to human tradition."

9 Then he said to them, "You have a fine way of rejecting the commandment of God in order to keep your tradition! 10 For Moses said, 'Honor your father and your mother'; and, 'Whoever speaks evil of father or mother must surely die.' 11 But you say that if anyone tells father or mother, 'Whatever support you might have had from me is Corban' (that is, an offering to God[v])— 12 then you no longer permit doing anything for a father or mother, 13 thus making void the word of God through your tradition that you have handed on. And you do many things like this."

14 Then he called the crowd again and said to them, "Listen to me, all of you, and understand: 15 there is nothing outside a person that by going in can defile, but the things that come out are what defile."[w]

17 When he had left the crowd and entered the house, his disciples asked him about the parable. 18 He said to them, "Then do you also fail to understand? Do you not see that whatever goes into a person from outside cannot defile, 19 since it enters, not the heart but the stomach, and goes out into the sewer?" (Thus he declared all foods clean.) 20 And he said, "It is what comes out of a person that defiles. 21 For it is from within, from the human heart, that evil intentions come: fornication, theft, murder, 22 adultery, avarice, wickedness, deceit, licentiousness, envy, slander, pride, folly. 23 All these evil things come from within, and they defile a person."

24 From there he set out and went away to the region of Tyre.[x] He entered a house and did not want anyone to know he was there. Yet he could not escape notice, 25 but a woman whose little daughter had an unclean spirit immediately heard about him, and she came and bowed down at his feet. 26 Now the woman was a Gentile, of Syrophoenician origin. She begged him to cast the demon out of her daughter. 27 He said to her, "Let the children be fed first, for it is not fair to take the children's food and throw it to the dogs." 28 But she answered him, "Sir,[y] even the dogs under the table eat the children's crumbs." 29 Then he said to her, "For saying that, you may go—the demon has left your daughter." 30 So she went home, found the child lying on the bed, and the demon gone.

31 Then he returned from the region of Tyre, and went by way of Sidon towards the Sea of Galilee, in the region of the Decapolis. 32 They brought to him a deaf man who had an impediment in his speech; and they begged him to lay his hand on him. 33 He took him aside in private, away from the crowd, and put his fingers into his ears, and he spat and touched his tongue. 34 Then looking up to heaven, he sighed and said to him, "Ephphatha," that is, "Be opened." 35 And immediately his ears were opened, his tongue was released, and he spoke plainly. 36 Then Jesus[z] ordered them to tell no one; but the more he ordered them, the more zealously they proclaimed it. 37 They were astounded beyond measure, saying, "He has done everything well; he even makes the deaf to hear and the mute to speak."

8 In those days when there was again a great crowd without anything to eat, he called his disciples and said to

*v* Gk lacks *to God* *w* Other ancient authorities add verse 16, *"Let anyone with ears to hear listen"* *x* Other ancient authorities add *and Sidon* *y* Or *Lord*; other ancient authorities prefix *Yes* *z* Gk *he*

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**11**: *An offering to God* verbally, but in fact retained for private use. **15**: See Mt 15.10–20 n. **19**: *Clean*, i.e. ritually. **21–23**: Gal 5.19–21.

**7.24–30**: **The Syrophoenician woman** (Mt 15.21–28). **27**: In Jesus' reply, the Jews are represented as *children*, the Gentiles as *dogs*, and the benefits of Jesus' ministry as *the children's food*. See Mt 15.24 n. **28**: See Mt 15.27 n.

**7.31–37**: **Healings** (Mt 15.29–31). **31**: *Decapolis*, see 5.20 n. **33**: *Touched his tongue*, i.e. with the saliva. **34**: Jesus looked *up to heaven*,

them, 2"I have compassion for the crowd, because they have been with me now for three days and have nothing to eat. 3If I send them away hungry to their homes, they will faint on the way—and some of them have come from a great distance." 4His disciples replied, "How can one feed these people with bread here in the desert?" 5He asked them, "How many loaves do you have?" They said, "Seven." 6Then he ordered the crowd to sit down on the ground; and he took the seven loaves, and after giving thanks he broke them and gave them to his disciples to distribute; and they distributed them to the crowd. 7They had also a few small fish; and after blessing them, he ordered that these too should be distributed. 8They ate and were filled; and they took up the broken pieces left over, seven baskets full. 9Now there were about four thousand people. And he sent them away. 10And immediately he got into the boat with his disciples and went to the district of Dalmanutha.[a]

11 The Pharisees came and began to argue with him, asking him for a sign from heaven, to test him. 12And he sighed deeply in his spirit and said, "Why does this generation ask for a sign? Truly I tell you, no sign will be given to this generation." 13And he left them, and getting into the boat again, he went across to the other side.

14 Now the disciples[b] had forgotten to bring any bread; and they had only one loaf with them in the boat. 15And he cautioned them, saying, "Watch out—beware of the yeast of the Pharisees and the yeast of Herod."[c] 16They said to one another, "It is because we have no bread." 17And becoming aware of it, Jesus said to them, "Why are you talking about having no bread? Do you still not perceive or understand? Are your hearts hardened? 18Do you have eyes, and fail to see? Do you have ears, and fail to hear? And do you not remember? 19When I broke the five loaves for the five thousand, how many baskets full of broken pieces did you collect?" They said to him, "Twelve." 20"And the seven for the four thousand, how many baskets full of broken pieces did you collect?" And they said to him, "Seven." 21Then he said to them, "Do you not yet understand?"

22 They came to Bethsaida. Some people[d] brought a blind man to him and begged him to touch him. 23He took the blind man by the hand and led him out of the village; and when he had put saliva on his eyes and laid his hands on him, he asked him, "Can you see anything?" 24And the man[e] looked up and said, "I can see people, but they look like trees, walking." 25Then Jesus[e] laid his hands on his eyes again; and he looked intently and his sight was restored, and he saw everything clearly. 26Then he sent him away to his home, saying, "Do not even go into the village."[f]

27 Jesus went on with his disciples to the villages of Caesarea Philippi; and on

*a* Other ancient authorities read *Mageda* or *Magdala* *b* Gk *they* *c* Other ancient authorities read *the Herodians* *d* Gk *They* *e* Gk *he* *f* Other ancient authorities add *or tell anyone in the village*

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thus indicating to the deaf man that he was praying for him. *Ephphatha,* an Aramaic word (see 5.41 n.).

**8.1–10: Four thousand fed** (Mt 15.32–39). This narrative repeats the thought of 6.30–44. Some regard these passages as alternate ways of describing one original event, the details of which we can no longer determine. **10:** *Dalmanutha,* the location is unknown (see note *a* and Mt 15.39).

**8.11–13: Sayings on signs** (Mt 16.1–4; 12.38–39; Lk 11.29; 11.16; 12.54–56). **13:** *The other side,* the eastern side of the Sea of Galilee.

**8.14–21: Yeast of the Pharisees** (Mt 16.5–12; Lk 12.1). **14–15:** Jesus joins two ideas. **15:** *Yeast* here seems to refer to settled conviction which affects all of life as yeast raises dough. *Yeast of the Pharisees* is hypocrisy (Lk 12.1), which spreads its influence by means of their teaching (Mt 16.12). *Yeast of Herod* is worldliness and irreligion. **17–18:** Isa 6.9–10; Jer 5.21; Ezek 12.2; Mt 13.10–15; Mk 6.52; Jn 12.36–41. **19:** 6.41–44. **20:** 8.1–10.

**8.22–26: A blind man healed.** 10.46–52; Jn 9.1–7. **22:** *Bethsaida,* 6.45; Lk 9.10.

**8.27–33: Peter's confession** (Mt 16.13–

the way he asked his disciples, "Who do people say that I am?" 28And they answered him, "John the Baptist; and others, Elijah; and still others, one of the prophets." 29He asked them, "But who do you say that I am?" Peter answered him, "You are the Messiah."[g] 30And he sternly ordered them not to tell anyone about him.

31 Then he began to teach them that the Son of Man must undergo great suffering, and be rejected by the elders, the chief priests, and the scribes, and be killed, and after three days rise again. 32He said all this quite openly. And Peter took him aside and began to rebuke him. 33But turning and looking at his disciples, he rebuked Peter and said, "Get behind me, Satan! For you are setting your mind not on divine things but on human things."

34 He called the crowd with his disciples, and said to them, "If any want to become my followers, let them deny themselves and take up their cross and follow me. 35For those who want to save their life will lose it, and those who lose their life for my sake, and for the sake of the gospel,[h] will save it. 36For what will it profit them to gain the whole world and forfeit their life? 37Indeed, what can they give in return for their life? 38Those who are ashamed of me and of my words[i] in this adulterous and sinful generation, of them the Son of Man will also be ashamed when he comes in the glory of his Father with the holy angels."

9 1And he said to them, "Truly I tell you, there are some standing here who will not taste death until they see that the kingdom of God has come with[j] power."

2 Six days later, Jesus took with him Peter and James and John, and led them up a high mountain apart, by themselves. And he was transfigured before them, 3and his clothes became dazzling white, such as no one[k] on earth could bleach them. 4And there appeared to them Elijah with Moses, who were talking with Jesus. 5Then Peter said to Jesus, "Rabbi, it is good for us to be here; let us make three dwellings,[l] one for you, one for Moses, and one for Elijah." 6He did not know what to say, for they were terrified. 7Then a cloud overshadowed them, and from the cloud there came a voice, "This is my Son, the Beloved;[m] listen to him!" 8Suddenly when they looked around, they saw no one with them any more, but only Jesus.

9 As they were coming down the

*g* Or *the Christ* *h* Other ancient authorities read *lose their life for the sake of the gospel*
*i* Other ancient authorities read *and of mine*
*j* Or *in* *k* Gk *no fuller* *l* Or *tents*
*m* Or *my beloved Son*

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23; Lk 9.18–22). **27**: *Caesarea Philippi* was a site of pagan worship. **28**: 6.14–16. **29**: Jn 6.66–69. **30**: Jesus consistently sought to repress sensational reports (see 1.43–44 n.). **31**: First prediction of the Passion (compare 9.30–32; 10.33–34). **32**: The idea that the *Son of Man* (the Messiah) was to suffer was in complete contrast to Jewish expectation (see 2.10 n.; 9.10 n.; Mt 16.22). **33**: Jesus saw in Peter's words a continuation of Satan's temptation (Mt 4.10; Lk 4.8).

**8.34–9.1**: **On discipleship** (Mt 16.24–28; Lk 9.23–27). **8.34**: *Deny themselves,* i.e. renounce self-centeredness; see Mt 10.38 n. **35**: Mt 10.39; Lk 17.33; Jn 12.25. The apparent contradiction here is overcome because everyone's existence depends on God. **38**: See Mt 12.39 n. **9.1**: *Taste,* become personally acquainted with.

**9.2–8**: **The transfiguration** (Mt 17.1–8; Lk 9.28–36). By this narrative the author means to describe a vision of Jesus in heavenly glory as the Messiah (see Lk 9.28–36 n.). **2**: *Six days later,* after Peter's confession of Jesus as the Messiah (8.29). *Transfigured,* having a non-earthly appearance. **4**: The prophet *Elijah* was expected to appear on earth before the Messiah appeared (Mal 4.5–6). *Moses,* the lawgiver, the traditional author of the first five books of the Bible, which formed the basic authority in Jewish religion. **5**: *Three dwellings,* booth-like, temporary shelters. **7**: Mt 3.17; Jn 12.28–29; 2 Pet 1.17–18.

**9.9–13**: **Prophecies about Elijah** (Mt 17.9–13). **10**: The disciples could not associate belief in resurrection with the Son of Man (v. 9; see 2.10 n.). **11**: See Mt 11.14 n. **13**: *Elijah has come* in the person of John the Baptist

mountain, he ordered them to tell no one about what they had seen, until after the Son of Man had risen from the dead. 10 So they kept the matter to themselves, questioning what this rising from the dead could mean. 11 Then they asked him, "Why do the scribes say that Elijah must come first?" 12 He said to them, "Elijah is indeed coming first to restore all things. How then is it written about the Son of Man, that he is to go through many sufferings and be treated with contempt? 13 But I tell you that Elijah has come, and they did to him whatever they pleased, as it is written about him."

14 When they came to the disciples, they saw a great crowd around them, and some scribes arguing with them. 15 When the whole crowd saw him, they were immediately overcome with awe, and they ran forward to greet him. 16 He asked them, "What are you arguing about with them?" 17 Someone from the crowd answered him, "Teacher, I brought you my son; he has a spirit that makes him unable to speak; 18 and whenever it seizes him, it dashes him down; and he foams and grinds his teeth and becomes rigid; and I asked your disciples to cast it out, but they could not do so." 19 He answered them, "You faithless generation, how much longer must I be among you? How much longer must I put up with you? Bring him to me." 20 And they brought the boy[n] to him. When the spirit saw him, immediately it convulsed the boy,[n] and he fell on the ground and rolled about, foaming at the mouth. 21 Jesus[o] asked the father, "How long has this been happening to him?" And he said, "From childhood. 22 It has often cast him into the fire and into the water, to destroy him; but if you are able to do anything, have pity on us and help us." 23 Jesus said to him, "If you are able!—All things can be done for the one who believes." 24 Immediately the father of the child cried out,[p] "I believe; help my unbelief!" 25 When Jesus saw that a crowd came running together, he rebuked the unclean spirit, saying to it, "You spirit that keeps this boy from speaking and hearing, I command you, come out of him, and never enter him again!" 26 After crying out and convulsing him terribly, it came out, and the boy was like a corpse, so that most of them said, "He is dead." 27 But Jesus took him by the hand and lifted him up, and he was able to stand. 28 When he had entered the house, his disciples asked him privately, "Why could we not cast it out?" 29 He said to them, "This kind can come out only through prayer."[q]

30 They went on from there and passed through Galilee. He did not want anyone to know it; 31 for he was teaching his disciples, saying to them, "The Son of Man is to be betrayed into human hands, and they will kill him, and three days after being killed, he will rise again." 32 But they did not understand what he was saying and were afraid to ask him.

33 Then they came to Capernaum; and when he was in the house he asked

*n* Gk *him* *o* Gk *He* *p* Other ancient authorities add *with tears* *q* Other ancient authorities add *and fasting*

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(Mt 11.14; Lk 1.17, 76), and John was treated as Elijah had been treated (1 Kings 19.2, 10).

**9.14–29: Epileptic child healed** (Mt 17.14–21; Lk 9.37–42). **15**: Perhaps the crowd was *overcome with awe* by the coincidence of the disciples' failure (v. 18) and Jesus' unexpected return. **18**: In modern diagnosis the symptoms point to an epileptic seizure. **19**: Failure is attributed to wrong attitude (v. 29); the disciple must speak from faith not argument (see Lk 10.20 n.; Mk 11.23 n., 24 n.). **28**: A reasonable question in the light of 6.7, 13 where spiritual power accompanied the message. **29**: Prayer to God is faith in God, and contrasts with the argumentative attitude in v. 14. The potency in faith rests with God and is not under the believer's control.

**9.30–32: The Passion foretold again** (Mt 17.22–23; Lk 9.43–45); compare 8.31; 10.33. **31**: The burden of Jesus' teaching was on his coming violent death and resurrection (8.31; 10.33–34; see Lk 9.22 n.). **32**: See 9.10 n.; Jn 12.16.

**9.33–37: True greatness** (Mt 18.1–5; Lk

them, "What were you arguing about on the way?" 34 But they were silent, for on the way they had argued with one another who was the greatest. 35 He sat down, called the twelve, and said to them, "Whoever wants to be first must be last of all and servant of all." 36 Then he took a little child and put it among them; and taking it in his arms, he said to them, 37 "Whoever welcomes one such child in my name welcomes me, and whoever welcomes me welcomes not me but the one who sent me."

38 John said to him, "Teacher, we saw someone[r] casting out demons in your name, and we tried to stop him, because he was not following us." 39 But Jesus said, "Do not stop him; for no one who does a deed of power in my name will be able soon afterward to speak evil of me. 40 Whoever is not against us is for us. 41 For truly I tell you, whoever gives you a cup of water to drink because you bear the name of Christ will by no means lose the reward.

42 "If any of you put a stumbling block before one of these little ones who believe in me,[s] it would be better for you if a great millstone were hung around your neck and you were thrown into the sea. 43 If your hand causes you to stumble, cut it off; it is better for you to enter life maimed than to have two hands and to go to hell,[t] to the unquenchable fire.[u] 45 And if your foot causes you to stumble, cut it off; it is better for you to enter life lame than to have two feet and to be thrown into hell.[t,u] 47 And if your eye causes you to stumble, tear it out; it is better for you to enter the kingdom of God with one eye than to have two eyes and to be thrown into hell,[t] 48 where their worm never dies, and the fire is never quenched.

49 "For everyone will be salted with fire.[v] 50 Salt is good; but if salt has lost its saltiness, how can you season it?[w] Have salt in yourselves, and be at peace with one another."

10 He left that place and went to the region of Judea and[x] beyond the Jordan. And crowds again gathered around him; and, as was his custom, he again taught them.

2 Some Pharisees came, and to test him they asked, "Is it lawful for a man to divorce his wife?" 3 He answered them, "What did Moses command you?" 4 They said, "Moses allowed a man to write a certificate of dismissal and to divorce her." 5 But Jesus said to them, "Because of your hardness of heart he wrote this commandment for you. 6 But from the beginning of creation, 'God made them male and female.' 7 'For this reason a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife,[y] 8 and the two

*r* Other ancient authorities add *who does not follow us* *s* Other ancient authorities lack *in me* *t* Gk *Gehenna* *u* Verses 44 and 46 (which are identical with verse 48) are lacking in the best ancient authorities *v* Other ancient authorities either add or substitute *and every sacrifice will be salted with salt* *w* Or *how can you restore its saltiness?* *x* Other ancient authorities lack *and* *y* Other ancient authorities lack *and be joined to his wife*

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9.46–48). **34**: Lk 22.24. **35**: 10.43–44; Mt 20.26–27; 23.11; Lk 9.48; 22.26. **36**: 10.16. **37**: *In my name* means "because of regard for who and what I am."

**9.38–41**: **The unknown exorcist** (Lk 9.49–50). **39–40**: Mt 12.30; Lk 11.23. Each saying arose in a situation which gave it specific meaning. Compare the account of Eldad and Medad (Num 11.26–29) where Moses rebukes Joshua for the same jealous attitude. **41**: Mt 10.42; Mk 9.37.

**9.42–48**: **Warnings of hell** (Mt 18.6–9; 5.29–30; Lk 17.1–2). **42**: *Little ones,* followers (see Mt 18.6 n.). The *great millstone* was turned by a donkey. **48**: Isa 66.24.

**9.49–50**: **Salty disciples.** Mt 5.13; Lk 14.34–35. **50a**: Mt 5.13. **50b**: Perhaps the meaning is: "Maintain peacefully your own distinct character and service."

**10.1–52**: **From Galilee to Jerusalem** (Mt 19.1–20.34; Lk 18.15–19.27). **1–12**: **On marriage and divorce** (Mt 19.1–12). **1**: *Beyond the Jordan,* Perea. Lk 9.51; Jn 10.40; 11.7. **2**: See Mt 19.3 n. **3–4**: See Deut 24.1–4 n. **5**: Jesus is saying that the Law was shaped to the character of those for whom it was written. **6**: Gen 1.27; 5.2. **7–8**: Gen 2.24. **11**: See Mt 5.31–32 n. **12**: This provision was not applicable to Palestine, where women could not sue for divorce.

shall become one flesh.' So they are no longer two, but one flesh. 9Therefore what God has joined together, let no one separate."

10 Then in the house the disciples asked him again about this matter. 11He said to them, "Whoever divorces his wife and marries another commits adultery against her; 12and if she divorces her husband and marries another, she commits adultery."

13 People were bringing little children to him in order that he might touch them; and the disciples spoke sternly to them. 14But when Jesus saw this, he was indignant and said to them, "Let the little children come to me; do not stop them; for it is to such as these that the kingdom of God belongs. 15Truly I tell you, whoever does not receive the kingdom of God as a little child will never enter it." 16And he took them up in his arms, laid his hands on them, and blessed them.

17 As he was setting out on a journey, a man ran up and knelt before him, and asked him, "Good Teacher, what must I do to inherit eternal life?" 18Jesus said to him, "Why do you call me good? No one is good but God alone. 19You know the commandments: 'You shall not murder; You shall not commit adultery; You shall not steal; You shall not bear false witness; You shall not defraud; Honor your father and mother.' " 20He said to him, "Teacher, I have kept all these since my youth." 21Jesus, looking at him, loved him and said, "You lack one thing; go, sell what you own, and give the money[z] to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven; then come, follow me." 22When he heard this, he was shocked and went away grieving, for he had many possessions.

23 Then Jesus looked around and said to his disciples, "How hard it will be for those who have wealth to enter the kingdom of God!" 24And the disciples were perplexed at these words. But Jesus said to them again, "Children, how hard it is[a] to enter the kingdom of God! 25It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for someone who is rich to enter the kingdom of God." 26They were greatly astounded and said to one another,[b] "Then who can be saved?" 27Jesus looked at them and said, "For mortals it is impossible, but not for God; for God all things are possible."

28 Peter began to say to him, "Look, we have left everything and followed you." 29Jesus said, "Truly I tell you, there is no one who has left house or brothers or sisters or mother or father or children or fields, for my sake and for the sake of the good news,[c] 30who will not receive a hundredfold now in this age—houses, brothers and sisters, mothers and children, and fields, with persecutions—and in the age to come eternal life. 31But many who are first will be last, and the last will be first."

32 They were on the road, going up to Jerusalem, and Jesus was walking ahead of them; they were amazed, and those who followed were afraid. He took

*z* Gk lacks *the money* *a* Other ancient authorities add *for those who trust in riches*
*b* Other ancient authorities read *to him*
*c* Or *gospel*

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**10.13–16**: **Blessing the children** (Mt 19.13–15; Lk 18.15–17). **14**: *Was indignant,* because the disciples interfered with the manifestation of his love. **15**: To receive the kingdom as a child is to depend in trustful simplicity on what God offers.

**10.17–31**: **The rich man** (Mt 19.16–30; Lk 18.18–30). **17**: Lk 10.25; Mk 1.40. **19**: Ex 20.12–16; Deut 5.16–20. **21**: Jesus' invitation to *sell . . . give . . . come* is a drastic test of the questioner's concern for spiritual satisfaction (see Lk 12.33–34 n.). **24**: It was supposed that wealth made possible the performance of religious duties. Jesus' point is that by nature people do not submit to God's rule (compare v. 15), but sincere submission is essential to salvation. **25**: A proverbial expression denoting a human impossibility (compare v. 27). **26**: To *be saved* is to enter the kingdom (v. 25). **28**: 1.16–20.

**10.32–34**: **The Passion foretold a third time** (Mt 20.17–19; Lk 18.31–34); compare 8.31; 9.31. **32**: *Walking ahead of them,* a vivid picture of Jesus' resolute demeanor (compare

the twelve aside again and began to tell them what was to happen to him, 33saying, "See, we are going up to Jerusalem, and the Son of Man will be handed over to the chief priests and the scribes, and they will condemn him to death; then they will hand him over to the Gentiles; 34they will mock him, and spit upon him, and flog him, and kill him; and after three days he will rise again."

35 James and John, the sons of Zebedee, came forward to him and said to him, "Teacher, we want you to do for us whatever we ask of you." 36And he said to them, "What is it you want me to do for you?" 37And they said to him, "Grant us to sit, one at your right hand and one at your left, in your glory." 38But Jesus said to them, "You do not know what you are asking. Are you able to drink the cup that I drink, or be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with?" 39They replied, "We are able." Then Jesus said to them, "The cup that I drink you will drink; and with the baptism with which I am baptized, you will be baptized; 40but to sit at my right hand or at my left is not mine to grant, but it is for those for whom it has been prepared."

41 When the ten heard this, they began to be angry with James and John. 42So Jesus called them and said to them, "You know that among the Gentiles those whom they recognize as their rulers lord it over them, and their great ones are tyrants over them. 43But it is not so among you; but whoever wishes to become great among you must be your servant, 44and whoever wishes to be first among you must be slave of all. 45For the Son of Man came not to be served but to serve, and to give his life a ransom for many."

46 They came to Jericho. As he and his disciples and a large crowd were leaving Jericho, Bartimaeus son of Timaeus, a blind beggar, was sitting by the roadside. 47When he heard that it was Jesus of Nazareth, he began to shout out and say, "Jesus, Son of David, have mercy on me!" 48Many sternly ordered him to be quiet, but he cried out even more loudly, "Son of David, have mercy on me!" 49Jesus stood still and said, "Call him here." And they called the blind man, saying to him, "Take heart; get up, he is calling you." 50So throwing off his cloak, he sprang up and came to Jesus. 51Then Jesus said to him, "What do you want me to do for you?" The blind man said to him, "My teacher,[d] let me see again." 52Jesus said to him, "Go; your faith has made you well." Immediately he regained his sight and followed him on the way.

11 When they were approaching Jerusalem, at Bethphage and Bethany, near the Mount of Olives, he sent two of his disciples 2and said to them, "Go into the village ahead of you, and immediately as you enter it, you will find

*d* Aramaic *Rabbouni*

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Lk 9.51) despite the sufferings which awaited him at Jerusalem (see 8.31 n.). **34:** See Mt 10.38 n.; Mk 14.65; 15.19, 26–32.

**10.35–45: James and John seek honor** (Mt 20.20–28; Lk 22.24–27). **37:** See Mt 19.28 n. The seats symbolize positions of special dignity. **38:** Lk 12.50; Jn 18.11; Mk 14.36. *Cup,* see Lk 22.42 n. Acceptance of *baptism* symbolizes acceptance of God's way (see 1.4 n.). **40:** *Has been prepared,* in Mt 20.23 the phrase is made more precise by adding *by my Father.* **45:** *A ransom,* that which is given to gain release. Jesus speaks of his life and death as achieving freedom for *many,* i.e. with no specified limit to "a few," but does not spell out details (14.24; Lk 4.18; 1 Tim 2.5–6).

**10.46–52: Blind Bartimaeus** (Mt 20.29–34; Lk 18.35–43). **46:** *Bartimaeus* means "son of Timaeus" in Aramaic. **47:** By addressing Jesus as *Son of David,* the beggar was publicly identifying him as King of the Jews, the Messiah, a dangerous thing politically. **50:** *Cloak,* the outer garment. **52:** See Mt 9.21 n.; Mk 11.23 n., 24 n.

**11.1–15.47: The last week** (Mt 21.1–27.66; Lk 19.28–23.56).

**11.1–11: Palm Sunday** (Mt 21.1–9; Lk 19.28–38). **1:** Jesus dramatized his offer of himself as the Messiah, putting his emphasis on humility. Like a parable, his action had to

tied there a colt that has never been ridden; untie it and bring it. 3If anyone says to you, 'Why are you doing this?' just say this, 'The Lord needs it and will send it back here immediately.' " 4They went away and found a colt tied near a door, outside in the street. As they were untying it, 5some of the bystanders said to them, "What are you doing, untying the colt?" 6They told them what Jesus had said; and they allowed them to take it. 7Then they brought the colt to Jesus and threw their cloaks on it; and he sat on it. 8Many people spread their cloaks on the road, and others spread leafy branches that they had cut in the fields. 9Then those who went ahead and those who followed were shouting,

"Hosanna!
Blessed is the one who comes in
the name of the Lord!
10 Blessed is the coming kingdom
of our ancestor David!
Hosanna in the highest heaven!"

11 Then he entered Jerusalem and went into the temple; and when he had looked around at everything, as it was already late, he went out to Bethany with the twelve.

12 On the following day, when they came from Bethany, he was hungry. 13Seeing in the distance a fig tree in leaf, he went to see whether perhaps he would find anything on it. When he came to it, he found nothing but leaves, for it was not the season for figs. 14He said to it, "May no one ever eat fruit from you again." And his disciples heard it.

15 Then they came to Jerusalem. And he entered the temple and began to drive out those who were selling and those who were buying in the temple, and he overturned the tables of the money changers and the seats of those who sold doves; 16and he would not allow anyone to carry anything through the temple. 17He was teaching and saying, "Is it not written,

'My house shall be called a house
of prayer for all the
nations'?
But you have made it a den
of robbers."

18And when the chief priests and the scribes heard it, they kept looking for a way to kill him; for they were afraid of him, because the whole crowd was spellbound by his teaching. 19And when evening came, Jesus and his disciples[e] went out of the city.

20 In the morning as they passed by, they saw the fig tree withered away to its roots. 21Then Peter remembered and said to him, "Rabbi, look! The fig tree that you cursed has withered." 22Jesus answered them, "Have[f] faith in God. 23Truly I tell you, if you say to this mountain, 'Be taken up and thrown into the sea,' and if you do not doubt in your heart, but believe that what you say will come to pass, it will be done for you. 24So I tell you, whatever you ask for in prayer, believe that you have received[g] it, and it will be yours.

25 "Whenever you stand praying, forgive, if you have anything against

*e* Gk *they*: other ancient authorities read *he*
*f* Other ancient authorities read *"If you have*
*g* Other ancient authorities read *are receiving*

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be understood and accepted. **7–10**: Jn 12.12–15. **9**: Ps 118.26; Mt 21.15; 23.39; Zech 9.9. *Hosanna*, see Mt 21.9 n. **11**: Mt 21.10–11, 17.

**11.12–14**: **Fig tree cursed** (Mt 21.18–19; compare Lk 13.6–9). **12**: Monday. **13**: The leaves showed the possibility of green fruit. Jesus' meaning, probably symbolic, is not clear.

**11.15–19**: **Cleansing the temple** (Mt 21.12–13; Lk 19.45–48; Jn 2.13–17). **15**: See Mt 21.12 n. **16**: The outer precinct of the temple, known as the Court of the Gentiles, was used for the sale of sacrificial animals. **17**: Isa 56.7; Jer 7.11. **19**: Lk 21.37–38.

**11.20–25**: **The meaning of the withered fig tree** (Mt 21.18–22). **23**: See Mt 17.20 n. Jesus emphasizes not power in faith but the power of God, his illustration being figurative. Faith will command only according to God's will (Mt 4.3–4; Mk 14.35–36). **24**: See Lk 11.9 n. What God wills is possible both to himself and to the person who shares his will. **25**: Mt 6.14–15; 18.35.

anyone; so that your Father in heaven may also forgive you your trespasses."[h]

27 Again they came to Jerusalem. As he was walking in the temple, the chief priests, the scribes, and the elders came to him [28]and said, "By what authority are you doing these things? Who gave you this authority to do them?" [29]Jesus said to them, "I will ask you one question; answer me, and I will tell you by what authority I do these things. [30]Did the baptism of John come from heaven, or was it of human origin? Answer me." [31]They argued with one another, "If we say, 'From heaven,' he will say, 'Why then did you not believe him?' [32]But shall we say, 'Of human origin'?"—they were afraid of the crowd, for all regarded John as truly a prophet. [33]So they answered Jesus, "We do not know." And Jesus said to them, "Neither will I tell you by what authority I am doing these things."

12 Then he began to speak to them in parables. "A man planted a vineyard, put a fence around it, dug a pit for the wine press, and built a watchtower; then he leased it to tenants and went to another country. [2]When the season came, he sent a slave to the tenants to collect from them his share of the produce of the vineyard. [3]But they seized him, and beat him, and sent him away empty-handed. [4]And again he sent another slave to them; this one they beat over the head and insulted. [5]Then he sent another, and that one they killed. And so it was with many others; some they beat, and others they killed. [6]He had still one other, a beloved son. Finally he sent him to them, saying, 'They will respect my son.' [7]But those tenants said to one another, 'This is the heir; come, let us kill him, and the inheritance will be ours.' [8]So they seized him, killed him, and threw him out of the vineyard. [9]What then will the owner of the vineyard do? He will come and destroy the tenants and give the vineyard to others. [10]Have you not read this scripture:

'The stone that the builders
rejected
has become the cornerstone;[i]
[11] this was the Lord's doing,
and it is amazing in our eyes'?"

12 When they realized that he had told this parable against them, they wanted to arrest him, but they feared the crowd. So they left him and went away.

13 Then they sent to him some Pharisees and some Herodians to trap him in what he said. [14]And they came and said to him, "Teacher, we know that you are sincere, and show deference to no one; for you do not regard people with partiality, but teach the way of God in accordance with truth. Is it lawful to pay taxes to the emperor, or not? [15]Should we pay them, or should we not?" But knowing their hypocrisy, he said to them, "Why are you putting me to the test? Bring me a denarius and let me see it." [16]And they brought one. Then he said to them, "Whose head is this, and whose title?" They answered, "The emperor's." [17]Jesus said to them, "Give to the emperor the things that are the emperor's, and to God the things that are God's." And they were utterly amazed at him.

18 Some Sadducees, who say there is no resurrection, came to him and asked him a question, saying, [19]"Teacher, Moses wrote for us that if a man's brother dies, leaving a wife but no child, the

*h* Other ancient authorities add verse 26, *"But if you do not forgive, neither will your Father in heaven forgive your trespasses."* *i* Or *keystone*

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**11.27–33: On Jesus' authority** (Mt 21.23–27; Lk 20.1–8; Jn 2.18–22). See Mt 21.27 n.

**12.1–12: Parable of the vineyard** (Mt 21.33–46; Lk 20.9–19). Isa 5.1–7. **10**: Ps 118.22–23.

**12.13–17: Paying taxes to Caesar** (Mt 22.15–22; Lk 20.20–26). **13**: 3.6 n.; Lk 11.53–54. **14**: See Mt 22.16 n. **17**: Rom 13.7.

**12.18–27: Question about the resurrection** (Mt 22.23–33; Lk 20.27–40). **18**: See Mt 22.23 n. **19**: Deut 25.5. **24**: See Mt 22.29 n. **26**: Ex 3.6; see Mt 22.31–32 n.; Lk 20.34–36 n.

man[j] shall marry the widow and raise up children for his brother. 20There were seven brothers; the first married and, when he died, left no children; 21and the second married the widow[jj] and died, leaving no children; and the third likewise; 22none of the seven left children. Last of all the woman herself died. 23In the resurrection[k] whose wife will she be? For the seven had married her."

24 Jesus said to them, "Is not this the reason you are wrong, that you know neither the scriptures nor the power of God? 25For when they rise from the dead, they neither marry nor are given in marriage, but are like angels in heaven. 26And as for the dead being raised, have you not read in the book of Moses, in the story about the bush, how God said to him, 'I am the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob'? 27He is God not of the dead, but of the living; you are quite wrong."

28 One of the scribes came near and heard them disputing with one another, and seeing that he answered them well, he asked him, "Which commandment is the first of all?" 29Jesus answered, "The first is, 'Hear, O Israel: the Lord our God, the Lord is one; 30you shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind, and with all your strength.' 31The second is this, 'You shall love your neighbor as yourself.' There is no other commandment greater than these." 32Then the scribe said to him, "You are right, Teacher; you have truly said that 'he is one, and besides him there is no other'; 33and 'to love him with all the heart, and with all the understanding, and with all the strength,' and 'to love one's neighbor as oneself,'—this is much more important than all whole burnt offerings and sacrifices." 34When Jesus saw that he answered wisely, he said to him, "You are not far from the kingdom of God." After that no one dared to ask him any question.

35 While Jesus was teaching in the temple, he said, "How can the scribes say that the Messiah[l] is the son of David? 36David himself, by the Holy Spirit, declared,

'The Lord said to my Lord,
"Sit at my right hand,
until I put your enemies under
your feet." '

37David himself calls him Lord; so how can he be his son?" And the large crowd was listening to him with delight.

38 As he taught, he said, "Beware of the scribes, who like to walk around in long robes, and to be greeted with respect in the marketplaces, 39and to have the best seats in the synagogues and places of honor at banquets! 40They devour widows' houses and for the sake of appearance say long prayers. They will receive the greater condemnation."

41 He sat down opposite the treasury, and watched the crowd putting money into the treasury. Many rich people put in large sums. 42A poor widow came and put in two small copper coins, which are worth a penny. 43Then he called his disciples and said to them, "Truly I tell you, this poor widow has put in more than all

*j* Gk *his brother* *jj* Gk *her* *k* Other ancient authorities add *when they rise* *l* Or *the Christ*

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**12.28–34: The great commandment** (Mt 22.34–40; Lk 10.25–28). **29**: The words of Deut 6.4, which are both preface to, and part of, the first commandment, define qualitatively the wholeness of the love that God requires. **33**: 1 Sam 15.22; Hos 6.6; Mic 6.6–8; Mt 9.13. Sacrifices were offered only at the temple in Jerusalem.

**12.35–37: David's son** (Mt 22.41–46; Lk 20.41–44). **36**: *By the Holy Spirit,* i.e. by inspiration. *Lord,* see Mt 22.44 n.

**12.38–40: Sayings on pride and humility. 38**: Mt 23.1; Lk 20.45. **39**: Mt 23.6; Lk 20.46. The *best seats* were at the front, facing the congregation (Jas 2.2, 3). The *places of honor* were the couches at the host's table (Lk 11.43; 14.7–11). **40**: Lk 20.47.

**12.41–44: The widow's offering** (Lk 21.1–4). **41**: *Into the treasury,* i.e. into the donation chests. Thirteen of these were in the temple court, each one labeled telling the purpose for which the money would be used; see Lk 21.1 n. **42**: See Lk 12.59 n. **43**: See Lk 21.2 n.

those who are contributing to the treasury. 44For all of them have contributed out of their abundance; but she out of her poverty has put in everything she had, all she had to live on."

13 As he came out of the temple, one of his disciples said to him, "Look, Teacher, what large stones and what large buildings!" 2Then Jesus asked him, "Do you see these great buildings? Not one stone will be left here upon another; all will be thrown down."

3 When he was sitting on the Mount of Olives opposite the temple, Peter, James, John, and Andrew asked him privately, 4"Tell us, when will this be, and what will be the sign that all these things are about to be accomplished?" 5Then Jesus began to say to them, "Beware that no one leads you astray. 6Many will come in my name and say, 'I am he!'[m] and they will lead many astray. 7When you hear of wars and rumors of wars, do not be alarmed; this must take place, but the end is still to come. 8For nation will rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom; there will be earthquakes in various places; there will be famines. This is but the beginning of the birth pangs.

9 "As for yourselves, beware; for they will hand you over to councils; and you will be beaten in synagogues; and you will stand before governors and kings because of me, as a testimony to them. 10And the good news[n] must first be proclaimed to all nations. 11When they bring you to trial and hand you over, do not worry beforehand about what you are to say; but say whatever is given you at that time, for it is not you who speak, but the Holy Spirit. 12Brother will betray brother to death, and a father his child, and children will rise against parents and have them put to death; 13and you will be hated by all because of my name. But the one who endures to the end will be saved.

14 "But when you see the desolating sacrilege set up where it ought not to be (let the reader understand), then those in Judea must flee to the mountains; 15the one on the housetop must not go down or enter the house to take anything away; 16the one in the field must not turn back to get a coat. 17Woe to those who are pregnant and to those who are nursing infants in those days! 18Pray that it may not be in winter. 19For in those days there will be suffering, such as has not been from the beginning of the creation that God created until now, no, and never will be. 20And if the Lord had not cut short those days, no one would be saved; but for the sake of the elect, whom he chose, he has cut short those days. 21And if anyone says to you at that time, 'Look! Here is the Messiah!'[o] or 'Look! There he is!'—do not believe it. 22False messiahs[p] and false prophets will appear and produce signs and omens, to lead astray, if possible, the elect. 23But be alert; I have already told you everything.

24 "But in those days, after that suffering,

the sun will be darkened,
and the moon will not give its light,
25 and the stars will be falling from heaven,
and the powers in the heavens will be shaken.

26Then they will see 'the Son of Man coming in clouds' with great power and

*m* Gk *I am* *n* Gk *gospel* *o* Or *the Christ* *p* Or *christs*

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**13.1–2: Destruction of Jerusalem foretold** (Mt 24.1–3; Lk 21.5–7). See Mt 24.1 n. **1**: *The temple,* begun by Herod the Great, was as yet unfinished. *What large stones,* most of them were 37½ feet long, 18 feet wide, and 12 feet thick. **2**: Lk 19.43–44; Mk 14.58; 15.29; Jn 2.19; Acts 6.14. This temple was destroyed A.D. 70.

**13.3–37: On the end of the age** (Mt 24.4–36; Lk 21.8–36). **4**: Lk 17.20. **6**: Jn 8.24; 1 Jn 2.18. **8**: *Birth pangs,* see Mt 24.8 n. **9–13**: Mt 10.17–22. **11**: Jn 14.26; 16.7–11; Lk 12.11–12. **13**: Jn 15.18–21.

**13.14**: Dan 9.27; 11.31; 12.11. *The desolating sacrilege,* the intrusion of Gentile practices into the temple. **17**: Lk 23.29. **22**: Mt 7.15; Jn

glory. 27Then he will send out the angels, and gather his elect from the four winds, from the ends of the earth to the ends of heaven.

28 "From the fig tree learn its lesson: as soon as its branch becomes tender and puts forth its leaves, you know that summer is near. 29So also, when you see these things taking place, you know that he[q] is near, at the very gates. 30Truly I tell you, this generation will not pass away until all these things have taken place. 31Heaven and earth will pass away, but my words will not pass away.

32 "But about that day or hour no one knows, neither the angels in heaven, nor the Son, but only the Father. 33Beware, keep alert;[r] for you do not know when the time will come. 34It is like a man going on a journey, when he leaves home and puts his slaves in charge, each with his work, and commands the doorkeeper to be on the watch. 35Therefore, keep awake—for you do not know when the master of the house will come, in the evening, or at midnight, or at cockcrow, or at dawn, 36or else he may find you asleep when he comes suddenly. 37And what I say to you I say to all: Keep awake."

14 It was two days before the Passover and the festival of Unleavened Bread. The chief priests and the scribes were looking for a way to arrest Jesus[s] by stealth and kill him; 2for they said, "Not during the festival, or there may be a riot among the people."

3 While he was at Bethany in the house of Simon the leper,[t] as he sat at the table, a woman came with an alabaster jar of very costly ointment of nard, and she broke open the jar and poured the ointment on his head. 4But some were there who said to one another in anger, "Why was the ointment wasted in this way? 5For this ointment could have been sold for more than three hundred denarii,[u] and the money given to the poor." And they scolded her. 6But Jesus said, "Let her alone; why do you trouble her? She has performed a good service for me. 7For you always have the poor with you, and you can show kindness to them whenever you wish; but you will not always have me. 8She has done what she could; she has anointed my body beforehand for its burial. 9Truly I tell you, wherever the good news[v] is proclaimed in the whole world, what she has done will be told in remembrance of her."

10 Then Judas Iscariot, who was one of the twelve, went to the chief priests in order to betray him to them. 11When they heard it, they were greatly pleased, and promised to give him money. So he began to look for an opportunity to betray him.

12 On the first day of Unleavened Bread, when the Passover lamb is sacrificed, his disciples said to him, "Where do you want us to go and make the preparations for you to eat the Passover?" 13So he sent two of his disciples, saying to them, "Go into the city, and a man

*q* Or *it* *r* Other ancient authorities add *and pray* *s* Gk *him* *t* The terms *leper* and *leprosy* can refer to several diseases
*u* The denarius was the usual day's wage for a laborer *v* Or *gospel*

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4.48. **26**: 8.38; Mt 10.23; Dan 7.13; 1 Thess 4.13–18. **30**: See Mt 24.34 n.; Mk 9.1. **31**: Mt 5.18; Lk 16.17.

**13.32**: Acts 1.7. **33**: Eph 6.18; Col 4.2. **34**: Mt 25.14. **35**: Lk 12.35–40. Domestic division of the night into four parts, namely 9 P.M., 12 P.M., 3 A.M., and 6 A.M.

**14.1–15.47**: **Jesus' death** (Mt 26.1–27.66; Lk 22.1–23.56; Jn 13.1–19.42). **14.1**: *The festival of Unleavened Bread* was part of the commemoration of the escape from Egypt under Moses (Ex 12.1–20). **3–9**: See Mt 26.6 n. *Nard* was imported from India. **5**: On the value of a denarius, see note *u*. **6**: See Mt 26.10 n. **7**: Deut 15.11. **8**: The woman has shown personal regard for Jesus within her ability and opportunity. Jn 19.40.

**14.10–11**: Mt 26.14–16; Lk 22.3–6. **10**: *One of the twelve;* the words do not so much identify *Judas* as intensify the horror of the betrayal. Judas makes possible a change in the priests' plans (vv. 1–2).

**14.12–25**: **The Last Supper. 12–16**: Mt 26.17–19; Lk 22.7–13; see 22.10 n. **13**: *Two of*

carrying a jar of water will meet you; follow him, 14and wherever he enters, say to the owner of the house, 'The Teacher asks, Where is my guest room where I may eat the Passover with my disciples?' 15He will show you a large room upstairs, furnished and ready. Make preparations for us there." 16So the disciples set out and went to the city, and found everything as he had told them; and they prepared the Passover meal.

17 When it was evening, he came with the twelve. 18And when they had taken their places and were eating, Jesus said, "Truly I tell you, one of you will betray me, one who is eating with me." 19They began to be distressed and to say to him one after another, "Surely, not I?" 20He said to them, "It is one of the twelve, one who is dipping bread[w] into the bowl[x] with me. 21For the Son of Man goes as it is written of him, but woe to that one by whom the Son of Man is betrayed! It would have been better for that one not to have been born."

22 While they were eating, he took a loaf of bread, and after blessing it he broke it, gave it to them, and said, "Take; this is my body." 23Then he took a cup, and after giving thanks he gave it to them, and all of them drank from it. 24He said to them, "This is my blood of the[y] covenant, which is poured out for many. 25Truly I tell you, I will never again drink of the fruit of the vine until that day when I drink it new in the kingdom of God."

26 When they had sung the hymn, they went out to the Mount of Olives. 27And Jesus said to them, "You will all become deserters; for it is written,

'I will strike the shepherd,
and the sheep will be scattered.'

28But after I am raised up, I will go before you to Galilee." 29Peter said to him, "Even though all become deserters, I will not." 30Jesus said to him, "Truly I tell you, this day, this very night, before the cock crows twice, you will deny me three times." 31But he said vehemently, "Even though I must die with you, I will not deny you." And all of them said the same.

32 They went to a place called Gethsemane; and he said to his disciples, "Sit here while I pray." 33He took with him Peter and James and John, and began to be distressed and agitated. 34And he said to them, "I am deeply grieved, even to death; remain here, and keep awake." 35And going a little farther, he threw himself on the ground and prayed that, if it were possible, the hour might pass from him. 36He said, "Abba,[z] Father, for you all things are possible; remove this cup from me; yet, not what I want, but what you want." 37He came and found them sleeping; and he said to Peter, "Simon, are you asleep? Could you not keep awake one hour? 38Keep awake and pray that you may not come into the time of trial;[a] the spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak." 39And again he went away and prayed, saying the same words. 40And once more he came and found them sleeping, for their eyes were very heavy; and they did not know what

*w* Gk lacks *bread* *x* Other ancient authorities read *same bowl* *y* Other ancient authorities add *new* *z* Aramaic for *Father* *a* Or *into temptation*

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*his disciples,* according to Luke (22.8) they were Peter and John. **14**: See Lk 22.12 n.

**14.17–21**: Mt 26.20–25; Lk 22.14, 21–23; Jn 13.21–30. **18**: Ps 41.9. **19**: The question was so worded as to imply that the answer would be negative. **22–25**: Mt 26.26–29; Lk 22.15–20; 1 Cor 11.23–26. **23**: 1 Cor 10.16. **24**: See Mt 26.28 n. Jesus speaks of his blood as being the mediating reality in a new relationship between God and humankind (see 10.45 n.). **25**: Lk 13.29; see 22.16 n.

**14.26–52: Gethsemane. 26–31**: Mt 26.30–35; Lk 22.39, 31–34. **26**: The Passover meal ended with the singing of Pss 115–118, the second part of the Hallel psalms. *They went out,* Jn 18.1–2. **27**: Zech 13.7; Jn 16.32. **28**: 16.7. **30**: 14.66–72; Jn 13.36–38; 18.17–18, 25–27. **32–42**: Mt 26.36–46; Lk 22.40–46. **32**: Jn 18.1; Heb 5.7–8. **34**: Jn 12.27. **35–36**: Jesus would not accept for himself the possibility of anything contrary to God's will (see 11.23–24 n.). *Abba,* "father" in Aramaic (see Rom 8.15 n.; Gal 4.6). **36**: *Cup,* see Lk 22.42 n. **38**: Mt 6.13; Lk 11.4.

to say to him. 41 He came a third time and said to them, "Are you still sleeping and taking your rest? Enough! The hour has come; the Son of Man is betrayed into the hands of sinners. 42 Get up, let us be going. See, my betrayer is at hand."

43 Immediately, while he was still speaking, Judas, one of the twelve, arrived; and with him there was a crowd with swords and clubs, from the chief priests, the scribes, and the elders. 44 Now the betrayer had given them a sign, saying, "The one I will kiss is the man; arrest him and lead him away under guard." 45 So when he came, he went up to him at once and said, "Rabbi!" and kissed him. 46 Then they laid hands on him and arrested him. 47 But one of those who stood near drew his sword and struck the slave of the high priest, cutting off his ear. 48 Then Jesus said to them, "Have you come out with swords and clubs to arrest me as though I were a bandit? 49 Day after day I was with you in the temple teaching, and you did not arrest me. But let the scriptures be fulfilled." 50 All of them deserted him and fled.

51 A certain young man was following him, wearing nothing but a linen cloth. They caught hold of him, 52 but he left the linen cloth and ran off naked.

53 They took Jesus to the high priest; and all the chief priests, the elders, and the scribes were assembled. 54 Peter had followed him at a distance, right into the courtyard of the high priest; and he was sitting with the guards, warming himself at the fire. 55 Now the chief priests and the whole council were looking for testimony against Jesus to put him to death; but they found none. 56 For many gave false testimony against him, and their testimony did not agree. 57 Some stood up and gave false testimony against him, saying, 58 "We heard him say, 'I will destroy this temple that is made with hands, and in three days I will build another, not made with hands.' " 59 But even on this point their testimony did not agree. 60 Then the high priest stood up before them and asked Jesus, "Have you no answer? What is it that they testify against you?" 61 But he was silent and did not answer. Again the high priest asked him, "Are you the Messiah, [b] the Son of the Blessed One?" 62 Jesus said, "I am; and

> 'you will see the Son of Man
> seated at the right hand of
> the Power,'
> and 'coming with the clouds
> of heaven.' "

63 Then the high priest tore his clothes and said, "Why do we still need witnesses? 64 You have heard his blasphemy! What is your decision?" All of them condemned him as deserving death. 65 Some began to spit on him, to blindfold him, and to strike him, saying to him, "Prophesy!" The guards also took him over and beat him.

66 While Peter was below in the courtyard, one of the servant-girls of the high priest came by. 67 When she saw Peter warming himself, she stared at him

*b* Or *the Christ*

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**14.43–52**: Mt 26.47–56; Lk 22.47–53; Jn 18.2–11. **43**: See Mt 26.50 n. **47**: *One . . . who stood near,* according to Jn 18.10 it was Simon Peter. **49**: Lk 19.47; Jn 18.19–21. **51**: The young man's identity is not disclosed. Perhaps he was sleeping in the house where Jesus ate the Last Supper and rose hastily from bed to follow Jesus to Gethsemane. If the house was that of Mary, the mother of John Mark (where the disciples met at a later date; Acts 12.12), it is possible that the *young man* was the Evangelist himself.

**14.53–72**: **Jesus before Caiaphas. 55**: At least two witnesses who agreed were required by Num 35.30 and Deut 19.15 (compare Mt 18.16). **58**: *Another, not made with hands,* an accusation that Jesus practices wizardry, which according to Lev 20.27 was a capital crime; see Jn 2.19–21. **61–62**: *The Blessed One . . . Power,* Jewish ways of referring to God. **62**: Dan 7.13 combined with the thought of Ps 110.1. **63**: *Tore his clothes,* an action expressing grief. Acts 14.14; Joel 2.12–13. **64**: Lev 24.16. *All of them,* but according to Lk 23.51 Joseph of Arimathea, a member of the council, had not assented. **66**: 14.30.

and said, "You also were with Jesus, the man from Nazareth." 68But he denied it, saying, "I do not know or understand what you are talking about." And he went out into the forecourt.[c] Then the cock crowed.[d] 69And the servant-girl, on seeing him, began again to say to the bystanders, "This man is one of them." 70But again he denied it. Then after a little while the bystanders again said to Peter, "Certainly you are one of them; for you are a Galilean." 71But he began to curse, and he swore an oath, "I do not know this man you are talking about." 72At that moment the cock crowed for the second time. Then Peter remembered that Jesus had said to him, "Before the cock crows twice, you will deny me three times." And he broke down and wept.

15 As soon as it was morning, the chief priests held a consultation with the elders and scribes and the whole council. They bound Jesus, led him away, and handed him over to Pilate. 2Pilate asked him, "Are you the King of the Jews?" He answered him, "You say so." 3Then the chief priests accused him of many things. 4Pilate asked him again, "Have you no answer? See how many charges they bring against you." 5But Jesus made no further reply, so that Pilate was amazed.

6 Now at the festival he used to release a prisoner for them, anyone for whom they asked. 7Now a man called Barabbas was in prison with the rebels who had committed murder during the insurrection. 8So the crowd came and began to ask Pilate to do for them according to his custom. 9Then he answered them, "Do you want me to release for you the King of the Jews?" 10For he realized that it was out of jealousy that the chief priests had handed him over. 11But the chief priests stirred up the crowd to have him release Barabbas for them instead. 12Pilate spoke to them again, "Then what do you wish me to do[e] with the man you call[f] the King of the Jews?" 13They shouted back, "Crucify him!" 14Pilate asked them, "Why, what evil has he done?" But they shouted all the more, "Crucify him!" 15So Pilate, wishing to satisfy the crowd, released Barabbas for them; and after flogging Jesus, he handed him over to be crucified.

16 Then the soldiers led him into the courtyard of the palace (that is, the governor's headquarters[g]); and they called together the whole cohort. 17And they clothed him in a purple cloak; and after twisting some thorns into a crown, they put it on him. 18And they began saluting him, "Hail, King of the Jews!" 19They struck his head with a reed, spat upon him, and knelt down in homage to him. 20After mocking him, they stripped him of the purple cloak and put his own clothes on him. Then they led him out to crucify him.

21 They compelled a passer-by, who was coming in from the country, to carry his cross; it was Simon of Cyrene, the

*c* Or *gateway* *d* Other ancient authorities lack *Then the cock crowed* *e* Other ancient authorities read *what should I do* *f* Other ancient authorities lack *the man you call* *g* Gk *the praetorium*

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**14.70**: See Mt 26.73 n. **72**: Before dawn, compare 13.35. *He broke down,* the meaning of the Greek is uncertain.

**15.1–15**: **Jesus before Pilate.** **1**: Pontius *Pilate,* Roman governor of Judea, Samaria, and Idumaea (A.D. 26–36). See Mt 27.1–2 n.; Lk 23.1; Jn 18.28–32. **2–5**: Mt 27.11–14; Lk 23.2–5; Jn 18.29–38.

**15.6–15**: Mt 27.15–26; Lk 23.18–25; Jn 18.38–40; 19.4–16. **7**: The *insurrection* is unrecorded; the crime was more serious than that of brigandage (15.27; Jn 18.40). **11**: Acts 3.14. **13**: According to Jewish law a religious curse was implicit in crucifixion (Deut 21.23). **15**: See Mt 27.26 n.

**15.16–47**: **The crucifixion.** **16–20**: Mt 27.27–31; Lk 23.11; Jn 19.1–3. **16**: See Mt 27.27 n. *Of Cyrene,* capital city of the north African district of Cyrenaica, which had a large Jewish community.

**15.21–32**: Mt 27.32–44; Lk 23.33–43; Jn 19.17–24. **21**: The men named were probably known to the Christians who first read Mark. A connection with the *Rufus* mentioned in

father of Alexander and Rufus. 22Then they brought Jesus[h] to the place called Golgotha (which means the place of a skull). 23And they offered him wine mixed with myrrh; but he did not take it. 24And they crucified him, and divided his clothes among them, casting lots to decide what each should take.

25 It was nine o'clock in the morning when they crucified him. 26The inscription of the charge against him read, "The King of the Jews." 27And with him they crucified two bandits, one on his right and one on his left.[i] 29Those who passed by derided[j] him, shaking their heads and saying, "Aha! You who would destroy the temple and build it in three days, 30save yourself, and come down from the cross!" 31In the same way the chief priests, along with the scribes, were also mocking him among themselves and saying, "He saved others; he cannot save himself. 32Let the Messiah,[k] the King of Israel, come down from the cross now, so that we may see and believe." Those who were crucified with him also taunted him.

33 When it was noon, darkness came over the whole land[l] until three in the afternoon. 34At three o'clock Jesus cried out with a loud voice, "Eloi, Eloi, lema sabachthani?" which means, "My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?"[m] 35When some of the bystanders heard it, they said, "Listen, he is calling for Elijah." 36And someone ran, filled a sponge with sour wine, put it on a stick, and gave it to him to drink, saying, "Wait, let us see whether Elijah will come to take him down." 37Then Jesus gave a loud cry and breathed his last. 38And the curtain of the temple was torn in two, from top to bottom. 39Now when the centurion, who stood facing him, saw that in this way he[n] breathed his last, he said, "Truly this man was God's Son!"[o]

40 There were also women looking on from a distance; among them were Mary Magdalene, and Mary the mother of James the younger and of Joses, and Salome. 41These used to follow him and provided for him when he was in Galilee; and there were many other women who had come up with him to Jerusalem.

42 When evening had come, and since it was the day of Preparation, that is, the day before the sabbath, 43Joseph of Arimathea, a respected member of the council, who was also himself waiting expectantly for the kingdom of God, went boldly to Pilate and asked for the body of Jesus. 44Then Pilate wondered if he were already dead; and summoning the centurion, he asked him whether he had been dead for some time. 45When he learned from the centurion that he was dead, he granted the body to Joseph. 46Then Joseph[p] bought a linen cloth, and taking down the body,[q] wrapped it in the linen cloth, and laid it in a tomb that had been hewn out of the rock. He then rolled a stone against the door of the tomb. 47Mary Magdalene and Mary the mother of Joses saw where the body[q] was laid.

16 When the sabbath was over, Mary Magdalene, and Mary the

*h* Gk *him* *i* Other ancient authorities add verse 28, *And the scripture was fulfilled that says, "And he was counted among the lawless."* *j* Or *blasphemed* *k* Or *the Christ* *l* Or *earth* *m* Other ancient authorities read *made me a reproach* *n* Other ancient authorities add *cried out and* *o* Or *a son of God* *p* Gk *he* *q* Gk *it*

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Rom 16.13 is possible but not established. **23**: *Wine . . . with myrrh* was a sedative. **24**: Ps 22.18. **29**: 13.2; 14.58; Jn 2.19. **31**: Ps 22.7–8.

**15.33**: See Mt 27.45 n. **34**: See Mt 27.46 n. **36**: Ps 69.21; see Mt 27.48 n. **38**: The *curtain* closed off the Holy of Holies (Heb 9.3), the inner sanctuary which represented God's presence with his people (compare 2 Kings 19.14–15; 2 Chr 6.1–2, 18–21). The damage to the curtain, whatever the underlying event may have been, symbolized for Christian faith the unhindered access to God achieved for all by Jesus' death (Heb 10.19–20). **41**: Lk 8.1–3.

**15.42–47**: Mt 27.57–61; Lk 23.50–56; Jn 19.38–42. **42**: Late on Friday afternoon. **46**: Acts 13.29.

**16.1–8**: **The first Easter** (Mt 28.1–10; Lk

mother of James, and Salome bought spices, so that they might go and anoint him. 2And very early on the first day of the week, when the sun had risen, they went to the tomb. 3They had been saying to one another, "Who will roll away the stone for us from the entrance to the tomb?" 4When they looked up, they saw that the stone, which was very large, had already been rolled back. 5As they entered the tomb, they saw a young man, dressed in a white robe, sitting on the right side; and they were alarmed. 6But he said to them, "Do not be alarmed; you are looking for Jesus of Nazareth, who was crucified. He has been raised; he is not here. Look, there is the place they laid him. 7But go, tell his disciples and Peter that he is going ahead of you to Galilee; there you will see him, just as he told you." 8So they went out and fled from the tomb, for terror and amazement had seized them; and they said nothing to anyone, for they were afraid.[r]

THE SHORTER ENDING OF MARK

[And all that had been commanded them they told briefly to those around Peter. And afterward Jesus himself sent out through them, from east to west, the sacred and imperishable proclamation of eternal salvation.[s]]

THE LONGER ENDING OF MARK

9 [Now after he rose early on the first day of the week, he appeared first to

*r* Some of the most ancient authorities bring the book to a close at the end of verse 8. One authority concludes the book with the shorter ending; others include the shorter ending and then continue with verses 9-20. In most authorities verses 9-20 follow immediately after verse 8, though in some of these authorities the passage is marked as being doubtful. *s* Other ancient authorities add *Amen*

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24.1–11; Jn 20.1–10). **1**: Lk 23.56; Jn 19.39. *Sabbath* ended at sundown on Saturday. The women came to complete the rites of burial. **3–4**: The disk-shaped *stone* rolled edgeways in a gutter to close the opening of the tomb. **5**: The main chamber of a tomb was normally furnished with niches to receive the bodies. The young man's clothes indicate him to be a heavenly messenger. **7**: 14.28; Jn 21.1–23; Mt 28.7. **8**: *For they were afraid.* The Greek expression is unusual in style and abrupt in effect, especially if, as is possible, it originally ended the Gospel. In contrast with Mt 28.8–10, where fear is part of an emotional state that includes joy (v. 8) and is controlled by worship (v. 9) and acceptance of mission (v. 10), fear here (probably in the sense of overwhelming awe) is the pervasive consequence of amazement (v. 5) and of trembling and astonishment (v. 8) that resulted in flight and silence (v. 8). On the silence of the women compare Mt 28.8 n.; Lk 24.9–11, 22–24, and vv. 9–10 below.

**16.9–20: The traditional close of the Gospel of Mark.** Nothing is certainly known either about how this Gospel originally ended or about the origin of vv. 9–20, which, because of the textual evidence as well as stylistic differences from the rest of the Gospel, cannot have been part of the original text of Mark. Certain important witnesses to the text, including some ancient ones, end the Gospel with v. 8. Though it is possible that the compiler of the Gospel intended this abrupt ending, one can find hints that he intended to describe events after the resurrection: for example, Mk 14.28 looks forward to an account of at least one experience of the disciples with Jesus in Galilee after the resurrection, while the friendly reference to Peter (16.7) may anticipate the recounting of the otherwise unrecorded moment of reconciliation between Peter and his Lord (compare Lk 24.34; 1 Cor 15.5). If accounts such as these were originally part of Mark's Gospel, the loss of them took place very shortly after the Gospel was written, under circumstances beyond present knowledge. Many witnesses, some ancient, end the Gospel with vv. 9–20, thus showing that from early Christian times these verses have been accepted traditionally and generally as part of the canonical Gospel of Mark. A variety of other manuscripts conclude the Gospel with the shorter ending, either alone or followed by verses 9–20, thus indicating that different attempts were made to provide a suitable ending for the Gospel. The longer ending may have been compiled early in the second century as a didactic summary of grounds for belief in Jesus' resurrection, being appended to the Gospel by the middle of the second century. On the Christian belief in continuing unrecorded memories about Jesus in the first century see Lk

Mary Magdalene, from whom he had cast out seven demons. [10]She went out and told those who had been with him, while they were mourning and weeping. [11]But when they heard that he was alive and had been seen by her, they would not believe it.

12 After this he appeared in another form to two of them, as they were walking into the country. [13]And they went back and told the rest, but they did not believe them.

14 Later he appeared to the eleven themselves as they were sitting at the table; and he upbraided them for their lack of faith and stubbornness, because they had not believed those who saw him after he had risen.[t] [15]And he said to them, "Go into all the world and proclaim the good news[u] to the whole creation. [16]The one who believes and is baptized will be saved; but the one who does not believe will be condemned. [17]And these signs will accompany those who believe: by using my name they will cast out demons; they will speak in new tongues; [18]they will pick up snakes in their hands,[v] and if they drink any deadly thing, it will not hurt them; they will lay their hands on the sick, and they will recover."

19 So then the Lord Jesus, after he had spoken to them, was taken up into heaven and sat down at the right hand of God. [20]And they went out and proclaimed the good news everywhere, while the Lord worked with them and confirmed the message by the signs that accompanied it.[w]]]

*t* Other ancient authorities add, in whole or in part, *And they excused themselves, saying, "This age of lawlessness and unbelief is under Satan, who does not allow the truth and power of God to prevail over the unclean things of the spirits. Therefore reveal your righteousness now"—thus they spoke to Christ. And Christ replied to them, "The term of years of Satan's power has been fulfilled, but other terrible things draw near. And for those who have sinned I was handed over to death, that they may return to the truth and sin no more, that they may inherit the spiritual and imperishable glory of righteousness that is in heaven."*

*u* Or *gospel*

*v* Other ancient authorities lack *in their hands*

*w* Other ancient authorities add *Amen*

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1.1–2; Jn 20.30; 21.25; Acts 20.35 n.; 1 Cor 15.3; also compare Mt 28.20; Jn 16.12–33; Rev 1.12–16 n.; 2.18.

**16.9–18: Post-resurrection appearances of Jesus. 9–10:** Mary is associated with other women in vv. 1, 7–8 and parallels; she is apparently alone in Jn 20.1–2, 11–19. *Seven demons,* Lk 8.2. **11:** Lk 24.11, 22–25; Jn 20.19–29; 1 Cor 15.5. Here, as in Jn 20.19–29, the disciples are convinced of the truth of Jesus' resurrection by their own immediate experience with him, though they should have heeded the witness of others as later generations must do (Jn 20.29). **12–13:** Lk 24.12–35. **13:** Compare Lk 24.34.

**16.14–18:** Mt 28.19; Lk 24.47. **16:** Acts 2.37–42; 10.47–48; Rom 10.9. **17–18:** The reality of faith in believers' lives as they respond to the apostolic witness is signified by events that both correspond with biblically recorded happenings in the lives of the apostles and conform to apostolic statements about the gifts of the Spirit (for example, 1 Cor 12.8–11, 28; 14.2–5; Heb 2.3–4): exorcism (Acts 8.6–7; 16.18; 19.11–20); new tongues (see Acts 2.4–11 n.; 10.46; 19.6; 1 Cor 12.10, 28; 14.2–33); healing (Acts 28.8; 1 Cor 12.9; Jas 5.13–16). Instances of picking up snakes and drinking poison, without injury to the believer in either case, lack New Testament parallels. However, the former resembles the harmless accidental attack upon Paul in Acts 28.3–6, and the latter appears occasionally in Christian literature from the second century onward.

**16.19–20: Jesus' exaltation. 19:** For the concept of Jesus' exaltation, Phil 2.9–11; Heb 1.3; for the language *was taken up,* Acts 1.2, 11, 22; 1 Tim 3.16 (seemingly a Christian hymn); for the image of the *right hand of God,* Ps 110.1 n.; Acts 7.55; Heb 1.3. **20:** Verses 17–18; Heb 2.3–4.

# *The Gospel According to*
# *Luke*

The Gospel according to Luke sets forth the words and works of Jesus as the divine-human Savior, whose compassion and tenderness extended to all who were needy. The universal mission of Jesus is emphasized (*a*) by tracing his genealogy back to Adam (3.38; contrast Mt 1.1–2); (*b*) by including references that commend members of a despised race, the Samaritans (10.30–37; 17.11–19; see Acts 8.5 n.); (*c*) by indicating that women have a new place of importance among the followers of Jesus (7.36–50; 8.3; 10.38–42); and (*d*) by promising that Gentiles would have an opportunity to accept the gospel (2.32; 3.6; 24.27; compare 15.4 n.).

In addition to presenting the story of Jesus' work in Galilee and his last week at Jerusalem, Luke includes more episodes of Jesus' final journey to Jerusalem than do any of the other Evangelists. This special section (9.51–18.14) also preserves many of the most beloved of Jesus' parables—such as the Good Samaritan (10.25–37), the Prodigal Son (15.11–32), the Unjust Judge (18.1–8), and the Pharisee and the Tax Collector (18.9–14).

It is obvious from a number of features that the Evangelist envisages a Gentile rather than a Jewish reading public. Thus, he makes comparatively few quotations from the Old Testament, which would have been a strange and almost unknown book to most non-Jews. For the same reason Luke seldom appeals to the argument from prophecy. Furthermore, instead of using the Jewish word "rabbi," Luke is the only New Testament author who employs the classical Greek equivalent, a word meaning *master* (5.5; 8.24, 45; 9.33, 49; 17.13).

The major divisions are: chs 1–2, Births of John and Jesus; the boy Jesus in the temple; 3.1–22, Activity of John the Baptist; baptism of Jesus; 3.23–38, Genealogy of Jesus; 4.1–13, Temptation of Jesus; 4.14–9.50, Jesus' activity, chiefly in Galilee; 9.51–19.27, Journey to Jerusalem; 19.28–23.56, The last week, concluding with Jesus' crucifixion and burial; ch 24, The resurrection; commissioning the disciples.

Although the Gospel is anonymous and the evidence pertaining to its author is inconclusive, many considerations support the early Christian tradition that the author was the physician Luke, a Gentile convert and friend of the apostle Paul (Col 4.14; compare 2 Tim 4.11; Philem 24). The Gospel appears to have been written, perhaps at Antioch, during the last third of the first century, though the precise date is unknown. Luke, who was not an eyewitness of the life of Jesus, tells us that he used great care in collecting information for his book (1.1–4). He dedicated the book, along with the Acts of the Apostles (1.1), to a certain Theophilus, who was probably a Roman of high rank.

Finally, mention must be made of the high quality of Luke's literary style (see also Introduction to the Acts of the Apostles). Of all four Evangelists, he is preeminently a person of broad culture, capable of adapting his Greek diction to different occasions, writing sometimes formal, classical prose, sometimes a racy narrative style in the vernacular of his own day, and sometimes a Semitic "Bible Greek" in which the Septuagint was written. As a gifted literary artist he produced what has justly been described as "the most beautiful book in the world."

For the literary genre of the gospels, see pp. viii–x NT.

1 Since many have undertaken to set down an orderly account of the events that have been fulfilled among us, 2just as they were handed on to us by those who from the beginning were eyewitnesses and servants of the word, 3I too decided, after investigating everything carefully from the very first,[a] to write an orderly account for you, most excellent Theophilus, 4so that you may know the truth concerning the things about which you have been instructed.

5 In the days of King Herod of Judea, there was a priest named Zechariah, who belonged to the priestly order of Abijah. His wife was a descendant of Aaron, and her name was Elizabeth. 6Both of them were righteous before God, living blamelessly according to all the commandments and regulations of the Lord. 7But they had no children, because Elizabeth was barren, and both were getting on in years.

8 Once when he was serving as priest before God and his section was on duty, 9he was chosen by lot, according to the custom of the priesthood, to enter the sanctuary of the Lord and offer incense. 10Now at the time of the incense offering, the whole assembly of the people was praying outside. 11Then there appeared to him an angel of the Lord, standing at the right side of the altar of incense. 12When Zechariah saw him, he was terrified; and fear overwhelmed him. 13But the angel said to him, "Do not be afraid, Zechariah, for your prayer has been heard. Your wife Elizabeth will bear you a son, and you will name him John. 14You will have joy and gladness, and many will rejoice at his birth, 15for he will be great in the sight of the Lord. He must never drink wine or strong drink; even before his birth he will be filled with the Holy Spirit. 16He will turn many of the people of Israel to the Lord their God. 17With the spirit and power of Elijah he will go before him, to turn the hearts of parents to their children, and the disobedient to the wisdom of the righteous, to make ready a people prepared for the Lord." 18Zechariah said to the angel, "How will I know that this is so? For I am an old man, and my wife is getting on in years." 19The angel replied, "I am Gabriel. I stand in the presence of God, and I have been sent to speak to you and to bring you this good news. 20But now, because you did not believe my words, which will be fulfilled in their time, you will become mute, unable to speak, until the day these things occur."

21 Meanwhile the people were waiting for Zechariah, and wondered at his delay in the sanctuary. 22When he did come out, he could not speak to them, and they realized that he had seen a vision in the sanctuary. He kept motioning to them and remained unable to speak. 23When his time of service was ended, he went to his home.

24 After those days his wife Elizabeth conceived, and for five months she remained in seclusion. She said, 25"This is what the Lord has done for me when he looked favorably on me and took away the disgrace I have endured among my people."

*a* Or *for a long time*

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**1.1–4: Introduction.** **1**: Jn 20.30–31; 21.25. The writers of the gospels used sources of information now lost (see 6.17–49 n.). **2**: Acts 1.21; 10.39; Heb 2.3; 1 Jn 1.1. **3**: See Acts 1.1 n. *Theophilus,* an unknown Christian, perhaps of social prominence (*most excellent,* see Acts 23.26 n.). **4**: Jn 20.31.

**1.5–2.40: The births of John and Jesus** (Mt 1.18–2.23). **1.5**: *Herod* the Great reigned 37–4 B.C. The date intended here is approximately 7–6 B.C. *The priestly order of Abijah,* there were twenty-four priestly orders, of which Abijah's was the eighth (1 Chr 24.10).

**1.8–9**: 2 Chr 31.2; Ex 30.1, 6–8. **14–17**: Canticle in honor of John. **15**: Num 6.1–4; Lk 7.33. **17**: *He will go before him,* that is, he will be the forerunner of the Messiah (Mal 4.5–6; Mt 11.14). **19**: Dan 8.16; 9.21. **22**: *He could not speak,* he was unable to pronounce the priestly blessing for which the people were waiting. **25**: Among Jews barrenness was regarded as a sign of divine disfavor and therefore a *disgrace* (see Gen 16.2 n.; 30.23; 1 Sam 1.1–18; Ps 128.3).

26 In the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent by God to a town in Galilee called Nazareth, 27 to a virgin engaged to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David. The virgin's name was Mary. 28 And he came to her and said, "Greetings, favored one! The Lord is with you."[b] 29 But she was much perplexed by his words and pondered what sort of greeting this might be. 30 The angel said to her, "Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favor with God. 31 And now, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you will name him Jesus. 32 He will be great, and will be called the Son of the Most High, and the Lord God will give to him the throne of his ancestor David. 33 He will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and of his kingdom there will be no end." 34 Mary said to the angel, "How can this be, since I am a virgin?"[c] 35 The angel said to her, "The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you; therefore the child to be born[d] will be holy; he will be called Son of God. 36 And now, your relative Elizabeth in her old age has also conceived a son; and this is the sixth month for her who was said to be barren. 37 For nothing will be impossible with God." 38 Then Mary said, "Here am I, the servant of the Lord; let it be with me according to your word." Then the angel departed from her.

39 In those days Mary set out and went with haste to a Judean town in the hill country, 40 where she entered the house of Zechariah and greeted Elizabeth. 41 When Elizabeth heard Mary's greeting, the child leaped in her womb. And Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit 42 and exclaimed with a loud cry, "Blessed are you among women, and blessed is the fruit of your womb. 43 And why has this happened to me, that the mother of my Lord comes to me? 44 For as soon as I heard the sound of your greeting, the child in my womb leaped for joy. 45 And blessed is she who believed that there would be[e] a fulfillment of what was spoken to her by the Lord."

46 And Mary[f] said,

"My soul magnifies the Lord,
47 and my spirit rejoices in God my Savior,
48 for he has looked with favor on the lowliness of his servant.
Surely, from now on all generations will call me blessed;
49 for the Mighty One has done great things for me,
and holy is his name.
50 His mercy is for those who fear him
from generation to generation.
51 He has shown strength with his arm;
he has scattered the proud in the thoughts of their hearts.
52 He has brought down the powerful from their thrones,
and lifted up the lowly;
53 he has filled the hungry with good things,
and sent the rich away empty.
54 He has helped his servant Israel,
in remembrance of his mercy,
55 according to the promise he made to our ancestors,
to Abraham and to his descendants forever."

56 And Mary remained with her about three months and then returned to her home.

*b* Other ancient authorities add *Blessed are you among women* *c* Gk *I do not know a man* *d* Other ancient authorities add *of you* *e* Or *believed, for there will be* *f* Other ancient authorities read *Elizabeth*

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**1.26–38**: The birth of Jesus is foretold (the Annunciation). **26**: *In the sixth month,* after the conception of John the Baptist. **31**: *Jesus,* the Greek form of the Hebrew Joshua (see Mt 1.21 n.). **33**: Mt 28.18; Dan 2.44. **42**: 11.27–28.

**1.46–55**: The "Magnificat" (so called from the first word of the Latin translation) is based largely on Hannah's prayer in 1 Sam 2.1–10. *Magnifies,* i.e. declares the greatness of. **47**: 1 Tim 2.3; Titus 3.4; Jude 25. **55**: Gen 17.7; 18.18; 22.17; Mic 7.20.

57 Now the time came for Elizabeth to give birth, and she bore a son. 58 Her neighbors and relatives heard that the Lord had shown his great mercy to her, and they rejoiced with her.

59 On the eighth day they came to circumcise the child, and they were going to name him Zechariah after his father. 60 But his mother said, "No; he is to be called John." 61 They said to her, "None of your relatives has this name." 62 Then they began motioning to his father to find out what name he wanted to give him. 63 He asked for a writing tablet and wrote, "His name is John." And all of them were amazed. 64 Immediately his mouth was opened and his tongue freed, and he began to speak, praising God. 65 Fear came over all their neighbors, and all these things were talked about throughout the entire hill country of Judea. 66 All who heard them pondered them and said, "What then will this child become?" For, indeed, the hand of the Lord was with him.

67 Then his father Zechariah was filled with the Holy Spirit and spoke this prophecy:

68 "Blessed be the Lord God of Israel,
for he has looked favorably on his people and redeemed them.
69 He has raised up a mighty savior[g] for us
in the house of his servant David,
70 as he spoke through the mouth of his holy prophets from of old,
71 that we would be saved from our enemies and from the hand of all who hate us.
72 Thus he has shown the mercy promised to our ancestors,
and has remembered his holy covenant,
73 the oath that he swore to our ancestor Abraham,
to grant us 74 that we, being rescued from the hands of our enemies,
might serve him without fear, 75 in holiness and righteousness before him all our days.
76 And you, child, will be called the prophet of the Most High;
for you will go before the Lord to prepare his ways,
77 to give knowledge of salvation to his people
by the forgiveness of their sins.
78 By the tender mercy of our God, the dawn from on high will break upon[h] us,
79 to give light to those who sit in darkness and in the shadow of death,
to guide our feet into the way of peace."

80 The child grew and became strong in spirit, and he was in the wilderness until the day he appeared publicly to Israel.

2 In those days a decree went out from Emperor Augustus that all the

*g* Gk *a horn of salvation* *h* Other ancient authorities read *has broken upon*

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**1.57–66**: Birth of John the Baptist. **59**: Lev 12.3; Gen 17.12; Lk 2.21. **63**: See v. 13. **65**: *Fear* (rendered "awe" in 5.26) indicates recognition of the limits of human understanding and power before God (2.9; 7.16; Acts 2.43, 46–47; 5.5, 11; 19.17).

**1.67–79**: The "Benedictus," so called from the first word in the Latin translation. **69**: *A mighty savior,* one who will bring salvation; see Ps 18.1–3; 92.10–11; 132.17–18. **76**: Mal 4.5; Lk 7.26. **77**: Mk 1.4. **78**: Mal 4.2; Eph 5.14. *The dawn* will be when God fulfills his purpose to bless humankind. **79**: Isa 9.2; Mt 4.16; Lk 4.18. **80**: These words cover a period of approximately thirty years. *The day he appeared publicly,* 3.2, 3.

**2.1–40**: **The birth of Jesus** (Mt 1.18–2.23). **1**: About 6–5 B.C. (see 1.5 n.). The Emperor *Augustus* reigned from 27 B.C. to A.D. 14. *World* here refers to the Roman Empire. **2**: *Quirinius* was at this time a special legate or commissioner of Augustus to carry

world should be registered. 2This was the first registration and was taken while Quirinius was governor of Syria. 3All went to their own towns to be registered. 4Joseph also went from the town of Nazareth in Galilee to Judea, to the city of David called Bethlehem, because he was descended from the house and family of David. 5He went to be registered with Mary, to whom he was engaged and who was expecting a child. 6While they were there, the time came for her to deliver her child. 7And she gave birth to her firstborn son and wrapped him in bands of cloth, and laid him in a manger, because there was no place for them in the inn.

8 In that region there were shepherds living in the fields, keeping watch over their flock by night. 9Then an angel of the Lord stood before them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified. 10But the angel said to them, "Do not be afraid; for see—I am bringing you good news of great joy for all the people: 11to you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is the Messiah,[i] the Lord. 12This will be a sign for you: you will find a child wrapped in bands of cloth and lying in a manger." 13And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host,[j] praising God and saying,

14 "Glory to God in the highest heaven,
and on earth peace among those whom he favors!"[k]

15 When the angels had left them and gone into heaven, the shepherds said to one another, "Let us go now to Bethlehem and see this thing that has taken place, which the Lord has made known to us." 16So they went with haste and found Mary and Joseph, and the child lying in the manger. 17When they saw this, they made known what had been told them about this child; 18and all who heard it were amazed at what the shepherds told them. 19But Mary treasured all these words and pondered them in her heart. 20The shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all they had heard and seen, as it had been told them.

21 After eight days had passed, it was time to circumcise the child; and he was called Jesus, the name given by the angel before he was conceived in the womb.

22 When the time came for their purification according to the law of Moses, they brought him up to Jerusalem to present him to the Lord 23(as it is written in the law of the Lord, "Every firstborn male shall be designated as holy to the Lord"), 24and they offered a sacrifice according to what is stated in the law of the Lord, "a pair of turtledoves or two young pigeons."

25 Now there was a man in Jerusalem

*i* Or *the Christ* *j* Gk *army* *k* Other ancient authorities read *peace, goodwill among people*

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on a war against a rebellious tribe, the Homonadenses. As such he was military governor of Syria, while the civil administration was in the hands of Varus. **7**: According to Catholic teaching, the expression *firstborn son* is used here simply as a Semitic legal term and does not necessarily imply subsequent births. *Bands of cloth* were customarily wrapped around a newly born infant. **9**: *Terrified,* see 1.65 n. **11**: *The city of David,* Bethlehem. Three great Christian claims about Jesus are that he is *Savior, Messiah,* and *Lord* (see Mt 1.21 n.; 16.16 n.; Jn 4.42; Acts 2.36; 5.31; Phil 2.11). **14**: 3.22; 19.38. *Peace . . . ,* the lack of one letter in the later Greek manuscripts accounts for the rendering in note *k*. *Those whom he favors* means "those whom God has chosen in accord with his good pleasure." **2.21**: See Mt 1.21 n. **22–24**: Lev 12.2–8. **23**: Ex 13.2, 12.

**2.25–38**: *Simeon* and *Anna,* not otherwise known, express faith in Jesus as Savior, Messiah, and universal Lord (see v. 11 n.). **25**: *The consolation of Israel* was the salvation which the Messiah was to bring (vv. 26, 38; 23.51). **26**: *The Lord's Messiah,* the Christ of God (9.20). **29–32**: The "Nunc Dimittis," so called from the first words of the Latin translation. **29**: *You are dismissing your servant,* the figure is taken from the manumission of a slave. *In peace,* i.e. in a state of peace with God. **30**: 3.6; Isa 52.10. **32**: Isa 42.6; 49.6; Acts 13.47; 26.23.

whose name was Simeon;[l] this man was righteous and devout, looking forward to the consolation of Israel, and the Holy Spirit rested on him. 26It had been revealed to him by the Holy Spirit that he would not see death before he had seen the Lord's Messiah.[m] 27Guided by the Spirit, Simeon[n] came into the temple; and when the parents brought in the child Jesus, to do for him what was customary under the law, 28Simeon[o] took him in his arms and praised God, saying,

29 "Master, now you are dismissing
your servant[p] in peace,
according to your word;
30 for my eyes have seen your
salvation,
31 which you have prepared in the
presence of all peoples,
32 a light for revelation to the
Gentiles
and for glory to your people
Israel."

33 And the child's father and mother were amazed at what was being said about him. 34Then Simeon[l] blessed them and said to his mother Mary, "This child is destined for the falling and the rising of many in Israel, and to be a sign that will be opposed 35so that the inner thoughts of many will be revealed—and a sword will pierce your own soul too."

36 There was also a prophet, Anna[q] the daughter of Phanuel, of the tribe of Asher. She was of a great age, having lived with her husband seven years after her marriage, 37then as a widow to the age of eighty-four. She never left the temple but worshiped there with fasting and prayer night and day. 38At that moment she came, and began to praise God and to speak about the child[r] to all who were looking for the redemption of Jerusalem.

39 When they had finished everything required by the law of the Lord, they returned to Galilee, to their own town of Nazareth. 40The child grew and became strong, filled with wisdom; and the favor of God was upon him.

41 Now every year his parents went to Jerusalem for the festival of the Passover. 42And when he was twelve years old, they went up as usual for the festival. 43When the festival was ended and they started to return, the boy Jesus stayed behind in Jerusalem, but his parents did not know it. 44Assuming that he was in the group of travelers, they went a day's journey. Then they started to look for him among their relatives and friends. 45When they did not find him, they returned to Jerusalem to search for him. 46After three days they found him in the temple, sitting among the teachers, listening to them and asking them questions. 47And all who heard him were amazed at his understanding and his answers. 48When his parents[s] saw him they were astonished; and his mother said to him, "Child, why have you treated us like this? Look, your father and I have been searching for you in great anxiety." 49He said to them, "Why were you searching for me? Did you not know that I must be in my Father's house?"[t] 50But they did not understand what he said to them. 51Then he went down with them and came to Nazareth, and was obedient to them. His mother treasured all these things in her heart.

52 And Jesus increased in wisdom and in years,[u] and in divine and human favor.

*l* Gk *Symeon* *m* Or *the Lord's Christ*
*n* Gk *In the Spirit, he* *o* Gk *he* *p* Gk *slave*
*q* Gk *Hanna* *r* Gk *him* *s* Gk *they*
*t* Or *be about my Father's interests?* *u* Or *in stature*

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**2.33**: Luke could call Joseph the *father* of Jesus notwithstanding 1.34–35 since he was Mary's husband and Jesus' legal father (compare Mt 13.55; Lk 3.23). **36**: Josh 19.24.

**2.41–52: The boy Jesus at Jerusalem.** This is the only information in the Bible on Jesus' maturing. **41**: Ex 23.15; Deut 16.1–8. Mary was not legally obligated to go up to Passover festivals, but did so perhaps from pious motives. **46**: *The teachers* were the experts in the Jewish religion. **48**: Mk 3.31–35. **50–51**: 2.19. **52**: 1 Sam 2.26; Lk 1.80; 2.40.

3 In the fifteenth year of the reign of Emperor Tiberius, when Pontius Pilate was governor of Judea, and Herod was ruler[v] of Galilee, and his brother Philip ruler[v] of the region of Ituraea and Trachonitis, and Lysanias ruler[v] of Abilene, 2during the high priesthood of Annas and Caiaphas, the word of God came to John son of Zechariah in the wilderness. 3He went into all the region around the Jordan, proclaiming a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins, 4as it is written in the book of the words of the prophet Isaiah,

"The voice of one crying out in the wilderness:
'Prepare the way of the Lord,
make his paths straight.
5 Every valley shall be filled,
and every mountain and hill shall be made low,
and the crooked shall be made straight,
and the rough ways made smooth;
6 and all flesh shall see the salvation of God.' "

7 John said to the crowds that came out to be baptized by him, "You brood of vipers! Who warned you to flee from the wrath to come? 8Bear fruits worthy of repentance. Do not begin to say to yourselves, 'We have Abraham as our ancestor'; for I tell you, God is able from these stones to raise up children to Abraham. 9Even now the ax is lying at the root of the trees; every tree therefore that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire."

10 And the crowds asked him, "What then should we do?" 11In reply he said to them, "Whoever has two coats must share with anyone who has none; and whoever has food must do likewise." 12Even tax collectors came to be baptized, and they asked him, "Teacher, what should we do?" 13He said to them, "Collect no more than the amount prescribed for you." 14Soldiers also asked him, "And we, what should we do?" He said to them, "Do not extort money from anyone by threats or false accusation, and be satisfied with your wages."

15 As the people were filled with expectation, and all were questioning in their hearts concerning John, whether he might be the Messiah,[w] 16John answered all of them by saying, "I baptize you with water; but one who is more powerful than I is coming; I am not worthy to untie the thong of his sandals. He will baptize you with[x] the Holy Spirit and fire. 17His winnowing fork is in his hand, to clear his threshing floor and to gather the wheat into his granary; but the chaff he will burn with unquenchable fire."

18 So, with many other exhortations, he proclaimed the good news to the people. 19But Herod the ruler,[v] who had been rebuked by him because of Herodias, his brother's wife, and because of all the evil things that Herod had done,

*v* Gk *tetrarch* *w* Or *the Christ* *x* Or *in*

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**3.1–20: Activity of John the Baptist** (Mt 3.1–12; Mk 1.1–8). **1:** The year A.D. 26 or 27 is meant. *Pilate,* a Roman procurator, had final authority in *Judea* (23.1). The remainder of the kingdom of Herod the Great was divided between his sons *Herod* Antipas (9.7; 23.6, 7) and *Philip*. *Abilene,* north of Philip's rule, was closely associated with it during the first century. **2:** Annas and his son-in-law Caiaphas (Jn 18.13) controlled the Jewish temple and priests. Caiaphas was the high priest (Mt 26.3; Jn 11.49); Annas, though retired, retained his prestige (Acts 4.6). *John,* see Mt 3.1 n. **3:** See Mk 1.4 n. **4–6:** Isa 40.3–5. **5:** The language expresses the idea of moral and spiritual renewal, but the coming of God's salvation also meant judgment (v. 7; Am 5.18–20).

**3.7:** *Vipers,* poisonous reptiles that frequented the area (Isa 30.6; 59.5; Mt 12.34; 23.33). *Wrath,* see Mt 3.7 n. **8:** John demands right living based on a sincere search for God's will (Mt 7.15–20; Gal 5.22–23) and suited to the protestations of repentance (see Mt 3.2 n.). The claim to have *Abraham as . . . ancestor* was a claim to privileged standing with God through natural birth (Jn 8.33, 39; Rom 2.28, 29). **9:** *Fire,* a symbol of judgment (Mt 7.19; 13.40–42; Heb 6.7–8). **10–11:** 6.29; Acts 2.44–45; 4.32–35. **12–13:** 19.2, 8. **15:** Acts 13.25; Jn 1.19–22; Lk 7.19. **16:** Acts 1.5; 11.16; 19.4. **18:** *He proclaimed the good news,* or

[20]added to them all by shutting up John in prison.

21 Now when all the people were baptized, and when Jesus also had been baptized and was praying, the heaven was opened, [22]and the Holy Spirit descended upon him in bodily form like a dove. And a voice came from heaven, "You are my Son, the Beloved;[y] with you I am well pleased."[z]

23 Jesus was about thirty years old when he began his work. He was the son (as was thought) of Joseph son of Heli, [24]son of Matthat, son of Levi, son of Melchi, son of Jannai, son of Joseph, [25]son of Mattathias, son of Amos, son of Nahum, son of Esli, son of Naggai, [26]son of Maath, son of Mattathias, son of Semein, son of Josech, son of Joda, [27]son of Joanan, son of Rhesa, son of Zerubbabel, son of Shealtiel,[a] son of Neri, [28]son of Melchi, son of Addi, son of Cosam, son of Elmadam, son of Er, [29]son of Joshua, son of Eliezer, son of Jorim, son of Matthat, son of Levi, [30]son of Simeon, son of Judah, son of Joseph, son of Jonam, son of Eliakim, [31]son of Melea, son of Menna, son of Mattatha, son of Nathan, son of David, [32]son of Jesse, son of Obed, son of Boaz, son of Sala,[b] son of Nahshon, [33]son of Amminadab, son of Admin, son of Arni,[c] son of Hezron son of Perez, son of Judah, [34]son of Jacob, son of Isaac, son of Abraham, son of Terah, son of Nahor, [35]son of Serug, son of Reu, son of Peleg, son of Eber, son of Shelah, [36]son of Cainan, son of Arphaxad, son of Shem, son of Noah, son of Lamech, [37]son of Methuselah, son of Enoch, son of Jared, son of Mahalalel, son of Cainan, [38]son of Enos, son of Seth, son of Adam, son of God.

4 Jesus, full of the Holy Spirit, returned from the Jordan and was led by the Spirit in the wilderness, [2]where for forty days he was tempted by the devil. He ate nothing at all during those days, and when they were over, he was famished. [3]The devil said to him, "If you are the Son of God, command this stone to become a loaf of bread." [4]Jesus answered him, "It is written, 'One does not live by bread alone.' "

5 Then the devil[d] led him up and showed him in an instant all the kingdoms of the world. [6]And the devil[d] said to him, "To you I will give their glory and all this authority; for it has been given over to me, and I give it to anyone I please. [7]If you, then, will worship me, it will all be yours." [8]Jesus answered him, "It is written,

'Worship the Lord your God,
and serve only him.' "

*y* Or *my beloved Son* *z* Other ancient authorities read *You are my Son, today I have begotten you* *a* Gk *Salathiel* *b* Other ancient authorities read *Salmon* *c* Other ancient authorities read *Amminadab, son of Aram*; others vary widely *d* Gk *he*

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"preached the gospel," refers to the message of forgiveness (v. 3) and the advent of a new relationship between individuals and God (vv. 15–17). **19–20**: Mt 14.3–4; Mk 6.17–18.

**3.21–22**: **Jesus' baptism** (Mt 3.13–17; Mk 1.9–11; Jn 1.29–34). See Mt 3.16–17 n. **21**: Prayer was part of many recorded momentous events in Jesus' life (e.g. Mk 1.35; Lk 5.16; 6.12; 9.18, 28; 11.1; 22.41–46). **22**: *Beloved,* see Mk 1.11 n.; Ps 2.7; Isa 42.1; Lk 9.35.

**3.23–38**: **The genealogy of Jesus** is traced through Old Testament lines back to Adam, the first man (compare Mt 1.1–17). By linking Jesus' line with God's original creation Luke shows Jesus' common humanity, as contrasted with Matthew's emphasis on Jesus' Jewish lineage (see Mt 1.1 n.). **23**: Jesus' age is approximate (Jn 8.57). The persons named from *Heli* to *Zerubbabel* (v. 27) are otherwise unknown. For the rest of the genealogy, compare Gen 5.3–32; 11.10–26; Ruth 4.18–22; 1 Chr 1.1–4, 24–28; 2.1–15.

**4.1–13**: **Jesus' temptation** (Mt 4.1–11; Mk 1.12–13). The order of temptations differs from Matthew's but the testing remains the same. **1**: *Full of the Holy Spirit* is a Christian phrase (Acts 2.4; 6.3, 5; 7.55; 11.24); the work of Jesus and the church begins as God acts through individuals. **2**: Deut 9.9; 1 Kings 19.8; see Mt 4.2 n. **3–4**: See Mt 4.3–4 n.; Deut 8.3. **5–8**: Deut 6.13; 1 Jn 5.19.

9 Then the devil[e] took him to Jerusalem, and placed him on the pinnacle of the temple, saying to him, "If you are the Son of God, throw yourself down from here, 10 for it is written,

'He will command his angels
concerning you,
to protect you,'

11 and

'On their hands they will bear
you up,
so that you will not dash your
foot against a stone.' "

12 Jesus answered him, "It is said, 'Do not put the Lord your God to the test.' " 13 When the devil had finished every test, he departed from him until an opportune time.

14 Then Jesus, filled with the power of the Spirit, returned to Galilee, and a report about him spread through all the surrounding country. 15 He began to teach in their synagogues and was praised by everyone.

16 When he came to Nazareth, where he had been brought up, he went to the synagogue on the sabbath day, as was his custom. He stood up to read, 17 and the scroll of the prophet Isaiah was given to him. He unrolled the scroll and found the place where it was written:

18 "The Spirit of the Lord is upon
me,
because he has anointed me
to bring good news to the
poor.
He has sent me to proclaim release
to the captives
and recovery of sight to the
blind,
to let the oppressed go free,
19 to proclaim the year of the Lord's
favor."

20 And he rolled up the scroll, gave it back to the attendant, and sat down. The eyes of all in the synagogue were fixed on him. 21 Then he began to say to them, "Today this scripture has been fulfilled in your hearing." 22 All spoke well of him and were amazed at the gracious words that came from his mouth. They said, "Is not this Joseph's son?" 23 He said to them, "Doubtless you will quote to me this proverb, 'Doctor, cure yourself!' And you will say, 'Do here also in your hometown the things that we have heard you did at Capernaum.' " 24 And he said, "Truly I tell you, no prophet is accepted in the prophet's hometown. 25 But the truth is, there were many widows in Israel in the time of Elijah, when the heaven was shut up three years and six months, and there was a severe famine over all the land; 26 yet Elijah was sent to none of them except to a widow at Zarephath in Sidon. 27 There were also many lepers[f] in Israel in the time of the prophet Elisha, and none of them was cleansed except Naaman the Syrian." 28 When they heard this, all in the synagogue were filled with rage. 29 They got up, drove him out of the town, and led him to the brow of the hill on which their town was built, so that they might hurl him off the cliff. 30 But he passed through the midst of them and went on his way.

31 He went down to Capernaum, a city in Galilee, and was teaching them on

*e* Gk *he* *f* The terms *leper* and *leprosy* can refer to several diseases

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**4.9–12**: See Mt 4.5–7; Ps 91.11–12; Deut 6.16. **13**: *Until an opportune time,* to renew temptation (compare Mk 8.33; Lk 22.28).

**4.14–9.50: Events and teachings in Galilee. 4.14–15: Jesus' return to Galilee** (Mt 4.12–17; Mk 1.14–15). **14**: 5.17.

**4.16–30: In the synagogue at Nazareth** (Mt 13.53–58; Mk 6.1–6). **16**: Jesus' *custom* was not merely to worship in the synagogue but to present his message there (v. 15; Mt 4.23; 9.35). Details of synagogue worship are mentioned here and in vv. 17, 20 (compare Acts 13.15). **17**: The *scroll of Isaiah was given to* Jesus by the chazzan or attendant of the synagogue (v. 20). **18–19**: Isa 61.1, 2; 58.6; see Mt 3.1 n.; Lk 13.11, 16 n. **20**: Having read while standing, Jesus *sat down* according to custom to preach the sermon. **21**: *Fulfilled,* see Mt 11.4–6 n. **23**: The popular reaction became increasingly hostile as the magnitude of Jesus' message sank home. **24–27**: According to the Old Testament, foreigners sometimes

the sabbath. 32They were astounded at his teaching, because he spoke with authority. 33In the synagogue there was a man who had the spirit of an unclean demon, and he cried out with a loud voice, 34"Let us alone! What have you to do with us, Jesus of Nazareth? Have you come to destroy us? I know who you are, the Holy One of God." 35But Jesus rebuked him, saying, "Be silent, and come out of him!" When the demon had thrown him down before them, he came out of him without having done him any harm. 36They were all amazed and kept saying to one another, "What kind of utterance is this? For with authority and power he commands the unclean spirits, and out they come!" 37And a report about him began to reach every place in the region.

38 After leaving the synagogue he entered Simon's house. Now Simon's mother-in-law was suffering from a high fever, and they asked him about her. 39Then he stood over her and rebuked the fever, and it left her. Immediately she got up and began to serve them.

40 As the sun was setting, all those who had any who were sick with various kinds of diseases brought them to him; and he laid his hands on each of them and cured them. 41Demons also came out of many, shouting, "You are the Son of God!" But he rebuked them and would not allow them to speak, because they knew that he was the Messiah.[g]

42 At daybreak he departed and went into a deserted place. And the crowds were looking for him; and when they reached him, they wanted to prevent him from leaving them. 43But he said to them, "I must proclaim the good news of the kingdom of God to the other cities also; for I was sent for this purpose." 44So he continued proclaiming the message in the synagogues of Judea.[h]

5 Once while Jesus[i] was standing beside the lake of Gennesaret, and the crowd was pressing in on him to hear the word of God, 2he saw two boats there at the shore of the lake; the fishermen had gone out of them and were washing their nets. 3He got into one of the boats, the one belonging to Simon, and asked him to put out a little way from the shore. Then he sat down and taught the crowds from the boat. 4When he had finished speaking, he said to Simon, "Put out into the deep water and let down your nets for a catch." 5Simon answered, "Master, we have worked all night long but have caught nothing. Yet if you say so, I will let down the nets." 6When they had done this, they caught so many fish that their nets were beginning to break. 7So they signaled their partners in the other boat to come and help them. And they came and filled both boats, so that they began to sink. 8But when Simon Peter saw it,

*g* Or *the Christ* *h* Other ancient authorities read *Galilee* *i* Gk *he*

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knew God's help when Israel did not (1 Kings 17.1, 8–16; 18.1; 2 Kings 5.1–14). **30**: It is not known that he ever visited Nazareth again.

**4.31–37**: **The synagogue at Capernaum** (Mt 7.28–29; Mk 1.21–28). **32**: *Teaching* here means the substance of what Jesus taught. **33**: See Mk 1.23 n. Demons were thought of in Jesus' day as non-material existences of a personal sort, hostile to human welfare and rebellious against God. The gospels reflect widespread dread of demons and a general sense of helplessness before demonic activity. Jesus is portrayed here and elsewhere (compare 11.20–22) as one who can deliver from demonic oppression and from Satan himself, evil's supreme embodiment (see Mt 4.24 n.; 12.22 n.; Lk 7.33 n.; 13.16 n.).

**4.38–44**: **Healing and preaching** (Mt 8.14–17; Mk 1.29–39). **40**: *Each of them,* Jesus gives attention to individuals, illustrating vv. 18–19. **41**: *Demons,* see v. 33 n. **44**: This is the only express mention outside the Fourth Gospel of Jesus' early Judean ministry (but compare the implications of Mt 23.37 and Lk 13.34). The original text, however, is uncertain, for *Galilee* appears in some ancient witnesses here as well as in the parallel accounts (Mt 4.23; Mk 1.39).

**5.1–11**: **The unexpected catch** (Mt 4.18–22; Mk 1.16–20). **1**: *Lake of Gennesaret,* Sea of Galilee. **8**: Although the great catch is not described as a miracle, Peter sees in Jesus' guidance a more-than-human power, and he responds by personal self-judgment.

he fell down at Jesus' knees, saying, "Go away from me, Lord, for I am a sinful man!" 9For he and all who were with him were amazed at the catch of fish that they had taken; 10and so also were James and John, sons of Zebedee, who were partners with Simon. Then Jesus said to Simon, "Do not be afraid; from now on you will be catching people." 11When they had brought their boats to shore, they left everything and followed him.

12 Once, when he was in one of the cities, there was a man covered with leprosy.[j] When he saw Jesus, he bowed with his face to the ground and begged him, "Lord, if you choose, you can make me clean." 13Then Jesus[k] stretched out his hand, touched him, and said, "I do choose. Be made clean." Immediately the leprosy[j] left him. 14And he ordered him to tell no one. "Go," he said, "and show yourself to the priest, and, as Moses commanded, make an offering for your cleansing, for a testimony to them." 15But now more than ever the word about Jesus[l] spread abroad; many crowds would gather to hear him and to be cured of their diseases. 16But he would withdraw to deserted places and pray.

17 One day, while he was teaching, Pharisees and teachers of the law were sitting near by (they had come from every village of Galilee and Judea and from Jerusalem); and the power of the Lord was with him to heal.[m] 18Just then some men came, carrying a paralyzed man on a bed. They were trying to bring him in and lay him before Jesus;[l] 19but finding no way to bring him in because of the crowd, they went up on the roof and let him down with his bed through the tiles into the middle of the crowd[n] in front of Jesus. 20When he saw their faith, he said, "Friend,[o] your sins are forgiven you." 21Then the scribes and the Pharisees began to question, "Who is this who is speaking blasphemies? Who can forgive sins but God alone?" 22When Jesus perceived their questionings, he answered them, "Why do you raise such questions in your hearts? 23Which is easier, to say, 'Your sins are forgiven you,' or to say, 'Stand up and walk'? 24But so that you may know that the Son of Man has authority on earth to forgive sins"—he said to the one who was paralyzed—"I say to you, stand up and take your bed and go to your home." 25Immediately he stood up before them, took what he had been lying on, and went to his home, glorifying God. 26Amazement seized all of them, and they glorified God and were filled with awe, saying, "We have seen strange things today."

27 After this he went out and saw a tax collector named Levi, sitting at the tax booth; and he said to him, "Follow me." 28And he got up, left everything, and followed him.

29 Then Levi gave a great banquet for him in his house; and there was a large crowd of tax collectors and others sitting at the table[p] with them. 30The Pharisees and their scribes were complaining to his disciples, saying, "Why do you eat and drink with tax collectors and sinners?" 31Jesus answered, "Those who are well have no need of a physician, but those who are sick; 32I have come to call not the righteous but sinners to repentance."

33 Then they said to him, "John's disciples, like the disciples of the Pharisees,

*j* The terms *leper* and *leprosy* can refer to several diseases *k* Gk *he* *l* Gk *him* *m* Other ancient authorities read *was present to heal them* *n* Gk *into the midst* *o* Gk *Man* *p* Gk *reclining*

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**5.12–16: A leper healed** (Mt 8.1–4; Mk 1.40–45). **12:** *Leprosy,* see Mt 8.2–4 n. **14:** Lev 13.2–3; 14.2–32. **16:** See 3.21 n.

**5.17–26: Forgiveness of sins** (Mt 9.1–8; Mk 2.1–12). **17:** *Power,* 4.14. **24:** *Son of Man,* see Mk 2.10 n.

**5.27–32: Call of Levi** (Matthew) (Mt 9.9–13; Mk 2.13–17). **30:** *Sinners,* see Mk 2.16 n. **32:** Jesus sought to draw in (i.e. *call*) outcasts whom the Pharisees excluded from society. *Call,* however, also meant "invite" (as to a banquet); Jesus' invitation to the Messianic banquet (see 12.37 n.; Rev 3.20 n.) was extended not to the self-judged righteous but to *sinners* (Mt 8.11–12; compare Lk 14.15–24).

frequently fast and pray, but your disciples eat and drink." 34Jesus said to them, "You cannot make wedding guests fast while the bridegroom is with them, can you? 35The days will come when the bridegroom will be taken away from them, and then they will fast in those days." 36He also told them a parable: "No one tears a piece from a new garment and sews it on an old garment; otherwise the new will be torn, and the piece from the new will not match the old. 37And no one puts new wine into old wineskins; otherwise the new wine will burst the skins and will be spilled, and the skins will be destroyed. 38But new wine must be put into fresh wineskins. 39And no one after drinking old wine desires new wine, but says, 'The old is good.' "[q]

6 One sabbath[r] while Jesus[s] was going through the grainfields, his disciples plucked some heads of grain, rubbed them in their hands, and ate them. 2But some of the Pharisees said, "Why are you doing what is not lawful[t] on the sabbath?" 3Jesus answered, "Have you not read what David did when he and his companions were hungry? 4He entered the house of God and took and ate the bread of the Presence, which it is not lawful for any but the priests to eat, and gave some to his companions?" 5Then he said to them, "The Son of Man is lord of the sabbath."

6 On another sabbath he entered the synagogue and taught, and there was a man there whose right hand was withered. 7The scribes and the Pharisees watched him to see whether he would cure on the sabbath, so that they might find an accusation against him. 8Even though he knew what they were thinking, he said to the man who had the withered hand, "Come and stand here." He got up and stood there. 9Then Jesus said to them, "I ask you, is it lawful to do good or to do harm on the sabbath, to save life or to destroy it?" 10After looking around at all of them, he said to him, "Stretch out your hand." He did so, and his hand was restored. 11But they were filled with fury and discussed with one another what they might do to Jesus.

12 Now during those days he went out to the mountain to pray; and he spent the night in prayer to God. 13And when day came, he called his disciples and chose twelve of them, whom he also named apostles: 14Simon, whom he named Peter, and his brother Andrew, and James, and John, and Philip, and Bartholomew, 15and Matthew, and Thomas, and James son of Alphaeus, and Simon, who was called the Zealot, 16and Judas son of James, and Judas Iscariot, who became a traitor.

17 He came down with them and

*q* Other ancient authorities read *better*; others lack verse 39 *r* Other ancient authorities read *On the second first sabbath* *s* Gk *he* *t* Other ancient authorities add *to do*

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**5.33–39**: **On fasting** (Mt 9.14–17; Mk 2.18–22). **34–35**: See Mk 2.19–20 n. **36–37**: See Mt 9.16–17 n. **39**: This sentence explains why the disciples of John and of the Pharisees (v. 33) continued their religious forms notwithstanding Jesus' message; pious conservatism prevented their accepting the new revelation.

**6.1–11**: **Jesus and sabbath laws** (see Mt 12.1–14 n.; Mk 2.23–3.6). **1**: Deut 23.25. **2**: Ex 20.10; 23.12; Deut 5.14. **3**: 1 Sam 21.1–6. **4**: Lev 24.5–9. **11**: *Filled with fury*, at their being thwarted (v. 7).

**6.12–16**: **Choosing the Twelve** (Mt 10.1–4; Mk 3.13–19). **12**: See 3.21 n. **13**: The *disciples* were a larger group of followers from whom Jesus chose twelve for close companionship (Acts 1.21–22). *Apostle* means "appointed representative" and was not always limited to the Twelve (Rom 16.7; Acts 14.14).

**6.17–49**: **The Sermon on the Plain.** Luke gives here a number of Jesus' sayings found in the Sermon on the Mount (Mt chs 5–7). He has fewer teachings than appear there; he gives others found elsewhere in Matthew. Verses 24–26 are without parallel. The "sermons" in the gospels were formed from collections of memorized words of Jesus to instruct Christian converts (compare Jn 20.30–31; 21.25).

**6.17–19**: Mt 4.24–25; 12.15–21; Mk 3.7–12. **17**: The setting for the discourse in vv. 20–49 (compare Mt 5.1–2). Each gospel distin-

stood on a level place, with a great crowd of his disciples and a great multitude of people from all Judea, Jerusalem, and the coast of Tyre and Sidon. 18 They had come to hear him and to be healed of their diseases; and those who were troubled with unclean spirits were cured. 19 And all in the crowd were trying to touch him, for power came out from him and healed all of them.

20 Then he looked up at his disciples and said:

"Blessed are you who are poor,
for yours is the kingdom of God.

21 "Blessed are you who are hungry now,
for you will be filled.

"Blessed are you who weep now,
for you will laugh.

22 "Blessed are you when people hate you, and when they exclude you, revile you, and defame you[u] on account of the Son of Man. 23 Rejoice in that day and leap for joy, for surely your reward is great in heaven; for that is what their ancestors did to the prophets.

24 "But woe to you who are rich,
for you have received your consolation.

25 "Woe to you who are full now,
for you will be hungry.

"Woe to you who are laughing now,
for you will mourn and weep.

26 "Woe to you when all speak well of you, for that is what their ancestors did to the false prophets.

27 "But I say to you that listen, Love your enemies, do good to those who hate you, 28 bless those who curse you, pray for those who abuse you. 29 If anyone strikes you on the cheek, offer the other also; and from anyone who takes away your coat do not withhold even your shirt. 30 Give to everyone who begs from you; and if anyone takes away your goods, do not ask for them again. 31 Do to others as you would have them do to you.

32 "If you love those who love you, what credit is that to you? For even sinners love those who love them. 33 If you do good to those who do good to you, what credit is that to you? For even sinners do the same. 34 If you lend to those from whom you hope to receive, what credit is that to you? Even sinners lend to sinners, to receive as much again. 35 But love your enemies, do good, and lend, expecting nothing in return.[v] Your reward will be great, and you will be children of the Most High; for he is kind to the ungrateful and the wicked. 36 Be merciful, just as your Father is merciful.

37 "Do not judge, and you will not be judged; do not condemn, and you will not be condemned. Forgive, and you will be forgiven; 38 give, and it will be given to you. A good measure, pressed down, shaken together, running over, will be put into your lap; for the measure you give will be the measure you get back."

39 He also told them a parable: "Can a blind person guide a blind person? Will not both fall into a pit? 40 A disciple is not above the teacher, but everyone who is fully qualified will be like the teacher. 41 Why do you see the speck in your neighbor's[w] eye, but do not notice the

*u* Gk *cast out your name as evil* *v* Other ancient authorities read *despairing of no one*
*w* Gk *brother's*

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guishes between the crowds in general and Jesus' followers. The teachings are primarily for the latter, though not exclusively so (7.1). **18**: *Unclean spirits,* see Mk 1.23 n. **20–23**: Mt 5.3–12; Lk 4.18–19.

**6.22**: *Exclude you,* this refers to social ostracism and exclusion from the synagogue and temple. **24–26**: Material satisfactions will not last (11.38–52; 17.1; 21.23; 22.22). **25**: 12.19–20; 16.25; Jas 5.1–5.

**6.27–30**: Mt 5.39–42; Rom 12.17; 13.8–10. **28**: Luke's Jesus gives the greatest example of this on the cross, if the verse is authentic; see 23.34 and note *o*. **29**: The reference is to a robber who grabs the outer garment (*coat*). He is not to be restrained from taking the *shirt* also. **31**: Mt 7.12. **32–36**: Mt 5.44–48. **35**: *The Most High,* a common expression referring to God.

**6.37–42**: Mt 7.1–5. **39**: Mt 15.14. **40**: Mt 10.24–25; Jn 13.16. **41–42**: Mt 7.3–5.

log in your own eye? 42Or how can you say to your neighbor,[x] 'Friend,[x] let me take out the speck in your eye,' when you yourself do not see the log in your own eye? You hypocrite, first take the log out of your own eye, and then you will see clearly to take the speck out of your neighbor's[y] eye.

43 "No good tree bears bad fruit, nor again does a bad tree bear good fruit; 44for each tree is known by its own fruit. Figs are not gathered from thorns, nor are grapes picked from a bramble bush. 45The good person out of the good treasure of the heart produces good, and the evil person out of evil treasure produces evil; for it is out of the abundance of the heart that the mouth speaks.

46 "Why do you call me 'Lord, Lord,' and do not do what I tell you? 47I will show you what someone is like who comes to me, hears my words, and acts on them. 48That one is like a man building a house, who dug deeply and laid the foundation on rock; when a flood arose, the river burst against that house but could not shake it, because it had been well built.[z] 49But the one who hears and does not act is like a man who built a house on the ground without a foundation. When the river burst against it, immediately it fell, and great was the ruin of that house."

7 After Jesus[a] had finished all his sayings in the hearing of the people, he entered Capernaum. 2A centurion there had a slave whom he valued highly, and who was ill and close to death. 3When he heard about Jesus, he sent some Jewish elders to him, asking him to come and heal his slave. 4When they came to Jesus, they appealed to him earnestly, saying, "He is worthy of having you do this for him, 5for he loves our people, and it is he who built our synagogue for us." 6And Jesus went with them, but when he was not far from the house, the centurion sent friends to say to him, "Lord, do not trouble yourself, for I am not worthy to have you come under my roof; 7therefore I did not presume to come to you. But only speak the word, and let my servant be healed. 8For I also am a man set under authority, with soldiers under me; and I say to one, 'Go,' and he goes, and to another, 'Come,' and he comes, and to my slave, 'Do this,' and the slave does it." 9When Jesus heard this he was amazed at him, and turning to the crowd that followed him, he said, "I tell you, not even in Israel have I found such faith." 10When those who had been sent returned to the house, they found the slave in good health.

11 Soon afterwards[b] he went to a town called Nain, and his disciples and a large crowd went with him. 12As he approached the gate of the town, a man who had died was being carried out. He was his mother's only son, and she was a widow; and with her was a large crowd from the town. 13When the Lord saw her, he had compassion for her and said to her, "Do not weep." 14Then he came forward and touched the bier, and the bearers stood still. And he said, "Young man, I say to you, rise!" 15The dead man

*x* Gk *brother* *y* Gk *brother's* *z* Other ancient authorities read *founded upon the rock*
*a* Gk *he* *b* Other ancient authorities read *Next day*

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**6.43–45**: Mt 7.16–21; 12.33–35; Jas 3.11–12. **45**: Mk 7.14–23. **46–49**: Mt 7.24–27; Jas 1.22–25. The differences between Matthew and Luke probably derive from different collections of words of Jesus.

**7.1–10**: **The centurion's slave.** This narrative appears to be another version of the story recounted in Mt 8.5–13 (compare Jn 4.46–53). **3**: *Elders,* leaders in the Jewish community. **5**: Acts 10.2. **9**: Though Luke lacks the climactic utterance of Mt 8.13, his intent is the same: the faith of a Gentile is acceptable to Jesus (4.27; 5.32).

**7.11–17**: **The widow's son at Nain.** Mk 5.21–24, 35–43; Jn 11.1–44; 1 Kings 17.17–24; 2 Kings 4.32–37; Lk 4.25–26. **11**: *Nain,* about twenty-five miles southwest of Capernaum. **12**: No burial was allowed within the walls of a Jewish city or town. In this case the funeral procession was passing through *the gate of the town.* The *large crowd* is evidence of deep sympathy for the loss of her only son. **13**: *Lord* is used frequently in Luke as a title for Jesus. **16**: *Fear,* see 1.65 n.

sat up and began to speak, and Jesus[c] gave him to his mother. 16 Fear seized all of them; and they glorified God, saying, "A great prophet has risen among us!" and "God has looked favorably on his people!" 17 This word about him spread throughout Judea and all the surrounding country.

18 The disciples of John reported all these things to him. So John summoned two of his disciples 19 and sent them to the Lord to ask, "Are you the one who is to come, or are we to wait for another?" 20 When the men had come to him, they said, "John the Baptist has sent us to you to ask, 'Are you the one who is to come, or are we to wait for another?' " 21 Jesus[d] had just then cured many people of diseases, plagues, and evil spirits, and had given sight to many who were blind. 22 And he answered them, "Go and tell John what you have seen and heard: the blind receive their sight, the lame walk, the lepers[e] are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead are raised, the poor have good news brought to them. 23 And blessed is anyone who takes no offense at me."

24 When John's messengers had gone, Jesus[c] began to speak to the crowds about John:[f] "What did you go out into the wilderness to look at? A reed shaken by the wind? 25 What then did you go out to see? Someone[g] dressed in soft robes? Look, those who put on fine clothing and live in luxury are in royal palaces. 26 What then did you go out to see? A prophet? Yes, I tell you, and more than a prophet. 27 This is the one about whom it is written,

'See, I am sending my messenger
ahead of you,
who will prepare your way
before you.'

28 I tell you, among those born of women no one is greater than John; yet the least in the kingdom of God is greater than he." 29 (And all the people who heard this, including the tax collectors, acknowledged the justice of God,[h] because they had been baptized with John's baptism. 30 But by refusing to be baptized by him, the Pharisees and the lawyers rejected God's purpose for themselves.)

31 "To what then will I compare the people of this generation, and what are they like? 32 They are like children sitting in the marketplace and calling to one another,

'We played the flute for you, and
you did not dance;
we wailed, and you did not
weep.'

33 For John the Baptist has come eating no bread and drinking no wine, and you say, 'He has a demon'; 34 the Son of Man has come eating and drinking, and you say, 'Look, a glutton and a drunkard, a friend of tax collectors and sinners!' 35 Nevertheless, wisdom is vindicated by all her children."

36 One of the Pharisees asked Jesus[f] to eat with him, and he went into the Pharisee's house and took his place at the table. 37 And a woman in the city, who was a sinner, having learned that he was eating in the Pharisee's house, brought an alabaster jar of ointment. 38 She stood behind him at his feet, weeping, and be-

*c* Gk *he* *d* Gk *He* *e* The terms *leper* and *leprosy* can refer to several diseases *f* Gk *him*
*g* Or *Why then did you go out? To see someone*
*h* Or *praised God*

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**7.18–35: Jesus and John** (Mt 11.2–19). **18:** *John* the Baptist was at this time in prison at Machaerus. **19:** *Lord,* see v. 13 n. *The one who is to come,* the Messiah (see Mt 11.2–3 n.). **21–22:** Isa 29.18–19; 35.5–6; 61.1; Lk 4.18–19. An appeal to John to believe because of the evidence that God's purposes were being realized. **27:** Mal 3.1; Mk 1.2. **29:** *Acknowledged the justice of God,* in the sense that they accepted Jesus' word about John and God's purpose through him, in contrast with the thought of v. 30. **30:** Not all Pharisees are referred to here (see Mt 3.7 n.). The *lawyers,* also called scribes, were experts in Jewish law. **33:** *Demon* possession is appealed to in order to explain unconventional behavior (Mt 11.18; Mk 3.22; Lk 8.27) or attitudes considered basically false (Jn 7.20; 10.20; 1 Tim 4.1). See 4.33 n.

**7.36–50: The woman who was a sinner** (compare Mt 26.6–13; Mk 14.3–9; Jn 12.1–8). **36:** 11.37; 14.1. **37:** Mt 9.10; Lk 5.29–30; 7.34. Houses seem to have been somewhat

gan to bathe his feet with her tears and to dry them with her hair. Then she continued kissing his feet and anointing them with the ointment. 39 Now when the Pharisee who had invited him saw it, he said to himself, "If this man were a prophet, he would have known who and what kind of woman this is who is touching him—that she is a sinner." 40 Jesus spoke up and said to him, "Simon, I have something to say to you." "Teacher," he replied, "speak." 41 "A certain creditor had two debtors; one owed five hundred denarii,[i] and the other fifty. 42 When they could not pay, he canceled the debts for both of them. Now which of them will love him more?" 43 Simon answered, "I suppose the one for whom he canceled the greater debt." And Jesus[j] said to him, "You have judged rightly." 44 Then turning toward the woman, he said to Simon, "Do you see this woman? I entered your house; you gave me no water for my feet, but she has bathed my feet with her tears and dried them with her hair. 45 You gave me no kiss, but from the time I came in she has not stopped kissing my feet. 46 You did not anoint my head with oil, but she has anointed my feet with ointment. 47 Therefore, I tell you, her sins, which were many, have been forgiven; hence she has shown great love. But the one to whom little is forgiven, loves little." 48 Then he said to her, "Your sins are forgiven." 49 But those who were at the table with him began to say among themselves, "Who is this who even forgives sins?" 50 And he said to the woman, "Your faith has saved you; go in peace."

8 Soon afterwards he went on through cities and villages, proclaiming and bringing the good news of the kingdom of God. The twelve were with him, 2 as well as some women who had been cured of evil spirits and infirmities: Mary, called Magdalene, from whom seven demons had gone out, 3 and Joanna, the wife of Herod's steward Chuza, and Susanna, and many others, who provided for them[k] out of their resources.

4 When a great crowd gathered and people from town after town came to him, he said in a parable: 5 "A sower went out to sow his seed; and as he sowed, some fell on the path and was trampled on, and the birds of the air ate it up. 6 Some fell on the rock; and as it grew up, it withered for lack of moisture. 7 Some fell among thorns, and the thorns grew with it and choked it. 8 Some fell into good soil, and when it grew, it produced a hundredfold." As he said this, he called out, "Let anyone with ears to hear listen!"

9 Then his disciples asked him what this parable meant. 10 He said, "To you it has been given to know the secrets[l] of the kingdom of God; but to others I speak[m] in parables, so that

*i* The denarius was the usual day's wage for a laborer *j* Gk *he* *k* Other ancient authorities read *him* *l* Or *mysteries* *m* Gk lacks *I speak*

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open to intrusion of this sort (Mk 1.33; 2.2). The woman may have intended to anoint Jesus' head, a sign of regard (v. 46) as well as of personal grooming (Mt 6.17), but was overcome by a sense of humility and gratitude for his message (5.32). **38**: Jesus was reclining at the table and his feet were stretched out on the couch behind him; hence the woman could easily approach and anoint his feet. **39**: Jesus does not share the Pharisee's concern (compare Mk 1.41 with Mk 7.3–4). **41**: *Denarius,* see 10.35 note *r.* **42**: Mt 18.25. **44–46**: Jesus notes contrasts in responses to himself. **47**: The conclusion: the woman knows the meaning of forgiveness, the host does not. *Hence she has shown great love,* her great love proves that her many sins have been forgiven. **48**: Mt 9.2; Mk 2.5; 11.23 n., 24 n.; Lk 5.20.

**8.1–3**: **On tour. 1**: Mt 4.23; 9.35; Mk 3.14; Lk 23.49. **2**: Mt 27.55–56; Mk 15.40–41. *Mary, called Magdalene,* apparently came from Magdala on the Sea of Galilee. There is no evidence to identify her with the woman in 7.36–50. **3**: Herod's *steward* was probably a domestic administrator. *Others,* i.e. other women.

**8.4–15**: **Parable of the sower** (Mt 13.1–23; Mk 4.1–20). **4**: *Parable,* see Mt 13.3 n. **5**: See Mk 4.3 n. **6**: See Mk 4.5 n. **10**: See Mk 4.11 n.; Mt 13.11 n.; Isa 6.9–10; Jer 5.21;

'looking they may not perceive,
and listening they may not
understand.'

11 "Now the parable is this: The seed is the word of God. 12 The ones on the path are those who have heard; then the devil comes and takes away the word from their hearts, so that they may not believe and be saved. 13 The ones on the rock are those who, when they hear the word, receive it with joy. But these have no root; they believe only for a while and in a time of testing fall away. 14 As for what fell among the thorns, these are the ones who hear; but as they go on their way, they are choked by the cares and riches and pleasures of life, and their fruit does not mature. 15 But as for that in the good soil, these are the ones who, when they hear the word, hold it fast in an honest and good heart, and bear fruit with patient endurance.

16 "No one after lighting a lamp hides it under a jar, or puts it under a bed, but puts it on a lampstand, so that those who enter may see the light. 17 For nothing is hidden that will not be disclosed, nor is anything secret that will not become known and come to light. 18 Then pay attention to how you listen; for to those who have, more will be given; and from those who do not have, even what they seem to have will be taken away."

19 Then his mother and his brothers came to him, but they could not reach him because of the crowd. 20 And he was told, "Your mother and your brothers are standing outside, wanting to see you." 21 But he said to them, "My mother and my brothers are those who hear the word of God and do it."

22 One day he got into a boat with his disciples, and he said to them, "Let us go across to the other side of the lake." So they put out, 23 and while they were sailing he fell asleep. A windstorm swept down on the lake, and the boat was filling with water, and they were in danger. 24 They went to him and woke him up, shouting, "Master, Master, we are perishing!" And he woke up and rebuked the wind and the raging waves; they ceased, and there was a calm. 25 He said to them, "Where is your faith?" They were afraid and amazed, and said to one another, "Who then is this, that he commands even the winds and the water, and they obey him?"

26 Then they arrived at the country of the Gerasenes,[n] which is opposite Galilee. 27 As he stepped out on land, a man of the city who had demons met him. For a long time he had worn[o] no clothes, and he did not live in a house but in the tombs. 28 When he saw Jesus, he fell down before him and shouted at the top of his voice, "What have you to do with me, Jesus, Son of the Most High God? I beg you, do not torment me"— 29 for Jesus[p] had commanded the unclean spirit to come out of the man. (For many times

*n* Other ancient authorities read *Gadarenes*; others, *Gergesenes* *o* Other ancient authorities read *a man of the city who had had demons for a long time met him. He wore* *p* Gk *he*

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Ezek 12.2. **11**: 1 Thess 2.13; 1 Pet 1.23. **15**: The words *honest and good,* here spoken of the heart (compare Mk 7.21–23), echo the classical Greek description of the true gentleman.

**8.16–18**: **On obedient listening** (Mk 4.21–25). **16**: See Mk 4.21 n. **17**: See Mk 4.22 n. **18**: See Mt 13.12 n.

**8.19–21**: **Jesus' true family** (Mt 12.46–50; Mk 3.31–35). **19**: *Brothers,* see Mt 13.55 n. **21**: 11.28.

**8.22–25**: **Wind and sea calmed** (Mt 8.18, 23–27; Mk 4.35–41). See notes on the passage in Mark. **24**: *Master* and the titles for Jesus in the parallels express aspects of the disciples' attitude toward Jesus (Mt 17.4; Mk 9.5; 11.21; 14.45; Lk 17.13; Jn 1.38).

**8.26–39**: **The Gerasene demoniac** (Mt 8.28–34; Mk 5.1–20). **27**: *Demons,* see 4.33 n. **31**: *Abyss,* a place of confinement for demonic forces which, though hostile to God, are ultimately under his control (Rev 9.1–11; 11.7; 17.8; 20.1–3). The words attribute to Jesus a judicial authority (as Mt 7.21–23; 11.20–24). **36**: *Had been healed,* see Mt 9.21 n. **37**: *Leave,* 5.8.

it had seized him; he was kept under guard and bound with chains and shackles, but he would break the bonds and be driven by the demon into the wilds.) 30Jesus then asked him, "What is your name?" He said, "Legion"; for many demons had entered him. 31They begged him not to order them to go back into the abyss.

32 Now there on the hillside a large herd of swine was feeding; and the demons[q] begged Jesus[r] to let them enter these. So he gave them permission. 33Then the demons came out of the man and entered the swine, and the herd rushed down the steep bank into the lake and was drowned.

34 When the swineherds saw what had happened, they ran off and told it in the city and in the country. 35Then people came out to see what had happened, and when they came to Jesus, they found the man from whom the demons had gone sitting at the feet of Jesus, clothed and in his right mind. And they were afraid. 36Those who had seen it told them how the one who had been possessed by demons had been healed. 37Then all the people of the surrounding country of the Gerasenes[s] asked Jesus[r] to leave them; for they were seized with great fear. So he got into the boat and returned. 38The man from whom the demons had gone begged that he might be with him; but Jesus[t] sent him away, saying, 39"Return to your home, and declare how much God has done for you." So he went away, proclaiming throughout the city how much Jesus had done for him.

40 Now when Jesus returned, the crowd welcomed him, for they were all waiting for him. 41Just then there came a man named Jairus, a leader of the synagogue. He fell at Jesus' feet and begged him to come to his house, 42for he had an only daughter, about twelve years old, who was dying.

As he went, the crowds pressed in on him. 43Now there was a woman who had been suffering from hemorrhages for twelve years; and though she had spent all she had on physicians,[u] no one could cure her. 44She came up behind him and touched the fringe of his clothes, and immediately her hemorrhage stopped. 45Then Jesus asked, "Who touched me?" When all denied it, Peter[v] said, "Master, the crowds surround you and press in on you." 46But Jesus said, "Someone touched me; for I noticed that power had gone out from me." 47When the woman saw that she could not remain hidden, she came trembling; and falling down before him, she declared in the presence of all the people why she had touched him, and how she had been immediately healed. 48He said to her, "Daughter, your faith has made you well; go in peace."

49 While he was still speaking, someone came from the leader's house to say, "Your daughter is dead; do not trouble the teacher any longer." 50When Jesus heard this, he replied, "Do not fear. Only believe, and she will be saved." 51When he came to the house, he did not allow anyone to enter with him, except Peter, John, and James, and the child's father and mother. 52They were all weeping and wailing for her; but he said, "Do not weep; for she is not dead but sleeping." 53And they laughed at him, knowing that she was dead. 54But he took her by the hand and called out, "Child, get up!" 55Her spirit returned, and she got up at once. Then he directed them to give her something to eat. 56Her parents were astounded; but he ordered them to tell no one what had happened.

*q* Gk *they* *r* Gk *him* *s* Other ancient authorities read *Gadarenes*; others, *Gergesenes* *t* Gk *he* *u* Other ancient authorities lack *and though she had spent all she had on physicians* *v* Other ancient authorities add *and those who were with him*

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**8.40–56: Jairus' daughter raised** (Mt 9.18–26; Mk 5.21–43). See notes on the parallel passages. **43**: Lev 15.25–30. **46**: 5.17. **48**: See Mt 9.21 n., 22; Lk 7.50; 17.19; 18.42. **50**: See Mt 9.21 n.

9 Then Jesus[w] called the twelve together and gave them power and authority over all demons and to cure diseases, 2and he sent them out to proclaim the kingdom of God and to heal. 3He said to them, "Take nothing for your journey, no staff, nor bag, nor bread, nor money—not even an extra tunic. 4Whatever house you enter, stay there, and leave from there. 5Wherever they do not welcome you, as you are leaving that town shake the dust off your feet as a testimony against them." 6They departed and went through the villages, bringing the good news and curing diseases everywhere.

7 Now Herod the ruler[x] heard about all that had taken place, and he was perplexed, because it was said by some that John had been raised from the dead, 8by some that Elijah had appeared, and by others that one of the ancient prophets had arisen. 9Herod said, "John I beheaded; but who is this about whom I hear such things?" And he tried to see him.

10 On their return the apostles told Jesus[y] all they had done. He took them with him and withdrew privately to a city called Bethsaida. 11When the crowds found out about it, they followed him; and he welcomed them, and spoke to them about the kingdom of God, and healed those who needed to be cured.

12 The day was drawing to a close, and the twelve came to him and said, "Send the crowd away, so that they may go into the surrounding villages and countryside, to lodge and get provisions; for we are here in a deserted place." 13But he said to them, "You give them something to eat." They said, "We have no more than five loaves and two fish—unless we are to go and buy food for all these people." 14For there were about five thousand men. And he said to his disciples, "Make them sit down in groups of about fifty each." 15They did so and made them all sit down. 16And taking the five loaves and the two fish, he looked up to heaven, and blessed and broke them, and gave them to the disciples to set before the crowd. 17And all ate and were filled. What was left over was gathered up, twelve baskets of broken pieces.

18 Once when Jesus[w] was praying alone, with only the disciples near him, he asked them, "Who do the crowds say that I am?" 19They answered, "John the Baptist; but others, Elijah; and still others, that one of the ancient prophets has arisen." 20He said to them, "But who do you say that I am?" Peter answered, "The Messiah[z] of God."

21 He sternly ordered and commanded them not to tell anyone, 22saying, "The Son of Man must undergo great suffering, and be rejected by the elders, chief priests, and scribes, and be killed, and on the third day be raised."

23 Then he said to them all, "If any want to become my followers, let them deny themselves and take up their cross daily and follow me. 24For those who want to save their life will lose it, and those who lose their life for my sake will

*w* Gk *he* *x* Gk *tetrarch* *y* Gk *him*
*z* Or *The Christ*

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**9.1–6: Commissioning and instruction of the Twelve** (Mt 9.35; 10.1, 9–11, 14; Mk 6.7–13; Lk 10.4–11). See notes on the passages in Matthew and Mark. **3:** *Tunic,* see Mt 10.10 n.

**9.7–9: Herod asks about Jesus** (Mt 14.1–2; Mk 6.14–16). *Herod* Antipas, son of Herod the Great. See notes on the parallel passages; compare Mt 16.14; Lk 9.18–19.

**9.10–17: Five thousand fed** (Mt 14.13–21; Mk 6.30–44; Jn 6.1–14). See notes on the parallel passages. **13:** 2 Kings 4.42–44. **16:** 22.19; 24.30–31; Acts 2.42; 20.11; 27.35.

**9.18–22: Peter's confession** (Mt 16.13–23; Mk 8.27–33). See notes on the parallel passages. **18:** See 3.21 n. **19:** 9.7; Mk 9.11–13; see Mt 14.2. **22:** 9.43–45; 18.31–34; 17.25; see Mk 9.31 n. Jesus accepted rejection because he insisted that he himself be freely followed.

**9.23–27: On discipleship** (Mt 16.24–28; Mk 8.34–9.1). See notes on the parallel passages. **23:** The language suggests that Jesus frequently spoke in this way (see Mt 10.38 n.). **26:** Mt 10.33; Lk 12.9; 1 Jn 2.28. **27:** *Taste death,* die (compare Jn 8.52; Heb 2.9).

save it. 25 What does it profit them if they gain the whole world, but lose or forfeit themselves? 26 Those who are ashamed of me and of my words, of them the Son of Man will be ashamed when he comes in his glory and the glory of the Father and of the holy angels. 27 But truly I tell you, there are some standing here who will not taste death before they see the kingdom of God."

28 Now about eight days after these sayings Jesus[a] took with him Peter and John and James, and went up on the mountain to pray. 29 And while he was praying, the appearance of his face changed, and his clothes became dazzling white. 30 Suddenly they saw two men, Moses and Elijah, talking to him. 31 They appeared in glory and were speaking of his departure, which he was about to accomplish at Jerusalem. 32 Now Peter and his companions were weighed down with sleep; but since they had stayed awake,[b] they saw his glory and the two men who stood with him. 33 Just as they were leaving him, Peter said to Jesus, "Master, it is good for us to be here; let us make three dwellings,[c] one for you, one for Moses, and one for Elijah"—not knowing what he said. 34 While he was saying this, a cloud came and overshadowed them; and they were terrified as they entered the cloud. 35 Then from the cloud came a voice that said, "This is my Son, my Chosen;[d] listen to him!" 36 When the voice had spoken, Jesus was found alone. And they kept silent and in those days told no one any of the things they had seen.

37 On the next day, when they had come down from the mountain, a great crowd met him. 38 Just then a man from the crowd shouted, "Teacher, I beg you to look at my son; he is my only child. 39 Suddenly a spirit seizes him, and all at once he[e] shrieks. It convulses him until he foams at the mouth; it mauls him and will scarcely leave him. 40 I begged your disciples to cast it out, but they could not." 41 Jesus answered, "You faithless and perverse generation, how much longer must I be with you and bear with you? Bring your son here." 42 While he was coming, the demon dashed him to the ground in convulsions. But Jesus rebuked the unclean spirit, healed the boy, and gave him back to his father. 43 And all were astounded at the greatness of God.

While everyone was amazed at all that he was doing, he said to his disciples, 44 "Let these words sink into your ears: The Son of Man is going to be betrayed into human hands." 45 But they did not understand this saying; its meaning was concealed from them, so that they could not perceive it. And they were afraid to ask him about this saying.

46 An argument arose among them as to which one of them was the greatest. 47 But Jesus, aware of their inner thoughts, took a little child and put it by his side, 48 and said to them, "Whoever welcomes this child in my name welcomes me, and whoever welcomes me welcomes the one who sent me; for the least among all of you is the greatest."

*a* Gk *he* *b* Or *but when they were fully awake*
*c* Or *tents* *d* Other ancient authorities read *my Beloved* *e* Or *it*

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**9.28–36**: **The transfiguration** (Mt 17.1–8; Mk 9.2–8). This event began as prayer (v. 29; see 3.21 n.) and grew into an intense religious experience, the exact nature of which is uncertain (Mt 17.9 uses the word *vision*). The aura of unnatural brilliance is associated with mystical experiences elsewhere (Ex 34.29–35; Acts 9.3). **31**: *Departure,* death. **32**: Apparently the experience took place at night. **35**: *Chosen* has about the same meaning as *beloved* in the parallel passages (see Mk 1.11 n.; Lk 3.22; Jn 12.28–30).

**9.37–43a**: **Epileptic child healed** (Mt 17.14–21; Mk 9.14–29). See notes on the parallel passages. **43**: Acts 2.22.

**9.43b–45**: **The Passion foretold again** (Mt 17.22–23; Mk 9.30–32); compare 9.22; 18.31–33. **44**: 9.22; 18.31–34; 17.25. **45**: The comment is based on the point of view that (*a*) the Messiah's death was not part of the disciples' Jewish faith, and (*b*) spiritual truth must be revealed (see 24.16 n.; Mt 16.17 n.; 1 Cor 2.14).

**9.46–48**: **True greatness** (Mt 18.1–5; Mk 9.33–37). **47**: 18.17. **48**: See 10.16 n.; Mk 9.35 n.

49 John answered, "Master, we saw someone casting out demons in your name, and we tried to stop him, because he does not follow with us." 50 But Jesus said to him, "Do not stop him; for whoever is not against you is for you."

51 When the days drew near for him to be taken up, he set his face to go to Jerusalem. 52 And he sent messengers ahead of him. On their way they entered a village of the Samaritans to make ready for him; 53 but they did not receive him, because his face was set toward Jerusalem. 54 When his disciples James and John saw it, they said, "Lord, do you want us to command fire to come down from heaven and consume them?"[f] 55 But he turned and rebuked them. 56 Then[g] they went on to another village.

57 As they were going along the road, someone said to him, "I will follow you wherever you go." 58 And Jesus said to him, "Foxes have holes, and birds of the air have nests; but the Son of Man has nowhere to lay his head." 59 To another he said, "Follow me." But he said, "Lord, first let me go and bury my father." 60 But Jesus[h] said to him, "Let the dead bury their own dead; but as for you, go and proclaim the kingdom of God." 61 Another said, "I will follow you, Lord; but let me first say farewell to those at my home." 62 Jesus said to him, "No one who puts a hand to the plow and looks back is fit for the kingdom of God."

10 After this the Lord appointed seventy[i] others and sent them on ahead of him in pairs to every town and place where he himself intended to go. 2 He said to them, "The harvest is plentiful, but the laborers are few; therefore ask the Lord of the harvest to send out laborers into his harvest. 3 Go on your way. See, I am sending you out like lambs into the midst of wolves. 4 Carry no purse, no bag, no sandals; and greet no one on the road. 5 Whatever house you enter, first say, 'Peace to this house!' 6 And if anyone is there who shares in peace, your peace will rest on that person; but if not, it will return to you. 7 Remain in the same house, eating and drinking whatever they provide, for the laborer deserves to be paid. Do not move about from house to house. 8 Whenever you enter a town and its people welcome you, eat what is set before you; 9 cure the sick who are there, and say to them, 'The kingdom of God has come near to you.'[j] 10 But whenever you enter a town and they do not welcome you, go out into its streets and say, 11 'Even the dust of your town that clings to our feet, we wipe off in protest against you. Yet know this: the kingdom of God has come near.'[k] 12 I tell you, on that day it will be more tolerable for Sodom than for that town.

13 "Woe to you, Chorazin! Woe to you, Bethsaida! For if the deeds of power done in you had been done in Tyre and

*f* Other ancient authorities add *as Elijah did*
*g* Other ancient authorities read *rebuked them, and said, "You do not know what spirit you are of,* 56 *for the Son of Man has not come to destroy the lives of human beings but to save them." Then* *h* Gk *he*
*i* Other ancient authorities read *seventy-two*
*j* Or *is at hand for you* *k* Or *is at hand*

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**9.49–50: The unknown exorcist** (Mk 9.38–41). **49:** 11.19. **50:** 11.23; see Mk 9.39–40 n.

**9.51–18.14: Events and teachings on the way to Jerusalem.** This section, which is peculiar to Luke, reports what is generally called the Perean ministry of Jesus, though the scene of that ministry was partly in Judea.

**9.51–56: The hostile Samaritans** (compare Jn 4.9). **52:** *Messengers,* whose errand was to arrange for lodging and food (Mt 10.5 was at an earlier stage of time and purpose). **53:** The Samaritans *did not* help pilgrims going to keep a feast at what they regarded as the wrong sanctuary (compare Jn 4.20). **54:** Mk 3.17; 2 Kings 1.9–16.

**9.57–62: Claims of discipleship** (Mt 8.19–22). **60:** See Mt 8.22 n. **61:** Phil 3.13; Heb 6.4–6.

**10.1–16: Mission of the Seventy** (Mt 9.37–38; 10.7–16). **1:** 9.1–5, 51–52; Mk 6.7–11. **2:** Mt 9.37–38; Jn 4.35. **4:** *Greet no one,* which might cause delay. **5:** 1 Sam 25.6. **6:** *Anyone . . . who shares in peace,* a peaceful person (compare Mt 5.45 n.). **7:** 1 Cor 9.4–14; 1 Tim 5.18; Deut 24.15. **9:** 11.20. **11:** Acts 13.51. **12:** Mt 11.24; Gen 19.24–28; Jude 7.

Sidon, they would have repented long ago, sitting in sackcloth and ashes. 14But at the judgment it will be more tolerable for Tyre and Sidon than for you. 15And you, Capernaum,

will you be exalted to heaven?
No, you will be brought down
to Hades.

16 "Whoever listens to you listens to me, and whoever rejects you rejects me, and whoever rejects me rejects the one who sent me."

17 The seventy[l] returned with joy, saying, "Lord, in your name even the demons submit to us!" 18He said to them, "I watched Satan fall from heaven like a flash of lightning. 19See, I have given you authority to tread on snakes and scorpions, and over all the power of the enemy; and nothing will hurt you. 20Nevertheless, do not rejoice at this, that the spirits submit to you, but rejoice that your names are written in heaven."

21 At that same hour Jesus[m] rejoiced in the Holy Spirit[n] and said, "I thank[o] you, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because you have hidden these things from the wise and the intelligent and have revealed them to infants; yes, Father, for such was your gracious will.[p] 22All things have been handed over to me by my Father; and no one knows who the Son is except the Father, or who the Father is except the Son and anyone to whom the Son chooses to reveal him."

23 Then turning to the disciples, Jesus[m] said to them privately, "Blessed are the eyes that see what you see! 24For I tell you that many prophets and kings desired to see what you see, but did not see it, and to hear what you hear, but did not hear it."

25 Just then a lawyer stood up to test Jesus.[q] "Teacher," he said, "what must I do to inherit eternal life?" 26He said to him, "What is written in the law? What do you read there?" 27He answered, "You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your strength, and with all your mind; and your neighbor as yourself." 28And he said to him, "You have given the right answer; do this, and you will live."

29 But wanting to justify himself, he asked Jesus, "And who is my neighbor?" 30Jesus replied, "A man was going down from Jerusalem to Jericho, and fell into the hands of robbers, who stripped him, beat him, and went away, leaving him half dead. 31Now by chance a priest was going down that road; and when he saw

*l* Other ancient authorities read *seventy-two*
*m* Gk *he*
*n* Other authorities read *in the spirit*
*o* Or *praise*
*p* Or *for so it was well-pleasing in your sight*
*q* Gk *him*

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**10.13–15**: Mt 11.21–23; Lk 6.24–26. **15**: The words echo Isa 14.13–15 (see also v. 18). **16**: Mt 10.40; 18.5; Mk 9.37; Lk 9.48; Jn 13.20; 12.48; Gal 4.14.

**10.17–20**: **Return of the Seventy.** **17**: *Even the demons submit to us,* unlike the Twelve (9.1), the Seventy had not been promised this power (see 13.16 n.). **18**: *I watched Satan fall from heaven,* alluding to the victory of the Seventy over the demons; compare Jn 12.31; Rev 12.7–12. **19**: *Authority,* Mk 6.7; Lk 22.29. *The enemy,* Satan (Mt 13.39). **20**: Jesus regarded exorcism as not in itself a sign of God's kingdom (11.19). *Written in heaven,* Dan 12.1; Ps 69.28; Ex 32.32; Phil 4.3; Heb 12.23; Rev 3.5; 13.8; 21.27.

**10.21–22**: **Prayer of Jesus** (see 3.21 n. and Mt 11.25–27 n.). **21**: 1 Cor 1.26–29. *In the Holy Spirit,* in spiritual ecstasy. **22**: Mt 28.18; Jn 3.35; 13.3; 10.15; 17.25.

**10.23–24**: Mt 13.16–17; Jn 8.56; Heb 11.13; 1 Pet 1.10–12. Jesus speaks both of spiritual perception guided by faith (Mk 4.9; Lk 8.10), and of the fulfillment of God's purpose (2.26–32).

**10.25–28**: **A lawyer's question** (Mt 22.23–40; Mk 12.28–31). **25**: Mt 19.16 n.; Mk 10.17; Lk 18.18. *Inherit,* see Mt 19.29 n. **27**: See Mk 12.29 n., 31 n. Rom 13.8–10; Gal 5.14; and Jas 2.8 implicitly link Deut 6.4–5 and Lev 19.18, stressing as here (vv. 29–37) the principle that acts of love are the final requirement of the law (compare Deut 6.4ff. and notes; Lev 19.17–18 n.). **28**: Mk 12.34; Lev 18.1–5.

**10.29–37**: **The Good Samaritan.** **29**: The questioner intended to prove his right to eternal life by defining the limits of his duty, and showing how he had fulfilled it. *Justify himself* means to show himself to be righteous, acceptable to God (18.9–14). **31–33**: The *priest* represented the highest religious leadership among the Jews; the *Levite* (v. 32)

him, he passed by on the other side. 32So likewise a Levite, when he came to the place and saw him, passed by on the other side. 33But a Samaritan while traveling came near him; and when he saw him, he was moved with pity. 34He went to him and bandaged his wounds, having poured oil and wine on them. Then he put him on his own animal, brought him to an inn, and took care of him. 35The next day he took out two denarii,[r] gave them to the innkeeper, and said, 'Take care of him; and when I come back, I will repay you whatever more you spend.' 36Which of these three, do you think, was a neighbor to the man who fell into the hands of the robbers?" 37He said, "The one who showed him mercy." Jesus said to him, "Go and do likewise."

38 Now as they went on their way, he entered a certain village, where a woman named Martha welcomed him into her home. 39She had a sister named Mary, who sat at the Lord's feet and listened to what he was saying. 40But Martha was distracted by her many tasks; so she came to him and asked, "Lord, do you not care that my sister has left me to do all the work by myself? Tell her then to help me." 41But the Lord answered her, "Martha, Martha, you are worried and distracted by many things; 42there is need of only one thing.[s] Mary has chosen the better part, which will not be taken away from her."

11 He was praying in a certain place, and after he had finished, one of his disciples said to him, "Lord, teach us to pray, as John taught his disciples." 2He said to them, "When you pray, say:

Father,[t] hallowed be your name.
Your kingdom come.[u]
3 Give us each day our daily bread.[v]
4 And forgive us our sins,
for we ourselves forgive everyone indebted to us.
And do not bring us to the time of trial."[w]

5 And he said to them, "Suppose one of you has a friend, and you go to him at midnight and say to him, 'Friend, lend me three loaves of bread; 6for a friend of mine has arrived, and I have nothing to set before him.' 7And he answers from within, 'Do not bother me; the door has already been locked, and my children are with me in bed; I cannot get up and give you anything.' 8I tell you, even though he will not get up and give him anything because he is his friend, at least because of his persistence he will get up and give him whatever he needs.

9 "So I say to you, Ask, and it will be given you; search, and you will find; knock, and the door will be opened for you. 10For everyone who asks receives, and everyone who searches finds, and for everyone who knocks, the door will be opened. 11Is there anyone among you

*r* The denarius was the usual day's wage for a laborer *s* Other ancient authorities read *few things are necessary, or only one* *t* Other ancient authorities read *Our Father in heaven* *u* A few ancient authorities read *Your Holy Spirit come upon us and cleanse us.* Other ancient authorities add *Your will be done, on earth as in heaven* *v* Or *our bread for tomorrow* *w* Or *us into temptation.* Other ancient authorities add *but rescue us from the evil one* (or *from evil*)

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was the designated lay-associate of the priest. In contrast it was a *Samaritan,* a foreigner not expected to show sympathy to Jews (see Jn 4.9 n.; Acts 8.5 n.), who *was moved with pity.* **34**: *Oil and wine,* ancient medication.

**10.38–42**: **Martha and Mary,** compare Jn 11.1 where they are introduced as well-known persons living at Bethany. **41**: *By many things,* which were not important enough to call for excessive attention or worry. **42**: With delicate ambiguity Jesus rebuked Martha's choice of values; a simple meal (one dish) is sufficient for hospitality. Jesus approved Mary's preference for listening to his teaching (thereby accepting a woman as a disciple) as contrasted with Martha's unneeded acts of hospitality (the more usual woman's role).

**11.1–13**: **Sayings on prayer. 1–4**: See Mt 6.9–13 n.; Lk 3.21 n. **4**: Mk 11.25; Mt 18.35. **5–8**: Lk 18.1–5.

**11.9–13**: Mt 7.7–11. **9**: Mt 18.19; 21.22; Mk 11.24; Jas 1.5–8; 1 Jn 5.14–15; Jn 14.13; 15.7; 17.23–24.

**11.14–28**: **Sources of Jesus' power** (Mt

who, if your child asks for[x] a fish, will give a snake instead of a fish? 12 Or if the child asks for an egg, will give a scorpion? 13 If you then, who are evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will the heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit[y] to those who ask him!"

14 Now he was casting out a demon that was mute; when the demon had gone out, the one who had been mute spoke, and the crowds were amazed. 15 But some of them said, "He casts out demons by Beelzebul, the ruler of the demons." 16 Others, to test him, kept demanding from him a sign from heaven. 17 But he knew what they were thinking and said to them, "Every kingdom divided against itself becomes a desert, and house falls on house. 18 If Satan also is divided against himself, how will his kingdom stand? —for you say that I cast out the demons by Beelzebul. 19 Now if I cast out the demons by Beelzebul, by whom do your exorcists[z] cast them out? Therefore they will be your judges. 20 But if it is by the finger of God that I cast out the demons, then the kingdom of God has come to you. 21 When a strong man, fully armed, guards his castle, his property is safe. 22 But when one stronger than he attacks him and overpowers him, he takes away his armor in which he trusted and divides his plunder. 23 Whoever is not with me is against me, and whoever does not gather with me scatters.

24 "When the unclean spirit has gone out of a person, it wanders through waterless regions looking for a resting place, but not finding any, it says, 'I will return to my house from which I came.' 25 When it comes, it finds it swept and put in order. 26 Then it goes and brings seven other spirits more evil than itself, and they enter and live there; and the last state of that person is worse than the first."

27 While he was saying this, a woman in the crowd raised her voice and said to him, "Blessed is the womb that bore you and the breasts that nursed you!" 28 But he said, "Blessed rather are those who hear the word of God and obey it!"

29 When the crowds were increasing, he began to say, "This generation is an evil generation; it asks for a sign, but no sign will be given to it except the sign of Jonah. 30 For just as Jonah became a sign to the people of Nineveh, so the Son of Man will be to this generation. 31 The queen of the South will rise at the judgment with the people of this generation and condemn them, because she came from the ends of the earth to listen to the wisdom of Solomon, and see, something greater than Solomon is here! 32 The people of Nineveh will rise up at the judgment with this generation and condemn it, because they repented at the proclamation of Jonah, and see, something greater than Jonah is here!

33 "No one after lighting a lamp puts it in a cellar,[a] but on the lampstand so that those who enter may see the light. 34 Your eye is the lamp of your body. If your eye is healthy, your whole body is full of light; but if it is not healthy, your body is full of darkness. 35 Therefore consider whether the light in you is not darkness. 36 If then your whole body is full of light, with no part of it in darkness, it will be as full of light as when a lamp gives you light with its rays."

*x* Other ancient authorities add *bread, will give a stone; or if your child asks for* *y* Other ancient authorities read *the Father give the Holy Spirit from heaven* *z* Gk *sons* *a* Other ancient authorities add *or under the bushel basket*

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12.22–30; Mk 3.22–27). **14**: Mt 9.32–34; see 12.22–24 n. **15**: See Mk 3.22 n. **16**: Mt 12.38; 16.1–4; Mk 8.11–12; Jn 2.18; 6.30; 1 Cor 1.22. **19**: See Mt 12.27 n. **20**: Ex 8.19. *Finger* stands for God's power. **23**: Mt 12.30. Jesus used similar language for a different point in Mk 9.38–40; Lk 9.49–50.

**11.24–26**: See Mt 12.43–45 n. **28**: 8.21.

**11.29–32**: **Request for a sign.** **29**: Mt 12.39. **30**: Jon 3.4. **31**: 1 Kings 10.1–10; 2 Chr 9.1–9. **32**: Mt 12.6.

**11.33–36**: **Concerning light** (Mt 5.15; 6.22–23). **33**: See Mk 4.21 n.

37 While he was speaking, a Pharisee invited him to dine with him; so he went in and took his place at the table. 38 The Pharisee was amazed to see that he did not first wash before dinner. 39 Then the Lord said to him, "Now you Pharisees clean the outside of the cup and of the dish, but inside you are full of greed and wickedness. 40 You fools! Did not the one who made the outside make the inside also? 41 So give for alms those things that are within; and see, everything will be clean for you.

42 "But woe to you Pharisees! For you tithe mint and rue and herbs of all kinds, and neglect justice and the love of God; it is these you ought to have practiced, without neglecting the others. 43 Woe to you Pharisees! For you love to have the seat of honor in the synagogues and to be greeted with respect in the marketplaces. 44 Woe to you! For you are like unmarked graves, and people walk over them without realizing it."

45 One of the lawyers answered him, "Teacher, when you say these things, you insult us too." 46 And he said, "Woe also to you lawyers! For you load people with burdens hard to bear, and you yourselves do not lift a finger to ease them. 47 Woe to you! For you build the tombs of the prophets whom your ancestors killed. 48 So you are witnesses and approve of the deeds of your ancestors; for they killed them, and you build their tombs. 49 Therefore also the Wisdom of God said, 'I will send them prophets and apostles, some of whom they will kill and persecute,' 50 so that this generation may be charged with the blood of all the prophets shed since the foundation of the world, 51 from the blood of Abel to the blood of Zechariah, who perished between the altar and the sanctuary. Yes, I tell you, it will be charged against this generation. 52 Woe to you lawyers! For you have taken away the key of knowledge; you did not enter yourselves, and you hindered those who were entering."

53 When he went outside, the scribes and the Pharisees began to be very hostile toward him and to cross-examine him about many things, 54 lying in wait for him, to catch him in something he might say.

12 Meanwhile, when the crowd gathered by the thousands, so that they trampled on one another, he began to speak first to his disciples, "Beware of the yeast of the Pharisees, that is, their hypocrisy. 2 Nothing is covered up that will not be uncovered, and nothing secret that will not become known. 3 Therefore whatever you have said in the dark will be heard in the light, and what you have whispered behind closed doors will be proclaimed from the housetops.

4 "I tell you, my friends, do not fear

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**11.37–54: Against Pharisees and lawyers** (Mt 23.1–36, in different order). **37**: 7.36; 14.1. **38**: *Wash before dinner,* ceremonial washing (literally "baptize before dinner"; compare Mk 7.1–5). **39–41**: Mt 23.25–26. Jesus turns back the Pharisees' criticism that the outside is unwashed by insisting that the inner life is equal in importance to the outer (v. 40); indeed, that it exercises a cleansing or corrupting power over the outward (v. 41; Mk 7.23). **41**: Titus 1.15.

**11.42**: *Rue,* a medicinal herb. Mt 23.23; Lev 27.30; Mic 6.8. **43**: See Mk 12.38–39 n. **44**: Mt 23.27. **45**: *Lawyer,* a teacher of the Jewish law. **46**: Mt 23.4. **47–48**: Mt 23.29–32; Acts 7.51–53. **49–51**: Mt 23.34–36. **49**: 1 Cor 1.24; Col 2.3. *The Wisdom of God* is either the title of an otherwise unknown book, or (more probably) a reference to the divine decrees as interpreted by Jesus (compare Jesus' personification of wisdom in 7.35); in Mt 23.34 the words are attributed to Jesus himself. **51**: See Mt 23.35 n. **52**: Mt 23.13. *The key of knowledge,* the clue to proper understanding of God's purpose. The lawyers have not *entered,* i.e. have rejected, God's rule, and keep others from it.

**12.1–12: Encouragement of disciples** (Mt 10.26–33). **1**: Mt 16.6, 12; see Mk 8.15 n. **2**: See Mk 4.22 n. **3**: Similar to but different from Mt 10.27. **5**: Heb 10.31. **6**: Mt 10.29. The *penny* (assarion) was one-sixteenth of a denarius (see 12.59 n.). **7**: 21.18; Acts 27.34; Mt 12.12. **9**: Mk 8.38; Lk 9.26; 2 Tim 2.12. **10**: See Mt 12.31 n.; Mk 3.28–29. **11**: Mt 10.19; Mk 13.11; Lk 21.14–15. **12**: 2 Tim 4.17.

those who kill the body, and after that can do nothing more. 5But I will warn you whom to fear: fear him who, after he has killed, has authority[b] to cast into hell.[c] Yes, I tell you, fear him! 6Are not five sparrows sold for two pennies? Yet not one of them is forgotten in God's sight. 7But even the hairs of your head are all counted. Do not be afraid; you are of more value than many sparrows.

8 "And I tell you, everyone who acknowledges me before others, the Son of Man also will acknowledge before the angels of God; 9but whoever denies me before others will be denied before the angels of God. 10And everyone who speaks a word against the Son of Man will be forgiven; but whoever blasphemes against the Holy Spirit will not be forgiven. 11When they bring you before the synagogues, the rulers, and the authorities, do not worry about how[d] you are to defend yourselves or what you are to say; 12for the Holy Spirit will teach you at that very hour what you ought to say."

13 Someone in the crowd said to him, "Teacher, tell my brother to divide the family inheritance with me." 14But he said to him, "Friend, who set me to be a judge or arbitrator over you?" 15And he said to them, "Take care! Be on your guard against all kinds of greed; for one's life does not consist in the abundance of possessions." 16Then he told them a parable: "The land of a rich man produced abundantly. 17And he thought to himself, 'What should I do, for I have no place to store my crops?' 18Then he said, 'I will do this: I will pull down my barns and build larger ones, and there I will store all my grain and my goods. 19And I will say to my soul, Soul, you have ample goods laid up for many years; relax, eat, drink, be merry.' 20But God said to him, 'You fool! This very night your life is being demanded of you. And the things you have prepared, whose will they be?' 21So it is with those who store up treasures for themselves but are not rich toward God."

22 He said to his disciples, "Therefore I tell you, do not worry about your life, what you will eat, or about your body, what you will wear. 23For life is more than food, and the body more than clothing. 24Consider the ravens: they neither sow nor reap, they have neither storehouse nor barn, and yet God feeds them. Of how much more value are you than the birds! 25And can any of you by worrying add a single hour to your span of life?[e] 26If then you are not able to do so small a thing as that, why do you worry about the rest? 27Consider the lilies, how they grow: they neither toil nor spin;[f] yet I tell you, even Solomon in all his glory was not clothed like one of these. 28But if God so clothes the grass of the field, which is alive today and tomorrow is thrown into the oven, how much more will he clothe you—you of little faith! 29And do not keep striving for what you are to eat and what you are to drink, and do not keep worrying. 30For it is the nations of the world that strive after all these things, and your Father knows that you need them. 31Instead, strive for his[g] kingdom, and these things will be given to you as well.

32 "Do not be afraid, little flock, for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom. 33Sell your possessions, and give alms. Make purses for yourselves that do not wear out, an unfailing treasure in heaven, where no thief comes near and no moth destroys. 34For

*b* Or *power* *c* Gk *Gehenna* *d* Other ancient authorities add *or what* *e* Or *add a cubit to your stature* *f* Other ancient authorities read *Consider the lilies; they neither spin nor weave* *g* Other ancient authorities read *God's*

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**12.13–21: Parable of the rich fool. 13:** According to Deut 21.17 the elder received double the younger's share. **15:** *One's life,* i.e. full human experience (1 Tim 6.6–10). **20:** Jer 17.11; Job 27.8; Ps 39.6; Lk 12.33–34.

**12.22–34: On anxiety** (Mt 6.25–33, 19–21). **24:** 12.6–7. **25:** See Mt 6.27 n. **27:** 1 Kings 10.1–10. **30:** Mt 6.8.

**12.32:** *Flock* refers to the Messiah's people (Ezek ch 34). **33–34:** Compare Mt 6.19–21;

where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.

35 "Be dressed for action and have your lamps lit; 36 be like those who are waiting for their master to return from the wedding banquet, so that they may open the door for him as soon as he comes and knocks. 37 Blessed are those slaves whom the master finds alert when he comes; truly I tell you, he will fasten his belt and have them sit down to eat, and he will come and serve them. 38 If he comes during the middle of the night, or near dawn, and finds them so, blessed are those slaves.

39 "But know this: if the owner of the house had known at what hour the thief was coming, he[h] would not have let his house be broken into. 40 You also must be ready, for the Son of Man is coming at an unexpected hour."

41 Peter said, "Lord, are you telling this parable for us or for everyone?" 42 And the Lord said, "Who then is the faithful and prudent manager whom his master will put in charge of his slaves, to give them their allowance of food at the proper time? 43 Blessed is that slave whom his master will find at work when he arrives. 44 Truly I tell you, he will put that one in charge of all his possessions. 45 But if that slave says to himself, 'My master is delayed in coming,' and if he begins to beat the other slaves, men and women, and to eat and drink and get drunk, 46 the master of that slave will come on a day when he does not expect him and at an hour that he does not know, and will cut him in pieces,[i] and put him with the unfaithful. 47 That slave who knew what his master wanted, but did not prepare himself or do what was wanted, will receive a severe beating. 48 But the one who did not know and did what deserved a beating will receive a light beating. From everyone to whom much has been given, much will be required; and from the one to whom much has been entrusted, even more will be demanded.

49 "I came to bring fire to the earth, and how I wish it were already kindled! 50 I have a baptism with which to be baptized, and what stress I am under until it is completed! 51 Do you think that I have come to bring peace to the earth? No, I tell you, but rather division! 52 From now on five in one household will be divided, three against two and two against three; 53 they will be divided:

father against son
and son against father,
mother against daughter
and daughter against mother,
mother-in-law against her
daughter-in-law
and daughter-in-law against
mother-in-law."

54 He also said to the crowds, "When you see a cloud rising in the west, you immediately say, 'It is going to rain'; and so it happens. 55 And when you see the south wind blowing, you say, 'There will be scorching heat'; and it happens. 56 You hypocrites! You know how to interpret the appearance of earth and sky, but why do you not know how to interpret the present time?

*h* Other ancient authorities add *would have watched and* *i* Or *cut him off*

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Mk 10.21; Lk 18.22; Acts 2.45; 4.32–35. Jesus spoke against abuse, not possession, of property (v. 15).

**12.35–48**: **On watchfulness** (Mt 24.43–51). **35**: Eph 6.14; Mt 25.1–13; Mk 13.33–37. **37**: The language suggests that Jesus' mind moved to the Messianic banquet (13.29; 22.16), to which a marriage feast served as an analogy. **38**: The time, between 9 P.M. and 3 A.M.

**12.39–40**: Mt 24.43–44; 1 Thess 5.2; Rev 3.3; 16.15; 2 Pet 3.10. **42**: Mt 24.45–51. **47–48**: Deut 25.2–3; Num 15.29–30; Lk 8.18; 19.26.

**12.49–56**: **On the end of the age. 49**: *Fire,* a symbol of judgment (Mt 3.11; 7.19; Mk 9.48; Lk 3.16). **50**: Mk 10.38–39; Jn 12.27. **51–53**: Mt 10.34–36; Lk 21.16; Mic 7.6.

**12.54–56**: Mt 16.2–3. Winds from the west blew off the Mediterranean; those from the south off the desert. Jesus says there are many signs of spiritual crisis that human beings neglect.

57 "And why do you not judge for
yourselves what is right? 58Thus, when
you go with your accuser before a magis-
trate, on the way make an effort to settle
the case,[j] or you may be dragged before
the judge, and the judge hand you over
to the officer, and the officer throw you
in prison. 59I tell you, you will never
get out until you have paid the very last
penny."

13 At that very time there were
some present who told him about
the Galileans whose blood Pilate had
mingled with their sacrifices. 2He asked
them, "Do you think that because these
Galileans suffered in this way they were
worse sinners than all other Galileans?
3No, I tell you; but unless you repent,
you will all perish as they did. 4Or those
eighteen who were killed when the tow-
er of Siloam fell on them—do you think
that they were worse offenders than all
the others living in Jerusalem? 5No, I tell
you; but unless you repent, you will all
perish just as they did."

6 Then he told this parable: "A man
had a fig tree planted in his vineyard; and
he came looking for fruit on it and found
none. 7So he said to the gardener, 'See
here! For three years I have come looking
for fruit on this fig tree, and still I find
none. Cut it down! Why should it be
wasting the soil?' 8He replied, 'Sir, let it
alone for one more year, until I dig
around it and put manure on it. 9If it
bears fruit next year, well and good; but
if not, you can cut it down.' "

10 Now he was teaching in one of the
synagogues on the sabbath. 11And just
then there appeared a woman with a spir-
it that had crippled her for eighteen
years. She was bent over and was quite
unable to stand up straight. 12When Jesus
saw her, he called her over and said,
"Woman, you are set free from your ail-
ment." 13When he laid his hands on her,
immediately she stood up straight and
began praising God. 14But the leader of
the synagogue, indignant because Jesus
had cured on the sabbath, kept saying to
the crowd, "There are six days on which
work ought to be done; come on those
days and be cured, and not on the sab-
bath day." 15But the Lord answered him
and said, "You hypocrites! Does not each
of you on the sabbath untie his ox or his
donkey from the manger, and lead it
away to give it water? 16And ought not
this woman, a daughter of Abraham
whom Satan bound for eighteen long
years, be set free from this bondage on
the sabbath day?" 17When he said this, all
his opponents were put to shame; and the
entire crowd was rejoicing at all the
wonderful things that he was doing.

18 He said therefore, "What is the
kingdom of God like? And to what
should I compare it? 19It is like a mustard

*j* Gk *settle with him*

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**12.57–59**: Mt 5.25–26. **59**: *Penny,* Greek "lepton," the smallest Greek coin in circulation. There were two lepta to a quadrans ("penny" in Mt 5.26; Mk 12.42), eight to an assarion ("penny" in Lk 12.6) and one hundred and twenty-eight to a denarius, the daily wage in Mt 20.2.

**13.1–9**: **On repentance. 1**: They had been slain by Pilate's order while sacrificing in the temple at Jerusalem. **2**: The reports carried with them questions of a deeper meaning. According to common Jewish belief, painful experiences were signs of God's judgment (Jn 9.2–3). Jesus does not argue here (as in Mt 5.45) for a disconnection between natural and moral good and evil. Here suffering represents God's judgment and is a call to repentance lest spiritual catastrophe overtake his hearers. **4**: *Siloam,* a section of Jerusalem.

**13.6–9**: Mt 21.18–20; Mk 11.12–14, 20–21. **7**: Mt 3.10; 7.19; Lk 3.9.

**13.10–17**: **A crippled woman healed.** This miraculous cure was unasked for by the woman or by anyone in her behalf. **14**: Ex 20.9–10; Mt 12.11–12; Lk 6.6–11; 14.1–6; Jn 5.1–18. **16**: Jesus attributes physical (and psychical) disorders to the work of *Satan* (see Mt 4.1 n.; 12.24 n.). They are in conflict with God's purpose of salvation in his covenant with Abraham, and are the concern of his saving activity (4.18; Mt 8.14–17).

**13.18–21**: **Parables of mustard seed and yeast** (see Mt 13.31–33 n.; Mk 4.30–32).

seed that someone took and sowed in the garden; it grew and became a tree, and the birds of the air made nests in its branches."

20 And again he said, "To what should I compare the kingdom of God? 21 It is like yeast that a woman took and mixed in with[k] three measures of flour until all of it was leavened."

22 Jesus[l] went through one town and village after another, teaching as he made his way to Jerusalem. 23 Someone asked him, "Lord, will only a few be saved?" He said to them, 24 "Strive to enter through the narrow door; for many, I tell you, will try to enter and will not be able. 25 When once the owner of the house has got up and shut the door, and you begin to stand outside and to knock at the door, saying, 'Lord, open to us,' then in reply he will say to you, 'I do not know where you come from.' 26 Then you will begin to say, 'We ate and drank with you, and you taught in our streets.' 27 But he will say, 'I do not know where you come from; go away from me, all you evildoers!' 28 There will be weeping and gnashing of teeth when you see Abraham and Isaac and Jacob and all the prophets in the kingdom of God, and you yourselves thrown out. 29 Then people will come from east and west, from north and south, and will eat in the kingdom of God. 30 Indeed, some are last who will be first, and some are first who will be last."

31 At that very hour some Pharisees came and said to him, "Get away from here, for Herod wants to kill you." 32 He said to them, "Go and tell that fox for me,[m] 'Listen, I am casting out demons and performing cures today and tomorrow, and on the third day I finish my work. 33 Yet today, tomorrow, and the next day I must be on my way, because it is impossible for a prophet to be killed outside of Jerusalem.' 34 Jerusalem, Jerusalem, the city that kills the prophets and stones those who are sent to it! How often have I desired to gather your children together as a hen gathers her brood under her wings, and you were not willing! 35 See, your house is left to you. And I tell you, you will not see me until the time comes when[n] you say, 'Blessed is the one who comes in the name of the Lord.' "

14 On one occasion when Jesus[o] was going to the house of a leader of the Pharisees to eat a meal on the sabbath, they were watching him closely. 2 Just then, in front of him, there was a man who had dropsy. 3 And Jesus asked the lawyers and Pharisees, "Is it lawful to cure people on the sabbath, or not?" 4 But they were silent. So Jesus[o] took him and healed him, and sent him away. 5 Then he said to them, "If one of you has a child[p] or an ox that has fallen into a well, will you not immediately pull it out on a sabbath day?" 6 And they could not reply to this.

7 When he noticed how the guests chose the places of honor, he told them a parable. 8 "When you are invited by someone to a wedding banquet, do not sit down at the place of honor, in case

*k* Gk *hid in* *l* Gk *He* *m* Gk lacks *for me* *n* Other ancient authorities lack *the time comes when* *o* Gk *he* *p* Other ancient authorities read *a donkey*

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**13.22–30: On the end of the age. 22–24:** Mt 7.13–14; Jn 10.7; Lk 9.51 n. **25:** Mt 25.10–12. **26–29:** The host clearly is meant to be the Messiah (compare 14.15–24).

**13.31–33: Words to Herod Antipas. 31:** *Here,* Herod's domain (Galilee and Perea). **32:** *Listen . . . ,* no cunning threats of *that fox* can shorten *my work. Third day,* not literally; a short and limited time is meant. **33:** *It is impossible . . . ,* bitter irony.

**13.34–35: Lament over Jerusalem** (Mt 23.37–39). **34:** *How often,* see Mt 23.37 n. **35:** Jer 22.5; Ps 118.26.

**14.1–6: Healing the man with dropsy.** Mt 12.9–14; Mk 3.1–6; Lk 6.6–11; 13.10–17. **2:** *Dropsy,* swelling from abnormal fluid retention.

**14.7–14: On humility. 8:** Prov 25.6–7; Lk 11.43; 20.46. **12:** Jas 2.2–4; Mt 5.43–48. **14:** Jesus appeals not to a spirit of material gain, i.e. a hope of reward in the judgment, but rather to the faith that the principle of love will be vindicated (Col 3.23–24).

**14.15–24: The great dinner** (Mt 22.1–10; compare also Mt 8.11; 26.29; see Lk

someone more distinguished than you has been invited by your host; [9]and the host who invited both of you may come and say to you, 'Give this person your place,' and then in disgrace you would start to take the lowest place. [10]But when you are invited, go and sit down at the lowest place, so that when your host comes, he may say to you, 'Friend, move up higher'; then you will be honored in the presence of all who sit at the table with you. [11]For all who exalt themselves will be humbled, and those who humble themselves will be exalted."

12 He said also to the one who had invited him, "When you give a luncheon or a dinner, do not invite your friends or your brothers or your relatives or rich neighbors, in case they may invite you in return, and you would be repaid. [13]But when you give a banquet, invite the poor, the crippled, the lame, and the blind. [14]And you will be blessed, because they cannot repay you, for you will be repaid at the resurrection of the righteous."

15 One of the dinner guests, on hearing this, said to him, "Blessed is anyone who will eat bread in the kingdom of God!" [16]Then Jesus[q] said to him, "Someone gave a great dinner and invited many. [17]At the time for the dinner he sent his slave to say to those who had been invited, 'Come; for everything is ready now.' [18]But they all alike began to make excuses. The first said to him, 'I have bought a piece of land, and I must go out and see it; please accept my regrets.' [19]Another said, 'I have bought five yoke of oxen, and I am going to try them out; please accept my regrets.' [20]Another said, 'I have just been married, and therefore I cannot come.' [21]So the slave returned and reported this to his master. Then the owner of the house became angry and said to his slave, 'Go out at once into the streets and lanes of the town and bring in the poor, the crippled, the blind, and the lame.' [22]And the slave said, 'Sir, what you ordered has been done, and there is still room.' [23]Then the master said to the slave, 'Go out into the roads and lanes, and compel people to come in, so that my house may be filled. [24]For I tell you,[r] none of those who were invited will taste my dinner.' "

25 Now large crowds were traveling with him; and he turned and said to them, [26]"Whoever comes to me and does not hate father and mother, wife and children, brothers and sisters, yes, and even life itself, cannot be my disciple. [27]Whoever does not carry the cross and follow me cannot be my disciple. [28]For which of you, intending to build a tower, does not first sit down and estimate the cost, to see whether he has enough to complete it? [29]Otherwise, when he has laid a foundation and is not able to finish, all who see it will begin to ridicule him, [30]saying, 'This fellow began to build and was not able to finish.' [31]Or what king, going out to wage war against another king, will not sit down first and consider whether he is able with ten thousand to oppose the one who comes against him with twenty thousand? [32]If he cannot, then, while the other is still far away, he sends a delegation and asks for the terms of peace. [33]So therefore, none of you can become my disciple if you do not give up all your possessions.

34 "Salt is good; but if salt has lost its taste, how can its saltiness be restored?[s] [35]It is fit neither for the soil nor for the

*q* Gk *he*
*r* The Greek word for *you* here is plural
*s* Or *how can it be used for seasoning?*

5.32 n.; 13.29). The point is that though some people imagine they highly prize the thought of sharing God's kingdom, they may in fact be rejecting appeals to act so that they may enter it. **15**: Lk 22.16, 18, 28–30; Rev 19.9. **20**: Deut 24.5; 1 Cor 7.33. **24**: *You* is plural here; Jesus drops the parabolic form and speaks to the guests (v. 15) in his own person.

**14.25–35: Conditions of discipleship.** **26–27**: Mt 10.37–38. **26**: Jn 12.25. *Hate* is used in vigorous, vivid hyperbole; the parallel passage in Mt 10.37 reflects Jesus' meaning. **27**: See Mt 10.38 n. **31–32**: Possibly Jesus alludes to some contemporary event. **33**: 9.57–62; 12.33; 18.29–30; Phil 3.7. **34–35**: Mt 5.13; Mk 9.49–50.

manure pile; they throw it away. Let anyone with ears to hear listen!"

15 Now all the tax collectors and sinners were coming near to listen to him. 2And the Pharisees and the scribes were grumbling and saying, "This fellow welcomes sinners and eats with them."

3 So he told them this parable: 4"Which one of you, having a hundred sheep and losing one of them, does not leave the ninety-nine in the wilderness and go after the one that is lost until he finds it? 5When he has found it, he lays it on his shoulders and rejoices. 6And when he comes home, he calls together his friends and neighbors, saying to them, 'Rejoice with me, for I have found my sheep that was lost.' 7Just so, I tell you, there will be more joy in heaven over one sinner who repents than over ninety-nine righteous persons who need no repentance.

8 "Or what woman having ten silver coins,[t] if she loses one of them, does not light a lamp, sweep the house, and search carefully until she finds it? 9When she has found it, she calls together her friends and neighbors, saying, 'Rejoice with me, for I have found the coin that I had lost.' 10Just so, I tell you, there is joy in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner who repents."

11 Then Jesus[u] said, "There was a man who had two sons. 12The younger of them said to his father, 'Father, give me the share of the property that will belong to me.' So he divided his property between them. 13A few days later the younger son gathered all he had and traveled to a distant country, and there he squandered his property in dissolute living. 14When he had spent everything, a severe famine took place throughout that country, and he began to be in need. 15So he went and hired himself out to one of the citizens of that country, who sent him to his fields to feed the pigs. 16He would gladly have filled himself with[v] the pods that the pigs were eating; and no one gave him anything. 17But when he came to himself he said, 'How many of my father's hired hands have bread enough and to spare, but here I am dying of hunger! 18I will get up and go to my father, and I will say to him, "Father, I have sinned against heaven and before you; 19I am no longer worthy to be called your son; treat me like one of your hired hands." ' 20So he set off and went to his father. But while he was still far off, his father saw him and was filled with compassion; he ran and put his arms around him and kissed him. 21Then the son said to him, 'Father, I have sinned against heaven and before you; I am no longer worthy to be called your son.'[w] 22But the father said to his slaves, 'Quickly, bring out a robe—the best one—and put it on him; put a ring on his finger and sandals on his feet. 23And get the fatted calf and kill it, and let us eat and celebrate; 24for this son of mine was dead and is alive again; he was lost and is found!' And they began to celebrate.

25 "Now his elder son was in the field; and when he came and approached the house, he heard music and dancing. 26He called one of the slaves and asked

*t* Gk *drachmas*, each worth about a day's wage for a laborer *u* Gk *he* *v* Other ancient authorities read *filled his stomach with* *w* Other ancient authorities add *Treat me like one of your hired servants*

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**15.1–32: Parables about the lost. 3–7: The lost sheep.** Mt 18.12–14. The parable illustrates God's concern for those who lack ability to find him; he seeks them. **4:** The phrase *until he finds it* is in harmony with Luke's universalism (see Introduction and contrast "if" in Mt 18.13).

**15.8–10: The lost coin.** This parable intensifies the picture of human helplessness and divine concern. The *coin* was approximately equivalent to the denarius (see note *t*).

**15.11–32: The lost son. 12:** See 12.13 n. **15:** *Pigs,* the culminating indignity for a Jew. **22–24:** His place as son is freely restored. The parable illustrates God's acceptance of those who rebel and return. **22:** *Robe,* a festal garment (not to be worn while working); *ring,* symbol of authority; *sandals,* slaves would have been unshod. Gen 41.42; Zech 3.4. **24:** 1 Tim 5.6; Eph 2.1; Lk 9.60.

**15.25–32:** Jesus' aim was to portray the difference between God's loving forgiveness

what was going on. 27He replied, 'Your brother has come, and your father has killed the fatted calf, because he has got him back safe and sound.' 28Then he became angry and refused to go in. His father came out and began to plead with him. 29But he answered his father, 'Listen! For all these years I have been working like a slave for you, and I have never disobeyed your command; yet you have never given me even a young goat so that I might celebrate with my friends. 30But when this son of yours came back, who has devoured your property with prostitutes, you killed the fatted calf for him!' 31Then the father[x] said to him, 'Son, you are always with me, and all that is mine is yours. 32But we had to celebrate and rejoice, because this brother of yours was dead and has come to life; he was lost and has been found.' "

16 Then Jesus[x] said to the disciples, "There was a rich man who had a manager, and charges were brought to him that this man was squandering his property. 2So he summoned him and said to him, 'What is this that I hear about you? Give me an accounting of your management, because you cannot be my manager any longer.' 3Then the manager said to himself, 'What will I do, now that my master is taking the position away from me? I am not strong enough to dig, and I am ashamed to beg. 4I have decided what to do so that, when I am dismissed as manager, people may welcome me into their homes.' 5So, summoning his master's debtors one by one, he asked the first, 'How much do you owe my master?' 6He answered, 'A hundred jugs of olive oil.' He said to him, 'Take your bill, sit down quickly, and make it fifty.' 7Then he asked another, 'And how much do you owe?' He replied, 'A hundred containers of wheat.' He said to him, 'Take your bill and make it eighty.' 8And his master commended the dishonest manager because he had acted shrewdly; for the children of this age are more shrewd in dealing with their own generation than are the children of light. 9And I tell you, make friends for yourselves by means of dishonest wealth[y] so that when it is gone, they may welcome you into the eternal homes.[z]

10 "Whoever is faithful in a very little is faithful also in much; and whoever is dishonest in a very little is dishonest also in much. 11If then you have not been faithful with the dishonest wealth,[y] who will entrust to you the true riches? 12And if you have not been faithful with what belongs to another, who will give you what is your own? 13No slave can serve two masters; for a slave will either hate the one and love the other, or be devoted to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and wealth."[y]

14 The Pharisees, who were lovers of money, heard all this, and they ridiculed him. 15So he said to them, "You are those who justify yourselves in the sight of others; but God knows your hearts; for what is prized by human beings is an abomination in the sight of God.

16 "The law and the prophets were in effect until John came; since then the good news of the kingdom of God is proclaimed, and everyone tries to enter it by force.[a] 17But it is easier for heaven and earth to pass away, than for one

*x* Gk *he* *y* Gk *mammon* *z* Gk *tents*
*a* Or *everyone is strongly urged to enter it*

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and the self-centered complacency that not only denies love, but cannot understand it.

**16.1–13**: **The dishonest manager.** The point is in v. 8, the application in v. 9: the dishonest manager was prudent in using the things of this life to ensure the future; believers should do the same. **8**: *His master* is the rich man of v. 1. *Children of light,* those who are spiritually enlightened. The phrase appears in Jn 12.36; Eph 5.8; 1 Thess 5.5, as well as in the Dead Sea Scrolls, where it is contrasted with the children of darkness. **10**: Mt 25.21; Lk 19.17. **13**: See Mt 6.24 n.

**16.14–18**: **Teaching about the law. 14–15**: Mt 19.16–30; Lk 18.9–14. *What is prized,* that is, what is given a regard due only to God. **17**: Mt 5.17–18; Lk 21.33. **18**: Mt 5.31–32; 19.9; Mk 10.11–12; 1 Cor 7.10–11.

stroke of a letter in the law to be dropped.

18 "Anyone who divorces his wife and marries another commits adultery, and whoever marries a woman divorced from her husband commits adultery.

19 "There was a rich man who was dressed in purple and fine linen and who feasted sumptuously every day. 20 And at his gate lay a poor man named Lazarus, covered with sores, 21 who longed to satisfy his hunger with what fell from the rich man's table; even the dogs would come and lick his sores. 22 The poor man died and was carried away by the angels to be with Abraham.[b] The rich man also died and was buried. 23 In Hades, where he was being tormented, he looked up and saw Abraham far away with Lazarus by his side.[c] 24 He called out, 'Father Abraham, have mercy on me, and send Lazarus to dip the tip of his finger in water and cool my tongue; for I am in agony in these flames.' 25 But Abraham said, 'Child, remember that during your lifetime you received your good things, and Lazarus in like manner evil things; but now he is comforted here, and you are in agony. 26 Besides all this, between you and us a great chasm has been fixed, so that those who might want to pass from here to you cannot do so, and no one can cross from there to us.' 27 He said, 'Then, father, I beg you to send him to my father's house— 28 for I have five brothers—that he may warn them, so that they will not also come into this place of torment.' 29 Abraham replied, 'They have Moses and the prophets; they should listen to them.' 30 He said, 'No, father Abraham; but if someone goes to them from the dead, they will repent.' 31 He said to him, 'If they do not listen to Moses and the prophets, neither will they be convinced even if someone rises from the dead.' "

17 Jesus[d] said to his disciples, "Occasions for stumbling are bound to come, but woe to anyone by whom they come! 2 It would be better for you if a millstone were hung around your neck and you were thrown into the sea than for you to cause one of these little ones to stumble. 3 Be on your guard! If another disciple[e] sins, you must rebuke the offender, and if there is repentance, you must forgive. 4 And if the same person sins against you seven times a day, and turns back to you seven times and says, 'I repent,' you must forgive."

5 The apostles said to the Lord, "Increase our faith!" 6 The Lord replied, "If you had faith the size of a[f] mustard seed, you could say to this mulberry tree, 'Be uprooted and planted in the sea,' and it would obey you.

7 "Who among you would say to your slave who has just come in from plowing or tending sheep in the field, 'Come here at once and take your place at the table'? 8 Would you not rather say to him, 'Prepare supper for me, put on your apron and serve me while I eat and drink; later you may eat and drink'? 9 Do you thank the slave for doing what was

*b* Gk *to Abraham's bosom* *c* Gk *in his bosom* *d* Gk *He* *e* Gk *your brother* *f* Gk *faith as a grain of*

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**16.19–31: The rich man and Lazarus.** It is not known whether Jesus alluded here to a contemporary incident. The main point (vv. 27–31) is that the Old Testament speaks an urgent and sufficient call to repentance (v. 17). As a whole the story seems to illustrate vv. 10–15. Jesus draws details from contemporary ways of expressing Jewish faith, including items not found in the Old Testament. **19**: The *rich man,* though unnamed, is commonly called "Dives" (Latin for "rich man"). *Purple* was a rich cloth dyed with the liquid obtained from a species of shellfish. **20**: The person named here is not to be identified with the Lazarus of Jn 11.1–44; 12.1, 9. **21–22**: The moral quality of Lazarus is passed over to illustrate the fatal deficiency in the life of the other and the impossibility of changing his condemnation. **22**: See 23.42 n. **29**: Jn 5.45–47; Acts 15.21. **30**: 3.8; 19.9.

**17.1–2**: Mt 18.6, 7; Mk 9.42; 1 Cor 8.12. **2**: *Little ones,* disciples (see Mt 18.6 n.). **5**: Mk 11.23 n., 24 n.

**17.7–10**: One's relation to God makes obedience to God a duty to be fulfilled and not an occasion for reward.

commanded? 10So you also, when you have done all that you were ordered to do, say, 'We are worthless slaves; we have done only what we ought to have done!' "

11 On the way to Jerusalem Jesus[g] was going through the region between Samaria and Galilee. 12As he entered a village, ten lepers[h] approached him. Keeping their distance, 13they called out, saying, "Jesus, Master, have mercy on us!" 14When he saw them, he said to them, "Go and show yourselves to the priests." And as they went, they were made clean. 15Then one of them, when he saw that he was healed, turned back, praising God with a loud voice. 16He prostrated himself at Jesus'[i] feet and thanked him. And he was a Samaritan. 17Then Jesus asked, "Were not ten made clean? But the other nine, where are they? 18Was none of them found to return and give praise to God except this foreigner?" 19Then he said to him, "Get up and go on your way; your faith has made you well."

20 Once Jesus[g] was asked by the Pharisees when the kingdom of God was coming, and he answered, "The kingdom of God is not coming with things that can be observed; 21nor will they say, 'Look, here it is!' or 'There it is!' For, in fact, the kingdom of God is among[j] you."

22 Then he said to the disciples, "The days are coming when you will long to see one of the days of the Son of Man, and you will not see it. 23They will say to you, 'Look there!' or 'Look here!' Do not go, do not set off in pursuit. 24For as the lightning flashes and lights up the sky from one side to the other, so will the Son of Man be in his day.[k] 25But first he must endure much suffering and be rejected by this generation. 26Just as it was in the days of Noah, so too it will be in the days of the Son of Man. 27They were eating and drinking, and marrying and being given in marriage, until the day Noah entered the ark, and the flood came and destroyed all of them. 28Likewise, just as it was in the days of Lot: they were eating and drinking, buying and selling, planting and building, 29but on the day that Lot left Sodom, it rained fire and sulfur from heaven and destroyed all of them 30—it will be like that on the day that the Son of Man is revealed. 31On that day, anyone on the housetop who has belongings in the house must not come down to take them away; and likewise anyone in the field must not turn back. 32Remember Lot's wife. 33Those who try to make their life secure will lose it, but those who lose their life will keep it. 34I tell you, on that night there will be two in one bed; one will be taken and the other left. 35There will be two women grinding meal together; one will be taken and the other left."[l] 37Then they asked him, "Where, Lord?" He said to them,

*g* Gk *he* *h* The terms *leper* and *leprosy* can refer to several diseases *i* Gk *his* *j* Or *within* *k* Other ancient authorities lack *in his day* *l* Other ancient authorities add verse 36, *"Two will be in the field; one will be taken and the other left."*

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**17.11–19**: **Ten lepers cleansed.** **12**: Lev 13.45–46; see Mt 8.2 n. **14**: *Priest,* Lev 13.2–3; 14.2–32. **17**: *The other nine* were, presumably, Jews. **18**: 7.9. **19**: Mt 9.22; Mk 5.34; Lk 8.48; 18.42. *Made you well,* see Mt 9.21 n.; Mk 11.23 n., 24 n.

**17.20–21**: **The kingdom is among you,** in the person of Jesus. **20**: 19.11; 21.7; Acts 1.6. **21**: The reality of God's *kingdom* is present and available. The questioners had in mind a kingdom bringing material benefits.

**17.22–37**: **The end of the age.** Mt ch 24 has similar teachings, in a different order and setting. **22**: Mt 9.15; Mk 2.20; Lk 5.35. **23–24**: Mt 24.23, 26, 27; Mk 13.21; Rev 1.7. **23**: *Look, there* is the Son of Man! etc. **24**: The coming will be sudden and visible to all. **25**: 9.22. **26–27**: Mt 24.37–39; Gen 6.5–8; 7.6–24. **28–30**: Gen 18.16–19.28. **31**: Mt 24.17–18; Mk 13.15–16; Lk 21.21. **32**: Gen 19.26. **33**: See Mt 10.38 n., 39. **34–35**: Mt 24.40–41. **37**: Mt 24.28. Jesus' answer is a significant appeal to faith. The questioners wish to know *where* the Messiah and his people will be located. Instead of answering them directly, Jesus warns: As surely as vultures find the carcass, so surely will divine judgment come; therefore always be ready!

"Where the corpse is, there the vultures will gather."

18 Then Jesus[m] told them a parable about their need to pray always and not to lose heart. 2He said, "In a certain city there was a judge who neither feared God nor had respect for people. 3In that city there was a widow who kept coming to him and saying, 'Grant me justice against my opponent.' 4For a while he refused; but later he said to himself, 'Though I have no fear of God and no respect for anyone, 5yet because this widow keeps bothering me, I will grant her justice, so that she may not wear me out by continually coming.' "[n] 6And the Lord said, "Listen to what the unjust judge says. 7And will not God grant justice to his chosen ones who cry to him day and night? Will he delay long in helping them? 8I tell you, he will quickly grant justice to them. And yet, when the Son of Man comes, will he find faith on earth?"

9 He also told this parable to some who trusted in themselves that they were righteous and regarded others with contempt: 10"Two men went up to the temple to pray, one a Pharisee and the other a tax collector. 11The Pharisee, standing by himself, was praying thus, 'God, I thank you that I am not like other people: thieves, rogues, adulterers, or even like this tax collector. 12I fast twice a week; I give a tenth of all my income.' 13But the tax collector, standing far off, would not even look up to heaven, but was beating his breast and saying, 'God, be merciful to me, a sinner!' 14I tell you, this man went down to his home justified rather than the other; for all who exalt themselves will be humbled, but all who humble themselves will be exalted."

15 People were bringing even infants to him that he might touch them; and when the disciples saw it, they sternly ordered them not to do it. 16But Jesus called for them and said, "Let the little children come to me, and do not stop them; for it is to such as these that the kingdom of God belongs. 17Truly I tell you, whoever does not receive the kingdom of God as a little child will never enter it."

18 A certain ruler asked him, "Good Teacher, what must I do to inherit eternal life?" 19Jesus said to him, "Why do you call me good? No one is good but God alone. 20You know the commandments: 'You shall not commit adultery; You shall not murder; You shall not steal; You shall not bear false witness; Honor your father and mother.' " 21He replied, "I have kept all these since my youth." 22When Jesus heard this, he said to him, "There is still one thing lacking. Sell all that you own and distribute the money[o] to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven; then come, follow me." 23But when he heard this, he became sad; for he was very rich. 24Jesus looked at him and said, "How hard it is for those who have wealth to enter the kingdom of God! 25Indeed, it is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle

*m* Gk *he* *n* Or *so that she may not finally come and slap me in the face* *o* Gk lacks *the money*

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**18.1–8: The unjust judge. 1**: The point is carefully stated (compare 11.5–8), perhaps because the details are incongruous (as in 16.1–9). **7**: Rev 6.10; Mt 24.22; Rom 8.33; Col 3.12; 2 Tim 2.10. **8**: *Comes,* from heaven, in judgment. *Faith,* a requisite for this persistent prayer (v. 1).

**18.9–14: Pharisee and tax collector. 9**: *Righteous,* that is, acceptable to God because of their ritual observance (vv. 11–12; see Mt 5.20 n.). **11**: Mt 6.5; Mk 11.25. **12**: *Twice a week,* Mondays and Thursdays. **14**: *Justified* means "accepted by God," "right with God." God receives those who in contrition implore his mercy rather than those who parade their supposed virtues (15.7).

**18.15–19.27: From Galilee to Jerusalem** (Mt 19.1–20.34; Mk 10.1–52).

**18.15–17: Blessing the children** (Mt 19.13–15; 18.3; Mk 10.13–16). **16–17**: God's kingdom is shared by those who depend in trustful simplicity on God. **17**: *As a little child,* with teachable humility.

**18.18–30: The rich ruler** (Mt 19.16–30; Mk 10.17–31). **18**: 10.25. **20**: See Mt 19.18 n. The order of the commandments, varying

than for someone who is rich to enter the kingdom of God."

26 Those who heard it said, "Then who can be saved?" 27He replied, "What is impossible for mortals is possible for God."

28 Then Peter said, "Look, we have left our homes and followed you." 29And he said to them, "Truly I tell you, there is no one who has left house or wife or brothers or parents or children, for the sake of the kingdom of God, 30who will not get back very much more in this age, and in the age to come eternal life."

31 Then he took the twelve aside and said to them, "See, we are going up to Jerusalem, and everything that is written about the Son of Man by the prophets will be accomplished. 32For he will be handed over to the Gentiles; and he will be mocked and insulted and spat upon. 33After they have flogged him, they will kill him, and on the third day he will rise again." 34But they understood nothing about all these things; in fact, what he said was hidden from them, and they did not grasp what was said.

35 As he approached Jericho, a blind man was sitting by the roadside begging. 36When he heard a crowd going by, he asked what was happening. 37They told him, "Jesus of Nazareth[p] is passing by." 38Then he shouted, "Jesus, Son of David, have mercy on me!" 39Those who were in front sternly ordered him to be quiet; but he shouted even more loudly, "Son of David, have mercy on me!" 40Jesus stood still and ordered the man to be brought to him; and when he came near, he asked him, 41"What do you want me to do for you?" He said, "Lord, let me see again." 42Jesus said to him, "Receive your sight; your faith has saved you." 43Immediately he regained his sight and followed him, glorifying God; and all the people, when they saw it, praised God.

19 He entered Jericho and was passing through it. 2A man was there named Zacchaeus; he was a chief tax collector and was rich. 3He was trying to see who Jesus was, but on account of the crowd he could not, because he was short in stature. 4So he ran ahead and climbed a sycamore tree to see him, because he was going to pass that way. 5When Jesus came to the place, he looked up and said to him, "Zacchaeus, hurry and come down; for I must stay at your house today." 6So he hurried down and was happy to welcome him. 7All who saw it began to grumble and said, "He has gone to be the guest of one who is a sinner." 8Zacchaeus stood there and said to the Lord, "Look, half of my possessions, Lord, I will give to the poor; and if I have defrauded anyone of anything, I will pay back four times as much." 9Then Jesus said to him, "Today salvation has come to this house, because he too is a son of Abraham. 10For the Son

*p* Gk *the Nazorean*

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from the Hebrew Scripture, follows the ancient Greek translation of the Old Testament. **22**: See 12.33 n. **25**: See Mk 10.25 n.

**18.26**: To *be saved* refers to the same spiritual experience as to *inherit eternal life* (v. 18), and to *enter the kingdom of God* (v. 25). The heart of this story lies in the questioner's sense of personal lack notwithstanding his opportunity (because of his wealth) to fulfill all ritual requirements. **27**: Gen 18.14; Job 42.2; Jer 32.17; Lk 1.37. **28**: 5.1–11.

**18.31–34**: **The Passion foretold again** (Mt 20.17–19; Mk 10.32–34); compare 9.22, 44–45; 17.25.

**18.35–43**: **A blind man healed** (Mt 20.29–34; Mk 10.46–52). Mt 9.27–31; Mk 8.22; Jn 9.1–3. **42**: See Mt 9.21 n.; Mk 11.23 n., 24 n.

**19.1–10**: **Zacchaeus. 1**: *Jericho* was on a main trade route, and was an important customs center. **2**: As *chief tax collector* Zacchaeus had contracted for the right to collect revenues in the district. His neighbors despised him for thus sharing in the Roman domination (v. 7). **7**: 5.29–30; 15.1–2. **8**: *I will give,* henceforward, a vow. *Four times as much,* Ex 22.1; Lev 6.5; Num 5.6–7. **9**: *Salvation,* or the kingdom of God, *has come* in Jesus' message and Zacchaeus' response (17.20–21; see 18.26 n.). *A son of Abraham,* in spirit as well as by descent.

of Man came to seek out and to save the lost."

11 As they were listening to this, he went on to tell a parable, because he was near Jerusalem, and because they supposed that the kingdom of God was to appear immediately. 12 So he said, "A nobleman went to a distant country to get royal power for himself and then return. 13 He summoned ten of his slaves, and gave them ten pounds,[q] and said to them, 'Do business with these until I come back.' 14 But the citizens of his country hated him and sent a delegation after him, saying, 'We do not want this man to rule over us.' 15 When he returned, having received royal power, he ordered these slaves, to whom he had given the money, to be summoned so that he might find out what they had gained by trading. 16 The first came forward and said, 'Lord, your pound has made ten more pounds.' 17 He said to him, 'Well done, good slave! Because you have been trustworthy in a very small thing, take charge of ten cities.' 18 Then the second came, saying, 'Lord, your pound has made five pounds.' 19 He said to him, 'And you, rule over five cities.' 20 Then the other came, saying, 'Lord, here is your pound. I wrapped it up in a piece of cloth, 21 for I was afraid of you, because you are a harsh man; you take what you did not deposit, and reap what you did not sow.' 22 He said to him, 'I will judge you by your own words, you wicked slave! You knew, did you, that I was a harsh man, taking what I did not deposit and reaping what I did not sow? 23 Why then did you not put my money into the bank? Then when I returned, I could have collected it with interest.' 24 He said to the bystanders, 'Take the pound from him and give it to the one who has ten pounds.' 25 (And they said to him, 'Lord, he has ten pounds!') 26 'I tell you, to all those who have, more will be given; but from those who have nothing, even what they have will be taken away. 27 But as for these enemies of mine who did not want me to be king over them—bring them here and slaughter them in my presence.' "

28 After he had said this, he went on ahead, going up to Jerusalem.

29 When he had come near Bethphage and Bethany, at the place called the Mount of Olives, he sent two of the disciples, 30 saying, "Go into the village ahead of you, and as you enter it you will find tied there a colt that has never been ridden. Untie it and bring it here. 31 If anyone asks you, 'Why are you untying it?' just say this, 'The Lord needs it.' " 32 So those who were sent departed and found it as he had told them. 33 As they were untying the colt, its owners asked them, "Why are you untying the colt?" 34 They said, "The Lord needs it." 35 Then they brought it to Jesus; and after throwing their cloaks on the colt, they set Jesus on it. 36 As he rode along, people kept spreading their cloaks on the road. 37 As he was now approaching the path down from the Mount of Olives, the whole multitude of the disciples began to praise God joyfully with a loud voice for all the deeds of power that they had seen, 38 saying,

"Blessed is the king
who comes in the name of
the Lord!
Peace in heaven,

*q* The mina, rendered here by *pound*, was about three months' wages for a laborer

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**19.11–27**: **Parable of the pounds.** Compare the somewhat similar parable of the talents (Mt 25.14–30). **11**: 9.51 n.; 13.22; 17.11; 18.31. **12**: The details here may reflect contemporary events. **13**: *Ten*, only three are mentioned later. **17**: 16.10. **21**: *You take . . . deposit*, probably a current proverbial expression for a grasping person. **26**: See Mt 13.12 n. **27**: Though all are judged, only the hostile are punished.

**19.28–23.56**: **The last week** (Mt 21.1–27.66; Mk 11.1–15.47).

**19.28–44**: **Palm Sunday** (Mt 21.1–9; Mk 11.1–10). Jn 12.12–18. **32**: 22.13. **35**: See Mk 11.1 n. **36**: 2 Kings 9.13. **37**: The road traversed a ridge into the valley of the Kidron. **38**: Ps 118.26; Zech 9.9; Lk 13.35. **39–40**: Mt 21.15–16; Hab 2.11.

and glory in the highest
heaven!"

39 Some of the Pharisees in the crowd said to him, "Teacher, order your disciples to stop." 40 He answered, "I tell you, if these were silent, the stones would shout out."

41 As he came near and saw the city, he wept over it, 42 saying, "If you, even you, had only recognized on this day the things that make for peace! But now they are hidden from your eyes. 43 Indeed, the days will come upon you, when your enemies will set up ramparts around you and surround you, and hem you in on every side. 44 They will crush you to the ground, you and your children within you, and they will not leave within you one stone upon another; because you did not recognize the time of your visitation from God."[r]

45 Then he entered the temple and began to drive out those who were selling things there; 46 and he said, "It is written,

'My house shall be a house
of prayer';
but you have made it a den
of robbers."

47 Every day he was teaching in the temple. The chief priests, the scribes, and the leaders of the people kept looking for a way to kill him; 48 but they did not find anything they could do, for all the people were spellbound by what they heard.

20 One day, as he was teaching the people in the temple and telling the good news, the chief priests and the scribes came with the elders 2 and said to him, "Tell us, by what authority are you doing these things? Who is it who gave you this authority?" 3 He answered them, "I will also ask you a question, and you tell me: 4 Did the baptism of John come from heaven, or was it of human origin?" 5 They discussed it with one another, saying, "If we say, 'From heaven,' he will say, 'Why did you not believe him?' 6 But if we say, 'Of human origin,' all the people will stone us; for they are convinced that John was a prophet." 7 So they answered that they did not know where it came from. 8 Then Jesus said to them, "Neither will I tell you by what authority I am doing these things."

9 He began to tell the people this parable: "A man planted a vineyard, and leased it to tenants, and went to another country for a long time. 10 When the season came, he sent a slave to the tenants in order that they might give him his share of the produce of the vineyard; but the tenants beat him and sent him away empty-handed. 11 Next he sent another slave; that one also they beat and insulted and sent away empty-handed. 12 And he sent still a third; this one also they wounded and threw out. 13 Then the owner of the vineyard said, 'What shall I do? I will send my beloved son; perhaps they will respect him.' 14 But when the tenants saw him, they discussed it among themselves and said, 'This is the heir; let us kill him so that the inheritance may be ours.' 15 So they threw him out of the vineyard and killed him. What then will the owner of the vineyard do to them? 16 He will come and destroy those tenants and give the vineyard to others." When they heard this, they said, "Heaven forbid!" 17 But he looked at them and said, "What then does this text mean:

r Gk lacks *from God*

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**19.41**: 13.33–34. **43**: 21.20–24; 21.6; Isa 29.3; Jer 6.6; Ezek 4.2. *Your enemies,* the Roman armies. *Ramparts,* a palisade, which would keep out all supplies of food. **44**: Ps 137.8–9; Hos 10.14–15; 13.16; see 1 Pet 2.12 n. *Your children,* the city's inhabitants. *The time of your visitation,* the time of Christ's ministry.

**19.45–46**: **Cleansing the temple** (Mt 21.12–13; Mk 11.15–19; Jn 2.13–17). **45**: See Mt 21.12 n.; Ex 30.13; Lev 1.14. **46**: Isa 56.7; Jer 7.11.

**20.1–8**: **On Jesus' authority** (Mt 21.23–27; Mk 11.27–33; Jn 2.18–22).

**20.9–19**: **Parable of the vineyard** (Mt 21.33–46; Mk 12.1–12). **9**: Isa 5.1–7; Mt 25.14. **13**: The use of *beloved* (not present in Matthew and Mark) identifies the *son* with Jesus. **16**: Acts 13.46; 18.6; 28.28. **17**: Ps 118.22–23; Acts 4.11; 1 Pet 2.7.

'The stone that the builders
rejected
has become the cornerstone'?[s]
18 Everyone who falls on that stone will be broken to pieces; and it will crush anyone on whom it falls." 19 When the scribes and chief priests realized that he had told this parable against them, they wanted to lay hands on him at that very hour, but they feared the people.

20 So they watched him and sent spies who pretended to be honest, in order to trap him by what he said, so as to hand him over to the jurisdiction and authority of the governor. 21 So they asked him, "Teacher, we know that you are right in what you say and teach, and you show deference to no one, but teach the way of God in accordance with truth. 22 Is it lawful for us to pay taxes to the emperor, or not?" 23 But he perceived their craftiness and said to them, 24 "Show me a denarius. Whose head and whose title does it bear?" They said, "The emperor's." 25 He said to them, "Then give to the emperor the things that are the emperor's, and to God the things that are God's." 26 And they were not able in the presence of the people to trap him by what he said; and being amazed by his answer, they became silent.

27 Some Sadducees, those who say there is no resurrection, came to him 28 and asked him a question, "Teacher, Moses wrote for us that if a man's brother dies, leaving a wife but no children, the man[t] shall marry the widow and raise up children for his brother. 29 Now there were seven brothers; the first married, and died childless; 30 then the second 31 and the third married her, and so in the same way all seven died childless. 32 Finally the woman also died. 33 In the resurrection, therefore, whose wife will the woman be? For the seven had married her."

34 Jesus said to them, "Those who belong to this age marry and are given in marriage; 35 but those who are considered worthy of a place in that age and in the resurrection from the dead neither marry nor are given in marriage. 36 Indeed they cannot die anymore, because they are like angels and are children of God, being children of the resurrection. 37 And the fact that the dead are raised Moses himself showed, in the story about the bush, where he speaks of the Lord as the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob. 38 Now he is God not of the dead, but of the living; for to him all of them are alive." 39 Then some of the scribes answered, "Teacher, you have spoken well." 40 For they no longer dared to ask him another question.

41 Then he said to them, "How can they say that the Messiah[u] is David's son? 42 For David himself says in the book of Psalms,

'The Lord said to my Lord,
"Sit at my right hand,
43 until I make your enemies your
footstool." '

44 David thus calls him Lord; so how can he be his son?"

45 In the hearing of all the people he

*s* Or *keystone* *t* Gk *his brother* *u* Or *the Christ*

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**20.18**: Isa 8.14–15. **19**: Lk 19.47.

**20.20–26**: **Paying taxes to Caesar** (Mt 22.15–22; Mk 12.13–17). **20**: *Honest* translates a Greek word which normally means "correct according to the law," i.e. "righteous." It is used here in the same sense of false pretense that it has in Mt 23.28. **25**: Rom 13.7; Lk 23.2.

**20.27–40**: **Question about the resurrection.** (Mt 22.23–33; Mk 12.18–27). **27**: Acts 4.1–2; 23.6–10. **28**: Deut 25.5; Gen 38.8.

**20.34–36**: Luke makes the same point as Matthew and Mark, but in somewhat different language: human relations in the home do not exist in the same way beyond death. Jesus distinguishes two ages and kinds of existence. Mortals are part of this age by the fact of physical birth, and of the age to come by resurrection (v. 36; Rom 1.4). **38**: God is not frustrated by physical death. **39**: Mk 12.28. **40**: Mk 12.34; Mt 22.46.

**20.41–44**: **David's son** (Mt 22.41–46; Mk 12.35–37). **42**: Ps 110.1; see Mt 22.44 n. **44**: The question is: How can the Messiah be David's descendant if David calls him *Lord?*

said to the[v] disciples, 46"Beware of the scribes, who like to walk around in long robes, and love to be greeted with respect in the marketplaces, and to have the best seats in the synagogues and places of honor at banquets. 47They devour widows' houses and for the sake of appearance say long prayers. They will receive the greater condemnation."

21 He looked up and saw rich people putting their gifts into the treasury; 2he also saw a poor widow put in two small copper coins. 3He said, "Truly I tell you, this poor widow has put in more than all of them; 4for all of them have contributed out of their abundance, but she out of her poverty has put in all she had to live on."

5 When some were speaking about the temple, how it was adorned with beautiful stones and gifts dedicated to God, he said, 6"As for these things that you see, the days will come when not one stone will be left upon another; all will be thrown down."

7 They asked him, "Teacher, when will this be, and what will be the sign that this is about to take place?" 8And he said, "Beware that you are not led astray; for many will come in my name and say, 'I am he!'[w] and, 'The time is near!'[x] Do not go after them.

9 "When you hear of wars and insurrections, do not be terrified; for these things must take place first, but the end will not follow immediately." 10Then he said to them, "Nation will rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom; 11there will be great earthquakes, and in various places famines and plagues; and there will be dreadful portents and great signs from heaven.

12 "But before all this occurs, they will arrest you and persecute you; they will hand you over to synagogues and prisons, and you will be brought before kings and governors because of my name. 13This will give you an opportunity to testify. 14So make up your minds not to prepare your defense in advance; 15for I will give you words[y] and a wisdom that none of your opponents will be able to withstand or contradict. 16You will be betrayed even by parents and brothers, by relatives and friends; and they will put some of you to death. 17You will be hated by all because of my name. 18But not a hair of your head will perish. 19By your endurance you will gain your souls.

20 "When you see Jerusalem surrounded by armies, then know that its desolation has come near.[z] 21Then those in Judea must flee to the mountains, and those inside the city must leave it, and those out in the country must not enter it; 22for these are days of vengeance, as a fulfillment of all that is written. 23Woe to those who are pregnant and to those who are nursing infants in those days! For there will be great distress on the earth and wrath against this people; 24they will fall by the edge of the sword and be taken away as captives among all nations; and Jerusalem will be trampled on by the

*v* Other ancient authorities read *his* *w* Gk *I am* *x* Or *at hand* *y* Gk *a mouth* *z* Or *is at hand*

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**20.45–47**: **On pride and humility.** **45**: Mt 23.1; Mk 12.37. **46**: Mt 23.6; see Mk 12.39 n.; Lk 11.43; 14.7–11.

**21.1–4**: **The widow's offering** (Mk 12.41–44). **1**: *The treasury* refers here to a container (shaped like an inverted trumpet for protection against theft; see Mk 12.41 n.) to receive offerings; in Jn 8.20 to a room in the temple. **2**: The *copper coin* (lepton) was of little monetary value (see 12.59 n.) but of great spiritual significance because of its cost to this giver.

**21.5–7**: **Destruction of the temple foretold** (Mt 24.1–3; Mk 13.1–2). **5**: See Mt 24.1 n. **6**: See Mk 13.2 n. **7**: 17.20; Acts 1.6.

**21.8–36**: **On the end of the age** (Mt 24.4–36; Mk 13.3–37). **8**: 17.23; Mk 13.21; 1 Jn 2.18. **10**: 2 Chr 15.6; Isa 19.2. **12–17**: Mt 10.17–22.

**21.12**: Acts 25.24; Jn 16.2. **13**: Phil 1.12. **14–15**: 12.11–12. **16**: 12.52–53. **17**: Mt 10.22; Jn 15.18–25. **18**: 12.7; Mt 10.30; Acts 27.34; 1 Sam 14.45. **19**: *Gain your souls,* Mk 13.13; Mt 10.22; Rev 2.7.

**21.20–22**: 19.41–44; 23.28–31; 17.31. **20**: *Armies,* the Roman legions. **24**: Rom 11.25; Isa 63.18; Dan 8.13; Rev 11.2. *The times of the Gentiles* represent spiritual opportunity that

Gentiles, until the times of the Gentiles are fulfilled.

25 "There will be signs in the sun, the moon, and the stars, and on the earth distress among nations confused by the roaring of the sea and the waves. 26 People will faint from fear and foreboding of what is coming upon the world, for the powers of the heavens will be shaken. 27 Then they will see 'the Son of Man coming in a cloud' with power and great glory. 28 Now when these things begin to take place, stand up and raise your heads, because your redemption is drawing near."

29 Then he told them a parable: "Look at the fig tree and all the trees; 30 as soon as they sprout leaves you can see for yourselves and know that summer is already near. 31 So also, when you see these things taking place, you know that the kingdom of God is near. 32 Truly I tell you, this generation will not pass away until all things have taken place. 33 Heaven and earth will pass away, but my words will not pass away.

34 "Be on guard so that your hearts are not weighed down with dissipation and drunkenness and the worries of this life, and that day does not catch you unexpectedly, 35 like a trap. For it will come upon all who live on the face of the whole earth. 36 Be alert at all times, praying that you may have the strength to escape all these things that will take place, and to stand before the Son of Man."

37 Every day he was teaching in the temple, and at night he would go out and spend the night on the Mount of Olives, as it was called. 38 And all the people would get up early in the morning to listen to him in the temple.

22 Now the festival of Unleavened Bread, which is called the Passover, was near. 2 The chief priests and the scribes were looking for a way to put Jesus[a] to death, for they were afraid of the people.

3 Then Satan entered into Judas called Iscariot, who was one of the twelve; 4 he went away and conferred with the chief priests and officers of the temple police about how he might betray him to them. 5 They were greatly pleased and agreed to give him money. 6 So he consented and began to look for an opportunity to betray him to them when no crowd was present.

7 Then came the day of Unleavened Bread, on which the Passover lamb had to be sacrificed. 8 So Jesus[b] sent Peter and John, saying, "Go and prepare the Passover meal for us that we may eat it." 9 They asked him, "Where do you want us to make preparations for it?" 10 "Listen," he said to them, "when you have entered the city, a man carrying a jar of water will meet you; follow him into the house he enters 11 and say to the owner of the house, 'The teacher asks you, "Where is the guest room, where I may eat the Passover with my disciples?"' 12 He will show you a large room upstairs, already furnished. Make preparations for us there." 13 So they went and

*a* Gk *him* *b* Gk *he*

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God previously had given Jews and now extends to non-Jews (20.16; Mk 13.10; Rom 11.25). **25**: Rev 6.12–13; Isa 13.10; Joel 2.10; Zeph 1.15. **27**: Dan 7.13–14. **28**: *Redemption,* 2.38; Eph 4.30. **33**: 16.17.

**21.34**: 8.14; 12.22, 45; Mk 4.19; 1 Thess 5.6–7. **36**: Mt 7.21–23; Mk 13.33; 2 Cor 5.10. **37**: Mt 21.17; Mk 11.19; Lk 19.47. **38**: The story of the woman caught in adultery appears after this verse in some ancient manuscripts; see Jn 8.11, note *k*.

**22.1–23.56**: **Jesus' death** (Mt 26.1–27.66; Mk 14.1–15.47; Jn 13.1–19.42). **22.1–2**: Mt 26.2–5; Mk 14.1–2; Jn 11.47–53. The word "called" is a concession to the Gentile readers for whom Luke wrote. **3–6**: Mt 26.14–16; Mk 14.10–11; Jn 13.2. **5**: See Mt 26.15 n.

**22.7–38**: **The Last Supper. 7–13**: Mt 26.17–19; Mk 14.12–16. **7**: Ex 12.18–20; Deut 16.5–8. **10**: The plans rest on some prearrangement, apparently; a man carrying a jar of water would be doing woman's work and would be readily noticeable. The procedure hid the intended place of the meal from Jesus' enemies. **11**: The identity of the householder is unknown (see Mk 14.51 n.). **12**: The *large room upstairs* was on the second floor, probably served by an outside staircase.

**22.14–23**: Mt 26.20–29; Mk 14.17–25; Jn 13.21–30. **14**: *The hour,* of the meal, after sun-

found everything as he had told them; and they prepared the Passover meal.

14 When the hour came, he took his place at the table, and the apostles with him. 15He said to them, "I have eagerly desired to eat this Passover with you before I suffer; 16for I tell you, I will not eat it[c] until it is fulfilled in the kingdom of God." 17Then he took a cup, and after giving thanks he said, "Take this and divide it among yourselves; 18for I tell you that from now on I will not drink of the fruit of the vine until the kingdom of God comes." 19Then he took a loaf of bread, and when he had given thanks, he broke it and gave it to them, saying, "This is my body, which is given for you. Do this in remembrance of me." 20And he did the same with the cup after supper, saying, "This cup that is poured out for you is the new covenant in my blood.[d] 21But see, the one who betrays me is with me, and his hand is on the table. 22For the Son of Man is going as it has been determined, but woe to that one by whom he is betrayed!" 23Then they began to ask one another which one of them it could be who would do this.

24 A dispute also arose among them as to which one of them was to be regarded as the greatest. 25But he said to them, "The kings of the Gentiles lord it over them; and those in authority over them are called benefactors. 26But not so with you; rather the greatest among you must become like the youngest, and the leader like one who serves. 27For who is greater, the one who is at the table or the one who serves? Is it not the one at the table? But I am among you as one who serves.

28 "You are those who have stood by me in my trials; 29and I confer on you, just as my Father has conferred on me, a kingdom, 30so that you may eat and drink at my table in my kingdom, and you will sit on thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel.

31 "Simon, Simon, listen! Satan has demanded[e] to sift all of you like wheat, 32but I have prayed for you that your own faith may not fail; and you, when once you have turned back, strengthen your brothers." 33And he said to him, "Lord, I am ready to go with you to prison and to death!" 34Jesus[f] said, "I tell you, Peter, the cock will not crow this day, until you have denied three times that you know me."

35 He said to them, "When I sent you out without a purse, bag, or sandals, did you lack anything?" They said, "No, not a thing." 36He said to them, "But now, the one who has a purse must take it, and likewise a bag. And the one who has no sword must sell his cloak and buy one.

*c* Other ancient authorities read *never eat it again*
*d* Other ancient authorities lack, in whole or in part, verses 19b-20 (*which is given . . . in my blood*)
*e* Or *has obtained permission* *f* Gk *He*

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down. **15**: 12.49–50. **16**: Jesus thinks of the meal as pointing forward to the meal celebrating the fulfilling of God's kingdom (13.28–29; 14.15; 22.28–30). **17**: Some Jewish meals included prayers over the cup of wine and several such prayers might be offered during the meal (see v. 20). Luke's order of events may be related to this fact, or to variations among early Christians in the way they observed the Lord's supper. Jesus transformed a Jewish devotional meal into a continuing expression of association with himself in death and victory. **19**: 1 Cor 11.23–26. **21**: Ps 41.9; Jn 13.21–30.

**22.24–30**: Mt 20.25–28; Mk 10.42–45. **24**: 9.46; Mk 9.34; Jn 13.3–16. **25**: *Benefactors*, a title bestowed on Hellenistic kings. **26**: See Mk 9.35 n. **28**: *My trials*, 4.13; Heb 2.18; 4.15. **29**: Mk 14.25; Heb 9.20. **30**: Mk 10.37; Rev 3.21; 20.4.

**22.31–34**: Mt 26.33–35; Mk 14.29–31; Jn 13.37–38. **31**: Job 1.6–12; Am 9.9. **32**: *You* in this verse is singular number (contrast v. 31). **34**: Verses 54–62.

**22.35**: 10.4. **36**: An example of Jesus' fondness for striking metaphors (see Mt 23.24; Mk 10.25), but the disciples take it literally. The *sword* apparently meant to Jesus a preparation to live by one's own resources against hostility. The natural meaning of v. 38 is that the disciples supposed he spoke of an actual sword, only to learn that two swords were sufficient for the whole enterprise, i.e. were not to be used at all. **37**: Isa 53.12.

37 For I tell you, this scripture must be fulfilled in me, 'And he was counted among the lawless'; and indeed what is written about me is being fulfilled." 38 They said, "Lord, look, here are two swords." He replied, "It is enough."

39 He came out and went, as was his custom, to the Mount of Olives; and the disciples followed him. 40 When he reached the place, he said to them, "Pray that you may not come into the time of trial."[g] 41 Then he withdrew from them about a stone's throw, knelt down, and prayed, 42 "Father, if you are willing, remove this cup from me; yet, not my will but yours be done." ‖ 43 Then an angel from heaven appeared to him and gave him strength. 44 In his anguish he prayed more earnestly, and his sweat became like great drops of blood falling down on the ground.‖[h] 45 When he got up from prayer, he came to the disciples and found them sleeping because of grief, 46 and he said to them, "Why are you sleeping? Get up and pray that you may not come into the time of trial."[g]

47 While he was still speaking, suddenly a crowd came, and the one called Judas, one of the twelve, was leading them. He approached Jesus to kiss him; 48 but Jesus said to him, "Judas, is it with a kiss that you are betraying the Son of Man?" 49 When those who were around him saw what was coming, they asked, "Lord, should we strike with the sword?" 50 Then one of them struck the slave of the high priest and cut off his right ear. 51 But Jesus said, "No more of this!" And he touched his ear and healed him. 52 Then Jesus said to the chief priests, the officers of the temple police, and the elders who had come for him, "Have you come out with swords and clubs as if I were a bandit? 53 When I was with you day after day in the temple, you did not lay hands on me. But this is your hour, and the power of darkness!"

54 Then they seized him and led him away, bringing him into the high priest's house. But Peter was following at a distance. 55 When they had kindled a fire in the middle of the courtyard and sat down together, Peter sat among them. 56 Then a servant-girl, seeing him in the firelight, stared at him and said, "This man also was with him." 57 But he denied it, saying, "Woman, I do not know him." 58 A little later someone else, on seeing him, said, "You also are one of them." But Peter said, "Man, I am not!" 59 Then about an hour later still another kept insisting, "Surely this man also was with him; for he is a Galilean." 60 But Peter said, "Man, I do not know what you are talking about!" At that moment, while he was still speaking, the cock crowed. 61 The Lord turned and looked at Peter. Then Peter remembered the word of the Lord, how he had said to him, "Before the cock crows today, you will deny me three times." 62 And he went out and wept bitterly.

63 Now the men who were holding Jesus began to mock him and beat him; 64 they also blindfolded him and kept ask-

*g* Or *into temptation* *h* Other ancient authorities lack verses 43 and 44

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**22.39–53: Gethsemane. 39–46:** Mt 26.30, 36–46; Mk 14.26, 32–42. **39:** Jn 18.1–2. **41:** Heb 5.7–8; Lk 11.4. **42:** *Cup,* metaphor for that which is allotted by God, whether blessing (Ps 16.5; 116.13) or judgment (Isa 51.17; Lam 4.21). It here refers to Jesus' suffering and death: see Mt 20.22; Mk 10.38. **43–44:** Although it is probable that these verses were not part of the original Gospel of Luke (since important early manuscripts lack them), they were known to Christian writers of the second century and reflect tradition from the first century concerning the sufferings of Jesus. **43:** Mt 4.11; see Acts 12.15 n. **44:** 2 Cor 8.9; Phil 2.6–8; Heb 2.9, 17–18; 4.15; 5.8; 1 Pet 2.21–24; 4.1.

**22.47–53:** Mt 26.47–56; Mk 14.43–52; Jn 18.3–11. **47:** See Mt 26.50 n. **52:** Only Luke says that the prospect of arresting Jesus had attracted the leaders of the Jewish religion (compare Mt 26.47, 57; Mk 14.43; Jn 18.3).

**22.54–71: Jesus before Caiaphas. 54–55:** Jn 18.12–16. **56–62:** Jn 18.16–18, 25–27. **59:** See Mt 26.73 n. **61:** 7.13; 22.34.

**22.63–65:** Jn 18.22–24. **66:** See Mt 27.1 n.

**23.1–5, 13–25: Jesus before Pilate. 1:** Mt

ing him, "Prophesy! Who is it that struck you?" [65]They kept heaping many other insults on him.

66 When day came, the assembly of the elders of the people, both chief priests and scribes, gathered together, and they brought him to their council. [67]They said, "If you are the Messiah,[i] tell us." He replied, "If I tell you, you will not believe; [68]and if I question you, you will not answer. [69]But from now on the Son of Man will be seated at the right hand of the power of God." [70]All of them asked, "Are you, then, the Son of God?" He said to them, "You say that I am." [71]Then they said, "What further testimony do we need? We have heard it ourselves from his own lips!"

23 Then the assembly rose as a body and brought Jesus[j] before Pilate. [2]They began to accuse him, saying, "We found this man perverting our nation, forbidding us to pay taxes to the emperor, and saying that he himself is the Messiah, a king."[k] [3]Then Pilate asked him, "Are you the king of the Jews?" He answered, "You say so." [4]Then Pilate said to the chief priests and the crowds, "I find no basis for an accusation against this man." [5]But they were insistent and said, "He stirs up the people by teaching throughout all Judea, from Galilee where he began even to this place."

6 When Pilate heard this, he asked whether the man was a Galilean. [7]And when he learned that he was under Herod's jurisdiction, he sent him off to Herod, who was himself in Jerusalem at that time. [8]When Herod saw Jesus, he was very glad, for he had been wanting to see him for a long time, because he had heard about him and was hoping to see him perform some sign. [9]He questioned him at some length, but Jesus[l] gave him no answer. [10]The chief priests and the scribes stood by, vehemently accusing him. [11]Even Herod with his soldiers treated him with contempt and mocked him; then he put an elegant robe on him, and sent him back to Pilate. [12]That same day Herod and Pilate became friends with each other; before this they had been enemies.

13 Pilate then called together the chief priests, the leaders, and the people, [14]and said to them, "You brought me this man as one who was perverting the people; and here I have examined him in your presence and have not found this man guilty of any of your charges against him. [15]Neither has Herod, for he sent him back to us. Indeed, he has done nothing to deserve death. [16]I will therefore have him flogged and release him."[m]

18 Then they all shouted out together, "Away with this fellow! Release Barabbas for us!" [19](This was a man who had been put in prison for an insurrection that had taken place in the city, and for murder.) [20]Pilate, wanting to release Jesus, addressed them again; [21]but they kept shouting, "Crucify, crucify him!" [22]A third time he said to them, "Why, what evil has he done? I have found in him no ground for the sentence of death; I will therefore have him flogged and then release him." [23]But they kept urgently demanding with loud shouts that he should be crucified; and their voices prevailed. [24]So Pilate gave his verdict that their demand should be granted. [25]He released the man they asked for, the

*i* Or *the Christ* *j* Gk *him* *k* Or *is an anointed king* *l* Gk *he* *m* Here, or after verse 19, other ancient authorities add verse 17, *Now he was obliged to release someone for them at the festival*

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27.1–2; Mk 15.1; Jn 18.28. **2**: 20.25. The charge is phrased to sound like treason. **3**: Mt 27.11–12; Mk 15.2–3; Jn 18.29–38; Lk 22.70. **4**: 23.14, 22, 41; Mt 27.24; Jn 19.4, 6; Acts 13.28. Pilate refused to take religious ideas in a political sense. Here and in the following verses Luke seems anxious to show that Pilate sought to free Jesus, but yielded at length to pressures.

**23.6–12: Jesus before Herod Antipas.** This episode is reported only by Luke. *Herod* was a son of Herod the Great (see 3.1 n.). **8**: 9.9; Acts 4.27–28. **9**: Mk 15.5. **11**: Mk 15.17–19; Jn 19.2–3. **14**: Verses 4, 22, 41. **16**: Jn 19.12–14.

**23.18–25**: Mt 27.20–26; Mk 15.11–15; Jn 18.38–40; 19.14–16; Acts 3.13–14.

one who had been put in prison for insurrection and murder, and he handed Jesus over as they wished.

26 As they led him away, they seized a man, Simon of Cyrene, who was coming from the country, and they laid the cross on him, and made him carry it behind Jesus. 27 A great number of the people followed him, and among them were women who were beating their breasts and wailing for him. 28 But Jesus turned to them and said, "Daughters of Jerusalem, do not weep for me, but weep for yourselves and for your children. 29 For the days are surely coming when they will say, 'Blessed are the barren, and the wombs that never bore, and the breasts that never nursed.' 30 Then they will begin to say to the mountains, 'Fall on us'; and to the hills, 'Cover us.' 31 For if they do this when the wood is green, what will happen when it is dry?"

32 Two others also, who were criminals, were led away to be put to death with him. 33 When they came to the place that is called The Skull, they crucified Jesus[n] there with the criminals, one on his right and one on his left. [[34 Then Jesus said, "Father, forgive them; for they do not know what they are doing."]][o] And they cast lots to divide his clothing. 35 And the people stood by, watching; but the leaders scoffed at him, saying, "He saved others; let him save himself if he is the Messiah[p] of God, his chosen one!" 36 The soldiers also mocked him, coming up and offering him sour wine, 37 and saying, "If you are the King of the Jews, save yourself!" 38 There was also an inscription over him,[q] "This is the King of the Jews."

39 One of the criminals who were hanged there kept deriding[r] him and saying, "Are you not the Messiah?[p] Save yourself and us!" 40 But the other rebuked him, saying, "Do you not fear God, since you are under the same sentence of condemnation? 41 And we indeed have been condemned justly, for we are getting what we deserve for our deeds, but this man has done nothing wrong." 42 Then he said, "Jesus, remember me when you come into[s] your kingdom." 43 He replied, "Truly I tell you, today you will be with me in Paradise."

44 It was now about noon, and darkness came over the whole land[t] until three in the afternoon, 45 while the sun's light failed;[u] and the curtain of the temple was torn in two. 46 Then Jesus, crying with a loud voice, said, "Father, into your hands I commend my spirit." Having said this, he breathed his last. 47 When the centurion saw what had taken place, he praised God and said, "Certainly this man was innocent."[v] 48 And when all the crowds who had gathered there for this spectacle saw what had taken place, they returned home, beating their breasts. 49 But all his acquaintances, including the

*n* Gk *him* *o* Other ancient authorities lack the sentence *Then Jesus . . . what they are doing* *p* Or *the Christ* *q* Other ancient authorities add *written in Greek and Latin and Hebrew* (that is, *Aramaic*) *r* Or *blaspheming* *s* Other ancient authorities read *in* *t* Or *earth* *u* Or *the sun was eclipsed*. Other ancient authorities read *the sun was darkened* *v* Or *righteous*

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**23.26–56: The crucifixion. 26**: See Mt 27.32 n.; Mk 15.21 n.; Jn 19.17. **28–32**: 21.23–24; 19.41–44. **30**: Hos 10.8. **31**: A proverbial saying which, in this context, probably means: If the innocent Jesus meets such a fate, what will be the fate of the guilty Jerusalem (v. 28)? Compare 1 Pet 4.17–18. **33–43**: Mt 27.33–44; Mk 15.22–32; Jn 19.17–24. **34**: Num 15.27–31; Acts 7.60; Ps 22.18. **35**: 4.23. **36**: Ps 69.21; see Mt 27.48 n.; Mk 15.23. **41**: Verses 4, 14, 22. **42**: The robber's appeal may be based on the charge against Jesus (vv. 2, 3, 38); he thinks in terms of 21.27–28. Jesus promises him much more than he had asked, intimating also that God's kingly power is a present reality, not merely future (Mt 6.10). **43**: *Paradise* (like "Abraham's bosom" in 16.22) was a contemporary Jewish term for the lodging place of the righteous dead prior to resurrection. **43**: 2 Cor 12.3; Rev 2.7.

**23.44–49**: Mt 27.45–56; Mk 15.33–41; Jn 19.25–30. **44**: See Mt 27.45 n. **45**: Ex 26.31–35; Heb 9.8; 10.19–20. *The sun's light failed,* the translation is uncertain; see note *u*. **46**: Ps 31.5. **48**: The cause of this popular agitation is not clear (Zech 12.10). **49**: 8.1–3; 23.55–56; 24.10; Ps 38.11. **50–56**: Mt 27.57–61; Mk 15.42–47; Jn 19.38–42; Acts 13.29. **51**: The

women who had followed him from Galilee, stood at a distance, watching these things.

50 Now there was a good and righteous man named Joseph, who, though a member of the council, 51 had not agreed to their plan and action. He came from the Jewish town of Arimathea, and he was waiting expectantly for the kingdom of God. 52 This man went to Pilate and asked for the body of Jesus. 53 Then he took it down, wrapped it in a linen cloth, and laid it in a rock-hewn tomb where no one had ever been laid. 54 It was the day of Preparation, and the sabbath was beginning. [w] 55 The women who had come with him from Galilee followed, and they saw the tomb and how his body was laid. 56 Then they returned, and prepared spices and ointments.

On the sabbath they rested according to the commandment.

24 But on the first day of the week, at early dawn, they came to the tomb, taking the spices that they had prepared. 2 They found the stone rolled away from the tomb, 3 but when they went in, they did not find the body. [x] 4 While they were perplexed about this, suddenly two men in dazzling clothes stood beside them. 5 The women [y] were terrified and bowed their faces to the ground, but the men [z] said to them, "Why do you look for the living among the dead? He is not here, but has risen. [a] 6 Remember how he told you, while he was still in Galilee, 7 that the Son of Man must be handed over to sinners, and be crucified, and on the third day rise again." 8 Then they remembered his words, 9 and returning from the tomb, they told all this to the eleven and to all the rest. 10 Now it was Mary Magdalene, Joanna, Mary the mother of James, and the other women with them who told this to the apostles. 11 But these words seemed to them an idle tale, and they did not believe them. 12 But Peter got up and ran to the tomb; stooping and looking in, he saw the linen cloths by themselves; then he went home, amazed at what had happened. [b]

13 Now on that same day two of them were going to a village called Emmaus, about seven miles [c] from Jerusalem, 14 and talking with each other about all these things that had happened. 15 While they were talking and discussing, Jesus himself came near and went with them, 16 but their eyes were kept from recognizing him. 17 And he said to them, "What are you discussing with each other while you walk along?" They stood still, looking sad. [d] 18 Then one of them, whose name was Cleopas, answered him, "Are you the only stranger in Jerusalem who does not know the things that have taken place there in these days?" 19 He asked them, "What things?" They replied, "The things about Jesus of Nazareth, [e] who was a prophet mighty in deed and word before God and all the people, 20 and how our chief priests and leaders handed him over to be con-

*w* Gk *was dawning* *x* Other ancient authorities add *of the Lord Jesus* *y* Gk *They* *z* Gk *but they* *a* Other ancient authorities lack *He is not here, but has risen* *b* Other ancient authorities lack verse 12 *c* Gk *sixty stadia;* other ancient authorities read *a hundred sixty stadia* *d* Other ancient authorities read *walk along, looking sad?"* *e* Other ancient authorities read *Jesus the Nazorean*

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council was the Sanhedrin (see Jn 11.47 n.). **52**: Mt 27.58. **53**: Acts 13.29. **54**: *The sabbath* began at sundown. Luke, having non-Jewish readers in mind, wishes to indicate the urgency of the burial in Jewish custom. **56**: Mk 16.1; Ex 12.16; 20.10.

**24.1–12**: **The first Easter** (Mt 28.1–10; Mk 16.1–8; Jn 20.1, 11–18). **1**: See Mk 16.1 n. **2**: See Mk 16.3 n. **4**: See Mk 16.5 n. **6**: 9.22; 13.32–33. *You* here suggests that Jesus' disciples as a group often included others than those of the inner circle. **9**: See Mt 28.8 n.; Mk 16.8. **10**: Mk 16.1; Lk 8.1–3; Jn 19.25; 20.2. **12**: This verse (see note *b*), though appearing in valuable ancient manuscripts, seems to be an addition to the original text of Luke based on Jn 20.3–10.

**24.13–35**: **On the road to Emmaus. 16**: See Mt 16.17 n.; Jn 20.14; 21.4. The distinction is between perception and recognition. **19**: Mt 21.11; Lk 7.16; 13.33; Acts 3.22; 10.38. **25**: Mk 12.24. **26**: *Necessary* because of the

demned to death and crucified him. 21 But we had hoped that he was the one to redeem Israel.[f] Yes, and besides all this, it is now the third day since these things took place. 22 Moreover, some women of our group astounded us. They were at the tomb early this morning. 23 and when they did not find his body there, they came back and told us that they had indeed seen a vision of angels who said that he was alive. 24 Some of those who were with us went to the tomb and found it just as the women had said; but they did not see him." 25 Then he said to them, "Oh, how foolish you are, and how slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have declared! 26 Was it not necessary that the Messiah[g] should suffer these things and then enter into his glory?" 27 Then beginning with Moses and all the prophets, he interpreted to them the things about himself in all the scriptures.

28 As they came near the village to which they were going, he walked ahead as if he were going on. 29 But they urged him strongly, saying, "Stay with us, because it is almost evening and the day is now nearly over." So he went in to stay with them. 30 When he was at the table with them, he took bread, blessed and broke it, and gave it to them. 31 Then their eyes were opened, and they recognized him; and he vanished from their sight. 32 They said to each other, "Were not our hearts burning within us[h] while he was talking to us on the road, while he was opening the scriptures to us?" 33 That same hour they got up and returned to Jerusalem; and they found the eleven and their companions gathered together. 34 They were saying, "The Lord has risen indeed, and he has appeared to Simon!" 35 Then they told what had happened on the road, and how he had been made known to them in the breaking of the bread.

36 While they were talking about this, Jesus himself stood among them and said to them, "Peace be with you."[i] 37 They were startled and terrified, and thought that they were seeing a ghost. 38 He said to them, "Why are you frightened, and why do doubts arise in your hearts? 39 Look at my hands and my feet; see that it is I myself. Touch me and see; for a ghost does not have flesh and bones as you see that I have." 40 And when he had said this, he showed them his hands and his feet.[j] 41 While in their joy they were disbelieving and still wondering, he said to them, "Have you anything here to eat?" 42 They gave him a piece of broiled fish, 43 and he took it and ate in their presence.

44 Then he said to them, "These are my words that I spoke to you while I was still with you—that everything written about me in the law of Moses, the prophets, and the psalms must be fulfilled." 45 Then he opened their minds to understand the scriptures, 46 and he said to

*f* Or *to set Israel free* *g* Or *the Christ*
*h* Other ancient authorities lack *within us*
*i* Other ancient authorities lack *and said to them, "Peace be with you."* *j* Other ancient authorities lack verse 40

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divine plan. **27**: *Moses,* the traditional author of the first five books of the Old Testament. *The prophets,* a major section of the Jewish Scriptures (see v. 44 n.; Mt 5.17 n.; Acts 28.23).

**24.28**: Mk 6.48. **30**: Mk 6.41; 14.22; Lk 9.16; 22.19. **34**: Mk 16.7; 1 Cor 15.5. Peter's experience, doubtless of tremendous effect for the beginnings of Christianity, is not described.

**24.36–53**: **Commissioning of the disciples. 36–43**: Jn 20.19–23; 1 Cor 15.5. The experience with Jesus, affirmed in v. 36, is tentatively interpreted in v. 37 as encounter with the dead, but this explanation is rejected in v. 39. **39**: *Touch me,* 1 Jn 1.1.

**24.44**: Verses 26–27; Acts 28.23. The Psalms formed the opening, and the longest, part of the third division of the Jewish Scriptures (see p. 623 OT). **45**: 24.32. **46**: Hos 6.2; 1 Cor 15.3–4. **47**: Acts 1.4–8; Mt 28.19. **48**: 1.2; Acts 1.8. **49**: Acts 2.1–4; Jn 14.26; 20.21–23. The words allude to the energy of the Holy Spirit referred to in Joel 2.28–32 (compare Acts 2.1–21). The new age has begun but its power is not yet freely felt. **51**: Acts 1.9–11. **52–53**: Acts 1.12–14.

them, "Thus it is written, that the Messiah[k] is to suffer and to rise from the dead on the third day, [47]and that repentance and forgiveness of sins is to be proclaimed in his name to all nations, beginning from Jerusalem. [48]You are witnesses[l] of these things. [49]And see, I am sending upon you what my Father promised; so stay here in the city until you have been clothed with power from on high."

50 Then he led them out as far as Bethany, and, lifting up his hands, he blessed them. [51]While he was blessing them, he withdrew from them and was carried up into heaven.[m] [52]And they worshiped him, and[n] returned to Jerusalem with great joy; [53]and they were continually in the temple blessing God.[o]

*k* Or *the Christ* *l* Or *nations. Beginning from Jerusalem* [48]*you are witnesses* *m* Other ancient authorities lack *and was carried up into heaven* *n* Other ancient authorities lack *worshiped him, and* *o* Other ancient authorities add *Amen*

# *The Gospel According to John*

The fourth Gospel explains the mystery of the person of Jesus. Like others among his contemporaries, yet also unlike them, he stands above them in unique, solitary grandeur. Whence this uniqueness? The Evangelist takes us behind the scenes of Jesus' ministry, giving us a glimpse into his eternal origin and divine nature. He was unique because "he was in the beginning with God," active in creation, the source of light and life (1.2–4). Hence, when he became incarnate in human flesh, he made known the eternal God, whom "no one has ever seen" (1.14, 18).

As do the other Evangelists, the author records real events, but he goes beyond them in interpreting these events. He uses symbolically a number of terms drawn from common experience—bread, water, light, life, word, shepherd, door, way—to make the significance of Christ both clear and gripping. After a magnificent prologue (1.1–18) he sets forth Jesus Christ as the object of faith (1.19–4.54), depicts Christ's conflict with unbelievers (chs 5–12), his fellowship with believers (chs 13–17), his death and resurrection (chs 18–20), and concludes with an epilogue (ch 21). A large part of the Gospel consists of discourses of Jesus. These discourses are not individual sayings (as in the Synoptic Gospels), nor even collections of sayings (as in the Sermon on the Mount, Matthew 5–7); they develop a particular theme. Furthermore, it is characteristic of the Johannine discourses that Jesus is interrupted by questions or objections from the hearers—something that never happens in the other Gospels.

The first half of the fourth Gospel contains accounts of seven miracles of Jesus, though the author knows that Jesus had performed many others as well (20.30). John's word for these wondrous deeds is "signs," because they are here regarded as symbols of Jesus' teaching or as a revelation of his glory (2.11). Their purpose is to evoke faith on the part of those who witness them (2.23), beginning with the disciples (2.11).

The conflict between Jesus and the Pharisees reported in the Synoptic Gospels is given marked attention in John (for example, 8.31–59; 10.19–39), and the expression "the Jews" (which should not be understood as a condemnation of Jews in particular or in general) virtually becomes a technical term for those who reject Jesus. These features no doubt reflect the heightened antagonism that developed in the latter part of the first century between church and synagogue, with mutual recrimination arising.

While the Synoptic Gospels preserve the sayings of Jesus in words closer to their original form, the fourth Evangelist employs more freely his own modes of thought and language in reporting and interpreting the teaching of Jesus. The fact, however, that this Gospel was soon placed side by side with the Synoptics indicates that the early church realized that Jesus' promise, as reported by John (14.26), had been fulfilled, "The Holy Spirit . . . will teach you everything, and remind you of all that I have said to you."

Who wrote this Gospel? Tradition says it was the apostle John. Many scholars, however, think that it was composed by a disciple of John who recorded his preaching as Mark did that of Peter. In any case, when the Gospel was published near the close of the first century, the church accepted it as authentic and apostolic testimony to Jesus (21.24), written that readers might "come to believe that Jesus is the Messiah, the Son of God," and thus "have life in his name" (20.31). (For the literary genre of the gospels, see pp. viii–x NT.)

1 In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. 2He was in the beginning with God. 3All things came into being through him, and without him not one thing came into being. What has come into being 4in him was life,[a] and the life was the light of all people. 5The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not overcome it.

6 There was a man sent from God, whose name was John. 7He came as a witness to testify to the light, so that all might believe through him. 8He himself was not the light, but he came to testify to the light. 9The true light, which enlightens everyone, was coming into the world.[b]

10 He was in the world, and the world came into being through him; yet the world did not know him. 11He came to what was his own,[c] and his own people did not accept him. 12But to all who received him, who believed in his name, he gave power to become children of God, 13who were born, not of blood or of the will of the flesh or of the will of man, but of God.

14 And the Word became flesh and lived among us, and we have seen his glory, the glory as of a father's only son,[d] full of grace and truth. 15(John testified to him and cried out, "This was he of whom I said, 'He who comes after me ranks ahead of me because he was before me.' ") 16From his fullness we have all received, grace upon grace. 17The law indeed was given through Moses; grace and truth came through Jesus Christ. 18No one has ever seen God. It is God the only Son,[e] who is close to the Father's heart,[f] who has made him known.

19 This is the testimony given by John when the Jews sent priests and Levites from Jerusalem to ask him, "Who are you?" 20He confessed and did not deny it, but confessed, "I am not the Messiah."[g] 21And they asked him, "What then? Are you Elijah?" He said, "I am not." "Are you the prophet?" He answered, "No." 22Then they said to him, "Who are you? Let us have an answer for those who sent us. What do you say about yourself?" 23He said,

"I am the voice of one crying out
in the wilderness,
'Make straight the way of
the Lord,' "

as the prophet Isaiah said.

*a* Or *3through him. And without him not one thing came into being that has come into being. 4In him was life* *b* Or *He was the true light that enlightens everyone coming into the world* *c* Or *to his own home* *d* Or *the Father's only Son* *e* Other ancient authorities read *It is an only Son, God,* or *It is the only Son* *f* Gk *bosom* *g* Or *the Christ*

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**1.1–18: The Prologue. 1–2:** The *Word* (Greek "logos") of God is more than speech; it is God in action, creating (Gen 1.3; Ps 33.6), revealing (Am 3.7–8), redeeming (Ps 107.19–20). Jesus is this *Word* (v. 14). He was eternal (*in the beginning;* compare Gen 1.1); personal (*with God*); divine (*was God*). *Was,* not "became" (contrast v. 14). **3:** He was sole agent of creation (Gen 1.1; Prov 8.27–30; Col 1.16–17; Heb 1.2). **4:** Apart from him both physical (Col 1.17) and spiritual life would recede into nothingness (5.39–40; 8.12). **5:** *Darkness* is total evil in conflict with God; it cannot *overcome.*

**1.6–8:** John (the Baptist), climaxing the Old Testament prophets, was *sent* (commissioned by God, Mal 3.1) to point to Jesus (vv. 19–34). **9:** *True light* is real, underived light, contrasted not with false light, but with those such as John, who was but a lamp (5.35). **11:** *His own people,* the Jews.

**1.14–17:** God's *glory* dwelt ("tabernacled") in the *flesh* (human nature) of Jesus, as did his *grace* (redeeming love) and *truth* (faithfulness to his promises). These are available to *all,* exhaustless (*grace upon grace*), a fulfillment of the *law* of *Moses.* **18:** *Close to the Father's heart,* complete communion (vv. 1–2). On seeing and knowing God, see 14.9.

**1.19–34: The testimony of John. 19:** *Jews,* the religious authorities. **21:** *Elijah* (2 Kings 2.11) was expected to return to prepare the Messiah's way (Mal 4.5). John is unconscious of this role, but Jesus later ascribed it to him (see Mt 11.14 n.; Mk 9.13 n.). *The prophet* was likewise an expected Messianic forerunner (6.14; 7.40; see Deut 18.15). **23:** As a *voice* John fulfills a prophetic role

24 Now they had been sent from the Pharisees. 25 They asked him, "Why then are you baptizing if you are neither the Messiah,[h] nor Elijah, nor the prophet?" 26 John answered them, "I baptize with water. Among you stands one whom you do not know, 27 the one who is coming after me; I am not worthy to untie the thong of his sandal." 28 This took place in Bethany across the Jordan where John was baptizing.

29 The next day he saw Jesus coming toward him and declared, "Here is the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world! 30 This is he of whom I said, 'After me comes a man who ranks ahead of me because he was before me.' 31 I myself did not know him; but I came baptizing with water for this reason, that he might be revealed to Israel." 32 And John testified, "I saw the Spirit descending from heaven like a dove, and it remained on him. 33 I myself did not know him, but the one who sent me to baptize with water said to me, 'He on whom you see the Spirit descend and remain is the one who baptizes with the Holy Spirit.' 34 And I myself have seen and have testified that this is the Son of God."[i]

35 The next day John again was standing with two of his disciples, 36 and as he watched Jesus walk by, he exclaimed, "Look, here is the Lamb of God!" 37 The two disciples heard him say this, and they followed Jesus. 38 When Jesus turned and saw them following, he said to them, "What are you looking for?" They said to him, "Rabbi" (which translated means Teacher), "where are you staying?" 39 He said to them, "Come and see." They came and saw where he was staying, and they remained with him that day. It was about four o'clock in the afternoon. 40 One of the two who heard John speak and followed him was Andrew, Simon Peter's brother. 41 He first found his brother Simon and said to him, "We have found the Messiah" (which is translated Anointed[j]). 42 He brought Simon[k] to Jesus, who looked at him and said, "You are Simon son of John. You are to be called Cephas" (which is translated Peter[l]).

43 The next day Jesus decided to go to Galilee. He found Philip and said to him, "Follow me." 44 Now Philip was from Bethsaida, the city of Andrew and Peter. 45 Philip found Nathanael and said to him, "We have found him about whom Moses in the law and also the prophets wrote, Jesus son of Joseph from Nazareth." 46 Nathanael said to him, "Can anything good come out of Nazareth?" Philip said to him, "Come and see." 47 When Jesus saw Nathanael coming toward him, he said of him, "Here is truly an Israelite in whom there is no deceit!" 48 Nathanael asked him, "Where did you get to know me?" Jesus answered, "I saw you under the fig tree before Philip called you." 49 Nathanael replied, "Rabbi, you are the Son of God! You are the King of Israel!" 50 Jesus answered, "Do you believe because I told you that I saw you

*h* Or *the Christ* *i* Other ancient authorities read *is God's chosen one* *j* Or *Christ* *k* Gk *him* *l* From the word for *rock* in Aramaic (*kepha*) and Greek (*petra*), respectively

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announcing the Messiah's coming (Isa 40.3). **25**: *Why . . . are you baptizing,* performing an official rite, without official status? **27**: *Untie . . . sandal,* a slave's task.

**1.29**: *Lamb,* Ex ch 12; Isa 53.7. *Of God,* provided by God. **30**: He outranks me, *because he was* (existed) *before me.* **31–33**: John's knowledge of Jesus' significance was given him by God at the baptism. **34**: *Son of God,* the Messiah (v. 49; 11.27).

**1.35–51**: **The testimony of Jesus' first disciples.** **37**: *They followed Jesus,* the first known disciples of Jesus; later both became apostles. **39**: *Come and see,* a call to personal following (8.12). **42**: In Aramaic *Cephas* (Greek "Peter") means "rock". **44**: *Bethsaida,* on the western shore of the Sea of Galilee. **45**: *Moses . . . prophets,* the Old Testament points to Christ. **46**: *Nathanael,* probably the same person as Bartholomew (Mt 10.3; Mk 3.18; Lk 6.14), lived in Cana, near Nazareth (21.2). **47**: *No deceit,* no qualities of Jacob before he became Israel (Gen 27.35; 32.28). **51**: What Jacob saw in vision (Gen 28.12) is now a reality in Jesus. *Son of Man,* a messenger from heaven to make God known (3.13), and to be

under the fig tree? You will see greater things than these." 51And he said to him, "Very truly, I tell you,[m] you will see heaven opened and the angels of God ascending and descending upon the Son of Man."

2 On the third day there was a wedding in Cana of Galilee, and the mother of Jesus was there. 2Jesus and his disciples had also been invited to the wedding. 3When the wine gave out, the mother of Jesus said to him, "They have no wine." 4And Jesus said to her, "Woman, what concern is that to you and to me? My hour has not yet come." 5His mother said to the servants, "Do whatever he tells you." 6Now standing there were six stone water jars for the Jewish rites of purification, each holding twenty or thirty gallons. 7Jesus said to them, "Fill the jars with water." And they filled them up to the brim. 8He said to them, "Now draw some out, and take it to the chief steward." So they took it. 9When the steward tasted the water that had become wine, and did not know where it came from (though the servants who had drawn the water knew), the steward called the bridegroom 10and said to him, "Everyone serves the good wine first, and then the inferior wine after the guests have become drunk. But you have kept the good wine until now." 11Jesus did this, the first of his signs, in Cana of Galilee, and revealed his glory; and his disciples believed in him.

12 After this he went down to Capernaum with his mother, his brothers, and his disciples; and they remained there a few days.

13 The Passover of the Jews was near, and Jesus went up to Jerusalem. 14In the temple he found people selling cattle, sheep, and doves, and the money changers seated at their tables. 15Making a whip of cords, he drove all of them out of the temple, both the sheep and the cattle. He also poured out the coins of the money changers and overturned their tables. 16He told those who were selling the doves, "Take these things out of here! Stop making my Father's house a marketplace!" 17His disciples remembered that it was written, "Zeal for your house will consume me." 18The Jews then said to him, "What sign can you show us for doing this?" 19Jesus answered them, "Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up." 20The Jews then said, "This temple has been under construction for forty-six years, and will you raise it up in three days?" 21But he was speaking of the temple of his body. 22After he was raised from the dead, his disciples remembered that he had said this; and they believed the scripture and the word that Jesus had spoken.

23 When he was in Jerusalem during the Passover festival, many believed in his name because they saw the signs that he was doing. 24But Jesus on his part

*m* Both instances of the Greek word for *you* in this verse are plural

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the final judge (5.27; see Mk 2.10 n.).

**2.1–12: The wedding at Cana. 1:** *On the third day,* from the day when Philip was called (1.43). *Cana,* a small village nine miles northwest of Nazareth. **4:** *Woman,* a term of solemn and respectful address (compare 19.26). The *hour* of Jesus' self-disclosure was determined by God, not by Mary's desires. His final manifestation was at the cross (7.30; 8.20; 12.23, 27; 13.1; 17.1). **6:** *Rites of purification* were ceremonial, not hygienic. **8:** *Steward,* headwaiter or toastmaster. **11:** Jesus' miracles were not wonders to astound, but *signs* pointing to *his glory* (God's presence in him). *First,* for the second see 4.46–54. **12:** *Capernaum,* on the northern shore of the Sea of Galilee.

**2.13–25: The cleansing of the temple** (compare Mt 21.12–17; Mk 11.15–19; Lk 19.45–48). **14:** Animals were sold for sacrifice; Roman money was changed into Jewish money to pay the temple tax. **15–16:** Not an outburst of temper, but the energy of righteousness against religious leaders to whom religion had become a business. *My Father's house* is a claim to lordship. **17:** Ps 69.9. **20:** *Forty-six years,* this was the temple begun by Herod the Great in 20 B.C. (it was finished by Herod Agrippa in A.D. 64). **21:** The reply of Jesus (v. 19) was a prediction of his own death and resurrection. **23–25:** Faith which rests merely on *signs* and not on him to whom they point is shallow and unstable.

would not entrust himself to them, because he knew all people [25]and needed no one to testify about anyone; for he himself knew what was in everyone.

3 Now there was a Pharisee named Nicodemus, a leader of the Jews. [2]He came to Jesus[n] by night and said to him, "Rabbi, we know that you are a teacher who has come from God; for no one can do these signs that you do apart from the presence of God." [3]Jesus answered him, "Very truly, I tell you, no one can see the kingdom of God without being born from above."[o] [4]Nicodemus said to him, "How can anyone be born after having grown old? Can one enter a second time into the mother's womb and be born?" [5]Jesus answered, "Very truly, I tell you, no one can enter the kingdom of God without being born of water and Spirit. [6]What is born of the flesh is flesh, and what is born of the Spirit is spirit.[p] [7]Do not be astonished that I said to you, 'You[q] must be born from above.'[r] [8]The wind[p] blows where it chooses, and you hear the sound of it, but you do not know where it comes from or where it goes. So it is with everyone who is born of the Spirit." [9]Nicodemus said to him, "How can these things be?" [10]Jesus answered him, "Are you a teacher of Israel, and yet you do not understand these things?

11 "Very truly, I tell you, we speak of what we know and testify to what we have seen; yet you[s] do not receive our testimony. [12]If I have told you about earthly things and you do not believe, how can you believe if I tell you about heavenly things? [13]No one has ascended into heaven except the one who descended from heaven, the Son of Man.[t] [14]And just as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, so must the Son of Man be lifted up, [15]that whoever believes in him may have eternal life.[u]

16 "For God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, so that everyone who believes in him may not perish but may have eternal life.

17 "Indeed, God did not send the Son into the world to condemn the world, but in order that the world might be saved through him. [18]Those who believe in him are not condemned; but those who do not believe are condemned already, because they have not believed in the name of the only Son of God. [19]And this is the judgment, that the light has come into the world, and people loved darkness rather than light because their deeds were evil. [20]For all who do evil hate the light and do not come to the light, so that their deeds may not be exposed. [21]But those who do what is true come to the light, so that it may be clearly seen that their deeds have been done in God."[u]

22 After this Jesus and his disciples went into the Judean countryside, and he spent some time there with them and baptized. [23]John also was baptizing at Aenon near Salim because water was abundant there; and people kept coming

*n* Gk *him* *o* Or *born anew* *p* The same Greek word means both *wind* and *spirit* *q* The Greek word for *you* here is plural *r* Or *anew* *s* The Greek word for *you* here and in verse 12 is plural *t* Other ancient authorities add *who is in heaven* *u* Some interpreters hold that the quotation concludes with verse 15

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**3.1–21: Jesus and official Judaism. 1**: The Pharisees were the most devout of Jews. *A leader,* a member of the Sanhedrin (see 11.47 n.). **3**: *The kingdom of God* is entered, not by moral achievement, but by a transformation wrought by God. **5**: Birth into the new order is through *water* (referring to baptism; 1.33; Eph 5.26) and *Spirit* (Ezek 36.25–27; Titus 3.5). **6**: Like begets like. **8–9**: See note *p* and Ezek 37.5–10. **12**: *Earthly things,* such as the parable of the wind; *heavenly things,* supreme spiritual realities. **13–15**: Jesus *descended from heaven* to bring *eternal life* (participation in God's life), through being *lifted up* on the cross (Num 21.9).

**3.16**: Luther called this verse "the Gospel in miniature." **17–20**: God's purpose is to save; individuals judge themselves by hiding their *evil deeds* from the *light* of Christ's holiness.

**3.22–36: Further testimony of John** (compare 1.19–34). **23**: The exact location of Aenon and Salim is uncertain.

and were being baptized [24]—John, of course, had not yet been thrown into prison.

25 Now a discussion about purification arose between John's disciples and a Jew.[v] [26]They came to John and said to him, "Rabbi, the one who was with you across the Jordan, to whom you testified, here he is baptizing, and all are going to him." [27]John answered, "No one can receive anything except what has been given from heaven. [28]You yourselves are my witnesses that I said, 'I am not the Messiah,[w] but I have been sent ahead of him.' [29]He who has the bride is the bridegroom. The friend of the bridegroom, who stands and hears him, rejoices greatly at the bridegroom's voice. For this reason my joy has been fulfilled. [30]He must increase, but I must decrease."[x]

31 The one who comes from above is above all; the one who is of the earth belongs to the earth and speaks about earthly things. The one who comes from heaven is above all. [32]He testifies to what he has seen and heard, yet no one accepts his testimony. [33]Whoever has accepted his testimony has certified[y] this, that God is true. [34]He whom God has sent speaks the words of God, for he gives the Spirit without measure. [35]The Father loves the Son and has placed all things in his hands. [36]Whoever believes in the Son has eternal life; whoever disobeys the Son will not see life, but must endure God's wrath.

4 Now when Jesus[z] learned that the Pharisees had heard, "Jesus is making and baptizing more disciples than John" [2]—although it was not Jesus himself but his disciples who baptized— [3]he left Judea and started back to Galilee. [4]But he had to go through Samaria. [5]So he came to a Samaritan city called Sychar, near the plot of ground that Jacob had given to his son Joseph. [6]Jacob's well was there, and Jesus, tired out by his journey, was sitting by the well. It was about noon.

7 A Samaritan woman came to draw water, and Jesus said to her, "Give me a drink." [8](His disciples had gone to the city to buy food.) [9]The Samaritan woman said to him, "How is it that you, a Jew, ask a drink of me, a woman of Samaria?" (Jews do not share things in common with Samaritans.)[a] [10]Jesus answered her, "If you knew the gift of God, and who it is that is saying to you, 'Give me a drink,' you would have asked him, and he would have given you living water." [11]The woman said to him, "Sir, you have no bucket, and the well is deep. Where do you get that living water? [12]Are you greater than our ancestor Jacob, who gave us the well, and with his sons and his flocks drank from it?" [13]Jesus said to her, "Everyone who drinks of this water will be thirsty again, [14]but those who drink of the water that I will give them will never be thirsty. The water that I will give will become in them a spring of water gushing up to eternal life." [15]The woman said to him, "Sir, give me this water, so that I may

*v* Other ancient authorities read *the Jews*
*w* Or *the Christ* *x* Some interpreters hold that the quotation continues through verse 36
*y* Gk *set a seal to* *z* Other ancient authorities read *the Lord* *a* Other ancient authorities lack this sentence

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**3.25**: *Purification,* Jewish religious ceremonies. **27–29**: John was only the *friend of the bridegroom,* leading Israel, the bride, to Jesus, the bridegroom. He *rejoices* in their union (see Mk 2.19–20 n.). **32–35**: *No one,* a generalization about the Jews. The author and others do believe, and attest that Jesus authentically speaks *the words of God.* **36**: Unbelief is disobedience. *Wrath* is the consuming fire of God's holiness.

**4.1–42: Jesus and the Samaritans. 1–3**: *The Pharisees,* hostile to John, now turn on Jesus. **4**: *Samaria,* between Judea and Galilee, with a mixed people (see Acts 8.5 n.). **5**: Gen 33.19; 48.22; Josh 24.32. **6**: *Tired out,* shows Jesus' humanity. **9**: Rabbis avoided speaking to a *woman* in public (v. 27). *Jews* held *Samaritans* in contempt, as religious apostates (2 Kings 17.24–34). *Not share,* in this case her water jar (v. 28).

**4.10**: *Living water,* Jer 2.13; 17.13. **14**: Jesus' gift is abundant life (10.10). **17**: *I have no hus-*

never be thirsty or have to keep coming here to draw water."

16 Jesus said to her, "Go, call your husband, and come back." 17The woman answered him, "I have no husband." Jesus said to her, "You are right in saying, 'I have no husband'; 18for you have had five husbands, and the one you have now is not your husband. What you have said is true!" 19The woman said to him, "Sir, I see that you are a prophet. 20Our ancestors worshiped on this mountain, but you[b] say that the place where people must worship is in Jerusalem." 21Jesus said to her, "Woman, believe me, the hour is coming when you will worship the Father neither on this mountain nor in Jerusalem. 22You worship what you do not know; we worship what we know, for salvation is from the Jews. 23But the hour is coming, and is now here, when the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth, for the Father seeks such as these to worship him. 24God is spirit, and those who worship him must worship in spirit and truth." 25The woman said to him, "I know that Messiah is coming" (who is called Christ). "When he comes, he will proclaim all things to us." 26Jesus said to her, "I am he,[c] the one who is speaking to you."

27 Just then his disciples came. They were astonished that he was speaking with a woman, but no one said, "What do you want?" or, "Why are you speaking with her?" 28Then the woman left her water jar and went back to the city. She said to the people, 29"Come and see a man who told me everything I have ever done! He cannot be the Messiah,[d] can he?" 30They left the city and were on their way to him.

31 Meanwhile the disciples were urging him, "Rabbi, eat something." 32But he said to them, "I have food to eat that you do not know about." 33So the disciples said to one another, "Surely no one has brought him something to eat?" 34Jesus said to them, "My food is to do the will of him who sent me and to complete his work. 35Do you not say, 'Four months more, then comes the harvest'? But I tell you, look around you, and see how the fields are ripe for harvesting. 36The reaper is already receiving[e] wages and is gathering fruit for eternal life, so that sower and reaper may rejoice together. 37For here the saying holds true, 'One sows and another reaps.' 38I sent you to reap that for which you did not labor. Others have labored, and you have entered into their labor."

39 Many Samaritans from that city believed in him because of the woman's testimony, "He told me everything I have ever done." 40So when the Samaritans came to him, they asked him to stay with them; and he stayed there two days. 41And many more believed because of his word. 42They said to the woman, "It is no longer because of what you said that we believe, for we have heard for ourselves, and we know that this is truly the Savior of the world."

43 When the two days were over, he went from that place to Galilee 44(for Jesus himself had testified that a prophet has no honor in the prophet's own coun-

*b* The Greek word for *you* here and in verses 21 and 22 is plural *c* Gk *I am* *d* Or *the Christ* *e* Or *35. . . the fields are already ripe for harvesting. 36The reaper is receiving*

*band,* a true answer, literally taken, though given with an intention to deceive. **19–20**: *A prophet* should be able to settle rival religious claims. **21**: *This mountain,* i.e. Mount Gerizim, where the Samaritans had had a temple. Jesus means that the place of worship is not of primary importance. **24**: Worship *in spirit* is our response to God's gift of himself (*the Father seeks,* v. 23). *In . . . truth,* in accord with God's nature seen in Christ.

**4.27**: See v. 9 n. **35**: *Do you not say,* i.e. is it not a common fact? **36**: *Wages,* the reward of gathering believers. **37–38**: Jesus *sows* (vv. 7–26), the disciples *reap;* the harvest comes from the *labor* of Jesus' life, death, and resurrection (12.23–24).

**4.39–42**: Faith based on the testimony of another (*the woman*) is vindicated in personal experience.

**4.43–54**: **Jesus and the Gentiles.** Illus-

try). 45 When he came to Galilee, the Galileans welcomed him, since they had seen all that he had done in Jerusalem at the festival; for they too had gone to the festival.

46 Then he came again to Cana in Galilee where he had changed the water into wine. Now there was a royal official whose son lay ill in Capernaum. 47 When he heard that Jesus had come from Judea to Galilee, he went and begged him to come down and heal his son, for he was at the point of death. 48 Then Jesus said to him, "Unless you[f] see signs and wonders you will not believe." 49 The official said to him, "Sir, come down before my little boy dies." 50 Jesus said to him, "Go; your son will live." The man believed the word that Jesus spoke to him and started on his way. 51 As he was going down, his slaves met him and told him that his child was alive. 52 So he asked them the hour when he began to recover, and they said to him, "Yesterday at one in the afternoon the fever left him." 53 The father realized that this was the hour when Jesus had said to him, "Your son will live." So he himself believed, along with his whole household. 54 Now this was the second sign that Jesus did after coming from Judea to Galilee.

5 After this there was a festival of the Jews, and Jesus went up to Jerusalem.

2 Now in Jerusalem by the Sheep Gate there is a pool, called in Hebrew[g] Beth-zatha,[h] which has five porticoes. 3 In these lay many invalids—blind, lame, and paralyzed.[i] 5 One man was there who had been ill for thirty-eight years. 6 When Jesus saw him lying there and knew that he had been there a long time, he said to him, "Do you want to be made well?" 7 The sick man answered him, "Sir, I have no one to put me into the pool when the water is stirred up; and while I am making my way, someone else steps down ahead of me." 8 Jesus said to him, "Stand up, take your mat and walk." 9 At once the man was made well, and he took up his mat and began to walk.

Now that day was a sabbath. 10 So the Jews said to the man who had been cured, "It is the sabbath; it is not lawful for you to carry your mat." 11 But he answered them, "The man who made me well said to me, 'Take up your mat and walk.'" 12 They asked him, "Who is the man who said to you, 'Take it up and walk'?" 13 Now the man who had been healed did not know who it was, for Jesus had disappeared in[j] the crowd that was there. 14 Later Jesus found him in the temple and said to him, "See, you have been made well! Do not sin any more, so that nothing worse happens to you." 15 The man went away and told the Jews that it was Jesus who had made him well.

*f* Both instances of the Greek word for *you* in this verse are plural *g* That is, *Aramaic* *h* Other ancient authorities read *Bethesda*, others *Bethsaida* *i* Other ancient authorities add, wholly or in part, *waiting for the stirring of the water; 4for an angel of the Lord went down at certain seasons into the pool, and stirred up the water; whoever stepped in first after the stirring of the water was made well from whatever disease that person had.* *j* Or *had left because of*

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trates v. 42, Jesus as *Savior of the world* (Jew, Samaritan, Gentile—everyone; compare Isa 43.3, 11; 45.22).

**4.46**: *A royal official,* a Gentile military officer. *In Capernaum,* about eighteen miles from Cana. **48**: *You* is plural here, addressed to all who base faith on mere signs (compare v. 45). **49**: He desires life for his child, not a display. **50**: The official *believed* that Jesus' *word* had effected the cure, and he did not return to his home (which was only about eighteen miles away) until the next day (v. 52). **53**: *Believed,* in the deepest sense. **54**: *Second,* for the first see 2.1–11.

**5.1–18: Healing the lame man on the sabbath.** **2**: Excavations at the Pool of St. Anna in the northeast of the city have revealed *five porticoes.* **3**: After the word *paralyzed* later manuscripts add an explanatory statement; see note *i*. **7**: *When the water is stirred up* is explained by the addition to v. 3. Movement caused by an intermittent spring was attributed to divine action. **13**: *Jesus had disappeared* to avoid publicity. **14**: There are

16 Therefore the Jews started persecuting
Jesus, because he was doing such things
on the sabbath. 17 But Jesus answered
them, "My Father is still working, and I
also am working." 18 For this reason the
Jews were seeking all the more to kill
him, because he was not only breaking
the sabbath, but was also calling God his
own Father, thereby making himself
equal to God.

19 Jesus said to them, "Very truly, I
tell you, the Son can do nothing on his
own, but only what he sees the Father
doing; for whatever the Father[k] does,
the Son does likewise. 20 The Father loves
the Son and shows him all that he himself
is doing; and he will show him greater
works than these, so that you will be
astonished. 21 Indeed, just as the Father
raises the dead and gives them life, so
also the Son gives life to whomever he
wishes. 22 The Father judges no one but
has given all judgment to the Son, 23 so
that all may honor the Son just as they
honor the Father. Anyone who does not
honor the Son does not honor the Father
who sent him. 24 Very truly, I tell you,
anyone who hears my word and believes
him who sent me has eternal life, and
does not come under judgment, but has
passed from death to life.

25 "Very truly, I tell you, the hour is
coming, and is now here, when the dead
will hear the voice of the Son of God, and
those who hear will live. 26 For just as the
Father has life in himself, so he has grant-
ed the Son also to have life in himself;
27 and he has given him authority to exe-
cute judgment, because he is the Son of
Man. 28 Do not be astonished at this; for
the hour is coming when all who are in
their graves will hear his voice 29 and will
come out—those who have done good,
to the resurrection of life, and those who
have done evil, to the resurrection of
condemnation.

30 "I can do nothing on my own. As
I hear, I judge; and my judgment is just,
because I seek to do not my own will but
the will of him who sent me.

31 "If I testify about myself, my testi-
mony is not true. 32 There is another who
testifies on my behalf, and I know that
his testimony to me is true. 33 You sent
messengers to John, and he testified to
the truth. 34 Not that I accept such human
testimony, but I say these things so that
you may be saved. 35 He was a burning
and shining lamp, and you were willing
to rejoice for a while in his light. 36 But
I have a testimony greater than John's.
The works that the Father has given me
to complete, the very works that I am
doing, testify on my behalf that the Fa-
ther has sent me. 37 And the Father who
sent me has himself testified on my be-
half. You have never heard his voice or
seen his form, 38 and you do not have his
word abiding in you, because you do not
believe him whom he has sent.

39 "You search the scriptures because
you think that in them you have eternal
life; and it is they that testify on my be-
half. 40 Yet you refuse to come to me to

*k* Gk *that one*

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*worse* things than illness. **16**: *The Jews,* the religious authorities, opposed Jesus for his break with their legalism. **17**: God continually gives life and judges evil, as does Jesus. **18**: *Equal,* see 10.30–33.

**5.19–29: Jesus' relation to God. 19–20**: Jesus' sonship involves the identity of his will and actions with the Father's. The *greater works* are giving life (v. 21) and judgment (v. 22). **24**: *Anyone* who *believes* on the basis of Jesus' word *has passed* into the realm where death does not reign.

**5.25**: The *coming* age is already present in Jesus. To *hear* with the comprehension of faith makes the spiritually *dead* live. **26–29**: They will share in the final *resurrection of life.*

**5.30–40: Evidence of Jesus' relation to God. 30**: Jesus' judgment is that of God, and therefore *just,* without favoritism or error. **32**: *Another,* the Father. **33–40**: God witnesses to Jesus through the ministry of *John* the Baptist (vv. 33–35), through Jesus' *works* (v. 36), and through *the scriptures* (vv. 37–40).

**5.39**: *You search,* in Greek the verb may be either imperative or indicative, i.e. "Search" or "You search"; the latter gives the better sense.

**5.41–47: Jesus rebukes those who refuse his offer. 41**: No human standards apply to him. **42**: No *love of God,* no love of Jesus.

have life. 41I do not accept glory from human beings. 42But I know that you do not have the love of God in[l] you. 43I have come in my Father's name, and you do not accept me; if another comes in his own name, you will accept him. 44How can you believe when you accept glory from one another and do not seek the glory that comes from the one who alone is God? 45Do not think that I will accuse you before the Father; your accuser is Moses, on whom you have set your hope. 46If you believed Moses, you would believe me, for he wrote about me. 47But if you do not believe what he wrote, how will you believe what I say?"

6 After this Jesus went to the other side of the Sea of Galilee, also called the Sea of Tiberias.[m] 2A large crowd kept following him, because they saw the signs that he was doing for the sick. 3Jesus went up the mountain and sat down there with his disciples. 4Now the Passover, the festival of the Jews, was near. 5When he looked up and saw a large crowd coming toward him, Jesus said to Philip, "Where are we to buy bread for these people to eat?" 6He said this to test him, for he himself knew what he was going to do. 7Philip answered him, "Six months' wages[n] would not buy enough bread for each of them to get a little." 8One of his disciples, Andrew, Simon Peter's brother, said to him, 9"There is a boy here who has five barley loaves and two fish. But what are they among so many people?" 10Jesus said, "Make the people sit down." Now there was a great deal of grass in the place; so they[o] sat down, about five thousand in all. 11Then Jesus took the loaves, and when he had given thanks, he distributed them to those who were seated; so also the fish, as much as they wanted. 12When they were satisfied, he told his disciples, "Gather up the fragments left over, so that nothing may be lost." 13So they gathered them up, and from the fragments of the five barley loaves, left by those who had eaten, they filled twelve baskets. 14When the people saw the sign that he had done, they began to say, "This is indeed the prophet who is to come into the world."

15 When Jesus realized that they were about to come and take him by force to make him king, he withdrew again to the mountain by himself.

16 When evening came, his disciples went down to the sea, 17got into a boat, and started across the sea to Capernaum. It was now dark, and Jesus had not yet come to them. 18The sea became rough because a strong wind was blowing. 19When they had rowed about three or four miles,[p] they saw Jesus walking on the sea and coming near the boat, and they were terrified. 20But he said to them, "It is I;[q] do not be afraid." 21Then they wanted to take him into the boat, and immediately the boat reached the land toward which they were going.

22 The next day the crowd that had stayed on the other side of the sea saw that there had been only one boat there.

*l* Or *among* *m* Gk *of Galilee of Tiberias* *n* Gk *Two hundred denarii*; the denarius was the usual day's wage for a laborer *o* Gk *the men* *p* Gk *about twenty-five or thirty stadia* *q* Gk *I am*

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**43–44**: Judgment based on human pride. **45**: 9.28; Rom 2.17. **47**: Lk 16.29, 31.

**6.1–15**: **Feeding the five thousand;** the only miracle recorded by all four gospels (Mt 14.13–21; Mk 6.32–44; Lk 9.10–17). **1**: *The other side,* the eastern shore. *Tiberias,* so named after the city, founded by Herod Antipas about A.D. 20 in honor of Tiberias Caesar. **6**: *To test* Philip's faith. **9**: *Barley loaves,* food of the poor. **12**: *Gather,* an act of reverential economy toward the gift of God. **13**: *Twelve baskets,* one for each disciple.

**6.15**: *To make him king,* as a political Messiah opposing Rome; but Jesus would not accept this (18.36).

**6.16–21**: **Jesus walks on the sea** (Mt 14.22–27; Mk 6.45–51). Jesus is greater than a political ruler (v. 15); he is Lord of the elements (Ps 107.29–30). **17**: *Not yet come,* probably they expected to meet Jesus along the shore. **20–21**: Jesus' presence dispels fear.

**6.22–71**: **Jesus, the bread of life. 22–25**: Note the clamor for more bread. **22**: *On the other side,* the eastern side.

They also saw that Jesus had not got into the boat with his disciples, but that his disciples had gone away alone. 23Then some boats from Tiberias came near the place where they had eaten the bread after the Lord had given thanks.[r] 24So when the crowd saw that neither Jesus nor his disciples were there, they themselves got into the boats and went to Capernaum looking for Jesus.

25 When they found him on the other side of the sea, they said to him, "Rabbi, when did you come here?" 26Jesus answered them, "Very truly, I tell you, you are looking for me, not because you saw signs, but because you ate your fill of the loaves. 27Do not work for the food that perishes, but for the food that endures for eternal life, which the Son of Man will give you. For it is on him that God the Father has set his seal." 28Then they said to him, "What must we do to perform the works of God?" 29Jesus answered them, "This is the work of God, that you believe in him whom he has sent." 30So they said to him, "What sign are you going to give us then, so that we may see it and believe you? What work are you performing? 31Our ancestors ate the manna in the wilderness; as it is written, 'He gave them bread from heaven to eat.' " 32Then Jesus said to them, "Very truly, I tell you, it was not Moses who gave you the bread from heaven, but it is my Father who gives you the true bread from heaven. 33For the bread of God is that which[s] comes down from heaven and gives life to the world." 34They said to him, "Sir, give us this bread always."

35 Jesus said to them, "I am the bread of life. Whoever comes to me will never be hungry, and whoever believes in me will never be thirsty. 36But I said to you that you have seen me and yet do not believe. 37Everything that the Father gives me will come to me, and anyone who comes to me I will never drive away; 38for I have come down from heaven, not to do my own will, but the will of him who sent me. 39And this is the will of him who sent me, that I should lose nothing of all that he has given me, but raise it up on the last day. 40This is indeed the will of my Father, that all who see the Son and believe in him may have eternal life; and I will raise them up on the last day."

41 Then the Jews began to complain about him because he said, "I am the bread that came down from heaven." 42They were saying, "Is not this Jesus, the son of Joseph, whose father and mother we know? How can he now say, 'I have come down from heaven'?" 43Jesus answered them, "Do not complain among yourselves. 44No one can come to me unless drawn by the Father who sent me; and I will raise that person up on the last day. 45It is written in the prophets, 'And they shall all be taught by God.' Everyone who has heard and learned from the Father comes to me. 46Not that anyone has seen the Father except the one who is from God; he has seen the Father. 47Very truly, I tell you, whoever believes has eternal life. 48I am

r Other ancient authorities lack *after the Lord had given thanks*  s Or *he who*

**6.25**: *The other side,* the crowd had now crossed in boats (v. 24) and were on the western side. **26**: *Signs,* pointing to Jesus as food for the soul. **27**: *Son of Man,* see 1.51 n. *Seal,* God's authentication, perhaps at the baptism (1.32). **28**: *Works,* 3.21; Rev 2.26. **29**: *Work,* singular number; not many works (v. 28), but obedient trust (*believe*) is the one thing pleasing to God (1 Jn 3.23). *Him . . . sent,* Jesus who reveals God. **30**: *See,* as a proof; but faith cannot be proved. **31**: The Messiah was expected to reproduce the miracle of the giving of manna (Ex 16.4, 15; Num 11.8; Ps 78.24; 105.40).

**6.36–40**: Jesus himself is God's gift of sustenance for time and eternity. Belief or unbelief involves a mystery known only to God, but no one who *comes* is rejected (v. 37). Faith is God's gift, not a human achievement; it gives *eternal life* now and issues in resurrection *on the last day*. **44–45**: The drawing is not coercive or mechanical. *Prophets,* Isa 54.13; compare Joel 2.28–29. Had they *heard* and *learned* God's voice in their scriptures, they would have recognized its accents in him who alone has direct communion with God.

the bread of life. 49 Your ancestors ate the manna in the wilderness, and they died. 50 This is the bread that comes down from heaven, so that one may eat of it and not die. 51 I am the living bread that came down from heaven. Whoever eats of this bread will live forever; and the bread that I will give for the life of the world is my flesh."

52 The Jews then disputed among themselves, saying, "How can this man give us his flesh to eat?" 53 So Jesus said to them, "Very truly, I tell you, unless you eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink his blood, you have no life in you. 54 Those who eat my flesh and drink my blood have eternal life, and I will raise them up on the last day; 55 for my flesh is true food and my blood is true drink. 56 Those who eat my flesh and drink my blood abide in me, and I in them. 57 Just as the living Father sent me, and I live because of the Father, so whoever eats me will live because of me. 58 This is the bread that came down from heaven, not like that which your ancestors ate, and they died. But the one who eats this bread will live forever." 59 He said these things while he was teaching in the synagogue at Capernaum.

60 When many of his disciples heard it, they said, "This teaching is difficult; who can accept it?" 61 But Jesus, being aware that his disciples were complaining about it, said to them, "Does this offend you? 62 Then what if you were to see the Son of Man ascending to where he was before? 63 It is the spirit that gives life; the flesh is useless. The words that I have spoken to you are spirit and life. 64 But among you there are some who do not believe." For Jesus knew from the first who were the ones that did not believe, and who was the one that would betray him. 65 And he said, "For this reason I have told you that no one can come to me unless it is granted by the Father."

66 Because of this many of his disciples turned back and no longer went about with him. 67 So Jesus asked the twelve, "Do you also wish to go away?" 68 Simon Peter answered him, "Lord, to whom can we go? You have the words of eternal life. 69 We have come to believe and know that you are the Holy One of God."[t] 70 Jesus answered them, "Did I not choose you, the twelve? Yet one of you is a devil." 71 He was speaking of Judas son of Simon Iscariot,[u] for he, though one of the twelve, was going to betray him.

7 After this Jesus went about in Galilee. He did not wish[v] to go about in Judea because the Jews were looking for an opportunity to kill him. 2 Now the Jewish festival of Booths[w] was near. 3 So his brothers said to him, "Leave here and

*t* Other ancient authorities read *the Christ, the Son of the living God* *u* Other ancient authorities read *Judas Iscariot son of Simon;* others, *Judas son of Simon from Karyot* (Kerioth)
*v* Other ancient authorities read *was not at liberty*
*w* Or *Tabernacles*

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**6.51–58**: In these verses the Fourth Evangelist (who does not include an account of the institution of the Lord's Supper) presents teachings that have unmistakable eucharistic echoes. **51**: *The living bread . . . is my flesh,* the One who became flesh (assumed complete human nature, 1.14) offered himself to God in death, thus releasing his life *for the life of the world.* **53**: The separation of the *blood* from the *flesh* emphasizes the reality of Jesus' death. **54**: To *eat* and *drink* is to believe (v. 47), to appropriate, assimilate, and *abide* in Christ (v. 56). **58**: Since Christ is *bread . . . from heaven* (compare vv. 32–35), to eat him is to *live forever.*

**6.60**: *This teaching is difficult* means it is offensive but not obscure. **62–63**: The ascension by which Jesus will be taken away as regards the flesh, will indicate that he has been speaking of spiritual realities and not the actual eating of his flesh. **64–65**: These truths can be discerned only by faith, which is God's gift, not a human achievement (Eph 2.8).

**6.66–71**: To receive God's gift of faith is to *know* God in Christ; to refuse it is to become an ally of the *devil.* Faith and unbelief mark the great divisions among even the disciples. **71**: *Iscariot,* identifies *Judas* as a man from Kerioth, a town in southern Judea.

**7.1–52**: **Jesus, the water of life.** **2**: *Booths,* a festival which began on the fifteenth day of the seventh month (Sept.–Oct.), commemorating the wilderness wanderings (Lev

go to Judea so that your disciples also may see the works you are doing; 4 for no one who wants[x] to be widely known acts in secret. If you do these things, show yourself to the world." 5 (For not even his brothers believed in him.) 6 Jesus said to them, "My time has not yet come, but your time is always here. 7 The world cannot hate you, but it hates me because I testify against it that its works are evil. 8 Go to the festival yourselves. I am not[y] going to this festival, for my time has not yet fully come." 9 After saying this, he remained in Galilee.

10 But after his brothers had gone to the festival, then he also went, not publicly but as it were[z] in secret. 11 The Jews were looking for him at the festival and saying, "Where is he?" 12 And there was considerable complaining about him among the crowds. While some were saying, "He is a good man," others were saying, "No, he is deceiving the crowd." 13 Yet no one would speak openly about him for fear of the Jews.

14 About the middle of the festival Jesus went up into the temple and began to teach. 15 The Jews were astonished at it, saying, "How does this man have such learning,[a] when he has never been taught?" 16 Then Jesus answered them, "My teaching is not mine but his who sent me. 17 Anyone who resolves to do the will of God will know whether the teaching is from God or whether I am speaking on my own. 18 Those who speak on their own seek their own glory; but the one who seeks the glory of him who sent him is true, and there is nothing false in him.

19 "Did not Moses give you the law? Yet none of you keeps the law. Why are you looking for an opportunity to kill me?" 20 The crowd answered, "You have a demon! Who is trying to kill you?" 21 Jesus answered them, "I performed one work, and all of you are astonished. 22 Moses gave you circumcision (it is, of course, not from Moses, but from the patriarchs), and you circumcise a man on the sabbath. 23 If a man receives circumcision on the sabbath in order that the law of Moses may not be broken, are you angry with me because I healed a man's whole body on the sabbath? 24 Do not judge by appearances, but judge with right judgment."

25 Now some of the people of Jerusalem were saying, "Is not this the man whom they are trying to kill? 26 And here he is, speaking openly, but they say nothing to him! Can it be that the authorities really know that this is the Messiah?[b] 27 Yet we know where this man is from; but when the Messiah[b] comes, no one will know where he is from." 28 Then Jesus cried out as he was teaching in the temple, "You know me, and you know where I am from. I have not come on my own. But the one who sent me is true, and you do not know him. 29 I know him, because I am from him, and

*x* Other ancient authorities read *wants it*
*y* Other ancient authorities add *yet*
*z* Other ancient authorities lack *as it were*
*a* Or *this man know his letters* *b* Or *the Christ*

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23.39–43; Deut 16.13–15). **3–5**: Jesus' *brothers* challenge him to declare himself *to the world* of pilgrims at the feast; his claims (chs 5 and 6) must be verified at Jerusalem. **6–8**: Jesus' *time*, or *hour* (v. 30; see 2.4 n.; 8.20; 12.23; 17.1), was the time for his self-manifestation on the cross. **10**: Compare Jesus' *secret* journey with the public one in 12.12–15, and the reasons for both in v. 8 and 12.23.

**7.11–13**: Subdued debate (*complaining*) over Jesus' character is prompted by *fear of the Jews* (see 5.16 n.). **15**: Wherein lay the authority of Jesus' teaching (Mk 1.22) without the accreditation of official rabbinic study? **16–18**: Jesus' *teaching* came *from God*, not from himself, a fact that can be recognized by anyone who wills to obey God's *will*.

**7.19–24**: The law of Moses condemns their desire to *kill* Jesus for healing on the sabbath (5.18), for it enjoins circumcision even when the eighth day falls on a sabbath (Lev 12.3). If circumcision, why not healings?

**7.25–31**: Possibility of Jesus' messiahship is denied because his origin is known, whereas it was believed that the Messiah's origin would be mysterious. Jesus' human origin is apparent, but not his true origin in God, by whom he was *sent* and whose authority he bears.

he sent me." [30]Then they tried to arrest him, but no one laid hands on him, because his hour had not yet come. [31]Yet many in the crowd believed in him and were saying, "When the Messiah[c] comes, will he do more signs than this man has done?"[d]

32 The Pharisees heard the crowd muttering such things about him, and the chief priests and Pharisees sent temple police to arrest him. [33]Jesus then said, "I will be with you a little while longer, and then I am going to him who sent me. [34]You will search for me, but you will not find me; and where I am, you cannot come." [35]The Jews said to one another, "Where does this man intend to go that we will not find him? Does he intend to go to the Dispersion among the Greeks and teach the Greeks? [36]What does he mean by saying, 'You will search for me and you will not find me' and 'Where I am, you cannot come'?"

37 On the last day of the festival, the great day, while Jesus was standing there, he cried out, "Let anyone who is thirsty come to me, [38]and let the one who believes in me drink. As[e] the scripture has said, 'Out of the believer's heart[f] shall flow rivers of living water.' " [39]Now he said this about the Spirit, which believers in him were to receive; for as yet there was no Spirit,[g] because Jesus was not yet glorified.

40 When they heard these words, some in the crowd said, "This is really the prophet." [41]Others said, "This is the Messiah."[c] But some asked, "Surely the Messiah[c] does not come from Galilee, does he? [42]Has not the scripture said that the Messiah[c] is descended from David and comes from Bethlehem, the village where David lived?" [43]So there was a division in the crowd because of him. [44]Some of them wanted to arrest him, but no one laid hands on him.

45 Then the temple police went back to the chief priests and Pharisees, who asked them, "Why did you not arrest him?" [46]The police answered, "Never has anyone spoken like this!" [47]Then the Pharisees replied, "Surely you have not been deceived too, have you? [48]Has any one of the authorities or of the Pharisees believed in him? [49]But this crowd, which does not know the law—they are accursed." [50]Nicodemus, who had gone to Jesus[h] before, and who was one of them, asked, [51]"Our law does not judge people without first giving them a hearing to find out what they are doing, does it?" [52]They replied, "Surely you are not also from Galilee, are you? Search and you will see that no prophet is to arise from Galilee."

*c* Or *the Christ* *d* Other ancient authorities read *is doing* *e* Or *come to me and drink. 38The one who believes in me, as* *f* Gk *out of his belly* *g* Other ancient authorities read *for as yet the Spirit* (others, *Holy Spirit*) *had not been given* *h* Gk *him*

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**7.32–36**: The *chief priests* (Sadducees) and *Pharisees,* inveterate enemies, unite in sending *temple police* to arrest Jesus. This leads Jesus to speak of his death (*I am going to him who sent me*). Later the Jews will seek deliverance in the Messiah, but *will not find* him, for he will have ascended to where they *cannot come* because they are unbelievers (contrast 8.21 with 12.26; 17.24). They miss the point, thinking that he is going to the Jews dispersed among the *Greeks* (Gentiles).

**7.37–39**: For seven days water was carried in a golden pitcher from the Pool of Siloam to the temple as a reminder of the water from the rock in the desert (Num 20.2–13), and as a symbol of hope for the coming Messianic deliverance (Isa 12.3). Jesus is the true water of life, who turns the symbol into reality (Isa 44.3; 55.1). Believers become channels of life to others, through Christ's *Spirit* given at Pentecost after he was *glorified* (crucified, risen, ascended). The gift of the *Spirit* is a mark of the Messianic age (Joel 2.28–29; Acts 2.14–21).

**7.40–44**: There is a division among the people over superficial matters. That he is from God is important. *The prophet . . . the Messiah,* see 1.21 n. **42**: *Descended from David,* 2 Sam 7.12–13; Ps 89.3–4; 132.11–12. *Bethlehem,* Mic 5.2. **49**: *Crowd,* the masses who are indifferent to scrupulous Pharisaic observances. **52**: Sarcasm, expressing the contempt of Jerusalem aristocrats for Galilean peasants.

8 [[53]Then each of them went home,
[1]while Jesus went to the Mount of
Olives. [2]Early in the morning he came
again to the temple. All the people came
to him and he sat down and began to
teach them. [3]The scribes and the Phari-
sees brought a woman who had been
caught in adultery; and making her stand
before all of them, [4]they said to him,
"Teacher, this woman was caught in the
very act of committing adultery. [5]Now
in the law Moses commanded us to stone
such women. Now what do you say?"
[6]They said this to test him, so that they
might have some charge to bring against
him. Jesus bent down and wrote with his
finger on the ground. [7]When they kept
on questioning him, he straightened up
and said to them, "Let anyone among
you who is without sin be the first to
throw a stone at her." [8]And once again
he bent down and wrote on the ground.[i]
[9]When they heard it, they went away,
one by one, beginning with the elders;
and Jesus was left alone with the woman
standing before him. [10]Jesus straightened
up and said to her, "Woman, where are
they? Has no one condemned you?"
[11]She said, "No one, sir."[j] And Jesus
said, "Neither do I condemn you. Go
your way, and from now on do not sin
again."]][k]

12 Again Jesus spoke to them, saying,
"I am the light of the world. Whoever
follows me will never walk in darkness
but will have the light of life." [13]Then the
Pharisees said to him, "You are testifying
on your own behalf; your testimony is
not valid." [14]Jesus answered, "Even if I
testify on my own behalf, my testimony
is valid because I know where I have
come from and where I am going, but
you do not know where I come from or
where I am going. [15]You judge by hu-
man standards;[l] I judge no one. [16]Yet
even if I do judge, my judgment is valid;
for it is not I alone who judge, but I and
the Father[m] who sent me. [17]In your law
it is written that the testimony of two
witnesses is valid. [18]I testify on my own
behalf, and the Father who sent me testi-
fies on my behalf." [19]Then they said to
him, "Where is your Father?" Jesus an-
swered, "You know neither me nor my
Father. If you knew me, you would
know my Father also." [20]He spoke these
words while he was teaching in the trea-
sury of the temple, but no one arrested
him, because his hour had not yet come.

21 Again he said to them, "I am going
away, and you will search for me, but
you will die in your sin. Where I am

*i* Other ancient authorities add *the sins of each of them* *j* Or *Lord* *k* The most ancient authorities lack 7.53—8.11; other authorities add the passage here or after 7.36 or after 21.25 or after Luke 21.38, with variations of text; some mark the passage as doubtful. *l* Gk *according to the flesh* *m* Other ancient authorities read *he*

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**7.53–8.11: The woman caught in adultery.** This account, omitted in many ancient manuscripts, appears to be an authentic incident in Jesus' ministry, though not belonging originally to John's Gospel.

**8.1**: *Mount of Olives,* a prominent hill east of Jerusalem, and separated from the city by the valley of the Kidron. **2**: *Early,* Lk 21.38; Acts 5.21. *Sat down,* Mt 5.1; 23.2; Mk 9.35. **5**: *In the law,* Lev 20.10; Deut 22.23–24. **7**: *Without sin,* Mt 23.28; Rom 2.1. **8**: *Wrote,* according to several later manuscripts, Jesus *wrote . . . on the ground* "the sins of each of them" (compare Jer 17.13). **11**: *Do not sin again,* 5.14.

**8.12–59: Jesus, the light of life.** Great golden lamps in the temple court were lit during the *festival of Booths* (7.2): therefore the appropriateness of Jesus' claim in v. 12 (Isa 49.6; 60.1–3). **13–18**: Jesus answers the objection to his bearing self-witness: (*a*) he comes from the world above; hence, he alone understands who he is (Mt 11.27); (*b*) the joint witness of the Father and the Son fulfills the Jewish requirement of *two* witnesses (Deut 19.15).

**8.19**: The question reveals judgment *by human standards* (v. 15); those who question Jesus have no ears to hear God speaking in Jesus. **20**: *The treasury,* in the Women's Court were thirteen bronze chests for the reception of voluntary offerings and the temple dues. **22**: Suicide leads to hell, they suggest. **23–24**: Jesus reiterates his source *from above* (in God); to believe in him is the only escape from sin and death.

going, you cannot come." 22Then the Jews said, "Is he going to kill himself? Is that what he means by saying, 'Where I am going, you cannot come'?" 23He said to them, "You are from below, I am from above; you are of this world, I am not of this world. 24I told you that you would die in your sins, for you will die in your sins unless you believe that I am he."[n] 25They said to him, "Who are you?" Jesus said to them, "Why do I speak to you at all?[o] 26I have much to say about you and much to condemn; but the one who sent me is true, and I declare to the world what I have heard from him." 27They did not understand that he was speaking to them about the Father. 28So Jesus said, "When you have lifted up the Son of Man, then you will realize that I am he,[n] and that I do nothing on my own, but I speak these things as the Father instructed me. 29And the one who sent me is with me; he has not left me alone, for I always do what is pleasing to him." 30As he was saying these things, many believed in him.

31 Then Jesus said to the Jews who had believed in him, "If you continue in my word, you are truly my disciples; 32and you will know the truth, and the truth will make you free." 33They answered him, "We are descendants of Abraham and have never been slaves to anyone. What do you mean by saying, 'You will be made free'?"

34 Jesus answered them, "Very truly, I tell you, everyone who commits sin is a slave to sin. 35The slave does not have a permanent place in the household; the son has a place there forever. 36So if the Son makes you free, you will be free indeed. 37I know that you are descendants of Abraham; yet you look for an opportunity to kill me, because there is no place in you for my word. 38I declare what I have seen in the Father's presence; as for you, you should do what you have heard from the Father."[p]

39 They answered him, "Abraham is our father." Jesus said to them, "If you were Abraham's children, you would be doing[q] what Abraham did, 40but now you are trying to kill me, a man who has told you the truth that I heard from God. This is not what Abraham did. 41You are indeed doing what your father does." They said to him, "We are not illegitimate children; we have one father, God himself." 42Jesus said to them, "If God were your Father, you would love me, for I came from God and now I am here. I did not come on my own, but he sent me. 43Why do you not understand what I say? It is because you cannot accept my word. 44You are from your father the devil, and you choose to do your father's desires. He was a murderer from the beginning and does not stand in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he lies, he speaks according to his own nature, for he is a liar and the father of lies. 45But because I tell the truth, you do not believe me. 46Which of you convicts me of sin? If I tell the truth, why do you not believe me? 47Whoever is from God hears the words of God. The reason you do not hear them is that you are not from God."

48 The Jews answered him, "Are we

*n* Gk *I am* *o* Or *What I have told you from the beginning* *p* Other ancient authorities read *you do what you have heard from your father*
*q* Other ancient authorities read *If you are Abraham's children, then do*

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**8.25–27**: An indirect claim to oneness with God, which they miss. **28–29**: The oneness is based on obedience, of which the cross is the final proof (12.32).

**8.32**: *Truth,* not knowledge in general, but saving truth (14.6). *Free,* from the power of sin and its slavery (v. 34). **33–38**: As *descendants of Abraham* the Jews had the truth of the Mosaic law; yet the law left them *slaves to sin.* True freedom comes only through *the Son.*

**8.39–47**: Their desire *to kill* Jesus forfeits their claim to be heirs of Abraham's faith and true children of God. They insist (v. 41) that *God* is their father. Their murderous intention and resistance to the truth belie this and brand them as children of *the devil* (v. 44). The fault is in them and not in Jesus (v. 46). **43**: *Word,* teaching.

**8.48**: *The Jews* turn to insult and calumny; unable to deny the miracles of Jesus, they

not right in saying that you are a Samaritan and have a demon?" 49Jesus answered, "I do not have a demon; but I honor my Father, and you dishonor me. 50Yet I do not seek my own glory; there is one who seeks it and he is the judge. 51Very truly, I tell you, whoever keeps my word will never see death." 52The Jews said to him, "Now we know that you have a demon. Abraham died, and so did the prophets; yet you say, 'Whoever keeps my word will never taste death.' 53Are you greater than our father Abraham, who died? The prophets also died. Who do you claim to be?" 54Jesus answered, "If I glorify myself, my glory is nothing. It is my Father who glorifies me, he of whom you say, 'He is our God,' 55though you do not know him. But I know him; if I would say that I do not know him, I would be a liar like you. But I do know him and I keep his word. 56Your ancestor Abraham rejoiced that he would see my day; he saw it and was glad." 57Then the Jews said to him, "You are not yet fifty years old, and have you seen Abraham?"[r] 58Jesus said to them, "Very truly, I tell you, before Abraham was, I am." 59So they picked up stones to throw at him, but Jesus hid himself and went out of the temple.

9 As he walked along, he saw a man blind from birth. 2His disciples asked him, "Rabbi, who sinned, this man or his parents, that he was born blind?" 3Jesus answered, "Neither this man nor his parents sinned; he was born blind so that God's works might be revealed in him. 4We[s] must work the works of him who sent me[t] while it is day; night is coming when no one can work. 5As long as I am in the world, I am the light of the world." 6When he had said this, he spat on the ground and made mud with the saliva and spread the mud on the man's eyes, 7saying to him, "Go, wash in the pool of Siloam" (which means Sent). Then he went and washed and came back able to see. 8The neighbors and those who had seen him before as a beggar began to ask, "Is this not the man who used to sit and beg?" 9Some were saying, "It is he." Others were saying, "No, but it is someone like him." He kept saying, "I am the man." 10But they kept asking him, "Then how were your eyes opened?" 11He answered, "The man called Jesus made mud, spread it on my eyes, and said to me, 'Go to Siloam and wash.' Then I went and washed and received my sight." 12They said to him, "Where is he?" He said, "I do not know."

13 They brought to the Pharisees the man who had formerly been blind. 14Now it was a sabbath day when Jesus made the mud and opened his eyes. 15Then the Pharisees also began to ask him how he had received his sight. He said to them, "He put mud on my eyes. Then I washed, and now I see." 16Some of the Pharisees said, "This man is not from God, for he does not observe the sabbath." But others said, "How can a man who is a sinner perform such signs?" And they were divided. 17So they said again to the blind man, "What do you say about him? It was your eyes he opened." He said, "He is a prophet."

18 The Jews did not believe that he had been blind and had received his sight until they called the parents of the man

*r* Other ancient authorities read *has Abraham seen you?* *s* Other ancient authorities read *I* *t* Other ancient authorities read *us*

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attribute them to the agency of *a demon*. **50–54**: God is judge, and will vindicate believers in Jesus with eternal life. **56**: Refusal to believe severs them from *Abraham*, who *rejoiced* in the hope of the coming of the Messiah (Heb 11.17). **58**: The *I am* is the divine name (Ex 3.14), a claim to pre-existence and oneness with God (10.30–33).

**9.1–41: Jesus manifests himself as the light of life. 2–3**: Suffering was attributed to sin, either of the parents or of the man prenatally. Jesus denies this and shifts attention from cause to purpose; this is an opportunity for God to act. **6**: *Saliva* was considered to have medicinal value. **7**: *Sent*, a symbol of Jesus as "sent" from God to give light.

**9.13–14**: The *Pharisees* would consider making *mud* as work, a breach of sabbath

who had received his sight [19]and asked them, "Is this your son, who you say was born blind? How then does he now see?" [20]His parents answered, "We know that this is our son, and that he was born blind; [21]but we do not know how it is that now he sees, nor do we know who opened his eyes. Ask him; he is of age. He will speak for himself." [22]His parents said this because they were afraid of the Jews; for the Jews had already agreed that anyone who confessed Jesus[u] to be the Messiah[v] would be put out of the synagogue. [23]Therefore his parents said, "He is of age; ask him."

24 So for the second time they called the man who had been blind, and they said to him, "Give glory to God! We know that this man is a sinner." [25]He answered, "I do not know whether he is a sinner. One thing I do know, that though I was blind, now I see." [26]They said to him, "What did he do to you? How did he open your eyes?" [27]He answered them, "I have told you already, and you would not listen. Why do you want to hear it again? Do you also want to become his disciples?" [28]Then they reviled him, saying, "You are his disciple, but we are disciples of Moses. [29]We know that God has spoken to Moses, but as for this man, we do not know where he comes from." [30]The man answered, "Here is an astonishing thing! You do not know where he comes from, and yet he opened my eyes. [31]We know that God does not listen to sinners, but he does listen to one who worships him and obeys his will. [32]Never since the world began has it been heard that anyone opened the eyes of a person born blind. [33]If this man were not from God, he could do nothing." [34]They answered him, "You were born entirely in sins, and are you trying to teach us?" And they drove him out.

35 Jesus heard that they had driven him out, and when he found him, he said, "Do you believe in the Son of Man?"[w] [36]He answered, "And who is he, sir?[x] Tell me, so that I may believe in him." [37]Jesus said to him, "You have seen him, and the one speaking with you is he." [38]He said, "Lord,[x] I believe." And he worshiped him. [39]Jesus said, "I came into this world for judgment so that those who do not see may see, and those who do see may become blind." [40]Some of the Pharisees near him heard this and said to him, "Surely we are not blind, are we?" [41]Jesus said to them, "If you were blind, you would not have sin. But now that you say, 'We see,' your sin remains.

10 "Very truly, I tell you, anyone who does not enter the sheepfold by the gate but climbs in by another way is a thief and a bandit. [2]The one who enters by the gate is the shepherd of the sheep. [3]The gatekeeper opens the gate for him, and the sheep hear his voice. He calls his own sheep by name and leads them out. [4]When he has brought out all his own, he goes ahead of them, and the

*u* Gk *him* *v* Or *the Christ* *w* Other ancient authorities read *the Son of God* *x* *Sir* and *Lord* translate the same Greek word

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laws. *They,* the neighbors and friends. **17**: The miracle authenticates Jesus as a messenger from God.

**9.18–23**: The *parents* are interrogated to avoid the possibility of mistaken identity. **22**: *Put out,* excommunicated (v. 34).

**9.24**: Not "*Give glory to God* rather than to Jesus," but a technical phrase adjuring the man to tell the truth (Josh 7.19). One who broke the sabbath must be *a sinner.* **25**: Recovered sight was more important than Pharisaic tradition. **28**: *You are his disciple,* an expression of baffled rage; the Pharisees attempt to cover their own defeat by denouncing the one who had been blind. **31**: *We know,* from Old Testament teachings (Ps 66.18; Prov 15.29). **34**: Anger usurps reason.

**9.35–41**: Judgment was not the purpose, but the result, of Jesus' coming (3.17). Belief opens the eyes of the spirit (*he worshiped him*), unbelief blinds *the Pharisees.* Proud refusal to admit spiritual blindness demonstrates their *sin* (v. 41).

**10.1–42**: **Jesus, the shepherd who gives his life. 1–6**: The details are strikingly true to life. **3**: *The gatekeeper* is apparently someone paid by a number of shepherds to guard their sheep in one fold, since Jesus refers to several

sheep follow him because they know his voice. 5They will not follow a stranger, but they will run from him because they do not know the voice of strangers." 6Jesus used this figure of speech with them, but they did not understand what he was saying to them.

7 So again Jesus said to them, "Very truly, I tell you, I am the gate for the sheep. 8All who came before me are thieves and bandits; but the sheep did not listen to them. 9I am the gate. Whoever enters by me will be saved, and will come in and go out and find pasture. 10The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy. I came that they may have life, and have it abundantly.

11 "I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep. 12The hired hand, who is not the shepherd and does not own the sheep, sees the wolf coming and leaves the sheep and runs away—and the wolf snatches them and scatters them. 13The hired hand runs away because a hired hand does not care for the sheep. 14I am the good shepherd. I know my own and my own know me, 15just as the Father knows me and I know the Father. And I lay down my life for the sheep. 16I have other sheep that do not belong to this fold. I must bring them also, and they will listen to my voice. So there will be one flock, one shepherd. 17For this reason the Father loves me, because I lay down my life in order to take it up again. 18No one takes[y] it from me, but I lay it down of my own accord. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it up again. I have received this command from my Father."

19 Again the Jews were divided because of these words. 20Many of them were saying, "He has a demon and is out of his mind. Why listen to him?" 21Others were saying, "These are not the words of one who has a demon. Can a demon open the eyes of the blind?"

22 At that time the festival of the Dedication took place in Jerusalem. It was winter, 23and Jesus was walking in the temple, in the portico of Solomon. 24So the Jews gathered around him and said to him, "How long will you keep us in suspense? If you are the Messiah,[z] tell us plainly." 25Jesus answered, "I have told you, and you do not believe. The works that I do in my Father's name testify to me; 26but you do not believe, because you do not belong to my sheep. 27My sheep hear my voice. I know them, and they follow me. 28I give them eternal life, and they will never perish. No one will snatch them out of my hand. 29What my Father has given me is greater than all else, and no one can snatch it out of the Father's hand.[a] 30The Father and I are one."

31 The Jews took up stones again to stone him. 32Jesus replied, "I have shown you many good works from the Father. For which of these are you going to stone me?" 33The Jews answered, "It is not for a good work that we are going to stone you, but for blasphemy, because you, though only a human being, are making yourself God." 34Jesus answered, "Is it

*y* Other ancient authorities read *has taken*
*z* Or *the Christ* *a* Other ancient authorities read *My Father who has given them to me is greater than all, and no one can snatch them out of the Father's hand*

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shepherds by inference (v. 16) and repeats *his own sheep* several times (vv. 3, 4, 12, 14). **7**: Christ is the *gate* into God's fold. **8**: Refers to Messianic pretenders. **9**: Christ provides (*a*) escape from the perils of sin, (*b*) freedom, and (*c*) spiritual sustenance (the bread, water, and light of life, chs 6–9). **10**: *Life,* see 3.13–15 n. *Abundantly,* beyond measure (Ps 23.5).

**10.11**: Jesus fulfills Old Testament promises that God himself will come to shepherd his people (Isa 40.11; Jer 23.1–6; Ezek 34, esp. v. 11). **16**: *Other sheep,* Gentiles. *One flock,* Eph 2.11–22.

**10.19–21**: 7.43; 8.48; 9.16. **22**: *Dedication,* commemorating the rededication of the temple in 164 B.C. after its desecration by Antiochus Epiphanes (1 Macc 4.52–59). **23**: *The portico of Solomon,* a cloister on the east side of the temple buildings. **24–30**: Evidence of Jesus' oneness with God demands faith for its interpretation (see 8.58 n.).

**10.31–39**: Two arguments: (*a*) In the light

not written in your law,[b] 'I said, you are gods'? 35If those to whom the word of God came were called 'gods'—and the scripture cannot be annulled— 36can you say that the one whom the Father has sanctified and sent into the world is blaspheming because I said, 'I am God's Son'? 37If I am not doing the works of my Father, then do not believe me. 38But if I do them, even though you do not believe me, believe the works, so that you may know and understand[c] that the Father is in me and I am in the Father." 39Then they tried to arrest him again, but he escaped from their hands.

40 He went away again across the Jordan to the place where John had been baptizing earlier, and he remained there. 41Many came to him, and they were saying, "John performed no sign, but everything that John said about this man was true." 42And many believed in him there.

11 Now a certain man was ill, Lazarus of Bethany, the village of Mary and her sister Martha. 2Mary was the one who anointed the Lord with perfume and wiped his feet with her hair; her brother Lazarus was ill. 3So the sisters sent a message to Jesus,[d] "Lord, he whom you love is ill." 4But when Jesus heard it, he said, "This illness does not lead to death; rather it is for God's glory, so that the Son of God may be glorified through it." 5Accordingly, though Jesus loved Martha and her sister and Lazarus, 6after having heard that Lazarus[e] was ill, he stayed two days longer in the place where he was.

7 Then after this he said to the disciples, "Let us go to Judea again." 8The disciples said to him, "Rabbi, the Jews were just now trying to stone you, and are you going there again?" 9Jesus answered, "Are there not twelve hours of daylight? Those who walk during the day do not stumble, because they see the light of this world. 10But those who walk at night stumble, because the light is not in them." 11After saying this, he told them, "Our friend Lazarus has fallen asleep, but I am going there to awaken him." 12The disciples said to him, "Lord, if he has fallen asleep, he will be all right." 13Jesus, however, had been speaking about his death, but they thought that he was referring merely to sleep. 14Then Jesus told them plainly, "Lazarus is dead. 15For your sake I am glad I was not there, so that you may believe. But let us go to him." 16Thomas, who was called the Twin,[f] said to his fellow disciples, "Let us also go, that we may die with him."

17 When Jesus arrived, he found that Lazarus[e] had already been in the tomb four days. 18Now Bethany was near Jerusalem, some two miles[g] away, 19and many of the Jews had come to Martha and Mary to console them about their brother. 20When Martha heard that Jesus was coming, she went and met him, while Mary stayed at home. 21Martha said to Jesus, "Lord, if you had been here, my brother would not have died. 22But even now I know that God will give you whatever you ask of him." 23Jesus said to her, "Your brother will

*b* Other ancient authorities read *in the law*
*c* Other ancient authorities lack *and understand*; others read *and believe* *d* Gk *him* *e* Gk *he*
*f* Gk *Didymus* *g* Gk *fifteen stadia*

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of Ps 82.6, titles are less important than realities; (*b*) Jesus' works authenticate him, for they are the kind which God does. **40**: Jesus withdraws to Perea for safety. **41**: 1.26–36.

**11.1–57**: **The raising of Lazarus,** the crowning miracle or *sign* (12.17–18), revealing Jesus as the giver of life (5.25–29), and precipitating his death (11.53). **1**: *Bethany,* v. 18. **2**: 12.1–3. **4**: *Death,* i.e. final death. **6**: The action of Jesus is never hurried.

**11.9**: His life would end when God willed; his enemies could not shorten it. **11**: *Asleep,* a common New Testament description of death (see Mt 9.24 n.; Mk 5.39; Acts 7.60; 1 Cor 15.6). **15**: The miracle will confirm their faith. **16**: Courageous loyalty, not cynicism.

**11.19**: *Many* came *to console them,* Jewish mourning ceremonies were elaborate and attended by many. At least ten persons were expected to take part in them; they were continued for about thirty days. **20**: As in Lk 10.38–42, Martha is active, Mary contemplative. **21–22**: Disappointment blends with

rise again." [24]Martha said to him, "I know that he will rise again in the resurrection on the last day." [25]Jesus said to her, "I am the resurrection and the life.[h] Those who believe in me, even though they die, will live, [26]and everyone who lives and believes in me will never die. Do you believe this?" [27]She said to him, "Yes, Lord, I believe that you are the Messiah,[i] the Son of God, the one coming into the world."

28 When she had said this, she went back and called her sister Mary, and told her privately, "The Teacher is here and is calling for you." [29]And when she heard it, she got up quickly and went to him. [30]Now Jesus had not yet come to the village, but was still at the place where Martha had met him. [31]The Jews who were with her in the house, consoling her, saw Mary get up quickly and go out. They followed her because they thought that she was going to the tomb to weep there. [32]When Mary came where Jesus was and saw him, she knelt at his feet and said to him, "Lord, if you had been here, my brother would not have died." [33]When Jesus saw her weeping, and the Jews who came with her also weeping, he was greatly disturbed in spirit and deeply moved. [34]He said, "Where have you laid him?" They said to him, "Lord, come and see." [35]Jesus began to weep. [36]So the Jews said, "See how he loved him!" [37]But some of them said, "Could not he who opened the eyes of the blind man have kept this man from dying?"

38 Then Jesus, again greatly disturbed, came to the tomb. It was a cave, and a stone was lying against it. [39]Jesus said, "Take away the stone." Martha, the sister of the dead man, said to him, "Lord, already there is a stench because he has been dead four days." [40]Jesus said to her, "Did I not tell you that if you believed, you would see the glory of God?" [41]So they took away the stone. And Jesus looked upward and said, "Father, I thank you for having heard me. [42]I knew that you always hear me, but I have said this for the sake of the crowd standing here, so that they may believe that you sent me." [43]When he had said this, he cried with a loud voice, "Lazarus, come out!" [44]The dead man came out, his hands and feet bound with strips of cloth, and his face wrapped in a cloth. Jesus said to them, "Unbind him, and let him go."

45 Many of the Jews therefore, who had come with Mary and had seen what Jesus did, believed in him. [46]But some of them went to the Pharisees and told them what he had done. [47]So the chief priests and the Pharisees called a meeting of the council, and said, "What are we to do? This man is performing many signs. [48]If we let him go on like this, everyone will believe in him, and the Romans will come and destroy both our holy place[j] and our nation." [49]But one of them, Caiaphas, who was high priest that year, said to them, "You know nothing at all! [50]You do not understand that it is better for you to have one man die for the people than to have the whole nation de-

*h* Other ancient authorities lack *and the life*
*i* Or *the Christ* *j* Or *our temple*; Greek *our place*

faint hope, *even now*. **24**: Belief in *the resurrection on the last day* was widespread among pious Jews in Jesus' day.

**11.25–26**: Jesus is not only the agent of final resurrection, but gives eternal life now (Rom 6.4–5; Col 2.12; 3.1). The body dies, but the person *will never die*. **27**: Martha rests her perplexity on the mystery of Jesus' person as the Messiah. **32**: See v. 21. **33**: *Moved,* stirred with indignation, probably at the power of death (12.27). **34**: *Laid,* buried. **35**: Jesus' humanity was real.

**11.39**: *Dead four days,* popular belief imagined that the soul lingered near the body for three days, then left. **40**: *Glory of God,* i.e. God acting to reveal his nature as lifegiver. 41–42: God hears even Jesus' unspoken thoughts, but Jesus wishes the people to know that he is no magician, but one sent from God.

**11.46**: *Some . . . went to the Pharisees,* this is a crucial turning point in Jesus' ministry. **47**: *Council,* the Sanhedrin, the official Jewish court, made up of seventy priests, scribes, and elders, presided over by the high priest. **49–53**: An unconscious prophecy with deep

stroyed." [51]He did not say this on his own, but being high priest that year he prophesied that Jesus was about to die for the nation, [52]and not for the nation only, but to gather into one the dispersed children of God. [53]So from that day on they planned to put him to death.

54 Jesus therefore no longer walked about openly among the Jews, but went from there to a town called Ephraim in the region near the wilderness; and he remained there with the disciples.

55 Now the Passover of the Jews was near, and many went up from the country to Jerusalem before the Passover to purify themselves. [56]They were looking for Jesus and were asking one another as they stood in the temple, "What do you think? Surely he will not come to the festival, will he?" [57]Now the chief priests and the Pharisees had given orders that anyone who knew where Jesus[k] was should let them know, so that they might arrest him.

12 Six days before the Passover Jesus came to Bethany, the home of Lazarus, whom he had raised from the dead. [2]There they gave a dinner for him. Martha served, and Lazarus was one of those at the table with him. [3]Mary took a pound of costly perfume made of pure nard, anointed Jesus' feet, and wiped them[l] with her hair. The house was filled with the fragrance of the perfume. [4]But Judas Iscariot, one of his disciples (the one who was about to betray him), said, [5]"Why was this perfume not sold for three hundred denarii[m] and the money given to the poor?" [6](He said this not because he cared about the poor, but because he was a thief; he kept the common purse and used to steal what was put into it.) [7]Jesus said, "Leave her alone. She bought it[n] so that she might keep it for the day of my burial. [8]You always have the poor with you, but you do not always have me."

9 When the great crowd of the Jews learned that he was there, they came not only because of Jesus but also to see Lazarus, whom he had raised from the dead. [10]So the chief priests planned to put Lazarus to death as well, [11]since it was on account of him that many of the Jews were deserting and were believing in Jesus.

12 The next day the great crowd that had come to the festival heard that Jesus was coming to Jerusalem. [13]So they took branches of palm trees and went out to meet him, shouting,

"Hosanna!
Blessed is the one who comes in
the name of the Lord—
the King of Israel!"

[14]Jesus found a young donkey and sat on it; as it is written:

[15] "Do not be afraid, daughter of
Zion.
Look, your king is coming,
sitting on a donkey's colt!"

[16]His disciples did not understand these things at first; but when Jesus was glorified, then they remembered that these things had been written of him and had been done to him. [17]So the crowd that

*k* Gk *he* *l* Gk *his feet* *m* Three hundred denarii would be nearly a year's wages for a laborer *n* Gk lacks *She bought it*

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theological meaning—Jesus' death would redeem not only the Jews but believers in all nations.

**11.54**: *No longer . . . openly,* because the Sanhedrin had ordered his arrest (v. 57). *Ephraim,* about fifteen miles north of Jerusalem.

**12.1–11**: **The anointing at Bethany.** In the full knowledge of a plot against his life (11.53, 57), Jesus returns to the vicinity of Jerusalem. **1**: *Bethany,* 11.18. **3**: *A* (Roman) *pound,* twelve ounces. **4–5**: Judas' reaction is a sign of his defection. **5**: *Three hundred denarii,* see note *m*. **7**: Jesus foresees his death; the anointing is the last rite in preparation for burial. **8**: Such spontaneous love will not neglect the poor.

**12.12–19**: **Palm Sunday.** Jesus dramatically manifests himself as the Messiah. **13**: *Hosanna,* see Mt 21.9 n. *In the name of,* with the authority of God. *King of Israel,* the Messiah. **14–15**: Zech 9.9. Warlike kings rode on horses and in chariots; the king of peace, *on a donkey's colt.* **16**: The cross, resurrection, ascension, and Pentecost clarified many Old Testament passages.

had been with him when he called Lazarus out of the tomb and raised him from the dead continued to testify.[o] 18It was also because they heard that he had performed this sign that the crowd went to meet him. 19The Pharisees then said to one another, "You see, you can do nothing. Look, the world has gone after him!"

20 Now among those who went up to worship at the festival were some Greeks. 21They came to Philip, who was from Bethsaida in Galilee, and said to him, "Sir, we wish to see Jesus." 22Philip went and told Andrew; then Andrew and Philip went and told Jesus. 23Jesus answered them, "The hour has come for the Son of Man to be glorified. 24Very truly, I tell you, unless a grain of wheat falls into the earth and dies, it remains just a single grain; but if it dies, it bears much fruit. 25Those who love their life lose it, and those who hate their life in this world will keep it for eternal life. 26Whoever serves me must follow me, and where I am, there will my servant be also. Whoever serves me, the Father will honor.

27 "Now my soul is troubled. And what should I say—'Father, save me from this hour'? No, it is for this reason that I have come to this hour. 28Father, glorify your name." Then a voice came from heaven, "I have glorified it, and I will glorify it again." 29The crowd standing there heard it and said that it was thunder. Others said, "An angel has spoken to him." 30Jesus answered, "This voice has come for your sake, not for mine. 31Now is the judgment of this world; now the ruler of this world will be driven out. 32And I, when I am lifted up from the earth, will draw all people[p] to myself." 33He said this to indicate the kind of death he was to die. 34The crowd answered him, "We have heard from the law that the Messiah[q] remains forever. How can you say that the Son of Man must be lifted up? Who is this Son of Man?" 35Jesus said to them, "The light is with you for a little longer. Walk while you have the light, so that the darkness may not overtake you. If you walk in the darkness, you do not know where you are going. 36While you have the light, believe in the light, so that you may become children of light."

After Jesus had said this, he departed and hid from them. 37Although he had performed so many signs in their presence, they did not believe in him. 38This was to fulfill the word spoken by the prophet Isaiah:

"Lord, who has believed our
message,
and to whom has the arm of the
Lord been revealed?"

39And so they could not believe, because Isaiah also said,

40 "He has blinded their eyes
and hardened their heart,
so that they might not look with
their eyes,
and understand with their heart
and turn—
and I would heal them."

41Isaiah said this because[r] he saw his glo-

*o* Other ancient authorities read *with him began to testify that he had called. . .from the dead*
*p* Other ancient authorities read *all things*
*q* Or *the Christ* *r* Other ancient witnesses read *when*

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**12.20–50: Jesus' public ministry concludes. 20**: *Greeks,* Gentiles. **21–22**: Both *Philip* ("lover of horses") and *Andrew* ("manly") were Greek names. Both were from *Bethsaida,* on the shore of the Sea of Galilee. **23–24**: *The hour,* see 2.4 n. **25–26**: Mt 10.39; Mk 8.35; Lk 9.24; 14.26.

**12.27–30**: Mk 14.32–42. A *voice . . . from heaven* was a common sign of divine reassurance (Mk 1.11; 9.7; Acts 9.7). **30**: *For your sake,* that they might believe that Jesus came from God. **31–33**: Reality reverses appearances: Jesus' death judges the *world,* not him; defeats Satan, not Jesus; draws, not repels, *all people.* **34–36a**: All evidence is in; it is time to act! *Children of light,* see Lk 16.8 n.

**12.36b–43**: Refusal to *believe* evidence (*so many signs*) induces spiritual blindness (Isa 6.9–10; Mt 13.14–15; see Acts 28.26 n.). **41**: *His glory,* the glory of Christ. **42**: *Many . . . authorities,* Nicodemus and Joseph of Arimathea are the only known ones.

ry and spoke about him. 42Nevertheless many, even of the authorities, believed in him. But because of the Pharisees they did not confess it, for fear that they would be put out of the synagogue; 43for they loved human glory more than the glory that comes from God.

44 Then Jesus cried aloud: "Whoever believes in me believes not in me but in him who sent me. 45And whoever sees me sees him who sent me. 46I have come as light into the world, so that everyone who believes in me should not remain in the darkness. 47I do not judge anyone who hears my words and does not keep them, for I came not to judge the world, but to save the world. 48The one who rejects me and does not receive my word has a judge; on the last day the word that I have spoken will serve as judge, 49for I have not spoken on my own, but the Father who sent me has himself given me a commandment about what to say and what to speak. 50And I know that his commandment is eternal life. What I speak, therefore, I speak just as the Father has told me."

13 Now before the festival of the Passover, Jesus knew that his hour had come to depart from this world and go to the Father. Having loved his own who were in the world, he loved them to the end. 2The devil had already put it into the heart of Judas son of Simon Iscariot to betray him. And during supper 3Jesus, knowing that the Father had given all things into his hands, and that he had come from God and was going to God, 4got up from the table,[s] took off his outer robe, and tied a towel around himself. 5Then he poured water into a basin and began to wash the disciples' feet and to wipe them with the towel that was tied around him. 6He came to Simon Peter, who said to him, "Lord, are you going to wash my feet?" 7Jesus answered, "You do not know now what I am doing, but later you will understand." 8Peter said to him, "You will never wash my feet." Jesus answered, "Unless I wash you, you have no share with me." 9Simon Peter said to him, "Lord, not my feet only but also my hands and my head!" 10Jesus said to him, "One who has bathed does not need to wash, except for the feet,[t] but is entirely clean. And you[u] are clean, though not all of you." 11For he knew who was to betray him; for this reason he said, "Not all of you are clean."

12 After he had washed their feet, had put on his robe, and had returned to the table, he said to them, "Do you know what I have done to you? 13You call me Teacher and Lord—and you are right, for that is what I am. 14So if I, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also ought to wash one another's feet. 15For I have set you an example, that you also should do as I have done to you. 16Very truly, I tell you, servants[v] are not greater than their master, nor are messengers greater than the one who sent them. 17If you know these things, you are blessed if you do them. 18I am not speaking of all of you; I know whom I have chosen. But it is to fulfill the scripture, 'The one who ate my bread[w] has lifted his heel against me.' 19I tell you this now, before it occurs, so that when it does occur, you may believe that I am he.[x] 20Very truly, I tell you, whoever receives one whom I send receives me; and whoever receives me receives him who sent me."

*s* Gk *from supper* *t* Other ancient authorities lack *except for the feet* *u* The Greek word for *you* here is plural *v* Gk *slaves* *w* Other ancient authorities read *ate bread with me* *x* Gk *I am*

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**12.44–50**: Summary of Jesus' teaching.

**13.1–38**: **The Last Supper.** Preparation for the teaching (chs 14–17) and events (chs 18–21) to follow. **1**: *To the end,* the utmost. **5**: Lk 22.27. **6–9**: Though it seems incongruous, Peter must let Jesus *wash* him, the reason made plain *later* in the cross.

**13.11**: Outward washing alone does not cleanse (Lk 11.39–41; Heb 10.22). **15**: 1 Pet 2.21. **16**: Mt 10.24; Lk 6.40. **17**: Lk 11.28; Jas 1.25. **18**: Ps 41.9.

21 After saying this Jesus was troubled in spirit, and declared, "Very truly, I tell you, one of you will betray me." 22The disciples looked at one another, uncertain of whom he was speaking. 23One of his disciples—the one whom Jesus loved—was reclining next to him; 24Simon Peter therefore motioned to him to ask Jesus of whom he was speaking. 25So while reclining next to Jesus, he asked him, "Lord, who is it?" 26Jesus answered, "It is the one to whom I give this piece of bread when I have dipped it in the dish."[y] So when he had dipped the piece of bread, he gave it to Judas son of Simon Iscariot.[z] 27After he received the piece of bread,[a] Satan entered into him. Jesus said to him, "Do quickly what you are going to do." 28Now no one at the table knew why he said this to him. 29Some thought that, because Judas had the common purse, Jesus was telling him, "Buy what we need for the festival"; or, that he should give something to the poor. 30So, after receiving the piece of bread, he immediately went out. And it was night.

31 When he had gone out, Jesus said, "Now the Son of Man has been glorified, and God has been glorified in him. 32If God has been glorified in him,[b] God will also glorify him in himself and will glorify him at once. 33Little children, I am with you only a little longer. You will look for me; and as I said to the Jews so now I say to you, 'Where I am going, you cannot come.' 34I give you a new commandment, that you love one another. Just as I have loved you, you also should love one another. 35By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another."

36 Simon Peter said to him, "Lord, where are you going?" Jesus answered, "Where I am going, you cannot follow me now; but you will follow afterward." 37Peter said to him, "Lord, why can I not follow you now? I will lay down my life for you." 38Jesus answered, "Will you lay down your life for me? Very truly, I tell you, before the cock crows, you will have denied me three times.

14 "Do not let your hearts be troubled. Believe[c] in God, believe also in me. 2In my Father's house there are many dwelling places. If it were not so, would I have told you that I go to prepare a place for you?[d] 3And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and will take you to myself, so that where I am, there you may be also. 4And you know the way to the place where I am going."[e] 5Thomas said to him, "Lord, we do not know where you are going. How can we know the way?" 6Jesus said to him, "I am the way, and the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me. 7If you know

*y* Gk *dipped it* *z* Other ancient authorities read *Judas Iscariot son of Simon*; others, *Judas son of Simon from Karyot* (Kerioth) *a* Gk *After the piece of bread* *b* Other ancient authorities lack *If God has been glorified in him* *c* Or *You believe* *d* Or *If it were not so, I would have told you; for I go to prepare a place for you* *e* Other ancient authorities read *Where I am going you know, and the way you know*

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**13.21–30**: The betrayer must be dissuaded, or dismissed. Jesus honors him by seating him next to himself, handing him a *piece of bread* (Ruth 2.14), concealing his treachery from all but the beloved disciple.

**13.31–35**: The death that Judas has gone to arrange will *glorify* (reveal the essence of) both Father and Son as holy love. The disciples are now the organ of this love. **33**: *Little children,* an expression of endearment found only here in the Gospels; see also 1 Jn 2.1, 12, 28; 3.7, 18; 4.4; 5.21. **36–38**: Peter is not yet ready to *follow* Jesus to death; *afterward,* according to tradition, he was martyred.

**14.1–17.26: Jesus' farewell discourse and prayer;** an interpretation of Jesus' completed work on earth and relation to both believers and the world after his resurrection and ascension. It is a meditation, which—like a love-letter—is difficult to outline.

**14.1–31: The believers' relation to the glorified Christ;** no separation, but deepened fellowship. **1**: Belief in God has new meaning in Jesus. **2–3**: For him to *go,* through death and resurrection, to his *Father's house* (with *dwelling places* for all) was to *prepare a place* of permanent fellowship with him (13.33, 36). **4–7**: Access to God is solely through Jesus (Mt 11.27; Jn 1.18; 6.46; Acts 4.12).

me, you will know[f] my Father also. From now on you do know him and have seen him."

8 Philip said to him, "Lord, show us the Father, and we will be satisfied." 9Jesus said to him, "Have I been with you all this time, Philip, and you still do not know me? Whoever has seen me has seen the Father. How can you say, 'Show us the Father'? 10Do you not believe that I am in the Father and the Father is in me? The words that I say to you I do not speak on my own; but the Father who dwells in me does his works. 11Believe me that I am in the Father and the Father is in me; but if you do not, then believe me because of the works themselves. 12Very truly, I tell you, the one who believes in me will also do the works that I do and, in fact, will do greater works than these, because I am going to the Father. 13I will do whatever you ask in my name, so that the Father may be glorified in the Son. 14If in my name you ask me[g] for anything, I will do it.

15 "If you love me, you will keep[h] my commandments. 16And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Advocate,[i] to be with you forever. 17This is the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it neither sees him nor knows him. You know him, because he abides with you, and he will be in[j] you.

18 "I will not leave you orphaned; I am coming to you. 19In a little while the world will no longer see me, but you will see me; because I live, you also will live. 20On that day you will know that I am in my Father, and you in me, and I in you. 21They who have my commandments and keep them are those who love me; and those who love me will be loved by my Father, and I will love them and reveal myself to them." 22Judas (not Iscariot) said to him, "Lord, how is it that you will reveal yourself to us, and not to the world?" 23Jesus answered him, "Those who love me will keep my word, and my Father will love them, and we will come to them and make our home with them. 24Whoever does not love me does not keep my words; and the word that you hear is not mine, but is from the Father who sent me.

25 "I have said these things to you while I am still with you. 26But the Advocate,[i] the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, will teach you everything, and remind you of all that I have said to you. 27Peace I leave with you; my peace I give to you. I do not give to you as the world gives. Do not let your hearts be troubled, and do not let them be afraid. 28You heard me say to you, 'I am going away, and I am coming to you.' If you loved me, you would rejoice that I am going to the Father, because the Father is greater than I. 29And now I have told you this before it occurs, so that when it does occur, you may believe. 30I will no longer talk much with you, for the ruler of this world is coming. He has no power over me; 31but I do as the Father has commanded me, so that the world may know that I love the Father. Rise, let us be on our way.

15 "I am the true vine, and my Father is the vinegrower. 2He removes every branch in me that bears no fruit. Every branch that bears fruit he

*f* Other ancient authorities read *If you had known me, you would have known* *g* Other ancient authorities lack *me* *h* Other ancient authorities read *me, keep* *i* Or *Helper* *j* Or *among*

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**14.8–11**: Knowledge of God is solely through the person, *words,* and *works* of Jesus. **12–17**: *Greater works* (of a more exalted nature because redemption is achieved) will be done by the believers through prayer (vv. 13, 15), obedience (v. 15), and the Holy Spirit (*Advocate,* vv. 16, 17).

**14.18–20**: The Spirit imparts Christ's life (Acts 2.33) and unites the believer to God. **21–24**: Fellowship with Christ is dependent on *love* which issues in obedience.

**14.25–27**: The *Holy Spirit* interprets Christ's teachings (v. 26), and imparts his peace (v. 27). **28–31**: To go to the Father meant Jesus' self-chosen conflict with *the ruler of this world* (i.e. Satan), whose *power* would be broken by death and resurrection.

**15.1–27**: **The pattern of the Christian**

prunes[k] to make it bear more fruit. 3 You have already been cleansed[k] by the word that I have spoken to you. 4 Abide in me as I abide in you. Just as the branch cannot bear fruit by itself unless it abides in the vine, neither can you unless you abide in me. 5 I am the vine, you are the branches. Those who abide in me and I in them bear much fruit, because apart from me you can do nothing. 6 Whoever does not abide in me is thrown away like a branch and withers; such branches are gathered, thrown into the fire, and burned. 7 If you abide in me, and my words abide in you, ask for whatever you wish, and it will be done for you. 8 My Father is glorified by this, that you bear much fruit and become[l] my disciples. 9 As the Father has loved me, so I have loved you; abide in my love. 10 If you keep my commandments, you will abide in my love, just as I have kept my Father's commandments and abide in his love. 11 I have said these things to you so that my joy may be in you, and that your joy may be complete.

12 "This is my commandment, that you love one another as I have loved you. 13 No one has greater love than this, to lay down one's life for one's friends. 14 You are my friends if you do what I command you. 15 I do not call you servants[m] any longer, because the servant[n] does not know what the master is doing; but I have called you friends, because I have made known to you everything that I have heard from my Father. 16 You did not choose me but I chose you. And I appointed you to go and bear fruit, fruit that will last, so that the Father will give you whatever you ask him in my name. 17 I am giving you these commands so that you may love one another.

18 "If the world hates you, be aware that it hated me before it hated you. 19 If you belonged to the world,[o] the world would love you as its own. Because you do not belong to the world, but I have chosen you out of the world—therefore the world hates you. 20 Remember the word that I said to you, 'Servants[p] are not greater than their master.' If they persecuted me, they will persecute you; if they kept my word, they will keep yours also. 21 But they will do all these things to you on account of my name, because they do not know him who sent me. 22 If I had not come and spoken to them, they would not have sin; but now they have no excuse for their sin. 23 Whoever hates me hates my Father also. 24 If I had not done among them the works that no one else did, they would not have sin. But now they have seen and hated both me and my Father. 25 It was to fulfill the word that is written in their law, 'They hated me without a cause.'

26 "When the Advocate[q] comes, whom I will send to you from the Father, the Spirit of truth who comes from the Father, he will testify on my behalf. 27 You also are to testify because you have been with me from the beginning.

16 "I have said these things to you to keep you from stumbling. 2 They will put you out of the synagogues. In-

*k* The same Greek root refers to pruning and cleansing *l* Or *be* *m* Gk *slaves*
*n* Gk *slave* *o* Gk *were of the world*
*p* Gk *Slaves* *q* Or *Helper*

**believer's life.** Three dimensions are set forth: (*a*) **1–11**: The believer's relation to Christ—*abide*. As *the true vine* Jesus was the true Israel, fulfilling the vocation in which the old Israel had failed (Isa 5.1–7; Jer 2.21; Ezek 19.10–14). The *fruit* bearing (Gal 5.22–23) of the new Israel (the church) springs from union (actual incorporation) with him (v. 5), through prayer (v. 7), and loving obedience (vv. 9, 10), issuing in *joy* (v. 11).

**15.12–17**: (*b*) The relation of believers to one another—*love*. The measure is determined by Jesus' death (v. 13). Fellowship with Jesus (vv. 14, 15), *fruit* bearing, and prayer (v. 16), are all dependent on obeying his *commands* to *love* (v. 17).

**15.18–27**: (*c*) The believer's relation to the world—to be separate from it (the world hates the church because it hates Christ who has judged it, vv. 18–25; Ps 35.19; 69.4), and to *testify on . . . behalf* of Christ in the power of the Holy *Spirit* (vv. 26–27; Acts 1.21–22; 5.32).

deed, an hour is coming when those who kill you will think that by doing so they are offering worship to God. 3And they will do this because they have not known the Father or me. 4But I have said these things to you so that when their hour comes you may remember that I told you about them.

"I did not say these things to you from the beginning, because I was with you. 5But now I am going to him who sent me; yet none of you asks me, 'Where are you going?' 6But because I have said these things to you, sorrow has filled your hearts. 7Nevertheless I tell you the truth: it is to your advantage that I go away, for if I do not go away, the Advocate[r] will not come to you; but if I go, I will send him to you. 8And when he comes, he will prove the world wrong about[s] sin and righteousness and judgment: 9about sin, because they do not believe in me; 10about righteousness, because I am going to the Father and you will see me no longer; 11about judgment, because the ruler of this world has been condemned.

12 "I still have many things to say to you, but you cannot bear them now. 13When the Spirit of truth comes, he will guide you into all the truth; for he will not speak on his own, but will speak whatever he hears, and he will declare to you the things that are to come. 14He will glorify me, because he will take what is mine and declare it to you. 15All that the Father has is mine. For this reason I said that he will take what is mine and declare it to you.

16 "A little while, and you will no longer see me, and again a little while, and you will see me." 17Then some of his disciples said to one another, "What does he mean by saying to us, 'A little while, and you will no longer see me, and again a little while, and you will see me'; and 'Because I am going to the Father'?" 18They said, "What does he mean by this 'a little while'? We do not know what he is talking about." 19Jesus knew that they wanted to ask him, so he said to them, "Are you discussing among yourselves what I meant when I said, 'A little while, and you will no longer see me, and again a little while, and you will see me'? 20Very truly, I tell you, you will weep and mourn, but the world will rejoice; you will have pain, but your pain will turn into joy. 21When a woman is in labor, she has pain, because her hour has come. But when her child is born, she no longer remembers the anguish because of the joy of having brought a human being into the world. 22So you have pain now; but I will see you again, and your hearts will rejoice, and no one will take your joy from you. 23On that day you will ask nothing of me.[t] Very truly, I tell you, if you ask anything of the Father in my name, he will give it to you.[u] 24Until now you have not asked for anything in my name. Ask and you will receive, so that your joy may be complete.

25 "I have said these things to you in figures of speech. The hour is coming when I will no longer speak to you in

*r* Or *Helper* *s* Or *convict the world of*
*t* Or *will ask me no question* *u* Other ancient authorities read *Father, he will give it to you in my name*

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**16.1–33**: **The Christian's relation to the world. 1–4a**: Forewarning of conflict. It is to be expected that the world, even the religious world, will persecute the followers of Christ (vv. 2–3; Acts 22.3–5; 26.9–11).

**16.4b–11**: The work of the *Advocate* (Holy Spirit) through the church. *Sorrow* at Jesus' departure is transformed by *the truth* that his death and resurrection make possible the Spirit's work (vv. 6–7). The Spirit *will prove the world wrong about sin* (unbelief in Jesus, v. 9), *about righteousness* (revealed in the cross, v. 10), *about judgment* (triumph over evil, v. 11); see also 12.31; 14.30; 1 Cor 2.8; Col 2.15.

**16.12–15**: The guidance of the *Spirit* into the full *truth* about the historic Jesus (*will glorify*, will reveal the essential nature of).

**16.16–24**: Temporary *pain* over Jesus' death yields to *joy* over his resurrection and abiding presence (vv. 20–22). This is sustained by prayer in Jesus' *name* (nature, all that the cross and resurrection reveal him to be, vv. 23–24).

**16.25–33**: The pledge of triumph. Jesus' *going to the Father* (v. 28) makes plain all his

figures, but will tell you plainly of the Father. 26On that day you will ask in my name. I do not say to you that I will ask the Father on your behalf; 27for the Father himself loves you, because you have loved me and have believed that I came from God.[v] 28I came from the Father and have come into the world; again, I am leaving the world and am going to the Father."

29 His disciples said, "Yes, now you are speaking plainly, not in any figure of speech! 30Now we know that you know all things, and do not need to have anyone question you; by this we believe that you came from God." 31Jesus answered them, "Do you now believe? 32The hour is coming, indeed it has come, when you will be scattered, each one to his home, and you will leave me alone. Yet I am not alone because the Father is with me. 33I have said this to you, so that in me you may have peace. In the world you face persecution. But take courage; I have conquered the world!"

17 After Jesus had spoken these words, he looked up to heaven and said, "Father, the hour has come; glorify your Son so that the Son may glorify you, 2since you have given him authority over all people,[w] to give eternal life to all whom you have given him. 3And this is eternal life, that they may know you, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom you have sent. 4I glorified you on earth by finishing the work that you gave me to do. 5So now, Father, glorify me in your own presence with the glory that I had in your presence before the world existed.

6 "I have made your name known to those whom you gave me from the world. They were yours, and you gave them to me, and they have kept your word. 7Now they know that everything you have given me is from you; 8for the words that you gave to me I have given to them, and they have received them and know in truth that I came from you; and they have believed that you sent me. 9I am asking on their behalf; I am not asking on behalf of the world, but on behalf of those whom you gave me, because they are yours. 10All mine are yours, and yours are mine; and I have been glorified in them. 11And now I am no longer in the world, but they are in the world, and I am coming to you. Holy Father, protect them in your name that you have given me, so that they may be one, as we are one. 12While I was with them, I protected them in your name that[x] you have given me. I guarded them, and not one of them was lost except the one destined to be lost,[y] so that the scripture might be fulfilled. 13But now I am coming to you, and I speak these things in the world so that they may have my joy made complete in themselves.[z] 14I have given them your word, and the world has hated them because they do not belong to the world, just as I do not belong to the world. 15I am not asking you to take them out of the world, but I ask you to protect them from the evil one.[a] 16They do not belong to the world, just as I do not belong to the world. 17Sanctify them in the truth; your word is truth. 18As you have

*v* Other ancient authorities read *the Father*
*w* Gk *flesh*
*x* Other ancient authorities read *protected in your name those whom*
*y* Gk *except the son of destruction*
*z* Or *among themselves*
*a* Or *from evil*

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teachings, reveals God's love (v. 27), empowers prayer (v. 26), and offers *peace* even in *persecution* (v. 33). **32**: Mt 26.31; Mk 14.27; Zech 13.7. **33**: 14.27; 15.18; Rom 8.37; 2 Cor 2.14; Rev 3.21.

**17.1–26: Jesus' high priestly prayer.** This falls naturally into three parts: (*a*) **1–5**: Jesus' prayer for himself. The *hour* (see 2.4 n.) of Jesus' perfect obedience unto death *has come*, securing *eternal life* for *all people* through knowledge (personal acquaintance) of God and his Son. *Finishing* his *work* (19.30), Jesus awaits the restoration of his pre-incarnate *glory*. (*b*) **6–19**: Jesus' prayer for his disciples, left *in the world* after his ascension (v. 11), is that they may *be one* as are the Father and the Son (v. 11), have *joy* (v. 13), be victorious over the *evil one* (v. 15), and fulfill their mission of representing Christ to *the world* (vv. 16–19). (*c*) **20–26**: Jesus' prayer for the church uni-

sent me into the world, so I have sent them into the world. 19And for their sakes I sanctify myself, so that they also may be sanctified in truth.

20 "I ask not only on behalf of these, but also on behalf of those who will believe in me through their word, 21that they may all be one. As you, Father, are in me and I am in you, may they also be in us,[b] so that the world may believe that you have sent me. 22The glory that you have given me I have given them, so that they may be one, as we are one, 23I in them and you in me, that they may become completely one, so that the world may know that you have sent me and have loved them even as you have loved me. 24Father, I desire that those also, whom you have given me, may be with me where I am, to see my glory, which you have given me because you loved me before the foundation of the world.

25 "Righteous Father, the world does not know you, but I know you; and these know that you have sent me. 26I made your name known to them, and I will make it known, so that the love with which you have loved me may be in them, and I in them."

18 After Jesus had spoken these words, he went out with his disciples across the Kidron valley to a place where there was a garden, which he and his disciples entered. 2Now Judas, who betrayed him, also knew the place, because Jesus often met there with his disciples. 3So Judas brought a detachment of soldiers together with police from the chief priests and the Pharisees, and they came there with lanterns and torches and weapons. 4Then Jesus, knowing all that was to happen to him, came forward and asked them, "Whom are you looking for?" 5They answered, "Jesus of Nazareth."[c] Jesus replied, "I am he."[d] Judas, who betrayed him, was standing with them. 6When Jesus[e] said to them, "I am he,"[d] they stepped back and fell to the ground. 7Again he asked them, "Whom are you looking for?" And they said, "Jesus of Nazareth."[c] 8Jesus answered, "I told you that I am he.[d] So if you are looking for me, let these men go." 9This was to fulfill the word that he had spoken, "I did not lose a single one of those whom you gave me." 10Then Simon Peter, who had a sword, drew it, struck the high priest's slave, and cut off his right ear. The slave's name was Malchus. 11Jesus said to Peter, "Put your sword back into its sheath. Am I not to drink the cup that the Father has given me?"

12 So the soldiers, their officer, and the Jewish police arrested Jesus and bound him. 13First they took him to Annas, who was the father-in-law of Caiaphas, the high priest that year. 14Caiaphas was the one who had advised the Jews that it was better to have one person die for the people.

15 Simon Peter and another disciple followed Jesus. Since that disciple was known to the high priest, he went with Jesus into the courtyard of the high priest, 16but Peter was standing outside at the gate. So the other disciple, who was known to the high priest, went out, spoke to the woman who guarded the gate, and brought Peter in. 17The woman said to Peter, "You are not also one of this man's disciples, are you?" He said, "I am not." 18Now the slaves and the police had made a charcoal fire because it was cold, and they were standing around it

*b* Other ancient authorities read *be one in us*
*c* Gk *the Nazorean* *d* Gk *I am* *e* Gk *he*

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versal is that believers may be indwelt by the Father and the Son and express their unity in *love,* thus fulfilling its mission of leading *the world* to *believe.*

**18.1–19.42: Arrest, trial, crucifixion, and burial of Jesus. 18.1:** *Kidron valley,* between Jerusalem and the Mount of Olives. *A garden,* Gethsemane. **3:** Both Roman *soldiers* and the Jewish temple *police* made the arrest. **4:** Jesus' fate is self-chosen; he, not Judas or the soldiers, determines his death.

**18.9:** 6.39; 10.28; 17.12. **11:** *Cup,* see Lk 22.42 n. **13:** *Annas,* though deposed by the Romans in A.D. 15, was still the leading influence among the Jews through his son-in-law and four sons who succeeded him.

and warming themselves. Peter also was standing with them and warming himself.

19 Then the high priest questioned Jesus about his disciples and about his teaching. 20 Jesus answered, "I have spoken openly to the world; I have always taught in synagogues and in the temple, where all the Jews come together. I have said nothing in secret. 21 Why do you ask me? Ask those who heard what I said to them; they know what I said." 22 When he had said this, one of the police standing nearby struck Jesus on the face, saying, "Is that how you answer the high priest?" 23 Jesus answered, "If I have spoken wrongly, testify to the wrong. But if I have spoken rightly, why do you strike me?" 24 Then Annas sent him bound to Caiaphas the high priest.

25 Now Simon Peter was standing and warming himself. They asked him, "You are not also one of his disciples, are you?" He denied it and said, "I am not." 26 One of the slaves of the high priest, a relative of the man whose ear Peter had cut off, asked, "Did I not see you in the garden with him?" 27 Again Peter denied it, and at that moment the cock crowed.

28 Then they took Jesus from Caiaphas to Pilate's headquarters.[f] It was early in the morning. They themselves did not enter the headquarters,[f] so as to avoid ritual defilement and to be able to eat the Passover. 29 So Pilate went out to them and said, "What accusation do you bring against this man?" 30 They answered, "If this man were not a criminal, we would not have handed him over to you." 31 Pilate said to them, "Take him yourselves and judge him according to your law." The Jews replied, "We are not permitted to put anyone to death." 32 (This was to fulfill what Jesus had said when he indicated the kind of death he was to die.)

33 Then Pilate entered the headquarters[f] again, summoned Jesus, and asked him, "Are you the King of the Jews?" 34 Jesus answered, "Do you ask this on your own, or did others tell you about me?" 35 Pilate replied, "I am not a Jew, am I? Your own nation and the chief priests have handed you over to me. What have you done?" 36 Jesus answered, "My kingdom is not from this world. If my kingdom were from this world, my followers would be fighting to keep me from being handed over to the Jews. But as it is, my kingdom is not from here." 37 Pilate asked him, "So you are a king?" Jesus answered, "You say that I am a king. For this I was born, and for this I came into the world, to testify to the truth. Everyone who belongs to the truth listens to my voice." 38 Pilate asked him, "What is truth?"

After he had said this, he went out to the Jews again and told them, "I find no case against him. 39 But you have a custom that I release someone for you at the Passover. Do you want me to release for you the King of the Jews?" 40 They shouted in reply, "Not this man, but Barabbas!" Now Barabbas was a bandit.

19 Then Pilate took Jesus and had him flogged. 2 And the soldiers wove a crown of thorns and put it on his head, and they dressed him in a purple robe. 3 They kept coming up to him, saying, "Hail, King of the Jews!" and striking him on the face. 4 Pilate went out again and said to them, "Look, I am bringing him out to you to let you know

*f* Gk *the praetorium*

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**18.19–21**: An informal trial, designed to indict Jesus for training disciples secretly as revolutionaries. **24**: He is sent to *Caiaphas* for formal trial before the Sanhedrin (Mt 26.57–75; Mk 14.53–72; Lk 22.54–71). **27**: 13.38. **18.28**: *Defilement,* entering a Gentile's house would make them ceremonially unclean. **29–31**: The Jews tried religious cases, but could not administer the death penalty. **32**: Crucifixion (3.14; 12.32), rather than the Jewish method of stoning.

**18.33–37**: The Jews charged Jesus with political treason. Jesus is king of *truth,* from God's world.

**19.1–5**: Though Pilate found (18.38b) Jesus innocent of political insurrection, he has him *flogged.* **7**: Lev 24.16; Mk 14.61–64; Jn 5.18; 10.33. **9**: Unable to understand the

that I find no case against him." 5So Jesus came out, wearing the crown of thorns and the purple robe. Pilate said to them, "Here is the man!" 6When the chief priests and the police saw him, they shouted, "Crucify him! Crucify him!" Pilate said to them, "Take him yourselves and crucify him; I find no case against him." 7The Jews answered him, "We have a law, and according to that law he ought to die because he has claimed to be the Son of God."

8 Now when Pilate heard this, he was more afraid than ever. 9He entered his headquarters[g] again and asked Jesus, "Where are you from?" But Jesus gave him no answer. 10Pilate therefore said to him, "Do you refuse to speak to me? Do you not know that I have power to release you, and power to crucify you?" 11Jesus answered him, "You would have no power over me unless it had been given you from above; therefore the one who handed me over to you is guilty of a greater sin." 12From then on Pilate tried to release him, but the Jews cried out, "If you release this man, you are no friend of the emperor. Everyone who claims to be a king sets himself against the emperor."

13 When Pilate heard these words, he brought Jesus outside and sat[h] on the judge's bench at a place called The Stone Pavement, or in Hebrew[i] Gabbatha. 14Now it was the day of Preparation for the Passover; and it was about noon. He said to the Jews, "Here is your King!" 15They cried out, "Away with him! Away with him! Crucify him!" Pilate asked them, "Shall I crucify your King?" The chief priests answered, "We have no king but the emperor." 16Then he handed him over to them to be crucified.

So they took Jesus; 17and carrying the cross by himself, he went out to what is called The Place of the Skull, which in Hebrew[i] is called Golgotha. 18There they crucified him, and with him two others, one on either side, with Jesus between them. 19Pilate also had an inscription written and put on the cross. It read, "Jesus of Nazareth,[j] the King of the Jews." 20Many of the Jews read this inscription, because the place where Jesus was crucified was near the city; and it was written in Hebrew,[i] in Latin, and in Greek. 21Then the chief priests of the Jews said to Pilate, "Do not write, 'The King of the Jews,' but, 'This man said, I am King of the Jews.'" 22Pilate answered, "What I have written I have written." 23When the soldiers had crucified Jesus, they took his clothes and divided them into four parts, one for each soldier. They also took his tunic; now the tunic was seamless, woven in one piece from the top. 24So they said to one another, "Let us not tear it, but cast lots for it to see who will get it." This was to fulfill what the scripture says,

"They divided my clothes among
themselves,
and for my clothing they
cast lots."

25And that is what the soldiers did.

Meanwhile, standing near the cross of Jesus were his mother, and his mother's sister, Mary the wife of Clopas, and Mary Magdalene. 26When Jesus saw his mother and the disciple whom he loved standing beside her, he said to his mother, "Woman, here is your son." 27Then he said to the disciple, "Here is your

*g* Gk *the praetorium* *h* Or *seated him* *i* That is, *Aramaic* *j* Gk *the Nazorean*

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charge, Pilate is superstitiously afraid (Mt 27.19).

**19.11**: God controls evil, without setting aside human responsibility. The high priest, who *handed* Jesus *over* to Pilate, bore the greater responsibility. **12**: A threat of blackmail. **17**: *By himself,* until relieved by Simon of Cyrene (Mt 27.32; Mk 15.21; Lk 23.26). *Skull,* a place of skull-like appearance just outside the city walls (v. 20).

**19.19–22**: The trilingual caption expressed Pilate's contempt (v. 14). **23**: A Roman custom. *His clothes,* namely, head-dress; cloak or outer garment; belt; shoes; tunic or inner garment. *Four parts,* one of the above, in the order mentioned, leaving the *tunic* to be won by lot. **24**: Providence controlled even the soldiers' behavior (Ps 22.18). **26–27**: Indicates Jesus' real humanity and concern for human values.

mother." And from that hour the disciple took her into his own home.

28 After this, when Jesus knew that all was now finished, he said (in order to fulfill the scripture), "I am thirsty." 29 A jar full of sour wine was standing there. So they put a sponge full of the wine on a branch of hyssop and held it to his mouth. 30 When Jesus had received the wine, he said, "It is finished." Then he bowed his head and gave up his spirit.

31 Since it was the day of Preparation, the Jews did not want the bodies left on the cross during the sabbath, especially because that sabbath was a day of great solemnity. So they asked Pilate to have the legs of the crucified men broken and the bodies removed. 32 Then the soldiers came and broke the legs of the first and of the other who had been crucified with him. 33 But when they came to Jesus and saw that he was already dead, they did not break his legs. 34 Instead, one of the soldiers pierced his side with a spear, and at once blood and water came out. 35 (He who saw this has testified so that you also may believe. His testimony is true, and he knows[k] that he tells the truth.) 36 These things occurred so that the scripture might be fulfilled, "None of his bones shall be broken." 37 And again another passage of scripture says, "They will look on the one whom they have pierced."

38 After these things, Joseph of Arimathea, who was a disciple of Jesus, though a secret one because of his fear of the Jews, asked Pilate to let him take away the body of Jesus. Pilate gave him permission; so he came and removed his body. 39 Nicodemus, who had at first come to Jesus by night, also came, bringing a mixture of myrrh and aloes, weighing about a hundred pounds. 40 They took the body of Jesus and wrapped it with the spices in linen cloths, according to the burial custom of the Jews. 41 Now there was a garden in the place where he was crucified, and in the garden there was a new tomb in which no one had ever been laid. 42 And so, because it was the Jewish day of Preparation, and the tomb was nearby, they laid Jesus there.

20 Early on the first day of the week, while it was still dark, Mary Magdalene came to the tomb and saw that the stone had been removed from the tomb. 2 So she ran and went to Simon Peter and the other disciple, the one whom Jesus loved, and said to them, "They have taken the Lord out of the tomb, and we do not know where they have laid him." 3 Then Peter and the other disciple set out and went toward the tomb. 4 The two were running together, but the other disciple outran Peter and reached the tomb first. 5 He bent down to look in and saw the linen wrappings lying there, but he did not go in. 6 Then Simon Peter came, following him, and went into the tomb. He saw the linen wrappings lying there, 7 and the cloth that had been on Jesus' head, not lying with the linen wrappings but rolled up in a place by itself. 8 Then the other disciple,

*k* Or *there is one who knows*

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**19.28**: *I am thirsty,* Ps 69.21. **30**: *Finished,* all that God has sent him to do for the redemption of the world (17.4). **31**: *A day of great solemnity,* especially holy since it fell on the first day of the Festival of Unleavened Bread. **32**: *Broke the legs,* with a heavy mallet, to hasten death. **34**: *Blood and water* indicate the reality of Jesus' humanity, and perhaps also the new covenant and baptism (Mk 14.24; 1 Cor 10.16; Jn 3.5; 1 Jn 5.6–8).

**19.36**: Jesus fulfills the passover (Ex 12.46; 1 Cor 5.7). **37**: Zech 12.10. **38**: *Joseph of Arimathea,* Mt 27.57–60; Mk 15.43; Lk 23.50–53. **39**: *Nicodemus,* 3.1–15; 7.50–52. *Myrrh,* a resinous gum, which, when mixed with crushed or pounded *aloes,* was used for embalming. *A hundred* (Roman) *pounds,* about seventy-five pounds, avoirdupois weight.

**20.1–31**: **The resurrection.** **1**: *First day,* Sunday. **2–3**: The empty tomb indicates actual resurrection, not mere immortality. **4**: *The other disciple* was younger. **6**: Peter shows characteristic boldness. **7**: Jesus' body had escaped without *the linen wrappings* being unwound. *The cloth,* which had been wrapped about *Jesus' head* (compare 11.44), lay apart, still *rolled up.* **8**: *Believed,* faith grasped the evidence that Jesus had not been resuscitated

who reached the tomb first, also went in, and he saw and believed; 9for as yet they did not understand the scripture, that he must rise from the dead. 10Then the disciples returned to their homes.

11 But Mary stood weeping outside the tomb. As she wept, she bent over to look[l] into the tomb; 12and she saw two angels in white, sitting where the body of Jesus had been lying, one at the head and the other at the feet. 13They said to her, "Woman, why are you weeping?" She said to them, "They have taken away my Lord, and I do not know where they have laid him." 14When she had said this, she turned around and saw Jesus standing there, but she did not know that it was Jesus. 15Jesus said to her, "Woman, why are you weeping? Whom are you looking for?" Supposing him to be the gardener, she said to him, "Sir, if you have carried him away, tell me where you have laid him, and I will take him away." 16Jesus said to her, "Mary!" She turned and said to him in Hebrew,[m] "Rabbouni!" (which means Teacher). 17Jesus said to her, "Do not hold on to me, because I have not yet ascended to the Father. But go to my brothers and say to them, 'I am ascending to my Father and your Father, to my God and your God.'" 18Mary Magdalene went and announced to the disciples, "I have seen the Lord"; and she told them that he had said these things to her.

19 When it was evening on that day, the first day of the week, and the doors of the house where the disciples had met were locked for fear of the Jews, Jesus came and stood among them and said, "Peace be with you." 20After he said this, he showed them his hands and his side. Then the disciples rejoiced when they saw the Lord. 21Jesus said to them again, "Peace be with you. As the Father has sent me, so I send you." 22When he had said this, he breathed on them and said to them, "Receive the Holy Spirit. 23If you forgive the sins of any, they are forgiven them; if you retain the sins of any, they are retained."

24 But Thomas (who was called the Twin[n]), one of the twelve, was not with them when Jesus came. 25So the other disciples told him, "We have seen the Lord." But he said to them, "Unless I see the mark of the nails in his hands, and put my finger in the mark of the nails and my hand in his side, I will not believe."

26 A week later his disciples were again in the house, and Thomas was with them. Although the doors were shut, Jesus came and stood among them and said, "Peace be with you." 27Then he said to Thomas, "Put your finger here and see my hands. Reach out your hand and put it in my side. Do not doubt but believe." 28Thomas answered him, "My Lord and my God!" 29Jesus said to him, "Have you believed because you have seen me? Blessed are those who have not seen and yet have come to believe."

30 Now Jesus did many other signs in the presence of his disciples, which are not written in this book. 31But these are written so that you may come to believe[o] that Jesus is the Messiah,[p] the Son

*l* Gk lacks *to look* *m* That is, *Aramaic*
*n* Gk *Didymus* *o* Other ancient authorities read *may continue to believe* *p* Or *the Christ*

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from a swoon, or stolen; he had been transformed without corruption into his resurrection body (Acts 2.24–31).

**20.9**: *The scripture,* the Old Testament (compare Lk 24.27, 32, 44–46; Acts 2.24–28).

**20.16–17**: The old title, *Teacher,* and Mary's effort to *hold on* (cling) to him, were to be abandoned for the new relation with him as the *ascended* Lord (compare chs 14–17). **20**: *Hands, side,* identifying marks; also signs of glory through suffering (Lk 24.25–26). **22**: *He breathed on them,* the same image that was used to describe the communication of the natural life (Gen 2.7) is here used to express the communication of the new, spiritual, life of re-created humanity. **23**: The church, having received the Spirit, embodies Christ's mission of forgiveness (see Mt 16.19 n.).

**20.24–27**: Thomas wanted visible proof. **28**: Climax of the book. **29**: Faith now rests on the apostolic testimony. **30–31**: Purpose of the Gospel according to John.

of God, and that through believing you may have life in his name.

21 After these things Jesus showed himself again to the disciples by the Sea of Tiberias; and he showed himself in this way. 2Gathered there together were Simon Peter, Thomas called the Twin,[q] Nathanael of Cana in Galilee, the sons of Zebedee, and two others of his disciples. 3Simon Peter said to them, "I am going fishing." They said to him, "We will go with you." They went out and got into the boat, but that night they caught nothing.

4 Just after daybreak, Jesus stood on the beach; but the disciples did not know that it was Jesus. 5Jesus said to them, "Children, you have no fish, have you?" They answered him, "No." 6He said to them, "Cast the net to the right side of the boat, and you will find some." So they cast it, and now they were not able to haul it in because there were so many fish. 7That disciple whom Jesus loved said to Peter, "It is the Lord!" When Simon Peter heard that it was the Lord, he put on some clothes, for he was naked, and jumped into the sea. 8But the other disciples came in the boat, dragging the net full of fish, for they were not far from the land, only about a hundred yards[r] off.

9 When they had gone ashore, they saw a charcoal fire there, with fish on it, and bread. 10Jesus said to them, "Bring some of the fish that you have just caught." 11So Simon Peter went aboard and hauled the net ashore, full of large fish, a hundred fifty-three of them; and though there were so many, the net was not torn. 12Jesus said to them, "Come and have breakfast." Now none of the disciples dared to ask him, "Who are you?" because they knew it was the Lord. 13Jesus came and took the bread and gave it to them, and did the same with the fish. 14This was now the third time that Jesus appeared to the disciples after he was raised from the dead.

15 When they had finished breakfast, Jesus said to Simon Peter, "Simon son of John, do you love me more than these?" He said to him, "Yes, Lord; you know that I love you." Jesus said to him, "Feed my lambs." 16A second time he said to him, "Simon son of John, do you love me?" He said to him, "Yes, Lord; you know that I love you." Jesus said to him, "Tend my sheep." 17He said to him the third time, "Simon son of John, do you love me?" Peter felt hurt because he said to him the third time, "Do you love me?" And he said to him, "Lord, you know everything; you know that I love you." Jesus said to him, "Feed my sheep. 18Very truly, I tell you, when you were younger, you used to fasten your own belt and to go wherever you wished. But when you grow old, you will stretch out your hands, and someone else will fasten a belt around you and take you where you do not wish to go." 19(He said this to indicate the kind of death by which he would glorify God.) After this he said to him, "Follow me."

20 Peter turned and saw the disciple whom Jesus loved following them; he was the one who had reclined next to Jesus at the supper and had said, "Lord,

*q* Gk *Didymus* *r* Gk *two hundred cubits*

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**21.1–25: Epilogue.** A post-resurrection appearance in Galilee (*Tiberias,* see 6.1 n.). **2–3:** Indicates Peter's natural leadership. **4–6:** Obedience to Jesus' command is rewarded. **5:** *Children,* a colloquialism perhaps meaning "lads."

**21.9–14:** Jesus' feeding of the disciples is a prelude to his command to Peter to *feed* others (vv. 15, 17). **14:** *The third time,* for the two previous appearances, see 20.19–23 and 26–29. **15–17:** *These,* other disciples (Mk 14.29). The triple question is reminiscent of Peter's triple denial (18.17, 25–27). **18–19:** According to tradition Peter was martyred under Nero at Rome about A.D. 64–68.

**21.20–22:** Each is to *follow* his Lord, regardless of others. *Until I come,* the second coming. **23:** A rumor that the End would come before the beloved disciple's death was falsely based. **24:** *We know,* confirmation by the elders of the church where the Gospel of John was written (see also 3 Jn v. 12).

who is it that is going to betray you?" 21 When Peter saw him, he said to Jesus, "Lord, what about him?" 22 Jesus said to him, "If it is my will that he remain until I come, what is that to you? Follow me!" 23 So the rumor spread in the community[s] that this disciple would not die. Yet Jesus did not say to him that he would not die, but, "If it is my will that he remain until I come, what is that to you?"[t]

24 This is the disciple who is testifying to these things and has written them, and we know that his testimony is true. 25 But there are also many other things that Jesus did; if every one of them were written down, I suppose that the world itself could not contain the books that would be written.

*s* Gk *among the brothers* *t* Other ancient authorities lack *what is that to you*

# *The Acts*
## *of the Apostles*

The book of Acts continues the narrative of the Gospel according to Luke by tracing the story of the Christian movement from the resurrection of Jesus to the time when the apostle Paul was in Rome, proclaiming the gospel "with all boldness and without hindrance" (28.31). Most of the first half of Acts is occupied with the Jerusalem church, its leaders and relationships, while the latter half is dominated by Paul and his three missionary journeys, climaxed by his arrest and voyage to Rome. The progress of the narrative is mainly geographical: from Jerusalem the word spreads to Samaria (8.5), the seacoast (8.40), Damascus (9.10), Antioch (where the disciples were first called "Christians"; 11.26), Asia Minor (13.13), Europe (16.11), and finally Rome itself.

Like the four Gospels, Acts is an anonymous book. The tradition attributing the third Gospel and Acts to Luke, the companion for a time of Paul (Col 4.14; compare 2 Tim 4.11; Philem 24), begins in the latter part of the second century and remains constant thereafter.

About one-fifth of the book of Acts comprises the report of speeches and missionary discourses; of the latter there are six to Jewish audiences (2.14–39; 3.12–26; 4.9–12; 5.29–32; 10.34–43; 13.16–41), two to Gentiles (14.15–17; 17.22–31). The archaic flavor and Semitic idiom of the speeches to the Jews testify to Luke's skill in conveying a variety of emphases and nuances appropriate to the several speakers and circumstances.

Four portions in the latter part of the book suddenly fall into the first person plural (16.10–17; 20.5–15; 21.1–18; 27.1–28.16). It is possible that these "we-passages" —all of which begin or end with a sea voyage—come from a travel diary that Luke, as Paul's companion on these occasions, had drawn up at the time. It is also possible that they, like the contents of the letter of Claudius Lysias to Felix (23.26), are Luke's own free composition, drawn up in the manner similar to that of other ancient historians, who shaped speeches by prominent persons to illustrate the meaning of historical events. (See also the article on "Narrative Books," pp. viii–x NT.)

The date of the composition of Acts is disputed. Because there is no mention of the outcome of Paul's arrest (the apostle is awaiting trial at the close of the book), some have thought that the book was published prior to Paul's martyrdom under Nero, about A.D. 65–67. On the other hand, internal qualities that hint at the author's considerable degree of historical maturity in assessing the significance of the first thirty years of the church's history suggests a later date, perhaps in the 80s. Luke's purpose in writing was to awaken faith by showing the triumphant progress of the Good News and to defend Christians against the charge that they were destructive of Jewish institutions and a troublesome element in the empire. None of the judges and other authorities who hear Paul and other Christians find them guilty of anything wrong.

Another of the author's special interests, controlling the selection and presentation of details, was to show the activity of the Holy Spirit in the founding and development of the church. In fact, the book might appropriately be entitled "The Acts of the Holy Spirit," for the dominating theme is the power of the Spirit manifested in and through the members of the early church. But Luke had also an interest in history for its own sake and in the men and women of the story, in the details of lodging, entertainment, and travel, and all that constitutes local color. As a result his work entertains and pleases the reader while dealing with the spread of Christianity in selected portions of the Mediterranean world. From every point of view, the New Testament would be infinitely poorer without this first book of church history.

1 In the first book, Theophilus, I wrote about all that Jesus did and taught from the beginning 2until the day when he was taken up to heaven, after giving instructions through the Holy Spirit to the apostles whom he had chosen. 3After his suffering he presented himself alive to them by many convincing proofs, appearing to them during forty days and speaking about the kingdom of God. 4While staying[a] with them, he ordered them not to leave Jerusalem, but to wait there for the promise of the Father. "This," he said, "is what you have heard from me; 5for John baptized with water, but you will be baptized with[b] the Holy Spirit not many days from now."

6 So when they had come together, they asked him, "Lord, is this the time when you will restore the kingdom to Israel?" 7He replied, "It is not for you to know the times or periods that the Father has set by his own authority. 8But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth." 9When he had said this, as they were watching, he was lifted up, and a cloud took him out of their sight. 10While he was going and they were gazing up toward heaven, suddenly two men in white robes stood by them. 11They said, "Men of Galilee, why do you stand looking up toward heaven? This Jesus, who has been taken up from you into heaven, will come in the same way as you saw him go into heaven."

12 Then they returned to Jerusalem from the mount called Olivet, which is near Jerusalem, a sabbath day's journey away. 13When they had entered the city, they went to the room upstairs where they were staying, Peter, and John, and James, and Andrew, Philip and Thomas, Bartholomew and Matthew, James son of Alphaeus, and Simon the Zealot, and Judas son of[c] James. 14All these were constantly devoting themselves to prayer, together with certain women, including Mary the mother of Jesus, as well as his brothers.

15 In those days Peter stood up among the believers[d] (together the crowd numbered about one hundred twenty persons) and said, 16"Friends,[e] the scripture had to be fulfilled, which the Holy Spirit through David foretold concerning Judas, who became a guide for those who arrested Jesus— 17for he was numbered among us and was allotted his share in this ministry." 18(Now this man acquired a field with the reward of his wickedness; and falling headlong,[f] he burst open in the middle and all his bowels gushed out. 19This became known to all the residents of Jerusalem, so that the field was called in their language Hakeldama, that is, Field of

*a* Or *eating* *b* Or *by* *c* Or *the brother of*
*d* Gk *brothers* *e* Gk *Men, brothers*
*f* Or *swelling up*

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**1.1–5: Introduction; the risen Christ.** The author links his volume with *the first book*, the Gospel of Luke. **1:** *Theophilus,* "lover of God"; perhaps a Roman official to whom the two books were addressed, or any reader who loves God (see Lk 1.3 n.). **3:** Some of the *many proofs* are given in Lk 24.13–53. **4:** The Greek words for *staying* and *eating* (see note *a*) are identical. **5:** John the Baptist had predicted that the Messiah would baptize his people *with the Holy Spirit* (Mk 1.8; Mt 3.11; Lk 3.16; Jn 1.33). The idea is found also in the Dead Sea scrolls.

**1.6–11: The ascension.** Compare Lk 24.50–51. **6:** Since he was promised "the throne of his ancestor David" (Lk 1.32), the disciples would expect Jesus to *restore the kingdom to Israel.* **8:** For apostles as *witnesses* see Lk 24.48; Acts 1.22; 2.32.

**1.12–26: The gathering of the Twelve.** The gospels agree that the Eleven remained together; now the sacred number, corresponding to the tribes of Israel, is restored, in anticipation of the coming age (Lk 22.29–30). **12:** *Olivet,* the Mount of Olives was east of Jerusalem. *A sabbath day's journey,* a little more than half a mile. **13:** The same list as in Lk 6.14–16, but in a different order. **14:** *Brothers,* see Mt 13.55.

**1.17:** *Us,* the apostles. **18:** *Falling headlong,* literally "flat" or "prone," but here the meaning is uncertain; according to Mt 27.5, Judas

Blood.) 20"For it is written in the book of Psalms,

'Let his homestead become
desolate,
and let there be no one to live
in it';

and

'Let another take his position of
overseer.'

21So one of the men who have accompanied us during all the time that the Lord Jesus went in and out among us, 22beginning from the baptism of John until the day when he was taken up from us—one of these must become a witness with us to his resurrection." 23So they proposed two, Joseph called Barsabbas, who was also known as Justus, and Matthias. 24Then they prayed and said, "Lord, you know everyone's heart. Show us which one of these two you have chosen 25to take the place[g] in this ministry and apostleship from which Judas turned aside to go to his own place." 26And they cast lots for them, and the lot fell on Matthias; and he was added to the eleven apostles.

2 When the day of Pentecost had come, they were all together in one place. 2And suddenly from heaven there came a sound like the rush of a violent wind, and it filled the entire house where they were sitting. 3Divided tongues, as of fire, appeared among them, and a tongue rested on each of them. 4All of them were filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other languages, as the Spirit gave them ability.

5 Now there were devout Jews from every nation under heaven living in Jerusalem. 6And at this sound the crowd gathered and was bewildered, because each one heard them speaking in the native language of each. 7Amazed and astonished, they asked, "Are not all these who are speaking Galileans? 8And how is it that we hear, each of us, in our own native language? 9Parthians, Medes, Elamites, and residents of Mesopotamia, Judea and Cappadocia, Pontus and Asia, 10Phrygia and Pamphylia, Egypt and the parts of Libya belonging to Cyrene, and visitors from Rome, both Jews and proselytes, 11Cretans and Arabs—in our own languages we hear them speaking about God's deeds of power." 12All were amazed and perplexed, saying to one another, "What does this mean?" 13But others sneered and said, "They are filled with new wine."

14 But Peter, standing with the eleven, raised his voice and addressed them, "Men of Judea and all who live in Jerusalem, let this be known to you, and listen to what I say. 15Indeed, these are not drunk, as you suppose, for it is only nine o'clock in the morning. 16No, this is what was spoken through the prophet Joel:

17 'In the last days it will be, God
declares,
that I will pour out my Spirit
upon all flesh,
and your sons and your
daughters shall prophesy,
and your young men shall
see visions,
and your old men shall
dream dreams.

g Other ancient authorities read *the share*

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hanged himself. *Their language,* Aramaic, a dialect related to Hebrew. **22**: *The baptism of John* is regarded as the beginning of the gospel (10.37; Mk 1.1–4). Every apostle is *a witness to* Jesus' *resurrection;* this includes Paul (1 Cor 15.8–9).

**2.1–47**: **The day of Pentecost** (Lev 23.15–21). Jewish tradition held that the Law was given on this day, seven weeks after Passover. **1–13**: The gift of the Holy Spirit. **3**: John had promised a baptism of the Holy Spirit and *fire* (Lk 3.16). **4–11**: The *other languages* in the Corinthian church were an incoherent form of speech (1 Cor 14.1–33); here Luke thinks of a gift of foreign languages, as though the story of the tower of Babel (Gen 11.1–9) had been reversed. **11**: *Arabs,* i.e. men of Jewish descent who came from Arabia. **13**: *Filled with new wine* suggests the ecstatic utterance of 1 Cor ch 14.

**2.14–36**: Peter's sermon. **17**: The gift of the Spirit to *all flesh,* and not just to chosen individuals, is a mark of the Messianic age (Joel 2.28–32). Like Paul (1 Cor 12.13), Acts

18 Even upon my slaves, both men
and women,
in those days I will pour out
my Spirit;
and they shall prophesy.
19 And I will show portents in the
heaven above
and signs on the earth below,
blood, and fire, and
smoky mist.
20 The sun shall be turned to
darkness
and the moon to blood,
before the coming of the
Lord's great and glorious
day.
21 Then everyone who calls on the
name of the Lord shall
be saved.'

22 "You that are Israelites,[h] listen to what I have to say: Jesus of Nazareth,[i] a man attested to you by God with deeds of power, wonders, and signs that God did through him among you, as you yourselves know— 23this man, handed over to you according to the definite plan and foreknowledge of God, you crucified and killed by the hands of those outside the law. 24But God raised him up, having freed him from death,[j] because it was impossible for him to be held in its power. 25For David says concerning him,

'I saw the Lord always before me,
for he is at my right hand so
that I will not be shaken;
26 therefore my heart was glad, and
my tongue rejoiced;
moreover my flesh will live
in hope.
27 For you will not abandon my soul
to Hades,
or let your Holy One experience
corruption.
28 You have made known to me the
ways of life;
you will make me full of
gladness with your
presence.'

29 "Fellow Israelites,[k] I may say to you confidently of our ancestor David that he both died and was buried, and his tomb is with us to this day. 30Since he was a prophet, he knew that God had sworn with an oath to him that he would put one of his descendants on his throne. 31Foreseeing this, David[l] spoke of the resurrection of the Messiah,[m] saying,

'He was not abandoned to Hades,
nor did his flesh experience
corruption.'

32This Jesus God raised up, and of that all of us are witnesses. 33Being therefore exalted at[n] the right hand of God, and having received from the Father the promise of the Holy Spirit, he has poured out this that you both see and hear. 34For David did not ascend into the heavens, but he himself says,

'The Lord said to my Lord,
"Sit at my right hand,
35 until I make your enemies your
footstool."'

36Therefore let the entire house of Israel know with certainty that God has made him both Lord and Messiah,[o] this Jesus whom you crucified."

37 Now when they heard this, they were cut to the heart and said to Peter and to the other apostles, "Brothers,[k] what should we do?" 38Peter said to them, "Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ so that your sins may be forgiven; and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. 39For the promise is for you, for your children, and for all who are far away, everyone whom the Lord our God calls to him."

*h* Gk *Men, Israelites* *i* Gk *the Nazorean*
*j* Gk *the pains of death* *k* Gk *Men, brothers*
*l* Gk *he* *m* Or *the Christ* *n* Or *by*
*o* Or *Christ*

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usually assumes that all Christians receive the Spirit (10.44–48).

**2.23**: *Definite plan,* see Lk 24.26 n. **24**: *God raised him up,* see 1 Cor 15.4–8. **25**: Ps 16.8–11. **29**: *His tomb,* the tombs of the House of David were among the notable features of interest in Jerusalem. **30**: Ps 132.11. **31**: Ps 16.10. **36**: Early Christians believed that Jesus was not only the *Messiah* on earth, but also the heavenly *Lord;* vv. 34–35 use Ps 110.1 to prove this.

**2.37–42**: The call to repentance. **39**: Isa

40 And he testified with many other arguments and exhorted them, saying, "Save yourselves from this corrupt generation." 41 So those who welcomed his message were baptized, and that day about three thousand persons were added. 42 They devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and fellowship, to the breaking of bread and the prayers.

43 Awe came upon everyone, because many wonders and signs were being done by the apostles. 44 All who believed were together and had all things in common; 45 they would sell their possessions and goods and distribute the proceeds[p] to all, as any had need. 46 Day by day, as they spent much time together in the temple, they broke bread at home[q] and ate their food with glad and generous[r] hearts, 47 praising God and having the goodwill of all the people. And day by day the Lord added to their number those who were being saved.

3 One day Peter and John were going up to the temple at the hour of prayer, at three o'clock in the afternoon. 2 And a man lame from birth was being carried in. People would lay him daily at the gate of the temple called the Beautiful Gate so that he could ask for alms from those entering the temple. 3 When he saw Peter and John about to go into the temple, he asked them for alms. 4 Peter looked intently at him, as did John, and said, "Look at us." 5 And he fixed his attention on them, expecting to receive something from them. 6 But Peter said, "I have no silver or gold, but what I have I give you; in the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth,[s] stand up and walk." 7 And he took him by the right hand and raised him up; and immediately his feet and ankles were made strong. 8 Jumping up, he stood and began to walk, and he entered the temple with them, walking and leaping and praising God. 9 All the people saw him walking and praising God, 10 and they recognized him as the one who used to sit and ask for alms at the Beautiful Gate of the temple; and they were filled with wonder and amazement at what had happened to him.

11 While he clung to Peter and John, all the people ran together to them in the portico called Solomon's Portico, utterly astonished. 12 When Peter saw it, he addressed the people, "You Israelites,[t] why do you wonder at this, or why do you stare at us, as though by our own power or piety we had made him walk? 13 The God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob, the God of our ancestors has glorified his servant[u] Jesus, whom you handed over and rejected in the presence of Pilate, though he had decided to release him. 14 But you rejected the Holy and Righteous One and asked to have a murderer given to you, 15 and you killed the Author of life, whom God raised from the dead. To this we are witnesses. 16 And by faith in his name, his name itself has made this man

*p* Gk *them* *q* Or *from house to house* *r* Or *sincere* *s* Gk *the Nazorean* *t* Gk *Men, Israelites* *u* Or *child*

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57.19; Joel 2.32. **42**: *The breaking of bread,* apparently a common meal which included the Lord's supper (see 1 Cor 11.17–34). **43–47**: Description of the early church. **44**: Jerusalem Christians for a time, like the Essenes (see Mt 3.7 n.), had everything in common (4.32–35), but 5.4 suggests that this was not a universal rule.

**3.1–10: Healing at the Beautiful Gate.** Two of the chief disciples manifest "the signs of a true apostle" (2 Cor 12.12; Mt 10.8). **1**: *Three o'clock in the afternoon,* when sacrifice was offered with prayer (Ex 29.39; Lev 6.20; Josephus, *Ant.* xiv.4.3). **2**: The *gate . . . called Beautiful* was made of polished Corinthian bronze and ornamented with silver and gold; it was probably on the east side of the temple. **6**: Christians and others healed and cast out demons *in the name of Jesus* (19.13; Mk 9.38; Mt 7.22).

**3.11–26: Peter's preaching.** In a second sermon Peter gives a fuller account of the Christian message. **11**: *The portico called Solomon's* was probably on the east side of the temple. **13**: *Servant,* the word can be translated "child" (see note *u*), but in the Greek version of Isa 52.13 it is used for the suffering Servant of the Lord; compare the prayers in Acts 4.25, 27, 30. **15**: *Author,* the word can mean "pioneer" or "founder" (of a new city).

strong, whom you see and know; and the faith that is through Jesus[v] has given him this perfect health in the presence of all of you.

17 "And now, friends,[w] I know that you acted in ignorance, as did also your rulers. 18 In this way God fulfilled what he had foretold through all the prophets, that his Messiah[x] would suffer. 19 Repent therefore, and turn to God so that your sins may be wiped out, 20 so that times of refreshing may come from the presence of the Lord, and that he may send the Messiah[y] appointed for you, that is, Jesus, 21 who must remain in heaven until the time of universal restoration that God announced long ago through his holy prophets. 22 Moses said, 'The Lord your God will raise up for you from your own people[w] a prophet like me. You must listen to whatever he tells you. 23 And it will be that everyone who does not listen to that prophet will be utterly rooted out of the people.' 24 And all the prophets, as many as have spoken, from Samuel and those after him, also predicted these days. 25 You are the descendants of the prophets and of the covenant that God gave to your ancestors, saying to Abraham, 'And in your descendants all the families of the earth shall be blessed.' 26 When God raised up his servant,[z] he sent him first to you, to bless you by turning each of you from your wicked ways."

4 While Peter and John[a] were speaking to the people, the priests, the captain of the temple, and the Sadducees came to them, 2 much annoyed because they were teaching the people and proclaiming that in Jesus there is the resurrection of the dead. 3 So they arrested them and put them in custody until the next day, for it was already evening. 4 But many of those who heard the word believed; and they numbered about five thousand.

5 The next day their rulers, elders, and scribes assembled in Jerusalem, 6 with Annas the high priest, Caiaphas, John,[b] and Alexander, and all who were of the high-priestly family. 7 When they had made the prisoners[c] stand in their midst, they inquired, "By what power or by what name did you do this?" 8 Then Peter, filled with the Holy Spirit, said to them, "Rulers of the people and elders, 9 if we are questioned today because of a good deed done to someone who was sick and are asked how this man has been healed, 10 let it be known to all of you, and to all the people of Israel, that this man is standing before you in good health by the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth,[d] whom you crucified, whom God raised from the dead. 11 This Jesus[e] is

'the stone that was rejected by
you, the builders;
it has become the cornerstone.'[f]

12 There is salvation in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given among mortals by which we must be saved."

13 Now when they saw the boldness of Peter and John and realized that they were uneducated and ordinary men, they

*v* Gk *him* *w* Gk *brothers* *x* Or *his Christ* *y* Or *the Christ* *z* Or *child* *a* Gk *While they* *b* Other ancient authorities read *Jonathan* *c* Gk *them* *d* Gk *the Nazorean* *e* Gk *This* *f* Or *keystone*

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**3.22**: Jesus is successor of Moses as well as David (Deut 18.15–16). **23**: Deut 18.19; Lev 23.29. **25**: Gen 22.18.

**4.1–31**: **Arrest and release of Peter and John.** The first of many incidents in which the apostles defend the faith before the authorities. **1–2**: *Captain of the temple,* chief officer of the temple guard of priests and Levites. **3**: It was not legal to hold a judicial inquiry at night. The *priests* in control of *the temple* were usually Sadducees, who denied the *resurrection of the dead* (23.6–8). **5–6**: Perhaps the *rulers* are priests; with the *elders and scribes* they made up the Sanhedrin, or council, of which *the high priest* was head (see Jn 11.47 n.). *Annas* held this office A.D. 6–14, and *Caiaphas* was his son-in-law (Jn 18.13); *John* may be Jonathan, who succeeded Caiaphas. **11**: The stone which was rejected (Ps 118.22) is also identified with Jesus in Mk 12.10; 1 Pet 2.7. Essenes (see Mt 3.7 n.) and Christians used this and other Old Testament "stone" passages in teaching. **13**: Like Jesus (Jn 7.15), the apostles were considered *uneducated* because they

were amazed and recognized them as companions of Jesus. 14When they saw the man who had been cured standing beside them, they had nothing to say in opposition. 15So they ordered them to leave the council while they discussed the matter with one another. 16They said, "What will we do with them? For it is obvious to all who live in Jerusalem that a notable sign has been done through them; we cannot deny it. 17But to keep it from spreading further among the people, let us warn them to speak no more to anyone in this name." 18So they called them and ordered them not to speak or teach at all in the name of Jesus. 19But Peter and John answered them, "Whether it is right in God's sight to listen to you rather than to God, you must judge; 20for we cannot keep from speaking about what we have seen and heard." 21After threatening them again, they let them go, finding no way to punish them because of the people, for all of them praised God for what had happened. 22For the man on whom this sign of healing had been performed was more than forty years old.

23 After they were released, they went to their friends[g] and reported what the chief priests and the elders had said to them. 24When they heard it, they raised their voices together to God and said, "Sovereign Lord, who made the heaven and the earth, the sea, and everything in them, 25it is you who said by the Holy Spirit through our ancestor David, your servant:[h]

'Why did the Gentiles rage,
and the peoples imagine vain things?
26 The kings of the earth took their stand,
and the rulers have gathered together
against the Lord and against his Messiah.'[i]

27For in this city, in fact, both Herod and Pontius Pilate, with the Gentiles and the peoples of Israel, gathered together against your holy servant[h] Jesus, whom you anointed, 28to do whatever your hand and your plan had predestined to take place. 29And now, Lord, look at their threats, and grant to your servants[j] to speak your word with all boldness, 30while you stretch out your hand to heal, and signs and wonders are performed through the name of your holy servant[h] Jesus." 31When they had prayed, the place in which they were gathered together was shaken; and they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and spoke the word of God with boldness.

32 Now the whole group of those who believed were of one heart and soul, and no one claimed private ownership of any possessions, but everything they owned was held in common. 33With great power the apostles gave their testimony to the resurrection of the Lord Jesus, and great grace was upon them all. 34There was not a needy person among them, for as many as owned lands or houses sold them and brought the proceeds of what was sold. 35They laid it at the apostles' feet, and it was distributed to each as any had need. 36There was a Levite, a native of Cyprus, Joseph, to whom the apostles gave the name Barnabas (which means "son of encouragement"). 37He sold a field that belonged to him, then brought the money, and laid it at the apostles' feet.

5 But a man named Ananias, with the consent of his wife Sapphira, sold a piece of property; 2with his wife's knowledge, he kept back some of the

*g* Gk *their own* *h* Or *child* *i* Or *his Christ* *j* Gk *slaves*

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lacked rabbinical training. **25–26:** Ps 2.1–2. **27:** *Servant,* see 3.13 n. **29:** *Look at their threats,* a prayer to be shielded from harm.

**4.32–5.11: The sharing of goods.** Christians took care of their needy (Rom 12.8; 1 Cor 13.3; Heb 13.16), but it was only in Jerusalem that this type of communal living (similar to that of the Essenes) was practiced for a time.

proceeds, and brought only a part and laid it at the apostles' feet. 3"Ananias," Peter asked, "why has Satan filled your heart to lie to the Holy Spirit and to keep back part of the proceeds of the land? 4While it remained unsold, did it not remain your own? And after it was sold, were not the proceeds at your disposal? How is it that you have contrived this deed in your heart? You did not lie to us[k] but to God!" 5Now when Ananias heard these words, he fell down and died. And great fear seized all who heard of it. 6The young men came and wrapped up his body,[l] then carried him out and buried him.

7 After an interval of about three hours his wife came in, not knowing what had happened. 8Peter said to her, "Tell me whether you and your husband sold the land for such and such a price." And she said, "Yes, that was the price." 9Then Peter said to her, "How is it that you have agreed together to put the Spirit of the Lord to the test? Look, the feet of those who have buried your husband are at the door, and they will carry you out." 10Immediately she fell down at his feet and died. When the young men came in they found her dead, so they carried her out and buried her beside her husband. 11And great fear seized the whole church and all who heard of these things.

12 Now many signs and wonders were done among the people through the apostles. And they were all together in Solomon's Portico. 13None of the rest dared to join them, but the people held them in high esteem. 14Yet more than ever believers were added to the Lord, great numbers of both men and women, 15so that they even carried out the sick into the streets, and laid them on cots and mats, in order that Peter's shadow might fall on some of them as he came by. 16A great number of people would also gather from the towns around Jerusalem, bringing the sick and those tormented by unclean spirits, and they were all cured.

17 Then the high priest took action; he and all who were with him (that is, the sect of the Sadducees), being filled with jealousy, 18arrested the apostles and put them in the public prison. 19But during the night an angel of the Lord opened the prison doors, brought them out, and said, 20"Go, stand in the temple and tell the people the whole message about this life." 21When they heard this, they entered the temple at daybreak and went on with their teaching.

When the high priest and those with him arrived, they called together the council and the whole body of the elders of Israel, and sent to the prison to have them brought. 22But when the temple police went there, they did not find them in the prison; so they returned and reported, 23"We found the prison securely locked and the guards standing at the doors, but when we opened them, we found no one inside." 24Now when the captain of the temple and the chief priests heard these words, they were perplexed about them, wondering what might be going on. 25Then someone arrived and announced, "Look, the men whom you put in prison are standing in the temple and teaching the people!" 26Then the captain went with the temple police and brought them, but without violence, for they were afraid of being stoned by the people.

27 When they had brought them, they had them stand before the council. The high priest questioned them, 28saying, "We gave you strict orders not to teach in this name,[m] yet here you have

*k* Gk *to men* *l* Meaning of Gk uncertain
*m* Other ancient authorities read *Did we not give you strict orders not to teach in this name?*

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**5.3**: The apostles, or perhaps the church, represent *the Holy Spirit*. **4**: The property was at Ananias' *disposal* until he pretended to dedicate all his goods.

**5.12–42**: **Second arrest of the apostles.** The motif of obeying God rather than human beings, and the divided opinion of the council, are repeated (compare ch 4). **12**: *Solomon's Portico,* see 3.11 n. **13**: *None of the rest,* i.e. the non-believers. **16**: Compare Mk 1.32–34.

**5.19**: *An angel . . . opened the prison doors,* as in 12.6–11; compare 16.25–26. **21**: *Body of the*

filled Jerusalem with your teaching and you are determined to bring this man's blood on us." 29 But Peter and the apostles answered, "We must obey God rather than any human authority.[n] 30 The God of our ancestors raised up Jesus, whom you had killed by hanging him on a tree. 31 God exalted him at his right hand as Leader and Savior that he might give repentance to Israel and forgiveness of sins. 32 And we are witnesses to these things, and so is the Holy Spirit whom God has given to those who obey him."

33 When they heard this, they were enraged and wanted to kill them. 34 But a Pharisee in the council named Gamaliel, a teacher of the law, respected by all the people, stood up and ordered the men to be put outside for a short time. 35 Then he said to them, "Fellow Israelites,[o] consider carefully what you propose to do to these men. 36 For some time ago Theudas rose up, claiming to be somebody, and a number of men, about four hundred, joined him; but he was killed, and all who followed him were dispersed and disappeared. 37 After him Judas the Galilean rose up at the time of the census and got people to follow him; he also perished, and all who followed him were scattered. 38 So in the present case, I tell you, keep away from these men and let them alone; because if this plan or this undertaking is of human origin, it will fail; 39 but if it is of God, you will not be able to overthrow them—in that case you may even be found fighting against God!"

They were convinced by him, 40 and when they had called in the apostles, they had them flogged. Then they ordered them not to speak in the name of Jesus, and let them go. 41 As they left the council, they rejoiced that they were considered worthy to suffer dishonor for the sake of the name. 42 And every day in the temple and at home[p] they did not cease to teach and proclaim Jesus as the Messiah.[q]

6 Now during those days, when the disciples were increasing in number, the Hellenists complained against the Hebrews because their widows were being neglected in the daily distribution of food. 2 And the twelve called together the whole community of the disciples and said, "It is not right that we should neglect the word of God in order to wait on tables.[r] 3 Therefore, friends,[s] select from among yourselves seven men of good standing, full of the Spirit and of wisdom, whom we may appoint to this task, 4 while we, for our part, will devote ourselves to prayer and to serving the word." 5 What they said pleased the whole community, and they chose Stephen, a man full of faith and the Holy Spirit, together with Philip, Prochorus, Nicanor, Timon, Parmenas, and Nicolaus, a proselyte of Antioch. 6 They had these men stand before the apostles, who prayed and laid their hands on them.

*n* Gk *than men* *o* Gk *Men, Israelites*
*p* Or *from house to house* *q* Or *the Christ*
*r* Or *keep accounts* *s* Gk *brothers*

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*elders,* another word for *council* or Sanhedrin (see Jn 11.47 n.). **30**: The cross was a pole or *tree* to which a crossbeam was fixed. **31**: *Leader,* the word is translated *Author* in 3.15. *Savior,* a name given by the ancients to one who saves a city, rescues, or heals; the New Testament uses it of Jesus as healer and deliverer from sin and death.

**5.34–37**: *Gamaliel,* a famous liberal rabbi; the speech here fits his tolerant attitude. *Theudas,* according to Josephus (*Ant.* xx.5.1), raised his revolt later than this. *Judas the Galilean,* a revolutionary leader who in A.D. 6 or 7 opposed the imposition of new taxes following *the census.* **40**: *Had them flogged,* for their disobedience to the Sanhedrin's first command (4.18). The penalty was probably thirty-nine stripes (see 2 Cor 11.24).

**6.1–7**: **Choice of the Seven.** These are traditionally regarded as the first deacons (Phil 1.1; 1 Tim 3.8–13), but their functions are more like those of presbyters or bishops (20.17, 28), for Stephen teaches (vv. 9–10) and does not merely *wait on tables* (v. 2). **1**: *The Hellenists,* Greek-speaking Jews or Jews who have adopted Greek customs; the *Hebrews* probably spoke Aramaic and were more conservative (compare 21.20). **2**: *To wait on tables,* perhaps to serve meals (Jesus thought this compatible with *the word of God,* Lk

7 The word of God continued to spread; the number of the disciples increased greatly in Jerusalem, and a great many of the priests became obedient to the faith.

8 Stephen, full of grace and power, did great wonders and signs among the people. 9Then some of those who belonged to the synagogue of the Freedmen (as it was called), Cyrenians, Alexandrians, and others of those from Cilicia and Asia, stood up and argued with Stephen. 10But they could not withstand the wisdom and the Spirit[t] with which he spoke. 11Then they secretly instigated some men to say, "We have heard him speak blasphemous words against Moses and God." 12They stirred up the people as well as the elders and the scribes; then they suddenly confronted him, seized him, and brought him before the council. 13They set up false witnesses who said, "This man never stops saying things against this holy place and the law; 14for we have heard him say that this Jesus of Nazareth[u] will destroy this place and will change the customs that Moses handed on to us." 15And all who sat in the council looked intently at him, and they saw that his face was like the face of an angel.

7 Then the high priest asked him, "Are these things so?" 2And Stephen replied:

"Brothers[v] and fathers, listen to me. The God of glory appeared to our ancestor Abraham when he was in Mesopotamia, before he lived in Haran, 3and said to him, 'Leave your country and your relatives and go to the land that I will show you.' 4Then he left the country of the Chaldeans and settled in Haran. After his father died, God had him move from there to this country in which you are now living. 5He did not give him any of it as a heritage, not even a foot's length, but promised to give it to him as his possession and to his descendants after him, even though he had no child. 6And God spoke in these terms, that his descendants would be resident aliens in a country belonging to others, who would enslave them and mistreat them during four hundred years. 7'But I will judge the nation that they serve,' said God, 'and after that they shall come out and worship me in this place.' 8Then he gave him the covenant of circumcision. And so Abraham[w] became the father of Isaac and circumcised him on the eighth day; and Isaac became the father of Jacob, and Jacob of the twelve patriarchs.

9 "The patriarchs, jealous of Joseph, sold him into Egypt; but God was with him, 10and rescued him from all his afflictions, and enabled him to win favor and to show wisdom when he stood before Pharaoh, king of Egypt, who appointed him ruler over Egypt and over all his household. 11Now there came a famine throughout Egypt and Canaan, and great suffering, and our ancestors could find no food. 12But when Jacob heard that there was grain in Egypt, he sent our ancestors there on their first vis-

*t* Or *spirit* *u* Gk *the Nazorean* *v* Gk *Men, brothers* *w* Gk *he*

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22.27); the phrase can also include financial administration. **5:** *Stephen, Philip,* and the other names are Greek. *Proselyte,* a Gentile convert to Judaism, prior to becoming a Christian. **6:** *Laid . . . hands,* see 1 Tim 4.14 n.

**6.8–8.1a: Preaching and martyrdom of Stephen.** Like Jesus, Stephen was charged with prophesying against the temple, and forgave his persecutors.

**6.9:** *Freedmen,* former slaves, either Jews or proselytes; an inscription found in Jerusalem is thought to refer to this *synagogue. Cilicia,* the southeastern portion of Asia Minor. *Asia,* the Roman province of that name in western Asia Minor. **14:** *Jesus . . . will destroy this place,* Mk 14.58; Jn 2.19. Stephen saw more clearly than others that Jesus' teaching would *change the customs* (Mk 7.18–19; Mt 23.25–26; Lk 11.39–41). Christianity now begins to emerge as a world religion.

**7.2–50:** Early Christian preaching often included the stories of *Abraham* (v. 2), *Joseph* (v. 9), *Moses* (v. 20), and others (compare 13.16–24; Heb 11.4–40). **6:** *Four hundred years,* so Gen 15.13; more precisely, 430 years (Ex 12.40; see Gal 3.17 n.).

it. 13 On the second visit Joseph made himself known to his brothers, and Joseph's family became known to Pharaoh. 14 Then Joseph sent and invited his father Jacob and all his relatives to come to him, seventy-five in all; 15 so Jacob went down to Egypt. He himself died there as well as our ancestors, 16 and their bodies[x] were brought back to Shechem and laid in the tomb that Abraham had bought for a sum of silver from the sons of Hamor in Shechem.

17 "But as the time drew near for the fulfillment of the promise that God had made to Abraham, our people in Egypt increased and multiplied 18 until another king who had not known Joseph ruled over Egypt. 19 He dealt craftily with our race and forced our ancestors to abandon their infants so that they would die. 20 At this time Moses was born, and he was beautiful before God. For three months he was brought up in his father's house; 21 and when he was abandoned, Pharaoh's daughter adopted him and brought him up as her own son. 22 So Moses was instructed in all the wisdom of the Egyptians and was powerful in his words and deeds.

23 "When he was forty years old, it came into his heart to visit his relatives, the Israelites.[y] 24 When he saw one of them being wronged, he defended the oppressed man and avenged him by striking down the Egyptian. 25 He supposed that his kinsfolk would understand that God through him was rescuing them, but they did not understand. 26 The next day he came to some of them as they were quarreling and tried to reconcile them, saying, 'Men, you are brothers; why do you wrong each other?' 27 But the man who was wronging his neighbor pushed Moses[z] aside, saying, 'Who made you a ruler and a judge over us? 28 Do you want to kill me as you killed the Egyptian yesterday?' 29 When he heard this, Moses fled and became a resident alien in the land of Midian. There he became the father of two sons.

30 "Now when forty years had passed, an angel appeared to him in the wilderness of Mount Sinai, in the flame of a burning bush. 31 When Moses saw it, he was amazed at the sight; and as he approached to look, there came the voice of the Lord: 32 'I am the God of your ancestors, the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.' Moses began to tremble and did not dare to look. 33 Then the Lord said to him, 'Take off the sandals from your feet, for the place where you are standing is holy ground. 34 I have surely seen the mistreatment of my people who are in Egypt and have heard their groaning, and I have come down to rescue them. Come now, I will send you to Egypt.'

35 "It was this Moses whom they rejected when they said, 'Who made you a ruler and a judge?' and whom God now sent as both ruler and liberator through the angel who appeared to him in the bush. 36 He led them out, having performed wonders and signs in Egypt, at the Red Sea, and in the wilderness for forty years. 37 This is the Moses who said to the Israelites, 'God will raise up a prophet for you from your own people[a] as he raised me up.' 38 He is the one who was in the congregation in the wilderness with the angel who spoke to him at Mount Sinai, and with our ancestors; and he received living oracles to give to us. 39 Our ancestors were unwilling to obey him; instead, they pushed him aside, and in their hearts they turned back to Egypt, 40 saying to Aaron, 'Make gods for us who will lead the way for us; as for this Moses who led us out from the land of Egypt, we do not know what has hap-

*x* Gk *they* *y* Gk *his brothers, the sons of Israel*
*z* Gk *him* *a* Gk *your brothers*

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**7.14**: *Seventy-five,* according to the Septuagint of Gen 46.27; Ex 1.5. **16**: *Shechem;* but according to Gen 50.13 Jacob was buried at Hebron. *Abraham;* but according to Gen 33.19 and Josh 24.32 it was Jacob who bought the tomb at Shechem.

**7.29**: *Midian,* northwest Arabia. **37**: *A prophet,* 3.22.

pened to him.' 41 At that time they made a calf, offered a sacrifice to the idol, and reveled in the works of their hands. 42 But God turned away from them and handed them over to worship the host of heaven, as it is written in the book of the prophets:

'Did you offer to me slain victims
and sacrifices
forty years in the wilderness,
O house of Israel?
43 No; you took along the tent
of Moloch,
and the star of your god
Rephan,
the images that you made
to worship;
so I will remove you beyond
Babylon.'

44 "Our ancestors had the tent of testimony in the wilderness, as God[b] directed when he spoke to Moses, ordering him to make it according to the pattern he had seen. 45 Our ancestors in turn brought it in with Joshua when they dispossessed the nations that God drove out before our ancestors. And it was there until the time of David, 46 who found favor with God and asked that he might find a dwelling place for the house of Jacob.[c] 47 But it was Solomon who built a house for him. 48 Yet the Most High does not dwell in houses made with human hands;[d] as the prophet says,

49 'Heaven is my throne,
and the earth is my footstool.
What kind of house will you build
for me, says the Lord,
or what is the place of my rest?
50 Did not my hand make all these
things?'

51 "You stiff-necked people, uncircumcised in heart and ears, you are forever opposing the Holy Spirit, just as your ancestors used to do. 52 Which of the prophets did your ancestors not persecute? They killed those who foretold the coming of the Righteous One, and now you have become his betrayers and murderers. 53 You are the ones that received the law as ordained by angels, and yet you have not kept it."

54 When they heard these things, they became enraged and ground their teeth at Stephen.[e] 55 But filled with the Holy Spirit, he gazed into heaven and saw the glory of God and Jesus standing at the right hand of God. 56 "Look," he said, "I see the heavens opened and the Son of Man standing at the right hand of God!" 57 But they covered their ears, and with a loud shout all rushed together against him. 58 Then they dragged him out of the city and began to stone him; and the witnesses laid their coats at the feet of a young man named Saul. 59 While they were stoning Stephen, he prayed, "Lord Jesus, receive my spirit." 60 Then he knelt down and cried out in a loud voice, "Lord, do not hold this sin against them." When he had said this, he died.[f]

8 1 And Saul approved of their killing him.

That day a severe persecution began against the church in Jerusalem, and all

*b* Gk *he* *c* Other ancient authorities read *for the God of Jacob* *d* Gk *with hands* *e* Gk *him* *f* Gk *fell asleep*

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**7.42–43**: Am 5.25–27 is quoted to suggest that the Hebrews had always been idolaters. The *book of the* (twelve minor) *prophets* was thought of as a unit. **42**: *The host of heaven,* the stars (2 Kings 17.16). **43**: *Moloch,* a god of the Ammonites; children were offered to it as sacrifices. *Rephan,* the planet Saturn. **44–50**: Up to v. 42 Stephen has been on common ground with his hearers; now he argues that God *does not dwell in houses made with human hands* (Isa 66.1–2) and that it was wrong for *Solomon* to build *a house for him.* The Letter to the Hebrews (chs 8 and 9) likewise regards the tent (tabernacle) as the true type of worship, and ignores the temple.

**7.51**: *Uncircumcised in heart and ears,* Ex 33.3, 5; Jer 9.26; Rom 2.29. **53**: *The law,* being *ordained by angels,* is considered valid; but Paul used this Jewish tradition to argue that the law is secondary (Gal 3.19). **56**: *Son of Man* in the gospels usually denotes Jesus as the glorified heavenly judge (see Mk 2.10 n.); elsewhere in the New Testament the phrase is found only here and in Rev 1.13. **58**: *The witnesses,* who were legally required to cast the first stones at the offender (Deut 17.7).

except the apostles were scattered throughout the countryside of Judea and Samaria. 2Devout men buried Stephen and made loud lamentation over him. 3But Saul was ravaging the church by entering house after house; dragging off both men and women, he committed them to prison.

4 Now those who were scattered went from place to place, proclaiming the word. 5Philip went down to the city[g] of Samaria and proclaimed the Messiah[h] to them. 6The crowds with one accord listened eagerly to what was said by Philip, hearing and seeing the signs that he did, 7for unclean spirits, crying with loud shrieks, came out of many who were possessed; and many others who were paralyzed or lame were cured. 8So there was great joy in that city.

9 Now a certain man named Simon had previously practiced magic in the city and amazed the people of Samaria, saying that he was someone great. 10All of them, from the least to the greatest, listened to him eagerly, saying, "This man is the power of God that is called Great." 11And they listened eagerly to him because for a long time he had amazed them with his magic. 12But when they believed Philip, who was proclaiming the good news about the kingdom of God and the name of Jesus Christ, they were baptized, both men and women. 13Even Simon himself believed. After being baptized, he stayed constantly with Philip and was amazed when he saw the signs and great miracles that took place.

14 Now when the apostles at Jerusalem heard that Samaria had accepted the word of God, they sent Peter and John to them. 15The two went down and prayed for them that they might receive the Holy Spirit 16(for as yet the Spirit had not come[i] upon any of them; they had only been baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus). 17Then Peter and John[j] laid their hands on them, and they received the Holy Spirit. 18Now when Simon saw that the Spirit was given through the laying on of the apostles' hands, he offered them money, 19saying, "Give me also this power so that anyone on whom I lay my hands may receive the Holy Spirit." 20But Peter said to him, "May your silver perish with you, because you thought you could obtain God's gift with money! 21You have no part or share in this, for your heart is not right before God. 22Repent therefore of this wickedness of yours, and pray to the Lord that, if possible, the intent of your heart may be forgiven you. 23For I see that you are in the gall of bitterness and the chains of wickedness." 24Simon answered, "Pray for me to the Lord, that nothing of what you[k] have said may happen to me."

25 Now after Peter and John[l] had testified and spoken the word of the Lord, they returned to Jerusalem, proclaiming the good news to many villages of the Samaritans.

26 Then an angel of the Lord said to Philip, "Get up and go toward the south[m] to the road that goes down from Jerusalem to Gaza." (This is a wilderness

*g* Other ancient authorities read *a city*
*h* Or *the Christ* *i* Gk *fallen* *j* Gk *they*
*k* The Greek word for *you* and the verb *pray* are plural *l* Gk *after they* *m* Or *go at noon*

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**8.1b–40: Spread of the gospel to Samaria and the seacoast.** Christianity now first reaches non-Jewish regions. **3:** *Saul was ravaging the church,* Gal 1.13. **5:** *Philip,* not the apostle, but one of the seven mentioned in 6.5. He now became an evangelist (21.8). *Samaria* was inhabited by mixed remnants of the northern tribes who worshiped the Lord God and used the Pentateuch. Jews despised them. In one tradition the disciples are forbidden to visit their towns (Mt 10.5), but according to others Jesus was friendly to Samaritans (Lk 10.30–37; 17.11–19; Jn 4.4–42).

**8.14–17:** In Acts believers usually receive the Holy Spirit at baptism (2.38; 19.5–6), or before baptism (10.44). Here the Samaritans *received the Holy Spirit* (v. 17) some time subsequent to baptism, and only after the apostles' visit. **17:** *Laid . . . hands,* see 1 Tim 4.14 n. **18:** The term "simony" (buying church offices) is derived from this account.

**8.27:** *Ethiopian* at this time meant "Nubi-

road.) 27So he got up and went. Now there was an Ethiopian eunuch, a court official of the Candace, queen of the Ethiopians, in charge of her entire treasury. He had come to Jerusalem to worship 28and was returning home; seated in his chariot, he was reading the prophet Isaiah. 29Then the Spirit said to Philip, "Go over to this chariot and join it." 30So Philip ran up to it and heard him reading the prophet Isaiah. He asked, "Do you understand what you are reading?" 31He replied, "How can I, unless someone guides me?" And he invited Philip to get in and sit beside him. 32Now the passage of the scripture that he was reading was this:

"Like a sheep he was led to the slaughter,
and like a lamb silent before its shearer,
so he does not open his mouth.
33 In his humiliation justice was denied him.
Who can describe his generation?
For his life is taken away from the earth."

34The eunuch asked Philip, "About whom, may I ask you, does the prophet say this, about himself or about someone else?" 35Then Philip began to speak, and starting with this scripture, he proclaimed to him the good news about Jesus. 36As they were going along the road, they came to some water; and the eunuch said, "Look, here is water! What is to prevent me from being baptized?"[n] 38He commanded the chariot to stop, and both of them, Philip and the eunuch, went down into the water, and Philip[o] baptized him. 39When they came up out of the water, the Spirit of the Lord snatched Philip away; the eunuch saw him no more, and went on his way rejoicing. 40But Philip found himself at Azotus, and as he was passing through the region, he proclaimed the good news to all the towns until he came to Caesarea.

9 Meanwhile Saul, still breathing threats and murder against the disciples of the Lord, went to the high priest 2and asked him for letters to the synagogues at Damascus, so that if he found any who belonged to the Way, men or women, he might bring them bound to Jerusalem. 3Now as he was going along and approaching Damascus, suddenly a light from heaven flashed around him. 4He fell to the ground and heard a voice saying to him, "Saul, Saul, why do you persecute me?" 5He asked, "Who are you, Lord?" The reply came, "I am Jesus, whom you are persecuting. 6But get up and enter the city, and you will be told what you are to do." 7The men who were traveling with him stood speechless because they heard the voice but saw no one. 8Saul got up from the ground, and though his eyes were open, he could see nothing; so they led him by the hand and brought him into Damascus. 9For three days he was without sight, and neither ate nor drank.

*n* Other ancient authorities add all or most of verse 37, *And Philip said, "If you believe with all your heart, you may." And he replied, "I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God."* *o* Gk *he*

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an." *The Candace* was the title of the *queen of the Ethiopians*. **28**: *He was reading* aloud to himself (as was customary in antiquity); hence Philip *heard him* (v. 30). **30–35**: In the book of Isaiah the early Christians found many prophecies of Christ; Isa 53.7–8 deals with the servant of the Lord (see Acts 3.13 n., and compare Mt 8.17). **40**: *Caesarea*, important Palestinian seaport where the Roman procurator had his headquarters.

**9.1–22**: **Conversion of Saul of Tarsus.** Slightly different versions are found in 22.4–16; 26.9–18; compare Paul's account, Gal 1.13–17. **2**: *The Way*, i.e. the true way of the Lord, was one of the earliest names for Christianity. Those *who belonged to* it *at Damascus* were probably from Jerusalem; the empire granted the Jews the right to extradite offenders. **3**: The glory of God (or Christ) is often described as light (2 Cor 3.18; 4.6). **4–5**: In persecuting the disciples, he persecuted *Jesus* (Mt 10.40; 25.40). **7**: The Greek suggests that his companions heard the sound of the voice but not the words spoken (see Jn 12.29).

10 Now there was a disciple in Damascus named Ananias. The Lord said to him in a vision, "Ananias." He answered, "Here I am, Lord." 11 The Lord said to him, "Get up and go to the street called Straight, and at the house of Judas look for a man of Tarsus named Saul. At this moment he is praying, 12 and he has seen in a vision[p] a man named Ananias come in and lay his hands on him so that he might regain his sight." 13 But Ananias answered, "Lord, I have heard from many about this man, how much evil he has done to your saints in Jerusalem; 14 and here he has authority from the chief priests to bind all who invoke your name." 15 But the Lord said to him, "Go, for he is an instrument whom I have chosen to bring my name before Gentiles and kings and before the people of Israel; 16 I myself will show him how much he must suffer for the sake of my name." 17 So Ananias went and entered the house. He laid his hands on Saul[q] and said, "Brother Saul, the Lord Jesus, who appeared to you on your way here, has sent me so that you may regain your sight and be filled with the Holy Spirit." 18 And immediately something like scales fell from his eyes, and his sight was restored. Then he got up and was baptized, 19 and after taking some food, he regained his strength.

For several days he was with the disciples in Damascus, 20 and immediately he began to proclaim Jesus in the synagogues, saying, "He is the Son of God." 21 All who heard him were amazed and said, "Is not this the man who made havoc in Jerusalem among those who invoked this name? And has he not come here for the purpose of bringing them bound before the chief priests?" 22 Saul became increasingly more powerful and confounded the Jews who lived in Damascus by proving that Jesus[r] was the Messiah.[s]

23 After some time had passed, the Jews plotted to kill him, 24 but their plot became known to Saul. They were watching the gates day and night so that they might kill him; 25 but his disciples took him by night and let him down through an opening in the wall,[t] lowering him in a basket.

26 When he had come to Jerusalem, he attempted to join the disciples; and they were all afraid of him, for they did not believe that he was a disciple. 27 But Barnabas took him, brought him to the apostles, and described for them how on the road he had seen the Lord, who had spoken to him, and how in Damascus he had spoken boldly in the name of Jesus. 28 So he went in and out among them in Jerusalem, speaking boldly in the name of the Lord. 29 He spoke and argued with the Hellenists; but they were attempting to kill him. 30 When the believers[u] learned of it, they brought him down to Caesarea and sent him off to Tarsus.

31 Meanwhile the church throughout Judea, Galilee, and Samaria had peace and was built up. Living in the fear of the Lord and in the comfort of the Holy Spirit, it increased in numbers.

32 Now as Peter went here and there among all the believers,[v] he came down also to the saints living in Lydda. 33 There

*p* Other ancient authorities lack *in a vision*
*q* Gk *him* *r* Gk *that this* *s* Or *the Christ*
*t* Gk *through the wall* *u* Gk *brothers*
*v* Gk *all of them*

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**9.10**: *Ananias,* evidently one of the leaders of the believers at Damascus (see 22.12). **11**: *The street called Straight,* perhaps Darb el-Mostakim, which runs through Damascus from east to west. **15**: Saul, like the prophets, was chosen for a special purpose (Jer 1.5; Gal 1.15); *instrument,* literally "vessel" (as in Rom 9.22–23; 2 Cor 4.7), emphasizes his domination by Christ.

**9.23–31: Saul's first visit to Jerusalem.** In Gal 1.15–20 Paul implies that his first visit was three years after his conversion. **25**: *A basket,* of the large kind used for carrying merchandise overland (2 Cor 11.32–33). **29**: *Hellenists,* Greek-speaking Jews. **30**: *Tarsus,* Paul's home city (22.3).

**9.32–43: Peter's journey to Lydda and Joppa.** **32**: *Lydda,* in the plain of Sharon (v. 35), about ten miles SE of Joppa (v. 36). **39**: *Widows,* those associated with Dorcas in

he found a man named Aeneas, who had been bedridden for eight years, for he was paralyzed. 34Peter said to him, "Aeneas, Jesus Christ heals you; get up and make your bed!" And immediately he got up. 35And all the residents of Lydda and Sharon saw him and turned to the Lord.

36 Now in Joppa there was a disciple whose name was Tabitha, which in Greek is Dorcas.[w] She was devoted to good works and acts of charity. 37At that time she became ill and died. When they had washed her, they laid her in a room upstairs. 38Since Lydda was near Joppa, the disciples, who heard that Peter was there, sent two men to him with the request, "Please come to us without delay." 39So Peter got up and went with them; and when he arrived, they took him to the room upstairs. All the widows stood beside him, weeping and showing tunics and other clothing that Dorcas had made while she was with them. 40Peter put all of them outside, and then he knelt down and prayed. He turned to the body and said, "Tabitha, get up." Then she opened her eyes, and seeing Peter, she sat up. 41He gave her his hand and helped her up. Then calling the saints and widows, he showed her to be alive. 42This became known throughout Joppa, and many believed in the Lord. 43Meanwhile he stayed in Joppa for some time with a certain Simon, a tanner.

10 In Caesarea there was a man named Cornelius, a centurion of the Italian Cohort, as it was called. 2He was a devout man who feared God with all his household; he gave alms generously to the people and prayed constantly to God. 3One afternoon at about three o'clock he had a vision in which he clearly saw an angel of God coming in and saying to him, "Cornelius." 4He stared at him in terror and said, "What is it, Lord?" He answered, "Your prayers and your alms have ascended as a memorial before God. 5Now send men to Joppa for a certain Simon who is called Peter; 6he is lodging with Simon, a tanner, whose house is by the seaside." 7When the angel who spoke to him had left, he called two of his slaves and a devout soldier from the ranks of those who served him, 8and after telling them everything, he sent them to Joppa.

9 About noon the next day, as they were on their journey and approaching the city, Peter went up on the roof to pray. 10He became hungry and wanted something to eat; and while it was being prepared, he fell into a trance. 11He saw the heaven opened and something like a large sheet coming down, being lowered to the ground by its four corners. 12In it were all kinds of four-footed creatures and reptiles and birds of the air. 13Then he heard a voice saying, "Get up, Peter; kill and eat." 14But Peter said, "By no means, Lord; for I have never eaten anything that is profane or unclean." 15The voice said to him again, a second time, "What God has made clean, you must not call profane." 16This happened three times, and the thing was suddenly taken up to heaven.

*w* The name Tabitha in Aramaic and the name Dorcas in Greek mean *a gazelle*

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good works; see 1 Tim 5.3–16 n. **43:** *A tanner* was practically an outcast; Jewish law regarded the work as defiling, since it required working with animal carcasses, which were ritually unclean. That Peter *stayed* with Simon shows that he had begun to disregard Jewish practices.

**10.1–48: The conversion of Cornelius.** Luke ascribes to Peter the honor of converting the first Gentile; but see 11.19–21. **1:** *Italian Cohort,* probably the Cohors II. Italica Civium Romanorum. **2:** Cornelius *feared God,* i.e. worshiped him, but had not adopted the Jewish religion. **3:** *About three o'clock,* the time of afternoon prayer.

**10.9:** *Noon,* the usual Roman time for luncheon. *The roof,* see Mk 2.4 n. **14:** *Profane,* ritually impure; only certain mammals, fish, and insects might be eaten (Lev 11). **15:** *God has made clean* all foods through Jesus' word (Mk 7.14–19), but Peter did not realize this until now; some Jewish Christians continued even later to insist on food laws (15.29; Col 2.21). **16:** *Three times,* for emphasis and warning.

17 Now while Peter was greatly puzzled about what to make of the vision that he had seen, suddenly the men sent by Cornelius appeared. They were asking for Simon's house and were standing by the gate. 18 They called out to ask whether Simon, who was called Peter, was staying there. 19 While Peter was still thinking about the vision, the Spirit said to him, "Look, three[x] men are searching for you. 20 Now get up, go down, and go with them without hesitation; for I have sent them." 21 So Peter went down to the men and said, "I am the one you are looking for; what is the reason for your coming?" 22 They answered, "Cornelius, a centurion, an upright and God-fearing man, who is well spoken of by the whole Jewish nation, was directed by a holy angel to send for you to come to his house and to hear what you have to say." 23 So Peter[y] invited them in and gave them lodging.

The next day he got up and went with them, and some of the believers[z] from Joppa accompanied him. 24 The following day they came to Caesarea. Cornelius was expecting them and had called together his relatives and close friends. 25 On Peter's arrival Cornelius met him, and falling at his feet, worshiped him. 26 But Peter made him get up, saying, "Stand up; I am only a mortal." 27 And as he talked with him, he went in and found that many had assembled; 28 and he said to them, "You yourselves know that it is unlawful for a Jew to associate with or to visit a Gentile; but God has shown me that I should not call anyone profane or unclean. 29 So when I was sent for, I came without objection. Now may I ask why you sent for me?"

30 Cornelius replied, "Four days ago at this very hour, at three o'clock, I was praying in my house when suddenly a man in dazzling clothes stood before me. 31 He said, 'Cornelius, your prayer has been heard and your alms have been remembered before God. 32 Send therefore to Joppa and ask for Simon, who is called Peter; he is staying in the home of Simon, a tanner, by the sea.' 33 Therefore I sent for you immediately, and you have been kind enough to come. So now all of us are here in the presence of God to listen to all that the Lord has commanded you to say."

34 Then Peter began to speak to them: "I truly understand that God shows no partiality, 35 but in every nation anyone who fears him and does what is right is acceptable to him. 36 You know the message he sent to the people of Israel, preaching peace by Jesus Christ—he is Lord of all. 37 That message spread throughout Judea, beginning in Galilee after the baptism that John announced: 38 how God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Spirit and with power; how he went about doing good and healing all who were oppressed by the devil, for God was with him. 39 We are witnesses to all that he did both in Judea and in Jerusalem. They put him to death by hanging him on a tree; 40 but God raised him on the third day and allowed him to appear, 41 not to all the people but to us who were chosen by God as witnesses, and who ate and drank with him after he rose from the dead. 42 He commanded us to preach to the people and to testify that he is the one ordained by God as judge of the living and the dead. 43 All the prophets testify about him that everyone who

*x* One ancient authority reads *two*; others lack the word *y* Gk *he* *z* Gk *brothers*

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**10.26**: *I am only a mortal,* 14.15; Rev 19.10. **28**: Food laws made association with Gentiles difficult. *But God has shown me,* Peter now understands the meaning of the vision that had puzzled him earlier (v. 17). **30**: See v. 3 n. **34**: *No partiality,* literally "God accepts no one's face"; compare Rom 2.11 where Paul teaches that Jews have no special privilege.

**10.36–43**: This sums up the gospel, beginning with the baptism of John and ending with the statement that Christ is judge (3.20–21). **38**: *God anointed Jesus,* Lk 3.22; 4.14. **41**: Jesus was seen only by those *chosen* (Lk 24.48; Acts 1.8, 22). **42**: *Judge of the living and the dead,* 1 Pet 4.5; 2 Tim 4.1.

believes in him receives forgiveness of sins through his name."

44 While Peter was still speaking, the Holy Spirit fell upon all who heard the word. 45The circumcised believers who had come with Peter were astounded that the gift of the Holy Spirit had been poured out even on the Gentiles, 46for they heard them speaking in tongues and extolling God. Then Peter said, 47"Can anyone withhold the water for baptizing these people who have received the Holy Spirit just as we have?" 48So he ordered them to be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ. Then they invited him to stay for several days.

11 Now the apostles and the believers[a] who were in Judea heard that the Gentiles had also accepted the word of God. 2So when Peter went up to Jerusalem, the circumcised believers[b] criticized him, 3saying, "Why did you go to uncircumcised men and eat with them?" 4Then Peter began to explain it to them, step by step, saying, 5"I was in the city of Joppa praying, and in a trance I saw a vision. There was something like a large sheet coming down from heaven, being lowered by its four corners; and it came close to me. 6As I looked at it closely I saw four-footed animals, beasts of prey, reptiles, and birds of the air. 7I also heard a voice saying to me, 'Get up, Peter; kill and eat.' 8But I replied, 'By no means, Lord; for nothing profane or unclean has ever entered my mouth.' 9But a second time the voice answered from heaven, 'What God has made clean, you must not call profane.' 10This happened three times; then everything was pulled up again to heaven. 11At that very moment three men, sent to me from Caesarea, arrived at the house where we were. 12The Spirit told me to go with them and not to make a distinction between them and us.[c] These six brothers also accompanied me, and we entered the man's house. 13He told us how he had seen the angel standing in his house and saying, 'Send to Joppa and bring Simon, who is called Peter; 14he will give you a message by which you and your entire household will be saved.' 15And as I began to speak, the Holy Spirit fell upon them just as it had upon us at the beginning. 16And I remembered the word of the Lord, how he had said, 'John baptized with water, but you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit.' 17If then God gave them the same gift that he gave us when we believed in the Lord Jesus Christ, who was I that I could hinder God?" 18When they heard this, they were silenced. And they praised God, saying, "Then God has given even to the Gentiles the repentance that leads to life."

19 Now those who were scattered because of the persecution that took place over Stephen traveled as far as Phoenicia, Cyprus, and Antioch, and they spoke the word to no one except Jews. 20But among them were some men of Cyprus and Cyrene who, on coming to Antioch, spoke to the Hellenists[d] also, proclaiming the Lord Jesus. 21The hand of the Lord was with them, and a great number became believers and turned to the Lord. 22News of this came to the ears of the church in Jerusalem, and they sent Barnabas to Antioch. 23When he came and saw the grace of God, he rejoiced, and he exhorted them all to remain faithful to the Lord with steadfast devotion; 24for

*a* Gk *brothers* *b* Gk lacks *believers* *c* Or *not to hesitate* *d* Other ancient authorities read *Greeks*

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**10.44–48**: They knew by the *speaking in tongues* (2.4–11) that *the Holy Spirit* fell before baptism (see 8.14–17 n.).

**11.1–18**: **Peter's defense.** The baptism of Gentiles requires explanation. **2**: *Circumcised believers* are conservative Jewish Christians, who object to Peter's associating with Gentiles (15.1–5; 21.20; Gal 2.12). **16**: See 1.5 n.

**11.19–26**: **Mission to the Greeks in Antioch.** Stephen's death and the ensuing *persecution* led to the Gentile mission (8.1b–4). **19**: *Antioch* on the Orontes, in Syria, the third largest city in the Roman Empire, ranking next to Alexandria. **20**: *Hellenists,* Greek-speaking Jews. **22**: *Barnabas* came from Cyprus (4.36) and there were Cypriots in Anti-

he was a good man, full of the Holy Spirit and of faith. And a great many people were brought to the Lord. 25Then Barnabas went to Tarsus to look for Saul, 26and when he had found him, he brought him to Antioch. So it was that for an entire year they met with[e] the church and taught a great many people. and it was in Antioch that the disciples were first called "Christians."

27 At that time prophets came down from Jerusalem to Antioch. 28One of them named Agabus stood up and predicted by the Spirit that there would be a severe famine over all the world; and this took place during the reign of Claudius. 29The disciples determined that according to their ability, each would send relief to the believers[f] living in Judea; 30this they did, sending it to the elders by Barnabas and Saul.

**12** About that time King Herod laid violent hands upon some who belonged to the church. 2He had James, the brother of John, killed with the sword. 3After he saw that it pleased the Jews, he proceeded to arrest Peter also. (This was during the festival of Unleavened Bread.) 4When he had seized him, he put him in prison and handed him over to four squads of soldiers to guard him, intending to bring him out to the people after the Passover. 5While Peter was kept in prison, the church prayed fervently to God for him.

6 The very night before Herod was going to bring him out, Peter, bound with two chains, was sleeping between two soldiers, while guards in front of the door were keeping watch over the prison. 7Suddenly an angel of the Lord appeared and a light shone in the cell. He tapped Peter on the side and woke him, saying, "Get up quickly." And the chains fell off his wrists. 8The angel said to him, "Fasten your belt and put on your sandals." He did so. Then he said to him, "Wrap your cloak around you and follow me." 9Peter[g] went out and followed him; he did not realize that what was happening with the angel's help was real; he thought he was seeing a vision. 10After they had passed the first and the second guard, they came before the iron gate leading into the city. It opened for them of its own accord, and they went outside and walked along a lane, when suddenly the angel left him. 11Then Peter came to himself and said, "Now I am sure that the Lord has sent his angel and rescued me from the hands of Herod and from all that the Jewish people were expecting."

12 As soon as he realized this, he went to the house of Mary, the mother of John whose other name was Mark, where many had gathered and were praying. 13When he knocked at the outer gate, a maid named Rhoda came to answer. 14On recognizing Peter's voice, she was

*e* Or *were guests of* *f* Gk *brothers* *g* Gk *He*

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och. **25–26**: *Saul* was in *Tarsus,* compare Gal 1.21. *Christians,* a Latin word meaning "partisans of Christ," perhaps at first a term of reproach.

**11.27–30**: **Famine relief sent to Jerusalem** through Barnabas and Paul. **27**: *Prophets* were numerous in the early church (see 13.1 n.; 1 Cor 12.28–29); their utterances, while including the foretelling of events, were mainly exhortations to righteousness. They were next in authority to the apostles (Eph 2.20; 4.11). **28**: *Agabus,* 21.10–11. The *famine . . . during the reign of Claudius* (A.D. 41–54) probably occurred in A.D. 46.

**12.1–19**: **Herod Agrippa's persecution.** James the son of Zebedee is martyred; Peter is arrested but escapes. **1**: *Herod* Agrippa I, grandson of Herod the Great and the Maccabean Mariamne, was made king by Claudius A.D. 41. He was popular because he favored Pharisaism. *James,* one of the sons of Zebedee. **4**: *Four squads of soldiers,* an indication of the political importance of the prisoner. *Passover* season, i.e. the days of unleavened bread (v. 3).

**12.12**: *John . . . Mark* accompanied Paul and Barnabas as far as Perga (12.25–13.13; compare also Mk 14.51 n.). **15**: It was believed that a person's guardian *angel* represented the person in heaven (Gen 48.16; Mt 18.10). **17**: *Tell . . . James,* the brother of Jesus next in age, and now titular head of the church at Jerusalem.

so overjoyed that, instead of opening the gate, she ran in and announced that Peter was standing at the gate. 15They said to her, "You are out of your mind!" But she insisted that it was so. They said, "It is his angel." 16Meanwhile Peter continued knocking; and when they opened the gate, they saw him and were amazed. 17He motioned to them with his hand to be silent, and described for them how the Lord had brought him out of the prison. And he added, "Tell this to James and to the believers."[h] Then he left and went to another place.

18 When morning came, there was no small commotion among the soldiers over what had become of Peter. 19When Herod had searched for him and could not find him, he examined the guards and ordered them to be put to death. Then he went down from Judea to Caesarea and stayed there.

20 Now Herod[i] was angry with the people of Tyre and Sidon. So they came to him in a body; and after winning over Blastus, the king's chamberlain, they asked for a reconciliation, because their country depended on the king's country for food. 21On an appointed day Herod put on his royal robes, took his seat on the platform, and delivered a public address to them. 22The people kept shouting, "The voice of a god, and not of a mortal!" 23And immediately, because he had not given the glory to God, an angel of the Lord struck him down, and he was eaten by worms and died.

24 But the word of God continued to advance and gain adherents. 25Then after completing their mission Barnabas and Saul returned to[j] Jerusalem and brought with them John, whose other name was Mark.

13 Now in the church at Antioch there were prophets and teachers: Barnabas, Simeon who was called Niger, Lucius of Cyrene, Manaen a member of the court of Herod the ruler,[k] and Saul. 2While they were worshiping the Lord and fasting, the Holy Spirit said, "Set apart for me Barnabas and Saul for the work to which I have called them." 3Then after fasting and praying they laid their hands on them and sent them off.

4 So, being sent out by the Holy Spirit, they went down to Seleucia; and from there they sailed to Cyprus. 5When they arrived at Salamis, they proclaimed the word of God in the synagogues of the Jews. And they had John also to assist them. 6When they had gone through the whole island as far as Paphos, they met a certain magician, a Jewish false prophet, named Bar-Jesus. 7He was with the proconsul, Sergius Paulus, an intelligent man, who summoned Barnabas and Saul and wanted to hear the word of God. 8But the magician Elymas (for that is the translation of his name) opposed them and tried to turn the proconsul away from the faith. 9But Saul, also known as Paul, filled with the Holy Spirit, looked

*h* Gk *brothers* *i* Gk *he* *j* Other ancient authorities read *from* *k* Gk *tetrarch*

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**12.20–23: Death of Herod Agrippa.** This was in the spring of A.D. 44. Josephus (*Ant.* xix.8.2) tells how he was stricken by a mortal illness immediately after the people hailed him as a god.

**12.24–13.12: Barnabas and Saul in Cyprus.** The beginning of Paul's first missionary journey.

**13.1**: *Prophets and teachers* were important in the early church (see 11.27 n.; 1 Cor 12.28; Eph 4.11). *Niger* means "black." *Cyrene* had a large Jewish colony. *Manaen,* Greek form of Hebrew Manahem. *Herod* Antipas, the son of Herod the Great. **2–3**: Paul declared that he received his apostleship not from human authorities but from divine commissioning (Gal 1.1). *The Holy Spirit* called them; when the others *laid their hands on them* it was not to make them apostles but to bless them for the new work (see 1 Tim 4.14 n.). **4**: *Seleucia* Pieria, Antioch's seaport, about 16 miles west at the mouth of the river Orontes. **5**: *Salamis,* largest city of Cyprus, north of modern Famagusta. *John,* that is John Mark, the cousin of Barnabas (12.12). **6**: *Paphos,* capital of the island, located in the extreme west. *Bar-Jesus,* "son of Jesus (or Joshua)." **7**: The island was a senatorial province ruled by a *proconsul.* **8**: *Elymas* does not mean "Bar-Jesus." Perhaps his name was Elymas, son of Je-

intently at him [10]and said, "You son of the devil, you enemy of all righteousness, full of all deceit and villainy, will you not stop making crooked the straight paths of the Lord? [11]And now listen—the hand of the Lord is against you, and you will be blind for a while, unable to see the sun." Immediately mist and darkness came over him, and he went about groping for someone to lead him by the hand. [12]When the proconsul saw what had happened, he believed, for he was astonished at the teaching about the Lord.

13 Then Paul and his companions set sail from Paphos and came to Perga in Pamphylia. John, however, left them and returned to Jerusalem; [14]but they went on from Perga and came to Antioch in Pisidia. And on the sabbath day they went into the synagogue and sat down. [15]After the reading of the law and the prophets, the officials of the synagogue sent them a message, saying, "Brothers, if you have any word of exhortation for the people, give it." [16]So Paul stood up and with a gesture began to speak:

"You Israelites,[l] and others who fear God, listen. [17]The God of this people Israel chose our ancestors and made the people great during their stay in the land of Egypt, and with uplifted arm he led them out of it. [18]For about forty years he put up with[m] them in the wilderness. [19]After he had destroyed seven nations in the land of Canaan, he gave them their land as an inheritance [20]for about four hundred fifty years. After that he gave them judges until the time of the prophet Samuel. [21]Then they asked for a king; and God gave them Saul son of Kish, a man of the tribe of Benjamin, who reigned for forty years. [22]When he had removed him, he made David their king. In his testimony about him he said, 'I have found David, son of Jesse, to be a man after my heart, who will carry out all my wishes.' [23]Of this man's posterity God has brought to Israel a Savior, Jesus, as he promised; [24]before his coming John had already proclaimed a baptism of repentance to all the people of Israel. [25]And as John was finishing his work, he said, 'What do you suppose that I am? I am not he. No, but one is coming after me; I am not worthy to untie the thong of the sandals[n] on his feet.'

26 "My brothers, you descendants of Abraham's family, and others who fear God, to us[o] the message of this salvation has been sent. [27]Because the residents of Jerusalem and their leaders did not recognize him or understand the words of the prophets that are read every sabbath, they fulfilled those words by condemning him. [28]Even though they found no cause for a sentence of death, they asked Pilate to have him killed. [29]When they had carried out everything that was written about him, they took him down from the tree and laid him in a tomb. [30]But God raised him from the dead; [31]and for many days he appeared to those who came up with him from Galilee to Jerusalem, and they are now his witnesses to the people. [32]And we bring you the good news that what God promised to our ancestors [33]he has fulfilled for us, their children, by raising Jesus; as also it is written in the second psalm,

'You are my Son;
today I have begotten you.'

*l* Gk *Men, Israelites* *m* Other ancient authorities read *cared for* *n* Gk *untie the sandals* *o* Other ancient authorities read *you*

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sus (or Joshua). **9**: *Saul* was his Jewish name, *Paul* his Roman name. A new source, using the latter, may begin here.

**13.13–52: Journey to Antioch of Pisidia and Iconium.** Paul's first work in inner Asia Minor. **13**: *Perga* is inland from Attalia, main seaport of Pamphylia ("region of all tribes"), which lies south of the Taurus range, between Cilicia and Lycia. **14**: Strictly, *Antioch* near *Pisidia*, near the modern Yalovach. **15**: One lesson each from *the law and the prophets* was customary. **19**: *Seven nations*, Deut 7.1; Josh 14.1. The rabbis reckoned almost *four hundred fifty years* from the entrance into Canaan to the building of the temple. **22**: Ps 89.20; 1 Sam 13.14. **23**: *Savior*, see 5.31 n. **25**: Mk 1.7; Lk 3.16; Mt 3.11; Jn 1.20.

**13.26–41**: For argument and style compare

34 As to his raising him from the dead, no more to return to corruption, he has spoken in this way,

'I will give you the holy promises made to David.'

35 Therefore he has also said in another psalm,

'You will not let your Holy One experience corruption.'

36 For David, after he had served the purpose of God in his own generation, died,[p] was laid beside his ancestors, and experienced corruption; 37 but he whom God raised up experienced no corruption. 38 Let it be known to you therefore, my brothers, that through this man forgiveness of sins is proclaimed to you; 39 by this Jesus[q] everyone who believes is set free from all those sins[r] from which you could not be freed by the law of Moses. 40 Beware, therefore, that what the prophets said does not happen to you:

41 'Look, you scoffers!
Be amazed and perish,
for in your days I am doing a work,
a work that you will never believe, even if someone tells you.' "

42 As Paul and Barnabas[s] were going out, the people urged them to speak about these things again the next sabbath. 43 When the meeting of the synagogue broke up, many Jews and devout converts to Judaism followed Paul and Barnabas, who spoke to them and urged them to continue in the grace of God.

44 The next sabbath almost the whole city gathered to hear the word of the Lord.[t] 45 But when the Jews saw the crowds, they were filled with jealousy; and blaspheming, they contradicted what was spoken by Paul. 46 Then both Paul and Barnabas spoke out boldly, saying, "It was necessary that the word of God should be spoken first to you. Since you reject it and judge yourselves to be unworthy of eternal life, we are now turning to the Gentiles. 47 For so the Lord has commanded us, saying,

'I have set you to be a light for the Gentiles,
so that you may bring salvation to the ends of the earth.' "

48 When the Gentiles heard this, they were glad and praised the word of the Lord; and as many as had been destined for eternal life became believers. 49 Thus the word of the Lord spread throughout the region. 50 But the Jews incited the devout women of high standing and the leading men of the city, and stirred up persecution against Paul and Barnabas, and drove them out of their region. 51 So they shook the dust off their feet in protest against them, and went to Iconium. 52 And the disciples were filled with joy and with the Holy Spirit.

**14** The same thing occurred in Iconium, where Paul and Barnabas[s] went into the Jewish synagogue and spoke in such a way that a great number of both Jews and Greeks became believers. 2 But the unbelieving Jews stirred up the Gentiles and poisoned their minds against the brothers. 3 So they remained for a long time, speaking boldly for the Lord, who testified to the word of his grace by granting signs and wonders to be done through them. 4 But the residents of the city were divided; some sided with the Jews, and some with the apostles. 5 And when an attempt was made by both Gentiles and Jews, with their rulers, to mistreat them and to

*p* Gk *fell asleep* *q* Gk *this* *r* Gk *all*
*s* Gk *they* *t* Other ancient authorities read *God*

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2.14–36. **33**: Ps 2.7. **34**: Isa 55.3. **35**: Ps 16.10. **38–39**: Paul's letters usually speak of justification, not *forgiveness of sins. Set free,* Greek "justified" or "acquitted." **41**: Hab 1.5.

**13.46**: In Corinth also (18.6) Paul went first to the Jews and then *to the Gentiles.* His churches usually included Jews. **47**: Isa 49.6. **51**: *They shook the dust off* (Lk 10.11) to show that their responsibility ended (18.6). *Iconium,* modern Konya, an important road-junction in the central plain.

**14.1–28**: **Ministry in the Iconium region and return.** Conclusion of the first missionary journey. **2**: 17.5, 13.

**14.6**: *Lystra,* a Roman colony, modern

stone them, [6]the apostles[u] learned of it and fled to Lystra and Derbe, cities of Lycaonia, and to the surrounding country; [7]and there they continued proclaiming the good news.

8 In Lystra there was a man sitting who could not use his feet and had never walked, for he had been crippled from birth. [9]He listened to Paul as he was speaking. And Paul, looking at him intently and seeing that he had faith to be healed, [10]said in a loud voice, "Stand upright on your feet." And the man[v] sprang up and began to walk. [11]When the crowds saw what Paul had done, they shouted in the Lycaonian language, "The gods have come down to us in human form!" [12]Barnabas they called Zeus, and Paul they called Hermes, because he was the chief speaker. [13]The priest of Zeus, whose temple was just outside the city,[w] brought oxen and garlands to the gates; he and the crowds wanted to offer sacrifice. [14]When the apostles Barnabas and Paul heard of it, they tore their clothes and rushed out into the crowd, shouting, [15]"Friends,[x] why are you doing this? We are mortals just like you, and we bring you good news, that you should turn from these worthless things to the living God, who made the heaven and the earth and the sea and all that is in them. [16]In past generations he allowed all the nations to follow their own ways; [17]yet he has not left himself without a witness in doing good—giving you rains from heaven and fruitful seasons, and filling you with food and your hearts with joy." [18]Even with these words, they scarcely restrained the crowds from offering sacrifice to them.

19 But Jews came there from Antioch and Iconium and won over the crowds. Then they stoned Paul and dragged him out of the city, supposing that he was dead. [20]But when the disciples surrounded him, he got up and went into the city. The next day he went on with Barnabas to Derbe.

21 After they had proclaimed the good news to that city and had made many disciples, they returned to Lystra, then on to Iconium and Antioch. [22]There they strengthened the souls of the disciples and encouraged them to continue in the faith, saying, "It is through many persecutions that we must enter the kingdom of God." [23]And after they had appointed elders for them in each church, with prayer and fasting they entrusted them to the Lord in whom they had come to believe.

24 Then they passed through Pisidia and came to Pamphylia. [25]When they had spoken the word in Perga, they went down to Attalia. [26]From there they sailed back to Antioch, where they had been commended to the grace of God for the work[y] that they had completed. [27]When they arrived, they called the church together and related all that God had done with them, and how he had opened a door of faith for the Gentiles. [28]And they stayed there with the disciples for some time.

15 Then certain individuals came down from Judea and were teaching the brothers, "Unless you are

*u* Gk *they* *v* Gk *he* *w* Or *The priest of Zeus-Outside-the-City* *x* Gk *Men*
*y* Or *committed in the grace of God to the work*

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Hatun-Serai, 25 miles southwest of Konya. *Derbe,* probably Kerti, a mound near Beydilli. **11–12**: According to a myth of this region, *Zeus* and *Hermes* visited Baucis and Philemon *in human form,* and rewarded their hospitality. Paul, *the chief speaker,* was hailed as the messenger of the gods (compare Gal 4.14), not the chief god. **14**: *Tore their clothes,* a sign of horror and dismay at what they looked upon as blasphemy. **15–17**: Compare 17.22–31. Paul, like Peter (10.26), rejects worship of himself.

**14.19**: Paul tells of receiving a stoning (2 Cor 11.25). **23**: In Acts, Paul's churches are ruled by *elders* (compare 20.17). The word is not used in letters attributed to Paul except in 1 Timothy and Titus. **25**: *Attalia,* the seaport of Perga. **26**: *Antioch,* their starting point, from which they had been absent about a year and a half.

**15.1–35: Controversy over admission of Gentiles.** The Jerusalem church guides developments on the mission field (8.14; 11.1–3). **1**: *Certain individuals,* not identified here or in Gal 2.4; 5.12. **2**: *Were appointed,*

circumcised according to the custom of Moses, you cannot be saved." 2And after Paul and Barnabas had no small dissension and debate with them, Paul and Barnabas and some of the others were appointed to go up to Jerusalem to discuss this question with the apostles and the elders. 3So they were sent on their way by the church, and as they passed through both Phoenicia and Samaria, they reported the conversion of the Gentiles, and brought great joy to all the believers.[z] 4When they came to Jerusalem, they were welcomed by the church and the apostles and the elders, and they reported all that God had done with them. 5But some believers who belonged to the sect of the Pharisees stood up and said, "It is necessary for them to be circumcised and ordered to keep the law of Moses."

6 The apostles and the elders met together to consider this matter. 7After there had been much debate, Peter stood up and said to them, "My brothers,[a] you know that in the early days God made a choice among you, that I should be the one through whom the Gentiles would hear the message of the good news and become believers. 8And God, who knows the human heart, testified to them by giving them the Holy Spirit, just as he did to us; 9and in cleansing their hearts by faith he has made no distinction between them and us. 10Now therefore why are you putting God to the test by placing on the neck of the disciples a yoke that neither our ancestors nor we have been able to bear? 11On the contrary, we believe that we will be saved through the grace of the Lord Jesus, just as they will."

12 The whole assembly kept silence, and listened to Barnabas and Paul as they told of all the signs and wonders that God had done through them among the Gentiles. 13After they finished speaking, James replied, "My brothers,[a] listen to me. 14Simeon has related how God first looked favorably on the Gentiles, to take from among them a people for his name. 15This agrees with the words of the prophets, as it is written,

16 'After this I will return,
and I will rebuild the dwelling of David, which has fallen;
from its ruins I will rebuild it,
and I will set it up,
17 so that all other peoples may seek the Lord—
even all the Gentiles over whom my name has been called.
Thus says the Lord, who has been making these things
18known from long ago.'[b]

19Therefore I have reached the decision that we should not trouble those Gentiles who are turning to God, 20but we should write to them to abstain only from things polluted by idols and from fornication and from whatever has been strangled[c] and from blood. 21For in every city, for generations past, Moses has had those who proclaim him, for he has been read aloud every sabbath in the synagogues."

22 Then the apostles and the elders, with the consent of the whole church,

*z* Gk *brothers* *a* Gk *Men, brothers* *b* Other ancient authorities read *things.* 18*Known to God from of old are all his works.'* *c* Other ancient authorities lack *and from whatever has been strangled*

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Paul says he went "by revelation" (Gal 2.2; see Acts 11.27–30 n.). *Apostles and . . . elders,* or presbyters, rule the Jerusalem church; see 6.1–7 n. **5**: The strict believers of v. 1 were probably *Pharisees* (see 11.2 n.). **7**: *In the early days,* compare 10.9–48. **10**: The *yoke* is that of the law (Mt 11.29–30; 23.4). **11**: *We will be saved through . . . grace,* Rom 3.24.

**15.13**: *James,* the brother of the Lord (see Gal 1.19 n.). **14**: *Simeon,* the Semitic form of Peter's given name. **16–18**: Am 9.11–12; Jer 12.15; Isa 45.21. **20**: *What has been strangled* may mean the same as *blood* (omitted by some manuscripts), i.e. meat not ritually butchered. *Polluted by idols,* i.e. food sacrificed to them. The rabbis taught that these, and *fornication,* had been forbidden to Noah's sons, therefore to the righteous of all nations.

**15.22**: *Paul* is told of the decree in 21.25 as though for the first time. He did not absolutely forbid food offered to idols (1 Cor 10.27–29) and he rejected other restrictions on food

decided to choose men from among their members[d] and to send them to Antioch with Paul and Barnabas. They sent Judas called Barsabbas, and Silas, leaders among the brothers, 23 with the following letter: "The brothers, both the apostles and the elders, to the believers[e] of Gentile origin in Antioch and Syria and Cilicia, greetings. 24 Since we have heard that certain persons who have gone out from us, though with no instructions from us, have said things to disturb you and have unsettled your minds,[f] 25 we have decided unanimously to choose representatives[g] and send them to you, along with our beloved Barnabas and Paul, 26 who have risked their lives for the sake of our Lord Jesus Christ. 27 We have therefore sent Judas and Silas, who themselves will tell you the same things by word of mouth. 28 For it has seemed good to the Holy Spirit and to us to impose on you no further burden than these essentials: 29 that you abstain from what has been sacrificed to idols and from blood and from what is strangled[h] and from fornication. If you keep yourselves from these, you will do well. Farewell."

30 So they were sent off and went down to Antioch. When they gathered the congregation together, they delivered the letter. 31 When its members[i] read it, they rejoiced at the exhortation. 32 Judas and Silas, who were themselves prophets, said much to encourage and strengthen the believers.[e] 33 After they had been there for some time, they were sent off in peace by the believers[e] to those who had sent them.[j] 35 But Paul and Barnabas remained in Antioch, and there, with many others, they taught and proclaimed the word of the Lord.

36 After some days Paul said to Barnabas, "Come, let us return and visit the believers[e] in every city where we proclaimed the word of the Lord and see how they are doing." 37 Barnabas wanted to take with them John called Mark. 38 But Paul decided not to take with them one who had deserted them in Pamphylia and had not accompanied them in the work. 39 The disagreement became so sharp that they parted company; Barnabas took Mark with him and sailed away to Cyprus. 40 But Paul chose Silas and set out, the believers[e] commending him to the grace of the Lord. 41 He went through Syria and Cilicia, strengthening the churches.

16 Paul[k] went on also to Derbe and to Lystra, where there was a disciple named Timothy, the son of a Jewish woman who was a believer; but his father was a Greek. 2 He was well spoken of by the believers[e] in Lystra and Iconium. 3 Paul wanted Timothy to accompany him; and he took him and had him circumcised because of the Jews who were in those places, for they all knew that his father was a Greek. 4 As they went from town to town, they delivered to them for observance the decisions that had been reached by the apostles and elders who were in Jerusalem. 5 So the churches were strengthened in the faith and increased in numbers daily.

6 They went through the region of Phrygia and Galatia, having been forbidden by the Holy Spirit to speak the word

*d* Gk *from among them* *e* Gk *brothers* *f* Other ancient authorities add *saying, 'You must be circumcised and keep the law,'* *g* Gk *men* *h* Other ancient authorities lack *and from what is strangled* *i* Gk *When they* *j* Other ancient authorities add verse 34, *But it seemed good to Silas to remain there* *k* Gk *He*

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(Gal 2.11–12; Col 2.21). *Silas* may be the Silvanus of 2 Cor 1.19; 1 Thess 1.1; 2 Thess 1.1.

**15.36–41: Departure on second missionary journey. 37–38:** *John called Mark . . . had deserted,* see 12.12 n.; 13.13. **39:** The *disagreement* may also have involved the eating together of Jews and Gentiles (see 10.28 n.; Gal 2.13).

**16.1–5: Timothy joins Paul.** If *Timothy,* being *the son of a Jewish woman,* was considered a Jew, Paul *had him circumcised* without inconsistency despite his rejection of the rite for Gentiles.

**16.6–10: Through Asia Minor to Troas.** Journey through the interior to the Aegean. **6:** *The region* is probably the country northwest of Iconium where both Phrygians and Gala-

in Asia. 7When they had come opposite Mysia, they attempted to go into Bithynia, but the Spirit of Jesus did not allow them; 8so, passing by Mysia, they went down to Troas. 9During the night Paul had a vision: there stood a man of Macedonia pleading with him and saying, "Come over to Macedonia and help us." 10When he had seen the vision, we immediately tried to cross over to Macedonia, being convinced that God had called us to proclaim the good news to them.

11 We set sail from Troas and took a straight course to Samothrace, the following day to Neapolis, 12and from there to Philippi, which is a leading city of the district[l] of Macedonia and a Roman colony. We remained in this city for some days. 13On the sabbath day we went outside the gate by the river, where we supposed there was a place of prayer; and we sat down and spoke to the women who had gathered there. 14A certain woman named Lydia, a worshiper of God, was listening to us; she was from the city of Thyatira and a dealer in purple cloth. The Lord opened her heart to listen eagerly to what was said by Paul. 15When she and her household were baptized, she urged us, saying, "If you have judged me to be faithful to the Lord, come and stay at my home." And she prevailed upon us.

16 One day, as we were going to the place of prayer, we met a slave-girl who had a spirit of divination and brought her owners a great deal of money by fortunetelling. 17While she followed Paul and us, she would cry out, "These men are slaves of the Most High God, who proclaim to you[m] a way of salvation." 18She kept doing this for many days. But Paul, very much annoyed, turned and said to the spirit, "I order you in the name of Jesus Christ to come out of her." And it came out that very hour.

19 But when her owners saw that their hope of making money was gone, they seized Paul and Silas and dragged them into the marketplace before the authorities. 20When they had brought them before the magistrates, they said, "These men are disturbing our city; they are Jews 21and are advocating customs that are not lawful for us as Romans to adopt or observe." 22The crowd joined in attacking them, and the magistrates had them stripped of their clothing and ordered them to be beaten with rods. 23After they had given them a severe flogging, they threw them into prison and ordered the jailer to keep them securely. 24Following these instructions, he put them in the innermost cell and fastened their feet in the stocks.

25 About midnight Paul and Silas were praying and singing hymns to God, and the prisoners were listening to them. 26Suddenly there was an earthquake, so violent that the foundations of the prison were shaken; and immediately all the doors were opened and everyone's

*l* Other authorities read *a city of the first district*
*m* Other ancient authorities read *to us*

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tians lived. *Asia,* the Roman province of Asia (in Asia Minor) included western Phrygia. **7**: *Opposite Mysia* (the region east of Troas) would be near Nacoleia, modern Seyitgazi. *Bithynia* was north of here. **9**: *Macedonia,* a Roman province in Europe including Philippi, Thessalonica, and Beroea.

**16.11–40**: **Paul and Silas in Philippi.** Paul enters Europe for the first time. *We,* here begins the first of the "we-passages" in Acts, which may suggest that the author joined the others at Troas. **11**: *Samothrace,* an island midway between Troas and *Neapolis,* the seaport of Philippi. **12**: *Philippi* was *a leading city,* but not the capital, *of Macedonia. A Roman colony* was often founded to provide land for veteran soldiers; as such it had special civic rights. **13**: *A place of prayer,* probably a synagogue. **14**: *Thyatira* (Rev 2.18–29), a city of Lydia, a country of Asia Minor. **17**: Pagans sometimes spoke of the God of Israel or the highest god of their pantheon as *the Most High God* (Num 24.16; Isa 14.14; Dan 3.26).

**16.20**: *Magistrates,* Greek "generals"; here probably praetors. **21**: *Not lawful,* because Jews were forbidden to make converts of *Romans.* **24**: *The stocks* tortured prisoners by forcing their legs apart. **27**: *Drew his sword,* a Roman jailor whose prisoner escaped was liable to forfeit his life.

chains were unfastened. 27When the jailer woke up and saw the prison doors wide open, he drew his sword and was about to kill himself, since he supposed that the prisoners had escaped. 28But Paul shouted in a loud voice, "Do not harm yourself, for we are all here." 29The jailer[n] called for lights, and rushing in, he fell down trembling before Paul and Silas. 30Then he brought them outside and said, "Sirs, what must I do to be saved?" 31They answered, "Believe on the Lord Jesus, and you will be saved, you and your household." 32They spoke the word of the Lord[o] to him and to all who were in his house. 33At the same hour of the night he took them and washed their wounds; then he and his entire family were baptized without delay. 34He brought them up into the house and set food before them; and he and his entire household rejoiced that he had become a believer in God.

35 When morning came, the magistrates sent the police, saying, "Let those men go." 36And the jailer reported the message to Paul, saying, "The magistrates sent word to let you go; therefore come out now and go in peace." 37But Paul replied, "They have beaten us in public, uncondemned, men who are Roman citizens, and have thrown us into prison; and now are they going to discharge us in secret? Certainly not! Let them come and take us out themselves." 38The police reported these words to the magistrates, and they were afraid when they heard that they were Roman citizens; 39so they came and apologized to them. And they took them out and asked them to leave the city. 40After leaving the prison they went to Lydia's home; and when they had seen and encouraged the brothers and sisters[p] there, they departed.

17 After Paul and Silas[q] had passed through Amphipolis and Apollonia, they came to Thessalonica, where there was a synagogue of the Jews. 2And Paul went in, as was his custom, and on three sabbath days argued with them from the scriptures, 3explaining and proving that it was necessary for the Messiah[r] to suffer and to rise from the dead, and saying, "This is the Messiah,[r] Jesus whom I am proclaiming to you." 4Some of them were persuaded and joined Paul and Silas, as did a great many of the devout Greeks and not a few of the leading women. 5But the Jews became jealous, and with the help of some ruffians in the marketplaces they formed a mob and set the city in an uproar. While they were searching for Paul and Silas to bring them out to the assembly, they attacked Jason's house. 6When they could not find them, they dragged Jason and some believers[p] before the city authorities,[s] shouting, "These people who have been turning the world upside down have come here also, 7and Jason has entertained them as guests. They are all acting contrary to the decrees of the emperor, saying that there is another king named Jesus." 8The people and the city officials were disturbed when they heard this, 9and after they had taken bail from Jason and the others, they let them go.

10 That very night the believers[p] sent Paul and Silas off to Beroea; and when they arrived, they went to the Jewish synagogue. 11These Jews were more receptive than those in Thessalonica, for they welcomed the message very eagerly and examined the scriptures every day to see whether these things were so.

*n* Gk *He* *o* Other ancient authorities read *word of God* *p* Gk *brothers* *q* Gk *they* *r* Or *the Christ* *s* Gk *politarchs*

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**16.35**: *Police,* lictors, whose symbol of office was a bundle of rods, sometimes bound around an ax (the fasces). **37–38**: By law *Roman citizens* were protected against scourging (yet see 2 Cor 11.25).

**17.1–15**: **From Thessalonica to Athens.** Paul founds churches in Thessalonica and Beroea. **1**: *Amphipolis and Apollonia* were on the Via Egnatia between Philippi and *Thessalonica,* capital of the province. **6–7**: *City authorities,* i.e. "politarchs," a Macedonian title. **9**: *Had taken bail from Jason,* i.e. had made him legally responsible for future good behavior.

**17.10**: *Beroea,* a city of Macedonia, fifty

12 Many of them therefore believed, including not a few Greek women and men of high standing. 13 But when the Jews of Thessalonica learned that the word of God had been proclaimed by Paul in Beroea as well, they came there too, to stir up and incite the crowds. 14 Then the believers[t] immediately sent Paul away to the coast, but Silas and Timothy remained behind. 15 Those who conducted Paul brought him as far as Athens; and after receiving instructions to have Silas and Timothy join him as soon as possible, they left him.

16 While Paul was waiting for them in Athens, he was deeply distressed to see that the city was full of idols. 17 So he argued in the synagogue with the Jews and the devout persons, and also in the marketplace[u] every day with those who happened to be there. 18 Also some Epicurean and Stoic philosophers debated with him. Some said, "What does this babbler want to say?" Others said, "He seems to be a proclaimer of foreign divinities." (This was because he was telling the good news about Jesus and the resurrection.) 19 So they took him and brought him to the Areopagus and asked him, "May we know what this new teaching is that you are presenting? 20 It sounds rather strange to us, so we would like to know what it means." 21 Now all the Athenians and the foreigners living there would spend their time in nothing but telling or hearing something new.

22 Then Paul stood in front of the Areopagus and said, "Athenians, I see how extremely religious you are in every way. 23 For as I went through the city and looked carefully at the objects of your worship, I found among them an altar with the inscription, 'To an unknown god.' What therefore you worship as unknown, this I proclaim to you. 24 The God who made the world and everything in it, he who is Lord of heaven and earth, does not live in shrines made by human hands, 25 nor is he served by human hands, as though he needed anything, since he himself gives to all mortals life and breath and all things. 26 From one ancestor[v] he made all nations to inhabit the whole earth, and he allotted the times of their existence and the boundaries of the places where they would live, 27 so that they would search for God[w] and perhaps grope for him and find him—though indeed he is not far from each one of us. 28 For 'In him we live and move and have our being'; as even some of your own poets have said,

'For we too are his offspring.'

29 Since we are God's offspring, we ought not to think that the deity is like gold, or silver, or stone, an image formed by the art and imagination of mortals. 30 While God has overlooked the times of human ignorance, now he commands all people everywhere to repent, 31 because he has fixed a day on which he will have the world judged in righteousness by a man whom he has appointed, and of this he has given assurance to all by raising him from the dead."

32 When they heard of the resurrec-

*t* Gk *brothers* *u* Or *civic center*; Gk *agora* *v* Gk *From one*; other ancient authorities read *From one blood* *w* Other ancient authorities read *the Lord*

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miles southwest of Thessalonica. **14**: *To the coast,* where he would take a ship to Athens (v. 15). **14–15**: *Timothy* must soon have joined Paul at Athens (1 Thess 3.2).

**17.16–34**: **Paul at Athens.** The apostle is portrayed as the first Christian philosopher, using Stoic and Jewish arguments. **17**: *The marketplace* or Agora has now been excavated. **18**: *Babbler,* literally "cock-sparrow," one who picks up scraps of learning. *Jesus and* Anastasis (= *resurrection*) were mistaken for two *foreign divinities*. **19**: Either the council of *the Areopagus,* or the hill itself, west of the Acropolis. **21**: *The Athenians* at this time were famous for their curiosity.

**17.22**: *Religious,* i.e. addicted to worship of gods. **23**: One who did not know which god to thank or propitiate might set up an altar *to an unknown god*. **26**: *From one ancestor,* Adam. **28**: The first quotation is sometimes attributed to Epimenides; the second is from the opening lines of the *Phaenomena* by Aratus, a Greek poet of Cilicia. He was a Stoic. **31**: *By a man,* i.e. Jesus. **32**: *Some scoffed,* as in 1 Cor

tion of the dead, some scoffed; but others said, "We will hear you again about this." 33 At that point Paul left them. 34 But some of them joined him and became believers, including Dionysius the Areopagite and a woman named Damaris, and others with them.

18 After this Paul[x] left Athens and went to Corinth. 2 There he found a Jew named Aquila, a native of Pontus, who had recently come from Italy with his wife Priscilla, because Claudius had ordered all Jews to leave Rome. Paul[y] went to see them, 3 and, because he was of the same trade, he stayed with them, and they worked together—by trade they were tentmakers. 4 Every sabbath he would argue in the synagogue and would try to convince Jews and Greeks.

5 When Silas and Timothy arrived from Macedonia, Paul was occupied with proclaiming the word,[z] testifying to the Jews that the Messiah[a] was Jesus. 6 When they opposed and reviled him, in protest he shook the dust from his clothes[b] and said to them, "Your blood be on your own heads! I am innocent. From now on I will go to the Gentiles." 7 Then he left the synagogue[c] and went to the house of a man named Titius[d] Justus, a worshiper of God; his house was next door to the synagogue. 8 Crispus, the official of the synagogue, became a believer in the Lord, together with all his household; and many of the Corinthians who heard Paul became believers and were baptized. 9 One night the Lord said to Paul in a vision, "Do not be afraid, but speak and do not be silent; 10 for I am with you, and no one will lay a hand on you to harm you, for there are many in this city who are my people." 11 He stayed there a year and six months, teaching the word of God among them.

12 But when Gallio was proconsul of Achaia, the Jews made a united attack on Paul and brought him before the tribunal. 13 They said, "This man is persuading people to worship God in ways that are contrary to the law." 14 Just as Paul was about to speak, Gallio said to the Jews, "If it were a matter of crime or serious villainy, I would be justified in accepting the complaint of you Jews; 15 but since it is a matter of questions about words and names and your own law, see to it yourselves; I do not wish to be a judge of these matters." 16 And he dismissed them from the tribunal. 17 Then all of them[e] seized Sosthenes, the official of the synagogue, and beat him in front of the tribunal. But Gallio paid no attention to any of these things.

18 After staying there for a considerable time, Paul said farewell to the believers[f] and sailed for Syria, accompanied by Priscilla and Aquila. At Cenchreae he had his hair cut, for he was under a vow. 19 When they reached Ephesus, he left them there, but first he himself went into the synagogue and had a discussion with the Jews. 20 When they asked him to stay longer, he declined;

*x* Gk *he* *y* Gk *He* *z* Gk *with the word* *a* Or *the Christ* *b* Gk *reviled him, he shook out his clothes* *c* Gk *left there* *d* Other ancient authorities read *Titus* *e* Other ancient authorities read *all the Greeks* *f* Gk *brothers*

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15.12, 35. **34**: *Dionysius the Areopagite,* a member of the Court of the Areopagus, the governing power of the city.

**18.1–17: Founding of the church in Corinth.** See 1 Cor chs 1–4 for Paul's own account. **2**: *Pontus,* a Roman province of Asia Minor. Claudius' edict expelling the Jews from Rome was issued probably in A.D. 49. *Priscilla,* the Prisca of 1 Cor 16.19. **3**: *Tentmakers,* the Greek word usually means "leather-workers." **8**: *Crispus,* one of the few Corinthians baptized personally by Paul (1 Cor 1.14).

**18.12**: L. Junius *Gallio,* brother of the philosopher Seneca, *proconsul of Achaia* about A.D. 51. The *tribunal* has been excavated. *The law,* the Jewish law. **17**: *Sosthenes* may be the one mentioned in 1 Cor 1.1.

**18.18–23: End of the second missionary journey and beginning of the third.** Paul returns to Antioch and goes back to Asia Minor. **18**: Paul *had his hair cut* as a temporary nazirite *vow* (21.24; Num 6.1–21). *Cenchreae,* the eastern port of Corinth. **22**: *Caesarea,* see 8.40 n. *Antioch,* see 11.19 n. **23**: *Galatia,* see 16.6 n. *The region of Galatia and Phrygia,*

21 but on taking leave of them, he said, "I[g] will return to you, if God wills." Then he set sail from Ephesus.

22 When he had landed at Caesarea, he went up to Jerusalem[h] and greeted the church, and then went down to Antioch. 23 After spending some time there he departed and went from place to place through the region of Galatia[i] and Phrygia, strengthening all the disciples.

24 Now there came to Ephesus a Jew named Apollos, a native of Alexandria. He was an eloquent man, well-versed in the scriptures. 25 He had been instructed in the Way of the Lord; and he spoke with burning enthusiasm and taught accurately the things concerning Jesus, though he knew only the baptism of John. 26 He began to speak boldly in the synagogue; but when Priscilla and Aquila heard him, they took him aside and explained the Way of God to him more accurately. 27 And when he wished to cross over to Achaia, the believers[j] encouraged him and wrote to the disciples to welcome him. On his arrival he greatly helped those who through grace had become believers, 28 for he powerfully refuted the Jews in public, showing by the scriptures that the Messiah[k] is Jesus.

19 While Apollos was in Corinth, Paul passed through the interior regions and came to Ephesus, where he found some disciples. 2 He said to them, "Did you receive the Holy Spirit when you became believers?" They replied, "No, we have not even heard that there is a Holy Spirit." 3 Then he said, "Into what then were you baptized?" They answered, "Into John's baptism." 4 Paul said, "John baptized with the baptism of repentance, telling the people to believe in the one who was to come after him, that is, in Jesus." 5 On hearing this, they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus. 6 When Paul had laid his hands on them, the Holy Spirit came upon them, and they spoke in tongues and prophesied— 7 altogether there were about twelve of them.

8 He entered the synagogue and for three months spoke out boldly, and argued persuasively about the kingdom of God. 9 When some stubbornly refused to believe and spoke evil of the Way before the congregation, he left them, taking the disciples with him, and argued daily in the lecture hall of Tyrannus.[l] 10 This continued for two years, so that all the residents of Asia, both Jews and Greeks, heard the word of the Lord.

11 God did extraordinary miracles through Paul, 12 so that when the handkerchiefs or aprons that had touched his skin were brought to the sick, their diseases left them, and the evil spirits came out of them. 13 Then some itinerant Jewish exorcists tried to use the name of the Lord Jesus over those who had evil spirits, saying, "I adjure you by the Jesus whom Paul proclaims." 14 Seven sons of a Jewish high priest named Sceva were

*g* Other ancient authorities read *I must at all costs keep the approaching festival in Jerusalem, but I*
*h* Gk *went up*
*i* Gk *the Galatian region*
*j* Gk *brothers*
*k* Or *the Christ*
*l* Other ancient authorities read *of a certain Tyrannus, from eleven o'clock in the morning to four in the afternoon*

see 16.6 n. Paul perhaps came near Pessinus and Gordium and then turned west.

**18.24–28: Apollos in Ephesus.** For his activity in Corinth see 1 Cor 1.12; 3.1–9, 21–23. **24:** An Alexandrian *well-versed in the scriptures* would probably interpret them allegorically. **25:** He knew something *concerning Jesus* but was ignorant of such Christian rites as baptism in Jesus' name (19.5).

**19.1–41: Paul's long ministry in Ephesus,** the capital of the Roman province of Asia. This period of more than two years (v. 10; compare 20.31) forms the background of 1 and 2 Corinthians. **1:** *The interior regions* of Asia Minor (18.23). *Disciples* elsewhere in Acts means Christians; these perhaps belonged to John the Baptist. **2:** All who read the Old Testament would know of *a Holy Spirit.* The reference may be to outward signs of the Spirit's presence. **5–6:** See 8.14–17 n. **9:** *The Way,* see 9.2 n. *Tyrannus,* head of a school of philosophical disputants. The hours mentioned in note *l* were during the heat of the day, when Tyrannus would not be using the hall. **10:** *Two years,* during which the seven churches of Asia would have been founded (see Rev 1.4 n.).

**19.12:** 5.15. **13:** Jewish and pagan sources

doing this. 15 But the evil spirit said to them in reply, "Jesus I know, and Paul I know; but who are you?" 16 Then the man with the evil spirit leaped on them, mastered them all, and so overpowered them that they fled out of the house naked and wounded. 17 When this became known to all residents of Ephesus, both Jews and Greeks, everyone was awestruck; and the name of the Lord Jesus was praised. 18 Also many of those who became believers confessed and disclosed their practices. 19 A number of those who practiced magic collected their books and burned them publicly; when the value of these books[m] was calculated, it was found to come to fifty thousand silver coins. 20 So the word of the Lord grew mightily and prevailed.

21 Now after these things had been accomplished, Paul resolved in the Spirit to go through Macedonia and Achaia, and then to go on to Jerusalem. He said, "After I have gone there, I must also see Rome." 22 So he sent two of his helpers, Timothy and Erastus, to Macedonia, while he himself stayed for some time longer in Asia.

23 About that time no little disturbance broke out concerning the Way. 24 A man named Demetrius, a silversmith who made silver shrines of Artemis, brought no little business to the artisans. 25 These he gathered together, with the workers of the same trade, and said, "Men, you know that we get our wealth from this business. 26 You also see and hear that not only in Ephesus but in almost the whole of Asia this Paul has persuaded and drawn away a considerable number of people by saying that gods made with hands are not gods. 27 And there is danger not only that this trade of ours may come into disrepute but also that the temple of the great goddess Artemis will be scorned, and she will be deprived of her majesty that brought all Asia and the world to worship her."

28 When they heard this, they were enraged and shouted, "Great is Artemis of the Ephesians!" 29 The city was filled with the confusion; and people[n] rushed together to the theater, dragging with them Gaius and Aristarchus, Macedonians who were Paul's travel companions. 30 Paul wished to go into the crowd, but the disciples would not let him; 31 even some officials of the province of Asia,[o] who were friendly to him, sent him a message urging him not to venture into the theater. 32 Meanwhile, some were shouting one thing, some another; for the assembly was in confusion, and most of them did not know why they had come together. 33 Some of the crowd gave instructions to Alexander, whom the Jews had pushed forward. And Alexander motioned for silence and tried to make a defense before the people. 34 But when they recognized that he was a Jew, for about two hours all of them shouted in unison, "Great is Artemis of the Ephesians!" 35 But when the town clerk had quieted the crowd, he said, "Citizens of Ephesus, who is there that does not know that the city of the Ephesians is the temple keeper of the great Artemis and of the statue that fell from heaven?[p] 36 Since these things cannot be denied, you ought to be quiet and do nothing

*m* Gk *them* *n* Gk *they* *o* Gk *some of the Asiarchs* *p* Meaning of Gk uncertain

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show that non-Christians used *the name of the Lord Jesus* in exorcism (Mk 9.38–41). **19**: Ephesus was such a noted center of *magic* that magical books were often called "Ephesian Scripts."

**19.21**: Rom 1.13–15; 15.22–25. **22**: *Erastus,* Rom 16.23; 2 Tim 4.20; an inscription from Corinth mentions a Roman official (an aedile) by this name. **24**: *Shrines,* perhaps miniature temples or statues. **27**: *Artemis,* Ephesus' chief divinity; her *temple* was one of the seven wonders of the ancient world.

**19.31**: *Asiarchs* (in note *o*), an honorific title given civic benefactors in the Roman province of Asia. **35**: Cities and peoples were sometimes honored with the title of *temple keeper* to a god. *The statue that fell from heaven,* apparently a meteoric stone having some resemblance to a woman.

rash. 37 You have brought these men here who are neither temple robbers nor blasphemers of our[q] goddess. 38 If therefore Demetrius and the artisans with him have a complaint against anyone, the courts are open, and there are proconsuls; let them bring charges there against one another. 39 If there is anything further[r] you want to know, it must be settled in the regular assembly. 40 For we are in danger of being charged with rioting today, since there is no cause that we can give to justify this commotion." 41 When he had said this, he dismissed the assembly.

20 After the uproar had ceased, Paul sent for the disciples; and after encouraging them and saying farewell, he left for Macedonia. 2 When he had gone through those regions and had given the believers[s] much encouragement, he came to Greece, 3 where he stayed for three months. He was about to set sail for Syria when a plot was made against him by the Jews, and so he decided to return through Macedonia. 4 He was accompanied by Sopater son of Pyrrhus from Beroea, by Aristarchus and Secundus from Thessalonica, by Gaius from Derbe, and by Timothy, as well as by Tychicus and Trophimus from Asia. 5 They went ahead and were waiting for us in Troas; 6 but we sailed from Philippi after the days of Unleavened Bread, and in five days we joined them in Troas, where we stayed for seven days.

7 On the first day of the week, when we met to break bread, Paul was holding a discussion with them; since he intended to leave the next day, he continued speaking until midnight. 8 There were many lamps in the room upstairs where we were meeting. 9 A young man named Eutychus, who was sitting in the window, began to sink off into a deep sleep while Paul talked still longer. Overcome by sleep, he fell to the ground three floors below and was picked up dead. 10 But Paul went down, and bending over him took him in his arms, and said, "Do not be alarmed, for his life is in him." 11 Then Paul went upstairs, and after he had broken bread and eaten, he continued to converse with them until dawn; then he left. 12 Meanwhile they had taken the boy away alive and were not a little comforted.

13 We went ahead to the ship and set sail for Assos, intending to take Paul on board there; for he had made this arrangement, intending to go by land himself. 14 When he met us in Assos, we took him on board and went to Mitylene. 15 We sailed from there, and on the following day we arrived opposite Chios. The next day we touched at Samos, and[t] the day after that we came to Miletus. 16 For Paul had decided to sail past Ephesus, so that he might not have to spend time in Asia; he was eager to be in Jerusalem, if possible, on the day of Pentecost.

17 From Miletus he sent a message to Ephesus, asking the elders of the church to meet him. 18 When they came to him, he said to them:

"You yourselves know how I lived among you the entire time from the first day that I set foot in Asia, 19 serving the

*q* Other ancient authorities read *your* *r* Other ancient authorities read *about other matters* *s* Gk *given them* *t* Other ancient authorities add *after remaining at Trogyllium*

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**20.1–6: The last visit to Greece. 2:** *Through those regions,* revisiting the churches of Philippi, Thessalonica, and Beroea. **3:** *Three months,* at Corinth. **4:** His companions may be carrying relief money to Jerusalem (24.17; 1 Cor 16.1–4; 2 Cor 8.23). *Sopater,* perhaps the Sosipater of Rom 16.21. **5:** The "we-passages" resume here at Philippi, the city where the previous passage ended (16.17). **6:** *Days of Unleavened Bread,* 12.3; see Mk 14.1 n.

**20.7–21.14: Paul's return to Palestine.** This concludes the third missionary journey.

**20.7:** *The first day of the week,* Sunday. *Break bread,* see 2.42 n. **9:** *Sitting in the window,* because of the smoke and fumes of the *many lamps* (v. 8). Windows were unglazed. **14:** *Mitylene,* capital city of the island of Lesbos. **15:** *Chios,* an island south of Lesbos. *Samos,* an island southwest of Chios.

**20.17:** *Miletus,* modern Balat, then an important port at the mouth of the Maeander.

Lord with all humility and with tears, enduring the trials that came to me through the plots of the Jews. 20 I did not shrink from doing anything helpful, proclaiming the message to you and teaching you publicly and from house to house, 21 as I testified to both Jews and Greeks about repentance toward God and faith toward our Lord Jesus. 22 And now, as a captive to the Spirit,[u] I am on my way to Jerusalem, not knowing what will happen to me there, 23 except that the Holy Spirit testifies to me in every city that imprisonment and persecutions are waiting for me. 24 But I do not count my life of any value to myself, if only I may finish my course and the ministry that I received from the Lord Jesus, to testify to the good news of God's grace.

25 "And now I know that none of you, among whom I have gone about proclaiming the kingdom, will ever see my face again. 26 Therefore I declare to you this day that I am not responsible for the blood of any of you, 27 for I did not shrink from declaring to you the whole purpose of God. 28 Keep watch over yourselves and over all the flock, of which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers, to shepherd the church of God[v] that he obtained with the blood of his own Son.[w] 29 I know that after I have gone, savage wolves will come in among you, not sparing the flock. 30 Some even from your own group will come distorting the truth in order to entice the disciples to follow them. 31 Therefore be alert, remembering that for three years I did not cease night or day to warn everyone with tears. 32 And now I commend you to God and to the message of his grace, a message that is able to build you up and to give you the inheritance among all who are sanctified. 33 I coveted no one's silver or gold or clothing. 34 You know for yourselves that I worked with my own hands to support myself and my companions. 35 In all this I have given you an example that by such work we must support the weak, remembering the words of the Lord Jesus, for he himself said, 'It is more blessed to give than to receive.' "

36 When he had finished speaking, he knelt down with them all and prayed. 37 There was much weeping among them all; they embraced Paul and kissed him, 38 grieving especially because of what he had said, that they would not see him again. Then they brought him to the ship.

21 When we had parted from them and set sail, we came by a straight course to Cos, and the next day to Rhodes, and from there to Patara.[x] 2 When we found a ship bound for Phoenicia, we went on board and set sail. 3 We came in sight of Cyprus; and leaving it on our left, we sailed to Syria and landed at Tyre, because the ship was to unload its cargo there. 4 We looked up the disciples and stayed there for seven days. Through the Spirit they told Paul not to go on to Jerusalem. 5 When our days there were ended, we left and proceeded on our journey; and all of them, with wives and children, escorted us outside the city. There we knelt down on the beach and prayed 6 and said farewell to one another. Then we went on board the ship, and they returned home.

7 When we had finished[y] the voyage from Tyre, we arrived at Ptolemais; and we greeted the believers[z] and stayed with them for one day. 8 The next day we left and came to Caesarea; and we went into the house of Philip the evangelist, one of the seven, and stayed with him.

*u* Or *And now, bound in the spirit* *v* Other ancient authorities read *of the Lord* *w* Or *with his own blood*; Gk *with the blood of his Own* *x* Other ancient authorities add *and Myra* *y* Or *continued* *z* Gk *brothers*

**24–25**: *Finish my course . . . testify*, a premonition of martyrdom (2 Tim 4.6).

**20.28**: *Overseers*, Greek "bishops" (compare Titus 1.5–7), the elders of v. 17. As in 1 Pet 2.25, the bishop is a shepherd. **29–30**: Mt 7.15; Mk 13.22. **34**: 1 Cor 9.1–18; 2 Cor 11.7–11. **35**: A saying of Jesus not found in the gospels.

**21.7**: *Ptolemais*, modern Acre, near Haifa. **8**: *Caesarea*, see 8.40 n. *Philip the evangelist*,

9 He had four unmarried daughters[a] who had the gift of prophecy. 10 While we were staying there for several days, a prophet named Agabus came down from Judea. 11 He came to us and took Paul's belt, bound his own feet and hands with it, and said, "Thus says the Holy Spirit, 'This is the way the Jews in Jerusalem will bind the man who owns this belt and will hand him over to the Gentiles.'" 12 When we heard this, we and the people there urged him not to go up to Jerusalem. 13 Then Paul answered, "What are you doing, weeping and breaking my heart? For I am ready not only to be bound but even to die in Jerusalem for the name of the Lord Jesus." 14 Since he would not be persuaded, we remained silent except to say, "The Lord's will be done."

15 After these days we got ready and started to go up to Jerusalem. 16 Some of the disciples from Caesarea also came along and brought us to the house of Mnason of Cyprus, an early disciple, with whom we were to stay.

17 When we arrived in Jerusalem, the brothers welcomed us warmly. 18 The next day Paul went with us to visit James; and all the elders were present. 19 After greeting them, he related one by one the things that God had done among the Gentiles through his ministry. 20 When they heard it, they praised God. Then they said to him, "You see, brother, how many thousands of believers there are among the Jews, and they are all zealous for the law. 21 They have been told about you that you teach all the Jews living among the Gentiles to forsake Moses, and that you tell them not to circumcise their children or observe the customs. 22 What then is to be done? They will certainly hear that you have come. 23 So do what we tell you. We have four men who are under a vow. 24 Join these men, go through the rite of purification with them, and pay for the shaving of their heads. Thus all will know that there is nothing in what they have been told about you, but that you yourself observe and guard the law. 25 But as for the Gentiles who have become believers, we have sent a letter with our judgment that they should abstain from what has been sacrificed to idols and from blood and from what is strangled[b] and from fornication." 26 Then Paul took the men, and the next day, having purified himself, he entered the temple with them, making public the completion of the days of purification when the sacrifice would be made for each of them.

27 When the seven days were almost completed, the Jews from Asia, who had seen him in the temple, stirred up the whole crowd. They seized him, 28 shouting, "Fellow Israelites, help! This is the man who is teaching everyone everywhere against our people, our law, and this place; more than that, he has actually brought Greeks into the temple and has defiled this holy place." 29 For they had previously seen Trophimus the Ephesian with him in the city, and they supposed that Paul had brought him into the temple. 30 Then all the city was aroused, and the people rushed together. They seized Paul and dragged him out of the temple, and immediately the doors were shut.

*a* Gk *four daughters, virgins,* *b* Other ancient authorities lack *and from what is strangled*

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though not an apostle, did similar work. *One of the seven,* see 6.1–7 n. **10–11**: *Agabus* (11.28), like Old Testament prophets (Isa 20.2–6), performed a symbolic act.

**21.15–26**: **Paul's conformity to Judaism.** He takes a vow in order to allay suspicions. **15**: *James,* see 15.11 n. **20**: On Jewish Christians who were *zealous for the law,* see 11.2; 15.5; and the Introduction to Galatians. **21**: The charge was untrue (16.3; 1 Cor 9.20; 10.32). **23–24**: The temporary nazirite *vow* was a later development out of Num 6.1–21. **25**: He is told of the decree as though he had not heard of it (see 15.22 n.).

**21.27–22.29**: **Paul's arrest and defense.** Seized after a disturbance in the temple, Paul tells of his conversion.

**21.28**: It was a capital offense to bring *Greeks into the temple;* an inscription stating this has been discovered. **29**: *Trophimus,* 20.4;

31 While they were trying to kill him,
word came to the tribune of the cohort
that all Jerusalem was in an uproar. 32 Im-
mediately he took soldiers and centurions and ran down to them. When they saw the tribune and the soldiers, they stopped beating Paul. 33 Then the tribune came, arrested him, and ordered him to be bound with two chains; he inquired who he was and what he had done. 34 Some in the crowd shouted one thing, some another; and as he could not learn the facts because of the uproar, he ordered him to be brought into the barracks. 35 When Paul[c] came to the steps, the violence of the mob was so great that he had to be carried by the soldiers. 36 The crowd that followed kept shouting, "Away with him!"

37 Just as Paul was about to be brought into the barracks, he said to the tribune, "May I say something to you?" The tribune[d] replied, "Do you know Greek? 38 Then you are not the Egyptian who recently stirred up a revolt and led the four thousand assassins out into the wilderness?" 39 Paul replied, "I am a Jew, from Tarsus in Cilicia, a citizen of an important city; I beg you, let me speak to the people." 40 When he had given him permission, Paul stood on the steps and motioned to the people for silence; and when there was a great hush, he addressed them in the Hebrew[e] language, saying:

**22** "Brothers and fathers, listen to the defense that I now make before you."

2 When they heard him addressing them in Hebrew,[e] they became even more quiet. Then he said:

3 "I am a Jew, born in Tarsus in Cilicia, but brought up in this city at the feet of Gamaliel, educated strictly according to our ancestral law, being zealous for God, just as all of you are today. 4 I persecuted this Way up to the point of death by binding both men and women and putting them in prison, 5 as the high priest and the whole council of elders can testify about me. From them I also received letters to the brothers in Damascus, and I went there in order to bind those who were there and to bring them back to Jerusalem for punishment.

6 "While I was on my way and approaching Damascus, about noon a great light from heaven suddenly shone about me. 7 I fell to the ground and heard a voice saying to me, 'Saul, Saul, why are you persecuting me?' 8 I answered, 'Who are you, Lord?' Then he said to me, 'I am Jesus of Nazareth[f] whom you are persecuting.' 9 Now those who were with me saw the light but did not hear the voice of the one who was speaking to me. 10 I asked, 'What am I to do, Lord?' The Lord said to me, 'Get up and go to Damascus; there you will be told everything that has been assigned to you to do.' 11 Since I could not see because of the brightness of that light, those who were with me took my hand and led me to Damascus.

12 "A certain Ananias, who was a devout man according to the law and well spoken of by all the Jews living there, 13 came to me; and standing beside me, he said, 'Brother Saul, regain your sight!' In that very hour I regained my sight and saw him. 14 Then he said, 'The God of our ancestors has chosen you to know his will, to see the Righteous One and to hear his own voice; 15 for you will be his witness to all the world of what you have seen and heard. 16 And now why do you delay? Get up, be baptized, and have

*c* Gk *he* *d* Gk *He* *e* That is, *Aramaic*
*f* Gk *the Nazorean*

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2 Tim 4.20. **31**: A military *tribune* commanded a *cohort;* this would have been stationed at Fort Antonia, which had access to the temple courtyard. **33**: Paul's case came into the hands of Roman, not Jewish, authorities. **38**: Concerning *the Egyptian,* a pseudo-messiah who, with several thousand followers, had planned to enter Jerusalem and overpower the Roman garrison, see Josephus, *War* ii.13.5.

**22.3**: *Brought up,* educated. *Gamaliel,* see 5.34 n. **4–21**: In 9.7 the companions heard the voice but saw no one; otherwise the account is similar to 9.1–18.

your sins washed away, calling on his name.'

17 "After I had returned to Jerusalem and while I was praying in the temple, I fell into a trance 18and saw Jesus[g] saying to me, 'Hurry and get out of Jerusalem quickly, because they will not accept your testimony about me.' 19And I said, 'Lord, they themselves know that in every synagogue I imprisoned and beat those who believed in you. 20And while the blood of your witness Stephen was shed, I myself was standing by, approving and keeping the coats of those who killed him.' 21Then he said to me, 'Go, for I will send you far away to the Gentiles.' "

22 Up to this point they listened to him, but then they shouted, "Away with such a fellow from the earth! For he should not be allowed to live." 23And while they were shouting, throwing off their cloaks, and tossing dust into the air, 24the tribune directed that he was to be brought into the barracks, and ordered him to be examined by flogging, to find out the reason for this outcry against him. 25But when they had tied him up with thongs,[h] Paul said to the centurion who was standing by, "Is it legal for you to flog a Roman citizen who is uncondemned?" 26When the centurion heard that, he went to the tribune and said to him, "What are you about to do? This man is a Roman citizen." 27The tribune came and asked Paul,[g] "Tell me, are you a Roman citizen?" And he said, "Yes." 28The tribune answered, "It cost me a large sum of money to get my citizenship." Paul said, "But I was born a citizen." 29Immediately those who were about to examine him drew back from him; and the tribune also was afraid, for he realized that Paul was a Roman citizen and that he had bound him.

30 Since he wanted to find out what Paul[i] was being accused of by the Jews, the next day he released him and ordered the chief priests and the entire council to meet. He brought Paul down and had him stand before them.

**23** While Paul was looking intently at the council he said, "Brothers,[j] up to this day I have lived my life with a clear conscience before God." 2Then the high priest Ananias ordered those standing near him to strike him on the mouth. 3At this Paul said to him, "God will strike you, you whitewashed wall! Are you sitting there to judge me according to the law, and yet in violation of the law you order me to be struck?" 4Those standing nearby said, "Do you dare to insult God's high priest?" 5And Paul said, "I did not realize, brothers, that he was high priest; for it is written, 'You shall not speak evil of a leader of your people.' "

6 When Paul noticed that some were Sadducees and others were Pharisees, he called out in the council, "Brothers, I am a Pharisee, a son of Pharisees. I am on trial concerning the hope of the resurrection[k] of the dead." 7When he said this, a dissension began between the Pharisees and the Sadducees, and the assembly was divided. 8(The Sadducees say that there is no resurrection, or angel, or spirit; but the Pharisees acknowledge all three.) 9Then a great clamor arose, and certain

*g* Gk *him* *h* Or *up for the lashes* *i* Gk *he* *j* Gk *Men, brothers* *k* Gk *concerning hope and resurrection*

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**22.24**: The *flogging* was to extract evidence, not for punishment. **25**: *A Roman citizen,* still uncondemned, was protected from scourging; see 16.37–38 n. **28**: In Claudius' reign *citizenship* was often purchased for *a large sum.*

**22.30–23.10: Paul before the Sanhedrin;** the tribune brings him before it to get evidence, not to try him.

**23.2**: *Ananias, high priest* in the reigns of Claudius and Nero, was assassinated about A.D. 66. **3**: *Whitewashed wall* is obscure; perhaps a tomb (compare Mt 23.27), which is unclean. *In violation to the law,* because Paul had not yet been allowed to speak in his own behalf (Jn 7.51). **5**: Quoted from Ex 22.28. **6**: *Paul* claims to be a *Pharisee* (26.5; Phil 3.5). For his *hope* of the *resurrection* see 1 Cor ch 15; Phil 3.11. **8**: *Sadducees* denied the *resurrection,* see Mt 22.23 n.

scribes of the Pharisees' group stood up and contended, "We find nothing wrong with this man. What if a spirit or an angel has spoken to him?" 10 When the dissension became violent, the tribune, fearing that they would tear Paul to pieces, ordered the soldiers to go down, take him by force, and bring him into the barracks.

11 That night the Lord stood near him and said, "Keep up your courage! For just as you have testified for me in Jerusalem, so you must bear witness also in Rome."

12 In the morning the Jews joined in a conspiracy and bound themselves by an oath neither to eat nor drink until they had killed Paul. 13 There were more than forty who joined in this conspiracy. 14 They went to the chief priests and elders and said, "We have strictly bound ourselves by an oath to taste no food until we have killed Paul. 15 Now then, you and the council must notify the tribune to bring him down to you, on the pretext that you want to make a more thorough examination of his case. And we are ready to do away with him before he arrives."

16 Now the son of Paul's sister heard about the ambush; so he went and gained entrance to the barracks and told Paul. 17 Paul called one of the centurions and said, "Take this young man to the tribune, for he has something to report to him." 18 So he took him, brought him to the tribune, and said, "The prisoner Paul called me and asked me to bring this young man to you; he has something to tell you." 19 The tribune took him by the hand, drew him aside privately, and asked, "What is it that you have to report to me?" 20 He answered, "The Jews have agreed to ask you to bring Paul down to the council tomorrow, as though they were going to inquire more thoroughly into his case. 21 But do not be persuaded by them, for more than forty of their men are lying in ambush for him. They have bound themselves by an oath neither to eat nor drink until they kill him. They are ready now and are waiting for your consent." 22 So the tribune dismissed the young man, ordering him, "Tell no one that you have informed me of this."

23 Then he summoned two of the centurions and said, "Get ready to leave by nine o'clock tonight for Caesarea with two hundred soldiers, seventy horsemen, and two hundred spearmen. 24 Also provide mounts for Paul to ride, and take him safely to Felix the governor." 25 He wrote a letter to this effect:

26 "Claudius Lysias to his Excellency the governor Felix, greetings. 27 This man was seized by the Jews and was about to be killed by them, but when I had learned that he was a Roman citizen, I came with the guard and rescued him. 28 Since I wanted to know the charge for which they accused him, I had him brought to their council. 29 I found that he was accused concerning questions of their law, but was charged with nothing deserving death or imprisonment. 30 When I was informed that there would be a plot against the man, I sent him to you at once, ordering his accusers also to state before you what they have against him.[1]"

31 So the soldiers, according to their instructions, took Paul and brought him during the night to Antipatris. 32 The next day they let the horsemen go on with him, while they returned to the barracks. 33 When they came to Caesarea and delivered the letter to the governor, they presented Paul also before him. 34 On reading the letter, he asked what province he belonged to, and when he learned that he was from Cilicia, 35 he said, "I will

*1* Other ancient authorities add *Farewell*

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**23.11–35: Paul is sent to Caesarea,** the seat of the Roman governor.

**23.23**: The number of soldiers is surprising. The Greek word translated *spearmen* is obscure; it may mean "bowmen" or "bodyguards." **24**: Antonius *Felix,* procurator of Judea (A.D. 52–58), brother of a favorite freedman of Claudius. **26**: *His Excellency,* the

give you a hearing when your accusers arrive." Then he ordered that he be kept under guard in Herod's headquarters.[m]

24 Five days later the high priest Ananias came down with some elders and an attorney, a certain Tertullus, and they reported their case against Paul to the governor. 2When Paul[n] had been summoned, Tertullus began to accuse him, saying:

"Your Excellency,[o] because of you we have long enjoyed peace, and reforms have been made for this people because of your foresight. 3We welcome this in every way and everywhere with utmost gratitude. 4But, to detain you no further, I beg you to hear us briefly with your customary graciousness. 5We have, in fact, found this man a pestilent fellow, an agitator among all the Jews throughout the world, and a ringleader of the sect of the Nazarenes.[p] 6He even tried to profane the temple, and so we seized him.[q] 8By examining him yourself you will be able to learn from him concerning everything of which we accuse him."

9 The Jews also joined in the charge by asserting that all this was true.

10 When the governor motioned to him to speak, Paul replied:

"I cheerfully make my defense, knowing that for many years you have been a judge over this nation. 11As you can find out, it is not more than twelve days since I went up to worship in Jerusalem. 12They did not find me disputing with anyone in the temple or stirring up a crowd either in the synagogues or throughout the city. 13Neither can they prove to you the charge that they now bring against me. 14But this I admit to you, that according to the Way, which they call a sect, I worship the God of our ancestors, believing everything laid down according to the law or written in the prophets. 15I have a hope in God—a hope that they themselves also accept—that there will be a resurrection of both[r] the righteous and the unrighteous. 16Therefore I do my best always to have a clear conscience toward God and all people. 17Now after some years I came to bring alms to my nation and to offer sacrifices. 18While I was doing this, they found me in the temple, completing the rite of purification, without any crowd or disturbance. 19But there were some Jews from Asia—they ought to be here before you to make an accusation, if they have anything against me. 20Or let these men here tell what crime they had found when I stood before the council, 21unless it was this one sentence that I called out while standing before them, 'It is about the resurrection of the dead that I am on trial before you today.' "

22 But Felix, who was rather well informed about the Way, adjourned the hearing with the comment, "When Lysias the tribune comes down, I will decide your case." 23Then he ordered the centurion to keep him in custody, but to let him have some liberty and not to prevent any of his friends from taking care of his needs.

24 Some days later when Felix came with his wife Drusilla, who was Jewish, he sent for Paul and heard him speak concerning faith in Christ Jesus. 25And as he discussed justice, self-control, and the

*m* Gk *praetorium* *n* Gk *he* *o* Gk lacks *Your Excellency* *p* Gk *Nazoreans* *q* Other ancient authorities add *and we would have judged him according to our law.* 7*But the chief captain Lysias came and with great violence took him out of our hands,* 8*commanding his accusers to come before you.* *r* Other ancient authorities read *of the dead, both of*

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word used in addressing Theophilus (Lk 1.3). **31**: *Antipatris,* a city on the main road to Caesarea.

**24.1–27**: **Paul before Felix.** The apostle denies the charges, and the governor postpones the case. **5**: *Sect,* the word is usually used in a bad sense (24.14; 28.22). *Nazarenes,* Christians as followers of Jesus of Nazareth (2.22); a meaning not found elsewhere in early Christian literature.

**24.14**: *The Way,* see 9.2 n. **17**: *To bring alms,* see 20.1–6 n. **24**: *Drusilla* was sister of Herod Agrippa II and Bernice (25.13); noted for her beauty, she had left her husband Azizus king of Emessa to marry Felix. **25–26**: The behavior of *Felix* is like that of Herod Antipas (Mk

coming judgment, Felix became frightened and said, "Go away for the present; when I have an opportunity, I will send for you." 26At the same time he hoped that money would be given him by Paul, and for that reason he used to send for him very often and converse with him.

27 After two years had passed, Felix was succeeded by Porcius Festus; and since he wanted to grant the Jews a favor, Felix left Paul in prison.

25 Three days after Festus had arrived in the province, he went up from Caesarea to Jerusalem 2where the chief priests and the leaders of the Jews gave him a report against Paul. They appealed to him 3and requested, as a favor to them against Paul,[s] to have him transferred to Jerusalem. They were, in fact, planning an ambush to kill him along the way. 4Festus replied that Paul was being kept at Caesarea, and that he himself intended to go there shortly. 5"So," he said, "let those of you who have the authority come down with me, and if there is anything wrong about the man, let them accuse him."

6 After he had stayed among them not more than eight or ten days, he went down to Caesarea; the next day he took his seat on the tribunal and ordered Paul to be brought. 7When he arrived, the Jews who had gone down from Jerusalem surrounded him, bringing many serious charges against him, which they could not prove. 8Paul said in his defense, "I have in no way committed an offense against the law of the Jews, or against the temple, or against the emperor." 9But Festus, wishing to do the Jews a favor, asked Paul, "Do you wish to go up to Jerusalem and be tried there before me on these charges?" 10Paul said, "I am appealing to the emperor's tribunal; this is where I should be tried. I have done no wrong to the Jews, as you very well know. 11Now if I am in the wrong and have committed something for which I deserve to die, I am not trying to escape death; but if there is nothing to their charges against me, no one can turn me over to them. I appeal to the emperor." 12Then Festus, after he had conferred with his council, replied, "You have appealed to the emperor; to the emperor you will go."

13 After several days had passed, King Agrippa and Bernice arrived at Caesarea to welcome Festus. 14Since they were staying there several days, Festus laid Paul's case before the king, saying, "There is a man here who was left in prison by Felix. 15When I was in Jerusalem, the chief priests and the elders of the Jews informed me about him and asked for a sentence against him. 16I told them that it was not the custom of the Romans to hand over anyone before the accused had met the accusers face to face and had been given an opportunity to make a defense against the charge. 17So when they met here, I lost no time, but on the next day took my seat on the tribunal and ordered the man to be brought. 18When the accusers stood up, they did not charge him with any of the crimes[t] that I was expecting. 19Instead they had certain points of disagreement with him about their own religion and about a certain Jesus, who had died, but whom Paul asserted to be alive. 20Since I was at a loss how to investigate these questions, I asked whether he wished to go to Jerusalem and be tried there on

*s* Gk *him* *t* Other ancient authorities read *with anything*

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6.20). Compare 18.14–17. **27:** *After two years had passed,* either from Felix's appointment or Paul's arrest. *Porcius Festus,* appointed procurator of Judea by Nero in A.D. 60.

**25.1–12: Appeal to the emperor.** Paul insists on a Roman trial and Festus sends him to Rome. **9–10:** Paul fears being turned over to a Jewish court; therefore he insists on *the emperor's tribunal,* i.e. trial according to Roman law. **11–12:** Paul's safety was in his Roman citizenship (22.27) with its right of appeal.

**25.13–26.32: Paul's defense before Agrippa.** Paul's speech is intended to present a model defense of Christianity.

**25.13:** *King Agrippa,* Herod Agrippa II,

these charges.[u] 21 But when Paul had appealed to be kept in custody for the decision of his Imperial Majesty, I ordered him to be held until I could send him to the emperor." 22 Agrippa said to Festus, "I would like to hear the man myself." "Tomorrow," he said, "you will hear him."

23 So on the next day Agrippa and Bernice came with great pomp, and they entered the audience hall with the military tribunes and the prominent men of the city. Then Festus gave the order and Paul was brought in. 24 And Festus said, "King Agrippa and all here present with us, you see this man about whom the whole Jewish community petitioned me, both in Jerusalem and here, shouting that he ought not to live any longer. 25 But I found that he had done nothing deserving death; and when he appealed to his Imperial Majesty, I decided to send him. 26 But I have nothing definite to write to our sovereign about him. Therefore I have brought him before all of you, and especially before you, King Agrippa, so that, after we have examined him, I may have something to write— 27 for it seems to me unreasonable to send a prisoner without indicating the charges against him."

26 Agrippa said to Paul, "You have permission to speak for yourself." Then Paul stretched out his hand and began to defend himself:

2 "I consider myself fortunate that it is before you, King Agrippa, I am to make my defense today against all the accusations of the Jews, 3 because you are especially familiar with all the customs and controversies of the Jews; therefore I beg of you to listen to me patiently.

4 "All the Jews know my way of life from my youth, a life spent from the beginning among my own people and in Jerusalem. 5 They have known for a long time, if they are willing to testify, that I have belonged to the strictest sect of our religion and lived as a Pharisee. 6 And now I stand here on trial on account of my hope in the promise made by God to our ancestors, 7 a promise that our twelve tribes hope to attain, as they earnestly worship day and night. It is for this hope, your Excellency,[v] that I am accused by Jews! 8 Why is it thought incredible by any of you that God raises the dead?

9 "Indeed, I myself was convinced that I ought to do many things against the name of Jesus of Nazareth.[w] 10 And that is what I did in Jerusalem; with authority received from the chief priests, I not only locked up many of the saints in prison, but I also cast my vote against them when they were being condemned to death. 11 By punishing them often in all the synagogues I tried to force them to blaspheme; and since I was so furiously enraged at them, I pursued them even to foreign cities.

12 "With this in mind, I was traveling to Damascus with the authority and commission of the chief priests, 13 when at midday along the road, your Excellency,[v] I saw a light from heaven, brighter than the sun, shining around me and my companions. 14 When we had all fallen to the ground, I heard a voice saying to me in the Hebrew[x] language, 'Saul, Saul, why are you persecuting me? It hurts you to kick against the goads.' 15 I asked, 'Who are you, Lord?' The Lord answered, 'I am Jesus whom you are persecuting. 16 But get up and stand on your feet; for I have appeared to you for this

*u* Gk *on them* *v* Gk *O king* *w* Gk *the Nazorean* *x* That is, *Aramaic*

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who ruled parts of Palestine. He and *Bernice* were children of Herod Agrippa I (12.1–23). **25**: *His Imperial Majesty,* literally Augustus, one of the imperial titles.

**26.3**: Agrippa was perhaps well acquainted with Judaism, but was not a practicing Jew. **4**: *Among my own people,* i.e. Cilicia. **8**: *You,* i.e. the Jewish people.

**26.10**: *Cast my vote,* for the stoning of Stephen (8.1); but according to this verse he had also helped to put others to death for their faith in Jesus. **12–20**: A third account of Paul's conversion (9.1–8; 22.4–16). Here he adds that *we had all fallen to the ground.* **14**: A goad is a sharp pointed stick used to prod an ox or donkey.

purpose, to appoint you to serve and testify to the things in which you have seen me[y] and to those in which I will appear to you. 17I will rescue you from your people and from the Gentiles—to whom I am sending you 18to open their eyes so that they may turn from darkness to light and from the power of Satan to God, so that they may receive forgiveness of sins and a place among those who are sanctified by faith in me.'

19 "After that, King Agrippa, I was not disobedient to the heavenly vision, 20but declared first to those in Damascus, then in Jerusalem and throughout the countryside of Judea, and also to the Gentiles, that they should repent and turn to God and do deeds consistent with repentance. 21For this reason the Jews seized me in the temple and tried to kill me. 22To this day I have had help from God, and so I stand here, testifying to both small and great, saying nothing but what the prophets and Moses said would take place: 23that the Messiah[z] must suffer, and that, by being the first to rise from the dead, he would proclaim light both to our people and to the Gentiles."

24 While he was making this defense, Festus exclaimed, "You are out of your mind, Paul! Too much learning is driving you insane!" 25But Paul said, "I am not out of my mind, most excellent Festus, but I am speaking the sober truth. 26Indeed the king knows about these things, and to him I speak freely; for I am certain that none of these things has escaped his notice, for this was not done in a corner. 27King Agrippa, do you believe the prophets? I know that you believe." 28Agrippa said to Paul, "Are you so quickly persuading me to become a Christian?"[a] 29Paul replied, "Whether quickly or not, I pray to God that not only you but also all who are listening to me today might become such as I am—except for these chains."

30 Then the king got up, and with him the governor and Bernice and those who had been seated with them; 31and as they were leaving, they said to one another, "This man is doing nothing to deserve death or imprisonment." 32Agrippa said to Festus, "This man could have been set free if he had not appealed to the emperor."

27 When it was decided that we were to sail for Italy, they transferred Paul and some other prisoners to a centurion of the Augustan Cohort, named Julius. 2Embarking on a ship of Adramyttium that was about to set sail to the ports along the coast of Asia, we put to sea, accompanied by Aristarchus, a Macedonian from Thessalonica. 3The next day we put in at Sidon; and Julius treated Paul kindly, and allowed him to go to his friends to be cared for. 4Putting out to sea from there, we sailed under the lee of Cyprus, because the winds were against us. 5After we had sailed across the sea that is off Cilicia and Pamphylia, we came to Myra in Lycia. 6There the centurion found an Alexandrian ship bound for Italy and put us on board. 7We sailed slowly for a number of days and arrived with difficulty off Cnidus, and as the wind was against us, we sailed under

*y* Other ancient authorities read *the things that you have seen* *z* Or *the Christ* *a* Or *Quickly you will persuade me to play the Christian*

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**26.17**: *Your people,* i.e. the Jewish people. **23**: *That the Messiah must suffer,* 8.32–35; Lk 24.26. **28**: *Christian,* see 11.26 n. **32**: See 25.11–12 n.

**27.1–44**: **The voyage to Malta.** A dangerous winter voyage ends in shipwreck. **1**: The "we-passages" resume here. *The Augustan Cohort,* a unit of this name was stationed in Syria in the first century. **2**: *Adramyttium,* an important seaport of Mysia. *Aristarchus,* 19.29; 20.4. *Thessalonica,* see 17.1 n. **3**: *Sidon,* a seaport on the coast of Phoenicia, twenty miles north of Tyre. **4**: *Under the lee of Cyprus,* apparently east of the island. **7**: *The lee of Crete,* to its south; *Salmone* is at the eastern end. **8**: *Fair Havens,* a bay on the southern coast of Crete. *Lasea,* a city about four miles east of Fair Havens.

**27.9**: *The Fast,* the Day of Atonement, in September or October. **17**: *The Syrtis,* a dangerous shoal west of Cyrene.

**27.27**: *Sea of Adria* then included the cen-

the lee of Crete off Salmone. 8 Sailing past it with difficulty, we came to a place called Fair Havens, near the city of Lasea.

9 Since much time had been lost and sailing was now dangerous, because even the Fast had already gone by, Paul advised them, 10 saying, "Sirs, I can see that the voyage will be with danger and much heavy loss, not only of the cargo and the ship, but also of our lives." 11 But the centurion paid more attention to the pilot and to the owner of the ship than to what Paul said. 12 Since the harbor was not suitable for spending the winter, the majority was in favor of putting to sea from there, on the chance that somehow they could reach Phoenix, where they could spend the winter. It was a harbor of Crete, facing southwest and northwest.

13 When a moderate south wind began to blow, they thought they could achieve their purpose; so they weighed anchor and began to sail past Crete, close to the shore. 14 But soon a violent wind, called the northeaster, rushed down from Crete. [b] 15 Since the ship was caught and could not be turned head-on into the wind, we gave way to it and were driven. 16 By running under the lee of a small island called Cauda [c] we were scarcely able to get the ship's boat under control. 17 After hoisting it up they took measures [d] to undergird the ship; then, fearing that they would run on the Syrtis, they lowered the sea anchor and so were driven. 18 We were being pounded by the storm so violently that on the next day they began to throw the cargo overboard, 19 and on the third day with their own hands they threw the ship's tackle overboard. 20 When neither sun nor stars appeared for many days, and no small tempest raged, all hope of our being saved was at last abandoned.

21 Since they had been without food for a long time, Paul then stood up among them and said, "Men, you should have listened to me and not have set sail from Crete and thereby avoided this damage and loss. 22 I urge you now to keep up your courage, for there will be no loss of life among you, but only of the ship. 23 For last night there stood by me an angel of the God to whom I belong and whom I worship, 24 and he said, 'Do not be afraid, Paul; you must stand before the emperor; and indeed, God has granted safety to all those who are sailing with you.' 25 So keep up your courage, men, for I have faith in God that it will be exactly as I have been told. 26 But we will have to run aground on some island."

27 When the fourteenth night had come, as we were drifting across the sea of Adria, about midnight the sailors suspected that they were nearing land. 28 So they took soundings and found twenty fathoms; a little farther on they took soundings again and found fifteen fathoms. 29 Fearing that we might run on the rocks, they let down four anchors from the stern and prayed for day to come. 30 But when the sailors tried to escape from the ship and had lowered the boat into the sea, on the pretext of putting out anchors from the bow, 31 Paul said to the centurion and the soldiers, "Unless these men stay in the ship, you cannot be saved." 32 Then the soldiers cut away the ropes of the boat and set it adrift.

33 Just before daybreak, Paul urged all of them to take some food, saying, "Today is the fourteenth day that you have been in suspense and remaining without food, having eaten nothing. 34 Therefore I urge you to take some food, for it will help you survive; for none of you will lose a hair from your heads." 35 After he had said this, he took bread; and giving thanks to God in the presence of all, he broke it and began to eat. 36 Then all of them were encouraged and took food for themselves. 37 (We were in all two hundred seventy-six [e] persons in the ship.) 38 After they had satisfied their hunger, they lightened the ship by throwing the wheat into the sea.

39 In the morning they did not recognize the land, but they noticed a bay with a beach, on which they planned to run the ship ashore, if they could. 40 So they

*b* Gk *it* *c* Other ancient authorities read *Clauda* *d* Gk *helps* *e* Other ancient authorities read *seventy-six*; others, *about seventy-six*

cast off the anchors and left them in the sea. At the same time they loosened the ropes that tied the steering-oars; then hoisting the foresail to the wind, they made for the beach. 41But striking a reef,[f] they ran the ship aground; the bow stuck and remained immovable, but the stern was being broken up by the force of the waves. 42The soldiers' plan was to kill the prisoners, so that none might swim away and escape; 43but the centurion, wishing to save Paul, kept them from carrying out their plan. He ordered those who could swim to jump overboard first and make for the land, 44and the rest to follow, some on planks and others on pieces of the ship. And so it was that all were brought safely to land.

28 After we had reached safety, we then learned that the island was called Malta. 2The natives showed us unusual kindness. Since it had begun to rain and was cold, they kindled a fire and welcomed all of us around it. 3Paul had gathered a bundle of brushwood and was putting it on the fire, when a viper, driven out by the heat, fastened itself on his hand. 4When the natives saw the creature hanging from his hand, they said to one another, "This man must be a murderer; though he has escaped from the sea, justice has not allowed him to live." 5He, however, shook off the creature into the fire and suffered no harm. 6They were expecting him to swell up or drop dead, but after they had waited a long time and saw that nothing unusual had happened to him, they changed their minds and began to say that he was a god.

7 Now in the neighborhood of that place were lands belonging to the leading man of the island, named Publius, who received us and entertained us hospitably for three days. 8It so happened that the father of Publius lay sick in bed with fever and dysentery. Paul visited him and cured him by praying and putting his hands on him. 9After this happened, the rest of the people on the island who had diseases also came and were cured. 10They bestowed many honors on us, and when we were about to sail, they put on board all the provisions we needed.

11 Three months later we set sail on a ship that had wintered at the island, an Alexandrian ship with the Twin Brothers as its figurehead. 12We put in at Syracuse and stayed there for three days; 13then we weighed anchor and came to Rhegium. After one day there a south wind sprang up, and on the second day we came to Puteoli. 14There we found believers[g] and were invited to stay with them for seven days. And so we came to Rome. 15The believers[g] from there, when they heard of us, came as far as the Forum of Appius and Three Taverns to meet us. On seeing them, Paul thanked God and took courage.

16 When we came into Rome, Paul was allowed to live by himself, with the soldier who was guarding him.

17 Three days later he called together the local leaders of the Jews. When they had assembled, he said to them, "Brothers, though I had done nothing against our people or the customs of our ancestors, yet I was arrested in Jerusalem and

*f* Gk *place of two seas* *g* Gk *brothers*

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tral Mediterranean. **41**: *A reef,* Greek "a place of two seas," probably the bay now named for St. Paul.

**28.1–10**: **Paul in Malta.** Unharmed though bitten by a viper, Paul heals the father of Publius. **2**: The *natives* were non-Greeks who spoke a Semitic language. **7**: *Leading man,* a Greek term for a high official in Malta.

**28.11–16**: **The journey to Rome.** Paul goes by sea to Syracuse, Rhegium, and Puteoli, then by land to the capital. **11**: *The Twin Brothers,* Castor and Pollux, were worshiped by sailors. **12**: *Syracuse,* capital city of the island of Sicily, and a Roman colony (see 16.12 n.). **13**: *Rhegium,* modern Reggio Calabria. *Puteoli,* Pozzuoli, on the north side of the Bay of Naples. **15**: The *Forum of Appius* was forty-three miles from Rome, and the *Three Taverns* thirty-three miles, both on the Via Appia. **16**: The "we-passages" would seem to end here. *By himself,* apparently in his own quarters, under house arrest or with a light chain (v. 20). This exceptional treatment was due to the favorable report of Festus (see 26.31) and the goodwill of the centurion.

**28.17–28**: **Paul and the Jews of Rome.**

handed over to the Romans. 18When they had examined me, the Romans[h] wanted to release me, because there was no reason for the death penalty in my case. 19But when the Jews objected, I was compelled to appeal to the emperor—even though I had no charge to bring against my nation. 20For this reason therefore I have asked to see you and speak with you,[i] since it is for the sake of the hope of Israel that I am bound with this chain." 21They replied, "We have received no letters from Judea about you, and none of the brothers coming here has reported or spoken anything evil about you. 22But we would like to hear from you what you think, for with regard to this sect we know that everywhere it is spoken against."

23 After they had set a day to meet with him, they came to him at his lodgings in great numbers. From morning until evening he explained the matter to them, testifying to the kingdom of God and trying to convince them about Jesus both from the law of Moses and from the prophets. 24Some were convinced by what he had said, while others refused to believe. 25So they disagreed with each other; and as they were leaving, Paul made one further statement: "The Holy Spirit was right in saying to your ancestors through the prophet Isaiah,

26 'Go to this people and say,
You will indeed listen, but never understand,
and you will indeed look, but never perceive.
27 For this people's heart has grown dull,
and their ears are hard of hearing,
and they have shut their eyes;
so that they might not look with their eyes,
and listen with their ears,
and understand with their heart and turn—
and I would heal them.'

28Let it be known to you then that this salvation of God has been sent to the Gentiles; they will listen."[j]

30 He lived there two whole years at his own expense[k] and welcomed all who came to him, 31proclaiming the kingdom of God and teaching about the Lord Jesus Christ with all boldness and without hindrance.

*h* Gk *they* *i* Or *I have asked you to see me and speak with me* *j* Other ancient authorities add verse 29, *And when he had said these words, the Jews departed, arguing vigorously among themselves* *k* Or *in his own hired dwelling*

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Rejected by the Jews, he again turns to the Gentiles (see 13.46 n.). **20**: The *chain* may be actual or a metaphor of his restriction. **23**: *The prophets,* see Mt 5.17 n. **26**: Christians often used Isa 6.9–10 to explain the Jews' rejection of the gospel (see Mt 13.14–15 n.; Jn 12.40; compare the ideas of Rom chs 9–11).

**28.30–31**: **Conclusion.** Though under house arrest (v. 16) Paul preached *without hindrance* for *two whole years.* Thus the author concludes his narrative of the spread of the gospel from Jerusalem (1.8) to Rome, the capital of the empire.

# *Letters/Epistles in the New Testament*

## CLASSIFICATION OF NEW TESTAMENT LETTERS

The predominant literary form in the New Testament is the letter form. Of the twenty-seven documents comprising the New Testament, seven-ninths of them have the format of a letter or epistle. Of these twenty-one, fourteen have been traditionally attributed to Paul, and the other seven to a variety of authors. In the case of the Pauline letters, the titles now given to them involve the names of the recipients (To the Romans, To the Galatians, To Philemon, etc.), whereas in the case of the others, called the General or Catholic Letters, the titles (except "To the Hebrews") identify the author (Letter of James, Letter of Jude, etc.). These titles, it goes without saying, were added by scribes and editors after the several letters had been collected into a corpus.

In almost all the complete manuscripts of the Greek New Testament the General Letters follow Acts and precede the Pauline Letters, whereas in many Latin manuscripts, the Pauline Letters often precede the General Letters. This latter sequence is followed in English Bibles. The Pauline Letters are in two series, those addressed to churches and those addressed to individuals. The present order of the General Letters and of each series of the Pauline Letters is in terms of their length, going from the longer to the shorter letters.

The letters included in the New Testament (with the exception of those included in Acts 15.23–29; 23.26–30, and the letters to the seven churches of Asia in chapters 2 and 3 of the Book of Revelation) are in general longer than other ancient letters. The letters attributed to Paul (with the exception of Hebrews) average about 1300 words each; Romans has 7101, Titus (the second shortest) 658, Philemon 335. Only 2 and 3 John are shorter than this, with 245 and 219 words respectively. The author of the anonymous Letter to the Hebrews concludes by saying, "I have written to you briefly" (13.22); since this letter contains 4951 words, we must perhaps understand the word "briefly" by considering the extent of the subject and its ramifications.

In comparison with the New Testament letters the following statistics are of interest. Thousands of private letters on papyrus have been unearthed, chiefly in Egypt; these average (according to one scholar's calculations) eighty-seven words in length — the shortest has eighteen words, the longest two hundred and nine. The literary collections of epistles from antiquity (for the distinction between letters and epistles, see p. 206 NT) have a much greater average length; the 796 genuine letters and epistles of Cicero the Roman orator average 295 words each (the shortest has 22 words, the longest 2530), and the 124 epistles of the Stoic philosopher Seneca average 995 words (from 149 to 4134 words).

## MANNER OF WRITING LETTERS

In antiquity, just as today, people sometimes wrote letters personally, and sometimes they dictated to a scribe or amanuensis. In the latter case, one might dictate word by word, with the amanu-

ensis writing each out verbatim. Or one might dictate more rapidly with the message being taken down stenographically. In this case the material would, of course, need to be transcribed again. Besides dictating word by word, there was also the practice of giving the amanuensis exact instructions about the content of the letter and leaving the choice of wording to the amanuensis.

In the case of the Letter to the Romans, we know that Paul dictated it to a certain Tertius, who added his own greeting among those that Paul was sending (Rom 16.22). In three other letters the apostle mentions explicitly that he has written the final greeting with his own hand, presumably as a guarantee of genuineness (1 Cor 16.21; Col 4.18; and especially 2 Thess 3.17). Near the close of his Letter to the Galatians Paul says to his readers, "See what large letters I make when I am writing in my own hand!" (6.11). Since the subject changes at this point, it is probable that here he has taken over the stylus from the amanuensis. In Philemon (v. 19) Paul writes a personal I O U that is apparently different from the script in the rest of the letter. From these data we may conclude that Paul's usual practice was to dictate the bulk of a given letter to a scribe and often to add notes in his own handwriting, perhaps also correcting what the scribe had written.

How far the New Testament contains letters for which a secretary had some responsibility for the language and style continues to be debated. It is possible that this is how we should understand the comment made near the close of 1 Peter: "Through Silvanus, whom I consider a faithful brother, I have written this short letter to encourage you" (5.12). In the case of several other letters (both Pauline and General) it is now thought that a friend and follower of the apostle drew up the document in the name of the apostle, perhaps actually after the death of the putative author. (See the Introductions to Ephesians, 1 Timothy, and 2 Peter.)

In light of such practices in antiquity, several consequences appear to be more or less probable. For one thing, a discontinuity in thought or expression may be the result of resuming the dictation after a break of some hours (or even on a subsequent day), and in a different mood from that reflected at the outset of the letter. Thus, for example, we can explain the change of tone between the close of ch 2 and what follows 3.1 of Paul's Letter to the Philippians. Furthermore, if a secretary took part in the composition of a letter, and not simply its transcription, then the vocabulary and style are not decisive criteria for settling its authenticity. Finally, the similarity between Ephesians and Colossians could be accounted for on the assumption that Paul had kept a copy of the earlier one, which he read before dictating the other. (We know that Cicero made a practice of keeping copies of the letters that he had sent.) It is also possible that these two letters were written by others, or another, with access to Paul's writings (see the Introduction to Ephesians and Colossians).

## FORM OF ANCIENT LETTERS

The form of an ancient Greco-Roman letter was conspicuously different from the modern letter. At its beginning one finds the sender's name, followed by that of the recipient, and a short salutation. The message in the body of the letter was often introduced by an appeal to the gods in terms of gratitude and thanksgiving or of a prayer for the welfare of the recipient. At the end of the letter came the conveyance of greetings.

The apostle Paul's letters, while they fall within the category of such Hellenistic letters, show some development of the letter pattern based on the apostle's creativity. Identifications of the writer (co-workers are sometimes named) and of the addressees are followed by expanded descriptions of both parties in terms of their standing in relation to God through Christ. Specif-

ically, the stereotyped Hellenistic "Greetings!" (Greek *chairein*) is replaced by "Grace (Greek *charis*) to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ," where the reference to peace (compare Hebrew *shalom*) may echo the close of the old priestly blessing of Num 6.24–26. The Pauline letters and those influenced by them generally expand the element of thanksgiving for the addressees (for example, 1 Cor 1.4–9; Eph 1.15–23; Phil 1.3–11; 2 Thess 1.3–12; 1 Tim 1.3–7); in Galatians, however, Paul replaces the thanksgiving with a rebuke, "I am astonished . . ." (1.6–9). The body of Pauline letters is usually divided into two parts, one doctrinal in content, and the other hortatory, giving instructions for Christian conduct. The conclusion of his letters often contains personal news and a final greeting. This is never the ordinary Greek "Farewell" (*erroso*, as in Acts 15.29), but a characteristic blessing, "The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you" (Rom 16.20; 1 Cor 16.23; 2 Cor 13.13 (expanded); Gal 6.18; Phil 4.23; 1 Thess 5.28; Philem 25).

## DISTINCTION BETWEEN LETTERS AND EPISTLES

In modern usage a distinction is often made between the terms "letter" and "epistle." Letters, as Adolf Deissmann repeatedly emphasized, are generally private missives and deal with circumstances of the passing moment. Confidential and personal in nature, they are intended only for the person or persons to whom they are addressed. Epistles, on the other hand, are on a more sophisticated level of literary effort, and are written with the intention of being both public and more or less permanent. In brief, the letter is, so to speak, a slice of life, while the epistle is a product of literary art. Now the examples in the New Testament combine features of both the letter and the epistle. The Letters of Paul are all real letters, arising out of real situations in his life or the lives of those to whom he writes. At the same time, they are quasi-official letters from an apostle rather than merely private letters, and their style is more formal than the ephemeral letters preserved among the Greek papyri.

Some of the other letters in the New Testament are more akin to the form and style of a theological treatise (such as the Letter to the Hebrews) or an edifying homily (1 Peter and 1 John). Even these, however, were not originally directed to the whole of Christendom, but were intended for particular—even if loosely defined—destinations, and were written in order to deal with urgent difficulties experienced by the recipients, such as persecution, heresy, and religious or moral laxity. Thus, the letters of the New Testament incorporate elements of the on-going life of the churches, such as liturgical materials, moral guidelines, and religious instruction applicable to many believers besides the immediate recipients of the document. Furthermore, it should be noted that the literary form of a letter/epistle combines the advantages of a conversation and a treatise; in such a format it is possible to communicate truth, not only abstractly, but in close relation to the personal circumstances of the recipients.

## DISPATCH OF LETTERS

In antiquity there was no organized postal service available to the general populace. The system of letter carriers (*cursus publicus*) created by the Emperor Augustus was restricted to the dispatch of government communiqués from Rome to officials in the provinces. Private individuals, therefore, had to make their own arrangements for the carrying and delivery of letters. Wealthy families would keep a certain number of slaves to serve as couriers—*grammatophoroi* ("letter carriers") as they were called in Greek, or *tabellarii* ("tablet men" from the wooden tablets, *tabellae*)

in Latin. Families and friends living near one another would pool their couriers in order to increase the opportunities to get off or receive a letter. But there were never enough carriers to meet the needs, and delays were inevitable. The opposite side of the coin was the need to dash off some lines at breakneck speed in order to take advantage of an available courier.

The actual transmission of private letters was in practice exposed to many uncertainties, delays, and, at times, almost insuperable difficulties. Travel whether by land or by sea could be hazardous. In all the countries referred to in the New Testament (except Egypt) the terrain is mountainous. One could travel on land, of course, only by daylight. The rigors of winter prevented travel by sea as well as by land. There was also the ever-present possibility of being waylaid by bandits or by pirates. Then too, illness or accident might incapacitate the one carrying the letter. In view of such eventualities, for really important letters it was advisable to send duplicate copies through two different messengers. In any case, a letter carrier had to be physically fit as well as loyal and intelligent. It is not surprising to find in antiquity repeated reference to letters written but never received. Others were lost for months, or even years, before finally being delivered. For example, through a series of mishaps a letter written by Augustine of Hippo in North Africa to Jerome in Bethlehem took nine years for delivery!

In the case of several letters in the New Testament internal evidence allows us to infer who it was that served as letter carrier. Obviously the apostle Paul utilized Onesimus, the converted runaway slave, to deliver the letter to his master Philemon. Titus and an unidentified believer "who is famous among all the churches for his proclaiming the good news," carried what we know as Paul's Second Letter to the Corinthians (2 Cor 8.16–18). Tychicus carried the Letter to the Ephesians (Eph 6.21) and the Letter to the Colossians (Col 4.7–8), while Phoebe, whom Paul commends to the Christians at Rome (Rom 16.1–2), probably carried his Letter to the Romans. Epaphroditus, sent by the church at Philippi with a gift to Paul (Phil 4.18), would have carried back with him the apostle's letter of thanks to that congregation (Phil 2.25–28). Three of the converts at Corinth (Stephanas, Fortunatus, and Achaicus) probably brought Paul the letter that is referred to in 1 Cor 7.1, as well as carrying back Paul's reply (1 Cor 16.15–18).

## CONCLUSION

The letters in the New Testament are real letters, and the issues they deal with belong to a particular period in the history of the church. At the same time, the treatment of the several problems that elicited a response on the part of Paul, Peter, John, and other leaders in the early church often involved an exposition of fundamental teachings of the Christian faith. Thus it comes about that these letters—having been recopied and circulated to other congregations, and finally collected together—eventually became, and have justly remained, among the primary documents of the Christian religion (on canonization, see p. v NT). Like the genre of gospels, the New Testament letters represent something startlingly new and original in the literature of their time. Both literary epistles, such as those of Cicero or Seneca, and the incidental papyrus letters preserved in the dry climate of Egypt are well known, but never before had the world ever seen anything quite like these rather lengthy letters/epistles, almost wholly concerned not just with personal details but with matters of Christian doctrine and conduct. Even the preliminary greeting and the concluding farewell are new and distinctively Christian formulae. If we ask what it was that provided the new dynamic behind the writing of these apostolic letters, the answer must certainly include reference to the several writers' loyal commitment to one whom they called "the Lord Jesus Christ."

# *The Letter of Paul to the Romans*

This letter, the first of Paul's letters in the canonical collection, is also the longest, the weightiest, and subsequently the most influential of all his correspondence. Written at the height of the apostle's career (between A.D. 54 and 58), it conveys the full richness of his experience of Christ as well as the full maturity of his thought.

The gospel as God's power for salvation to all who believe is the theme of Romans (see 1.16–17 n.). It is expressed especially in terms of God's saving righteousness, or justification by faith (see 3.24 n.), and with a universal concern for both Jew and Gentile (note the frequent use of "all" and "every," 1.16; 3.9, 19, 23–24; 4.11, 16; 5.12, 18). Reconciliation (5.10–11), forgiveness (4.6–8), life in Christ (chs 5–8), the Spirit and our adoption by God—all these intertwine with justification (8.5–30). There is also development of God's plan of salvation, from Adam through Abraham and Moses to Christ (chs 4–5) and the future fulfillment (8.18–25). Israel and the church, comprising the community of those who hear the proclamation about Christ and believe, are discussed in chs 9–11.

For several years—years of intense missionary activity in the northeastern Mediterranean area—Paul had been engaged in collecting contributions in his predominantly Gentile churches of Greece and Asia Minor for the needy Jerusalem church. It was his hope that these gifts would allay certain suspicions about him and his work and bring the two wings of the church, Jewish Christian and Gentile, closer together. The collection was now complete, and Paul, apparently in Corinth (15.25–27; compare 1 Cor 16.3–5 and Acts 20.2–3), was awaiting an opportunity to go to Jerusalem with it. He intended afterwards to carry the gospel to Spain (15.28) and, on his way, to stop at Rome, where the church had already been established by others. He therefore writes to the Christians at Rome to announce this intention and to explain his understanding of the gospel (1.10–15), perhaps also with a view to securing the support of believers there for his work farther to the west.

Because the text of Romans has existed from antiquity in several forms (see 15–16 n.; 16.25–27 n.), some have suggested that Paul, while writing to Rome, might also have sent a copy to Ephesus, for 16.1–16 reads like a letter of recommendation for Phoebe; or that he left a copy in Corinth (for the "strong" and the "weak" of 14.1–15.13 may reflect 1 Cor 8.9–13; 10.23–11.1). Others propose that Paul is writing with one eye on the situation in Jerusalem, where the collection is to be presented.

After the customary salutation and thanksgiving, Paul describes the world's need of redemption (1.18–3.20). He then discusses God's saving act in Christ: its nature (3.21–4.25) and the new life that it has made available (5.1–8.39). After a section dealing with the role of the Jewish nation in God's plan (chs 9–11), the letter closes with ethical teaching and some personal remarks (chs 12–16).

1 Paul, a servant[a] of Jesus Christ,
called to be an apostle, set apart for
the gospel of God, 2which he promised
beforehand through his prophets in the
holy scriptures, 3the gospel concerning
his Son, who was descended from David
according to the flesh 4and was declared
to be Son of God with power according
to the spirit[b] of holiness by resurrection
from the dead, Jesus Christ our Lord,
5through whom we have received grace
and apostleship to bring about the obedi-
ence of faith among all the Gentiles for
the sake of his name, 6including your-
selves who are called to belong to Jesus
Christ,

7 To all God's beloved in Rome, who
are called to be saints:

Grace to you and peace from God our
Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

8 First, I thank my God through Jesus
Christ for all of you, because your faith
is proclaimed throughout the world.
9For God, whom I serve with my spirit
by announcing the gospel[c] of his Son, is
my witness that without ceasing I re-
member you always in my prayers,
10asking that by God's will I may some-
how at last succeed in coming to you.
11For I am longing to see you so that I
may share with you some spiritual gift to
strengthen you— 12or rather so that we
may be mutually encouraged by each
other's faith, both yours and mine. 13I
want you to know, brothers and sisters,[d]
that I have often intended to come to you
(but thus far have been prevented), in
order that I may reap some harvest
among you as I have among the rest of
the Gentiles. 14I am a debtor both to
Greeks and to barbarians, both to the
wise and to the foolish 15—hence my
eagerness to proclaim the gospel to you
also who are in Rome.

16 For I am not ashamed of the gos-
pel; it is the power of God for salvation
to everyone who has faith, to the Jew
first and also to the Greek. 17For in it the
righteousness of God is revealed through
faith for faith; as it is written, "The one
who is righteous will live by faith."[e]

18 For the wrath of God is revealed
from heaven against all ungodliness and
wickedness of those who by their wick-
edness suppress the truth. 19For what can
be known about God is plain to them,
because God has shown it to them.
20Ever since the creation of the world his
eternal power and divine nature, invisi-
ble though they are, have been under-
stood and seen through the things he has
made. So they are without excuse; 21for
though they knew God, they did not
honor him as God or give thanks to him,
but they became futile in their thinking,

*a* Gk *slave* *b* Or *Spirit* *c* Gk *my spirit in the gospel* *d* Gk *brothers* *e* Or *The one who is righteous through faith will live*

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**1.1–7: Salutation.** Ancient Greek letters customarily began with the names of the sender and of the recipient and a short greeting (compare Acts 23.26). Paul expands this form to express his Christian faith as well. **3–4**: God's *Son,* who came into the world physically *descended from David,* was manifested and installed in his true status at the resurrection. *The spirit of holiness,* the Holy Spirit. **7**: *Saints,* "holy ones," who belong to God, consecrated to God's service. *Grace . . . and peace,* conventional Greek and Hebrew greetings, now expressing gifts received in Christ (5.1–2).

**1.8–15: Thanksgiving.** After the salutation in ancient letters there usually came a short prayer of thanksgiving or of petition for those addressed. This element also Paul expands in a characteristically Christian way, reflecting his plans and mutual hopes (vv. 10–15).

**1.16–17: The theme of the letter.** In Christ God has acted powerfully to save *Jew* and *Gentile,* offering righteousness and life, to be received in faith. **17**: *The righteousness of God* originates in the divine nature (3.5) acting to effect pardon or acceptance with God, a relationship that is not a human achievement but God's gift. *Through faith for faith,* faith is the sole condition of salvation. *The one who . . . will live,* Hab 2.4 in a Greek form allowing also the translation in the note; compare Gal 3.11; Phil 3.9; Heb 10.38.

**1.18–32: God's judgment upon sin. 18**: *Wrath,* see Col 3.6 n. **19**: *What can be known,* i.e. apart from God's revelation to Israel and

and their senseless minds were darkened. 22Claiming to be wise, they became fools; 23and they exchanged the glory of the immortal God for images resembling a mortal human being or birds or four-footed animals or reptiles.

24 Therefore God gave them up in the lusts of their hearts to impurity, to the degrading of their bodies among themselves, 25because they exchanged the truth about God for a lie and worshiped and served the creature rather than the Creator, who is blessed forever! Amen.

26 For this reason God gave them up to degrading passions. Their women exchanged natural intercourse for unnatural, 27and in the same way also the men, giving up natural intercourse with women, were consumed with passion for one another. Men committed shameless acts with men and received in their own persons the due penalty for their error.

28 And since they did not see fit to acknowledge God, God gave them up to a debased mind and to things that should not be done. 29They were filled with every kind of wickedness, evil, covetousness, malice. Full of envy, murder, strife, deceit, craftiness, they are gossips, 30slanderers, God-haters,[f] insolent, haughty, boastful, inventors of evil, rebellious toward parents, 31foolish, faithless, heartless, ruthless. 32They know God's decree, that those who practice such things deserve to die—yet they not only do them but even applaud others who practice them.

2 Therefore you have no excuse, whoever you are, when you judge others; for in passing judgment on another you condemn yourself, because you, the judge, are doing the very same things. 2You say,[g] "We know that God's judgment on those who do such things is in accordance with truth." 3Do you imagine, whoever you are, that when you judge those who do such things and yet do them yourself, you will escape the judgment of God? 4Or do you despise the riches of his kindness and forbearance and patience? Do you not realize that God's kindness is meant to lead you to repentance? 5But by your hard and impenitent heart you are storing up wrath for yourself on the day of wrath, when God's righteous judgment will be revealed. 6For he will repay according to each one's deeds: 7to those who by patiently doing good seek for glory and honor and immortality, he will give eternal life; 8while for those who are self-seeking and who obey not the truth but wickedness, there will be wrath and fury. 9There will be anguish and distress for everyone who does evil, the Jew first and also the Greek, 10but glory and honor and peace for everyone who does good, the Jew first and also the Greek. 11For God shows no partiality.

12 All who have sinned apart from the law will also perish apart from the law, and all who have sinned under the law will be judged by the law. 13For it is not the hearers of the law who are righteous in God's sight, but the doers of the law who will be justified. 14When Gentiles, who do not possess the law, do instinctively what the law requires, these, though not having the law, are a law to themselves. 15They show that what the law requires is written on their

*f* Or *God-hated* *g* Gk lacks *You say*

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in Christ. **20–21**: People have denied the knowledge about God available in the created world.

**1.24, 26, 28**: *God gave them up,* because in turning from God they violated their true nature, becoming involved in terrible and destructive perversions; God has let the process of death work itself out. **26–27**: See 1 Cor 6.9 n. **29–31**: Gal 5.19–21.

**2.1–11**: **Jews are under judgment,** as well as Gentiles (1.18–32). **5**: *The day of wrath,* God's condemnation of sin, already manifest (1.18), will be consummated in the final judgment. **9–10**: The Jew *first* (compare 1.16), because privileges granted to the covenant people (3.1–8) increase responsibility (1.16; Am 3.2; Lk 12.48).

**2.12–29**: **Basis for judgment:** law of Moses for the Jew; law of conscience for the Gentile. **14–15**: Paul recognizes (despite 1.18–

hearts, to which their own conscience also bears witness; and their conflicting thoughts will accuse or perhaps excuse them [16]on the day when, according to my gospel, God, through Jesus Christ, will judge the secret thoughts of all.

17 But if you call yourself a Jew and rely on the law and boast of your relation to God [18]and know his will and determine what is best because you are instructed in the law, [19]and if you are sure that you are a guide to the blind, a light to those who are in darkness, [20]a corrector of the foolish, a teacher of children, having in the law the embodiment of knowledge and truth, [21]you, then, that teach others, will you not teach yourself? While you preach against stealing, do you steal? [22]You that forbid adultery, do you commit adultery? You that abhor idols, do you rob temples? [23]You that boast in the law, do you dishonor God by breaking the law? [24]For, as it is written, "The name of God is blasphemed among the Gentiles because of you."

25 Circumcision indeed is of value if you obey the law; but if you break the law, your circumcision has become uncircumcision. [26]So, if those who are uncircumcised keep the requirements of the law, will not their uncircumcision be regarded as circumcision? [27]Then those who are physically uncircumcised but keep the law will condemn you that have the written code and circumcision but break the law. [28]For a person is not a Jew who is one outwardly, nor is true circumcision something external and physical. [29]Rather, a person is a Jew who is one inwardly, and real circumcision is a matter of the heart—it is spiritual and not literal. Such a person receives praise not from others but from God.

3 Then what advantage has the Jew? Or what is the value of circumcision? [2]Much, in every way. For in the first place the Jews[h] were entrusted with the oracles of God. [3]What if some were unfaithful? Will their faithlessness nullify the faithfulness of God? [4]By no means! Although everyone is a liar, let God be proved true, as it is written,

"So that you may be justified in
your words,
and prevail in your judging."[i]

[5]But if our injustice serves to confirm the justice of God, what should we say? That God is unjust to inflict wrath on us? (I speak in a human way.) [6]By no means! For then how could God judge the world? [7]But if through my falsehood God's truthfulness abounds to his glory, why am I still being condemned as a sinner? [8]And why not say (as some people slander us by saying that we say), "Let us do evil so that good may come"? Their condemnation is deserved!

9 What then? Are we any better off?[j] No, not at all; for we have already charged that all, both Jews and Greeks, are under the power of sin, [10]as it is written:

*h* Gk *they* *i* Gk *when you are being judged*
*j* Or *at any disadvantage?*

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32) that there are morally sensitive and responsible Gentiles, however short they may fall of God's righteous demands.

**2.17–24**: Many Jews, though possessing God's written law, fall short of even ordinary morality. **23**: *Do you . . . the law?*, may also be translated, "You dishonor God by breaking the law." **24**: Isa 52.5.

**2.25**: *Circumcision has become uncircumcision,* in the sense that the Jewish violator of the law stands before God precisely where the Gentile violator stands (Jer 9.25–26). **28**: Mt 3.9; Jn 8.39; Gal 6.15. **29**: *Circumcision . . . of the heart,* Deut 10.16; Jer 4.4; 9.26; Ezek 44.9.

**3.1–8**: **The advantage of the Jews** as the covenant people cannot be denied. To them were given the *oracles,* i.e. the Scriptures, and particularly the promises they contain. God's *faithfulness* in making the promises is not invalidated by the failure of the Jews to keep their part of the covenant; nor can that failure be excused on the plea that, because of it, God's *faithfulness* and *truthfulness* will shine the more brightly when God acts for good (Paul will discuss this problem more fully in chs 9–11). **4**: Ps 51.4. **5**: *Justice of God,* same phrase as in 1.17, "righteousness of God."

**3.9–20**: **All are guilty.** Jew and Greek, despite the former's advantages, stand on the same ground, *under the power of sin.* **10–18**: Pss

"There is no one who is righteous,
not even one;
11 there is no one who has understanding,
there is no one who seeks God.
12 All have turned aside, together they have become worthless;
there is no one who shows kindness,
there is not even one."
13 "Their throats are opened graves;
they use their tongues to deceive."
"The venom of vipers is under their lips."
14 "Their mouths are full of cursing and bitterness."
15 "Their feet are swift to shed blood;
16 ruin and misery are in their paths,
17 and the way of peace they have not known."
18 "There is no fear of God before their eyes."

19 Now we know that whatever the law says, it speaks to those who are under the law, so that every mouth may be silenced, and the whole world may be held accountable to God. 20For "no human being will be justified in his sight" by deeds prescribed by the law, for through the law comes the knowledge of sin.

21 But now, apart from law, the righteousness of God has been disclosed, and is attested by the law and the prophets, 22the righteousness of God through faith in Jesus Christ[k] for all who believe. For there is no distinction, 23since all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God; 24they are now justified by his grace as a gift, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, 25whom God put forward as a sacrifice of atonement[l] by his blood, effective through faith. He did this to show his righteousness, because in his divine forbearance he had passed over the sins previously committed; 26it was to prove at the present time that he himself is righteous and that he justifies the one who has faith in Jesus.[m]

27 Then what becomes of boasting? It is excluded. By what law? By that of works? No, but by the law of faith. 28For we hold that a person is justified by faith apart from works prescribed by the law. 29Or is God the God of Jews only? Is he not the God of Gentiles also? Yes, of Gentiles also, 30since God is one; and he will justify the circumcised on the

*k* Or *through the faith of Jesus Christ* *l* Or *a place of atonement* *m* Or *who has the faith of Jesus*

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14.1–2; 53.1–2; 5.9; 140.3; 10.7; Isa 59.7–8; Ps 36.1. The law succeeds only in making people aware of their condition. That indeed was God's purpose in giving it (7.7; see Gal 3.19–29 n.).

**3.21–26**: **The true righteousness,** now revealed in Christ, rests not upon obedience to law, but on faith in God's act of *redemption . . . in Christ Jesus.* **21**: *The law and the prophets,* the Hebrew Scriptures. **22**: *Faith in Jesus Christ;* the alternate rendering *faith of Jesus Christ* (also at 3.26; Gal 2.16, 20; 3.22; Phil 3.9) assumes Christ's faithful obedience unto death (Rom 5.18–21; Phil 2.8) or in becoming incarnate (Phil 2.6–8), or the entire ministry of Jesus, possibly involving an interchange of faith with *all who believe* in God (4.24) and Christ (Gal 2.16). **24**: *Justified,* same term as 1.17; 3.5, 21, 25, 26, "righteousness," "justice." *Redemption* means a ransoming or "buying back" (as of a slave or captive), and therefore emancipation or deliverance. Slaves of sin are set free through God's act in Christ (Eph 1.7; Col 1.14; Heb 9.15). **25**: *Sacrifice of atonement by his blood,* a reference to the death of Christ as a sacrifice for sin (1 Jn 2.2; Ex 25.22; Lev 16.12–15), demonstrating the seriousness with which God regards sin (despite divine *forbearance*); it reveals how God's love (5.8) effects forgiveness. **26**: *Faith,* see 3.22 n.

**3.27–31**: **Boasting is excluded.** One's *works* or deeds might be ground for boasting, but if salvation is by faith, pride *is excluded.* **27**: *Law,* here "principle," as at 7.21–23 n. **30**: Since *God is one* (Deut 6.4), Jews and Gentiles will be treated on the same basis, faith.

ground of faith and the uncircumcised through that same faith. 31Do we then overthrow the law by this faith? By no means! On the contrary, we uphold the law.

4 What then are we to say was gained by[n] Abraham, our ancestor according to the flesh? 2For if Abraham was justified by works, he has something to boast about, but not before God. 3For what does the scripture say? "Abraham believed God, and it was reckoned to him as righteousness." 4Now to one who works, wages are not reckoned as a gift but as something due. 5But to one who without works trusts him who justifies the ungodly, such faith is reckoned as righteousness. 6So also David speaks of the blessedness of those to whom God reckons righteousness apart from works:

7 "Blessed are those whose iniquities
are forgiven,
and whose sins are covered;
8 blessed is the one against whom
the Lord will not reckon
sin."

9 Is this blessedness, then, pronounced only on the circumcised, or also on the uncircumcised? We say, "Faith was reckoned to Abraham as righteousness." 10How then was it reckoned to him? Was it before or after he had been circumcised? It was not after, but before he was circumcised. 11He received the sign of circumcision as a seal of the righteousness that he had by faith while he was still uncircumcised. The purpose was to make him the ancestor of all who believe without being circumcised and who thus have righteousness reckoned to them, 12and likewise the ancestor of the circumcised who are not only circumcised but who also follow the example of the faith that our ancestor Abraham had before he was circumcised.

13 For the promise that he would inherit the world did not come to Abraham or to his descendants through the law but through the righteousness of faith. 14If it is the adherents of the law who are to be the heirs, faith is null and the promise is void. 15For the law brings wrath; but where there is no law, neither is there violation.

16 For this reason it depends on faith, in order that the promise may rest on grace and be guaranteed to all his descendants, not only to the adherents of the law but also to those who share the faith of Abraham (for he is the father of all of us, 17as it is written, "I have made you the father of many nations")—in the presence of the God in whom he believed, who gives life to the dead and calls into existence the things that do not exist. 18Hoping against hope, he believed that he would become "the father of many nations," according to what was said, "So numerous shall your descendants be." 19He did not weaken in faith when he considered his own body, which was already[o] as good as dead (for he was about a hundred years old), or when he considered the barrenness of Sarah's womb. 20No distrust made him

*n* Other ancient authorities read *say about*
*o* Other ancient authorities lack *already*

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**4.1–8: Abraham justified by faith,** not by works. **2:** *But not before God;* Abraham may have had grounds for glorying, but, Paul adds, not in God's sight. **3:** According to Paul's understanding of Gen 15.6, Abraham's faith in God was credited to him as righteousness. The commercial term *reckoned* reminds Paul of Ps 32.2 (v. 8). **6–8:** God's blessing belongs not to those who perfectly obey the law (as though that were possible), but to those who in faith accept God's free gift of forgiveness (Ps 32.1–2).

**4.9–12:** This justification of Abraham occurred *before he was circumcised* (Gen 17.24), and therefore cannot have been dependent upon circumcision; it depended only upon faith (15.6). **11:** Gen 17.10. **12:** *Follow the example,* i.e. rely only on faith, as Abraham did.

**4.13–25: The true descendants of Abraham** are those who have faith in Christ, whether Jews or Gentiles. To them the benefits promised to Abraham belong (Gen 17.4–6; 22.17–18; Gal 3.29). **17:** Gen 17.5. **18:** Gen 15.5. **19:** Gen 17.17; 18.11; Heb 11.11–12 (Sarah also). **22–23:** See v. 3.

waver concerning the promise of God, but he grew strong in his faith as he gave glory to God, [21]being fully convinced that God was able to do what he had promised. [22]Therefore his faith[p] "was reckoned to him as righteousness." [23]Now the words, "it was reckoned to him," were written not for his sake alone, [24]but for ours also. It will be reckoned to us who believe in him who raised Jesus our Lord from the dead, [25]who was handed over to death for our trespasses and was raised for our justification.

5 Therefore, since we are justified by faith, we[q] have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, [2]through whom we have obtained access[r] to this grace in which we stand; and we[s] boast in our hope of sharing the glory of God. [3]And not only that, but we[s] also boast in our sufferings, knowing that suffering produces endurance, [4]and endurance produces character, and character produces hope, [5]and hope does not disappoint us, because God's love has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit that has been given to us.

6 For while we were still weak, at the right time Christ died for the ungodly. [7]Indeed, rarely will anyone die for a righteous person—though perhaps for a good person someone might actually dare to die. [8]But God proves his love for us in that while we still were sinners Christ died for us. [9]Much more surely then, now that we have been justified by his blood, will we be saved through him from the wrath of God.[t] [10]For if while we were enemies, we were reconciled to God through the death of his Son, much more surely, having been reconciled, will we be saved by his life. [11]But more than that, we even boast in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we have now received reconciliation.

12 Therefore, just as sin came into the world through one man, and death came through sin, and so death spread to all because all have sinned— [13]sin was indeed in the world before the law, but sin is not reckoned when there is no law. [14]Yet death exercised dominion from Adam to Moses, even over those whose sins were not like the transgression of Adam, who is a type of the one who was to come.

15 But the free gift is not like the trespass. For if the many died through the one man's trespass, much more surely have the grace of God and the free gift in the grace of the one man, Jesus Christ, abounded for the many. [16]And the free gift is not like the effect of the one man's sin. For the judgment following one trespass brought condemnation, but the free gift following many trespasses brings justification. [17]If, because of the one man's trespass, death exercised dominion through that one, much more surely will those who receive the abundance of grace and the free gift of righteousness exercise dominion in life through the one man, Jesus Christ.

18 Therefore just as one man's trespass led to condemnation for all, so one

*p* Gk *Therefore it* *q* Other ancient authorities read *let us* *r* Other ancient authorities add *by faith* *s* Or *let us* *t* Gk *the wrath*

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**5.1–11: Consequences of justification.** **1–5**: When we rely utterly upon God's grace and not at all upon ourselves, *we have peace,* i.e. reconciliation (5.10), *with God,* and other blessings. *Hope of . . . the glory of God,* though we had fallen short of the glorious destiny God intended for us (3.23), we now find ourselves confidently expecting it.

**5.6–11**: Christ in death has borne the consequences of our sin and thus has reconciled us to God. Paul never speaks of God's being reconciled to us; it is we who were estranged. **9–10**: Being *now . . . justified* and *reconciled by* Christ's *blood* (*death*), we *will . . . be saved* in the final judgment *by* (*through*) Christ's cross and resurrection (4.24, 25), including participation in his present *life* as the risen Lord. **11**: *Now,* under the gospel (3.21).

**5.12–21: Adam and Christ; analogy and contrast.** Sin and death for all followed upon Adam's disobedience (Gen 2.17; 3.17–19). **13–16**: 1 Cor 15.21–23, 45–49.

**5.18**: *Justification and life for all* followed upon Christ's perfect obedience. **20**: *Law . . .*

man's act of righteousness leads to justification and life for all. 19For just as by the one man's disobedience the many were made sinners, so by the one man's obedience the many will be made righteous. 20But law came in, with the result that the trespass multiplied; but where sin increased, grace abounded all the more, 21so that, just as sin exercised dominion in death, so grace might also exercise dominion through justification[u] leading to eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.

6 What then are we to say? Should we continue in sin in order that grace may abound? 2By no means! How can we who died to sin go on living in it? 3Do you not know that all of us who have been baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death? 4Therefore we have been buried with him by baptism into death, so that, just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, so we too might walk in newness of life.

5 For if we have been united with him in a death like his, we will certainly be united with him in a resurrection like his. 6We know that our old self was crucified with him so that the body of sin might be destroyed, and we might no longer be enslaved to sin. 7For whoever has died is freed from sin. 8But if we have died with Christ, we believe that we will also live with him. 9We know that Christ, being raised from the dead, will never die again; death no longer has dominion over him. 10The death he died, he died to sin, once for all; but the life he lives, he lives to God. 11So you also must consider yourselves dead to sin and alive to God in Christ Jesus.

12 Therefore, do not let sin exercise dominion in your mortal bodies, to make you obey their passions. 13No longer present your members to sin as instruments[v] of wickedness, but present yourselves to God as those who have been brought from death to life, and present your members to God as instruments[v] of righteousness. 14For sin will have no dominion over you, since you are not under law but under grace.

15 What then? Should we sin because we are not under law but under grace? By no means! 16Do you not know that if you present yourselves to anyone as obedient slaves, you are slaves of the one whom you obey, either of sin, which leads to death, or of obedience, which leads to righteousness? 17But thanks be to God that you, having once been slaves of sin, have become obedient from the heart to the form of teaching to which you were entrusted, 18and that you, having been set free from sin, have become slaves of righteousness. 19I am speaking in human terms because of your natural limitations.[w] For just as you once presented your members as slaves to impurity and to greater and greater iniquity, so now present your members as slaves to righteousness for sanctification.

20 When you were slaves of sin, you

*u* Or *righteousness* *v* Or *weapons* *w* Gk *the weakness of your flesh*

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*the trespass multiplied,* this is explained in 7.7–13.

**6.1–14: Dying and rising with Christ.** Paul's insistence that salvation is entirely a gracious and undeserved gift of God may seem to have laid him open to the charge of encouraging sin. This charge Paul vigorously rejects. When Christians are *baptized,* they are united with Christ. They share in Christ's death and in the *newness of life* (v. 4) which his resurrection has made possible for us. But this death is a *death . . . to sin,* and the new life is *life . . . to God* (v. 10). *How can we who died to sin go on living in it?* (v. 2).

**6.6**: *The body of sin,* not the physical body as such, but the sinful self. **13**: *Your members,* all the faculties and functions of the person.

**6.15–23: The two slaveries.** In rejecting again the same charge (see v. 1 n.), Paul draws an analogy from slavery. Sinners are sin's slaves; but if they become God's slaves, how can they any longer obey their former master? **19**: *Sanctification,* the result of righteousness/justification (v. 22) and ongoing process of living this out in consecration to God and holiness (see 1.7 *saints;* 1 Thess 4.3– 8).

were free in regard to righteousness. 21So what advantage did you then get from the things of which you now are ashamed? The end of those things is death. 22But now that you have been freed from sin and enslaved to God, the advantage you get is sanctification. The end is eternal life. 23For the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.

7 Do you not know, brothers and sisters[x]—for I am speaking to those who know the law—that the law is binding on a person only during that person's lifetime? 2Thus a married woman is bound by the law to her husband as long as he lives; but if her husband dies, she is discharged from the law concerning the husband. 3Accordingly, she will be called an adulteress if she lives with another man while her husband is alive. But if her husband dies, she is free from that law, and if she marries another man, she is not an adulteress.

4 In the same way, my friends,[x] you have died to the law through the body of Christ, so that you may belong to another, to him who has been raised from the dead in order that we may bear fruit for God. 5While we were living in the flesh, our sinful passions, aroused by the law, were at work in our members to bear fruit for death. 6But now we are discharged from the law, dead to that which held us captive, so that we are slaves not under the old written code but in the new life of the Spirit.

7 What then should we say? That the law is sin? By no means! Yet, if it had not been for the law, I would not have known sin. I would not have known what it is to covet if the law had not said, "You shall not covet." 8But sin, seizing an opportunity in the commandment, produced in me all kinds of covetousness. Apart from the law sin lies dead. 9I was once alive apart from the law, but when the commandment came, sin revived 10and I died, and the very commandment that promised life proved to be death to me. 11For sin, seizing an opportunity in the commandment, deceived me and through it killed me. 12So the law is holy, and the commandment is holy and just and good.

13 Did what is good, then, bring death to me? By no means! It was sin, working death in me through what is good, in order that sin might be shown to be sin, and through the commandment might become sinful beyond measure.

14 For we know that the law is spiritual; but I am of the flesh, sold into slavery under sin.[y] 15I do not understand my own actions. For I do not do what I want, but I do the very thing I hate. 16Now if I do what I do not want, I agree

*x* Gk *brothers* *y* Gk *sold under sin*

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**7.1–6: An analogy from marriage.** Christians who have died to sin are no more bound to it than is a woman to her deceased husband. **1–2:** *Law* generally, but specifically Num 5.20, 24; 30.10–14. **4–6:** *The law* of Moses, as in 2.12–27; 3.19–21, 28–31; 4.13–16.

**7.7–13: The law and sin.** *I, me:* Variously referred to Paul (before or after faith), Adam, the Jewish people, the carefree childhood of a Jewish boy, or all humanity, vv. 7–13 represent a dramatic device by Paul to look with Christian eyes on the law and the human situation. **7:** Though the law is *holy . . . and good* (v. 12), it not only makes one conscious of sin (see Gal 3.19 n.), but also incites to sin (e.g. covetousness; compare Ex 20.17; Deut 5.21). **9:** A Jewish boy was not held responsible for his actions until after the age of twelve when he became "Barmitzvah" (Son of the Commandment). **10:** Lev 18.5. **13:** The real enemy is sin, which uses even *what is good* (the law) to make persons more sinful than they would otherwise be.

**7.14–23: The inner conflict.** Sin is personified as an evil power that enters one's life and brings the true self into slavery to its rule.

**7.14:** *The law is spiritual,* divine in origin and nature, and holy (v. 12). *I am of the flesh,* referring not merely to our physical nature, but to our whole self, ruled by sin and selfishness (*I, me*), though the *inmost self* (v. 22) or *mind* (vv. 23, 25) rejoices in God's *law*. **17:** In emphasizing sin's power, Paul seems to deny one's responsibility for sin (compare v. 20), but other passages prevent inferring that he

that the law is good. 17But in fact it is no longer I that do it, but sin that dwells within me. 18For I know that nothing good dwells within me, that is, in my flesh. I can will what is right, but I cannot do it. 19For I do not do the good I want, but the evil I do not want is what I do. 20Now if I do what I do not want, it is no longer I that do it, but sin that dwells within me.

21 So I find it to be a law that when I want to do what is good, evil lies close at hand. 22For I delight in the law of God in my inmost self, 23but I see in my members another law at war with the law of my mind, making me captive to the law of sin that dwells in my members. 24Wretched man that I am! Who will rescue me from this body of death? 25Thanks be to God through Jesus Christ our Lord!

So then, with my mind I am a slave to the law of God, but with my flesh I am a slave to the law of sin.

8 There is therefore now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus. 2For the law of the Spirit[z] of life in Christ Jesus has set you[a] free from the law of sin and of death. 3For God has done what the law, weakened by the flesh, could not do: by sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and to deal with sin,[b] he condemned sin in the flesh, 4so that the just requirement of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not according to the flesh but according to the Spirit.[z] 5For those who live according to the flesh set their minds on the things of the flesh, but those who live according to the Spirit[z] set their minds on the things of the Spirit.[z] 6To set the mind on the flesh is death, but to set the mind on the Spirit[z] is life and peace. 7For this reason the mind that is set on the flesh is hostile to God; it does not submit to God's law—indeed it cannot, 8and those who are in the flesh cannot please God.

9 But you are not in the flesh; you are in the Spirit,[z] since the Spirit of God dwells in you. Anyone who does not have the Spirit of Christ does not belong to him. 10But if Christ is in you, though the body is dead because of sin, the Spirit[z] is life because of righteousness. 11If the Spirit of him who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you, he who raised Christ[c] from the dead will give life to your mortal bodies also through[d] his Spirit that dwells in you.

12 So then, brothers and sisters,[e] we

*z* Or *spirit* *a* Here the Greek word *you* is singular number; other ancient authorities read *me* or *us* *b* Or *and as a sin offering* *c* Other ancient authorities read *the Christ* or *Christ Jesus* or *Jesus Christ* *d* Other ancient authorities read *on account of* *e* Gk *brothers*

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means this (e.g. Rom 1.31–2.5; 5.12, 14). **21–23**: *Law,* here "principle" or "pattern," as at 3.27.

**7.24–25**: **Despair and release.** Threatened by utter defeat in the struggle with our enemy entrenched in our own lives, we cast ourselves upon God's mercy in Christ; only then do we find freedom from both the guilt and the power of sin. **24**: *This body of death,* i.e. the body, which is the instrument of sin, is under the dominion of death.

**8.1–4**: **God's saving act. 1**: *Condemnation* means judgment, doom, and death (2 Cor 3.7, 9), but not for those in Christ, because God has sentenced sin to death (*condemned sin,* v. 3). **2**: *The* life-giving *Spirit* is the divine principle (*law*) in the new order which God has created through Christ. To be *in Christ* is to belong to this new order and thus to have the Spirit (v. 9), who is the actual presence of God in our midst and in our hearts. **3**: *Sin offering* (in footnote), Lev 6.25; 14.19. **4**: Only through the power of *the Spirit* can we hope for the righteousness which *the law* requires but cannot enable us in our weakness to attain.

**8.5–11**: **Life in the flesh and in the Spirit. 5**: To live *according to the flesh* (see 7.14 n.) is to be dominated by selfish passions; to *live according to* (or *in,* v. 9) *the Spirit* is to belong to the new community of faith where God dwells as the Spirit.

**8.9–10**: Note the interchangeable use of *the Spirit, the Spirit of God,* and *the Spirit of Christ,* and the interrelation with *Christ.* **10**: Gal 2.20; Eph 3.17. **11**: Jn 5.21.

**8.12–17**: **The Spirit and adoption.** The Spirit does not make slaves of us, but *children*

are debtors, not to the flesh, to live according to the flesh— 13for if you live according to the flesh, you will die; but if by the Spirit you put to death the deeds of the body, you will live. 14For all who are led by the Spirit of God are children of God. 15For you did not receive a spirit of slavery to fall back into fear, but you have received a spirit of adoption. When we cry, "Abba![f] Father!" 16it is that very Spirit bearing witness[g] with our spirit that we are children of God, 17and if children, then heirs, heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ—if, in fact, we suffer with him so that we may also be glorified with him.

18 I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worth comparing with the glory about to be revealed to us. 19For the creation waits with eager longing for the revealing of the children of God; 20for the creation was subjected to futility, not of its own will but by the will of the one who subjected it, in hope 21that the creation itself will be set free from its bondage to decay and will obtain the freedom of the glory of the children of God. 22We know that the whole creation has been groaning in labor pains until now; 23and not only the creation, but we ourselves, who have the first fruits of the Spirit, groan inwardly while we wait for adoption, the redemption of our bodies. 24For in[h] hope we were saved. Now hope that is seen is not hope. For who hopes[i] for what is seen? 25But if we hope for what we do not see, we wait for it with patience.

26 Likewise the Spirit helps us in our weakness; for we do not know how to pray as we ought, but that very Spirit intercedes[j] with sighs too deep for words. 27And God,[k] who searches the heart, knows what is the mind of the Spirit, because the Spirit[l] intercedes for the saints according to the will of God.[m]

28 We know that all things work together for good[n] for those who love God, who are called according to his purpose. 29For those whom he foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the image of his Son, in order that he might be the firstborn within a large family.[o] 30And those whom he predestined he also called; and those whom he called he also justified; and those whom he justified he also glorified.

*f* Aramaic for *Father* *g* Or *15a spirit of adoption, by which we cry, "Abba! Father!" 16The Spirit itself bears witness* *h* Or *by* *i* Other ancient authorities read *awaits* *j* Other ancient authorities add *for us* *k* Gk *the one* *l* Gk *he* or *it* *m* Gk *according to God* *n* Other ancient authorities read *God makes all things work together for good*, or *in all things God works for good* *o* Gk *among many brothers*

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*of God*. **15**: *Abba*, the Aramaic word meaning "Father," which Jesus used in his own prayers (Mk 14.36) and which passed into the prayer life of the early church. **16–17**: The fact that the *Spirit* prompts this ecstatic prayer proves our adoption (Gal 4.5–7).

**8.18–25**: **The hope of fulfillment.** **18**: The Christian life involves *sufferings* (especially in Paul's mission work), but the apostle rejoices in the sure hope of *glory* (5.2). **20**: *The one who subjected* creation: God (Gen 3.17). **21**: When human beings (in Christ) are finally restored to their true destiny, nature will also share in this release from *bondage to decay* and in the *freedom of glory*. **22–23**: Nature is thought of as sharing in the stress, anxiety, and pain which we ourselves feel as we wait for the promised *redemption*. *The first fruits of the Spirit*, the Spirit, already received, is an advanced installment of the full adoption we are yet to receive. *Our bodies*, as often in Paul, our "selves," expressed bodily (2 Cor 5.2–4). **24–25**: 1 Cor 2.9; 2 Cor 5.7; Heb 11.1.

**8.26–30**: **Human weakness is sustained** by the Spirit's intercession and by the knowledge of God's loving purpose. **28**: *His purpose*, or plan of salvation, is set forth in vv. 29–30. **29**: *To be conformed to . . . his Son* is to share the resurrection life of Christ, to be a "joint heir" (compare v. 17), to be *glorified* (v. 30).

**8.31–39**: **Our confidence in God.** **31**: Ps 118.6. **32**: 4.25; 5.8; Jn 3.16. **35**: To be a Christian in the first century was both difficult and dangerous (compare 2 Cor 11.23–27). **36**: Ps 44.22. **38**: *Neither death, nor life*, i.e. whether we live or die (14.8) we shall not be separated. *Angels . . . rulers . . . powers*, supernatural beings, whether evil or good, and of various ranks (see Eph 6.12 n.). **39**: *Height*

31 What then are we to say about these things? If God is for us, who is against us? 32He who did not withhold his own Son, but gave him up for all of us, will he not with him also give us everything else? 33Who will bring any charge against God's elect? It is God who justifies. 34Who is to condemn? It is Christ Jesus, who died, yes, who was raised, who is at the right hand of God, who indeed intercedes for us.[p] 35Who will separate us from the love of Christ? Will hardship, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? 36As it is written,

"For your sake we are being killed
all day long;
we are accounted as sheep to be
slaughtered."

37No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us. 38For I am convinced that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor rulers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, 39nor height, nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord.

9 I am speaking the truth in Christ—I am not lying; my conscience confirms it by the Holy Spirit— 2I have great sorrow and unceasing anguish in my heart. 3For I could wish that I myself were accursed and cut off from Christ for the sake of my own people,[q] my kindred according to the flesh. 4They are Israelites, and to them belong the adoption, the glory, the covenants, the giving of the law, the worship, and the promises; 5to them belong the patriarchs, and from them, according to the flesh, comes the Messiah,[r] who is over all, God blessed forever.[s] Amen.

6 It is not as though the word of God had failed. For not all Israelites truly belong to Israel, 7and not all of Abraham's children are his true descendants; but "It is through Isaac that descendants shall be named for you." 8This means that it is not the children of the flesh who are the children of God, but the children of the promise are counted as descendants. 9For this is what the promise said, "About this time I will return and Sarah shall have a son." 10Nor is that all; something similar happened to Rebecca when she had conceived children by one husband, our ancestor Isaac. 11Even before they had been born or had done anything good or bad (so that God's purpose of election might continue, 12not by works but by his call) she was told, "The elder shall serve the younger." 13As it is written,

"I have loved Jacob,
but I have hated Esau."

14 What then are we to say? Is there injustice on God's part? By no means! 15For he says to Moses,

"I will have mercy on whom I
have mercy,
and I will have compassion on
whom I have compassion."

16So it depends not on human will or exertion, but on God who shows mercy. 17For the scripture says to Pharaoh, "I have raised you up for the very purpose

*p* Or *Is it Christ Jesus . . . for us?* *q* Gk *my brothers* *r* Or *the Christ* *s* Or *Messiah, who is God over all, blessed forever*; or *Messiah. May he who is God over all be blessed forever*

and *depth,* compare Ps 139.8; perhaps astrological, the highest point to which the stars rise and the abyss out of which they were thought to ascend; i.e. no such power can separate us from Christ or defeat God's purpose for us.

**9.1–5: The problem of Israel's unbelief. 3**: Ex 32.32. **4**: *Adoption,* i.e. as God's children (Ex 4.22; Jer 31.9). *Glory,* God's presence (Ex 16.10; 24.16). *Covenants,* plural because several existed with humanity and with Israel (Gen 6.18; 9.9; 15.8; 17.2, 7, 9; Ex 2.24). *Giving of the law,* Ex 20.1–17; Deut 5.1–21. *Worship,* in tabernacle and temple. **5**: *Messiah . . . God:* Whether Christ is called God here depends on the punctuation inserted (see footnote).

**9.6–13: God's promise to Israel has not failed,** because the promise was not made to all of Abraham's physical descendants, but to those whom God chose, i.e. Sarah, not Hagar (Gal 4.21–31); Isaac, not Ishmael; Jacob, not Esau. **7**: Gen 21.12. **9**: Gen 18.10. **10–12**: Gen 25.21, 23. **13**: Mal 1.2–3.

**9.14–29: God's right to choose. 15**: Ex 33.19. **17**: Ex 9.16. **19–21**: Isa 29.16; 45.9;

of showing my power in you, so that my name may be proclaimed in all the earth." [18]So then he has mercy on whomever he chooses, and he hardens the heart of whomever he chooses.

19 You will say to me then, "Why then does he still find fault? For who can resist his will?" [20]But who indeed are you, a human being, to argue with God? Will what is molded say to the one who molds it, "Why have you made me like this?" [21]Has the potter no right over the clay, to make out of the same lump one object for special use and another for ordinary use? [22]What if God, desiring to show his wrath and to make known his power, has endured with much patience the objects of wrath that are made for destruction; [23]and what if he has done so in order to make known the riches of his glory for the objects of mercy, which he has prepared beforehand for glory— [24]including us whom he has called, not from the Jews only but also from the Gentiles? [25]As indeed he says in Hosea,

"Those who were not my people I
will call 'my people,'
and her who was not beloved I
will call 'beloved.' "

[26] "And in the very place where it
was said to them, 'You are
not my people,'
there they shall be called
children of the living God."

27 And Isaiah cries out concerning Israel, "Though the number of the children of Israel were like the sand of the sea, only a remnant of them will be saved; [28]for the Lord will execute his sentence on the earth quickly and decisively."[t] [29]And as Isaiah predicted,

"If the Lord of hosts had not left
survivors[u] to us,
we would have fared like
Sodom
and been made like Gomorrah."

30 What then are we to say? Gentiles, who did not strive for righteousness, have attained it, that is, righteousness through faith; [31]but Israel, who did strive for the righteousness that is based on the law, did not succeed in fulfilling that law. [32]Why not? Because they did not strive for it on the basis of faith, but as if it were based on works. They have stumbled over the stumbling stone, [33]as it is written,

"See, I am laying in Zion a stone
that will make people
stumble, a rock that will
make them fall,
and whoever believes in him[v]
will not be put to shame."

10 Brothers and sisters,[w] my heart's desire and prayer to God for them is that they may be saved. [2]I can testify that they have a zeal for God, but it is not enlightened. [3]For, being ignorant of the righteousness that comes from God, and seeking to establish their own, they have not submitted to God's righteousness. [4]For Christ is the end of the law so that there may be righteousness for everyone who believes.

5 Moses writes concerning the righteousness that comes from the law, that

*t* Other ancient authorities read *for he will finish his work and cut it short in righteousness, because the Lord will make the sentence shortened on the earth*
*u* Or *descendants*; Gk *seed* *v* Or *trusts in it*
*w* Gk *Brothers*

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64.8; Jer 18.6. **19**: As at 6.1, 7.7, and elsewhere, an objection, to which Paul responds.

**9.24**: God's choice or election is not limited to *the Jews* (compare 3.29). **25–26**: The passage *in Hosea* (Hos 2.23; 1.10) refers to God's reclaiming of Israel after the nation had forsaken God and lost covenant status; Paul (as also 1 Pet 2.10) applies the promise to the Gentiles. **27–29**: God's promises never included all Israelites (Isa 10.22; 1.9). *Sodom* and *Gomorrah*, Gen 19.24–25.

**9.30–10.13: True righteousness is by faith. 9.30**: 3.22; 10.6, 20; Gal 2.16; 3.24; Phil 3.9; Heb 11.7. **32b–33**: The *stone* (in Isa 8.14–15, God, a *rock* over which Israel stumbles; in Isa 28.16, a symbol of salvation) is christologically interpreted (compare Mt 21.42). Belief or trust in it (Christ) brings salvation (10.10–11). **10.4**: *The end of the law*, its termination (Gal 3.23–26; 4.2–6) and/or its goal (3.31; 9.30–32, *strive* toward).

**10.5**: Lev 18.5; Gal 3.12. One must actually

"the person who does these things will live by them." 6But the righteousness that comes from faith says, "Do not say in your heart, 'Who will ascend into heaven?' " (that is, to bring Christ down) 7"or 'Who will descend into the abyss?' " (that is, to bring Christ up from the dead). 8But what does it say?

"The word is near you,
on your lips and in your heart"

(that is, the word of faith that we proclaim); 9because[x] if you confess with your lips that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved. 10For one believes with the heart and so is justified, and one confesses with the mouth and so is saved. 11The scripture says, "No one who believes in him will be put to shame." 12For there is no distinction between Jew and Greek; the same Lord is Lord of all and is generous to all who call on him. 13For, "Everyone who calls on the name of the Lord shall be saved."

14 But how are they to call on one in whom they have not believed? And how are they to believe in one of whom they have never heard? And how are they to hear without someone to proclaim him? 15And how are they to proclaim him unless they are sent? As it is written, "How beautiful are the feet of those who bring good news!" 16But not all have obeyed the good news;[y] for Isaiah says, "Lord, who has believed our message?" 17So faith comes from what is heard, and what is heard comes through the word of Christ.[z]

18 But I ask, have they not heard? Indeed they have; for

"Their voice has gone out to all
the earth,
and their words to the ends of
the world."

19Again I ask, did Israel not understand? First Moses says,

"I will make you jealous of those
who are not a nation;
with a foolish nation I will
make you angry."

20Then Isaiah is so bold as to say,

"I have been found by those who
did not seek me;
I have shown myself to those
who did not ask for me."

21But of Israel he says, "All day long I have held out my hands to a disobedient and contrary people."

11 I ask, then, has God rejected his people? By no means! I myself am an Israelite, a descendant of Abraham, a member of the tribe of Benjamin. 2God has not rejected his people whom he foreknew. Do you not know what the scripture says of Elijah, how he pleads with God against Israel? 3"Lord, they have killed your prophets, they have demolished your altars; I alone am left, and they are seeking my life." 4But what is the divine reply to him? "I have kept for myself seven thousand who have not bowed the knee to Baal." 5So too at the present time there is a remnant, chosen by grace. 6But if it is by grace, it is no longer on the basis of works, otherwise grace would no longer be grace.[a]

*x* Or *namely, that* *y* Or *gospel* *z* Or *about Christ*; other ancient authorities read *of God*
*a* Other ancient authorities add *But if it is by works, it is no longer on the basis of grace, otherwise work would no longer be work*

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practice the law if one is to find life through it; this Paul has already shown to be impossible (3.9–20). But one has only to accept the free gift of the salvation in Christ (vv. 6–9; compare Deut 30.11–14). **10:** *Justified,* same term as *righteousness* (9.30; 10.3–6). Both faith and confession of Jesus are essential for justification and salvation. **11:** Isa 28.16. **13:** Joel 2.32. The early Christians often applied to Jesus Old Testament references to the *Lord,* which in their original context refer to God.

**10.14–21: Israel responsible for its failure. 14–18:** The nation cannot claim that it has not had the opportunity of hearing the gospel. **15:** Isa 52.7. **16:** Isa 53.1.

**10.18:** Ps 19.4. **19–21:** Nor can Israel claim that it has not understood the gospel; even Gentiles have been able to understand it. **19:** Deut 32.21. **20–21:** Isa 65.1–2.

**11.1–16: Israel's rejection not final. 1–6:** As in Elijah's time (1 Kings 19.10, 18), there is a *remnant* of the faithful. Paul as a Jew is no more alone than Elijah was.

7 What then? Israel failed to obtain what it was seeking. The elect obtained it, but the rest were hardened, 8as it is written,

"God gave them a sluggish spirit,
eyes that would not see
and ears that would not hear,
down to this very day."

9And David says,

"Let their table become a snare
and a trap,
a stumbling block and a
retribution for them;
10 let their eyes be darkened so that
they cannot see,
and keep their backs forever
bent."

11 So I ask, have they stumbled so as to fall? By no means! But through their stumbling[b] salvation has come to the Gentiles, so as to make Israel[c] jealous. 12Now if their stumbling[b] means riches for the world, and if their defeat means riches for Gentiles, how much more will their full inclusion mean!

13 Now I am speaking to you Gentiles. Inasmuch then as I am an apostle to the Gentiles, I glorify my ministry 14in order to make my own people[d] jealous, and thus save some of them. 15For if their rejection is the reconciliation of the world, what will their acceptance be but life from the dead! 16If the part of the dough offered as first fruits is holy, then the whole batch is holy; and if the root is holy, then the branches also are holy.

17 But if some of the branches were broken off, and you, a wild olive shoot, were grafted in their place to share the rich root[e] of the olive tree, 18do not boast over the branches. If you do boast, remember that it is not you that support the root, but the root that supports you. 19You will say, "Branches were broken off so that I might be grafted in." 20That is true. They were broken off because of their unbelief, but you stand only through faith. So do not become proud, but stand in awe. 21For if God did not spare the natural branches, perhaps he will not spare you.[f] 22Note then the kindness and the severity of God: severity toward those who have fallen, but God's kindness toward you, provided you continue in his kindness; otherwise you also will be cut off. 23And even those of Israel,[g] if they do not persist in unbelief, will be grafted in, for God has the power to graft them in again. 24For if you have been cut from what is by nature a wild olive tree and grafted, contrary to nature, into a cultivated olive tree, how much more will these natural branches be grafted back into their own olive tree.

25 So that you may not claim to be wiser than you are, brothers and sisters,[h] I want you to understand this mystery: a hardening has come upon part of Israel,

*b* Gk *transgression* *c* Gk *them* *d* Gk *my flesh*
*e* Other ancient authorities read *the richness*
*f* Other ancient authorities read *neither will he spare you* *g* Gk lacks *of Israel* *h* Gk *brothers*

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**11.7–12**: The resistance to the gospel on the part of many Jews is providential; God has *hardened* their hearts for a loving purpose, namely, that the Gentiles might have an opportunity to hear and receive the gospel. **8**: Isa 29.10. **9**: Ps 69.22–23.

**11.13–16**: The *reconciliation* of Gentiles will have the effect of making Israelites *jealous* and thus of drawing *some of them* to Christ. **16**: *The dough* (Num 15.18–21 Septuagint) likely stands for a converted remnant of Jewish Christians; *the root* (Jer 11.16–17), Israel's *ancestors* (v. 28), through whom all Israel has been consecrated.

**11.17–24**: **The metaphor of the olive tree.** The tree, including root and branches, is Israel. The branches broken off are the unbelieving Jews; the branches grafted in are Gentiles who believe in Christ. **20–22**: Having been made a part of the tree only because of faith (not merit or works), Gentile believers have no reason for pride, else God who has grafted them into the tree may later cut them off. **24**: The restoration of Israel will be easier for God than the call of the Gentiles.

**11.25–36**: **All Israel will be saved. 25–26**: A *mystery,* a truth once hidden, but now revealed by God. The *full number of the Gentiles* may mean the elect from among the Gentiles; and *all Israel* may mean all the elect (Gentiles and Jews), the elect of Israel as a people, or Israel as a whole, but not every Israelite. **26–27**: Isa 59.20–21; 27.9. **28–32**: Although some Jews may be temporarily *ene-*

until the full number of the Gentiles has
come in. 26 And so all Israel will be saved;
as it is written,
"Out of Zion will come the
Deliverer;
he will banish ungodliness
from Jacob."
27 "And this is my covenant
with them,
when I take away their sins."
28 As regards the gospel they are enemies
of God[i] for your sake; but as regards
election they are beloved, for the sake of
their ancestors; 29 for the gifts and the
calling of God are irrevocable. 30 Just as
you were once disobedient to God but
have now received mercy because of
their disobedience, 31 so they have now
been disobedient in order that, by the
mercy shown to you, they too may
now[j] receive mercy. 32 For God has im-
prisoned all in disobedience so that he
may be merciful to all.

33 O the depth of the riches and wis-
dom and knowledge of God! How un-
searchable are his judgments and how
inscrutable his ways!
34 "For who has known the mind of
the Lord?
Or who has been his
counselor?"
35 "Or who has given a gift to him,
to receive a gift in return?"
36 For from him and through him and to
him are all things. To him be the glory
forever. Amen.

**12** I appeal to you therefore, broth-
ers and sisters,[k] by the mercies of
God, to present your bodies as a living
sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God,
which is your spiritual[l] worship. 2 Do
not be conformed to this world,[m] but be
transformed by the renewing of your
minds, so that you may discern what is
the will of God—what is good and ac-
ceptable and perfect.[n]

3 For by the grace given to me I say
to everyone among you not to think of
yourself more highly than you ought to
think, but to think with sober judgment,
each according to the measure of faith
that God has assigned. 4 For as in one
body we have many members, and not
all the members have the same function,
5 so we, who are many, are one body in
Christ, and individually we are members
one of another. 6 We have gifts that differ
according to the grace given to us:
prophecy, in proportion to faith; 7 minis-
try, in ministering; the teacher, in teach-
ing; 8 the exhorter, in exhortation; the
giver, in generosity; the leader, in dili-
gence; the compassionate, in cheerful-
ness.

9 Let love be genuine; hate what is
evil, hold fast to what is good; 10 love one
another with mutual affection; outdo one
another in showing honor. 11 Do not lag
in zeal, be ardent in spirit, serve the
Lord.[o] 12 Rejoice in hope, be patient in
suffering, persevere in prayer. 13 Con-
tribute to the needs of the saints; extend
hospitality to strangers.

14 Bless those who persecute you;

*i* Gk lacks *of God* *j* Other ancient authorities lack *now* *k* Gk *brothers* *l* Or *reasonable* *m* Gk *age* *n* Or *what is the good and acceptable and perfect will of God* *o* Other ancient authorities read *serve the opportune time*

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*mies* of the *gospel,* the *election* of the Jews is *irrevocable.*

**11.33**: The wonder of God's providence. **34**: Isa 40.13. **35**: Job 35.7; 41.11. **36**: 1 Cor 8.6; 11.12; Col 1.16; Heb 2.10.

**12.1–8**: **The consecrated life.** **1**: *Therefore,* in view of the argument above, especially 3.21–8.39. *Bodies,* as often in Paul, means "selves." *Living sacrifice,* as contrasted to the sacrifice of a slain beast. **2**: Christians are to live as belonging to the coming age, not this present world (Eph 2.2; 1 Jn 2.15). **3**: *Measure of faith,* the gift of faith to work miracles (1 Cor 13.2) or of trusting obedience in Christ, with which to measure oneself; or the faith or gospel that Christians confess. **4–8**: Gifts are to be used for the community, the *body in Christ;* see 1 Cor 12.4–31 n. **8**: *The leader,* administrator (1 Thess 5.12), perhaps of charity; or patron, benefactor (16.2).

**12.9–21**: **Exhortations.** **9–10**: *Love,* compare 1 Cor 13 and 1 Thess 4.9. **13**: *Hospitality,* see 16.1–2 n.; Heb 13.2 n.; 3 Jn 5–8 n.

**12.14**: Mt 5.44. **19**: Vindication is God's

bless and do not curse them. 15Rejoice with those who rejoice, weep with those who weep. 16Live in harmony with one another; do not be haughty, but associate with the lowly;[p] do not claim to be wiser than you are. 17Do not repay anyone evil for evil, but take thought for what is noble in the sight of all. 18If it is possible, so far as it depends on you, live peaceably with all. 19Beloved, never avenge yourselves, but leave room for the wrath of God;[q] for it is written, "Vengeance is mine, I will repay, says the Lord." 20No, "if your enemies are hungry, feed them; if they are thirsty, give them something to drink; for by doing this you will heap burning coals on their heads." 21Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good.

13 Let every person be subject to the governing authorities; for there is no authority except from God, and those authorities that exist have been instituted by God. 2Therefore whoever resists authority resists what God has appointed, and those who resist will incur judgment. 3For rulers are not a terror to good conduct, but to bad. Do you wish to have no fear of the authority? Then do what is good, and you will receive its approval; 4for it is God's servant for your good. But if you do what is wrong, you should be afraid, for the authority[r] does not bear the sword in vain! It is the servant of God to execute wrath on the wrongdoer. 5Therefore one must be subject, not only because of wrath but also because of conscience. 6For the same reason you also pay taxes, for the authorities are God's servants, busy with this very thing. 7Pay to all what is due them—taxes to whom taxes are due, revenue to whom revenue is due, respect to whom respect is due, honor to whom honor is due.

8 Owe no one anything, except to love one another; for the one who loves another has fulfilled the law. 9The commandments, "You shall not commit adultery; You shall not murder; You shall not steal; You shall not covet"; and any other commandment, are summed up in this word, "Love your neighbor as yourself." 10Love does no wrong to a neighbor; therefore, love is the fulfilling of the law.

11 Besides this, you know what time it is, how it is now the moment for you to wake from sleep. For salvation is nearer to us now than when we became believers; 12the night is far gone, the day is near. Let us then lay aside the works of darkness and put on the armor of light; 13let us live honorably as in the day, not in reveling and drunkenness, not in debauchery and licentiousness, not in quarreling and jealousy. 14Instead, put on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make no provision for the flesh, to gratify its desires.

14 Welcome those who are weak in faith,[s] but not for the purpose of quarreling over opinions. 2Some believe

*p* Or *give yourselves to humble tasks* *q* Gk *the wrath* *r* Gk *it* *s* Or *conviction*

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prerogative, not ours (Deut 32.35). We are to pursue *good* in the face of evil (v. 21). **20**: To *heap burning coals* . . . makes enemies feel ashamed (Prov 25.21–22) and perhaps repentant.

**13.1–7: The Christian and the state.** Though the Christian has no right to punish (12.19–21), the state does have that right and the Christian must respect it. Paul's confidence that the Roman state (under Nero!) is, on the whole, just and beneficent reflects Jewish teaching (Wis 6.1–3) and is matched in 1 Pet 2.13–17; 3.13.

**13.8–10: Love fulfills the law. 8a**: Pay every debt; do not stand under any obligation except the obligation to love. **8b**: Mk 12.31; Jas 2.8. **9**: Ex 20.13–17; Deut 5.17–21 (in the order of the Septuagint).

**13.11–14: The imminence of Christ's second coming** makes it the more urgent that Christians *live honorably*. **14**: To *put on the Lord Jesus Christ* is to enter fully into the new order of existence which God has created through Christ (see 6.1–14 n.).

**14.1–23: Love respects the scruples of others.** Some (Jewish) Christians had scruples about eating meat (v. 2), drinking wine (v. 21), and not observing the sabbath (vv. 5–6). Paul regards these scruples as unnecessary (v. 14; compare Mt 15.11) and designates

in eating anything, while the weak eat only vegetables. 3Those who eat must not despise those who abstain, and those who abstain must not pass judgment on those who eat; for God has welcomed them. 4Who are you to pass judgment on servants of another? It is before their own lord that they stand or fall. And they will be upheld, for the Lord[t] is able to make them stand.

5 Some judge one day to be better than another, while others judge all days to be alike. Let all be fully convinced in their own minds. 6Those who observe the day, observe it in honor of the Lord. Also those who eat, eat in honor of the Lord, since they give thanks to God; while those who abstain, abstain in honor of the Lord and give thanks to God.

7 We do not live to ourselves, and we do not die to ourselves. 8If we live, we live to the Lord, and if we die, we die to the Lord; so then, whether we live or whether we die, we are the Lord's. 9For to this end Christ died and lived again, so that he might be Lord of both the dead and the living.

10 Why do you pass judgment on your brother or sister?[u] Or you, why do you despise your brother or sister?[u] For we will all stand before the judgment seat of God.[v] 11For it is written,

"As I live, says the Lord, every
knee shall bow to me,
and every tongue shall give
praise to[w] God."

12So then, each of us will be accountable to God.[x]

13 Let us therefore no longer pass judgment on one another, but resolve instead never to put a stumbling block or hindrance in the way of another.[y] 14I know and am persuaded in the Lord Jesus that nothing is unclean in itself; but it is unclean for anyone who thinks it unclean. 15If your brother or sister[u] is being injured by what you eat, you are no longer walking in love. Do not let what you eat cause the ruin of one for whom Christ died. 16So do not let your good be spoken of as evil. 17For the kingdom of God is not food and drink but righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Spirit. 18The one who thus serves Christ is acceptable to God and has human approval. 19Let us then pursue what makes for peace and for mutual upbuilding. 20Do not, for the sake of food, destroy the work of God. Everything is indeed clean, but it is wrong for you to make others fall by what you eat; 21it is good not to eat meat or drink wine or do anything that makes your brother or sister[u] stumble.[z] 22The faith that you have, have as your own conviction before God. Blessed are those who have no reason to condemn themselves because of what they approve. 23But those who have doubts are condemned if they eat, because they do not act from faith;[a] for whatever does not proceed from faith[a] is sin.[b]

15 We who are strong ought to put up with the failings of the weak, and not to please ourselves. 2Each of us must please our neighbor for the good purpose of building up the neighbor.

*t* Other ancient authorities read *for God*
*u* Gk *brother* *v* Other ancient authorities read *of Christ* *w* Or *confess* *x* Other ancient authorities lack *to God* *y* Gk *of a brother* *z* Other ancient authorities add *or be upset or be weakened* *a* Or *conviction* *b* Other authorities, some ancient, add here 16.25-27

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those who are troubled by them *weak* or *weak in faith* (v. 1). But the "strong" must not pass judgment on the *weak* (v. 10). **11**: Isa 45.23.

**14.13–15**: The "strong" must also restrict their own liberty if they find that their example is injuring a *brother or sister* who has such scruples (1 Cor 8.9–13; 10.23–29a).

**14.17–21**: More important than our right to eat and drink as we please is our obligation not to *destroy the work of God* by making our *brother or sister stumble* (1 Cor 10.23–24). **22**: *Blessed are those* who are free from misgivings as to the rightness of their practices, whether of eating or of not eating. **23**: Whatever is done against one's conscience *is sin*.

**Chs 15–16**: Some ancient writers knew a text of Romans without these chapters.

**15.1–13**: **The strong should bear patiently burdens** laid on them by *the failings of the weak*. **3**: Ps 69.9 is related to the self-

3For Christ did not please himself; but, as it is written, "The insults of those who insult you have fallen on me." 4For whatever was written in former days was written for our instruction, so that by steadfastness and by the encouragement of the scriptures we might have hope. 5May the God of steadfastness and encouragement grant you to live in harmony with one another, in accordance with Christ Jesus, 6so that together you may with one voice glorify the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.

7 Welcome one another, therefore, just as Christ has welcomed you, for the glory of God. 8For I tell you that Christ has become a servant of the circumcised on behalf of the truth of God in order that he might confirm the promises given to the patriarchs, 9and in order that the Gentiles might glorify God for his mercy. As it is written,

"Therefore I will confess[c] you
among the Gentiles,
and sing praises to your name";

10and again he says,

"Rejoice, O Gentiles, with his
people";

11and again,

"Praise the Lord, all you Gentiles,
and let all the peoples
praise him";

12and again Isaiah says,

"The root of Jesse shall come,
the one who rises to rule
the Gentiles;
in him the Gentiles shall hope."

13May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, so that you may abound in hope by the power of the Holy Spirit.

14 I myself feel confident about you, my brothers and sisters,[d] that you yourselves are full of goodness, filled with all knowledge, and able to instruct one another. 15Nevertheless on some points I have written to you rather boldly by way of reminder, because of the grace given me by God 16to be a minister of Christ Jesus to the Gentiles in the priestly service of the gospel of God, so that the offering of the Gentiles may be acceptable, sanctified by the Holy Spirit. 17In Christ Jesus, then, I have reason to boast of my work for God. 18For I will not venture to speak of anything except what Christ has accomplished[e] through me to win obedience from the Gentiles, by word and deed, 19by the power of signs and wonders, by the power of the Spirit of God,[f] so that from Jerusalem and as far around as Illyricum I have fully proclaimed the good news[g] of Christ. 20Thus I make it my ambition to proclaim the good news,[g] not where Christ has already been named, so that I do not build on someone else's foundation, 21but as it is written,

"Those who have never been told
of him shall see,
and those who have never heard
of him shall understand."

22 This is the reason that I have so often been hindered from coming to you. 23But now, with no further place for me in these regions, I desire, as I have for many years, to come to you 24when I go to Spain. For I do hope to see you

*c* Or *thank* *d* Gk *brothers* *e* Gk *speak of those things that Christ has not accomplished*
*f* Other ancient authorities read *of the Spirit* or *of the Holy Spirit* *g* Or *gospel*

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abasement of the pre-existent Christ (2 Cor 8.9; Phil 2.5–8), or the passion (Mk 15.29–32, 36). **8–12**: Christ had to minister to (become *a servant of*) the Jews to prove God's *truth* or faithfulness to promises to the *patriarchs* (9.4); but the promised salvation was also for the Gentiles, as Paul emphasizes with quotations from Ps 18.49; Deut 32.43; Ps 117.1; and Isa 11.10.

**15.14–23: Personal notes. 14–16**: An apology for Paul's apparent boldness in writing so long a letter to a church with which he had had no earlier connections.

**15.14**: *Able to instruct one another,* suggests a certain maturity and that the Roman church was not under the oversight of another apostle (compare v. 20). **19**: *Signs and wonders,* a reference to apostolic miracles (1 Cor 12.10; 2 Cor 12.12; Gal 3.5). *Illyricum,* modern Albania.

**15.21**: Isa 52.15. **23**: *No further place,* Paul conceives of his work as primarily that of an

on my journey and to be sent on by you, once I have enjoyed your company for a little while. 25At present, however, I am going to Jerusalem in a ministry to the saints; 26for Macedonia and Achaia have been pleased to share their resources with the poor among the saints at Jerusalem. 27They were pleased to do this, and indeed they owe it to them; for if the Gentiles have come to share in their spiritual blessings, they ought also to be of service to them in material things. 28So, when I have completed this, and have delivered to them what has been collected,[h] I will set out by way of you to Spain; 29and I know that when I come to you, I will come in the fullness of the blessing[i] of Christ.

30 I appeal to you, brothers and sisters,[j] by our Lord Jesus Christ and by the love of the Spirit, to join me in earnest prayer to God on my behalf, 31that I may be rescued from the unbelievers in Judea, and that my ministry[k] to Jerusalem may be acceptable to the saints, 32so that by God's will I may come to you with joy and be refreshed in your company. 33The God of peace be with all of you.[l] Amen.

16 I commend to you our sister Phoebe, a deacon[m] of the church at Cenchreae, 2so that you may welcome her in the Lord as is fitting for the saints, and help her in whatever she may require from you, for she has been a benefactor of many and of myself as well.

3 Greet Prisca and Aquila, who work with me in Christ Jesus, 4and who risked their necks for my life, to whom not only I give thanks, but also all the churches of the Gentiles. 5Greet also the church in their house. Greet my beloved Epaenetus, who was the first convert[n] in Asia for Christ. 6Greet Mary, who has worked very hard among you. 7Greet Andronicus and Junia,[o] my relatives[p] who were in prison with me; they are prominent among the apostles, and they were in Christ before I was. 8Greet Ampliatus, my beloved in the Lord. 9Greet Urbanus, our co-worker in Christ, and my beloved Stachys. 10Greet Apelles, who is approved in Christ. Greet those who belong to the family of Aristobulus. 11Greet my relative[q] Herodion. Greet those in the Lord who belong to the family of Narcissus. 12Greet those workers in the Lord, Tryphaena and Tryphosa. Greet the beloved Persis, who has worked hard in the Lord. 13Greet Rufus, chosen in the Lord; and greet his mother—a mother to me also. 14Greet Asyncritus, Phlegon, Hermes, Patrobas, Hermas, and the brothers and sisters[j] who are with them. 15Greet Philologus, Julia, Nereus and his sister, and Olym-

*h* Gk *have sealed to them this fruit* *i* Other ancient authorities add *of the gospel* *j* Gk *brothers* *k* Other ancient authorities read *my bringing of a gift* *l* One ancient authority adds 16.25-27 here *m* Or *minister* *n* Gk *first fruits* *o* Or *Junias*; other ancient authorities read *Julia* *p* Or *compatriots* *q* Or *compatriot*

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evangelist taking the gospel to new territories. **25**: *Ministry to the saints,* the collection mentioned in 1 Cor 16.1–4; 2 Cor 8–9; and probably Gal 2.10.

**15.30–31**: Paul anticipates that he may have trouble in Jerusalem (Acts 21.7–28.31). *My ministry to Jerusalem,* the offering he is bringing.

**16.1–23**: **Greetings. 1–2**: Because ancient inns and hotels were often infested with prostitutes and bandits, Christians who traveled usually depended upon the hospitality of other believers (see 12.13 n.). *Deacon* may denote an office or simply one who serves. *Cenchreae* was Corinth's seaport to the east. *Benefactor,* see 12.8 n.

**16.3–16**: Except for *Prisca and Aquila* (Acts ch 18; 1 Cor 16.19; 2 Tim 4.19), nothing is known about these persons beyond what is contained here. **5**: *The church in their house,* most congregations in the earliest period met in the homes of members (see Philem 2 n.). **6**: See v. 12. **7**: *Junia,* a woman's name; *Junias,* the same Greek read as a man's name. *Relatives,* Jews like Paul (9.3). *Apostles,* a larger group than the twelve; see 1 Cor 15.5, 7; Phil 2.25 *messenger* (and footnote). **11**: *Relative,* see v. 7 n. **12**: *Persis,* the name of a woman. **13**:

pas, and all the saints who are with them.
16 Greet one another with a holy kiss. All the churches of Christ greet you.

17 I urge you, brothers and sisters,[r] to keep an eye on those who cause dissensions and offenses, in opposition to the teaching that you have learned; avoid them. 18 For such people do not serve our Lord Christ, but their own appetites,[s] and by smooth talk and flattery they deceive the hearts of the simple-minded. 19 For while your obedience is known to all, so that I rejoice over you, I want you to be wise in what is good and guileless in what is evil. 20 The God of peace will shortly crush Satan under your feet. The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you.[t]

21 Timothy, my co-worker, greets you; so do Lucius and Jason and Sosipater, my relatives.[u]

22 I Tertius, the writer of this letter, greet you in the Lord.[v]

23 Gaius, who is host to me and to the whole church, greets you. Erastus, the city treasurer, and our brother Quartus, greet you.[w]

25 Now to God[x] who is able to strengthen you according to my gospel and the proclamation of Jesus Christ, according to the revelation of the mystery that was kept secret for long ages 26 but is now disclosed, and through the prophetic writings is made known to all the Gentiles, according to the command of the eternal God, to bring about the obedience of faith— 27 to the only wise God, through Jesus Christ, to whom[y] be the glory forever! Amen.[z]

*r* Gk *brothers* *s* Gk *their own belly* *t* Other ancient authorities lack this sentence *u* Or *compatriots* *v* Or *I Tertius, writing this letter in the Lord, greet you* *w* Other ancient authorities add verse 24, *The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with all of you. Amen.* *x* Gk *the one* *y* Other ancient authorities lack *to whom.* The verse then reads, *to the only wise God be the glory through Jesus Christ forever. Amen.* *z* Other ancient authorities lack 16.25-27 or include it after 14.23 or 15.33; others put verse 24 after verse 27

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*Rufus,* see Mk 15.21 n. *His mother . . . also,* Paul felt for her the affection of a son. **16:** The *holy kiss,* a symbol of communal love among Christians, became a regular part of worship in the church (1 Cor 16.20; 2 Cor 13.12; 1 Thess 5.26; 1 Pet 5.14).

**16.17**: Gal 1.8–9; 2 Thess 3.6, 14; 2 Jn 10. **20**: *Crush Satan under your feet,* see Gen 3.15. **22**: *Tertius* is the amanuensis, or secretary, who wrote down what Paul dictated (see Col 4.18 n. and compare 1 Pet 5.12).

**16.25–27: The benediction.** Because these verses occur at different points in ancient Greek manuscripts and versions (see textual notes on 14.23, 15.33, and 16.27) and reflect a liturgical style and themes (like *mystery*) not found elsewhere in Romans, some consider 25–27 a fragment inserted variously by later scribes and editors. **25**: *Proclamation,* another word for "gospel" (1 Cor 1.21–24). **26**: *The prophetic writings* (the Old Testament) held a *mystery* or secret (v. 25) which became known only when Christ appeared.

# *The First Letter of Paul to the Corinthians*

This is one of the most valuable of Paul's letters, not only for the light it throws upon the character and mind of the apostle (e.g. 2.16; ch 4) and for its vigorous presentation of the gospel (1.18–31, "Christ crucified"; 15.1–11, the "good news" of Christ's death and resurrection), but also for the vivid pictures it brings us of the actual life and problems of a particular local church at the middle of the first century.

The church at Corinth was situated near the center of the Roman province of Achaia in one of the most important cities of Greece. Paul had himself brought the Christian message to Corinth and it was through his work that the church had been established there (Acts 18.1–11). One gathers from the two letters to the Corinthians in the New Testament canon that Paul's subsequent relations with this church were disturbed from time to time by doubts and suspicions on both sides, but that, in spite of even a "painful visit" to Corinth, he rejoiced at his confidence in this richly gifted community (2 Cor 2.1; 7.16). It is clear that he is writing this letter from Ephesus (16.8; compare Acts 19.1–40), just across the Aegean Sea from Corinth. The allusion to the "collection for the saints" (16.1; compare 2 Cor 9.1–2) shows that the letter must be dated earlier than Romans, but hardly more than two or three years earlier (see Introduction to Romans).

After the usual epistolary address (1.1–9), Paul lays the groundwork in "the message of the cross" (1.17–25) for dealing with divisions and disorders in the Corinthian community (1.10–6.20). Then a series of questions, posed by the Corinthians, is discussed, concerning marriage and other aspects of status in society (ch 7); practices in a pagan environment (8–11.1); propriety and principles in communal life, especially worship, in a group with many different spiritual gifts (11.2–14); the resurrection of Christ and of Christians (ch 15); and specific plans for the Corinthians and Paul (ch 16).

The letter is thus concerned directly or indirectly with doctrinal and ethical problems that were disturbing the Corinthian church. In settling these local problems Paul has bequeathed to the Church universal some of the most exalted chapters in his correspondence, such as the hymn on Christian love (ch 13) and the teaching on Christ's cross (ch 1) and resurrection (ch 15).

1 Paul, called to be an apostle of Christ Jesus by the will of God, and our brother Sosthenes,

2 To the church of God that is in Corinth, to those who are sanctified in Christ Jesus, called to be saints, together with all those who in every place call on the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, both their Lord[a] and ours:

3 Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

4 I give thanks to my[b] God always for you because of the grace of God that has been given you in Christ Jesus, 5for in every way you have been enriched in him, in speech and knowledge of every kind— 6just as the testimony of[c] Christ has been strengthened among you— 7so that you are not lacking in any spiritual gift as you wait for the revealing of our Lord Jesus Christ. 8He will also strengthen you to the end, so that you may be blameless on the day of our Lord Jesus Christ. 9God is faithful; by him you were called into the fellowship of his Son, Jesus Christ our Lord.

10 Now I appeal to you, brothers and sisters,[d] by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that all of you be in agreement and that there be no divisions among you, but that you be united in the same mind and the same purpose. 11For it has been reported to me by Chloe's people that there are quarrels among you, my brothers and sisters.[e] 12What I mean is that each of you says, "I belong to Paul," or "I belong to Apollos," or "I belong to Cephas," or "I belong to Christ." 13Has Christ been divided? Was Paul crucified for you? Or were you baptized in the name of Paul? 14I thank God[f] that I baptized none of you except Crispus and Gaius, 15so that no one can say that you were baptized in my name. 16(I did baptize also the household of Stephanas; beyond that, I do not know whether I baptized anyone else.) 17For Christ did not send me to baptize but to proclaim the gospel, and not with eloquent wisdom, so that the cross of Christ might not be emptied of its power.

18 For the message about the cross is foolishness to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God. 19For it is written,

"I will destroy the wisdom of
the wise,
and the discernment of the
discerning I will thwart."

20Where is the one who is wise? Where is the scribe? Where is the debater of this age? Has not God made foolish the wisdom of the world? 21For since, in the wisdom of God, the world did not know God through wisdom, God decided, through the foolishness of our proclamation, to save those who believe. 22For Jews demand signs and Greeks desire wisdom, 23but we proclaim Christ cruci-

*a* Gk *theirs* *b* Other ancient authorities lack *my* *c* Or *to* *d* Gk *brothers* *e* Gk *my brothers* *f* Other ancient authorities read *I am thankful*

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**1.1–3**: **Salutation,** see Rom 1.1–7 n. *Sosthenes,* perhaps the person referred to in Acts 18.17. **3**: *Grace . . . peace,* see Rom 1.7 n.

**1.4–9**: **Thanksgiving,** see Rom 1.8–15 n. Paul touches felicitously upon themes which he will discuss more critically later in the letter, namely, his readers' advanced understanding (*knowledge*) of the gospel, their eloquence (*speech*), and the variety of their spiritual gifts. **7–8**: *The revealing . . .* and *the day . . .* are allusions to the final time of judgment and salvation.

**1.10–17**: **Divisions at Corinth. 11**: *Chloe's people,* members of or slaves in her household who have either written or visited Paul. **12**: *Apollos,* Acts 18.24–28. *Cephas,* Peter (see Mt 16.18 n.). Possibly four parties existed in the church. **14–17**: Not to be taken to mean that Paul regarded baptism as unimportant, but only that he had not himself baptized many persons at Corinth. *Crispus,* former official of the synagogue at Corinth, Acts 18.8. *Gaius,* Rom 16.23. **16**: *Stephanas,* 1 Cor 16.15. **17**: *Eloquent wisdom,* some at Corinth took pride in their ability to talk in a sophisticated, philosophical way; over against this stands the wisdom of the cross.

**1.18–2.5**: **Christ crucified** is *the power of God* to save, a message to be accepted and lived. **19**: Isa 29.14 Gk. **20–21**: The saved are not the *wise* of this world (or the *powerful* or *noble,* v. 26), but *those who believe.*

fied, a stumbling block to Jews and foolishness to Gentiles, 24but to those who are the called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God. 25For God's foolishness is wiser than human wisdom, and God's weakness is stronger than human strength.

26 Consider your own call, brothers and sisters:[g] not many of you were wise by human standards,[h] not many were powerful, not many were of noble birth. 27But God chose what is foolish in the world to shame the wise; God chose what is weak in the world to shame the strong; 28God chose what is low and despised in the world, things that are not, to reduce to nothing things that are, 29so that no one[i] might boast in the presence of God. 30He is the source of your life in Christ Jesus, who became for us wisdom from God, and righteousness and sanctification and redemption, 31in order that, as it is written, "Let the one who boasts, boast in[j] the Lord."

2 When I came to you, brothers and sisters,[g] I did not come proclaiming the mystery[k] of God to you in lofty words or wisdom. 2For I decided to know nothing among you except Jesus Christ, and him crucified. 3And I came to you in weakness and in fear and in much trembling. 4My speech and my proclamation were not with plausible words of wisdom,[l] but with a demonstration of the Spirit and of power, 5so that your faith might rest not on human wisdom but on the power of God.

6 Yet among the mature we do speak wisdom, though it is not a wisdom of this age or of the rulers of this age, who are doomed to perish. 7But we speak God's wisdom, secret and hidden, which God decreed before the ages for our glory. 8None of the rulers of this age understood this; for if they had, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory. 9But, as it is written,

"What no eye has seen, nor
ear heard,
nor the human heart conceived,
what God has prepared for those
who love him"—

10these things God has revealed to us through the Spirit; for the Spirit searches everything, even the depths of God. 11For what human being knows what is truly human except the human spirit that is within? So also no one comprehends what is truly God's except the Spirit of God. 12Now we have received not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit that is from God, so that we may understand the gifts bestowed on us by God. 13And we speak of these things in words not taught by human wisdom but taught by the Spirit, interpreting spiritual things to those who are spiritual.[m]

14 Those who are unspiritual[n] do not receive the gifts of God's Spirit, for they are foolishness to them, and they are unable to understand them because they are spiritually discerned. 15Those who are spiritual discern all things, and they

*g* Gk *brothers* *h* Gk *according to the flesh* *i* Gk *no flesh* *j* Or *of* *k* Other ancient authorities read *testimony* *l* Other ancient authorities read *the persuasiveness of wisdom* *m* Or *interpreting spiritual things in spiritual language*, or *comparing spiritual things with spiritual* *n* Or *natural*

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**1.23:** *Christ crucified,* the Christ who died on the cross, now risen and living. **28:** *Things that are not:* God chose the "nothings" in order to nullify the "somebodies" by worldly standards, so that boasting might be *in the Lord,* not ourselves. **31:** See Jer 9.23–24; 2 Cor 10.17; Gal 6.14.

**2.6–16: Spiritual wisdom.** God's Spirit imparts a deeper wisdom than any human speculation can achieve, a wisdom which only the *mature* (those who have been *taught by the Spirit*) can understand. **7:** *Wisdom, secret and hidden,* God's plan for salvation, redemption in Christ, now present through the Spirit and soon to be fully manifested. **8:** *The rulers of this age,* political leaders (Acts 4.25–28), or cosmic, demonic powers (Eph 1.20–21; 3.10; 6.12), or both. Not recognizing Christ for what he was, they crucified him; but his cross was the means of his victory over them (Col 2.14–15). **9:** Compare Isa 64.4.

**2.10–12:** *The Spirit* we have received is God's own Spirit who knows what is in God, as our own spirits know what is in us. **15:**

are themselves subject to no one else's scrutiny.

16 "For who has known the mind
of the Lord
so as to instruct him?"

But we have the mind of Christ.

3 And so, brothers and sisters,[o] I could not speak to you as spiritual people, but rather as people of the flesh, as infants in Christ. 2I fed you with milk, not solid food, for you were not ready for solid food. Even now you are still not ready, 3for you are still of the flesh. For as long as there is jealousy and quarreling among you, are you not of the flesh, and behaving according to human inclinations? 4For when one says, "I belong to Paul," and another, "I belong to Apollos," are you not merely human?

5 What then is Apollos? What is Paul? Servants through whom you came to believe, as the Lord assigned to each. 6I planted, Apollos watered, but God gave the growth. 7So neither the one who plants nor the one who waters is anything, but only God who gives the growth. 8The one who plants and the one who waters have a common purpose, and each will receive wages according to the labor of each. 9For we are God's servants, working together; you are God's field, God's building.

10 According to the grace of God given to me, like a skilled master builder I laid a foundation, and someone else is building on it. Each builder must choose with care how to build on it. 11For no one can lay any foundation other than the one that has been laid; that foundation is Jesus Christ. 12Now if anyone builds on the foundation with gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, straw— 13the work of each builder will become visible, for the Day will disclose it, because it will be revealed with fire, and the fire will test what sort of work each has done. 14If what has been built on the foundation survives, the builder will receive a reward. 15If the work is burned up, the builder will suffer loss; the builder will be saved, but only as through fire.

16 Do you not know that you are God's temple and that God's Spirit dwells in you?[p] 17If anyone destroys God's temple, God will destroy that person. For God's temple is holy, and you are that temple.

18 Do not deceive yourselves. If you think that you are wise in this age, you should become fools so that you may become wise. 19For the wisdom of this world is foolishness with God. For it is written,

"He catches the wise in their
craftiness,"

20and again,

"The Lord knows the thoughts of
the wise,
that they are futile."

*o* Gk *brothers* *p* In verses 16 and 17 the Greek word for *you* is plural

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Perhaps Paul means that the spiritual are not to be judged by the unspiritual (4.3–4). **16**: Those with the Spirit have the *mind of Christ*, and no one is in a position to instruct *Christ*. *The Lord* (Isa 40.13 Gk, referring to God) is here applied to Christ.

**3.1–9**: **Dissension over leaders.** Paul has apparently been criticized at Corinth for preaching too simple a gospel (2.1–2). He explains that, though he has wisdom to impart (2.6), he could impart it only to *spiritual people*, the mature (2.6); but the Corinthians are *infants* and do not qualify. They lack the real community to which God's servants like Apollos and Paul each contribute, as Corinthian party slogans show (1.12–13; 3.4).

**3.10–23**: **Teachers and church under God. 10–15**: Paul turns to the work of missionary preachers who edify the church; at the Judgment Day (v. 13) God will test what each has built. **16–17**: Since the community (*you*, plural) is a *temple* where God is present (6.19), those who divide and destroy it will suffer condemnation.

**3.18–20**: Most divisive and harmful is the "wisdom" that finds its center in "this age" (2.6) and not in God's wisdom, Christ and the cross (1.18–25). Paul refutes such pretensions by quoting Job 5.13 and Ps 94.11. **21–23**: You do not belong to any human leader; all of these leaders belong to you, the community as a whole, as indeed does everything else. But this is true only because you belong to Christ and thus to God.

21 So let no one boast about human leaders. For all things are yours, 22 whether Paul or Apollos or Cephas or the world or life or death or the present or the future—all belong to you, 23 and you belong to Christ, and Christ belongs to God.

4 Think of us in this way, as servants of Christ and stewards of God's mysteries. 2 Moreover, it is required of stewards that they be found trustworthy. 3 But with me it is a very small thing that I should be judged by you or by any human court. I do not even judge myself. 4 I am not aware of anything against myself, but I am not thereby acquitted. It is the Lord who judges me. 5 Therefore do not pronounce judgment before the time, before the Lord comes, who will bring to light the things now hidden in darkness and will disclose the purposes of the heart. Then each one will receive commendation from God.

6 I have applied all this to Apollos and myself for your benefit, brothers and sisters,[q] so that you may learn through us the meaning of the saying, "Nothing beyond what is written," so that none of you will be puffed up in favor of one against another. 7 For who sees anything different in you?[r] What do you have that you did not receive? And if you received it, why do you boast as if it were not a gift?

8 Already you have all you want! Already you have become rich! Quite apart from us you have become kings! Indeed, I wish that you had become kings, so that we might be kings with you! 9 For I think that God has exhibited us apostles as last of all, as though sentenced to death, because we have become a spectacle to the world, to angels and to mortals. 10 We are fools for the sake of Christ, but you are wise in Christ. We are weak, but you are strong. You are held in honor, but we in disrepute. 11 To the present hour we are hungry and thirsty, we are poorly clothed and beaten and homeless, 12 and we grow weary from the work of our own hands. When reviled, we bless; when persecuted, we endure; 13 when slandered, we speak kindly. We have become like the rubbish of the world, the dregs of all things, to this very day.

14 I am not writing this to make you ashamed, but to admonish you as my beloved children. 15 For though you might have ten thousand guardians in Christ, you do not have many fathers. Indeed, in Christ Jesus I became your father through the gospel. 16 I appeal to you, then, be imitators of me. 17 For this reason I sent[s] you Timothy, who is my beloved and faithful child in the Lord, to remind you of my ways in Christ Jesus, as I teach them everywhere in every church. 18 But some of you, thinking that I am not coming to you, have become arrogant. 19 But I will come to you soon, if the Lord wills, and I will find out not the talk of these arrogant people but their power. 20 For the kingdom of God de-

*q* Gk *brothers* *r* Or *Who makes you different from another?* *s* Or *am sending*

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**4.1–13: Applications. 1–7:** The teachers themselves, as *servants of Christ,* are answerable only to the Lord. **4–5:** Since only the Lord knows the heart, both boasting and blaming are ruled out.

**4.6:** If this is true for such teachers as Paul and Apollos, it is true also for church factions. *What is written,* in Scripture, thus avoiding speculations. **7:** See 3.21–23 n.

**4.8–13:** Corinthian pretensions are rebuked in ironical statements by which Paul hopes to shame his critics. Some in Corinth felt they were already in God's final kingdom, rich and full (v. 8). Contrast the lot of apostles like Paul. **9:** A reference to captives thrown to beasts in the arena or to triumphal processions where military conquerors displayed their captives. *Sentenced to death, . . . a spectacle,* like condemned criminals in the arena. **12:** Paul's *work,* Acts 18.2–3; 1 Cor 9.6, 18.

**4.14–21: Fatherly admonition and warning. 15:** The *guardian* (translated "disciplinarian" in Gal 3.24) was the slave who looked after a child's conduct when not in school. A wide gulf separated this slave and the father; Paul's relation to the Corinthians was unique. **16:** *Imitators,* see 11.1. **17:** *Timothy,* one of Paul's most faithful helpers (Acts 16.1–3). **19, 20:** *Power,* of the Spirit.

pends not on talk but on power. 21 What would you prefer? Am I to come to you with a stick, or with love in a spirit of gentleness?

5 It is actually reported that there is sexual immorality among you, and of a kind that is not found even among pagans; for a man is living with his father's wife. 2 And you are arrogant! Should you not rather have mourned, so that he who has done this would have been removed from among you?

3 For though absent in body, I am present in spirit; and as if present I have already pronounced judgment 4 in the name of the Lord Jesus on the man who has done such a thing.[t] When you are assembled, and my spirit is present with the power of our Lord Jesus, 5 you are to hand this man over to Satan for the destruction of the flesh, so that his spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord.[u]

6 Your boasting is not a good thing. Do you not know that a little yeast leavens the whole batch of dough? 7 Clean out the old yeast so that you may be a new batch, as you really are unleavened. For our paschal lamb, Christ, has been sacrificed. 8 Therefore, let us celebrate the festival, not with the old yeast, the yeast of malice and evil, but with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth.

9 I wrote to you in my letter not to associate with sexually immoral persons— 10 not at all meaning the immoral of this world, or the greedy and robbers, or idolaters, since you would then need to go out of the world. 11 But now I am writing to you not to associate with anyone who bears the name of brother or sister[v] who is sexually immoral or greedy, or is an idolater, reviler, drunkard, or robber. Do not even eat with such a one. 12 For what have I to do with judging those outside? Is it not those who are inside that you are to judge? 13 God will judge those outside. "Drive out the wicked person from among you."

6 When any of you has a grievance against another, do you dare to take it to court before the unrighteous, instead of taking it before the saints? 2 Do you not know that the saints will judge the world? And if the world is to be judged by you, are you incompetent to try trivial cases? 3 Do you not know that we are to judge angels—to say nothing of ordinary matters? 4 If you have ordinary cases, then, do you appoint as judges those who have no standing in the church? 5 I say this to your shame. Can it be that there is no one among you wise enough to decide between one believer[v] and another, 6 but a believer[v] goes to court against a believer[v]—and before unbelievers at that?

*t* Or *on the man who has done such a thing in the name of the Lord Jesus* *u* Other ancient authorities add *Jesus* *v* Gk *brother*

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**Chs 5–6: Disorders in Corinth.**

**5.1–13: A case for church discipline.** **1:** *Reported,* possibly by Chloe's people (1.11). Both Roman and Jewish law (Deut 22.30; 27.20; Lev 18.7–8) forbade marriage between a man and his stepmother. **2:** Paul is as much shocked by the complacency of the congregation in tolerating this sin as by the sin itself. **5:** Membership in the church protects one from Satan's destructive power; this man does not deserve such protection. Once excluded, he will be subject to disease and death (*the destruction of the flesh*), but there is hope that his spirit may be saved in the final judgment (see 1 Tim 1.20 n.). **7:** *Yeast . . . unleavened,* Ex 12.15. *Paschal lamb,* Ex 12.3–8, 21; Mk 14.12; Lk 22.7. **8:** Our new life is ethically a continuing festival, with bread unleavened by *malice and evil.*

**5.9:** An earlier *letter,* which has been lost (unless possibly a fragment of it is now found in 2 Cor 6.14–7.1). **11:** Immoral people are bound to be met with in public social life, but they must not be tolerated as brothers or sisters (compare Deut 17.2–7).

**6.1–8: Lawsuits in pagan courts.** Christians ought to settle their differences outside of Roman courts, for they will participate with Christ in the final, eschatological judgment of pagan magistrates; how absurd then that they should now abide by the judgments of outsiders! **1:** *Unrighteous,* unbelievers (v. 6). **2:** *Will judge,* compare Mt 19.28. **7–8:** A rebuke to both sides of every lawsuit.

7 In fact, to have lawsuits at all with one another is already a defeat for you. Why not rather be wronged? Why not rather be defrauded? 8But you yourselves wrong and defraud—and believers[w] at that.

9 Do you not know that wrongdoers will not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived! Fornicators, idolaters, adulterers, male prostitutes, sodomites, 10thieves, the greedy, drunkards, revilers, robbers—none of these will inherit the kingdom of God. 11And this is what some of you used to be. But you were washed, you were sanctified, you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and in the Spirit of our God.

12 "All things are lawful for me," but not all things are beneficial. "All things are lawful for me," but I will not be dominated by anything. 13"Food is meant for the stomach and the stomach for food,"[x] and God will destroy both one and the other. The body is meant not for fornication but for the Lord, and the Lord for the body. 14And God raised the Lord and will also raise us by his power. 15Do you not know that your bodies are members of Christ? Should I therefore take the members of Christ and make them members of a prostitute? Never! 16Do you not know that whoever is united to a prostitute becomes one body with her? For it is said, "The two shall be one flesh." 17But anyone united to the Lord becomes one spirit with him. 18Shun fornication! Every sin that a person commits is outside the body; but the fornicator sins against the body itself. 19Or do you not know that your body is a temple[y] of the Holy Spirit within you, which you have from God, and that you are not your own? 20For you were bought with a price; therefore glorify God in your body.

7 Now concerning the matters about which you wrote: "It is well for a man not to touch a woman." 2But because of cases of sexual immorality, each man should have his own wife and each woman her own husband. 3The husband should give to his wife her conjugal rights, and likewise the wife to her husband. 4For the wife does not have authority over her own body, but the husband does; likewise the husband does not have authority over his own body, but the wife does. 5Do not deprive one another except perhaps by agreement for a set time, to devote yourselves to prayer, and then come together again, so that Satan may not tempt you because of your lack of self-control. 6This I say by way of concession, not of command. 7I wish that all were as I myself am. But each has a particular gift from God, one having one kind and another a different kind.

8 To the unmarried and the widows I say that it is well for them to remain

*w* Gk *brothers* *x* The quotation may extend to the word *other* *y* Or *sanctuary*

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**6.9–20: A warning against laxity.** Corinth was known in antiquity as a particularly licentious city. **9–10:** A traditional, probably catechetical, early Christian list of vices.

**6.9:** *Male prostitutes,* young men or boys in a pederastic relationship; *sodomites,* the older homosexual; see Rom 1.26–27; 1 Tim 1.10; possibly 1 Cor 11.4–7 is pertinent. **11bc:** Baptismal tradition (*washed*).

**6.12–13:** Slogans quoted from Paul's opponents. **13:** The libertines argued that satisfying sexual desire was like taking food to satisfy one's hunger. Paul rejects this analogy. **16:** Immorality involves the whole *body,* which for Paul means one's entire personal life (compare Gen 2.24; Mt 19.5; Eph 5.31). **19:** *Your body,* of each Christian; contrast 3.16. **20:** We belong to Christ, who has *bought* us with his own blood (7.23).

**Chs 7–14, 16: Discussion of questions from the Corinthians.**

**7.1–16: Directions about marriage. 1:** The phrase *Now concerning* introduces the first of a series of questions raised in Corinth (7.25; 8.1; 12.1; 16.1, 12; see 15.1). *"It . . . woman,"* a quotation from the Corinthians (cf. 6.12–13 n.), favoring asceticism. Paul's reasons for favoring celibacy (v. 8) are given in vv. 26, 32–34. **3–4:** Equality of *conjugal rights* between husband and wife and the need for mutual consideration.

**7.8:** *As I am:* Paul was therefore single or

unmarried as I am. 9But if they are not practicing self-control, they should marry. For it is better to marry than to be aflame with passion.

10 To the married I give this command—not I but the Lord—that the wife should not separate from her husband 11(but if she does separate, let her remain unmarried or else be reconciled to her husband), and that the husband should not divorce his wife.

12 To the rest I say—I and not the Lord—that if any believer[z] has a wife who is an unbeliever, and she consents to live with him, he should not divorce her. 13And if any woman has a husband who is an unbeliever, and he consents to live with her, she should not divorce him. 14For the unbelieving husband is made holy through his wife, and the unbelieving wife is made holy through her husband. Otherwise, your children would be unclean, but as it is, they are holy. 15But if the unbelieving partner separates, let it be so; in such a case the brother or sister is not bound. It is to peace that God has called you.[a] 16Wife, for all you know, you might save your husband. Husband, for all you know, you might save your wife.

17 However that may be, let each of you lead the life that the Lord has assigned, to which God called you. This is my rule in all the churches. 18Was anyone at the time of his call already circumcised? Let him not seek to remove the marks of circumcision. Was anyone at the time of his call uncircumcised? Let him not seek circumcision. 19Circumcision is nothing, and uncircumcision is nothing; but obeying the commandments of God is everything. 20Let each of you remain in the condition in which you were called.

21 Were you a slave when called? Do not be concerned about it. Even if you can gain your freedom, make use of your present condition now more than ever.[b] 22For whoever was called in the Lord as a slave is a freed person belonging to the Lord, just as whoever was free when called is a slave of Christ. 23You were bought with a price; do not become slaves of human masters. 24In whatever condition you were called, brothers and sisters,[c] there remain with God.

25 Now concerning virgins, I have no command of the Lord, but I give my opinion as one who by the Lord's mercy is trustworthy. 26I think that, in view of the impending[d] crisis, it is well for you to remain as you are. 27Are you bound to a wife? Do not seek to be free. Are you free from a wife? Do not seek a wife. 28But if you marry, you do not sin, and if a virgin marries, she does not sin. Yet those who marry will experience distress in this life,[e] and I would spare you that. 29I mean, brothers and sisters,[c] the appointed time has grown short; from now on, let even those who have wives be as though they had none, 30and those who mourn as though they were not mourning, and those who rejoice as though

*z* Gk *brother* *a* Other ancient authorities read *us* *b* Or *avail yourself of the opportunity* *c* Gk *brothers* *d* Or *present* *e* Gk *in the flesh*

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a widower. **10–11**: *Not I but the Lord,* a possible reference to the teaching of Jesus found in Mk 10.2–9.

**7.12**: *I and not the Lord,* Paul can cite no remembered saying of Jesus as authority for what he now writes. **14**: *Is made holy,* is brought in some sense within the sphere of salvation. *They are holy,* i.e. regarded as Christian children. **15**: *The brother or sister,* the Christian partner.

**7.17–40**: **Eschatology and changes in social and marital status.**

**7.17–24**: Because the end of the world is fast approaching (vv. 26, 29–31), it is better for everyone to remain as is and not try to change his or her outward situation. But believers are free from bondage to "this world" and its environment.

**7.25–35**: Paul repeats his counsel about marriage, justifying his caution with a reference to the shortness of the time and the desirability of not being involved in the distracting obligations of family life. **25**: *Virgins:* This group, about which the Corinthians had asked (see 7.1 n.), may refer to unmarried but engaged couples or possibly to a couple married but ascetically committed not to have sexual relations; see vv. 28, 34, 36–38.

they were not rejoicing, and those who buy as though they had no possessions, 31 and those who deal with the world as though they had no dealings with it. For the present form of this world is passing away.

32 I want you to be free from anxieties. The unmarried man is anxious about the affairs of the Lord, how to please the Lord; 33 but the married man is anxious about the affairs of the world, how to please his wife, 34 and his interests are divided. And the unmarried woman and the virgin are anxious about the affairs of the Lord, so that they may be holy in body and spirit; but the married woman is anxious about the affairs of the world, how to please her husband. 35 I say this for your own benefit, not to put any restraint upon you, but to promote good order and unhindered devotion to the Lord.

36 If anyone thinks that he is not behaving properly toward his fiancée,[f] if his passions are strong, and so it has to be, let him marry as he wishes; it is no sin. Let them marry. 37 But if someone stands firm in his resolve, being under no necessity but having his own desire under control, and has determined in his own mind to keep her as his fiancée,[f] he will do well. 38 So then, he who marries his fiancée[f] does well; and he who refrains from marriage will do better.

39 A wife is bound as long as her husband lives. But if the husband dies,[g] she is free to marry anyone she wishes, only in the Lord. 40 But in my judgment she is more blessed if she remains as she is. And I think that I too have the Spirit of God.

8 Now concerning food sacrificed to idols: we know that "all of us possess knowledge." Knowledge puffs up, but love builds up. 2 Anyone who claims to know something does not yet have the necessary knowledge; 3 but anyone who loves God is known by him.

4 Hence, as to the eating of food offered to idols, we know that "no idol in the world really exists," and that "there is no God but one." 5 Indeed, even though there may be so-called gods in heaven or on earth—as in fact there are many gods and many lords— 6 yet for us there is one God, the Father, from whom are all things and for whom we exist, and one Lord, Jesus Christ, through whom are all things and through whom we exist.

7 It is not everyone, however, who has this knowledge. Since some have become so accustomed to idols until now, they still think of the food they eat as food offered to an idol; and their conscience, being weak, is defiled. 8 "Food will not bring us close to God."[h] We are no worse off if we do not eat, and no better off if we do. 9 But take care that this liberty of yours does not somehow become a stumbling block to the weak.

*f* Gk *virgin* *g* Gk *falls asleep*
*h* The quotation may extend to the end of the verse

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**7.36–38**: The translation above assumes an engaged couple; see v. 9. Others, less likely, have interpreted *he, his,* and *him* as referring to a father and his daughter (note *f* Gk *virgin*), or a master and his slave, and her suitor; the father "gives her in marriage," v. 38. A third possibility is a couple pledged to virginity in a "spiritual marriage," who now wish to enter into normal conjugal relationships (vv. 3–5). Paul's preference, in any case, is consistent with vv. 7–8, 24, 26–28.

**8.1–13**: **May a Christian eat food consecrated to an idol?** Another question from Corinth (7.1 n.). Much of the meat sold in the market places had come from animals sacrificed in pagan temples. Some Christians, *weak believers* (v. 11), had scruples about eating such meat (Rom ch 14). Others, however, felt superior to such scruples and contemptuous toward those troubled by them. Their views are quoted in vv. 1, 4, and 8. These superior people with their *"knowledge"* Paul rebukes. His principles are *love* for others that *builds up* community (v. 1) and renunciation of one's rights for the sake of others (v. 13). **2–3**: The true blessedness consists, not in knowing, but in being known by God, and it is in love that one is thus known.

**8.6**: Basic Old Testament (Deut 6.4) and early Christian confessions (Phil 2.11) are expanded (see Mal 2.10; Rom 11.36) and combined to speak of God and Christ, each with

10For if others see you, who possess knowledge, eating in the temple of an idol, might they not, since their conscience is weak, be encouraged to the point of eating food sacrificed to idols? 11So by your knowledge those weak believers for whom Christ died are destroyed.[i] 12But when you thus sin against members of your family,[j] and wound their conscience when it is weak, you sin against Christ. 13Therefore, if food is a cause of their falling,[k] I will never eat meat, so that I may not cause one of them[l] to fall.

9 Am I not free? Am I not an apostle? Have I not seen Jesus our Lord? Are you not my work in the Lord? 2If I am not an apostle to others, at least I am to you; for you are the seal of my apostleship in the Lord.

3 This is my defense to those who would examine me. 4Do we not have the right to our food and drink? 5Do we not have the right to be accompanied by a believing wife,[m] as do the other apostles and the brothers of the Lord and Cephas? 6Or is it only Barnabas and I who have no right to refrain from working for a living? 7Who at any time pays the expenses for doing military service? Who plants a vineyard and does not eat any of its fruit? Or who tends a flock and does not get any of its milk?

8 Do I say this on human authority? Does not the law also say the same? 9For it is written in the law of Moses, "You shall not muzzle an ox while it is treading out the grain." Is it for oxen that God is concerned? 10Or does he not speak entirely for our sake? It was indeed written for our sake, for whoever plows should plow in hope and whoever threshes should thresh in hope of a share in the crop. 11If we have sown spiritual good among you, is it too much if we reap your material benefits? 12If others share this rightful claim on you, do not we still more?

Nevertheless, we have not made use of this right, but we endure anything rather than put an obstacle in the way of the gospel of Christ. 13Do you not know that those who are employed in the temple service get their food from the temple, and those who serve at the altar share in what is sacrificed on the altar? 14In the same way, the Lord commanded that those who proclaim the gospel should get their living by the gospel.

15 But I have made no use of any of these rights, nor am I writing this so that they may be applied in my case. Indeed, I would rather die than that — no one will deprive me of my ground for boasting! 16If I proclaim the gospel, this gives me no ground for boasting, for an obligation is laid on me, and woe to me if I do not proclaim the gospel! 17For if I do this of my own will, I have a reward; but if not

*i* Gk *the weak brother . . . is destroyed* *j* Gk *against the brothers* *k* Gk *my brother's falling* *l* Gk *cause my brother* *m* Gk *a sister as wife*

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regard to creation (see 10.26). **10**: Social clubs and guilds held banquets in pagan temples; since no real acknowledgment or worship of the idol was involved for Christians, many of them felt that there was no objection to attending. But Paul warns of the influence by example upon a brother or sister for whom such indulgence would be a violation of conscience and therefore destructive.

**9.1–14: Paul's rights as an apostle.** Paul himself practiced the principle of self-denial (v. 12b) that he has just been preaching (8.13). For the good of the church, he has refrained from asserting his rights as an apostle (vv. 15, 18; 1 Thess 2.7). **1**: *Free,* a theme developed in 9.19–27; *an apostle,* developed in 9.1–8; see 15.8–9; Gal 1.1, 11–12; Acts 9.3–6, 17. **2**: The Corinthian church is itself proof of the effectiveness and authenticity of Paul's *apostleship.* **4**: That is, at the expense of the church.

**9.5**: *Brothers of the Lord,* see Mt 13.55. For Peter's wife, compare Mk 1.30. **6**: See 4.12 n. **9**: The ox has a right to eat the grain (Deut 25.4). **13**: Lev 7.28–36, as also in pagan cult. **14**: Lk 10.7; compare 1 Tim 5.18.

**9.15–27: Paul is free to waive his apostolic rights. 15–18**: He deserves no credit for preaching the gospel — this he cannot help — but he does take pride in doing it without compensation; and the ground of this pride he will not give up. See 2 Cor 11.7–12.

of my own will, I am entrusted with a commission. 18 What then is my reward? Just this: that in my proclamation I may make the gospel free of charge, so as not to make full use of my rights in the gospel.

19 For though I am free with respect to all, I have made myself a slave to all, so that I might win more of them. 20 To the Jews I became as a Jew, in order to win Jews. To those under the law I became as one under the law (though I myself am not under the law) so that I might win those under the law. 21 To those outside the law I became as one outside the law (though I am not free from God's law but am under Christ's law) so that I might win those outside the law. 22 To the weak I became weak, so that I might win the weak. I have become all things to all people, that I might by all means save some. 23 I do it all for the sake of the gospel, so that I may share in its blessings.

24 Do you not know that in a race the runners all compete, but only one receives the prize? Run in such a way that you may win it. 25 Athletes exercise self-control in all things; they do it to receive a perishable wreath, but we an imperishable one. 26 So I do not run aimlessly, nor do I box as though beating the air; 27 but I punish my body and enslave it, so that after proclaiming to others I myself should not be disqualified.

10 I do not want you to be unaware, brothers and sisters,[n] that our ancestors were all under the cloud, and all passed through the sea, 2 and all were baptized into Moses in the cloud and in the sea, 3 and all ate the same spiritual food, 4 and all drank the same spiritual drink. For they drank from the spiritual rock that followed them, and the rock was Christ. 5 Nevertheless, God was not pleased with most of them, and they were struck down in the wilderness.

6 Now these things occurred as examples for us, so that we might not desire evil as they did. 7 Do not become idolaters as some of them did; as it is written, "The people sat down to eat and drink, and they rose up to play." 8 We must not indulge in sexual immorality as some of them did, and twenty-three thousand fell in a single day. 9 We must not put Christ[o] to the test, as some of them did, and were destroyed by serpents. 10 And do not complain as some of them did, and were destroyed by the destroyer. 11 These things happened to them to serve as an example, and they were written down to instruct us, on whom the ends of the ages have come. 12 So if you think you are standing, watch out that you do not fall. 13 No testing has overtaken you that is not common to everyone. God is faithful, and he will not let you be tested beyond your strength, but with the testing he will also provide the way out so that you may be able to endure it.

14 Therefore, my dear friends,[p] flee from the worship of idols. 15 I speak as to

*n* Gk *brothers* *o* Other ancient authorities read *the Lord* *p* Gk *my beloved*

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**9.19–23**: Paul returns to the general topic of ch 8; the Christian is free except from the obligation to love; therefore free to serve. If taken in context vv. 20–22 will not be misunderstood: here are consideration and tact, not cowardice and compromise. **24–27**: Athletic metaphors on the importance of self-discipline out of consideration for others.

**10.1–13**: **A warning against overconfidence.** Baptism and partaking the Lord's supper do not guarantee salvation, any more than corresponding acts sufficed for the ancient Hebrews. **2**: *Cloud, sea,* Ex 13.21; 14.22. **3–4**: Ex 16.4–35; 17.6; Num 20.7–11. A later legend told of the rock following the people in the desert. Paul sees the *rock* as a symbol of Christ, perhaps as the work of the preexistent Christ. **5**: Num 14.29–30. **7**: Ex 32.4, 6. **8**: Num 25.1–9. **9**: Num 21.5–6. **10**: Num 16.13–14, 41–49.

**10.14–22**: **Application: sacrifices to idols, again.** The scriptural examples cited in vv. 1–13 move Paul to warn against participation in pagan worship. To eat at a friend's table, or even at a banquet in a temple, food consecrated to an idol is one thing; taking part

sensible people; judge for yourselves what I say. 16The cup of blessing that we bless, is it not a sharing in the blood of Christ? The bread that we break, is it not a sharing in the body of Christ? 17Because there is one bread, we who are many are one body, for we all partake of the one bread. 18Consider the people of Israel;[q] are not those who eat the sacrifices partners in the altar? 19What do I imply then? That food sacrificed to idols is anything, or that an idol is anything? 20No, I imply that what pagans sacrifice, they sacrifice to demons and not to God. I do not want you to be partners with demons. 21You cannot drink the cup of the Lord and the cup of demons. You cannot partake of the table of the Lord and the table of demons. 22Or are we provoking the Lord to jealousy? Are we stronger than he?

23 "All things are lawful," but not all things are beneficial. "All things are lawful," but not all things build up. 24Do not seek your own advantage, but that of the other. 25Eat whatever is sold in the meat market without raising any question on the ground of conscience, 26for "the earth and its fullness are the Lord's." 27If an unbeliever invites you to a meal and you are disposed to go, eat whatever is set before you without raising any question on the ground of conscience. 28But if someone says to you, "This has been offered in sacrifice," then do not eat it, out of consideration for the one who informed you, and for the sake of conscience— 29I mean the other's conscience, not your own. For why should my liberty be subject to the judgment of someone else's conscience? 30If I partake with thankfulness, why should I be denounced because of that for which I give thanks?

31 So, whether you eat or drink, or whatever you do, do everything for the glory of God. 32Give no offense to Jews or to Greeks or to the church of God, 33just as I try to please everyone in everything I do, not seeking my own advantage, but that of many, so that they may be saved. 11 1Be imitators of me, as I am of Christ.

2 I commend you because you remember me in everything and maintain the traditions just as I handed them on to you. 3But I want you to understand that Christ is the head of every man, and the husband[r] is the head of his wife,[s] and God is the head of Christ. 4Any man who prays or prophesies with something on his head disgraces his head, 5but any woman who prays or prophesies with her head unveiled disgraces her head—it is one and the same thing as having her

*q* Gk *Israel according to the flesh* *r* The same Greek word means *man* or *husband* *s* Or *head of the woman*

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in a pagan religious rite (comparable to the Lord's supper in the church, vv. 16–17) is quite another. **19–20**: Idols have no real existence; but demons stand behind them (Deut 32.17) and use them to destroy those who worship them. **21**: 2 Cor 6.15–16.

**10.23–11.1**: **Principles: our freedom and responsibility for others.** Chapter 8 sides with those willing to eat food that had been offered to an idol but advised restraint in this right out of conscience' sake for weaker Christians. In 10.1–22 Paul uses a sacramental argument based on the Old Testament to conclude, with the "weak" (8.7, 10; 9.22), against participation in such eating and drinking. Paul resolves the matter by affirming Christian freedom (10.25–27, 29b–30), yet with consideration for others (vv. 24, 28–29a), all to God's glory (v. 31), as Paul himself does (10.33–11.1).

**10.23**: Slogans in Corinth, as at 6.12–13. **26**: Pss 24.1; 50.12. **28**: 8.7, 10–12. **32**: 8.13.

**11.2–14.40**: **Problems in community life and worship.**

**11.2–16**: **Propriety in dress at public prayer.** **2**: *The traditions,* see 11.23; 15.3; 2 Thess 2.15 n. **3–5**: A play on the word *head:* v. 3, "source," see v. 8; 15.28, but in 4a (and 5–7) a physical sense, and 4b *his head* and *her head* may denote Christ. Reflecting first-century culture, a man dishonors Christ by worshiping with his head covered; a woman dishonors both her husband and Christ by worshiping otherwise. **4–7a**: Confusion of gender, see 6.9 n.

head shaved. 6For if a woman will not veil herself, then she should cut off her hair; but if it is disgraceful for a woman to have her hair cut off or to be shaved, she should wear a veil. 7For a man ought not to have his head veiled, since he is the image and reflection[t] of God; but woman is the reflection[t] of man. 8Indeed, man was not made from woman, but woman from man. 9Neither was man created for the sake of woman, but woman for the sake of man. 10For this reason a woman ought to have a symbol of[u] authority on her head,[v] because of the angels. 11Nevertheless, in the Lord woman is not independent of man or man independent of woman. 12For just as woman came from man, so man comes through woman; but all things come from God. 13Judge for yourselves: is it proper for a woman to pray to God with her head unveiled? 14Does not nature itself teach you that if a man wears long hair, it is degrading to him, 15but if a woman has long hair, it is her glory? For her hair is given to her for a covering. 16But if anyone is disposed to be contentious—we have no such custom, nor do the churches of God.

17 Now in the following instructions I do not commend you, because when you come together it is not for the better but for the worse. 18For, to begin with, when you come together as a church, I hear that there are divisions among you; and to some extent I believe it. 19Indeed, there have to be factions among you, for only so will it become clear who among you are genuine. 20When you come together, it is not really to eat the Lord's supper. 21For when the time comes to eat, each of you goes ahead with your own supper, and one goes hungry and another becomes drunk. 22What! Do you not have homes to eat and drink in? Or do you show contempt for the church of God and humiliate those who have nothing? What should I say to you? Should I commend you? In this matter I do not commend you!

23 For I received from the Lord what I also handed on to you, that the Lord Jesus on the night when he was betrayed took a loaf of bread, 24and when he had given thanks, he broke it and said, "This is my body that is for[w] you. Do this in remembrance of me." 25In the same way he took the cup also, after supper, saying, "This cup is the new covenant in my blood. Do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of me." 26For as often as you eat this bread and drink the cup, you proclaim the Lord's death until he comes.

27 Whoever, therefore, eats the bread or drinks the cup of the Lord in an unworthy manner will be answerable for the body and blood of the Lord. 28Examine yourselves, and only then eat of the

*t* Or *glory* *u* Gk lacks *a symbol of*
*v* Or *have freedom of choice regarding her head*
*w* Other ancient authorities read *is broken for*

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**11.7b–9**: Reflects Gen 2.21–23, not 1.26–27. **10**: *Authority,* to be exercised likely by women in worship (v. 5), less likely by men over women. See note *v*. If *angels* are thought of as administering the divine order (see 1 Tim 5.21 n.), women worshiping with head bare show disrespect for this order. Or *the angels* are cosmic, demonic powers against whom protection is needed. Or these *angels* are messengers from other churches (11.16; Gal 4.14; Lk 7.24; 9.52) whom Corinthian women leaders ought not to offend. **11–12**: Paul guards against a wrong inference (subordination of women) from what he has said. **16**: Paul shuts off further discussion, appealing to the example of other churches (14.36).

**11.17–34**: **Directions in the face of abuses at the Lord's supper. 18–19**: *Factions,* cliques, perhaps corresponding to social classes (compare also 1.11–12). **20–21**: The Lord's supper (see 10.3–5, 11–12, 16–17) took place in connection with a common meal, which came to be known as the agape, or love feast (Jude 12); see vv. 24–25, bread, supper, cup. **23**: *Received . . . handed on,* technical terms for transmitting an oral tradition.

**11.23–25**: Mt 26.26–29; Mk 14.22–25; and especially Lk 22.14–20. **25**: *New covenant,* Jer 31.31. *In my blood,* here Christ's death (v. 26); the Mosaic covenant was also confirmed with blood (Ex 24.8). **26**: *You proclaim,* the celebration is a sermon on "Christ crucified" (1.23).

bread and drink of the cup. 29 For all who eat and drink[x] without discerning the body,[y] eat and drink judgment against themselves. 30 For this reason many of you are weak and ill, and some have died.[z] 31 But if we judged ourselves, we would not be judged. 32 But when we are judged by the Lord, we are disciplined[a] so that we may not be condemned along with the world.

33 So then, my brothers and sisters,[b] when you come together to eat, wait for one another. 34 If you are hungry, eat at home, so that when you come together, it will not be for your condemnation. About the other things I will give instructions when I come.

12 Now concerning spiritual gifts,[c] brothers and sisters,[b] I do not want you to be uninformed. 2 You know that when you were pagans, you were enticed and led astray to idols that could not speak. 3 Therefore I want you to understand that no one speaking by the Spirit of God ever says "Let Jesus be cursed!" and no one can say "Jesus is Lord" except by the Holy Spirit.

4 Now there are varieties of gifts, but the same Spirit; 5 and there are varieties of services, but the same Lord; 6 and there are varieties of activities, but it is the same God who activates all of them in everyone. 7 To each is given the manifestation of the Spirit for the common good. 8 To one is given through the Spirit the utterance of wisdom, and to another the utterance of knowledge according to the same Spirit, 9 to another faith by the same Spirit, to another gifts of healing by the one Spirit, 10 to another the working of miracles, to another prophecy, to another the discernment of spirits, to another various kinds of tongues, to another the interpretation of tongues. 11 All these are activated by one and the same Spirit, who allots to each one individually just as the Spirit chooses.

12 For just as the body is one and has many members, and all the members of the body, though many, are one body, so it is with Christ. 13 For in the one Spirit we were all baptized into one body—Jews or Greeks, slaves or free—and we were all made to drink of one Spirit.

14 Indeed, the body does not consist of one member but of many. 15 If the foot would say, "Because I am not a hand, I do not belong to the body," that would not make it any less a part of the body. 16 And if the ear would say, "Because I am not an eye, I do not belong to the body," that would not make it any less a part of the body. 17 If the whole body were an eye, where would the hearing

*x* Other ancient authorities add *in an unworthy manner,* *y* Other ancient authorities read *the Lord's body* *z* Gk *fallen asleep* *a* Or *When we are judged, we are being disciplined by the Lord* *b* Gk *brothers* *c* Or *spiritual persons*

**29**: *Without discerning the body,* the community, one's relation to other Christians (vv. 20–22, 33); in v. 27 *body and blood,* the whole person of Christ.

**11.33–34**: *Wait for one another,* apparently those who came early left too little food for others. *Eat at home,* Paul says, if you cannot control your hunger.

**Chs 12–14: The gifts of the Spirit. 1**: *Now concerning,* see 7.1 n.

**12.1–11: Variety of spiritual gifts. 2**: A reference to the highly emotional practices in certain pagan cults. Ecstasy does not prove that one is led by the Holy Spirit; confession of Jesus as Lord is the criterion.

**12.4–11**: The real test of gifts is whether they come from the one God and contribute to *the common good* (v. 7) and edify the community (8.1). Note the suggestion of the Trinity, *Spirit . . . Lord . . . God* (vv. 4–5). **9**: *Faith,* not saving faith (Rom 1.17 n.) but miracle-working faith (13.2). **10**: *Miracles,* see Gal 3.5 n. *Prophecy,* inspired preaching. *Discernment of spirits,* power to recognize whether a prophet is true or false (1 Jn 4.1). *Interpretation of tongues,* ability to put into intelligible words what the ecstatics were saying (14.9–19).

**12.12–31: The body requires a variety of members. 12–13**: *Many* persons are made *one body* by baptism.

**12.14–26**: This body (Rom 12.4–5; Eph 4.14–16) is Christ's (v. 12) and needs the gifts of each, even those who feel unimportant. To *care for* and empathize with others prevents dissension (vv. 25–26).

be? If the whole body were hearing, where would the sense of smell be? 18But as it is, God arranged the members in the body, each one of them, as he chose. 19If all were a single member, where would the body be? 20As it is, there are many members, yet one body. 21The eye cannot say to the hand, "I have no need of you," nor again the head to the feet, "I have no need of you." 22On the contrary, the members of the body that seem to be weaker are indispensable, 23and those members of the body that we think less honorable we clothe with greater honor, and our less respectable members are treated with greater respect; 24whereas our more respectable members do not need this. But God has so arranged the body, giving the greater honor to the inferior member, 25that there may be no dissension within the body, but the members may have the same care for one another. 26If one member suffers, all suffer together with it; if one member is honored, all rejoice together with it.

27 Now you are the body of Christ and individually members of it. 28And God has appointed in the church first apostles, second prophets, third teachers; then deeds of power, then gifts of healing, forms of assistance, forms of leadership, various kinds of tongues. 29Are all apostles? Are all prophets? Are all teachers? Do all work miracles? 30Do all possess gifts of healing? Do all speak in tongues? Do all interpret? 31But strive for the greater gifts. And I will show you a still more excellent way.

13 If I speak in the tongues of mortals and of angels, but do not have love, I am a noisy gong or a clanging cymbal. 2And if I have prophetic powers, and understand all mysteries and all knowledge, and if I have all faith, so as to remove mountains, but do not have love, I am nothing. 3If I give away all my possessions, and if I hand over my body so that I may boast,[d] but do not have love, I gain nothing.

4 Love is patient; love is kind; love is not envious or boastful or arrogant 5or rude. It does not insist on its own way; it is not irritable or resentful; 6it does not rejoice in wrongdoing, but rejoices in the truth. 7It bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things.

8 Love never ends. But as for prophecies, they will come to an end; as for tongues, they will cease; as for knowledge, it will come to an end. 9For we know only in part, and we prophesy only in part; 10but when the complete comes, the partial will come to an end. 11When I was a child, I spoke like a child, I thought like a child, I reasoned like a child; when I became an adult, I put an end to childish ways. 12For now we see in a mirror, dimly,[e] but then we will see

*d* Other ancient authorities read *body to be burned*
*e* Gk *in a riddle*

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**12.27–30**: For the one *church* (*you* in Corinth and those elsewhere) God provides varied leadership. *Apostles* (4.9; 9.5), *prophets* (14.3), and teachers are preeminent. Among other functions and gifts, *assistance* and *leadership* suggest "helpful deeds" and "guidance"; only later were they linked to "deacons" and "bishops" (Phil 1.1). **31**: For all spiritual gifts *love* provides a better way (ch 13; see 14.1).

**13.1–13**: **Love, the greatest gift and way.** This lyric chapter, powerful by itself, is even more meaningful in its context. Paul is still discussing spiritual gifts (12.1–11); the great gift of the Spirit is not tongues or even prophecy, but *love*. This *love* is not love in an ordinary or general sense, but the love for others which is known within the church (8.1), inspired ultimately by the love of God in Christ for us through the Holy Spirit (Rom 5.5). **1**: *Gong . . . cymbal,* as in noisy accompaniments of pagan worship (12.2). **2**: *Faith,* see 12.9 n.; Mt 17.20. **3**: *Boast,* or glory, as at 9.15 and 2 Cor 1.14; note *d* suggests voluntary self-immolation, martyrdom, or branding as a slave.

**13.4–7**: The reverse of the proud, contemptuous, divisive spirit manifested in the behavior of some at Corinth.

**13.8–13**: *Knowledge* and ability to express it (whether in *prophecies* or *tongues*) are too faulty for one to take pride in them. **12**: *A mirror,* a polished metal surface, not yielding

face to face. Now I know only in part; then I will know fully, even as I have been fully known. 13 And now faith, hope, and love abide, these three; and the greatest of these is love.

14 Pursue love and strive for the spiritual gifts, and especially that you may prophesy. 2 For those who speak in a tongue do not speak to other people but to God; for nobody understands them, since they are speaking mysteries in the Spirit. 3 On the other hand, those who prophesy speak to other people for their upbuilding and encouragement and consolation. 4 Those who speak in a tongue build up themselves, but those who prophesy build up the church. 5 Now I would like all of you to speak in tongues, but even more to prophesy. One who prophesies is greater than one who speaks in tongues, unless someone interprets, so that the church may be built up.

6 Now, brothers and sisters,[f] if I come to you speaking in tongues, how will I benefit you unless I speak to you in some revelation or knowledge or prophecy or teaching? 7 It is the same way with lifeless instruments that produce sound, such as the flute or the harp. If they do not give distinct notes, how will anyone know what is being played? 8 And if the bugle gives an indistinct sound, who will get ready for battle? 9 So with yourselves; if in a tongue you utter speech that is not intelligible, how will anyone know what is being said? For you will be speaking into the air. 10 There are doubtless many different kinds of sounds in the world, and nothing is without sound. 11 If then I do not know the meaning of a sound, I will be a foreigner to the speaker and the speaker a foreigner to me. 12 So with yourselves; since you are eager for spiritual gifts, strive to excel in them for building up the church.

13 Therefore, one who speaks in a tongue should pray for the power to interpret. 14 For if I pray in a tongue, my spirit prays but my mind is unproductive. 15 What should I do then? I will pray with the spirit, but I will pray with the mind also; I will sing praise with the spirit, but I will sing praise with the mind also. 16 Otherwise, if you say a blessing with the spirit, how can anyone in the position of an outsider say the "Amen" to your thanksgiving, since the outsider does not know what you are saying? 17 For you may give thanks well enough, but the other person is not built up. 18 I thank God that I speak in tongues more than all of you; 19 nevertheless, in church I would rather speak five words with my mind, in order to instruct others also, than ten thousand words in a tongue.

20 Brothers and sisters,[f] do not be children in your thinking; rather, be infants in evil, but in thinking be adults. 21 In the law it is written,

"By people of strange tongues
and by the lips of foreigners
I will speak to this people;
yet even then they will not
listen to me,"

says the Lord. 22 Tongues, then, are a sign not for believers but for unbelievers, while prophecy is not for unbelievers but for believers. 23 If, therefore, the whole church comes together and all speak in tongues, and outsiders or unbelievers enter, will they not say that you are out of your mind? 24 But if all prophesy, an unbeliever or outsider who enters is re-

*f* Gk *brothers*

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a clear image. **13**: *Love* is *greatest* because it endures when *faith* becomes sight (v. 12) and *hope* is fulfilled, with God who is love (1 Jn 4.8–10). The triad appears elsewhere in Paul's letters (Rom 5.1–5; Gal 5.5–6; Col 1.4–5; 1 Thess 1.3; 5.8).

**14.1–40: Among gifts, prophecy outranks tongues** (vv. 1, 5, 39). Besides love (v. 1), Paul stresses order (vv. 33, 40) and building up the community (vv. 3, 5, 12, 17, 26) when members come together. On *prophecy* and *speaking in tongues*, see 12.10 n.

**14.16**: *Say the "Amen,"* Neh 8.6; 1 Chr 16.36. **18**: For other evidence that Paul himself had ecstatic experiences, see 2 Cor 12.1–4. **21**: *Law,* the Old Testament (Isa 28.11–12). **25**: *The secrets . . . are disclosed,* compare 4.5; Jn 4.16–19. *God . . . among you,* Isa 45.14; Zech

proved by all and called to account by all. 25After the secrets of the unbeliever's heart are disclosed, that person will bow down before God and worship him, declaring, "God is really among you."

26 What should be done then, my friends?[g] When you come together, each one has a hymn, a lesson, a revelation, a tongue, or an interpretation. Let all things be done for building up. 27If anyone speaks in a tongue, let there be only two or at most three, and each in turn; and let one interpret. 28But if there is no one to interpret, let them be silent in church and speak to themselves and to God. 29Let two or three prophets speak, and let the others weigh what is said. 30If a revelation is made to someone else sitting nearby, let the first person be silent. 31For you can all prophesy one by one, so that all may learn and all be encouraged. 32And the spirits of prophets are subject to the prophets, 33for God is a God not of disorder but of peace.

(As in all the churches of the saints, 34women should be silent in the churches. For they are not permitted to speak, but should be subordinate, as the law also says. 35If there is anything they desire to know, let them ask their husbands at home. For it is shameful for a woman to speak in church.[h] 36Or did the word of God originate with you? Or are you the only ones it has reached?)

37 Anyone who claims to be a prophet, or to have spiritual powers, must acknowledge that what I am writing to you is a command of the Lord. 38Anyone who does not recognize this is not to be recognized. 39So, my friends,[i] be eager to prophesy, and do not forbid speaking in tongues; 40but all things should be done decently and in order.

15 Now I would remind you, brothers and sisters,[g] of the good news[j] that I proclaimed to you, which you in turn received, in which also you stand, 2through which also you are being saved, if you hold firmly to the message that I proclaimed to you—unless you have come to believe in vain.

3 For I handed on to you as of first importance what I in turn had received: that Christ died for our sins in accordance with the scriptures, 4and that he was buried, and that he was raised on the third day in accordance with the scriptures, 5and that he appeared to Cephas, then to the twelve. 6Then he appeared to more than five hundred brothers and sisters[g] at one time, most of whom are still alive, though some have died.[k] 7Then he appeared to James, then to all the apostles. 8Last of all, as to one untimely born, he appeared also to me. 9For I am the least of the apostles, unfit to be called an apostle, because I persecuted the church

*g* Gk *brothers* *h* Other ancient authorities put verses 34–35 after verse 40 *i* Gk *my brothers* *j* Or *gospel* *k* Gk *fallen asleep*

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8.23 applied to the Christian community; 1 Cor 3.16–17 n.

**14.26**: Features of a non-eucharistic worship-service of the word. *Hymn,* Eph 5.19. *Lesson,* a teaching.

**14.33b–36**: Since 11.5 reports that women had a role in worship at Corinth, some refer *women* here only to those married (see v. 35), or distinguish a house church in ch 11 from the total community in Corinth (v. 26), or take these culturally conditioned verses as an editorial insertion; see 1 Tim 2.11–12.

**15.1–58**: **The resurrection.**

**15.1–11**: **The gospel of Christ's death and resurrection. 1**: *Now I would remind you,* not necessarily a question from Corinth (see 7.1 n.), but Paul has heard that some "spiritual persons" there deny "resurrection" (15.12) of the body (v. 35, on grounds in Greek philosophy of an "immortal soul") or in the future (vv. 23, 49, 51–52, on the grounds that Christians are already raised, 4.8; 2 Tim 2.17b–18). As a basis for our resurrection Paul reiterates that of Christ.

**15.3**: *Handed on . . . received,* see 11.23 n. *Scriptures,* Isa 53.5–12. **4**: *Scriptures,* Hos 6.2; Ps 16.10 (compare Acts 2.31). **7**: *James,* "the Lord's brother" of Gal 1.19. **8**: *One untimely born,* the meaning is obscure; Paul perhaps is referring to the separation in time between his own experience and those of the others. For other accounts of Paul's encounter with the risen Christ, see 9.1; Gal 1.16; Acts 9.3–6.

of God. [10]But by the grace of God I am what I am, and his grace toward me has not been in vain. On the contrary, I worked harder than any of them—though it was not I, but the grace of God that is with me. [11]Whether then it was I or they, so we proclaim and so you have come to believe.

12 Now if Christ is proclaimed as raised from the dead, how can some of you say there is no resurrection of the dead? [13]If there is no resurrection of the dead, then Christ has not been raised; [14]and if Christ has not been raised, then our proclamation has been in vain and your faith has been in vain. [15]We are even found to be misrepresenting God, because we testified of God that he raised Christ—whom he did not raise if it is true that the dead are not raised. [16]For if the dead are not raised, then Christ has not been raised. [17]If Christ has not been raised, your faith is futile and you are still in your sins. [18]Then those also who have died[l] in Christ have perished. [19]If for this life only we have hoped in Christ, we are of all people most to be pitied.

20 But in fact Christ has been raised from the dead, the first fruits of those who have died.[l] [21]For since death came through a human being, the resurrection of the dead has also come through a human being; [22]for as all die in Adam, so all will be made alive in Christ. [23]But each in his own order: Christ the first fruits, then at his coming those who belong to Christ. [24]Then comes the end,[m] when he hands over the kingdom to God the Father, after he has destroyed every ruler and every authority and power. [25]For he must reign until he has put all his enemies under his feet. [26]The last enemy to be destroyed is death. [27]For "God[n] has put all things in subjection under his feet." But when it says, "All things are put in subjection," it is plain that this does not include the one who put all things in subjection under him. [28]When all things are subjected to him, then the Son himself will also be subjected to the one who put all things in subjection under him, so that God may be all in all.

29 Otherwise, what will those people do who receive baptism on behalf of the dead? If the dead are not raised at all, why are people baptized on their behalf?

30 And why are we putting ourselves in danger every hour? [31]I die every day! That is as certain, brothers and sisters,[o] as my boasting of you—a boast that I make in Christ Jesus our Lord. [32]If with merely human hopes I fought with wild animals at Ephesus, what would I have gained by it? If the dead are not raised,

"Let us eat and drink,
for tomorrow we die."

[33]Do not be deceived:

"Bad company ruins good
morals."

[34]Come to a sober and right mind, and sin no more; for some people have no knowledge of God. I say this to your shame.

35 But someone will ask, "How are the dead raised? With what kind of body

*l* Gk *fallen asleep* *m* Or *Then come the rest*
*n* Gk *he* *o* Gk *brothers*

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**15.12–34: The significance for us of the resurrection. 18**: 1 Thess 4.16. **21–22**: Rom 5.12–18. **23**: *Coming,* the glorious return of Christ at the end of the age (1 Thess 2.19; 4.13–17). **24–27**: *His enemies* are the demonic powers dominating the present age; one of these is *death.* **27**: Ps 8.6. *His feet,* Christ's.

**15.29**: A practice otherwise unknown. Presumably Christians accepted baptism on behalf of loved ones who had died without being baptized, in order that the latter might share in the final resurrection. Without advocating this practice, Paul makes it a point in his argument. **31**: *I die,* i.e. I risk death, *every day.* **32**: One cannot say with assurance whether the fighting *with wild animals* is to be taken literally or is merely a strong metaphor (compare 4.9). In any case, Paul had bitter and dangerous enemies. The quotation is from Isa 22.13. **33**: Paul quotes a Greek proverb (from the Attic poet Menander), warning the Corinthians not to associate with those who deny the resurrection.

**15.35–58: The nature of the resurrection. 35–44**: Greeks had no trouble in conceiving of the immortality of the soul, but the idea of the raised body was difficult. Paul's point is that there are many kinds of "bodies";

do they come?" 36 Fool! What you sow does not come to life unless it dies. 37 And as for what you sow, you do not sow the body that is to be, but a bare seed, perhaps of wheat or of some other grain. 38 But God gives it a body as he has chosen, and to each kind of seed its own body. 39 Not all flesh is alike, but there is one flesh for human beings, another for animals, another for birds, and another for fish. 40 There are both heavenly bodies and earthly bodies, but the glory of the heavenly is one thing, and that of the earthly is another. 41 There is one glory of the sun, and another glory of the moon, and another glory of the stars; indeed, star differs from star in glory.

42 So it is with the resurrection of the dead. What is sown is perishable, what is raised is imperishable. 43 It is sown in dishonor, it is raised in glory. It is sown in weakness, it is raised in power. 44 It is sown a physical body, it is raised a spiritual body. If there is a physical body, there is also a spiritual body. 45 Thus it is written, "The first man, Adam, became a living being"; the last Adam became a life-giving spirit. 46 But it is not the spiritual that is first, but the physical, and then the spiritual. 47 The first man was from the earth, a man of dust; the second man is[p] from heaven. 48 As was the man of dust, so are those who are of the dust; and as is the man of heaven, so are those who are of heaven. 49 Just as we have borne the image of the man of dust, we will[q] also bear the image of the man of heaven.

50 What I am saying, brothers and sisters,[r] is this: flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God, nor does the perishable inherit the imperishable. 51 Listen, I will tell you a mystery! We will not all die,[s] but we will all be changed, 52 in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet. For the trumpet will sound, and the dead will be raised imperishable, and we will be changed. 53 For this perishable body must put on imperishability, and this mortal body must put on immortality. 54 When this perishable body puts on imperishability, and this mortal body puts on immortality, then the saying that is written will be fulfilled:

"Death has been swallowed up
in victory."

55 "Where, O death, is your victory?
Where, O death, is your sting?"

56 The sting of death is sin, and the power of sin is the law. 57 But thanks be to God, who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.

58 Therefore, my beloved,[t] be steadfast, immovable, always excelling in the work of the Lord, because you know that in the Lord your labor is not in vain.

16 Now concerning the collection for the saints: you should follow the directions I gave to the churches of Galatia. 2 On the first day of every week, each of you is to put aside and save whatever extra you earn, so that collections need not be taken when I come. 3 And when I arrive, I will send any whom you approve with letters to take your gift to Jerusalem. 4 If it seems advisable that I should go also, they will accompany me.

5 I will visit you after passing through Macedonia—for I intend to pass through Macedonia— 6 and perhaps I will stay with you or even spend the winter, so that you may send me on my way, wherever I go. 7 I do not want to see you now just in passing, for I hope to spend some

*p* Other ancient authorities add *the Lord*
*q* Other ancient authorities read *let us*
*r* Gk *brothers* *s* Gk *fall asleep* *t* Gk *beloved brothers*

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the resurrection body will be a new body (not *perishable,* v. 42, or *physical,* v. 44), which God will provide. **45–47**: Gen 2.7.

**15.50**: Jn 3.6. **51–52**: *Mystery,* a secret made known in Christ. *We will not all die* before the Lord's coming (1 Thess 4.13–17). **54–55**: Isa 25.8 Gk; Hos 13.14. **57**: *God gives us the victory* over sin now (Rom 8.1–2) and hereafter over death (Rom 8.11). **58**: *Immovable,* not shaken by false teaching.

**16.1–24**: **Final messages. 1**: *Now concerning,* see 7.1 n. *Collection,* Rom 15.25–29; 2 Cor chs 8–9; Gal 2.10. **5**: Acts 19.21. **8–9**: Acts 18.19–20; 19.8–10, 20, 23–27.

time with you, if the Lord permits. [8]But I will stay in Ephesus until Pentecost, [9]for a wide door for effective work has opened to me, and there are many adversaries.

10 If Timothy comes, see that he has nothing to fear among you, for he is doing the work of the Lord just as I am; [11]therefore let no one despise him. Send him on his way in peace, so that he may come to me; for I am expecting him with the brothers.

12 Now concerning our brother Apollos, I strongly urged him to visit you with the other brothers, but he was not at all willing[u] to come now. He will come when he has the opportunity.

13 Keep alert, stand firm in your faith, be courageous, be strong. [14]Let all that you do be done in love.

15 Now, brothers and sisters,[v] you know that members of the household of Stephanas were the first converts in Achaia, and they have devoted themselves to the service of the saints; [16]I urge you to put yourselves at the service of such people, and of everyone who works and toils with them. [17]I rejoice at the coming of Stephanas and Fortunatus and Achaicus, because they have made up for your absence; [18]for they refreshed my spirit as well as yours. So give recognition to such persons.

19 The churches of Asia send greetings. Aquila and Prisca, together with the church in their house, greet you warmly in the Lord. [20]All the brothers and sisters[v] send greetings. Greet one another with a holy kiss.

21 I, Paul, write this greeting with my own hand. [22]Let anyone be accursed who has no love for the Lord. Our Lord, come![w] [23]The grace of the Lord Jesus be with you. [24]My love be with all of you in Christ Jesus.[x]

*u* Or *it was not at all God's will for him*
*v* Gk *brothers* *w* Gk *Marana tha*. These Aramaic words can also be read *Maran atha*, meaning *Our Lord has come* *x* Other ancient authorities add *Amen*

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**16.10**: *Timothy,* see Introduction to 2 Timothy. **12**: *Apollos,* Acts 18.24–26.

**16.15**: *Stephanas,* 1.16. **17**: Perhaps these men brought the letter mentioned in 7.1 and are to carry back Paul's reply. **19**: *Asia,* a Roman province in western Asia Minor. *Aquila and Prisca* are mentioned in Acts 18.2; Rom 16.3; 2 Tim 4.19. *The church in their house,* see Philem 1 n. **20**: *Holy kiss,* see Rom 16.16 n.

**16.21**: Paul adds his personal signature (2 Thess 3.17), after dictating the rest; perhaps Sosthenes (1.1) had served as his secretary (compare Rom 16.22). **22**: *Our Lord, come!* is the preferable rendering of the words *Marana tha* (transliterated from two Aramaic words); see Rev 22.20; see also note *w*.

# *The Second Letter of Paul to the Corinthians*

Relations between Paul and the Corinthian church had deteriorated during the period after 1 Corinthians was written. The visit announced at 1 Cor 16.5–7 did not come off as planned, and the Corinthians felt that Paul had vacillated in his plans (2 Cor 1.15–23). Much of 2 Corinthians therefore deals with a crisis in confidence between apostle and community (1.12–7.16; 1.1–11 provides the usual Pauline introduction to a letter). Having made a "painful visit" to the church there (2.1), the apostle delayed from making another visit (12.14; 13.1) because he had reason to believe that it too would be painful. Instead, he had written a severe letter (possibly lost) "out of much distress and anguish of heart and with many tears" (2.4) and sent it to Corinth, presumably by Titus, one of his fellow-workers. So anxious was he about the effects of this letter that he found it impossible to wait for Titus' return. He left Ephesus, hoping to meet Titus in Troas. Disappointed there, he went on to Macedonia (2.12–13), where Titus rejoined him, bringing a most reassuring report on the attitude of the Corinthian church toward him (7.13–16). In relief and gratitude, Paul wrote the letter before us, or at least much of it on this occasion.

Chapters 8 and 9 go on to speak at length about the collection for the church at Jerusalem (8.1–9.15), which was now almost complete.

Chapters 10 to 13 constitute a vigorous defense of Paul and his work and are written in a tone so different from that of chapters 1 to 9 that many scholars believe they are a fragment of a letter written to Corinth at some other time. Possibly chs 10–13 are the "severe letter" mentioned above.

Because so much of 2 Corinthians is a response to the words and feelings of others (often opponents), which are not recorded in the letter, it is sometimes difficult to follow the apostle's argument. Its pages preserve much, however, that illuminates Paul's own life, ministry, and the concern that he felt for the churches he had established (4.5; 5.20; 6.1–10; 11.22–33; 12.2–10).

*Paul's thanksgiving after affliction*

1 Paul, an apostle of Christ Jesus by the will of God, and Timothy our brother,

To the church of God that is in Corinth, including all the saints throughout Achaia:

2 Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

3 Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies and the God of all consolation, 4who consoles us in all our affliction, so that we may be able to console those who are in any affliction with the consolation with which we ourselves are consoled by God. 5For just as the sufferings of Christ are abundant for us, so also our consolation is abundant through Christ. 6If we are being afflicted, it is for your consolation and salvation; if we are being consoled, it is for your consolation, which you experience when you patiently endure the same sufferings that we are also suffering. 7Our hope for you is unshaken; for we know that as you share in our sufferings, so also you share in our consolation.

8 We do not want you to be unaware, brothers and sisters,[a] of the affliction we experienced in Asia; for we were so utterly, unbearably crushed that we despaired of life itself. 9Indeed, we felt that we had received the sentence of death so that we would rely not on ourselves but on God who raises the dead. 10He who rescued us from so deadly a peril will continue to rescue us; on him we have set our hope that he will rescue us again, 11as you also join in helping us by your prayers, so that many will give thanks on our[b] behalf for the blessing granted us through the prayers of many.

12 Indeed, this is our boast, the testimony of our conscience: we have behaved in the world with frankness[c] and godly sincerity, not by earthly wisdom but by the grace of God—and all the more toward you. 13For we write you nothing other than what you can read and also understand; I hope you will understand until the end— 14as you have already understood us in part—that on the day of the Lord Jesus we are your boast even as you are our boast.

15 Since I was sure of this, I wanted to come to you first, so that you might have a double favor;[d] 16I wanted to visit you on my way to Macedonia, and to come back to you from Macedonia and have you send me on to Judea. 17Was I vacillating when I wanted to do this? Do I make my plans according to ordinary human standards,[e] ready to say "Yes, yes" and "No, no" at the same time? 18As surely as God is faithful, our word to you has not been "Yes and No." 19For the Son of God, Jesus Christ, whom we proclaimed among you, Silvanus and Timothy and I, was not "Yes and No"; but in him it is always "Yes." 20For in him every one of God's promises is a "Yes." For this reason it is through him that we say the "Amen," to the glory of God. 21But

*a* Gk *brothers* *b* Other ancient authorities read *your* *c* Other ancient authorities read *holiness* *d* Other ancient authorities read *pleasure* *e* Gk *according to the flesh*

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**1.1–11: Salutation and thanksgiving,** see Rom 1.1–7 n. and 1.8–15 n. The thanksgiving (vv. 3–11) reflects the relief which Paul felt as a result of the news that Titus brought him (see Introduction). **1:** *Timothy,* see Introduction to 2 Timothy. *Achaia,* the Roman province in which Corinth was located. **2:** *Grace . . . peace,* see Rom 1.7 n.; 2 Thess 1.2 n.

**1.8–10:** It is not known what this terrible trial was; some identify it with the experience mentioned in 1 Cor 15.32; see also 2 Cor 4.11; 11.23. **8:** *Asia,* a Roman province in western Asia Minor.

**1.12–7.16: Paul's apostolic ministry and the crisis with Corinth.**

**1.12–2.13: Recent relations with the church.** See Introduction. **12–14:** Appeal for a full and fair hearing, even if, while writing in the first person (*we, I*), Paul "boasts." *Our boast,* a key theme in 2 Cor, along with "confidence" (3.4; 8.22; 10.2 *boldness;* see 1.15 *sure*). Compare Rom 1.29–31.

**1.15:** See 1 Cor 16.5–7. **16:** Paul *wanted* to go to both Macedonia and Corinth in order (among other reasons) to receive their contributions to the collection, which he would then take *to Judea.* **17–20:** His critics accused

it is God who establishes us with you in Christ and has anointed us, 22by putting his seal on us and giving us his Spirit in our hearts as a first installment.

23 But I call on God as witness against me: it was to spare you that I did not come again to Corinth. 24I do not mean to imply that we lord it over your faith; rather, we are workers with you for your joy, because you stand firm in the faith.

2 1So I made up my mind not to make you another painful visit. 2For if I cause you pain, who is there to make me glad but the one whom I have pained? 3And I wrote as I did, so that when I came, I might not suffer pain from those who should have made me rejoice; for I am confident about all of you, that my joy would be the joy of all of you. 4For I wrote you out of much distress and anguish of heart and with many tears, not to cause you pain, but to let you know the abundant love that I have for you.

5 But if anyone has caused pain, he has caused it not to me, but to some extent—not to exaggerate it—to all of you. 6This punishment by the majority is enough for such a person; 7so now instead you should forgive and console him, so that he may not be overwhelmed by excessive sorrow. 8So I urge you to reaffirm your love for him. 9I wrote for this reason: to test you and to know whether you are obedient in everything. 10Anyone whom you forgive, I also forgive. What I have forgiven, if I have forgiven anything, has been for your sake in the presence of Christ. 11And we do this so that we may not be outwitted by Satan; for we are not ignorant of his designs.

12 When I came to Troas to proclaim the good news of Christ, a door was opened for me in the Lord; 13but my mind could not rest because I did not find my brother Titus there. So I said farewell to them and went on to Macedonia.

14 But thanks be to God, who in Christ always leads us in triumphal procession, and through us spreads in every place the fragrance that comes from knowing him. 15For we are the aroma of Christ to God among those who are being saved and among those who are perishing; 16to the one a fragrance from death to death, to the other a fragrance from life to life. Who is sufficient for these things? 17For we are not peddlers of God's word like so many;[f] but in Christ we speak as persons of sincerity, as persons sent from God and standing in his presence.

3 Are we beginning to commend ourselves again? Surely we do not need, as some do, letters of recommendation to you or from you, do we? 2You yourselves are our letter, written on our[g] hearts, to be known and read by all; 3and

*f* Other ancient authorities read *like the others*
*g* Other ancient authorities read *your*

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him of being *vacillating*. **22**: The *Spirit,* already given, is an advance *installment* of what is in store for Christians (5.5; Eph 1.13); God will finish what has been begun (Rom 8.16–17, 23; Eph 1.14; Phil 1.6).

**2.1**: *Another painful visit,* assuming between the plans announced in 1 Cor 16.5–7 and the writing of 2 Cor or any part of it a visit where Paul was wronged by someone in Corinth and not supported by the community there (see 2.5–11; 7.8–12), a visit not recorded in Acts but hinted at in 2 Cor 12.14; 13.1. **3–4**: Many identify the tearful but severe letter referred to with chs 10–13 (see Introduction); but 2.5 suggests that an individual caused the pain, whereas chs 10–13 deal with problems caused by *false apostles* (11.5, 13). Some therefore have identified what Paul *wrote . . . out of much distress* with 1 Cor, especially ch 5. Or the severe letter may simply be lost.

**2.12–13**: *A door was opened,* there was a good opportunity for preaching Christ. *Titus,* like Timothy, was one of Paul's helpers (see Introduction to Titus).

**2.14–3.6**: **Our ministry,** *as persons sent from God* (2.17; 3.5). **14**: A reference to the triumphal processions of conquerors returning to their capitals. The *fragrance* is the odor of incense in connection with such processions or with sacrifice (Col 2.15). It is knowledge of God in Christ (see 4.6). **16**: The decisiveness of one's acceptance or rejection of the gospel. **17**: *Peddlers,* a reference presumably to the "false apostles" of 11.4, 13.

**3.1**: Apparently Paul had been accused of commending himself. **3**: The church at Cor-

you show that you are a letter of Christ, prepared by us, written not with ink but with the Spirit of the living God, not on tablets of stone but on tablets of human hearts.

4 Such is the confidence that we have through Christ toward God. 5Not that we are competent of ourselves to claim anything as coming from us; our competence is from God, 6who has made us competent to be ministers of a new covenant, not of letter but of spirit; for the letter kills, but the Spirit gives life.

7 Now if the ministry of death, chiseled in letters on stone tablets,[h] came in glory so that the people of Israel could not gaze at Moses' face because of the glory of his face, a glory now set aside, 8how much more will the ministry of the Spirit come in glory? 9For if there was glory in the ministry of condemnation, much more does the ministry of justification abound in glory! 10Indeed, what once had glory has lost its glory because of the greater glory; 11for if what was set aside came through glory, much more has the permanent come in glory!

12 Since, then, we have such a hope, we act with great boldness, 13not like Moses, who put a veil over his face to keep the people of Israel from gazing at the end of the glory that[i] was being set aside. 14But their minds were hardened. Indeed, to this very day, when they hear the reading of the old covenant, that same veil is still there, since only in Christ is it set aside. 15Indeed, to this very day whenever Moses is read, a veil lies over their minds; 16but when one turns to the Lord, the veil is removed. 17Now the Lord is the Spirit, and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is freedom. 18And all of us, with unveiled faces, seeing the glory of the Lord as though reflected in a mirror, are being transformed into the same image from one degree of glory to another; for this comes from the Lord, the Spirit.

4 Therefore, since it is by God's mercy that we are engaged in this ministry, we do not lose heart. 2We have renounced the shameful things that one hides; we refuse to practice cunning or to falsify God's word; but by the open statement of the truth we commend ourselves to the conscience of everyone in the sight of God. 3And even if our gospel is veiled, it is veiled to those who are perishing. 4In their case the god of this world has blinded the minds of the unbelievers, to keep them from seeing the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God. 5For we do not proclaim ourselves; we proclaim Jesus Christ as Lord and ourselves as your slaves for Jesus' sake. 6For it is the God

*h* Gk *on stones* *i* Gk *of what*

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inth (Paul's *letter of recommendation*) was the work of God; Paul was only the instrument (v. 5). *Tablets of stone,* like the *letter* (v. 6), suggest the covenant with Moses (Ex 24.12); Christ has instituted a new covenant. **6**: *Kills,* produces not life but despair and death. For Paul's view of the purpose and effect of the law, see Gal 3.19–29 n. and Rom 7.7–13 n.

**3.7–18**: **The ministry of the new covenant** (see 1 Cor 11.25 n.). The contrast announced in v. 6 is developed on the basis of Ex 34.29–35. **7**: *Ministry of death,* existence under the Mosaic law. **13**: Paul interprets Moses' *veil* as his effort to hide from the people how temporary the old covenant was to be. **14**: *The old covenant,* the books of the law.

**3.15–17**: In Christ one sees the transiency of the old and knows the *freedom* and *glory* of the new. Paul here seems to identify the Spirit, known within the church, with the risen Lord Jesus, but since v. 16 is a quotation of Ex 34.34, the reference may be to Moses and God. **17**: *Lord,* God (v. 3); others see a reference to Christ (Rom 8.9–10). **18**: *All of us* who are *being saved* (2.15), not just Paul and colleagues. *Unveiled faces,* in contrast to v. 15. *Seeing . . . reflected in a mirror:* combines two suggested senses of a single Greek phrase, "beholding" and "reflecting." *Transformed,* Rom 12.2; see Rom 8.17, 29. *Image,* of God, that is, Christ, 4.4. *Lord,* see v. 17.

**4.1–18**: **True treasure, mortal ministers.** **1**: Such a ministry (3.6), from God, brings confidence; see 1.12–14 n. **2**: Probably an oblique reference to the methods of the "false apostles" (see 2.17 n.). **3–4**: Paul has apparently been accused of not making the gospel clear. **3**: *Veiled,* 3.15, 18; 2.15. **4**: *God of this world,* Satan or Beliar (6.15). **6**: Gen 1.3, applied to our *new creation* (5.17).

who said, "Let light shine out of darkness," who has shone in our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.

7 But we have this treasure in clay jars, so that it may be made clear that this extraordinary power belongs to God and does not come from us. 8We are afflicted in every way, but not crushed; perplexed, but not driven to despair; 9persecuted, but not forsaken; struck down, but not destroyed; 10always carrying in the body the death of Jesus, so that the life of Jesus may also be made visible in our bodies. 11For while we live, we are always being given up to death for Jesus' sake, so that the life of Jesus may be made visible in our mortal flesh. 12So death is at work in us, but life in you.

13 But just as we have the same spirit of faith that is in accordance with scripture—"I believed, and so I spoke"—we also believe, and so we speak, 14because we know that the one who raised the Lord Jesus will raise us also with Jesus, and will bring us with you into his presence. 15Yes, everything is for your sake, so that grace, as it extends to more and more people, may increase thanksgiving, to the glory of God.

16 So we do not lose heart. Even though our outer nature is wasting away, our inner nature is being renewed day by day. 17For this slight momentary affliction is preparing us for an eternal weight of glory beyond all measure, 18because we look not at what can be seen but at what cannot be seen; for what can be seen is temporary, but what cannot be seen is eternal.

5 For we know that if the earthly tent we live in is destroyed, we have a building from God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens. 2For in this tent we groan, longing to be clothed with our heavenly dwelling— 3if indeed, when we have taken it off[j] we will not be found naked. 4For while we are still in this tent, we groan under our burden, because we wish not to be unclothed but to be further clothed, so that what is mortal may be swallowed up by life. 5He who has prepared us for this very thing is God, who has given us the Spirit as a guarantee.

6 So we are always confident; even though we know that while we are at home in the body we are away from the Lord— 7for we walk by faith, not by sight. 8Yes, we do have confidence, and we would rather be away from the body and at home with the Lord. 9So whether we are at home or away, we make it our aim to please him. 10For all of us must appear before the judgment seat of Christ, so that each may receive recompense for what has been done in the body, whether good or evil.

11 Therefore, knowing the fear of the Lord, we try to persuade others; but we ourselves are well known to God, and I hope that we are also well known to your consciences. 12We are not commending ourselves to you again, but giving you an

*j* Other ancient authorities read *put it on*

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**4.7**: *Clay jars,* a reference to the weakness of the body (Gen 2.7) and indeed to all human limitations. **10–11**: In his sufferings and perils Paul shares in Jesus' death; but it is given to him also to share in the life of the risen, victorious Christ. **12**: The apostle "dies" (i.e. suffers) that the Corinthians and others may know the life in Christ (v. 15).

**4.13**: A reference to the faith of the psalmist in the midst of troubles (Ps 116.10); belief leads to confession of faith. **15**: As the gospel of God's grace (6.1) advances, *more and more people* respond in faith with thankfulness. **16**: See 3.18. **17**: Paul considers all of his sufferings as a *slight momentary affliction.*

**5.1–10**: **Confidence in facing death.** Continuing to think of his sufferings and constant peril, Paul uses the figures of a *tent* and a *building from God* in speaking of death and resurrection. This *building* is the "spiritual body" of 1 Cor 15.44–50. **3**: *Naked,* Paul hopes that the Lord will come and that he will receive his new body before he has had to put off the old one. **4**: 1 Cor 15.51–54. *Burden,* of afflictions (1.6; 4.8, 17). **5**: See 1.22 n.

**5.6–8**: Believers are never *away from the Lord* in the absolute sense; but as long as they are in the body, they are to a degree separated from him (1 Cor 13.12).

**5.11–6.13**: **Further defense of his minis-**

opportunity to boast about us, so that you may be able to answer those who boast in outward appearance and not in the heart. 13For if we are beside ourselves, it is for God; if we are in our right mind, it is for you. 14For the love of Christ urges us on, because we are convinced that one has died for all; therefore all have died. 15And he died for all, so that those who live might live no longer for themselves, but for him who died and was raised for them.

16 From now on, therefore, we regard no one from a human point of view;[k] even though we once knew Christ from a human point of view,[k] we know him no longer in that way. 17So if anyone is in Christ, there is a new creation: everything old has passed away; see, everything has become new! 18All this is from God, who reconciled us to himself through Christ, and has given us the ministry of reconciliation; 19that is, in Christ God was reconciling the world to himself,[l] not counting their trespasses against them, and entrusting the message of reconciliation to us. 20So we are ambassadors for Christ, since God is making his appeal through us; we entreat you on behalf of Christ, be reconciled to God. 21For our sake he made him to be sin who knew no sin, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.

6 As we work together with him,[m] we urge you also not to accept the grace of God in vain. 2For he says,

"At an acceptable time I have
listened to you,
and on a day of salvation I have
helped you."

See, now is the acceptable time; see, now is the day of salvation! 3We are putting no obstacle in anyone's way, so that no fault may be found with our ministry, 4but as servants of God we have commended ourselves in every way: through great endurance, in afflictions, hardships, calamities, 5beatings, imprisonments, riots, labors, sleepless nights, hunger; 6by purity, knowledge, patience, kindness, holiness of spirit, genuine love, 7truthful speech, and the power of God; with the weapons of righteousness for the right hand and for the left; 8in honor and dishonor, in ill repute and good repute. We are treated as impostors, and yet are true; 9as unknown, and yet are well known; as dying, and see—we are alive; as punished, and yet not killed; 10as sorrowful, yet always rejoicing; as poor, yet making many rich; as having nothing, and yet possessing everything.

11 We have spoken frankly to you Corinthians; our heart is wide open to you. 12There is no restriction in our affections, but only in yours. 13In return—I speak as to children—open wide your hearts also.

*k* Gk *according to the flesh* *l* Or *God was in Christ reconciling the world to himself* *m* Gk *As we work together*

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**try of reconciliation. 5.13**: *Beside ourselves,* in contrast to *in our right mind,* refers to a charge by opponents against Paul, perhaps of religious ecstasy (12.1–7). **14**: *The love of Christ,* Christ's love for us, as seen in his cross. *All have died,* to "die" in this sense is to live no longer for oneself but for Christ (v. 15).

**5.16–17**: Once Paul *from a human point of view,* by worldly standards, thought of Christ as rightly put to death; now he knows the crucified Christ as risen Lord, head of a *new creation* into which the believer as a new creature is incorporated. **18**: *Reconciled,* Rom 5.10; Col 1.20; Heb 1.3. **20**: *Be reconciled,* accept God's forgiveness in Christ. **21**: Paul does not say "made him a sinner"; the sinless Christ bore the burden of our sin that we might be acquitted (Gal 3.13). *Sin* may mean sin offering (see Rom 8.3 n.; Isa 53.10). *Righteousness of God,* Rom 1.17 n. As at Rom 5.10–11, reference to *reconciliation* intertwines with justification.

**6.1–2**: Quoting Isa 49.8 Paul urges his readers to respond faithfully to God's grace in Christ. *Now,* at this moment, before the Lord returns. **4–5**: 11.23–29. **6–7**: See Gal 5.22–23. **10**: *Rich,* with spiritual gifts.

**6.11**: I have been frank with you, *Corinthians,* for you are in my *heart.* **12**: Any restraint upon our relations has been owing to you, not to me; see 1.12–14.

14 Do not be mismatched with unbelievers. For what partnership is there between righteousness and lawlessness? Or what fellowship is there between light and darkness? 15 What agreement does Christ have with Beliar? Or what does a believer share with an unbeliever? 16 What agreement has the temple of God with idols? For we[n] are the temple of the living God; as God said,

"I will live in them and walk
among them,
and I will be their God,
and they shall be my people.
17 Therefore come out from them,
and be separate from them, says
the Lord,
and touch nothing unclean;
then I will welcome you,
18 and I will be your father,
and you shall be my sons and
daughters,
says the Lord Almighty."

7 Since we have these promises, beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from every defilement of body and of spirit, making holiness perfect in the fear of God.

2 Make room in your hearts[o] for us; we have wronged no one, we have corrupted no one, we have taken advantage of no one. 3 I do not say this to condemn you, for I said before that you are in our hearts, to die together and to live together. 4 I often boast about you; I have great pride in you; I am filled with consolation; I am overjoyed in all our affliction.

5 For even when we came into Macedonia, our bodies had no rest, but we were afflicted in every way—disputes without and fears within. 6 But God, who consoles the downcast, consoled us by the arrival of Titus, 7 and not only by his coming, but also by the consolation with which he was consoled about you, as he told us of your longing, your mourning, your zeal for me, so that I rejoiced still more. 8 For even if I made you sorry with my letter, I do not regret it (though I did regret it, for I see that I grieved you with that letter, though only briefly). 9 Now I rejoice, not because you were grieved, but because your grief led to repentance; for you felt a godly grief, so that you were not harmed in any way by us. 10 For godly grief produces a repentance that leads to salvation and brings no regret, but worldly grief produces death. 11 For see what earnestness this godly grief has produced in you, what eagerness to clear yourselves, what indignation, what alarm, what longing, what zeal, what punishment! At every point you have proved yourselves guiltless in the matter. 12 So although I wrote to you, it was not on account of the one who did the wrong, nor on account of the one who was wronged, but in order that your zeal for us might be made known to you before God. 13 In this we find comfort.

In addition to our own consolation,

*n* Other ancient authorities read *you*
*o* Gk lacks *in your hearts*

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**6.14–7.1: A parenthesis on relations with unbelievers.** This passage represents an abrupt change of subject and an interruption, since 7.2 seems to follow directly upon 6.13. It has been suggested that a fragment of some other letter to Corinth (possibly that mentioned in 1 Cor 5.9–11) was inserted here when the letters of Paul were first collected and published. But the verses do continue the urgent appeal of 6.1 with an exhortation to *holiness* (7.1). **6.15**: *Beliar*, an evil spirit in the intertestamental literature; under, or identified with, Satan. **16**: 1 Cor 3.16–17 n. **16–18**: A number of Old Testament passages are rather loosely quoted to urge separateness from the pagan world: Lev 26.12; Ezek 37.27; Isa 52.11; 2 Sam 7.14. **7.1**: *Making holiness perfect*, completely dedicated to God.

**7.2–16**: **Paul's joy** at the restoration of good relations. **2–4**: After the "parenthesis" of 6.14–7.1 this statement follows naturally upon 6.13. **4**: *Boast*, see 1.12–14 n.

**7.5–16**: See Introduction and 2.13. **5**: *Bodies*, a way of referring to his suffering and anxiety; see 2.13 *mind*. **6–7**: *Consolation*, 1.3–11. **8**: 2.3–4 n. **11**: *Punishment*, a penalty of some kind imposed by the community on an unnamed opponent of the apostle (2.5–9). **12**: *The one who was wronged*, probably Paul himself.

we rejoiced still more at the joy of Titus, because his mind has been set at rest by all of you. 14For if I have been somewhat boastful about you to him, I was not disgraced; but just as everything we said to you was true, so our boasting to Titus has proved true as well. 15And his heart goes out all the more to you, as he remembers the obedience of all of you, and how you welcomed him with fear and trembling. 16I rejoice, because I have complete confidence in you.

8 We want you to know, brothers and sisters,[p] about the grace of God that has been granted to the churches of Macedonia; 2for during a severe ordeal of affliction, their abundant joy and their extreme poverty have overflowed in a wealth of generosity on their part. 3For, as I can testify, they voluntarily gave according to their means, and even beyond their means, 4begging us earnestly for the privilege[q] of sharing in this ministry to the saints— 5and this, not merely as we expected; they gave themselves first to the Lord and, by the will of God, to us, 6so that we might urge Titus that, as he had already made a beginning, so he should also complete this generous undertaking[r] among you. 7Now as you excel in everything—in faith, in speech, in knowledge, in utmost eagerness, and in our love for you[s]—so we want you to excel also in this generous undertaking.[r]

8 I do not say this as a command, but I am testing the genuineness of your love against the earnestness of others. 9For you know the generous act[t] of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor, so that by his poverty you might become rich. 10And in this matter I am giving my advice: it is appropriate for you who began last year not only to do something but even to desire to do something— 11now finish doing it, so that your eagerness may be matched by completing it according to your means. 12For if the eagerness is there, the gift is acceptable according to what one has—not according to what one does not have. 13I do not mean that there should be relief for others and pressure on you, but it is a question of a fair balance between 14your present abundance and their need, so that their abundance may be for your need, in order that there may be a fair balance. 15As it is written,

> "The one who had much did not
> have too much,
> and the one who had little did
> not have too little."

16 But thanks be to God who put in the heart of Titus the same eagerness for you that I myself have. 17For he not only accepted our appeal, but since he is more eager than ever, he is going to you of his own accord. 18With him we are sending the brother who is famous among all the churches for his proclaiming the good news;[u] 19and not only that, but he has

*p* Gk *brothers* *q* Gk *grace* *r* Gk *this grace*
*s* Other ancient authorities read *your love for us*
*t* Gk *the grace* *u* Or *the gospel*

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**8.1–9.15: The collection for the relief of the Jerusalem church** (Gal 2.1–10; 1 Cor 16.1–4; Rom 15.25–27). These chapters have sometimes been taken as a separate stewardship appeal or even as two administrative letters, ch 8 to Corinth, ch 9 to Achaia (9.2; 1.1 n.).

**8.1**: *Churches of Macedonia,* in a province to the north where Philippi and Thessalonica were located (Acts 16.9–10, 12, 17). are cited as examples of generosity; see 9.2, however.

**8.6**: *Titus,* see 1.12–13 n.; 8.16–17. **9**: *Though he was rich,* a reference to Christ's pre-existence. **10**: The raising of funds at Corinth had perhaps been interrupted by the rift between Paul and the church, a rift now healed. **13–14**: *A fair balance* or equality is stressed. **14**: *Your abundance* suggests that the Corinthian church was in better economic condition than some of Paul's other churches (compare the Macedonians' extreme poverty, 8.1–2). **15**: Ex 16.18.

**8.16–9.5**: Administrative arrangements for the collection. **18**: *The brother,* like *our brother* in v. 22, is unidentified. One gathers from v. 23 that two men had been appointed by the churches to assist Paul in the collection and, no doubt at Paul's insistence, to "audit" the accounts (vv. 20–21).

also been appointed by the churches to travel with us while we are administering this generous undertaking[v] for the glory of the Lord himself[w] and to show our goodwill. 20We intend that no one should blame us about this generous gift that we are administering, 21for we intend to do what is right not only in the Lord's sight but also in the sight of others. 22And with them we are sending our brother whom we have often tested and found eager in many matters, but who is now more eager than ever because of his great confidence in you. 23As for Titus, he is my partner and co-worker in your service; as for our brothers, they are messengers[x] of the churches, the glory of Christ. 24Therefore openly before the churches, show them the proof of your love and of our reason for boasting about you.

9 Now it is not necessary for me to write you about the ministry to the saints, 2for I know your eagerness, which is the subject of my boasting about you to the people of Macedonia, saying that Achaia has been ready since last year; and your zeal has stirred up most of them. 3But I am sending the brothers in order that our boasting about you may not prove to have been empty in this case, so that you may be ready, as I said you would be; 4otherwise, if some Macedonians come with me and find that you are not ready, we would be humiliated—to say nothing of you—in this undertaking.[y] 5So I thought it necessary to urge the brothers to go on ahead to you, and arrange in advance for this bountiful gift that you have promised, so that it may be ready as a voluntary gift and not as an extortion.

6 The point is this: the one who sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and the one who sows bountifully will also reap bountifully. 7Each of you must give as you have made up your mind, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver. 8And God is able to provide you with every blessing in abundance, so that by always having enough of everything, you may share abundantly in every good work. 9As it is written,

"He scatters abroad, he gives to the poor;
his righteousness[z] endures forever."

10He who supplies seed to the sower and bread for food will supply and multiply your seed for sowing and increase the harvest of your righteousness.[z] 11You will be enriched in every way for your great generosity, which will produce thanksgiving to God through us; 12for the rendering of this ministry not only supplies the needs of the saints but also overflows with many thanksgivings to God. 13Through the testing of this ministry you glorify God by your obedience to the confession of the gospel of Christ and by the generosity of your sharing with them and with all others, 14while they long for you and pray for you because of the surpassing grace of God that he has given you. 15Thanks be to God for his indescribable gift!

10 I myself, Paul, appeal to you by the meekness and gentleness of Christ—I who am humble when face to face with you, but bold toward you

*v* Gk *this grace* *w* Other ancient authorities lack *himself* *x* Gk *apostles* *y* Other ancient authorities add *of boasting* *z* Or *benevolence*

**9.2**: *Achaia,* see 1.1 n. **3**: *The brothers,* perhaps the same ones spoken of in 8.18, 22–23. **7**: *God . . . giver,* see Prov 22.8a Gk. **9**: Ps 112.9.

**9.10**: A reminiscence of Isa 55.10. **11–12**: The gift *which . . . through us* is to be delivered at Jerusalem will be the occasion of *many thanksgivings to God* on the part of those who receive it; see 4.15 n. **15**: *Thanks . . . to God,* not only for the generosity inspired, but also, and much more, for the *gift* of Christ.

**Chs 10–13: Vindicating Paul's authority.** On the problem which the abrupt change of tone in these chapters presents, see Introduction. Some identify 10.1–13.10 with the "painful" letter referred to in 2.3–9; 7.8–12. This identification is uncertain, but one can see grounds for holding that these chapters

when I am away!— 2I ask that when I am present I need not show boldness by daring to oppose those who think we are acting according to human standards. 3Indeed, we live as human beings,[b] but we do not wage war according to human standards;[a] 4for the weapons of our warfare are not merely human,[c] but they have divine power to destroy strongholds. We destroy arguments 5and every proud obstacle raised up against the knowledge of God, and we take every thought captive to obey Christ. 6We are ready to punish every disobedience when your obedience is complete.

7 Look at what is before your eyes. If you are confident that you belong to Christ, remind yourself of this, that just as you belong to Christ, so also do we. 8Now, even if I boast a little too much of our authority, which the Lord gave for building you up and not for tearing you down, I will not be ashamed of it. 9I do not want to seem as though I am trying to frighten you with my letters. 10For they say, "His letters are weighty and strong, but his bodily presence is weak, and his speech contemptible." 11Let such people understand that what we say by letter when absent, we will also do when present.

12 We do not dare to classify or compare ourselves with some of those who commend themselves. But when they measure themselves by one another, and compare themselves with one another, they do not show good sense. 13We, however, will not boast beyond limits, but will keep within the field that God has assigned to us, to reach out even as far as you. 14For we were not overstepping our limits when we reached you; we were the first to come all the way to you with the good news[d] of Christ. 15We do not boast beyond limits, that is, in the labors of others; but our hope is that, as your faith increases, our sphere of action among you may be greatly enlarged, 16so that we may proclaim the good news[d] in lands beyond you, without boasting of work already done in someone else's sphere of action. 17"Let the one who boasts, boast in the Lord." 18For it is not those who commend themselves that are approved, but those whom the Lord commends.

11 I wish you would bear with me in a little foolishness. Do bear with me! 2I feel a divine jealousy for you, for I promised you in marriage to one husband, to present you as a chaste virgin to Christ. 3But I am afraid that as the serpent deceived Eve by its cunning, your thoughts will be led astray from a sincere and pure[e] devotion to Christ. 4For if someone comes and proclaims another

*a* Gk *according to the flesh* *b* Gk *in the flesh*
*c* Gk *fleshly* *d* Or *the gospel*
*e* Other ancient authorities lack *and pure*

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were not originally a part of the same letter as chs 1–9.

**10.1–18**: **An appeal for true apostleship,** Paul's, in contrast to the "super-apostles" (11.5, 12–15; 12.11–12). **1**: *I who am humble,* Paul is ironically quoting his opponents, as he often does in these last four chapters. On the paradox of *meekness* and *gentleness* with *boldness* in Paul and Christ, compare that of *weakness* and *power* in Christ and the true apostle (13.3–4). **6**: The "disobedient" (11.4) ones will be punished when the church as a whole returns to its loyalty and *obedience* to Paul, as he is sure it will eventually do.

**10.7–12**: The critics are probably members of the Corinthian church as well as "false apostles" from outside. They have apparently accused him of weakness and empty *boasting* (1.12–14 n.). **10**: 2.3. **13–14**: Paul is not doing more than God commissioned him to do when he exercises his authority as an apostle in the church at Corinth. **15–16**: A hint perhaps that his opponents were exploiting *the labors of others,* intruding where others had built; for Paul's missionary policy, compare Rom 15.20. On Paul's hopes of working west of Achaia, see Acts 19.21; Rom 1.11–15; 15.23–28. **17**: See 1 Cor 1.31 n.

**11.1–15**: **Paul's reply to opponents.** Because those who are "super-apostles" (11.5; 12.1) in their own estimation have intruded and preach a *different gospel* and *another Jesus* and threaten to *lead astray* the Corinthians, Paul adopts their method of boasting (11.13) to meet this menace, but *in the Lord* and *not beyond limits* (10.13, 15, 17). **2**: Hos 2.19–20;

Jesus than the one we proclaimed, or if you receive a different spirit from the one you received, or a different gospel from the one you accepted, you submit to it readily enough. 5I think that I am not in the least inferior to these super-apostles. 6I may be untrained in speech, but not in knowledge; certainly in every way and in all things we have made this evident to you.

7 Did I commit a sin by humbling myself so that you might be exalted, because I proclaimed God's good news[f] to you free of charge? 8I robbed other churches by accepting support from them in order to serve you. 9And when I was with you and was in need, I did not burden anyone, for my needs were supplied by the friends[g] who came from Macedonia. So I refrained and will continue to refrain from burdening you in any way. 10As the truth of Christ is in me, this boast of mine will not be silenced in the regions of Achaia. 11And why? Because I do not love you? God knows I do!

12 And what I do I will also continue to do, in order to deny an opportunity to those who want an opportunity to be recognized as our equals in what they boast about. 13For such boasters are false apostles, deceitful workers, disguising themselves as apostles of Christ. 14And no wonder! Even Satan disguises himself as an angel of light. 15So it is not strange if his ministers also disguise themselves as ministers of righteousness. Their end will match their deeds.

16 I repeat, let no one think that I am a fool; but if you do, then accept me as a fool, so that I too may boast a little. 17What I am saying in regard to this boastful confidence, I am saying not with the Lord's authority, but as a fool; 18since many boast according to human standards,[h] I will also boast. 19For you gladly put up with fools, being wise yourselves! 20For you put up with it when someone makes slaves of you, or preys upon you, or takes advantage of you, or puts on airs, or gives you a slap in the face. 21To my shame, I must say, we were too weak for that!

But whatever anyone dares to boast of—I am speaking as a fool—I also dare to boast of that. 22Are they Hebrews? So am I. Are they Israelites? So am I. Are they descendants of Abraham? So am I. 23Are they ministers of Christ? I am talking like a madman—I am a better one: with far greater labors, far more imprisonments, with countless floggings, and often near death. 24Five times I have re-

*f* Gk *the gospel of God* *g* Gk *brothers*
*h* Gk *according to the flesh*

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Eph 5.26–27. **3**: Gen 3.4. **5–6**: That Paul as a speaker was being compared to others to his disadvantage appears also in 10.10 and, less clearly, in 1 Cor 2.1–5.

**11.7–11**: Even Paul's honorable and generous determination (so as not to be a financial burden) to work with his own hands (1 Cor 4.12; 1 Thess 2.9) had been perversely twisted into a charge against him, probably that manual labor degrades one. On the matter of Paul's support, see Acts 18.1–4; 2 Thess 3.7–9; 1 Cor 9.3–7; and especially Phil 4.10–20. Why he accepted aid of this kind only from the Philippian church in Macedonia we are not told. **8**: *I robbed,* a natural exaggeration (compare v. 9). Those *disguising themselves as apostles of Christ* (v. 13) are in reality *ministers* of Satan; they have not manifested the same disinterestedness as Paul and are seeking to force him through their criticisms to surrender a practice which embarrasses them. **10**: *Achaia,* see 1.1 n. **13–15**: Paul's judgment of the *false apostles.*

**11.16–33**: **Paul's boasting.** Paul indulges in the "little foolishness" spoken of in v. 1. He knows it is foolish to boast, and perhaps even wrong (12.1), but accepts the challenge (v. 18) of some at Corinth who have forced him to assert his claims (12.11). Some verses are written in irony (19, 20–21).

**11.22**: Apparently even Paul's Judaism (Rom 9.1–3; 11.1; Gal 1.13–14; Phil 3.4–6; compare Acts 22.3; 26.4–6) was called into question by the self-assertions of the "super-apostles." **23–27**: Very little is known about these hardships; the book of Acts refers to only a few of them. See also 2 Cor 4.8–9; 6.4–5; and 1 Cor 4.9–13 on the lifestyle of true apostles. **24**: *Forty lashes,* a Jewish punishment; only thirty-nine were administered lest by a miscount the number exceed the maximum prescribed in Deut 25.3.

ceived from the Jews the forty lashes minus one. 25 Three times I was beaten with rods. Once I received a stoning. Three times I was shipwrecked; for a night and a day I was adrift at sea; 26 on frequent journeys, in danger from rivers, danger from bandits, danger from my own people, danger from Gentiles, danger in the city, danger in the wilderness, danger at sea, danger from false brothers and sisters;[i] 27 in toil and hardship, through many a sleepless night, hungry and thirsty, often without food, cold and naked. 28 And, besides other things, I am under daily pressure because of my anxiety for all the churches. 29 Who is weak, and I am not weak? Who is made to stumble, and I am not indignant?

30 If I must boast, I will boast of the things that show my weakness. 31 The God and Father of the Lord Jesus (blessed be he forever!) knows that I do not lie. 32 In Damascus, the governor[j] under King Aretas guarded the city of Damascus in order to[k] seize me, 33 but I was let down in a basket through a window in the wall,[l] and escaped from his hands.

12 It is necessary to boast; nothing is to be gained by it, but I will go on to visions and revelations of the Lord. 2 I know a person in Christ who fourteen years ago was caught up to the third heaven—whether in the body or out of the body I do not know; God knows. 3 And I know that such a person—whether in the body or out of the body I do not know; God knows— 4 was caught up into Paradise and heard things that are not to be told, that no mortal is permitted to repeat. 5 On behalf of such a one I will boast, but on my own behalf I will not boast, except of my weaknesses. 6 But if I wish to boast, I will not be a fool, for I will be speaking the truth. But I refrain from it, so that no one may think better of me than what is seen in me or heard from me, 7 even considering the exceptional character of the revelations. Therefore, to keep[m] me from being too elated, a thorn was given me in the flesh, a messenger of Satan to torment me, to keep me from being too elated.[n] 8 Three times I appealed to the Lord about this, that it would leave me, 9 but he said to me, "My grace is sufficient for you, for power[o] is made perfect in weakness." So, I will boast all the more gladly of my weaknesses, so that the power of Christ may dwell in me. 10 Therefore I am content with weaknesses, insults, hardships, persecutions, and calamities for the sake of Christ; for whenever I am weak, then I am strong.

11 I have been a fool! You forced me to it. Indeed you should have been the ones commending me, for I am not at all inferior to these super-apostles, even though I am nothing. 12 The signs of a true apostle were performed among you with utmost patience, signs and wonders

*i* Gk *brothers* *j* Gk *ethnarch* *k* Other ancient authorities read *and wanted to*
*l* Gk *through the wall* *m* Other ancient authorities read *To keep* *n* Other ancient authorities lack *to keep me from being too elated*
*o* Other ancient authorities read *my power*

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**11.25**: *Beaten with rods,* a Roman punishment (Acts 16.22–23). *Stoning,* Acts 14.19. **32–33**: This item would seem logically to belong after v. 27; perhaps it is an afterthought (see also Acts 9.23–25). *Aretas* IV was king of Nabataea, southeast of Palestine. Apparently Damascus was under his jurisdiction at the time of Paul's escape.

**12.1–13: Further boastings: strength in weakness,** a theme begun at 11.30. Though Paul speaks of *revelations* (vv. 1, 7), he refers specifically to only one of them. **2**: *I know a person,* an oblique reference to himself (see v. 7). *The third heaven,* the highest ecstasy. Nothing is otherwise known of this experience unless it is that referred to in Gal 1.16 and 1 Cor 15.8; but this is not probable. **4**: *Things that are not to be told,* because they are too sacred.

**12.5**: Paul deserves no credit for these *revelations;* therefore he will not speak of them as though they were his own. **7–9**: Some have thought that *the thorn . . . in the flesh* was illness or a physical disability; others have suggested that it was a specific opponent or the opposition of his fellow Jews. No firm decision is possible. **12**: A reference to apostolic miracles (Rom 15.19; Gal 3.5). **13**: See 11.7–11 n. *Forgive me this wrong,* for the irony compare 11.21a.

and mighty works. 13How have you been worse off than the other churches, except that I myself did not burden you? Forgive me this wrong!

14 Here I am, ready to come to you this third time. And I will not be a burden, because I do not want what is yours but you; for children ought not to lay up for their parents, but parents for their children. 15I will most gladly spend and be spent for you. If I love you more, am I to be loved less? 16Let it be assumed that I did not burden you. Nevertheless (you say) since I was crafty, I took you in by deceit. 17Did I take advantage of you through any of those whom I sent to you? 18I urged Titus to go, and sent the brother with him. Titus did not take advantage of you, did he? Did we not conduct ourselves with the same spirit? Did we not take the same steps?

19 Have you been thinking all along that we have been defending ourselves before you? We are speaking in Christ before God. Everything we do, beloved, is for the sake of building you up. 20For I fear that when I come, I may find you not as I wish, and that you may find me not as you wish; I fear that there may perhaps be quarreling, jealousy, anger, selfishness, slander, gossip, conceit, and disorder. 21I fear that when I come again, my God may humble me before you, and that I may have to mourn over many who previously sinned and have not repented of the impurity, sexual immorality, and licentiousness that they have practiced.

13 This is the third time I am coming to you. "Any charge must be sustained by the evidence of two or three witnesses." 2I warned those who sinned previously and all the others, and I warn them now while absent, as I did when present on my second visit, that if I come again, I will not be lenient— 3since you desire proof that Christ is speaking in me. He is not weak in dealing with you, but is powerful in you. 4For he was crucified in weakness, but lives by the power of God. For we are weak in him,[p] but in dealing with you we will live with him by the power of God.

5 Examine yourselves to see whether you are living in the faith. Test yourselves. Do you not realize that Jesus Christ is in you?—unless, indeed, you fail to meet the test! 6I hope you will find out that we have not failed. 7But we pray to God that you may not do anything wrong—not that we may appear to have met the test, but that you may do what is right, though we may seem to have failed. 8For we cannot do anything against the truth, but only for the truth. 9For we rejoice when we are weak and you are strong. This is what we pray for, that you may become perfect. 10So I write these things while I am away from you, so that when I come, I may not have to be severe in using the authority that the Lord has given me for building up and not for tearing down.

*p* Other ancient authorities read *with him*

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**12.14–13.10: Paul plans to visit Corinth again.** This *third* visit cannot be identified with assurance. Some suppose it to be the visit referred to in retrospect in 2.1; others, that it is the visit in prospect when chs 1–9 were written.

**12.14–18:** Once again (see 11.7–11) Paul discusses financial support. **17–18:** Is this the sending of *Titus* and *the brother* mentioned in 8.16–19? If so, chs 10–13 cannot have been written earlier than chs 1–9, unless ch 8 be regarded as a separate note about the collection written earlier still. See Introduction and 8.1–9.15 n.; 10–13 n.

**12.19–13.10: A call for self-examination** (13.5) **and amendment** before Paul comes. For his readers' sake, as well as for his own, the apostle wants the coming visit to be happy and mutually rewarding. If chs 10–13 are the "painful" letter referred to in 2.3–4, we know from chs 1–9 that Paul's hopes were fulfilled.

**13.1:** *Witnesses,* Deut 19.15. **2–4:** Paul will vigorously assert his apostolic authority in dealing with wrongdoing at Corinth, but it will be Christ's authority. **5–9:** Paul hopes that he will not need to exert his authority, but that the church will discipline itself. **10:** See 12.19.

***Final greetings and benediction***

11 Finally, brothers and sisters,[q] farewell.[r] Put things in order, listen to my appeal,[s] agree with one another, live in peace; and the God of love and peace will be with you. 12Greet one another with a holy kiss. All the saints greet you.

13 The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of[t] the Holy Spirit be with all of you.

*q* Gk *brothers* *r* Or *rejoice* *s* Or *encourage one another* *t* Or *and the sharing in*

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**13.11–14: Conclusion. 12**: The liturgical *kiss,* see Rom 16.16 n. **13:** The fullest of Paul's benedictions at the end of his letters (for the Trinitarian form, compare 1 Cor 12.4–6). The order is significant; the *grace of Christ* expresses and leads one toward the *love of God,* and the love of God when actualized through the *Spirit,* produces *communion* with God and with one another.

# *The Letter of Paul to the Galatians*

Often called the Magna Charta of Christian liberty, the Letter to the Galatians deals with the question whether Gentiles must become Jews before they can become Christians. Certain Judaizing teachers had infiltrated the churches of Galatia in central Asia Minor, which Paul had previously founded (Acts 16.6), declaring that in addition to having faith in Jesus Christ a Christian was obligated to keep the Mosaic law. Paul insists, on the contrary, that a person becomes right with God only by faith in Christ and not by the performance of good works, ritual observances, and the like (2.16; 3.24–25; 5.1; 6.12–15).

So serious was the crisis in Galatia that Paul dispenses with his customary expression of thanksgiving and commendation, and plunges directly into a vigorous defense of his apostolic authority and the validity of his teaching (1.1–2.21). His gospel must be asserted against *certain people . . . from James* in Jerusalem (2.12) and even against *Cephas* (Peter, see 2.14). The central part of the letter is an exposition of the doctrine of justification by faith alone (3.1–4.31). Lest some should imagine that this doctrine leads to a life of indifference to the moral code, Paul concludes with certain practical applications of his teaching (5.1–6.18). Some think these ethical admonitions were necessitated not by the Judaizing teachers but a second group of opponents, more gnosticizing in nature, who abused Christian freedom.

The importance of this brief letter is hard to overestimate. Written perhaps about A.D. 55 or slightly earlier during Paul's third missionary journey, it gives many autobiographical details of the apostle's earlier life and evangelistic activity. Here are set forth, with impassioned eloquence, the true function of the Mosaic law and its relation to God's grace manifested in Christ. The declaration of the principles reiterated in these six chapters made Christianity a world religion instead of a Jewish sect.

1 Paul an apostle—sent neither by human commission nor from human authorities, but through Jesus Christ and God the Father, who raised him from the dead— 2and all the members of God's family[a] who are with me,

To the churches of Galatia:

3 Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. 4who gave himself for our sins to set us free from the present evil age, according to the will of our God and Father, 5to whom be the glory forever and ever. Amen.

6 I am astonished that you are so quickly deserting the one who called you in the grace of Christ and are turning to a different gospel— 7not that there is another gospel, but there are some who are confusing you and want to pervert the gospel of Christ. 8But even if we or an angel[b] from heaven should proclaim to you a gospel contrary to what we proclaimed to you, let that one be accursed! 9As we have said before, so now I repeat, if anyone proclaims to you a gospel contrary to what you received, let that one be accursed!

10 Am I now seeking human approval, or God's approval? Or am I trying to please people? If I were still pleasing people, I would not be a servant[c] of Christ.

11 For I want you to know, brothers and sisters,[d] that the gospel that was proclaimed by me is not of human origin; 12for I did not receive it from a human source, nor was I taught it, but I received it through a revelation of Jesus Christ.

13 You have heard, no doubt, of my earlier life in Judaism. I was violently persecuting the church of God and was trying to destroy it. 14I advanced in Judaism beyond many among my people of the same age, for I was far more zealous for the traditions of my ancestors. 15But when God, who had set me apart before I was born and called me through his grace, was pleased 16to reveal his Son to me,[e] so that I might proclaim him among the Gentiles, I did not confer with

*a* Gk *all the brothers* *b* Or *a messenger*
*c* Gk *slave* *d* Gk *brothers* *e* Gk *in me*

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**1.1–5**: **The Salutation** (see Rom 1.1–7 n.) emphasizes both Paul's divinely given authority as an *apostle* and in his gospel the atoning death of *Jesus Christ, who gave himself for our sins* (Mk 10.45; 1 Tim 2.6). **2**: *Galatia,* probably the area in north central Asia Minor around Ancyra (modern Ankara, Turkey), not the Roman province southward; see Acts 16.6; 18.23. **3**: *Grace* and *peace,* see Rom 1.7 n. and 2 Thess 1.2 n. **4**: *The present evil age* (see 2 Cor 4.4) is in contrast to the coming age to be inaugurated at the return of Christ. Our deliverance through Christ's self-giving rests upon *the will of God.*

**1.6–10**: **The Galatian apostasy** from the true gospel. Instead of the customary thanksgiving (Rom 1.8–15 n.) Paul launches into the issue: *deserting . . . Christ* for what is not the "good news." **6**: *The one who called you,* God, through Christ (see 1.15). **8–9**: A solemn anathema; Rom 9.3; 1 Cor 12.3, "(ac)cursed." **10**: Paul denies an opponent's charge that he conciliates people to win converts; see 1 Thess 2.4.

**1.11–2.21**: **Defense of Paul's gospel and apostolic authority.** In a first-person-singular narrative (*I, me*) Paul sets forth his call from God to *proclaim* Christ *among the Gentiles* (1.15–16) and his experiences as an *apostle* (1.1, 17; 2.8). Then (2.15–21) in propositional and personal terms he outlines his gospel of justification by faith.

**1.11–24**: **Paul's vindication of his apostleship. 11**: Despite his severity, Paul addresses the Galatians as *brothers and sisters.* A message merely *of human origin* would be no *gospel of Christ* (v. 7) or *revelation* (v. 12). **12**: *Through a revelation,* at the time of Paul's conversion (Acts 9.3–6).

**1.13**: *I was . . . persecuting,* compare Acts 8.3; 9.21; 22.4. The *church* is the people of God, called into fellowship with the Lord through the redemptive work of Jesus Christ. The word may refer to the total number of believers throughout the world, to those in a particular region (1.2), or to those in one locality, whether gathered for worship and instruction, engaged in mission, or scattered by persecution. **14**: Phil 3.4–6; Acts 22.3. **15–17**: Paul's conversion and commission as an apostle were due to the sovereign plan of God, not to human teachers (1.1). **16**: *To me,* but also through Paul (note *e*) as a missionary. **17**: *Arabia,* that is, the Nabataean kingdom, of which the capital was Petra. *Damascus,* Acts 9.19–25; 2 Cor 11.32–33.

any human being, [17]nor did I go up to Jerusalem to those who were already apostles before me, but I went away at once into Arabia, and afterwards I returned to Damascus.

18 Then after three years I did go up to Jerusalem to visit Cephas and stayed with him fifteen days; [19]but I did not see any other apostle except James the Lord's brother. [20]In what I am writing to you, before God, I do not lie! [21]Then I went into the regions of Syria and Cilicia, [22]and I was still unknown by sight to the churches of Judea that are in Christ; [23]they only heard it said, "The one who formerly was persecuting us is now proclaiming the faith he once tried to destroy." [24]And they glorified God because of me.

2 Then after fourteen years I went up again to Jerusalem with Barnabas, taking Titus along with me. [2]I went up in response to a revelation. Then I laid before them (though only in a private meeting with the acknowledged leaders) the gospel that I proclaim among the Gentiles, in order to make sure that I was not running, or had not run, in vain. [3]But even Titus, who was with me, was not compelled to be circumcised, though he was a Greek. [4]But because of false believers[f] secretly brought in, who slipped in to spy on the freedom we have in Christ Jesus, so that they might enslave us— [5]we did not submit to them even for a moment, so that the truth of the gospel might always remain with you. [6]And from those who were supposed to be acknowledged leaders (what they actually were makes no difference to me; God shows no partiality)—those leaders contributed nothing to me. [7]On the contrary, when they saw that I had been entrusted with the gospel for the uncircumcised, just as Peter had been entrusted with the gospel for the circumcised [8](for he who worked through Peter making him an apostle to the circumcised also worked through me in sending me to the Gentiles), [9]and when James and Cephas and John, who were acknowledged pillars, recognized the grace that had been given to me, they gave to Barnabas and me the right hand of fellowship, agreeing that we should go to the Gentiles and they to the circumcised. [10]They asked only one thing, that we remember the poor, which was actually what I was[g] eager to do.

11 But when Cephas came to Antioch, I opposed him to his face, because he stood self-condemned; [12]for until certain people came from James, he used to eat with the Gentiles. But after they came, he drew back and kept himself separate for fear of the circumcision fac-

*f* Gk *false brothers* *g* Or *had been*

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**1.18**: *Cephas,* the Aramaic equivalent of "Peter" (see Mt 16.18 n.). **19**: *The Lord's brother,* see Mt 13.55 n. **21**: *Cilicia,* of which Tarsus (see Acts 9.30 n.) was the capital.

**2.1–10**: **Paul's apostleship recognized in Jerusalem.** This visit is probably the one mentioned in Acts 15.2. **1**: *Barnabas,* see Acts 11.22 n., 25; 13.1–3; 15.2; 1 Cor 9.6. *Titus,* one of Paul's most trusted helpers (2 Cor 7.6; 8.6, 16–17). **2–3**: Although the Judaizers had apparently demanded that *Titus, a Greek,* should be circumcised, the apostles at Jerusalem, by not enforcing that demand, approved of Paul's work among the Gentiles (v. 9; see Acts 16.1–5 n.). On *Titus,* see Introduction to Titus. **4**: *False believers* (literally "brothers," note *f*). The New Testament never combines "false" with the root "believe" or "have faith"; though the word "brothers [and sisters]" regularly in Acts denotes Christians, Paul uses "false brothers" only here and at 2 Cor 11.26, of opponents (cf. 11.3). On their identity here, see Acts 15.1, 5. **10**: *The poor,* Jerusalem Christians or a group within the Palestinian church, Rom 15.26; on the collection for them, see Acts 11.29–30; 24.17; 1 Cor 16.1–3; 2 Cor 8.1–15.

**2.11–14**: **Paul rebukes Peter's inconsistency at Antioch** when pressured by *people . . . from James,* more conservative on the Jewish law than Peter. *Cephas,* see 1.18 n. After his vision (Acts 10.10–35) Peter had recognized that God makes no distinction between Jew and Gentile. But at Antioch, when criticized for table fellowship with converted Gentiles, Peter yielded to the narrow prejudices of the Judaizers (v. 12); his inconsistency was contagious (v. 13).

tion. 13And the other Jews joined him in this hypocrisy, so that even Barnabas was led astray by their hypocrisy. 14But when I saw that they were not acting consistently with the truth of the gospel, I said to Cephas before them all, "If you, though a Jew, live like a Gentile and not like a Jew, how can you compel the Gentiles to live like Jews?"[h]

15 We ourselves are Jews by birth and not Gentile sinners; 16yet we know that a person is justified[i] not by the works of the law but through faith in Jesus Christ.[j] And we have come to believe in Christ Jesus, so that we might be justified by faith in Christ,[k] and not by doing the works of the law, because no one will be justified by the works of the law. 17But if, in our effort to be justified in Christ, we ourselves have been found to be sinners, is Christ then a servant of sin? Certainly not! 18But if I build up again the very things that I once tore down, then I demonstrate that I am a transgressor. 19For through the law I died to the law, so that I might live to God. I have been crucified with Christ; 20and it is no longer I who live, but it is Christ who lives in me. And the life I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God,[l] who loved me and gave himself for me. 21I do not nullify the grace of God; for if justification[m] comes through the law, then Christ died for nothing.

3 You foolish Galatians! Who has bewitched you? It was before your eyes that Jesus Christ was publicly exhibited as crucified! 2The only thing I want to learn from you is this: Did you receive the Spirit by doing the works of the law or by believing what you heard? 3Are you so foolish? Having started with the Spirit, are you now ending with the flesh? 4Did you experience so much for nothing?—if it really was for nothing. 5Well then, does God[n] supply you with the Spirit and work miracles among you by your doing the works of the law, or by your believing what you heard?

6 Just as Abraham "believed God, and it was reckoned to him as righteousness," 7so, you see, those who believe are the descendants of Abraham. 8And the scripture, foreseeing that God would justify the Gentiles by faith, declared the gospel beforehand to Abraham, saying, "All the Gentiles shall be blessed in you." 9For this reason, those who believe are blessed with Abraham who believed.

10 For all who rely on the works of the law are under a curse; for it is written, "Cursed is everyone who does not ob-

*h* Some interpreters hold that the quotation extends into the following paragraph
*i* Or *reckoned as righteous;* and so elsewhere
*j* Or *the faith of Jesus Christ* *k* Or *the faith of Christ* *l* Or *by the faith of the Son of God*
*m* Or *righteousness* *n* Gk *he*

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**2.15–21**: **A statement of principle** on the fundamental difference between the law and the gospel. These verses could be taken in quotation marks as a continuation of what Paul said to Cephas at Antioch (note *h*), but they function in the letter as a propositional statement on what is at issue, using *we* in vv. 15–17 and concluding with a declaration of Paul's own living faith. **16**: *Faith in Jesus Christ,* see notes *j* and *k* and Rom 3.22 n. Here Christ is the object of faith, in whom *we have come to believe.* **20**: Paul's union with Christ does not destroy his own personality, but sustains and molds his Christian life (compare Jesus' reference to the vine and the branches, Jn 15.1–5). *Faith,* see v. 16.

**3.1–4.31**: **Evidence confirming Paul's gospel and its freedom.** For *the truth of the gospel* (2.5, 14), that justification/righteousness comes by faith and not by law (2.16, 21), a series of proofs are presented.

**3.1–5**: **An appeal to experience,** the Galatians' receipt of the Spirit, to prove that justification is by faith, not works. The sequence is hearing and believing the gospel, receiving the Spirit, and hence experiencing divine wondrous deeds. **5**: *Miracles,* wrought *among* (lit. "in") the Galatians, attest the truth of the gospel (on apostolic miracles, compare Rom 15.19; 1 Cor 12.10; 2 Cor 12.12).

**3.6–14**: **An appeal to Abraham's experience in scripture. 6–7**: *Abraham* is typical of all *those who believe* (Gen 15.6; Rom 4.3, 16). **8**: Gen 12.3; compare 18.18; Acts 3.25. **10**: Deut 27.26. **11**: Hab 2.4 Gk. **12**: Lev 18.5; Rom 10.5. **13**: The *tree* in Deut 21.23 is referred to Jesus' cross.

serve and obey all the things written in the book of the law." 11 Now it is evident that no one is justified before God by the law; for "The one who is righteous will live by faith."[o] 12 But the law does not rest on faith; on the contrary, "Whoever does the works of the law[p] will live by them." 13 Christ redeemed us from the curse of the law by becoming a curse for us—for it is written, "Cursed is everyone who hangs on a tree"— 14 in order that in Christ Jesus the blessing of Abraham might come to the Gentiles, so that we might receive the promise of the Spirit through faith.

15 Brothers and sisters,[q] I give an example from daily life: once a person's will[r] has been ratified, no one adds to it or annuls it. 16 Now the promises were made to Abraham and to his offspring;[s] it does not say, "And to offsprings,"[t] as of many; but it says, "And to your offspring,"[s] that is, to one person, who is Christ. 17 My point is this: the law, which came four hundred thirty years later, does not annul a covenant previously ratified by God, so as to nullify the promise. 18 For if the inheritance comes from the law, it no longer comes from the promise; but God granted it to Abraham through the promise.

19 Why then the law? It was added because of transgressions, until the offspring[s] would come to whom the promise had been made; and it was ordained through angels by a mediator. 20 Now a mediator involves more than one party; but God is one.

21 Is the law then opposed to the promises of God? Certainly not! For if a law had been given that could make alive, then righteousness would indeed come through the law. 22 But the scripture has imprisoned all things under the power of sin, so that what was promised through faith in Jesus Christ[u] might be given to those who believe.

23 Now before faith came, we were imprisoned and guarded under the law until faith would be revealed. 24 Therefore the law was our disciplinarian until Christ came, so that we might be justified by faith. 25 But now that faith has come, we are no longer subject to a disciplinarian, 26 for in Christ Jesus you are all children of God through faith. 27 As many of you as were baptized into Christ have clothed yourselves with Christ. 28 There is no longer Jew or Greek, there is no longer slave or free, there is no longer male and female; for all of you are one in Christ Jesus. 29 And if you belong to Christ, then you are Abraham's offspring,[s] heirs according to the promise.

*o* Or *The one who is righteous through faith will live* *p* Gk *does them* *q* Gk *Brothers*
*r* Or *covenant* (as in verse 17) *s* Gk *seed*
*t* Gk *seeds* *u* Or *through the faith of Jesus Christ*

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**3.15–18: An example from the covenant with Abraham:** God gives our inheritance by promise, not law. **15:** The same Greek word means last *will* or testament and *covenant* (note *r*). **16:** *Offspring,* the word used in Gen 12.7 and 22.17–18 is literally "seed," a collective singular. **17:** The faith-principle is older and more fundamental than the Mosaic law. Paul follows the chronology found in some manuscripts of the Septuagint of Ex 12.40, according to which the 430 years included the sojourn of Israel's forebears in Canaan and in Egypt; on the other hand the Hebrew text of Ex 12.40 refers the 430 years solely to the sojourn in Egypt (see also Acts 7.6 n.).

**3.19–25: The true purpose of the Mosaic law.** Though the law could not make people righteous (v. 21), it revealed God's will so that they might recognize their *transgressions* (vv. 19 and 22; Rom 3.20; 7.7). It is like a *disciplinarian* (see 1 Cor 4.15 n.) who has temporary charge of a child (vv. 24–25). It was not even given by God directly, but (according to later Jewish belief) through *angels* (v. 19; Deut 33.2, Septuagint; see Acts 7.38, 53 n.; Heb 2.2) and *a mediator,* Moses (see Lev 26.46).

**3.19:** *Because of,* or even to produce, *transgressions.* **22:** *Faith in Jesus Christ,* see Rom 3.22 n. **23:** *Faith,* the era of Christ, Christianity.

**3.26–29: An appeal to baptismal equality.** In the imagery and implications about those *baptized into* (Rom 6.3–11) and *clothed . . . with Christ* (Rom 13.14; Col 3.10), Paul is here interested especially in *Jew* and *Greek* all being *one in Christ* and thus *Abraham's offspring* (spiritual kinship), so fulfilling God's promise (3.6–7, 16 n., 17 n.).

*Enslavement under the law*

4 My point is this: heirs, as long as they are minors, are no better than slaves, though they are the owners of all the property; 2but they remain under guardians and trustees until the date set by the father. 3So with us; while we were minors, we were enslaved to the elemental spirits[v] of the world. 4But when the fullness of time had come, God sent his Son, born of a woman, born under the law, 5in order to redeem those who were under the law, so that we might receive adoption as children. 6And because you are children, God has sent the Spirit of his Son into our[w] hearts, crying, "Abba![x] Father!" 7So you are no longer a slave but a child, and if a child then also an heir, through God.[y]

8 Formerly, when you did not know God, you were enslaved to beings that by nature are not gods. 9Now, however, that you have come to know God, or rather to be known by God, how can you turn back again to the weak and beggarly elemental spirits?[z] How can you want to be enslaved to them again? 10You are observing special days, and months, and seasons, and years. 11I am afraid that my work for you may have been wasted.

12 Friends,[a] I beg you, become as I am, for I also have become as you are. You have done me no wrong. 13You know that it was because of a physical infirmity that I first announced the gospel to you; 14though my condition put you to the test, you did not scorn or despise me, but welcomed me as an angel of God, as Christ Jesus. 15What has become of the goodwill you felt? For I testify that, had it been possible, you would have torn out your eyes and given them to me. 16Have I now become your enemy by telling you the truth? 17They make much of you, but for no good purpose; they want to exclude you, so that you may make much of them. 18It is good to be made much of for a good purpose at all times, and not only when I am present with you. 19My little children, for whom I am again in the pain of childbirth until Christ is formed in you, 20I wish I were present with you now and could change my tone, for I am perplexed about you.

21 Tell me, you who desire to be subject to the law, will you not listen to the law? 22For it is written that Abraham had two sons, one by a slave woman and the other by a free woman. 23One, the child of the slave, was born according to the flesh; the other, the child of the free woman, was born through the promise. 24Now this is an allegory: these women are two covenants. One woman, in fact,

*v* Or *the rudiments* *w* Other ancient authorities read *your* *x* Aramaic for *Father* *y* Other ancient authorities read *an heir of God through Christ* *z* Or *beggarly rudiments* *a* Gk *Brothers*

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**4.1–11: Enslavement under the law; freedom for God's children. 3:** *Elemental spirits of the world,* cosmic powers controlling the universe (4.8); or (note *v*) *the rudiments* of the world (earth, air, fire, water), or rudimentary rules and religious observances (vv. 9–10; Col 2.8, 20). **4:** Christ was sent at a time determined by God in order to ransom those who were in bondage *under the law.*

**4.6:** *Abba,* see note *x* and Rom 8.15 n. **9:** *Elemental spirits,* see v. 3 n. **10:** They still observe Jewish fast-*days,* new moons (*months;* Col 2.16), Passover *seasons,* and sabbatical *years.*

**4.12–20: An appeal to the Galatians in their relationship to Paul.** While Paul reproves the Galatians for their spiritual immaturity, the apostle points to past examples of fervent friendship. **13:** *First,* either "formerly" on his prior visit, or on the first of two visits (Acts 16.6; 18.23). **13–14:** On his first visit through the region of Galatia (Acts 16.6) an illness (was it eye trouble? see v. 15) detained Paul; though he was a care to the Galatians, they treated him with special consideration. **17:** *They,* the Judaizing teachers. **19:** *My little children,* Paul addresses the Galatians as their father in Jesus Christ (1 Cor 4.15).

**4.21–5.1: A final proof,** the allegory about *Hagar* and Sarah, showing that those who rely upon the law instead of having faith in God's promise are to be excluded from the inheritance. **22:** Gen 16.15; 21.2, 9. **25:** *Jerusalem* was stressed by Paul's opponents (2.12). **26:** The heavenly Jerusalem (see Ezek 40; Zech 2.6–9; Rev 21.2), not that in Palestine, is *our mother.*

is Hagar, from Mount Sinai, bearing children for slavery. 25Now Hagar is Mount Sinai in Arabia[b] and corresponds to the present Jerusalem, for she is in slavery with her children. 26But the other woman corresponds to the Jerusalem above; she is free, and she is our mother. 27For it is written,

"Rejoice, you childless one, you
who bear no children,
burst into song and shout, you
who endure no birth pangs;
for the children of the desolate
woman are more numerous
than the children of the one
who is married."

28Now you,[c] my friends,[d] are children of the promise, like Isaac. 29But just as at that time the child who was born according to the flesh persecuted the child who was born according to the Spirit, so it is now also. 30But what does the scripture say? "Drive out the slave and her child; for the child of the slave will not share the inheritance with the child of the free woman." 31So then, friends,[d] we are children, not of the slave but of the free woman. 1For freedom Christ has set us free. Stand firm, therefore, and do not submit again to a yoke of slavery.

2 Listen! I, Paul, am telling you that if you let yourselves be circumcised, Christ will be of no benefit to you. 3Once again I testify to every man who lets himself be circumcised that he is obliged to obey the entire law. 4You who want to be justified by the law have cut yourselves off from Christ; you have fallen away from grace. 5For through the Spirit, by faith, we eagerly wait for the hope of righteousness. 6For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision nor uncircumcision counts for anything; the only thing that counts is faith working[e] through love.

7 You were running well; who prevented you from obeying the truth? 8Such persuasion does not come from the one who calls you. 9A little yeast leavens the whole batch of dough. 10I am confident about you in the Lord that you will not think otherwise. But whoever it is that is confusing you will pay the penalty. 11But my friends,[d] why am I still being persecuted if I am still preaching circumcision? In that case the offense of the cross has been removed. 12I wish those who unsettle you would castrate themselves!

13 For you were called to freedom, brothers and sisters;[d] only do not use your freedom as an opportunity for self-indulgence,[f] but through love become slaves to one another. 14For the whole law is summed up in a single commandment, "You shall love your neighbor as yourself." 15If, however, you bite and

*b* Other ancient authorities read *For Sinai is a mountain in Arabia* *c* Other ancient authorities read *we* *d* Gk *brothers* *e* Or *made effective* *f* Gk *the flesh*

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**4.27**: Isa 54.1 Gk, with Sarah as the once *childless one*. **29–30**: Gen 21.9–12. **5.1**: Both applies the allegory and sets the theme for the next section (see 5.13).

**5.2–6.10**: **Ethical exhortations,** growing out of Paul's gospel and of various sorts.

**5.2–26**: **The nature of Christian liberty. 2–12**: To seek justification by legal works is futile; Christ and the Mosaic law of circumcision are mutually exclusive. Faith alone justifies, but the faith that justifies is not alone—it produces good works *through love* (v. 6). **3**: See 3.10–12.

**5.6**: The ethical result of the gospel is one's faith expressing itself in loving deeds. If *made effective* (note *e*) is read, the sense may be "coming to effective expression in love" or "made effective by God's *love*." **11**: *Still preaching circumcision,* as Paul might have if once a missionary for Judaism; or a charge based on 1 Cor 9.20 or on the case of Timothy reported in Acts 16.1–3. **12**: A bitterly satirical wish; see Phil 3.2. **13–26**: Though free from the law, Christians must not abuse their liberty. Paul's emphasis on ethical responsibility may be intended to answer those concerned about libertine opponents (see Introduction), though his letters regularly include moral imperatives (Rom 12.1ff.).

**5.13**: 5.6; Mt 20.26. **14**: Lev 19.18; Mt 22.39; compare Rom 13.8–10. **16**: *Spirit, flesh:* 3.3; Rom 8.5–11 n. **17**: Rom 7.15–23.

devour one another, take care that you are not consumed by one another.

16 Live by the Spirit, I say, and do not gratify the desires of the flesh. 17For what the flesh desires is opposed to the Spirit, and what the Spirit desires is opposed to the flesh; for these are opposed to each other, to prevent you from doing what you want. 18But if you are led by the Spirit, you are not subject to the law. 19Now the works of the flesh are obvious: fornication, impurity, licentiousness, 20idolatry, sorcery, enmities, strife, jealousy, anger, quarrels, dissensions, factions, 21envy,[g] drunkenness, carousing, and things like these. I am warning you, as I warned you before: those who do such things will not inherit the kingdom of God.

22 By contrast, the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, generosity, faithfulness, 23gentleness, and self-control. There is no law against such things. 24And those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires. 25If we live by the Spirit, let us also be guided by the Spirit. 26Let us not become conceited, competing against one another, envying one another.

6 My friends,[h] if anyone is detected in a transgression, you who have received the Spirit should restore such a one in a spirit of gentleness. Take care that you yourselves are not tempted. 2Bear one another's burdens, and in this way you will fulfill[i] the law of Christ. 3For if those who are nothing think they are something, they deceive themselves. 4All must test their own work; then that work, rather than their neighbor's work, will become a cause for pride. 5For all must carry their own loads.

6 Those who are taught the word must share in all good things with their teacher.

7 Do not be deceived; God is not mocked, for you reap whatever you sow. 8If you sow to your own flesh, you will reap corruption from the flesh; but if you sow to the Spirit, you will reap eternal life from the Spirit. 9So let us not grow weary in doing what is right, for we will reap at harvest time, if we do not give up. 10So then, whenever we have an opportunity, let us work for the good of all, and especially for those of the family of faith.

11 See what large letters I make when I am writing in my own hand! 12It is those who want to make a good showing in the flesh that try to compel you to be circumcised—only that they may not be persecuted for the cross of Christ. 13Even the circumcised do not themselves obey the law, but they want you to be circumcised so that they may boast about your flesh. 14May I never boast of anything except the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by which[j] the world has been crucified to me, and I to the world. 15For[k] neither circumcision nor uncircumcision is anything; but a new creation is everything! 16As for those who will follow this rule—peace be upon them, and mercy, and upon the Israel of God.

*g* Other ancient authorities add *murder*
*h* Gk *Brothers* *i* Other ancient authorities read *in this way fulfill* *j* Or *through whom*
*k* Other ancient authorities add *in Christ Jesus*

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**5.19–21**: Catalogues of vices were common in the Graeco-Roman world (cf. Rom 1.29–31; 1 Cor 6.9–10), as were lists of virtues (cf. 2 Cor 6.6–7), *fruit* that comes from the Holy Spirit (5.22–23).

**6.1–10: Specifics in the use of Christian liberty. 2**: *The law of Christ* (the term "law" is used figuratively; Rom 8.2 n.; 1 Cor 9.21) is the principle or norm of love for one another; see 5.14 n.

**6.6**: The church is obligated to support its teachers. **10**: *For the good of all,* for Christian love is not limited.

**6.11–18: Paul's autograph postscript,** see 1 Cor 16.21 n.; 2 Thess 3.17. **11**: Large letters, compared with those of a trained scribe. **15**: Final declaration of what really matters in Christianity (see 5.6; 5.2–12 n.; 1 Cor 7.19). *New creation,* see 2 Cor 5.17. **16**: *Rule,* vv. 14–15. The church as those holding to Christ's

17 From now on, let no one make trouble for me; for I carry the marks of Jesus branded on my body.

18 May the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit, brothers and sisters.[l] Amen.

*l* Gk *brothers*

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*cross* and *new creation* is God's *Israel* (3.7, 9, 14, 29).

**6.17**: *Marks of Jesus,* scars from Paul's sufferings as a missionary for Christ, like brand marks on a slave (1.10 note *c*). **18**: The addition of the words *brothers and sisters* to the benediction softens the severity of the whole letter.

# *The Letter of Paul to the Ephesians*

In powerful, poetic language, which was probably drawn in part from Christian hymns and liturgies, the Letter to the Ephesians celebrates the life of the church, a unique community established by God through the work of Jesus Christ, who is its head, and also the head of the whole creation. The church was established by God's eternal purpose, and in it believers already live in a union with God through Christ and the Holy Spirit that anticipates the full union in the life to come.

Reconciliation to God through the death of Christ has broken the power of evil and specifically the long-standing separation between Jews and non-Jews. Paul's own dignity and vocation as apostle are emphasized; his apostleship includes both his mission to the Gentiles and his stewardship of the mystery of the gospel, which could not be known until its revelation through Jesus Christ. The concluding ethical exhortation stresses unity in the church, love as an imitation of God, and separation from impurity. Advice to family groups follows the tradition of the time in emphasizing the authority of the father. The well-known concluding passage about putting on the armor of God pictures the life of faith as a conflict with evil, a theme that also appears earlier in the letter.

Some early manuscripts of this letter and some commentators in the early church make no reference to Ephesus in 1.1 (see note *a*), nor does the author deal with the problems of a particular congregation. Hence Ephesians is widely regarded as a "circular letter" that was not written specifically for Ephesus, but was distributed to several churches in Asia Minor. Through the years it has been assumed that Ephesians was written by the apostle Paul, late in his career and from prison, probably in Rome. There are, however, important contrasts between Ephesians and the letters that we can confidently ascribe to Paul. Many of the words in Ephesians do not appear elsewhere in the apostle's correspondence, and some important terms have a different meaning here from their meaning in letters that are surely Paul's. The style, also, with its loose collection of phrases and clauses in long sentences (many of which have been divided in the NRSV), is not characteristic of Paul's letters. Many scholars hold that these differences simply express changes in Paul's thought and style. Many other scholars, however, hold that Ephesians was written by a follower of Paul who had at hand a collection of Paul's letters, and who interpreted the mind of Paul to the church of a slightly later day. That would explain the many parallels to Paul's other letters that are woven into the text, a striking feature of this letter. Parts of Ephesians are strongly parallel to Colossians, which also may or may not have been written by Paul (see the Introduction to Colossians). If Paul was the author of both letters, they were written at nearly the same time; if Ephesians comes from a disciple of Paul, Colossians was an important source.

1 Paul, an apostle of Christ Jesus by the will of God,

To the saints who are in Ephesus and are faithful[a] in Christ Jesus:

2 Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

3 Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in Christ with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places, 4just as he chose us in Christ[b] before the foundation of the world to be holy and blameless before him in love. 5He destined us for adoption as his children through Jesus Christ, according to the good pleasure of his will, 6to the praise of his glorious grace that he freely bestowed on us in the Beloved. 7In him we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of our trespasses, according to the riches of his grace 8that he lavished on us. With all wisdom and insight 9he has made known to us the mystery of his will, according to his good pleasure that he set forth in Christ, 10as a plan for the fullness of time, to gather up all things in him, things in heaven and things on earth. 11In Christ we have also obtained an inheritance,[c] having been destined according to the purpose of him who accomplishes all things according to his counsel and will, 12so that we, who were the first to set our hope on Christ, might live for the praise of his glory. 13In him you also, when you had heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation, and had believed in him, were marked with the seal of the promised Holy Spirit; 14this[d] is the pledge of our inheritance toward redemption as God's own people, to the praise of his glory.

15 I have heard of your faith in the Lord Jesus and your love[e] toward all the saints, and for this reason 16I do not cease to give thanks for you as I remember you in my prayers. 17I pray that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give you a spirit of wisdom and revelation as you come to know him, 18so that, with the eyes of your heart enlightened, you may know what is the hope to which he has called you, what are the riches of his glorious inheritance among the saints, 19and what is the immeasurable greatness of his power for us who believe, according to the working of his great power. 20God[f] put this power to work in Christ when he raised him from the dead and seated him at his right hand in the heavenly places, 21far above all rule and authority and power and dominion, and above every name that is named, not only in this age but also in the age to come. 22And he has put all things under his feet and has made him the head over all things for the church, 23which is his body, the fullness of him who fills all in all.

2 You were dead through the trespasses and sins 2in which you once lived, following the course of this world, following the ruler of the power of the

*a* Other ancient authorities lack *in Ephesus,* reading *saints who are also faithful* *b* Gk *in him* *c* Or *been made a heritage* *d* Other ancient authorities read *who* *e* Other ancient authorities lack *and your love* *f* Gk *He*

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**1.1–2: Salutation,** see Introduction and Rom 1.1–7 n. **2:** *Grace . . . peace,* see 2 Thess 1.2 n.

**1.3–23: Thanksgiving for blessings** and prayer for spiritual wisdom (see Rom 1.8–15 n.). **3:** *In the heavenly places,* an expression, found only in this letter (1.20; 2.6; 3.10; 6.12), referring to the unseen spiritual world behind and above the material universe. **4–10:** God *chose us . . .* and *destined us* to be *his children* in accord with his eternal *good pleasure . . . in Christ . . . to gather up* all things in heaven and earth in him. **6:** *To the praise of his* [the Father's] *glorious grace* (v. 6), a refrain repeated in briefer form referring to Christ (v. 12) and the Holy Spirit (vv. 13–14). **7:** *Redemption through his blood,* Mk 10.45; 14.24; see Heb 9.11 n. **9:** The word *mystery* everywhere in Ephesians (except 5.32) and Colossians refers to God's age-long purpose, now disclosed to his chosen, to call Gentiles as well as Jews to share in Christ's redemptive work (3.4–6).

**1.10:** *Fullness of time,* Gal 4.4. **13:** *You also,* "you Gentiles as well as we Jews." *Promised,* Lk 24.49; Jn 14.26; Acts 1.4; 2.33. **14:** *Pledge,* see 2 Cor 1.22 n. **22–23:** The church, as the *fullness* of Christ, is the complement of his mystic person; he is the *head,* the church *is his body.*

**2.1–22: Christ's benefits,** for both Gen-

air, the spirit that is now at work among those who are disobedient. 3All of us once lived among them in the passions of our flesh, following the desires of flesh and senses, and we were by nature children of wrath, like everyone else. 4But God, who is rich in mercy, out of the great love with which he loved us 5even when we were dead through our trespasses, made us alive together with Christ[g]—by grace you have been saved— 6and raised us up with him and seated us with him in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus, 7so that in the ages to come he might show the immeasurable riches of his grace in kindness toward us in Christ Jesus. 8For by grace you have been saved through faith, and this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God— 9not the result of works, so that no one may boast. 10For we are what he has made us, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand to be our way of life.

11 So then, remember that at one time you Gentiles by birth,[h] called "the uncircumcision" by those who are called "the circumcision"—a physical circumcision made in the flesh by human hands— 12remember that you were at that time without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers to the covenants of promise, having no hope and without God in the world. 13But now in Christ Jesus you who once were far off have been brought near by the blood of Christ. 14For he is our peace; in his flesh he has made both groups into one and has broken down the dividing wall, that is, the hostility between us. 15He has abolished the law with its commandments and ordinances, that he might create in himself one new humanity in place of the two, thus making peace, 16and might reconcile both groups to God in one body[i] through the cross, thus putting to death that hostility through it.[j] 17So he came and proclaimed peace to you who were far off and peace to those who were near; 18for through him both of us have access in one Spirit to the Father. 19So then you are no longer strangers and aliens, but you are citizens with the saints and also members of the household of God, 20built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, with Christ Jesus himself as the cornerstone.[k] 21In him the whole structure is joined together and grows into a holy temple in the Lord; 22in whom you also are built together spiritually[l] into a dwelling place for God.

3 This is the reason that I Paul am a prisoner for[m] Christ Jesus for the sake of you Gentiles— 2for surely you have already heard of the commission of God's grace that was given me for you,

*g* Other ancient authorities read *in Christ*
*h* Gk *in the flesh* *i* Or *reconcile both of us in one body for God* *j* Or *in him*, or *in himself*
*k* Or *keystone* *l* Gk *in the Spirit* *m* Or *of*

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tiles and Jews. **1**: *Dead,* v. 5; Col 2.13. **2**: *The ruler of the power of the air,* Satan (6.11–12; Col 1.13). **3**: *By nature,* the human state apart from God's grace in Christ. *Wrath,* see Col 3.6 n. **5**: *Grace,* God's unmerited favor shown to humankind in Christ. **8**: *Through faith,* as the channel; Paul never says, "saved because of faith." *This,* namely, your salvation. **10**: *Good works* are the result, not the cause, of salvation. *Beforehand* ascribes the whole matter to God.

**2.11**: *Called . . . called,* since the distinction between Jew and Gentile is removed in Christ (Col 3.11) the terms "circumcision" and "uncircumcision" are obsolete. **12**: The plight of the Gentiles apart from Christ. **13–22**: *But now* the reconciling work of Christ avails also for Gentiles, *who once were far off* from God and his people. *By the blood of Christ,* by the new covenant (see 1.7 n.). **14–16**: Christ has not only *broken down the . . . hostility* between Jew and Gentile (*made both groups into one*), but has reconciled *both . . . to God in one body,* the church. **14**: *The dividing wall,* an allusion to the barrier in the temple at Jerusalem separating the court of Israel from the court of the Gentiles. Gentiles who trespassed the barrier did so on pain of death, as warning notices proclaimed. **16**: *Both,* Jew and Gentile. **17**: Isa 52.7; 57.19. **18**: The unity of Christians *in one body,* the church (v. 16), is based on their participation *in one Spirit.* **19**: *Strangers,* v. 12. **20–22**: *The foundation,* laid by *the apostles and* Christian *prophets* (3.5; 4.11; Acts 13.1). The *whole structure* depends upon Christ as the *cornerstone* (a messianic designation, compare Isa

3 and how the mystery was made known to me by revelation, as I wrote above in a few words, 4 a reading of which will enable you to perceive my understanding of the mystery of Christ. 5 In former generations this mystery[n] was not made known to humankind, as it has now been revealed to his holy apostles and prophets by the Spirit: 6 that is, the Gentiles have become fellow heirs, members of the same body, and sharers in the promise in Christ Jesus through the gospel.

7 Of this gospel I have become a servant according to the gift of God's grace that was given me by the working of his power. 8 Although I am the very least of all the saints, this grace was given to me to bring to the Gentiles the news of the boundless riches of Christ, 9 and to make everyone see[o] what is the plan of the mystery hidden for ages in[p] God who created all things; 10 so that through the church the wisdom of God in its rich variety might now be made known to the rulers and authorities in the heavenly places. 11 This was in accordance with the eternal purpose that he has carried out in Christ Jesus our Lord, 12 in whom we have access to God in boldness and confidence through faith in him.[q] 13 I pray therefore that you[r] may not lose heart over my sufferings for you; they are your glory.

14 For this reason I bow my knees before the Father,[s] 15 from whom every family[t] in heaven and on earth takes its name. 16 I pray that, according to the riches of his glory, he may grant that you may be strengthened in your inner being with power through his Spirit, 17 and that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith, as you are being rooted and grounded in love. 18 I pray that you may have the power to comprehend, with all the saints, what is the breadth and length and height and depth, 19 and to know the love of Christ that surpasses knowledge, so that you may be filled with all the fullness of God.

20 Now to him who by the power at work within us is able to accomplish abundantly far more than all we can ask or imagine, 21 to him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus to all generations, forever and ever. Amen.

4 I therefore, the prisoner in the Lord, beg you to lead a life worthy of the calling to which you have been called, 2 with all humility and gentleness, with patience, bearing with one another in love, 3 making every effort to maintain the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. 4 There is one body and one Spirit, just as you were called to the one hope of your calling, 5 one Lord, one faith, one baptism, 6 one God and Father of all,

*n* Gk *it* *o* Other ancient authorities read *to bring to light* *p* Or *by* *q* Or *the faith of him* *r* Or *I* *s* Other ancient authorities add *of our Lord Jesus Christ* *t* Gk *fatherhood*

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28.16; Mt 21.42). Christians are built into a growing *temple* or *dwelling place for God* (1 Cor 3.16–17; 1 Pet 2.4–5).

**3.1–21**: **A prayer for wisdom,** interrupted by a parenthesis on Paul's mission to the Gentiles (vv. 2–13). **1**: Paul was *a prisoner* because he had aroused the hostility of the Jews by advocating the equality of the *Gentiles* in the church (Acts 21.21, 28; 22.21–22). **2**: Col 1.25. **3**: *Mystery,* see 1.9 n. *By revelation,* 1.17; Acts 9.3–4; Gal 1.12. *In a few words,* in 1.9–10.

**3.5**: Christian *prophets,* see 2.20. **6**: The content of the *mystery,* v. 3. **7**: *Servant,* Col 1.23, 25. **8**: *Least,* 1 Cor 15.9. *Boundless,* in their nature, extent, and application (v. 19; Rom 11.33). **9**: *The mystery,* or secret, that Gentiles, by faith, were to form an integral part of the new Israel. **10**: By means of *the church* God's *wisdom* in the plan of redemption is displayed to angelic beings (1 Cor 4.9) *in its rich variety.* **12**: 2.18.

**3.14–19**: Paul's prayer. **14**: *For this reason,* resumes v. 1. **14–15**: *Father, family,* a play on words in Greek ("pater," "patria," see note *t*); God is the Author of all family relationships. **18**: *The breadth . . . and depth,* of Christ's love. **20–21**: The doxology celebrates God's boundless generosity and his *glory* both *in the church and in Christ Jesus.*

**4.1–6.20**: **Ethical implications** of the doctrinal teaching in chs 1–3. **4.1–16**: **An appeal to maintain the unity of the faith.** **2**: Col 3.12–13. **4–6**: Seven elements of unity.

who is above all and through all and in all.

7 But each of us was given grace according to the measure of Christ's gift. 8Therefore it is said,

"When he ascended on high he
made captivity itself
a captive;
he gave gifts to his people."

9(When it says, "He ascended," what does it mean but that he had also descended[u] into the lower parts of the earth? 10He who descended is the same one who ascended far above all the heavens, so that he might fill all things.) 11The gifts he gave were that some would be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, some pastors and teachers, 12to equip the saints for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ, 13until all of us come to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to maturity, to the measure of the full stature of Christ. 14We must no longer be children, tossed to and fro and blown about by every wind of doctrine, by people's trickery, by their craftiness in deceitful scheming. 15But speaking the truth in love, we must grow up in every way into him who is the head, into Christ, 16from whom the whole body, joined and knit together by every ligament with which it is equipped, as each part is working properly, promotes the body's growth in building itself up in love.

17 Now this I affirm and insist on in the Lord: you must no longer live as the Gentiles live, in the futility of their minds. 18They are darkened in their understanding, alienated from the life of God because of their ignorance and hardness of heart. 19They have lost all sensitivity and have abandoned themselves to licentiousness, greedy to practice every kind of impurity. 20That is not the way you learned Christ! 21For surely you have heard about him and were taught in him, as truth is in Jesus. 22You were taught to put away your former way of life, your old self, corrupt and deluded by its lusts, 23and to be renewed in the spirit of your minds, 24and to clothe yourselves with the new self, created according to the likeness of God in true righteousness and holiness.

25 So then, putting away falsehood, let all of us speak the truth to our neighbors, for we are members of one another. 26Be angry but do not sin; do not let the sun go down on your anger, 27and do not make room for the devil. 28Thieves must give up stealing; rather let them labor and work honestly with their own hands, so as to have something to share with the needy. 29Let no evil talk come out of your mouths, but only what is useful for building up,[v] as there is need, so that your words may give grace to those who hear. 30And do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, with which you were marked with a seal for the day of redemption. 31Put away from you all bitterness and wrath and anger and wrangling and slander, together with all malice, 32and be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, as God in Christ has forgiven you.[w]

5 1Therefore be imitators of God, as beloved children, 2and live in love, as

*u* Other ancient authorities add *first* *v* Other ancient authorities read *building up faith*
*w* Other ancient authorities read *us*

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**4.7–16**: Christian unity amid diversity of spiritual gifts. **8**: Ps 68.18. The psalm is applied to Christ's victory over spiritual powers (1.21; Col 2.15), but here attention is focused on his ascent. **9**: *Lower parts,* the region of the grave. **10**: The same Christ, after his burial, was exalted that he might fill all things with himself. **11**: *Pastors and teachers,* two aspects of one ministry. **12**: All Christians are to be equipped *for the work of* active spiritual service. **15**: The verb means both *speaking* and doing.

**4.17–5.20**: **An appeal to renounce pagan ways. 4.17–19**: Rom 1.21–25. **22**: *Put away,* like filthy, worn-out clothes (Col 3.9; see Rom 6.6 n.). **25**: Zech 8.16; Rom 12.5. **26**: If angry, let it neither be in a sinful spirit nor prolonged (Ps 4.4; Jas 1.19–20). **28**: *Share,* not merely in restitution, but in liberality. **29**: Col 3.8. **32**: *As God . . . has forgiven,*

Christ loved us[x] and gave himself up for us, a fragrant offering and sacrifice to God.

3 But fornication and impurity of any kind, or greed, must not even be mentioned among you, as is proper among saints. 4Entirely out of place is obscene, silly, and vulgar talk; but instead, let there be thanksgiving. 5Be sure of this, that no fornicator or impure person, or one who is greedy (that is, an idolater), has any inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and of God.

6 Let no one deceive you with empty words, for because of these things the wrath of God comes on those who are disobedient. 7Therefore do not be associated with them. 8For once you were darkness, but now in the Lord you are light. Live as children of light— 9for the fruit of the light is found in all that is good and right and true. 10Try to find out what is pleasing to the Lord. 11Take no part in the unfruitful works of darkness, but instead expose them. 12For it is shameful even to mention what such people do secretly; 13but everything exposed by the light becomes visible, 14for everything that becomes visible is light. Therefore it says,

"Sleeper, awake!
Rise from the dead,
and Christ will shine on you."

15 Be careful then how you live, not as unwise people but as wise, 16making the most of the time, because the days are evil. 17So do not be foolish, but understand what the will of the Lord is. 18Do not get drunk with wine, for that is debauchery; but be filled with the Spirit, 19as you sing psalms and hymns and spiritual songs among yourselves, singing and making melody to the Lord in your hearts, 20giving thanks to God the Father at all times and for everything in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ.

21 Be subject to one another out of reverence for Christ.

22 Wives, be subject to your husbands as you are to the Lord. 23For the husband is the head of the wife just as Christ is the head of the church, the body of which he is the Savior. 24Just as the church is subject to Christ, so also wives ought to be, in everything, to their husbands.

25 Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her, 26in order to make her holy by cleansing her with the washing of water by the word, 27so as to present the church to himself in splendor, without a spot or wrinkle or anything of the kind—yes, so that she may be holy and without blemish. 28In the same way, husbands should love their wives as they do their own bodies. He who loves his wife loves himself. 29For no one ever hates his own body, but he nourishes and tenderly cares for it, just as Christ does for the church, 30because we are members of his body.[y] 31"For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and the two will become one flesh." 32This is a great mys-

*x* Other ancient authorities read *you*
*y* Other ancient authorities add *of his flesh and of his bones*

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Christian conduct is the corollary of Christian doctrine (Phil 2.5–8; Col 3.1–3).

**5.1**: *Imitators of God,* in forgiving (4.32) and in loving. **2**: *Gave himself up* to death as a sacrifice *for us.* **4**: *Vulgar talk,* of a licentious nature. **5**: *Greedy,* see Col 3.5 n.

**5.6**: *Wrath,* see Col 3.6 n. **9**: Gal 5.22–23. **11**: Gal 5.19–21. **14**: Quoted perhaps from an early Christian hymn based on Isa 60.1. **16**: Col 4.5. **19**: Col 3.16.

**5.21–6.9**: **The Christian household** (Col 3.18–4.1): husband and wife (5.21–33), children and parents (6.1–4), masters and slaves (6.5–9). **5.21**: The general principle is that of mutual subjection (Phil 2.3) (with a presupposed subordination of wife, children, and slaves) on which the following applications rest. **23**: Being *the head of the wife* involves responsibility for cherishing and protecting her (vv. 25, 29).

**5.25**: *Gave,* see 5.2 n. **26**: Christian baptism, under the figure of the ritual bath of purification taken by Jewish women, here prior to the marriage ceremony. **27**: Song 4.7; 2 Cor 11.2; Rev 21.2. **31**: Gen 2.24. **32**: *This . . . mystery,* namely Christ's spiritual union with our humanity, is of great significance in understanding the nature of human marriage. **33**: Here, implicitly, monogamy is taken for granted.

tery, and I am applying it to Christ and the church. 33 Each of you, however, should love his wife as himself, and a wife should respect her husband.

6 Children, obey your parents in the Lord,[z] for this is right. 2 "Honor your father and mother"—this is the first commandment with a promise: 3 "so that it may be well with you and you may live long on the earth."

4 And, fathers, do not provoke your children to anger, but bring them up in the discipline and instruction of the Lord.

5 Slaves, obey your earthly masters with fear and trembling, in singleness of heart, as you obey Christ; 6 not only while being watched, and in order to please them, but as slaves of Christ, doing the will of God from the heart. 7 Render service with enthusiasm, as to the Lord and not to men and women, 8 knowing that whatever good we do, we will receive the same again from the Lord, whether we are slaves or free.

9 And, masters, do the same to them. Stop threatening them, for you know that both of you have the same Master in heaven, and with him there is no partiality.

10 Finally, be strong in the Lord and in the strength of his power. 11 Put on the whole armor of God, so that you may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. 12 For our[a] struggle is not against enemies of blood and flesh, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the cosmic powers of this present darkness, against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly places. 13 Therefore take up the whole armor of God, so that you may be able to withstand on that evil day, and having done everything, to stand firm. 14 Stand therefore, and fasten the belt of truth around your waist, and put on the breastplate of righteousness. 15 As shoes for your feet put on whatever will make you ready to proclaim the gospel of peace. 16 With all of these,[b] take the shield of faith, with which you will be able to quench all the flaming arrows of the evil one. 17 Take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God.

18 Pray in the Spirit at all times in every prayer and supplication. To that end keep alert and always persevere in supplication for all the saints. 19 Pray also for me, so that when I speak, a message may be given to me to make known with boldness the mystery of the gospel,[c] 20 for which I am an ambassador in chains. Pray that I may declare it boldly, as I must speak.

21 So that you also may know how I am and what I am doing, Tychicus will tell you everything. He is a dear brother and a faithful minister in the Lord. 22 I am sending him to you for this very purpose, to let you know how we are, and to encourage your hearts.

23 Peace be to the whole community,[d] and love with faith, from God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. 24 Grace be with all who have an undying love for our Lord Jesus Christ.[e]

*z* Other ancient authorities lack *in the Lord*
*a* Other ancient authorities read *your* *b* Or *In all circumstances* *c* Other ancient authorities lack *of the gospel* *d* Gk *to the brothers* *e* Other ancient authorities add *Amen*

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**6.2**: Ex 20.12. **3**: Deut 5.16. **4**: Col 3.21. **8**: Col 3.22; on slavery, see Introduction to Philemon. **9**: God shows *no partiality* to social status (Col 3.25–4.1).

**6.10–20**: **God's armor and the Christian's warfare. 12**: *Blood and flesh,* that is, mere mortal beings. *Rulers . . . forces of evil,* organized forces of malevolent spirit beings (see Rom 8.38 n.; Rev 12.7–9). **13–17**: The armor that God wears (Isa 11.5; 59.17) and supplies.

**6.15**: Isa 52.7. **17**: *The sword* (the one offensive weapon mentioned here) is the word that God speaks through his servants (Hos 6.5; Mt 10.19–20; compare Heb 4.12). **18–20**: Persevering prayer (Col 4.2–4) is an aid in standing (v. 14). **19**: *Mystery,* see 1.9 n. **20**: *In chains,* as a prisoner awaiting trial.

**6.21–24**: **Personal matters and benediction. 24**: *Grace . . . undying love,* a worthy conclusion, returning to the fundamental thought of 1.3–14.

# *The Letter of Paul to the Philippians*

Philippi was a city of Macedonia, a stop on one of the main roads between East and West in the Roman Empire. The Christian community in Philippi was the first church established by Paul on European soil (Acts 16.11–13). Paul seems to have had a close and happy relationship with this church in the years that followed (4.15–16).

From the beginning of Paul's work in Philippi there had been opposition (1 Thess 2.2; Acts 16.19–40), and evidently opposition to the church was very active at the time Paul wrote the Letter to the Philippians, for a main theme of this letter is persistence in faith in the face of opposition and even the threat of death. Paul offers himself as an example of steadfast courage and of joy in the midst of harsh circumstances and possible death; he turns attention away from preoccupation with one's own fate toward the proclamation of the gospel, which is the task to be accomplished in the face of suffering, and toward the joy, which is real even in such difficult times, while one follows the "mind" of Christ (1.12–25; 2.1–5; 3.8–16; 4.11–13).

At the center of this theme is the moving and powerful hymn-like passage that celebrates the story of Christ's self-emptying even to death, for which Christ was awarded by God the name "Lord," which is above every name (2.6–11). The hymn was probably quoted and adapted by Paul from earlier tradition. Through the years and today, the theme of self-emptying, or "kenosis," has been a key concept according to which Christians have reflected about the meaning of Christ.

Except that Paul was in prison at the time of writing and awaiting trial (1.12–26), it is impossible to speak confidently of the time and place of the writing of this letter. Because of references to the imperial guard or praetorium (1.13) and to the emperor's household (4.22) and also because the situation reflected in the letter bears some resemblance to that described at the very end of the book of Acts, many scholars put its composition during the period of Paul's imprisonment at Rome (about A.D. 61–63); but the indications are by no means conclusive, and it is perhaps more probable that the letter was written from Caesarea or Ephesus at an earlier stage in Paul's career. The terms referring to the emperor's establishment were used also for government functions in other parts of the empire than Rome.

The immediate occasion of Paul's writing was the return to Philippi of Epaphroditus (2.25–30), who had been sent by the Philippian church with gifts for Paul (4.18), and who had been seriously ill while staying with Paul. The apostle took this opportunity to thank them for their gifts, and to set their difficulties in a wider framework by describing his own situation and the relation of both his and their situations to the reality of Christ.

The letter follows the usual pattern of Paul's letters in a general way. But some abrupt changes of topic (especially between 3.1 and 3.2), in addition to the fact that an early Christian writer (Polycarp, *Philippians* 2.3), speaks of "letters" of Paul to the Philippians, has led some scholars to conclude that our present Philippians is composed of parts of two or three letters that Paul wrote to Philippi. Many others, however, find that Philippians is a coherent whole as it stands.

1 Paul and Timothy, servants[a] of Christ Jesus,

To all the saints in Christ Jesus who are in Philippi, with the bishops[b] and deacons:[c]

2 Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

3 I thank my God every time I remember you, 4constantly praying with joy in every one of my prayers for all of you, 5because of your sharing in the gospel from the first day until now. 6I am confident of this, that the one who began a good work among you will bring it to completion by the day of Jesus Christ. 7It is right for me to think this way about all of you, because you hold me in your heart,[d] for all of you share in God's grace[e] with me, both in my imprisonment and in the defense and confirmation of the gospel. 8For God is my witness, how I long for all of you with the compassion of Christ Jesus. 9And this is my prayer, that your love may overflow more and more with knowledge and full insight 10to help you to determine what is best, so that in the day of Christ you may be pure and blameless, 11having produced the harvest of righteousness that comes through Jesus Christ for the glory and praise of God.

12 I want you to know, beloved,[f] that what has happened to me has actually helped to spread the gospel, 13so that it has become known throughout the whole imperial guard[g] and to everyone else that my imprisonment is for Christ; 14and most of the brothers and sisters,[f] having been made confident in the Lord by my imprisonment, dare to speak the word[h] with greater boldness and without fear.

15 Some proclaim Christ from envy and rivalry, but others from goodwill. 16These proclaim Christ out of love, knowing that I have been put here for the defense of the gospel; 17the others proclaim Christ out of selfish ambition, not sincerely but intending to increase my suffering in my imprisonment. 18What does it matter? Just this, that Christ is proclaimed in every way, whether out of false motives or true; and in that I rejoice.

Yes, and I will continue to rejoice, 19for I know that through your prayers and the help of the Spirit of Jesus Christ this will turn out for my deliverance. 20It is my eager expectation and hope that I will not be put to shame in any way, but that by my speaking with all boldness, Christ will be exalted now as always in my body, whether by life or by death. 21For to me, living is Christ and dying is gain. 22If I am to live in the flesh, that means fruitful labor for me; and I do not know which I prefer. 23I am hard pressed between the two: my desire is to depart and be with Christ, for that is far better; 24but to remain in the flesh is more necessary for you. 25Since I am convinced of

*a* Gk *slaves* *b* Or *overseers* *c* Or *overseers and helpers* *d* Or *because I hold you in my heart* *e* Gk *in grace* *f* Gk *brothers* *g* Gk *whole praetorium* *h* Other ancient authorities read *word of God*

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**1.1–2: Salutation,** see Rom 1.1–7 n. **1:** *Bishops and deacons,* i.e. "overseers" and "helpers" (compare 1 Cor 12.28). **2:** *Grace . . . peace,* see 2 Thess 1.2 n.

**1.3–11: Thanksgiving,** see Rom 1.8–15 n. **5:** *Sharing,* see Introduction. *From the first day,* when Paul first preached at Philippi (Acts 16.13). **6:** *The day of Jesus Christ,* the day when he will return and the present age will end (1 Cor 1.8; compare 2 Thess 2.3 and 2 Pet 3.10). **10:** Rom 2.18.

**1.12–30: Paul's present circumstances. 12:** See v. 7. **13:** Paul is under military guard; and now all the members of the local headquarters (compare note *g*) know why he is there, and so have heard at least the name of Christ.

**1.15–18:** That some of Paul's fellow-Christians regarded him with suspicion and ill-will appears in Galatians and in 1 and 2 Corinthians (especially 2 Cor chs 10–13). **21–24:** His life is not his own but belongs utterly to Christ; therefore *to depart and be with Christ* is *gain;* but this would mean loss to his churches.

**1.25–26:** It is not known whether Paul's expectation was fulfilled or not. **28–30:** The *evidence* consists in the church's brave, united witness to Christ even at the cost of *struggle* and *suffering.*

this, I know that I will remain and continue with all of you for your progress and joy in faith, 26so that I may share abundantly in your boasting in Christ Jesus when I come to you again.

27 Only, live your life in a manner worthy of the gospel of Christ, so that, whether I come and see you or am absent and hear about you, I will know that you are standing firm in one spirit, striving side by side with one mind for the faith of the gospel, 28and are in no way intimidated by your opponents. For them this is evidence of their destruction, but of your salvation. And this is God's doing. 29For he has graciously granted you the privilege not only of believing in Christ, but of suffering for him as well— 30since you are having the same struggle that you saw I had and now hear that I still have.

2 If then there is any encouragement in Christ, any consolation from love, any sharing in the Spirit, any compassion and sympathy, 2make my joy complete: be of the same mind, having the same love, being in full accord and of one mind. 3Do nothing from selfish ambition or conceit, but in humility regard others as better than yourselves. 4Let each of you look not to your own interests, but to the interests of others. 5Let the same mind be in you that was[i] in Christ Jesus,

6 who, though he was in the form
of God,
did not regard equality with
God
as something to be exploited,
7 but emptied himself,
taking the form of a slave,
being born in human likeness.
And being found in human form,
8 he humbled himself
and became obedient to the
point of death—
even death on a cross.

9 Therefore God also highly
exalted him
and gave him the name
that is above every name,
10 so that at the name of Jesus
every knee should bend,
in heaven and on earth and
under the earth,
11 and every tongue should confess
that Jesus Christ is Lord,
to the glory of God the Father.

12 Therefore, my beloved, just as you have always obeyed me, not only in my presence, but much more now in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling; 13for it is God who is at work in you, enabling you both to will and to work for his good pleasure.

14 Do all things without murmuring and arguing, 15so that you may be blameless and innocent, children of God without blemish in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation, in which you shine like stars in the world. 16It is by your holding fast to the word of life that I can boast on the day of Christ that I did not run in vain or labor in vain. 17But even if I am being poured out as a libation over the sacrifice and the offering of your faith, I am glad and rejoice with all of you— 18and in the same way you also must be glad and rejoice with me.

*i* Or *that you have*

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**2.1–18: Humility and the example of Christ. 1–2:** The "if" is rhetorical; with Christ's *encouragement* and moved by God's *love* for them, they are to *make* Paul's *joy complete*. **3:** He has reason to fear that they are somewhat divided by petty jealousies (4.2).

**2.6:** *In the form of God,* that is, pre-existent and divine (Jn 1.1–3; Col 1.15). *Something to be exploited,* and never relinquished. **7:** *But emptied himself,* the extreme limit of self-denial. *Slave,* perhaps an allusion to Isa 52.13–53.12. *Born,* Jn 1.14. **8:** Mt 26.39; Jn 10.18; Rom 5.19; Heb 5.8; 12.2. **9:** *Exalted,* at the resurrection. *The name* is "Lord" (see 1 Thess 1.1 n.). **10–11:** Compare Isa 45.23.

**2.12:** *With fear and trembling,* humbly and with constant dependence on God's help. **14:** *Without murmuring,* compare 1 Cor 10.9–10. **15:** *Crooked and perverse,* Deut 32.5. *Shine like stars,* Dan 12.3. **16:** *Day of Christ,* see 1.6 n. **17:** A reminder that Paul stands in danger of condemnation and death.

19 I hope in the Lord Jesus to send
Timothy to you soon, so that I may be
cheered by news of you. 20I have no one
like him who will be genuinely con-
cerned for your welfare. 21All of them
are seeking their own interests, not those
of Jesus Christ. 22But Timothy's[j] worth
you know, how like a son with a father
he has served with me in the work of the
gospel. 23I hope therefore to send him as
soon as I see how things go with me;
24and I trust in the Lord that I will also
come soon.

25 Still, I think it necessary to send to
you Epaphroditus—my brother and co-
worker and fellow soldier, your messen-
ger[k] and minister to my need; 26for he
has been longing for[l] all of you, and has
been distressed because you heard that he
was ill. 27He was indeed so ill that he
nearly died. But God had mercy on him,
and not only on him but on me also, so
that I would not have one sorrow after
another. 28I am the more eager to send
him, therefore, in order that you may
rejoice at seeing him again, and that I
may be less anxious. 29Welcome him
then in the Lord with all joy, and honor
such people, 30because he came close to
death for the work of Christ,[m] risking his
life to make up for those services that you
could not give me.

3 Finally, my brothers and sisters,[n]
rejoice[o] in the Lord.

To write the same things to you is not
troublesome to me, and for you it is a
safeguard.

2 Beware of the dogs, beware of the
evil workers, beware of those who muti-
late the flesh![p] 3For it is we who are the
circumcision, who worship in the Spirit
of God[q] and boast in Christ Jesus and
have no confidence in the flesh— 4even
though I, too, have reason for confidence
in the flesh.

If anyone else has reason to be confi-
dent in the flesh, I have more: 5circum-
cised on the eighth day, a member of the
people of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin,
a Hebrew born of Hebrews; as to the
law, a Pharisee; 6as to zeal, a persecutor
of the church; as to righteousness under
the law, blameless.

7 Yet whatever gains I had, these I
have come to regard as loss because of
Christ. 8More than that, I regard every-
thing as loss because of the surpassing
value of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord.
For his sake I have suffered the loss of all
things, and I regard them as rubbish, in
order that I may gain Christ 9and be
found in him, not having a righteousness
of my own that comes from the law, but
one that comes through faith in Christ,[r]
the righteousness from God based on
faith. 10I want to know Christ[s] and the
power of his resurrection and the sharing
of his sufferings by becoming like him in

*j* Gk *his* *k* Gk *apostle* *l* Other ancient authorities read *longing to see* *m* Other ancient authorities read *of the Lord* *n* Gk *my brothers* *o* Or *farewell* *p* Gk *the mutilation* *q* Other ancient authorities read *worship God in spirit* *r* Or *through the faith of Christ* *s* Gk *him*

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**2.19–30: Timothy and Epaphroditus.** **19**: *Timothy,* Acts 16.1–3; 1 Cor 16.10–11; see Introduction to 2 Timothy. **23–24**: A reference to the uncertainty of how his impending trial will end (1.19, 26). **25**: *Epaphroditus,* see Introduction and 4.18.

**3.1–11: A warning.** **1**: *The same things,* he has given this warning before. **2**: A bitter and ironical reference to those who preach the necessity of circumcision (compare Gal 5.12). **3**: *Circumcision,* Jer 4.4; Rom 2.28–29; Gal 6.14–15; Col 2.11–13. *The flesh,* outward states or rites. **5**: *A Hebrew . . .,* though living in a Greek city (Tarsus) Paul's family spoke the language of Palestine (Acts 21.40; 22.2). *Pharisee,* one who carefully observed the Jewish law.

**3.6**: *A persecutor,* Acts 9.1–2; 1 Cor 15.9; Gal 1.13. *Under the law, blameless,* so far as its external requirements are concerned. No contradiction need be found between this statement and what Paul says in Rom 3.20 and 7.7–25. **9**: *In Christ,* see Rom 3.22 n. *The righteousness from God,* a free gift, dependent only upon a human being's willingness humbly to receive it (Rom 1.16–4.25).

**3.10–11**: Actually to know Christ as risen and living is to have *power* to suffer like him and for him, and to possess the sure hope of rising and living with him.

his death, [11] if somehow I may attain the resurrection from the dead.

12 Not that I have already obtained this or have already reached the goal;[t] but I press on to make it my own, because Christ Jesus has made me his own. [13] Beloved,[u] I do not consider that I have made it my own;[v] but this one thing I do: forgetting what lies behind and straining forward to what lies ahead, [14] I press on toward the goal for the prize of the heavenly[w] call of God in Christ Jesus. [15] Let those of us then who are mature be of the same mind; and if you think differently about anything, this too God will reveal to you. [16] Only let us hold fast to what we have attained.

17 Brothers and sisters,[u] join in imitating me, and observe those who live according to the example you have in us. [18] For many live as enemies of the cross of Christ; I have often told you of them, and now I tell you even with tears. [19] Their end is destruction; their god is the belly; and their glory is in their shame; their minds are set on earthly things. [20] But our citizenship[x] is in heaven, and it is from there that we are expecting a Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ. [21] He will transform the body of our humiliation[y] that it may be conformed to the body of his glory,[z] by the power that also enables him to make all things subject to himself.

4 [1] Therefore, my brothers and sisters,[a] whom I love and long for, my joy and crown, stand firm in the Lord in this way, my beloved.

2 I urge Euodia and I urge Syntyche to be of the same mind in the Lord. [3] Yes, and I ask you also, my loyal companion,[b] help these women, for they have struggled beside me in the work of the gospel, together with Clement and the rest of my co-workers, whose names are in the book of life.

4 Rejoice[c] in the Lord always; again I will say, Rejoice.[c] [5] Let your gentleness be known to everyone. The Lord is near. [6] Do not worry about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. [7] And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.

8 Finally, beloved,[d] whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is just, whatever is pure, whatever is pleasing, whatever is commendable, if there is any excellence and if there is anything worthy of praise, think about[e] these things. [9] Keep on doing the things that you have learned and received and heard and seen in me, and the God of peace will be with you.

10 I rejoice[f] in the Lord greatly that now at last you have revived your concern for me; indeed, you were concerned for me, but had no opportunity to show it.[g] [11] Not that I am referring to being in need; for I have learned to be content with whatever I have. [12] I know what it

*t* Or *have already been made perfect*
*u* Gk *Brothers* *v* Other ancient authorities read *my own yet* *w* Gk *upward*
*x* Or *commonwealth* *y* Or *our humble bodies*
*z* Or *his glorious body* *a* Gk *my brothers*
*b* Or *loyal Syzygus* *c* Or *Farewell*
*d* Gk *brothers* *e* Gk *take account of* *f* Gk *I rejoiced* *g* Gk lacks *to show it*

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**3.12–21: Confession and exhortation. 12–14:** Though righteousness is God's gift, Christians are not relieved of the obligation of serious effort. *The goal,* the allusion is to Greek foot races and their finishing post. *The prize* is God's *heavenly call* to share God's glory (Rom 5.2).

**3.18–19:** *Many,* presumably professing Christians, but probably not the Judaizers of 3.2, whom the description scarcely fits. **20:** *Our citizenship,* our real homeland. Paul's illustration is drawn from the fact that the citizenship of the Philippian was in Rome. **21:** Rom 8.23; 1 Cor 15.47–57; 2 Cor 5.1–5; Col 3.1–4.

**4.1–23: Final appeals. 1:** *Joy and crown,* 1 Thess 2.19–20. **2:** *Euodia . . . Syntyche,* two women in the Philippian church who had been disagreeing. **3:** *My loyal companion,* probably a leader in the church at Philippi. The Greek word for *companion* may be understood as a proper name, Syzygus. *Book of life,* Ex 32.32. **5:** Ps 119.151.

**4.10:** A reference to the gift which Epaph-

is to have little, and I know what it is to have plenty. In any and all circumstances I have learned the secret of being well-fed and of going hungry, of having plenty and of being in need. 13I can do all things through him who strengthens me. 14In any case, it was kind of you to share my distress.

15 You Philippians indeed know that in the early days of the gospel, when I left Macedonia, no church shared with me in the matter of giving and receiving, except you alone. 16For even when I was in Thessalonica, you sent me help for my needs more than once. 17Not that I seek the gift, but I seek the profit that accumulates to your account. 18I have been paid in full and have more than enough; I am fully satisfied, now that I have received from Epaphroditus the gifts you sent, a fragrant offering, a sacrifice acceptable and pleasing to God. 19And my God will fully satisfy every need of yours according to his riches in glory in Christ Jesus. 20To our God and Father be glory forever and ever. Amen.

21 Greet every saint in Christ Jesus. The friends[h] who are with me greet you. 22All the saints greet you, especially those of the emperor's household.

23 The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit.[i]

*h* Gk *brothers* *i* Other ancient authorities add *Amen*

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roditus brought; see Introduction and 2.25–30. **14**: *My distress,* the deprivations and disappointments attendant upon imprisonment.

**4.15**: *When I left Macedonia,* Acts 16.40. **16**: According to Acts 17.1, Paul had gone to Thessalonica immediately after his stay in Philippi. **22**: *The emperor's household,* Paul had taken advantage of his imprisonment to evangelize the soldiers who were his jailers, and they joined him in sending greetings to the Philippians (see 1.13 n.). The emperor at that time was probably Nero.

# *The Letter of Paul to the Colossians*

Colossae was a town of Phrygia in Asia Minor, not far from Ephesus. The church in Colossae had been founded, not by Paul, but probably by Epaphras (1.7; 4.12). The letter is confident that the believers are basically faithful to Paul's message. But right faith is threatened by the wrong teaching of persons who are not clearly identified. Our only clue to their teaching is the letter itself. It opposes certain ascetic practices ("Do not handle, do not taste," 2.21; "severe treatment of the body," 2.23) and some ritual practices that may have come from the Jewish tradition (dietary regulations and "festivals, new moons, and sabbaths," 2.16), as well as "philosophy and empty deceit" (2.8), which seems to mean esoteric teaching, and which included relying on the "elemental spirits of the universe" (2.8, 20). A combination of Jewish ritual practices and gnostic or theosophical speculation seems to have been what threatened the church at Colossae. Such syncretism or mixing of religious traditions was common at the time. Colossians opposes such teachings because they distribute the powers on which human beings depend among a variety of sources.

Against any such division of loyalty, the letter presents a strong and poetic image of the sole lordship of Christ, both throughout the whole cosmos and in the church. Christ is the unified and unifying power on which alone they are to depend. There is no stronger affirmation of the lordship of Christ in the New Testament.

The letter follows the pattern of most Pauline letters: introduction (1.1–11); moving directly into the basic statement (1.12–2.23), which opens with the powerful celebration of the cosmic and ecclesiastical Christ, and closes by arguing from Christ's lordship against the practices that were to be rejected in Colossae; practical application (3.1–4.6), which stresses being risen with Christ, and includes specific, somewhat patriarchal, directives about household and religious practices; and conclusion (4.7–18).

Colossians is closely related to the letters to Philemon and to Ephesians; the latter has drawn from it (see Introductions to Philemon and Ephesians).

The language of Colossians is similar to that of letters that are certainly Paul's, but many terms that are central to Paul elsewhere do not appear, and Paul's usual argumentative presentation of his thought is replaced by a more liturgical, celebrative style. The greatest contrast with letters that are surely Paul's is the emphasis on the transformation of the present by faith, instead of the usual Pauline tension between the partly-fulfilled present and the future that is hoped for. Scholars are divided about how to interpret these differences. Some hold that they are strong enough to conclude that Colossians was not written by Paul, as it claims, but by a disciple of Paul shortly after his time, to give Paul's authority to the continuing tradition of his teaching. Others think that the letter was written by Paul, while in prison (4.4, 18), presumably at Rome; the particular situation and, perhaps, changes in Paul's thinking, account for the contrasts.

1 Paul, an apostle of Christ Jesus by the will of God, and Timothy our brother,

2 To the saints and faithful brothers and sisters[a] in Christ in Colossae:

Grace to you and peace from God our Father.

3 In our prayers for you we always thank God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, 4for we have heard of your faith in Christ Jesus and of the love that you have for all the saints, 5because of the hope laid up for you in heaven. You have heard of this hope before in the word of the truth, the gospel 6that has come to you. Just as it is bearing fruit and growing in the whole world, so it has been bearing fruit among yourselves from the day you heard it and truly comprehended the grace of God. 7This you learned from Epaphras, our beloved fellow servant.[b] He is a faithful minister of Christ on your[c] behalf, 8and he has made known to us your love in the Spirit.

9 For this reason, since the day we heard it, we have not ceased praying for you and asking that you may be filled with the knowledge of God's[d] will in all spiritual wisdom and understanding, 10so that you may lead lives worthy of the Lord, fully pleasing to him, as you bear fruit in every good work and as you grow in the knowledge of God. 11May you be made strong with all the strength that comes from his glorious power, and may you be prepared to endure everything with patience, while joyfully 12giving thanks to the Father, who has enabled[e] you[f] to share in the inheritance of the saints in the light. 13He has rescued us from the power of darkness and transferred us into the kingdom of his beloved Son, 14in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins.[g]

15 He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of all creation; 16for in[h] him all things in heaven and on earth were created, things visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or powers—all things have been created through him and for him. 17He himself is before all things, and in[h] him all things hold together. 18He is the head of the body, the church; he is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead, so that he might come to have first place in everything. 19For in him all the fullness of God was pleased to dwell, 20and through him God was pleased to reconcile to himself all things, whether on earth or in heaven, by making peace through the blood of his cross.

21 And you who were once estranged and hostile in mind, doing evil deeds, 22he has now reconciled[i] in his fleshly

*a* Gk *brothers* *b* Gk *slave* *c* Other ancient authorities read *our* *d* Gk *his* *e* Other ancient authorities read *called* *f* Other ancient authorities read *us* *g* Other ancient authorities add *through his blood* *h* Or *by* *i* Other ancient authorities read *you have now been reconciled*

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**1.1–2: Salutation,** see Rom 1.1–7 n. **2:** *Grace . . . peace,* see 2 Thess 1.2 n.

**1.3–14: Thanksgiving and intercession,** see Rom 1.8–15 n. **3:** Eph 1.16. **4:** Philem 5. **4–5:** *Faith . . . love . . . hope,* 1 Cor 13.13. **6:** *The whole world,* in every quarter of the Roman Empire (v. 23). **7:** *Epaphras,* the founder of the church at Colossae, is now with Paul (4.12; Philem 23). **8–9:** Eph 1.15–17.

**1.9–11:** A petition for sensitivity to God's will, issuing in Christian conduct and sustained by divine strength. **13:** *Rescued* from Satan's power (Mt 6.13 note *j*; Acts 26.18).

**1.15–23: The supremacy of Christ** in the universe and in the church. **15:** The *image* perfectly reveals *the invisible God* (Jn 1.18; 2 Cor 4.4; Heb 1.3). *Firstborn* expresses priority to and supremacy over *all creation* (v. 17). **16:** Every *created* thing had its origin *in him* and exists *for him. Thrones . . . powers* refer to various ranks of angels (Eph 6.12). **17:** Christ holds together the universe (Heb 1.3). **18:** *Head of . . . the church,* Eph 1.22–23; 4.15. *The beginning,* the origin or source (Rev 3.14). *Firstborn from the dead,* Acts 26.23; Rom 14.9; Rev 1.5. **19:** *The fullness of God,* a technical term for the plenitude of deity (see 2.9 n.). The verse may also be translated, "For it pleased God that in him [i.e. the Son] all the fullness of deity should dwell." **20:** *Blood of his cross,* the sacrificial death of Christ. **22:** *To present you,* the purpose and effect of the reconciliation (Eph 5.27).

body[j] through death, so as to present you holy and blameless and irreproachable before him— [23]provided that you continue securely established and steadfast in the faith, without shifting from the hope promised by the gospel that you heard, which has been proclaimed to every creature under heaven. I, Paul, became a servant of this gospel.

24 I am now rejoicing in my sufferings for your sake, and in my flesh I am completing what is lacking in Christ's afflictions for the sake of his body, that is, the church. [25]I became its servant according to God's commission that was given to me for you, to make the word of God fully known, [26]the mystery that has been hidden throughout the ages and generations but has now been revealed to his saints. [27]To them God chose to make known how great among the Gentiles are the riches of the glory of this mystery, which is Christ in you, the hope of glory. [28]It is he whom we proclaim, warning everyone and teaching everyone in all wisdom, so that we may present everyone mature in Christ. [29]For this I toil and struggle with all the energy that he powerfully inspires within me.

2 For I want you to know how much I am struggling for you, and for those in Laodicea, and for all who have not seen me face to face. [2]I want their hearts to be encouraged and united in love, so that they may have all the riches of assured understanding and have the knowledge of God's mystery, that is, Christ himself,[k] [3]in whom are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge. [4]I am saying this so that no one may deceive you with plausible arguments. [5]For though I am absent in body, yet I am with you in spirit, and I rejoice to see your morale and the firmness of your faith in Christ.

6 As you therefore have received Christ Jesus the Lord, continue to live your lives[l] in him, [7]rooted and built up in him and established in the faith, just as you were taught, abounding in thanksgiving.

8 See to it that no one takes you captive through philosophy and empty deceit, according to human tradition, according to the elemental spirits of the universe,[m] and not according to Christ. [9]For in him the whole fullness of deity dwells bodily, [10]and you have come to fullness in him, who is the head of every ruler and authority. [11]In him also you were circumcised with a spiritual circumcision,[n] by putting off the body of the flesh in the circumcision of Christ; [12]when you were buried with him in baptism, you were also raised with him through faith in the power of God, who raised him from the dead. [13]And when you were dead in trespasses and the uncircumcision of your flesh, God[o] made you[p] alive together with him, when he forgave us all our trespasses, [14]erasing the record that stood against us with its legal demands. He set this aside, nailing it to the cross. [15]He disarmed[q] the rulers

*j* Gk *in the body of his flesh* *k* Other ancient authorities read *of the mystery of God, both of the Father and of Christ* *l* Gk *to walk* *m* Or *the rudiments of the world* *n* Gk *a circumcision made without hands* *o* Gk *he* *p* Other ancient authorities read *made us*; others, *made* *q* Or *divested himself of*

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**1.24–2.7: Paul's interest in the Colossians,** justifying his intervention in the affairs of a church where he was personally unknown (2.1).

**1.24:** Because of the mystical union of the believers with Christ, what Paul suffers *for the sake of . . . the church* can be called *Christ's afflictions* (2 Cor 1.5; 4.10). **26:** *Mystery,* 2.2; 4.3; see Eph 1.9 n.

**2.1:** *Laodicea,* chief city of Phrygia in Asia Minor, near Colossae (Rev 3.14–22).

**2.8–23: Warning against false teaching. 8:** Here *philosophy* refers to "vain speculation." *Elemental spirits,* see Gal 4.3 n. **9:** *In him,* the exalted Christ. *The whole fullness of deity,* not merely the divine attributes but the divine nature. *Dwells,* eternally. **10:** Eph 1.21–22. **13:** Eph 2.1, 5. **14:** *The record* of our transgressions (Eph 2.15; 1 Pet 2.24). **15:** *Rulers and authorities,* see 1.16 n. *Made a public example,* as captives, stripped of armor, are displayed in proof of victory.

and authorities and made a public example of them, triumphing over them in it.

16 Therefore do not let anyone condemn you in matters of food and drink or of observing festivals, new moons, or sabbaths. 17These are only a shadow of what is to come, but the substance belongs to Christ. 18Do not let anyone disqualify you, insisting on self-abasement and worship of angels, dwelling[r] on visions,[s] puffed up without cause by a human way of thinking,[t] 19and not holding fast to the head, from whom the whole body, nourished and held together by its ligaments and sinews, grows with a growth that is from God.

20 If with Christ you died to the elemental spirits of the universe,[u] why do you live as if you still belonged to the world? Why do you submit to regulations, 21"Do not handle, Do not taste, Do not touch"? 22All these regulations refer to things that perish with use; they are simply human commands and teachings. 23These have indeed an appearance of wisdom in promoting self-imposed piety, humility, and severe treatment of the body, but they are of no value in checking self-indulgence.[v]

3 So if you have been raised with Christ, seek the things that are above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God. 2Set your minds on things that are above, not on things that are on earth, 3for you have died, and your life is hidden with Christ in God. 4When Christ who is your[w] life is revealed, then you also will be revealed with him in glory.

5 Put to death, therefore, whatever in you is earthly: fornication, impurity, passion, evil desire, and greed (which is idolatry). 6On account of these the wrath of God is coming on those who are disobedient.[x] 7These are the ways you also once followed, when you were living that life.[y] 8But now you must get rid of all such things—anger, wrath, malice, slander, and abusive[z] language from your mouth. 9Do not lie to one another, seeing that you have stripped off the old self with its practices 10and have clothed yourselves with the new self, which is being renewed in knowledge according to the image of its creator. 11In that renewal[a] there is no longer Greek and Jew, circumcised and uncircumcised, barbarian, Scythian, slave and free; but Christ is all and in all!

12 As God's chosen ones, holy and beloved, clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, meekness, and patience. 13Bear with one another and, if anyone has a complaint against another, forgive each other; just as the Lord[b] has forgiven you, so you also must forgive. 14Above all, clothe yourselves with love, which binds everything together in perfect harmony. 15And let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, to which indeed you were called in the one body. And be thankful. 16Let the word of

*r* Other ancient authorities read *not dwelling*
*s* Meaning of Gk uncertain *t* Gk *by the mind of his flesh* *u* Or *the rudiments of the world*
*v* Or *are of no value, serving only to indulge the flesh* *w* Other authorities read *our*
*x* Other ancient authorities lack *on those who are disobedient* (Gk *the children of disobedience*)
*y* Or *living among such people* *z* Or *filthy*
*a* Gk *its creator,* 11*where* *b* Other ancient authorities read *just as Christ*

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**2.16–23**: The Colossian error involved excessive ritualism, asceticism, and the worship of angels. **16**: *Festivals, new moons, . . . sabbaths,* annual, monthly, and weekly observances. **19**: *The head,* Christ (Eph 1.22; 4.15).

**2.20**: *You died,* compare Rom 6.6–11; Gal 2.19. *Elemental spirits,* see Gal 4.3 n. *Regulations,* such as those quoted in v. 21.

**3.1–17**: **The true Christian life. 1**: *Raised,* 2.12. *Seated,* see Heb 1.3. **3**: *You have died* to the world (2.20); *your* new *life is* secure *in God,* hidden *with Christ* from the world. **4**: Jn 14.6; 1 Jn 2.28; 3.2.

**3.5**: *Greed,* the covetous person sets up another object of worship besides God (Eph 5.5). **6**: *The wrath of God,* God's steadfast and holy hatred of sin (Rom 1.18–32). *Is coming,* at the Day of Judgment. **10**: *Image,* Gen 1.26–27; Eph 2.10; 4.24. **11**: Gal 3.28. *Greek,* i.e. Gentile.

**3.12**: *Clothe yourselves,* v. 12 takes up the metaphor of v. 10; these virtues belong to the

Christ[c] dwell in you richly; teach and admonish one another in all wisdom; and with gratitude in your hearts sing psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs to God.[d] 17And whatever you do, in word or deed, do everything in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him.

18 Wives, be subject to your husbands, as is fitting in the Lord. 19Husbands, love your wives and never treat them harshly.

20 Children, obey your parents in everything, for this is your acceptable duty in the Lord. 21Fathers, do not provoke your children, or they may lose heart. 22Slaves, obey your earthly masters[e] in everything, not only while being watched and in order to please them, but wholeheartedly, fearing the Lord.[c] 23Whatever your task, put yourselves into it, as done for the Lord and not for your masters,[f] 24since you know that from the Lord you will receive the inheritance as your reward; you serve[g] the Lord Christ. 25For the wrongdoer will be paid back for whatever wrong has been done, and there is no partiality.

4 1Masters, treat your slaves justly and fairly, for you know that you also have a Master in heaven.

2 Devote yourselves to prayer, keeping alert in it with thanksgiving. 3At the same time pray for us as well that God will open to us a door for the word, that we may declare the mystery of Christ, for which I am in prison, 4so that I may reveal it clearly, as I should.

5 Conduct yourselves wisely toward outsiders, making the most of the time.[h] 6Let your speech always be gracious, seasoned with salt, so that you may know how you ought to answer everyone.

7 Tychicus will tell you all the news about me; he is a beloved brother, a faithful minister, and a fellow servant[i] in the Lord. 8I have sent him to you for this very purpose, so that you may know how we are[j] and that he may encourage your hearts; 9he is coming with Onesimus, the faithful and beloved brother, who is one of you. They will tell you about everything here.

10 Aristarchus my fellow prisoner greets you, as does Mark the cousin of Barnabas, concerning whom you have received instructions—if he comes to you, welcome him. 11And Jesus who is called Justus greets you. These are the only ones of the circumcision among my co-workers for the kingdom of God, and they have been a comfort to me. 12Epaphras, who is one of you, a servant[i] of Christ Jesus, greets you. He is always wrestling in his prayers on your behalf,

*c* Other ancient authorities read *of God*, or *of the Lord* *d* Other ancient authorities read *to the Lord* *e* In Greek the same word is used for *master* and *Lord* *f* Gk *not for men* *g* Or *you are slaves of*, or *be slaves of* *h* Or *opportunity* *i* Gk *slave* *j* Other authorities read *that I may know how you are*

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new nature. **15**: *Rule,* literally "be umpire." **17**: *Do everything* for Jesus' sake, that it may be as though he were doing it (v. 11).

**3.18–4.6**: **The Christian's duties** as regards family (vv. 18–20), masters and slaves (3.22–4.1) prayer, and social intercourse (4.2–6), much of which presupposes the patriarchal ethics of the time.

**3.18–4.1**: Eph 5.22–6.9. **3.22**: *Slaves, obey;* the case of Onesimus was then engaging Paul's attention (see Introduction to Philemon). **4.3**: *Open . . . a door,* see Rev 3.8 n. **5**: Eph 5.16. **6**: *Gracious,* courteous. *With salt,* with spiritual understanding (Mk 9.50).

**4.7–18**: **Epilogue,** personal messages (vv. 7–9), greetings (vv. 10–15), and final instructions (vv. 16–18). **7**: *Tychicus,* Eph 6.21–22. **9**: *Onesimus,* Philem 10. *Everything here,* presumably at Rome.

**4.10**: Acts 19.29; 27.2; Philem 24. **11**: *Jesus,* the Greek form of a fairly common Jewish name. **12**: 1.7; Philem 23. **14**: 2 Tim 4.10–11; Philem 24. **15**: *Church in . . . house,* see Philem 2 n. **16**: *The letter* left at *Laodicea,* either the letter to the Ephesians or some other Pauline letter no longer extant. **18**: *I . . . with my own hand,* up to this point Paul had been dictating (see 2 Thess 3.17 n.). *Remember my chains,* i.e. in prayer.

so that you may stand mature and fully assured in everything that God wills. 13For I testify for him that he has worked hard for you and for those in Laodicea and in Hierapolis. 14Luke, the beloved physician, and Demas greet you. 15Give my greetings to the brothers and sisters[k] in Laodicea, and to Nympha and the church in her house. 16And when this letter has been read among you, have it read also in the church of the Laodiceans; and see that you read also the letter from Laodicea. 17And say to Archippus, "See that you complete the task that you have received in the Lord."

18 I, Paul, write this greeting with my own hand. Remember my chains. Grace be with you.[l]

*k* Gk *brothers* *l* Other ancient authorities add *Amen*

# *The First Letter of Paul to the Thessalonians*

Thessalonica was the capital of the Roman province of Macedonia, important for its location on both sea and land routes of travel. Paul founded the church in Thessalonica shortly after he left Philippi (2.1–2; Acts 17.1–8). Although Acts tells us that his initial contact in Thessalonica was with the synagogue, 1 Thessalonians is addressed to Gentile believers (1.9).

The letter reflects the life of a congregation that was devoted to its faith and strongly aware of its separation from the society in which its members had until recently found their standards and values. At the same time it was also a community that was threatened by social pressures and at times outright persecution to turn back to the life from which they had come.

Paul wrote to encourage the church, stressing that opposition is simply something to be expected (3.3), and expressing appreciation for their steadfastness (1.6; 3.6–10); but he also wrote to defend himself against accusations about his character and motives (2.1–12). He forcefully asserts his straightforwardness (2.3–6) as well as his affectionate caring for them like a nurse or a parent (2.7, 11). Paul skillfully links his situation to theirs by telling of his sending Timothy to them and of his own response to Timothy's encouraging report (3.1–10). This is followed by ethical admonitions that emphasize holiness or belonging to God, as well as the need to act in such a way as to make an acceptable impression on outsiders (4.1–12).

A further main theme of 1 Thessalonians is a response to questions about eschatology that were troubling the church, that is, questions about the end. Some of the Thessalonians were perplexed by the deaths of believers, and wondered whether those who had died would be excluded from the life of the resurrection. Paul replies with an apocalyptic narrative, a story of the events of the end-time, which makes clear that it would not be an advantage to be still living when Christ returns; all believers "will be with the Lord forever" (4.13–18). This section shows that both Paul and his readers expected the end very soon. But Paul follows with another statement, also expressed in traditional apocalyptic language, which emphasizes that one cannot predict the time of the end (5.1–11). These apocalyptic sections are to be compared with Paul's most extensive statement about hope for the end, 1 Corinthians 15.

In one passage the difficulties of the Thessalonian church are compared to those of the churches of Judea (2.13–16). This passage, so critical of the Jews, is held by many scholars to be a later addition to the letter, not only because the anti-Jewish language is not like what Paul writes elsewhere, but especially because the passage introduces an atypical second thanksgiving into the pattern of the letter.

Although Paul had sent Timothy to Thessalonica from Athens (3.1–2), he was probably in Corinth when he wrote 1 Thessalonians, perhaps in the early 50s. This letter is probably the earliest of Paul's extant correspondence and therefore the earliest of all New Testament writings.

1 Paul, Silvanus, and Timothy,
To the church of the Thessalonians
in God the Father and the Lord Jesus
Christ:
Grace to you and peace.

2 We always give thanks to God for
all of you and mention you in our
prayers, constantly 3remembering be-
fore our God and Father your work of
faith and labor of love and steadfastness
of hope in our Lord Jesus Christ. 4For we
know, brothers and sisters[a] beloved by
God, that he has chosen you, 5because
our message of the gospel came to you
not in word only, but also in power and
in the Holy Spirit and with full convic-
tion; just as you know what kind of per-
sons we proved to be among you for
your sake. 6And you became imitators of
us and of the Lord, for in spite of perse-
cution you received the word with joy
inspired by the Holy Spirit, 7so that you
became an example to all the believers in
Macedonia and in Achaia. 8For the word
of the Lord has sounded forth from you
not only in Macedonia and Achaia, but in
every place your faith in God has become
known, so that we have no need to speak
about it. 9For the people of those re-
gions[b] report about us what kind of wel-
come we had among you, and how you
turned to God from idols, to serve a liv-
ing and true God, 10and to wait for his
Son from heaven, whom he raised from
the dead—Jesus, who rescues us from
the wrath that is coming.

2 You yourselves know, brothers and
sisters,[a] that our coming to you was
not in vain, 2but though we had already
suffered and been shamefully mistreated
at Philippi, as you know, we had courage
in our God to declare to you the gospel
of God in spite of great opposition. 3For
our appeal does not spring from deceit or
impure motives or trickery, 4but just as
we have been approved by God to be
entrusted with the message of the gospel,
even so we speak, not to please mortals,
but to please God who tests our hearts.
5As you know and as God is our witness,
we never came with words of flattery or
with a pretext for greed; 6nor did we seek
praise from mortals, whether from you
or from others, 7though we might have
made demands as apostles of Christ. But
we were gentle[c] among you, like a nurse
tenderly caring for her own children. 8So
deeply do we care for you that we are
determined to share with you not only
the gospel of God but also our own
selves, because you have become very
dear to us.

9 You remember our labor and toil,
brothers and sisters;[a] we worked night
and day, so that we might not burden
any of you while we proclaimed to you
the gospel of God. 10You are witnesses,
and God also, how pure, upright, and
blameless our conduct was toward you
believers. 11As you know, we dealt with

*a* Gk *brothers* *b* Gk *For they* *c* Other ancient authorities read *infants*

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**1.1: Salutation,** see Rom 1.1–7 n. *Silvanus,* identical with Silas (Acts 15.22, 40; 16.19–25; 17.4). *Timothy,* see Introduction to 2 Timothy. *Church,* see Gal 1.13 n. *Lord,* the title of Israel's covenant God, is applied by Christians to the risen and glorified Jesus (Phil 2.9–11). *Grace . . . and peace,* see 2 Thess 1.2 n.

**1.2–10: Thanksgiving,** see Rom 1.8–15 n. Paul is grateful that the Thessalonians have persevered, though aware that much yet needs to be accomplished in them. **4:** Israel's privileges as God's *chosen* are transferred to the church. **5:** *Our . . . gospel* is not just words; the saving power of God is at work in it.

**1.6:** The first converts of Paul and Silas at Thessalonica were subjected to much *persecution* (Acts 17.5–9). **7–8:** *Macedonia,* of which Thessalonica was the capital. *Achaia,* Greece (where Paul was then). **10:** The return of the risen Christ is the hope of God's people. *The wrath,* i.e. of God, which is not anger or irritation, but justice (Rom 1.28, 32; 2.8, 9; Eph 2.3; Col 3.6).

**2.1–16: Paul's life and work at Thessalonica. 2:** *Philippi,* Acts 16.19–40. **3–8:** The opponents of the gospel accused Paul of heresy, immorality, trickery, and greed. He replies by reminding his readers of his conduct among them. **4:** *Tests our hearts,* Prov 17.3.

**2.9:** Paul supported himself by working at his trade (Acts 18.3) so as not to burden the

each one of you like a father with his children, 12 urging and encouraging you and pleading that you lead a life worthy of God, who calls you into his own kingdom and glory.

13 We also constantly give thanks to God for this, that when you received the word of God that you heard from us, you accepted it not as a human word but as what it really is, God's word, which is also at work in you believers. 14 For you, brothers and sisters,[d] became imitators of the churches of God in Christ Jesus that are in Judea, for you suffered the same things from your own compatriots as they did from the Jews, 15 who killed both the Lord Jesus and the prophets,[e] and drove us out; they displease God and oppose everyone 16 by hindering us from speaking to the Gentiles so that they may be saved. Thus they have constantly been filling up the measure of their sins; but God's wrath has overtaken them at last.[f]

17 As for us, brothers and sisters,[d] when, for a short time, we were made orphans by being separated from you—in person, not in heart—we longed with great eagerness to see you face to face. 18 For we wanted to come to you—certainly I, Paul, wanted to again and again—but Satan blocked our way. 19 For what is our hope or joy or crown of boasting before our Lord Jesus at his coming? Is it not you? 20 Yes, you are our glory and joy!

3 Therefore when we could bear it no longer, we decided to be left alone in Athens; 2 and we sent Timothy, our brother and co-worker for God in proclaiming[g] the gospel of Christ, to strengthen and encourage you for the sake of your faith, 3 so that no one would be shaken by these persecutions. Indeed, you yourselves know that this is what we are destined for. 4 In fact, when we were with you, we told you beforehand that we were to suffer persecution; so it turned out, as you know. 5 For this reason, when I could bear it no longer, I sent to find out about your faith; I was afraid that somehow the tempter had tempted you and that our labor had been in vain.

6 But Timothy has just now come to us from you, and has brought us the good news of your faith and love. He has told us also that you always remember us kindly and long to see us—just as we long to see you. 7 For this reason, brothers and sisters,[d] during all our distress and persecution we have been encouraged about you through your faith. 8 For we now live, if you continue to stand firm in the Lord. 9 How can we thank God enough for you in return for all the joy that we feel before our God because of you? 10 Night and day we pray most earnestly that we may see you face to face and restore whatever is lacking in your faith.

11 Now may our God and Father himself and our Lord Jesus direct our way to you. 12 And may the Lord make you increase and abound in love for one another and for all, just as we abound in love for you. 13 And may he so strengthen your hearts in holiness that you may be blameless before our God and Father at the coming of our Lord Jesus with all his saints.

*d* Gk *brothers* *e* Other ancient authorities read *their own prophets* *f* Or *completely* or *forever*
*g* Gk lacks *proclaiming*

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church. **14–16**: The severe language reflects the strenuous struggle between Paul and the Jews (Acts 14.2, 5, 19; 17.5, 13; 21.21; 25.2, 7). It is possible that 2.13–16 was added later to the letter (see Introduction).

**2.17–3.13: Paul's affection for the Thessalonians. 2.18**: Behind obstacles Paul recognizes the activity of Satan, the adversary of God's kingly rule (see Mt 4.1 n.; Rom 16.20; 2 Cor 11.14; 1 Tim 1.20).

**3.3**: *Persecutions* are normal, not exceptional. **5**: *Tempter*, see 2.18 n.

**3.6**: *Timothy has . . . come*, see Introduction. **7**: *Distress and persecution*, Acts 18.6, 12. **10**: The prayer was answered some years later (Acts 20.1–2). **13**: The heart is not the organ of feeling as in modern speech, but the controlling center of personality. *Saints*, all who belong to God.

4 Finally, brothers and sisters,[h] we ask and urge you in the Lord Jesus that, as you learned from us how you ought to live and to please God (as, in fact, you are doing), you should do so more and more. 2For you know what instructions we gave you through the Lord Jesus. 3For this is the will of God, your sanctification: that you abstain from fornication; 4that each one of you know how to control your own body[i] in holiness and honor, 5not with lustful passion, like the Gentiles who do not know God; 6that no one wrong or exploit a brother or sister[j] in this matter, because the Lord is an avenger in all these things, just as we have already told you beforehand and solemnly warned you. 7For God did not call us to impurity but in holiness. 8Therefore whoever rejects this rejects not human authority but God, who also gives his Holy Spirit to you.

9 Now concerning love of the brothers and sisters,[h] you do not need to have anyone write to you, for you yourselves have been taught by God to love one another; 10and indeed you do love all the brothers and sisters[h] throughout Macedonia. But we urge you, beloved,[h] to do so more and more, 11to aspire to live quietly, to mind your own affairs, and to work with your hands, as we directed you, 12so that you may behave properly toward outsiders and be dependent on no one.

13 But we do not want you to be uninformed, brothers and sisters,[h] about those who have died,[k] so that you may not grieve as others do who have no hope. 14For since we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so, through Jesus, God will bring with him those who have died.[k] 15For this we declare to you by the word of the Lord, that we who are alive, who are left until the coming of the Lord, will by no means precede those who have died.[k] 16For the Lord himself, with a cry of command, with the archangel's call and with the sound of God's trumpet, will descend from heaven, and the dead in Christ will rise first. 17Then we who are alive, who are left, will be caught up in the clouds together with them to meet the Lord in the air; and so we will be with the Lord forever. 18Therefore encourage one another with these words.

5 Now concerning the times and the seasons, brothers and sisters,[h] you do not need to have anything written to you. 2For you yourselves know very well that the day of the Lord will come like a thief in the night. 3When they say, "There is peace and security," then sudden destruction will come upon them, as labor pains come upon a pregnant woman, and there will be no escape! 4But you, beloved,[h] are not in darkness, for that day to surprise you like a thief; 5for you are all children of light and children of the day; we are not of the night or of darkness. 6So then let us not fall asleep as others do, but let us keep awake and be

*h* Gk *brothers* *i* Or *how to take a wife for himself* *j* Gk *brother* *k* Gk *fallen asleep*

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**4.1–12: Exhortation to purity. 3:** The Gentile world was notorious for sexual license (1 Cor 6.18). **5:** *Gentiles who do not know God,* Ps 79.6. **8:** Paul's supreme argument for purity of life—the indwelling Holy Spirit (1 Cor 3.16–17).

**4.9:** *Taught by God,* Isa 54.13. **11:** *Work with your hands,* see 2.9 n. **12:** *Outsiders,* not belonging to God's people. *Be dependent on no one,* 2 Thess 3.11–12.

**4.13–5.11: Questions concerning the coming of the Lord. 4.13:** See Mt 9.24 n.; Jn 11.11 n. **14:** The Christian is united with Christ in his death and resurrection (Rom 6.3). **15:** *The word of the Lord,* authoritative revelation, not private opinion. **16:** Mt 24.30–31; Mk 13.26–27; 1 Cor 15.52.

**5.1:** Some *brothers and sisters* desired an eschatological time-table (Acts 1.6–7). **2:** Paul reiterates Jesus' warning (Mt 24.43–44; Lk 12.39–40). **3:** *Pregnant woman,* a common prophetic expression for the suddenness of the day of the Lord (Isa 13.8; Jer 6.24; Hos 13.13). **5:** Lk 16.8. The Essenes contrasted the Children of Light with the Children of Darkness.

**5.6:** *Let us not fall asleep,* in carelessness and sin. **8:** The Christian's armor (compare Rom

sober; 7for those who sleep sleep at night, and those who are drunk get drunk at night. 8But since we belong to the day, let us be sober, and put on the breastplate of faith and love, and for a helmet the hope of salvation. 9For God has destined us not for wrath but for obtaining salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ, 10who died for us, so that whether we are awake or asleep we may live with him. 11Therefore encourage one another and build up each other, as indeed you are doing.

12 But we appeal to you, brothers and sisters,[l] to respect those who labor among you, and have charge of you in the Lord and admonish you; 13esteem them very highly in love because of their work. Be at peace among yourselves. 14And we urge you, beloved,[l] to admonish the idlers, encourage the fainthearted, help the weak, be patient with all of them. 15See that none of you repays evil for evil, but always seek to do good to one another and to all. 16Rejoice always, 17pray without ceasing, 18give thanks in all circumstances; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you. 19Do not quench the Spirit. 20Do not despise the words of prophets,[m] 21but test everything; hold fast to what is good; 22abstain from every form of evil.

23 May the God of peace himself sanctify you entirely; and may your spirit and soul and body be kept sound[n] and blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. 24The one who calls you is faithful, and he will do this.

25 Beloved,[o] pray for us.

26 Greet all the brothers and sisters[l] with a holy kiss. 27I solemnly command you by the Lord that this letter be read to all of them.[p]

28 The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you.[q]

*l* Gk *brothers* *m* Gk *despise prophecies* *n* Or *complete* *o* Gk *Brothers* *p* Gk *to all the brothers* *q* Other ancient authorities add *Amen*

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13.12; 2 Cor 6.7; 10.4; Eph 6.13–17). **10**: *Whether we are awake or asleep,* whether we are alive or dead when Christ returns. **11**: Paul frequently pictures the church as a temple under construction. The builder is God, but Christians can take part in the work of building (1 Cor 3.9; Eph 2.20).

**5.12–28**: **Concluding exhortation. 19**: *Do not quench* the fire of *the Spirit* (compare Mt 3.11; Acts 2.3; 2 Tim 1.6). **20**: *Words of prophets,* not only prediction, but the inspired word of preaching (see Acts 11.27 n.). **21**: *Test everything,* this injunction probably relates to preaching mentioned in the preceding verse; see 1 Jn 4.1–3.

**5.23**: *Spirit and soul and body,* Paul does not think of a person as having three parts, but as a unity which may be viewed from three different points of view: the relation to God, the personal vitality, and the physical body. **24**: *Will do this,* v. 23. **26**: *Holy kiss,* see Rom 16.16 n. **27**: Col 4.16.

# *The Second Letter of Paul to the Thessalonians*

Second Thessalonians deals with issues that are also central in 1 Thessalonians: how to understand the fulfillment of God's promises in the return of Christ, and how to act in the meantime. It appears to be a letter that Paul wrote shortly after 1 Thessalonians, to correct the impression that "the day of the Lord is already here" (2.2); the Greek of this verse can also be rendered, "the day of the Lord is impending." First Thessalonians assumes that Christ's coming again is near (1 Thess 4.13–18), but also emphasizes that the appearance of Christ will be a surprise; we cannot know the time (1 Thess 5.1–11). The thrust of 2 Thessalonians is in the opposite direction—if we cannot know the exact time, nonetheless we can know that the day of the Lord will not come at once; a dire struggle with evil must take place first, and even this is to be delayed for a time. The details of this apocalyptic story were known to those who received the letter. Thus, the "rebellion" and "the lawless one" (2.3–4, 8) and the "mystery of lawlessness" (2.7), as well as "what is now restraining [the lawless one]" (2.6) and "the one who restrains it" (2.7), are references to things that the recipients of the letter already know (2.6), though these terms are not clear to us. But it is clear that knowing about the delayed struggle with lawlessness assured one that the end was not to come just yet. The message of 2 Thessalonians prepares the church for a period of continued life in this world.

The implication for daily life was very clear: it is important to continue the pursuits of daily life in a regular and orderly way, especially the life of work, as Paul himself had worked when he was among them (3.6–13). "Anyone unwilling to work should not eat" (3.10) has been cited as a maxim of the orderly life ever since. This theme also appears in 1 Thessalonians; the emphasis on it is even stronger in the second letter.

Most scholars have explained the contrast between the two Thessalonian letters by placing the second letter shortly after the first, perhaps even before Paul had heard how the church responded to his first letter. When he learned how disruptive the expectation of the imminent end was, he wrote, using the theme of apocalyptic signs (see 2.3–4n.), to explain that the end was not to come for a time, and to reinforce his teaching about the proper conduct of life.

Other scholars find it difficult to think that Paul would shift the emphasis of his apocalyptic teaching so abruptly, and such scholars also stress stylistic features of the letter that point to a different author: the letter contains two thanksgivings (1.3–4; 2.13–15); only 1 Thessalonians among Paul's letters has this feature, and some scholars hold that the second one is a later addition (see the Introduction to 1 Thessalonians), and the second letter draws from the first in a way that seems more likely to come from a later writer than from Paul himself. This interpretation sees the letter as pseudonymous, written in Paul's name to clarify a dispute about eschatology among the followers of Paul at a somewhat later date. (See the Introduction to 2 Peter on pseudonymous authorship.)

1 Paul, Silvanus, and Timothy,
To the church of the Thessalonians
in God our Father and the Lord Jesus
Christ:

2 Grace to you and peace from God
our[a] Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

3 We must always give thanks to God
for you, brothers and sisters,[b] as is right,
because your faith is growing abundant-
ly, and the love of everyone of you for
one another is increasing. 4Therefore we
ourselves boast of you among the
churches of God for your steadfastness
and faith during all your persecutions
and the afflictions that you are enduring.

5 This is evidence of the righteous
judgment of God, and is intended to
make you worthy of the kingdom of
God, for which you are also suffering.
6For it is indeed just of God to repay with
affliction those who afflict you, 7and to
give relief to the afflicted as well as to us,
when the Lord Jesus is revealed from
heaven with his mighty angels 8in flam-
ing fire, inflicting vengeance on those
who do not know God and on those who
do not obey the gospel of our Lord Jesus.
9These will suffer the punishment of
eternal destruction, separated from the
presence of the Lord and from the glory
of his might, 10when he comes to be glo-
rified by his saints and to be marveled at
on that day among all who have be-
lieved, because our testimony to you was
believed. 11To this end we always pray
for you, asking that our God will make
you worthy of his call and will fulfill by
his power every good resolve and work
of faith, 12so that the name of our Lord
Jesus may be glorified in you, and you in
him, according to the grace of our God
and the Lord Jesus Christ.

2 As to the coming of our Lord Jesus
Christ and our being gathered to-
gether to him, we beg you, brothers and
sisters,[b] 2not to be quickly shaken in
mind or alarmed, either by spirit or by
word or by letter, as though from us, to
the effect that the day of the Lord is al-
ready here. 3Let no one deceive you in
any way; for that day will not come un-
less the rebellion comes first and the law-
less one[c] is revealed, the one destined for
destruction.[d] 4He opposes and exalts
himself above every so-called god or ob-
ject of worship, so that he takes his seat
in the temple of God, declaring himself
to be God. 5Do you not remember that
I told you these things when I was still
with you? 6And you know what is now
restraining him, so that he may be re-
vealed when his time comes. 7For the
mystery of lawlessness is already at
work, but only until the one who now

*a* Other ancient authorities read *the*
*b* Gk *brothers* *c* Gk *the man of lawlessness*; other ancient authorities read *the man of sin*
*d* Gk *the son of destruction*

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**1.1–2: Salutation,** see Rom 1.1–7 n. *Silvanus, Timothy,* see 1 Thess 1.1 n. **2:** *Grace . . . and peace* combine the conventional Greek and Hebrew salutations; the apostle's greeting, however, is not merely his own good wishes but the grace and peace of God given in Jesus Christ.

**1.3–4: Thanksgiving,** see Rom 1.8–15 n.

**1.5–12: The judgment of God.** Reference to *afflictions* (v. 4) leads to a digression of remarkable intensity. **8:** *Vengeance,* the word is not used in the sense of revenge, but of just recompense.

**1.9:** *Eternal destruction,* not annihilation, but endless ruin in separation from Christ. **10:** *That day,* see 2 Tim 1.12 n. *Glorified by his saints,* what Christ has done for his people will be seen to redound to his glory. **12:** *The name,* the character and fame (Phil 2.9).

**2.1–12: The day of the Lord.** *The rebellion . . . and the lawless one* will precede the second coming of Christ. **2:** The new teaching originated in or was supported by the utterances of an ecstatic individual, or perhaps in a letter purporting to come from Paul. **3–4:** The day of the Lord (2 Pet 3.10) will be preceded by persecutions, false prophets, and a "desolating sacrilege" (Dan 9.20–27; 11.31; 12.11; Mt ch 24; Mk ch 13; Lk 21.5–36). **6–8:** *The lawless one* has not yet come because something (v. 7, someone) is *restraining him.* Paul assumes that his readers understand this reference, but we do not. There are three main conjectures, none of which is entirely satisfactory: (*a*) The Roman empire and emperor; (*b*) A supernatural power; (*c*) Satan himself. **7:** *The mystery of lawlessness,* the counterfeit and opponent of the mystery of

restrains it is removed. 8And then the lawless one will be revealed, whom the Lord Jesus[e] will destroy[f] with the breath of his mouth, annihilating him by the manifestation of his coming. 9The coming of the lawless one is apparent in the working of Satan, who uses all power, signs, lying wonders, 10and every kind of wicked deception for those who are perishing, because they refused to love the truth and so be saved. 11For this reason God sends them a powerful delusion, leading them to believe what is false, 12so that all who have not believed the truth but took pleasure in unrighteousness will be condemned.

13 But we must always give thanks to God for you, brothers and sisters[g] beloved by the Lord, because God chose you as the first fruits[h] for salvation through sanctification by the Spirit and through belief in the truth. 14For this purpose he called you through our proclamation of the good news,[i] so that you may obtain the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ. 15So then, brothers and sisters,[g] stand firm and hold fast to the traditions that you were taught by us, either by word of mouth or by our letter.

16 Now may our Lord Jesus Christ himself and God our Father, who loved us and through grace gave us eternal comfort and good hope, 17comfort your hearts and strengthen them in every good work and word.

3 Finally, brothers and sisters,[g] pray for us, so that the word of the Lord may spread rapidly and be glorified everywhere, just as it is among you, 2and that we may be rescued from wicked and evil people; for not all have faith. 3But the Lord is faithful; he will strengthen you and guard you from the evil one.[j] 4And we have confidence in the Lord concerning you, that you are doing and will go on doing the things that we command. 5May the Lord direct your hearts to the love of God and to the steadfastness of Christ.

6 Now we command you, beloved,[g] in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, to keep away from believers who are[k] living in idleness and not according to the tradition that they[l] received from us. 7For you yourselves know how you ought to imitate us; we were not idle when we were with you, 8and we did not eat anyone's bread without paying for it; but with toil and labor we worked night and day, so that we might not burden any of you. 9This was not because we do not have that right, but in order to give you an example to imitate. 10For even when we were with you, we gave you this command: Anyone unwilling to work should not eat. 11For we hear that some of you are living in idleness, mere busybodies, not doing any work. 12Now such persons we command and exhort in the Lord Jesus Christ to do their work quietly and to earn their own living. 13Brothers and sisters,[m] do not be weary in doing what is right.

14 Take note of those who do not obey what we say in this letter; have

*e* Other ancient authorities lack *Jesus* *f* Other ancient authorities read *consume* *g* Gk *brothers* *h* Other ancient authorities read *from the beginning* *i* Or *through our gospel* *j* Or *from evil* *k* Gk *from every brother who is* *l* Other ancient authorities read *you* *m* Gk *Brothers*

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godliness (Col 1.26; 1 Tim 3.16). **11**: Rom 1.28.

**2.13–17**: **Thanksgiving and exhortation.** **13**: 1.3; Eph 1.4; 1 Pet 1.2. **15**: *The traditions* would involve doctrinal, moral, and liturgical teaching, as 1 Corinthians shows. **16**: 1 Thess 3.11; 1 Pet 1.3.

**3.1–18**: **Closing appeals, rebukes, and prayer.** **2**: Rom 15.31. **3**: *The evil one,* Mt 6.13. **5**: *Love of God,* love for God.

**3.6–15**: Paul rebukes those who, because of the supposed imminence of Christ's coming, had ceased to work and were living on the generosity of others. **8**: 1 Thess 2.9; Acts 18.3. **9**: *That right,* Lk 10.7; Gal 6.6. **11**: *Busybodies,* 1 Thess 4.11. **13**: Gal 6.9. **15**: A reminder that those who disregard Paul's instructions are nevertheless to be treated with love. **16**: *Give you peace,* see the Aaronic benediction, Num 6.26. **17**: Paul adds a concluding note in his own handwriting as a guarantee of genuineness (see 2.2 n.).

nothing to do with them, so that they may be ashamed. 15Do not regard them as enemies, but warn them as believers.[n]

16 Now may the Lord of peace himself give you peace at all times in all ways. The Lord be with all of you.

17 I, Paul, write this greeting with my own hand. This is the mark in every letter of mine; it is the way I write. 18The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with all of you.[o]

*n* Gk *a brother*

*o* Other ancient authorities add *Amen*

# *The First Letter of Paul to* *Timothy*

The two letters to Timothy and the one to Titus, commonly called the Pastorals, are similar in character and in the problems they raise concerning authorship. It is difficult to ascribe them in their present form to the apostle Paul. The vocabulary and style of these letters differ widely from the acknowledged letters of Paul; some of his leading theological themes are entirely absent (e.g. the union of the believer with Christ, the power and witness of the Spirit, freedom from the law), and some of the expressions bear a different meaning from that in his customary usage (e.g. "the faith" as a synonym for the Christian religion rather than the believer's relationship to Christ).

A few scholars, attempting to maintain Pauline authorship, account for the differences by assuming changes in his environment as well as modifications of his vocabulary, style, and thought. But in view of the widespread custom in antiquity of pseudonymous authorship (that is, the use of a respected name to give authority to a writing actually written by someone else), it is easier to assume that a loyal disciple of Paul composed these letters. The purpose was to present Paul's teaching as it was then understood in the church, using it as a bulwark against wrong teaching and practice. Some scholars believe that fragments of letters written by Paul are incorporated into these three letters, while others hold that the personal greetings are simply a framework that the author used to give Paul's authority to the teachings of the letters. (On pseudonymous authorship see the Introduction to 2 Peter).

The First Letter to Timothy has a double purpose: to provide guidance in the problems of church administration, and to oppose false teaching of a speculative and moralistic type. Thus, it offers suggestions for the regulation of worship (2.1–15), lays down the qualifications of "bishops" (3.1–7) and "deacons" (3.8–13) (neither bishop nor deacon was yet defined as they later came to be, and the letter does not clearly describe their functions), while it also gives instructions as to the attitude of church leaders toward an asceticism that devalued the creation (4.1–10) and toward individual members (5.1–22), particularly widows (5.3–16), elders or presbyters (5.17–20), and slaves (6.1–2). It also warns strongly against teachers who lack understanding, wander into vain discussions, and end by making shipwreck of their faith (1.3–7, 19–20; 6.3–10). The author is especially sharp in reproving those who seek to make profit out of religion (6.3–10). The letter attacks an asceticism that was related to gnosticism, namely the attitude of one who claims to possess true knowledge (*gnosis*) and is therefore superior to the claims of the body, renouncing marriage and abstaining from certain foods (4.3). Speculative mythology is also denounced as "profane myths" (4.7) and "what is falsely called knowledge" (6.20).

For information concerning the person called Timothy, see the Introduction to 2 Timothy.

1 Paul, an apostle of Christ Jesus by the command of God our Savior and of Christ Jesus our hope,

2 To Timothy, my loyal child in the faith:

Grace, mercy, and peace from God the Father and Christ Jesus our Lord.

3 I urge you, as I did when I was on my way to Macedonia, to remain in Ephesus so that you may instruct certain people not to teach any different doctrine, 4and not to occupy themselves with myths and endless genealogies that promote speculations rather than the divine training[a] that is known by faith. 5But the aim of such instruction is love that comes from a pure heart, a good conscience, and sincere faith. 6Some people have deviated from these and turned to meaningless talk, 7desiring to be teachers of the law, without understanding either what they are saying or the things about which they make assertions.

8 Now we know that the law is good, if one uses it legitimately. 9This means understanding that the law is laid down not for the innocent but for the lawless and disobedient, for the godless and sinful, for the unholy and profane, for those who kill their father or mother, for murderers, 10fornicators, sodomites, slave traders, liars, perjurers, and whatever else is contrary to the sound teaching 11that conforms to the glorious gospel of the blessed God, which he entrusted to me.

12 I am grateful to Christ Jesus our Lord, who has strengthened me, because he judged me faithful and appointed me to his service, 13even though I was formerly a blasphemer, a persecutor, and a man of violence. But I received mercy because I had acted ignorantly in unbelief, 14and the grace of our Lord overflowed for me with the faith and love that are in Christ Jesus. 15The saying is sure and worthy of full acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners—of whom I am the foremost. 16But for that very reason I received mercy, so that in me, as the foremost, Jesus Christ might display the utmost patience, making me an example to those who would come to believe in him for eternal life. 17To the King of the ages, immortal, invisible, the only God, be honor and glory forever and ever.[b] Amen.

18 I am giving you these instructions, Timothy, my child, in accordance with the prophecies made earlier about you, so that by following them you may fight the good fight, 19having faith and a good conscience. By rejecting conscience, certain persons have suffered shipwreck in the faith; 20among them are Hymenaeus and Alexander, whom I have turned over to Satan, so that they may learn not to blaspheme.

2 First of all, then, I urge that supplications, prayers, intercessions, and

*a* Or *plan* *b* Gk *to the ages of the ages*

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**1.1–2: Salutation,** see Rom 1.1–7 n. **2:** *Timothy,* see Introduction to 2 Timothy. *Mercy* is added to *grace and peace* (compare 2 Tim 1.2 and see 2 Thess 1.2 n.).

**1.3–20: The defense of the truth. 4:** *Myths and endless genealogies,* probably Jewish speculations (compare Titus 1.14; 3.9). *The divine training* pictures the Christian life as the discipline of servants in a large household (the term translated *training* may also mean the divine "plan" of salvation; see note *a*). **5:** The goal of preaching is love: not romantic sentiment, but sharing God's generosity with one's neighbor. **6:** The neglect of love leads to empty talk.

**1.12–14:** The Lord displayed his grace in making an apostle out of Saul the persecutor (Acts 9.4; 1 Cor 15.9; Gal 1.13; Phil 3.6). **15:** *The saying is sure,* a formula characteristic of the letters to Timothy and Titus (3.1; 4.9; 2 Tim 2.11; Titus 3.8). **17:** This is the language of Jewish congregational prayer and praise. **20:** *Hymenaeus,* 2 Tim 2.17. *Alexander,* perhaps the same as Alexander the coppersmith, 2 Tim 4.14. *Satan* was regarded as the source of suffering and disease as well as moral evil (Lk 13.16; 2 Cor 12.7). Under the power of Satan, the sufferer may be moved to repentance (see 1 Cor 5.5 n.).

**2.1–15: The regulation of worship. 2:**

thanksgivings be made for everyone, 2for kings and all who are in high positions, so that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and dignity. 3This is right and is acceptable in the sight of God our Savior, 4who desires everyone to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth. 5For

there is one God;
there is also one mediator
between God and
humankind,
Christ Jesus, himself human,
6 who gave himself a ransom
for all

—this was attested at the right time. 7For this I was appointed a herald and an apostle (I am telling the truth,[c] I am not lying), a teacher of the Gentiles in faith and truth.

8 I desire, then, that in every place the men should pray, lifting up holy hands without anger or argument; 9also that the women should dress themselves modestly and decently in suitable clothing, not with their hair braided, or with gold, pearls, or expensive clothes, 10but with good works, as is proper for women who profess reverence for God. 11Let a woman[d] learn in silence with full submission. 12I permit no woman[d] to teach or to have authority over a man;[e] she is to keep silent. 13For Adam was formed first, then Eve; 14and Adam was not deceived, but the woman was deceived and became a transgressor. 15Yet she will be saved through childbearing, provided they continue in faith and love and holiness, with modesty.

3 The saying is sure:[f] whoever aspires to the office of bishop[g] desires a noble task. 2Now a bishop[h] must be above reproach, married only once,[i] temperate, sensible, respectable, hospitable, an apt teacher, 3not a drunkard, not violent but gentle, not quarrelsome, and not a lover of money. 4He must manage his own household well, keeping his children submissive and respectful in every way— 5for if someone does not know how to manage his own household, how can he take care of God's church? 6He must not be a recent convert, or he may be puffed up with conceit and fall into the condemnation of the devil. 7Moreover, he must be well thought of by outsiders, so that he may not fall into disgrace and the snare of the devil.

8 Deacons likewise must be serious, not double-tongued, not indulging in much wine, not greedy for money; 9they must hold fast to the mystery of the faith with a clear conscience. 10And let them first be tested; then, if they prove themselves blameless, let them serve as deacons. 11Women[j] likewise must be serious, not slanderers, but temperate, faithful in all things. 12Let deacons be married only once,[k] and let them manage their children and their households well; 13for those who serve well as deacons gain a good standing for themselves and great boldness in the faith that is in Christ Jesus.

*c* Other ancient authorities add *in Christ*
*d* Or *wife* *e* Or *her husband* *f* Some interpreters place these words at the end of the previous paragraph. Other ancient authorities read *The saying is commonly accepted*
*g* Or *overseer* *h* Or *an overseer* *i* Gk *the husband of one wife* *j* Or *Their wives*, or *Women deacons* *k* Gk *be husbands of one wife*

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The Christian prays even for bad rulers (Rom 13.1). *A quiet and peaceable life,* a phrase that expresses the ideal of good citizenship. **4**: One of the strongest affirmations of the universality of God's grace. **5**: *Mediator,* Heb 9.15; 12.24. **6**: *Ransom,* Mt 20.28; Mk 10.45.

**2.8**: *Lifting up holy hands,* a common posture for prayer (Ps 141.2). **9**: *Suitable clothing,* 1 Pet 3.3–6. **11**: *In silence,* 1 Cor 14.34–35. **12**: 1 Cor 11.2–16; compare Eph 5.22–33. **13**: Gen 2.7, 21–22. **14**: Gen 3.1–6. **15**: This much debated verse has also been translated (*a*) "she will be saved through the birth of the Child" [referring to Jesus Christ], or (*b*) "she will be brought safely through childbirth."

**3.1–16: Problems of administration. 1–7**: The qualifications of a bishop (literally "overseer," note *g*). **2**: *Hospitable,* see 3 Jn 5 n. **6**: The devil accuses believers before God's judgment seat (Job 1.6–11; Rev 12.10).

**3.8–13**: The qualifications of deacons (compare Acts 6.1–6). **11**: Women also shared

14 I hope to come to you soon, but I
am writing these instructions to you so
that, 15if I am delayed, you may know
how one ought to behave in the house-
hold of God, which is the church of the
living God, the pillar and bulwark of the
truth. 16Without any doubt, the mystery
of our religion is great:

He[l] was revealed in flesh,
vindicated[m] in spirit,[n]
seen by angels,
proclaimed among Gentiles,
believed in throughout the
world,
taken up in glory.

4 Now the Spirit expressly says that in
later[o] times some will renounce the
faith by paying attention to deceitful
spirits and teachings of demons,
2through the hypocrisy of liars whose
consciences are seared with a hot iron.
3They forbid marriage and demand ab-
stinence from foods, which God created
to be received with thanksgiving by
those who believe and know the truth.
4For everything created by God is good,
and nothing is to be rejected, provided it
is received with thanksgiving; 5for it is
sanctified by God's word and by prayer.

6 If you put these instructions before
the brothers and sisters,[p] you will be a
good servant[q] of Christ Jesus, nourished
on the words of the faith and of the sound
teaching that you have followed. 7Have
nothing to do with profane myths and
old wives' tales. Train yourself in godli-
ness, 8for, while physical training is of
some value, godliness is valuable in ev-
ery way, holding promise for both the
present life and the life to come. 9The
saying is sure and worthy of full accep-
tance. 10For to this end we toil and strug-
gle,[r] because we have our hope set on
the living God, who is the Savior of all
people, especially of those who believe.

11 These are the things you must in-
sist on and teach. 12Let no one despise
your youth, but set the believers an ex-
ample in speech and conduct, in love, in
faith, in purity. 13Until I arrive, give at-
tention to the public reading of scrip-
ture,[s] to exhorting, to teaching. 14Do
not neglect the gift that is in you, which
was given to you through prophecy with
the laying on of hands by the council of
elders.[t] 15Put these things into practice,
devote yourself to them, so that all may
see your progress. 16Pay close attention
to yourself and to your teaching; contin-
ue in these things, for in doing this you
will save both yourself and your hearers.

5 Do not speak harshly to an older
man,[u] but speak to him as to a fa-

*l* Gk *Who*; other ancient authorities read *God*; others, *Which* *m* Or *justified* *n* Or *by the Spirit* *o* Or *the last* *p* Gk *brothers* *q* Or *deacon* *r* Other ancient authorities read *suffer reproach* *s* Gk *to the reading* *t* Gk *by the presbytery* *u* Or *an elder*, or *a presbyter*

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in the work of the deacons (Rom 16.1). **14–16**: Practical problems in perspective; administration is not a necessary evil but a spiritual task in the household of God (1 Cor 12.28). **16**: Christ is the content of *the mystery*. What follows the colon may be a quotation from an early Christian hymn.

**4.1–16: False teachers. 1**: *The* Holy *Spirit*, speaking through New Testament prophets (compare Acts 20.23; 21.11). *Later times*, that is, either times later than Paul, or else (see note *o*) the period before the day of the Lord (Mt 24.24; 1 Jn 2.18). *Deceitful spirits*, see 1 Jn 4.1 n.; 2 Jn 7. *Teachings of demons*, Eph 6.12; Jas 3.15; Rev 16.13–14. **3–5**: Gnostic teachers forbade legitimate *marriage* and certain *foods* (Col 2.16). The author's reply stresses the goodness of God's creation (Titus 1.15); since, however, the creation can be misused, *everything* should be *sanctified by God's word and by prayer*.

**4.7**: *Myths and old wives' tales*, foolish stories and speculations (1.4; Titus 1.14). **13**: The church adopted many liturgical practices of the synagogue, including *public reading of scripture, exhorting, teaching*. **14**: The laying on of hands (see 5.22 n.) is not an empty gesture but expresses the donation and reception of a gift; e.g. Jesus blesses children (Mk 10.16); he heals with a touch (Mk 6.5); the Spirit is given to the baptized (Acts 8.17; 19.6); believers are set aside for special tasks in the church (Acts 6.6; 13.3).

ther, to younger men as brothers, [2]to older women as mothers, to younger women as sisters—with absolute purity.

3 Honor widows who are really widows. [4]If a widow has children or grandchildren, they should first learn their religious duty to their own family and make some repayment to their parents; for this is pleasing in God's sight. [5]The real widow, left alone, has set her hope on God and continues in supplications and prayers night and day; [6]but the widow[v] who lives for pleasure is dead even while she lives. [7]Give these commands as well, so that they may be above reproach. [8]And whoever does not provide for relatives, and especially for family members, has denied the faith and is worse than an unbeliever.

9 Let a widow be put on the list if she is not less than sixty years old and has been married only once;[w] [10]she must be well attested for her good works, as one who has brought up children, shown hospitality, washed the saints' feet, helped the afflicted, and devoted herself to doing good in every way. [11]But refuse to put younger widows on the list; for when their sensual desires alienate them from Christ, they want to marry, [12]and so they incur condemnation for having violated their first pledge. [13]Besides that, they learn to be idle, gadding about from house to house; and they are not merely idle, but also gossips and busybodies, saying what they should not say. [14]So I would have younger widows marry, bear children, and manage their households, so as to give the adversary no occasion to revile us. [15]For some have already turned away to follow Satan. [16]If any believing woman[x] has relatives who are really widows, let her assist them; let the church not be burdened, so that it can assist those who are real widows.

17 Let the elders who rule well be considered worthy of double honor,[y] especially those who labor in preaching and teaching; [18]for the scripture says, "You shall not muzzle an ox while it is treading out the grain," and, "The laborer deserves to be paid." [19]Never accept any accusation against an elder except on the evidence of two or three witnesses. [20]As for those who persist in sin, rebuke them in the presence of all, so that the rest also may stand in fear. [21]In the presence of God and of Christ Jesus and of the elect angels, I warn you to keep these instructions without prejudice, doing nothing on the basis of partiality. [22]Do not ordain[z] anyone hastily, and do not participate in the sins of others; keep yourself pure.

23 No longer drink only water, but take a little wine for the sake of your stomach and your frequent ailments.

24 The sins of some people are conspicuous and precede them to judgment, while the sins of others follow them there. [25]So also good works are conspicuous; and even when they are not, they cannot remain hidden.

6 Let all who are under the yoke of slavery regard their masters as worthy of all honor, so that the name of God

*v* Gk *she* *w* Gk *the wife of one husband*
*x* Other ancient authorities read *believing man or woman*; others, *believing man*
*y* Or *compensation* *z* Gk *Do not lay hands on*

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**5.1–6.2: The pastor and the flock. 5.3–16:** Three classes of *widows* are mentioned: (*a*) *real* widows are older women who depend upon the church for support (Acts 6.1); (*b*) those widows *put on the list* are Christian workers whose qualifications are detailed; they pledge themselves to the service of Christ; (*c*) *younger* widows are encouraged to remarry. *Put on the list,* so as to receive communal assistance. **3:** *Widows who are really widows* are not to be treated as burdens but with honor.

**5.17–22:** *Elders,* see Titus 1.5–7 n. **18:** Deut 25.4; Mt 10.10; Lk 10.7; 1 Cor 9.9–14. **19:** *Two or three witnesses,* Deut 19.15; Mt 18.16. **21:** *Elect angels,* chosen by God as his ministers (see 1 Cor 11.10 n.; Heb 1.14 n.). **22:** *Ordain* is literally "lay hands on" (see 4.14). Here the phrase may refer to the restoration of penitents after discipline.

**6.1–2:** Slaves and masters (1 Cor 7.21–23; Eph 6.5–9), see Introduction to Philemon.

**6.3–21: Final directions. 3–5:** *Sound words,* the apostolic testimony. The false

and the teaching may not be blasphemed. 2Those who have believing masters must not be disrespectful to them on the ground that they are members of the church;[a] rather they must serve them all the more, since those who benefit by their service are believers and beloved.[b]

Teach and urge these duties. 3Whoever teaches otherwise and does not agree with the sound words of our Lord Jesus Christ and the teaching that is in accordance with godliness, 4is conceited, understanding nothing, and has a morbid craving for controversy and for disputes about words. From these come envy, dissension, slander, base suspicions, 5and wrangling among those who are depraved in mind and bereft of the truth, imagining that godliness is a means of gain.[c] 6Of course, there is great gain in godliness combined with contentment; 7for we brought nothing into the world, so that[d] we can take nothing out of it; 8but if we have food and clothing, we will be content with these. 9But those who want to be rich fall into temptation and are trapped by many senseless and harmful desires that plunge people into ruin and destruction. 10For the love of money is a root of all kinds of evil, and in their eagerness to be rich some have wandered away from the faith and pierced themselves with many pains.

11 But as for you, man of God, shun all this; pursue righteousness, godliness, faith, love, endurance, gentleness. 12Fight the good fight of the faith; take hold of the eternal life, to which you were called and for which you made[e] the good confession in the presence of many witnesses. 13In the presence of God, who gives life to all things, and of Christ Jesus, who in his testimony before Pontius Pilate made the good confession, I charge you 14to keep the commandment without spot or blame until the manifestation of our Lord Jesus Christ, 15which he will bring about at the right time—he who is the blessed and only Sovereign, the King of kings and Lord of lords. 16It is he alone who has immortality and dwells in unapproachable light, whom no one has ever seen or can see; to him be honor and eternal dominion. Amen.

17 As for those who in the present age are rich, command them not to be haughty, or to set their hopes on the uncertainty of riches, but rather on God who richly provides us with everything for our enjoyment. 18They are to do good, to be rich in good works, generous, and ready to share, 19thus storing up for themselves the treasure of a good foundation for the future, so that they may take hold of the life that really is life.

20 Timothy, guard what has been entrusted to you. Avoid the profane chatter and contradictions of what is falsely called knowledge; 21by professing it some have missed the mark as regards the faith.

Grace be with you.[f]

*a* Gk *are brothers* *b* Or *since they are believers and beloved, who devote themselves to good deeds* *c* Other ancient authorities add *Withdraw yourself from such people* *d* Other ancient authorities read *world—it is certain that* *e* Gk *confessed* *f* The Greek word for *you* here is plural; in other ancient authorities it is singular. Other ancient authorities add *Amen*

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teachers are conceited, contentious, and greedy. **6:** 2 Cor 9.8. **10:** Frequently misquoted: it is the *love of money* which is a *root of all kinds of evil.*

**6.12:** *Confession,* a word from the language of worship, signifying adoration and praise of God; in baptism, or before the Roman tribunal, the believer praises God by affirming that Jesus is Lord. **14:** *The commandment,* here probably synonymous with the Christian way of life. **16:** God *alone . . . has immortality,* 1.17; Jn 5.26. *Unapproachable light,* Ps 104.2. *No one . . . can see* God (Jn 1.18; 1 Jn 4.12), but the Son can and will reveal him (Mt 11.27; 1 Jn 3.2; Rev 22.4).

**6.17–19:** Warnings to the wealthy. **20:** Gnostic pretensions are dealt a final blow in the reference to *what is falsely called knowledge.*

# *The Second Letter of Paul to Timothy*

From the Book of Acts we learn that Timothy was from Lystra in Asia Minor, and was the son of a Greek father and a Jewish mother who had become a Christian (Acts 16.1), and in Acts Timothy is mentioned as a companion of Paul in his travels. According to 2 Tim 1.5; 3.15, Timothy had known the Hebrew Scriptures from his childhood, and through his mother's and grandmother's influence he had become a Christian before Paul's arrival. In several of Paul's letters Timothy is mentioned as a trusted companion and fellow worker (Rom 16.21; 1 Cor 4.17, etc.) or he is joined with Paul in the greeting of the letter (2 Cor 1.1; Phil 1.1, etc.).

Second Timothy is the most personal of the Pastoral Letters; most of it is directed specifically to Timothy. By contrast, most of Titus and 1 Timothy consist of general teaching for the congregation. This letter, however, presents Paul speaking directly to Timothy, and thus of all the Pastorals it has the best claim to direct Pauline authorship or to having within it substantial fragments that Paul had written to Timothy. It must be recognized, furthermore, that in this period the form of the personal letter (along with more general forms of instruction) was used pseudonymously to give teaching that could be applied beyond the situation of a particular recipient. If it was written in the generation after Paul, it presents in Paul's name a set of instructions for church leaders. The personal cast of the letter may thus reflect either direct or indirect authorship by Paul, but in either case it is a presentation of Paul's teaching to the churches. See the Introduction to 1 Timothy for further discussion of date and authorship.

Second Timothy is an earnest pastoral letter from a veteran missionary to a younger colleague. Like the other Pastorals, it presents a teaching suitable for continuing life in the world, though it does refer to the "last days" (3.1). It pictures Timothy as responsible for a group of churches and for preserving them from destructive influences from without and from dissidents within. Endurance is a prime quality for such a leader. Timothy is urged to rekindle the gift of God within him (1.3–7); he is not to be ashamed of witnessing to the Lord (1.8–18); and is to take his share of suffering as a good soldier of Jesus Christ (2.1–13). As he encounters false teachers with their "profane chatter," he must endeavor to be a sound worker, handling the word rightly (2.14–19), and to purify himself from what is ignoble, to be a vessel fit for the Master's use (2.20–26). In this he can be helped by the example of Paul (3.10–17), who is now at the end of his career and awaits the crown of righteousness. The farewell words (4.6–8) are a moving testimony of Christian fortitude and hope in the face of certain martyrdom.

1 Paul, an apostle of Christ Jesus by the will of God, for the sake of the promise of life that is in Christ Jesus,

2 To Timothy, my beloved child:

Grace, mercy, and peace from God the Father and Christ Jesus our Lord.

3 I am grateful to God—whom I worship with a clear conscience, as my ancestors did—when I remember you constantly in my prayers night and day. 4Recalling your tears, I long to see you so that I may be filled with joy. 5I am reminded of your sincere faith, a faith that lived first in your grandmother Lois and your mother Eunice and now, I am sure, lives in you. 6For this reason I remind you to rekindle the gift of God that is within you through the laying on of my hands; 7for God did not give us a spirit of cowardice, but rather a spirit of power and of love and of self-discipline.

8 Do not be ashamed, then, of the testimony about our Lord or of me his prisoner, but join with me in suffering for the gospel, relying on the power of God, 9who saved us and called us with a holy calling, not according to our works but according to his own purpose and grace. This grace was given to us in Christ Jesus before the ages began, 10but it has now been revealed through the appearing of our Savior Christ Jesus, who abolished death and brought life and immortality to light through the gospel. 11For this gospel I was appointed a herald and an apostle and a teacher,[a] 12and for this reason I suffer as I do. But I am not ashamed, for I know the one in whom I have put my trust, and I am sure that he is able to guard until that day what I have entrusted to him.[b] 13Hold to the standard of sound teaching that you have heard from me, in the faith and love that are in Christ Jesus. 14Guard the good treasure entrusted to you, with the help of the Holy Spirit living in us.

15 You are aware that all who are in Asia have turned away from me, including Phygelus and Hermogenes. 16May the Lord grant mercy to the household of Onesiphorus, because he often refreshed me and was not ashamed of my chain; 17when he arrived in Rome, he eagerly[c] searched for me and found me 18—may the Lord grant that he will find mercy from the Lord on that day! And you know very well how much service he rendered in Ephesus.

2 You then, my child, be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus; 2and what you have heard from me through many witnesses entrust to faithful people who will be able to teach others as well. 3Share in suffering like a good soldier of Christ Jesus. 4No one serving in the army gets entangled in everyday affairs; the soldier's aim is to please the enlisting officer. 5And in the case of an athlete, no one is crowned without competing according to the rules. 6It is the farmer who

*a* Other ancient authorities add *of the Gentiles*
*b* Or *what has been entrusted to me*
*c* Or *promptly*

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**1.1–2**: **Salutation,** see Rom 1.1–7 n. *Grace . . .* see 2 Thess 1.2 n. and 1 Tim 1.2 n.

**1.3–7**: **Thanksgiving and exhortation,** see Rom 1.8–15 n. **5**: Timothy's family, see Introduction. **6**: God does not regret or withdraw his gifts, but they can become ineffective through one's neglect of them; hence Timothy is encouraged to *rekindle the gift of God. Laying on . . . hands,* see 1 Tim 4.14 n. **7**: Throughout the letter Timothy is exhorted to courage and endurance, which are possibilities, not because of native human qualities, but through the gift of the Holy Spirit (Rom 8.15; Eph 1.17).

**1.8–2.13**: **An appeal to show courage.** Timothy was apparently overawed by his surroundings and did not make his witness boldly. **1.9**: In the gospel God invites men and women to become his own, not as a reward of their accomplishments, but because he is gracious (Eph 1.3–4). **10**: *The appearing,* the Incarnation of Christ. *Abolished death,* Rom 6.9; 8.2; Heb 2.14–15. *Life and immortality,* immortal life (Rom 8.11). **12**: *That day,* the second coming of Christ (v. 18; 2 Thess 1.10). **13**: *The standard of sound teaching,* the apostolic testimony to the gospel.

**1.15**: *Asia,* the Roman province of that name in Asia Minor. **18**: *That day,* see v. 12 n.

**2.3–7**: Three illustrations (*soldier, athlete,*

does the work who ought to have the first share of the crops. 7Think over what I say, for the Lord will give you understanding in all things.

8 Remember Jesus Christ, raised from the dead, a descendant of David—that is my gospel, 9for which I suffer hardship, even to the point of being chained like a criminal. But the word of God is not chained. 10Therefore I endure everything for the sake of the elect, so that they may also obtain the salvation that is in Christ Jesus, with eternal glory.

11The saying is sure:

If we have died with him, we will
also live with him;
12 if we endure, we will also reign
with him;
if we deny him, he will also
deny us;
13 if we are faithless, he remains
faithful—
for he cannot deny himself.

14 Remind them of this, and warn them before God[d] that they are to avoid wrangling over words, which does no good but only ruins those who are listening. 15Do your best to present yourself to God as one approved by him, a worker who has no need to be ashamed, rightly explaining the word of truth. 16Avoid profane chatter, for it will lead people into more and more impiety, 17and their talk will spread like gangrene. Among them are Hymenaeus and Philetus, 18who have swerved from the truth by claiming that the resurrection has already taken place. They are upsetting the faith of some. 19But God's firm foundation stands, bearing this inscription: "The Lord knows those who are his," and, "Let everyone who calls on the name of the Lord turn away from wickedness."

20 In a large house there are utensils not only of gold and silver but also of wood and clay, some for special use, some for ordinary. 21All who cleanse themselves of the things I have mentioned[e] will become special utensils, dedicated and useful to the owner of the house, ready for every good work. 22Shun youthful passions and pursue righteousness, faith, love, and peace, along with those who call on the Lord from a pure heart. 23Have nothing to do with stupid and senseless controversies; you know that they breed quarrels. 24And the Lord's servant[f] must not be quarrelsome but kindly to everyone, an apt teacher, patient, 25correcting opponents with gentleness. God may perhaps grant that they will repent and come to know the truth, 26and that they may escape from the snare of the devil, having been held captive by him to do his will.[g]

3 You must understand this, that in the last days distressing times will come. 2For people will be lovers of themselves, lovers of money, boasters, arrogant, abusive, disobedient to their parents, ungrateful, unholy, 3inhuman, implacable, slanderers, profligates, brutes, haters of good, 4treacherous, reckless, swollen with conceit, lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God, 5holding to the outward form of godli-

*d* Other ancient authorities read *the Lord*
*e* Gk *of these things* *f* Gk *slave* *g* Or *by him, to do his* (that is, God's) *will*

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*farmer*) having the same point: hold nothing back from commitment to your work. **9**: *The word . . . is not chained,* Phil 1.12–14.

**2.11**: *The saying* is rhythmical in structure; it may be from an early Christian hymn. *We will also live with him,* Rom 6.5–11; Gal 6.14; Col 2.12. **12**: *If we deny him,* Mt 10.32–33; Mk 8.38; Lk 12.9. **13**: Rom 3.3–4.

**2.14–4.5**: **The pastor and the flock. 2.15**: The task of preaching demands work and discipline. **17**: *Hymenaeus,* 1 Tim 1.20. **19**: *Inscription,* involving quotations from Num 16.5 and Isa 26.13, one bearing on predestination, the other on free will.

**2.20**: *In a large house,* such as the church is (compare Rom 9.19–24). **25**: *Correcting with gentleness,* nothing is gained by becoming angry; patience and avoidance of controversy may lead some to repentance.

**3.1**: *The last days,* which have already begun (compare v. 5; Acts 2.16–17). *Distressing times,* Mt 24.4–5; Mk 13.22; 2 Thess 2.3–12. **2**: Rom 1.29–31. **5**: Having the outward *form,* but lacking the vital *power* (1 Cor 2.5; 4.19–

ness but denying its power. Avoid them! 6For among them are those who make their way into households and captivate silly women, overwhelmed by their sins and swayed by all kinds of desires, 7who are always being instructed and can never arrive at a knowledge of the truth. 8As Jannes and Jambres opposed Moses, so these people, of corrupt mind and counterfeit faith, also oppose the truth. 9But they will not make much progress, because, as in the case of those two men,[h] their folly will become plain to everyone.

10 Now you have observed my teaching, my conduct, my aim in life, my faith, my patience, my love, my steadfastness, 11my persecutions, and my suffering the things that happened to me in Antioch, Iconium, and Lystra. What persecutions I endured! Yet the Lord rescued me from all of them. 12Indeed, all who want to live a godly life in Christ Jesus will be persecuted. 13But wicked people and impostors will go from bad to worse, deceiving others and being deceived. 14But as for you, continue in what you have learned and firmly believed, knowing from whom you learned it, 15and how from childhood you have known the sacred writings that are able to instruct you for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus. 16All scripture is inspired by God and is[i] useful for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness, 17so that everyone who belongs to God may be proficient, equipped for every good work.

4 In the presence of God and of Christ Jesus, who is to judge the living and the dead, and in view of his appearing and his kingdom, I solemnly urge you: 2proclaim the message; be persistent whether the time is favorable or unfavorable; convince, rebuke, and encourage, with the utmost patience in teaching. 3For the time is coming when people will not put up with sound doctrine, but having itching ears, they will accumulate for themselves teachers to suit their own desires, 4and will turn away from listening to the truth and wander away to myths. 5As for you, always be sober, endure suffering, do the work of an evangelist, carry out your ministry fully.

6 As for me, I am already being poured out as a libation, and the time of my departure has come. 7I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith. 8From now on there is reserved for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, will give me on that day, and not only to me but also to all who have longed for his appearing.

9 Do your best to come to me soon, 10for Demas, in love with this present world, has deserted me and gone to Thessalonica; Crescens has gone to Galatia,[j] Titus to Dalmatia. 11Only Luke is with me. Get Mark and bring him with you, for he is useful in my ministry. 12I have sent Tychicus to Ephesus. 13When you come, bring the cloak that I left with Carpus at Troas, also the books, and above all the parchments. 14Alexander the coppersmith did me great harm; the Lord will pay him back for his deeds.

*h* Gk lacks *two men* *inspired by God is also* authorities read *Gaul*

*i* Or *Every scripture*

*j* Other ancient

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20; 1 Thess 1.5; Titus 1.16). **6–7**: Love of novelty was a feature of life in ancient times also.

**3.8**: The names *Jannes* and *Jambres* are not given in Ex 7.11, but are supplied by Jewish tradition. **11**: Acts 13.14–52; 14.1–20; 16.1–5; 2 Cor 6.4–10. **15**: *The sacred writings,* the books of the Old Testament, which the church interpreted as pointing to Jesus Christ. **16**: *All scripture,* the Old Testament. *Inspired by God,* compare Gen 2.7 where God breathes life into the first human being. **17**: *Every good work,* including those mentioned in v. 16.

**4.1**: *His appearing,* Christ's second coming. *His kingdom,* the rule of Christ as king. **3**: 3.1. **4**: *Myths,* 1 Tim 1.4; 4.7. **5**: *Evangelist,* Acts 21.8; Eph 4.11.

**4.6–22**: **Concluding exhortations.** **8**: Among Jews crowns or wreaths of leaves or of flowers were worn as symbols of joy and honor at feasts and weddings. The Greeks gave wreaths to the winners of athletic con-

***Final greetings and benediction***

15 You also must beware of him, for he strongly opposed our message.

16 At my first defense no one came to my support, but all deserted me. May it not be counted against them! 17 But the Lord stood by me and gave me strength, so that through me the message might be fully proclaimed and all the Gentiles might hear it. So I was rescued from the lion's mouth. 18 The Lord will rescue me from every evil attack and save me for his heavenly kingdom. To him be the glory forever and ever. Amen.

19 Greet Prisca and Aquila, and the household of Onesiphorus. 20 Erastus remained in Corinth; Trophimus I left ill in Miletus. 21 Do your best to come before winter. Eubulus sends greetings to you, as do Pudens and Linus and Claudia and all the brothers and sisters. [k]

22 The Lord be with your spirit. Grace be with you. [l]

*k* Gk *all the brothers* *l* The Greek word for *you* here is plural. Other ancient authorities add *Amen*

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tests (1 Cor 9.25). **14**: *Alexander,* Acts 19.33; 1 Tim 1.20.

**4.17**: *The lion's mouth,* a common Old Testament metaphor for a violent death (Ps 7.2; 17.12; 22.21). **19**: *Prisca and Aquila,* Acts 18.2, 18; Rom 16.3; 1 Cor 16.19. *Onesiphorus,* 1.16–17. **20**: *Trophimus,* Acts 20.4; 21.29. **21**: *Winter,* when navigation was suspended.

# *The Letter of Paul to*
# *Titus*

Although he is not mentioned in the Acts of the Apostles, Titus appears as an important companion of Paul in Galatians and in 2 Corinthians. In Gal 2.1–3 we learn that Titus accompanied Paul on the visit to Jerusalem when Paul's apostleship was recognized by the Jerusalem leaders (see also Acts 15.2, "some of the others" went with Paul and Barnabas). Titus was the focus of a vigorous debate about circumcision (since as a non-Jew he had not been circumcised), and Paul resisted all efforts made in demanding that he be circumcised.

After Paul had established the church in Corinth, and while he was absent, he twice sent Titus there in his effort to reestablish his leadership of that church. Titus's mission was important in effecting a reconciliation between Paul and the church in Corinth (2 Cor 7.6–7, 13–14; 8.6, 16–17; see the Introduction to 2 Corinthians). If Paul and Titus traveled to Crete as the letter to Titus presupposes, this may have been as part of the visit to Greece mentioned in Acts 20.3, or at a later time if Paul was released from the Roman imprisonment with which Acts 28 closes. The author of 2 Timothy mentions (4.10) that Titus had gone to Dalmatia, a region on the eastern side of the Adriatic Sea. In the present letter, Paul wrote to Titus giving directions for the administration of the new churches of Crete. If the author of Titus was writing in Paul's name, he drew upon the association of Paul and Titus to frame a series of directions for missionary supervision of new churches. (On date and authorship, see the Introduction to 1 Timothy).

The teaching of this letter is strongly parallel to that of 1 Timothy, and like that letter, it is principally made up of general teaching rather than being directed to an individual person. The Letter to Titus has three main topics, corresponding to its chapter divisions. The first (ch 1) sets forth what is required of church leaders ("elders" or "bishops") in the face of various false teachers and local shortcomings. As in both 1 and 2 Timothy, wrong teaching is seen to result in immoral behavior. The second division suggests the proper approach to different groups in the church: older men (2.1–2), older women (2.3–5), younger men (2.6–8), and slaves (2.9–10); the emphasis on the submissiveness of women and slaves is in accord with the patriarchal tradition of the time. This section concludes with a summary of what is expected of believers in view of God's grace (2.11–15). The third division (ch 3) unfolds this ethical program in terms that presuppose the continuing life of the church in the world and the responsibility of believers to be good citizens, admonishing the readers to avoid hatred and wrangling and to manifest the meekness, gentleness, obedience, and courtesy made possible by God's mercy in Christ.

1 Paul, a servant[a] of God and an apostle of Jesus Christ, for the sake of the faith of God's elect and the knowledge of the truth that is in accordance with godliness, 2in the hope of eternal life that God, who never lies, promised before the ages began— 3in due time he revealed his word through the proclamation with which I have been entrusted by the command of God our Savior,

4 To Titus, my loyal child in the faith we share:

Grace[b] and peace from God the Father and Christ Jesus our Savior.

5 I left you behind in Crete for this reason, so that you should put in order what remained to be done, and should appoint elders in every town, as I directed you: 6someone who is blameless, married only once,[c] whose children are believers, not accused of debauchery and not rebellious. 7For a bishop,[d] as God's steward, must be blameless; he must not be arrogant or quick-tempered or addicted to wine or violent or greedy for gain; 8but he must be hospitable, a lover of goodness, prudent, upright, devout, and self-controlled. 9He must have a firm grasp of the word that is trustworthy in accordance with the teaching, so that he may be able both to preach with sound doctrine and to refute those who contradict it.

10 There are also many rebellious people, idle talkers and deceivers, especially those of the circumcision; 11they must be silenced, since they are upsetting whole families by teaching for sordid gain what it is not right to teach. 12It was one of them, their very own prophet, who said,

"Cretans are always liars, vicious
brutes, lazy gluttons."

13That testimony is true. For this reason rebuke them sharply, so that they may become sound in the faith, 14not paying attention to Jewish myths or to commandments of those who reject the truth. 15To the pure all things are pure, but to the corrupt and unbelieving nothing is pure. Their very minds and consciences are corrupted. 16They profess to know God, but they deny him by their actions. They are detestable, disobedient, unfit for any good work.

2 But as for you, teach what is consistent with sound doctrine. 2Tell the older men to be temperate, serious, prudent, and sound in faith, in love, and in endurance.

3 Likewise, tell the older women to be reverent in behavior, not to be slanderers or slaves to drink; they are to teach what is good, 4so that they may encourage the young women to love their husbands, to love their children, 5to be self-controlled, chaste, good managers of the household, kind, being submissive to their husbands, so that the word of God may not be discredited.

6 Likewise, urge the younger men to be self-controlled. 7Show yourself in all

*a* Gk *slave* *b* Other ancient authorities read *Grace, mercy,* *c* Gk *husband of one wife* *d* Or *an overseer*

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**1.1–4**: **Salutation,** see Rom 1.1–7 n. **1**: The church is *God's elect,* the chosen people. **2–3**: The good news of Christ was *promised before the ages began* (Lk 24.44; Acts 3.18; Rom 1.2) and revealed in *due time* (Mk 1.15; Gal 4.4); the stress is on God's initiative and sovereignty. *Who never lies,* contrast v. 12. **4**: *Grace and peace,* see 2 Thess 1.2 n.

**1.5–16**: **Administration** of the church in Crete. **5**: *Elder* and *bishop* (v. 7) are two terms for the same officer in the church. **7**: The *bishop* is pictured as *God's steward,* the servant who manages the affairs of a large household.

**1.10**: *Those of the circumcision* maintained that Christians are subject to the law of Moses and to Jewish traditions (Acts 15.1–29; see Introduction to Galatians). **12**: Quoted from the Cretan poet Epimenides (around 600 B.C.). In ancient parlance "to Cretanize" was to be a liar. **14**: *Jewish myths,* see 1 Tim 1.4 n.

**2.1–3.11**: **The pastor and the flock.** Advice is given on relationships to *older men* (v. 2), *older women* (vv. 3–5), *younger men* (vv. 6–8), *slaves* (vv. 9–10). **5**: *Submissive to their husbands,* see Eph 5.21 n. **7**: Titus himself is to set the example.

**2.9**: *Slaves,* 1 Cor 7.21–23; Eph 6.5–8; Col

respects a model of good works, and in your teaching show integrity, gravity, [8]and sound speech that cannot be censured; then any opponent will be put to shame, having nothing evil to say of us.

9 Tell slaves to be submissive to their masters and to give satisfaction in every respect; they are not to talk back, [10]not to pilfer, but to show complete and perfect fidelity, so that in everything they may be an ornament to the doctrine of God our Savior.

11 For the grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation to all,[e] [12]training us to renounce impiety and worldly passions, and in the present age to live lives that are self-controlled, upright, and godly, [13]while we wait for the blessed hope and the manifestation of the glory of our great God and Savior,[f] Jesus Christ. [14]He it is who gave himself for us that he might redeem us from all iniquity and purify for himself a people of his own who are zealous for good deeds.

15 Declare these things; exhort and reprove with all authority.[g] Let no one look down on you.

3 Remind them to be subject to rulers and authorities, to be obedient, to be ready for every good work, [2]to speak evil of no one, to avoid quarreling, to be gentle, and to show every courtesy to everyone. [3]For we ourselves were once foolish, disobedient, led astray, slaves to various passions and pleasures, passing our days in malice and envy, despicable, hating one another. [4]But when the goodness and loving kindness of God our Savior appeared, [5]he saved us, not because of any works of righteousness that we had done, but according to his mercy, through the water[h] of rebirth and renewal by the Holy Spirit. [6]This Spirit he poured out on us richly through Jesus Christ our Savior, [7]so that, having been justified by his grace, we might become heirs according to the hope of eternal life. [8]The saying is sure.

I desire that you insist on these things, so that those who have come to believe in God may be careful to devote themselves to good works; these things are excellent and profitable to everyone. [9]But avoid stupid controversies, genealogies, dissensions, and quarrels about the law, for they are unprofitable and worthless. [10]After a first and second admonition, have nothing more to do with anyone who causes divisions, [11]since you know that such a person is perverted and sinful, being self-condemned.

12 When I send Artemas to you, or Tychicus, do your best to come to me at Nicopolis, for I have decided to spend the winter there. [13]Make every effort to send Zenas the lawyer and Apollos on their way, and see that they lack nothing. [14]And let people learn to devote themselves to good works in order to meet urgent needs, so that they may not be unproductive.

15 All who are with me send greetings to you. Greet those who love us in the faith.

Grace be with all of you.[i]

*e* Or *has appeared to all, bringing salvation*
*f* Or *of the great God and our Savior*
*g* Gk *commandment* *h* Gk *washing* *i* Other ancient authorities add *Amen*

3.22; 1 Tim 6.1–2; see Introduction to Philemon. **14:** *Who gave himself,* Mt 20.28; Mk 10.45; Gal 1.4. To *redeem . . . iniquity,* to ransom us from slavery to sin (Ps 130.8). *Purify . . . a people,* Ezek 37.23; 1 Pet 2.9.

**3.1:** *Be subject,* see 1 Tim 2.2 n. **5:** *The water of rebirth* combines two pictures descriptive of baptism: the washing away of sins (Acts 22.16; Eph 5.26), and rebirth, the beginning of a new life (Jn 3.5). *Renewal by the Holy Spirit,* the restoration of the relationship to God which was lost through sin (2 Cor 5.17). **9:** *Genealogies,* see 1 Tim 1.4 n. **10:** See 2 Jn 10 n.

**3.12–15: Final instructions. 12:** *Tychicus,* Acts 20.4; Eph 6.21; Col 4.7; 2 Tim 4.12. **13:** *Apollos,* Acts 18.24; 1 Cor 1.12; 16.12.

# *The Letter of Paul to*
# *Philemon*

The Letter to Philemon was to be delivered by Onesimus (v. 10), a slave who had emancipated himself and whom Paul was sending back to his master, as the law required. Although the letter has this specific purpose, it is not a private letter, for others are addressed as well as Philemon, including the whole church that meets in his house (v. 2). Paul sets the personal message and the question of how to treat the returning slave in the context of the life of the church, and thereby indirectly points to his own authority as apostle (v. 8) and as the one to whom Philemon owed his conversion to Christian faith (v. 19).

Why Onesimus had left is not stated. A slave who had deserted could be severely punished and even put to death. Evidently Onesimus had made his way to Paul, and had become a Christian while with him (v. 16). He had become very "useful" to Paul (v. 11), who suggests that he will now be the same to Philemon (in Greek Onesimus means "useful"); that is, Onesimus has changed and should return to a changed situation.

Paul does not address the general question of slavery as a social institution, nor does he discuss whether or not Onesimus should be set free. He expects Onesimus to be received back with forgiveness into the household of Philemon and at the same time to be received into the community of the church as a full and equal member (a "brother," v. 16). Elsewhere he speaks of slaves and free as one in Christ (Gal 3.28; Col 3.11).

The Letter to Philemon illustrates in a very concrete way how Paul applied his grasp of love or *agape* to the problem between Philemon and Onesimus. Paul's authority stands in the background, and he undertakes to be responsible for whatever Onesimus may owe (vv. 18–19). Yet Paul does not want to appeal to his own authority; he wants the decision to be Philemon's own choice. But Paul expects that the relation between master and slave will be set in the context of the church and transformed by the love that is active there.

Onesimus is identified elsewhere as coming from Colossae (Col 4.9), as is Archippus who is mentioned in the opening greeting of this letter (v. 2; Col 4.17). Hence Philemon and the church in his house were in Colossae. Since most of those who are greeted at the end of the letter are also mentioned in the close of Colossians, it is probable that the two letters were written at nearly the same time, if Paul was the author of Colossians, or that the author of Colossians had Philemon at hand, if Paul was not the author (see Introduction to Colossians).

Paul wrote from prison (vv. 1, 9), perhaps in Rome or Caesarea. But many scholars today think that Ephesus is the most likely to be the place where Paul wrote Philemon.

1 Paul, a prisoner of Christ Jesus, and Timothy our brother, [a]

To Philemon our dear friend and co-worker, 2to Apphia our sister, [b] to Archippus our fellow soldier, and to the church in your house:

3 Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

4 When I remember you [c] in my prayers, I always thank my God 5because I hear of your love for all the saints and your faith toward the Lord Jesus. 6I pray that the sharing of your faith may become effective when you perceive all the good that we [d] may do for Christ. 7I have indeed received much joy and encouragement from your love, because the hearts of the saints have been refreshed through you, my brother.

8 For this reason, though I am bold enough in Christ to command you to do your duty, 9yet I would rather appeal to you on the basis of love—and I, Paul, do this as an old man, and now also as a prisoner of Christ Jesus. [e] 10I am appealing to you for my child, Onesimus, whose father I have become during my imprisonment. 11Formerly he was useless to you, but now he is indeed useful [f] both to you and to me. 12I am sending him, that is, my own heart, back to you. 13I wanted to keep him with me, so that he might be of service to me in your place during my imprisonment for the gospel; 14but I preferred to do nothing without your consent, in order that your good deed might be voluntary and not something forced. 15Perhaps this is the reason he was separated from you for a while, so that you might have him back forever, 16no longer as a slave but more than a slave, a beloved brother—especially to me but how much more to you, both in the flesh and in the Lord.

17 So if you consider me your partner, welcome him as you would welcome me. 18If he has wronged you in any way, or owes you anything, charge that to my account. 19I, Paul, am writing this with my own hand: I will repay it. I say nothing about your owing me even your own self. 20Yes, brother, let me have this benefit from you in the Lord! Refresh my heart in Christ. 21Confident of your obedience, I am writing to you, knowing that you will do even more than I say.

22 One thing more—prepare a guest room for me, for I am hoping through your prayers to be restored to you.

23 Epaphras, my fellow prisoner in Christ Jesus, sends greetings to you, [g] 24and so do Mark, Aristarchus, Demas, and Luke, my fellow workers.

25 The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit. [h]

*a* Gk *the brother* *b* Gk *the sister* *c* From verse 4 through verse 21, *you* is singular *d* Other ancient authorities read *you* (plural) *e* Or *as an ambassador of Christ Jesus, and now also his prisoner* *f* The name Onesimus means *useful* or (compare verse 20) *beneficial* *g* Here *you* is singular *h* Other ancient authorities add *Amen*

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**1–3: Salutation,** see Rom 1.1–7 n. **1:** *Prisoner,* see Introduction. **2:** *Sister,* in the faith. *Archippus,* mentioned at the close of the Letter to Colossae (4.17). *The church in your house,* in the first century Christians met for worship in private homes (Rom 16.5; 1 Cor 16.19; Col 4.15). **3:** *Grace . . . peace,* see 2 Thess 1.2 n.

**4–7: Thanksgiving,** see Rom 1.8–15 n. **7:** *Refreshed through* Philemon's charitable acts.

**8–20: Paul's plea for Onesimus. 10:** *My child* in the Christian faith (see Gal 4.19 n.). *Onesimus,* see note *f.* **14:** Although as an apostle Paul had the right to command (v. 8), he leaves the matter to Philemon's free choice.

**15:** *Was separated,* a tactful expression for "ran away." *Back forever,* suggesting God's providential oversight. **18:** Paul's promise to repay does not necessarily mean that Onesimus had taken anything from Philemon. **21:** *More than I say,* perhaps a gentle hint that Philemon should grant Onesimus his freedom, but more probably a courteous anticipation of Philemon's acceptance of Paul's letter.

**21–25: Concluding hopes and greetings. 22:** While Philemon's *guest,* Paul will be able to observe how Onesimus has been treated. **23:** *Epaphras,* Col 1.7; 4.12. **24:** All these individuals are referred to in Col 4.10, 14.

# *The Letter to the Hebrews*

This anonymous treatise combines a theological argument for the finality of salvation, achieved by Christ, with repeated exhortations, directed to those whose faith and practice are weakening, not to abandon that salvation (2.1; 10.32–36; 13.22). With a careful and closely-knit discussion, the unknown author moves with confidence step by step through an elaborate analysis. Three main points are emphasized; (*a*) The superiority of Jesus Christ to the prophets (1.1–3), to the angels (1.5–2.18), and to Moses himself (3.1–6); (*b*) The superiority of Christ's priesthood to the levitical priesthood (4.14–7.28); and (*c*) The superiority of Christ's sacrifice, offered in the heavenly sanctuary, to the many animal sacrifices offered on earth by the levitical priests (8.1–10.39).

Some scholars conclude that the author's argument for the superiority of Christ's sacrifice over those offered by the levitical priests indicates that the recipients were in danger of adopting or returning to Jewish ritual practices, and that therefore the letter must have been composed before the destruction of the Jerusalem temple in A.D. 70 had brought sacrificial ritual to an end. Although this conclusion cannot be definitively ruled out, it is not demanded, for both Jewish and Christian authors write about temple sacrifice after the cultus had ceased. In any case, Hebrews is not referring to the Jerusalem cultus, since the argument in the treatise is developed from references to the tent shrine of Exodus.

By mid-second century Alexandrian exegetes had placed Hebrews among the letters of Paul, though they recognized that it was so different in language and style from the Pauline correspondence that some special account of its authorship was required. Thus Clement thought that Luke had translated a Pauline letter written in Hebrew (though the presence of plays on words in Greek shows that it is not a translation), and Origen held that it was written by an unknown disciple of Paul's. In any case, 2.3–4 suggests that the author comes from a generation after that of the apostles.

The addressees had formerly been subject to persecution, imprisonment, and loss of property as a result of their faith. Having met all those trials with joy, they must continue in faith and good works until the coming of the Lord (10.32–39). This exhortation is followed by an encomium on faith that traces the faithful endurance of all the great heroes of the Hebrew Scriptures, who have their hopes fulfilled in the people redeemed by Christ's sacrifice (11.1–40). Jesus' own life is an example of faithful endurance that Christians should imitate (12.1–11).

The Letter to the Hebrews concludes with an exhortation to remember the exemplary lives of past leaders of the community (13.7) and to submit to its present leaders, who are responsible for the souls of those entrusted to them (13.17). An epistolary closing, modelled on the style of the Pauline letters (travel plans, benediction, appeal and greetings, farewell) ends the treatise (13.20–25). Although the author speaks of the work as a discourse or "word of exhortation" (5.11; 6.1; 13.22), this ending led to the common designation of Hebrews as a "letter."

1 Long ago God spoke to our ancestors in many and various ways by the prophets, 2but in these last days he has spoken to us by a Son,[a] whom he appointed heir of all things, through whom he also created the worlds. 3He is the reflection of God's glory and the exact imprint of God's very being, and he sustains[b] all things by his powerful word. When he had made purification for sins, he sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high, 4having become as much superior to angels as the name he has inherited is more excellent than theirs.

5 For to which of the angels did God ever say,

"You are my Son;
today I have begotten you"?

Or again,

"I will be his Father,
and he will be my Son"?

6And again, when he brings the firstborn into the world, he says,

"Let all God's angels worship him."

7Of the angels he says,

"He makes his angels winds,
and his servants flames of fire."

8But of the Son he says,

"Your throne, O God, is[c] forever and ever,
and the righteous scepter is the scepter of your[d] kingdom.
9 You have loved righteousness and hated wickedness;
therefore God, your God, has anointed you
with the oil of gladness beyond your companions."

10And,

"In the beginning, Lord, you founded the earth,
and the heavens are the work of your hands;
11 they will perish, but you remain;
they will all wear out like clothing;
12 like a cloak you will roll them up,
and like clothing[e] they will be changed.
But you are the same,
and your years will never end."

13But to which of the angels has he ever said,

"Sit at my right hand
until I make your enemies a footstool for your feet"?

14Are not all angels[f] spirits in the divine service, sent to serve for the sake of those who are to inherit salvation?

2 Therefore we must pay greater attention to what we have heard, so that we do not drift away from it. 2For if the message declared through angels was valid, and every transgression or disobedience received a just penalty, 3how can we escape if we neglect so great a salvation? It was declared at first through the Lord, and it was attested to us by those who heard him, 4while God added his testimony by signs and wonders and

*a* Or *the Son* *b* Or *bears along* *c* Or *God is your throne* *d* Other ancient authorities read *his* *e* Other ancient authorities lack *like clothing* *f* Gk *all of them*

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**1.1–4**: **The prologue,** a stately declaration of the author's theme, namely the finality of salvation in Christ. Note the contrasts between *long ago* and *in these last days, to our ancestors* and *to us, by the prophets* and *by a Son;* yet it is the same God who spoke then and speaks now. God's *Son,* who is the exact counterpart of the Father (v. 3), not only had part in the creation (Jn 1.1–3), but continues to sustain *all things* (Col 1.15–17). Having accomplished his priestly work of *purification for sins* (v. 3), he was enthroned in divine splendor. Christ's sonship and priesthood are the basis of salvation.

**1.5–2.18**: **The superiority of Christ to angels.**

**1.5–13**: Seven quotations from the Old Testament. **5**: Ps 2.7 and 2 Sam 7.14. **6**: Deut 32.43 Septuagint, compare Ps 97.7. **7**: Ps 104.4. **8–9**: Ps 45.6–7. **10–12**: Ps 102.25–27. **13**: Ps 110.1. **14**: Unlike the divine Son, angels are *spirits,* who are *sent to serve.*

**2.1–4**: **Warning against falling away.** The superior status of the Son to angels authenticates his message and lays a greater obligation on those who *heard.* **2**: *The message declared through angels,* see Acts 7.53 n.; Gal 3.19 n.

various miracles, and by gifts of the Holy Spirit, distributed according to his will.

5 Now God[g] did not subject the coming world, about which we are speaking, to angels. 6 But someone has testified somewhere,

"What are human beings that you are mindful of them,[h]
or mortals, that you care for them?[i]
7 You have made them for a little while lower[j] than the angels;
you have crowned them with glory and honor,[k]
8 subjecting all things under their feet."

Now in subjecting all things to them, God[g] left nothing outside their control. As it is, we do not yet see everything in subjection to them, 9 but we do see Jesus, who for a little while was made lower[l] than the angels, now crowned with glory and honor because of the suffering of death, so that by the grace of God[m] he might taste death for everyone.

10 It was fitting that God,[g] for whom and through whom all things exist, in bringing many children to glory, should make the pioneer of their salvation perfect through sufferings. 11 For the one who sanctifies and those who are sanctified all have one Father.[n] For this reason Jesus[g] is not ashamed to call them brothers and sisters,[o] 12 saying,

"I will proclaim your name to my brothers and sisters,[o]
in the midst of the congregation I will praise you."

13 And again,

"I will put my trust in him."

And again,

"Here am I and the children whom God has given me."

14 Since, therefore, the children share flesh and blood, he himself likewise shared the same things, so that through death he might destroy the one who has the power of death, that is, the devil, 15 and free those who all their lives were held in slavery by the fear of death. 16 For it is clear that he did not come to help angels, but the descendants of Abraham. 17 Therefore he had to become like his brothers and sisters[o] in every respect, so that he might be a merciful and faithful high priest in the service of God, to make a sacrifice of atonement for the sins of the people. 18 Because he himself was tested by what he suffered, he is able to help those who are being tested.

*g* Gk *he* *h* Gk *What is man that you are mindful of him?* *i* Gk *or the son of man that you care for him?* In the Hebrew of Psalm 8.4-6 both *man* and *son of man* refer to all humankind
*j* Or *them only a little lower* *k* Other ancient authorities add *and set them over the works of your hands* *l* Or *who was made a little lower*
*m* Other ancient authorities read *apart from God*
*n* Gk *are all of one* *o* Gk *brothers*

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**2.5–18: The humiliation and exaltation of Jesus.** Though Jesus, in his humiliation, was *for a little while . . . lower than the angels* (v. 9), his suffering was temporary and enabled him to *be a merciful and faithful high priest* (v. 17). **6–8:** Quoted from Ps 8.4–6; *for a little while* (v. 7) agrees with the Septuagint, not the Hebrew. **9:** Jesus' exaltation is the consequence of his humiliation (12.2; Phil 2.6–11). *Taste death,* a biblical expression for its bitterness (Isa 51.17; Jer 49.18; Mt 16.28).

**2.10–18:** The high destiny of humankind described in Ps 8, is to be attained through the work of Christ. **10:** *It was fitting,* it was in accord with God's gracious plan of salvation. The expression, "to make perfect," is characteristic of this letter (5.9; 7.19, 28; 9.9; 10.1, 14; 11.40; 12.23) and means "to make complete, to bring to maturity." Christ as *pioneer* goes before and points out the way to his followers (12.2); the same Greek word is translated "Author" (Acts 3.15) and "Leader" (Acts 5.31). **11:** *The one who sanctifies,* Jesus Christ; *those who are sanctified,* see 10.10 n. *One Father,* God. **12:** Ps 22.22. **13:** Isa 8.17–18. **14–15:** The eternal Son became a human being in order to overcome the devil and to free humanity from death (Rom 6.23). **17:** As high priest the Son is both sympathetic (*merciful;* compare 5.2–3) and trustworthy (*faithful;* compare 3.2, 6), *to make a sacrifice of atonement* continually for *sins* that bring death and the fear of it to God's *people* (vv. 14–15). **18:** At Gethsemane, and elsewhere, Jesus was *tested* by death on the cross (5.7–8); therefore he can help those who *are being tested* by apostasy.

3 Therefore, brothers and sisters,[p] holy partners in a heavenly calling, consider that Jesus, the apostle and high priest of our confession, 2was faithful to the one who appointed him, just as Moses also "was faithful in all[q] God's[r] house." 3Yet Jesus[s] is worthy of more glory than Moses, just as the builder of a house has more honor than the house itself. 4(For every house is built by someone, but the builder of all things is God.) 5Now Moses was faithful in all God's[r] house as a servant, to testify to the things that would be spoken later. 6Christ, however, was faithful over God's[r] house as a son, and we are his house if we hold firm[t] the confidence and the pride that belong to hope.

7 Therefore, as the Holy Spirit says,
"Today, if you hear his voice,
8 do not harden your hearts as in the rebellion,
as on the day of testing in the wilderness,
9 where your ancestors put me to the test,
though they had seen my works
10for forty years.
Therefore I was angry with that generation,
and I said, 'They always go astray in their hearts,
and they have not known my ways.'
11 As in my anger I swore,
'They will not enter my rest.' "

12Take care, brothers and sisters,[p] that none of you may have an evil, unbelieving heart that turns away from the living God. 13But exhort one another every day, as long as it is called "today," so that none of you may be hardened by the deceitfulness of sin. 14For we have become partners of Christ, if only we hold our first confidence firm to the end. 15As it is said,

"Today, if you hear his voice,
do not harden your hearts as in the rebellion."

16Now who were they who heard and yet were rebellious? Was it not all those who left Egypt under the leadership of Moses? 17But with whom was he angry forty years? Was it not those who sinned, whose bodies fell in the wilderness? 18And to whom did he swear that they would not enter his rest, if not to those who were disobedient? 19So we see that they were unable to enter because of unbelief.

4 Therefore, while the promise of entering his rest is still open, let us take care that none of you should seem to have failed to reach it. 2For indeed the good news came to us just as to them; but the message they heard did not benefit them, because they were not united by

*p* Gk *brothers* *q* Other ancient authorities lack *all* *r* Gk *his* *s* Gk *this one* *t* Other ancient authorities add *to the end*

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**3.1–6: Christ is superior to Moses. 1:** *Holy partners,* the readers are addressed in terms that remind them of their position and responsibility in sharing *in a heavenly calling,* as distinguished from the calling of Israel to an earthly Canaan. As *apostle, Jesus* is God's envoy to humankind; as *high priest,* he is their representative before God. **2:** The author first refers to what Jesus and Moses have in common, namely faithfulness to their respective tasks. **3–5:** As to position, Jesus (a son) is superior to Moses (a servant in God's house; Num 12.7). **6:** *We are his house,* the community of faithful believers.

**3.7–4.13: Warning and exhortation,** based on the fate of Israel in the wilderness (Ps 95.7–11).

**3.8:** *Rebellion* and *testing* are translations of the Hebrew names Meribah and Massah in Ps 95.8 (Ex 17.1–7; Num 20.1–13; Deut 33.8). **11:** *My rest,* the peaceful settlement of the promised land of Canaan (4.1–4). **12:** Jer 17.5–6. **13:** *The deceitfulness of sin,* disobedience (Num 14.1–4, 34, 41), leading to apostasy (v. 12). **16–18:** A series of questions (based on Num 14.1–35) suggests the lessons to be drawn from the failure of the wilderness generation.

**4.1–13: The rest that God promised. 1:** God's *promise,* which must be fulfilled, *remains* for faithful Christians to inherit (v. 6). **2:** *Those who listened,* Num 13.30–14.10. **3:** Ps 95.11. **4:** Gen 2.2. **5:** Ps 95.11. **6:** See v. 1 n. **7–8:** The possession of Canaan under *Joshua*

faith with those who listened.[u] 3For we who have believed enter that rest, just as God[v] has said,

"As in my anger I swore,
'They shall not enter my rest,' "

though his works were finished at the foundation of the world. 4For in one place it speaks about the seventh day as follows, "And God rested on the seventh day from all his works." 5And again in this place it says, "They shall not enter my rest." 6Since therefore it remains open for some to enter it, and those who formerly received the good news failed to enter because of disobedience, 7again he sets a certain day—"today"—saying through David much later, in the words already quoted,

"Today, if you hear his voice,
do not harden your hearts."

8For if Joshua had given them rest, God[v] would not speak later about another day. 9So then, a sabbath rest still remains for the people of God; 10for those who enter God's rest also cease from their labors as God did from his. 11Let us therefore make every effort to enter that rest, so that no one may fall through such disobedience as theirs.

12 Indeed, the word of God is living and active, sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing until it divides soul from spirit, joints from marrow; it is able to judge the thoughts and intentions of the heart. 13And before him no creature is hidden, but all are naked and laid bare to the eyes of the one to whom we must render an account.

14 Since, then, we have a great high priest who has passed through the heavens, Jesus, the Son of God, let us hold fast to our confession. 15For we do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but we have one who in every respect has been tested[w] as we are, yet without sin. 16Let us therefore approach the throne of grace with boldness, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need.

5 Every high priest chosen from among mortals is put in charge of things pertaining to God on their behalf, to offer gifts and sacrifices for sins. 2He is able to deal gently with the ignorant and wayward, since he himself is subject to weakness; 3and because of this he must offer sacrifice for his own sins as well as for those of the people. 4And one does not presume to take this honor, but takes it only when called by God, just as Aaron was.

5 So also Christ did not glorify himself in becoming a high priest, but was appointed by the one who said to him,

"You are my Son,
today I have begotten you";

6as he says also in another place,

"You are a priest forever,
according to the order of
Melchizedek."

7 In the days of his flesh, Jesus[v] offered up prayers and supplications, with loud cries and tears, to the one who was

*u* Other ancient authorities read *it did not meet with faith in those who listened* *v* Gk *he*
*w* Or *tempted*

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was not the promised *rest,* otherwise *David* would not have spoken centuries later of a *rest* still remaining. **7**: Ps 95.7–8. **9–10**: *Sabbath rest,* points back to God's rest after the work of creation (Gen 2.2), and forward to rest as salvation in God's presence (11.16), completed at the end of time (10.25, 37–38; 12.26–29). **11–13**: An exhortation to diligence, reinforced by a reminder that *the word of God* can discern all secret *intentions of the heart.*

**4.14–5.14**: **The theme of Jesus our high priest** is resumed (compare 2.17–18); he has the two qualifications of a priest, divine appointment (5.4) and the ability to *sympathize with our weaknesses* (4.15).

**4.15–16**: Because Christ experienced real, human testing, he is able *to sympathize with our weaknesses.* **16**: At God's *throne of grace* humans *receive mercy* for past sins and *find grace* for present and future *need.*

**5.1**: *Gifts and sacrifices,* grain and animal sacrifices. **2**: The Old Testament provides no atoning sacrifice for deliberate and defiant sins (see Num 15.30 n.; Deut 17.12), but only for "unwitting" offenses committed by *the ignorant and wayward* (Lev ch 4). **4**: *Aaron,* Ex 28.1. **5**: Ps 2.7; Lk 3.22 note *z.* **6**: *The order of Melchizedek,* according to the rank which Melchizedek held (Ps 110.4; see 7.1–10 n.).

**5.7–8**: Jesus' agonizing prayer in Geth-

able to save him from death, and he was heard because of his reverent submission. 8 Although he was a Son, he learned obedience through what he suffered; 9 and having been made perfect, he became the source of eternal salvation for all who obey him, 10 having been designated by God a high priest according to the order of Melchizedek.

11 About this[x] we have much to say that is hard to explain, since you have become dull in understanding. 12 For though by this time you ought to be teachers, you need someone to teach you again the basic elements of the oracles of God. You need milk, not solid food; 13 for everyone who lives on milk, being still an infant, is unskilled in the word of righteousness. 14 But solid food is for the mature, for those whose faculties have been trained by practice to distinguish good from evil.

6 Therefore let us go on toward perfection,[y] leaving behind the basic teaching about Christ, and not laying again the foundation: repentance from dead works and faith toward God, 2 instruction about baptisms, laying on of hands, resurrection of the dead, and eternal judgment. 3 And we will do[z] this, if God permits. 4 For it is impossible to restore again to repentance those who have once been enlightened, and have tasted the heavenly gift, and have shared in the Holy Spirit, 5 and have tasted the goodness of the word of God and the powers of the age to come, 6 and then have fallen away, since on their own they are crucifying again the Son of God and are holding him up to contempt. 7 Ground that drinks up the rain falling on it repeatedly, and that produces a crop useful to those for whom it is cultivated, receives a blessing from God. 8 But if it produces thorns and thistles, it is worthless and on the verge of being cursed; its end is to be burned over.

9 Even though we speak in this way, beloved, we are confident of better things in your case, things that belong to salvation. 10 For God is not unjust; he will not overlook your work and the love that you showed for his sake[a] in serving the saints, as you still do. 11 And we want each one of you to show the same diligence so as to realize the full assurance of hope to the very end, 12 so that you may not become sluggish, but imitators of those who through faith and patience inherit the promises.

13 When God made a promise to Abraham, because he had no one greater by whom to swear, he swore by himself, 14 saying, "I will surely bless you and multiply you." 15 And thus Abraham,[b] having patiently endured, obtained the promise. 16 Human beings, of course, swear by someone greater than themselves, and an oath given as confirmation puts an end to all dispute. 17 In the same way, when God desired to show even more clearly to the heirs of the promise the unchangeable character of his purpose, he guaranteed it by an oath, 18 so that through two unchangeable things,

*x* Or *him* *y* Or *toward maturity* *z* Other ancient authorities read *let us do* *a* Gk *for his name* *b* Gk *he*

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semane (Mk 14.32–42) *was heard* in the sense that *he learned obedience* by submitting to the divine will, which involved death. **9**: *Made perfect,* Jesus completed his divinely appointed discipline for priesthood (see 2.10 n.). *Eternal salvation,* not merely temporary deliverance, such as the levitical law provided (9.12). **10**: *Melchizedek,* see 7.1–10 n. **11–14**: The author deplores the spiritual immaturity of the readers. **12–14**: *Milk* stands for rudimentary teachings; *solid food,* more advanced teaching (1 Cor 3.1–2).

**6.1–20**: **Exhortation and declaration of purpose.** Despite misgivings as to the capacity of the readers (5.11–14), and taking *basic* Christian *teaching* for granted (6.1–3), the author is resolved to proceed to more advanced subjects. Though it would be useless to address those who have apostatized from the faith (vv. 4–6), who are like *worthless ground* (vv. 7–8), this gloomy picture does not represent the condition of the readers (vv. 9–12), who are addressed for the first and only time as *beloved* (v. 9).

**6.13–20**: The certainty of God's promises. To encourage patient waiting (v. 12) the author mentions the example of Abraham (v. 15). **13–14**: Gen 22.16–17. **18**: *Two un-*

in which it is impossible that God would prove false, we who have taken refuge might be strongly encouraged to seize the hope set before us. [19]We have this hope, a sure and steadfast anchor of the soul, a hope that enters the inner shrine behind the curtain, [20]where Jesus, a forerunner on our behalf, has entered, having become a high priest forever according to the order of Melchizedek.

7 This "King Melchizedek of Salem, priest of the Most High God, met Abraham as he was returning from defeating the kings and blessed him"; [2]and to him Abraham apportioned "one-tenth of everything." His name, in the first place, means "king of righteousness"; next he is also king of Salem, that is, "king of peace." [3]Without father, without mother, without genealogy, having neither beginning of days nor end of life, but resembling the Son of God, he remains a priest forever.

4 See how great he is! Even[c] Abraham the patriarch gave him a tenth of the spoils. [5]And those descendants of Levi who receive the priestly office have a commandment in the law to collect tithes[d] from the people, that is, from their kindred,[e] though these also are descended from Abraham. [6]But this man, who does not belong to their ancestry, collected tithes[d] from Abraham and blessed him who had received the promises. [7]It is beyond dispute that the inferior is blessed by the superior. [8]In the one case, tithes are received by those who are mortal; in the other, by one of whom it is testified that he lives. [9]One might even say that Levi himself, who receives tithes, paid tithes through Abraham, [10]for he was still in the loins of his ancestor when Melchizedek met him.

11 Now if perfection had been attainable through the levitical priesthood—for the people received the law under this priesthood—what further need would there have been to speak of another priest arising according to the order of Melchizedek, rather than one according to the order of Aaron? [12]For when there is a change in the priesthood, there is necessarily a change in the law as well. [13]Now the one of whom these things are spoken belonged to another tribe, from which no one has ever served at the altar. [14]For it is evident that our Lord was descended from Judah, and in connection with that tribe Moses said nothing about priests.

15 It is even more obvious when another priest arises, resembling Melchizedek, [16]one who has become a priest, not through a legal requirement concerning physical descent, but through the power of an indestructible life. [17]For it is attested of him,

"You are a priest forever,
according to the order of
Melchizedek."

[18]There is, on the one hand, the abrogation of an earlier commandment because it was weak and ineffectual [19](for the law made nothing perfect); there is, on the other hand, the introduction of a better hope, through which we approach God.

*c* Other ancient authorities lack *Even* *d* Or *a tenth* *e* Gk *brothers*

*changeable things,* God's promise and God's oath. **19**: *The inner shrine,* the Holy of Holies (9.3) of the tabernacle, *behind the curtain* or veil (Ex 26.31–35), restricted to the high priest alone (Lev 16.2). **20**: As *forerunner,* however, Jesus secures our unhindered access to God. *Melchizedek,* here the author picks up the argument of 5.10.

**7.1–28**: **The priesthood of Melchizedek and the levitical priesthood compared. 1–10**: From Gen 14.17–20 the author deduces that the mysterious priest-king, Melchizedek, was greater than either Abraham or his descendent, Levi. **3**: *Without father, without mother,* Melchizedek's ancestors, birth, and death are not recorded in Scripture. **8**: *Those who are mortal,* the levitical priests. *One* who *lives,* Melchizedek, whose death is not recorded.

**7.11–25**: The levitical priesthood is inadequate, because it is provisional and temporary (vv. 11–14). On the other hand, a *priest . . . resembling Melchizedek* is eternal (Ps 110.4), and the office is neither inherited nor transmitted (vv. 15–19). (Among the Essene community at Qumran, Melchizedek was regarded as an angelic, heavenly figure and judge, who rescues the righteous.) Unlike the levitical priests, Jesus was appointed with a divine oath (Ps 110.4); furthermore, being immortal

20 This was confirmed with an oath;
for others who became priests took their
office without an oath, 21 but this one
became a priest with an oath, because of
the one who said to him,

"The Lord has sworn
and will not change his mind,
'You are a priest forever' "—

22 accordingly Jesus has also become the
guarantee of a better covenant.

23 Furthermore, the former priests
were many in number, because they
were prevented by death from continu-
ing in office; 24 but he holds his priest-
hood permanently, because he continues
forever. 25 Consequently he is able for all
time to save[f] those who approach God
through him, since he always lives to
make intercession for them.

26 For it was fitting that we should
have such a high priest, holy, blameless,
undefiled, separated from sinners, and
exalted above the heavens. 27 Unlike the
others[g] high priests, he has no need to
offer sacrifices day after day, first for his
own sins, and then for those of the peo-
ple; this he did once for all when he of-
fered himself. 28 For the law appoints as
high priests those who are subject to
weakness, but the word of the oath,
which came later than the law, appoints
a Son who has been made perfect
forever.

8 Now the main point in what we are
saying is this: we have such a high
priest, one who is seated at the right hand
of the throne of the Majesty in the heav-
ens, 2 a minister in the sanctuary and the
true tent[h] that the Lord, and not any
mortal, has set up. 3 For every high priest
is appointed to offer gifts and sacrifices;
hence it is necessary for this priest also to
have something to offer. 4 Now if he
were on earth, he would not be a priest
at all, since there are priests who offer
gifts according to the law. 5 They offer
worship in a sanctuary that is a sketch
and shadow of the heavenly one; for Mo-
ses, when he was about to erect the
tent,[h] was warned, "See that you make
everything according to the pattern that
was shown you on the mountain." 6 But
Jesus[i] has now obtained a more excellent
ministry, and to that degree he is the
mediator of a better covenant, which has
been enacted through better promises.
7 For if that first covenant had been fault-
less, there would have been no need to
look for a second one.

8 God[j] finds fault with them when
he says:

"The days are surely coming, says
the Lord,
when I will establish a new
covenant with the house
of Israel
and with the house of Judah;
9 not like the covenant that I made
with their ancestors,
on the day when I took them
by the hand to lead them
out of the land of Egypt;
for they did not continue in
my covenant,
and so I had no concern for
them, says the Lord.
10 This is the covenant that I will
make with the house
of Israel
after those days, says the Lord:
I will put my laws in their minds,
and write them on their hearts,
and I will be their God,
and they shall be my people.
11 And they shall not teach
one another

*f* Or *able to save completely* *g* Gk lacks *other*
*h* Or *tabernacle* *i* Gk *he* *j* Gk *He*

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Jesus *holds his priesthood permanently* (vv. 20–25).

**7.26–28**: Summary of the merits of our high priest, Jesus the Son of God.

**8.1–13**: **The heavenly sanctuary and the new covenant. 1–6**: The chief *point . . . is this, we have . . . a high priest* who is also the enthroned king, ministering on our behalf in the heavenly sanctuary, of which the earthly tabernacle erected by Moses was *a sketch* (v. 5; Ex 25.40).

**8.7–12**: The *new covenant*, of which Jeremiah prophesied (Jer 31.31–34), surpasses the *first covenant* in making available a new order

or say to each other, 'Know
the Lord,'
for they shall all know me,
from the least of them to
the greatest.
12 For I will be merciful toward their
iniquities,
and I will remember their sins
no more."

13 In speaking of "a new covenant," he has made the first one obsolete. And what is obsolete and growing old will soon disappear.

9 Now even the first covenant had regulations for worship and an earthly sanctuary. 2 For a tent[k] was constructed, the first one, in which were the lampstand, the table, and the bread of the Presence;[l] this is called the Holy Place. 3 Behind the second curtain was a tent[k] called the Holy of Holies. 4 In it stood the golden altar of incense and the ark of the covenant overlaid on all sides with gold, in which there were a golden urn holding the manna, and Aaron's rod that budded, and the tablets of the covenant; 5 above it were the cherubim of glory overshadowing the mercy seat.[m] Of these things we cannot speak now in detail.

6 Such preparations having been made, the priests go continually into the first tent[k] to carry out their ritual duties; 7 but only the high priest goes into the second, and he but once a year, and not without taking the blood that he offers for himself and for the sins committed unintentionally by the people. 8 By this the Holy Spirit indicates that the way into the sanctuary has not yet been disclosed as long as the first tent[k] is still standing. 9 This is a symbol[n] of the present time, during which gifts and sacrifices are offered that cannot perfect the conscience of the worshiper, 10 but deal only with food and drink and various baptisms, regulations for the body imposed until the time comes to set things right.

11 But when Christ came as a high priest of the good things that have come,[o] then through the greater and perfect[p] tent[k] (not made with hands, that is, not of this creation), 12 he entered once for all into the Holy Place, not with the blood of goats and calves, but with his own blood, thus obtaining eternal redemption. 13 For if the blood of goats and bulls, with the sprinkling of the ashes of a heifer, sanctifies those who have been defiled so that their flesh is purified, 14 how much more will the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit[q] offered himself without blemish to God, purify our[r] conscience from dead works to worship the living God!

15 For this reason he is the mediator of a new covenant, so that those who are called may receive the promised eternal

*k* Or *tabernacle* *l* Gk *the presentation of the loaves* *m* Or *the place of atonement* *n* Gk *parable* *o* Other ancient authorities read *good things to come* *p* Gk *more perfect* *q* Other ancient authorities read *Holy Spirit* *r* Other ancient authorities read *your*

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of perfection. **13:** Jeremiah shows that the old covenant would not endure forever (Jer 31.31–32).

**9.1–10: The ministry of the levitical priests** (Ex 25.10–40). **2:** *The bread of the Presence,* Lev 24.5–9. **3:** Ex 26.31–33. **4:** *The golden altar of incense* stood in the Holy Place (Ex 30.6). *Ark of the covenant,* the chest containing the tablets of the Law (Ex 25.10–22). *Urn . . . manna,* Ex 16.32–34. *Aaron's rod,* Num 17.1–10. **7:** Lev ch 16. *Sins committed unintentionally by the people,* see 5.2 n. **9–10:** *Perfect,* see 2.10 n. *The conscience,* levitical sacrifices cannot cleanse the inner guilt that results from sin. **10:** *The time . . . to set things right,* the period of the new covenant, inaugurated by the death of Christ.

**9.11–10.18: Characteristics of the sacrifice of Christ.** The offering of the blood of Christ is incomparably superior to sacrifices of *the blood of goats and bulls* (9.13–14), because (*a*) it is the life (Lev 17.11) of a person, the Christ, not of irrational beasts (10.4); (*b*) Christ was both priest and sacrificial victim (9.12); (*c*) the offering was made *once for all* (9.12, 25–26; 10.11–12); (*d*) it was made in the heavenly *sanctuary* (9.24); (*e*) it was a voluntary act (10.9; compare Jn 10.17–18), accomplished through *the eternal Spirit* (9.14); and therefore (*f*) the efficacy of his sacrifice remains *for all time* (10.14).

**9.13:** Lev 16.6, 16; Num 19.9, 17–18. **14:** *The eternal Spirit,* probably Christ's spirit of self-offering. **15:** Christ's death redeemed also

inheritance, because a death has occurred that redeems them from the transgressions under the first covenant.[s] 16Where a will[s] is involved, the death of the one who made it must be established. 17For a will[s] takes effect only at death, since it is not in force as long as the one who made it is alive. 18Hence not even the first covenant was inaugurated without blood. 19For when every commandment had been told to all the people by Moses in accordance with the law, he took the blood of calves and goats,[t] with water and scarlet wool and hyssop, and sprinkled both the scroll itself and all the people, 20saying, "This is the blood of the covenant that God has ordained for you." 21And in the same way he sprinkled with the blood both the tent[u] and all the vessels used in worship. 22Indeed, under the law almost everything is purified with blood, and without the shedding of blood there is no forgiveness of sins.

23 Thus it was necessary for the sketches of the heavenly things to be purified with these rites, but the heavenly things themselves need better sacrifices than these. 24For Christ did not enter a sanctuary made by human hands, a mere copy of the true one, but he entered into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God on our behalf. 25Nor was it to offer himself again and again, as the high priest enters the Holy Place year after year with blood that is not his own; 26for then he would have had to suffer again and again since the foundation of the world. But as it is, he has appeared once for all at the end of the age to remove sin by the sacrifice of himself. 27And just as it is appointed for mortals to die once, and after that the judgment, 28so Christ, having been offered once to bear the sins of many, will appear a second time, not to deal with sin, but to save those who are eagerly waiting for him.

10 Since the law has only a shadow of the good things to come and not the true form of these realities, it[v] can never, by the same sacrifices that are continually offered year after year, make perfect those who approach. 2Otherwise, would they not have ceased being offered, since the worshipers, cleansed once for all, would no longer have any consciousness of sin? 3But in these sacrifices there is a reminder of sin year after year. 4For it is impossible for the blood of bulls and goats to take away sins. 5Consequently, when Christ[w] came into the world, he said,

"Sacrifices and offerings you have not desired,
but a body you have prepared for me;
6 in burnt offerings and sin offerings you have taken no pleasure.
7 Then I said, 'See, God, I have come to do your will, O God'
(in the scroll of the book[x] it is written of me)."

8When he said above, "You have neither desired nor taken pleasure in sacrifices and offerings and burnt offerings and sin offerings" (these are offered according to the law), 9then he added, "See, I have come to do your will." He abolishes the first in order to establish the second. 10And it is by God's will[y] that we have been sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all.

11 And every priest stands day after day at his service, offering again and

*s* The Greek word used here means both *covenant* and *will* *t* Other ancient authorities lack *and goats* *u* Or *tabernacle* *v* Other ancient authorities read *they* *w* Gk *he* *x* Meaning of Gk uncertain *y* Gk *by that will*

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the Old Testament saints (11.39–40), and inaugurated the new covenant (Rom 3.24–25; 1 Cor 11.25).

**9.15–17**: See note *s*. **18–20**: Ex 24.6–8. **28**: *The sins of many,* Isa 53.12; Mk 10.45; Rom 5.19; Rev 7.9–10. *A second time,* Acts 1.10–11; Phil 3.20.

**10.1**: Insubstantial *shadow* is contrasted with *the true form. Approach,* i.e. God (7.25). **2**: *Consciousness of sin,* see 9.9 n. **5–9**: Ps 40.6–8 Septuagint. **8**: 1 Sam 15.22; Ps 50.8–15; Isa 1.10–17; Jer 7.21–26; Hos 6.6. **10**: *Sanctified,* ceremonially cleansed and perfected through Christ's blood (10.29).

**10.11–12**: A priest stands, a king sits; Christ is both (1.3). **14**: *Sanctified,* see v. 10 n. **16–17**:

again the same sacrifices that can never take away sins. 12 But when Christ[z] had offered for all time a single sacrifice for sins, "he sat down at the right hand of God," 13 and since then has been waiting "until his enemies would be made a footstool for his feet." 14 For by a single offering he has perfected for all time those who are sanctified. 15 And the Holy Spirit also testifies to us, for after saying,

16 "This is the covenant that I will
make with them
after those days, says the Lord:
I will put my laws in their hearts,
and I will write them on
their minds,"

17 he also adds,

"I will remember[a] their sins and
their lawless deeds no
more."

18 Where there is forgiveness of these, there is no longer any offering for sin.

19 Therefore, my friends,[b] since we have confidence to enter the sanctuary by the blood of Jesus, 20 by the new and living way that he opened for us through the curtain (that is, through his flesh), 21 and since we have a great priest over the house of God, 22 let us approach with a true heart in full assurance of faith, with our hearts sprinkled clean from an evil conscience and our bodies washed with pure water. 23 Let us hold fast to the confession of our hope without wavering, for he who has promised is faithful. 24 And let us consider how to provoke one another to love and good deeds, 25 not neglecting to meet together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another, and all the more as you see the Day approaching.

26 For if we willfully persist in sin after having received the knowledge of the truth, there no longer remains a sacrifice for sins, 27 but a fearful prospect of judgment, and a fury of fire that will consume the adversaries. 28 Anyone who has violated the law of Moses dies without mercy "on the testimony of two or three witnesses." 29 How much worse punishment do you think will be deserved by those who have spurned the Son of God, profaned the blood of the covenant by which they were sanctified, and outraged the Spirit of grace? 30 For we know the one who said, "Vengeance is mine, I will repay." And again, "The Lord will judge his people." 31 It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God.

32 But recall those earlier days when, after you had been enlightened, you endured a hard struggle with sufferings, 33 sometimes being publicly exposed to abuse and persecution, and sometimes being partners with those so treated. 34 For you had compassion for those who were in prison, and you cheerfully accepted the plundering of your possessions, knowing that you yourselves possessed something better and more lasting. 35 Do not, therefore, abandon that confidence of yours; it brings a great reward. 36 For you need endurance, so that when you have done the will of God, you may receive what was promised. 37 For yet

"in a very little while,
the one who is coming will
come and will not delay;
38 but my righteous one will live
by faith.
My soul takes no pleasure in
anyone who shrinks back."

39 But we are not among those who shrink back and so are lost, but among those who have faith and so are saved.

11 Now faith is the assurance of things hoped for, the conviction

*z* Gk *this one* *a* Gk *on their minds and I will remember* *b* Gk *Therefore, brothers*

The new covenant assures full and final remission of sins (Jer 31.33–34).

**10.19–39: Exhortations and warnings. 19–25:** Three privileges and duties of Christians: *let us approach* God in faith and worship (vv. 22 and 25); *let us hold fast* the public *confession of our hope* (v. 23); *let us consider* how we can help others in love (v. 24). **25:** *The Day* of Christ's second coming (see 9.28 n.).

**10.26–31:** The fate of the wilful sinner (see 5.2 n. and 6.4–6). **28:** Deut 17.2–6. **30:** Deut 32.35–36. **32–39:** Memory of past victories should inspire present *endurance*. **37:** Isa 26.20 Septuagint. **37–38:** Hab 2.3–4.

of things not seen. 2Indeed, by faith[c] our ancestors received approval. 3By faith we understand that the worlds were prepared by the word of God, so that what is seen was made from things that are not visible.[d]

4 By faith Abel offered to God a more acceptable[e] sacrifice than Cain's. Through this he received approval as righteous, God himself giving approval to his gifts; he died, but through his faith[f] he still speaks. 5By faith Enoch was taken so that he did not experience death; and "he was not found, because God had taken him." For it was attested before he was taken away that "he had pleased God." 6And without faith it is impossible to please God, for whoever would approach him must believe that he exists and that he rewards those who seek him. 7By faith Noah, warned by God about events as yet unseen, respected the warning and built an ark to save his household; by this he condemned the world and became an heir to the righteousness that is in accordance with faith.

8 By faith Abraham obeyed when he was called to set out for a place that he was to receive as an inheritance; and he set out, not knowing where he was going. 9By faith he stayed for a time in the land he had been promised, as in a foreign land, living in tents, as did Isaac and Jacob, who were heirs with him of the same promise. 10For he looked forward to the city that has foundations, whose architect and builder is God. 11By faith he[g] received power of procreation, even though he was too old—and Sarah herself was barren—because he considered him faithful who had promised.[g] 12Therefore from one person, and this one as good as dead, descendants were born, "as many as the stars of heaven and as the innumerable grains of sand by the seashore."

13 All of these died in faith without having received the promises, but from a distance they saw and greeted them. They confessed that they were strangers and foreigners on the earth, 14for people who speak in this way make it clear that they are seeking a homeland. 15If they had been thinking of the land that they had left behind, they would have had opportunity to return. 16But as it is, they desire a better country, that is, a heavenly one. Therefore God is not ashamed to be called their God; indeed, he has prepared a city for them.

17 By faith Abraham, when put to the test, offered up Isaac. He who had received the promises was ready to offer up his only son, 18of whom he had been told, "It is through Isaac that descendants shall be named for you." 19He considered the fact that God is able even to raise someone from the dead—and figuratively speaking, he did receive him back. 20By faith Isaac invoked blessings for the future on Jacob and Esau. 21By faith Jacob, when dying, blessed each of the sons of Joseph, "bowing in worship over the top of his staff." 22By faith Joseph, at the end of his life, made mention of the exodus of the Israelites and gave instructions about his burial.[h]

23 By faith Moses was hidden by his parents for three months after his birth, because they saw that the child was beau-

*c* Gk *by this* *d* Or *was not made out of visible things* *e* Gk *greater* *f* Gk *through it* *g* Or *By faith Sarah herself, though barren, received power to conceive, even when she was too old, because she considered him faithful who had promised.* *h* Gk *his bones*

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**11.1–40: Roll call of heroes and heroines of faith,** designed to reinforce the exhortation in 10.35–39. **1:** Instead of defining faith comprehensively, the author describes those aspects of it which bear upon the argument. **4:** Gen 4.3–10. **5:** Gen 5.21–24. **6:** A general axiom referring to the existence and the moral government of God. **7:** Gen 6.13–22.

**11.8–9:** Gen 12.1–8. **10:** *The city* is the heavenly Jerusalem (v. 16; Gal 4.26; Rev 21.2). *Foundations,* contrasted with tents (v. 9). **11:** Gen 17.19; 18.11–14; 21.2. **12:** Gen 15.5–6; 22.17; 32.12; Rom 4.19. **16:** *A city,* see v. 10 n. **17:** Gen 22.1–10. **18:** Gen 21.12. **19:** Abraham received Isaac *back* when he was told to offer a ram instead of his son (Gen 22.13). **20:** Gen 27.27–29, 39–40. **21:** Gen ch 48; 47.31 Septuagint. **22:** Gen 50.24–25; Ex 13.19.

**11.23:** Ex 2.2; 1.22. **24–25:** Ex 2.10–15. **26:**

tiful; and they were not afraid of the king's edict.[i] 24By faith Moses, when he was grown up, refused to be called a son of Pharaoh's daughter, 25choosing rather to share ill-treatment with the people of God than to enjoy the fleeting pleasures of sin. 26He considered abuse suffered for the Christ[j] to be greater wealth than the treasures of Egypt, for he was looking ahead to the reward. 27By faith he left Egypt, unafraid of the king's anger; for he persevered as though[k] he saw him who is invisible. 28By faith he kept the Passover and the sprinkling of blood, so that the destroyer of the firstborn would not touch the firstborn of Israel.[l]

29 By faith the people passed through the Red Sea as if it were dry land, but when the Egyptians attempted to do so they were drowned. 30By faith the walls of Jericho fell after they had been encircled for seven days. 31By faith Rahab the prostitute did not perish with those who were disobedient,[m] because she had received the spies in peace.

32 And what more should I say? For time would fail me to tell of Gideon, Barak, Samson, Jephthah, of David and Samuel and the prophets— 33who through faith conquered kingdoms, administered justice, obtained promises, shut the mouths of lions, 34quenched raging fire, escaped the edge of the sword, won strength out of weakness, became mighty in war, put foreign armies to flight. 35Women received their dead by resurrection. Others were tortured, refusing to accept release, in order to obtain a better resurrection. 36Others suffered mocking and flogging, and even chains and imprisonment. 37They were stoned to death, they were sawn in two,[n] they were killed by the sword; they went about in skins of sheep and goats, destitute, persecuted, tormented— 38of whom the world was not worthy. They wandered in deserts and mountains, and in caves and holes in the ground.

39 Yet all these, though they were commended for their faith, did not receive what was promised, 40since God had provided something better so that they would not, apart from us, be made perfect.

12 Therefore, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us also lay aside every weight and the sin that clings so closely,[o] and let us run with perseverance the race that is set before us, 2looking to Jesus the pioneer and perfecter of our faith, who for the sake of[p] the joy that was set before him endured the cross, disregarding its shame, and has taken his seat at the right hand of the throne of God.

3 Consider him who endured such hostility against himself from sinners,[q] so that you may not grow weary or lose heart. 4In your struggle against sin you

*i* Other ancient authorities add *By faith Moses, when he was grown up, killed the Egyptian, because he observed the humiliation of his people* (Gk *brothers*) *j* Or *the Messiah* *k* Or *because* *l* Gk *would not touch them* *m* Or *unbelieving* *n* Other ancient authorities add *they were tempted* *o* Other ancient authorities read *sin that easily distracts* *p* Or *who instead of* *q* Other ancient authorities read *such hostility from sinners against themselves*

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*Abuse suffered for the Christ,* 13.13 (see 1 Cor 10.3–4 n.). **27**: *Him who is invisible,* Jn 1.18; Col 1.15; 1 Tim 1.17; 6.16. **28**: *Sprinkling of blood,* on the lintels and doorposts. See Ex 12.21–30. **29**: Ex 14.21–31. **30**: Josh 6.12–21. **31**: Josh 2.1–21; 6.22–25.

**11.32**: Judg chs 6–8; 4–5; 13–16; 11–12; 1 Sam chs 16–30; 2 Sam chs 1–24; 1 Kings 1.1–2.11; 1 Sam 1–12; 15.1–16.13. **33**: *Lions,* Dan ch 6. **34**: *Fire,* Dan ch 3. **35**: 1 Kings 17.17–24; 2 Kings 4.25–37; 2 Macc 7.9, 14. **37**: 2 Chr 24.20–22; Jer 26.23; 2 Macc 5.27; 6.12–7.42. **38**: *Caves,* 2 Macc 6.11; 10.6. **40**: See 9.15 n.

**12.1–29**: **Exhortations and warnings. 1–11**: Suffering, its joy and discipline. **1**: *Witnesses,* those mentioned in ch 11. *Weight,* encumbrance. *Sin,* not a particular "besetting sin," but sin in general as a hindrance to running *the race* (1 Cor 9.24–27). **2**: *Pioneer and perfecter,* see 2.10 n. *Our faith,* literally "the faith." *For . . . the joy,* may also be translated "instead of the joy" (of unbroken life in heaven, Phil 2.6). **5–6**: Prov 3.11–12. **8**: *All . . . share,* namely, all children of God (v. 6). **9**: *Father of spirits,* God is the author of humanity's spiritual being (Num 16.22; Ecc l 12.7; Zech 12.1).

have not yet resisted to the point of shedding your blood. 5And you have forgotten the exhortation that addresses you as children—

"My child, do not regard lightly
the discipline of the Lord,
or lose heart when you are
punished by him;
6 for the Lord disciplines those
whom he loves,
and chastises every child whom
he accepts."

7Endure trials for the sake of discipline. God is treating you as children; for what child is there whom a parent does not discipline? 8If you do not have that discipline in which all children share, then you are illegitimate and not his children. 9Moreover, we had human parents to discipline us, and we respected them. Should we not be even more willing to be subject to the Father of spirits and live? 10For they disciplined us for a short time as seemed best to them, but he disciplines us for our good, in order that we may share his holiness. 11Now, discipline always seems painful rather than pleasant at the time, but later it yields the peaceful fruit of righteousness to those who have been trained by it.

12 Therefore lift your drooping hands and strengthen your weak knees, 13and make straight paths for your feet, so that what is lame may not be put out of joint, but rather be healed.

14 Pursue peace with everyone, and the holiness without which no one will see the Lord. 15See to it that no one fails to obtain the grace of God; that no root of bitterness springs up and causes trouble, and through it many become defiled. 16See to it that no one becomes like Esau, an immoral and godless person, who sold his birthright for a single meal. 17You know that later, when he wanted to inherit the blessing, he was rejected, for he found no chance to repent,[r] even though he sought the blessing[s] with tears.

18 You have not come to something[t] that can be touched, a blazing fire, and darkness, and gloom, and a tempest, 19and the sound of a trumpet, and a voice whose words made the hearers beg that not another word be spoken to them. 20(For they could not endure the order that was given, "If even an animal touches the mountain, it shall be stoned to death." 21Indeed, so terrifying was the sight that Moses said, "I tremble with fear.") 22But you have come to Mount Zion and to the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to innumerable angels in festal gathering, 23and to the assembly[u] of the firstborn who are enrolled in heaven, and to God the judge of all, and to the spirits of the righteous made perfect, 24and to Jesus, the mediator of a new covenant, and to the sprinkled blood that speaks a better word than the blood of Abel.

25 See that you do not refuse the one who is speaking; for if they did not escape when they refused the one who warned them on earth, how much less will we escape if we reject the one who warns from heaven! 26At that time his voice shook the earth; but now he has promised, "Yet once more I will shake not only the earth but also the heaven." 27This phrase, "Yet once more," indicates the removal of what is shaken—

*r* Or *no chance to change his father's mind* *s* Gk *it*
*t* Other ancient authorities read *a mountain*
*u* Or *angels, and to the festal gathering* 23*and assembly*

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**12.12**: Isa 35.3. **14–17**: The necessity of peace and purity. **15**: Deut 29.18 Septuagint. **16**: Gen 25.29–34. **17**: *Chance to repent,* or "chance to change his father's mind" (Gen 27.30–40).

**12.18–29**: The two covenants contrasted. **18–19**: *Something that can be touched,* Mount Sinai (Ex 19.12–22; 20.18–21; Deut 4.11–12; 5.22–27). **20**: Ex 19.12–13. **21**: Deut 9.19. **22**: *Mount Zion . . . the heavenly Jerusalem,* contrast v. 18 and see 11.10 n. **24**: Abel's blood cried for vengeance (11.4; Gen 4.10); *the sprinkled blood* of Jesus, which established the new covenant (9.14; 13.20), *speaks . . . better* for forgiveness. **25**: *Who warns,* the Greek may also be translated "who is." **26**: Hag 2.6. **29**: Deut 4.24; 9.3; 2 Thess 1.7–8; compare Mt 3.12.

that is, created things—so that what cannot be shaken may remain. 28Therefore, since we are receiving a kingdom that cannot be shaken, let us give thanks, by which we offer to God an acceptable worship with reverence and awe; 29for indeed our God is a consuming fire.

13 Let mutual love continue. 2Do not neglect to show hospitality to strangers, for by doing that some have entertained angels without knowing it. 3Remember those who are in prison, as though you were in prison with them; those who are being tortured, as though you yourselves were being tortured.[v] 4Let marriage be held in honor by all, and let the marriage bed be kept undefiled; for God will judge fornicators and adulterers. 5Keep your lives free from the love of money, and be content with what you have; for he has said, "I will never leave you or forsake you." 6So we can say with confidence,

"The Lord is my helper;
I will not be afraid.
What can anyone do to me?"

7 Remember your leaders, those who spoke the word of God to you; consider the outcome of their way of life, and imitate their faith. 8Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and today and forever. 9Do not be carried away by all kinds of strange teachings; for it is well for the heart to be strengthened by grace, not by regulations about food,[w] which have not benefited those who observe them. 10We have an altar from which those who officiate in the tent[x] have no right to eat. 11For the bodies of those animals whose blood is brought into the sanctuary by the high priest as a sacrifice for sin are burned outside the camp. 12Therefore Jesus also suffered outside the city gate in order to sanctify the people by his own blood. 13Let us then go to him outside the camp and bear the abuse he endured. 14For here we have no lasting city, but we are looking for the city that is to come. 15Through him, then, let us continually offer a sacrifice of praise to God, that is, the fruit of lips that confess his name. 16Do not neglect to do good and to share what you have, for such sacrifices are pleasing to God.

17 Obey your leaders and submit to them, for they are keeping watch over your souls and will give an account. Let them do this with joy and not with sighing—for that would be harmful to you.

18 Pray for us; we are sure that we have a clear conscience, desiring to act honorably in all things. 19I urge you all the more to do this, so that I may be restored to you very soon.

20 Now may the God of peace, who brought back from the dead our Lord Jesus, the great shepherd of the sheep, by the blood of the eternal covenant, 21make you complete in everything good so that you may do his will, working among us[y] that which is pleasing in his sight, through Jesus Christ, to whom be the glory forever and ever. Amen.

22 I appeal to you, brothers and sisters,[z] bear with my word of exhortation, for I have written to you briefly. 23I want you to know that our brother Timothy has been set free; and if he comes in time, he will be with me when I see you. 24Greet all your leaders and all the saints. Those from Italy send you greetings. 25Grace be with all of you.[a]

*v* Gk *were in the body* *w* Gk *not by foods* *x* Or *tabernacle* *y* Other ancient authorities read *you* *z* Gk *brothers* *a* Other ancient authorities add *Amen*

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**13.1–17: Concluding admonitions.** **2:** *Strangers,* Christian sisters and brothers from other places (see Rom 16.1–2 n.; 1 Pet 4.9 n.). *Angels,* Gen 18.1–8; 19.1–3. **3:** Mt 25.35–46. **5:** Josh 1.5. **6:** Ps 118.6. **9:** *Food,* 9.10. **11:** Lev 16.27. **12:** *City gate,* of Jerusalem. *Sanctify,* see 10.10 n. **14:** *The city that is to come,* i.e. the new Jerusalem; see 11.10 n.; 12.22 n. **15:** *A sacrifice* of thanksgiving (Lev 7.12; Ps 50.14, 23; Hos 14.2). **17:** *Leaders,* v. 7.

**13.18–25: Personal messages** (vv. 18–19), **benediction** (vv. 20–21), **and postscript** (vv. 22–25). **22:** *Briefly,* considering the extent of the subject.

# *The Letter of James*

Although it begins with an epistolatory greeting (1.1), James lacks other formal characteristics of a letter. The central section (2.1–3.12) contains three diatribe-style discussions (2.1–13, on partiality; 2.14–26, on faith and works; 3.1–12, on speech). This central section can also be seen as describing relationships within a community that is to embody the love-command. Smaller sections of wisdom sayings linked by catchword, and even single proverbs, surround the central section. James concludes with admonitions addressed to the community. The members are to await the coming of the Lord with patience (5.7–11), not to swear oaths (5.12; compare Mt 5.34–37), but to pray together (5.13). Elders of the community are to pray over the sick and to anoint them, for such prayer brings healing and forgiveness of sin (5.14–15). Sins within the community are to be dealt with by mutual confession, exhortation, and pastoral efforts to recall the sinner (5.16–19). Although Jesus is mentioned only twice (1.1; 2.1) and much of the exhortation can be paralleled in Jewish wisdom traditions, such directives in the conclusion of the letter suggest that James addresses a structured Christian community.

Like other wisdom materials, James speaks of tensions between rich and poor. The common social practice of favoring the wealthy and pushing aside the poor must be rejected (2.1–5). Christians have experienced some form of abuse by wealthy non-Christians (2.6–7). Wealthy merchants are warned against confidence that the future is assured (4.13–17). Those who gained their wealth by withholding just wages from workers will be condemned (5.1–6). Many of the sayings in James seem to echo sayings of Jesus in the synoptic tradition, though without directly invoking Jesus' authority. The mention, however, of "James" in the greeting (1.1) may place this teaching under the authority of James, the brother of the Lord (Gal 1.19; see Acts 12.17; 1 Cor 15.7; Gal 2.9).

The figure of James emerges in another early Christian context, which seems to be echoed in the letter, namely the dispute over "faith and works" (Jas 2.14–26; contrast Gal 2.1–14). James is not defending salvation through Christ against the Pauline understanding of "works" as the efforts of non-Jewish Christians to conform to Jewish rites of circumcision, kosher food laws, and religious feasts. Paul would certainly agree that Christian life should be expressed by deeds of charity (see Gal 5.6, "faith working through love"). Both Paul and James hold that love of one's neighbor fulfills the law (2.8; Gal 5.14). James appears to be opposed to a distorted and sloganizing Paulinism, which influenced Christians to neglect their obligations to aid their poverty-stricken and suffering brothers and sisters (2.15–17).

Although this elegantly composed treatise does not appear to have come from the James whom Paul met in Jerusalem, the author may have deliberately put this Christian wisdom-sermon under the patronage of that revered figure. Not only can James reformulate the wisdom teaching of Jesus, but James also has the authority to counter the false slogans about "faith and works" attributed to Paul.

1 James, a servant[a] of God and of the Lord Jesus Christ,
To the twelve tribes in the Dispersion:
Greetings.

2 My brothers and sisters,[b] whenever you face trials of any kind, consider it nothing but joy, 3because you know that the testing of your faith produces endurance; 4and let endurance have its full effect, so that you may be mature and complete, lacking in nothing.

5 If any of you is lacking in wisdom, ask God, who gives to all generously and ungrudgingly, and it will be given you. 6But ask in faith, never doubting, for the one who doubts is like a wave of the sea, driven and tossed by the wind; 7, 8for the doubter, being double-minded and unstable in every way, must not expect to receive anything from the Lord.

9 Let the believer[c] who is lowly boast in being raised up, 10and the rich in being brought low, because the rich will disappear like a flower in the field. 11For the sun rises with its scorching heat and withers the field; its flower falls, and its beauty perishes. It is the same way with the rich; in the midst of a busy life, they will wither away.

12 Blessed is anyone who endures temptation. Such a one has stood the test and will receive the crown of life that the Lord[d] has promised to those who love him. 13No one, when tempted, should say, "I am being tempted by God"; for God cannot be tempted by evil and he himself tempts no one. 14But one is tempted by one's own desire, being lured and enticed by it; 15then, when that desire has conceived, it gives birth to sin, and that sin, when it is fully grown, gives birth to death. 16Do not be deceived, my beloved.[e]

17 Every generous act of giving, with every perfect gift, is from above, coming down from the Father of lights, with whom there is no variation or shadow due to change.[f] 18In fulfillment of his own purpose he gave us birth by the word of truth, so that we would become a kind of first fruits of his creatures.

19 You must understand this, my beloved:[e] let everyone be quick to listen, slow to speak, slow to anger; 20for your anger does not produce God's righteousness. 21Therefore rid yourselves of all sordidness and rank growth of wickedness, and welcome with meekness the implanted word that has the power to save your souls.

22 But be doers of the word, and not merely hearers who deceive themselves. 23For if any are hearers of the word and not doers, they are like those who look at themselves[g] in a mirror; 24for they look at themselves and, on going away, immediately forget what they were like. 25But those who look into the perfect law, the law of liberty, and persevere, being not hearers who forget but doers

*a* Gk *slave* *b* Gk *brothers* *c* Gk *brother*
*d* Gk *he*; other ancient authorities read *God*
*e* Gk *my beloved brothers* *f* Other ancient authorities read *variation due to a shadow of turning*
*g* Gk *at the face of his birth*

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**1.1**: **Salutation. 1**: *Dispersion* describes Jews scattered outside Palestine (see Jn 7.35). Its metaphorical use here testifies to the church's sense of being aliens in this world as well as the heir of Israel (Gal 4.21–31; Phil 3.20; 1 Pet 1.1).

**1.2–18**: **The blessings of trials.** Trials are a ground for rejoicing. **5**: *Wisdom,* see 3.13 n. **6**: *The sea,* Isa 57.20; Jer 49.23. **7–8**: *The doubter's* entire conduct reflects inconstancy of purpose (Mt 6.24). **10–11**: Isa 40.6–7.

**1.12**: *The crown of life,* see 2 Tim 4.8 n. **13**: Temptation is not from God, but from human passions. **17**: *Father of lights,* creator of the heavenly bodies (Gen 1.14–18; Ps 136.7). **18**: The *first fruits* of harvest were frequently offered to God (Lev 23.10; Num 15.21; Deut 18.4).

**1.19–27**: **True worship. 19–20**: *Anger,* see Eph 4.26 n. **21**: *Rid yourselves,* strip off as dirty clothing. *The implanted word,* the gospel which has been received and is now growing. James uses a variety of expressions for the gospel: perfect law (v. 25), law of liberty (v. 25; 2.12), royal law (2.8). **22**: *Be doers . . ., not merely hearers,* Mt 7.24–27; Rom 2.13. **25**: *The perfect law,* the Jewish description of the Mosaic law, is here applied to the gospel, the "law" (1.27; 2.1–13) through which a believer obtains freedom. *Blessed,* Ps 1.1; Mt

who act—they will be blessed in their doing.

26 If any think they are religious, and do not bridle their tongues but deceive their hearts, their religion is worthless. 27 Religion that is pure and undefiled before God, the Father, is this: to care for orphans and widows in their distress, and to keep oneself unstained by the world.

2 My brothers and sisters,[h] do you with your acts of favoritism really believe in our glorious Lord Jesus Christ?[i] 2 For if a person with gold rings and in fine clothes comes into your assembly, and if a poor person in dirty clothes also comes in, 3 and if you take notice of the one wearing the fine clothes and say, "Have a seat here, please," while to the one who is poor you say, "Stand there," or, "Sit at my feet,"[j] 4 have you not made distinctions among yourselves, and become judges with evil thoughts? 5 Listen, my beloved brothers and sisters.[k] Has not God chosen the poor in the world to be rich in faith and to be heirs of the kingdom that he has promised to those who love him? 6 But you have dishonored the poor. Is it not the rich who oppress you? Is it not they who drag you into court? 7 Is it not they who blaspheme the excellent name that was invoked over you?

8 You do well if you really fulfill the royal law according to the scripture, "You shall love your neighbor as yourself." 9 But if you show partiality, you commit sin and are convicted by the law as transgressors. 10 For whoever keeps the whole law but fails in one point has become accountable for all of it. 11 For the one who said, "You shall not commit adultery," also said, "You shall not murder." Now if you do not commit adultery but if you murder, you have become a transgressor of the law. 12 So speak and so act as those who are to be judged by the law of liberty. 13 For judgment will be without mercy to anyone who has shown no mercy; mercy triumphs over judgment.

14 What good is it, my brothers and sisters,[k] if you say you have faith but do not have works? Can faith save you? 15 If a brother or sister is naked and lacks daily food, 16 and one of you says to them, "Go in peace; keep warm and eat your fill," and yet you do not supply their bodily needs, what is the good of that? 17 So faith by itself, if it has no works, is dead.

18 But someone will say, "You have faith and I have works." Show me your faith apart from your works, and I by my works will show you my faith. 19 You believe that God is one; you do well. Even the demons believe—and shudder. 20 Do you want to be shown, you senseless person, that faith apart from works is barren? 21 Was not our ancestor Abraham justified by works when he offered his son Isaac on the altar? 22 You see that faith was active along with his works, and faith was brought to completion by the works. 23 Thus the scripture was fulfilled that says, "Abraham believed God, and it was reckoned to him as righteousness," and he was called the friend of God. 24 You see that a person is justified by works and not by faith alone. 25 Like-

*h* Gk *My brothers* *i* Or *hold the faith of our glorious Lord Jesus Christ without acts of favoritism*
*j* Gk *Sit under my footstool* *k* Gk *brothers*

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5.3–11. The word points to the happiness of the person who has God's favor. **26–27**: Religion consists of more than devotional exercises (Mt 25.35–36).

**2.1–13**: **The respect due to the poor.** **1**: God shows no partiality; the disciple must not. **2**: *Assembly*, literally "synagogue." **5**: Lk 6.20; 1 Cor 1.26–29. **7**: *The excellent name* is that of Christ (see 2 Thess 1.12 n.).

**2.8**: Lev 19.18. **10**: *The law* forms a unity; therefore violating any one part breaks the entire law. **11**: Ex 20.13–14; Deut 5.17–18. **13**: *No mercy*, Mt 6.14–15; 18.21–35.

**2.14–26**: **Faith and works.** See Introduction. **14**: Faith without works is counterfeit; such faith cannot save (Mt 25.31–46; Gal 5.6). **19**: Demons know the truth about God (Deut 6.4), but are not saved. **21**: Gen 22.1–14. **23**: Gen 15.6 (compare Rom 4.3–25; Gal 3.6–14). *The friend of God*, 2 Chr 20.7; Isa 41.8. **25**:

wise, was not Rahab the prostitute also justified by works when she welcomed the messengers and sent them out by another road? 26 For just as the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without works is also dead.

3 Not many of you should become teachers, my brothers and sisters,[l] for you know that we who teach will be judged with greater strictness. 2 For all of us make many mistakes. Anyone who makes no mistakes in speaking is perfect, able to keep the whole body in check with a bridle. 3 If we put bits into the mouths of horses to make them obey us, we guide their whole bodies. 4 Or look at ships: though they are so large that it takes strong winds to drive them, yet they are guided by a very small rudder wherever the will of the pilot directs. 5 So also the tongue is a small member, yet it boasts of great exploits.

How great a forest is set ablaze by a small fire! 6 And the tongue is a fire. The tongue is placed among our members as a world of iniquity; it stains the whole body, sets on fire the cycle of nature,[m] and is itself set on fire by hell.[n] 7 For every species of beast and bird, of reptile and sea creature, can be tamed and has been tamed by the human species, 8 but no one can tame the tongue—a restless evil, full of deadly poison. 9 With it we bless the Lord and Father, and with it we curse those who are made in the likeness of God. 10 From the same mouth come blessing and cursing. My brothers and sisters,[o] this ought not to be so. 11 Does a spring pour forth from the same opening both fresh and brackish water? 12 Can a fig tree, my brothers and sisters,[p] yield olives, or a grapevine figs? No more can salt water yield fresh.

13 Who is wise and understanding among you? Show by your good life that your works are done with gentleness born of wisdom. 14 But if you have bitter envy and selfish ambition in your hearts, do not be boastful and false to the truth. 15 Such wisdom does not come down from above, but is earthly, unspiritual, devilish. 16 For where there is envy and selfish ambition, there will also be disorder and wickedness of every kind. 17 But the wisdom from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, willing to yield, full of mercy and good fruits, without a trace of partiality or hypocrisy. 18 And a harvest of righteousness is sown in peace for[q] those who make peace.

4 Those conflicts and disputes among you, where do they come from? Do they not come from your cravings that are at war within you? 2 You want something and do not have it; so you commit murder. And you covet[r] something and cannot obtain it; so you engage in disputes and conflicts. You do not have, because you do not ask. 3 You ask and do not receive, because you ask wrongly, in order to spend what you get on your pleasures. 4 Adulterers! Do you not know that friendship with the world is enmity with God? Therefore whoever wishes to be a friend of the world be-

*l* Gk *brothers* *m* Or *wheel of birth* *n* Gk *Gehenna* *o* Gk *My brothers* *p* Gk *my brothers* *q* Or *by* *r* Or *you murder and you covet*

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*Rahab,* Josh 2.1–21. Abraham and Rahab represent two extremes: the friend of God and the prostitute; but both were justified by God. *Sent them out,* i.e. from Jericho. **26**: Where there are no works, faith is no more alive than a body without spirit.

**3.1–18**: **True wisdom.** Two besetting sins of the teacher are rebuked: intemperate speech (vv. 1–12) and arrogance (vv. 13–18). **5**: Sir 28.22. **12**: Mt 7.16.

**3.13**: True *wisdom* is not a human achievement, but is from God, and it reveals itself in a good life (v. 17). **14**: *Hearts,* see 1 Thess 3.13 n. **17**: Wisdom and godliness are intimately connected (Job 28.28; Sir 19.22–24). **18**: Isa 32.16–18; Mt 5.6, 9–10.

**4.1–5.6**: **The contrast between godliness and worldliness. 4.1**: *Cravings,* Rom 7.5–25; 1 Pet 2.11–12. **3**: Mt 7.7, 11. **4**: The prophets pictured the covenant as a marriage between God and Israel. Those who break covenant are *adulterers* (Isa 1.21; Jer 3.6–10; Hos 2.2). *Enmity with God,* Mt 6.24; Lk 16.13. **5**: For the quotation compare Ex 20.5; Deut

comes an enemy of God. [5]Or do you suppose that it is for nothing that the scripture says, "God[s] yearns jealously for the spirit that he has made to dwell in us"? [6]But he gives all the more grace; therefore it says,

"God opposes the proud,
but gives grace to the humble."

[7]Submit yourselves therefore to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you. [8]Draw near to God, and he will draw near to you. Cleanse your hands, you sinners, and purify your hearts, you double-minded. [9]Lament and mourn and weep. Let your laughter be turned into mourning and your joy into dejection. [10]Humble yourselves before the Lord, and he will exalt you.

11 Do not speak evil against one another, brothers and sisters.[t] Whoever speaks evil against another or judges another, speaks evil against the law and judges the law; but if you judge the law, you are not a doer of the law but a judge. [12]There is one lawgiver and judge who is able to save and to destroy. So who, then, are you to judge your neighbor?

13 Come now, you who say, "Today or tomorrow we will go to such and such a town and spend a year there, doing business and making money." [14]Yet you do not even know what tomorrow will bring. What is your life? For you are a mist that appears for a little while and then vanishes. [15]Instead you ought to say, "If the Lord wishes, we will live and do this or that." [16]As it is, you boast in your arrogance; all such boasting is evil. [17]Anyone, then, who knows the right thing to do and fails to do it, commits sin.

5 Come now, you rich people, weep and wail for the miseries that are coming to you. [2]Your riches have rotted, and your clothes are moth-eaten. [3]Your gold and silver have rusted, and their rust will be evidence against you, and it will eat your flesh like fire. You have laid up treasure[u] for the last days. [4]Listen! The wages of the laborers who mowed your fields, which you kept back by fraud, cry out, and the cries of the harvesters have reached the ears of the Lord of hosts. [5]You have lived on the earth in luxury and in pleasure; you have fattened your hearts in a day of slaughter. [6]You have condemned and murdered the righteous one, who does not resist you.

7 Be patient, therefore, beloved,[t] until the coming of the Lord. The farmer waits for the precious crop from the earth, being patient with it until it receives the early and the late rains. [8]You also must be patient. Strengthen your hearts, for the coming of the Lord is near.[v] [9]Beloved,[w] do not grumble against one another, so that you may not be judged. See, the Judge is standing at the doors! [10]As an example of suffering and patience, beloved,[t] take the prophets who spoke in the name of the Lord. [11]Indeed we call blessed those who showed endurance. You have heard of the endurance of Job, and you have seen the purpose of the Lord, how the Lord is compassionate and merciful.

12 Above all, my beloved,[t] do not swear, either by heaven or by earth or by any other oath, but let your "Yes" be yes

*s* Gk *He* *t* Gk *brothers* *u* Or *will eat your flesh, since you have stored up fire* *v* Or *is at hand* *w* Gk *Brothers*

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4.24; Zech 8.2. **6**: Prov 3.34 Septuagint; 1 Pet 5.5. **9**: Isa 32.11; Jer 4.13; Mic 2.4. **10**: Mt 23.12; 1 Pet 5.6. **12**: *One,* God.

**4.13–17**: The author rebukes the presumption of those who plan their future with complacency (Prov 27.1), forgetting that they live by the mercy of God. Human life is as evanescent as morning mist.

**5.1–6**: The rich are addressed as examples of the folly of accumulating riches (Lk 12.16–20).

**5.7–20**: **Concluding encouragement.** **7–9**: Three references to the coming of the Lord stand in contrast to the preceding passage; seeking riches is vain, but one who waits patiently for the Lord will be rewarded. **11**: Job 1.21–22; 2.10; Ps 111.4. **12**: Mt 5.34–37.

*The effects and power of prayer*

and your "No" be no, so that you may not fall under condemnation.

13 Are any among you suffering? They should pray. Are any cheerful? They should sing songs of praise. 14 Are any among you sick? They should call for the elders of the church and have them pray over them, anointing them with oil in the name of the Lord. 15 The prayer of faith will save the sick, and the Lord will raise them up; and anyone who has committed sins will be forgiven. 16 Therefore confess your sins to one another, and pray for one another, so that you may be healed. The prayer of the righteous is powerful and effective. 17 Elijah was a human being like us, and he prayed fervently that it might not rain, and for three years and six months it did not rain on the earth. 18 Then he prayed again, and the heaven gave rain and the earth yielded its harvest.

19 My brothers and sisters,[x] if anyone among you wanders from the truth and is brought back by another, 20 you should know that whoever brings back a sinner from wandering will save the sinner's[y] soul from death and will cover a multitude of sins.

*x* Gk *My brothers* *y* Gk *his*

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**5.13–15:** This passage is cited by those churches that make a practice of anointing the sick (formerly called the sacrament of extreme unction by the Roman Catholic Church). **14:** *Oil* was a common medicinal remedy (Isa 1.6; Mk 6.13; see Lk 10.34 n.). Here it is invested with special significance through connection with the divine name (see 2 Thess 1.12 n.). **17:** 1 Kings 17.1; 18.1; Lk 4.25. **19:** God's *truth* is that which leads to righteousness. It is a closing indication of the practical character of the letter. **20:** *Cover . . . sins,* see 1 Pet 4.8 n.

# *The First Letter of*
# *Peter*

The First Letter of Peter is a pastoral exhortation from an elder in Rome (5.1; "Babylon" [5.13] was a common code-name for Rome in Jewish and Christian apocalyptic; see Rev 17.5–6). It was written to those having oversight of churches in Asia Minor (1.1; 5.2–3). The opening greeting claims Peter as author (1.1), while the epistolatory conclusion refers to Silvanus (5.12; associated with Paul's mission in 1 Thess 1.1). Some scholars hold that Peter had Silvanus dispatch this exhortation before his own martyrdom in Rome (ca. A.D. 64). Others find such an early date improbable.

The sociological setting of the communities assumes that their members are Gentiles, resident aliens and household slaves in rural Asia Minor. Outsiders recognize the Christian "name" as offensive (4.14, 16), and Christians must expect to endure persecution as well as milder forms of social ostracism and "name-calling" as a result of that identification. Christianity is not struggling to define itself in relationship to Jewish traditions. The letter assumes that the church is the true heir of the covenant (2.4–10). Christians must show by their lives that they reject the religious and moral ethos of a pagan culture to which they no longer belong (4.1–6).

The most vulnerable Christians, slaves of abusive masters and wives of non-believing husbands, are told to suffer abuse, to accept the authority of their husbands, to do what is right, not to be afraid (2.18–3.6). Such behavior may convert the persecutor. If it does not, it follows the pattern of Christ's own suffering and will also be rewarded. This characterization hardly fits the Petrine mission of Galatians and Acts, but is characteristic of Asia Minor at the end of the first century.

In order to encourage Christians who are suffering because their faith has called them to break with the social fabric of their community, the author reminds them that though they are "aliens" in this world, they belong to a new commonwealth, which is God's own household (1.2–5). Just as God chose Jesus to be the cornerstone of the new temple (2.6–7), so Christians are a "new race" (2.9), living stones of the spiritual house of God (2.5). God is not indifferent to their suffering. Jesus trusted God while being persecuted, bearing humanity's sins so that believers can now live in holiness (2.22–24). Therefore Christians are to continue their lives of mutual love and service, confident that God's judgment is at hand (4.7–11). They should not be surprised when they are tested by persecution (4.12). The devil tries to use suffering to destroy faith (4.8–9). By reminding the readers of Jesus' suffering and the suffering of countless fellow Christians throughout the world, the author assures them that they are not isolated in the struggle.

First Peter follows the typical pattern of a Pauline letter: greeting (1.1–2); thanksgiving (1.3–9); body of the letter, consisting of theological reflection on Christian identity (1.10–2.10), followed by exhortation (2.11–5.11); closing (5.12–14).

1 Peter, an apostle of Jesus Christ.
To the exiles of the Dispersion in Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia, 2who have been chosen and destined by God the Father and sanctified by the Spirit to be obedient to Jesus Christ and to be sprinkled with his blood:

May grace and peace be yours in abundance.

3 Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! By his great mercy he has given us a new birth into a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, 4and into an inheritance that is imperishable, undefiled, and unfading, kept in heaven for you, 5who are being protected by the power of God through faith for a salvation ready to be revealed in the last time. 6In this you rejoice,[a] even if now for a little while you have had to suffer various trials, 7so that the genuineness of your faith—being more precious than gold that, though perishable, is tested by fire—may be found to result in praise and glory and honor when Jesus Christ is revealed. 8Although you have not seen[b] him, you love him; and even though you do not see him now, you believe in him and rejoice with an indescribable and glorious joy, 9for you are receiving the outcome of your faith, the salvation of your souls.

10 Concerning this salvation, the prophets who prophesied of the grace that was to be yours made careful search and inquiry, 11inquiring about the person or time that the Spirit of Christ within them indicated when it testified in advance to the sufferings destined for Christ and the subsequent glory. 12It was revealed to them that they were serving not themselves but you, in regard to the things that have now been announced to you through those who brought you good news by the Holy Spirit sent from heaven—things into which angels long to look!

13 Therefore prepare your minds for action;[c] discipline yourselves; set all your hope on the grace that Jesus Christ will bring you when he is revealed. 14Like obedient children, do not be conformed to the desires that you formerly had in ignorance. 15Instead, as he who called you is holy, be holy yourselves in all your conduct; 16for it is written, "You shall be holy, for I am holy."

17 If you invoke as Father the one who judges all people impartially according to their deeds, live in reverent fear during the time of your exile. 18You know that you were ransomed from the futile ways inherited from your ancestors, not with perishable things like silver or gold, 19but with the precious blood of Christ, like that of a lamb without defect or blemish. 20He was destined

*a* Or *Rejoice in this* *b* Other ancient authorities read *known* *c* Gk *gird up the loins of your mind*

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**1.1–2: Salutation,** see Rom 1.1–7 n. **1:** *Exiles of the Dispersion,* see Jas 1.1 n. **2:** The transcendent origin of redemption, involving *God the Father,* the *Spirit,* and *Jesus Christ. Chosen and destined,* see Eph 1.4–10 n.; 1 Thess 1.4 n. *To be obedient to Jesus Christ* is the goal to which God's election and sanctification point (1.14, 22). *Sprinkled with his blood,* forgiveness is based on Christ's sacrificial death (see Mt 26.28 n.; Heb 9.11–10.18 n.). *Grace and peace,* see 2 Thess 1.2 n.

**1.3–12: Rejoice in salvation.** *Living hope,* not forlorn or dead. *The resurrection of Jesus Christ* is the foundation of Christian hope, for in him God has shown what he intends to do for the faithful (1 Cor 15.20–28). **4:** *Inheritance* expresses the forward-looking character of the Christian life; the greater part of the riches is yet to come. **5:** *Faith* puts one in God's keeping. *Salvation* is *ready to be revealed;* it is accomplished, but not fully manifest. **6:** God permits believers to suffer as proof of the quality of their faith (Ps 26.2; Jas 1.2–3). **10–12:** The prophets, and even angels, sought to understand what God was doing for the redemption of the faithful.

**1.13–2.10: An appeal for holiness.**

**1.13:** *When he is revealed,* at the second coming. **14:** *Formerly had in ignorance,* Acts 17.30; Eph 4.17–18. **16:** Lev 11.44–45. **20:** Redemption through Christ was not a sudden whim of God, but was planned *before the foundation of the world* (Col 1.26).

before the foundation of the world, but was revealed at the end of the ages for your sake. 21Through him you have come to trust in God, who raised him from the dead and gave him glory, so that your faith and hope are set on God.

22 Now that you have purified your souls by your obedience to the truth[d] so that you have genuine mutual love, love one another deeply[e] from the heart.[f] 23You have been born anew, not of perishable but of imperishable seed, through the living and enduring word of God.[g] 24For

"All flesh is like grass
and all its glory like the flower of grass.
The grass withers,
and the flower falls,
25 but the word of the Lord endures forever."

That word is the good news that was announced to you.

2 Rid yourselves, therefore, of all malice, and all guile, insincerity, envy, and all slander. 2Like newborn infants, long for the pure, spiritual milk, so that by it you may grow into salvation— 3if indeed you have tasted that the Lord is good.

4 Come to him, a living stone, though rejected by mortals yet chosen and precious in God's sight, and 5like living stones, let yourselves be built[h] into a spiritual house, to be a holy priesthood, to offer spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ. 6For it stands in scripture:

"See, I am laying in Zion a stone,
a cornerstone chosen and precious;
and whoever believes in him[i] will not be put to shame."

7To you then who believe, he is precious; but for those who do not believe,

"The stone that the builders rejected
has become the very head of the corner,"

8and

"A stone that makes them stumble,
and a rock that makes them fall."

They stumble because they disobey the word, as they were destined to do.

9 But you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, God's own people,[j] in order that you may proclaim the mighty acts of him who called you out of darkness into his marvelous light.

10 Once you were not a people,
but now you are God's people;
once you had not received mercy,
but now you have received mercy.

11 Beloved, I urge you as aliens and exiles to abstain from the desires of the flesh that wage war against the soul. 12Conduct yourselves honorably among the Gentiles, so that, though they malign you as evildoers, they may see your hon-

*d* Other ancient authorities add *through the Spirit* *e* Or *constantly* *f* Other ancient authorities read *a pure heart* *g* Or *through the word of the living and enduring God* *h* Or *you yourselves are being built* *i* Or *it* *j* Gk *a people for his possession*

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**1.23–25**: The Christian has been *born anew* by the creative *word of God*. Humans are frail, but the word that works in them *endures forever* (Isa 40.6–9).

**2.2**: *Pure, spiritual milk,* unadulterated nourishment supplied by the gospel (1 Thess 2.7–8). **3**: Ps 34.8. **4**: Ps 118.22; Isa 28.16; Mt 21.42. **5–8**: The images are mixed: a spiritual house being built of living stones, then a holy priesthood offering spiritual sacrifices. Christ is the rock of destiny: to those who believe, he is *chosen and precious*; to those who reject him, he is *a rock that makes them fall*. **6**: Isa 28.16. **7**: Ps 118.22. **8**: Isa 8.14–15. **9–10**: As Gentiles they were *not a people* (Hos 2.23); now they are *God's own people,* chosen, holy, *a royal priesthood* (Ex 19.6). *Into his marvelous light,* in which God dwells (Isa 57.15; 1 Tim 6.16).

**2.11–4.11**: **The obligation of Christians.**

**2.11**: *That wage war;* Rom 7.23. **12**: *Malign you,* Christians were accused of committing immoralities during their secret meetings. *He comes to judge,* when God makes the innocence

orable deeds and glorify God when he comes to judge.[k]

13 For the Lord's sake accept the authority of every human institution,[l] whether of the emperor as supreme, 14 or of governors, as sent by him to punish those who do wrong and to praise those who do right. 15 For it is God's will that by doing right you should silence the ignorance of the foolish. 16 As servants[m] of God, live as free people, yet do not use your freedom as a pretext for evil. 17 Honor everyone. Love the family of believers.[n] Fear God. Honor the emperor.

18 Slaves, accept the authority of your masters with all deference, not only those who are kind and gentle but also those who are harsh. 19 For it is a credit to you if, being aware of God, you endure pain while suffering unjustly. 20 If you endure when you are beaten for doing wrong, what credit is that? But if you endure when you do right and suffer for it, you have God's approval. 21 For to this you have been called, because Christ also suffered for you, leaving you an example, so that you should follow in his steps.

22 "He committed no sin,
and no deceit was found in
his mouth."

23 When he was abused, he did not return abuse; when he suffered, he did not threaten; but he entrusted himself to the one who judges justly. 24 He himself bore our sins in his body on the cross,[o] so that, free from sins, we might live for righteousness; by his wounds[p] you have been healed. 25 For you were going astray like sheep, but now you have returned to the shepherd and guardian of your souls.

3 Wives, in the same way, accept the authority of your husbands, so that, even if some of them do not obey the word, they may be won over without a word by their wives' conduct, 2 when they see the purity and reverence of your lives. 3 Do not adorn yourselves outwardly by braiding your hair, and by wearing gold ornaments or fine clothing; 4 rather, let your adornment be the inner self with the lasting beauty of a gentle and quiet spirit, which is very precious in God's sight. 5 It was in this way long ago that the holy women who hoped in God used to adorn themselves by accepting the authority of their husbands. 6 Thus Sarah obeyed Abraham and called him lord. You have become her daughters as long as you do what is good and never let fears alarm you.

7 Husbands, in the same way, show consideration for your wives in your life together, paying honor to the woman as the weaker sex,[q] since they too are also heirs of the gracious gift of life—so that nothing may hinder your prayers.

8 Finally, all of you, have unity of spirit, sympathy, love for one another, a tender heart, and a humble mind. 9 Do not repay evil for evil or abuse for abuse; but, on the contrary, repay with a blessing. It is for this that you were called—that you might inherit a blessing. 10 For

"Those who desire life
and desire to see good days,
let them keep their tongues
from evil

*k* Gk *God on the day of visitation* *l* Or *every institution ordained for human beings*
*m* Gk *slaves* *n* Gk *Love the brotherhood*
*o* Or *carried up our sins in his body to the tree*
*p* Gk *bruise* *q* Gk *vessel*

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of the suffering faithful known. **13–17**: Respect for civil authority (Rom 13.1–7). **14**: *Governors,* of Roman provinces. **16**: Live as *servants of God,* only so can you *live as free people.* **17**: *Fear God. Honor the emperor,* Prov 24.21; Mt 22.21; Rom 13.7.

**2.18–25**: Obedience to masters. The Christian slave must have respect even for harsh and unjust masters (Col 3.22–25; Eph 6.5–8). **21–25**: The example of Christ is set forth in language that echoes Isa 53.5–12. **25**: *Shepherd and guardian,* synonymous terms, referring to Christ (5.4; Jn 10.11, 14; Heb 13.20).

**3.1–7**: Wives and husbands (Col 3.18). **1**: An unbelieving husband *may be won* (converted) by example (1 Cor 7.13–16) without argument. **4**: *Inner self,* Eph 3.16. **6**: Gen 18.12. **7**: 1 Thess 4.4.

**3.8–12**: Love for one another. **9**: Rom 12.17; 1 Thess 5.15. **10**: Ps 34.12–16. **13–17**: Patience in persecution (Mt 5.10–11). Be

and their lips from speaking deceit;
11 let them turn away from evil and do good;
let them seek peace and pursue it.
12 For the eyes of the Lord are on the righteous,
and his ears are open to their prayer.
But the face of the Lord is against those who do evil."

13 Now who will harm you if you are eager to do what is good? 14But even if you do suffer for doing what is right, you are blessed. Do not fear what they fear,[r] and do not be intimidated, 15but in your hearts sanctify Christ as Lord. Always be ready to make your defense to anyone who demands from you an accounting for the hope that is in you; 16yet do it with gentleness and reverence.[s] Keep your conscience clear, so that, when you are maligned, those who abuse you for your good conduct in Christ may be put to shame. 17For it is better to suffer for doing good, if suffering should be God's will, than to suffer for doing evil. 18For Christ also suffered[t] for sins once for all, the righteous for the unrighteous, in order to bring you[u] to God. He was put to death in the flesh, but made alive in the spirit, 19in which also he went and made a proclamation to the spirits in prison, 20who in former times did not obey, when God waited patiently in the days of Noah, during the building of the ark, in which a few, that is, eight persons, were saved through water. 21And baptism, which this prefigured, now saves you—not as a removal of dirt from the body, but as an appeal to God for[v] a good conscience, through the resurrection of Jesus Christ, 22who has gone into heaven and is at the right hand of God, with angels, authorities, and powers made subject to him.

4 Since therefore Christ suffered in the flesh,[w] arm yourselves also with the same intention (for whoever has suffered in the flesh has finished with sin), 2so as to live for the rest of your earthly life[x] no longer by human desires but by the will of God. 3You have already spent enough time in doing what the Gentiles like to do, living in licentiousness, passions, drunkenness, revels, carousing, and lawless idolatry. 4They are surprised that you no longer join them in the same excesses of dissipation, and so they blaspheme.[y] 5But they will have to give an accounting to him who stands ready to judge the living and the dead. 6For this is the reason the gospel was proclaimed even to the dead, so that, though they had been judged in the flesh as everyone is judged, they might live in the spirit as God does.

7 The end of all things is near;[z] therefore be serious and discipline yourselves for the sake of your prayers. 8Above all, maintain constant love for one another, for love covers a multitude of sins. 9Be hospitable to one another without com-

*r* Gk *their fear* *s* Or *respect* *t* Other ancient authorities read *died* *u* Other ancient authorities read *us* *v* Or *a pledge to God from* *w* Other ancient authorities add *for us*; others, *for you* *x* Gk *rest of the time in the flesh* *y* Or *they malign you* *z* Or *is at hand*

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ready to defend your hope as a Christian, but do so with gentleness and reverence (1 Cor 4.12–13).

**3.18–22**: The example of Christ (compare 2.21–25). **18**: *Put to death in the flesh* asserts that he really died. *Made alive in the spirit,* death did not hold him; he rose to new life (1 Cor 15.35–50). **19–20**: This difficult passage may mean that Christ announced his completed work in the realm of the dead to those who in Noah's day had been disobedient (compare 4.6). **21**: Mention of the flood (Gen chs 6–8) leads to a comparison with baptism: then water destroyed; now in baptism it saves. **22**: *At the right hand of God,* the place of honor (Ps 110.1). *Authorities and powers,* angelic beings (see Col 1.16 n.).

**4.1–6**: Spiritual liberation through suffering. **1**: *Since therefore,* refers back to 3.18. **4**: *No longer join,* as you once did. **6**: *Proclaimed . . . to the dead,* see 3.19–20 n. **7–11**: Since the end is near, be sober stewards of God's diverse gifts (1 Cor 12.14–26). **8**: *Love covers . . . sins,* Prov 10.12; Lk 7.47; 1 Cor 13.7. **9**: *Be hospitable,* provide lodging for Christian travelers (see Heb 13.2 n.; 3 Jn 5–8 n.).

plaining. 10 Like good stewards of the manifold grace of God, serve one another with whatever gift each of you has received. 11 Whoever speaks must do so as one speaking the very words of God; whoever serves must do so with the strength that God supplies, so that God may be glorified in all things through Jesus Christ. To him belong the glory and the power forever and ever. Amen.

12 Beloved, do not be surprised at the fiery ordeal that is taking place among you to test you, as though something strange were happening to you. 13 But rejoice insofar as you are sharing Christ's sufferings, so that you may also be glad and shout for joy when his glory is revealed. 14 If you are reviled for the name of Christ, you are blessed, because the spirit of glory,[a] which is the Spirit of God, is resting on you.[b] 15 But let none of you suffer as a murderer, a thief, a criminal, or even as a mischief maker. 16 Yet if any of you suffers as a Christian, do not consider it a disgrace, but glorify God because you bear this name. 17 For the time has come for judgment to begin with the household of God; if it begins with us, what will be the end for those who do not obey the gospel of God? 18 And

"If it is hard for the righteous
to be saved,
what will become of the
ungodly and the sinners?"

19 Therefore, let those suffering in accordance with God's will entrust themselves to a faithful Creator, while continuing to do good.

*Good stewards of God's grace*

5 Now as an elder myself and a witness of the sufferings of Christ, as well as one who shares in the glory to be revealed, I exhort the elders among you 2 to tend the flock of God that is in your charge, exercising the oversight,[c] not under compulsion but willingly, as God would have you do it[d]—not for sordid gain but eagerly. 3 Do not lord it over those in your charge, but be examples to the flock. 4 And when the chief shepherd appears, you will win the crown of glory that never fades away. 5 In the same way, you who are younger must accept the authority of the elders.[e] And all of you must clothe yourselves with humility in your dealings with one another, for

"God opposes the proud,
but gives grace to the humble."

6 Humble yourselves therefore under the mighty hand of God, so that he may exalt you in due time. 7 Cast all your anxiety on him, because he cares for you. 8 Discipline yourselves, keep alert.[f] Like a roaring lion your adversary the devil prowls around, looking for someone to devour. 9 Resist him, steadfast in your faith, for you know that your brothers and sisters[g] in all the world are undergoing the same kinds of suffering. 10 And after you have suffered for a little while, the God of all grace, who has called you to his eternal glory in Christ, will himself restore, support, strengthen, and estab-

*a* Other ancient authorities add *and of power*
*b* Other ancient authorities add *On their part he is blasphemed, but on your part he is glorified*
*c* Other ancient authorities lack *exercising the oversight*
*d* Other ancient authorities lack *as God would have you do it*
*e* Or *of those who are older*
*f* Or *be vigilant*
*g* Gk *your brotherhood*

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**4.12–19: Recapitulation** of previous exhortations. **12:** *Fiery ordeal,* persecutions (1.6–7). **13:** Rom 8.17; 2 Tim 2.12. **14:** 2.20; Isa 11.2. **16:** Phil 1.20. *Christian,* see Acts 11.26 n. **18:** Prov 11.31 Septuagint. **19:** 2.20.

**5.1–14: Concluding exhortations and greetings. 1:** *Elders,* church officials (Acts 14.23; 20.17–38; Jas 5.14). **3:** *Not . . . over,* Mk 10.42. **4:** *The chief shepherd,* Christ (see 2.25 n.). **5:** *Clothe yourselves,* humility is not natural to anyone; it must be put on like the menial's apron. The quotation is from Prov 3.34. **7:** Ps 55.22. **8:** *Roaring,* the rage of hunger. **9:** *Resist,* the devil (compare Eph 6.11–18). **10:** God has *called;* he will also *strengthen.* **12:** *Silvanus,* probably identical with Silas (Acts 15.22, 40; 16.19; 17.4). **13:** *Babylon,* a cryptic designation of Rome (see Rev 17.1 n.). *My son,* in a spiritual sense (see Philem 10 n.). *Mark,* see Acts 12.12 n.; Col 4.10; Philem 24. **14:** *Kiss,* see Rom 16.16 n.

lish you. [11]To him be the power forever and ever. Amen.

12 Through Silvanus, whom I consider a faithful brother, I have written this short letter to encourage you and to testify that this is the true grace of God. Stand fast in it. [13]Your sister church[h] in Babylon, chosen together with you, sends you greetings; and so does my son Mark. [14]Greet one another with a kiss of love.

Peace to all of you who are in Christ.[i]

*h* Gk *She who is* *i* Other ancient authorities add *Amen*

# *The Second Letter of*
# *Peter*

The Second Letter of Peter presents itself as the work of Simeon Peter (1.1; Simeon is Semitic orthography; see Acts 15.14 n.), whose death was predicted by Jesus (1.14). The author has witnessed the transfiguration, which is evidence that Jesus' promise to return in glory is no mere fable, as some allege (1.16). At the same time, identification with Peter, or even a disciple of Peter (like the author of 1 Peter), appears unlikely. Although the author claims to have written a previous letter (3.1), 2 Peter does not reflect the social setting of 1 Peter or its imagery for the new covenant community. Despite the author's claim to fellowship with Paul (3.15), the reference to misinterpretation of Paul's letters suggests that they have already been collected and are treated as "scriptures" in some churches (3.16)—clearly not the case during the lifetime of the apostles.

The author refers to "your apostles" as those who have transmitted the teaching of the prophets and the Lord, which the readers must take care to remember correctly (3.2). The reference to the transfiguration in 1.17–18 assumes an audience familiar with some form of the synoptic gospel tradition. In addition, 2 Peter has apparently incorporated sections of Jude (compare 2.1–8 with Jude 4–16), and uses the Stoic philosophical concept of the return of all things to fire at the end of the world (3.10). Thus, 2 Peter appears to have been composed late in the first century or early in the second century A.D. In this view, it is intended to meet the challenge of persons who are distorting the true apostolic tradition by denying that the world will be brought to an end by divine judgment (2.1–3; 3.3–4).

It should be borne in mind that in antiquity pseudonymous authorship was a widely accepted literary convention. Therefore the use of an apostle's name in reasserting his teaching was not regarded as dishonest but was merely a way of reminding the church of what it had received from God through that apostle.

From 1.12–14 it appears that the letter is cast as the "last testament" of the apostle. Like other testaments, the author seeks to preserve a legacy of correct teaching (1.15) against the turmoil created by false teachers in coming generations (3.3–4). These teachers are already active in the church. Since denunciations of the moral character of opponents were common in ancient polemic, the author's descriptions of the heretics' moral turpitude (2.2–14) should not be taken as evidence for their teaching. It does provide an opportunity to warn that divine judgment, which requires a high standard of ethical conduct (1.3–11; 2.11–21), will condemn such persons. The point of contention is clearly belief in the coming of judgment itself (3.10–12). The opposition may have argued that the failure of Christ to return (3.4), as well as the philosophical doctrine of the eternity of the world, disproves traditional belief in the parousia.

Second Peter embodies a sustained refutation of all such claims, drawing upon evidence of divine judgment in the Hebrew Scriptures, the testimony of the prophets, the transfiguration of Jesus witnessed by Peter himself, and even Paul's own writings. The author also advances logical arguments against their view; these arguments seek to show that the doctrine of the parousia is no myth or fable. Stoic cosmology taught that the universe would return to the fiery matter from which it emerged. As for the alleged delay of the parousia, the opponents fail to recognize that God's time is different from that of humans (3.8). Furthermore, God delays the judgment out of patience so that people may have opportunity to repent (3.9).

1 Simeon[a] Peter, a servant[b] and apostle of Jesus Christ,

To those who have received a faith as precious as ours through the righteousness of our God and Savior Jesus Christ:[c]

2 May grace and peace be yours in abundance in the knowledge of God and of Jesus our Lord.

3 His divine power has given us everything needed for life and godliness, through the knowledge of him who called us by[d] his own glory and goodness. 4Thus he has given us, through these things, his precious and very great promises, so that through them you may escape from the corruption that is in the world because of lust, and may become participants of the divine nature. 5For this very reason, you must make every effort to support your faith with goodness, and goodness with knowledge, 6and knowledge with self-control, and self-control with endurance, and endurance with godliness, 7and godliness with mutual[e] affection, and mutual[e] affection with love. 8For if these things are yours and are increasing among you, they keep you from being ineffective and unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. 9For anyone who lacks these things is nearsighted and blind, and is forgetful of the cleansing of past sins. 10Therefore, brothers and sisters,[f] be all the more eager to confirm your call and election, for if you do this, you will never stumble. 11For in this way, entry into the eternal kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ will be richly provided for you.

12 Therefore I intend to keep on reminding you of these things, though you know them already and are established in the truth that has come to you. 13I think it right, as long as I am in this body,[g] to refresh your memory, 14since I know that my death[h] will come soon, as indeed our Lord Jesus Christ has made clear to me. 15And I will make every effort so that after my departure you may be able at any time to recall these things.

16 For we did not follow cleverly devised myths when we made known to you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but we had been eyewitnesses of his majesty. 17For he received honor and glory from God the Father when that voice was conveyed to him by the Majestic Glory, saying, "This is my Son, my Beloved,[i] with whom I am well pleased." 18We ourselves heard this voice come from heaven, while we were with him on the holy mountain.

19 So we have the prophetic message more fully confirmed. You will do well to be attentive to this as to a lamp shining in a dark place, until the day dawns and the morning star rises in your hearts. 20First of all you must understand this, that no prophecy of scripture is a matter of one's own interpretation, 21because no prophecy ever came by human will, but men and women moved by the Holy Spirit spoke from God.[j]

*a* Other ancient authorities read *Simon*
*b* Gk *slave* *c* Or *of our God and the Savior Jesus Christ* *d* Other ancient authorities read *through* *e* Gk *brotherly* *f* Gk *brothers*
*g* Gk *tent* *h* Gk *the putting off of my tent*
*i* Other ancient authorities read *my beloved Son*
*j* Other ancient authorities read *but moved by the Holy Spirit saints of God spoke*

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**1.1–2: Salutation,** see Rom 1.1–7 n. **1:** *To those who have received,* i.e. Gentile converts who had not observed the Mosaic law. *God and Savior,* see Titus 2.13. **2:** *Knowledge* is one of the author's favorite words (1.3, 5, 6, 8; 2.20; 3.18). *Grace and peace,* see 2 Thess 1.2 n.

**1.3–21: Exhortation to holiness.** Salvation is the result of God's goodness. One must hold firmly *his precious and very great promises,* and thus escape the corruption of the world. **5–7:** *Faith* should lead to Christian virtues (Rom 5.2–5; 1 Cor 13.13). **11:** *Kingdom,* Col 1.13.

**1.16:** Apostolic tradition is not a collection of *myths,* but is based upon the experience of *eyewitnesses.* **17–18:** The transfiguration confirms the tradition that Christ will return in glory (Mt 17.1–8; Mk 9.2–8; Lk 9.28–36). **19:** Prophecies also confirm the coming of the Lord. **20–21:** Since *prophecy* is inspired by the Spirit, its *interpretation* must be in accord with God's intention.

2 But false prophets also arose among the people, just as there will be false teachers among you, who will secretly bring in destructive opinions. They will even deny the Master who bought them—bringing swift destruction on themselves. 2Even so, many will follow their licentious ways, and because of these teachers[k] the way of truth will be maligned. 3And in their greed they will exploit you with deceptive words. Their condemnation, pronounced against them long ago, has not been idle, and their destruction is not asleep.

4 For if God did not spare the angels when they sinned, but cast them into hell[l] and committed them to chains[m] of deepest darkness to be kept until the judgment; 5and if he did not spare the ancient world, even though he saved Noah, a herald of righteousness, with seven others, when he brought a flood on a world of the ungodly; 6and if by turning the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah to ashes he condemned them to extinction[n] and made them an example of what is coming to the ungodly;[o] 7and if he rescued Lot, a righteous man greatly distressed by the licentiousness of the lawless 8(for that righteous man, living among them day after day, was tormented in his righteous soul by their lawless deeds that he saw and heard), 9then the Lord knows how to rescue the godly from trial, and to keep the unrighteous under punishment until the day of judgment 10—especially those who indulge their flesh in depraved lust, and who despise authority.

Bold and willful, they are not afraid to slander the glorious ones,[p] 11whereas angels, though greater in might and power, do not bring against them a slanderous judgment from the Lord.[q] 12These people, however, are like irrational animals, mere creatures of instinct, born to be caught and killed. They slander what they do not understand, and when those creatures are destroyed,[r] they also will be destroyed, 13suffering[s] the penalty for doing wrong. They count it a pleasure to revel in the daytime. They are blots and blemishes, reveling in their dissipation[t] while they feast with you. 14They have eyes full of adultery, insatiable for sin. They entice unsteady souls. They have hearts trained in greed. Accursed children! 15They have left the straight road and have gone astray, following the road of Balaam son of Bosor,[u] who loved the wages of doing wrong, 16but was rebuked for his own transgression; a speechless donkey spoke with a human voice and restrained the prophet's madness.

17 These are waterless springs and mists driven by a storm; for them the deepest darkness has been reserved. 18For they speak bombastic nonsense, and with licentious desires of the flesh they entice people who have just[v] escaped from those who live in error. 19They promise them freedom, but they themselves are slaves of corruption; for people are slaves to whatever masters them. 20For if, after they have escaped the defilements of the world through the

*k* Gk *because of them* *l* Gk *Tartaros*
*m* Other ancient authorities read *pits* *n* Other ancient authorities lack *to extinction* *o* Other ancient authorities read *an example to those who were to be ungodly* *p* Or *angels*; Gk *glories*
*q* Other ancient authorities read *before the Lord*; others lack the phrase *r* Gk *in their destruction*
*s* Other ancient authorities read *receiving*
*t* Other ancient authorities read *love-feasts*
*u* Other ancient authorities read *Beor*
*v* Other ancient authorities read *actually*

**2.1–22: Attack upon false teachers.** The language follows closely the Letter of Jude (vv. 4–16) in the denunciation of heretics. **1**: The future tense gives an atmosphere of prophecy; but in vv. 14–19 and 3.5 the present tense is used. False teachers are already present.

**2.4–10a**: God's past judgments indicate what is in store for these people. **5**: Gen 6.6–8; 8.18. **6**: Gen 19.24. **7**: Gen 19.16, 29.

**2.11–12**: See Jude 9–10 n. **13–16**: The opponents are no better than pagans (see Rom 1.18–32; 1 Cor 6.9–11; Eph 4.17–19; Col 3.5–10; 1 Pet 4.3–4). **15**: Num 22.5, 7. **16**: Num 22.21, 23, 28, 30–31. **19**: *Slaves,* Jn 8.34; Rom 6.6, 16. **20**: *The last state,* Mt 12.45; Lk 11.26. **21**: *The holy commandment . . . passed on to them,* 1 Tim 6.14; Jude 3. **22**: Prov 26.11.

knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, they are again entangled in them and overpowered, the last state has become worse for them than the first. 21For it would have been better for them never to have known the way of righteousness than, after knowing it, to turn back from the holy commandment that was passed on to them. 22It has happened to them according to the true proverb,

"The dog turns back to its own vomit,"

and,

"The sow is washed only to wallow in the mud."

3 This is now, beloved, the second letter I am writing to you; in them I am trying to arouse your sincere intention by reminding you 2that you should remember the words spoken in the past by the holy prophets, and the commandment of the Lord and Savior spoken through your apostles. 3First of all you must understand this, that in the last days scoffers will come, scoffing and indulging their own lusts 4and saying, "Where is the promise of his coming? For ever since our ancestors died,[w] all things continue as they were from the beginning of creation!" 5They deliberately ignore this fact, that by the word of God heavens existed long ago and an earth was formed out of water and by means of water, 6through which the world of that time was deluged with water and perished. 7But by the same word the present heavens and earth have been reserved for fire, being kept until the day of judgment and destruction of the godless.

8 But do not ignore this one fact, beloved, that with the Lord one day is like a thousand years, and a thousand years are like one day. 9The Lord is not slow about his promise, as some think of slowness, but is patient with you,[x] not wanting any to perish, but all to come to repentance. 10But the day of the Lord will come like a thief, and then the heavens will pass away with a loud noise, and the elements will be dissolved with fire, and the earth and everything that is done on it will be disclosed.[y]

11 Since all these things are to be dissolved in this way, what sort of persons ought you to be in leading lives of holiness and godliness, 12waiting for and hastening[z] the coming of the day of God, because of which the heavens will be set ablaze and dissolved, and the elements will melt with fire? 13But, in accordance with his promise, we wait for new heavens and a new earth, where righteousness is at home.

14 Therefore, beloved, while you are waiting for these things, strive to be found by him at peace, without spot or

*w* Gk *our fathers fell asleep* *x* Other ancient authorities read *on your account* *y* Other ancient authorities read *will be burned up* *z* Or *earnestly desiring*

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**3.1–18: The day of the Lord.** Scoffers ridicule the hope of Christ's second coming. Delay is no proof that he will not come, for God does not measure time as mortals do. The delay shows God's patience and desire that sinners should repent. Because the day of the Lord will come as promised, Christians should await it in holiness and godliness. **3:** The coming of scoffers is a sign of *the last days* (see 2 Tim 3.1 n.). **4:** *Ever since our ancestors died* expresses the viewpoint of a later generation. The scoffers apparently argued that the universe is immutable, and therefore there would be no end. **5:** God's *word* is not just chatter; it is creative, and by it the world was brought into being (Gen 1.6–10). **6–7:** So far from being immutable the world has already been destroyed once, by the deluge (2.5; Gen 7.11), and, so the author affirms, it will be destroyed again, by fire.

**3.8:** God's measure of time is cited from Ps 90.4. **10:** *Day of the Lord,* see Am 5.18–20 n.; Joel 2.28–32 n. *Like a thief,* Mt 24.43; Lk 12.39. **12:** In apocalyptic writings *fire* plays a prominent role in the destruction of the world. **13–14:** Freely quoted from Isa 65.17; 66.22. In Isaiah and Rev ch 21 the thought is not the destruction but the renewal and transformation of the universe. **14:** *By him,* i.e. Christ. **15–16:** The author knows several letters of Paul and equates them with *the other scriptures,* which confirm the tradition that Christians must lead blameless lives while awaiting Christ's coming.

blemish; [15]and regard the patience of our Lord as salvation. So also our beloved brother Paul wrote to you according to the wisdom given him, [16]speaking of this as he does in all his letters. There are some things in them hard to understand, which the ignorant and unstable twist to their own destruction, as they do the other scriptures. [17]You therefore, beloved, since you are forewarned, beware that you are not carried away with the error of the lawless and lose your own stability. [18]But grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. To him be the glory both now and to the day of eternity. Amen.[a]

*a* Other ancient authorities lack *Amen*

# *The First Letter of John*

Although traditionally called a letter, 1 John is a treatise or sermon from an unknown teacher in the Johannine tradition to those in the community ("my little children," 2.1; "beloved," 2.7). Two letters from the same author indicate that the writer is an elder (2 Jn 1; 3 Jn 1) with authority in other Johannine communities. Travelling emissaries from the elder apparently maintained contact with a number of communities in the region (3 Jn 10). Consequently, the claim that 1 John represents the tradition that has been passed on by the official witnesses ("we" in 1.1–4) is made in the context of a network of Johannine churches.

By the end of the second century A.D., 1 John was commonly thought to have been written by the author of the Fourth Gospel, and 2 and 3 John by another member of the Johannine circle (see Eusebius, *Hist.* III. 39.4 for the distinction between John, the disciple, and John, the elder). The three letters, however, reflect a common community setting that is quite different from that which is implied by the gospel. In the gospel the Johannine community is a minority that had been excluded from the Jewish synagogue and still faces hostility from persons with ties to the synagogue (Jn 9.22; 12.42–43; 16.1–4a). The point of conflict lay in the Johannine claim that Jesus is the preexistent, divine Son of God, the only revelation of the Father (Jn 5.18; 8.23–30, 38, 52–59). First John is not concerned with the relationship of Christian faith to Jewish traditions but with the proper testimony about Jesus embodied in the Christian tradition itself (1.1–4). Its emphasis falls upon the physical reality of Jesus' coming in the flesh (1.1–3; 4.2). The author does not oppose Jewish claims to interpret the tradition of Moses, as the gospel does, but opposes the teaching of former members of the Johannine fellowship who have broken away (2.19; 4.1; 2 Jn 7).

Both the author and these secessionist teachers clearly appeal to a common Johannine tradition. The elder knows that people could easily be misled by the false teachers. The Holy Spirit, which members of the community have received, will confirm that the writer's teaching reflects the true gospel (2.20, 27; 4.13). The dissident teachers apparently emphasize the divine Jesus of the Gospel and deny the significance of Jesus' human reality and death on the cross as sacrifice for sin (1.7; 2.2; 3.16; 4.10; 5.6). The author challenges their claims to sinlessness by insisting that sinlessness is a gift that Christians receive from God through Christ (2.1–2). Persons who have violated the fundamental commandment of the Johannine tradition, the mutual love among Christians (Jn 13.35; 15.12), are not sinless (2.3–9; 3.22–23; 4.21; 5.2–3). Their apostasy and false teaching is a deadly sin (idolatry), which separates them from the communal prayer for forgiveness (5.15–17, 21) and makes them agents of the demonic attack on the faithful, which apocalyptic traditions had prophesied for the end-time (2.18, 22; 3.4–5; 4.1–5).

Claims to perfectionism, denial of the significance of Jesus' coming in the flesh, rejection of the saving power of Jesus' death, and schismatic preaching among established Christian communities are all features of second-century gnostic teaching. Since 1 John does not provide evidence of the peculiar teaching of the secessionist opponents, one cannot identify them with any known gnostic group. The conflict may have arisen over the true meaning of the Johannine Gospel prior to the emergence of well-defined gnostic groups. As part of the Christian canon, 1 John rejects any gnosticizing interpretation of the Fourth Gospel.

1 We declare to you what was from the beginning, what we have heard, what we have seen with our eyes, what we have looked at and touched with our hands, concerning the word of life— 2this life was revealed, and we have seen it and testify to it, and declare to you the eternal life that was with the Father and was revealed to us— 3we declare to you what we have seen and heard so that you also may have fellowship with us; and truly our fellowship is with the Father and with his Son Jesus Christ. 4We are writing these things so that our[a] joy may be complete.

5 This is the message we have heard from him and proclaim to you, that God is light and in him there is no darkness at all. 6If we say that we have fellowship with him while we are walking in darkness, we lie and do not do what is true; 7but if we walk in the light as he himself is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus his Son cleanses us from all sin. 8If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. 9If we confess our sins, he who is faithful and just will forgive us our sins and cleanse us from all unrighteousness. 10If we say that we have not sinned, we make him a liar, and his word is not in us.

2 My little children, I am writing these things to you so that you may not sin. But if anyone does sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous; 2and he is the atoning sacrifice for our sins, and not for ours only but also for the sins of the whole world.

3 Now by this we may be sure that we know him, if we obey his commandments. 4Whoever says, "I have come to know him," but does not obey his commandments, is a liar, and in such a person the truth does not exist; 5but whoever obeys his word, truly in this person the love of God has reached perfection. By this we may be sure that we are in him: 6whoever says, "I abide in him," ought to walk just as he walked.

7 Beloved, I am writing you no new commandment, but an old commandment that you have had from the beginning; the old commandment is the word that you have heard. 8Yet I am writing you a new commandment that is true in him and in you, because[b] the darkness is passing away and the true light is already shining. 9Whoever says, "I am in the light," while hating a brother or sister,[c] is still in the darkness. 10Whoever loves a brother or sister[d] lives in the light, and in such a person[e] there is no cause for stumbling. 11But whoever hates another believer[f] is in the darkness, walks in the

*a* Other ancient authorities read *your*
*b* Or *that* *c* Gk *hating a brother* *d* Gk *loves a brother* *e* Or *in it* *f* Gk *hates a brother*

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**1.1–4: Introduction. 1–2:** *From the beginning,* compare Gen 1.1; Jn 1.1. *We,* teachers in the Johannine community who preserve its traditions. *The word of life,* namely Christ, the word and source of life (Jn 1.14; 11.25; 14.6). *Heard, seen, looked at, touched* refer to the evidence of the senses, refuting the claim that Christ was not really human. **3–4:** The purpose of writing is the attainment of *fellowship* (oneness with Christ) and Christian joy (Jn 15.11; 17.13).

**1.5–10: Right attitude toward sin. 5:** *God is light,* absolute holiness without taint of evil. **6:** *Walking in darkness,* habitual and intentional evil conduct (Jn 3.19; 1 Jn 2.11). **8–9:** Denial of *sin* (guilt, sinful nature) is self-deception; confession brings forgiveness. **10:** Denial of sin contradicts God's declaration that no one is sinless. The secessionists are liars (2.4, 22; 4.20; Ps 14.1–2; 53.1–3).

**2.1–6: Obedience. 1:** *That you may not sin* is the ultimate goal of Christian living (Rom 6.11). *Advocate,* one who pleads the cause of another (Jn 14.16f.). **2:** *Atoning sacrifice,* 4.10. **3–5:** Obedience to God's *commandments* tests whether we know God, and measures the perfection (completeness) of our *love of God* (Jn 14.15, 21, 23; 15.10). **6:** Jesus is the pattern of obedience.

**2.7–11: Love for one another. 8:** The *commandment* to love, though old, is never obsolete or antiquated, but ever *new,* being the law of the new age and overcoming the *darkness* of evil (1.5; Jn 13.34; 15.12). **9–11:** Hatred of a *brother or sister* (fellow Christian) is incompatible with Christ's *light* (see Jn 8.12; 11.9–10; 12.35–36).

darkness, and does not know the way to go, because the darkness has brought on blindness.

12 I am writing to you, little children,
because your sins are forgiven on account of his name.
13 I am writing to you, fathers,
because you know him who is from the beginning.
I am writing to you, young people,
because you have conquered the evil one.
14 I write to you, children,
because you know the Father.
I write to you, fathers,
because you know him who is from the beginning.
I write to you, young people,
because you are strong
and the word of God abides in you,
and you have overcome the evil one.

15 Do not love the world or the things in the world. The love of the Father is not in those who love the world; 16 for all that is in the world—the desire of the flesh, the desire of the eyes, the pride in riches—comes not from the Father but from the world. 17 And the world and its desire[g] are passing away, but those who do the will of God live forever.

18 Children, it is the last hour! As you have heard that antichrist is coming, so now many antichrists have come. From this we know that it is the last hour. 19 They went out from us, but they did not belong to us; for if they had belonged to us, they would have remained with us. But by going out they made it plain that none of them belongs to us. 20 But you have been anointed by the Holy One, and all of you have knowledge.[h] 21 I write to you, not because you do not know the truth, but because you know it, and you know that no lie comes from the truth. 22 Who is the liar but the one who denies that Jesus is the Christ?[i] This is the antichrist, the one who denies the Father and the Son. 23 No one who denies the Son has the Father; everyone who confesses the Son has the Father also. 24 Let what you heard from the beginning abide in you. If what you heard from the beginning abides in you, then you will abide in the Son and in the Father. 25 And this is what he has promised us,[j] eternal life.

26 I write these things to you concerning those who would deceive you. 27 As for you, the anointing that you received from him abides in you, and so you do not need anyone to teach you. But as his anointing teaches you about all things, and is true and is not a lie, and just as it has taught you, abide in him.[k]

28 And now, little children, abide in him, so that when he is revealed we may have confidence and not be put to shame before him at his coming.

29 If you know that he is righteous, you may be sure that everyone who does

*g* Or *the desire for it* *h* Other ancient authorities read *you know all things* *i* Or *the Messiah* *j* Other ancient authorities read *you* *k* Or *it*

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**2.12–14: True relationship to God in Christ. 12:** *Little children,* the whole Christian group (2.1, 18, 28). **14:** *Fathers,* the aged. *Young people,* youth. The terms could refer to leaders and younger members of the community.

**2.15–17: True appraisal of the world. 15:** *The world,* all that is alienated from God (Jas 1.27). **16:** *Desire of the flesh,* unlawful physical gratification; *desire of the eyes,* sinful delights of mind or emotions; *pride in riches,* empty trust in possessions.

**2.18–29: Loyalty to the true faith. 18:** *Antichrist,* an expression coined by Johannine Christians meaning "opponent of Christ"; in this case, false teachers (4.3). **19:** They left the Christian fellowship because they were not really Christians. **20–21:** Christians have received the enlightening grace of the Holy Spirit, and therefore can discern *the truth* (v. 27; 1 Cor 2.15–16). **22–23:** The dissidents denied the human reality of Jesus (2 Jn 7). **27:** Jn 14.26. **28:** 4.17. **29:** 3.7–10; 4.7.

3 right has been born of him. [1]See what love the Father has given us, that we should be called children of God; and that is what we are. The reason the world does not know us is that it did not know him. [2]Beloved, we are God's children now; what we will be has not yet been revealed. What we do know is this: when he[l] is revealed, we will be like him, for we will see him as he is. [3]And all who have this hope in him purify themselves, just as he is pure.

4 Everyone who commits sin is guilty of lawlessness; sin is lawlessness. [5]You know that he was revealed to take away sins, and in him there is no sin. [6]No one who abides in him sins; no one who sins has either seen him or known him. [7]Little children, let no one deceive you. Everyone who does what is right is righteous, just as he is righteous. [8]Everyone who commits sin is a child of the devil; for the devil has been sinning from the beginning. The Son of God was revealed for this purpose, to destroy the works of the devil. [9]Those who have been born of God do not sin, because God's seed abides in them;[m] they cannot sin, because they have been born of God. [10]The children of God and the children of the devil are revealed in this way: all who do not do what is right are not from God, nor are those who do not love their brothers and sisters.[n]

11 For this is the message you have heard from the beginning, that we should love one another. [12]We must not be like Cain who was from the evil one and murdered his brother. And why did he murder him? Because his own deeds were evil and his brother's righteous. [13]Do not be astonished, brothers and sisters,[o] that the world hates you. [14]We know that we have passed from death to life because we love one another. Whoever does not love abides in death. [15]All who hate a brother or sister[n] are murderers, and you know that murderers do not have eternal life abiding in them. [16]We know love by this, that he laid down his life for us—and we ought to lay down our lives for one another. [17]How does God's love abide in anyone who has the world's goods and sees a brother or sister[p] in need and yet refuses help?

18 Little children, let us love, not in word or speech, but in truth and action. [19]And by this we will know that we are from the truth and will reassure our hearts before him [20]whenever our hearts condemn us; for God is greater than our hearts, and he knows everything. [21]Beloved, if our hearts do not condemn us, we have boldness before God; [22]and we receive from him whatever we ask, because we obey his commandments and do what pleases him.

23 And this is his commandment, that we should believe in the name of his Son Jesus Christ and love one another, just as he has commanded us. [24]All who obey his commandments abide in him,

*l* Or *it* *m* Or *because the children of God abide in him* *n* Gk *his brother* *o* Gk *brothers* *p* Gk *brother*

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**3.1–10: Filial relation expressed in right conduct. 1–2:** God's *love* in making us *children* (Jn 1.12) progressively produces resemblance to God, here and hereafter. **3:** Hope of complete moral likeness to Christ motivates purity of life (Mt 5.8). **5:** Jn 1.29. **6:** *Sins,* habitually and constantly (3 Jn 11). **8:** Jn 8.44; Acts 13.10; Heb 2.14. **9:** 5.18.

**3.11–18: Love for one another. 11–12:** Abel's *righteous deeds* stirred Cain's hatred (Gen 4.8; Heb 11.4; Jude 11). **13:** *The world* likewise *hates* the church (Jn 15.18–19). **14–15:** Hatred of fellow Christians is equivalent to murder (compare Mt 5.21–22). **16–17:** Jesus, in contrast to taking life, *laid down his life* (Jn 15.13). He is our pattern. *To lay down our lives* may take the form of daily sacrifice for others *in need.* **18:** *Word,* intention without *action; speech,* hypocrisy, not *truth* (Jas 1.22).

**3.19–24: The Christian's assurance. 19:** *This,* the *love* described in v. 18. **20:** *God,* who *knows* everything, judges us by the abiding relation of love to others, rather than by our passing moods (Jn 21.17). **21–22:** *Boldness* in prayer results from obedience to God, and strengthens assurance (5.14). **23–24:** Belief *in the name of Jesus Christ,* Jesus bears God's name; belief makes people children of God (Jn 17.11, 12). *Love* (Jn 13.34; 15.17) is evidence of God's Spirit and presence (4.12–13).

and he abides in them. And by this we know that he abides in us, by the Spirit that he has given us.

4 Beloved, do not believe every spirit, but test the spirits to see whether they are from God; for many false prophets have gone out into the world. 2By this you know the Spirit of God: every spirit that confesses that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh is from God, 3and every spirit that does not confess Jesus[q] is not from God. And this is the spirit of the antichrist, of which you have heard that it is coming; and now it is already in the world. 4Little children, you are from God, and have conquered them; for the one who is in you is greater than the one who is in the world. 5They are from the world; therefore what they say is from the world, and the world listens to them. 6We are from God. Whoever knows God listens to us, and whoever is not from God does not listen to us. From this we know the spirit of truth and the spirit of error.

7 Beloved, let us love one another, because love is from God; everyone who loves is born of God and knows God. 8Whoever does not love does not know God, for God is love. 9God's love was revealed among us in this way: God sent his only Son into the world so that we might live through him. 10In this is love, not that we loved God but that he loved us and sent his Son to be the atoning sacrifice for our sins. 11Beloved, since God loved us so much, we also ought to love one another. 12No one has ever seen God; if we love one another, God lives in us, and his love is perfected in us.

13 By this we know that we abide in him and he in us, because he has given us of his Spirit. 14And we have seen and do testify that the Father has sent his Son as the Savior of the world. 15God abides in those who confess that Jesus is the Son of God, and they abide in God. 16So we have known and believe the love that God has for us.

God is love, and those who abide in love abide in God, and God abides in them. 17Love has been perfected among us in this: that we may have boldness on the day of judgment, because as he is, so are we in this world. 18There is no fear in love, but perfect love casts out fear; for fear has to do with punishment, and whoever fears has not reached perfection in love. 19We love[r] because he first loved us. 20Those who say, "I love God," and hate their brothers or sisters,[s] are liars; for those who do not love a brother or sister[t] whom they have seen, cannot love God whom they have not seen. 21The commandment we have from him is this: those who love God must love their brothers and sisters[s] also.

5 Everyone who believes that Jesus is the Christ[u] has been born of God, and everyone who loves the parent loves the child. 2By this we know that we love the children of God, when we love God and obey his commandments. 3For the love of God is this, that we obey his commands. And his command-

*q* Other ancient authorities read *does away with Jesus* (Gk *dissolves Jesus*) *r* Other ancient authorities add *him*; others add *God* *s* Gk *brothers* *t* Gk *brother* *u* Or *the Messiah*

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**4.1–6: Discernment of truth and error. 1–2:** Note the contrast between *spirits* (supernatural powers claimed by *false prophets*) and the Holy *Spirit* (Jn 16.13–15), which inspires the true confession about Christ (compare 1 Cor 12.1–3). **3:** 2 Jn 7. **4:** *The one who is in the world,* the devil (3.10; Jn 8.44; 12.31). **5:** *They,* the false prophets. **6:** *We,* the Christian teachers. *Whoever knows God* discriminates between *truth* and *error* (Jn 5.37–38; 8.47; 10.4–5).

**4.7–21: The blessedness of love. 7–10:** That *God is love* is seen in sending *his Son* as *the atoning sacrifice for our sins* (2.2). **11–12:** *To love one another* is the only authentication that we know God, whom *no one has ever seen* (Jn 1.18). **13–18:** The Holy *Spirit* testifies that *Jesus,* God's *Son,* has revealed his *Father* as *love.* When his love is *perfected* (matured) in us, *fear* of *judgment* is allayed (2.28; 3.21). **19–21:** *Love* originates in *God.* Failure to *love* is visible evidence of a breach with the unseen God, and a violation of his *commandment.*

**5.1–12: Victorious faith** issuing in eternal life. **1:** Jn 8.42. **3:** *Love of God* involves obedience to his will. *Not burdensome,* Mt 11.30;

ments are not burdensome, [4]for whatever is born of God conquers the world. And this is the victory that conquers the world, our faith. [5]Who is it that conquers the world but the one who believes that Jesus is the Son of God?

6 This is the one who came by water and blood, Jesus Christ, not with the water only but with the water and the blood. And the Spirit is the one that testifies, for the Spirit is the truth. [7]There are three that testify:[v] [8]the Spirit and the water and the blood, and these three agree. [9]If we receive human testimony, the testimony of God is greater; for this is the testimony of God that he has testified to his Son. [10]Those who believe in the Son of God have the testimony in their hearts. Those who do not believe in God[w] have made him a liar by not believing in the testimony that God has given concerning his Son. [11]And this is the testimony: God gave us eternal life, and this life is in his Son. [12]Whoever has the Son has life; whoever does not have the Son of God does not have life.

13 I write these things to you who believe in the name of the Son of God, so that you may know that you have eternal life.

14 And this is the boldness we have in him, that if we ask anything according to his will, he hears us. [15]And if we know that he hears us in whatever we ask, we know that we have obtained the requests made of him. [16]If you see your brother or sister[x] committing what is not a mortal sin, you will ask, and God[y] will give life to such a one—to those whose sin is not mortal. There is sin that is mortal; I do not say that you should pray about that. [17]All wrongdoing is sin, but there is sin that is not mortal.

18 We know that those who are born of God do not sin, but the one who was born of God protects them, and the evil one does not touch them. [19]We know that we are God's children, and that the whole world lies under the power of the evil one. [20]And we know that the Son of God has come and has given us understanding so that we may know him who is true;[z] and we are in him who is true, in his Son Jesus Christ. He is the true God and eternal life.

21 Little children, keep yourselves from idols.[a]

*v* A few other authorities read (with variations) *[7]There are three that testify in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Spirit, and these three are one. [8]And there are three that testify on earth:*
*w* Other ancient authorities read *in the Son*
*x* Gk *your brother* *y* Gk *he* *z* Other ancient authorities read *know the true God*
*a* Other ancient authorities add *Amen*

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Phil 4.13. **4**: Jn 16.33. *That conquers,* or "that has conquered." **6–8**: The Spirit's witness is to *the water* (Jesus' baptism) and to *the blood* (the cross); see Jn 19.34–35. **9**: Jn 5.32, 36; 8.18. **11–12**: *Eternal life* is *in* (living union with) Jesus, God's *Son,* and nowhere else (Jn 1.4; 3.36; 5.24–26; 6.57).

**5.13–21**: **Conclusion.** **13**: Jn 17.3; 20.31. **14**: Jn 14.14–16; 15.16; 16.23–26. **15**: 3.22. **16**: *Sin that is mortal,* for unforgivable sin compare Mk 3.21; 8.38. Here the reference is probably to those who have left the Johannine community (1.2–3; 3.12–17); Christians are not to associate with such persons (2 Jn 10). **18–20**: *We know,* thrice repeated (compare v. 13). **18**: *Do not sin,* see 3.6 n. **19**: *World,* see 2.15 n. **20**: *The true God,* in contrast to the secessionists' view of God. **21**: *Idols,* any rival to God (1 Cor 10.14).

# *The Second Letter of John*

Language, literary style, and ideas, along with early church tradition, make it highly probable that this letter came from the same pen that produced 1 John. A copy of 1 John may have accompanied this letter, which instructs its addressees not to associate with the dissidents (vv. 9–11). The tone of the admonitions indicates that the author was well known to the readers and was one whose spiritual authority they acknowledged. Unlike 1 John, which appears to have been addressed to several churches, this letter was written to one specific church ("the elect lady," v. 1), probably one of the churches in Asia Minor.

The letter yields no definite evidence regarding date. The kinship of situation and ideas with those reflected in 1 John suggests a date near the end of the first century (see Introduction to 1 John).

The author alludes to the main teaching of 1 John (vv. 5–7), and adds a command not to show hospitality to false teachers. Anyone who does so is guilty of participation in their evil teaching (vv. 7–11).

1 The elder to the elect lady and her children, whom I love in the truth, and not only I but also all who know the truth, 2 because of the truth that abides in us and will be with us forever:

3 Grace, mercy, and peace will be with us from God the Father and from[a] Jesus Christ, the Father's Son, in truth and love.

4 I was overjoyed to find some of your children walking in the truth, just as we have been commanded by the Father. 5 But now, dear lady, I ask you, not as though I were writing you a new commandment, but one we have had from the beginning, let us love one another. 6 And this is love, that we walk according to his commandments; this is the commandment just as you have heard it from the beginning—you must walk in it.

7 Many deceivers have gone out into the world, those who do not confess that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh; any such person is the deceiver and the antichrist! 8 Be on your guard, so that you do not lose what we[b] have worked for, but may receive a full reward. 9 Everyone who does not abide in the teaching of Christ, but goes beyond it, does not have God; whoever abides in the teaching has both the Father and the Son. 10 Do not receive into the house or welcome anyone who comes to you and does not bring this teaching; 11 for to welcome is to participate in the evil deeds of such a person.

12 Although I have much to write to you, I would rather not use paper and ink; instead I hope to come to you and talk with you face to face, so that our joy may be complete.

13 The children of your elect sister send you their greetings.[c]

*a* Other ancient authorities add *the Lord*
*b* Other ancient authorities read *you* *c* Other ancient authorities add *Amen*

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**1**: *Elect lady,* probably refers to a local church, the members of which are called *her children.* **2**: *The truth* about Jesus, in contrast to false teaching (v. 7). **4**: *Some,* not all; heresy has crept in. **5–6**: 1 Jn 2.7; 5.3; Jn 13.34. **7**: *Deceivers,* who taught that the Christ was not indissolubly united with the man Jesus (1 Jn 2.22), or that Jesus' body was not a real body of *flesh* and blood (1 Jn 4.2–3). **8**: *Full reward,* eternal life (Jn 20.31; 1 Jn 2.25; 5.11–12). **9**: *Goes beyond,* i.e. beyond the tradition about Jesus (1 Jn 1.1–4) and Jesus' own commandment of love (1 Jn 3.23; see 1 Jn 2.22–23 n.). **10–11**: Hospitality to false teachers incurs responsibility for their *evil deeds* (compare Titus 3.10; Rev 2.2). **13**: *Elect sister,* sister church (see v. 1 n.).

# *The Third Letter of John*

Of the three Johannine letters, this one alone is written to an individual. It reflects a period in the church's life when organization was loose and churches were bound together by letters from those in authority and by personal visits of their representatives and traveling missionaries. In the unknown church to which this letter was directed, a certain Diotrephes, who liked "to put himself first" (v. 9), had challenged the spiritual authority of "the elder," refusing to receive messengers from him and expelling "from the church" those who showed them hospitality (v. 10). The elder, therefore, writes to a respected and influential member of the church named Gaius (v. 1), who has cordially welcomed the messengers and provided for their further needs (vv. 5–6). He encourages Gaius to continue this practice, indicating that he will deal with Diotrephes on a subsequent visit (v. 10). Verse 11 echoes the exhortation of 1 Jn 2.6; 3.6, 10; 4.7. Hospitality is an application of the love-command (vv. 5–6). Verse 12 serves as a letter of recommendation for Demetrius, probably a missionary about to visit the area.

The authorship and date parallel those of 1 and 2 John (see Introductions to 1 and 2 John).

1 The elder to the beloved Gaius,
whom I love in truth.

2 Beloved, I pray that all may go well
with you and that you may be in good
health, just as it is well with your soul.
3 I was overjoyed when some of the
friends[a] arrived and testified to your
faithfulness to the truth, namely how
you walk in the truth. 4 I have no greater
joy than this, to hear that my children are
walking in the truth.

5 Beloved, you do faithfully whatever you do for the friends,[a] even though they are strangers to you; 6 they have testified to your love before the church. You will do well to send them on in a manner worthy of God; 7 for they began their journey for the sake of Christ,[b] accepting no support from non-believers.[c] 8 Therefore we ought to support such people, so that we may become coworkers with the truth.

9 I have written something to the church; but Diotrephes, who likes to put himself first, does not acknowledge our authority. 10 So if I come, I will call attention to what he is doing in spreading false charges against us. And not content with those charges, he refuses to welcome the friends,[a] and even prevents those who want to do so and expels them from the church.

11 Beloved, do not imitate what is evil but imitate what is good. Whoever does good is from God; whoever does evil has not seen God. 12 Everyone has testified favorably about Demetrius, and so has the truth itself. We also testify for him,[d] and you know that our testimony is true.

13 I have much to write to you, but I would rather not write with pen and ink; 14 instead I hope to see you soon, and we will talk together face to face.

15 Peace to you. The friends send you their greetings. Greet the friends there, each by name.

*a* Gk *brothers* *b* Gk *for the sake of the name*
*c* Gk *the Gentiles* *d* Gk lacks *for him*

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**1**: *Gaius,* see Introduction. **3**: *Your faithfulness to the truth,* behavior contrasting with that of Diotrephes (vv. 9–10) in receiving emissaries from the elder. **5–8**: Commendation for, and encouragement to continue, rendering assistance to traveling missionaries, who were dependent on the church rather than on *non-believers.* Such support is true participation in spreading the gospel (contrast 2 Jn 10–11). **9–10**: *Written something,* probably a letter of apostolic counsel no longer extant. *Diotrephes,* see Introduction. Personal ambition rejects *authority. Friends,* emissaries of the elder (contrast 1 Jn 2.19). **11**: 1 Jn 3.6–10. **12**: *Demetrius,* perhaps the bearer of this letter. Such recommedations appear in the Pauline letters (Rom 16.1–2; 1 Cor 16.3; 2 Cor 3.1; Phil 2.25–30). **13**: 2 Jn 12. **15**: *Friends,* fellow-Christians.

# *The Letter of*
# *Jude*

Jude is a brief tract cast as a general letter that warns Christians against persons who cause divisions in the Christian community (vv. 4, 12, 19). The traditional identification of Jude with Judas, a brother of Jesus (Mt 13.55; Mk 6.3), is unlikely. The author is contending for the faith that had been "once for all entrusted to the saints" (v. 3). Readers are reminded that the apostles had predicted the coming of such false Christians in the last days (v. 18). Jude clearly originated in the post-apostolic age.

The readers should not be deceived by such false Christians. Their licentious way of life (vv. 4, 6–8, 12–13, 16) and divisiveness show that they are without the Holy Spirit and the love of God that leads to eternal life (vv. 19–21). Christians, however, should seek to rescue those who are weak, and even show mercy to persons whose evil lives they reject (vv. 22–23).

The central argument (vv. 5–16) includes examples of divine judgment that are drawn from both Hebrew Scriptures and Jewish apocalyptic. The latter provides accounts of the fate of the angels who fell from heaven and the prophecies of judgment associated with Enoch (vv. 6–15), as well as a tradition that the archangel Michael and the devil struggled over the body of Moses (v. 9). The author's exhortation is so general that the letter may not be directed against a particular group or crisis within the community. Perhaps the author composed this warning against the deceit of ungodly Christians in order to remind the readers that they must never relax their efforts to achieve holiness. The brief but trenchant letter concludes with a beautiful and moving doxology (vv. 24–25).

1 Jude,[a] a servant[b] of Jesus Christ
and brother of James,
To those who are called, who are be-
loved[c] in[d] God the Father and kept safe
for[d] Jesus Christ:
2 May mercy, peace, and love be
yours in abundance.

3 Beloved, while eagerly preparing to write to you about the salvation we share, I find it necessary to write and appeal to you to contend for the faith that was once for all entrusted to the saints. 4For certain intruders have stolen in among you, people who long ago were designated for this condemnation as ungodly, who pervert the grace of our God into licentiousness and deny our only Master and Lord, Jesus Christ.[e]

5 Now I desire to remind you, though you are fully informed, that the Lord, who once for all saved[f] a people out of the land of Egypt, afterward destroyed those who did not believe. 6And the angels who did not keep their own position, but left their proper dwelling, he has kept in eternal chains in deepest darkness for the judgment of the great day. 7Likewise, Sodom and Gomorrah and the surrounding cities, which, in the same manner as they, indulged in sexual immorality and pursued unnatural lust,[g] serve as an example by undergoing a punishment of eternal fire.

8 Yet in the same way these dreamers also defile the flesh, reject authority, and slander the glorious ones.[h] 9But when the archangel Michael contended with the devil and disputed about the body of Moses, he did not dare to bring a condemnation of slander[i] against him, but said, "The Lord rebuke you!" 10But these people slander whatever they do not understand, and they are destroyed by those things that, like irrational animals, they know by instinct. 11Woe to them! For they go the way of Cain, and abandon themselves to Balaam's error for the sake of gain, and perish in Korah's rebellion. 12These are blemishes[j] on your love-feasts, while they feast with you without fear, feeding themselves.[k] They are waterless clouds carried along by the winds; autumn trees without fruit, twice dead, uprooted; 13wild waves of the sea, casting up the foam of their own shame; wandering stars, for whom the deepest darkness has been reserved forever.

14 It was also about these that Enoch, in the seventh generation from Adam,

*a* Gk *Judas* *b* Gk *slave* *c* Other ancient authorities read *sanctified* *d* Or *by* *e* Or *the only Master and our Lord Jesus Christ* *f* Other ancient authorities read *though you were once for all fully informed, that Jesus* (or *Joshua*) *who saved* *g* Gk *went after other flesh* *h* Or *angels*; Gk *glories* *i* Or *condemnation for blasphemy* *j* Or *reefs* *k* Or *without fear. They are shepherds who care only for themselves*

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**1–2: Salutation,** see 1 Pet 1.1–2; Rom 1.1–7 n. **1:** God has *called* (Rom 1.6–7; 8.28) the Christians, shown them his love, and keeps them for the coming of *Jesus Christ* (1 Thess 5.23).

**3–4: Occasion of the letter.** The emergence of false teachers has stimulated the author to warn readers against those who pervert the gospel and deny Christ. **3:** *The faith,* a synonym for the gospel. *The saints,* see Rom 1.7 n.

**5–16: False teachers. 5–7:** The Israelites in the wilderness (1 Cor 10.1–11; Heb 3.7–19), the rebellious angels (Gen 6.4; the legend of the fallen angels appears in 1 Enoch 6–8), and Sodom and Gomorrah (Gen ch 19) are illustrations of how God judges the disobedient. **8:** In spite of warnings, the heretics defy authority, revile angels (apparently those angels who are God's servants), and live licentiously.

**9–10:** The author refers to a Jewish tradition according to which Michael, though provoked to anger by Satan (who had charged that Moses, being a murderer, was not worthy of burial), refrained from bringing *a condemnation of slander.* The heretics, however, slander spiritual truths they do not comprehend (1 Cor 2.7–16) and will perish because they follow animal passions. **11:** *The way of Cain,* Gen 4.9; Heb 11.4; 1 Jn 3.12. *Balaam,* Num chs 22–24; Rev 2.14. *Korah,* Num ch 16. **12:** Apparently the heretics are within the fellowship, even attending the love-feasts (see 1 Cor 11.20–21 n., and 2 Pet 2.13 note *t*), and hence were the more dangerous. **14:** *See . . .* , quoted from the book of 1 Enoch, 1.9.

prophesied, saying, "See, the Lord is coming[l] with ten thousands of his holy ones, 15to execute judgment on all, and to convict everyone of all the deeds of ungodliness that they have committed in such an ungodly way, and of all the harsh things that ungodly sinners have spoken against him." 16These are grumblers and malcontents; they indulge their own lusts; they are bombastic in speech, flattering people to their own advantage.

17 But you, beloved, must remember the predictions of the apostles of our Lord Jesus Christ; 18for they said to you, "In the last time there will be scoffers, indulging their own ungodly lusts." 19It is these worldly people, devoid of the Spirit, who are causing divisions. 20But you, beloved, build yourselves up on your most holy faith; pray in the Holy Spirit; 21keep yourselves in the love of God; look forward to the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ that leads to[m] eternal life. 22And have mercy on some who are wavering; 23save others by snatching them out of the fire; and have mercy on still others with fear, hating even the tunic defiled by their bodies.[n]

24 Now to him who is able to keep you from falling, and to make you stand without blemish in the presence of his glory with rejoicing, 25to the only God our Savior, through Jesus Christ our Lord, be glory, majesty, power, and authority, before all time and now and forever. Amen.

*l* Gk *came* *m* Gk *Christ to* *n* Gk *by the flesh.* The Greek text of verses 22-23 is uncertain at several points

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**17–23**: **Exhortations.** Recall the apostolic tradition, avoid the heretics, grow in faith, wait for the mercy of Jesus Christ, care for the erring (on excluding false Christians from fellowship, 1 Cor 5.9–11; 2 Thess 3.14–15; 2 Jn 9–11). **18**: *In the last time,* 1 Jn 2.18; 1 Pet 1.5. **19**: *Divisions* in the church (1 Cor 1.12–13). **20–21**: Note the Trinitarian reference.

**24–25**: **Doxology.**

# *Apocalyptic Literature*

Apocalyptic literature is a class of Jewish and Christian writings that first appeared about 250 B.C. and continued well into the opening centuries A.D. It frequently reflects a negative view of this world and expresses the hope for salvation in new creation or in another life. It served to comfort and encourage the faithful in difficult times.

Examples of apocalyptic literature are the following. In the Old Testament the second half of the book of Daniel (chs 7–12) has long been recognized as apocalyptic in genre. Other Old Testament writings also contain passages that resemble the eschatological symbolism of the apocalypses: e.g. Isaiah chs 24–27 ("the apocalypse of Isaiah"), a very late addition to the Isaianic collection; Ezekiel chs 38–39, depicting the final victory over eschatological enemies by God's people; Joel ch 2 and Zechariah chs 9–14. In the New Testament the leading example of apocalyptic genre is the book of Revelation; apocalyptic materials are present also in Mark ch 13 and its parallels in Matthew ch 24 and Luke ch 12. Among the books of the Apocrypha the work traditionally known as 2 Esdras contains as its central portion (chs 3–14) the "Ezra-Apocalypse." This section, which is believed to have been written in Hebrew by a Palestinian Jew at the close of the first century A.D., presents seven visions granted to Ezra in order to answer his questions about the disproportionate sufferings of Zion. Other examples of Jewish apocalyptic literature include 1 Enoch, 2 Enoch, Jubilees, and the Apocalypses of Abraham, of Baruch, and of Elijah. Among Christian apocryphal literature are the Apocalypses of Peter, of Paul, and the *Shepherd* of Hermas.

The word "apocalypse" is derived from the Greek word *apokalypsis,* meaning "disclosure," "unveiling," or "revelation." Apocalyptic revelations are of two kinds: (1) symbolic visions (e.g. Daniel 7–12; Revelation) and (2) otherworldly journeys (parts of 1 Enoch; 2 Enoch; 3 Baruch). In both kinds, there is a heavenly mediator (usually an angel, but sometimes Christ in the Christian apocalypses) who explains what the visionary sees. The otherworldly journeys have a stronger interest in cosmological matters than the visions do. All the apocalypses in the Bible and Apocrypha include symbolic visions. The symbolism is colorful. Gentile nations and institutions are represented as wild beasts, sometimes of composite make-up; for example, a leopard, with feet like a bear's, and a mouth like a lion's mouth (Rev 13.2). There is also sometimes an interest in numerology, whether in terms of cryptic reference to a person (as the number of the beast, 666, in Rev 13.18) or the duration of persecutions (a time, times, and half a time = three-and-a-half years) in Daniel (7.2–5) and Revelation (12.14).

The apocalyptic author often makes use of two literary devices that, though not confined to apocalyptic writings, are characteristic of many such writings. The first is that of secret books in which the seer is bidden to conceal these mysteries until the time of the End when they will be revealed to "the wise" as a sign that the End is soon at hand. In 2 Esdras, for example, Ezra

is bidden to "keep the seventy [books] that were written last, in order to give them to the wise among your people. For in them is the spring of understanding, the fountain of wisdom, and the river of knowledge" (14.46f.; compare Dan 12.4, 9). It is noteworthy that the author of the New Testament Apocalypse is commanded not to seal up "the words of the prophecy of this book, for the time is near" (Rev 22.10). The second device is that of pseudonymity, whereby the author writes in the name of some honored person of antiquity, such as Enoch, Abraham, Moses, or Ezra. The intention is not to deceive but rather to strengthen the conviction that the apocalyptist is the transmitter of a long and authoritative tradition. The same device is followed in 2 Esdras and apocryphal Christian apocalypses, such as those of Peter and Paul, but not in the book of Revelation, where the writer uses his own name.

The content of the revelations invariably involves eschatology, that is, predictions about the final outcome of human affairs. To a degree, the eschatology resembles that of the prophets: apocalypses often predict the restoration of Israel as a messianic kingdom on earth. The eschatological kingdom plays an important part in the biblical apocalypses of Daniel and Revelation and in 2 Esdras. Apocalyptic eschatology is distinguished from prophecy, however, by the expectation of a judgment of the dead and of reward or punishment in a future life.

Apocalypticism is also characterized by dualism. There are two opposing personified forces in the universe, one good and the other evil. Yahweh is, of course, the supreme God. In Jewish apocalypticism the archangel Michael often functions as God's agent. Opposed to him is Belial, or Satan. The opposition of these supernatural figures is most clearly drawn in certain treatises among the Dead Sea Scrolls.

Dualism also modifies the eschatology of the apocalypses. There are two distinct and separate ages, the present age and the age to come. The second is not a natural development of the first, but is a new creation. At present, human history is under the domination of the power of evil; consequently it is evil and corrupt. God, however, has set a limit to the era of wickedness and will intervene at the appointed time to execute judgment.

Other features frequently found in apocalypses include the representation of present troubles as "birth-pangs" heralding the End (Mt 24.8; Mk 13.8). Sometimes this End is described in terms of political action and military struggle (the battle of "Armageddon"). At other times the conflict assumes cosmic proportions involving mysterious and awesome happenings on earth and in the heavens: earthquakes, famine, fearful celestial portents, and destruction by fire (Joel 2.30–32; Mt 24.29–31; Mk 13.24–26; Lk 21.25–27; Rev 6.12–17). In the final battle the powers of evil, together with the evil nations they represent, will be utterly destroyed (Rev 19.11–21). Then a new divine order will be established, when the End will be as the Beginning, and Paradise will be restored.

The relevance of apocalypticism has been variously estimated. On the one hand, to some it may seem to be hopelessly pessimistic. On the other hand, it has had a strong appeal as an uncomplicated explanation of the struggle between good and evil. In any case, one cannot deny that books such as Daniel and Revelation have sustained and strengthened believers, whether Jewish or Christian, amid experiences of trials and persecutions. The apocalyptists believed in God, and they, like the prophets, had faith in the divine control of history. That control, they were assured, was certain to be vindicated and displayed in the final climax of history, which was regarded solely and uniquely as the act of God.

# *The Revelation*
## *to John*

The book of Revelation, or Apocalypse, is a fitting close to the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments, for its final chapters depict the consummation toward which the whole biblical message of redemption is focused. It may be described as an inspired picture-book that, by an accumulation of magnificent poetic imagery, makes a powerful appeal to the reader's imagination. Many of the details of its pictures are intended to contribute to the total impression, and are not to be isolated and interpreted with wooden literalism.

Through the centuries the Apocalypse has been the object of widely divergent systems of interpretation. It can be best understood when one takes into account the following considerations. (1) This book comprises the substance of real visions that repeat with kaleidoscopic variety certain great principles of God's just and merciful government of the whole creation. By centering attention on these principles, the church in all ages has been encouraged and sustained despite the fiercest antagonisms of both human and demonic foes. (2) The book is written in apocalyptic style, a recognized literary genre (see pp. 362–363 NT). It contains other elements as well, such as the seven letters in chs 2 and 3 and the several prophetic utterances scattered here and there throughout its pages, but its difficulty will be found to arise largely from our unfamiliarity with apocalyptic writings. (3) As an apocalypse, the message of the book is couched in symbolism, involving numbers, strange beasts, and other typical apocalyptic features. Throughout one must recognize that the author's descriptions are descriptions of the symbols, not of the reality conveyed by the symbol. (4) Although the key for understanding some of the symbols has been lost, in other cases a comparison with the prophetic symbolism of the Old Testament sheds light on the intended meaning. This is understandable in view of the author's frequent allusion to the Greek Septuagint translation of the Hebrew Scriptures; of the 404 verses in Revelation, some 275 include one or more allusions to passages in the Old Testament. (5) The structure of the book involves a series of parallel and yet ever-progressing sections; these bring before the reader, over and over again, but in climacteric form, the struggle of the church, and its victory over the world in the providence of God Almighty. There are probably seven of these sections, though only five are clearly marked. The plan of the whole is, then, something like the following: Prologue, 1.1–8; seven parallel sections divided at 3.22; 8.1; 11.19; 14.20; 16.21; and 19.21; Epilogue, 22.6–21.

Although parts of the book (e.g. ch 11) may have been reduced to writing before the fall of Jerusalem in A.D. 70, it is probable that the author, whose name is John (1.1, 4, 9; 22.8), put the book in its present form toward the close of the reign of the Emperor Domitian (A.D. 81–96). It was then that Domitian began to demand that his subjects address him as "Lord and God" and worship his image. For refusing to do so, many Christians were put to death (6.9; 13.15); others, like John (1.9), were exiled, and all were threatened. One reason for the author's couching his teaching in mysterious figures and extraordinary metaphors was to prevent the imperial police from recognizing that this book is a trumpet call to the persecuted, assuring them that, despite the worst that the Roman Empire could do, God reigns supreme, and Christ, who died and is alive forevermore (1.18), has the power to overcome all evil. And therefore John closes his book with the prayer, "Come, Lord Jesus!" (22.20).

1 The revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave him to show his servants[a] what must soon take place; he made[b] it known by sending his angel to his servant[c] John, 2who testified to the word of God and to the testimony of Jesus Christ, even to all that he saw.

3 Blessed is the one who reads aloud the words of the prophecy, and blessed are those who hear and who keep what is written in it; for the time is near.

4 John to the seven churches that are in Asia:

Grace to you and peace from him who is and who was and who is to come, and from the seven spirits who are before his throne, 5and from Jesus Christ, the faithful witness, the firstborn of the dead, and the ruler of the kings of the earth.

To him who loves us and freed[d] us from our sins by his blood, 6and made[b] us to be a kingdom, priests serving[e] his God and Father, to him be glory and dominion forever and ever. Amen.

7 Look! He is coming with the clouds;
every eye will see him,
even those who pierced him;
and on his account all the tribes of the earth will wail.
So it is to be. Amen.

8 "I am the Alpha and the Omega," says the Lord God, who is and who was and who is to come, the Almighty.

9 I, John, your brother who share with you in Jesus the persecution and the kingdom and the patient endurance, was on the island called Patmos because of the word of God and the testimony of Jesus.[f] 10I was in the spirit[g] on the Lord's day, and I heard behind me a loud voice like a trumpet 11saying, "Write in a book what you see and send it to the seven churches, to Ephesus, to Smyrna, to Pergamum, to Thyatira, to Sardis, to Philadelphia, and to Laodicea."

12 Then I turned to see whose voice it was that spoke to me, and on turning I saw seven golden lampstands, 13and in the midst of the lampstands I saw one like the Son of Man, clothed with a long robe and with a golden sash across his chest. 14His head and his hair were white as white wool, white as snow; his eyes were like a flame of fire, 15his feet were like burnished bronze, refined as in a furnace, and his voice was like the sound of many waters. 16In his right hand he held seven stars, and from his mouth came a

*a* Gk *slaves* *b* Gk *and he made* *c* Gk *slave*
*d* Other ancient authorities read *washed*
*e* Gk *priests to* *f* Or *testimony to Jesus*
*g* Or *in the Spirit*

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**1.1–3**: **The prologue.** This revelation came from God through Jesus Christ and was communicated to John by an angel (referred to again in 22.16). **3**: *Blessed is . . .*, the first of seven beatitudes in Revelation (compare 14.13; 16.15; 19.9; 20.6; 22.7, 14) is pronounced upon the reader of this prophetic book in services of worship and upon the listening worshipers who heed its message. The solemn words, *the time is near,* provide a motive for obedience.

**1.4–8**: **Introductory salutation** to seven representative churches in the Roman province of Asia (in western Asia Minor). *Seven* suggests the idea of completeness and totality. **4**: *Grace . . . and peace,* see 2 Thess 1.2 n. The *seven spirits* are either angelic beings or, more likely, a symbolic reference to the manifold energies of the Spirit of God (Isa 11.2). **5**: *Faithful witness,* Jesus testifies to the truth (Jn 18.37). He *loves* continually; he *freed us* once for all by his death as a sacrifice (Rom 6.10; Heb 7.27). **8**: *Alpha* and *Omega,* the first and last letters of the Greek alphabet (like our "A to Z"); hence, the beginning and end of all things (Isa 44.6).

**1.9–20**: **Preparatory vision** on *Patmos,* a rocky island, about ten by five miles, in the Aegean, where John had been exiled (see Introduction). **10**: *In the spirit,* in a state of prophetic illumination. *Lord's day,* Sunday.

**1.12–16**: In the midst of the churches (see v. 20) stands the exalted Christ, whose royalty, eternity, wisdom, and immutability are suggested by means of symbols; the effect is that of terrifying majesty (compare v. 17 with Isa 6.5). *Son of Man,* see Mk 2.10 n. *Sound of many waters,* Ezekiel also makes a similar comparison with the voice of the Almighty (Ezek 1.24; 43.2). *Two-edged sword,* the word of God (Heb 4.12). **18**: *Hades,* used here with its synonym *death,* is the abode of the dead;

sharp, two-edged sword, and his face was like the sun shining with full force.

17 When I saw him, I fell at his feet as though dead. But he placed his right hand on me, saying, "Do not be afraid; I am the first and the last, 18and the living one. I was dead, and see, I am alive forever and ever; and I have the keys of Death and of Hades. 19Now write what you have seen, what is, and what is to take place after this. 20As for the mystery of the seven stars that you saw in my right hand, and the seven golden lampstands: the seven stars are the angels of the seven churches, and the seven lampstands are the seven churches.

2 "To the angel of the church in Ephesus write: These are the words of him who holds the seven stars in his right hand, who walks among the seven golden lampstands:

2 "I know your works, your toil and your patient endurance. I know that you cannot tolerate evildoers; you have tested those who claim to be apostles but are not, and have found them to be false. 3I also know that you are enduring patiently and bearing up for the sake of my name, and that you have not grown weary. 4But I have this against you, that you have abandoned the love you had at first. 5Remember then from what you have fallen; repent, and do the works you did at first. If not, I will come to you and remove your lampstand from its place, unless you repent. 6Yet this is to your credit: you hate the works of the Nicolaitans, which I also hate. 7Let anyone who has an ear listen to what the Spirit is saying to the churches. To everyone who conquers, I will give permission to eat from the tree of life that is in the paradise of God.

8 "And to the angel of the church in Smyrna write: These are the words of the first and the last, who was dead and came to life:

9 "I know your affliction and your poverty, even though you are rich. I know the slander on the part of those who say that they are Jews and are not, but are a synagogue of Satan. 10Do not fear what you are about to suffer. Beware, the devil is about to throw some of you into prison so that you may be tested, and for ten days you will have affliction. Be faithful until death, and I will give you the crown of life. 11Let anyone who has an ear listen to what the Spirit is saying to the churches. Whoever conquers will not be harmed by the second death.

12 "And to the angel of the church in Pergamum write: These are the words of him who has the sharp two-edged sword:

13 "I know where you are living,

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Christ has *the keys* to release those confined within its gates (Mt 16.18; Jn 5.25–29). **20:** *Mystery,* truth formerly hidden, but now to be revealed. Angels are assigned to *the seven churches,* as also to nations (Dan 10.13; 12.1) and individuals (Mt 18.10).

**2.1–3.22: The letters to the seven churches,** each containing an address, a descriptive phrase referring to the risen Lord, a commendation or condemnation of the church addressed, an admonition, and a concluding promise and exhortation to the faithful.

**2.1–7: The first letter** is appropriately sent to *Ephesus,* the most important city of proconsular Asia; Paul labored here in the 60s for two years and three months (Acts 19.8–10). **1:** Christ *walks among* his churches (1.20). **2:** *Evildoers,* compare the warning to the Ephesian elders in Acts 20.29–30. **6:** To *hate* evil is the counterpart of the love of the good (Isa 61.8; Zech 8.17). The *Nicolaitans* (probably not connected with the Nicolaus of Acts 6.5) taught that Christians were free to eat food offered to idols and to practice immorality in the name of religion (v. 14). **7:** *What the Spirit is saying,* speaking through Christ to John. *Conquers,* a military term, suggesting continuous vigilance. *Tree of life,* Gen 2.9.

**2.8–11: The second letter,** sent to *Smyrna,* commends the church for its perseverance amid *affliction* and *poverty.* **8:** Isa 44.6. **9:** *Rich,* in spiritual things. **10:** *Ten days,* not a lengthy period (Dan 1.12). *Crown of life,* supreme blessedness. **11:** *The second death,* the final condemnation of sinners (20.14; Mt 10.28).

where Satan's throne is. Yet you are holding fast to my name, and you did not deny your faith in me[h] even in the days of Antipas my witness, my faithful one, who was killed among you, where Satan lives. 14 But I have a few things against you: you have some there who hold to the teaching of Balaam, who taught Balak to put a stumbling block before the people of Israel, so that they would eat food sacrificed to idols and practice fornication. 15 So you also have some who hold to the teaching of the Nicolaitans. 16 Repent then. If not, I will come to you soon and make war against them with the sword of my mouth. 17 Let anyone who has an ear listen to what the Spirit is saying to the churches. To everyone who conquers I will give some of the hidden manna, and I will give a white stone, and on the white stone is written a new name that no one knows except the one who receives it.

18 "And to the angel of the church in Thyatira write: These are the words of the Son of God, who has eyes like a flame of fire, and whose feet are like burnished bronze:

19 "I know your works—your love, faith, service, and patient endurance. I know that your last works are greater than the first. 20 But I have this against you: you tolerate that woman Jezebel, who calls herself a prophet and is teaching and beguiling my servants[i] to practice fornication and to eat food sacrificed to idols. 21 I gave her time to repent, but she refuses to repent of her fornication. 22 Beware, I am throwing her on a bed, and those who commit adultery with her I am throwing into great distress, unless they repent of her doings; 23 and I will strike her children dead. And all the churches will know that I am the one who searches minds and hearts, and I will give to each of you as your works deserve. 24 But to the rest of you in Thyatira, who do not hold this teaching, who have not learned what some call 'the deep things of Satan,' to you I say, I do not lay on you any other burden; 25 only hold fast to what you have until I come. 26 To everyone who conquers and continues to do my works to the end,

I will give authority over
the nations;
27 to rule[j] them with an iron rod,
as when clay pots are
shattered—

28 even as I also received authority from my Father. To the one who conquers I will also give the morning star. 29 Let anyone who has an ear listen to what the Spirit is saying to the churches.

3 "And to the angel of the church in Sardis write: These are the words of him who has the seven spirits of God and the seven stars:

"I know your works; you have a name of being alive, but you are dead. 2 Wake up, and strengthen what remains and is on the point of death, for I have not found your works perfect in the sight of

*h* Or *deny my faith* *i* Gk *slaves* *j* Or *to shepherd*

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**2.12–17**: **The third letter** is sent to *Pergamum,* a noted center of idolatrous worship. **12**: *Sharp two-edged sword,* 1.16. **14–15**: See v. 6; Num 25.1–2; 31.16. **17**: *Manna . . . name,* Ex 16.33–34; Ps 78.24; Isa 62.2. *White,* the color symbolizing victory and joy.

**2.18–29**: **The fourth letter** is sent to *Thyatira,* a commercial center renowned for its many trade guilds, which periodically sponsored idolatrous feasts. Lydia, one of Paul's converts, was a dealer in purple cloth from Thyatira (Acts 16.14). **18**: Dan 10.6. **20**: *Jezebel,* a false *prophet,* resembling Ahab's wicked and idolatrous queen (1 Kings 16.31; 2 Kings 9.22, 30). **22**: In the Old Testament idolatry is often called *adultery,* as an abandonment of God, the husband of his people (Deut 31.16; Judg 2.17; 1 Chr 5.25). **23**: *Her children,* those who follow her teachings. **24**: *Deep things of Satan,* a withering reference to heretical teachings (contrast 1 Cor 2.10). **26–27**: The conquerors will share in Christ's Messianic rule (Ps 2.8–9). **28**: *The morning star* is Christ himself (22.16). **29**: *Is saying,* in this revelation.

**3.1–6**: **The fifth letter** is sent to *Sardis,* notorious for its luxury and licentiousness. **1**: *Seven spirits,* see 1.4 n. *Seven stars,* 1.20. *You have a name,* its Christianity was only nomi-

my God. 3Remember then what you received and heard; obey it, and repent. If you do not wake up, I will come like a thief, and you will not know at what hour I will come to you. 4Yet you have still a few persons in Sardis who have not soiled their clothes; they will walk with me, dressed in white, for they are worthy. 5If you conquer, you will be clothed like them in white robes, and I will not blot your name out of the book of life; I will confess your name before my Father and before his angels. 6Let anyone who has an ear listen to what the Spirit is saying to the churches.

7 "And to the angel of the church in Philadelphia write:

These are the words of the holy
one, the true one,
who has the key of David,
who opens and no one will
shut,
who shuts and no one opens:

8 "I know your works. Look, I have set before you an open door, which no one is able to shut. I know that you have but little power, and yet you have kept my word and have not denied my name. 9I will make those of the synagogue of Satan who say that they are Jews and are not, but are lying—I will make them come and bow down before your feet, and they will learn that I have loved you. 10Because you have kept my word of patient endurance, I will keep you from the hour of trial that is coming on the whole world to test the inhabitants of the earth. 11I am coming soon; hold fast to what you have, so that no one may seize your crown. 12If you conquer, I will make you a pillar in the temple of my God; you will never go out of it. I will write on you the name of my God, and the name of the city of my God, the new Jerusalem that comes down from my God out of heaven, and my own new name. 13Let anyone who has an ear listen to what the Spirit is saying to the churches.

14 "And to the angel of the church in Laodicea write: The words of the Amen, the faithful and true witness, the origin[k] of God's creation:

15 "I know your works; you are neither cold nor hot. I wish that you were either cold or hot. 16So, because you are lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I am about to spit you out of my mouth. 17For you say, 'I am rich, I have prospered, and I need nothing.' You do not realize that you are wretched, pitiable, poor, blind, and naked. 18Therefore I counsel you to buy from me gold refined by fire so that you may be rich; and white robes to clothe you and to keep the shame of your nakedness from being seen; and salve to anoint your eyes so that you may see. 19I reprove and discipline those whom I love. Be earnest, therefore, and repent. 20Listen! I am standing at the door,

*k* Or *beginning*

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nal. **3**: *Received,* the gospel. *Like a thief,* just when unexpected (16.15; Mt 24.42–44; 1 Thess 5.2). **4–5**: Those who have maintained spiritual purity will enjoy Christ's companionship here and will be acknowledged before God in heaven. **5**: *Book of life,* the register of God containing the names of the redeemed (13.8; 17.8; 20.12, 15; Ex 32.32; Ps 69.28; Dan 12.1; Mal 3.16; Lk 10.20).

**3.7–13**: **The sixth letter** is sent to *Philadelphia,* a small town in Lydia. **7**: *Key of David,* a symbol of authority (Isa 22.22). **8**: *An open door,* of opportunity (1 Cor 16.9; 2 Cor 2.12). **9**: Isa 43.4; 60.14. **10**: The Philadelphian church, though feeble (v. 8), will be sustained during the coming persecution. **12**: *A pillar,* steadfast and permanent (Gal 2.9). *New Jerusalem,* 21.2.

**3.14–22**: **The seventh letter** is sent to *Laodicea,* a proud and wealthy city near Colossae (Col 4.13–16). **14**: *The Amen* is Jesus Christ (2 Cor 1.20). *The origin of God's creation,* Christ is the principle and source of all creation (Jn 1.3; Col 1.15, 18). **15–16**: Their lukewarm Christianity is nauseating. **17**: Complacent and self-satisfied, they are spiritually poverty-stricken (Hos 12.8). **18**: *Eyes,* Laodicea was noted for its manufacture of a medication for ophthalmic disorders. **19**: God's chastening has beneficent motives (Prov 3.12; Heb 12.5–11). **20**: An invitation to share the joys of the Messianic banquet in

knocking; if you hear my voice and open the door, I will come in to you and eat with you, and you with me. 21To the one who conquers I will give a place with me on my throne, just as I myself conquered and sat down with my Father on his throne. 22Let anyone who has an ear listen to what the Spirit is saying to the churches."

4 After this I looked, and there in heaven a door stood open! And the first voice, which I had heard speaking to me like a trumpet, said, "Come up here, and I will show you what must take place after this." 2At once I was in the spirit,[l] and there in heaven stood a throne, with one seated on the throne! 3And the one seated there looks like jasper and carnelian, and around the throne is a rainbow that looks like an emerald. 4Around the throne are twenty-four thrones, and seated on the thrones are twenty-four elders, dressed in white robes, with golden crowns on their heads. 5Coming from the throne are flashes of lightning, and rumblings and peals of thunder, and in front of the throne burn seven flaming torches, which are the seven spirits of God; 6and in front of the throne there is something like a sea of glass, like crystal.

Around the throne, and on each side of the throne, are four living creatures, full of eyes in front and behind: 7the first living creature like a lion, the second living creature like an ox, the third living creature with a face like a human face, and the fourth living creature like a flying eagle. 8And the four living creatures, each of them with six wings, are full of eyes all around and inside. Day and night without ceasing they sing,

"Holy, holy, holy,
the Lord God the Almighty,
who was and is and is to
come."

9And whenever the living creatures give glory and honor and thanks to the one who is seated on the throne, who lives forever and ever, 10the twenty-four elders fall before the one who is seated on the throne and worship the one who lives forever and ever; they cast their crowns before the throne, singing,

11 "You are worthy, our Lord
and God,
to receive glory and honor
and power,
for you created all things,
and by your will they existed
and were created."

5 Then I saw in the right hand of the one seated on the throne a scroll written on the inside and on the back, sealed[m] with seven seals; 2and I saw a mighty angel proclaiming with a loud voice, "Who is worthy to open the scroll and break its seals?" 3And no one in heaven or on earth or under the earth was able to open the scroll or to look into it. 4And I began to weep bitterly because no one was found worthy to open the scroll or to look into it. 5Then one of the elders

*l* Or *in the Spirit* *m* Or *written on the inside, and sealed on the back*

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the coming age (compare Mt 26.29). **21**: *A place with me,* a promise of reigning with Christ in glory (22.5; Lk 22.30).

**4.1–5.14: Vision of the glory of God and of the Lamb.**

**4.1**: *The first voice,* mentioned in 1.10. *Come up,* John was exalted in spirit, as was Ezekiel, to behold visions of God (Ezek 3.12; 8.3; 11.1). **2**: *A throne,* Ezek 1.26–28. **3**: The glory of the divine presence is described in terms of precious gems. **4**: *Twenty-four elders,* probably angelic beings of the heavenly court, symbolizing the twelve patriarchs of the Old Testament and the twelve apostles of the New Testament. **5**: *Flashes of lightning,* expressive of the majesty of the Most High (Ex 19.16; Rev 11.19). *Seven spirits,* 1.4. **6**: *A sea of glass* suggests the distance between God and his creatures, even in heaven. *Four living creatures,* angelic beings representing humankind and all beasts (Ezek 1.5, 10). *Full of eyes,* symbolizing unceasing watchfulness. **8**: *Six wings . . . Holy, holy, holy,* Isa 6.2–3. **10**: *Cast their crowns,* acknowledging that all power comes from God. **11**: *They existed* in God's mind from all eternity.

**5.1**: *A scroll,* containing the fixed purposes of God for the future (Ezek 2.9–10). *Sealed,* therefore both unalterable and unknown to others. **3–5**: No created being is worthy to

said to me, "Do not weep. See, the Lion of the tribe of Judah, the Root of David, has conquered, so that he can open the scroll and its seven seals."

6 Then I saw between the throne and the four living creatures and among the elders a Lamb standing as if it had been slaughtered, having seven horns and seven eyes, which are the seven spirits of God sent out into all the earth. 7He went and took the scroll from the right hand of the one who was seated on the throne. 8When he had taken the scroll, the four living creatures and the twenty-four elders fell before the Lamb, each holding a harp and golden bowls full of incense, which are the prayers of the saints. 9They sing a new song:

"You are worthy to take the scroll
and to open its seals,
for you were slaughtered and by
your blood you ransomed
for God
saints from[n] every tribe and
language and people
and nation;
10 you have made them to be a
kingdom and priests
serving[o] our God,
and they will reign on earth."

11 Then I looked, and I heard the voice of many angels surrounding the throne and the living creatures and the elders; they numbered myriads of myriads and thousands of thousands, 12singing with full voice,

"Worthy is the Lamb that was
slaughtered
to receive power and wealth and
wisdom and might
and honor and glory and
blessing!"

13Then I heard every creature in heaven and on earth and under the earth and in the sea, and all that is in them, singing,

"To the one seated on the throne
and to the Lamb
be blessing and honor and glory
and might
forever and ever!"

14And the four living creatures said, "Amen!" And the elders fell down and worshiped.

6 Then I saw the Lamb open one of the seven seals, and I heard one of the four living creatures call out, as with a voice of thunder, "Come!"[p] 2I looked, and there was a white horse! Its rider had a bow; a crown was given to him, and he came out conquering and to conquer.

3 When he opened the second seal, I heard the second living creature call out, "Come!"[p] 4And out came[q] another horse, bright red; its rider was permitted to take peace from the earth, so that people would slaughter one another; and he was given a great sword.

5 When he opened the third seal, I

*n* Gk *ransomed for God from*
*o* Gk *priests to*
*p* Or "Go!"
*q* Or *went*

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carry out God's plan, only the Messianic king can do so; for his titles (*Lion . . . Root*), compare Gen 49.9–10; Isa 11.1, 10.

**5.6–9**: The *Lamb . . . slaughtered,* refers to Christ's sacrificial death, by which God's purposes contained in the scroll are accomplished (Isa 53.7; Jn 1.29, 36; 1 Pet 1.19). *Seven horns . . . seven eyes,* plentitude of power and insight. *Seven spirits,* 1.4. **8**: *The prayers of the saints* on earth are joined with the worship rendered to the *Lamb* by heavenly creatures. **9–10**: *A new song,* because Christ has inaugurated a new era (14.3). The Lamb is adored in terms similar to the adoration rendered to God (4.11). *A kingdom and priests,* the vocation promised to Israel (Ex 19.6; Isa 61.6) is extended to the church (1 Pet 2.9). **11–12**: The sevenfold praise of *myriads* in heaven honoring the sacrificial *Lamb.* **13**: Universal praise to the Creator and to the Redeemer as equal in majesty.

**6.1–17**: **The opening of the first six seals** of the scroll, and the pictorial enactment of what is written therein. **1–8**: *Come!* addressed successively to each of the four *riders* (Zech 6.1–3) who accomplish God's purposes. **2**: The *white horse* symbolizes a conquering power that none can resist (in 19.11–13 the reference is to Christ). **4**: The *red horse* symbolizes war and bloodshed. **5**: The *black horse* symbolizes famine, which follows upon war. **8**: The *pale green horse* symbolizes pestilence and death. *A fourth* part indicates wide but not total devastation. *Pestilence,* Ex 9.3;

heard the third living creature call out, "Come!"[r] I looked, and there was a black horse! Its rider held a pair of scales in his hand, [6]and I heard what seemed to be a voice in the midst of the four living creatures saying, "A quart of wheat for a day's pay,[s] and three quarts of barley for a day's pay,[s] but do not damage the olive oil and the wine!"

7 When he opened the fourth seal, I heard the voice of the fourth living creature call out, "Come!"[r] [8]I looked and there was a pale green horse! Its rider's name was Death, and Hades followed with him; they were given authority over a fourth of the earth, to kill with sword, famine, and pestilence, and by the wild animals of the earth.

9 When he opened the fifth seal, I saw under the altar the souls of those who had been slaughtered for the word of God and for the testimony they had given; [10]they cried out with a loud voice, "Sovereign Lord, holy and true, how long will it be before you judge and avenge our blood on the inhabitants of the earth?" [11]They were each given a white robe and told to rest a little longer, until the number would be complete both of their fellow servants[t] and of their brothers and sisters,[u] who were soon to be killed as they themselves had been killed.

12 When he opened the sixth seal, I looked, and there came a great earthquake; the sun became black as sackcloth, the full moon became like blood, [13]and the stars of the sky fell to the earth as the fig tree drops its winter fruit when shaken by a gale. [14]The sky vanished like a scroll rolling itself up, and every mountain and island was removed from its place. [15]Then the kings of the earth and the magnates and the generals and the rich and the powerful, and everyone, slave and free, hid in the caves and among the rocks of the mountains, [16]calling to the mountains and rocks, "Fall on us and hide us from the face of the one seated on the throne and from the wrath of the Lamb; [17]for the great day of their wrath has come, and who is able to stand?"

7 After this I saw four angels standing at the four corners of the earth, holding back the four winds of the earth so that no wind could blow on earth or sea or against any tree. [2]I saw another angel ascending from the rising of the sun, having the seal of the living God, and he called with a loud voice to the four angels who had been given power to damage earth and sea, [3]saying, "Do not damage the earth or the sea or the trees, until we have marked the servants[t] of our God with a seal on their foreheads."

4 And I heard the number of those who were sealed, one hundred forty-four thousand, sealed out of every tribe of the people of Israel:

5 From the tribe of Judah twelve thousand sealed,
from the tribe of Reuben twelve thousand,
from the tribe of Gad twelve thousand,

*r* Or *"Go!"* *s* Gk *a denarius* *t* Gk *slaves* *u* Gk *brothers*

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2 Sam 24.13; Ezek 5.12. *Wild animals,* Ezek 5.17; 29.5; 33.27.

**6.9–17**: **The fifth and sixth seals** describe the prayers of the martyrs in heaven (vv. 9–11) and their effects on earth (vv. 12–17). **9**: The souls of the martyrs are said to be *under the altar* because they had been martyred for the sake of Christ (Mt 24.9; Phil 2.17; 2 Tim 4.6). **10**: *How long?* is a cry for divine vindication. *Avenge our blood,* vengeance belongs to God (Rom 12.19). **11**: *White robe,* see 2.17 n. and 7.9 n. **12–14**: The *great earthquake* and cosmic catastrophes are not to be understood literally, but represent social upheavals and divine judgment on the Day of the Lord (Isa 34.4; Joel 2.30–31; Am 8.9). **15–17**: All classes of society seek to escape from God (Isa 2.10).

**7.1–17**: **An interlude** between the sixth and seventh seals: two visions (vv. 1–8 and vv. 9–17) which provide assurance that God's people are secure from the plagues and judgments. **3**: The seal (Ezek 9.4–6) marks those under God's protection; they are preserved through, not from, tribulations (1 Cor 10.13). **4**: The explicit number (144,000) symbolizes completeness; not one of the redeemed is missing.

6 from the tribe of Asher twelve thousand,
from the tribe of Naphtali twelve thousand,
from the tribe of Manasseh twelve thousand,
7 from the tribe of Simeon twelve thousand,
from the tribe of Levi twelve thousand,
from the tribe of Issachar twelve thousand,
8 from the tribe of Zebulun twelve thousand,
from the tribe of Joseph twelve thousand,
from the tribe of Benjamin twelve thousand sealed.

9 After this I looked, and there was a great multitude that no one could count, from every nation, from all tribes and peoples and languages, standing before the throne and before the Lamb, robed in white, with palm branches in their hands. 10They cried out in a loud voice, saying,

"Salvation belongs to our God
who is seated on the
throne, and to the Lamb!"

11And all the angels stood around the throne and around the elders and the four living creatures, and they fell on their faces before the throne and worshiped God, 12singing,

"Amen! Blessing and glory
and wisdom
and thanksgiving and honor
and power and might
be to our God forever and ever!
Amen."

13 Then one of the elders addressed me, saying, "Who are these, robed in white, and where have they come from?" 14I said to him, "Sir, you are the one that knows." Then he said to me, "These are they who have come out of the great ordeal; they have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb.

15 For this reason they are before the
throne of God,
and worship him day and night
within his temple,
and the one who is seated on
the throne will shelter
them.
16 They will hunger no more, and
thirst no more;
the sun will not strike them,
nor any scorching heat;
17 for the Lamb at the center of the
throne will be their
shepherd,
and he will guide them to
springs of the water of life,
and God will wipe away every
tear from their eyes."

8 When the Lamb opened the seventh seal, there was silence in heaven for about half an hour. 2And I saw the seven angels who stand before God, and seven trumpets were given to them.

3 Another angel with a golden censer came and stood at the altar; he was given a great quantity of incense to offer with the prayers of all the saints on the golden altar that is before the throne. 4And the smoke of the incense, with the prayers of the saints, rose before God from the hand of the angel. 5Then the angel took the censer and filled it with fire from the altar and threw it on the earth; and there were peals of thunder, rumblings, flashes of lightning, and an earthquake.

6 Now the seven angels who had the

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**7.9**: *A great multitude* of the redeemed, so many they cannot be counted. *White* robes and *palm branches* symbolize righteousness and victory. **12**: A sevenfold ascription of praise to God. **14**: *The blood of the Lamb* cleanses from sin (Jn 1.29; 1 Jn 1.7). **15**: *Before the throne of God,* in a favored position because of their faithfulness. To *worship* God implies activity in heaven. *Shelter them,* literally "spread his tabernacle over them." **16**: Isa 49.10; Ps 121.6. **17**: A paradox, the *Lamb* is a *shepherd* (Ps 23.1–2; Ezek 34.23–24; Jn 10.11). *Springs of . . . life,* 21.6; 22.1, 17; Jn 4.10; 7.37. *Wipe away every tear,* 21.4; Isa 25.8.

**8.1–5**: **The seventh seal** is opened. The sight of the unsealed scroll leads to reverential *silence*. **3**: *Incense . . . prayers,* Ps 141.2. **5**: Ezek 10.2.

seven trumpets made ready to blow them.

7 The first angel blew his trumpet, and there came hail and fire, mixed with blood, and they were hurled to the earth; and a third of the earth was burned up, and a third of the trees were burned up and all green grass was burned up.

8 The second angel blew his trumpet, and something like a great mountain, burning with fire, was thrown into the sea. 9A third of the sea became blood, a third of the living creatures in the sea died, and a third of the ships were destroyed.

10 The third angel blew his trumpet, and a great star fell from heaven, blazing like a torch, and it fell on a third of the rivers and on the springs of water. 11The name of the star is Wormwood. A third of the waters became wormwood, and many died from the water, because it was made bitter.

12 The fourth angel blew his trumpet, and a third of the sun was struck, and a third of the moon, and a third of the stars, so that a third of their light was darkened; a third of the day was kept from shining, and likewise the night.

13 Then I looked, and I heard an eagle crying with a loud voice as it flew in midheaven, "Woe, woe, woe to the inhabitants of the earth, at the blasts of the other trumpets that the three angels are about to blow!"

9 And the fifth angel blew his trumpet, and I saw a star that had fallen from heaven to earth, and he was given the key to the shaft of the bottomless pit; 2he opened the shaft of the bottomless pit, and from the shaft rose smoke like the smoke of a great furnace, and the sun and the air were darkened with the smoke from the shaft. 3Then from the smoke came locusts on the earth, and they were given authority like the authority of scorpions of the earth. 4They were told not to damage the grass of the earth or any green growth or any tree, but only those people who do not have the seal of God on their foreheads. 5They were allowed to torture them for five months, but not to kill them, and their torture was like the torture of a scorpion when it stings someone. 6And in those days people will seek death but will not find it; they will long to die, but death will flee from them.

7 In appearance the locusts were like horses equipped for battle. On their heads were what looked like crowns of gold; their faces were like human faces, 8their hair like women's hair, and their teeth like lions' teeth; 9they had scales like iron breastplates, and the noise of their wings was like the noise of many chariots with horses rushing into battle. 10They have tails like scorpions, with stingers, and in their tails is their power to harm people for five months. 11They have as king over them the angel of the bottomless pit; his name in Hebrew is Abaddon,[v] and in Greek he is called Apollyon.[w]

12 The first woe has passed. There are still two woes to come.

*v* That is, *Destruction* *w* That is, *Destroyer*

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**8.6–9.21: The first six trumpets** introduce new convulsions of nature, in judgment upon the wicked (compare the plagues of Egypt, Ex 9.23, 25; 7.17–21; 10.21–23). These calamities are not consecutive nor are they to be taken literally.

**8.11**: *Wormwood,* a bitter drug symbolizing divine chastisements (Jer 9.15; 23.15). **13**: *An eagle* announces impending judgment. *Woe . . .*, thrice repeated because the last three plagues are especially grievous.

**9.1–12: The plague of demonic locusts,** which combine the terrors of evil spirits and of invading horsemen (probably Parthians). **1**: *A star . . . fallen from heaven,* one of the fallen angels, perhaps Satan himself (v. 11; Lk 10.18). **3**: *Locusts,* Ex 10.12–15. **4**: God's servants are not to be harmed (7.3). **5**: *Five months,* the period from May to September, the life-cycle of a plague of locusts. **6**: *Will seek death,* in utter despair because of the torments.

**9.7–10**: John apparently would have the reader understand the locusts to be of considerable size. **11**: The name *Abaddon,* which means "Destruction," denotes the depths of Sheol (Job 26.6; see Prov 15.11 n.).

13 Then the sixth angel blew his trumpet, and I heard a voice from the four[x] horns of the golden altar before God, 14 saying to the sixth angel who had the trumpet, "Release the four angels who are bound at the great river Euphrates." 15 So the four angels were released, who had been held ready for the hour, the day, the month, and the year, to kill a third of humankind. 16 The number of the troops of cavalry was two hundred million; I heard their number. 17 And this was how I saw the horses in my vision: the riders wore breastplates the color of fire and of sapphire[y] and of sulfur; the heads of the horses were like lions' heads, and fire and smoke and sulfur came out of their mouths. 18 By these three plagues a third of humankind was killed, by the fire and smoke and sulfur coming out of their mouths. 19 For the power of the horses is in their mouths and in their tails; their tails are like serpents, having heads; and with them they inflict harm.

20 The rest of humankind, who were not killed by these plagues, did not repent of the works of their hands or give up worshiping demons and idols of gold and silver and bronze and stone and wood, which cannot see or hear or walk. 21 And they did not repent of their murders or their sorceries or their fornication or their thefts.

10 And I saw another mighty angel coming down from heaven, wrapped in a cloud, with a rainbow over his head; his face was like the sun, and his legs like pillars of fire. 2 He held a little scroll open in his hand. Setting his right foot on the sea and his left foot on the land, 3 he gave a great shout, like a lion roaring. And when he shouted, the seven thunders sounded. 4 And when the seven thunders had sounded, I was about to write, but I heard a voice from heaven saying, "Seal up what the seven thunders have said, and do not write it down." 5 Then the angel whom I saw standing on the sea and the land

raised his right hand to heaven
6 and swore by him who lives
forever and ever,

who created heaven and what is in it, the earth and what is in it, and the sea and what is in it: "There will be no more delay, 7 but in the days when the seventh angel is to blow his trumpet, the mystery of God will be fulfilled, as he announced to his servants[z] the prophets."

8 Then the voice that I had heard from heaven spoke to me again, saying, "Go, take the scroll that is open in the hand of the angel who is standing on the sea and on the land." 9 So I went to the angel and told him to give me the little scroll; and he said to me, "Take it, and eat; it will be bitter to your stomach, but sweet as honey in your mouth." 10 So I took the little scroll from the hand of the angel and ate it; it was sweet as honey in my mouth, but when I had eaten it, my stomach was made bitter.

11 Then they said to me, "You must prophesy again about many peoples and nations and languages and kings."

11 Then I was given a measuring rod like a staff, and I was told, "Come and measure the temple of God and the altar and those who worship there, 2 but do not measure the court outside the temple; leave that out, for it is given over to the nations, and they will trample over the holy city for forty-two

*x* Other ancient authorities lack *four*
*y* Gk *hyacinth* *z* Gk *slaves*

**9.13–21: The plague of demonic cavalry.** **14**: The *Euphrates* was at the eastern border of the Roman empire, where invasion by the Parthians was feared. **16–19**: As with the locusts, the details regarding the two hundred million cavalry are not to be understood literally. **20–21**: Compare the hardness of Pharaoh's heart despite the plagues (Ex 8.15, 19).

**10.1–11.13: An interlude** between the sixth and seventh trumpets; two visions (10.1–11 and 11.1–13) provide consolation and assurance for the seer and for his fellow-believers.

**10.1–2**: The smallness of the *little scroll* is emphasized in contrast to the *mighty angel* holding it. **6**: *No more delay* in the accomplishment of God's will. **7**: *The mystery of God,* Rom 16.25–26; Eph 1.9; 3.3–9; Col 1.26, 27. **8**: *The scroll,* which is not the sealed scroll of 5.1, is a special message from God to John. **9**:

months. 3And I will grant my two witnesses authority to prophesy for one thousand two hundred sixty days, wearing sackcloth."

4 These are the two olive trees and the two lampstands that stand before the Lord of the earth. 5And if anyone wants to harm them, fire pours from their mouth and consumes their foes; anyone who wants to harm them must be killed in this manner. 6They have authority to shut the sky, so that no rain may fall during the days of their prophesying, and they have authority over the waters to turn them into blood, and to strike the earth with every kind of plague, as often as they desire.

7 When they have finished their testimony, the beast that comes up from the bottomless pit will make war on them and conquer them and kill them, 8and their dead bodies will lie in the street of the great city that is prophetically[a] called Sodom and Egypt, where also their Lord was crucified. 9For three and a half days members of the peoples and tribes and languages and nations will gaze at their dead bodies and refuse to let them be placed in a tomb; 10and the inhabitants of the earth will gloat over them and celebrate and exchange presents, because these two prophets had been a torment to the inhabitants of the earth.

11 But after the three and a half days, the breath[b] of life from God entered them, and they stood on their feet, and those who saw them were terrified. 12Then they[c] heard a loud voice from heaven saying to them, "Come up here!" And they went up to heaven in a cloud while their enemies watched them. 13At that moment there was a great earthquake, and a tenth of the city fell; seven thousand people were killed in the earthquake, and the rest were terrified and gave glory to the God of heaven.

14 The second woe has passed. The third woe is coming very soon.

15 Then the seventh angel blew his trumpet, and there were loud voices in heaven, saying,

"The kingdom of the world has
become the kingdom of
our Lord
and of his Messiah,[d]
and he will reign forever and ever."

16 Then the twenty-four elders who sit on their thrones before God fell on their faces and worshiped God, 17singing,

"We give you thanks, Lord
God Almighty,
who are and who were,
for you have taken your
great power
and begun to reign.
18 The nations raged,
but your wrath has come,
and the time for judging
the dead,

*a* Or *allegorically*; Gk *spiritually* *b* Or *the spirit*
*c* Other ancient authorities read *I* *d* Gk *Christ*

Ezek 2.8; 3.1–3. **10**: *Sweet,* because it contains God's words; *bitter,* because it involves his terrible judgments. **11**: *You must,* in accord with the divine will, *prophesy again;* the second part of the book (chs 12–22) contains these prophecies.

**11.1–13**: **The measuring of the temple and the two witnesses. 1**: The sanctuary *and those who worship there* are measured with a view to their preservation (as in Zech 2.1–5; compare Ezek 40.3–42.20). **2**: *The court outside,* the court of the Gentiles. *The holy city,* Jerusalem (Mt 4.5; 27.53). *Forty-two months*= 1260 days=3½ years (Dan 7.25; 12.7). **3**: *My two witnesses,* unnamed but resembling Zerubbabel and Joshua (Zech 3.1–4.14) as well as Elijah (vv. 5–6; 2 Kings 1.10) and Moses (v. 6; Ex 7.17, 19). Clothed in *sackcloth,* a sign that their prophecy was of repentance. **4**: *Two olive trees,* supplying the lamps in the temple (Zech 4.3–14). **6**: *Shut the sky,* cause a draught, as did Elijah (1 Kings 17.1). *Authority over the waters,* as did Moses and Aaron (Ex 7.17–21).

**11.7**: *The beast* (or "the monster") is the Antichrist (17.8; Dan 7.3, 7, 21). **8**: The name *Sodom* is applied to Jerusalem in Isa 1.10; Jer 23.14; Ezek 16.46–56. *Prophets had been a torment,* to those who have guilty consciences. **11–12**: The witnesses are resuscitated (compare Ezek 37.5, 10) and taken to heaven (2 Kings 2.11).

**11: 14–19**: **The seventh trumpet** announces (v. 15) the consummation of God's kingdom (10.7). **17–18**: A song of triumph.

for rewarding your servants,[e]
the prophets
and saints and all who fear
your name,
both small and great,
and for destroying those who
destroy the earth."

19 Then God's temple in heaven was opened, and the ark of his covenant was seen within his temple; and there were flashes of lightning, rumblings, peals of thunder, an earthquake, and heavy hail.

12 A great portent appeared in heaven: a woman clothed with the sun, with the moon under her feet, and on her head a crown of twelve stars. 2She was pregnant and was crying out in birth pangs, in the agony of giving birth. 3Then another portent appeared in heaven: a great red dragon, with seven heads and ten horns, and seven diadems on his heads. 4His tail swept down a third of the stars of heaven and threw them to the earth. Then the dragon stood before the woman who was about to bear a child, so that he might devour her child as soon as it was born. 5And she gave birth to a son, a male child, who is to rule[f] all the nations with a rod of iron. But her child was snatched away and taken to God and to his throne; 6and the woman fled into the wilderness, where she has a place prepared by God, so that there she can be nourished for one thousand two hundred sixty days.

7 And war broke out in heaven; Michael and his angels fought against the dragon. The dragon and his angels fought back, 8but they were defeated, and there was no longer any place for them in heaven. 9The great dragon was thrown down, that ancient serpent, who is called the Devil and Satan, the deceiver of the whole world—he was thrown down to the earth, and his angels were thrown down with him.

10 Then I heard a loud voice in heaven, proclaiming,

"Now have come the salvation
and the power
and the kingdom of our God
and the authority of his
Messiah,[g]
for the accuser of our comrades[h]
has been thrown down,
who accuses them day and night
before our God.
11 But they have conquered him by
the blood of the Lamb
and by the word of their
testimony,
for they did not cling to life even
in the face of death.
12 Rejoice then, you heavens
and those who dwell in them!
But woe to the earth and the sea,
for the devil has come down
to you
with great wrath,
because he knows that his time
is short!"

13 So when the dragon saw that he had been thrown down to the earth, he pursued[i] the woman who had given birth to the male child. 14But the woman was given the two wings of the great eagle, so that she could fly from the serpent into the wilderness, to her place where she is nourished for a time, and times, and half a time. 15Then from his mouth the serpent poured water like a river after the woman, to sweep her away with the flood. 16But the earth came to the help of the woman; it opened

*e* Gk *slaves* *f* Or *to shepherd* *g* Gk *Christ*
*h* Gk *brothers* *i* Or *persecuted*

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**12.1–17: The vision of the woman, the child, and the dragon** portrays the conflict between Christ and Satan. **1:** The *woman* appears to be the heavenly representative of God's people, first as Israel (from whom Jesus the Messiah was born, v. 5), then as the Christian Church (which is persecuted by the dragon, v. 13). **3:** *Dragon,* identified in v.9 as *the Devil* or *Satan.* His enormous size and power are suggested in v. 4. **5:** Ps 2.9 identifies the *child* to be the Davidic Messiah. **6:** The church is sustained by God.

**12.7:** *Michael,* an archangel and the champion of Israel (Dan 10.13, 21; 12.1; Jude 9). *The dragon and his angels,* see Eph 6.12 n. **9:** Lk 10.18. **10:** *The accuser,* Job 1.9–11. **11:** *They have conquered,* through both divine and human effort. **12:** *Rejoice,* Ps 96.11; Isa 49.13. **16:**

its mouth and swallowed the river that the dragon had poured from his mouth. [17]Then the dragon was angry with the woman, and went off to make war on the rest of her children, those who keep the commandments of God and hold the testimony of Jesus.

18 Then the dragon[j] took his stand on the sand of the seashore.

**13** [1]And I saw a beast rising out of the sea, having ten horns and seven heads; and on its horns were ten diadems, and on its heads were blasphemous names. [2]And the beast that I saw was like a leopard, its feet were like a bear's, and its mouth was like a lion's mouth. And the dragon gave it his power and his throne and great authority. [3]One of its heads seemed to have received a death-blow, but its mortal wound[k] had been healed. In amazement the whole earth followed the beast. [4]They worshiped the dragon, for he had given his authority to the beast, and they worshiped the beast, saying, "Who is like the beast, and who can fight against it?"

5 The beast was given a mouth uttering haughty and blasphemous words, and it was allowed to exercise authority for forty-two months. [6]It opened its mouth to utter blasphemies against God, blaspheming his name and his dwelling, that is, those who dwell in heaven. [7]Also it was allowed to make war on the saints and to conquer them.[l] It was given authority over every tribe and people and language and nation, [8]and all the inhabitants of the earth will worship it, everyone whose name has not been written from the foundation of the world in the book of life of the Lamb that was slaughtered.[m]

9 Let anyone who has an ear listen:
[10] If you are to be taken captive,
into captivity you go;
if you kill with the sword,
with the sword you must be killed.

Here is a call for the endurance and faith of the saints.

11 Then I saw another beast that rose out of the earth; it had two horns like a lamb and it spoke like a dragon. [12]It exercises all the authority of the first beast on its behalf, and it makes the earth and its inhabitants worship the first beast, whose mortal wound[n] had been healed. [13]It performs great signs, even making fire come down from heaven to earth in the sight of all; [14]and by the signs that it is allowed to perform on behalf of the beast, it deceives the inhabitants of earth, telling them to make an image for the beast that had been wounded by the sword[o] and yet lived; [15]and it was allowed to give breath[p] to the image of the beast so that the image of the beast could even speak and cause those who would not worship the image of the beast to be killed. [16]Also it causes all, both small and great, both rich and poor, both free and slave, to be marked on the right hand or the forehead, [17]so that no one can buy or sell who does not have the mark, that is, the name of the beast or the number of its name. [18]This calls for wisdom: let anyone with understanding calculate the

*j* Gk *Then he*; other ancient authorities read *Then I stood* *k* Gk *the plague of its death* *l* Other ancient authorities lack this sentence *m* Or *written in the book of life of the Lamb that was slaughtered from the foundation of the world* *n* Gk *whose plague of its death* *o* Or *that had received the plague of the sword* *p* Or *spirit*

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Aid comes from an unexpected quarter.

**13.1–18**: **The two beasts. 1–10**: The *beast* from *the sea* combines the powers of the four beasts of Dan ch 7 and represents the Roman empire, incited by the *dragon* (v. 2) to persecute *the saints* (v. 7). **5**: The sovereignty of God, even amid persecution, is implied by the use of passive verbs here and in vv. 7, 10, 14, 15 (compare 6.4; see 17.17 n.). *Forty-two months*, see 11.2 n. **8**: *Book of life*, see 3.5 n. **10**: Jer 15.2; Mt 26.52.

**13.11–18**: The *beast* from *the earth*, called the false prophet (19.20), enforces Emperor worship (v. 12), and produces *great signs* (v. 13) to deceive the people (v. 14; compare Deut 13.1–5; Mt 24.24; 2 Thess 2.9). **16–17**: *Marked* in imitation of the sealing of God's servants (7.2–4), resulting in economic boycott against the Christians. **18**: Since Hebrew and Greek letters have numerical equivalents, *the number of the beast* (666) is the sum of the separate letters of his name. Of countless ex-

number of the beast, for it is the number of a person. Its number is six hundred sixty-six.[q]

14 Then I looked, and there was the Lamb, standing on Mount Zion! And with him were one hundred forty-four thousand who had his name and his Father's name written on their foreheads. 2 And I heard a voice from heaven like the sound of many waters and like the sound of loud thunder; the voice I heard was like the sound of harpists playing on their harps, 3 and they sing a new song before the throne and before the four living creatures and before the elders. No one could learn that song except the one hundred forty-four thousand who have been redeemed from the earth. 4 It is these who have not defiled themselves with women, for they are virgins; these follow the Lamb wherever he goes. They have been redeemed from humankind as first fruits for God and the Lamb, 5 and in their mouth no lie was found; they are blameless.

6 Then I saw another angel flying in midheaven, with an eternal gospel to proclaim to those who live[r] on the earth—to every nation and tribe and language and people. 7 He said in a loud voice, "Fear God and give him glory, for the hour of his judgment has come; and worship him who made heaven and earth, the sea and the springs of water."

8 Then another angel, a second, followed, saying, "Fallen, fallen is Babylon the great! She has made all nations drink of the wine of the wrath of her fornication."

9 Then another angel, a third, followed them, crying with a loud voice, "Those who worship the beast and its image, and receive a mark on their foreheads or on their hands, 10 they will also drink the wine of God's wrath, poured unmixed into the cup of his anger, and they will be tormented with fire and sulfur in the presence of the holy angels and in the presence of the Lamb. 11 And the smoke of their torment goes up forever and ever. There is no rest day or night for those who worship the beast and its image and for anyone who receives the mark of its name."

12 Here is a call for the endurance of the saints, those who keep the commandments of God and hold fast to the faith of[s] Jesus.

13 And I heard a voice from heaven saying, "Write this: Blessed are the dead who from now on die in the Lord." "Yes," says the Spirit, "they will rest from their labors, for their deeds follow them."

14 Then I looked, and there was a white cloud, and seated on the cloud was one like the Son of Man, with a golden crown on his head, and a sharp sickle in his hand! 15 Another angel came out of the temple, calling with a loud voice to the one who sat on the cloud, "Use your sickle and reap, for the hour to reap has

*q* Other ancient authorities read *six hundred sixteen* *r* Gk *sit* *s* Or *to their faith in*

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planations, the most probable is *Neron Caesar* (in Hebrew letters), which, if spelled without the final *n*, also accounts for the variant reading, 616 (see note *q*).

**14.1–20**: **An interlude** of three visions intended to reassure the church amid trials and persecutions. **1–5**: The Lamb and those redeemed from the earth; as in 7.4, the one hundred forty-four thousand is a symbolic expression for the whole number of the faithful. **1**: *Mount Zion,* that is, the heavenly Zion (Heb 12.22). *Written on their foreheads,* 7.3; 22.4. **3**: *They,* the one hundred forty-four thousand. *New song,* compare 5.8–10. **4**: *They are virgins,* that is, chaste, in contrast to the devotees of the pagan cults (2.20–22). *First fruits,* Ex 23.19; Jas 1.18. **6–13**: Three angels announce the coming judgment. **6**: God's *eternal* purpose is soon to be fulfilled (10.7). **7**: *Fear God,* 15.4; Jer 10.7; Acts 5.11. *The hour of his judgment,* Acts 10.42; 17.31; 24.25. **8**: An anticipation of ch 18. **10**: *Wine of God's wrath,* Jer 25.15–16; 51.7. *Unmixed,* not diluted. Wine was often mixed with water before being drunk. *Tormented with fire,* in Gehenna (see 19.20 n.; 20.10). **11**: *Smoke,* 18.9, 18–19.3.

**14.13**: *Blessed,* see 1.3 n. *Their deeds,* the fruits of Christian character (Gal 5.22–23). **14–20**: The final judgment of God (Joel 3.13), involving the ingathering of the saints by *one like the Son of Man* (vv. 14–16) and the assem-

come, because the harvest of the earth is fully ripe." 16So the one who sat on the cloud swung his sickle over the earth, and the earth was reaped.

17 Then another angel came out of the temple in heaven, and he too had a sharp sickle. 18Then another angel came out from the altar, the angel who has authority over fire, and he called with a loud voice to him who had the sharp sickle, "Use your sharp sickle and gather the clusters of the vine of the earth, for its grapes are ripe." 19So the angel swung his sickle over the earth and gathered the vintage of the earth, and he threw it into the great wine press of the wrath of God. 20And the wine press was trodden outside the city, and blood flowed from the wine press, as high as a horse's bridle, for a distance of about two hundred miles.[t]

15 Then I saw another portent in heaven, great and amazing: seven angels with seven plagues, which are the last, for with them the wrath of God is ended.

2 And I saw what appeared to be a sea of glass mixed with fire, and those who had conquered the beast and its image and the number of its name, standing beside the sea of glass with harps of God in their hands. 3And they sing the song of Moses, the servant[u] of God, and the song of the Lamb:

"Great and amazing are your deeds,
Lord God the Almighty!
Just and true are your ways,
King of the nations![v]
4 Lord, who will not fear
and glorify your name?
For you alone are holy.
All nations will come
and worship before you,
for your judgments have been revealed."

5 After this I looked, and the temple of the tent[w] of witness in heaven was opened, 6and out of the temple came the seven angels with the seven plagues, robed in pure bright linen,[x] with golden sashes across their chests. 7Then one of the four living creatures gave the seven angels seven golden bowls full of the wrath of God, who lives forever and ever; 8and the temple was filled with smoke from the glory of God and from his power, and no one could enter the temple until the seven plagues of the seven angels were ended.

16 Then I heard a loud voice from the temple telling the seven angels, "Go and pour out on the earth the seven bowls of the wrath of God."

2 So the first angel went and poured his bowl on the earth, and a foul and painful sore came on those who had the mark of the beast and who worshiped its image.

3 The second angel poured his bowl into the sea, and it became like the blood of a corpse, and every living thing in the sea died.

4 The third angel poured his bowl into the rivers and the springs of water, and they became blood. 5And I heard the angel of the waters say,

"You are just, O Holy One, who are and were,

*t* Gk *one thousand six hundred stadia* *u* Gk *slave*
*v* Other ancient authorities read *the ages*
*w* Or *tabernacle* *x* Other ancient authorities read *stone*

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bling of the wicked for destruction (vv. 17–20; Isa 63.1–6). **14**: *White cloud,* Dan 7.13; Mt 24.30; Mk 14.62. **15–16**: A harvest scene and **18–20**: A vintage scene; these two scenes correspond to the parable in Mt 13.24–30, 37–43. **20**: God's judgment is severe and prolonged.

**15.1–16.21**: **The seven bowls of the wrath of God.**

**15.2–4**: Preparatory vision of the victorious martyrs in heaven (8.3–5). **2**: *Sea,* see 4.6 n. **3**: *Song of Moses,* i.e. Deut 32 with Ex 15.1–18. **7**: *Golden bowls,* resembling the bronze basins used by the priests in the sacrificial ritual (Ex 27.3). **8**: *Smoke,* Isa 6.1–4.

**16.1–21**: **The pouring of the bowls** (compare the plagues inflicted on Egypt, Ex chs 7–12). The descriptive details are not to be understood literally, but as contributing to the general effect of intense calamity and terror. **2**: Ex 9.10–11; Deut 28.35. **3–4**: Ex 7.17–21. **5**: *The angel* that has control *of the waters.*

for you have judged these things;
6 because they shed the blood of saints and prophets,
you have given them blood to drink.
It is what they deserve!"
7 And I heard the altar respond,
"Yes, O Lord God, the Almighty,
your judgments are true and just!"

8 The fourth angel poured his bowl on the sun, and it was allowed to scorch people with fire; 9 they were scorched by the fierce heat, but they cursed the name of God, who had authority over these plagues, and they did not repent and give him glory.

10 The fifth angel poured his bowl on the throne of the beast, and its kingdom was plunged into darkness; people gnawed their tongues in agony, 11 and cursed the God of heaven because of their pains and sores, and they did not repent of their deeds.

12 The sixth angel poured his bowl on the great river Euphrates, and its water was dried up in order to prepare the way for the kings from the east. 13 And I saw three foul spirits like frogs coming from the mouth of the dragon, from the mouth of the beast, and from the mouth of the false prophet. 14 These are demonic spirits, performing signs, who go abroad to the kings of the whole world, to assemble them for battle on the great day of God the Almighty. 15 ("See, I am coming like a thief! Blessed is the one who stays awake and is clothed,[y] not going about naked and exposed to shame.") 16 And they assembled them at the place that in Hebrew is called Harmagedon.

17 The seventh angel poured his bowl into the air, and a loud voice came out of the temple, from the throne, saying, "It is done!" 18 And there came flashes of lightning, rumblings, peals of thunder, and a violent earthquake, such as had not occurred since people were upon the earth, so violent was that earthquake. 19 The great city was split into three parts, and the cities of the nations fell. God remembered great Babylon and gave her the wine-cup of the fury of his wrath. 20 And every island fled away, and no mountains were to be found; 21 and huge hailstones, each weighing about a hundred pounds,[z] dropped from heaven on people, until they cursed God for the plague of the hail, so fearful was that plague.

17 Then one of the seven angels who had the seven bowls came and said to me, "Come, I will show you the judgment of the great whore who is seated on many waters, 2 with whom the kings of the earth have committed fornication, and with the wine of whose fornication the inhabitants of the earth have become drunk." 3 So he carried me away in the spirit[a] into a wilderness, and I saw a woman sitting on a scarlet beast that was full of blasphemous names, and it had seven heads and ten horns. 4 The woman was clothed in purple and scarlet, and adorned with gold and jewels and pearls, holding in her hand a golden cup full of abominations and the impurities of her fornication; 5 and on her forehead was written a name, a mystery: "Babylon the great, mother of whores and of earth's abominations." 6 And I saw that the woman was drunk with the blood of the saints and the blood of the witnesses to Jesus.

*y* Gk *and keeps his robes* *z* Gk *weighing about a talent* *a* Or *in the Spirit*

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**6**: Divine retribution.

**16.10**: Ex 10.21. **13**: *Foul spirits,* 1 Tim 4.1; 1 Jn 4.3. **15**: *Like a thief,* see 3.3 n. *Blessed,* see 1.3 n. **16**: *They,* the frog-like spirits. *Harmagedon,* spelled variously in the manuscripts with "gg" and/or "dd"; also "Armagedon." There is perhaps an allusion to Megiddo, the site of several decisive battles in Israel's history (compare Judg 5.19; 2 Kings 9.27; 2 Chr 35.22). **19**: *The great city,* Rome. **21**: *Hail,* Ex 9.23.

**17.1–18.24**: **The fall of Babylon,** which is Rome, the city on seven hills (17.9, 18) and the archpersecutor of the saints (17.6).

**17.2**: Jer 51.7. **3**: *Scarlet beast,* the Roman empire (see 13.1 n.). *Blasphemous names,* di-

When I saw her, I was greatly amazed. 7But the angel said to me, "Why are you so amazed? I will tell you the mystery of the woman, and of the beast with seven heads and ten horns that carries her. 8The beast that you saw was, and is not, and is about to ascend from the bottomless pit and go to destruction. And the inhabitants of the earth, whose names have not been written in the book of life from the foundation of the world, will be amazed when they see the beast, because it was and is not and is to come.

9 "This calls for a mind that has wisdom: the seven heads are seven mountains on which the woman is seated; also, they are seven kings, 10of whom five have fallen, one is living, and the other has not yet come; and when he comes, he must remain only a little while. 11As for the beast that was and is not, it is an eighth but it belongs to the seven, and it goes to destruction. 12And the ten horns that you saw are ten kings who have not yet received a kingdom, but they are to receive authority as kings for one hour, together with the beast. 13These are united in yielding their power and authority to the beast; 14they will make war on the Lamb, and the Lamb will conquer them, for he is Lord of lords and King of kings, and those with him are called and chosen and faithful."

15 And he said to me, "The waters that you saw, where the whore is seated, are peoples and multitudes and nations and languages. 16And the ten horns that you saw, they and the beast will hate the whore; they will make her desolate and naked; they will devour her flesh and burn her up with fire. 17For God has put it into their hearts to carry out his purpose by agreeing to give their kingdom to the beast, until the words of God will be fulfilled. 18The woman you saw is the great city that rules over the kings of the earth."

18 After this I saw another angel coming down from heaven, having great authority; and the earth was made bright with his splendor. 2He called out with a mighty voice,

"Fallen, fallen is Babylon the great!
It has become a dwelling place of demons,
a haunt of every foul spirit,
a haunt of every foul bird,
a haunt of every foul and hateful beast.[b]
3 For all the nations have drunk[c]
of the wine of the wrath of her fornication,
and the kings of the earth have committed fornication with her,
and the merchants of the earth have grown rich from the power[d] of her luxury."

4 Then I heard another voice from heaven saying,

"Come out of her, my people,
so that you do not take part in her sins,
and so that you do not share in her plagues;
5 for her sins are heaped high as heaven,
and God has remembered her iniquities.

*b* Other ancient authorities lack the words *a haunt of every foul beast* and attach the words *and hateful* to the previous line so as to read *a haunt of every foul and hateful bird* *c* Other ancient authorities read *She has made all nations drink* *d* Or *resources*

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vine titles given to Roman emperors. **5**: *On her forehead,* as was customary with Roman prostitutes. **8**: *The beast* now represents the Emperor Nero, commonly expected to return to life and power (v. 11).

**17.12**: These are probably local governors and satraps. **14**: The victory of Christ over the empire of the Antichrist. **17**: By divine over-ruling, the forces of iniquity fulfill the purposes of God (compare the passive verbs in 6.4; see 13.5 n.).

**18.1–24**: **Dirge over the fallen city** (Rome), with echoes from the taunt songs in Isa chs 23–24; ch 47; Jer chs 50–51; Ezek chs 26–27. **1–3**: Angelic announcement of doom (Isa 21.9; Jer 50.39). **4–8**: Summons to God's people to leave the doomed city; compare Jer 51.45; Mt 24.16. **5**: *High as heaven,* Jer 51.9. **6**: Ps 137.8.

6 Render to her as she herself has rendered,
and repay her double for her deeds;
mix a double draught for her in the cup she mixed.
7 As she glorified herself and lived luxuriously,
so give her a like measure of torment and grief.
Since in her heart she says,
'I rule as a queen;
I am no widow,
and I will never see grief,'
8 therefore her plagues will come in a single day—
pestilence and mourning and famine—
and she will be burned with fire;
for mighty is the Lord God who judges her."

9 And the kings of the earth, who committed fornication and lived in luxury with her, will weep and wail over her when they see the smoke of her burning; 10they will stand far off, in fear of her torment, and say,

"Alas, alas, the great city,
Babylon, the mighty city!
For in one hour your judgment has come."

11 And the merchants of the earth weep and mourn for her, since no one buys their cargo anymore, 12cargo of gold, silver, jewels and pearls, fine linen, purple, silk and scarlet, all kinds of scented wood, all articles of ivory, all articles of costly wood, bronze, iron, and marble, 13cinnamon, spice, incense, myrrh, frankincense, wine, olive oil, choice flour and wheat, cattle and sheep, horses and chariots, slaves—and human lives.[e]
14 "The fruit for which your soul longed
has gone from you,
and all your dainties and your splendor
are lost to you,
never to be found again!"
15The merchants of these wares, who gained wealth from her, will stand far off, in fear of her torment, weeping and mourning aloud,
16 "Alas, alas, the great city,
clothed in fine linen,
in purple and scarlet,
adorned with gold,
with jewels, and with pearls!
17 For in one hour all this wealth has been laid waste!"

And all shipmasters and seafarers, sailors and all whose trade is on the sea, stood far off 18and cried out as they saw the smoke of her burning,

"What city was like the great city?"

19And they threw dust on their heads, as they wept and mourned, crying out,

"Alas, alas, the great city,
where all who had ships at sea grew rich by her wealth!
For in one hour she has been laid waste."

20 Rejoice over her, O heaven, you saints and apostles and prophets! For God has given judgment for you against her.

21 Then a mighty angel took up a stone like a great millstone and threw it into the sea, saying,

"With such violence Babylon the great city
will be thrown down,
and will be found no more;
22 and the sound of harpists and minstrels and of flutists and trumpeters
will be heard in you no more;

*e* Or *chariots, and human bodies and souls*

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**18.9–20:** Lamentation of those who have been enriched by the wicked city: kings (vv. 9–10), merchants (vv. 11–16), and mariners (vv. 17–20). **20:** *Rejoice over her,* Jer 51.48.

**18.21–24:** Symbolic action representing the total destruction of the city (Jer 51.63–64). **22:** *Sound of harpists,* Jer 25.10; Ezek 26.13. **24:** *Blood of prophets,* Mt 23.34, 35; Lk 11.49–51; 13.33, 34.

and an artisan of any trade
will be found in you no more;
and the sound of the millstone
will be heard in you no more;
23 and the light of a lamp
will shine in you no more;
and the voice of bridegroom
and bride
will be heard in you no more;
for your merchants were the
magnates of the earth,
and all nations were deceived by
your sorcery.
24 And in you[f] was found the blood
of prophets and of saints,
and of all who have been
slaughtered on earth."

19 After this I heard what seemed to be the loud voice of a great multitude in heaven, saying,
"Hallelujah!
Salvation and glory and power
to our God,
2 for his judgments are true
and just;
he has judged the great whore
who corrupted the earth with
her fornication,
and he has avenged on her the
blood of his servants."[g]
3 Once more they said,
"Hallelujah!
The smoke goes up from her
forever and ever."
4 And the twenty-four elders and the four living creatures fell down and worshiped God who is seated on the throne, saying,
"Amen. Hallelujah!"
5 And from the throne came a voice saying,
"Praise our God,
all you his servants,[g]
and all who fear him,
small and great."
6 Then I heard what seemed to be the voice of a great multitude, like the sound of many waters and like the sound of mighty thunderpeals, crying out,
"Hallelujah!
For the Lord our God
the Almighty reigns.
7 Let us rejoice and exult
and give him the glory,
for the marriage of the Lamb
has come,
and his bride has made
herself ready;
8 to her it has been granted to
be clothed
with fine linen, bright and
pure"—
for the fine linen is the righteous deeds of the saints.
9 And the angel said[h] to me, "Write this: Blessed are those who are invited to the marriage supper of the Lamb." And he said to me, "These are true words of God." 10 Then I fell down at his feet to worship him, but he said to me, "You must not do that! I am a fellow servant[i] with you and your comrades[j] who hold the testimony of Jesus.[k] Worship God! For the testimony of Jesus[k] is the spirit of prophecy."

11 Then I saw heaven opened, and there was a white horse! Its rider is called Faithful and True, and in righteousness he judges and makes war. 12 His eyes are like a flame of fire, and on his head are many diadems; and he has a name inscribed that no one knows but himself. 13 He is clothed in a robe dipped in[l] blood, and his name is called The Word of God. 14 And the armies of heaven, wearing fine linen, white and pure, were

*f* Gk *her* *g* Gk *slaves* *h* Gk *he said*
*i* Gk *slave* *j* Gk *brothers* *k* Or *to Jesus*
*l* Other ancient authorities read *sprinkled with*

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**19.1–10**: **Praises in heaven** for the destruction of Rome (vv. 1–5) and for the marriage of the Lamb (vv. 6–9). **5**: Ps 115.13. **7**: *His bride,* the church (Eph 5.23–32). **8**: The church is holy as her members are holy (7.14; compare Mt 22.11). **9**: *Blessed,* see 1.3 n. **10**: An aside (compare 22.8–9).

**19.11–21**: **The victory of Christ and his heavenly armies** over the beast and his cohorts. **12**: *A name . . . that no one knows,* the greatness of Christ surpasses human knowledge (Mt 11.27). **13**: As revealer of God he is called *The Word of God* (Jn 1.1, 14). **14**: *Armies,* the angelic host (see Lk 2.13 note *j*). **15**: 1.16;

following him on white horses. 15From his mouth comes a sharp sword with which to strike down the nations, and he will rule[m] them with a rod of iron; he will tread the wine press of the fury of the wrath of God the Almighty. 16On his robe and on his thigh he has a name inscribed, "King of kings and Lord of lords."

17 Then I saw an angel standing in the sun, and with a loud voice he called to all the birds that fly in midheaven, "Come, gather for the great supper of God, 18to eat the flesh of kings, the flesh of captains, the flesh of the mighty, the flesh of horses and their riders—flesh of all, both free and slave, both small and great." 19Then I saw the beast and the kings of the earth with their armies gathered to make war against the rider on the horse and against his army. 20And the beast was captured, and with it the false prophet who had performed in its presence the signs by which he deceived those who had received the mark of the beast and those who worshiped its image. These two were thrown alive into the lake of fire that burns with sulfur. 21And the rest were killed by the sword of the rider on the horse, the sword that came from his mouth; and all the birds were gorged with their flesh.

20 Then I saw an angel coming down from heaven, holding in his hand the key to the bottomless pit and a great chain. 2He seized the dragon, that ancient serpent, who is the Devil and Satan, and bound him for a thousand years, 3and threw him into the pit, and locked and sealed it over him, so that he would deceive the nations no more, until the thousand years were ended. After that he must be let out for a little while.

4 Then I saw thrones, and those seated on them were given authority to judge. I also saw the souls of those who had been beheaded for their testimony to Jesus[n] and for the word of God. They had not worshiped the beast or its image and had not received its mark on their foreheads or their hands. They came to life and reigned with Christ a thousand years. 5(The rest of the dead did not come to life until the thousand years were ended.) This is the first resurrection. 6Blessed and holy are those who share in the first resurrection. Over these the second death has no power, but they will be priests of God and of Christ, and they will reign with him a thousand years.

7 When the thousand years are ended, Satan will be released from his prison 8and will come out to deceive the nations at the four corners of the earth, Gog and Magog, in order to gather them for battle; they are as numerous as the sands of the sea. 9They marched up over the breadth of the earth and surrounded the camp of the saints and the beloved city.

*m* Or *will shepherd* *n* Or *for the testimony of Jesus*

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Ps 2.9. **16**: 17.14; Deut 10.17. **17–18**: *An angel* summons the birds of prey (Ezek 39.4, 17–20). **19–21**: The final battle between Christ and Antichrist (anticipated in 16.13–16). **20**: *The false prophet,* the second beast of 13.11–15. *The lake of fire* is Gehenna (see 14.10 n.; Mt 18.9 note *g*).

**20.1–6: The binding of Satan and the reign of the martyrs.** **1**: *Chain,* 2 Pet 2.4; Jude 6. **2**: As other numerals in this book are to be understood symbolically and not literally, so this period of *a thousand years* represents the perfection and completion of the martyrs' reign with Christ, untroubled by Satan's wiles. The first limiting of the power of the evil one occurred during the ministry of the Seventy (Lk 10.18). One must beware of reading more into this passage than is warranted; e.g. nothing is said here about a reign on earth. **4**: *Thrones* of judgment (Dan 7.9, 22, 27; Mt 19.28; Lk 22.30). *Those . . . beheaded for their testimony,* martyrs (in 6.9–10 the souls of the martyrs, under the altar, cry for vengeance). *Its mark,* 13.16–17; 14.9. **6**: *Blessed,* see 1.3 n. *Priests,* 1.6; 5.10. *Second death,* see 2.11 n.

**20.7–10: The loosing of Satan and the final conflict.** *Gog and Magog,* Ezek chs 38–39. **9**: *The beloved city,* Jerusalem, symbol of the Church universal. *Fire,* 2 Kings 1.10–12. **10**: *Was thrown into the lake of fire,* the final overthrow of Satan.

And fire came down from heaven[o] and consumed them. 10 And the devil who had deceived them was thrown into the lake of fire and sulfur, where the beast and the false prophet were, and they will be tormented day and night forever and ever.

11 Then I saw a great white throne and the one who sat on it; the earth and the heaven fled from his presence, and no place was found for them. 12 And I saw the dead, great and small, standing before the throne, and books were opened. Also another book was opened, the book of life. And the dead were judged according to their works, as recorded in the books. 13 And the sea gave up the dead that were in it, Death and Hades gave up the dead that were in them, and all were judged according to what they had done. 14 Then Death and Hades were thrown into the lake of fire. This is the second death, the lake of fire; 15 and anyone whose name was not found written in the book of life was thrown into the lake of fire.

21 Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth; for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away, and the sea was no more. 2 And I saw the holy city, the new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. 3 And I heard a loud voice from the throne saying,

"See, the home[p] of God is
among mortals.
He will dwell[q] with them;
they will be his peoples,[r]
and God himself will be
with them;[s]
4 he will wipe every tear from
their eyes.
Death will be no more;
mourning and crying and pain
will be no more,
for the first things have
passed away."

5 And the one who was seated on the throne said, "See, I am making all things new." Also he said, "Write this, for these words are trustworthy and true." 6 Then he said to me, "It is done! I am the Alpha and the Omega, the beginning and the end. To the thirsty I will give water as a gift from the spring of the water of life. 7 Those who conquer will inherit these things, and I will be their God and they will be my children. 8 But as for the cowardly, the faithless,[t] the polluted, the murderers, the fornicators, the sorcerers, the idolaters, and all liars, their place will be in the lake that burns with fire and sulfur, which is the second death."

9 Then one of the seven angels who had the seven bowls full of the seven last plagues came and said to me, "Come, I will show you the bride, the wife of the

*o* Other ancient authorities read *from God, out of heaven,* or *out of heaven from God*
*p* Gk *the tabernacle* *q* Gk *will tabernacle*
*r* Other ancient authorities read *people*
*s* Other ancient authorities add *and be their God* *t* Or *the unbelieving*

**20.11–15: The final judgment. 12:** *Books,* containing the record of what everyone has done (Dan 7.10). *Book of life,* see 3.5 n. *Judged according to their works,* Mt 16.27; Rom 2.6; 2 Cor 5.10. **13–14:** *Death and Hades* (the temporary abode of the dead) are personified. **14:** *The second death,* see 2.11 n.; Mt 25.41.

**21.1–22.5: Vision of the new Jerusalem.**

**21.1–8: The renewal of creation. 1:** The *new heaven and . . . new earth,* predicted by Isaiah (Isa 65.17; 66.22); all creation will be renewed, freed from imperfections, and transformed by the glory of God (Rom 8.19–21). *The sea,* a symbol of turbulence and unrest. **2:** *New Jerusalem,* the church (Gal 4.26). *Prepared as a bride,* suggesting all that is beautiful and lovely (19.7–9). **3:** Ezek 37.27. **4:** 7.16; Isa 25.8; 35.10. **5:** The speaker is the Lord God (1.8). **6:** *Alpha* and *Omega,* see 1.8 n. *Water of life,* Isa 55.1; Jn 4.13; 7.37. **7:** *Those who conquer,* compare the concluding words of each of the seven letters in chs 2 and 3. **8:** *The cowardly* and *the faithless* do not have faith enough to endure trials, and so fall away in time of persecution. *Sorcerers,* literally "poisoners," those dealing in philters and poisons (Acts 19.19). *The lake,* see 19.20 n. *The second death,* contrasted to the water of life in v. 6 (see 2.11 n.).

**21.9–27: The measuring of the city.** Since the city is symbolical, so are its measurements (all of which are multiples of 12).

Lamb." [10]And in the spirit[u] he carried me away to a great, high mountain and showed me the holy city Jerusalem coming down out of heaven from God. [11]It has the glory of God and a radiance like a very rare jewel, like jasper, clear as crystal. [12]It has a great, high wall with twelve gates, and at the gates twelve angels, and on the gates are inscribed the names of the twelve tribes of the Israelites; [13]on the east three gates, on the north three gates, on the south three gates, and on the west three gates. [14]And the wall of the city has twelve foundations, and on them are the twelve names of the twelve apostles of the Lamb.

15 The angel[v] who talked to me had a measuring rod of gold to measure the city and its gates and walls. [16]The city lies foursquare, its length the same as its width; and he measured the city with his rod, fifteen hundred miles;[w] its length and width and height are equal. [17]He also measured its wall, one hundred forty-four cubits[x] by human measurement, which the angel was using. [18]The wall is built of jasper, while the city is pure gold, clear as glass. [19]The foundations of the wall of the city are adorned with every jewel; the first was jasper, the second sapphire, the third agate, the fourth emerald, [20]the fifth onyx, the sixth carnelian, the seventh chrysolite, the eighth beryl, the ninth topaz, the tenth chrysoprase, the eleventh jacinth, the twelfth amethyst. [21]And the twelve gates are twelve pearls, each of the gates is a single pearl, and the street of the city is pure gold, transparent as glass.

22 I saw no temple in the city, for its temple is the Lord God the Almighty and the Lamb. [23]And the city has no need of sun or moon to shine on it, for the glory of God is its light, and its lamp is the Lamb. [24]The nations will walk by its light, and the kings of the earth will bring their glory into it. [25]Its gates will never be shut by day—and there will be no night there. [26]People will bring into it the glory and the honor of the nations. [27]But nothing unclean will enter it, nor anyone who practices abomination or falsehood, but only those who are written in the Lamb's book of life.

22 Then the angel[y] showed me the river of the water of life, bright as crystal, flowing from the throne of God and of the Lamb [2]through the middle of the street of the city. On either side of the river is the tree of life[z] with its twelve kinds of fruit, producing its fruit each month; and the leaves of the tree are for the healing of the nations. [3]Nothing accursed will be found there any more. But the throne of God and of the Lamb will be in it, and his servants[a] will worship him; [4]they will see his face, and his name will be on their foreheads. [5]And there will be no more night; they need no light of lamp or sun, for the Lord God will be

*u* Or *in the Spirit* *v* Gk *He* *w* Gk *twelve thousand stadia* *x* That is, almost seventy-five yards *y* Gk *he* *z* Or *the Lamb.* [2]*In the middle of the street of the city, and on either side of the river, is the tree of life* *a* Gk *slaves*

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**9**: *The seven bowls,* see ch 16. **10**: *In the spirit,* see 1.10 n. *High mountain,* Ezek 40.2. **11**: *Jasper,* 4.3. **12**: Ezek 48.30–34. **14**: *Apostles,* Eph 2.20.

**21.15–18**: *The city* is represented as being a cube, symbol of perfection; its beauty and magnificence are suggested by the precious stones (Ex 28.17–21). **19**: Isa 54.11–12. **21**: *The street,* the paving of the streets.

**21.22–23**: *No temple . . . no sun* are needed because the Presence and Glory of God pervades the entire community (Isa 24.23; 60.1, 19). *Its lamp is the Lamb,* Jn 8.12. **25**: Gates are for protection from enemies; perpetually open gates symbolize perfect safety; see Isa 60.11. **27**: *Book of life,* see 3.5 n.

**22.1–5**: **The river and the tree of life.** **1**: *The river* of blessings from God (compare Gen 2.10; Ps 46.4; Ezek 47.1; Zech 14.8; Jn 4.10, 14). **2**: *The tree,* used here generically of many trees *on either side of the river* (Ezek 47.12). **3**: *The throne of God and of the Lamb* is one throne (Jn 10.30). **4**: To *see his face* will be the crowning joy of heaven (Mt 5.8; 1 Jn 3.2; compare 1 Cor 13.12). *On their foreheads,* see 7.3 n.; contrast 13.16. **5**: Those who *worship* God (v. 3) *will reign* with him in eternal triumph.

their light, and they will reign forever and ever.

6 And he said to me, "These words are trustworthy and true, for the Lord, the God of the spirits of the prophets, has sent his angel to show his servants[b] what must soon take place."

7 "See, I am coming soon! Blessed is the one who keeps the words of the prophecy of this book."

8 I, John, am the one who heard and saw these things. And when I heard and saw them, I fell down to worship at the feet of the angel who showed them to me; 9but he said to me, "You must not do that! I am a fellow servant[c] with you and your comrades[d] the prophets, and with those who keep the words of this book. Worship God!"

10 And he said to me, "Do not seal up the words of the prophecy of this book, for the time is near. 11Let the evildoer still do evil, and the filthy still be filthy, and the righteous still do right, and the holy still be holy."

12 "See, I am coming soon; my reward is with me, to repay according to everyone's work. 13I am the Alpha and the Omega, the first and the last, the beginning and the end."

14 Blessed are those who wash their robes,[e] so that they will have the right to the tree of life and may enter the city by the gates. 15Outside are the dogs and sorcerers and fornicators and murderers and idolaters, and everyone who loves and practices falsehood.

16 "It is I, Jesus, who sent my angel to you with this testimony for the churches. I am the root and the descendant of David, the bright morning star."

17 The Spirit and the bride say,
"Come."
And let everyone who hears say,
"Come."
And let everyone who is thirsty
come.
Let anyone who wishes take the
water of life as a gift.

18 I warn everyone who hears the words of the prophecy of this book: if anyone adds to them, God will add to that person the plagues described in this book; 19if anyone takes away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God will take away that person's share in the tree of life and in the holy city, which are described in this book.

20 The one who testifies to these things says, "Surely I am coming soon."

Amen. Come, Lord Jesus!

21 The grace of the Lord Jesus be with all the saints. Amen.[f]

*b* Gk *slaves* *c* Gk *slave* *d* Gk *brothers* *e* Other ancient authorities read *do his commandments* *f* Other ancient authorities lack *all*; others lack *the saints*; others lack *Amen*

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**22.6–21**: **Epilogue,** consisting of warnings and exhortations. **6**: *He said,* an angel (v. 8), perhaps the one referred to in 1.1. *These words,* i.e. the contents of this book. *The God of the spirits of the prophets,* the one who inspired the spirits of the prophets. **7**: A parenthesis, reporting the words of Christ (compare 16.15). *Blessed,* see 1.3 n. **8–9**: 19.10. **10**: *Do not seal,* this book is intended for all to read. **11**: The end of the age is too near to allow time for change.

**22.12**: *My reward is with me,* Isa 40.10; Jer 17.10. **13**: Christ applies God's title to himself (see 1.8 n.). **14**: *Blessed,* see 1.3 n. *Wash,* 7.14. *The city,* heavenly Jerusalem. **15**: *Dogs,* impure, lascivious persons (Phil 3.2). *Sorcerers,* see 21.8 n. **16**: *Root . . . of David,* Isa 11.1, 10; Mt 1.1. *Morning star,* see 2.28 n. **17**: *The bride,* the church. "*Come,*" singular number in Greek, is addressed to Jesus, as v. 20. **18–19**: A solemn warning against perversion of the teachings of *this book* (compare Deut 4.2; 12.32). **20**:*The one who testifies,* Jesus Christ; see 1.2. **21**: A fitting conclusion to this book and to the Bible.

# *Modern Approaches to Biblical Study*

Opening the Old Testament can be at first quite disconcerting to the average reader. If Moses wrote the Pentateuch (the Torah, see p. xxxv OT), he would appear to have done it in a very sporadic fashion, with laws and narrative put together in a puzzling mixture. And how was the book of Jeremiah assembled, with its personal sayings, the biography (Jer chs 37–45), and prose discourses? So many of the prophetical books have the character of pieces in an anthology, to which no indication of the date or life-setting have been provided. More basically, are we to think of the Old Testament as a *literary* work? In its final form it is literature, but how was it put together, especially since oral tradition (the prophets were *preachers*) must have played a role? These questions can also be addressed to the New Testament. How did the synoptic Gospels come to be written? What was the role of the early Christian community in the formation of the oral and written traditions about Jesus? It is problems such as these that gave rise to the scientific approach to the Bible in modern times—an approach that is manifested in the introductions and annotations of the present edition of the Bible.

## I. LITERARY CRITICISM

During the nineteenth and twentieth centuries scholars attempted to answer these questions by the method of literary criticism. This approach aimed primarily at questions of authorship (did John write the Gospel attributed to him?), and the formation of the *written* documents (how were the J, E, P, and D documents (see pp. xxxv–xxxvi OT) put together to form the Pentateuch?). This method achieved many good results. For example, we can now better grasp the message of Isa 40–55 when we read these chapters in the light of the exilic period rather than as coming from the Isaiah of 700 B.C. It must be acknowledged, however, that new insights from archaeology and history have revealed definite limitations of this method. Among other things, it failed to take seriously the *oral* traditions that lay behind the final written form of a biblical book, and it did not adequately examine questions of the origin or life-setting of the individual units within a book. This task was taken over by the method called "form criticism."

## II. FORM CRITICISM

The method of form criticism was first used by German scholars (Hermann Gunkel for the Old Testament; Martin Dibelius for the New Testament), who employed the term *Formegeschichte* (lit. "form history"). It was recognized that within the Bible certain definite literary genres or forms could be identified. Gunkel analyzed the Psalter into Hymns, Laments, Thanksgiving Songs, Liturgies, etc. The analysis rested upon a study of literary style, which was correlated with the life-setting (*Sitz im Leben*) of the individual Psalm. Often similar genres in the literature of Israel's neighbors, especially Egypt and Mesopotamia, served to suggest or confirm such analysis, which eventually was applied to all parts of the Bible.

The existence of various literary genres in the Bible had always been admitted, but they had not been studied in and for themselves or used as tools in the analysis of biblical literature. In a sense, they were taken for granted, just as we take for granted the several genres in our own literatures. Any newspaper presents its readers with many and various literary genres: advertisements, obituary notices, editorials, letters to the editor, human interest stories, the comics, etc. In all these cases fixed written forms can be recognized. Each has its own specific characteristics: certain expressions or formulae and perhaps even a given structure. Modern readers are oblivious to all these details. They are so attuned to the literary expressions of their own culture that they automatically "shift gears" as they move from one genre to another. But it is a different expe-

rience when they expose themselves to a literature as ancient and varied as the Bible.

The difference between the peoples of the ancient Semitic world, its way of thinking, and our own style, quickly dawns upon us. It would not do to exaggerate these differences, but the fact remains that the mode of expression of the people of biblical times is a challenge to our understanding. Thus, their way of writing history does not conform to ours, as we quickly learn from the story of David's rise in 1 Sam 16—2 Sam 5, or from the "throne succession" narrative in 2 Sam 9ff. Our task is to ascertain and respect the various literary types, whether historical, epic, saga, or legend, that occur in the Bible; otherwise we will fail to comprehend the literary riches preserved in the various parts of Scripture.

In contrast to an earlier generation of Bible readers, we are very much aware of the role played by oral tradition in the gradual formation of the Scriptures. Many of the biblical books have a long pre-history of oral transmission. The ancients retained in their memories far more than they wrote. Thus we read of Jeremiah being commissioned by the Lord to write "all the words that I have spoken to you . . . from the days of Josiah until today" (36.2). It would appear that it was only after a twenty-year period of preaching that Jeremiah resorted to writing. In his case, and in that of other prophets as well, it is easy to imagine that many of their listeners remembered certain sayings and even put them in writing. We know that Isaiah had a group of disciples (Isa 8.16). The wisdom-sayings were cultivated at the Jerusalem court (Prov 25.1), as was the case in Egypt. But many of these sayings doubtless were first coined among the common people. Similarly, the laws circulated by oral tradition before they became fixed in writing. They were proclaimed at the great feasts, such as that of the covenant renewal, and only later reduced to the codes we find in the Bible (Covenant [see Ex 20.22–23.33n.], Priestly, and Deuteronomic Codes). The stories of the Judges (Jephthah, Samson, Deborah, and others) circulated by word of mouth among the people concerned (in Transjordan and in Judah) before they were incorporated into a *book* such as Judges. The Gospels too have been analyzed in the light of the several units that went into their composition: the sayings of Jesus, the miracle stories, the Passion narratives, etc. Scholars came to recognize that some of these had their life-setting in the primitive Church. Such literary units reflect concerns that became particularly acute in the history of the community—such as the attitude to the synagogue, the delay of the parousia (=second coming), etc.—and the gospel material was shaped to meet the needs of the growing Church. Thus, several parables reflect their new life-setting (see p. 400); they shift the emphasis which Jesus would have placed on the coming of the kingdom to the second coming of Christ (e.g., the parable of the ten bridesmaids, Mt 25.1–13).

The life-setting of any piece of literature is a particularly important element. To a given life-setting there corresponds a certain range of literary genres. Thus, Israelite liturgy is the general life-setting within which the Psalms were composed and utilized. It was in the temple and in association with various feasts that the Songs of Praise, Thanksgivings, Laments, etc., were used. And we are better able to understand the structures and motifs of a given genre if we can locate it within its proper life-setting. In everyday life we understand the life-setting implicit in a wedding invitation, in an obituary notice, etc. In a similar vein, we must be sensitive to the life-setting of a given prophetic oracle, or a given wisdom saying. It is also important to recognize that the life-setting changes as a biblical tradition is handed down within a community. This fact is especially important for understanding the Gospels. Thus, one may distinguish between the historical life-setting in Jesus' own experience, into which one of his sayings may fit (Mk 2.27, "the sabbath was made for humankind, and not humankind for the sabbath"), from the life-setting in the Christian community that applied one of the Lord's sayings to a particular situation in the life of the Church (Mt 28.19–20, "Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them . . ."). Furthermore, as will be indicated in the following section dealing with redaction criticism, there is a third life-setting—the place of, and emphasis given to, a particular section within a Gospel. Thus, one can see the different ways in which the tradition concerning John the Baptist is used in the Gospels of Matthew and Mark. Each evangelist has his own way of emphasizing the traditions about Jesus, and gives these a specific life-setting within his own Gospel.

### III. REDACTION CRITICISM

The intensely analytical method of form criticism called forth another approach, synthetic in character. This is the method of "redaction criticism" (*Redaktionsgeschichte*, lit. "redaction history"), which studies the document in its final form from

the theological point of view of the author who arranged, modified, and edited the traditional material that formed the raw material out of which the work was created. Such an editor may even have created new forms to express new meanings appropriate to new contexts. The method of redaction criticism is most clearly illustrated by the differences among the Synoptic Gospels, which show that Matthew's viewpoint goes beyond Mark's, and that Luke's is different from either—despite the similarities among them all that warrant for them the term "synoptic." Now there is another life-setting to take into consideration: the life-setting of the Gospel itself—how a given form is used in a Gospel.

A similar synthetic approach is applicable to the Old Testament. It is not enough to recognize a unit or given literary genre. One must also consider its function within the larger work of which it forms a part. Thus, the various episodes in the book of Judges have been brought together to contribute to a higher unity, the theme of which is clearly enunciated in ch 2 of that book: the cycle of apostasy, enslavement, repentance, and deliverance (Judg 2.16–20). As the author of this passage clearly implies, readers should understand from history that Israel was prosperous and free only when it was loyal to God. Indeed, the book of Judges itself is a part of a larger composition: Joshua, Judges, 1–2 Samuel, 1–2 Kings. This corpus has been given the name "Deuteronomistic History," because it interprets the history of Israel from Joshua to the Exile in the light of the teaching of the book of Deuteronomy (see "The Historical Books," pp. 267–269 OT). It is interesting, furthermore, to compare the treatment given to a particular unit by the Deuteronomistic historians with that accorded by the Chronicler in that historical narrative. In 2 Sam 24.1, the bare fact is recorded that "the anger of the Lord was kindled against Israel, and he incited David against them. . . ." And David is condemned for taking a census on this occasion. But in 1 Chr 21.1 we read, "Satan stood up against Israel, and incited David to count the people of Israel." The point of view of the redactor has shaped the text—hence the name, redaction criticism.

## IV. TRANSMISSION (OR TRADITION) HISTORY

Another term that is frequently used in this kind of study of the biblical text is "transmission history" (*Überlieferungsgeschichte;* also called "tradition history," *Traditionsgeschichte*). This means the recognition of the growth and gradual formation of the stories that have been handed down—from simple forms in the beginning, to large complexes that can be recognized in the books as we now have them. Thus, the manner in which the Yahwist writer in the J document has put together the material belonging to pre-history (Gen 2–11), and has also worked out the sequence of the patriarchal narratives (e.g., that of Abraham), can come alive by the study of the history of the transmission of a unit. And very often this kind of analysis lends itself to conclusions about the history of Israel and its beliefs, enabling us to date certain ideas and movements as very old or as relatively late.

## V. OTHER WAYS OF READING THE TEXT

The above methods of approaching the biblical text can be summarized under the term historical methodology, or historical criticism. The purpose is to span the years and get into the meaning of the text as it came to be written. But there are other ways of reading the text that have surfaced in the history of exegesis. The typological reading sought to find correspondences between persons (Adam and Christ; see Rom 5.14–21), or events (Exodus and return from Babylon; see Isa 43. 16–19). Allegory sought for hidden meanings behind the obvious sense of the text (Noah's ark and baptism; see 1 Pet 3.20–21). These time-honored methods still survive.

In recent times other ways of reading the text have been proposed and they deserve to be noticed here. For example, why should one not read the Pentateuch as a whole, and not merely as the product of four primary documents? What meaning does one derive from such an approach to the Torah? What was the "canonical shape" given to the book of Isaiah by joining together its three major parts (1–39; 40–55; 56–66)? What difference does it make that the original Luke/Acts (one work) was separated into two books in different places in the New Testament? This kind of "holistic" approach yields a different perspective for interpretation. In a similar way the addition of the New Testament to the Old creates a broader context of interpretation for the Christian; at the same time the Christian should be aware that the Old Testament can complete or correct a Christian understanding of the Bible (e.g., an exaggerated personal eschatology.)

Furthermore, modern literary critics have chided biblical scholars for composing commentaries that

concentrate on the genesis of a biblical book. Why not approach the interpretation of such a work from the point of view of its final form, not its hypothetical pre-history? Repetitions can be deliberate and meaningful, and not just signs of separate documents (e.g., J or E in the Pentateuch) in a work. Modern tastes are beginning to make allowances for the different emphases in the styles of ancient writings.

The development of philosophical hermeneutics has also added further dimensions to biblical interpretation. No interpretation (of *any* text) takes place without presuppositions, of which we are often unaware. Historical methodology, too, has to make allowances for this. Contextual interpretation, i.e., interpretation from the situation in which either the reader or the writer begins, is inevitable. Hence many approaches have been recognized: liberationist, feminist, etc. Sophisticated methods of literary criticism have also been developed: structuralism, deconstruction, reader-response theory, etc. Perhaps the most practical rule for a Bible reader is to strive to become aware of his or her initial presuppositions in reading the Scriptures (and to recognize these also in the explanations offered by various interpreters). The long history of biblical interpretation teaches us valuable lessons about our own biases in reading a text.

## VI. SUMMARY

Current biblical scholarship employs all the methods that we have briefly described. It is concerned to determine the given literary genre of a biblical book or most often a given section of it (form criticism). Further, it may be possible to discover how this genre was handed down (transmission history), and came to be incorporated by a collector or editor (redaction criticism) into a continuous narrative, and ultimately became part of a written document (literary criticism). The methods do not exclude one another; in fact, they are mutually complementary. But they are not merely methods; they are not intellectual exercises for an élite. Every perceptive reader of the Bible can profit from the several approaches. We shall try to illustrate the advantages in the case of the Decalogue.

The literary genre of the Decalogue can be described as apodictic law. As opposed to casuistic law (or "case law"), which stipulates a course of action in given circumstances, the apodictic law is a forceful command or prohibition. (Apodictic means "clear" or "incontrovertible" and denotes foundational law from which there is generally no appeal.) There are several such laws in the Old Testament (for example, Ex 23.1–9; Lev 18.6–23). A motive clause may be appended to a law, as in the case of the sabbath law and honoring one's parents. Unfortunately, there is as yet no way of tracing the history of the development of the Decalogue, even though we can make many worthwhile observations about it. As is well known, there is more than one version of it: Ex 20.1–17, and Deut 5.6–22. A comparison of the two passages reveals something of the transmission history.

In general, the Decalogue in Deuteronomy is couched in language that is characteristic of this book: "as the Lord your God commanded you" (5.12–16; compare 4.5; 5.32); "that it may go well with you in the land that the Lord your God is giving you" (5.16, 29; 6.18). The familiar sabbath law is strengthened in Deuteronomy ("observe") as against Exodus ("remember"). A more striking difference is the motive clause: creation in six days and rest on the seventh (Ex 20.11), in contrast to the Exodus from Egypt (Deut 5.15). Originally, one may presume, there was no motive given; in the course of time, two different motives were offered.

The treatment of the second commandment is particularly interesting. The prohibition of a graven image (Ex 20.4; Deut 5.8) referred originally to an image of the Lord (see Ex 34.17). But both versions of the Decalogue, by adding the phrase "the likeness of anything . . . ," refer the prohibition to images of other gods—presumably at a time when *this* was the great temptation. The continuation, "you shall not bow down to them or serve them" refers now to the "other gods," and thus the second commandment stands in the shadow of the first; the prohibition of images (of the Lord) and of foreign gods is viewed as one and the same. The "false witness" in Ex 20.16 and Deut 5.20 calls for comment. In the Deuteronomy passage "false witness" is, more literally, "vain witness" (empty, and eventually, deceitful). One may reasonably surmise that the form in Exodus is the original. It is found frequently outside the Decalogue (for example, Ps 27.12; Prov 6.19 "lying witness"), whereas "vain witness" is found only in the Deuteronomic version of the Decalogue.

We may conclude, then, that the form of the Decalogue has had a complicated transmission history. What is suggested by the fact that it is found in two different books? The form in Exodus has the flavor of the editing given to the

Deuteronomistic history (Joshua to Kings): Egypt is "the house of slavery" (Ex 20.2); reverence for "the name of the LORD your God" (Ex 20.7). The import of such touches is to include the Decalogue within the sweep of Israel's salvation history as it is presented here. In Deuteronomy the role of the Decalogue is slightly different—it has become the sovereign will of God, mediated through Moses in a farewell speech. It is followed by the Deuteronomic code (Deut chs 12–26), which serves as a commentary on, or interpretation of, this Decalogue. But this life-setting of the Decalogue within the framework of the book of Deuteronomy is not necessarily the life-setting which the Decalogue had in the life of Israel. Here we are on somewhat uncertain ground. But it seems safe to say that *one* life-setting for the Decalogue has been the cult, perhaps at the covenant renewal ceremony, or the Feast of Tabernacles.

We have discussed the Decalogue merely as an example of how literary analysis of a biblical text can proceed. Basically the same approach can be used throughout the Old and New Testaments. And readers will find Bible reading more challenging, as well as more informative, if they study the text along these lines. They will understand how truly the Old Testament is a precipitate, as it were, from the life of Israel, the People of God. Similarly, the role of the Church in the formation of the New Testament, especially the Gospels, will stand out. We have not mentioned the Pauline Epistles, but readers will not fail to be impressed with the manner in which the "good news" is mediated by Paul, in contrast to the way in which it is presented in the four Gospels. In short, there is no book, or part of a book, in the Bible that does not have a literary form and a history behind its incorporation and transmission within the Scriptures. If we pay attention to this aspect of biblical literature, we shall be well on our way to understanding it.

# *Characteristics of Hebrew Poetry*


I. Poetry in the Bible
II. The Forms of Hebrew Poetry
  1. Parallelism
    a. Synonymous Parallelism
    b. Antithetic Parallelism
    c. Formal Parallelism
    d. Climactic Parallelism
    e. Internal or External Parallelism
    f. Complete or Incomplete Parallelism
  2. Meter
  3. Strophic Arrangement
III. The Techniques of Hebrew Poetry
  1. Acrostic Patterns
  2. Alliteration
  3. Assonance
  4. Onomatopoiea
  5. Paranomasia
IV. Conclusion


## I. POETRY IN THE BIBLE

Hebrew poetry has had a long and varied history, extending from the beginnings of Israel's life up to modern times. The earliest phases are represented by the poetical parts of the Old Testament (Hebrew Scriptures). These are, in relation to the total extent of the Old Testament, quite substantial: Psalms, Proverbs, Song of Solomon, Lamentations, almost the whole of Job, much of the prophetic literature, and many passages in the narrative literature (e.g., Gen ch 49; Ex 15.1–18; Deut chs 32 and 33; Judg 5.2–31). In all, this amounts to about one third of the Old Testament; but it is presumably only a fraction of the entire body of Hebrew poetry produced during the Old Testament period. The Hebrew poetic tradition is continued in the Apocrypha (Wisdom of Solomon, Sirach, and several passages in other books, e.g., Judith), and in parts of the Pseudepigrapha and of the literature of the Qumran sect (the Dead Sea Scrolls). In the New Testament much of the teaching of Jesus is expressed in poetic form (see "Literary Forms in the Gospels," §2); and there are passages of poetry in Lk chs 1–2 and in several other books, notably Revelation.

It is significant that the Hebrew poetic form is clear even when the poems have been transmitted in Greek. In translating from one language to another there is the double problem of reproducing both the spirit and the form of the original.

For technical reasons, and because of the dissimilarity between poetic structure in different languages, it may be difficult to reproduce the form satisfactorily. In order to preserve and communicate the spirit, it is often necessary in translation to adopt a different poetic form, or even to translate into rhythmical prose. The many attempts which have been made to render the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey* into English verse and prose show how formidable the undertaking can be. In some ways the translation of ancient Hebrew poetry presents a less intractable problem, because its formal characteristics are in the main simple and flexible. Increased knowledge of ancient Near Eastern literature, particularly the poetic texts from Ugarit in northern Syria, has enlarged our understanding of Hebrew poetry by providing parallels to its forms and techniques. Ps 29 is an excellent example of a Hebrew poem that reflects the structural characteristics and poetic techniques known to us from the Ugaritic texts. It has been suggested that it is an Israelite adaptation of a Canaanite hymn to Baal.

## II. THE FORMS OF HEBREW POETRY

Although there are gaps in our knowledge of the forms of ancient Hebrew poetry, and important points are still open to dispute, its general structure is sufficiently clear. Three main formal characteristics have been attributed to it: §1. Parallelism; §2. Meter; §3. Strophic Arrangement.

### *1. Parallelism*

This feature (sometimes referred to also as "thought rhyme") is a balance not only of form but also of the thought between successive members in a poem. The terminology applied to these members varies considerably, but in this article the poetic unit printed as a line in the New Revised Standard Version will be called a "stich" (Gr. *stichos,* "line"), and combinations of two and three of these units will be termed "distichs" and "tristichs" respectively. A distich is composed of two lines, and a tristich is composed of three. The following from Ps 19.1 is a distich, or couplet, in which such a balance of thought and form is evident:

The heavens are telling the glory of God;
and the firmament proclaims his handiwork.

As an example of a tristich we may take Ps 100.1:

Make a joyful noise to the LORD, all the earth.
Worship the LORD with gladness;
come into his presence with singing.

Parallelism is more than mere repetition of words or ideas in successive lines. The second line is a specification, often an intensification, of the first. It can be said to serve, sometimes with a third line, to complement the thought of the first line.

Parallelism appears in four main forms: (*a*) Synonymous, (*b*) Antithetic, (*c*) Formal, (*d*) Climactic; and it may be (*e*) Internal or External, and (*f*) Complete or Incomplete.

(*a*) In Synonymous Parallelism the same thought is expressed in successive stichs; for example,

The ox knows its owner,
and the donkey its master's crib . . . (Isa 1.3a)

and

But let justice roll down like waters,
and righteousness like an ever flowing stream.
(Am 5.24)

In these distichs, the second stich simply repeats the sense of the first in slightly different terms. Sometimes, however, the second stich gives more precise expression to the sense of the first, as in Ps 34.13:

Keep your tongue from evil,
and your lips from speaking deceit.

(*b*) In Antithetic Parallelism the thought expressed in the second stich is in contrast to that in the first; for example,

for the LORD watches over the way of
the righteous,
but the way of the wicked will perish.
(Ps 1.6)

and

A wise child makes a glad father,
but a foolish child is a mother's grief.
(Prov 10.1)

This type of parallelism is particularly characteristic of the Wisdom Literature. It also occurs frequently in the sayings of Jesus; for example,

A good tree cannot bear bad fruit,
nor can a bad tree bear good fruit. (Mt 7.18)

and

Those who find their life will lose it,
and those who lose their life for my sake
will find it. (Mt 10.39)

(*c*) Formal Parallelism, also called Synthetic Parallelism, contains neither reptition in different terms nor contrasted assertions. In it the thought

of the first stich is carried further and completed in the second; for example,

> The LORD looks down from heaven on humankind
> to see if there are any who are wise,
> who seek after God. (Ps 14.2)

Here there is a formal balance of clause with clause, but no such correspondence in content as we find in Synonymous and Antithetic Parallelism. The balance is emphasized by two factors: the clearly marked caesura or break between the stichs, and the correspondence in rhythm or meter (see below §2).

(*d*) In Climactic Parallelism the characteristics of Synonymous and Formal Parallelism are combined. The second stich echoes or repeats part of the first and also adds to it an element which carries forward or completes the sense; for example,

> Ascribe to the LORD, O heavenly beings,
> ascribe to the LORD glory and strength. (Ps 29.1)

and

> Pray to your Father who is in secret;
> and your Father who sees in secret will reward you. (Mt 6.6b)

(*e*) All the examples quoted above are instances of Internal Parallelism, in which the balance of form and thought is between the individual stichs within a distich or tristich. In External Parallelism there is balance not only *within* but *between* distichs. So in Isa 1.27–28:

> Zion shall be redeemed by justice,
> and those in her who repent, by righteousness.
> But rebels and sinners shall be destroyed together,
> and those who forsake the LORD shall be consumed.

There is here Internal Synonymous Parallelism *within* each of the two distichs and External Antithetic Parallelism *between* the distichs. Compare Isa 1.10:

> Hear the word of the LORD,
> you rulers of Sodom!
> Listen to the teaching of our God,
> you people of Gomorrah!

By contrast, here each distich has Internal Formal Parallelism, and there is External Parallelism between the distichs. External Parallelism gives scope for still more elaborate patterns, as in Ps 30.8–10:

> To you, O LORD, I cried;
> and to the LORD I made supplication;
> "What profit is there in my death,
> if I go down to the Pit?
> Will the dust praise you?
> Will it tell of your faithfulness?
> Hear, O LORD, and be gracious to me!
> O LORD, be my helper!"

The first, third, and fourth distichs have Internal Synonymous Parallelism, but the second has Internal Formal Parallelism. There is External Synonymous Parallelism between the first and fourth distichs and between the second and third, giving the pattern a, b, b, a (chiasmus). The juxtaposition of the second and third distichs serves to emphasize the thought which they both express.

(*f*) Complete Parallelism occurs when each term in the first stich is matched by a corresponding term in the second, as in the following example from Psalm 146.2:

> I-will-praise the-LORD as-long-as-I-live;
> I-will-sing-praises to-my-God all-my-life-long.

(The hyphens link words that together represent a single term in the Hebrew.) In Incomplete Parallelism one or more terms in the first stich have no counterpart in the second, as in the following:

> Our-inheritance has-been-turned-over to-strangers,
> our-homes to-aliens. (Lam 5.2)

Here there is nothing in the second stich to correspond to "has-been-turned-over" in the first. Incomplete Parallelism may occur without compensation, as in the example just given, or with compensation, as in Lam 5.11:

> Women are-raped in-Zion,
> virgins in-the-towns-of Judah.

In this verse the second stich contains no counterpart to "are-raped" in the first, but the *two* terms "in-the-towns-of" and "Judah" in the second stich correspond to the *one* term "in-Zion" in the first.

These varied forms of parallelism provide almost innumerable possibilities of changing poetic patterns. One feature, however, remains constant. In a distich or tristich each stich is separated from what follows or precedes by an emphatic rhythmic break (a caesura); there may be a completion of the sense in what follows, but there is always a marked pause. The feature known as

enjambement (running over without rhetorical pause from one line to another so that closely related words fall in different lines) is foreign to Hebrew poetry.

Even a superficial study of the poetic parts of the Bible makes it abundantly clear that parallelism is a formal characteristic of Hebrew poetry; and this is further borne out by the fact that the same feature also appears in other ancient Near Eastern literatures. There is, unfortunately, less clarity about the second formal characteristic, namely meter.

### *2. Meter*

It is reasonable to suppose that parallelism is complemented by metrical or rhythmical patterns and that each stich is composed of a number of metrical units. But the evidence about the nature of the patterns of meter from ancient Near Eastern parallels and from writers such as Josephus, Origen, and Jerome is inadequate. Of the varied theories that have been advanced in modern times, the one that commands the widest agreement is that the meter is determined in terms of accented syllables and that the number of unaccented syllables is of no significance. This means that as a rule each word counts as one unit; but where a word has a secondary accent in addition to the main one, it counts as two units, and where a word loses its accent because of its close connection with the following word, it does not count as a unit. The metrical value of a stich is indicated by the number of stressed syllables that it contains. By far the most frequent metrical pattern is 3 + 3, that is, a distich with three stressed syllables in each stich. This is the characteristic meter of Hebrew proverbs; it abounds in the Wisdom Literature, but it is also very frequent in some parts of the prophetical books and in the Psalms. The following example is from Wisdom Literature:

A-mórtal, bórn of-wóman,
  féw-of dáys and-full-of-tróuble,
comes úp like-a-flówer, and-wíthers,
  flées like-a-shádow and does-not-
    lást. (Job 14.1–2)

The shorter 2+ 2 meter is well adapted to the expression of intense emotion and urgency; for example,

Céase to-do-évil,
  léarn to-do-góod;
séek jústice,
  réscue the-oppréssed,
    defénd the-orphan,
      pléad for-the-wídow. (Isa. 1.16d-17)

The unequal metrical pattern 3 + 2 is known as the Qinah ("lament") meter, because it is the prevailing meter used in the book of Lamentations and occurs frequently in laments, though it is not confined to this type of composition. The unfulfilled expectation of a third beat in the second stich creates a peculiarly haunting effect. So in the two following passages:

Fállen, no-móre to-ríse,
  is-maíden Ísrael. (Am 5.2a)

Give-éar-to my-wórds, O-LÓRD;
  give héed-to my-síghing.
Lísten to-the-sóund-of my-crý,
  my-Kíng and-my-Gód . . .
    (Ps 5.1–2b)

Other metrical patterns that occur less frequently are 4 + 4, 2+ 2 + 2, 3+ 3 + 3. The last of these is memorably illustrated in a familiar psalm:

Líft-up your-héads, O-gátes!
  and-be-lífted-up, O-áncient dóors!
  that-the-Kíng-of glóry may-cóme-in.
Whó-is the-Kíng-of glóry?
  The-LÓRD, stróng and-míghty,
  the-LÓRD, míghty in-báttle. (Ps 24.7–8)

A Hebrew poem is not necessarily composed in a single meter throughout. Indeed, the variation of meter can be most effective. A good instance of this is Ps 46, in which 4 + 4 meter predominates (verses 1–2, 4–6, 8–10), with 3 + 3 distichs rounding off each section (verses 3, 7, 11), so that the metrical pattern suggests that the poem is constructed in three stanzas.

### *3. Strophic Arrangement*

Ps 46 is by no means the only poem in the Old Testament in which a recurring refrain appears to indicate a grouping of distichs or tristichs into larger patterns resembling stanzas. For instance, in Pss 42 and 43 (which form one psalm), the following refrain occurs at 42.5, 11, and 43.5:

Why are you cast down, O my soul,
  and why are you disquieted within me?
Hope in God; for I shall again praise him,
  my help and my God.

Again in Isa 9.8–10.4 and 5.25–30, which are probably parts of a single poem, the following refrain appears to mark off recognizable stanzas:

For all this his anger has not turned away;
  his hand is stretched out still.
    (9.12b, 17c, 21b; 10.4b; 5.25c)

Ps 107.1–32 contains the double refrain,

Then they cried to the LORD in their trouble,
and he delivered them from their distress; . . .
Let them thank the LORD for his steadfast love,
for his wonderful works to humankind.

at verses 6, 8, 13, 15, 19, 21, 28, 31; but it does not mark off regular strophes.

Strophic arrangement is the least convincing of the formal characteristics attributed to Hebrew poetry. Some Hebrew poems do indeed fall into recognizable sections; but, with the exception of poems of a special type (see below, III.§1), these sections are not strictly regular. Moreover, the term "strophe" is inappropriate, since it implies the recurrence of regular metrical patterns in a fixed number of poetic lines. All the indications are that such rigid structures were alien to ancient Hebrew poetry, which in meter and in the grouping of distichs and tristichs was as flexible as it manifestly was in the use of parallelism.

## III. THE TECHNIQUES OF HEBREW POETRY

In addition to the structural forms of Hebrew poetry, certain technical devices were used to secure particular effects. These are: §1 Acrostic Patterns; §2 Alliteration; §3 Assonance; §4 Onomatopoeia; §5 Paranomasia.

### *1. Acrostic Patterns*

The sole instances of deliberately contrived sequences of lines (see above, II. §3) are acrostic poems. Acrostic patterns occur in varying degrees of complexity. In Ps 34.1–21 the successive verses begin with the letters of the Hebrew alphabet in the appropriate order (verse 22 is outside the pattern). Pss 9 and 10 form a single poem with an imperfectly preserved acrostic pattern in which pairs of verses begin with successive letters of the Hebrew alphabet. Varied acrostic patterns appear in Lam chs 1, 2, 3, and 4: in chs 1, 2, and 3 the distichs are grouped in threes (in ch 3 *all* the distichs in a given group begin with the same letter; in chs 1 and 2 only the first distich in each group) and in ch 4 the grouping is in pairs. The most elaborate acrostic poem in the Bible is Ps 119, in which there are twenty-two sections (corresponding to the successive letters of the alphabet) each consisting of eight distichs, and every distich in a given section begins with the same letter.

Various reasons have been suggested for the adoption of this somewhat exacting technical pattern: to serve as a mnemonic device; to exploit the supposed magical power of an alphabetic acrostic; or to express completeness of grief, aspiration, penitence, hope, or devotion. The last of these would be particularly appropriate to Ps 119 and the acrostics in the book of Lamentations.

### *2. Alliteration*

Effect is sometimes gained by the juxtaposition of words or syllables that begin with the same consonant; for example, in Ps 122.6–7, where *sh* and *l* recur:

*shaʿălu shĕlom Yĕrushalayim*
*yishlayu ʾohăbhayikh*
*yĕhi shalom bĕḥelekh*
*shalwah bĕʾarmĕnothayikh.*

Similarly, in Ps 93.4 the occurrence of doubled consonants and particularly of *m*, brings out effectively the menacing reverberation of the flood waters:

*miqqoloth mayim rabbim*
*ʾaddir mimmishbĕre yam*
*ʾaddir bammarom Yahweh.*

### *3. Assonance*

There is no systematic use of rhyme in ancient Hebrew poetry; but the recurrence of the same vowel sound is often deliberately contrived. Where this occurs in suffixes such as *-enu* ("our," "us") and *-ehu* ("it"), something approximating to rhyme appears. Thus in Ps 90.17 we find

*wihi noʿam ʾădhonay ʾĕlohenu ʿalenu*
*umaʿăseh yadhenu konĕnah ʿalenu*
*umaʿăseh yadhenu konĕnehu.*

In Isa 53.4–5 the echoing suffixes *-enu* ("our") and *-hu* ("him") produce a wailing effect and also, together with the emphatic repetition of the pronoun *huʾ* ("he") and the final *lanu* ("for us"), bring out the contrast between the Servant and those for whom he suffered.

### *4. Onomatopoeia*

The use of words that sound like what they describe has already been illustrated from Ps 93.4 (see above, III.§2). Similarly, in Isa 17. 12–13 a combination of doubled consonants and long vowels expresses the surge and thunder of the waves, to which the tumultuous onslaught of the nations is compared. Then, with a change of figure, there follows a description of the repulse and scattering of the nations like chaff or dust before a storm wind:

*hōy hămōn ʿammīm rabbīm*
*kahămōth yammīm yehĕmāyūn*

*ūshe'ōn lĕ 'ummīm*
*kishĕ 'ōn mayīm kabbīrīm yishshā'ūn*
*lĕ 'ummīm kishĕ 'ōn mayīm rabbīm yishshā'ūn*
*wĕghā'ar bō wĕnās mimmerḥāq*
*wĕruddaph kemōṣ hārīm liphĕnē rūāḥ*
*ūkhĕghalgal liphnē sūphāh.*

Another outstanding example of onomatopoeia is the description in the Song of Deborah of the thudding hoofs of galloping horses:

*'az ḥalĕmu 'iqqĕbhe sus*
*middahăroth dahăroth 'abbiraw* (Judg 5.22)

### *5. Paranomasia*

A pointed play on words occurs more frequently in the Bible than is evident from an English rendering. In predicting national disaster Amos makes an effective play on the name "Gilgal" and the verb *galah* ("go into exile"):

*ki haggilgal galoh yighleh.*

Again, when Amos sees a basket of "summer fruit" (*qayiṣ*) it is a token that the 'end' (*qeṣ*) is coming on Israel (Am 8.12). Isaiah says that God looked for 'justice' (*mishpaṭ*) and 'righteousness' (*ṣĕdhaqah*) but found only 'bloodshed' (*mispaḥ*) and the 'cry' (*ṣĕ'aqah*) of the oppressed (Isa 5.7b). In Jer 31.16–19 the words "come back," "bring back," "turned away" all come from the same verb (*shubh*). It is probably impossible to reproduce in translation this sustained play on similar and contrasted meanings.

## IV. CONCLUSION

The supreme quality of ancient Hebrew poetry is seen in the concentrated expression, within a limited compass, of experience, emotion, and aspiration. This is seen in ancient war songs and dirges, the love poems in the Song of Songs, many of the hymns, laments, and thanksgivings in the Psalter, and in the terse oracles of Amos and of Isaiah of Jerusalem. Apart from Job and (probably) Isa 40–55, there is no sustained poetic composition of any great length in the Old Testament, and nothing that is epic in character. Although the tradition of the Psalmists is continued in the later period, e.g., in the poems in Lk 1–2 and (with significant differences) the Qumran *Hymns of Thanksgiving*, it is on the whole the didactic and reflective notes that tend to predominate, as in Sirach and the Wisdom of Solomon. In the sayings of Jesus the form and spirit of classical prophecy and of Wisdom are fused in a new and creative manifestation of the Hebrew poetic genius.

# *Literary Forms in the Gospels*

An analysis of the teaching of Jesus reported in the four Gospels reveals a variety of literary forms. Sometimes he conveyed his teaching by means of parables; at other times he used proverbs and plays on words (puns). Many passages in the Gospels are arranged in strophic, or poetic, form, and frequently one is struck by the vigorous, picturesque language by which the teaching is conveyed. Examples within each of these categories, considered in reverse order, include the following.

### *1. Picturesque Speech*

Like other persons of the Near East, Jesus made use of striking contrasts and vivid metaphors. Using exaggerated and colorful expressions, he frequently drew attention to the ridiculous and the illogical behavior of the self-righteous. For example instead of saying in prosaic and commonplace terms that some people are inconsistent when judging others and themselves, Jesus put it thus:

> Why do you see the speck in your neighbor's eye, but do not notice the log in your own eye? . . . You hypocrite, first take the log out of your own eye, and then you will see clearly to take the speck out of your neighbor's eye (Mt 7.3,5).

By taking into account the presence of picturesque expression in the Gospels the reader can sometimes avoid misinterpreting the meaning. For example, the hard saying preserved in the third Gospel, "Whoever comes to me and does not hate father and mother, wife and children, brothers and sisters, yes, and even life itself, cannot be my disciple" (Lk 14.26), must be

understood in the light of the frequent use of overstatement as characteristic of the speech of Near Easterners. It is obvious that Jesus, so far from intending to increase the sum total of hatred in the world, states a principle in a startling, hyperbolic manner, and leaves it to his hearers to discover whatever qualifications are necessary in the light of his other pronouncements. The saying means that in order to be a follower of Jesus one must be prepared to choose between natural affection and loyalty to the Master. The same idea is expressed in Matthew's less rigorous version of Jesus' saying: "Whoever loves father or mother more than me is not worthy of me; and whoever loves son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me" (Mt 10.37).

One should, of course, be alert to the danger of diluting Jesus' teaching by finding overstatement in passages where it is not present. For example, Jesus' command to the rich man who inquired what he should do to inherit eternal life, "Sell all that you own and distribute the money to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven; then come, follow me" (Lk 18.22), should not be discounted as exaggerated hyperbole, meaning merely, "Sell ten percent of what you own. . . ." The context makes it absolutely clear that the questioner as well as the disciples understood Jesus' words in their literal sense.

### *2. Poetic, Rhythmical Parallelism*

Hebrew poetry, illustrated in the Old Testament Psalter, is characterized by parallelism of members. Sometimes the parallelism is synonymous and sometimes antithetic (see pp. 394–395).

In view of the frequency of Jesus' quotations from and allusions to the Psalms, it is not surprising that we find much of his teaching cast into the mold of Semitic poetry. Synonymous parallelism appears in the saying recorded in Lk 6.27–28:

> Love your enemies,
> do good to those who hate you,
> bless those who curse you,
> pray for those who abuse you.

Antithetic parallelism is illustrated by Mt 7.17–18:

> Every good tree bears good fruit,
> but the bad tree bears bad fruit.
> A good tree cannot bear bad fruit,
> nor can a bad tree bear good fruit.

Besides these two basic types of parallelism, several other kinds have been identified. What is called step parallelism, for example, occurs when the second line takes up a thought contained in the first line and, repeating it, makes it, as it were, a step toward the development of a further thought, which is the climax of the whole. An example of step parallelism is found in Lk 9.48 (the italics indicate the repeated member which serves as a step, and the vertical line stands before the climax):

> Whoever welcomes this child in my name
> *welcomes me,*
> *and whoever welcomes me* |welcomes the one
> who sent me.

For other passages that exhibit an elaborate rhythmical pattern, see Mt 6.19–21; 23.16–22; Mk 2.21–22; 9.43–48; Lk 11.31–32; 17.26–30.

### *3. Plays on Words*

The Old Testament contains not a few instances of plays on words (for examples see p. 397 and the notes on Gen 11.9; Jer 1.11–12; Am 8.1–2). The text of the Gospels, which has been transmitted to us in Greek, contains more than one instance where the original Aramaic of Jesus' mother tongue probably involved a word-play. It is understandable that very few such puns in Aramaic could be reproduced in Greek. In one case, however, it happens that the Greek word *pneuma,* just as the Aramaic *rūhâ,* means both "wind" and "spirit." In Jn 3.8 Jesus is quoted as saying to Nicodemus, "The *pneuma* blows where it wills, and you hear the sound of it, but you do not know whence it comes or whither it goes; so it is with everyone who is born of the *pneuma.*"

One of the most noteworthy of Jesus' sayings about the church involves a play on words. According to Mt 16.13ff. at Caesarea Philippi, in response to Jesus' question to his disciples who they thought he was, Simon Peter confessed, "You are the Messiah, the Son of the living God." After declaring that Peter had spoken this by divine revelation, Jesus retorted, "And I tell you, you are Peter [Greek *Petros*], and on this rock [Greek *petra*] I will build my church." In Jesus' mother tongue the play is even closer, for in Aramaic the word *kēphâ* serves as a proper name (Cephas) and also means "a rock, a stone." Jesus' statement therefore would have been, "And I tell you, you are *Kēphâ,* and on this *kēphâ* I will build my church" (there remains a difference in gender, for the common noun is feminine and the proper name is, of course, masculine; compare French *pierre* (f.), "a stone," and *Pierre* (m.), "Peter").

Another passage which probably involved a

pun is Mt 23.24, where the Greek text is unable to reproduce the jingle that is present in what is presumed to be the original Aramaic. In his condemnation of the inconsistency of certain scribes and Pharisees, Jesus reproached them for "straining out a gnat and swallowing a camel." Since in Aramaic the word for "gnat" or "louse" is *qalmâ* and the word for "camel" is *gamlâ,* the pun provides added piquancy to the picturesque speech used by Jesus: he is describing a punctilious Pharisee who, in view of Lev 11.41ff., which forbids the eating of what swarms or crawls on the earth, is careful to strain out a *qalmâ* that may have fallen into his food or wine, but is quite unconcerned over gulping down a whole *gamlâ!*

### *4. Proverbs*

Every language has pithy sayings or maxims that express a truth crisply and forcefully. Because proverbs frequently express only one side of a truth, it happens that mutually contradictory proverbs may circulate, each of which is true when applied to the appropriate life-setting. The common saying, "Penny wise, pound foolish," correctly describes one who is scrupulous about small transactions, but is extravagant in great ones. On the other hand, the proverb, "Take care of the pennies, and the dollars will take care of themselves," is also true. More than once the Bible presents two proverbs that, though contradictory, are both true when applied to appropriate circumstances. In Prov 26.4 the writer cautions his reader, "Do not answer fools according to their folly, or you will be a fool yourself"; in the very next verse, however, he advises, "Answer fools according to their folly, or they will be wise in their own eyes." It is left to the reader to know when it is appropriate to heed one or the other of these two antithetical proverbs.

It is not surprising that Jesus sometimes cast his teaching in the form of proverbs. Since, however, these brief, salty sayings stress one side of a truth, they should not be exalted as maxims of inflexible conduct. On the contrary, one categorical statement must be interpreted in the light of another that may counsel the opposite of the first. For example, Jesus' command, "Do not judge, so that you may be not judged" (Mt 7.1), has sometimes been taken as a blanket prohibition against making judgments concerning right and wrong, good and evil. In the same context, however, the evangelist includes another of Jesus' pithy sayings, one which presupposes the necessity of forming judgments: "Do not give what is holy to dogs; and do not throw your pearls before swine" (Mt 7.6). To obey this command against desecrating what is holy, one obviously must judge who is doggish and who is swinish. Spiritual prudence will know when it is appropriate to follow one precept and when it is appropriate to follow the other.

Similarly Jesus' proverb-like prohibiton, "Do not resist an evildoer" (Mt 5.39), is not to be taken to mean that his disciples are never to resist evil in any kind of way. In the light of Jesus' other teachings as well as his use of force to drive out the money-changers from the temple precincts (Mk 12.15), it is clear that the principle that he inculcates in this crisp maxim is nonretaliation for a malicious wrong inflicted by a personal enemy.

### *5. Parables*

In all the teaching of Jesus there is no feature more striking than the parables. Although other religious teachers had made use of parabolic stories (see Judg 9.7–15; 2 Sam 12.1–6), in quantity and in excellence his parables are acknowledged to be outstanding. About sixty examples, from what was probably a larger number, have been preserved in the synoptic Gospels; these comprise more than one third of Jesus' recorded words. The fourth Gospel nowhere uses the word "parable," but it contains several parabolic sayings in the form of allegories (for example, Jn 10.1–18; 15.1–11).

The old definition of a parable as "an earthly story with a heavenly meaning" contains a certain amount of truth, but one must beware against seeking an elaborate allegorical meaning for every detail in a parable. That is, many details in Jesus' parables are present in order to make the story "live," and were not included primarily to instruct or edify the hearer. Defined more precisely, in Jesus' teaching a parable is a comparison drawn from nature or common experience in life and designed to illustrate some moral or religious truth, on the assumption that what is valid in one sphere is valid also in the other. The distinctions between parable and simile and metaphor are not easily defined. Often there is scarcely any difference, for all of them involve an aspect of comparison, but generally the metaphor and simile are short while the parable is more extended. "You are the salt of the earth" (Mt 5.13) is a metaphor; "Be wise as serpents" (Mt 10.16) is a simile; but "The kingdom of heaven is like yeast that a woman took and mixed in with three measures of flour until all of it was leavened" (Mt 13.33) is a parable.

The proper method of interpreting Jesus' parables is to make a thorough inquiry into the "life-setting" in his ministry when the parable was first uttered, and to seek out the chief point that, in that setting, it was intended to teach. In other words, To whom did Jesus speak the parable? and, Why did he speak it? Usually the details in a parable provide nothing more than the necessary background in order to make the story realistic, and are not to be assigned, point by point, special meanings in the manner of an allegory.

An analysis of Jesus' parables reveals that most of them are intended either *(a)* to portray a type of human character or disposition for warning or example, or *(b)* to reveal a principle of God's government of the world and humankind. In other words, Jesus' parables usually teach a certain kind of conduct that his hearers are to emulate or avoid (matters of ethics), or they disclose something of the character of God and his dealings with humankind (matters of theology). Examples of the former class of parables include The Two Builders (Mt 7.24–27), The Two Sons (Mt 21.28–32), The Pharisee and the Tax Collector (Lk 18.9–14), and The Good Samaritan (Lk 10.30–37); examples of the latter include the several parables concerning the Kingdom of Heaven (Mt ch 13; 20.1–15), The Seed Growing Secretly (Mk 4.26–29), The Great Supper (Lk 14.16–24), and The Lost Coin (Lk 15.8–10). Most parables of Jesus have two levels of meaning. One is the story itself, which usually reflects some aspect of daily life in the Near East. The other, deeper level of meaning (which may be paradoxical or surprising), is an open-ended invitation awaiting the hearer's response. In this respect the parable is not effective until the challenge inherent in the parable is freely accepted and acted upon.

Finally, it should be observed that when Christian teachers and evangelists retold Jesus' parables in the early church, they occasionally introduced small changes so as to apply the stories to new situations or to bring out the application more vividly. An example of the latter is the slight modification in the order of the wording in Matthew and Luke's retelling of the parable of The Wicked Tenants. According to Mk 12.8, when the owner of the vineyard sent his son to the tenants to get some of the fruit, they "killed him, and threw him out of the vineyard." Matthew and Luke, however, finding in the parable a parallel to what happened to Jesus when he was crucified *outside* the city walls, altered the sequence of the clauses so as to read, "they threw him out of the vineyard, and killed him" (Mt 21.39; Lk 20.15).

There was also a tendency to turn parables that Jesus addressed to the crowd, or to opponents, into parables for the disciples. For example, according to Luke (15.4–10) Jesus told the parable of the Lost Sheep as an answer to criticisms leveled against him by Pharisees and scribes (15.2). When Matthew recounts the same parable (18.12–14), however, it is no longer addressed to Jesus' opponents; it has now become part of Jesus' instruction to his disciples (18.1), that is, to the church, on the subject of how Christians are to relate to other Christians (see also 18.15–17).

In other cases the parables of Jesus were remembered long after the circumstances that gave rise to them had been forgotten. More than once, therefore, we find that the Evangelists, impressed by the sublimity of Jesus' teaching, recount his parables without mentioning the specific situation in which they were first narrated.

# *English Versions of the Bible*

Prior to the sixteenth century, translations of the Bible into English were made from the Latin Vulgate instead of from the Hebrew or Greek, and were recorded only in manuscript copies.

To the Anglo-Saxon period belong the paraphrases of the Biblical narrative put into verse by Caedmon, herdsman for the abbey at Whitby (about A.D. 670); a version of the Psalms attributed to Aldhelm, bishop of Sherborne (640–709); a translation of the Gospel of John by the Venerable Bede (d. 735); portions of Exodus and the Acts of the Apostles, and some of the Psalms, by King Alfred (849–901); and a translation of the Heptateuch (Genesis through Judges) by Aelfric, abbot of Eynsham (955–1020). Four complete manuscripts and five fragmentary manu-

scripts remain of the Anglo-Saxon Gospels; these date from the eleventh to the thirteenth centuries. The famous Lindisfarne Gospels and the Rushworth Gospels are Latin manuscripts written toward the close of the seventh century, with interlinear Anglo-Saxon glosses (translations) inserted three centuries later. There were many Anglo-Saxon Psalters, with the Latin text and an interlinear Anglo-Saxon gloss.

To the Middle English period (1150–1500) belong the Ormulum, a metrical paraphrase of the Gospels, with interspersed moralizations; the Psalter of Richard Rolle (d. 1349), a prose version with commentary; and a prose version of the Psalms that has been attributed to William of Shoreham (about 1270–1350).

The first English versions of the entire Bible were the two associated with the work of John Wyclif, made by translation from the Latin Vulgate between 1380 and 1397. They were copied by hand, and there remain some one hundred and eighty manuscripts, mostly of the second version.

We do not know what part of the work upon the first version was done by Wyclif himself. But that is of no consequence; he inspired it all, including the making of the second version after his death in 1384. Both versions were made by scholars who were his immediate associates. Nicholas Hereford was largely responsible for the first version, which was completed before Wyclif's death. John Purvey, Wyclif's secretary, was responsible for the second version, which was completed by 1397.

The first version of the Wyclif Bible was a careful literal translation of the Latin Vulgate, with the English words following the order of the Latin words as closely as possible. Purvey gives a striking example of the mischief that may thus be wrought. In 1 Sam 2.10 the Latin has *Dominum formidabunt adversarii eius,* which the first version renders, "The Lord shulen drede the adversaries of hym." This follows the Latin word order, but ignores the Latin inflections which show that "adversaries" is the subject of the verb, that the verb for "shall dread" is plural, and that "the Lord" is its object. Purvey changes the translation to read, "Adversaries of the Lord shulen drede hym."

In the "General Prologue" to the second version Purvey states that it is best "to translate after the sentence and not only after the words, so that the sentence be as open, or opener, in English as Latin"—that is, so that the meaning be as clear, or clearer.

The sixteenth century brought the Bible in English to the common people as a printed book. Beginning with the first of Tyndale's translations in 1526, there appeared in rapid succession eight English versions of the Bible, culminating in the King James Version published in 1611.

The first English version of the Scriptures to be made by direct translation from the Hebrew and Greek was the work of William Tyndale. His New Testament, 1526, was followed by his translation of the Pentateuch in 1530 and of Jonah in 1531. In 1534 he issued a revision of his translation of the New Testament, and in 1535 *The New Testament yet once again corrected by William Tyndale.* These became the basis of all later revisions and the main source of the authorized versions of the New Testament in English.

Tyndale was bitterly opposed. He was accused of perverting the meaning of the Scriptures, and his New Testaments were ordered to be burned as "untrue translations," intended "for the advancement and setting forth of Luther's abominable heresies." He was finally betrayed into the hands of his enemies, and in October 1536 was executed and burned at the stake.

In 1535 appeared an English translation of the Bible by Miles Coverdale. This was the first complete Bible to be printed in English. It was not a direct translation from the original languages, but was based upon two Latin versions and upon the translations by Tyndale into English, and by Luther and Zwingli into German.

In 1537 a folio volume was published entitled *The Bible, which is all the Holy Scriptures, in which are contayned the Olde and Newe Testaments, truely and purely translated into Englysh, by Thomas Matthew.* "Thomas Matthew" was a pseudonym adopted by John Rogers, a friend of Tyndale, who took Tyndale's manuscript translations of the books of the Old Testament from Joshua to Second Chronicles, together with Tyndale's printed translations of the Pentateuch and the New Testament, and published them in this one volume, which he completed by adding Coverdale's version of the rest of the Old Testament and the Apocrypha.

In 1539 Richard Taverner, a layman and a lawyer, clerk of the signet to the king, published a revision of Matthew's Bible, one edition of which was issued in parts in order that people who could not afford to purchase the whole Bible might buy one or more parts. He was a good Greek scholar, and made some changes in the translation of the New Testament that have been kept in later versions.

Meanwhile at Paris, in early 1538, Miles Coverdale had begun a new revision of Matthew's Bible, for which he had been commissioned by Sir Thomas Cromwell, Secretary to King Henry VIII, and Vicar General. The Great Bible, as this was called, was published at London in April 1539. It was the first authorized English version, and a copy was ordered to be placed in every church. Until very recently, the Psalms in the *Book of Common Prayer* were from Coverdale's translation.

Under Queen Mary the printing of the English Bible ceased and its use in the churches was forbidden. Many English citizens sought refuge on the Continent, and a group of these at Geneva undertook the revision of the English Bible. The Geneva version appeared in 1560. It was set in Roman type instead of the old blackface, and it was a book easy to handle, instead of an unwieldy folio. It was the first English version to use numbered verses, each set off as a separate paragraph.

The Geneva Bible was never authorized, but it became at once the people's book, the household Bible of the English-speaking nations, and it held this place for three-quarters of a century. It was the Bible used by Shakespeare and John Bunyan, and it was the Bible of the Puritans who settled New England. Between 1560 and 1644 at least one hundred and forty editions of the Geneva Bible or New Testament were printed, and it lasted longer in competition with the King James Version than any other English version. This was the version of the Bible brought to America by the Pilgrims in 1620.

Queen Elizabeth renewed the injunction that a copy of "the whole Bible of the largest volume in English" be replaced in every church, and encouraged its reading. Because not enough copies of the Great Bible were available, Archbishop Parker proposed that the bishops themselves make a new revision of the English Bible. The resulting version, known as the Bishops' Bible, was published in 1568. It was authorized by Convocation, and its possession enjoined upon the churches. In 1572 another edition was published, with considerable revision of the New Testament. This revised edition, reprinted in 1602, became the basis of the revision under King James.

In 1582 an English translation of the New Testament was published at Rheims, made from the Latin by Roman Catholic scholars led by Gregory Martin, who had been trained at Oxford University. A similar translation was made of the Old Testament, but not published until 1609. The distinctive characteristic of the Rhemish version of the New Testament is the closeness with which it adheres to the Latin.

On February 10, 1604, after a conference "for hearing and for the determining things pretended to be amiss in the church," King James I ordained: "That a translation be made of the whole Bible, as consonant as can be to the original Hebrew and Greek; and this to be set out and printed without any marginal notes, and only to be used in all churches of England in time of divine service." He appointed fifty-four men as translators, forty-eight of whom are named in the records that have come down to us. They worked in six companies, to each of which was assigned a section of the Bible. Two companies met at Oxford, two at Cambridge, and two at Westminster.

It was provided that each company would consider the work of each other company, and that differences would be resolved by correspondence if possible, and if not, be referred to the general meeting at the end. This was a meeting at London of a committee of six, made up of two representatives from the companies at each of the three centers, which devoted nine months to bringing together and finally editing the work. It was then seen through the press by Dr. Thomas Bilson, bishop of Winchester, and Dr. Myles Smith, of Oxford University; and Smith wrote an extended and informative preface, entitled "The Translators to the Reader." This version of the Bible, with a dedication to King James, was published in 1611.

It is a strange fact that no evidence has yet been found that the King James Version was ever authorized in the sense of being publicly sanctioned by Convocation or by Parliament. But it did not need that. Bishop Westcott, writing in the nineteenth century, said: "From the middle of the seventeenth century, the King's Bible has been the acknowledged Bible of the English-speaking nations throughout the world simply because it is the best. A revision which embodied the ripe fruits of nearly a century of labour, and appealed to the religious instinct of a great Christian people, gained by its own internal character a vital authority which could never have been secured by any edict of sovereign rulers."

An outstanding merit of the King James Version is the music of its cadences. The translators were experienced in the public reading of the Scriptures and in the conduct of public worship. Their choice of the final wording of a passage was often determined by a marvelously sure in-

stinct for what would sound well when read aloud. Take as an example the successive translations of Prov 3.17, part of a discourse in praise of wisdom, where Coverdale, the Great Bible, and the Bishops' Bible agree in reading: "Her wayes are pleasant wayes and all her paths are peaceable."

The Geneva Bible has: "Her wayes are wayes of pleasure and all her paths prosperitie."

The King James Version gives to the verse a perfect melody: "Her wayes are wayes of pleasantnesse, and all her pathes are peace."

The English Bible owes more to William Tyndale than to any other man, not only because he was the first to translate the Bible from the original Hebrew and Greek, but because the basic structure of his translation has endured through all subsequent changes. It has been estimated that about sixty per cent of the text of the English Bible achieved its final literary form before the King James Version appeared, and that in the King James Version at least one-third of the New Testament is worded exactly as in Tyndale's New Testament, while the sentences of the remaining two-thirds follow the general pattern of the underlying structure of Tyndale's New Testament.

For two and a half centuries the King James Version maintained its place as the Authorized Version of the English-speaking peoples, without any serious consideration of its revision. But in the 1850's a movement toward revision began to gather strength, and in 1870 the Convocation of the Province of Canterbury appointed a Committee to undertake it. The Revised Version of the New Testament was published in 1881, of the Old Testament in 1885, and of the Apocrypha in 1895. The American Standard Version, a variant edition containing the renderings preferred by the American scholars who had cooperated in the work of revision, was published in 1901.

In 1928 the copyright of the American Standard Version was acquired by the International Council of Religious Education, and thus passed into the ownership of the churches of the United States and Canada that were associated in this Council through their boards of education and publication. The Council appointed a committee of scholars to have charge of the text of the American Standard Version and to undertake inquiry as to whether further revision was necessary. After more than two years of study and experimental work, this committee decided that there was need for a thorough revision of the version of 1901, which would stay as close to the Tyndale-King James tradition as it could in the light of present knowledge of the Hebrew and Greek texts and their meaning on the one hand, and present usage of English on the other.

In 1937 the revision was authorized by vote of the Council, which directed that the resulting version should "embody the best results of modern scholarship as to the meaning of the Scriptures, and express this meaning in English diction which is designed for use in public and private worship and preserves those qualities which have given to the King James Version a supreme place in English literature."

The Revised Standard Version of the New Testament was published in 1946, of the Old Testament in 1952, and of the Apocrypha in 1957. The publication of the Revised Standard Version of the Bible was authorized in 1951 by vote of the National Council of the Churches of Christ in the U.S.A.

The revised versions of 1881–1901 made permanent advances in their recognition of the principle that Hebrew poetry is to be translated as poetry, in characteristic parallelism, and in their giving due weight to the text of the ancient Greek manuscripts of the New Testament that had been discovered since 1611.

But the Revised New Testament of 1881, said Charles H. Spurgeon, the great London preacher, was "strong in Greek, weak in English." The revisers were literalists, especially in the New Testament. Their ideal of translation was a meticulous word-for-word reproduction of the Greek text in English words, using the same English word for a given Greek word whenever possible, leaving no Greek word without translation into a correspondent English word, following the order of the Greek words rather than the order natural to English, and attempting to translate the tenses and the definite article with a precision alien to English idioms. The result is that the Revised Version and the American Standard Version are distinctly "translation English."

The problem of the archaic language of the King James Version was ineffectively handled by the revisers, who changed some of the misleading words but actually increased the use of other archaic terms, such as aforetime, haply, holden, howbeit, would fain, must needs, peradventure. Where the King James Version reads, "this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you" (1 Thess 5.18), the 1881–1901 revisers changed it to "this is the will of God in Christ Jesus to youward" (so also in Rom 8.18, Gal 5.10, Col 1.25). A full account of archaic words and obsolete meanings in the King James Version and the

revised versions of 1881–1901 is given in *The Bible Word Book,* by Ronald Bridges and Luther A. Weigle.

It is one of the ironies of history that the King James Version remained unrevised for two hundred and sixty years, then was revised with the utmost care, but that almost immediately there began a period that was marked by discovery after discovery, widening our knowledge of the Bible text and its early history, and testing the results at which the scholars of 1881 had arrived by evidence with which they were totally unacquainted.

The Revised Standard Version took full account of the new knowledge of the history, geography, religions, and cultures of Bible lands, and of the rich new resources for understanding the vocabulary, grammar, and idioms of the Biblical and related languages. It also broke away from the literalism and mechanical exactitude of the revisions of 1881–1901, and returned to the basic structure and more natural cadence of the Tyndale-King James tradition.

Paraphrases and new translations, usually of the New Testament, have appeared from time to time, such as those by Henry Hammond, 1653; Richard Baxter, 1685; Daniel Mace, 1729; Edward Harwood, 1768; Andrews Norton, 1855; Leicester Sawyer, 1858. A group of scholars produced The Twentieth Century New Testament, 1898–1901; thereafter have come new translations by R.F. Weymouth, 1903; James Moffatt, 1913; Edgar J. Goodspeed, 1923; J.B. Phillips, 1947–1958 (2nd. ed. 1972); Charles Kingsley Williams, 1952; Hugh J. Schonfield, 1955 (2nd. ed. 1985); William F. Beck, 1963; William Barclay, 1968, 1969; Richmond Lattimore, 1982; and Heinz W. Cassirer, 1989.

Moffatt's translation of the Old Testament appeared in 1924, and a rendering of the Old Testament by J. M. Powis Smith and other scholars was published (1927) with the Goodspeed New Testament as *The Bible: An American Translation.* After Beck's death in 1966 several other Lutheran scholars finished his partially complete rendering of the Old Testament, and both parts of the Bible were issued in 1976. It is a dignified and contemporary rendering in mid-American English.

After the publication of the Revised Standard Version in 1952, the second half of the twentieth century saw the publication of many translations and revisions of the English Bible. In fact, between 1952 and 1990, when the New Revised Standard Version was published, no fewer than twenty-six different renderings of the complete English Bible were issued, with twenty-five additional translations and revisions of the New Testament. Among these the following Jewish, Protestant, and Catholic translations are of special note.

In 1955 the Jewish Publication Society, whose first translation of the Hebrew Scriptures had appeared in 1917, initiated a new translation of the Scriptures in English. The first part, published in 1962, was entitled *The Torah, The Five Books of Moses.* This was followed by *The Prophets (Nevi'im)* in 1978, and *The Writings (Kethuvim)* in 1982. These three volumes, with revisions, were brought together in 1985 under the title *Tanakh, A New Translation of the Holy Scriptures According to the Traditional Hebrew Text.* The rendering is supplied with useful footnotes of three kinds: textual, translational, and explanatory. The version is notable for its perceptive handling of the Hebrew vocabulary and syntax in contemporary English.

In the year that the RSV New Testament was published (1946), British Protestant Churches embarked on a totally new translation of the Scriptures, The New English Bible. Prior to its completion in 1970 a first edition of the New Testament appeared in 1961. At that time, C. H. Dodd, director of the enterprise and chairman of the New Testament translation panel, stated that this was "not another revision of an old version, but a genuinely new translation of the original, which should be frankly contemporary in vocabulary, idiom, style and rhythm—not to supersede the Authorized Version, but as a second version alongside it." The rendering is free and vigorous, tending at places to be periphrastic. Here and there the translators have rearranged the sequence of verses and sections of the text.

The first English Bible made from the original Hebrew and Greek languages that received Roman Catholic approval was The Revised Standard Version Catholic Edition, of which the New Testament was published in 1965 and the complete Bible in 1966. In it the Deuterocanonical Books, which comprise what others call the Apocrypha (but without 1 Esdras, 2 Esdras, and the Prayer of Manasseh), were placed among the Old Testament books in accord with Catholic usage. It was prepared by the Catholic Biblical Association of Great Britain with the consent of the Revised Standard Version Bible Committee and the Division of Christian Education of the National Council of the Churches of Christ in the U.S.A. There are no changes in the Old Testament text; the sixty-seven changes in the

New Testament, made for liturgical and theological reasons, are carefully noted in an appendix. A significant further advance toward a Common Bible was achieved with the publication of the RSV without any changes whatever in the Oxford Annotated Bible with the Apocrypha (1966), to which Richard Cardinal Cushing of Boston granted the imprimatur.

The first English translation of the Bible made from the original languages by Catholic scholars was The Jerusalem Bible, published in 1966. With close comparison with the Hebrew and Greek, it is based on the French translation made under the direction of l'École Biblique of Jerusalem by a committee of scholars headed by Père Roland de Vaux, O.P., and popularly known as La Bible de Jérusalem. The English translation was made by a British Committee headed by Alexander Jones, L.S.S., of Christ's College, Liverpool. The translation is well done and has been warmly received. At the same time it must be acknowledged that occasionally the French idiom intrudes. "Yahweh" is used instead of the surrogate, the LORD. The volume is provided with useful introductions and notes, and "thee," "thou," and "thine" disappear from the text.

The New American Bible, published September 30, 1970 (St. Jerome's Day in the ecclesiastical calendar), carries on its title page the statement that it is "translated from the original languages with critical use of all the ancient sources," that the translation is by members of the Catholic Biblical Association of America, and that it is sponsored by the Bishops' Committee of the Confraternity of Christian Doctrine. The version is the final outcome of a movement that began in response to the encyclical letter of Pope Pius XII, issued September 30, 1943, and urging translation of the Scriptures from the original languages. The work of translation was begun in 1944, and the first volume, Genesis to Ruth, was published on September 30, 1952. Later volumes appeared in due time, copyrighted by the Confraternity of Christian Doctrine. A few years before the end of the work, four Protestant scholars were added to the Committee. The completed work represents capable and dedicated scholarship and renders the Scriptures in modern American idiom.

Persons who have only a limited facility in the English language—such as immigrants, or children, or those with little education—find the traditional language of the King James Bible forbidding if not sometimes incomprehensible. It was chiefly for such readers that in 1966 the American Bible Society issued "Good News for Modern Man," a translation of the New Testament made by Robert G. Bratcher. Known as Today's English Version, the rendering uses simplified syntax and a limited vocabulary. The Old Testament (1976), prepared by a committee, was subsequently followed by a rendering of the Deuterocanonicals/Apocrypha (1979). The translators employ contemporary American English (although a British-Usage edition has also appeared) and adopt the translational practice of producing "dynamic equivalence," as opposed to "formal equivalence."

The popularity of the Good News Bible spurred the preparation of another modern-speech Bible. This is the New International Version, sponsored by the New York Bible Society (subsequently known as the New York International Bible Society). The New Testament was published in 1973 and the complete Bible in 1978. Less colloquial than Today's English Version, and more literal than the New English Bible, the version was prepared by twenty teams of translators in the USA, Canada, Australia, New Zealand, and Great Britain. It had the largest first printing ever for an English Bible.

Unlike the other versions mentioned here, the Living Bible (1971), prepared by Kenneth N. Taylor, is professedly a paraphrase of the Scriptures: "A restatement of the author's thought, using different words than he did." Its chatty style made it the best-selling book in 1972.

The latter part of the twentieth century saw the publication of a number of revisions of earlier translations. The New American Standard Version (1970), prepared by a group of anonymous scholars sponsored by the Lockman Foundation of California, is ostensibly the American Standard Version of 1901 purged of some of the archaisms taken over from the Revised Version of 1881–1884. A number of verses resting on doubtful manuscript authority have been reintroduced into the text from the margin. It remains a severely literalistic rendering.

The New King James Bible (1982) is the work of an international group of some 130 scholars, editors, and religious leaders who have sought to produce an English Bible that retains as much of the classic King James Version as possible, while at the same time bringing its English up-to-date. Changes have been introduced in word order, grammar, vocabulary, and spelling. It retains the practice of printing the numbered verses as separate units, rather than arranging the text in paragraphs. The chief deficiency of the New Testa-

ment results from the decision to follow the Greek text known as the Textus Receptus, despite the many scribal errors that this text embodies. A totally new feature, never used in the King James Bible or in English Bibles in general, is the capitalization of pronouns referring to the Deity. This introduces into English something that is foreign to the Hebrew and Greek originals.

The first stage of producing a revision of the New American Bible (mentioned above) was finished in 1986 when the second edition of the New Testament was issued. This is a totally new translation, done with Protestant cooperation. No longer is the First Epistle of John printed in strophic format similar to blank verse, and the reader will notice changes throughout made in the rendering, including an attempt to compensate in part for the masculine bias of the English language.

In 1973 a new edition of *La Bible de Jérusalem* was published, which incorporated the progress in scholarship over the two decades since the preparation of its first edition in 1955. The French revision was deemed important enough to warrant a completely new edition of the English-language Jerusalem Bible. This edition, entitled *The New Jerusalem Bible* (1985), was prepared under the supervision of Henry Wansbrough of Ampleforth Abbey, York. The translation of the biblical text was made directly from the Hebrew, Greek, or Aramaic, and paraphrase was avoided more rigorously than in the first edition. "Considerable efforts have been made, though not at all costs, to soften or avoid the inbuilt preferences of the English language . . . for the masculine [gender]." As in the earlier edition, extensive introductions and explanatory notes are provided throughout the volume.

In the early 1980s work began on a revision of the New English Bible, under the chairmanship of W. D. McHardy, and in 1989 the work of the revision panels was published under the title, *The Revised English Bible.* It is somewhat less idiosyncratic in the Old Testament than its predecessor. The revisers sought to insure that the style of English used is fluent and of appropriate dignity for liturgical use. In passages that address God the "you"-form replaces the traditional "thou"-form. Steps were taken in preferring more inclusive gender reference in place of male-oriented language "where that was possible without compromising scholarly integrity of English style" (Preface).

The ecumenicity of our times is in various degrees represented in these newer translations, but perhaps most of all in the New Revised Standard Version. The committee that produced the Revised Standard Version is a continuing committee, holding meetings at regular intervals and having charge of the RSV text. In 1959 a few changes were authorized for subsequent printings of the Revised Standard Version, growing out of a study of suggestions sent to the committee by various readers. Meanwhile the committee became both international and ecumenical, with the appointment of Catholic and Protestant members from Great Britain, Canada, and the United States. Since 1946 an American Jewish scholar had been a member of the Old Testament section. More recently an Eastern Orthodox scholar was added to the committee.

In 1974 the Division of Christian Education of the National Council of Churches of Christ in the U.S.A. directed that the Standard Bible Committee undertake a revision of the RSV Bible, with the Apocrypha. Four mandates were given to the committee, namely, that necessary changes be made (1) in paragraph structure and punctuation; (2) in the elimination of archaisms while retaining the flavor of the Tyndale-King James Bible tradition; (3) in attaining a greater degree of accuracy, clarity, and euphony; and (4) in eliminating masculine-oriented language relating to people, so far as this could be done without distorting passages that reflect the historical situation of ancient patriarchal culture. Within the constraints set by the original text and the mandates given by the Division, the committee followed the maxim, "As literal as possible, as free as necessary." As a consequence, the New Revised Standard Version (1990) remains essentially a literal translation. Paraphrastic renderings were adopted only sparingly, and then chiefly to compensate for a deficiency in the English language—the lack of a common gender third person singular pronoun. The results may now be assessed in the present translation, which, unlike other English Bibles, contains all of the books that are regarded as authoritative by Protestant, Roman Catholic, and Eastern Orthodox churches.

# *Survey of the Geography, History, and Archaeology of the Bible Lands*

I. Geography
1. Lands of the Bible
2. Geographical features of Palestine
3. The central hills
4. The Rift Valley
5. The plateau of Jordan
6. Climate and rainfall
7. Neighboring peoples
8. Phoenicia, Philistia, Aram, and Hittites

II. History
9. Nature of biblical history
10. The patriarchal period
11. Exodus, election, covenant
12. The Israelite settlement
13. The united monarchy
14. The divided kingdom
15. Dynasty of Jehu
16. The age of Hezekiah
17. The Babylonian exile
18. The postexilic period
19. The Greek period
20. The Hasmoneans
21. The Herodian period
22. The New Testament period
23. The post-resurrection period
24. The Jewish revolts

III. Archaeology
25. Archaeology and the Bible
26. Iron Age I
27. Iron Age II
28. Persian to Herodian periods
29. New Testament period

## I. GEOGRAPHY

### *1. Lands of the Bible*

Physical geography is concerned with the land's feature, its climate, and ecology, whereas historical geography considers their influence on the people who inhabited the land. Physical and historical geography are complementary disciplines that furnish the background for biblical geography. The study of biblical geography gives rise to two immediate problems: the appropriate name of the biblical lands and their boundaries. Modern names and boundaries only add to the confusion; names change and boundaries fluctuate over time. Broadly speaking, modern Israel, Jordan, Lebanon, and Syria constitute the Lands of the Bible. In addition to the Holy Land, two other names used to describe this geographical unit are Canaan and Palestine. Canaan, a term used somewhat loosely, is the common name in the Hebrew Bible for the Promised Land; it designates especially Phoenicia proper.

By an irony of history the name Palestine is derived from one of the Sea Peoples, the Philistines, who were Israel's archenemies. The Greek historian Herodotus first used the designation Palestine in the fifth century B.C., and the Romans later adopted it. Since Palestine is a broader term than Land of Israel (the modern Israeli designation), biblical scholars use Palestine as an inclusive geographical name, not as a modern political title. Palestine, consisting of Cisjordan on the west side of the Jordan River and Transjordan on the east, is a land bridge connecting Egypt to the south and Mesopotamia to the north. With the Amanus and Taurus mountains as its northern border, the desert to the south and east, and the Mediterranean Sea ("the Great Sea" in the Bible) as its western border, Palestine (Canaan) is a relatively small geographical unit, about 350 miles long and 60 miles wide. In terms of the traditional formula "from Dan to Beer-sheba," Palestine is only 150 miles long. (For these and other geographical details, consult the set of maps at the end of the volume.)

### *2. Geographical features of Palestine*

Palestine may be divided into five main geographical regions, extending from north to south: the coastal plain, the central hills, the Rift Valley, the plateau of Jordan, and the deserts. These strips, varying in topography, have several subdivisions, which may be described as follows, though the Bible does not delineate boundaries clearly.

The coastal plain stretches about 125 miles from Lebanon to Gaza. The most important of the international highways, the Via Maris ("Way of the Sea"), runs the length of the Mediterranean coast. The Mount Carmel ridge, which rises above the harbor of modern Haifa, divides the coastal plain into a northern and southern region. Acco, about fourteen miles north of Haifa, was one of the important harbor cities in antiquity. The coastal plain widens at the plain of Sharon, lying between

Mount Carmel on the north and the Yarkon River on the south. Sharon is still forested and rich in agriculture. Dor and Joppa (modern Jaffa) are the chief harbors of Sharon.

The Philistines occupied the southern part of the fertile coastal plain, notable for barley and wheat. The city-states of Ashdod, Ashkelon, Gaza, Gath, and Ekron constitute the Philistine pentapolis. Ashdod is a half-mile inland from the Mediterranean coast. Ashkelon, the only Philistine city located on the seacoast, was the main Philistine harbor. Modern Gaza marks the site of the ancient city. Gath is unidentified, and Ekron is ten miles inland from Ashdod.

The Negeb (Hebrew for "dry"), a barren steppe, forms the southern border of Palestine. In modern terminology the Negeb extends to the Sinai peninsula. The Bible sometimes uses "Negeb" to refer to the south, designating the area around Beer-sheba (see Gen 20.1). In biblical times this dry, hot region had little economic significance. The Via Maris, connecting Egypt with Mesopotamia and Anatolia, passses through the Negeb. The two principal sites in the Negeb are Beer-sheba and Kadesh-barnea. Beer-sheba is the capital of the northern Negeb. Fifty miles south of Beer-sheba is Kadesh-barnea, where the Israelites encamped in the wilderness.

### 3. *The Central Hills*

The western highlands extend about 188 miles from northern Galilee to the Sinai. A great valley running from west to east divides Galilee into Upper and Lower Galilee. This region is rarely mentioned in the Old Testament; the New Testament relates that Jesus spent much of his early ministry in Lower Galilee. Both Jews and Christians relocated in Upper and Lower Galilee after A.D. 135 when this region flourished. The rolling country of Galilee, with the mountains of Upper Galilee rising more than 3,000 feet, was fertile and prosperous.

The central hills also include the plain of Megiddo, the valley of Jezreel, Mount Ephraim (at the center of the hill country), and the hill country of Judah. Between the hills of Galilee and Samaria is the plain of Jezreel (Esdraelon is its Greek name), which is also rich in agriculture. This important plain connects the Mediterranean coast with the Jordan Valley. Jezreel and Esdraelon are often identified; but, in fact, they are two distinct lowlands. The Jezreel Valley was the scene of several well-known battles in biblical history. The principal fortified cities on the west side of the Jezreel Valley are Jokneam, Megiddo, Taanach, and Ibleam. Megiddo is strategically located in the international route between Egypt and Mesopotamia.

Ephraim is a land of mountains and fertile valleys. Grapevines and olives are still cultivated on the slopes of the hills, while wheat and barley are planted in the valleys. The capital city of Samaria, situated 300 feet above the valley, is strategically located on the trade routes converging from all directions. Other cities in the Ephraim region are Shechem and Tirzah, both former capitals of the Northern Kingdom of Israel. Shechem controlled the pass between Mount Gerizim and Mount Ebal.

No sharp demarcation exists between the hill country of Ephraim and the hill country of Judah. The Southern Kingdom of Judah was more defensible than the Nothern Kingdom of Samaria because it was more isolated, but it lacks the physical attractiveness of the north. The hill country of Judah reaches altitudes of 3,345 feet. Jerusalem is located in the midst of the Judean hills, on the edge of the desert. Surrounded by the Kidron and Hinnom Valleys, Jerusalem stands 2,600 feet above sea level. Hebron and Bethlehem, well-known towns in biblical times, are situated in the hill country of Judah.

The Shephelah (Hebrew for "lowlands") separates the coastal plain from the central hills. Grains and vines flourish in the Shephelah. Situated between Philistia and the hill country of Judah, the Shephelah was protected by fortresses and served as the buffer between the Philistines and the Israelites. Among the fortress cities was Lachish, one of the most prominent cities in Judah, second only to Jerusalem.

### 4. *The Rift Valley*

This geological fault, called the Ghor in Arabic, is about ten miles wide; it is a unique feature of Palestine's physical geography. Between Mount Hermon in the north and Elath (Eilat) in the south this depression extends about 260 miles. The Jordan, the longest river in Palestine, follows the Rift Valley. If the Jordan River ran in a straight line between the Sea of Galilee and the Dead Sea, the distance covered would be 65 miles; in fact, the Jordan meanders more than twice that distance.

The Sea of Galilee (biblical Chinnereth), also known as the Lake of Tiberias, is a freshwater lake at the northern end of the Jordan Valley. Measuring thirteen miles long and eight miles wide, it is 700 feet below the level of the Mediterranean Sea. The Sea of Galilee is well known

for plentiful fish and sudden storms. Though barely mentioned in the Old Testament, the Sea of Galilee was prominent in the early ministry of Jesus. The Gospels refer to Capernaum, Tiberias, and other towns in the vicinity of the Sea of Galilee.

The Jordan River flows into the Dead Sea, the surface of which, at 1300 feet below sea level, is the lowest spot of land on earth. Forty-eight miles long and ten miles wide, it lies between the hills of Moab on the east and the Judean hills on the west. There is no outlet from this body of water; instead, the inflow is balanced by evaporation. Since the mineral content of water is left behind when the water evaporates, the Dead Sea has a high mineral content. For this reason it is also known in the Bible as the Salt Sea. (Another name for it is Sea of the Plain.) Its high salt deposits and other chemicals in this lake preclude plant and animal life. Jericho, located seven miles northwest of the Dead Sea, is thought to be the oldest city of Palestine.

The term Arabah, connoting aridity, is sometimes used in the Bible with reference to the entire Rift Valley, extending from the Sea of Galilee to the Gulf of Aqabah at the Red Sea. Arabah may also be used, as in modern terminology, to designate simply the area from the Dead Sea to the Red Sea, a distance of about a hundred miles. The Arabah is noted for its copper mines.

### 5. *The Plateau of Jordan*

This zone is located east of the Jordan (Transjordan); it is the modern Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan. The King's Highway, running the length of Transjordan from Damascus to the Gulf of Aqabah, was a major international route in antiquity. Eastern tributaries emptying into the Jordan River or the Dead Sea have formed natural boundaries separating nations and peoples in the course of history. The principal rivers of Transjordan are the Yarmuk (not mentioned in the Bible), the Jabbok (modern Nahr es-Zerqa), the Arnon (Wadi el-Mojib), and the Brook Zered (Wadi el-Hesa).

Bashan is a fertile plateau northeast of the Jordan River. It is located north of Gilead and divided from it by the Yarmuk River. It is rich pasture land; wheat and barley are grown there; basalt is also found in Bashan. The hills of Gilead are located between Bashan to the north and Moab to the south. The Jabbok River divides Gilead into a northern and southern section. Gilead is a delightful region, abounding with forests, vines, olives, and grains.

Ammon is situated south of Gilead between the Jabbok and Arnon Rivers. The principal town of this region in Old Testament times was Rabbath-Ammon; in the third century B.C. it was renamed Philadelphia; today it is Amman, the capital of the modern kingdom of Jordan.

Moab is a small plateau located between Ammon and Edom. Moab's northern border is the Arnon, and the Wadi Zered is its southern boundary. Moab's economy depended on the wheat and barley crop, as well as on sheep and goats. Before entering the land of Canaan the Israelites camped in the plains of Moab. Among the principal towns in Moab are Medeba (modern Madeba) in the north, and Dibon (modern Dhiban) in the south.

Edom or Mount Seir (the Old Testament connects the two) is located south of the Dead Sea on both sides of the Wadi Arabah. The Brook Zered serves as the frontier between Moab and Edom. Edom extended to the Gulf of Aqabah. Important trade routes passed through Edom. This rugged, mountainous region (with some peaks over 5,000 feet) is notable for agriculture, commerce, and copper mines. Bozrah (modern Buseirah) was the principal city of northern Edom. After the Nabateans settled in Edom in the sixth century B.C., Petra, a city carved from sandstone, became the capital of the Nabatean kingdom. Ezion-geber and Elath were both situated in Edom, at the head of the Gulf of Aqabah, but their precise locations are disputed.

The deserts of Syria and Arabia constitute the final geographic zone of Palestine. Today most of this region lies in Saudi Arabia, as well as in eastern Jordan and Syria.

### 6. *Climate and Rainfall*

Palestine's location between the sea and the desert has a marked influence on the climate and rainfall of the country. There are great fluctuations in climate within small areas of Palestine. The climate is subtropical, with only two seasons: summer and winter. Between May and October the weather is warm, and there is almost no rainfall. Between October and April the weather is both cool and wet (see Deut 11.14). The early rains ("former rains"), coming in mid-October, soften the ground preparatory to plowing for the winter crop. The spring rains ("latter rains") occur usually in March and April when summer crops are planted. The amount of rainfall varies throughout the country: the annual rainfall at the Dead Sea is four inches; the annual rainfall in Jerusalem is about twenty-five inches. In addition to rainfall,

dew is indispensable for watering the crops in the hot, dry months. Wadis (water beds that are usually dry except in the rainy season), springs, and cisterns also provide needed water.

The basis of the economy of Palestine, as in many neighboring countries, was agriculture. The Bible specifies the products of agriculture in Palestine: "a land of wheat and barley, of vines and fig trees and pomegranates, a land of olive trees and honey" (Deut 8.8).

### 7. *Neighboring Peoples*

Egypt and Mesopotamia were the two great empires in biblical times; they were also great rivals. Egypt (*misraim* in Hebrew), one of the great civilizations of antiquity, is located in the northeast corner of Africa, along the course of the Lower Nile River. Surrounded for the most part by desert, Egypt is bordered on the east by the Red Sea, and by Libya on the west. Lower Egypt comprises the Nile Delta, whereas Upper Egypt constitutes the remainder of the country south of Cairo. Egypt's route to Palestine passed through the Sinai wilderness, along the Mediterranean coast, and into the hill country. The peninsula of Sinai is triangular in shape, and lies between the Gulf of Suez and the Gulf of Aqabah. Mount Sinai (Horeb) is traditionally located at the southern end of the Sinai peninsula.

Egyptian involvement with Palestine began at some time in the Old Kingdom (approximately 2686–2181 B.C.); there is much evidence of connections in the Early Bronze Age (approximately 3300–2000 B.C.). Abundant biblical references document the interrelationship of Egypt and Palestine. This relationship was ambivalent, sometimes amicable, sometimes hostile. For the most part, Egypt's influence on Palestine was more indirect than direct.

Mesopotamia (the biblical name is Aram-naharayim, designating roughly "the land between the rivers"), constitutes the area of the Upper and Middle Euphrates and the Tigris Rivers. Ancient Mesopotamia was approximately coterminous with modern Iraq. The northern region of Mesopotamia was Assyria; the southern sector was Babylonia.

Assyria, situated in the Upper Mesopotamian plain (northern Iraq), was a mighty empire bent on territorial expansion. The beginnings of Assyria date from the second millennium B.C., but the empire enjoyed its greatest prominence in the Neo-Assyrian period (911–609 B.C.) when it controlled both provinces and vassal states, including, for a time, Egypt. Among the principal cities of Assyria were Asshur, the first capital of the Assyrian empire, situated on the west bank of the Tigris; Calah (Nimrud), on the east bank of the Tigris; and Nineveh, the last capital of the Assyrian empire, located on the east bank of the Tigris, opposite modern Mosul in northern Iraq.

Babylonia in southern Iraq may designate both the region and its capital city. The Bible often refers to the region of southern Mesopotamia as Chaldea. The Neo-Babylonian empire (626–539 B.C.) is synonymous with Chaldea. The city of Babylon, which gave its name to the whole region, is located on the Euphrates River, about fifty miles south of modern Baghdad.

### 8. *Phoenicia, Philistia, Aram, and Hittites*

Occupying the land along the coast of the East Mediterranean, ancient Phoenicia was coextensive with modern Lebanon and the northern part of Palestine. The Greeks used the title "Phoenicia" to denote ancient Canaan. Among the Phoenician city-states were Tyre, Sidon, Arvad, and Byblos. For the most part, Phoenicia and Israel enjoyed a cordial and close relationship; the Phoenicians, for example, supplied both artisans and materials for the building of Solomon's temple. The economic base of Phoenicia was maritime trade.

Sometime after 1150 B.C., the Philistines settled on the southwest coast of Palestine, between Joppa and Gaza. They and the Israelites clashed constantly because both were bent on expansion of their territory.

Aram, a collection of city-states to the northeast of Israel, was also in constant conflict with its neighbors. Aram is usually equated with Aram-Damascus, the capital of modern Syria, located about sixty miles east of the East Mediterranean. Especially prominent from the tenth to the eighth century B.C., Damascus was an ancient and prosperous city, well located on the major trade routes.

The Hittites, an Indo-European people, established their kingdom during the second millennium B.C. in the central Anatolia plain. The Old Testament contains several references to the Hittites.

## II. HISTORY

### 9. *Nature of Biblical History*

The Bible is not a textbook of ancient history. The biblical authors intended to tell the story of Israel, not to present a history of Israel in the modern sense. Writing from a theological per-

spective, these authors provided a religious interpretation of God's role in the events that shaped their destiny.

The historicity of the Pentateuch (see pp. xxxv–xxxvi OT) is a troublesome question. The literary tradition behind the patriarchal narratives and the other events related in the early books of the Bible is a complex subject. This is not to disparage the biblical accounts; it is rather to understand the nature of the biblical record. The Bible is not an eyewitness account of the early events of Israel's history. The sources for these events were compiled at a much later date than the events they describe. During generations of oral circulation the stories underwent considerable development. It is the function of scholars to reconstruct the history from available archaeological and literary evidence.

Old Testament history begins with Abraham, yet the period in which the patriarchs lived cannot be dated with certainty. Even the exodus from Egypt, the central event in Old Testament history, is surrounded with several difficulties of detail. The earliest reference to Israel appears on the Merneptah stele, dating from about 1207 B.C. This, then, marks the beginning of the actual history of Israel, so far as non-biblical sources are concerned.

### *10. The Patriarchal Period*

A long period of oral transmission lies behind the episodes of the patriarchal period as related in Genesis. Conjecturally, this period may be dated to the first third of the second millennium (2000–1700 B.C.), inasmuch as the culture and customs reflected in the biblical story appear to match that epoch in ancient Near Eastern history.

Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and Joseph stand at the center of the patriarchal narratives in Genesis. Despite the traditional term "patriarch," the spouses of the patriarchs also play a role in the Genesis narratives. The inclusive term "ancestors" then is more accurate than "patriarchs." The central theme of Genesis is God's promise to Abraham (Gen 12.3), meaning that God chose one people (Israel) through whom all others would be affected. Abraham and his wife Sarah migrated from Haran (in Turkey) to Canaan so as to fulfill the divine plan.

### *11. Exodus, Election, Covenant*

These three events are the heart of the Old Testament; they are also the subject of the book of Exodus, which elaborates the meaning of these events in the life of Israel. Many details surrounding the exodus event are lacking, and consequently are disputed; for example the following: the name of the pharaoh of the exodus, the route of the exodus, the precise location of Sinai, and the origin of the personal name of Israel's God.

The Hebrews were slaves in Egypt, but they escaped under the leadership of Moses, who is the central figure in Israel's history from Exodus to Deuteronomy. Legendary elements surround the biblical account of Moses, but few would question his influence upon Israelite traditions.

### *12. The Israelite Settlement*

According to the biblical account, the Israelites crossed into Canaan (Palestine) from Transjordan. The results of excavation and survey point to Iron Age I (1200–900 B.C.) as the period of the Israelite settlement in Canaan. The books of Joshua and Judges are the principal biblical sources for the settlement, although they furnish somewhat contradictory accounts. Describing the conquest very much as if it were a blitzkrieg, the book of Joshua gives the impression that the conquest was relatively rapid and definitive. On the contrary, other sources show that the Israelite settlement was a lengthy and complicated process. The book of Joshua, reflecting a variety of sources, was compiled and composed much later than the events described. With respect to at least three sites—Ai, Jericho, and Gibeon—archaeological evidence does not bear out the book of Joshua's account of a decisive assault. These cities appear to have been unoccupied at the time of the conquest (settlement). As Judges relates, the infiltration of Israelites into Canaan was gradual; it was brought to completion only with David and Solomon.

Israel's emergence in Canaan has been the object of intense archaeological investigation in recent times. Much more is known about settlement patterns in Canaan as a result of recent excavations and extensive site-surveys. Although consensus among scholars is still lacking, three models of settlement have been proposed: a decisive military assault (the traditional theory), a social movement from within (peasant revolt theory), and a process of peaceful infiltration. The most plausible explanation may be the last, as elaborated by the archaeologist I. Finkelstein on the basis of excavation and survey: namely, that Israel developed from pastoralist elements already residing in Canaan who settled in the hill country sometime around 1200 B.C.

The beginning of the Iron Age dates from 1200 B.C. when changes began to appear in architecture, weapons, and agriculture. This coincided

with the period of the judges (Hebrew: *shophetim;* from about 1200 to 1050 B.C.). The judges were charismatic military leaders who delivered Israel from crises caused by the onslaughts of neighboring peoples, including the Philistines. Without a strong central government, the tribes were only loosely confederated. Such a situation led inevitably to anarchy, as the book of Judges attests: "In those days there was no king in Israel; all the people did what was right in their own eyes" (Judg 21.25).

The book of Judges, encompassing the period between Joshua and Samuel, is a valuable historical source for this barbarous period, even though Judges is a religious rather than an historical document. It is not easy to distinguish Canaanite and Israelite religious practices during this chaotic period when the neighboring peoples probably shared a common material culture.

### *13. The United Monarchy*

With respect to the historicity of the Israelite monarchy from about 1020 B.C. onward, scholars are on firmer ground. Starting in this period, the biblical record and the archaeological evidence can be correlated with more assurance. Extrabiblical sources, including increased epigraphic remains, are available to clarify the biblical narrative.

Confronted with the anarchy of the period of judges, Israel had to take steps to establish a strong central rule if it was to survive the Philistine threat. The dominant figure at that time in Israel's history was Samuel. The two books of Samuel are a valuable historical resource, even though their narratives are more composite than continuous, and discrepancies appear in the accounts. The people (though not all) demanded that they be "like other nations" (1 Sam 8.20), that is, that they establish kingship, a new type of leadership. But kingship occasioned a serious theological crisis. Would it not compromise the positioin of the LORD, who was the sole king of Israel? The practical consideration of survival outweighed theology, and so the monarchy was established at a critical period in Israelite history. Kingship in Israel had to be different from that of Mesopotamia and Egypt, however, where the king was considered divine.

Saul became Israel's first king about 1020 B.C., and his major challenge was to contain the Philistines who were threatening Israel's existence. Little is known about the Philistines because documentary evidence is lacking; Philistine written texts are practically unknown to scholars. The Philistines, one of the Sea Peoples, had migrated from the Aegean area and settled in southern Palestine after 1150 B.C., following their defeat at the hands of the Egyptians under Rameses III. Conflict between Israel and Philistia persisted until David's defeat of the Philistines, though it continued less intensely until the time of Hezekiah in the latter part of the eighth century B.C.

Saul's story dominates 1 Samuel (chs 13–31). More a warrior than a king, he had some military successes, but ultimately was unable to prevail over the Philistines, who drove him to suicide on Mount Gilboa. Saul was basically a good person, who was thrust into a role for which he was unprepared. Saul's life, especially his ultimate defeat by the Philistines, is full of pathos.

Saul and his successor David (1000–961 B.C.) are a study in contrasts. Saul was no match for David, with whom he had an ambivalent relationship. Saul, jealous of David, even tried to kill him. David's story is told principally in 2 Samuel, especially in the Succession Narrative (2 Sam chs 9--20; 1 Kings chs 1–2). This court history of David addresses the question of his successor to the throne. The disarming candor of the narrative, including the court intrigues, allows the reader to see the human side of David, who was one of Israel's greatest heroes.

As military leader and statesman, David united both Judah and Israel into one kingdom, and was victorious over the Philistines. He also expanded his empire to encompass territory from Eziongeber to Homs (in modern Syria), and from the Mediterranean to the Euphrates. For seven years David ruled over Judah from Hebron. After capturing Jerusalem from the Jebusites, David showed his diplomatic genius by establishing it as the capital of the kingdom. Jerusalem was ideally located for this purpose—on neutral territory and thereby acceptable to both the Northern Kingdom of Israel and the Southern Kingdom of Judah. From that time on, Jerusalem (specifically, the lower eastern ridge) was known as the City of David (Zion). By transferring the Ark of the Covenant to Jerusalem David made his city the religious center of the kingdom, in addition to its being the political capital. David ruled over the United Kingdom of Israel for thirty-three years.

David had planned to build the temple in Jerusalem, but was dissuaded by the prophet Nathan. David's son and successor, Solomon, built the temple and the other royal buildings just north of the original City of David. Nathan is best known for the dynastic oracle (2 Sam ch 7; see also Ps 89), describing the promissory cove-

nant between the God of Israel and the Davidic dynasty.

The contents of 1 and 2 Kings, which are theological narratives, deal with Solomon and his achievements (1 Kings chs 1–11), the kingdoms of Israel and Judah (1 Kings ch 12 to 2 Kings ch 17), and the lone-surviving kingdom of Judah (2 Kings chs 18–25). The kings are judged on the basis of the Deuteronomic principle of purity of the Yahwist cult in Jerusalem. These narratives are ambivalent toward Solomon, a political rather than a military leader. He is praised for consolidating the kingdom by the establishment of administrative districts. Solomon also interjected himself onto the international scene by trade and commerce. He is also distinguished for his elaborate building projects, especially the splendid Jerusalem temple and adjacent palace complex. Solomon is also justly famous for the "Solomonic gates" built to fortify Hazor, Megiddo, and Gezer (1 Kings 9.15).

To finance his lavish building program, Solomon imposed heavy taxes and had recourse to forced labor, thereby alienating his subjects, especially those of the Northern Kingdom. At the same time, he fostered syncretism by introducing foreign religious practices. The United Kingdom of Israel was at the pinnacle of its wealth and power during Solomon's reign, but it was short-lived. The kingdom, united for seventy years, fell apart at Solomon's death in 922 B.C.

### *14. The Divided Kingdom*

Egypt was in constant conflict with both the Northern and Southern Kingdoms; at the same time, internecine warfare persisted until the Northern Kingdom fell in 722/721 B.C. The Northern Kingdom (Israel) was larger and stronger than the Southern Kingdom (Judah), but the latter enjoyed more stability. Rehoboam (922–915 B.C.), Solomon's successor, could have deterred Israel from seceding, but his arrogance prevented him from conciliating the Northern Kingdom. Jeroboam I (922–901 B.C.), the first king of the North, set up royal sanctuaries at Dan (in the north) and Bethel (in the south) to discourage his subjects from worshipping at Jerusalem. He adorned these royal temples with golden bulls, probably to serve as pedestals upon which the invisible Yahweh was enthroned. Jeroboam's purpose probably was not idolatrous; nevertheless, he incurred the condemnation of the Jerusalem-based Deuteronomic historian (1 Kings ch 12). He established his first capital at Shechem, subsequently transferring it to Tirzah.

The next memorable ruler of the Northern Kingdom was Omri (876–869 B.C.), sometimes referred to as "David of the North"; he established a prestigious dynasty, and also expanded the kingdom. He set up his new capital at the strategic site of Samaria, which had been previously occupied by the Shomron family. Omri achieved stability for Israel through collaboration with Judah and a marriage alliance with Phoenicia. He arranged a political marriage between Jezebel, daughter of Ethbaal of Tyre, and his son Ahab (869–850 B.C.). The triple alliance of Israel, Judah, and Phoenicia was intended to hold Aram-Damascus in check. Israel's prosperity achieved under Omri continued through Ahab's reign.

Ahab was a great builder, as attested by the magnificent buildings at Samaria. Much of his reign was absorbed with successful wars against Aram-Damascus. Then in 853 B.C. Israel and Aram joined forces against Assyria at Qarqar on the Orontes. Ahab is reputed to have put two thousand chariots and ten thousand foot soldiers in battle against the armies of Shalmaneser III of Assyria. Ahab was killed subsequently in a campaign against the Arameans at Ramoth-gilead (in modern Jordan, though its location is disputed).

The biblical story focuses on the hostile encounter of Ahab and Jezebel with the prophet Elijah. Jezebel was as zealous for her Phoenician god Baal as Elijah ("Yahweh is my God") was for the God of Israel. But Elijah, an eerie, solitary figure, would tolerate no rival to Yahweh. By defeating the Baal prophets in a dramatic contest on Mount Carmel, Elijah proved that "the LORD indeed is God" (1 Kings 18.39).

During this period the Kingdom of Judah, overshadowed by the Northern Kingdom, was little more than a vassal state of Israel, partly due to its geographical isolation. King Jehoshaphat of Judah reigned twenty-five years (873–849 B.C.). Jehoram (Joram; 849–843 B.C.), his son and successor, maintained a close alliance with Israel during his reign. Ahaziah, the son of Jehoram and Athaliah, was king of Judah in 842 B.C. Athaliah (842–837 B.C.), the daughter of Ahab and Jezebel, usurped the throne and ruled in Judah upon the death of Ahaziah. She met her inglorious end by murder. Jehoash (Joash; 837–800 B.C.), the youngest son of Ahaziah, having escaped Athaliah's purge of the royal family, acceded to the Davidic throne.

### *15. Dynasty of Jehu (842–746 B.C.)*

Jehu (842–815 B.C.), son of Jehoshaphat, established a dynasty that ruled Israel more than ninety

years. Having usurped the throne, Jehu conducted a bloody crusade against the worship of Baal, resulting in the massacre of the whole house of Ahab, including the queen mother Jezebel. He put an end to the worship of the Tyrian Baal, destroying the Baal temple in Samaria. The prophet Elisha, among others, supported Jehu's rebellion. Jehu became a vassal to the Assyrian king Shalmaneser III (858–824 B.C.), paying tribute to win Assyrian favor against the Arameans, but he was not entirely successful. The Arameans continued to menace Israel for another half century. Jehu's submission to Shalmaneser III is memorialized on the famous Black Obelisk (discovered in Nimrud, and now in the British Museum). Jehoash (Joash; 802–786 B.C.) of Israel destroyed portions of the Jerusalem wall, and raided the palace treasures as well.

The greatest king of the Jehu dynasty was Jeroboam II (786–746 B.C.), who ruled when the Northern Kingdom was at the height of prosperity. Through territorial expansion Jeroboam II came close to restoring the boundaries of the Davidic empire. Many eighth-century Israelites acquired their wealth through exploitation and oppression of the poor. The prophets Amos and Hosea inveighed uncompromisingly against rampant social injustice, moral turpitude, and religious abuses. Amos aimed his attack against "the winter house as well as the summer house" and "the houses of ivory" (Am 3.15) of the affluent. Hosea indicted the Israelites for their practice of gross rites associated with fertility cults. The conduct of eighth-century Israel was a total contradiction of the covenant ideal.

In the same era Judah also was enjoying prosperity and stability under King Uzziah (Azariah; 783–742 B.C.), partly because Israel and Judah were at peace with each other. Internationally it was an ideal time for the Northern and Southern Kingdoms because Aram (Syria) and Assyria, absorbed in their own internal problems, were not serious threats. Uzziah fortified Jerusalem and strengthened the city walls. He also expanded the territory of Judah to the west, north, and east. His career was cut short when leprosy forced him to relinquish the throne to Jotham, who acted as regent. In 742 B.C., the year Uzziah died, Isaiah was called to be a prophet (Isa 6.1).

The international picture changed for the worse when Tiglath-pileser III (745–727 B.C.), also known as Pul (2 Kings 15.19), became king of Assyria. As founder of the Neo-Assyrian empire, this imperialist was devoted to the conquest of the west, including Syria, Israel, Philistia, Judah, and Transjordan. Forming a coalition against Assyrian advances, King Pekah of Israel and King Rezin of Damascus tried unsuccessfully to force Judah to join. Ahaz (735–715 B.C.), king of Judah at this time, ignored the advice of Isaiah to place absolute trust in Yahweh, and instead appealed to Tiglath-pileser III for help. He paid the price by becoming an Assyrian vassal. The upshot was that Assyria devastated Damascus in 733 B.C., made Galilee and Gilead Assyrian provinces, and reduced Israel to the status of vassal of Assyria.

The Assyrian siege of Samaria under Shalmaneser V began in 724 B.C., and the Northern Kingdom fell to Sargon II in 722/721 B.C. In accordance with Assyrian policy, inhabitants of Samaria were deported, and captives from elsewhere were relocated there. After the fall of Samaria a number of refugees from the Northern Kingdom migrated south and settled in Judah, including Jerusalem. The increase in population of Jerusalem accounts for the expansion of Jerusalem westward at that time. Samaria became an Assyrian province, known as Samarina.

### 16. *The Age of Hezekiah* (*715–687* B.C.)

Hezekiah, son and successor of the weak Ahaz, was a vigorous leader. Like Ahaz, Hezekiah continued as a vassal of Assyria. Judah, for the most part, enjoyed great prosperity during the reign of Hezekiah. He may be best known for instituting cultic reforms: he abolished local shrines ("high places") and purified the Jerusalem temple, henceforth the exclusive center of worship. Isaiah, prominent during the reign of Hezekiah, exerted some influence on the king.

When Sargon II died in 705 B.C., Hezekiah revolted against Assyrian rule. In anticipation of an Assyrian military response, Hezekiah cut a 1,750-foot tunnel through solid rock to conduct the waters of the exposed Gihon spring to the pool of Siloam within the walls of Jerusalem. In 701 B.C. Sennacherib (704–681 B.C.), the new Assyrian king, invaded Philistia and Judah, suppressing the revolt of the west. He conquered forty-six cities surrounding Jerusalem, including Lachish. The wall reliefs in Sennacherib's palace at Nineveh (now in the British Museum) furnish an unusually vivid pictorial account of his siege and capture of Lachish. Jerusalem was spared when Hezekiah capitulated to Sennacherib by paying a heavy tribute. According to Sennacherib's description of the siege of Jerusalem, he shut up Hezekiah in Jerusalem "like a bird in a cage."

Manasseh (687–642 B.C.), Hezekiah's successor,

undid during his long reign the cultic reforms implemented by his father, and reintroduced idolatrous worship. Judah's vassaldom to Assyria continued through the reign of Manasseh. Assyria attained the zenith of its power during this era.

Like Hezekiah, Josiah (639–609 B.C.) inaugurated a sweeping religious reform, emphasizing the centralization of public worship in Jerusalem and the elimination of idolatory. This religious reform did not prove to be as effective as anticipated. Jeremiah, whose prophetic career extended roughly from 626 to 580 B.C., was disappointed in the reform, perhaps because it had more form than substance.

Josiah, sometimes compared with David, succeeded in expanding the territory of Judah, including, it would seem, much of the former Northern Kingdom of Israel. As the Assyrian empire was beginning to wane as the result of overextension, the Medes and the Babylonians emerged. In 612 B.C. Nineveh, the Assyrian capital, fell to the Babylonians (see Nahum). Josiah died in 609 B.C. at the age of thirty-nine, killed at the Megiddo pass (2 Chron 35.22–24), apparently attempting to prevent Egypt from bolstering the declining Assyrian empire in its struggle with Babylon.

During the last two decades of its history the Kingdom of Judah was caught in a power struggle between imperial Egypt and Babylonia, each striving to fill the power vacuum left by Assyria. The last three kings of Judah—Jehoiakim (609–598 B.C.), Jehoiachin (three months), and Zedekiah (597–587 B.C.)—were undistinguished. During Jehoiakim's reign in 605 B.C. the Babylonian king Nebuchadnezzar defeated the Egyptian pharaoh Neco in battle at Carchemish, placing Judah under the control of Babylonia. This was a turning point in Judah's history. Jehoiakim (see Jer 36) refused to listen to Jeremiah's prediction of the impending Babylonian destruction. In 597 B.C., Nebuchadnezzar besieged Jerusalem and deported Jehoiachin to Babylon, as well as thousands of leading citizens, among them Ezekiel, who became a prophet in Babylon. Nebuchadnezzar then appointed Zedekiah as a puppet in place of the exiled Jehoiachin. Jeremiah was a kind of adviser to Zedekiah, who sought his counsel but seldom followed it. Jeremiah, a realist, urged Zedekiah (Jer 37–38) not to rebel against Babylonia, but instead to capitulate. As a result, Jeremiah was accused of being a traitor. Zedekiah rebelled against the Babylonians, and in 587–586 B.C. Nebuchadnezzar attacked and destroyed Jerusalem and its temple, deporting many of its inhabitants to Babylon. Zedekiah, the last king of Judah, was taken to Babylon, was imprisoned for treason, and died there. At the same time the fortified towns of Judah, including Lachish, were also destroyed.

### *17. The Babylonian Exile (586–539 B.C.)*

After the captives of Judah were deported to Babylon, the Babylonians did not replace them with foreigners. Although the number of deportees is uncertain, the majority did not go into exile. In fact, some cultic practices continued to be observed at the site of the ruined Jerusalem temple (Jer 41.4–6). Meanwhile, the Babylonians and the Edomites (see Ps 137) sacked the land of Judah. Apparently, the Jews in exile prospered; among other considerations they were granted religious freedom.

Before the fall of Jerusalem, Jeremiah and Ezekiel uttered menacing oracles, to lead the people of Judah to repentance; after the fall, these prophets proclaimed oracles of hope: Jeremiah promised a new covenant (Jer 31.31–34), Ezekiel (37.40–48) a new beginning. Using the typology of the first exodus, the prophet Second Isaiah (Isa chs 40–55) also strove to restore the confidence of his people. Assuring them of imminent delivery from captivity, Second Isaiah declared that a new exodus would follow the demise of Babylon. Cyrus of Persia was God's "messiah" who would deliver the Jews (Isa 45.1–3).

In 539 B.C. at the battle of Opis on the Tigris, the Persians under Cyrus defeated the Babylonian army. Cyrus, a tolerant and enlightened leader, issued an edict liberating the Jews from captivity and permitting repatriation, though not all Jews were eager to return to Judah. The economic opportunities were greater in Babylon than in Jerusalem, which was in need of rebuilding. Cyrus also granted a certain amount of autonomy to Judah.

### *18. The Postexilic Period*

The principal source of information for this period is in Ezra and Nehemiah. Cyrus appointed Sheshbazzar governor of the province of Judah, who led the first group of returning exiles back to Judah. Only in 520 B.C. did Zerubbabel, governor of the province of Judah, and Joshua, the high priest, join forces to undertake the rebuilding of the temple. With the prodding of the prophets Haggai and Zechariah, the temple was completed in 515 B.C. The Samaritans from the district of Samaria in the north offered assistance in rebuilding the temple, but Zerubbabel spurned

them. Herein lies the root of the animosity, evident in the Gospels, between Jews and Samaritans. Later the Samaritans went on to build their own temple on Mount Gerizim, overlooking Shechem.

About 445 B.C. Nehemiah, who had been appointed governor of Jerusalem, came from Persia to rebuild the walls of Jerusalem. He met with stiff opposition from both outside and within Jerusalem. His opponents, opting for the status quo, may have felt threatened by a walled city. Nonetheless, Nehemiah completed the rebuilding of the walls in fifty-two days. He also repopulated Jeusalem. Instituting social and religious reforms, Nehemiah championed the cause of the poor, regulated tithing, enforced Sabbath observance, and forbade foreign marriages.

The priest Ezra came to Jerusalem from Babylon, perhaps after Nehemiah, as a religious leader in the company of a large number of exiles. He was skilled in the law of Moses. Some scholars describe his position as "secretary for Jewish affairs" (see Ezra 7.6–10). It was Ezra's function to enforce the observance of the Jewish law. Disturbed by the number of mixed marriages, Ezra fostered Jewish endogamy.

### *19. The Greek Period (333–63 B.C.)*

In 334 B.C. Alexander the Great, king of Macedon, undertook the conquest of the Persian empire, including Anatolia, Phoenicia, Palestine, Egypt, and Mesopotamia. Persian rule came to an end in Judea when Alexander captured Jerusalem in 332 B.C.. The direct result of his victorious campaigns was hellenization, the imposition of Greek culture and language on the East. For the Jews, it meant the accommodation of Jewish faith to Greek practice. The Greek translation of the Old Testament (the Septuagint) and the composition of the New Testament in Greek are direct results of the Greek acculturation instituted by Alexander, and fostered by his successors.

After Alexander's death his vast empire was partitioned into four parts; two of these kingdoms competed for control of Palestine: Egypt, ruled by Ptolemy, and Asia (including Syria), ruled by Seleucus, both generals of Alexander. Ptolemy I captured Jerusalem in 320 B.C. With the Ptolemaic dynasty controlling Palestine for about a century, the Jewish community in Palestine underwent little change; it was a peaceful and prosperous period. The Ptolemies, and later the Seleucids, permitted the high priest to continue as both religious and civil head of Judea.

The Seleucids, also patrons of Hellenism, gained control of Palestine in 198 B.C. when Antiochus III (the Great; 223–187 B.C.) defeated the Ptolemies. Antiochus treated the Jews with consideration, providing financial assistance for the rebuilding of Jerusalem, and exempting them from taxes for a three-year period.

Whereas many Jews, especially the economically poor, opposed any form of hellenization, other Jews (Hellenistic Jews), especially those among the upper classes and the temple priesthood, were eager for assimilation. Embracing Greek culture willingly, those Jews became hellenizers. For example, the high priest Jason, who bought the office, transformed Jerusalem into a Hellenistic polis, a Greek city-state. Jason also built a gymnasium in Jerusalem under the patronage of Hermes and Hercules. The gymnasium was more than a coliseum; it became a social center in deliberate competition with the temple.

Antiochus IV (Epiphanes; 175–164 B.C.), who forbade Jewish religious practices, was the infamous Seleucid king against whom the Maccabees revolted. He erected in Jerusalem a citadel for his garrison; known as the Akra, it housed Syrian troops, and was at the same time the symbol of foreign rule. Attempting to destroy Judaism, Antiochus IV descrated the temple by erecting an altar to Zeus. The Maccabean family (the Hasmoneans), including the priest Mattathias and his five sons, revolted in 167 B.C. against Antiochus IV when he mandated Jews to offer pagan sacrifice.

Judas Maccabeus, the third of the five sons, succeeded Mattathias; conducting guerrilla warfare against both opposing Jews and Syrian troops, he led his forces to victory, liberating Jerusalem (except for the Akra fortress) in 164 B.C. This resulted in the purification and rededication of the temple, memorialized in the festival of the Dedication (John 10.22; called Hanukkah today).

Upon the death of Judas in 160 B.C., Jonathan (160–143 B.C.), who usurped the high priesthood in 152 B.C., was chosen leader of the Jewish forces. Another brother, Simon (143–134 B.C.), succeeded Jonathan. He was recognized as high priest, commander, and ethnarch of the Jews. Simon was successful in capturing the Akra, and razing it. From the height of the Akra the Seleucids had been able to spy on the Jews during temple services. (For an account of the general history of the period see 1 and 2 Maccabees.)

### *20. The Hasmoneans*

The Hasmonean dynasty traced its roots to the family of the priest Mattathias. The capital of the

dynasty was Jerusalem, center of religious, political, and economic life. Excluding the Maccabees, the Hasmonean dynasty extended from 134 to 63 B.C., and embraced John Hyrcanus I (134–104 B.C.), Aristobulus I (104–103 B.C.), Alexander Jannaeus (103–76 B.C.), Salome Alexandra (76–69 B.C.), and Aristobulus II (69–63 B.C.). The Hasmoneans attained the summit of their power under John Hyrcanus I and his son, Alexander Jannaeus. (In editions of this book that include the Apocryphal/Deuterocanonical Books, see "Chronological Table of Rulers," pp. XIV-XV AP of Apocrypha.)

John Hyrcanus I, Simon's son, succeeded as high priest when his father was murdered; he was an exemplary ruler, often compared with David. John Hyrcanus I extended Jewish rule to Transjordan; he forcibly converted the Idumeans to Judaism, imposing Jewish ritual observances on them; he destroyed the Samaritan temple on Mount Gerizim. During this period, or shortly before, two rival parties or "sects"—the Pharisees and the Sadducees—emerged in the Jewish community. The Pharisees took issue with Hyrcanus' secular attitude; in turn, he supported the Sadducees.

The Pharisees (the name may mean "separated ones") were principally a lay group. Advocating a strict interpretation of Torah ("law" or, better, "teaching") the Pharisees accepted both the written Torah (in the Pentateuch) and the oral Torah (accumulated interpretations of the Torah). Included among their beliefs were the resurrection, the coming of a Messiah, and angels. They emphasized ritual purity, tithing, and Sabbath observance. The description of the Pharisees in the Gospels is somewhat tendentious, reflecting an early Christian polemic. Matthew ch 23, for example, is a litany of angry fulminations against (some of) the Pharisees.

The conservative Sadducees were opponents of the Pharisees. The name "Sadducees" may be derived from the priestly Zadokite family of David's time. Although it is difficult to get a coherent picture of the Sadducees, their membership appears to be priestly (not all priests were Sadducees) and aristocratic. The Sadducees supported the Hasmonean priest-kings; they were also influenced by Greek culture. Unlike the Pharisees, the Sadducees did not believe in the immortality of the soul, the general resurrection, or angels. The Sadducees disappeared after the fall of Jerusalem in A.D. 70.

Hyrcanus' son, Aristobulus, appropriated the title of king, and his successors followed suit. The fact that he assumed a Greek name (*Aristobulus,* "excellent counselor") is an indication of Hellenistic influence.

During the long reign of Alexander Jannaeus, the Hasmoneans achieved considerable territorial expansion, approximating the boundaries of the ancient Davidic kingdom. A deep animosity developed between Alexander and the Pharisees, some of whom were put to death. Alexander's widow, Salome Alexandra, succeeded to the throne, and appointed her son, Hyrcanus II, as high priest. Unlike her husband, she favored the Pharisees, who were powerful in this period. At the death of Salome Alexandra, her two sons, Hyrcanus II and Aristobulus II, engaged in bitter rivalry. Aristobulus became king and high priest.

Ultimately, Pompey intervened with his Roman legions, capturing Jerusalem in 63 B.C.; he attacked the temple mount, entered the holy of holies, and destroyed the walls of the city. Aristobulus II was imprisoned in Rome, while Hyrcanus II ruled in Jerusalem as high priest, but not as king. Judea became part of the province of Syria. From 63 B.C. until the advent of Herod the Great in 37 B.C., the Hasmoneans ruled under the protection of Rome; in 37 B.C. the Herodians replaced the Hasmonean dynasty. It had been a period of great political intrigue.

### *21. The Herodian Period (63–4 B.C.)*

Antipater II, the father of Herod the Great and Phasael, was a friend of Hyrcanus II. Because of their military support of Julius Caesar, both Hyrcanus II and Antipater were rewarded. Antipater was appointed procurator of Judea in 47 B.C., Herod was named governor of Galilee, and Phasael governor of Jerusalem. In 40 B.C. Herod was appointed king of the Jews by the Roman senate; in 37 B.C. he conquered the kingdom of Judea.

Herod the Great (37–4 B.C.) was king of the Jews for thirty-three years, ruling over Judea, Idumea, Perea, Galilee, and Jaffa. Though technically a Jew (as a native of Idumea), Herod was more Hellenist than Jewish; in fact, the Jews hated him. Herod was enamored of Greek culture. He was able to survive so long amidst intrigue and conspiracy because of his total loyalty to Rome, his ruthless repression of those who opposed him, and his unprincipled political maneuvering, not to mention his boundless ambition.

Herod's long reign marked an era of economic prosperity, when the Upper City of Jerusalem attained the zenith of its development; at the same time, the poor were living in the Lower City. As evidence of affluence, archaeologists have uncov-

ered the remains of luxurious houses, adorned with mosaic flooring, frescoes, and painted plaster. Herod may be remembered best for his grandiose building activities. The designation "Herodian" is synonymous with military architecture and massive masonry throughout Palestine. Herod's best-known building project was the Jerusalem temple, rebuilt to ingratiate himself with the Jews. Begun in 20 B.C. and dedicated ten years later, the temple was not actually completed until A.D. 63. To accommodate the newly enlarged temple, Herod doubled the size of the temple platform by filling in the surrounding valleys. Retaining walls, still standing, were built to support the temple esplanade. The most famous of these walls is called the *kotel* or "western wall," regarded as one of the holiest places in Judaism.

In the northwest corner of the Upper City of Jerusalem, near the present Jaffa Gate, Herod built a splendid, fortified palace, but nothing remains of its superstructure. At the north side of the palace stood three towers, named in memory of Phasael (Herod's brother), Hippicus (an unknown friend), and Miriamme (Herod's Hasmonean wife).

Herod also rebuilt the Baris (a Hasmonean fortress), situated at the northwest corner of the temple enclosure. He enlarged it with towers, naming it Antonia after his patron Mark Antony. This huge fortress served to protect the temple mount.

Herod also constructed fortress-palaces throughout the realm, notably the Alexandrium, north of Jericho; the Machaerus on the east shore of the Dead Sea, where, according to Josephus, Herod Antipas put John the Baptist to death; Masada on the western cliffs of the Dead Sea, first fortified by Alexander Jannaeus, where, according to Josephus, resisting Jewish Zealots committed suicide in A.D. 74 rather than be taken captive by the Romans; and the Herodion, southeast of Bethlehem, where Herod is supposedly buried, although no tomb has been unearthed. Herod magnificently rebuilt Caesarea, the seaport on the eastern coast of the Mediterranean, renaming it Caesarea Maritima in honor of Octavian (Caesar Augustus). Herod also constructed a splendid new city at Samaria, renaming it Sebaste (Greek-Latin "Augustus") in honor of Caesar Augustus.

## 22. *The New Testament Period (4 B.C.–A.D. 30)*

According to the New Testament, Jesus was born when Herod the Great was king and Caesar Augustus was Roman emperor; the year was probably 6 B.C. At the death of Herod in 4 B.C., Augustus divided the kingdom among Herod's three sons. Archelaus (4 B.C.–A.D. 6) became ethnarch of Judea, Idumea, and Samaria. When he was removed for brutality, his territory became a Roman province ruled by a procurator. Herod Antipas (4 B.C.–A.D. 39), the most frequently mentioned Herod in the New Testament (and always designated as Herod), was tetrarch of Galilee and Perea. He established his capital at Tiberias on the western shore of the Sea of Galilee. John the Baptist reproached Herod Antipas for his marriage to Herodias, the mother of Salome, because Antipas was Herodias' half-uncle. At the instigation of the vindictive Herodias, Herod Antipas ordered the execution of John (Mk 6.17–29). He also had a part in the condemnation of Jesus.

Philip (4 B.C.–A.D. 34), was tetrarch of Batanea, Trachonitis, and Auranitis, place-names used in the Hellenistic period for the region of Bashan. Philip, a reputable ruler, rebuilt the old Greek city of Paneas (modern Baniyas) in the extreme north of Palestine, renaming it Caesarea Philippi, after the emperor and himself. This city is associated with Peter's confession (Mt 16.16). At Philip's death (A.D. 34) his region became part of the Roman province of Syria.

After the demise of Herod the Great, Jerusalem became a province of the Roman empire, ruled by Roman procurators residing in Caesarea. Pontius Pilate (A.D. 26–36) is the best-known of the Roman procurators of Judea. The preaching of John the Baptist and the ministry of Jesus took place during his governorship. Jewish sources underscore his cruel and insensitive nature. Lacking in respect for Jewish customs, he countered nonviolent protests with bloody responses. Despite his central role in the condemnation of Jesus, Pilate, according to the Gospels, thought Jesus innocent and tried to free him.

The four Gospels, the source for the life and especially the teachings of Jesus, are not intended as a biography in the modern sense (see pp. v–vi NT). On the basis of historical reconstruction, Jesus began his public ministry around A.D. 26, frequenting the Lower Galilee region (the territory of Herod Antipas). Three or four years later, Jesus moved south to Jerusalem to preach there. His public life is reckoned as extending two to three years. About A.D. 30 Roman soldiers put Jesus to death by crucifixion outside the walls of Jerusalem. According to the New Testament, Jesus rose from the dead and appeared to his followers.

### *23. The Post-Resurrection Period (A.D. 30–135)*

After Pentecost, the gospel was preached abroad, first to the Jews and then to the Gentiles; shortly thereafter, perhaps in A.D. 36, persecution followed. Paul the apostle was born a Hellenistic Jew at Tarsus of Cilicia (in Asia Minor) in the early first century A.D. After persecuting the nascent church, he converted to Christianity and made three famous missionary journeys, described in Acts. Thirteen New Testament letters are attributed to Paul.

Herod Agrippa I (A.D. 41–44), friend of Emperor Caligula and grandson of Herod the Great, was given the title of king and eventually ruled the former kingdom of Herod the Great. He persecuted the Christians and, according to Acts 12, executed James, the son of Zebedee, and also imprisoned Peter. Herod Agrippa's name is associated with the foundations of the "third wall," the northernmost wall of Jerusalem completed as late as the first Jewish revolt (A.D. 66–70). The three northern walls of Jerusalem are known from the writings of the Jewish historian Josephus. Because the archaeological evidence is ambiguous, the alignment of the "third wall" remains a problem.

Herod Agrippa II (called Agrippa in the New Testament), son of Herod Agrippa I, governed (from A.D. 53) the former tetrarchy of Philip, as well as parts of Galilee and Perea. He apparently had an incestuous relationship with his sister Bernice. Paul as a prisoner addressed Agrippa and Bernice at Caesarea (Acts 26.2–29). Agrippa observed Jewish laws and customs; at the beginning of the Jewish revolt in A.D. 66, however, he sided with Rome against the Jews.

### *24. The Jewish Revolts (A.D. 66–135)*

The first revolt broke out in A.D. 66. At that time the Christian community abandoned Jerusalem and fled to Pella in Transjordan. The Jews had some success until the emperor Nero dispatched Vespasian as field commander. He moved against Jerusalem in A.D. 69; meanwhile having been acclaimed emperor, he returned to Rome before the actual siege of Jerusalem. His son Titus led the attack on Jerusalem from the north side, always the most vulnerable, and built a siege wall around the city. First, he razed the fortress Antonia, and then destroyed the temple by fire. In A.D. 70, after a siege lasting from April to September, Jerusalem was captured, and its walls destroyed.

The emperor Hadrian visited Jerusalem in A.D. 129–130; he rebuilt the city as a Roman military camp, renaming it Aelia Capitolina. He also erected a temple honoring Jupiter Capitolinus on the temple mount. The rebuilding and renaming of Jerusalem most likely sparked the second Jewish revolt. Simon ben Kosibah (Bar Cochba) led this revolt against Rome between A.D. 132 and 135. Sextus Julius Severus crushed the revolt only after the Jews had reoccupied Jerusalem. A decree of Hadrian forbade Jews henceforth to live in Jerusalem, or even to visit the city.

## III. ARCHAEOLOGY

### *25. Archaeology and the Bible*

Archaeology may be defined as the scientific study of the material remains of past human life and activities. The interrelationship of the Bible and archaeology is reflected in the title "biblical archaeology." It is the function of biblical archaeology to correlate archaeological evidence with the biblical record for the purpose of illuminating the biblical text. Although other archaeologists had preceded W. Flinders Petrie, he conducted the first systematic excavation in Palestine in 1890. Excavating at Tell el-Hesi on the northern edge of the Negeb, he laid the foundations for the scientific dating of sites in Palestine. Since that time, significant progress has been made in Near Eastern archaeology, and especially since 1960 with new developments in the method of excavation, as well as in the processing and interpreting of data.

For convenience, archaeologists refer to periods of time (called "ages") that are named from the material culture that was prevalent during them. This is determined by the artifacts that are found in excavations for the time periods. The periods discussed below are the following:

| | |
|---|---|
| Early Bronze Age | 3000–2100 B.C. |
| Middle Bronze Age | 2100–1550 B.C. |
| Late Bronze Age | 1550–1200 B.C. |
| Iron Age I | 1200–900 B.C. |
| Iron Age II | 900–600 B.C. |
| Iron Age III | 600–300 B.C. |

Iron Age III is also called the Persian period. After that era, the ages are named for the dominant political or cultural power. See the discussion below.

The archaeological periods in Palestine date as early as Paleolithic (Old Stone Age), but in biblical studies it is sufficient to begin with the Middle Bronze Age (2100–1550 B.C.). This was a period of power and prosperity in Palestine, characterized by imposing city walls, a simplified

alphabet, and international trade. The biblical ancestors (patriarchs) are often associated with the Middle Bronze Age (or the Late Bronze Age), though the chronology of the Genesis narratives is not easy to determine. The Hyksos, the Asiatics who ruled in Egypt as the fifteenth and sixteenth dynasties (ca. 1667–1559 B.C.), belong to the Middle Bronze period. Excavation of Hyksos sites in Egypt, Mari documents from Syria, and Nuzi tablets from northwest Iraq are shedding light on the cultures surrounding the biblical peoples. Excavations at Ras-Shamra, the ancient city-state of Ugarit in northern Syria, have uncovered five major phases of occupation beginning in the seventh and sixth millennia. This site has illuminated the Early Bronze (3000–2100 B.C.) and Middle Bronze (2100–1550 B.C.) Ages, and especially the Late Bronze Age (below).

Hazor (Josh 11.10), located nine miles north of the Sea of Galilee, was the largest city in Palestine during the Middle Bronze period. At Dan on the northern border of Israel a huge mud-brick gateway, including a set of towers and an arch, has been unearthed intact. At Megiddo the earliest excavated city gate dates from the Middle Bronze Age. Taanach, Tirzah, and Shechem were important urban centers in this period. Gezer, with its massive fortifications and a "high place," reached its peak as a Canaanite city in Middle Bronze. In this period Lachish was a Hyksos settlement, protected by a glacis (a defensible slope) and a moat.

The Late Bronze Age (1550–1200 B.C.) was the era of Egyptian domination in Palestine. The archives at Amarna in Egypt, the capital of Pharaoh Amenhoptep IV (Akhenaton), have yielded correspondence from Canaanite kings to the Egyptian court describing conditions in Palestine. The Late Bronze period marked the golden age of Ugarit. The cuneiform (wedge-shaped writing) texts unearthed at Ugarit have been invaluable in clarifying the biblical text. The language of these cuneiform texts, called Ugaritic, bears a close resemblance to biblical Hebrew.

Despite scholarly disputes about details of the exodus, the event itself is usually dated in the Late Bronze period. Some date the Israelite settlement in Canaan to the Late Bronze Age, though that event too is fraught with historical problems. Excavations at Israelite villages of the Early Iron Age, including Ai and Radanna, are casting some light on the manner of Israelite settlement. At the farming villages in the central hill-country archaeologists have uncovered the remains of small, rectangular pillared houses, as well as agricultural terraces. From the material elements found at Iron Age I sites it is obvious that their occupants were not nomads recently arrived from the desert.

### *26. Iron Age I (1200–900 B.C.)*

The Iron Age is also known as the Israelite period. The introduction of iron metallurgy was one of the factors in the transition from the Bronze to the Iron Age. In the first half of the twelfth century B.C. the Philistines and other Sea Peoples settled in the East Mediterranean basin. The center of Philistine power was located along the southern coastal plain of Palestine (Ashdod, Ashkelon, Gaza, Gath, and Ekron), but not exclusively. It also extended north to Dor, and east to Beth-shan and Tell Deir Alla (Succoth?). Philistine pottery with its elaborate decoration testifies to the high level of culture achieved by the Philistines, despite the later pejorative connotation of their name. This pottery is painted in black and red on a white-slipped background.

Excavations at Ekron (Tel Miqne) and Ashkelon in the 1980s and 1990s add significantly to the history of the Philistines. Ekron, continuing as a Philistine city until the end of the seventh century B.C., is one of the largest Iron Age sites in modern Israel. In the seventh century B.C. Ekron was among the principal centers for production of olive oil in the ancient Near East. In 603 B.C. the Neo-Babylonians destroyed Ekron.

Ashkelon was one of the most important seaports in the East Mediterranean. Occupation at the site extended from about 2000 B.C. to A.D. 1500. The stele of Pharaoh Merneptah (ca. 1213–1204 B.C.) records the Egyptian conquest of Ashkelon. Indicative of the importance of this port city, Assyria, Egypt, and Neo-Babylonia successively conquered Ashkelon in the eighth and seventh centuries B.C.

Three superimposed Philistine temples, the earliest dating from the twelfth century B.C., have come to light at Tel Qasile, a prime Philistine site on the Yarkon river (within the modern city of Tel Aviv). Tel Batash, biblical Timnah, in the Sorek Valley, reveals continuous occupation from the Middle Bronze Age to the Persian period. This city played a prominent role in the Samson story. Philistine artifacts at Timnah indicate that the city prospered in Iron Age I.

Jerusalem may be the most excavated city in the world. Early excavations in Jerusalem took place from 1867, principally under British auspices. Between 1961 and 1967 Kenyon excavated stratigraphically in the City of David (Ophel hill). After 1967 Israeli archaeologists (principally, Ma-

zar adjacent to the Temple Mount, Avigad in the Jewish Quarter, and Shiloh at the City of David) excavated Jerusalem intensively. The City of David, constituting only a small portion of modern Jerusalem, is located on the steep slope of the Old City's southeast spur. Kenyon discovered on the eastern ridge the Jebusite wall and adjacent tower (dating to 1800 B.C.) surrounding pre-Israelite Jerusalem. Continuing Kenyon's excavations, Shiloh uncovered twenty-five occupational strata, extending from the Chalcolithic period (4500–3200 B.C.) to medieval times. He also investigated Jerusalem's complex hydraulic system, including Hezekiah's 1,750-foot tunnel running under the city, the Siloam channel, and "Warren's shaft," a vertical shaft and connecting tunnels (named for Charles Warren, who discovered it in 1867). These three watercourses originated from the Gihon spring, Jerusalem's chief source of fresh water. Earlier archaeologists, dating "Warren's shaft" to the pre-Davidic Jebusite period, assumed that David's soldiers captured Jerusalem by entering the city through "Warren's shaft" (2 Sam 5). Shiloh, however, found no evidence for dating the shaft system before the Israelite occupation (in the tenth to ninth centuries B.C.).

Architectural remains from time of Solomon have also been uncovered in Palestine. Typical are the Solomonic casemate walls (a double line of fortification walls partitioned into compartments by cross walls), the impressive city gates with four entryways at Megiddo, Hazor, and Gezer (1 Kings 9.15), and the header-stretcher masonry (referring to the configuration of stones within a fortification wall). The tenth and ninth centuries B.C. were notable for hydraulic technology at several ancient cities; in addition to Jerusalem, archaeologists have uncovered water tunnels at Megiddo, Hazor, Gezer, and Gibeon. It was imperative to protect the water supply, especially during times of siege, by channeling it within the city walls.

Solomon undertook with Phoenician help the construction of the Jerusalem temple in the fourth year of his reign (ca. 960 B.C.), a project that took seven years. No remains of this temple have been unearthed; nevertheless a paper reconstruction is possible on the basis of the brief biblical description (1 Kings 6) and from comparison with extant temples in neighboring lands, especially the eighth-century B.C. temple at Tell Tainat in the Amuq valley (Syria). This temple and the Solomonic were long-room temples (the entrance on the short side, and the shrine at the opposite end), with a tripartite architectural design consisting of the vestibule, the holy place (nave), and the holy of holies. The Jerusalem temple was relatively modest in size: about 105 feet long, 35 feet wide, and 52 feet high.

The temple and royal palace together constituted the administrative center of the Israelite kingdom. The temple, principally a religious center, also played a major role in the economic and political life of the kingdom.

The Gezer calendar, found at Tel Gezer in 1908, is the oldest inscription thus far found that relates to the Bible. This small limestone plaque, written in Hebrew in the late tenth century B.C., provides information about the agricultural cycle in Palestine.

### 27. *Iron Age II (900–600 B.C.)*

This archaeological period is approximately coterminous with the divided kingdoms of Judah and Israel (922–586 B.C.). When the Northern Kingdom of Israel seceded under Jeroboam I, it had no permanent capital until Omri (876–869 B.C.) became king. He established the capital at Samaria (Shomron), and built an elaborate city virtually anew. This strategically located site, 300 feet above the surrounding area, has been excavated extensively. Samaria is a difficult site to interpret archaeologically because it has been destroyed and rebuilt several times, with the reuse of stone in the successive rebuilding of the city. After Omri and his son Ahab, the kings Jehu and Jeroboam II continued with the architectural development of the city.

Among the valuable artifacts from Samaria are ivory, pottery, and ostraca. More than five hundred fragments of ivory inlays, signs of the city's wealth, have been unearthed in the area of the royal quarter. Among ceramics of the ancient Near East, "Samaria ware" is highly prized; such vessels from Samaria are finely burnished with red slip (veneer). More than sixty ostraca (potsherds preserving writing in ink) were also uncovered. Dating from the reign of Jeroboam II in the eighth century B.C., these ostraca may have been tax receipts for the shipment of wine and oil, indicating Samaria's activity in commerce and trade. After the conquest of Samaria in 722/721 B.C., the Assyrians rebuilt the city as the headquarters of the whole administrative district.

The Siloam monumental inscription, the most important Hebrew inscription ever recovered, was found in 1880 carved on the east wall of Hezekiah's tunnel; it describes how two teams digging from opposite directions built the tunnel. Heze-

kiah, though unmentioned in the inscription, constructed this underground channel in Jerusalem in preparation for Sennacherib's siege in 701 B.C. (2 Chr 32.2–4, 30).

Another important discovery was a hoard in excess of two hundred ostraca at Arad; more than half are in Hebrew and dated to the monarchy; the remainder are in Aramaic from about 400 B.C.

At Ramat Rahel (Beth-haccherem?), situated south of Bethlehem, archaeologists excavated a royal citadel (ninth or eighth century B.C.) and a palace of one of the last kings of Judah, possibly Manasseh (687–642 B.C.). Khirbet Rabud, a large tell southwest of Hebron, is probably the site of the Levitical city of Debir, once thought to be identified with Tell Beit Mirsim. Debir was destroyed by Sennacherib, and rebuilt later. At Tel Goren in the En-gedi region, an oasis on the west shore of the Dead Sea, Israeli archaeologists unearthed an industrial installation dating to the reign of Josiah in the mid-seventh century B.C.

At the City of David (Jerusalem) archaeologists have found over fifty well-preserved clay bullae, used to seal papyri. These bullae, dating from the late seventh to the early sixth century B.C., may be from the royal archive of Jeremiah's time. Several of the names on the bullae are also found in Jer 36.

Beer-sheba, small in size, was the principal city of the northern Negeb. A strong fortification system combined with city-planning made Beer-sheba an impressive site. A street with buildings on each side encircled the city. An important discovery at Beer-sheba was a dismantled horned altar; some of its stones were found in a restored section of a storehouse wall, dating to the eighth century B.C. Three of the altar's horns were intact; the top of the fourth had been displaced. Archaeologists, rconstructing the altar, found that its original height was just over five feet. This altar may have been dismantled as a consequence of Hezekiah's reform, requiring worship to be centralized in Jerusalem.

Two Israelite forts located in the Negeb cast light on Iron Age II. The site of Ein el-Qudeirat, forty miles south of Beer-sheba, is considered to be Kadesh-barnea, the principal station during the Israelite sojourn in the wilderness. However, no Late Bronze or Early Iron Age remains that could relate to the exodus have been unearthed. The three successive fortresses found at the site date between the tenth and the sixth centuries B.C.

Kuntillet Ajrud, situated forty miles south of Ein el-Qudeirat, was a remote wayside shrine in northeastern Sinai. This southernmost outpost of the kingdom of Judah dates to about 800 B.C., when Amaziah was king of Judah and Joash king of Israel. More important than the buildings at the site are the inscriptions (dedications, prayers, requests, blessings) and accompanying drawings on the plaster walls and on two large storage jars. The interpretation of the inscriptions and the drawings is still uncertain.

Lachish in the foothills of the Hebron mountains was the second most important city of Judah. No site has illuminated more clearly Sennacherib's Assyrian assault on Judah in 701 B.C. Lachish, excavated in the 1930s and again in the 1970s and 1980s, is a textbook case in archaeology. The reliefs (now in the British Museum) adorning the walls of Sennacherib's palace at Nineveh, complemented by the Assyrian annals and the biblical record, depict in detail the siege of Lachish. In addition, they furnish military historians with valuable information about warfare in the Iron Age II period. A little more than a century after Sennacherib's siege of Lachish the Babylonian king Nebuchadnezzar destroyed the city as part of his conquest of Judah. The Lachish Letters, consisting of twenty-one ostraca, cast light on the city during the reign of King Zedekiah, shortly before it fell to the Babylonians.

Important Iron Age II sites are also found in the north of Israel. Dan, located at the foot of Mount Hermon, is the site of one of Jeroboam I's national sanctuaries in the Northern Kingdom. The excavators may have uncovered the sacred area or "high place" on the northwest side of the site. Jeroboam I may have built the square platform; the monumental steps were constructed during the reigns of Ahab and Jeroboam II.

Hazor, rebuilt during the Solomonic era, prospered during the reign of Jeroboam II. Israelite houses of this period are noteworthy: the excavators unearthed a four-room house with two stories, the second floor supported by pillars. Tiglath-pileser III destroyed Hazor in 732 B.C., as broken vessels in ash layers attest.

During Iron Age II the region east of the Jordan river (Transjordan) prospered. Extensive surveys of this region in the 1980s generated new data, adding considerably to the results of the earlier surveys of Glueck, who in the 1930s and the 1940s mapped, surveyed, and photographed Moab, Ammon, and Edom, lands practically unknown. The surveys and excavations in Transjordan have led to the discovery of new inscriptions that add considerably to the history of Transjordan.

With respect to the Ammonites, the following

written material has come to light: the Tell Siran bronze bottle inscription, the Amman citadel inscription, the Amman theatre inscription, and numerous seals. With regard to the Moabites, the Moabite Stone (Mesha stele), documenting the Moabite King Mesha's revolt against Israelite control in the ninth century B.C., was discovered in 1868 at Dibon (modern Dhiban), Mesha's capital.

A tell near the modern village of Hesban in Jordan was once thought to be the site of biblical Heshbon, capital of the Amorite king Sihon, formerly in the land of Moab. The lack of Bronze Age remains and the paucity of Early Iron Age artifacts, however, cast doubt on the identification of the site. Iron Age II is well represented here, including ostraca from the seventh and sixth centuries B.C.

Almost no Edomite writing has come to light, with the exception of some seventh-century B.C. jar stamps from Tell el-Kheleifeh and an Edomite ostracon with six lines of writing from Horvat Uza, a Judean fortress in the eastern Negeb. But the picture is changing with the discovery in the 1980s of an Edomite shrine, the first ever excavated. Surprisingly, the shrine, named Qitmit, is located in ancient Judah, and not in Edom. This cult center dates to about 586 B.C., when the Babylonians destroyed Jerusalem. As this excavation continues into the 1990s, much more may be discovered.

### *28. Persian to Herodian Periods (539–4 B.C.)*

Samaria was a provincial capital in the Persian era (sixth to fourth centuries B.C.), as it had been in the Assyrian period, but few Persian remains are in evidence at Samaria. During the Persian period the Upper City of Jerusalem was not resettled, the city being confined to the City of David and the temple mount. This restricted area was adequate for the small number of people living in Jerusalem at the time. New excavations underway in Palestine are more promising with respect to the Persian period.

Anafa in Upper Galilee was an affluent Hellenistic town from the mid-second century B.C. Molded glass vessels, fine red wares (terra sigillata), and elaborately decorated buildings attest to the wealth of this Greek settlement.

Concerning Jerusalem, Israeli excavators, concentrating on the southwest corner of the temple mount, as well as the area adjacent to the western and southern walls of the temple enclosure, have recovered remains dating from the Iron Age to the Ottoman era (A.D. 1516–1918), with most finds belonging to the Herodian period (37–4 B.C.). At the same time, excavations proceeding in the Jewish Quarter of the Old City unearthed remnants from the Hasmonean and Herodian periods. The artifacts reveal that during the Herodian period Jerusalem residents enjoyed considerable luxury. Beautiful stone objects (tables, bowls, cups, and purification jars) were recovered, as well as mosaics and frescoes.

### *29. New Testament Period*

Archaeological evidence is far more extensive for the Old Testament than for the New. The New Testament encompasses a much shorter period; also, fewer New Testament excavations have been undertaken, though the situation is changing. The locations of many of the events in the life and ministry of Jesus are often uncertain; the sites currently associated with a number of them have been determined by pious tradition, not by scientific investigation.

The site of the famous Capernaum synagogue on the western shore of the Sea of Galilee is certain, but the date is in dispute. The Franciscan excavators favor the fourth or fifth century A.D. on the basis of coins found beneath the pavement, whereas the Israelis prefer a date in the late second or early third century A.D. The ruins of a more ancient synagogue, lying beneath the reconstructed limestone synagogue, may be the building where Jesus preached.

With respect to the trial and condemnation of Jesus, some scholars have conjectured that the Antonia fortress at the northwest corner of the temple enclosure was the site of the Roman praetorium where Pontius Pilate judged Jesus (Jn 18.28–19.16). It seems certain that the praetorium of Jesus' trial was located at Herod's palace, near the present Jaffa Gate in the northwest corner of the Upper City, which was the official residence of the Roman procurators (including Pontius Pilate) during their visits to Jerusalem. (A dedicatory inscription found in 1961 at Caesarea Maritima bears the name of Pontius Pilate.)

Some have conjectured that the broad stone pavement in the basement of the Sisters of Zion convent on the Via Dolorosa is the *lithostrothon* (stone pavement) mentioned in the trial of Jesus (Jn 19.13). Benoit demonstrated, however, that this stone pavement dates to the Roman emperor Hadrian (A.D. 117–138), and that the adjoining "Ecce Homo" arch (John 19.5) was the large central arch of Hadrian's east forum.

Concerning Josephus' three successive walls defending Jerusalem's northern side, the direction

of the disputed second wall bears on the authenticity of the church of the Holy Sepulchre. The site of Jesus' burial had to have been located outside the city wall because burials were forbidden within the city. Recent excavations appear to confirm that at the time of Jesus' crucifixion the site of the Holy Sepulchre was located outside the second wall of Jerusalem.

# *Measures and Weights in the Bible*

## I. HEBREW MEASURES OF LENGTH

| *Hebrew* | *NRSV* | *Equivalence* | *U.S. Measures* |
|---|---|---|---|
| *'ammāh* | cubit | 2 spans | 17.49 inches |
| *zéreth* | span | 3 handbreadths | 8.745 inches |
| *ṭṓphaḥ, ṭéphaḥ* | handbreadth | 4 fingers | 2.915 inches |
| *'eṣba'* | finger | | 0.728 inch |

The cubit described in Ezekiel (40.5; 43.13) is equal to seven (not six) handbreadths, namely 20.405 inches.

## II. MEASURES OF LENGTH IN THE NEW TESTAMENT

| *Greek* | *NRSV* | *U.S. Measures* |
|---|---|---|
| *pēchus* | cubit | about 1½ feet |
| *orguia* | fathom | about 72.44 inches |
| *stadion* | stadia, or the equivalent in miles | about 606 feet |
| *milion* | mile | about 4,854 feet |

## III. HEBREW MEASURES OF CAPACITY

DRY MEASURES

| *Hebrew* | *NRSV* | *Equivalence* | *U.S. Measures* |
|---|---|---|---|
| *ḥṓmer* | homer | 2 lethechs | 6.524 bushels |
| *kōr* | measure, cor | | |
| *léthekh* | lethech | 5 ephahs | 3.262 bushels |
| *'êphāh* | ephah, measure | 3 seahs | 20.878 quarts |
| *ṣe'āh* | measure | 3⅓ omers | 6.959 quarts |
| *'ṓmer* | omer | 1⅕ kabs | 2.087 quarts |
| *'issārôn* | tenth part (of ephah) | | |
| *qabh* | | kab | 1.159 quarts |

LIQUID MEASURES

| *Hebrew* | *NRSV* | *Equivalence* | *U.S. Measures* |
|---|---|---|---|
| *kōr* | measure, cor | 10 baths | 60.738 gallons |
| *bath* | bath | 6 hins | 6.073 gallons |
| *hîn* | hin | 3 kabs | 1.012 gallons |
| *qabh* | kab | 4 logs | 1.349 quarts |
| *lōgh* | log | | 0.674 pint |

## IV. MEASURES OF CAPACITY IN THE NEW TESTAMENT

| *Greek* | *NRSV* | *Equivalence* | *U.S. Measures* |
|---|---|---|---|
| *batos* | measure | (Hebrew) bath | |
| *koros* | measure | (Hebrew) kōr | see Table III |
| *saton* | measure | (Hebrew) ṣe'āh | |
| *metrētēs* | measure | | 10.3 gallons |
| *choinix* | quart | | 0.98 dry quart |
| *modios* | bushel | (Latin) modius | 7.68 dry quarts |
| *xestēs* | pot | (Latin) sextarius | 0.96 dry pint, or 1.12 fluid pints |

## V. HEBREW WEIGHTS

| *Hebrew* | *NRSV* | *Equivalence* | *U.S. Avoirdupois* |
|---|---|---|---|
| *kikkār* | talent | 60 minas | 75.558 pounds |
| *māneh* | mina | 50 shekels | 20.148 ounces |
| *shéqel* | shekel | 2 bekas | 176.29 grains |
| *pîm* (or *payim*) | pim | ⅔ shekel | 117.52 grains |
| *béqa'* | beka, half a shekel | 10 gerahs | 88.14 grains |
| *gērāh* | gerah | | 8.81 grains |

The practice of weighing unmarked ingots of metal used in commercial transactions prior to the invention of money explains that the names of the units of weight were used later as indications of value, and as names for monetary stardards. There is, however, no direct relation between the shekel-weight and the weight of a shekel piece.

## VI. WEIGHTS IN THE NEW TESTAMENT

| *Greek* | *NRSV* | *Equivalence* | *U.S. Avoirdupois* |
|---|---|---|---|
| *talenton* | talent | (Hebrew) talent | see Table V |
| *mna* | pound | (Hebrew) mina | see Table V |
| *litra* | pound | (Latin) libra | 0.719 pound |

# *Index to the Annotations*

The following index lists important names, institutions, and ideas that are mentioned in the annotations. In order to gain the fullest information, the Scriptural references as well as the annotation itself should be read, and all cross references should be consulted.

This index combines references from the Hebrew Scriptures, the New Testament, and the Apocryphal/Deuterocanonical Books. References to the Apocryphal/Deuterocanonical Books follow those to the other Scripture portions, in cases where a topic is treated in various places.

A separate Index to the Annotations of the Apocryphal/Deuterocanonical Books appears at the end of that section. In editions of this book that do not include the Apocryphal/Deuterocanonical Books, the reader should ignore references to them contained in this Index.

Page numbers are followed by letters indicating the section in which they are found, thus: OT = Old Testament, AP = Apocryphal/Deuterocanonical Books, NT = New Testament.


Aaron, Sir 44.19–47.11
Abaddon, Job 26.6; Rev 9.11
Abba, Rom 8.15
Abbot, George, p. viii AP
Abel, 4 Macc 18.11
Abiram, 4 Macc 2.17
Abraham, Sir 44.19–47.11; Song of Thr 12; 4 Macc 7.19; 13.12; 14.20
Abyss, the, Lk 8.31
Achior, Jdt 5.5–21
Acrostic, Pss 9–10; 25; 34; 37; 112; 119; 145; Intro to Lam, p. 1047 OT; Nah 1.2–11
Adam, creation of, 2 Esd 3.4–5
Adultery, Sir 23.16–27
Agriculture, Gen 3.17–19; 4.1–26; 9.20; 47.13–26
Ahikar, Tob 1.21; 11.18; 14.10
Alcimus, 1 Macc 7.5–25
Alexander Balas, 1 Macc 10.1–21
Alexander the Great, 1 Macc 1.1
Alexander Janneus, 1 Macc 14.41–43
Alexandria, 3 Macc 4.11
Alexandrian pseudepigrapha, p. xii AP
Alliances, foreign, 2 Kings 20.16–19; Ezek 23.5–10
Almsgiving, Tob 4.7–11; Sir 3.30–4.10
Almsgiving, right spirit in, Sir 18.15–18
Alpha and Omega, Rev 1.8
Altar, Ex 20.24–26; 27.1–8; Ezek 43.13–26
Altar, horns of the, 1 Kings 1.49–53
Amen-em-ope, Prov 22.17–24.22
Amorites, Gen 10.15–20; 1 Sam 7.13–14
Angel(s), Gen 16.7; 32.1–2; Judg 2.1; 2 Sam 24.16; Job 33.8–33; Isa 37.36; Dan 10.12–14; Acts 12.15; 1 Cor 11.10; Heb 1.14; Rev 1.20; 2 Esd 6.41; Tob 12.12–15; Pr Man 15b; 2 Macc 11.6
Anglo-Saxon poem of Judith, Jdt 10.21
Anoint, 1 Sam 10.1; Ps 2.2; see also Messiah
Anointed, Ps 151
Antichrist, 1 Jn 2.18; Rev 11.7; 19.19–21
Antioch, p. 341 AP
Antiochus III the Great, 1 Macc 1.10; 3 Macc 1.1–2
Antiochus Epiphanes, Dan 7.4–8; 8.9–14, 23–25; 11.21–45; Jn 10.22; 1 Macc 1.10; 3.30; 2 Macc 4.7; p. 285 AP; 4 Macc 1.11; 4.15–26; 17.24
Antiochus V Eupator, 1 Macc 3.33; 2 Macc 10.10–11
Antiochus VII Sidetes, 1 Macc 15.1–14
Anti-Semitism, Add Esth (Gk) 10.4–11.1
Apocalypse, Isaiah, Isa 24–27
Apocalypticism, Ezek 38.1–39.29; Intro to Dan, p. 1126 OT
Apocalyptic literature, p. v AP
Apocrypha, pp. iii AP
Apollos, Acts 18.24–28
Apollonius, governor of Samaria, 1 Macc 3.10
Apostasy, Num 25.1–18; Judg 2.6–3.6; 1 Kings 12.25–33; 14.1–16; 2 Kings 17.1–41; Ps 78; Jer 2.1–37; Ezek 20.1–44; 23.1–4; Hos 4.1–8.14; 1 Tim 4.1–16
Apostles, the twelve, Lk 6.12–16
Aramaic, 2 Kings 18.26; Esth 1.22; Isa 36.11; Jer 10.11; 44.1; Intro to Dan, p. 1126 OT; p. iv NT; Rom 8.15; pp. 411–415
Archaeology, pp. 419–424
Archelaus, Mt 2.22
Ark (of the Covenant), Ex 25.10–22; 33.8–9; Num 10.33–36; Deut 10.1–3,8; Josh 3.3; 1 Sam 3.3; 2 Sam 6.1–15; Ps 132; Jer 3.16–17; pp. 412–413
Arrogance, Sir 10.6–18
Arsinoë, 3 Macc 1.1
Art and the Apocrypha, p. x AP
Artaxerxes I, 1 Esd 2.16–30
Artaxerxes II, 2 Esd 1.3
Ascension of Christ, Jn 6.62–63; Acts 1.6–11
Asherah, 1 Kings 14.15; Jer 2.20–28; Ezek 6.1–14
Asmodeus, Tob 3.8
Assyrians, pp. 410, 414–415
Atargatis, 2 Macc 12.26
Atbash, Jer 25.26
Athens, Paul at, Acts 17.16–34

Athlete, 4 Macc 6.10; 9.8; 11.20; 12.11, 14; 16.16; 17.11–12
Atonement, Ex 29.35–37; 32.30; Lev 1.4; Heb 9.11–10.18
Atonement, Day of, Lev 16.1–34
Attharates, 1 Esd 9.49
Authority, 4 Macc 4.5
Azareth, 2 Esd 13.45
Azariah, Prayer of, p. 174 AP; 4 Macc 16.21

Baal, 2 Sam 2.8; 1 Kings 17.1; 18.17–19; 2 Kings 1.2–5; Jer 9.12–16; Hos 2.2–13, 14–23
Baal-zebul, 2 Kings 1.2–5; see also Beelzebul
Bagoas, Jdt 12.11
Ban, Josh 6.17; 7.1–5; 1 Sam 15.3; 1 Kings 20.42; see also Holy War
Baptism with the Holy Spirit, Mk 1.8
Baruch, book of, p. 161 AP
Beatitudes, Mt 5.3–12; Rev 1.3
Beccau, p. x AP
Beelzebul, Mk 3.22; see also Baal-zebul
Behemoth, 2 Esd 6.49–52
Bel and the Dragon, p. 183 AP
Beliar, 2 Cor 6.15
Belshazzar, Bar 1.11
Beltethmus, 1 Esd 2.16
Benediction, Aaronic, Num 6.22–27
Benediction, apostolic, 2 Cor 13.13
Benedictus, the, Lk 1.67–79
Bethulia, Jdt 4.6
"Bind or loose," the expression, Mt 16.19
Birthright, Gen 25.31–34; Deut 21.15–17; see also First-born, Inheritance
Bishops, qualifications of, 1 Tim 3.1–7; Titus 1.5, 7
Blessing, Gen 27.1–45; 48.13–14; 49.1–28; Deut 28.3–6; 36.5–9; Joel 3.18–21
Blood, Gen 4.10–11; 9.3–6; 37.22; Ex 12.7; 24.8; Hab 2.6–20
Blood revenge, Gen 4.13–14; Lev 25.25; Num 35.1–34; Josh 20.3; Isa 41.14–16
Book of Common Prayer, p. viii AP
Book of the Law, Josh 1.8; 2 Kings 22.8–10; Neh 8.1
Book of life, 2 Esd 6.20
Booths, festival of, 1 Macc 10.21
Branch, Isa 4.2; Jer 23.1–8; Zech 3.8; 6.12
Bridal chambers, 3 Macc 1.19
Burnt offerings, Lev 1.1–17; 1 Sam 7.9

Calendar of feasts, Ex 23.10–19; 34.18–24; Lev 23.1–44; Ezek 45.18–25
Caligula, p. 341 AP
Calves, gold, Ex 32.2–3; 1 Kings 12.25–33
Cambyses, 1 Esd 2.16–30
Camel and eye of needle, Mk 10.25
Canaanites, Josh 3.10; 2 Sam 5.6–9; Ezek 16.1–7; pp. 411–412
Canon of the New Testament, pp. v–vi NT
Canon of the Old Testament, pp. xxxii OT
Canon of the Old Testament, the Hebrew, pp. iv, v AP; 2 Esd 14.45; Sir 38.24–39.11
Canon of the Old Testament, the Protestant, pp. iv, vii AP
Canon of the Old Testament, the Roman Catholic, pp. iv, viii AP
Canon, the Hebrew, p. iii–iv AP; 2 Esd 14.45; Sir 38.24–39.11
Carlstadt, p. vii AP
Carmonians, 2 Esd 15.30
Carthage, p. vi AP
Celibacy, Mt 19.11–12
Census, Num 1.1–54; 26.1–65; 2 Sam 24.1–25
Cephas, Mt 16.18
Cherethites and Pelethites, 2 Sam 8.18; 2 Kings 11.4; Ezek 25.15–17
Cherubim, Gen 3.24; 1 Sam 4.3–4; Ps 18.10; Ezek 1.5, 26–28
Childlikeness, Mt 18.3
Children, on bringing up, Sir 30.1–13
Chorus, 4 Macc 8.4; 13.8, 13
Christ, pre-existence of, Jn 1.1–2; 2 Cor 8.9; Phil 2.6: Col 1.16; Heb 1.1–4
Christ, sacrifice of, Heb 9.11–10.18
Christ, second coming of, Phil 1.6; 1 Thess 4.13–5.11
Christ, to be in, Rom 8.2; Gal 2.20; 1 Jn 5.11–12
Christian growth, Heb 6.1–20
Christian life, the, Eph 4.1–6.20; Phil 3.12–21
Christian, the name, Acts 11.25–26
Christian virtues, 2 Pet 1.5
Church, Gal 1.13; Eph 1.22–23
Church of England, p. viii AP
Church Fathers and the Apocrypha, p. vi AP
Cilicia, p. 341 AP; 4 Macc 4.2
Circumcision, Gen 17.9–14; Deut 10.16; Josh 5.2–9; 1 Sam 14.6
Clean and unclean, Lev 11.1–47; 15.1–32; Num 19.1–22; 31.19–24; Deut 14.3–21; Ezek 36.25–26
Cleansing of the temple, Jesus', Jn 2.13–25
Coelesyria, 1 Macc 10.69
Coins, Roman, Lk 12.59
Columbus, Christopher, pp. x–xi AP
Concubine, 2 Sam 3.6–11; 5.13–16; 16.20–23
*Confessio Esdrae*, 2 Esd 8.19b–36
Confession of faith, 1 Tim 6.12
Confession of sin, Bar 1.15–3.8
Contentment, Sir 29.21–28
Corban, Mk 7.11
Cornelius, conversion of, Acts 10.1–48
Coronation, Pss 2; 72; 101; 110; Zech 6.9–15
Cosmogony, Gen 1.1–2.3; 7.11; Job 26.7; 38.2–3; Prov 3.19–20; 8.28
Covenant, Gen 9.1–19; 15.1–21; 17.1–27; Ex 6.4; 19.1–25; 24.1–18; 34.1–35; Lev 3.1–17; Deut 4.16–18; 5.2–3; 27.1–26; 29.1–30.20; 31.9–13; Judg 9.4; 2 Kings 23.2; Isa 5.7; Jer 11.1–17; 34.13–22; Ezek 16.1–14; Hos 1.8–9; p. iii NT, p. 411
Covenant Code, Ex 20.22–23.33
Covenant, new, Jer 31.23–40; 32.16–44; Ezek 16.53–63; 34.25–31; Hos 2.14–23; p. iii NT; 2 Cor 3.7–18; Heb 10.16–17
Covenant with David, Ps 89.3–4, 19–37; Isa 55.3–5
Craftiness contrasted with Wisdom, Sir 19.20–30
Creation, Gen 1.1–2.3; 2.4b–31; Pss 74.12–17; 104; Isa 51.3; Ezek 28.11–19
Cross, the, Mt 10.38
Cubit, Ezek 40.5; pp. 424–425
Cult prostitute, Gen 38.15; Deut 23.17–18; 1 Kings 22.38; Ezek 16.15–22
Curse, Gen 27.4; Ex 21.17; Num 22.6; Deut 27.15–26; 28.1–68; Pss 58; 109.6–29; Zech 5.3
Cyrus of Persia, 1 Esd 2.1–15; Bel 1

Dagon, Judg 16.23; 1 Sam 5.2; 1 Macc 10.83
Damascus, Jdt 2.27
Damasus, Pope, p. iv AP
Dan'el, Ezek 14.12–23; 28.1–10
Daniel, 3 Macc 6.7; 4 Macc 16.3, 21; 18.13
Daphne, 2 Macc 4.33
Darius I, 1 Esd 2.16–30; 3.2, 1–3; 6.23
Dathan, 4 Macc 2.17
David, p. 412; Sir 47.1–22; 4 Macc 3.6–18
David and Goliath, p. xi AP; Ps 151
Day of the LORD, Isa 2.11; 13.6–16; 22.5–8a; Ezek 30.1–5; Joel 2.28–3.21; Am 5.18–20; Ob 15–18; Zeph 1.14–18; Zech 12.1–14.21; 2 Thess 2.1–12; 2 Pet 3.1–18
Deacon, Rom 16.1
Deacon, qualifications of a, 1 Tim 3.8–13
Dead Sea Scrolls, p. xxxi OT; Isa 37.27–28; 38.8; Dan 4.25; Mt 3.7; Lk 16.8; Acts 1.5; 1 Macc 3.55; 2 Macc 8.23; 4 Macc 6.29; p. 348 AP
Death, Gen 3.17–19; Mt 9.24; see also Sheol
Death of the Christian, 2 Cor 5.1–10
Death, shadow of, Ps 23.4
*De Canonicis Scripturis Libellus*, p. vii AP
Decapolis, Mk 5.20
*Decretum Gelasianum*, p. vi AP
Dedication, feast of, Jn 10.22

Deep, the, Gen 1.1; 7.11; Job 28.1–28; Ezek 31.4
Defilement, 4 Macc 5.3; 7.6
Demetrius I Soter, 1 Macc 7.1–4; 2 Macc 14.1–10
Demetrius II, 1 Macc 10.67
Demoniacs, Mt 4.24
Demons, Mt 12.22–24; Lk 4.33; Bar 4.7, 35
Deuterocanonical, meaning of, p. iv AP
Deuteronomic Code, Intro to Deut, p. 217 OT; Deut 5.1–26.19; 28.1–68; 2 Kings 22.8–10
Devil, Mt 4.1; see also Satan
Dietary Practices, Gen 32.32; Lev 11.1–47; Dan 1.8; Hos 9.4; Zech 9.7; Acts 15.20, 22; 1 Cor 8.1–13
Dionysus, 2 Macc 6.7; p. 285 AP; 3 Macc 2.29; 3.28
Disciples, Lk 6.13
Dives, the name, Lk 16.19
Divination, Gen 44.15; Num 22.5–20; 23.1–6; 24.14; Deut 18.15–22; Judg 18.5; 1 Sam 28.9; Ezek 13.1–16; 21.18–24; Dan 2.1–49; see also Dream
Divorce, Deut 24.1–4; Ezra 10.2; Mal 2.10–16; Mt 5.31, 32
Dositheus, 3 Macc 1.3
Dragon, Job 7.12; 41.1–34; Isa 27.1; 51.9–11; Ezek 29.1–16; 31.4; 32.1–16; Rev 12.3; see also Leviathan, Rahab
Dream, Gen 28.11; 37.5–11; 40.1–23; Deut 13.1; Jer 23.23–32; Dan 2.2, 4–11; 4.6
Dreams, Sir 34.1–8
Dutch Bible, p. vii AP
Duties toward the poor, Sir 35.14–26

Eastern Orthodox Church, pp.iii–iv AP
Ecbatana, 1 Esd 6.23
Ecclesiasticus, p. 86 AP
Eden, Gen 2.8–9; Isa 51.3; Ezek 28.11–19
Eleazar, martyrdom of, 2 Macc 6.18–31; p. 228 AP; 3 Macc 6.1–15; p. xii AP; 4 Macc 1.8; 5.1–7.23
Elders, Christian, Acts 14.23
Elect, numbers of the, 2 Esd 7.[52]
Election of Israel, Gen 12.1–3; Ex 4.22; Deut 7.7–8; Am 3.1–15; 9.7–10
Elephantine papyri, Tob 1.21; Jdt 12.11
Elijah, Sir 47.23–48.15
Elisha, Sir 47.23–48.15
End of the age, 2 Esd 5.56–6.6; 7.26–44; 8.62b–9.13
End, signs of the, 2 Esd 4.51–5.13; 6.11–28; 8.62b–9.13; 15.12–27
Enmity, 3 Macc 4.1
Enoch, Wis 4.10–15; Sir 44.16–18
Enoch, the book of, p. xii AP
Epeiph, 3 Macc 6.38
Ephod, Ex 28.6–12; Judg 17.5; 1 Sam 2.18; 14.3; 21.9
Esar-haddon, 1 Esd 5.69; Tob 1.21–22
Esdras, First Book of, p. 259 AP
Esdras, Second Book of, p. 300 AP
Essenes, Mt 3.7; Acts 2.44; 4.11; 1 Macc 3.55
Esther, Additions to the Book of, p. 41 AP
Eternal life, 1 Jn 5.11–12
Ethiopian coronation ritual, p. xi AP
Etiquette at a banquet, Sir 32.1–13
Euhemerus, Wis 14.14–21
Everlasting life, 4 Macc 10.15
Exile, the, 2 Kings 24.10–17; 25.8–12, 27–30; 1 Chr 5.23–26; Jer 29.1–32; 52.28–30; Ezek 12.1–20
Exile, the return from, 1 Esd 2.1–15; Bar 5.1–9
Exodus, the, Ex 12.29–50; Deut 1.1–3.29; Isa 43.16–17; Hos 2.14; p. 411
Ezra, 1 Esd 8.1–9.55; 2 Esd 1.1–2.48
Ezra restores the Old Testament, 2 Esd 14.37–48
Ezra, translation of, 2 Esd 8.19b

Faith, Gen 12.3; 22.1–19; Ps 34.7–22; Isa 30.15–17; Hab 2.4; Intro to Jas, p. 331 NT
Family ties, 4 Macc 9.23; 10.15
Famous men, in praise of, Sir 44.1–50.24
Fasting, Mt 9.15; 2 Esd 5.13
Fathers, Church, and the Apocrypha, p. vi AP
Fear of the Lord, Sir 1.11–30
Fertility cults, 2 Macc 6.4
Fire (from God), Gen 15.17–18; Ex 3.2; 13.21–22; 19.16–19; Num 11.1; 1 Kings 18.38; 2 Kings 1.9–16; 2.11; 1 Chr 21.26; Isa 4.5; see also Theophany
Firstborn, Ex 4.22; 13.1–16; Deut 21.15–17
Fool, Ps 14.1
Foreknowledge of God, Jdt 9.5–6
Foresight, Sir 18.19–21
Forgiveness, Mt 18.21–22
Free will, Sir 15.11–20
Friends, Sir 11.29–12.18, 37.1–6
Friends of the king, 1 Macc 2.18; 3 Macc 2.23, 26; 5.19
Friendship, Sir 6.5–17
Fullness of God, the, Col 1.19

Galatians, 2 Macc 8.20
Gallienus, 2 Esd 15.11
Gamaliel, Acts 5.34–37
Gangliano, p. x AP
Gate (as center of community life and court of justice), Josh 20.4; Ruth 4.10
Gates of Jerusalem, 2 Kings 14.13; Jer 31.38–40; Ezek 10.19; 40.6–16; 44.1–5; 48.30–35
Gedaliah, 1 Esd 9.22
Gehenna, Rev 19.20; p. xii; 2 Esd 7.[70]
Gelasius, Pope, p. vi AP
Genealogy, Jesus', Mt 1.1–17; Lk 3.23–38
Geneva Bibles, p. viii AP
Geography of Bible lands, pp. 407–410
Giants, 3 Macc 2.4
Glory (of God), Ex 16.6–7; 40.34–38; Pss 8; 19.1–6; 24.8–10; Isa 48.9–10; Ezek 10.3–4; 43.1–12
Gnosticism, 1 Tim 4.3–5; 6.20; Intro to 1 Jn, p. 349 NT
God Almighty, Gen 17.1
God as creator, Sir 39.12–35
God as father, Tob 13.4; 3 Macc 5.7; 7.6
God as judge, Sir 17.15–24
God as king, Jdt 9.12
God as parent, Hos 11.1
God, the omnipotence of, Wis 12.12–18
God, the omniscience of, Wis 1.6–11
God, the patience and mercy of, Wis 12.3–11
God, seven fold attributes of, 2 Esd 7.[132–139]
God, supreme, 3 Macc 1.9; 4.16
God, the universal love of, Wis 11.17–12.2
Gods, pagan
  Astartes, Judg 2.13; 1 Sam 7.3–4
  Bel, Isa 46.1–4
  Chemosh, Num 21.29; Judg 11.24
  Day Star and Dawn, Isa 14.12–15
  Hadad-rimmon, Zech 12.11
  Ishtar, Jer 44.15–28
  Marduk, Jer 50.2–3
  Milcom, 2 Sam 12.30
  Nabu, Isa 46.1–4
  Sakkuth and Kaiwan, Am 5.26
  Tammuz, Isa 17.9–11; Ezek 8.14–18; Dan 11.36–39
  see also Asherah, Baal, Dagon
Golden Rule, the, Mt 7.12
Golden Rule, the negative, Tob 4.15
Goliath, David and, p. xi AP, Ps 151
Good and evil, Gen 2.9; Isa 7.15
Grace, Isa 55.6–9; Eph 2.5; 2 Thess 1.2
Great Commandment, Lev 19.17–18; Deut 6.4–5; 10.19; Mt 22.34–40
Greek language, the, pp. xxxi OT; iv NT
Greek Orthodox Church, Holy Synod of the, p. iv AP
Greeks, 3 Macc 3.8
Guilt offering, Lev 5.14–6.7; 1 Sam 6.3

Hallel, Egyptian, Ps 113
Hallelujah, Pss 105; 113; 146; 3 Macc 7.13
Haman, Add Esth (Gk) 11.2–12
Hananiah, 4 Macc 16.21; 18.12

Handel, p. x AP
Hanukkah, 1 Macc 4.52–59; 2 Macc 1.9, 18
Harem, 2 Sam 5.13–16; 1 Kings 2.13–25; Esth 2.3, 9
Hasideans, 1 Macc 2.42
Healing, Pss 30; 32; 38; 39; 41; 42; 43; 51; 88; 102; 103; 116
Heaven, joy of, Rev 22.4; 2 Esd 8.52
Heaven, metonym for God, Sus 9; 1 Macc 3.18
Heaven, the third, 2 Cor 12.2
Heavenly places, Eph 1.3
Hebrews, origins of the, Gen 10.21–31; Ex 1.15; 1 Sam 4.6; 14.21; p. 411
Heliodorus, 2 Macc 3.3; 3 Macc 2.22; 4 Macc 4.5
Hell, Mt 18.7–9
Herod Agrippa I, Acts 12.1
Herod Agrippa II, Acts 25.13
Herod Antipas, Lk 3.1
Herod the Great, Lk 1.5
Herodians, Mk 3.6
Hezekiah, Sir 48.15–49.13
High places, 1 Kings 3.1–2; 2 Kings 23.4–14; Ezek 6.1–14
High priesthood, 3 Macc 1.11; 4 Macc 4.1, 16
Hippo, p. vi AP
Hittites, Gen 10.15–20; 23.3; 1 Sam 26.5–6; Ezek 16.1–7
Holiness, Ex 19.12; Lev 6.27–28; 19.1–37
Holiness Code, Intro to Lev, p. 125 OT; Lev 17-26
Holofernes, Jdt 2.4
Holy City, Pss 46.4–7; 87.1–6
Holy of holies, p. 285 AP; 3 Macc 1.9
Holy One, Isa 1.4
Holy Spirit, as Advocate, Jn 14.12–20, 25–27
Holy Synod of the Greek Orthodox Church, p. iv AP
Holy War, Ex 17.14; Num 31.9–12; Deut 3.22; 20.1–20; 1 Sam 15.3
Horites (Hurrians), Gen 36.20
Hormisdas, Pope, p. vi AP
Hosanna, Ps 118.25; Mt 21.9
Hospitality, Christian, Heb 13.2
Hosts, Lord of, 1 Sam 1.3
House-churches, Philem 2
Human condition, reflections on, Sir 40.1–41.13
Humility, Sir 3.17–24
Hymns and the Apocrypha, pp. ix–x AP
Hypocrisy, Sir 27.22–27

Idolatry, Deut 12.32–13.18; Judg 17.1–6; 1 Sam 7.3–4; Job 12.6; Isa 44.9–20; 57.1–13; Jer 10.1–16; 19.3–15; Ezek 8.16–18; 14.1–11; Hos 13.1–3; Zeph 1.2–6
Idolatry, condemnation of, Let Jer [6.]8–73; 4 Macc 5.2; 8.25
Idolatry, folly of, Add Esth (Gk) 14.6–11; Wis 13.10–19
Ignatius, 4 Macc 9.29
Image of God, Gen 1.26; 5.3
Immanuel, Isa 7.10–17
Immorality, 1 Cor 6.16
Immortality, Wis 1.12–15; 3.1–9; 6.17–21; 4 Macc 9.22; 16.13
"In Christ," Rom 8.2; Gal 2.20
Inclination, the evil, 2 Esd 4.30; 7.[48], [92]; Sir 15.14
Influence of the Apocrypha, pp. viii–x AP
Inheritance, Gen 25.31–34; Lev 25.10,23; Num 27.1–11; Deut 21.15–17; 1 Kings 21.1–4; see also Birthright
Instruments of torture, 3 Macc 5.45; 4 Macc 8.13; 11.10
Interest, Ex 22.25; Deut 23.19–20; Neh 5.7–10; Ps 15.5
Isaac, Sir 44.19–47.11; 4 Macc 7.11, 19; 13.12; 14.20; 16.20; 18.11
Isaiah, Sir 48.15–49.13; 4 Macc 9.6
Iron Age, 1 Sam 13.19–22

Jachin and Boaz, 1 Kings 7.15–22
Jacob, Sir 44.19–47.11
Jason as high priest, 2 Macc 4.7–22; 4 Macc 4.16
Jeconiah, 1 Esd 1.34; Bar 1.3
Jehoiakim, 1 Esd 1.43
Jeremiah, Letter of, p. 169 AP
Jeremiel, 2 Esd 4.36
Jerome, the canon according to, p. iv AP
Jerusalem, the city, 3 Macc 2.9
Jerusalem, fall of, 2 Kings 24.1–17; 24.20b–25.7; Mt 24.1; p. 415
Jerusalem, new, Isa 60.1–22; 65.24–25; Ezek 48.30–35
Jerusalem, the transformed, 2 Esd 10.25–28
Jesus, baptism of, Mt 3.13–17
Jesus, birth of, Mt 1.18; Lk 2.1–40
Jesus, brothers and sisters of, Mt 13.55–56
Jesus, high priestly prayer of, Jn 17.1–26
Jesus, mission of, Mt 15.24
Jesus, name of, Mt 1.21
Jesus, temptation of, Mt 4.1–11
Jewish teaching concerning the law, Sir 3.1–16
Jews of Alexandria, 3 Macc 2.25–33; 3.1; 4.1–21; 6.30–41; 7.10–23; 4 Macc 4.15–16
Joakim, Sus 1; Jdt 4.6
John the Baptist, Mt 3.1–12
John Hyrcanus I, 1 Macc 16.1, 23
Jonah, 3 Macc 6.8
Jonathan becomes leader of the Jews, 1 Macc 9.23–73
Joseph, 4 Macc 2.2; 18.11
Josephus, p. v AP
Joshua, Sir 46.1–20
Josiah's religious reform, 1 Esd 1–33
Jubilee, Lev 25.8–24
Jubilees, Book of, p. xi AP
Judaism, the term, 2 Macc 2.20–21
Judas, death of, Mt 27.3–10; Acts 1.18
Judas Maccabeus, 1 Macc 2.2–5; 9.1–22
Judges, Judg 2.16–19; 10.1–5; Sir 46.1–20
Judgment, the, 2 Esd 7.[70] ff.
Judgment, divine, 2 Thess 1.5–12
Judgment, Last, Dan 7.9–14; Joel 3.1–3; Mt 25.31–46; Rev 20.11–15
Judith, book of, p. 20 AP
Judith, the name, Jdt 8.1
Justice, God's, 4 Macc 4.21

Kingdom of God, Pss 93; 145.10–13a; Dan 2.36–45; 7.11–14; Mt 4.17; Wis 6.20
Kingdom of heaven, Mt 4.17
King James Version, p. viii AP
Kingship of God, 1 Sam 4.3–4; Pss 93; 95–100; Isa 43.14–15
Kiss, the holy, Rom 16.16
Kittim, 1 Macc 1.1
Knowledge, Prov 1.7; Isa 1.2–3; Jer 9.23–24; Hos 4.1–3
Knowledge, tree of, Gen 2.9

Ladder of Tyre, 1 Macc 11.59
Laments of Jeremiah, Jer 11.18–12.6; 15.10–21; 17.14–18; 18.18–23; 20.7–13, 14–18
Language of the New Testament, the, p. iv NT
Languages of the Old Testament, the, pp. xxxi OT
Languages, origins of, Gen 11.1–9
Last supper, the, Mt 26.17–29
Latin Vulgate Bible, pp. iv, vi, viii AP
Law, Ex 20.22-23.33; Intro to Lev. p. 125 OT; Lev 1.1; 17.1-26; Intro to Deut, p. 217 OT; Deut 6.8–9; Intro to Ezra, p. 581 OT; Neh 8.1–12; Pss 19.7–14; 119; Isa 1.10; Jer 8.8–9; 4 Macc 8.25; see also Covenant Code, Deuteronomic Code, Holiness Code, Priestly Code, Clean and unclean, Dietary Practices
Law, purpose of the Mosaic, Gal 3.19–25; Sir 3.1–16
Lawyer, Lk 11.45
Laying on of hands, the, 1 Tim 4.14
Lazarus, the raising of, Jn 11.1–57
Laziness, Sir 22.1–18
Legion, a Roman, Mk 5.9
Leprosy, Lev 13.1–59; 14.1–32; 2 Kings 5.1–27; 2 Chr 26.16–20; Mt 8.2–4
Letter of Jeremiah, p. 169 AP
Letters as a form of religious literature, p. v AP
Leviathan, Job 3.8; 41.1–34; Pss 74.12–17; 104.26; Isa 27.1; 2 Esd 6.49–52

Levirate marriage, Gen 38.8; Deut 25.5–10; Ruth 3.9, 12
Levites, Num 3.1–51; 8.1–26; 18.1–32; Deut 14.27–29; 18.1–22; 1 Chr 6.1–81; 23.1–32
Liberty, Christian, Gal 5.2–26
Life, book of, Ex 32.32; Ps 40.7; Mal 3.16; Rev 3.5
Life, tree of, Gen 2.9; 3.22; Ezek 31.7–18; Rev 22.2
Lilith, Isa 34.13–15
Literature and the Apocrypha, p. ix AP
Little ones, Mt 18.6
Loans, Sir 29.1–20
Longfellow and the Apocrypha, p. ix AP
Lord's Prayer, the, Mt 6.9–13
Lord's Supper, the, 1 Cor 11.17–34
Lots, 1 Sam 14.36–37; Neh 10.34; Prov 16.33; see also Urim and Thummim
Love, Lev 19.17–18; Deut 6.4–5; Isa 54.8; Hos 3.1; 4.1–3; Am 4.6–12; Jon 4.11; Mal 1.2–5; 1 Cor 13.1–13; 1 Jn 4.7–21; see also Steadfast love
Love, Christian, 1 Cor 13.1–13
Love of God, 2 Esd 8.46–47
Luther and the Apocrypha, p. ix AP
Lying, Sir 20.24–26
Lysias, 1 Macc 3.27–4.35; 2 Macc 11.1–15
Lysimachus, Add Esth (Gk) 11.1

Macabre, the word, p. x AP
Maccabees, First Book of the, p. 186 AP
Maccabees, Second Book of the, p. 208 AP
Maccabees, Third Book of the, p. 285 AP
Maccabees, Fourth Book of the, p. 341 AP
Magic, Gen 41.8; Ex 4.1–9
Magnificat, the, Lk 1.46–55
Majesty of God, Sir 18.1–14; 42.15–43.33; Pr Man 1–8
Manasseh, Prayer of, p. 281 AP
Manna, Ex 16.14; Ps 78.25
Manuscripts of the New Testament, pp. iv–v NT
Manuscripts of the Old Testament, pp. xxxi–xxxii OT
Marana tha, 1 Cor 16.22
Marriage, Gen 2.24–25; 29.23–25, 27; 31.43; 38.8; Mal 2.14–16; see also Levirate marriage
Marriage, mixed, Ezra 9.1–15; 10.2
Martha and Mary, Lk 10.38–42
Martyrdom of Eleazar, 4 Macc chs. 5–7
Martyrdom of the eldest, 4 Macc 9.10–25
Martyrdom of the mother, 4 Macc 14.11–17.1
Martyrdom of the other brothers, 4 Macc 9.26–12.19
Martyrdoms, Jewish, 2 Macc 6.7–17; 4 Macc
Mary Magdalene, Lk 8.2
Masada, 4 Macc 12.19
Materialism, Wis 1.16–2.24
Mattathias, death of, 1 Macc 2.49–70
Mattathias, revolt of, 1 Macc 2.1–48
Melchizedek, the order of, Heb 5.6
Menelaus as high priest, 2 Macc 4.23–50
Mercy divine, Sir 5.6; Pr Man 1–8
Messenger of the Lord, Mal 2.17–3.5; 4.4–6
Messiah, 1 Sam 10.1; 1 Chr 5.1–10; Pss 2.2; 110.1; Isa 9.2–7; 11.1–9; 45.1–7; 55.3–5; Mic 5.2–6; Hag 2.20–23; Zech 3.8; 6.9–15; 9.9–10; Mt 11.4–5; see also Christ
Messiahship, Jesus', Jn 7.25–31; p. xii AP; 2 Esd 12.32; 13.3; 13.26; 14.9
Messianic banquet, Lk 12.37; Rev 3.20
Messianic kingdom, 2 Esd 7.26–44
Michael, the archangel, Dan 10.12–14; Jude 9–10; Rev 12.7
Millennium, the, Rev 20.2
Miracle, Josh 10.11–14; 1 Kings 17.1–24; 2 Kings 4.1–8.6
Miracles, apostolic, Gal 3.5
Mishael, 4 Macc 16.3, 21
Mixed marriages, 1 Esd 8.68–9.36
Moabite stone, 1 Kings 16.21–28; 2 Kings 3.4–8; 10.32–36; pp. 421–422
Money and coins, 2 Kings 22.3–7; Ezra 2.69; 3.7; Jer 32.6–15; p. 425
Money, Roman, Lk 12.59
Mordecai, Add Esth (Gk) 11.2–16
Moses, Sir 45.19–47.11
Mother of the seven, pp. xii AP; 4 Macc 14.11–17.1
Mourning for the dead, Sir 38.16–23; 3 Macc 4.2
Music and the Apocrypha, pp. ix–x AP
Music and musicians (Temple), 1 Chr 25.1–31; Neh 12.36; Intro to Pss, p. 674 OT
Mystery, Dan 2.18–19; Rom 11.25–26; Eph 1.9

Nabateans, 1 Macc 5.25; 9.35
Nabonidus, Bar 1.11
Name of the Lord, pp. xii–xiii OT; Gen 32.27, 29; Ex 3.14; 20.7; 34.14; Lev 24.10–14
Nanea, 2 Macc 1.13
Naphtha, Song of Thr 23; 2 Macc 1.20
Nations, origins of, Gen 10.1–32; 1 Chr 1.1–54
Nazirite, Num 6.2; Judg 13.5; 2 Kings 10.15; Acts 21.23–24
Nebuchadnezzar, Jdt 1.1–6
Necromancy, 1 Sam 28.9; Isa 8.19–20
Needle's eye, Mk 10.25
Nehemiah, 1 Esd 5.40
Nephthar, 2 Macc 1.36
Nicanor, death of, 2 Macc 15.1–36
Nicanos Day, 1 Macc 7.49
Nicholas of Hereford, p. vi AP
Nicolaitans, Rev 2.6
Ninevah, Tob 1.3
Noah, Sir 44.16–18
Noah's ark, 4 Macc 7.1–3; 15.31
Number of the beast, the, Rev 13.18
Nunc Dimittis, the, Lk 2.29–32

Oath (swearing), Gen 24.2; Ex 22.9; Num 5.19–28; Josh 9.20; 1 Sam 25.26; Job 31.1–40
OEcolampadius, p. vii AP
Old Testament, Hebrew canon of the, pp. iv, v AP; 2 Esd 14.45; Sir 38.24–39.11
Old Testament, restored by Ezra, 2 Esd 14.37–38
Olympian Zeus, 2 Macc 6.2
Omens, Sir 34.1–8
Omnipotence and omniscience of God, Sir 42.15–43.33
Onias I, 1 Macc 12.7
Onias III, 1 Macc 7.5–25; 2 Macc 3.1; 4 Macc 4.1
Opitz, p. x AP
Oracle, Am 1.3,6,9; Nah 1.1
Ordination of priests, Ex 29.1–46; Lev 8.1–36

Pagan, 3 Macc 1.9
Palestinian Jewish canon, p. vi AP
Palestinian pseudepigrapha, p. xi AP
Palm Sunday, Mt 21.1–9
Parables, purpose of Jesus', Mt 13.1–52
Paradise, Lk 23.42; p. xi AP, 2 Esd 7.[70]
Passover, Ex 12.1–28; 2 Chr 30.1–27; 35.1–6
Patriarchs, p. 411
Paul, conversion of, Acts 9.1–22
Penitence, Pss 6; 32; 38; 51
Penny, Lk 12.59
Pentateuch, p. xxxv OT
Pentecost, Ex 23.16; Lev 23.15–21; Joel 2.28–29; Zeph 3.9; Acts 2.1–47; Tob 2.1; 2 Macc 12.31
Perfection, Christian, Heb 2.10
Personality, the human, 1 Thess 5.23
Peter, Mt 16.18
Peter, confession of, Mt 16.13–23
Phalaris, 3 Macc 5.20, 42
Pharaoh, 3 Macc 6.4
Pharisees, Mt 3.7; p. xii AP; 1 Macc 16.23; compare Jdt 8.6; 12.2
Philistines, Gen 9.27; 10.2–5; Judg 13.1; 14.3; 1 Sam 4.1b–7.2; 2 Sam 5.17–25; 21.15–22; Jer 47.1–7; Am 1.6–8; Zech 9.7; p. 410; 4 Macc 3.7
Phinehas, Sir 45.19–47.11; 4 Macc 18.12
Phoenicia, Ezek 27.1–36; p. 410; 4 Macc 4.2

Physicians, Sir 38.1–15
Pillar, Gen 28.18; Ex 34.13; 1 Sam 2.8; 2 Sam 18.16–18; 1 Kings 7.15–22; Ezek 6.1–14
Pillar of cloud and fire, Ex 13.21–22
Plague, Ex 7.8–11.10; 1 Sam 6.4–5; 2 Sam 24.16–25; 2 Kings 19.35; Joel 1.1–2.27; Wis 11.6–17.15
Pope Damasus, p. iv, vi AP
Pope Gelasius, p. vi AP
Pope Hormisdas, p. vi AP
Praise of famous men, Sir 44.1–50.24
Prayer, 1 Kings 3.1–28; 1 Chr 29.10–19; 2 Chr 6.1–42; Intro to Neh, p. 594 OT; Dan 6.10
Prayer, in Jesus' life, Lk 3.21
Prayer of Azariah, p. 174 AP
Prayer of Manasseh, p. 281 AP
Priestly Code, Ex 24.15–18; Intro to Lev, p. 125 OT; Lev 1.1
Prophecy, Ex 15.20; Num 11.25; Deut 18.15–22; 1 Sam 10.6; 2 Kings 2.3; Isa 48.3–5; Ezek 12.21–28; 33.1–9; Hos 1.1; Am 7.14; Mic 3.5–8
Prophetesses, Ezek 13.17–23
Prophets, Christian, Acts 11.27; Eph 2.20–22
Prophets, false, Deut 13.1–5; Ezek 13.1–16; Jer 23.9–40; Mic 3.5–8
Proselytes, Isa 14.1–2; 19.19–22; 56.3, 6–7; Ezek 14.1–11; 47.21–23; Acts 6.5
Prostitutes, cultic, Let Jer [6.]43
Protocanonical, meaning of, p. iv AP
Proverbs, 1 Kings 4.29–33; Intro to Prov p. 802 OT
Psalm 151, p. 283 AP
Psalms of Solomon, p. xi AP
Pseudepigrapha, meaning of the word, pp. iv, xi–xii AP
Pseudonymous authorship, Intro to 2 Pet, p. 344 NT
Ptolemais, 3 Macc 7.17
Ptolemy IV Philopator, p. 285 AP; 3 Macc 1.1, 8–15; 16–28; 3.11–30
Ptolemy V Epiphanes, 3 Macc 7.1–9
Ptolemy VI Philometor, 1 Macc 1.18; 2 Macc 4.21; 4 Macc 4.22
Ptolemy VII Physcon, 2 Macc 1.10
Punishment for sin, Sir 16.5–23; 3 Macc 2.6, 21–22
Purgatory, disputes over doctrines of, p. vii AP
Puritans and the Apocrypha, p. viii AP
Purvey, John, p. vi AP

Qoheleth, Intro to Eccl, p. 841 OT
Qumran, p. xxxi OT; 1 Macc 3.55; 2 Macc 8.23; 4 Macc 6.29; p. 283 AP; see also Dead Sea Scrolls

Raguel, Tob 8.9b–21
Rahab (dragon), Ps 74.12–17; Isa 30.7b; 51.9–11
Rains, Deut 11.10–12, 14; 1 Kings 17.1
Ransom, 4 Macc 6.29; 17.21
Raphael, Tob 3.16–17
Raphia, battle of, 3 Macc 1.1–7
Razis, death of, 2 Macc 14.37–46
Rechabites, 2 Kings 10.15; Jer 35.1–19
Redeemer, Lev 25.25; Job 19.25–27; Isa 41.14–16; 43.14–15
Redemption, Hos 3.1; Rom 3.24; see also Redeemer
Rehum, 1 Esd 2.16
Remnant, 2 Kings 19.29–31; Isa 4.2; 7.3; 10.20–23; 24.13–16a; Mic 5.7–9; Zech 13.7–9
Repentance, Ezek 18.30–32; Lk 13.1–9
Responsibility, collective, Gen 18.23–33; Deut 24.16; Josh 7.11–13; 2 Sam 12.13–14; Job 21.1–34; Dan 6.24
Responsibility, individual (personal), Deut 24.16; 2 Kings 14.6; Jer 31.29–30; Ezek 3.16–21; 14.12–23; 18.1–32; 33.1–20; 34.1–10; Hab 2.2–5
Resurrection, Isa 26.16–19; Ezek 37.14; Dan 12.2; Mt 22.23–33; 1 Cor 15.12–58; 2 Macc 7.9 ff
Resurrection of Christ, Mt 28.1–15
Retribution, Pss 10.4; 37; 73; Hab 1.1–2.5; see also Responsibility
Return from the exile, the, 1 Esd 2.1–15; Bar 5.1–9
Rewards of wisdom, Sir 4.11–19
Righteousness of God, the, Isa 5.16; Rom 1.17; Phil 3.9
River, the sacred, Ezek 47.1–12; Rev 22.1
Roman Catholic Church, pp. iv, vi–vii AP
Russian Orthodox Church, p. iv AP

Sabbath, Gen 2.1–3; Ex 16.22–36; 20.8–11; 2 Kings 4.23; Neh 13.15–22; Jer 17.19–27
Sabbath day's journey, Acts 1.12
Sabbath laws, Mt 12.1–14
Sabbatical year, Lev 25.1–55; Deut 15.1–11; 31.10–11
Sacrifice, human, Judg 11.30–31; 1 Kings 16.34; 2 Kings 3.27; 16.1–4; Jer 7.31; 19.3–9; Ezek 36.14
Sacrifice of Christ, Heb 9.11–10.18
Sacrifices, acceptable and unacceptable, Sir 34.21–35.13
Sacrificing, atoning, 4 Macc 17.22
Sadducees, Mt 3.7; Acts 4.1–2; p. xii AP
Saints, Rom 1.7
Salathiel, 2 Esd 3.1
Salt, Gen 19.26; Lev 2.13
Salvadori, p. x AP
Salvation, Isa 45.8; 62.6–9; Hab 3.18; Lk 18.26
Samaritans, 2 Kings 17.24–28; Lk 9.51–56
Samuel, Sir 46.1–20
Sanctification, Rom 6.19
Sanctuary, central, Deut 12.1–31; 16.1–8; Josh 22.12; 2 Kings 23.4–14
Sanhedrin, Jn 11.47; Jdt 11.14
Sapor I, 2 Esd 15.28–63
Satan, 1 Kings 22.19–23; 1 Chr 21.1; Job 1.6–7; Zech 3.1; 1 Tim 1.20; see also Devil
Satrapy, Dan 6.1
Saul, p. 419
Savior, a mighty, Lk 1.69
Savoy Conference, p. viii AP
Schedia, 3 Macc 4.11
Schroeder, Father H. J., p. viii AP
Scribes, Sir 38.24–39.11
Scythians, 2 Macc 4.47; 3 Macc 7.5; 4 Macc 10.7
Selah, Ps 3.2
Seleucid era, 1 Macc 1.10
Seleucids and Ptolemies, Dan 11.1–12.13; pp. 416–417
Seleucus I Nicanor, 4 Macc 3.20
Seleucus IV Philopator, 2 Macc 3.3; 4 Macc 3.20
Self-control, Sir 6.2–4; 18.30–19.4; 22.27–23.27
Senate, the Jewish, Jdt 11.14; 1 Macc 12.6
Sennacherib, 3 Macc 6.5
Septuagint, p. 416; p. iii AP
Seraphs, Isa 6.2
Sermon on the Mount, the, Mt 5.1–7.27
Servant Songs, Isa 42.1–4; 49.1–6; 50.4–11; 52.13–53.12
Seven, the, Acts 6.1–7
Seven brothers, p. xii AP; 4 Macc 8.1–9.9
Seven churches, the, Rev 2.1–3.22
Sex, Gen 2.24–25; 3.16; 9.25; 19.5; Lev 18.1–30; Deut 22.5, 22–27; 1 Cor 6.9–20
Shakespeare and the Apocrypha, p. ix AP
Shalmaneser, 1 Esd 5.69; Tob 1.2; 1.15
Shame, true and false, Sir 41.14–42.8
Shekel, Ex 30.13; p. 425
Sheol, Gen 37.35; 1 Sam 2.6–7; 28.13; 2 Sam 12.23; Job 26.5–6; Pss 6.5; 16.10; 88.5–6; 139.8; Ezek 31.10–18; 32.17–32; Am 9.2
Sign, Gen 9.13; Ex 3.11–12; Num 14.11; Deut 13.1–5; Isa 7.10–17; Jer 10.2; Jn 2.11
Siloam tunnel, 2 Kings 20.20–21; Isa 22.8b–11; p. 421–422
Simon, son of Mattathias, 1 Macc 13.1–30
Simon, son of Onias, Sir 50.1–24; 3 Macc 2.1–20
Simony, Acts 8.18
Sin, Gen 4.7; Pss 32; 51; Rom 7.14–23; Sir 21.2–3; see also Apostasy
Sin, confession of, Bar 1.15–3.8
Sin offering, Lev 4.1–5.13
Sin, the unforgivable, Mt 12.31–32
Sirach, Wisdom of Jesus Son of, p. 86 AP

Sisinnes, 1 Esd 6.3
Sixtus of Sienna, p. iv AP
Slavery, Ex 21.1–11; Intro to Philem, p. 314 NT
Slavonic Bibles, p. iv AP
Sleep, symbol of death, Jn 11.11
Sodom, 3 Macc 2.5
Solomon, pp. 412–413; Sir 47.1–22
Solomon, Psalms of, pp. xi–xii AP
Solomon, Wisdom of, p. 57 AP
Son of God, Jn 1.34
Son of Man, Ps 8.4; Ezek 1.28b–2.8a; Mk 2.10; Acts 7.56; p. xii AP
Sorites, Wis 6.17–21
Soul, Gen 2.7; Isa 1.14; 1 Thess 5.23
Soul, pre-existence of the, 2 Esd 8.4–5; Wis 8.19–20
Spartans, 1 Macc 12.1–23
Speaking in tongues, 1 Cor 14.1–40
Speech, appropriate and inappropriate, Sir 20.1–8, 18–20
Spirit of the Lord, Gen 6.3; Num 11.16–17; Judg 3.10; 14.6; Ezek 2.2; Joel 2.28–32; Mic 3.8
Spiritual gifts, 1 Cor 12.1–11
Steadfast love, Gen 24.12; Isa 63.7; Hos 4.1–3; 6.4–6; Mic 7.8–20
Stephen, Acts 6.8–8.1a
Stoicism, p. 341 AP; 4 Macc 5.7–8; 8.15; 9.7; 12.13, 19; 15.4; 17.5
Stones, Ps 151.6
Stoning, Gen 38.24; Deut 13.10; 1 Kings 21.8–14; Ezek 23.36–49
Suffering, 4 Macc 15.13
Suffering, vicarious, Isa 53.4–6
Suicide, 1 Sam 31.5
Suretyship, Sir 29.1–20
Susanna, book of, p. 179 AP
Swiss German Bible, p. vii AP
Swiss Reformers, p. vii AP
Synod of Jerusalem, p. vi AP
Synoptic Gospels, pp. iii–iv NT
Syria, p. 410; 4 Macc 4.2

Tabernacle, Ex 26.1–37; 39.32–43; see also Tent of meeting
Temperance, Sir 31.12–31; 37.27–31
Temple, 2 Sam 7.1–29; 1 Kings 5.1–18; 6.1–38; 7.13–50; 8.1–66; 2 Kings 22.1–20; 25.8–17; 1 Chr 22.2–19; 28.1–21; Ezra 3.1–13; Jer 26.1–24; Ezek 40.1–48.35; Hag 1.4, 15b–2.9; Zech 4.6–10a; pp. 412–413, 417–418
Temple, attempt on the treasury of the, 4 Macc 3.19–4.14
Temple, desecration of the, 1 Macc 1.41–64; 2 Macc 5.1–27
Ten Commandments, Ex 20.1–17; Deut 5.6–21
Tent of meeting, Ex 33.7–11; Num 2.2; 1 Chr 9.17–34; see also Tabernacle
Teraphim, Gen 31.19; Judg 17.5; Ezek 21.18–24; Hos 3.4
Text of the New Testament, the, p. v NT
Text of the Old Testament, the, pp. xxxi–xxxii OT
Thanksgiving, Pss 30; 65; 75; 107; Rom 1.8–15
Theodotus, 3 Macc 1.2
Theophany (visible manifestation of God), Ex 3.1–6; 19.1–25; Job 38.1; Ps 18.7–19; Isa 6.1–13; Ezek 1.4–28a
Theras, 1 Esd 8.41
Thorn in the flesh, 2 Cor 12.7–9
Throne chariot, Ezek 1.4–28a
Timothy, Acts 16.1–5
Timothy, victory over, 2 Macc 10.24–38
Tobit, book of, p. 1 AP
Transfiguration, the, Mk 9.2–8
Transformation, 4 Macc 9.22
Trent, the Council of, pp. iv, vii–viii AP
Trinity, the, 2 Cor 13.13; Jude 20–21; see also Intro to Eph, p. 272 NT, and Mt 28.19
Tyranny, 4 Macc 1.11; 8.15

Uriel, 2 Esd 4.1
Urim and Thummim, Ex 28.15–30; 1 Sam 14.3; 1 Esd 5.40; see also Divination

Vengeance, Sir 27.28–28.1
Virtues, the four cardinal, Wis 8.7
Vows, Lev 27.1–34; Num 30.1–16; Ps 7.17

War, see Holy War
Watcher, Dan 4.13,17,23
Way, the, Acts 9.2
Weeks, festival of, 2 Macc 12.31
Weights and measures, pp. 424–425
Widows, Gen 38.11; Ex 22.21–27; 1 Tim 5.3–16
Wife, the capable, Intro to Prov, p. 802 OT; Prov 31.10–31
Wisdom, Job 28.1–28; Intro to Prov, p. 802 OT; see also Wisdom of Solomon
Wisdom, the personification of, Sir 1.1–10 ff
Wisdom, given to Israel, Bar 3.9–4.4
"Wisdom of God," the, Lk 11.49
Wisdom of Solomon, 1 Kings 3.1–28; 4.29–34; 10.1–5; 2 Chr 1.1–17; Intro to Prov, p. 802 OT
Wisdom, twenty-one attributes of, Wis 7.22b–23
Women, 1 Esd 4.13–32; Sir 25.13–26.27; 42.9–14; 3 Macc 1.18
Word, Gen 1.3–5; Jer 1.4,10; 5.12–17; 8.8–9; 23.29; Hos 1.1
Wrath of God, Jer 6.9–15; Jn 3.36; Rom 2.5; Col 3.6; Rev 14.10
Wyclif, John, p. vi AP

Yahweh, Gen 4.26b; Ex 3.14; 6.2–3; 1 Kings 18.1–6; pp. xii–xiii OT
*Yeser*, 2 Esd 4.30; 7.[48], [92]; Sir 15.14

Zacchaeus, Lk 19.1–10
Zerubbabel, 1 Esd 4.13–32
Zeus, Olympian, 1 Macc 1.54
Zion, inviolability of, 2 Kings 19.32–34
Zion, mount, 2 Sam 5.6–9; 1 Kings 8.1–11; Ps 48.2
Zion, songs of, Ps 46.4–7
Zurich Bible, p. viii AP

# A CONCORDANCE
# TO THE
# NEW REVISED STANDARD VERSION

# TABLE OF ABBREVIATIONS

## CANONICAL BOOKS

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| 1Ch . . . . . 1 Chronicles | Ecc . . . . . Ecclesiastes | La . . . . . Lamentations |
| 1Co . . . . . 1 Corinthians | Eph . . . . . Ephesians | Lev . . . . . Leviticus |
| 1Jn . . . . . 1 John | Est . . . . . Esther | Lk . . . . . Luke |
| 1Ki . . . . . 1 Kings | Ex . . . . . Exodus | Mal . . . . . Malachi |
| 1Pe . . . . . 1 Peter | Eze . . . . . Ezekiel | Mic . . . . . Micah |
| 1Sa . . . . . 1 Samuel | Ezr . . . . . Ezra | Mk . . . . . Mark |
| 1Th . . . . . 1 Thessalonians | Gal . . . . . Galatians | Mt . . . . . Matthew |
| 1Ti . . . . . 1 Timothy | Ge . . . . . Genesis | Na . . . . . Nahum |
| 2Ch . . . . . 2 Chronicles | Hab . . . . . Habakkuk | Ne . . . . . Nehemiah |
| 2Co . . . . . 2 Corinthians | Hag . . . . . Haggai | Nu . . . . . Numbers |
| 2Jn . . . . . 2 John | Heb . . . . . Hebrews | Ob . . . . . Obadiah |
| 2Ki . . . . . 2 Kings | Hos . . . . . Hosea | Phm . . . . . Philemon |
| 2Pe . . . . . 2 Peter | Isa . . . . . Isaiah | Php . . . . . Philippians |
| 2Sa . . . . . 2 Samuel | Jas . . . . . James | Pr . . . . . Proverbs |
| 2Th . . . . . 2 Thessalonians | Jdg . . . . . Judges | Ps . . . . . Psalms |
| 2Ti . . . . . 2 Timothy | Jer . . . . . Jeremiah | Rev . . . . . Revelation |
| 3Jn . . . . . 3 John | Jn . . . . . John | Ro . . . . . Romans |
| Ac . . . . . Acts | Jnh . . . . . Jonah | Ru . . . . . Ruth |
| Am . . . . . Amos | Job . . . . . Job | SS . . . . . Song of Songs |
| Col . . . . . Colossians | Joel . . . . . Joel | Tit . . . . . Titus |
| Da . . . . . Daniel | Jos . . . . . Joshua | Zec . . . . . Zechariah |
| Dt . . . . . Deuteronomy | Jude . . . . . Jude | Zep . . . . . Zephaniah |

## DEUTEROCANONICAL BOOKS

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| 1Es . . . . . 1 Esdras | AdE . . . . . Additions to Esther | Man . . . . . Prayer of Manasseh |
| 1Mc . . . . . 1 Maccabees | Aza . . . . . Prayer of Azariah | Pm . . . . . Psalm 151 |
| 2Es . . . . . 2 Esdras | Bar . . . . . Baruch | Sir . . . . . Sirach |
| 2Mc . . . . . 2 Maccabees | Bel . . . . . Bel and the Dragon | Sus . . . . . Susanna |
| 3Mc . . . . . 3 Maccabees | Jdt . . . . . Judith | Tob . . . . . Tobit |
| 4Mc . . . . . 4 Maccabees | LtJ . . . . . Letter of Jeremiah | Wis . . . . . Wisdom |

## OTHER

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| S . . . . . Shorter Ending of Mark | T . . . . . Psalm Titles | Pr: . . . . . Sirach Prologue |

## SPECIAL SYMBOLS

* . . . . . Entries marked with an asterisk (e.g., ABBA*) contain every reference in the NRSV
→ . . . . . An arrow following an entry heading points to related words for additional study
= . . . . . An equals sign marks an alternate proper name for additional study (e.g., ISRAEL =JACOB)
[ ] . . . . . Contexts in double brackets are from passages that are similarly bracketed in the NRSV (e.g., John 7:53—8:11)

For further study consult *The Concise Concordance to the New Revised Standard Version* (Oxford University Press, 1993) and *The NRSV Concordance Unabridged* (Zondervan, 1991).

John R. Kohlenberger III

## A

### AARON

Genealogy (Ex 6:16-20; Jos 21:4, 10; 1Ch 6:3-15). Priesthood of (Ex 28:1; Nu 17; Heb 5:1-4; 7). vestments of (Ex 28; 39), consecration of (Ex 29), ordination of (Lev 8).

Spokesman for Moses (Ex 4:14-16, 27-31; 7:1-2). Supported Moses' hands in battle (Ex 17:8-13). Built golden calf (Ex 32; Dt 9:20). Spoke against Moses (Nu 12). Priesthood opposed (Nu 16); staff budded (Nu 17). Forbidden to enter the promised land (Nu 20:1-12). Death of (Nu 20:22-29; 33:38-39). Praise of (Sir 45:6-22).

### ABANDON → ABANDONED

Nu 32: 15 will again **a** them in the wilderness;
Dt 4: 31 will neither **a** you nor destroy you;
2Ch 15: 2 but if you **a** him, he will **a** you.
Mk 7: 8 You **a** the commandment of God
Ac 2: 27 For you will not **a** my soul to Hades
Heb 10: 35 Do not, therefore, **a** that confidence

### ABANDONED → ABANDON

Dt 29: 25 they **a** the covenant of the LORD,
Jdg 2: 13 **a** the LORD, and worshiped Baal
2Ch 12: 5 You **a** me, so I have **a** you
Isa 54: 7 For a brief moment I **a** you,
Sir 49: 4 for they **a** the law of the Most High;

### ABBA*

Mk 14: 36 **"A,** Father, for you all things are possible;
Ro 8: 15 When we cry, **"A!** Father!"
Gal 4: 6 into our hearts, crying, **"A!** Father!"

### ABEDNEGO* → =AZARIAH

Deported to Babylon with Daniel (Da 1:1-6). Name changed from Azariah (Da 1:7). Refused defilement by food (Da 1:8-20). Refused idol worship (Da 3:1-12); saved from furnace (Da 3:13-30).

### ABEL

Second son of Adam (Ge 4:2). Offered acceptable sacrifice (Ge 4:4; Heb 11:4; 12:24). Murdered by Cain (Ge 4:8; Mt 23:35; Lk 11:51; 1Jn 3:12).

### ABHOR → ABHORRENT

Lev 26: 11 and I shall not **a** you.

### ABHORRENT → ABHOR

Dt 14: 3 You shall not eat any **a** thing.
18: 9 not learn to imitate the **a** practices

### ABIATHAR

High priest in days of Saul and David (1Sa 22; 2Sa 15; 1Ki 1-2; Mk 2:26). Escaped Saul's slaughter of priests (1Sa 22:18-23). Supported David in Absalom's revolt (2Sa 15:24-29). Supported Adonijah (1Ki 1:7-42); deposed by Solomon (1Ki 2:22-35; cf. 1Sa 2:31-35).

### ABIDE → ABIDES, ABODE

Ge 6: 3 My spirit shall not **a** in mortals forever,
Ps 15: 1 O LORD, who may **a** in your tent?
91: 1 **a** in the shadow of the Almighty.
Jn 15: 4 A in me as I **a** in you.
1Co 13: 13 faith, hope, and love **a,** these three;
1Jn 2: 28 And now, little children, **a** in him,
Wis 3: 9 the faithful will **a** with him in love,

### ABIDES → ABIDE

Hag 2: 5 My spirit **a** among you; do not fear.
1Jn 3: 14 Whoever does not love **a** in death.

### ABIGAIL

1. Sister of David (1Ch 2:16-17).

2. Wife of Nabal (1Sa 25:30); pled for his life with David (1Sa 25:14-35). Became David's wife after Nabal's death (1Sa 25:36-42).

### ABIHU

Son of Aaron (Ex 6:23; 24:1, 9); killed for offering illicit fire (Lev 10; Nu 3:2-4; 1Ch 24:1-2).

### ABIJAH

1. Second son of Samuel (1Ch 6:28); a corrupt judge (1Sa 8:1-5).

2. An Aaronic priest (1Ch 24:10; Lk 1:5).

3. Son of Jeroboam I; died as prophesied by Ahijah (1Ki 14:1-18).

4. Son of Rehoboam, also called Abijam; king of Judah who fought Jeroboam I attempting to reunite Israel (1Ki 14:31-15:8; 2Ch 12:16-14:1).

### ABILITY → ABLE

Ex 31: 3 filled him with divine spirit, with **a,**
Mt 25: 15 to each according to his **a.**
Ac 2: 4 as the Spirit gave them **a.**

### ABIMELECH

1. King of Gerar who took Abraham's wife Sarah, believing her to be his sister (Ge 20). Covenanted with Abraham (Ge 21:22-33).

2. King of Gerar who took Isaac's wife Rebe-kah, believing her to be his sister (Ge 26:1-11). Covenanted with Isaac (Ge 26:12-31).

3. Son of Gideon (Jdg 8:31). Attempted to become king (Jdg 9).

### ABIRAM

Sided with Dathan in rebellion against Moses and Aaron (Nu 16; 26:9; Dt 11:6; Sir 45:18).

### ABISHAI

Son of Zeruiah, David's sister (1Sa 26:6; 1Ch 2:16). One of David's chief warriors (1Ch 11:15-21); against Edom (1Ch 18:12-13), Ammon (2Sa 10), Absalom (2Sa 18), Sheba (2Sa 20). Wanted to kill Saul (1Sa 26), killed Abner (2Sa 2:18-27; 3:22-39).

### ABLE → ABILITY

Ex 18: 25 Moses chose **a** men from all Israel
Jos 1: 5 No one shall be **a** to stand against
23: 9 no one has been **a** to withstand you
Da 3: 17 God whom we serve is **a** to deliver
Mt 9: 28 "Do you believe that I am **a** to do
Mk 10: 38 you **a** to drink the cup that I drink,
Ro 14: 4 the Lord is **a** to make them stand.
2Co 9: 8 God is **a** to provide you with every
Eph 6: 11 **a** to stand against the wiles of the devil.
2Ti 1: 12 he is **a** to guard until that day
Heb 2: 18 **a** to help those who are being tested.
5: 2 is **a** to deal gently with the ignorant
7: 25 he is **a** for all time to save
Rev 5: 3 **a** to open the scroll or to look into it.
Jdt 11: 18 of them will be **a** to withstand you.

### ABNER

Cousin of Saul and commander of his army (1Sa 14:50; 17:55-57; 26). Made Ish-Bosheth king after Saul (2Sa 2:8-10), but later defected to David (2Sa 3:6-21). Killed Asahel (2Sa 2:18-32), for which he was killed by Joab and Abishai (2Sa 3:22-39).

### ABODE → ABIDE

Ps 68: 16 mount that God desired for his **a,**
Pr 3: 33 but he blesses the **a** of the righteous.

### ABOLISH → ABOLISHED

Da 11: 31 shall **a** the regular burnt offering
Mt 5: 17 I have come not to **a** but to fulfill.

### ABOLISHED → ABOLISH

Eph 2: 15 **a** the law with its commandments
2Ti 1: 10 who **a** death and brought life

### ABOMINABLE → ABOMINATION

2Ch 28: 3 the **a** practices of the nations
Eze 7: 20 they made their **a** images.
1Mc 1: 48 to make themselves **a** by everything

### ABOMINATION → ABOMINABLE, ABOMINATIONS

Pr 6: 16 seven that are an **a** to him:
Da 9: 27 shall be an **a** that desolates,
Rev 21: 27 anyone who practices **a** or falsehood
Sir 1: 25 but godliness is an **a** to a sinner.
1Mc 6: 7 that they had torn down the **a** that

### ABOMINATIONS → ABOMINATION

Lev 18: 27 committed all of these **a,**
1Ki 14: 24 all the **a** of the nations that the LORD
Eze 44: 7 broken my covenant with all your **a.**
Rev 17: 5 mother of whores and of earth's **a."**

### ABOUND → ABOUNDED, ABOUNDING

Dt 28: 11 LORD will make you **a** in prosperity,
Ro 6: 1 in sin in order that grace may **a?**

### ABOUNDED → ABOUND

Ro 5: 20 sin increased, grace **a** all the more.

### ABOUNDING → ABOUND

Ex 34: 6 **a** in steadfast love and faithfulness,
Ps 86: 5 **a** in steadfast love to all who call on
Joel 2: 13 to anger, and **a** in steadfast love,
Jnh 4: 2 to anger, and **a** in steadfast love,

### ABOVE

Dt 4: 39 the LORD is God in heaven **a**
Jn 3: 7 'You must be born from **a.'**
Php 2: 9 the name that is **a** every name,
Col 3: 2 Set your minds on things that are **a,**

### ABRAHAM

Abram, son of Terah (Ge 11:26-27), husband of Sarah (Ge 11:29).

Covenant relation with the LORD (Ge 12:1-3; 13:14-17; 15; 17; 22:15-18; Ex 2:24; Ne 9:8; Ps 105; Mic 7:20; Lk 1:68-75; Ro 4; Heb 6:13-15).

Called from Ur, via Haran, to Canaan (Ge 12:1; Ac 7:2-4; Heb 11:8-10). Moved to Egypt, nearly lost Sarah to Pharoah (Ge 12:10-20). Divided the land with Lot; settled in Hebron (Ge 13). Saved Lot from four kings (Ge 14:1-16); blessed by Melchizedek (Ge 14:17-20; Heb 7:1-20). Declared righteous by faith (Ge 15:6; Ro 4:3; Gal 3:6-9; 1Mc 2:52). Fathered Ishmael by Hagar (Ge 16).

Name changed from Abram (Ge 17:5; Ne 9:7). Circumcised (Ge 17; Ro 4:9-12). Entertained three visitors (Ge 18); promised a son by Sarah (Ge 18:9-15; 17:16). Questioned destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah (Ge 18:16-33). Moved to Gerar; nearly lost Sarah to Abimelech (Ge 20). Fathered Isaac by Sarah (Ge 21:1-7; Ac 7:8; Heb 11:11-12); sent away Hagar and Ishmael (Ge 21:8-21; Gal 4:22-30). Covenant with Abimelech (Ge 21:22-32). Tested by offering Isaac (Ge 22; Heb 11:17-19; Jas 2:21-24). Sarah died; bought field of Ephron for burial (Ge 23). Secured wife for Isaac (Ge 24). Fathered children by Keturah (Ge 25:1-6; 1Ch 1:32-33). Death (Ge 25:7-11).

Called servant of God (Ge 26:24), friend of God (2Ch 20:7; Isa 41:8; Jas 2:23), prophet (Ge 20:7), father of Israel (Ex 3:15; Isa 51:2; Mt 3:9; Jn 8:39-58). Praised (Sir 44:19-45:1).

### ABSALOM

Son of David by Maacah (2Sa 3:3; 1Ch 3:2). Killed Amnon for rape of his sister Tamar; banished by David (2Sa 13). Returned to Jerusalem; received by David (2Sa 14). Rebelled against David (2Sa 15-17). Killed (2Sa 18).

### ABSENT

1Co 5: 3 **a** in body, I am present in spirit;
Col 2: 5 For though I am **a** in body,

### ABUNDANCE → ABUNDANTLY

Lk 6: 45 **a** of the heart that the mouth speaks.
12: 15 one's life does not consist in the **a**
2Co 9: 8 provide you with every blessing in **a**

### ABUNDANTLY → ABUNDANCE

Jn 10: 10 that they may have life, and have it **a.**
Eph 3: 20 to accomplish **a** far more than all

### ABYSS

Lk 8: 31 to order them to go back into the **a.**
Ro 10: 7 'Who will descend into the **a?'"**

### ACCEPT → ACCEPTABLE, ACCEPTED

Pr 19: 20 Listen to advice and **a** instruction,
Jer 32: 33 would not listen and **a** correction.
Mt 19: 11 "Not everyone can **a** this teaching,
Jn 1: 11 his own people did not **a** him.

### ACCEPTABLE → ACCEPT

Ps 19: 14 meditation of my heart be **a** to you,
51: 17 sacrifice **a** to God is a broken spirit;
Ro 12: 1 a living sacrifice, holy and **a** to God,

### ACCEPTED → ACCEPT

Ge 4: 7 If you do well, will you not be **a?**
Lk 4: 24 no prophet is **a** in the prophet's hometown.

### ACCESS
Ro 5: 2 we have obtained **a** to this grace
Eph 2: 18 have **a** in one Spirit to the Father.

### ACCOMPLISH → ACCOMPLISHED
Isa 55: 11 but it shall **a** that which I purpose.
Eze 17: 24 I the LORD have spoken: I will **a** it.

### ACCOMPLISHED → ACCOMPLISH
Mt 5: 18 will pass from the law until all is **a.**

### ACCORDING
Ps 28: 4 Repay them **a** to their work,
119: 9 By guarding it **a** to your word.
Mt 9: 29 "**A** to your faith let it be done to you
Ro 8: 4 not **a** to the flesh but **a** to the Spirit.
Heb 2: 4 Holy Spirit, distributed **a** to his will.
1Jn 5: 14 that if we ask anything **a** to his will,
Rev 20: 12 dead were judged **a** to their works.
Sir 16: 12 he judges a person **a** to one's deeds.

### ACCOUNT → ACCOUNTABLE
Mt 12: 36 judgment you will have to give an **a**
Heb 4: 13 to whom we must render an **a.**

### ACCOUNTABLE → ACCOUNT
Ro 14: 12 each of us will be **a** to God.

### ACCURSED → CURSE
Ro 9: 3 I could wish that I myself were **a**
Rev 22: 3 Nothing **a** will be found there any

### ACCUSATION → ACCUSE
Lk 23: 4 no basis for an **a** against this man."

### ACCUSE → ACCUSATION, ACCUSER
Ps 103: 9 He will not always **a,**
Zec 3: 1 Satan standing at his right hand to **a**
Mt 12: 10 so that they might **a** him.

### ACCUSER → ACCUSE
Jn 5: 45 your **a** is Moses.
Rev 12: 10 the **a** of our comrades has been thrown

### ACHAN
Sinned at Jericho; stoned (Jos 7: 22:20; 1Ch 2:7).

### ACHISH
King of Gath before whom David feigned insanity (1Sa 21:10-15). Later "ally" of David (2Sa 27-29).

### ACKNOWLEDGE
Dt 4: 35 you would **a** that the LORD is God;
Pr 3: 6 In all your ways **a** him,
Mt 10: 32 I also will **a** before my Father in
Ro 1: 28 since they did not see fit to **a** God,

### ACT → ACTED, ACTIVE, ACTS
Ps 37: 5 trust in him, and he will **a.**
Ro 14: 23 because they do not **a** from faith;
Jas 1: 25 hearers who forget but doers who **a**

### ACTED → ACT
Eze 20: 9 But I **a** for the sake of my name,
Ac 3: 17 I know that you **a** in ignorance,
1Ti 1: 13 mercy because I had **a** ignorantly

### ACTIVE → ACT
Heb 4: 12 the word of God is living and **a,**
Jas 2: 22 faith was **a** along with his works,

### ACTS → ACT
Ex 6: 6 outstretched arm and with mighty **a**
Ps 71: 15 mouth will tell of your righteous **a,**
Mt 7: 24 hears these words of mine and **a**

### ADAM
First man (Ge 1:26-2:25; Ro 5:14; 1Ti 2:13; Tob 8:6). Sin of (Ge 3; Hos 6:7 [note]; Ro 5:12-21; 2Es 3:21; 7:70-140). Children of (Ge 4:1-5:5). Death of (Ge 5:5; Ro 5:12-21; 1Co 15:22).

### ADD → ADDED
Dt 4: 2 You must neither **a** anything
Pr 30: 6 Do not **a** to his words, or else
Lk 12: 25 by worrying **a** a single hour to your

### ADDED → ADD
Ecc 3: 14 nothing can be **a** to it, nor anything
Sir 42: 21 Nothing can be **a** or taken away,

### ADDICTED*
Tit 1: 7 or quick-tempered or **a** to wine

### ADMONISH → ADMONITION
Col 3: 16 and **a** one another in all wisdom;

### ADMONITION → ADMONISH
Pr 15: 5 one who heeds **a** is prudent.

### ADONIJAH
1. Son of David by Haggith (2Sa 3:4; 1Ch 3:2). Attempted to be king after David; killed at Solomon's order (1Ki 1-2).
2. Levite; teacher of the Law (2Ch 17:8).

### ADOPTION
Ro 8: 23 groan inwardly while we wait for **a,**
Gal 4: 5 that we might receive **a** as children.

### ADORNED → ADORNMENT
Lk 21: 5 how it was **a** with beautiful stones
Rev 17: 4 **a** with gold and jewels and pearls,
21: 2 as a bride **a** for her husband.

### ADORNMENT → ADORNED, ADORNS
Pr 3: 22 for your soul and **a** for your neck.
1Pe 3: 4 let your **a** be the inner self with the

### ADORNS → ADORNMENT
Isa 61: 10 as a bride **a** herself with her jewels.

### ADULT* → ADULTS
1Co 13: 11 an **a,** I put an end to childish ways.

### ADULTERERS → ADULTERY
Jer 23: 10 For the land is full of **a;**
1Co 6: 9 idolaters, **a,** male prostitutes,

### ADULTERESS → ADULTERY
Lev 20: 10 the **a** shall be put to death.
Pr 2: 16 from the **a** with her smooth words,

### ADULTERY → ADULTERERS, ADULTERESS
Ex 20: 14 You shall not commit **a.**
Jer 3: 9 committing **a** with stone and tree.
Mt 5: 28 committed **a** with her in his heart.
Lk 16: 18 and marries another commits **a,**
Jn 8: 3 [a woman who had been caught in **a**;]

### ADULTS* → ADULT
1Co 14: 20 infants in evil, but in thinking be **a.**

### ADVANTAGE
Ecc 7: 12 **a** of knowledge is that wisdom gives
Ro 3: 1 Then what **a** has the Jew?
1Co 10: 24 Do not seek your own **a,** but that of

### ADVERSARIES → ADVERSARY
Dt 32: 41 I will take vengeance on my **a,**
2Sa 22: 49 you exalted me above my **a,**

### ADVERSARY → ADVERSARIES
1Ti 5: 14 give the **a** no occasion to revile us.
1Pe 5: 8 roaring lion your **a** the devil prowls

### ADVERSITY → ADVERSARY
Dt 30: 15 life and prosperity, death and **a.**
Isa 48: 10 I have tested you in the furnace of **a.**

### ADVICE → ADVISERS
2Ch 10: 13 rejected the **a** of the older men;
Ps 1: 1 do not follow the **a** of the wicked,
Pr 8: 14 I have good **a** and sound wisdom;
Tob 4: 18 Seek **a** from every wise person
Sir 37: 11 pay no attention to any **a** they give.

### ADVISERS → ADVICE
Pr 15: 22 but with many **a** they succeed.

### ADVOCATE
Jn 14: 26 But the **A,** the Holy Spirit,
15: 26 the **A** comes, whom I will send
1Jn 2: 1 we have an **a** with the Father,

### AFFLICT → AFFLICTED, AFFLICTION, AFFLICTIONS, AFFLICTS
2Sa 7: 10 evildoers shall **a** them no more,
La 3: 33 for he does not willingly **a**
2Th 1: 6 repay with affliction those who **a**

### AFFLICTED → AFFLICT
Dt 26: 6 Egyptians treated us harshly and **a**
Na 1: 12 Though I have **a** you, I will afflict
2Co 4: 8 are **a** in every way, but not crushed;

### AFFLICTION → AFFLICT
Dt 16: 3 bread with it—the bread of **a**—
Ps 25: 18 Consider my **a** and my trouble,
Isa 30: 20 of adversity and the water of **a,**
La 1: 9 "O LORD, look at my **a,**
2Co 4: 17 this slight momentary **a** is preparing

### AFFLICTIONS → AFFLICT
Ps 34: 19 Many are the **a** of the righteous,

### AFFLICTS* → AFFLICT
Tob 13: 2 For he **a,** and he shows mercy;

### AFRAID → FEAR
Ge 3: 10 and I was **a,** because I was naked;
15: 1 not be **a,** Abram. I am your shield;
Ex 3: 6 his face, for he was **a** to look at God.
Lev 26: 6 and no one shall make you **a;**
Dt 20: 3 Do not lose heart, or be **a,**
Ps 3: 6 I am not **a** of ten thousands
27: 1 of whom shall I be **a?**
56: 11 in God I trust; I am not **a.**
Isa 12: 2 I will trust, and will not be **a,**
Eze 2: 6 do not be **a** of their words,
Mt 10: 31 So do not be **a;** you are of more
28: 10 Jesus said to them, "Do not be **a;**
Lk 12: 32 "Do not be **a,** little flock,
Heb 13: 6 Lord is my helper; I will not be **a.**

### AGABUS*
A Christian prophet (Ac 11:28; 21:10).

### AGAG
King of Amalekites; not killed by Saul (1Sa 15).

### AGAIN
Job 14: 14 If mortals die, will they live **a?**
Ecc 3: 20 and all turn to dust **a.**
Mk 8: 31 and after three days rise **a.**
Jn 14: 3 I will come **a** and will take you to
Heb 6: 6 they are crucifying **a** the Son of God
9: 25 Nor was it to offer himself **a** and **a,**

### AGE → AGES
Ge 21: 2 bore Abraham a son in his old **a,**
Mt 28: 20 with you always, to the end of the **a."**
Gal 1: 4 to set us free from the present evil **a,**

### AGES → AGE
Dt 4: 32 For ask now about former **a,**
1Co 2: 7 decreed before the **a** for our glory.
Col 1: 26 has been hidden throughout the **a**
1Ti 1: 17 To the King of the **a,** immortal,

### AGREE
Mt 18: 19 if two of you **a** on earth about
Mk 14: 56 and their testimony did not **a.**
1Jn 5: 8 and the blood, and these three **a.**

### AGRIPPA
Descendant of Herod; king before whom Paul argued his case in Caesarea (Ac 25:13-26:32).

### AHAB
1. Son of Omri; king of Israel (1Ki 16:28-22:40), husband of Jezebel (1Ki 16:31). Promoted Baal worship (1Ki 16:31-33); opposed by Elijah (1Ki 17:1; 18; 21), a prophet (1Ki 20:35-43), Micaiah (1Ki 22:1-28). Defeated Ben-Hadad (1Ki 20). Killed for failing to kill Ben-Hadad and for murder of Naboth (1Ki 20:35-21:40).
2. A false prophet (Jer 29:21-22).

### AHASUERUS → =ARTAXERXES
King of Persia (Ezr 4:6), husband of Esther. Deposed Vashti; replaced her with Esther (Est 1-2). Sealed Haman's edict to annihilate the Jews (Est 3). Received Esther without having called her (Est 5:1-8). Honored Mordecai (Est 6). Hanged Haman (Est 7). Issued edict allowing Jews to defend themselves (Est 8). Promoted Mordecai (Est 8:1-2, 15; 9:4; 10). Called Artaxerxes in the Additions to Esther.

### AHAZ
Son of Jotham; king of Judah, (2Ki 16; 2Ch 28; Mt 1:9). Idolatry of (2Ki 16:3-4, 10-18; 2Ch 28:1-4, 22-25). Defeated by Aram and Israel (2Ki 16:5-6; 2Ch 28:5-15). Sought help from Assyria rather than the LORD (2Ki 16:7-9; 2Ch 28:16-21; Isa 7).

### AHAZIAH → =JEHOAHAZ

1. Son of Ahab; king of Israel (1Ki 22:51-2Ki 1:18; 2Ch 20:35-37). Made an unsuccessful alliance with Jehoshaphat (2Ch 20:35-37). Died for seeking Baal rather than the LORD (2Ki 1).

2. Son of Jehoram; king of Judah (2Ki 8:25-29; 9:14-29), also called Jehoahaz (2Ch 21:17-22:9; 25:23). Killed by Jehu while visiting Joram (2Ki 9:14-29; 2Ch 22:1-9).

### AHEAD

Mt 11: 10 sending my messenger **a** of you.
Php 3: 13 straining forward to what lies **a.**
Heb 11: 26 for he was looking **a** to the reward.

### AHIJAH

1. Priest during Saul's reign (1Sa 14:3,18).
2. Prophet of Shiloh (1Ki 11:29-39; 14:1-18).

### AHIKAM

Father of Gedaliah (2Ki 25:22), protector of Jeremiah (Jer 26:24).

### AHIMAAZ

1. Father-in-law of Saul (1Sa 14:50).
2. Son of Zadok, the high priest, loyal to David (2Sa 15:27,36; 17:17-20; 18:19-33).

### AHIMELECH

1. Priest who helped David in his flight from Saul (1Sa 21-22).
2. One of David's warriors (1Sa 26:6).

### AHITHOPHEL

One of David's counselors who sided with Absalom (2Sa 15:12, 31-37; 1Ch 27:33-34); committed suicide when his advice was ignored (2Sa 16:15-17:23).

### AI

Jos 7: 4 and they fled before the men of **A.**

### AIR

Eph 2: 2 the ruler of the power of the **a,**
1Th 4: 17 to meet the Lord in the **a;**
Rev 16: 17 angel poured his bowl into the **a,**

### ALARMED

Mk 13: 7 and rumors of wars, do not be **a;**
2Th 2: 2 to be quickly shaken in mind or **a,**

### ALERT

Lk 12: 37 slaves whom the master finds **a**
1Co 16: 13 Keep **a,** stand firm in your faith.
Eph 6: 18 keep **a** and always persevere
1Pe 5: 8 Discipline yourselves, keep **a.**

### ALEXANDER

1Mc 1: 1 **A** son of Philip, the Macedonian.

### ALIEN → ALIENS

Ex 2: 22 an **a** residing in a foreign land."
Lev 19: 34 you shall love the **a** as yourself.
Dt 24: 17 You shall not deprive a resident **a**

### ALIENS → ALIEN

Ge 15: 13 your offspring shall be **a** in a land
Eph 2: 19 you are no longer strangers and **a,**
1Pe 2: 11 I urge you as **a** and exiles to abstain
1Mc 2: 7 the sanctuary given over to **a?**

### ALIVE → LIVE

Ge 6: 19 to keep them **a** with you;
Dt 32: 39 I kill and I make **a;** I wound and I heal;
Ac 1: 3 suffering he presented himself **a**
Ro 6: 11 dead to sin and **a** to God
Eph 2: 5 made us **a** together with Christ—
1Th 4: 17 Then we who are **a,** who are left,
Rev 1: 18 I am **a** forever and ever;
19: 20 were thrown **a** into the lake of fire

### ALL

Ge 6: 13 to make an end of **a** flesh,
Dt 6: 5 You shall love the LORD your God with **a** your heart, and with **a** your soul, and with **a** your might.
Ps 1: 3 In **a** that they do, they prosper.
Jer 29: 13 if you seek me with **a** your heart,
Lk 10: 27 love the Lord your God with **a** your
Ro 3: 23 **a** have sinned and fall short of the
6: 10 he died to sin, once for **a;**
1Co 6: 12 "**A** things are lawful for me,"
15: 51 not **a** die, but we will **a** be changed,
Eph 1: 23 the fullness of him who fills **a** in **a.**
Php 4: 13 I can do **a** things through him
2Ti 3: 16 **A** scripture is inspired by God
2Pe 3: 9 but **a** to come to repentance.
Rev 21: 5 "See, I am making **a** things new."
Sir 7: 29 With **a** your soul fear the Lord,

### ALMIGHTY → MIGHT

Ge 17: 1 "I am God **A;** walk before me,
Ex 6: 3 Isaac, and Jacob as God **A,**
Ps 91: 1 who abide in the shadow of the **A,**
Rev 1: 8 who was and who is to come, the **A.**
21: 22 its temple is the Lord God the **A**
Bar 3: 1 O Lord **A,** God of Israel,
Man 1: 1 O Lord **A,** God of our ancestors.

### ALMS

Mt 6: 2 "So whenever you give **a,**
Tob 12: 8 better to give **a** than to lay up gold.
Sir 7: 10 do not neglect to give **a.**

### ALONE → LONELY

Ge 2: 18 not good that the man should be **a;**
Dt 6: 4 The LORD is our God, the LORD **a.**
Isa 2: 11 LORD **a** will be exalted in that day.
Mk 2: 7 Who can forgive sins but God **a?"**
10: 18 No one is good but God **a.**
Jas 2: 24 justified by works and not by faith **a**

### ALPHA

Rev 1: 8 "I am the **A** and the Omega,"
22: 13 I am the **A** and the Omega.

### ALTAR → ALTARS

Ge 22: 9 Isaac, and laid him on the **a,**
Ex 27: 1 shall make the **a** of acacia wood,
30: 1 an **a** on which to offer incense:
Ezr 3: 2 to build the **a** of the God of Israel,
Mt 5: 24 leave your gift there before the **a**
Heb 13: 10 We have an **a** from which those
Jas 2: 21 he offered his son Isaac on the **a?**
Rev 6: 9 I saw under the **a** the souls of those
Jdt 4: 12 even draped the **a** with sackcloth
1Mc 1: 54 a desolating sacrilege on the **a** of
4: 47 built a new **a** like the former one.

### ALTARS → ALTAR

Ex 34: 13 You shall tear down their **a,**
Nu 3: 31 the table, the lampstand, the **a,**
1Mc 2: 45 went around and tore down the **a;**

### ALWAYS

Mt 28: 20 And remember, I am with you **a,**
Lk 18: 1 to pray **a** and not to lose heart.
Php 4: 4 Rejoice in the Lord **a;** again I will

### AMALEK

Ex 17: 8 Then **A** came and fought with Israel
1Sa 15: 3 attack **A,** and utterly destroy all

### AMASA

Nephew of David (1Ch 2:17). Commander of Absalom's forces (2Sa 17:24-27). Returned to David (2Sa 19:13). Killed by Joab (2Sa 20:4-13).

### AMAZED → AMAZING

Mt 8: 27 **a,** saying, "What sort of man is this,
Mk 6: 6 And he was **a** at their unbelief.
Ac 2: 7 **A** and astonished, they asked,

### AMAZIAH

1. Son of Joash; king of Judah (2Ki 14; 2Ch 25). Defeated Edom (2Ki 14:7; 2Ch 25:5-13); defeated by Israel for worshiping Edom's gods (2Ki 14:8-14; 2Ch 25:14-24).

2. Idolatrous priest; opposed Amos (Am 7:10-17).

### AMAZING → AMAZED

Mk 12: 11 and it is **a** in our eyes'?"
Rev 15: 3 "Great and **a** are your deeds,

### AMBASSADOR* → AMBASSADORS

Eph 6: 20 for which I am an **a** in chains.

### AMBASSADORS → AMBASSADOR

2Co 5: 20 So we are **a** for Christ,

### AMBITION

Php 2: 3 Do nothing from selfish **a** or conceit
Jas 3: 14 envy and selfish **a** in your hearts,

### AMEN

Dt 27: 15 people shall respond, saying, **"A!"**
2Co 1: 20 through him that we say the **"A,"**
Rev 3: 14 The words of the **A,** the faithful and

### AMMONITE → AMMONITES

Dt 23: 3 No **A** or Moabite shall be admitted

### AMMONITES → AMMONITE

Ge 19: 38 the ancestor of the **A** to this day.
Jer 49: 6 I will restore the fortunes of the **A,**

### AMNON

Firstborn of David (2Sa 3:2; 1Ch 3:1). Killed by Absalom for raping his sister Tamar (2Sa 13).

### AMON

1. Son of Manasseh; king of Judah (2Ki 21:18-26; 1Ch 3:14; 2Ch 33:21-25).
2. Ruler of Samaria (1Ki 22:26; 2Ch 18:25).

### AMORITES

Ge 15: 16 iniquity of the **A** is not yet complete
Nu 21: 31 Israel settled in the land of the **A.**

### AMOS

Prophet from Tekoa (Am 1:1; 7:10-17; Tob 2:6).

### ANANIAS

1. Early disciple; died for lying to God (Ac 5:1-11).
2. Disciple who baptized Saul (Ac 9:10-19).
3. High priest at Paul's arrest (Ac 22:30-24:1).

### ANCESTOR → ANCESTORS

Dt 26: 5 "A wandering Aramean was my **a;**
Mt 3: 9 'We have Abraham as our **a';**

### ANCESTORS → ANCESTOR

Ex 3: 13 'The God of your **a** has sent me to
Dt 4: 31 not forget the covenant with your **a**
La 5: 7 Our **a** sinned; they are no more,
Ac 5: 30 The God of our **a** raised up Jesus,
Heb 1: 1 Long ago God spoke to our **a** in

### ANCHOR

Heb 6: 19 a sure and steadfast **a** of the soul,

### ANCIENT

Ps 24: 7 and be lifted up, O **a** doors!
Jer 6: 16 ask for the **a** paths, where the good
Da 7: 9 and an **A** One took his throne,
Mic 5: 2 origin is from of old, from **a** days.
Rev 20: 2 He seized the dragon, that **a** serpent,

### ANDREW*

Apostle; brother of Simon Peter (Mt 4:18; 10:2; Mk 1:16-18, 29; 3:18; 13:3; Lk 6:14; Jn 1:35-44; 6:8-9; 12:22; Ac 1:13).

### ANGEL → ANGELS, ARCHANGEL, ARCHANGEL'S

Ge 22: 11 the **a** of the LORD called to him
Ex 3: 2 the **a** of the LORD appeared to him
23: 20 going to send an **a** in front of you,
Nu 22: 22 the **a** of the LORD took his stand in
1Ch 21: 15 sent an **a** to Jerusalem to destroy it;
Ps 34: 7 The **a** of the LORD encamps
Isa 37: 36 the **a** of the LORD set out and struck
Da 3: 28 who has sent his **a** and delivered
6: 22 God sent his **a** and shut the lions'
Mt 1: 20 an **a** of the Lord appeared to him in
Lk 1: 26 In the sixth month the **a** Gabriel
Ac 5: 19 during the night an **a** of the Lord
23: 8 say that there is no resurrection, or **a,**
2Co 11: 14 Satan disguises himself as an **a** of light.
Gal 1: 8 if we or an **a** from heaven should
Tob 5: 4 the **a** Raphael standing in front of
Sir 48: 21 and his **a** wiped them out.
LtJ 6: 7 For my **a** is with you,
Aza 1: 26 But the **a** of the Lord came down
Sus 1: 59 **a** of God is waiting with his sword
Bel 1: 34 the **a** of the Lord said to Habakkuk,
1Mc 7: 41 your **a** went out and struck
2Es 2: 44 Then I asked an **a,** "Who are these,

### ANGELS → ANGEL

Ge 19: 1 The two **a** came to Sodom in the
28: 12 **a** of God were ascending and
Ps 103: 20 Bless the LORD, O you his **a**,
Mk 12: 25 but are like **a** in heaven.
Lk 4: 10 command his **a** concerning you,
Jn 1: 51 and the **a** of God ascending and
Ro 8: 38 that neither death, nor life, nor **a**,
1Co 6: 3 not know that we are to judge **a**—
Col 2: 18 on self-abasement and worship of **a**,
Heb 2: 7 for a little while lower than the **a**;
1Pe 1: 12 things into which **a** long to look!
2Pe 2: 4 not spare the **a** when they sinned,
Rev 1: 20 stars are the **a** of the seven churches,
7: 1 After this I saw four **a** standing at
21: 12 and at the gates twelve **a**,
Tob 11: 14 and blessed be all his holy **a**.

### ANGER → ANGRY

Ex 32: 19 the dancing, Moses' **a** burned hot.
34: 6 merciful and gracious, slow to **a**,
Dt 32: 22 For a fire is kindled by my **a**,
Jdg 2: 12 and they provoked the LORD to **a**.
1Ki 16: 13 God of Israel to **a** with their idols.
Ps 30: 5 For his **a** is but for a moment;
Pr 12: 16 Fools show their **a** at once.
Ecc 7: 9 Do not be quick to **a**,
Isa 48: 9 For my name's sake I defer my **a**,
Joel 2: 13 slow to **a**, and abounding in
Jnh 4: 2 slow to **a**, and abounding in
Mk 3: 5 He looked around at them with **a**;
Eph 4: 26 not let the sun go down on your **a**,
Jas 1: 19 slow to speak, slow to **a**;
Rev 14: 10 unmixed into the cup of his **a**,
Sir 5: 4 for the Lord is slow to **a**.

### ANGRY → ANGER

Ge 4: 5 So Cain was very **a**, and his
Jer 3: 12 I will not be **a** forever.
Mt 5: 22 that if you are **a** with a brother or

### ANGUISH

Isa 53: 11 Out of his **a** he shall see light;
Da 12: 1 There shall be a time of **a**,
Zep 1: 15 a day of distress and **a**,
Lk 22: 44 [[In his **a** he prayed more earnestly,]]

### ANIMAL → ANIMALS

Ge 2: 19 God formed every **a** of the field
9: 2 dread of you shall rest on every **a** of
Ps 50: 10 every wild **a** of the forest is mine.

### ANIMALS → ANIMAL

Ge 3: 14 cursed are you among all **a**
Lev 26: 6 remove dangerous **a** from the land,
Ps 36: 6 save humans and **a** alike, O LORD.

### ANNA

1. Prophetess; spoke of the child Jesus (Lk 2:36-38).
2. Wife of Tobit (Tob 1:20; 2:1, 11).

### ANNAS*

High priest C.E. 6-15 (Lk 3:2; Jn 18:13, 24; Ac 4:6).

### ANNOUNCED → ANNOUNCING

Isa 48: 5 before they came to pass I **a** them
1Pe 1: 25 the good news that was **a** to you.

### ANNOUNCES → ANNOUNCING

Isa 52: 7 feet of the messenger who **a** peace,

### ANNOUNCING* → ANNOUNCED, ANNOUNCES

Isa 63: 1 I, **a** vindication, mighty to save."
Ro 1: 9 serve with my spirit by **a** the gospel

### ANNULLED

Jn 10: 35 and the scripture cannot be **a**—

### ANOINT → ANOINTED, ANOINTING

Ex 30: 30 You shall **a** Aaron and his sons,
1Sa 15: 1 "The LORD sent me to **a** you king
Ps 23: 5 you **a** my head with oil; my cup
Da 9: 24 and to **a** a most holy place.

### ANOINTED → ANOINT

1Sa 2: 10 and exalt the power of his **a**."
26: 9 raise his hand against the LORD's **a**,
1Ch 16: 22 "Do not touch my **a** ones;
Ps 2: 2 against the LORD and his **a**, saying,
Isa 61: 1 because the LORD has **a** me.
Eze 28: 14 With an **a** cherub as guardian
Da 9: 26 an **a** one shall be cut off and
Zec 4: 14 These are the two **a** ones who stand
Lk 4: 18 he has **a** me to bring good news to
Jn 1: 41 Messiah" (which is translated **A**).

### ANOINTING → ANOINT

Ex 30: 25 it shall be a holy **a** oil.
Jas 5: 14 **a** them with oil in the name of the Lord
1Jn 2: 27 as his **a** teaches you about all things,

### ANOTHER

Pr 27: 2 Let **a** praise you, and not your own
Isa 48: 11 My glory I will not give to **a**.
Jn 14: 16 and he will give you **a** Advocate,
Gal 1: 7 not that there is **a** gospel,

### ANSWER → ANSWERED

1Ki 18: 37 **A** me, O LORD, a me,
Job 30: 20 I cry to you and you do not **a** me;
Ps 65: 2 O you who **a** prayer!
Pr 15: 1 A soft **a** turns away wrath,
Isa 65: 24 Before they call I will **a**,
Lk 23: 9 but Jesus gave him no **a**.

### ANSWERED → ANSWER

1Ch 21: 26 and he **a** him with fire from heaven
Ps 118: 21 I thank you that you have **a** me

### ANT*

Pr 6: 6 Go to the **a**, you lazybones;

### ANTICHRIST*

1Jn 2: 18 As you have heard that **a** is coming,
2: 22 the **a**, the one who denies the Father
4: 3 And this is the spirit of the **a**,
2Jn 1: 7 person is the deceiver and the **a**!

### ANTIOCH

Ac 11: 26 in **A** that the disciples were first called "Christians."
13: 1 the church at **A** there were prophets
Gal 2: 11 But when Cephas came to **A**,

### ANTIOCHUS

Antiochus IV Epiphanes, king of the Syrian Greeks B.C.E. 175-164 (1Mc 1:10-19). Plundered the temple in Jerusalem (1Mc 1:20-28). Attempted to force the Hellenization of the Jewish people (1Mc 1:41-53), including defiling the altar and holy place (1Mc 1:54-64). His policies sparked the Maccabean revolt.

### ANXIETIES → ANXIETY

1Co 7: 32 I want you to be free from **a**.

### ANXIETY → ANXIETIES

Ecc 11: 10 Banish **a** from your mind,
1Pe 5: 7 Cast all your **a** on him, because he

### ANYTHING

Ge 18: 14 Is **a** too wonderful for the LORD?
Jer 32: 27 is **a** too hard for me?
Mt 18: 19 if two of you agree on earth about **a**
Jn 16: 23 if you ask **a** of the Father in my name,

### APART → PART

Jn 15: 5 **a** from me you can do nothing.
Ro 3: 21 **a** from law, the righteousness of
Jas 2: 20 that faith **a** from works is barren?

### APOLLOS

Christian from Alexandria, learned in the Scriptures; instructed by Aquila and Priscilla (Ac 18:24-28). At Corinth (Ac 19:1; 1Co 1:12; 3; Tit 3:13).

### APOSTASIES → APOSTASY

Jer 2: 19 and your **a** will convict you,
Eze 37: 23 I will save them from all the **a**

### APOSTASY* → APOSTASIES

1Mc 2: 15 officers who were enforcing the **a**

### APOSTLE → APOSTLES

Ro 11: 13 as I am an **a** to the Gentiles,
1Co 9: 1 Am I not an **a**?
2Co 12: 12 signs of a true **a** were performed
Heb 3: 1 **a** and high priest of our confession,

### APOSTLES → APOSTLE

See also Andrew, Bartholomew, Barnabas, James, John, Judas, Matthew, Matthias, Nathanael, Paul, Peter, Philip, Simon, Thaddaeus, Thomas.

Mt 10: 2 the names of the twelve **a**:
Ac 2: 43 and signs were being done by the **a**.
1Co 12: 28 has appointed in the church first **a**,
Eph 2: 20 foundation of the **a** and prophets,
4: 11 he gave were that some would be **a**,
Rev 21: 14 are the twelve names of the twelve **a**

### APPEAL

Mt 26: 53 think that I cannot **a** to my Father,
Ac 25: 11 I **a** to the emperor."
2Co 5: 20 God is making his **a** through us;
Phm 1: 9 rather **a** to you on the basis of love
1Pe 3: 21 an **a** to God for a good conscience,

### APPEAR → APPEARANCE, APPEARANCES, APPEARED, APPEARING

Mt 24: 30 the sign of the Son of Man will **a** in
Mk 13: 22 messiahs and false prophets will **a**
2Co 5: 10 **a** before the judgment seat of Christ,
Heb 9: 28 **a** a second time, not to deal with sin,

### APPEARANCE → APPEAR

Ex 24: 17 Now the **a** of the glory of the LORD
1Sa 16: 7 not look on his **a** or on the height
2Co 5: 12 those who boast in outward **a**
Jdt 11: 23 You are not only beautiful in **a**,
AdE 2: 7 The girl was beautiful in **a**.
Sir 19: 29 A person is known by his **a**,

### APPEARANCES → APPEAR

Jn 7: 24 not judge by **a**, but judge with right

### APPEARED → APPEAR

Jn 21: 14 that Jesus **a** to the disciples after he
1Co 15: 5 he **a** to Cephas, then to the twelve.
Heb 9: 26 **a** once for all at the end of the age

### APPEARING → APPEAR

Ac 1: 3 **a** to them during forty days and
2Ti 4: 8 to all who have longed for his **a**.

### APPETITES

Ro 16: 18 our Lord Christ, but their own **a**,
Sir 18: 30 base desires, but restrain your **a**.

### APPLE

Dt 32: 10 guarded him as the **a** of his eye.
Zec 2: 8 touches you touches the **a** of my eye

### APPOINT → APPOINTED

1Sa 8: 5 **a** for us, then, a king to govern us,
Isa 60: 17 I will **a** Peace as your overseer

### APPOINTED → APPOINT

Lev 23: 2 the **a** festivals of the LORD
Ecc 3: 17 for he has **a** a time for every matter,
Hab 2: 3 there is still a vision for the **a** time;
Mk 3: 16 So he **a** the twelve: Simon (to whom
Ac 3: 20 that he may send the Messiah **a** for
Heb 1: 2 whom he **a** heir of all things,
9: 27 just as it is **a** for mortals to die once,

### APPORTIONED → PORTION

Dt 32: 8 When the Most High **a** the nations,
Jos 18: 10 Joshua **a** the land to the Israelites,

### APPROACH

Heb 4: 16 **a** the throne of grace with boldness,
11: 6 whoever would **a** him must believe
Sir 1: 28 do not **a** him with a divided mind.

### APPROVAL → APPROVED

Gal 1: 10 I now seeking human **a**, or God's **a**?
Heb 11: 2 by faith our ancestors received **a**.
1Pe 2: 20 and suffer for it, you have God's **a**.

### APPROVED → APPROVAL

1Th 2: 4 but just as we have been **a** by God
2Ti 2: 15 to present yourself to God as one **a**

### AQUILA*

Husband of Priscilla; co-worker with Paul, instructor of Apollos (Ac 18; Ro 16:3; 1Co 16:19; 2Ti 4:19).

### ARABS

Ne 4: 7 and the **A** and the Ammonites
1Mc 5: 39 also have hired **A** to help them,

**ARAM** → ARAMAIC, ARAMEAN
Jdg 10: 6 the gods of **A,** the gods of Sidon,
2Ch 16: 7 you relied on the king of **A,**

**ARAMAIC** → ARAM
2Ki 18: 26 to your servants in the **A** language,
Ezr 4: 7 the letter was written in **A** and
Da 2: 4 Chaldeans said to the king (in **A**),

**ARAMEAN** → ARAM
Dt 26: 5 "A wandering **A** was my ancestor;

**ARARAT**
Ge 8: 4 ark came to rest on the mountains of **A.**

**ARAUNAH** → =ORNAN
2Sa 24: 16 the threshing floor of **A** the Jebusite.

**ARCHANGEL*** → ANGEL
Jude 1: 9 **a** Michael contended with the devil
2Es 4: 36 the **a** Jeremiel answered and said,

**ARCHANGEL'S*** → ANGEL
1Th 4: 16 **a** call and with the sound of God's

**ARCHITECT***
Heb 11: 10 whose **a** and builder is God.

**AREOPAGUS**
Ac 17: 22 Then Paul stood in front of the **A**

**ARGUE** → ARGUES, ARGUMENT, ARGUMENTS
Job 13: 3 and I desire to **a** my case with God.
Isa 1: 18 now, let us **a** it out, says the LORD:
Ac 18: 4 Every sabbath he would **a** in the
Ro 9: 20 a human being, to **a** with God?

**ARGUES*** → ARGUE
Job 40: 2 who **a** with God must respond."

**ARGUMENT** → ARGUE
Lk 9: 46 An **a** arose among them as to which
1Ti 2: 8 up holy hands without anger or **a;**

**ARGUMENTS** → ARGUE
2Co 10: 4 destroy strongholds. We destroy **a**
Col 2: 4 may deceive you with plausible **a.**

**ARIMATHEA**
Jn 19: 38 After these things, Joseph of **A,**

**ARISE** → RISE
SS 2: 10 **"A,** my love, my fair one, and
Isa 60: 1 **A,** shine; for your light has come,
Mt 24: 11 false prophets will **a** and lead many
1Mc 14: 41 until a trustworthy prophet should **a,**

**ARK**
Ge 6: 14 Make yourself an **a** of cypress wood
Ex 25: 10 shall make an **a** of acacia wood;
1Sa 4: 11 The **a** of God was captured;
1Ki 8: 9 There was nothing in the **a** except
1Pe 3: 20 during the building of the **a,**
Rev 11: 19 the **a** of his covenant was seen
2Mc 2: 4 that the tent and the **a** should follow
2Es 10: 22 the **a** of our covenant has been

**ARM** → ARMIES, ARMOR, ARMS, ARMY
Ex 6: 6 redeem you with an outstretched **a**
Dt 7: 19 mighty hand and the outstretched **a**
2Ch 32: 8 With him is an **a** of flesh;
Job 40: 9 Have you an **a** like God,
Ps 98: 1 his holy **a** have gotten him victory.
Isa 53: 1 the **a** of the LORD been revealed?
Jn 12: 38 the **a** of the Lord been revealed?"

**ARMIES** → ARM
1Sa 17: 36 defied the **a** of the living God."
Lk 21: 20 you see Jerusalem surrounded by **a,**
Rev 19: 14 the **a** of heaven, wearing fine linen,

**ARMOR** → ARM
1Sa 17: 38 Saul clothed David with his **a;**
Ro 13: 12 and put on the **a** of light;
Eph 6: 11 Put on the whole **a** of God,
Wis 5: 17 will take his zeal as his whole **a,**

**ARMS** → ARM
Pr 31: 17 and makes her **a** strong.
Hos 11: 3 I took them up in my **a;**
Mk 10: 16 And he took them up in his **a,**

**ARMY** → ARM
Ex 15: 4 and his **a** he cast into the sea;
Jos 5: 14 as commander of the **a** of the LORD
Ps 27: 3 Though an **a** encamp against me,
33: 16 A king is not saved by his great **a;**
Rev 19: 19 rider on the horse and against his **a.**

**AROMA**
2Co 2: 15 For we are the **a** of Christ to God

**ARRESTED**
Jer 37: 14 and **a** Jeremiah and brought him to
Mt 14: 3 For Herod had **a** John, bound him,
26: 50 and laid hands on Jesus and **a** him.
Ac 5: 18 **a** the apostles and put them in the
28: 17 yet I was **a** in Jerusalem and handed

**ARROGANCE** → ARROGANT
Pr 8: 13 Pride and **a** and the way of evil
Eze 7: 24 put an end to the **a** of the strong,
Jdt 9: 10 their **a** by the hand of a woman.
Sir 10: 7 **A** is hateful to the Lord and to
1Mc 1: 24 much blood, and spoke with great **a.**

**ARROGANT** → ARROGANCE
Ps 73: 3 For I was envious of the **a;**
Da 7: 11 **a** words that the horn was speaking.
1Co 13: 4 love is not envious or boastful or **a**

**ARROW** → ARROWS
Ps 64: 7 But God will shoot his **a** at them;
Isa 49: 2 he made me a polished **a,**

**ARROWS** → ARROW
1Sa 20: 20 I will shoot three **a** to the side of it,
Eph 6: 16 quench all the flaming **a** of the evil

**ARTAXERXES** → =AHASUERUS
1. King of Persia; allowed rebuilding of temple under Ezra (Ezr 4; 7), and of walls of Jerusalem under his cupbearer Nehemiah (Ne 2; 5:14; 13:6).
2. See Ahasuerus.

**ARTEMIS**
Ac 19: 27 the temple of the great goddess **A**

**ASA**
King of Judah (1Ki 15:8-24; 1Ch 3:10; 2Ch 14-16). Godly reformer (2Ch 15); in later years defeated Israel with help of Aram, not the LORD (1Ki 15:16-22; 2Ch 16).

**ASAHEL**
Nephew of David, one of his warriors (2Sa 23:24; 1Ch 2:16; 11:26; 27:7). Killed by Abner (2Sa 2); avenged by Joab (2Sa 3:22-39).

**ASAPH**
1. Recorder to Hezekiah (2Ki 18:18, 37; Isa 36:3, 22).
2. Levitical musician (1Ch 6:39; 15:17-19; 16:4-7, 37), seer (2Ch 29:30). Sons of (1Ch 25; 2Ch 5:12; 20:14; 29:13; 35:15; Ezr 2:41; 3:10; Ne 7:44; 11:17; 12:27-47). Psalms of (2Ch 29:30; Ps 50; 73-83).

**ASCEND** → ASCENDED, ASCENDING, ASCENTS
Ps 139: 8 If I **a** to heaven, you are there;
Isa 14: 13 in your heart, "I will **a** to heaven;
Ac 2: 34 David did not **a** into the heavens,
Ro 10: 6 'Who will **a** into heaven?'"
2Es 4: 8 neither did I ever **a** into heaven.'

**ASCENDED** → ASCEND
2Ki 2: 11 Elijah **a** in a whirlwind into heaven.
Jn 3: 13 No one has **a** into heaven except

**ASCENDING** → ASCEND
Ge 28: 12 the angels of God were **a** and
Jn 1: 51 the angels of God **a** and descending

**ASCENTS** → ASCEND
Songs of ascents (Ps 120-134).

**ASCRIBE**
Dt 32: 3 **a** greatness to our God!
1Ch 16: 29 **A** to the LORD the glory due his
Ps 68: 34 **A** power to God,
Sir 39: 15 **A** majesty to his name
Bar 2: 17 not **a** glory or justice to the Lord;

**ASHAMED** → SHAME
Ge 2: 25 were both naked, and were not **a.**
Ps 6: 10 All my enemies shall be **a** and
Isa 29: 22 No longer shall Jacob be **a,**
Mk 8: 38 who are **a** of me and of my words
Ro 1: 16 For I am not **a** of the gospel;
2Ti 2: 15 a worker who has no need to be **a,**
Heb 2: 11 Jesus is not **a** to call them brothers
11: 16 God is not **a** to be called their God;

**ASHER**
Son of Jacob by Zilpah (Ge 30:13; 35:26; 46:17; Ex 1:4; 1Ch 2:2). Tribe of blessed (Ge 49:20; Dt 33:24-25), numbered (Nu 1:40-41; 26:44-47), allotted land (Jos 10:24-31; Eze 48:2), failed to fully possess (Jdg 1:31-32), failed to support Deborah (Jdg 5:17), supported Gideon (Jdg 6:35; 7:23) and David (1Ch 12:36), 12,000 from (Rev 7:6).

**ASHERAH** → ASHERAHS, ASTARTE
1Ki 18: 19 and the four hundred prophets of **A,**
2Ch 15: 16 made an abominable image for **A.**

**ASHERAHS*** → ASHERAH
Jdg 3: 7 and worshiping the Baals and the **A.**

**ASHES**
Ge 18: 27 I who am but dust and **a.**
Est 4: 1 and put on sackcloth and **a,**
Job 42: 6 and repent in dust and **a."**
Jnh 3: 6 himself with sackcloth, and sat in **a.**
Mt 11: 21 long ago in sackcloth and **a.**
Jdt 4: 11 the temple and put **a** on their heads
Sir 17: 32 but all human beings are dust and **a.**

**ASIA**
Ac 16: 6 Holy Spirit to speak the word in **A.**
Rev 1: 4 to the seven churches that are in **A:**

**ASIDE** → SIDE
Ex 32: 8 quick to turn **a** from the way that I
Dt 28: 14 if you do not turn **a** from any of the
Jer 5: 23 they have turned **a** and gone away.
Da 9: 5 turning **a** from your commandments
Ro 3: 12 All have turned **a,** together they
Heb 12: 1 also lay **a** every weight and the sin

**ASK**
Ps 2: 8 **A** of me, and I will make the nations
Isa 65: 1 sought out by those who did not **a,**
Mt 6: 8 knows what you need before you **a**
7: 7 **"A,** and it will be given you;
Jn 16: 24 **A** and you will receive,
Jas 4: 3 You **a** and do not receive, because you **a** wrongly,
1Jn 5: 14 we **a** anything according to his will,

**ASLEEP** → SLEEP
Jnh 1: 5 had lain down, and was fast **a.**
Mt 8: 24 by the waves; but he was **a.**
1Th 5: 6 So then let us not fall **a** as others do,

**ASSEMBLE** → ASSEMBLY
1Ki 18: 19 all Israel **a** for me at Mount Carmel,
Zep 3: 8 to gather nations, to **a** kingdoms,
Rev 16: 14 to **a** them for battle on the great day

**ASSEMBLY** → ASSEMBLE
Ne 8: 2 Ezra brought the law before the **a,**
Ps 149: 1 his praise in the **a** of the faithful.
Heb 12: 23 the **a** of the firstborn who are

**ASSIGNED**
Ro 12: 3 the measure of faith that God has **a.**
1Co 3: 5 as the Lord **a** to each.
7: 17 lead the life that the Lord has **a,**

**ASSURANCE**
Dt 28: 66 in dread, with no **a** of your life.
Heb 6: 11 so as to realize the full **a** of hope
11: 1 faith is the **a** of things hoped for.

**ASSYRIA**
Ge 10: 11 From that land he went into **A,**
2Ki 18: 11 of **A** carried the Israelites away to **A,**
Jer 50: 18 as I punished the king of **A.**

**ASTARTE** → ASHERAH, ASTARTES
1Ki 11: 5 Solomon followed **A** the goddess

**ASTARTES** → ASTARTE
Jdg 2: 13 and worshiped Baal and the **A.**

**ASTONISHED**
Isa 52: 14 there were many who were **a** at him
Lk 2: 48 his parents saw him they were **a;**
Gal 1: 6 **a** that you are so quickly deserting

**ASTRAY** → STRAY
Dt 30: 17 are led **a** to bow down to other gods
Isa 53: 6 All we like sheep have gone **a;**
Jer 50: 6 their shepherds have led them **a,**
Mt 18: 12 go in search of the one that went **a?**
1Pe 2: 25 For you were going **a** like sheep.

**ATE** → EAT
Ge 3: 6 she took of its fruit and **a;**
Ex 16: 35 The Israelites **a** manna forty years.
Ps 78: 25 Mortals **a** of the bread of angels:
Eze 3: 3 I **a** it; and in my mouth it was as
Mt 14: 20 And all **a** and were filled;
15: 37 And all of them **a** and were filled;
Rev 10: 10 from the hand of the angel and **a** it;

**ATHALIAH**
Granddaughter of Omri; wife of Jehoram and mother of Ahaziah; encouraged their evil ways (2Ki 8:18, 27; 2Ch 22:2). At death of Ahaziah she made herself queen, killing all his sons but Joash (2Ki 11:1-3; 2Ch 22:10-12); killed six years later when Joash revealed (2Ki 11:4-16; 2Ch 23:1-15).

**ATHLETE** → ATHLETES
2Ti 2: 5 And in the case of an **a,**

**ATHLETES** → ATHLETE
1Co 9: 25 **A** exercise self-control in all things;

**ATONE** → ATONEMENT
Da 9: 24 an end to sin, and to **a** for iniquity,
Sir 3: 3 who honor their father **a** for sins,

**ATONED*** → ATONEMENT
Pr 16: 6 and faithfulness iniquity is **a** for,

**ATONEMENT** → ATONE, ATONED, ATONING
Ex 29: 36 a bull as a sin offering for **a.**
30: 10 Aaron shall perform the rite of **a**
32: 30 perhaps I can make **a** for your sin."
Lev 23: 28 for it is a day of **a,**
Ro 3: 25 God put forward as a sacrifice of **a**
Heb 2: 17 to make a sacrifice of **a** for the sins

**ATONING** → ATONEMENT
1Jn 2: 2 and he is the **a** sacrifice for our sins,
4: 10 sent his Son to be the **a** sacrifice for
Sir 28: 5 will make an **a** sacrifice for his sins?

**ATTAIN** → ATTAINED
Ps 139: 6 it is so high that I cannot **a** it.
Pr 8: 12 and I **a** knowledge and discretion.
Da 12: 12 those who persevere and **a**
Php 3: 11 **a** the resurrection from the dead.

**ATTAINED** → ATTAIN
Ro 9: 30 not strive for righteousness, have **a**
Php 3: 16 let us hold fast to what we have **a.**

**ATTENTION**
Nu 16: 15 "Pay no **a** to their offering.
Job 24: 12 yet God pays no **a** to their prayer.
Heb 2: 1 greater **a** to what we have heard,

**ATTESTED**
Ac 2: 22 a man **a** to you by God with deeds
Ro 3: 21 and is **a** by the law and the prophets.

**AUTHOR***
Ac 3: 15 and you killed the **A** of life,
Wis 13: 3 for the **a** of beauty created them.

**AUTHORITIES** → AUTHORITY
Ro 13: 1 be subject to the governing **a;**
Col 2: 15 He disarmed the rulers and **a** and

**AUTHORITY** → AUTHORITIES
Ge 41: 45 Thus Joseph gained **a** over the land
Pr 29: 2 When the righteous are in **a,**
Mk 1: 27 A new teaching—with **a!**
Lk 5: 24 Son of Man has **a** on earth to forgive
Ac 5: 29 obey God rather than any human **a.**
Ro 13: 1 for there is no **a** except from God.
1Co 11: 10 woman ought to have a symbol of **a**
Col 2: 10 who is the head of every ruler and **a.**
1Ti 2: 12 no woman to teach or to have **a** over
Rev 12: 10 and the **a** of his Messiah.
20: 4 on them were given **a** to judge.

**AVENGE** → VENGEANCE
Dt 32: 43 he will **a** the blood of his children,
Joel 3: 21 I will **a** their blood, and I will not
Ro 12: 19 Beloved, never **a** yourselves,
Rev 6: 10 and **a** our blood on the inhabitants
1Mc 2: 67 **a** the wrong done to your people.

**AVENGER** → VENGEANCE
Nu 35: 12 shall be for you a refuge from the **a,**
Ps 8: 2 to silence the enemy and the **a.**
1Th 4: 6 the Lord is an **a** in all these things,

**AVENGING** → VENGEANCE
Na 1: 2 A jealous and **a** God is the LORD,

**AVOID** → AVOIDS
2Ti 2: 16 A profane chatter, for it will lead
Tit 3: 9 But **a** stupid controversies,

**AVOIDS** → AVOID
Pr 16: 6 by the fear of the LORD one **a** evil.

**AWAKE**
Ps 44: 23 **A,** do not cast us off forever!
57: 8 **A,** my soul! **A,** O harp and lyre!
Isa 51: 9 **A, a,** put on strength, O arm of the LORD!
Da 12: 2 in the dust of the earth shall **a,**
Mk 14: 37 Could you not keep **a** one hour?
Eph 5: 14 "Sleeper, **a!** Rise from the dead,
1Th 5: 6 but let us keep **a** and be sober;
Rev 16: 15 Blessed is the one who stays **a** and

**AWE** → AWESOME
Ps 119: 161 my heart stands in **a** of your words.
Isa 29: 23 will stand in **a** of the God of Israel.
Mt 9: 8 saw it, they were filled with **a,**
Ac 2: 43 **A** came upon everyone, because
Ro 11: 20 do not become proud, but stand in **a.**

**AWESOME** → AWE
Ex 15: 11 majestic in holiness, **a** in splendor,
Dt 6: 22 before our eyes great and **a** signs
10: 17 the great God, mighty and **a,**
Ne 1: 5 and **a** God who keeps covenant
Ps 47: 2 For the LORD, the Most High, is **a,**
65: 5 By **a** deeds you answer us with
68: 35 **A** is God in his sanctuary.
Da 9: 4 saying, "Ah, Lord, great and **a** God,
Sir 43: 29 **A** is the Lord and very great,

**AX**
2Ki 6: 5 his **a** head fell into the water;
Mt 3: 10 Even now the **a** is lying at the root

**AZARIAH** → =ABEDNEGO, =UZZIAH
1. King of Judah; see Uzziah (2Ki 15:1-7).
2. Prophet (2Ch 15:1-8).
3. Opponent of Jeremiah (Jer 43:2).
4. Jewish exile; see Abednego (Da 1:6-19).

**AZAZEL**
Lev 16: 8 for the LORD and the other lot for **A.**

## B

**BAAL** → BAALS
Nu 25: 3 Israel yoked itself to the **B** of Peor,
Jdg 2: 13 and worshiped **B** and the Astartes.
1Ki 18: 25 Elijah said to the prophets of **B,**
19: 18 the knees that have not bowed to **B,**
Jer 2: 8 the prophets prophesied by **B,**
Hos 2: 16 no longer will you call me, "My **B.**"
Ro 11: 4 not bowed the knee to **B."**

**BAALS** → BAAL
Jdg 3: 7 worshiping the **B** and the Asherahs.
1Sa 7: 4 So Israel put away the **B** and the

**BAASHA**
King of Israel (1Ki 15:16-16:7; 2Ch 16:1-6).

**BABEL** → BABYLON
Ge 11: 9 Therefore it was called **B,**

**BABES** → BABIES
Ps 8: 2 Out of the mouths of **b** and infants
Isa 3: 4 and **b** shall rule over them.

**BABIES** → BABES
Mt 21: 16 the mouths of infants and nursing **b**

**BABYLON** → BABEL
2Ki 24: 15 into captivity from Jerusalem to **B.**
Ps 137: 1 By the rivers of **B**—there we sat
Isa 14: 4 this taunt against the king of **B:**
21: 9 he responded, "Fallen, fallen is **B;**
Jer 25: 11 serve the king of **B** seventy years.
1Pe 5: 13 Your sister church in **B,** chosen
Rev 14: 8 "Fallen, fallen is **B** the great!
Bel 1: 36 he set him down in **B,**

**BACK** → BACKSLIDING
Ge 19: 26 Lot's wife, behind him, looked **b,**
2Ki 20: 11 he brought the shadow **b** the ten
Lk 9: 62 puts a hand to the plow and looks **b**

**BACKSLIDING*** → BACK
Jer 8: 5 people turned away in perpetual **b?**

**BAD**
Pr 20: 14 **"B, b,"** says the buyer, then goes
Mt 7: 17 but the **b** tree bears **b** fruit.
1Co 15: 33 **"B** company ruins good morals."

**BALAAM**
Prophet who attempted to curse Israel (Nu 22-24; Dt 23:4-5; 2Pe 2:15; Jude 11; Rev 2:14). Killed in Israel's vengeance on Midianites (Nu 31:8; Jos 13:22).

**BALAK**
Moabite king who hired Balaam to curse Israel (Nu 22-24; Jos 24:9; Mic 6:5).

**BALANCE** → BALANCES
Job 31: 6 let me be weighed in a just **b,**
Isa 40: 12 in scales and the hills in a **b?**

**BALANCES** → BALANCE
Lev 19: 36 shall have honest **b,** honest weights.
Pr 16: 11 Honest **b** and scales are the LORD's;
Sir 28: 25 make **b** and scales for your words.

**BALM**
Jer 8: 22 Is there no **b** in Gilead?

**BANDIT**
Mt 26: 55 to arrest me as though I were a **b?**
Jn 10: 1 in by another way is a thief and a **b.**

**BANISH**
Ecc 11: 10 **B** anxiety from your mind,
Ro 11: 26 he will **b** ungodliness from Jacob."

**BANNER**
Ex 17: 15 and called it, The LORD is my **b.**

**BAPTISM** → BAPTIZE
Mk 1: 4 proclaiming a **b** of repentance for
10: 38 be baptized with the **b** that I am
Lk 20: 4 the **b** of John come from heaven,
Ac 18: 25 though he knew only the **b** of John.
19: 3 They answered, "Into John's **b."**
Ro 6: 4 buried with him by **b** into death,
1Co 15: 29 receive **b** on behalf of the dead?
Eph 4: 5 one Lord, one faith, one **b,**
Col 2: 12 when you were buried with him in **b,**
1Pe 3: 21 **b,** which this prefigured, now saves

**BAPTISMS*** → BAPTIZE
Heb 6: 2 about **b,** laying on of hands,
9: 10 with food and drink and various **b,**

**BAPTIST** → BAPTIZE
Mt 3: 1 In those days John the **B** appeared
11: 11 has arisen greater than John the **B;**
14: 8 the head of John the **B** here on a
16: 14 they said, "Some say John the **B,**

**BAPTIZE** → BAPTISM, BAPTISMS, BAPTIST, BAPTIZED, BAPTIZING
Mt 3: 11 "I **b** you with water for repentance,
Lk 3: 16 He will **b** you with the Holy Spirit
1Co 1: 17 For Christ did not send me to **b** but

**BAPTIZED** → BAPTIZE
Mt 3: 13 to John at the Jordan, to be **b**
Ac 1: 5 John **b** with water, but you will be **b** with the Holy
2: 38 "Repent, and be **b** every one of you
Ro 6: 3 **b** into Christ Jesus were **b** into his
1Co 10: 2 all were **b** into Moses in the cloud
12: 13 one Spirit we were all **b** into one

**BAPTIZING*** → BAPTIZE
Mt 28: 19 **b** them in the name of the Father
Jn 4: 1 "Jesus is making and **b** more

**BARABBAS***
Prisoner released by Pilate instead of Jesus (Mt 27:16-26; Mk 15:7-15; Lk 23:18-19; Jn 18:40).

**BARAK***
Judge who fought with Deborah against Canaanites (Jdg 4-5; 1Sa 12:11; Heb 11:32).

**BARBARIAN** → BARBARIANS
Col 3: 11 circumcised and uncircumcised, **b,**

**BARBARIANS*** → BARBARIAN
Ro 1: 14 am a debtor both to Greeks and to **b,**

**BARBS***
Nu 33: 55 let remain shall be as **b** in your eyes

**BARE** → BARED
Ps 18: 15 were laid **b** at your rebuke,
Heb 4: 13 all are naked and laid **b** to the eyes

**BARED*** → BARE
Isa 52: 10 The LORD has **b** his holy arm

**BARN** → BARNS
Lk 12: 24 they have neither storehouse nor **b,**

**BARNABAS*** → =JOSEPH
Disciple, originally Joseph (Ac 4:36), prophet (Ac 13:1), apostle (Ac 14:14). Brought Paul to apostles (Ac 9:27), Antioch (Ac 11:22-29; Gal 2:1-13), on the first missionary journey (Ac 13-14). Together at Jerusalem Council, they separated over John Mark (Ac 15). Later co-workers (1Co 9:6; Col 4:10).

**BARNS*** → BARN
Dt 28: 8 the blessing upon you in your **b,**
Ps 144: 13 May our **b** be filled, with produce
Lk 12: 18 pull down my **b** and build larger

**BARREN** → BARRENNESS
Ge 11: 30 Now Sarai was **b;** she had no child.
Ex 23: 26 No one shall miscarry or be **b** in
1Sa 2: 5 The **b** has borne seven, but she who
Ps 113: 9 He gives the **b** woman a home.
Isa 54: 1 Sing, O **b** one who did not bear;
Lk 1: 7 because Elizabeth was **b,**
Heb 11: 11 too old—and Sarah herself was **b**—

**BARRENNESS*** → BARREN
Dt 7: 14 neither sterility nor **b** among you
Ro 4: 19 considered the **b** of Sarah's womb.

**BARTHOLOMEW*** → =NATHANAEL?
Apostle (Mt 10:3; Mk 3:18; Lk 6:14; Ac 1:13). Possibly also called Nathanael (Jn 1:45-49; 21:2).

**BARUCH***
Jeremiah's secretary (Jer 32:12-16; 36; 43:1-6; 45:1-2). Deuterocanonical book ascribed to (Bar 1:1, 3, 8).

**BARZILLAI**
1. Gileadite who aided David during Absalom's revolt (2Sa 17:27; 19:31-39).
2. Son-in-law of 1. (Ezr 2:61; Ne 7:63).

**BASED***
Ro 9: 31 righteousness that is **b** on the law,
9: 32 but as if it were **b** on works.
Php 3: 9 righteousness from God **b** on faith.

**BASHAN**
Nu 21: 33 King Og of **B** came out against
Ps 22: 12 strong bulls of **B** surround me;
Mic 7: 14 let them feed in **B** and Gilead as in

**BASIN**
Ex 30: 18 You shall make a bronze **b** with a
1Ki 7: 30 four corners were supports for a **b.**
Jn 13: 5 **b** and began to wash the disciples'

**BASIS**
Lk 23: 4 "I find no **b** for an accusation
Phm 1: 9 rather appeal to you on the **b** of love

**BASKET**
Ex 2: 3 she got a papyrus **b** for him,
Mt 5: 15 a lamp puts it under the bushel **b,**
Ac 9: 25 in the wall, lowering him in a **b.**

**BATHING**
2Sa 11: 2 he saw from the roof a woman **b;**

**BATHSHEBA***
Wife of Uriah; committed adultery with and married David (2Sa 11; Ps 51), mother of Solomon (2Sa 12:24; 1Ki 1-2; 1Ch 3:5).

**BATTLE**
1Sa 17: 47 the **b** is the LORD's and he will give
2Ch 20: 15 for the **b** is not yours but God's.
Ps 24: 8 and mighty, the LORD, mighty in **b.**
Ecc 9: 11 nor the **b** to the strong, nor bread to
Rev 16: 14 them for **b** on the great day of God
20: 8 Magog, in order to gather them for **b;**
1Mc 3: 19 the army that victory in **b** depends.

**BEAR** → BEARS, BIRTH, BIRTHRIGHT, BORE, BORN, CHILDBEARING, FIRSTBORN
Ge 4: 13 punishment is greater than I can **b!**
17: 19 your wife Sarah shall **b** you a son,
Isa 7: 14 is with child and shall **b** a son,
Mt 1: 23 virgin shall conceive and **b** a son,
7: 18 A good tree cannot **b** bad fruit,
Lk 11: 46 load people with burdens hard to **b,**
Jn 15: 2 he prunes to make it **b** more fruit.
Gal 6: 2 **B** one another's burdens,
Col 3: 13 **B** with one another and,
Heb 9: 28 offered once to **b** the sins of many,
Rev 12: 4 woman who was about to **b** a child,

**BEARS** → BEAR
Ps 68: 19 Blessed be the Lord, who daily **b** us
1Co 13: 7 It **b** all things, believes all things,

**BEAST** → BEASTS
Rev 11: 7 **b** that comes up from the bottomless pit
13: 18 calculate the number of the **b,**
16: 2 who had the mark of the **b**
19: 20 who had received the mark of the **b**

**BEASTS** → BEAST
Da 7: 3 four great **b** came up out of the sea,
Mk 1: 13 and he was with the wild **b;**

**BEAT** → BEATEN, BEATING
Isa 2: 4 shall **b** their swords into plowshares,
Joel 3: 10 **B** your plowshares into swords,
Lk 22: 63 began to mock him and **b** him;

**BEATEN** → BEAT
2Co 11: 25 Three times I was **b** with rods.
1Pe 2: 20 If you endure when you are **b** for

**BEATING** → BEAT
Ex 2: 11 He saw an Egyptian **b** a Hebrew,
1Co 9: 26 nor do I box as though **b** the air;

**BEAUTIFUL** → BEAUTY
Ge 12: 11 you are a woman **b** in appearance;
1Sa 25: 3 The woman was clever and **b,**
Est 2: 7 the girl was fair and **b,**
Job 42: 15 no women so **b** as Job's daughters;
Ps 48: 2 **b** in elevation, is the joy of all
SS 1: 5 I am black and **b,** O daughters of
Isa 4: 2 the branch of the LORD shall be **b**
52: 7 How **b** upon the mountains are the
Ac 3: 2 the temple called the **B** Gate so that
Ro 10: 15 **b** are the feet of those who bring
Tob 6: 12 girl is sensible, brave, and very **b,**
Jdt 8: 7 She was **b** in appearance.
Wis 7: 29 She is more **b** than the sun,
Sir 25: 1 and they are **b** in the sight of God
Sus 1: 2 very **b** woman and one who feared

**BEAUTY** → BEAUTIFUL
2Sa 14: 25 so much for his **b** as Absalom;
Ps 27: 4 to behold the **b** of the LORD,
Pr 6: 25 Do not desire her **b** in your heart,
31: 30 Charm is deceitful, and **b** is vain,
1Pe 3: 4 with the lasting **b** of a gentle
Jdt 16: 9 her **b** captivated his mind,
Wis 13: 3 for the author of **b** created them.
Sir 9: 8 not gaze at **b** belonging to another;
Sus 1: 56 **b** has beguiled you and lust has
1Mc 2: 12 And see, our holy place, our **b,**

**BED** → BEDS
Ge 47: 31 bowed himself on the head of his **b.**
Ps 139: 8 if I make my **b** in Sheol, you are
Lk 5: 19 let him down with his **b** through the
Heb 13: 4 let the marriage **b** be kept undefiled;

**BEDS** → BED
Ps 36: 4 They plot mischief while on their **b;**
Mic 2: 1 and evil deeds on their **b!**

**BEE*** → BEES
Isa 7: 18 the **b** that is in the land of Assyria.
Sir 11: 3 The **b** is small among flying

**BEER-SHEBA**
Ge 21: 31 Therefore that place was called **B;**
1Sa 3: 20 And all Israel from Dan to **B** knew

**BEES** → BEE
Jdg 14: 8 a swarm of **b** in the body of the lion,

**BEFORE**
Ex 20: 3 you shall have no other gods **b** me.
33: 2 I will send an angel **b** you,
Isa 43: 10 **B** me no god was formed,
65: 24 **B** they call I will answer,
Mal 3: 1 my messenger to prepare the way **b**
Mt 6: 8 Father knows what you need **b** you
Lk 22: 61 "**B** the cock crows today,
Heb 12: 2 sake of the joy that was set **b** him

**BEGGAR** → BEGS
Mk 10: 46 son of Timaeus, a blind **b,**
Jn 9: 8 who had seen him before as a **b**

**BEGINNING**
Ge 1: 1 In the **b** when God created the
Ps 111: 10 fear of the LORD is the **b** of wisdom;
Pr 1: 7 The fear of the LORD is the **b** of
8: 22 The LORD created me at the **b** of his
Ecc 7: 8 Better is the end of a thing than its **b**
Isa 40: 21 Has it not been told you from the **b?**
Mt 24: 8 this is but the **b** of the birth pangs.
Jn 1: 1 In the **b** was the Word,
1Jn 1: 1 declare to you what was from the **b,**
2Jn 1: 6 as you have heard it from the **b**—
Rev 21: 6 and the Omega, the **b** and the end.
Wis 6: 17 The **b** of wisdom is the most sincere
Sir 1: 14 To fear the Lord is the **b** of wisdom;

**BEGOTTEN**
Ps 2: 7 You are my son; today I have **b** you.
Ac 13: 33 are my Son; today I have **b** you.'
Heb 1: 5 are my Son; today I have **b** you"?
2Es 6: 58 have called your firstborn, only **b,**

**BEGS** → BEG
Lk 6: 30 Give to everyone who **b** from you;

**BEHEADED** → HEAD
Lk 9: 9 Herod said, "John I **b;**
Rev 20: 4 the souls of those who had been **b**

**BEHEMOTH**
Job 40: 15 "Look at **B,** which I made just as I
2Es 6: 49 the one you called **B** and the name

**BEHIND**
Isa 38: 17 have cast all my sins **b** your back.
Mt 16: 23 said to Peter, "Get **b** me, Satan!
Php 3: 13 forgetting what lies **b** and straining

**BEING**
Ge 2: 7 and the man became a living **b.**
Nu 23: 19 God is not a human **b,**
Da 7: 13 one like a human **b** coming with the
Jn 1: 3 All things came into **b** through him,
1Co 15: 45 Adam, became a living **b";**
Heb 1: 3 the exact imprint of God's very **b,**

**BEL***
Babylonian deity (Isa 46:1; Jer 50:2; 51:44; LtJ 6:40; Bel 1:3-28).

### BELIEF → BELIEVE

2Th 2:13 the Spirit and through **b** in the truth.

### BELIEVE → BELIEF, BELIEVED, BELIEVER, BELIEVERS, BELIEVES, BELIEVING

Ex 4:5 that they may **b** that the LORD,
Nu 14:11 long will they refuse to **b** in me,
2Ki 17:14 did not **b** in the LORD their God.
Ps 119:66 for I **b** in your commandments.
Pr 14:15 The simple **b** everything,
Jer 12:6 do not **b** them, though they speak
Hab 1:5 you would not **b** if you were told.
Mt 18:6 one of these little ones who **b** in me,
24:23 or 'There he is!'—do not **b** it.
Mk 1:15 repent, and **b** in the good news."
9:24 "I **b**; help my unbelief!"
Lk 24:25 how slow of heart to **b** all that the
Jn 1:7 so that all might **b** through him.
3:18 who **b** in him are not condemned;
5:46 believed Moses, you would **b** me,
6:29 you **b** in him whom he has sent."
10:38 you do not **b** me, **b** the works,
14:1 **B** in God, b also in me.
17:20 will **b** in me through their word,
20:29 not seen and yet have come to **b.**"
Ac 16:31 answered, "**B** on the Lord Jesus,
28:24 while others refused to **b.**
Ro 3:22 faith in Jesus Christ for all who **b.**
10:9 **b** in your heart that God raised him
1Co 15:2 unless you have come to **b** in vain.
Gal 3:9 this reason, those who **b** are blessed
1Th 4:14 For since we **b** that Jesus died and
Heb 11:6 would approach him must **b**
Jas 2:19 Even the demons **b**—and shudder.
1Pe 1:8 you do not see him now, you **b**
1Jn 4:1 Beloved, do not **b** every spirit,
Jude 1:5 destroyed those who did not **b.**
Sir 19:15 so do not **b** everything you hear.

### BELIEVED → BELIEVE

Ge 15:6 And he **b** the LORD;
Ex 14:31 **b** in the LORD and in his servant
Isa 53:1 Who has **b** what we have heard?
Jn 1:12 received him, who **b** in his name,
12:38 "Lord, who has **b** our message,
20:8 also went in, and he saw and **b;**
Ac 2:44 All who **b** were together and had all
Ro 4:3 "Abraham **b** God, and it was
10:16 "Lord, who has **b** our message?"
2Co 4:13 "I **b,** and so I spoke"—
Gal 3:6 Just as Abraham "**b** God,
1Ti 3:16 **b** in throughout the world, taken up
Heb 4:3 For we who have **b** enter that rest,
Jas 2:23 that says, "Abraham **b** God,
Jdt 14:10 had done, he **b** firmly in God.
1Mc 2:59 **b** and were saved from the flame.

### BELIEVER → BELIEVE

1Co 6:6 but a **b** goes to court against a **b**—
7:12 **b** has a wife who is an unbeliever,
2Co 6:15 Or what does a **b** share with an

### BELIEVERS → BELIEVE

1Co 14:22 a sign not for **b** but for unbelievers,
Gal 2:4 because of false **b** secretly brought
2Th 3:6 keep away from **b** who are living in
1Pe 2:17 Love the family of **b.**

### BELIEVES → BELIEVE

Jn 3:15 whoever **b** in him may have eternal
11:26 everyone who lives and **b** in me
Ro 9:33 whoever **b** in him will not be put to
10:10 **b** with the heart and so is justified,
1Co 13:7 It bears all things, **b** all things,

### BELIEVING → BELIEVE

Jn 20:31 through **b** you may have life in his
Gal 3:5 or by your **b** what you heard?

### BELLY

Ge 3:14 upon your **b** you shall go,
Lev 11:42 Whatever moves on its **b,**
Jnh 1:17 and Jonah was in the **b** of the fish
Mt 12:40 three days and three nights in the **b**
Php 3:19 is destruction; their god is the **b;**

### BELONG → BELONGS

Dt 29:29 The secret things **b** to the LORD our God, but the revealed things **b** to us
Ps 82:8 for all the nations **b** to you!
Da 9:9 To the Lord our God **b** mercy and
Jn 10:16 sheep that do not **b** to this fold.
15:19 Because you do not **b** to the world,
Ro 9:6 not all Israelites truly **b** to Israel,
1Co 3:23 you **b** to Christ, and Christ belongs
12:15 I do not **b** to the body,"
1Jn 2:19 out from us, but they did not **b** to us;

### BELONGS → BELONG

Ps 22:28 For dominion **b** to the LORD,
62:11 I heard this: that power **b** to God,
Jnh 2:9 Deliverance **b** to the LORD!"
Rev 7:10 "Salvation **b** to our God who is

### BELOVED → LOVE

SS 2:16 My **b** is mine and I am his;
Mt 3:17 heaven said, "This is my Son, the **B,**
12:18 my **b,** with whom my soul is well
17:5 "This is my Son, the **B;**
Col 3:12 As God's chosen ones, holy and **b,**
Rev 20:9 camp of the saints and the **b** city,

### BELSHAZZAR*

King of Babylon (Da 5; Bar 1:11-12).

### BELT

1Sa 18:4 his sword and his bow and his **b.**
Isa 11:5 Righteousness shall be the **b** around
Mk 1:6 with a leather **b** around his waist,
Eph 6:14 the **b** of truth around your waist,

### BELTESHAZZAR → See DANIEL

### BEN-HADAD*

1. King of Syria in time of Asa (1Ki 15:18-20; 2Ch 16:2-4).

2. King of Syria in time of Ahab (1Ki 20; 2Ki 6:24; 8:7-15).

3. King of Syria in time of Jehoahaz (2Ki 13:3, 24-25; Jer 49:27; Am 1:4).

### BENAIAH

A commander of David's army (2Sa 8:18; 20:23; 23:20-30); loyal to Solomon (1Ki 1:8-2:46; 4:4).

### BEND → BENT

Php 2:10 name of Jesus every knee should **b,**
Mn 1:11 And now I **b** the knee of my heart,

### BENEFICIAL → BENEFIT

1Co 6:12 but not all things are **b.**
10:23 lawful," but not all things are **b.**

### BENEFIT → BENEFICIAL, BENEFITS

Gal 5:2 Christ will be of no **b** to you.
Phm 1:20 have this **b** from you in the Lord!
Heb 4:2 message they heard did not **b** them,

### BENEFITS → BENEFIT

Ps 103:2 and do not forget all his **b**—
1Co 9:11 if we reap your material **b?**

### BENJAMIN → BENJAMINITE

Twelfth son of Jacob by Rachel (Ge 35:16-24; 46:19-21; 1Ch 2:2). Jacob refused to send him to Egypt, but relented (Ge 42-45). Tribe of blessed (Ge 49:27; Dt 33:12), numbered (Nu 1:37; 26:41), allotted land (Jos 18:11-28; Eze 48:23), failed to fully possess (Jdg 1:21), nearly obliterated (Jdg 20-21), sided with Ish-Bosheth (2Sa 2), but turned to David (1Ch 12:2, 29). 12,000 from (Rev 7:8).

### BENJAMINITE → BENJAMIN

Jdg 3:15 the **B,** a left-handed man.
1Sa 9:21 Saul answered, "I am only a **B,**

### BENT → BEND

Hos 11:4 I **b** down to them and fed them.
Jn 8:6 ‖Jesus **b** down and wrote with his‖
20:5 He **b** down to look in and saw

### BEREAVE → BEREAVES

Lev 26:22 they shall **b** you of your children
Eze 36:12 No longer shall you **b** them of

### BEREAVES* → BEREAVE

La 1:20 In the street the sword **b;**

### BESIDES

Dt 32:39 there is no god **b** me.
Ps 18:31 And who is a rock **b** our God?—
Isa 45:21 There is no other god **b** me,
Wis 12:13 For neither is there any god **b** you,
Bel 1:41 there is no other **b** you!"

### BEST → GOOD

Dt 33:21 He chose the **b** for himself,
Mk 12:39 the **b** seats in the synagogues and
2Ti 2:15 your **b** to present yourself to God

### BETHANY

Mt 26:6 Jesus was at **B** in the house of
Jn 11:1 a certain man was ill, Lazarus of **B,**

### BETHEL

Ge 12:8 the east of **B,** and pitched his tent,
28:19 He called that place **B;**
1Sa 7:16 a circuit year by year to **B,** Gilgal,

### BETHLEHEM

Ru 4:11 and bestow a name in **B;**
1Sa 17:12 David was the son of an Ephrathite of **B**
Mic 5:2 But you, O **B** of Ephrathah,
Mt 2:1 after Jesus was born in **B** of Judea,
Lk 2:15 "Let us go now to **B** and see this

### BETRAY → BETRAYED

Mt 10:21 Brother will **b** brother to death,
Mk 14:11 to look for an opportunity to **b** him,
Jn 13:11 For he knew who was to **b** him;

### BETRAYED → BETRAY

Lk 21:16 You will be **b** even by parents and
1Co 11:23 Jesus on the night when he was **b**

### BETTER → GOOD

1Sa 15:22 Surely, to obey is **b** than sacrifice,
Ps 63:3 your steadfast love is **b** than life,
Pr 15:16 **B** is a little with the fear of
27:5 **B** is open rebuke than hidden love,
Ecc 2:24 There is nothing **b** for mortals than
9:4 a living dog is **b** than a dead lion,
SS 1:2 For your love is **b** than wine,
Da 1:20 he found them ten times **b** than all
Mt 5:29 it is **b** for you to lose one of your
Mk 14:21 It would have been **b** for that one
Jn 11:50 **b** for you to have one man die for
Ro 14:5 Some judge one day to be **b** than
Php 1:23 and be with Christ, for that is far **b;**
2:3 in humility regard others as **b** than
Heb 7:22 the guarantee of a **b** covenant,
9:23 need **b** sacrifices than these,
1Pe 3:17 For it is **b** to suffer for doing good,
Tob 12:8 A little with righteousness is **b** than
Sir 40:26 the fear of the Lord is **b** than either,

### BETWEEN

Ge 3:15 put enmity **b** you and the woman,
9:13 a sign of the covenant **b** me and
16:5 the LORD judge **b** you and me!"
Isa 2:4 He shall judge **b** the nations,
Eze 34:17 I shall judge **b** sheep and sheep, **b** rams and goats:
Jn 19:18 on either side, with Jesus **b** them,
Ro 10:12 no distinction **b** Jew and Greek;
Eph 2:14 dividing wall, that is, the hostility **b**
1Ti 2:5 one mediator **b** God and humankind

### BEWARE

Ecc 12:12 anything beyond these, my child, **b.**
Mt 6:1 "**B** of practicing your piety before
Php 3:2 **B** of the dogs, **b** of the evil workers,

### BEYOND

Ps 147:5 his understanding is **b** measure,
2Co 4:17 an eternal weight of glory **b** all
2Jn 1:9 but goes **b** it, does not have God;
Sir 3:23 not meddle in matters that are **b** you

### BEZALEL

Judahite craftsman in charge of building the tabernacle (Ex 31:1-11; 35:30-39:31).

### BILDAD*

One of Job's friends (Job 2:11; 8; 18; 25; 42:9).

### BILHAH
Servant of Rachel, mother of Jacob's sons Dan and Naphtali (Ge 30:1-7; 35:25; 46:23-25).

### BIND → BINDS
Dt 6: 8 **B** them as a sign on your hand,
Pr 6: 21 **B** them upon your heart always;
Isa 61: 1 to **b** up the brokenhearted,
Mt 16: 19 whatever you **b** on earth will be

### BINDS → BIND
Job 5: 18 For he wounds, but he **b** up;
Col 3: 14 **b** everything together in perfect

### BIRD → BIRDS
Ge 1: 21 and every winged **b** of every kind.
Lev 20: 25 the unclean **b** and the clean;

### BIRDS → BIRD
Ge 1: 22 and let **b** multiply on the earth."
7: 3 and seven pairs of the **b** of the air
Ps 50: 11 I know all the **b** of the air,
Jer 7: 33 be food for the **b** of the air, and for
Mt 6: 26 Look at the **b** of the air;
Rev 19: 21 the **b** were gorged with their flesh.

### BIRTH → BEAR
Dt 32: 18 you forgot the God who gave you **b.**
Ps 22: 10 On you I was cast from my **b,**
Mt 24: 8 is but the beginning of the **b** pangs.
Jas 1: 18 he gave us **b** by the word of truth,
1Pe 1: 3 given us a new **b** into a living hope

### BIRTHRIGHT → BEAR, RIGHT
Ge 25: 34 Thus Esau despised his **b.**
Heb 12: 16 who sold his **b** for a single meal.

### BISHOP
1Ti 3: 1 whoever aspires to the office of **b**
Tit 1: 7 For a **b,** as God's steward, must be

### BIT → BITE, BITS
Nu 21: 9 and whenever a serpent **b** someone,
Ps 32: 9 temper must be curbed with **b** and

### BITE* → BIT
Gal 5: 15 If, however, you **b** and devour one
Sir 21: 2 if you approach sin, it will **b** you.

### BITS → BIT
Jas 3: 3 we put **b** into the mouths of horses

### BITTER → BITTERNESS
Ex 1: 14 made their lives **b** with hard service
12: 8 with unleavened bread and **b** herbs.
15: 23 water of Marah because it was **b.**
Ru 1: 13 it has been far more **b** for me than
Rev 8: 11 the water, because it was made **b.**

### BITTERNESS → BITTER
Nu 5: 18 the water of **b** that brings the curse.
Pr 14: 10 The heart knows its own **b,**
Ro 3: 14 mouths are full of cursing and **b."**
Eph 4: 31 Put away from you all **b** and wrath

### BLACK
SS 1: 5 I am **b** and beautiful, O daughters
Zec 6: 2 the second chariot **b** horses,
Mt 5: 36 cannot make one hair white or **b.**
Rev 6: 5 I looked, and there was a **b** horse!

### BLAMELESS
Ge 17: 1 walk before me, and be **b.**
2Sa 22: 26 with the **b** you show yourself **b;**
Job 1: 1 That man was **b** and upright,
Ps 37: 18 The LORD knows the days of the **b,**
Pr 11: 20 but those of **b** ways are his delight.
Eph 1: 4 holy and **b** before him in love.
Php 2: 15 so that you may be **b** and innocent,
1Th 5: 23 and **b** at the coming of our Lord
Tit 1: 7 bishop, as God's steward, must be **b**
Heb 7: 26 **b,** undefiled, separated from sinners,
Rev 14: 5 mouth no lie was found; they are **b.**
1Mc 4: 42 chose **b** priests devoted to the law,

### BLASPHEME → BLASPHEMED, BLASPHEMER, BLASPHEMES, BLASPHEMIES, BLASPHEMOUS
Ac 26: 11 I tried to force them to **b;**
1Ti 1: 20 so that they may learn not to **b.**

### BLASPHEMED → BLASPHEME
Eze 20: 27 In this again your ancestors **b** me,
Mt 26: 65 tore his clothes and said, "He has **b!**

### BLASPHEMER → BLASPHEME
1Ti 1: 13 even though I was formerly a **b,**
Sir 3: 16 forsakes a father is like a **b,**

### BLASPHEMES → BLASPHEME
Lev 24: 16 One who **b** the name of the LORD
Lk 12: 10 whoever **b** against the Holy Spirit

### BLASPHEMIES → BLASPHEME
Mk 3: 28 their sins and whatever **b** they utter;
Rev 13: 6 its mouth to utter **b** against God,
1Mc 2: 6 He saw the **b** being committed in

### BLASPHEMOUS → BLASPHEME
Ac 6: 11 "We have heard him speak **b** words
Rev 13: 1 and on its heads were **b** names.

### BLAZING
Ex 3: 2 he looked, and the bush was **b,**
Dt 4: 11 the mountain was **b** up to the very
Heb 12: 18 a **b** fire, and darkness, and gloom,

### BLEMISH → BLEMISHED
Ex 12: 5 Your lamb shall be without **b,**
Lev 22: 20 not offer anything that has a **b,**
Eph 5: 27 that she may be holy and without **b.**
Heb 9: 14 offered himself without **b** to God,
1Pe 1: 19 that of a lamb without defect or **b.**
Jude 1: 24 to make you stand without **b** in the

### BLEMISHED* → BLEMISH
Mal 1: 14 yet sacrifices to the Lord what is **b;**
Sir 34: 21 ill-gotten goods, the offering is **b;**

### BLESS → BLESSED, BLESSING, BLESSINGS
Ge 12: 2 I will **b** you, and make your name
17: 16 I will **b** her, and moreover I will
22: 17 I will indeed **b** you, and I will make
26: 3 I will be with you, and will **b** you;
32: 26 not let you go, unless you **b** me."
Ex 20: 24 I will come to you and **b** you.
Nu 6: 24 The LORD **b** you and keep you;
23: 20 See, I received a command to **b;**
Dt 7: 13 he will love you, **b** you,
30: 16 the LORD your God will **b** you in
1Ch 29: 20 **"B** the LORD your God."
Ps 5: 12 For you **b** the righteous, O LORD;
29: 11 the LORD **b** his people with peace!
34: 1 I will **b** the LORD at all times;
103: 1 **B** the LORD, O my soul,
109: 28 Let them curse, but you will **b.**
Hag 2: 19 From this day on I will **b** you.
Lk 6: 28 **b** those who curse you, pray
Ro 12: 14 **B** those who persecute you;
1Co 4: 12 When reviled, we **b;**
Jas 3: 9 With it we **b** the Lord and Father,
Tob 4: 19 At all times **b** the Lord God,
Sir 32: 13 But above all **b** your Maker,

### BLESSED → BLESS
Ge 1: 22 God **b** them, saying, "Be fruitful
2: 3 So God **b** the seventh day and
14: 19 He **b** him and said, **"B** be Abram
Nu 24: 9 **B** is everyone who blesses you,
Job 1: 21 **b** be the name of the LORD."
42: 12 The LORD **b** the latter days
Ps 118: 26 **B** is the one who comes in the name
Isa 30: 18 **b** are all those who wait for him.
Jer 17: 7 **B** are those who trust in the LORD,
Mt 5: 3 **"B** are the poor in spirit,
Mk 10: 16 laid his hands on them, and **b** them.
Lk 1: 42 **"B** are you among women,
6: 20 **"B** are you who are poor,
Jn 12: 13 **B** is the one who comes in the name
20: 29 **B** are those who have not seen and
Ac 20: 35 It is more **b** to give than to receive.
Gal 3: 8 "All the Gentiles shall be **b** in you."
Eph 1: 3 who has **b** us in Christ
1Pe 3: 14 for doing what is right, you are **b.**
Rev 1: 3 **B** is the one who reads aloud the
22: 7 **B** is the one who keeps the words of
Tob 3: 11 she prayed and said, **"B** are you,
Jdt 13: 17 one accord, **"B** are you our God,
Aza 1: 3 **"B** are you, O Lord, God of our
Sus 1: 60 raised a great shout and **b** God,

### BLESSING → BLESS
Ge 12: 2 so that you will be a **b,**
22: 18 the nations of the earth gain **b** for
27: 36 now he has taken away my **b."**
Dt 11: 26 before you today a **b** and a curse:
23: 5 your God turned the curse into a **b**
Ne 13: 2 our God turned the curse into a **b.**
Eze 34: 26 they shall be showers of **b.**
Mal 3: 10 for you an overflowing **b.**
Mk 14: 22 of bread, and after **b** it he broke it,
Lk 24: 51 While he was **b** them, he withdrew
1Co 10: 16 The cup of **b** that we bless,
Gal 3: 14 in Christ Jesus the **b** of Abraham
Eph 1: 3 every spiritual **b** in the heavenly
Rev 5: 12 might and honor and glory and **b!"**
7: 12 **B** and glory and wisdom and
Tob 8: 15 you, O God, with every pure **b;**
Sir 34: 20 he gives health and life and **b.**

### BLESSINGS → BLESS
Dt 28: 2 all these **b** shall come upon you
Jos 8: 34 the words of the law, **b** and curses,
Ps 21: 6 You bestow on him **b** forever;
144: 15 Happy are the people to whom such **b**
Pr 10: 6 **B** are on the head of the righteous,
Mal 2: 2 and I will curse your **b;**
Ro 15: 27 come to share in their spiritual **b,**

### BLIND → BLINDED, BLINDNESS
Ex 4: 11 mute or deaf, seeing or **b?**
Dt 27: 18 misleads a **b** person on the road."
Ps 146: 8 the LORD opens the eyes of the **b.**
Isa 35: 5 the eyes of the **b** shall be opened,
42: 19 Who is **b** but my servant,
Mt 11: 5 **b** receive their sight, the lame walk,
Lk 6: 39 "Can a **b** person guide a **b** person?
Jn 9: 25 though I was **b,** now I see."
Ro 2: 19 sure that you are a guide to the **b,**
2Pe 1: 9 **b,** and is forgetful of the cleansing
Tob 2: 10 until I became completely **b.**
Ltf 6: 37 They cannot restore sight to the **b;**

### BLINDED → BLIND
Zec 11: 17 withered, his right eye utterly **b!**
Jn 12: 40 "He has **b** their eyes and hardened
2Co 4: 4 has **b** the minds of the unbelievers,

### BLINDNESS → BLIND
Ge 19: 11 And they struck with **b** the men
Dt 28: 28 will afflict you with madness, **b,**
1Jn 2: 11 the darkness has brought on **b.**

### BLOCK → BLOCKS
Isa 44: 19 I fall down before a **b** of wood?"
Eze 14: 7 their iniquity as a stumbling **b**
Mt 16: 23 You are a stumbling **b** to me;
Ro 11: 9 a stumbling **b** and a retribution for
1Co 1: 23 stumbling **b** to Jews and foolishness
Sir 31: 7 It is a stumbling **b** to those who are

### BLOCKS → BLOCK
Jer 6: 21 before this people stumbling **b**
Mt 18: 7 the world because of stumbling **b!**

### BLOOD → BLOODSHED
Ge 4: 10 your brother's **b** is crying out to me
9: 6 sheds the **b** of a human, by a human
shall that person's **b** be shed;
Ex 7: 17 and it shall be turned to **b.**
12: 13 when I see the **b,** I will pass over
24: 8 the **b** of the covenant that the LORD
Lev 1: 5 the priests shall offer the **b,**
3: 17 you must not eat any fat or any **b.**
17: 11 it is the **b** that makes atonement.
Nu 35: 33 for **b** pollutes the land,
Ps 72: 14 and precious is their **b** in his sight.
Isa 1: 11 I do not delight in the **b** of bulls,
Eze 33: 4 **b** shall be upon their own heads.
Joel 2: 30 **b** and fire and columns of smoke.
Mt 27: 8 field has been called the Field of **B**
Mk 14: 24 "This is my **b** of the covenant,

Lk 22:44 [sweat became like great drops of **b**]
Jn 1:13 who were born, not of **b**
6:53 of the Son of Man and drink his **b**,
19:34 and at once **b** and water came out.
Ac 2:20 to darkness and the moon to **b**,
Ro 5:9 that we have been justified by his **b**,
1Co 11:25 cup is the new covenant in my **b**.
Eph 1:7 we have redemption through his **b**,
6:12 not against enemies of **b** and flesh.
Heb 9:12 the **b** of goats and calves, but with his own **b**,
9:22 without the shedding of **b** there is no
1Jn 5:6 the one who came by water and **b**,
Rev 1:5 and freed us from our sins by his **b**,
5:9 by your **b** you ransomed for God
6:12 the full moon became like **b**,
8:9 A third of the sea became **b**,
12:11 conquered him by the **b** of the Lamb

**BLOODSHED** → BLOOD, SHED
Isa 5:7 he expected justice, but saw **b**;
Eze 35:6 you did not hate **b**, **b** shall pursue
Hab 2:8 because of human **b**, and violence

**BLOSSOMS**
Ex 25:33 three cups shaped like almond **b**,
Nu 17:8 It put forth buds, produced **b**,

**BLOT**
Ge 6:7 "I will **b** out from the earth
Ex 32:32 **b** me out of the book that you have
Ps 51:1 mercy **b** out my transgressions.
Rev 3:5 not **b** your name out of the book of

**BLOW** → BLOWING
Joel 2:1 **B** the trumpet in Zion; sound the
Rev 8:6 the seven trumpets made ready to **b**

**BOAST** → BOASTERS, BOASTFUL, BOASTING
Ps 34:2 My soul makes its **b** in the LORD;
Pr 27:1 Do not **b** about tomorrow,
Jer 9:24 but let those who **b** **b** in this,
Ro 2:23 You that **b** in the law,
1Co 1:31 the one who boasts, **b** in the Lord."
2Co 11:30 If I must **b**, I will **b** of the things that
Gal 6:14 never **b** of anything except the cross
Eph 2:9 of works, so that no one may **b**.
Sir 25:6 and their **b** is the fear of the Lord.

**BOASTERS*** → BOAST
2Co 11:13 For such **b** are false apostles,
2Ti 3:2 **b**, arrogant, abusive, disobedient to

**BOASTFUL** → BOAST
Ps 5:5 The **b** will not stand before your
1Co 13:4 love is not envious or **b** or arrogant

**BOASTING** → BOAST
1Co 5:6 Your **b** is not a good thing.
1Th 2:19 or crown of **b** before our Lord Jesus

**BOAZ**
Bethlehemite who showed favor to Ruth (Ru 2), married her (Ru 4). Ancestor of David (Ru 4:18-22; 1Ch 2:12-15). Jesus (Mt 1:5-16; Lk 3:23-32).

**BODIES** → BODY
Ro 12:1 present your **b** as a living sacrifice,
1Co 6:15 that your **b** are members of Christ?
Heb 10:22 and our **b** washed with pure water.

**BODILY** → BODY
Lk 3:22 upon him in **b** form like a dove.
Col 2:9 the whole fullness of deity dwells **b**,

**BODY** → BODIES, BODILY
2Sa 7:12 who shall come forth from your **b**,
Mic 6:7 fruit of my **b** for the sin of my soul?
Mt 6:22 "The eye is the lamp of the **b**.
Mk 14:22 and said, "Take; this is my **b**."
Lk 12:4 do not fear those who kill the **b**,
Jn 2:21 speaking of the temple of his **b**.
Ro 7:24 will rescue me from this **b** of death?
1Co 6:13 **b** is meant not for fornication but
15:44 It is sown a physical **b**, it is raised a spiritual **b**.
2Co 5:8 from the **b** and at home with the Lord.
Eph 4:4 There is one **b** and one Spirit,

**BOLD** → BOLDNESS
Dt 31:6 Be strong and **b**; have no fear
Pr 28:1 but the righteous are as **b** as a lion.

**BOLDNESS** → BOLD
Eph 3:12 whom we have access to God in **b**
Heb 4:16 approach the throne of grace with **b**,
1Jn 4:17 may have **b** on the day of judgment,

**BONE** → BONES
Ge 2:23 "This at last is **b** of my bones and
Eze 37:7 the bones came together, **b** to its **b**.

**BONES** → BONE
Ex 12:46 and you shall not break any of its **b**.
Ps 34:20 He keeps all their **b**; not one of
Jn 19:36 "None of his **b** shall be broken."

**BOOK** → BOOKS
Ex 17:14 "Write this as a reminder in a **b** and
Dt 31:24 writing down in a **b** the words of
Jos 1:8 This **b** of the law shall not depart
Ps 69:28 be blotted out of the **b** of the living;
Rev 1:11 "Write in a **b** what you see and
21:27 who are written in the Lamb's **b**
1Mc 1:57 possessing the **b** of the covenant,

**BOOKS** → BOOK
Ecc 12:12 Of making many **b** there is no end,
Da 7:10 in judgment, and the **b** were opened.
Jn 21:25 world itself could not contain the **b**
Rev 20:12 the throne, and **b** were opened.
1Mc 1:56 The **b** of the law that they found
2Es 14:44 ninety-four **b** were written.

**BOOTHS**
Lev 23:34 the festival of **b** to the LORD.
Ezr 3:4 kept the festival of **b**, as prescribed,
Zec 14:16 and to keep the festival of **b**.

**BORE** → BEAR
Isa 53:12 yet he **b** the sin of many,
Mt 8:17 our infirmities and **b** our diseases."
1Pe 2:24 He himself **b** our sins in his body

**BORN** → BEAR
Ecc 3:2 a time to be **b**, and a time to die;
Isa 9:6 For a child has been **b** for us,
66:8 Shall a land be **b** in one day?
Lk 2:11 is **b** this day in the city of David
Jn 3:7 'You must be **b** from above.'
1Co 15:8 Last of all, as to one untimely **b**,
1Pe 1:23 You have been **b** anew,
1Jn 4:7 everyone who loves is **b** of God

**BORROW** → BORROWER
Dt 28:12 to many nations, but you will not **b**.
Ps 37:21 The wicked **b**, and do not pay back,
Mt 5:42 anyone who wants to **b** from you.

**BORROWER** → BORROW
Pr 22:7 and the **b** is the slave of the lender.

**BOUGHT** → BUY
1Co 6:20 For you were **b** with a price;
2Pe 2:1 even deny the Master who **b** them—

**BOW** → BOWED, RAINBOW
Ge 9:13 I have set my **b** in the clouds,
Ex 20:5 You shall not **b** down to them or
Ps 95:6 O come, let us worship and **b** down,
Isa 45:23 "To me every knee shall **b**,
Ro 14:11 every knee shall **b** to me,

**BOWED** → BOW
Ps 146:8 The LORD lifts up those who are **b**
Jn 19:30 he **b** his head and gave up his spirit.

**BOWLS**
Rev 16:1 the seven **b** of the wrath of God."

**BOY** → BOYS
Jer 1:7 to me, "Do not say, 'I am only a **b**';
Lk 2:43 **b** Jesus stayed behind in Jerusalem,

**BOYS** → BOY
Ex 1:18 and allowed the **b** to live?"
2Ki 2:24 and mauled forty-two of the **b**,

**BRANCH** → BRANCHES
Isa 4:2 On that day the **b** of the LORD shall
11:1 and a **b** shall grow out of his roots.
Jer 23:5 raise up for David a righteous **B**,
Zec 3:8 going to bring my servant the **B**.
Jn 15:2 every **b** in me that bears no fruit,

**BRANCHES** → BRANCH
Ro 11:21 if God did not spare the natural **b**,

**BREAD**
Ge 3:19 sweat of your face you shall eat **b**
Ex 12:8 with unleavened **b** and bitter herbs,
25:30 set the **b** of the Presence on the table
Dt 8:3 that one does not live by **b** alone,
Ecc 11:1 Send out your **b** upon the waters,
Mt 6:11 Give us this day our daily **b**,
Lk 4:4 'One does not live by **b** alone.'"
Jn 6:35 Jesus said to them, "I am the **b** of life.
Ac 2:42 to the breaking of **b** and the prayers.
1Co 11:26 For as often as you eat this **b** and
Wis 16:20 from heaven with **b** ready to eat,
Sir 15:3 will feed him with the **b** of learning,

**BREAK** → BREAKING, BROKEN, BROKENHEARTED
Ps 2:9 You shall **b** them with a rod of iron,
Mt 6:19 where thieves **b** in and steal;
Jn 19:33 they did not **b** his legs.

**BREASTPIECE** → BREASTPLATE
Ex 28:15 You shall make a **b** of judgment,

**BREASTPLATE** → BREASTPIECE
Isa 59:17 He put on righteousness like a **b**,
Eph 6:14 and put on the **b** of righteousness,
Wis 5:18 he will put on righteousness as a **b**,

**BREATH**
Ge 2:7 into his nostrils the **b** of life;
6:17 all flesh in which is the **b** of life;
Job 7:7 "Remember that my life is a **b**;
Ecc 12:7 the **b** returns to God who gave it,
2Th 2:8 will destroy with the **b** of his mouth,

**BRIBE**
Dt 16:19 for a **b** blinds the eyes of the wise
Pr 6:35 and refuses a **b** no matter how great.

**BRIDE** → BRIDEGROOM
Isa 62:5 the bridegroom rejoices over the **b**,
Rev 21:9 the **b**, the wife of the Lamb."

**BRIDEGROOM** → BRIDE
Mt 9:15 as long as the **b** is with them,
Jn 3:29 He who has the bride is the **b**.

**BRIDLE**
Ps 32:9 must be curbed with bit and **b**,
Jas 3:2 the whole body in check with a **b**.

**BRIGHT** → BRIGHTNESS
Mt 17:5 suddenly a **b** cloud overshadowed
Rev 15:6 robed in pure **b** linen,
22:16 of David, the **b** morning star."

**BRIGHTNESS** → BRIGHT
Da 12:3 wise shall shine like the **b** of the sky
Am 5:20 not light, and gloom with no **b** in it?

**BRING** → BRINGS, BROUGHT
Ge 6:19 **b** two of every kind into the ark,
Ecc 12:14 will **b** every deed into judgment,
Jer 24:6 and I will **b** them back to this land.
Mt 10:34 not come to **b** peace, but a sword.
Ro 10:15 the feet of those who **b** good news!"

**BRINGS** → BRING
1Sa 2:6 The LORD kills and **b** to life;
Jas 5:20 that whoever **b** back a sinner

**BROKE** → BREAK
Ex 32:19 tablets from his hands and **b** them
2Ch 36:19 **b** down the wall of Jerusalem,
Jer 31:32 a covenant that they **b**,
Mt 14:19 and blessed and **b** the loaves,
1Co 11:24 he **b** it and said, "This is my body
1Mc 3:5 and pursued those who **b** the law;

**BROKEN** → BREAK
Ne 1:3 the wall of Jerusalem is **b** down,

Ps 51:17 acceptable to God is a **b** spirit;
Mt 15:37 they took up the **b** pieces left over.
Lk 20:18 who falls on that stone will be **b**
Ro 11:20 were **b** off because of their unbelief.

**BROKENHEARTED** → BREAK, HEART
Ps 147:3 He heals the **b,** and binds up their
Isa 61:1 the oppressed, to bind up the **b,**

**BRONZE**
Nu 21:9 look at the serpent of **b** and live.
Dt 28:23 The sky over your head shall be **b,**
Da 10:6 legs like the gleam of burnished **b,**
Rev 1:15 his feet were like burnished **b,**

**BROOD**
Mt 3:7 he said to them, "You **b** of vipers!
Lk 13:34 a hen gathers her **b** under her wings,

**BROTHER** → BROTHER'S, BROTHER-IN-LAW, BROTHERS
Ge 4:8 Cain rose up against his **b** Abel.
Mt 5:24 first be reconciled to your **b** or
10:21 **B** will betray **b** to death,

**BROTHER'S** → BROTHER
Dt 25:7 has no desire to marry his **b** widow,
Mk 6:18 lawful for you to have your **b** wife."

**BROTHER-IN-LAW*** → BROTHER
Ge 38:8 and perform the duty of a **b** to her;

**BROTHERS** → BROTHER
Ge 9:25 lowest of slaves shall he be to his **b.**
37:11 So his **b** were jealous of him,
Mk 3:33 "Who are my mother and my **b?"**
Lk 22:32 turned back, strengthen your **b."**
Heb 2:11 not ashamed to call them **b** and

**BROUGHT** → BRING
Ge 15:7 **b** you from Ur of the Chaldeans,
Jdg 2:1 "I **b** you up from Egypt, and **b** you into
2Ch 36:18 all these he **b** to Babylon.
Ezr 6:5 **b** back to the temple in Jerusalem,
Ro 6:13 who have been **b** from death to life,
1Ti 6:7 for we **b** nothing into the world,

**BUILD** → BUILDER, BUILDERS, BUILDING, BUILDS, BUILT, REBUILD
Ge 11:4 "Come, let us **b** ourselves a city,
Dt 6:10 fine, large cities that you did not **b,**
Ps 127:1 those who **b** it labor in vain.
Isa 57:14 said, "**B** up, **b** up, prepare the way,
Mt 16:18 and on this rock I will **b** my church,
27:40 destroy the temple and **b** it in three
1Co 3:10 must choose with care how to **b**
10:23 are lawful," but not all things **b** up.

**BUILDER** → BUILD
Heb 3:4 but the **b** of all things is God.)
11:10 whose architect and **b** is God.

**BUILDERS** → BUILD
Ps 118:22 The stone that the **b** rejected has
Mk 12:10 'The stone that the **b** rejected has
1Pe 2:7 "The stone that the **b** rejected has

**BUILDING** → BUILD
1Co 3:9 you are God's field, God's **b.**
2Co 5:1 we have a **b** from God,
Eph 4:12 for **b** up the body of Christ,

**BUILDS** → BUILD
Ps 127:1 Unless the LORD **b** the house,
Pr 14:1 The wise woman **b** her house,
1Co 8:1 Knowledge puffs up, but love **b** up.

**BUILT** → BUILD
1Ki 6:14 Solomon **b** the house, and finished
Ne 7:1 the wall had been **b** and I had set up
Pr 9:1 Wisdom has **b** her house,
Da 9:25 sixty-two weeks it shall be **b** again
Eph 2:20 **b** upon the foundation of the
Tob 13:16 Jerusalem will be **b** as his house for
1Mc 4:47 **b** a new altar like the former one.

**BULL** → BULLS
Ps 50:9 will not accept a **b** from your house,

**BULLS** → BULL
1Ch 29:21 a thousand **b,** a thousand rams,
Ps 22:12 **b** encircle me, strong **b** of Bashan
Isa 1:11 I do not delight in the blood of **b,**
Heb 10:4 it is impossible for the blood of **b**

**BURDEN** → BURDENS, BURDENSOME
Ps 55:22 Cast your **b** on the LORD.
Mt 11:30 my yoke is easy, and my **b** is light."
2Co 5:4 in this tent, we groan under our **b,**

**BURDENS** → BURDEN
Ex 6:6 free you from the **b** of the Egyptians
Lk 11:46 you load people with **b** hard to bear,
Gal 6:2 Bear one another's **b,** and

**BURDENSOME** → BURDEN
1Jn 5:3 And his commandments are not **b,**

**BURIED** → BURY
Ro 6:4 have been **b** with him by baptism
1Co 15:4 he was **b,** and that he was raised on

**BURN** → BURNED, BURNING, BURNT
Ex 21:25 **b** for **b,** wound for wound,
Ps 79:5 Will your jealous wrath **b** like fire?
Jer 7:31 to **b** their sons and their daughters
Mal 4:1 the day that comes shall **b** them up,
Lk 3:17 but the chaff he will **b** with

**BURNED** → BURN
Ex 3:3 and see why the bush is not **b** up."
Jn 15:6 thrown into the fire, and **b.**
1Co 3:15 If the work is **b** up, the builder will

**BURNING** → BURN
Lk 24:32 "Were not our hearts **b** within us

**BURNT** → BURN
Ex 40:6 You shall set the altar of **b** offering
Lev 1:3 If the offering is a **b** offering from
1Sa 15:22 LORD as great delight in **b** offerings
Ps 51:16 if I were to give a **b** offering,
Da 8:11 it took the regular **b** offering away
Hos 6:6 the knowledge of God rather than **b**
Mic 6:6 Shall I come before him with **b**
Mk 12:33 more important than all whole **b**
1Mc 1:45 to forbid **b** offerings and sacrifices
4:56 and joyfully offered **b** offerings;

**BURY** → BURIED
Lk 9:60 "Let the dead **b** their own dead;

**BUSH**
Ex 3:2 he looked, and the **b** was blazing,
Jnh 4:6 The LORD God appointed a **b,**

**BUY** → BOUGHT, BUYS
Pr 23:23 **B** truth, and do not sell it;
Isa 55:1 **b** wine and milk without money
Rev 3:18 to **b** from me gold refined by fire so

**BUYS** → BUY
Pr 31:16 She considers a field and **b** it;
Mt 13:44 sells all that he has and **b** that field.

**BYWORD** → WORD
Dt 28:37 and a **b** among all the peoples where
Job 17:6 He has made me a **b** of the peoples,
Ps 44:14 made us a **b** among the nations.

## C

**CAESAREA**
Mt 16:13 came into the district of **C** Philippi.
Ac 10:1 **C** there was a man named Cornelius
25:4 that Paul was being kept at **C,**

**CAIAPHAS***
High priest at trial of Jesus (Mt 26:3, 57; Lk 3:2; Jn 11:49; 18:13-28); at trial of disciples (Ac 4:6).

**CAIN***
Firstborn of Adam (Ge 4:1), murdered brother Abel (Ge 4:1-25; Heb 11:4; 1Jn 3:12; Jude 11; 4Mc 18:11).

**CALAMITIES** → CALAMITY
1Sa 10:19 who saves you from all your **c** and
2Co 6:4 in afflictions, hardships, **c,**
12:10 and **c** for the sake of Christ;

**CALAMITY** → CALAMITIES
Pr 1:26 I also will laugh at your **c;**
Da 9:13 all this **c** has come upon us.
Hab 3:16 wait quietly for the day of **c** to come

**CALEB**
Judahite who spied out Canaan (Nu 13:6); allowed to enter land (Nu 13:30-14:38; Dt 1:36; Sir 46:7-9; 1Mc 2:56). Given Hebron (Jos 14:6-15:19).

**CALF** → CALVES
Ex 32:4 and cast an image of a **c;**
Lk 15:23 And get the fatted **c** and kill it,

**CALL** → CALLED, CALLING
Dt 4:26 I **c** heaven and earth to witness
1Sa 3:5 But he said, "I did not **c;** lie down
1Ki 18:24 you **c** on the name of your god and I
will **c** on the name of the LORD:
1Ch 16:8 thanks to the LORD, **c** on his name,
Ps 61:2 From the end of the earth I **c** to you,
Pr 8:1 Does not wisdom **c,** and does
Isa 65:24 Before they **c** I will answer,
Mt 9:13 to **c** not the righteous but sinners."
Lk 6:46 "Why do you **c** me 'Lord, Lord,'
Jn 15:15 I do not **c** you servants any longer,
Ro 10:12 and is generous to all who **c** on him.
Php 3:14 goal for the prize of the heavenly **c**

**CALLED** → CALL
2Sa 22:7 In my distress I **c** upon the LORD;
Isa 43:1 I have **c** you by name, you are mine.
Mt 23:8 But you are not to be **c** rabbi,
1Co 7:15 It is to peace that God has **c** you.
Eph 1:18 the hope to which he has **c** you,
1Jn 3:1 that we should be **c** children of God;

**CALLING** → CALL
Ro 11:29 and the **c** of God are irrevocable.
Eph 4:1 lead a life worthy of the **c** to which

**CALVES** → CALF
1Ki 12:28 and made two **c** of gold.
Mal 4:2 go out leaping like **c** from the stall.

**CAMEL**
Mt 23:24 strain out a gnat but swallow a **c!**
Mk 10:25 **c** to go through the eye of a needle

**CANA**
Jn 2:1 there was a wedding in **C**

**CANAAN** → CANAANITE, CANAANITES
Ge 9:25 "Cursed be **C;** lowest of slaves
Nu 13:2 "Send men to spy out the land of **C,**
1Ch 16:18 "To you I will give the land of **C**

**CANAANITE** → CANAAN
Ge 28:1 not marry one of the **C** women.
Mt 15:22 a **C** woman from that region came

**CANAANITES** → CANAAN
Ex 33:2 I will drive out the **C,** the Amorites,
Jdg 3:5 So the Israelites lived among the **C,**

**CAPERNAUM**
Mt 4:13 and made his home in **C** by the sea,
Jn 6:59 was teaching in the synagogue at **C.**

**CAPTIVE** → CAPTIVITY
2Ki 15:29 he carried the people **c** to Assyria.
24:16 king of Babylon brought **c** to
Ro 7:23 making me **c** to the law of sin
Eph 4:8 he made captivity itself a **c;**

**CAPTIVITY** → CAPTIVE
Dt 28:41 for they shall go into **c.**
Ezr 8:35 those who had come from **c,**

**CARE** → CAREFUL, CARELESS, CARES, CARING
Ps 8:4 mortals that you **c** for them?
Heb 2:6 or mortals, that you **c** for them?
Jas 1:27 to **c** for orphans and widows in

**CAREFUL** → CARE
Dt 4:23 So be **c** not to forget the covenant
Jos 1:8 you may be **c** to act in accordance
Eph 5:15 Be **c** then how you live,

**CARELESS*** → CARE
Pr 14:16 the fool throws off restraint and is **c.**
Mt 12:36 to give an account for every **c** word

**CARES** → CARE
Lk 8: 14 they are choked by the **c** and riches
1Pe 5: 7 on him, because he **c** for you.

**CARMEL**
1Ki 18: 20 assembled the prophets at Mount **C.**

**CARPENTER'S***
Mt 13: 55 Is not this the **c** son?

**CARRY**
Ps 28: 9 their shepherd, and **c** them forever.
Isa 40: 11 and **c** them in his bosom,
Lk 14: 27 does not **c** the cross and follow me

**CASE**
Job 13: 3 and I desire to argue my **c** with God.
Isa 41: 21 Set forth your **c,** says the LORD;
Lk 12: 58 make an effort to settle the **c,**
Jn 18: 38 "I find no **c** against him.

**CAST**
Ex 34: 17 You shall not make **c** idols.
Est 9: 24 Jews to destroy them, and had **c** Pur
Ps 22: 18 and for my clothing they **c** lots.
55: 22 **C** your burden on the LORD,
Pr 16: 33 The lot is **c** into the lap,
Mk 3: 23 "How can Satan **c** out Satan?
Jn 19: 24 and for my clothing they **c** lots."
1Pe 5: 7 **C** all your anxiety on him,

**CATTLE**
Ge 1: 25 and the **c** of every kind,
Ps 50: 10 the **c** on a thousand hills.

**CAUGHT**
2Co 12: 2 was **c** up to the third heaven—
1Th 4: 17 be **c** up in the clouds together with

**CAUSE**
Job 5: 8 and to God I would commit my **c,**
Ps 9: 4 For you have maintained my just **c;**
140: 12 LORD maintains the **c** of the needy,
Jn 15: 25 'They hated me without a **c.'**

**CAVE**
Ge 23: 9 he may give me the **c** of Machpelah,
1Sa 22: 1 and escaped to the **c** of Adullam;
24: 3 in the innermost parts of the **c,**
1Ki 18: 4 hid them fifty to a **c,**

**CEASE**
Ge 8: 22 winter, day and night, shall not **c."**
Jer 31: 36 If this fixed order were ever to **c**
1Co 13: 8 as for tongues, they will **c;**

**CEDAR**
2Sa 7: 2 See now, I am living in a house of **c,**
Ps 92: 12 and grow like a **c** in Lebanon.

**CELEBRATE**
Lev 23: 37 shall **c** as times of holy convocation,
1Co 5: 8 Therefore, let us **c** the festival,

**CENSER**
Lev 10: 1 Nadab and Abihu, each took his **c,**
Eze 8: 11 Each had his **c** in his hand,
Rev 8: 3 Another angel with a golden **c** came

**CENSUS**
Nu 1: 2 Take a **c** of the whole congregation
2Sa 24: 2 and take a **c** of the people,

**CENTURION**
Mt 8: 5 he entered Capernaum, a **c** came to
Lk 23: 47 the **c** saw what had taken place,
Ac 10: 1 a man named Cornelius, a **c**

**CEPHAS*** → =PETER
Name given to the apostle Peter (Jn 1:42; 1Co 1:12; 3:22; 9:5; 15:5; Gal 1:18; 2:9, 11, 14).

**CERTIFICATE**
Dt 24: 1 and so he writes her a **c** of divorce,
Mt 5: 31 let him give her a **c** of divorce.'
Mk 10: 4 a man to write a **c** of dismissal

**CHAFF**
Ps 1: 4 are like **c** that the wind drives away.
Lk 3: 17 **c** he will burn with unquenchable

**CHAINED*** → CHAINS
2Ti 2: 9 the point of being **c** like a criminal.
But the word of God is not **c.**

**CHAINS** → CHAINED
Eph 6: 20 for which I am an ambassador in **c.**
Heb 11: 36 and even **c** and imprisonment.
2Pe 2: 4 them to **c** of deepest darkness

**CHALDEANS**
Ge 15: 7 who brought you from Ur of the **C,**
Da 1: 4 the literature and language of the **C.**

**CHANGE** → CHANGED, CHANGERS
Ex 32: 12 **c** your mind and do not bring
Nu 23: 19 a mortal, that he should **c** his mind.
1Sa 15: 29 will not recant or **c** his mind;
Ps 46: 2 not fear, though the earth should **c,**
Jer 18: 8 I will **c** my mind about the disaster
Jas 1: 17 is no variation or shadow due to **c.**

**CHANGED** → CHANGE
1Co 15: 51 will not all die, but we will all be **c,**
Heb 1: 12 and like clothing they will be **c.**

**CHANGERS** → CHANGE
Mk 11: 15 overturned the tables of the money **c**
Jn 2: 15 poured out the coins of the money **c**

**CHARACTER**
Ro 5: 4 endurance produces **c,** and **c** produces

**CHARGE**
Mt 25: 21 I will put you in **c** of many things;
Mk 15: 26 The inscription of the **c** against him
Ro 8: 33 will bring any **c** against God's elect?
1Co 9: 18 I may make the gospel free of **c,**

**CHARIOT** → CHARIOTS
2Ki 2: 11 a **c** of fire and horses of fire
Ps 104: 3 you make the clouds your **c,**

**CHARIOTS** → CHARIOT
Ex 14: 28 waters returned and covered the **c**
Zec 6: 1 and saw four **c** coming out from

**CHARM**
Pr 31: 30 **C** is deceitful, and beauty is vain,
Sir 7: 19 for her **c** is worth more than gold.
26: 15 A modest wife adds **c** to **c,**

**CHASTISEMENT** → CHASTISES
La 4: 6 the **c** of my people has been greater
Sir 16: 12 Great as his mercy, so also is his **c;**

**CHASTISES*** → CHASTISEMENT
Heb 12: 6 and **c** every child whom he accepts.

**CHEEK**
Ps 3: 7 you strike all my enemies on the **c;**
Mt 5: 39 if anyone strikes you on the right **c,**

**CHEERFUL**
Pr 15: 13 A glad heart makes a **c** countenance,
17: 22 A **c** heart is a good medicine,
2Co 9: 7 for God loves a **c** giver.
Jas 5: 13 Are any **c?** They should sing songs

**CHEMOSH**
1Ki 11: 7 Solomon built a high place for **C**
Jer 48: 7 **C** shall go out into exile,

**CHERUB** → CHERUBIM
2Ch 3: 11 touched the wing of the other **c;**
Ps 18: 10 He rode on a **c,** and flew;
Eze 10: 14 the first face was that of the **c,**
28: 14 an anointed **c** as guardian I placed

**CHERUBIM** → CHERUB
Ge 3: 24 the garden of Eden he placed the **c,**
Ex 25: 18 You shall make two **c** of gold;
Ps 80: 1 You who are enthroned upon the **c,**
Heb 9: 5 the **c** of glory overshadowing the

**CHIEF**
Ps 118: 22 has become the **c** cornerstone.
Mk 15: 3 the **c** priests accused him of many
1Pe 5: 4 And when the **c** shepherd appears,

**CHILD** → CHILDBEARING, CHILDISH, CHILDREN
Ge 17: 17 **c** be born to a man who is a hundred
1Ki 3: 7 although I am only a little **c;**
Isa 11: 6 and a little **c** shall lead them.
49: 15 Can a woman forget her nursing **c,**
Hos 11: 1 When Israel was a **c,** I loved him,
Mt 1: 18 with **c** from the Holy Spirit.
Mk 10: 15 the kingdom of God as a little **c**
Lk 2: 12 you will find a **c** wrapped in bands
1Co 13: 11 When I was a **c,** I spoke like a **c,**
Gal 4: 7 So you are no longer a slave but a **c,**
Rev 12: 4 that he might devour her **c** as soon

**CHILDBEARING*** → CHILD, BEAR
Ge 3: 16 greatly increase your pangs in **c;**
1Ti 2: 15 Yet she will be saved through **c,**

**CHILDISH*** → CHILD
1Co 13: 11 an adult, I put an end to **c** ways.

**CHILDREN** → CHILD
Ex 12: 26 And when your **c** ask you,
Dt 6: 7 Recite them to your **c** and talk about
11: 19 Teach them to your **c,** talking about
Pr 22: 6 Train **c** in the right way, and when
Mt 3: 9 stones to raise up **c** to Abraham.
Lk 18: 16 "Let the little **c** come to me,
Jn 1: 12 he gave power to become **c** of God,
Ro 8: 14 by the Spirit of God are **c** of God.
1Co 14: 20 do not be **c** in your thinking;
Eph 6: 4 do not provoke your **c** to anger,
Heb 12: 7 God is treating you as **c;**
1Jn 3: 10 The **c** of God and the **c** of the devil
Sir 30: 1 CONCERNING **C** He who loves his son

**CHOOSE** → CHOOSES, CHOSE, CHOSEN
Dt 12: 14 at the place that the LORD will **c**
30: 19 **C** life so that you and your
Jos 24: 15 **c** this day whom you will serve,
Jn 15: 16 You did not **c** me but I chose you.

**CHOOSES** → CHOOSE
Ro 9: 18 he has mercy on whomever he **c,**

**CHOSE** → CHOOSE
Dt 4: 37 he **c** their descendants after them.
Ne 9: 7 God who **c** Abram and brought him
Mk 13: 20 for the sake of the elect, whom he **c,**
1Co 1: 27 God **c** what is foolish in the world

**CHOSEN** → CHOOSE
Isa 42: 1 my servant, whom I uphold, my **c,**
Mt 22: 14 For many are called, but few are **c."**
Ro 11: 5 there is a remnant, **c** by grace.
1Pe 2: 6 a cornerstone **c** and precious;
2: 9 you are a **c** race, a royal priesthood.

**CHRIST** → CHRIST'S, CHRISTIAN, CHRISTIANS, MESSIAH
Jn 4: 25 Messiah is coming" (who is called **C**).
Ro 5: 6 right time **C** died for the ungodly.
8: 35 will separate us from the love of **C?**
10: 4 For **C** is the end of the law so that
1Co 1: 23 but we proclaim **C** crucified,
3: 11 that foundation is Jesus **C.**
11: 1 Be imitators of me, as I am of **C.**
15: 3 **C** died for our sins in accordance
Gal 5: 1 For freedom **C** has set us free.
Eph 4: 15 into him who is the head, into **C,**
Php 1: 21 to me, living is **C** and dying is gain.
2: 11 should confess that Jesus **C** is Lord,
Col 1: 27 **C** in you, the hope of glory.
Rev 20: 4 reigned with **C** a thousand years.

**CHRIST'S** → CHRIST
Col 1: 24 what is lacking in **C** afflictions
1Pe 4: 13 as you are sharing **C** sufferings,

**CHRISTIAN*** → CHRIST
Ac 26: 28 persuading me to become a **C?"**
1Pe 4: 16 Yet if any of you suffers as a **C,**

**CHRISTIANS*** → CHRIST
Ac 11: 26 the disciples were first called **"C."**

**CHURCH**
Mt 16: 18 and on this rock I will build my **c,**
Ac 8: 1 persecution began against the **c**
1Co 12: 28 has appointed in the **c** first apostles,
14: 4 those who prophesy build up the **c.**
Col 1: 18 He is the head of the body, the **c;**

**CIRCUMCISE** → CIRCUMCISED, CIRCUMCISION
Ge 17: 11 shall **c** the flesh of your foreskins,
Dt 10: 16 **C**, then, the foreskin of your heart,
Lk 1: 59 the eighth day they came to **c** the
Jn 7: 22 and you **c** a man on the sabbath.

**CIRCUMCISED** → CIRCUMCISE
Ge 17: 10 Every male among you shall be **c.**
Ac 15: 1 **c** according to the custom of Moses,
Gal 6: 13 **c** do not themselves obey the law,
Col 2: 11 also you were **c** with a spiritual
1Mc 1: 60 the women who had their children **c,**

**CIRCUMCISION** → CIRCUMCISE
Ro 2: 29 and real **c** is a matter of the heart—
Gal 5: 6 For in Christ Jesus neither **c**

**CISTERN**
Pr 5: 15 Drink water from your own **c,**
Jer 38: 6 Jeremiah and threw him into the **c**

**CITIES** → CITY
Ge 19: 25 and he overthrew those **c,**
Jos 20: 2 'Appoint the **c** of refuge,
Rev 16: 19 and the **c** of the nations fell.

**CITIZENSHIP**
Php 3: 20 But our **c** is in heaven,

**CITY** → CITIES
1Ch 11: 7 it was called the **c** of David.
Ps 127: 1 Unless the LORD guards the **c,**
Pr 31: 31 her works praise her in the **c** gates.
La 1: 1 lonely sits the **c** that once was full
Da 9: 24 for your people and your holy **c:**
Mt 5: 14 A **c** built on a hill cannot be hid.
Heb 12: 22 Zion and to the **c** of the living God,
Rev 21: 2 I saw the holy **c,** the new Jerusalem,

**CLAP**
Ps 47: 1 **C** your hands, all you peoples;
Isa 55: 12 all the trees of the field shall **c** their

**CLAY**
Isa 45: 9 Does the **c** say to the one who
Jer 18: 6 Just like the **c** in the potter's hand,
Da 2: 33 its feet partly of iron and partly of **c.**
Ro 9: 21 Has the potter no right over the **c,**
2Co 4: 7 But we have this treasure in **c** jars,
2Ti 2: 20 and silver but also of wood and **c,**

**CLEAN** → CLEANSE, CLEANSING
Ge 7: 2 seven pairs of all **c** animals,
Lev 10: 10 and between the unclean and the **c;**
Ps 51: 7 with hyssop, and I shall be **c;**
Mk 7: 19 (Thus he declared all foods **c.**)
Jn 13: 10 you are **c,** though not all of you."
Ac 10: 15 "What God has made **c,**
Heb 10: 22 with our hearts sprinkled **c** from

**CLEANSE** → CLEAN
Ps 51: 2 and **c** me from my sin.
1Jn 1: 9 **c** us from all unrighteousness.
Sir 38: 10 and **c** your heart from all sin.

**CLEANSING** → CLEAN
Eph 5: 26 by **c** her with the washing of water
2Pe 1: 9 and is forgetful of the **c** of past sins.

**CLEAR** → CLEARING
Ps 19: 8 the commandment of the LORD is **c,**
Na 1: 3 LORD will by no means **c** the guilty.
1Ti 3: 9 of the faith with a **c** conscience.
Rev 21: 18 the city is pure gold, **c** as glass.

**CLEARING*** → CLEAR
Ex 34: 7 yet by no means **c** the guilty,

**CLEFT**
Ex 33: 22 I will put you in a **c** of the rock,
Dt 14: 6 the hoof and has the hoof **c** in two,

**CLINGS**
Ge 2: 24 and his mother and **c** to his wife,
Ps 119: 25 My soul **c** to the dust;
Heb 12: 1 weight and the sin that **c** so closely,

**CLOAK**
Ex 4: 6 "Put your hand inside your **c.**"
22: 26 you take your neighbor's **c** in pawn,
1Sa 24: 4 cut off a corner of Saul's **c.**
Mk 15: 17 And they clothed him in a purple **c;**
Heb 1: 12 like a **c** you will roll them up,

**CLOTH** → SACKCLOTH
Isa 64: 6 righteous deeds are like a filthy **c.**
Lk 2: 7 and wrapped him in bands of **c,**

**CLOTHE** → CLOTHED, CLOTHES, CLOTHING
Col 3: 14 Above all, **c** yourselves with love,
1Pe 5: 5 you must **c** yourselves with humility

**CLOTHED** → CLOTHE
2Co 5: 2 longing to be **c** with our heavenly
Gal 3: 27 have **c** yourselves with Christ.
Rev 12: 1 a woman **c** with the sun,

**CLOTHES** → CLOTHE
Zec 3: 3 Joshua was dressed with filthy **c** as
Lk 8: 44 and touched the fringe of his **c,**

**CLOTHING** → CLOTHE
Ps 22: 18 and for my **c** they cast lots.
Mt 25: 36 I was naked and you gave me **c,**
Jn 19: 24 and for my **c** they cast lots."

**CLOUD** → CLOUDS
Ex 13: 21 went in front of them in a pillar of **c**
1Ki 8: 10 a **c** filled the house of the LORD,
18: 44 a little **c** no bigger than a person's
Eze 10: 4 the house was filled with the **c,**
Mk 9: 7 Then a **c** overshadowed them,
Lk 21: 27 'the Son of Man coming in a **c'**
Heb 12: 1 by so great a **c** of witnesses,
Rev 14: 14 on the **c** was one like the Son of Man,

**CLOUDS** → CLOUD
Ge 9: 13 I have set my bow in the **c,**
Da 7: 13 being coming with the **c** of heaven.
Mt 24: 30 'the Son of Man coming on the **c** of
1Th 4: 17 be caught up in the **c** together with
Rev 1: 7 He is coming with the **c;**
2Es 13: 3 this man flew with the **c** of heaven;

**CLUSTER**
Nu 13: 23 from there a branch with a single **c**

**COALS**
Ps 11: 6 On the wicked he will rain **c** of fire
Pr 25: 22 will heap **c** of fire on their heads,
Ro 12: 20 will heap burning **c** on their heads."

**CODE***
Ro 2: 27 condemn you that have the written **c**
7: 6 slaves not under the old written **c**

**COIN***
Mt 17: 27 open its mouth, you will find a **c;**
22: 19 Show me the **c** used for the tax."
Lk 15: 9 I have found the **c** that I had lost.'

**COLD**
Zec 14: 6 that day there shall not be either **c**
Mt 24: 12 the love of many will grow **c.**
Rev 3: 16 lukewarm, and neither **c** nor hot,

**COLLECTOR** → COLLECTORS
Mt 10: 3 Thomas and Matthew the tax **c;**
Lk 18: 10 one a Pharisee and the other a tax **c.**
19: 2 he was a chief tax **c** and was rich.

**COLLECTORS** → COLLECTOR
Mt 5: 46 Do not even the tax **c** do the same?
11: 19 a friend of tax **c** and sinners!'

**COLT**
Ge 49: 11 his donkey's **c** to the choice vine,
Zec 9: 9 and riding on a donkey, on a **c,**
Jn 12: 15 coming, sitting on a donkey's **c!"**

**COME** → COMES, COMING
Ps 144: 5 your heavens, O LORD, and **c** down;
Isa 59: 20 And he will **c** to Zion as Redeemer,
Zec 14: 5 Then the LORD my God will **c,**
Mt 6: 10 Your kingdom **c.** Your will be done,
Lk 7: 20 'Are you the one who is to **c,**
Jn 6: 37 the Father gives me will **c** to me,
1Co 16: 22 Our Lord, **c!**
Rev 1: 4 who is and who was and who is to **c,**
22: 20 Amen. **C,** Lord Jesus!

**COMES** → COME
Ps 118: 26 one who **c** in the name of the LORD.
Lk 19: 38 "Blessed is the king who **c** in the
Jn 14: 6 No one **c** to the Father except through

**COMFORT** → COMFORTED, COMFORTER, COMFORTERS, COMFORTS
Ps 23: 4 your rod and your staff—they **c** me.
Isa 40: 1 **C,** O **c** my people, says your God.

**COMFORTED** → COMFORT
Ps 86: 17 LORD, have helped me and **c** me.
Isa 49: 13 For the LORD has **c** his people,
Jer 31: 15 she refuses to be **c** for her children,
Mt 5: 4 those who mourn, for they will be **c.**

**COMFORTER*** → COMFORT
La 1: 16 for a **c** is far from me,

**COMFORTERS** → COMFORT
Job 16: 2 miserable **c** are you all.
Ps 69: 20 and for **c,** but I found none.

**COMFORTS** → COMFORT
Isa 66: 13 As a mother **c** her child, so I will

**COMING** → COME
Mal 3: 2 But who can endure the day of his **c,**
Heb 10: 37 is **c** will come and will not delay;
2Pe 3: 4 "Where is the promise of his **c?**
Rev 22: 20 "Surely I am **c** soon."

**COMMAND** → COMMANDED, COMMANDING, COMMANDMENT, COMMANDMENTS
Ex 34: 11 Observe what I **c** you today.
Dt 1: 26 rebelled against the **c** of the LORD
Jdg 2: 2 But you have not obeyed my **c.**

**COMMANDED** → COMMAND
Ge 7: 5 Noah did all that the LORD had **c**
Ex 40: 32 as the LORD had **c** Moses.
Jos 1: 16 "All that you have **c** us we will do,
Mt 28: 20 to obey everything that I have **c** you.
Jn 14: 31 but I do as the Father has **c** me,

**COMMANDING** → COMMAND
Dt 4: 40 **c** you today for your own well-being
30: 11 **c** you today is not too hard for you,

**COMMANDMENT** → COMMAND
Dt 6: 1 Now this is the **c**—the statutes
Ps 19: 8 **c** of the LORD is clear,
Mt 22: 38 This is the greatest and first **c.**
Ro 7: 12 and the **c** is holy and just and good.
Gal 5: 14 law is summed up in a single **c,**
1Jn 3: 23 this is his **c,** that we should believe

**COMMANDMENTS** → COMMAND
Ex 20: 6 those who love me and keep my **c.**
Dt 4: 13 to observe, that is, the ten **c;**
Ps 119: 66 for I believe in your **c.**
Pr 10: 8 The wise of heart will heed **c,**
Ecc 12: 13 Fear God, and keep his **c;**
Mt 22: 40 On these two **c** hang all the law and
Jn 14: 15 If you love me, you will keep my **c.**
1Co 7: 19 obeying the **c** of God is everything.
1Jn 5: 3 And his **c** are not burdensome,
Rev 14: 12 those who keep the **c** of God and
Sir 1: 26 If you desire wisdom, keep the **c,**
1Mc 2: 19 and have chosen to obey his **c,**

**COMMENDABLE*** → COMMENDATION
Php 4: 8 whatever is pleasing, whatever is **c,**

**COMMENDATION*** → COMMENDABLE, COMMENDED
1Co 4: 5 each one will receive **c** from God.

**COMMENDED** → COMMENDATION
2Co 6: 4 but as servants of God we have **c**
Heb 11: 39 though they were **c** for their faith,

**COMMIT** → COMMITS
Dt 5: 18 Neither shall you **c** adultery.
2Ki 17: 21 and made them **c** great sin.
Ps 31: 5 Into your hand I **c** my spirit;
Pr 16: 3 **C** your work to the LORD,
Mt 5: 27 'You shall not **c** adultery.'

**COMMITS** → COMMIT
Jn 8:34 who **c** sin is a slave to sin.
Jas 4:17 to do and fails to do it, **c** sin.

**COMMON**
Lev 10:10 between the holy and the **c**,
Eze 22:26 between the holy and the **c**,
Ac 2:44 and had all things in **c**;
1Co 10:13 has overtaken you that is not **c**
12:7 of the Spirit for the **c** good.

**COMMUNION***
2Co 13:13 the **c** of the Holy Spirit be with all

**COMPANY**
1Co 15:33 "Bad **c** ruins good morals."

**COMPARE** → COMPARING
Pr 8:11 all that you may desire cannot **c**
Isa 40:18 or what likeness **c** with him?
Lk 7:31 I **c** the people of this generation,

**COMPARING*** → COMPARE
Ro 8:18 of this present time are not worth **c**

**COMPASSION** → COMPASSIONATE
Dt 32:36 will vindicate his people, have **c**
Ps 103:13 As a father has **c** for his children,
Isa 54:8 with everlasting love I will have **c**
Jer 12:15 I will again have **c** on them,
Hos 11:8 my **c** grows warm and tender.
Mt 14:14 had **c** for them and cured their sick.
Ro 9:15 I will have **c** on whom I have **c.**"
Col 3:12 clothe yourselves with **c,** kindness,
Sir 18:13 the **c** of the Lord is for every living

**COMPASSIONATE** → COMPASSION
Ex 22:27 I will listen, for I am **c.**
Jas 5:11 how the Lord is **c** and merciful.
Sir 2:11 For the Lord is **c** and merciful;

**COMPETE** → COMPETING, COMPETITION
Jer 12:5 how will you **c** with horses?
1Co 9:24 that in a race the runners all **c,**

**COMPETING*** → COMPETE
Gal 5:26 **c** against one another, envying one
2Ti 2:5 is crowned without **c** according to

**COMPLAIN** → COMPLAINING, COMPLAINT
Nu 14:27 shall this wicked congregation **c**
Jer 2:29 Why do you **c** against me?
1Co 10:10 And do not **c** as some of them did,

**COMPLAINING** → COMPLAIN
Ex 16:7 has heard your **c** against the LORD.
1Pe 4:9 hospitable to one another without **c.**

**COMPLAINT** → COMPLAIN
Job 10:1 I will give free utterance to my **c;**
Ps 142:2 I pour out my **c** before him;
Hab 2:1 he will answer concerning my **c.**
Col 3:13 if anyone has a **c** against another,

**COMPLETE** → COMPLETED, COMPLETION
Ge 15:16 iniquity of the Amorites is not yet **c.**
Lev 23:3 seventh day is a sabbath of **c** rest,
Jn 4:34 him who sent me and to **c** his work.
Rev 6:11 until the number would be **c**

**COMPLETED** → COMPLETE
Jer 25:12 Then after seventy years are **c,**
Da 11:36 until the period of wrath is **c,**

**COMPLETION** → COMPLETE
Php 1:6 work among you will bring it to **c**
Jas 2:22 faith was brought to **c** by the works.

**CONCEALED**
Lk 9:45 its meaning was **c** from them,
Sir 11:4 his works are **c** from humankind.

**CONCEIT** → CONCEITED
Php 2:3 nothing from selfish ambition or **c,**
1Ti 3:6 he may be puffed up with **c** and fall
Sir 3:24 For their **c** has led many astray,

**CONCEITED*** → CONCEIT
Gal 5:26 Let us not become **c,** competing
1Ti 6:4 is **c,** understanding nothing,

**CONCEIVE** → CONCEIVED
Mt 1:23 the virgin shall **c** and bear a son,
Lk 1:31 you will **c** in your womb and bear

**CONCEIVED** → CONCEIVE
1Co 2:9 ear heard, nor the human heart **c,**
Jas 1:15 desire has **c,** it gives birth to sin,

**CONDEMN** → CONDEMNATION, CONDEMNED
Job 10:2 I will say to God, Do not **c** me:
Ps 109:31 save them from those who would **c**
Lk 11:31 of this generation and **c** them.
Jn 3:17 not send the Son into the world to **c**
Ro 8:34 Who is to **c?**
1Jn 3:21 Beloved, if our hearts do not **c** us,

**CONDEMNATION** → CONDEMN
Mk 12:40 They will receive the greater **c.**"
Ro 5:18 one man's trespass led to **c** for all,
1Ti 3:6 fall into the **c** of the devil.
Jas 5:12 so that you may not fall under **c.**

**CONDEMNED** → CONDEMN
Mt 12:37 and by your words you will be **c.**"
Lk 24:20 handed him over to be **c** to death
Jn 3:18 Those who believe in him are not **c;**
16:11 the ruler of this world has been **c.**
1Co 11:32 disciplined so that we may not be **c**

**CONDUCT**
Eze 22:31 returned their **c** upon their heads,
Ro 13:3 For rulers are not a terror to good **c,**
1Pe 1:15 be holy yourselves in all your **c;**
Tob 4:14 and discipline yourself in all your **c.**
Sir 37:17 The mind is the root of all **c;**

**CONFESS** → CONFESSES, CONFESSION
Lev 5:5 you shall **c** the sin that you have
16:21 **c** over it all the iniquities of the
Ps 38:18 **c** my iniquity; I am sorry for my sin.
Php 2:11 should **c** that Jesus Christ is Lord,
1Jn 1:9 If we **c** our sins, he who is faithful
Rev 3:5 will **c** your name before my Father
Sir 4:26 Do not be ashamed to **c** your sins,

**CONFESSES** → CONFESS
Ro 10:10 **c** with the mouth and so is saved.
1Jn 2:23 who **c** the Son has the Father also.

**CONFESSION** → CONFESS
Da 9:4 to the LORD my God and made **c,**
1Ti 6:12 for which you made the good **c** in
Heb 4:14 let us hold fast to our **c.**

**CONFIDENCE**
Ps 118:8 in the LORD than to put **c** in mortals.
Php 3:3 and have no **c** in the flesh—
Heb 10:19 we have **c** to enter the sanctuary

**CONFIRM** → CONFIRMED
2Sa 7:25 **c** it forever; do as you have
Ps 119:38 **C** to your servant your promise,
Ro 15:8 that he might **c** the promises given

**CONFIRMED** → CONFIRM
Ps 105:10 which he **c** to Jacob as a statute,
2Pe 1:19 the prophetic message more fully **c.**

**CONFORMED***
Ro 8:29 predestined to be **c** to the image of
12:2 Do not be **c** to this world,
Php 3:21 may be **c** to the body of his glory,
1Pe 1:14 do not be **c** to the desires that you

**CONFUSE** → CONFUSION
Ge 11:7 go down, and **c** their language there,

**CONFUSION** → CONFUSE
Ex 23:27 and will throw into **c** all the people
Dt 28:28 blindness, and **c** of mind;
Ps 44:7 and have put to **c** those who hate us.

**CONGREGATION**
Lev 4:13 **c** of Israel errs unintentionally
Nu 1:2 a census of the whole **c** of Israelites,
Ps 1:5 nor sinners in the **c** of the righteous;
Heb 2:12 the midst of the **c** I will praise you."

**CONQUER** → CONQUERED, CONQUERORS, CONQUERS
Rev 17:14 and the Lamb will **c** them,
21:7 who **c** will inherit these things,

**CONQUERED** → CONQUER
Jn 16:33 take courage; I have **c** the world!"
Heb 11:33 who through faith **c** kingdoms,
1Jn 2:13 because you have **c** the evil one.
Rev 15:2 who had **c** the beast and its image

**CONQUERORS** → CONQUER
Ro 8:37 all these things we are more than **c**

**CONQUERS** → CONQUER
1Jn 5:4 victory that **c** the world, our faith.
Rev 2:7 To everyone who **c,** I will give

**CONSCIENCE**
Ro 2:15 their own **c** also bears witness;
1Co 8:7 and their **c,** being weak, is defiled.
1Ti 1:5 a good **c,** and sincere faith.
Heb 9:14 purify our **c** from dead works to
1Pe 3:21 as an appeal to God for a good **c,**

**CONSECRATE** → CONSECRATED
Ex 13:2 **C** to me all the firstborn;
40:9 and **c** it and all its furniture,

**CONSECRATED** → CONSECRATE
Lev 8:30 Thus he **c** Aaron and his vestments,
2Ch 7:16 now I have chosen and **c** this house
Ne 3:1 They **c** it and set up its doors;
1Mc 4:48 of the temple, and **c** the courts.

**CONSIDER** → CONSIDERED
Ex 33:13 **C** too that this nation is your people.
1Sa 12:24 for **c** what great things he has done
Ps 107:43 and **c** the steadfast love of the LORD.
Lk 12:27 **C** the lilies, how they grow:
Ro 6:11 must **c** yourselves dead to sin
Jas 1:2 of any kind, **c** it nothing but joy,

**CONSIDERED** → CONSIDER
Pr 17:28 fools who keep silent are **c** wise;
Heb 11:11 he **c** him faithful who had promised.

**CONSOLATION**
Lk 2:25 looking forward to the **c** of Israel,
2Co 1:3 of mercies and the God of all **c,**

**CONSPIRACY** → CONSPIRE
Isa 8:12 not call **c** all that this people calls **c,**

**CONSPIRE** → CONSPIRACY, CONSPIRED
Ps 2:1 Why do the nations **c,**
83:5 They **c** with one accord;

**CONSPIRED** → CONSPIRE
Da 6:6 So the presidents and satraps **c**
Mt 26:4 and they **c** to arrest Jesus by stealth

**CONSULT** → CONSULTED
1Sa 28:8 And he said, "**C** a spirit for me,
Isa 31:1 Holy One of Israel or **c** the LORD!
40:14 did he **c** for his enlightenment,
Sir 8:17 Do not **c** with fools, for they cannot

**CONSULTED** → CONSULT
1Ch 10:13 had **c** a medium, seeking guidance,
Eze 20:3 Lord GOD, I will not be **c** by you.

**CONSUME** → CONSUMED, CONSUMING
Ex 32:12 **c** them from the face of the earth"?
Nu 16:21 so that I may **c** them in a moment.
Mt 6:19 where moth and rust **c** and where
Jn 2:17 "Zeal for your house will **c** me."

**CONSUMED** → CONSUME
Ex 3:2 bush was blazing, yet it was not **c.**
Ps 69:9 zeal for your house that has **c** me;
90:7 For we are **c** by your anger;
Zep 3:8 all the earth shall be **c.**
Gal 5:15 that you are not **c** by one another.

**CONSUMING** → CONSUME
Heb 12:29 for indeed our God is a **c** fire.

**CONTAIN**
2Ch 2:6 even highest heaven, cannot **c** him?
Jn 21:25 world itself could not **c** the books

**CONTEMPT**
Da 12:2 some to shame and everlasting **c.**
Mk 9:12 sufferings and be treated with **c?**
Heb 6:6 and are holding him up to **c.**

**CONTEND**
Isa 49: 25 I will **c** with those who **c** with you,
Jude 1: 3 to **c** for the faith that was once for

**CONTENT** → CONTENTMENT
2Co 12: 10 Therefore I am **c** with weaknesses,
Php 4: 11 learned to be **c** with whatever I have
Heb 13: 5 and be **c** with what you have;
Sir 29: 23 Be **c** with little or much,

**CONTENTMENT*** → CONTENT
1Ti 6: 6 gain in godliness combined with **c;**

**CONTINUE**
1Ch 17: 27 that it may **c** forever before you.
Jn 8: 31 "If you **c** in my word,
Ac 13: 43 urged them to **c** in the grace of God.
1Th 3: 8 if you **c** to stand firm in the Lord.
Heb 8: 9 for they did not **c** in my covenant,

**CONTRARY**
Gal 1: 8 a gospel **c** to what we proclaimed to
1Ti 1: 10 else is **c** to the sound teaching

**CONTRIBUTE*** → CONTRIBUTING
Ro 12: 13 **C** to the needs of the saints;

**CONTRIBUTING*** → CONTRIBUTE
Dt 16: 10 **c** a freewill offering in proportion to
Mk 12: 43 all those who are **c** to the treasury.

**CONTRITE**
Ps 51: 17 broken and **c** heart, O God, you wil
Isa 57: 15 who are **c** and humble in spirit,

**CONVERT**
Mt 23: 15 sea and land to make a single **c,**
1Ti 3: 6 He must not be a recent **c,**

**CONVICT** → CONVICTION
Dt 19: 15 to **c** a person of any crime
Jude 1: 15 to **c** everyone of all the deeds of

**CONVICTION** → CONVICT
Heb 11: 1 the **c** of things not seen.

**CONVINCE** → CONVINCED, CONVINCING
Ac 28: 23 and trying to **c** them about Jesus
2Ti 4: 2 **c,** rebuke, and encourage,

**CONVINCED** → CONVINCE
Lk 16: 31 neither will they be **c** even if
Ro 8: 38 For I am **c** that neither death, nor
2Co 5: 14 we are **c** that one has died for all;

**CONVINCING*** → CONVINCE
Ac 1: 3 to them by many **c** proofs,

**CONVOCATIONS**
Lev 23: 2 that you shall proclaim as holy **c,**

**COPPER**
Lev 26: 19 like iron and your earth like **c.**
Mk 12: 42 and put in two small **c** coins,

**COPY**
Dt 17: 18 he shall have a **c** of this law written
Heb 9: 24 a mere **c** of the true one,

**CORDS**
2Sa 22: 6 the **c** of Sheol entangled me,
Hos 11: 4 led them with **c** of human kindness,

**CORNELIUS***
First Gentile Christian (Ac 10).

**CORNER** → CORNERSTONE
Pr 1: 21 At the busiest **c** she cries out;
1Pe 2: 7 has become the very head of the **c,"**

**CORNERSTONE** → CORNER, STONE
Ps 118: 22 rejected has become the chief **c.**
Isa 28: 16 a tested stone, a precious **c,** a sure
Zec 10: 4 Out of them shall come the **c,**
Lk 20: 17 builders rejected has become the **c"?**
Eph 2: 20 with Christ Jesus himself as the **c.**
1Pe 2: 6 laying in Zion a stone, a **c** chosen

**CORRECT** → CORRECTING, CORRECTION
Ps 141: 5 let the faithful **c** me.
Jer 10: 24 **C** me, O LORD, but in just measure;
Sir 42: 8 Do not be ashamed to **c** the stupid

**CORRECTING*** → CORRECT
2Ti 2: 25 **c** opponents with gentleness.

**CORRECTION** → CORRECT
Jer 5: 3 but they refused to take **c.**
2Ti 3: 16 **c,** and for training in righteousness,

**CORRUPT** → CORRUPTION
Ge 6: 11 Now the earth was **c** in God's sight,
Ac 2: 40 yourselves from this **c** generation."
Eph 4: 22 your old self, **c** and deluded

**CORRUPTION** → CORRUPT
Ac 2: 31 nor did his flesh experience **c.'**
2Pe 1: 4 you may escape from the **c**

**COST**
1Ch 21: 24 burnt offerings that **c** me nothing."
Lk 14: 28 not first sit down and estimate the **c,**

**COUNCIL** → COUNCILS
Jer 23: 18 who has stood in the **c** of the LORD
Mt 26: 59 the whole **c** were looking for false

**COUNCILS*** → COUNCIL
Mk 13: 9 for they will hand you over to **c;**

**COUNSEL** → COUNSELOR, COUNSELORS
Job 38: 2 that darkens **c** by words without
Ps 2: 2 and the rulers take **c** together,
33: 11 The **c** of the LORD stands forever,
Isa 28: 29 he is wonderful in **c,** and excellent

**COUNSELOR** → COUNSEL
Isa 9: 6 and he is named Wonderful **C,**
Ro 11: 34 Or who has been his **c?"**
Sir 42: 21 and he needs no one to be his **c.**

**COUNSELORS** → COUNSEL
Pr 11: 14 in an abundance of **c** there is safety.
24: 6 in abundance of **c** there is victory.

**COUNT** → COUNTED, COUNTS
Ge 13: 16 if one can **c** the dust of the earth,
1Ch 21: 1 incited David to **c** the people of
Ps 90: 12 So teach us to **c** our days

**COUNTED** → COUNT
Ecc 1: 15 and what is lacking cannot be **c.**
Mt 10: 30 even the hairs of your head are all **c.**

**COUNTENANCE**
Nu 6: 26 the LORD lift up his **c** upon you,
Ps 89: 15 O LORD, in the light of your **c;**
Pr 15: 13 A glad heart makes a cheerful **c,**

**COUNTRY**
Ge 12: 1 "Go from your **c** and your kindred
Jer 31: 17 shall come back to their own **c.**
Jn 4: 44 has no honor in the prophet's own **c).**
Heb 11: 16 they desire a better **c,** that is,

**COURAGE** → COURAGEOUS
1Ch 22: 13 Be strong and of good **c.**
Jn 16: 33 But take **c;** I have conquered

**COURAGEOUS** → COURAGE
Jos 1: 6 Be strong and **c;** for you shall put
Da 10: 19 Be strong and **c!"**
1Co 16: 13 stand firm in your faith, be **c,**
1Mc 2: 64 be **c** and grow strong in the law,

**COURT** → COURTS
Ex 27: 9 shall make the **c** of the tabernacle.
Pr 25: 8 do not hastily bring into **c;**
Da 7: 10 **c** sat in judgment, and the books
Mt 5: 25 while you are on the way to **c**
1Co 6: 6 believer goes to **c** against a believer

**COURTS** → COURT
Ps 84: 10 in your **c** is better than a thousand
96: 8 an offering, and come into his **c.**

**COVENANT** → COVENANTS
Ge 6: 18 But I will establish my **c** with you;
9: 9 I am establishing my **c** with you
15: 18 the LORD made a **c** with Abram,
Ex 2: 24 remembered his **c** with Abraham,
19: 5 you obey my voice and keep my **c,**
24: 7 Then he took the book of the **c,**
40: 3 put in it the ark of the **c,**
Lev 26: 42 will I remember my **c** with Jacob;
Jdg 2: 1 'I will never break my **c** with you.
1Ki 8: 23 keeping **c** and steadfast love
Ezr 10: 3 now let us make a **c** with our God
Job 31: 1 "I have made a **c** with my eyes;
Ps 105: 8 He is mindful of his **c** forever,
Isa 61: 8 I will make an everlasting **c** with
Jer 31: 31 when I will make a new **c** with
Eze 16: 60 establish with you an everlasting **c.**
Da 9: 27 a strong **c** with many for one week,
Mal 3: 1 The messenger of the **c** in whom
Lk 22: 20 is the new **c** in my blood.
1Co 11: 25 "This cup is the new **c** in my blood.
2Co 3: 6 be ministers of a new **c,** not of letter
Heb 7: 22 become the guarantee of a better **c.**
12: 24 the mediator of a new **c,**
Rev 11: 19 the ark of his **c** was seen within his
Jdt 9: 13 planned cruel things against your **c,**
Sir 28: 7 remember the **c** of the Most High,
1Mc 1: 15 and abandoned the holy **c.**
2Es 3: 15 You made an everlasting **c** with

**COVENANTS** → COVENANT
Ro 9: 4 the adoption, the glory, the **c,**
Gal 4: 24 an allegory: these women are two **c.**

**COVER**
Ex 33: 22 I will **c** you with my hand
Ps 139: 11 "Surely the darkness shall **c** me,
Isa 11: 9 as the waters **c** the sea.
Jas 5: 20 and will **c** a multitude of sins.

**COVET**
Ex 20: 17 shall not **c** your neighbor's house;
Ro 7: 7 had not said, "You shall not **c."**
Jas 4: 2 you **c** something and cannot obtain

**CRAFTINESS** → CRAFTY
Ro 1: 29 of envy, murder, strife, deceit, **c,**
1Co 3: 19 "He catches the wise in their **c,"**

**CRAFTY** → CRAFTINESS
Ge 3: 1 serpent was more **c** than any other
2Co 12: 16 (you say) since I was **c,** I took you

**CRAVING***
Nu 11: 4 rabble among them had a strong **c;**
Ps 78: 30 But before they had satisfied their **c,**

**CREATE** → CREATED, CREATION, CREATOR
Ps 51: 10 **C** in me a clean heart, O God,
Isa 65: 17 to **c** new heavens and a new earth;
Eph 2: 15 **c** in himself one new humanity

**CREATED** → CREATE
Ge 1: 1 In the beginning when God **c** the
1: 27 So God **c** humankind in his image,
Dt 32: 6 Is not he your father, who **c** you,
Pr 8: 22 The LORD **c** me at the beginning of
Mal 2: 10 Has not one God **c** us?
1Co 11: 9 Neither was man **c** for the sake of
Eph 2: 10 **c** in Christ Jesus for good works,
Col 1: 16 all things have been **c** through him
1Ti 4: 4 For everything **c** by God is good,
Rev 4: 11 for you **c** all things, and by your will
Jdt 13: 18 who **c** the heavens and the earth,
Wis 2: 23 for God **c** us for incorruption,
Sir 1: 4 Wisdom was **c** before all other

**CREATION** → CREATE
Ge 2: 3 all the work that he had done in **c.**
Mk 10: 6 But from the beginning of **c,**
Ro 8: 19 the **c** waits with eager longing for
2Co 5: 17 anyone is in Christ, there is a new **c;**
Col 1: 15 invisible God, the firstborn of all **c;**
2Pe 3: 4 they were from the beginning of **c!"**

**CREATOR** → CREATE
Ecc 12: 1 Remember your **c** in the days of
Ro 1: 25 served the creature rather than the **C**
Col 3: 10 according to the image of its **c.**
1Pe 4: 19 to a faithful **C,**

**CREATURE** → CREATURES
Ge 2: 19 the man called every living **c,**
Ro 1: 25 worshiped and served the **c** rather

**CREATURES** → CREATURE
Lev 11: 2 these are the **c** that you may eat.
Ps 104: 24 the earth is full of your **c.**

Eze 1: 5 was something like four living **c.**
Rev 4: 6 are four living **c.**, full of eyes
19: 4 elders and the four living **c** fell

**CREDIT** → CREDITED
Lk 6: 33 what **c** is that to you?
1Pe 2: 20 for doing wrong, what **c** is that?

**CREDITED** → CREDIT
Lev 7: 18 nor shall it be **c** to the one who

**CREEPING**
Ge 1: 24 cattle and **c** things and wild animals
Ps 148: 10 **c** things and flying birds!

**CRIED** → CRY
Ex 2: 23 under their slavery, and **c** out.
Nu 20: 16 when we **c** to the LORD, he heard
Jdg 3: 9 the Israelites **c** out to the LORD,
Ps 22: 5 To you they **c,** and were saved;
Mt 27: 46 Jesus **c** with a loud voice,

**CRIMINAL** → CRIMINALS
Jn 18: 30 "If this man were not a **c,**
2Ti 2: 9 the point of being chained like a **c.**
1Pe 4: 15 suffer as a murderer, a thief, a **c,**

**CRIMINALS** → CRIMINAL
Lk 23: 32 Two others also, who were **c,**

**CRIMSON**
Ex 25: 4 purple, and **c** yarns and fine linen,
Lev 14: 4 cedarwood and **c** yarn and hyssop
Jos 2: 21 she tied the **c** cord in the window.

**CROOKED**
Dt 32: 5 a perverse and **c** generation.
Ps 18: 26 the **c** you show yourself perverse.
Ecc 1: 15 What is **c** cannot be made straight,
Lk 3: 5 and the **c** shall be made straight,
Php 2: 15 in the midst of a **c** and perverse

**CROSS** → CROSSROADS
Dt 31: 3 your God himself will **c** over before
Mk 15: 30 and come down from the **c!"**
Lk 14: 27 the **c** and follow me cannot be my
1Co 1: 18 the **c** is foolishness to those who are
Gal 6: 14 never boast of anything except the **c**
Php 2: 8 of death—even death on a **c.**
Col 1: 20 peace through the blood of his **c.**
Heb 12: 2 was set before him endured the **c,**

**CROSSROADS*** → CROSS, ROAD
Pr 8: 2 at the **c** she takes her stand;
Jer 6: 16 Stand at the **c,** and look, and ask for

**CROW***
Lk 22: 34 the cock will not **c** this day.

**CROWD** → CROWDS
Mk 8: 2 "I have compassion for the **c,**
14: 43 a **c** with swords and clubs,

**CROWDS** → CROWD
Mt 7: 28 **c** were astounded at his teaching,

**CROWN** → CROWNED, CROWNS
Lev 8: 9 the golden ornament, the holy **c,**
Pr 4: 9 will bestow on you a beautiful **c."**
La 5: 16 The **c** has fallen from our head;
Jn 19: 2 soldiers wove a **c** of thorns and put
Php 4: 1 my joy and **c,** stand firm in the Lord
2Ti 4: 8 there is reserved for me the **c**
1Pe 5: 4 the **c** of glory that never fades away.
Rev 6: 2 Its rider had a bow; a **c** was given
14: 14 with a golden **c** on his head,
Sir 1: 18 fear of the Lord is the **c** of wisdom,

**CROWNED** → CROWN
Ps 8: 5 and **c** them with glory and honor.
2Ti 2: 5 no one is **c** without competing
Heb 2: 9 now **c** with glory and honor

**CROWNS** → CROWN
Rev 4: 10 they cast their **c** before the throne,

**CRUCIFIED** → CRUCIFY
Mt 27: 22 All of them said, "Let him be **c!"**
Lk 24: 7 **c,** and on the third day rise again."
Ac 4: 10 whom you **c,** whom God raised
Ro 6: 6 We know that our old self was **c**
1Co 1: 23 but we proclaim Christ **c,**
Gal 2: 19 I have been **c** with Christ;

**CRUCIFY** → CRUCIFIED, CRUCIFYING
Lk 23: 21 they kept shouting, "**C,** c him!"
Jn 19: 15 asked them, "Shall I **c** your King?"

**CRUCIFYING*** → CRUCIFY
Heb 6: 6 they are **c** again the Son of God

**CRUSH** → CRUSHED
Job 6: 9 that it would please God to **c** me,
Isa 53: 10 it was the will of the LORD to **c** him
Da 2: 40 it shall **c** and shatter all these.
Mt 21: 44 it will **c** anyone on whom it falls."
Ro 16: 20 will shortly **c** Satan under your feet.

**CRUSHED** → CRUSH
Ps 34: 18 and saves the **c** in spirit.
2Co 4: 8 afflicted in every way, but not **c;**

**CRY** → CRIED, CRYING
Ex 2: 23 Out of the slavery their **c** for help
Ps 5: 2 Listen to the sound of my **c,**
130: 1 Out of the depths I **c** to you.
Hab 1: 2 how long shall I **c** for help.
Mk 15: 37 Then Jesus gave a loud **c**

**CRYING** → CRY
Ge 4: 10 your brother's blood is **c** out to me
Mk 1: 3 the voice of one **c** out in the
Rev 21: 4 **c** and pain will be no more.

**CRYSTAL**
Eze 1: 22 shining like **c,** spread out above
Rev 22: 1 river of the water of life, bright as **c,**

**CUP**
Ps 23: 5 my head with oil; my **c** overflows.
Jer 25: 15 my hand this **c** of the wine of wrath,
Mt 10: 42 gives even a **c** of cold water to one
26: 39 if it is possible, let this **c** pass from
Mk 10: 38 you able to drink the **c** that I drink,
Lk 22: 17 he took a **c,** and after giving thanks
1Co 11: 25 **c** is the new covenant in my blood.
Rev 14: 10 unmixed into the **c** of his anger,

**CURE** → CURED
Hos 5: 13 But he is not able to **c** you or heal

**CURED** → CURE
Mt 8: 16 and **c** all who were sick.
Ac 5: 16 and they were all **c.**

**CURSE** → ACCURSED, CURSED, CURSES
Ge 8: 21 "I will never again **c** the ground
12: 3 and the one who curses you I will **c;**
Nu 22: 12 not **c** the people, for they are blessed
Dt 21: 23 hung on a tree is under God's **c.**
23: 5 God turned the **c** into a blessing
Job 2: 9 **C** God, and die."
Ps 109: 28 Let them **c,** but you will bless.
Mal 4: 6 come and strike the land with a **c.**
Mk 14: 71 he began to **c,** and he swore an oath,
Lk 6: 28 bless those who **c** you, pray
Ro 12: 14 bless and do not **c** them.
Gal 3: 13 Christ redeemed us from the **c** of the
law by becoming a **c** for us—
Sir 4: 5 and give no one reason to **c** you;

**CURSED** → CURSE
Ge 3: 17 **c** is the ground because of you;
9: 25 **"C** be Canaan; lowest of slaves
27: 29 **C** be everyone who curses you,
Nu 23: 8 can I curse whom God has not **c?**
Job 3: 1 Job opened his mouth and **c** the day
Mk 11: 21 fig tree that you **c** has withered."
Gal 3: 10 **"C** is everyone who does not
Heb 6: 8 and on the verge of being **c;**
Rev 16: 9 but they **c** the name of God,

**CURSES** → CURSE
Lev 24: 15 who **c** God shall bear the sin.
2Ch 34: 24 all the **c** that are written in the book

**CURTAIN**
Ex 26: 31 You shall make a **c** of blue, purple,
2Ch 3: 14 And Solomon made the **c** of blue
Lk 23: 45 the **c** of the temple was torn in two.
Heb 10: 20 that he opened for us through the **c**

**CUSTOM** → CUSTOMS
Est 9: 23 Jews adopted as a **c**
Jn 18: 39 But you have a **c** that I release

**CUSTOMS** → CUSTOM
2Ki 17: 8 the **c** of the nations whom the LORD
Ac 16: 21 advocating **c** that are not lawful for
1Mc 1: 42 all should give up their particular **c.**

**CUT**
Ge 9: 11 never again shall all flesh be **c** off
Ps 37: 9 For the wicked shall be **c** off,
Isa 53: 8 **c** off from the land of the living,
Da 2: 45 a stone was **c** from the mountain
Mt 3: 10 does not bear good fruit is **c** down
Mk 9: 43 hand causes you to stumble, **c** it off;
Ro 11: 22 otherwise you also will be **c** off.

**CYMBAL*** → CYMBALS
1Co 13: 1 I am a noisy gong or a clanging **c.**

**CYMBALS** → CYMBAL
2Sa 6: 5 tambourines and castanets and **c.**
Ne 12: 27 and with singing, with **c,**
Ps 150: 5 Praise him with clanging **c;**

**CYRUS**
Persian king who allowed exiles to return (2Ch 36:22-Ezr 1:8), to rebuild temple (Ezr 5:13-6:14), as appointed by the LORD (Isa 44:28-45:13).

## D

**DAGON**
Jdg 16: 23 a great sacrifice to their god **D,**
1Sa 5: 2 and brought it into the house of **D**

**DAILY** → DAY
Mt 6: 11 Give us this day our **d** bread.
Lk 9: 23 take up their cross **d** and follow me.

**DAMASCUS**
Ac 9: 3 was going along and approaching **D,**

**DAN**
1. Son of Jacob by Bilhah (Ge 30:4-6; 35:25; 46:23). Tribe of blessed (Ge 49:16-17; Dt 33:22), numbered (Nu 1:39; 26:43), allotted land (Jos 19:40-48; Eze 48:1), failed to fully possess (Jdg 1:34-35), failed to support Deborah (Jdg 5:17), possessed Dan (Jdg 18).
2. Northernmost city in Israel (Ge 14:14; Jdg 18; 20:1).

**DANCE** → DANCED
Ps 150: 4 Praise him with tambourine and **d;**
Ecc 3: 4 a time to mourn, and a time to **d;**
Lk 7: 32 the flute for you, and you did not **d;**

**DANCED** → DANCE
2Sa 6: 14 David **d** before the LORD with all
Mt 14: 6 the daughter of Herodias **d** before

**DANIEL** → =BELTESHAZZAR
1. Hebrew exile to Babylon, name changed to Belteshazzar (Da 1:6-7). Refused to eat unclean food (Da 1:8-21). Interpreted Nebuchadnezzar's dreams (Da 2; 4), writing on the wall (Da 5). Thrown into lion's den (Da 6). Visions of (Da 7-12). In deuterocanonical books of Bel and the Dragon, Susanna.
2. Son of David (1Ch 3:1).

**DARE**
Mt 22: 46 **d** to ask him any more questions.
Ro 5: 7 someone might actually **d** to die.

**DARIUS**
1. King of Persia (Ezr 4:5), allowed rebuilding of temple (Ezr 5-6).
2. Mede who conquered Babylon (Da 5:31).

**DARK** → DARKEST, DARKNESS
Ps 139: 12 even the darkness is not **d** to you;
Lk 12: 3 whatever you have said in the **d** will
2Pe 1: 19 as to a lamp shining in a **d** place,

**DARKEST*** → DARK
Ps 23: 4 though I walk through the **d** valley,

**DARKNESS** → DARK
Ge 1: 2 the earth was a formless void and **d**

Ex 10:22 was dense **d** in all the land of Egypt
Dt 5:23 you heard the voice out of the **d,**
Isa 9:2 walked in **d** have seen a great light;
Joel 2:31 The sun shall be turned to **d,**
Zep 1:15 a day of **d** and gloom,
Mt 4:16 who sat in **d** have seen a great light,
6:23 light in you is **d,** how great is the **d!**
Jn 1:5 light shines in the **d,** and the **d** did not
Eph 5:8 For once you were **d,** but now in
Col 1:13 from the power of **d** and transferred
1Jn 1:5 God is light and in him there is no **d**

### DATHAN*

Involved in Korah's rebellion against Moses and Aaron (Nu 16:1-27; 26:9; Dt 11:6; Ps 106:17; Sir 45:18; 4Mc 2:17).

### DAUGHTER → DAUGHTERS

Ex 2:5 **d** of Pharaoh came down to bathe at
Est 2:7 Mordecai adopted her as his own **d.**
Ps 9:14 and, in the gates of **d** Zion,
La 2:1 in his anger has humiliated **d** Zion!
Mic 7:6 the **d** rises up against her mother,
Zec 9:9 Rejoice greatly, O **d** Zion!
Mt 14:6 the **d** of Herodias danced before the
Lk 12:53 against **d** and **d** against mother.
Jdt 10:12 replied, "I am a **d** of the Hebrews,

### DAUGHTERS → DAUGHTER

Ge 6:4 of God went in to the **d** of humans,
19:36 the **d** of Lot became pregnant by their
Nu 27:1 the **d** of Zelophehad came forward.
Dt 12:31 even burn their sons and their **d** in
Job 42:15 no women so beautiful as Job's **d;**
Joel 2:28 sons and your **d** shall prophesy,
Ac 2:17 sons and your **d** shall prophesy,
2Co 6:18 and you shall be my sons and **d,**
1Pe 3:6 You have become her **d** as long

### DAVID

Son of Jesse (Ru 4:17-22; 1Ch 2:13-15), ancestor of Jesus (Mt 1:1-17; Lk 3:31). Wives and children (1Sa 18; 25:39-44; 2Sa 3:2-5; 5:13-16; 11:27; 1Ch 3:1-9).

Anointed king by Samuel (1Sa 16:1-13). Musician to Saul (1Sa 16:14-23; 18:10). Killed Goliath (1Sa 17). Relation with Jonathan (1Sa 18:1-4; 19-20; 23:16-18; 2Sa 1). Disfavor of Saul (1Sa 18:6-23:29). Spared Saul's life (1Sa 24; 26). Among Philistines (1Sa 21:10-14; 27-30). Lament for Saul and Jonathan (2Sa 1).

Anointed king of Judah (2Sa 2:1-11). Conflict with house of Saul (2Sa 2-4). Anointed king of Israel (2Sa 5:1-4; 1Ch 11:1-3). Conquered Jerusalem (2Sa 5:6-10; 1Ch 11:4-9). Brought ark to Jerusalem (2Sa 6; 1Ch 13; 15-16). The LORD promised eternal dynasty (2Sa 7; 1Ch 17; Ps 132). Showed kindness to Mephibosheth (2Sa 9). Adultery with Bathsheba, murder of Uriah (2Sa 11-12). Son Amnon raped daughter Tamar; killed by Absalom (2Sa 13). Absalom's revolt (2Sa 14-17); death (2Sa 18). Sheba's revolt (2Sa 20). Victories: Philistines (2Sa 5:17-25; 21:15-22; 1Ch 14:8-17; 20:4-8). Ammonites (2Sa 10; 1Ch 19), various (2Sa 8; 1Ch 18). Mighty men (2Sa 23:8-39; 1Ch 11-12). Punished for numbering army (2Sa 24; 1Ch 21). Appointed Solomon king (1Ki 1:28-2:9). Prepared for building of temple (1Ch 22-29). Last words (2Sa 23:1-7). Death (1Ki 2:10-12; 1Ch 29:28).

Psalmist (Mt 22:43-45), musician (Am 6:5), prophet (2Sa 23:2-7; Ac 1:16; 2:30).

Psalms of: 2 (Ac 4:25), 3-32, 34-41, 51-65, 68-70, 86, 95 (Heb 4:7), 101, 103, 108-110, 122, 124, 131, 133, 138-145. Deuterocanonical Ps 151 ascribed to.

### DAWN → DAWNS

Isa 14:12 from heaven, O Day Star, son of **D!**
Hos 6:3 his appearing is as sure as the **d;**

### DAWNS → DAWN

Ps 97:11 Light **d** for the righteous,
2Pe 1:19 until the day **d** and the morning star

### DAY → DAILY, DAYS

Ge 1:5 God called the light **D,** and
8:22 **d** and night, shall not cease."
Ex 13:21 of them in a pillar of cloud by **d,**
20:8 Remember the sabbath **d,** and keep
Jos 1:8 you shall meditate on it **d** and night,
Ps 1:2 his law they meditate **d** and night.
118:24 is the **d** that the LORD has made;
Isa 66:8 Shall a land be born in one **d?**
Joel 1:15 For the **d** of the LORD is near.
Zec 14:1 See, a **d** is coming for the LORD.
Mal 3:2 who can endure the **d** of his coming,
Mt 25:13 you know neither the **d** nor the hour.
Lk 11:3 Give us each **d** our daily bread.
24:46 to rise from the dead on the third **d,**
Jn 6:40 I will raise them up on the last **d."**
Ro 14:5 Some judge one **d** to be better than
2Co 6:2 see, now is the **d** of salvation!
1Th 5:2 very well that the **d** of the Lord
2Pe 3:8 the Lord one **d** is like a thousand years.
3:10 **d** of the Lord will come like a thief,
1Jn 4:17 have boldness on the **d** of judgment.
Rev 1:10 I was in the spirit on the Lord's **d,**
16:14 for battle on the great **d** of God

### DAYS → DAY

Ge 1:14 and for seasons and for **d** and years,
7:4 rain on the earth for forty **d** and forty
Ex 24:18 on the mountain for forty **d** and
1Ki 19:8 that food forty **d** and forty nights
Ps 90:10 The **d** of our life are seventy years,
Mk 1:13 He was in the wilderness forty **d,**
Eph 5:16 of the time, because the **d** are evil.
2Ti 3:1 in the last **d** distressing times will
Heb 1:2 last **d** he has spoken to us by a Son,
1Mc 4:56 dedication of the altar for eight **d,**
2Es 14:42 They sat forty **d;** they wrote

### DEACON* → DEACONS

Ro 16:1 a **d** of the church at Cenchreae.

### DEACONS → DEACON

1Ti 3:8 **D** likewise must be serious, not

### DEAD → DEATH, DIE, DIED, DYING

Nu 16:48 stood between the **d** and the living;
Dt 18:11 or who seeks oracles from the **d.**
Ps 115:17 The **d** do not praise the LORD,
Ecc 9:4 a living dog is better than a **d** lion.
Mt 8:22 and let the **d** bury their own **d."**
Mk 12:27 God not of the **d,** but of the living;
Lk 24:5 look for the living among the **d?**
Ro 6:11 must consider yourselves **d** to sin
Eph 2:1 You were **d** through the trespasses
Col 1:18 the firstborn from the **d,**
1Pe 4:5 ready to judge the living and the **d.**
Rev 1:5 witness, the firstborn of the **d,**
20:12 And the **d** were judged according to

### DEAF

Ex 4:11 Who makes them mute or **d,**
Isa 29:18 On that day the **d** shall hear the
Lk 7:22 the lepers are cleansed, the **d** hear,

### DEATH → DEAD

Dt 30:19 that I have set before you life and **d,**
Ru 1:17 if even **d** parts me from you!"
Ps 22:15 you lay me in the dust of **d.**
Pr 18:21 **D** and life are in the power of the
SS 8:6 for love is strong as **d,**
Isa 25:7 he will swallow up **d** forever.
Hos 13:14 O **D,** where are your plagues?
Mt 16:28 standing here who will not taste **d**
Lk 1:79 in darkness and in the shadow of **d,**
Jn 5:24 but has passed from **d** to life.
Ro 4:25 handed over to **d** for our trespasses
6:23 For the wages of sin is **d,**
1Co 15:55 "Where, O **d,** is your victory?
2Co 2:16 to the one a fragrance from **d** to **d,**
Heb 2:14 through **d** he might destroy the one
who has the power of **d,**
1Jn 3:14 that we have passed from **d** to life
Rev 1:18 I have the keys of **D** and of Hades.
20:14 **D** and Hades were thrown into the lake
21:4 **D** will be no more;
Sir 15:17 Before each person are life and **d,**

### DEBAUCHERY

Ro 13:13 not in **d** and licentiousness,
Eph 5:18 drunk with wine, for that is **d;**

### DEBORAH

Prophetess; led victory over Canaanites (Jdg 4-5).

### DEBT → DEBTS, INDEBTED

Mt 18:27 released him and forgave him the **d.**

### DEBTS → DEBT

Dt 15:1 you shall grant a remission of **d.**
Mt 6:12 And forgive us our **d,** as we

### DECEIT → DECEITFUL, DECEIVE, DECEIVED, DECEIVERS

Dt 32:4 A faithful God, without **d,**
Isa 53:9 and there was no **d** in his mouth.
Ro 1:29 Full of envy, murder, strife, **d,**
1Pe 2:22 and no **d** was found in his mouth."

### DECEITFUL → DECEIT

Ps 35:20 but they conceive **d** words
Zep 3:13 nor shall a **d** tongue be found
1Ti 4:1 by paying attention to **d** spirits

### DECEIVE → DECEIT

Eph 5:6 Let no one **d** you with empty words,
1Jn 1:8 that we have no sin, we **d** ourselves,
Rev 20:8 to **d** the nations at the four corners

### DECEIVED → DECEIT

Gal 6:7 Do not be **d;** God is not mocked,
1Ti 2:14 was not **d,** but the woman was **d**

### DECEIVERS* → DECEIT

Tit 1:10 rebellious people, idle talkers and **d,**
2Jn 1:7 Many **d** have gone out into the

### DECISION

Pr 16:33 but the **d** is the LORD'S alone.
Joel 3:14 multitudes, in the valley of **d!**

### DECLARE → DECLARED

Ps 50:6 The heavens **d** his righteousness.
Col 4:3 that we may **d** the mystery of Christ,

### DECLARED → DECLARE

Isa 41:26 Who **d** it from the beginning,
Mk 7:19 (Thus he **d** all foods clean.)
Ro 1:4 and was **d** to be Son of God

### DECREASE

Jn 3:30 He must increase, but I must **d."**

### DECREE → DECREED, DECREES

Ps 2:7 I will tell of the **d** of the LORD:
Lk 2:1 **d** went out from Emperor Augustus

### DECREED → DECREE

Da 9:24 "Seventy weeks are **d** for your

### DECREES → DECREE

Dt 6:2 and keep all his **d** and his
Ps 19:7 the **d** of the LORD are sure,
119:2 Happy are those who keep his **d,**

### DEDICATED → DEDICATION

1Ki 8:63 all the people of Israel **d** the house
Lk 21:5 beautiful stones and gifts **d** to God,

### DEDICATION → DEDICATED

2Ch 7:9 the **d** of the altar seven days and
Ezr 6:16 the **d** of this house of God with joy.
1Mc 4:56 the **d** of the altar for eight days,

### DEED → DEEDS

Ecc 12:14 will bring every **d** into judgment,
Jer 32:10 I signed the **d,** sealed it,
Mt 19:16 good **d** must I do to have eternal life
Col 3:17 And whatever you do, in word or **d,**

### DEEDS → DEED

Dt 3:24 in heaven or on earth can perform **d**
Ps 9:1 I will tell of all your wonderful **d.**
Jer 50:29 Repay her according to her **d;**
Ob 1:15 your **d** shall return on your own
Lk 23:41 getting what we deserve for our **d,**
Ro 2:6 repay according to each one's **d:**
Rev 15:3 "Great and amazing are your **d,**
19:8 the righteous **d** of the saints.

### DEEP → DEPTH, DEPTHS

Ge 1:2 darkness covered the face of the **d,**
7:11 the fountains of the great **d** burst

Ro 8:26 with sighs too **d** for words.

**DEFECT**
1Pe 1:19 like that of a lamb without **d** or

**DEFEND**
Ps 72:4 May he **d** the cause of the poor of
Pr 31:9 **d** the rights of the poor and needy.
Jdt 5:21 for their Lord and God will **d** them.

**DEFILE** → DEFILED
Lev 11:43 you shall not **d** yourselves
Nu 35:34 You shall not **d** the land
Mk 7:15 things that come out are what **d.**"

**DEFILED** → DEFILE
Ps 79:1 they have **d** your holy temple;
1Mc 1:37 they even **d** the sanctuary.

**DEFRAUD***
Lev 19:13 You shall not **d** your neighbor;
Mk 10:19 You shall not **d;**
1Co 6:8 you yourselves wrong and **d**—

**DEITY**
Col 2:9 whole fullness of **d** dwells bodily,

**DELAY**
Dt 7:10 He does not **d** but repays
Ps 70:5 my deliverer; O LORD, do not **d!**
Heb 10:37 will come and will not **d;**

**DELIGHT** → DELIGHTS
1Sa 15:22 "Has the LORD as great **d** in burnt
Ps 1:2 but their **d** is in the law of the LORD,
40:8 I **d** to do your will, O my God;
Pr 8:30 I was daily his **d,** rejoicing before
Ro 7:22 For I **d** in the law of God in my
Sir 1:27 fidelity and humility are his **d.**

**DELIGHTS** → DELIGHT
Ps 5:4 not a God who **d** in wickedness;
Isa 42:1 chosen, in whom my soul **d;**

**DELILAH***
Philistine who betrayed Samson (Jdg 16:4-22).

**DELIVER** → DELIVERANCE, DELIVERED, DELIVERER, DELIVERS
Ex 3:8 to **d** them from the Egyptians,
Dt 32:39 and no one can **d** from my hand.
Da 3:17 able to **d** us from the furnace
6:20 able to **d** you from the lions?"
Mt 27:43 let God **d** him now,

**DELIVERANCE** → DELIVER
Ex 14:13 and see the **d** that the LORD will
Est 4:14 **d** will rise for the Jews from another
Ps 3:8 **D** belongs to the LORD;
Php 1:19 this will turn out for my **d.**
Jdt 8:17 while we wait for his **d,**

**DELIVERED** → DELIVER
Isa 66:8 Shall a nation be **d** in one moment?
Da 12:1 at that time your people shall be **d,**

**DELIVERER** → DELIVER
Ps 140:7 O LORD, my Lord, my strong **d,**
Ro 11:26 "Out of Zion will come the **D;**

**DEMON** → DEMONIACS, DEMONIC, DEMONS
Mt 11:18 and they say, 'He has a **d';**
17:18 Jesus rebuked the **d,** and it came out
Jn 8:48 you are a Samaritan and have a **d?"**
10:21 not the words of one who has a **d.**
Tob 3:8 the wicked **d** Asmodeus had killed
6:8 of a man or woman afflicted by a **d**

**DEMONIACS** → DEMON
Mt 4:24 **d,** epileptics, and paralytics, and he
8:28 two **d** coming out of the tombs met

**DEMONIC*** → DEMON
Rev 16:14 These are **d** spirits, performing signs

**DEMONS** → DEMON
Dt 32:17 They sacrificed to **d,** not God,
Ps 106:37 and their daughters to the **d;**
Lk 11:18 that I cast out the **d** by Beelzebul.
1Co 10:20 not want you to be partners with **d.**
1Ti 4:1 deceitful spirits and teachings of **d,**
Jas 2:19 Even the **d** believe—and shudder.
Rev 9:20 their hands or give up worshiping **d**
Bar 4:7 by sacrificing to **d** and not

**DEN**
Jer 7:11 a **d** of robbers in your sight?
Da 6:7 shall be thrown into a **d** of lions.
Mk 11:17 you have made it a **d** of robbers."

**DENARIUS**
Mk 12:15 Bring me a **d** and let me see it."

**DENIED** → DENY
Mt 26:70 But he **d** it before all of them,
1Ti 5:8 has **d** the faith and is worse than an
Rev 3:8 my word and have not **d** my name.

**DENIES** → DENY
Lk 12:9 but whoever **d** me before others
1Jn 2:22 the liar but the one who **d** that Jesus

**DENY** → DENIED, DENIES
Lev 16:29 you shall **d** yourselves,
23:27 you shall **d** yourselves
Mt 16:24 let them **d** themselves and take up
2Ti 2:12 if we **d** him, he will also **d** us;
2Pe 2:1 **d** the Master who bought them—

**DEPART** → DEPARTED
Ge 49:10 The scepter shall not **d** from Judah,
Jos 1:8 law shall not **d** out of your mouth;
Ps 34:14 **D** from evil, and do good;
Php 1:23 my desire is to **d** and be with Christ,

**DEPARTED** → DEPART
1Sa 4:21 "The glory has **d** from Israel,"

**DEPRAVED** → DEPRAVITY
1Ti 6:5 among those who are **d** in mind
2Pe 2:10 who indulge their flesh in **d** lust,

**DEPRAVITY** → DEPRAVED
Lev 20:14 that there may be no **d** among you.

**DEPRIVE**
Dt 24:17 not **d** a resident alien or an orphan
1Co 7:5 not **d** one another except perhaps

**DEPTH** → DEEP
Mt 13:5 since they had no **d** of soil.
Ro 11:33 O the **d** of the riches and wisdom
Eph 3:18 and length and height and **d,**

**DEPTHS** → DEEP
Ps 130:1 Out of the **d** I cry to you, O LORD.
1Co 2:10 even the **d** of God.

**DESCENDANTS**
Ge 15:18 saying, "To your **d** I give this land,
Dt 4:37 he chose their **d** after them.
Isa 44:3 I will pour my spirit upon your **d,**
Ro 9:7 Abraham's children are his true **d;**
Gal 3:7 who believe are the **d** of Abraham.

**DESCENDED** → DESCENDING
Ex 34:5 LORD **d** in the cloud and stood
Jn 3:13 except the one who **d** from heaven,
Eph 4:9 does it mean but that he had also **d**

**DESCENDING** → DESCENDED
Ge 28:12 angels of God were ascending and **d**
Mk 1:10 and the Spirit **d** like a dove
Jn 1:51 the angels of God ascending and **d**

**DESERT** → DESERTED
Ps 106:14 and put God to the test in the **d;**
Isa 40:3 make straight in the **d** a highway
Mk 8:4 with bread here in the **d?"**

**DESERTED** → DESERT
Mt 26:56 all the disciples **d** him and fled.

**DESERVE**
Pr 14:14 and the good, what their deeds **d.**
Lk 23:15 he has done nothing to **d** death.
Ac 26:31 man is doing nothing to **d** death
Rev 2:23 give to each of you as your works **d.**

**DESIRE** → DESIRED, DESIRES
Ge 3:16 your **d** shall be for your husband,
Ps 20:4 May he grant you your heart's **d,**
Pr 3:15 nothing you **d** can compare with her
Hos 6:6 I **d** steadfast love and not sacrifice,
Mt 9:13 learn what this means, 'I **d** mercy,
Jas 1:14 But one is tempted by one's own **d,**
1Jn 2:16 the **d** of the flesh, the **d** of the eyes,

**DESIRED** → DESIRE
Ps 19:10 More to be **d** are they than gold,
Lk 22:15 I have eagerly **d** to eat this Passover

**DESIRES** → DESIRE
Ps 37:4 he will give you the **d** of your heart.
Gal 5:16 do not gratify the **d** of the flesh.
1Ti 2:4 who **d** everyone to be saved
2Ti 4:3 teachers to suit their own **d,**
Sir 18:30 Do not follow your base **d,**

**DESOLATE** → DESOLATES, DESOLATING
Ex 23:29 or the land would become **d** and
Da 11:31 the abomination that makes **d.**
Mt 23:38 See, your house is left to you, **d.**
1Mc 1:39 sanctuary became **d** like a desert;

**DESOLATES** → DESOLATE
Da 9:27 shall be an abomination that **d,**

**DESOLATING** → DESOLATE
Mk 13:14 the **d** sacrilege set up where it ought
1Mc 1:54 erected a **d** sacrilege on the altar

**DESPAIR** → DESPAIRED
2Co 4:8 perplexed, but not driven to **d;**

**DESPAIRED*** → DESPAIR
2Co 1:8 crushed that we **d** of life itself.

**DESPISE** → DESPISED
Job 5:17 not **d** the discipline of the Almighty.
Ps 51:17 contrite heart, O God, you will not **d**
Pr 1:7 fools **d** wisdom and instruction.
Lk 16:13 devoted to the one and **d** the other.

**DESPISED** → DESPISE
Isa 53:3 He was **d** and rejected by others;
1Co 1:28 God chose what is low and **d** in the

**DESTINED**
Eph 1:5 He **d** us for adoption as his children
1Th 5:9 For God has **d** us not for wrath but
1Pe 1:11 to the sufferings **d** for Christ

**DESTROY** → DESTROYED, DESTROYER, DESTRUCTION
Ge 6:13 to **d** them along with the earth.
Est 3:6 Haman plotted to **d** all the Jews,
Mt 10:28 rather fear him who can **d** both soul
Jn 10:10 comes only to steal and kill and **d.**
Jas 4:12 who is able to save and to **d.**
1Jn 3:8 to **d** the works of the devil.

**DESTROYED** → DESTROY
Da 6:26 His kingdom shall never be **d,**
1Co 15:26 The last enemy to be **d** is death.
2Co 5:1 if the earthly tent we live in is **d,**

**DESTROYER** → DESTROY
Ex 12:23 not allow the **d** to enter your houses
1Co 10:10 and were destroyed by the **d.**

**DESTRUCTION** → DESTROY
Pr 16:18 Pride goes before **d,** and a haughty
Mt 7:13 and the road is easy that leads to **d,**
Ro 9:22 objects of wrath that are made for **d;**
2Pe 3:16 and unstable twist to their own **d,**

**DEVIL**
Mt 4:1 wilderness to be tempted by the **d.**
Lk 8:12 **d** comes and takes away the word
Jn 8:44 You are from your father the **d,**
Eph 4:27 and do not make room for the **d.**
6:11 to stand against the wiles of the **d.**
1Ti 3:6 fall into the condemnation of the **d.**
Heb 2:14 the power of death, that is, the **d,**
Jas 4:7 Resist the **d,** and he will flee from
1Pe 5:8 lion your adversary the **d** prowls
1Jn 3:8 to destroy the works of the **d.**
Jude 1:9 Michael contended with the **d**
Rev 12:9 who is called the **D** and Satan,
20:2 that ancient serpent, who is the **D**

**DEVOTED**
Ps 86:2 Preserve my life, for I am **d** to you;
Mt 6:24 **d** to the one and despise the other.

**DEVOUR** → DEVOURING
Gal 5:15 you bite and **d** one another,
1Pe 5: 8 looking for someone to **d.**
Rev 12: 4 that he might **d** her child

**DEVOURING** → DEVOUR
Ex 24:17 glory of the LORD was like a **d** fire
Dt 9: 3 crosses over before you as a **d** fire:

**DEW**
Jdg 6:37 if there is **d** on the fleece alone.

**DICTATED***
Jer 36:18 "He **d** all these words to me,
2Es 14:42 and by turns they wrote what was **d,**

**DIE** → DEAD
Ge 2:17 eat of it you shall **d."**
3: 4 to the woman, "You will not **d;**
Ex 11: 5 firstborn in the land of Egypt shall **d**
Ru 1:17 Where you **d,** I will **d—**
Job 2: 9 Curse God, and **d."**
Pr 10:21 but fools **d** for lack of sense.
Ecc 3: 2 a time to be born, and a time to **d;**
Isa 22:13 eat and drink, for tomorrow we **d."**
Jer 31:30 But all shall **d** for their own sins;
Mt 26:35 "Even though I must **d** with you,
Jn 11:26 and believes in me will never **d.**
Ro 14: 8 if we **d,** we **d** to the Lord;
1Co 15:32 eat and drink, for tomorrow we **d."**
Heb 9:27 it is appointed for mortals to **d** once,

**DIED** → DEAD
Ro 5: 6 right time Christ **d** for the ungodly.
1Co 15: 3 Christ **d** for our sins in accordance
Gal 2:19 the law I **d** to the law,

**DIFFERENT**
2Co 11: 4 or a **d** gospel from the one you
Gal 1: 6 and are turning to a **d** gospel—

**DIFFICULT**
Da 4: 9 and that no mystery is too **d**
Jn 6:60 teaching is **d;** who can accept it?"

**DILIGENCE** → DILIGENTLY
Ro 12: 8 the leader, in **d;**
Heb 6:11 each one of you to show the same **d**

**DILIGENTLY** → DILIGENCE
Dt 4: 6 You must observe them **d,**
Pr 8:17 and those who seek me **d** find me.

**DINAH***
Only daughter of Jacob, by Leah (Ge 30:21; 46:15). Raped by Shechem; avenged by Simeon and Levi (Ge 34).

**DIRECT** → DIRECTS
Ps 119:128 I **d** my steps by all your precepts;
2Th 3: 5 the Lord **d** your hearts to the love

**DIRECTS** → DIRECT
Pr 16: 9 but the LORD **d** the steps.
Jas 3: 4 wherever the will of the pilot **d.**

**DISAPPOINT***
Ro 5: 5 and hope does not **d** us,

**DISASTER**
Ex 32:12 your mind and do not bring **d**
Dt 28:20 The LORD will send upon you **d,**
Jer 18: 8 I will change my mind about the **d**
Eze 7: 5 Thus says the Lord GOD: **D** after **d!**

**DISCERNED** → DISCERNMENT
1Co 2:14 because they are spiritually **d.**

**DISCERNING** → DISCERNMENT
Dt 4: 6 nation is a wise and **d** people!"
Pr 1: 5 in learning, and the **d** acquire skill,
1Co 1:19 discernment of the **d** I will thwart."
Sir 1:19 knowledge and **d** comprehension,

**DISCERNMENT** → DISCERNED, DISCERNING
1Ki 4:29 Solomon very great wisdom, **d,**
1Co 12:10 prophecy, to another the **d** of spirits,

**DISCIPLE** → DISCIPLES
Mt 10:24 "A **d** is not above the teacher,
Lk 14:26 even life itself, cannot be my **d.**

**DISCIPLES** → DISCIPLE
Isa 8:16 seal the teaching among my **d.**
Mt 26:56 all the **d** deserted him and fled.
28:19 therefore and make **d** of all nations,
Lk 6:13 he called his **d** and chose twelve of
Jn 8:31 in my word, you are truly my **d;**
Ac 11:26 the **d** were first called "Christians."

**DISCIPLINE** → DISCIPLINED
Job 5:17 not despise the **d** of the Almighty.
Ps 94:12 Happy are those whom you **d,**
Pr 5:23 They die for lack of **d,**
Jer 7:28 their God, and did not accept **d;**
Eph 6: 4 in the **d** and instruction of the Lord.
Heb 12: 5 not regard lightly the **d** of the Lord,
1Pe 5: 8 **D** yourselves, keep alert.
Sir 1:27 fear of the Lord is wisdom and **d,**

**DISCIPLINED** → DISCIPLINE
1Co 11:32 **d** so that we may not be condemned
Wis 3: 5 Having been **d** a little, they will

**DISEASE** → DISEASES
Mt 4:23 of the kingdom and curing every **d**
9:35 curing every **d** and every sickness.

**DISEASES** → DISEASE
Ex 15:26 **d** that I brought upon the Egyptians;
Ps 103: 3 your iniquity, who heals all your **d,**
Isa 53: 4 our infirmities and carried our **d;**
Mt 8:17 took our infirmities and bore our **d."**

**DISGRACE**
Jos 5: 9 I have rolled away from you the **d**
Pr 11: 2 When pride comes, then comes **d;**
Mt 1:19 unwilling to expose her to public **d,**
1Pe 4:16 do not consider it a **d,**
1Mc 4:58 the **d** brought by the Gentiles was

**DISGUISES**
2Co 11:14 Satan **d** himself as an angel of light.

**DISHONEST**
Jer 22:17 and heart are only on your **d** gain,
Lk 16:10 is **d** in a very little is **d** also in much.
Sir 5: 8 Do not depend on **d** wealth,

**DISHONOR**
Jn 8:49 I honor my Father, and you **d** me.
Ac 5:41 considered worthy to suffer **d** for
1Co 15:43 It is sown in **d,** it is raised in glory.

**DISMAYED**
Dt 1:21 do not fear or be **d."**
Jos 1: 9 do not be frightened or **d,**
Jer 17:18 them be **d,** but do not let me be **d;**

**DISOBEDIENT** → DISOBEY
Ne 9:26 they were **d** and rebelled
Ro 10:21 I have held out my hands to a **d**
11:30 as you were once **d** to God but have
Tit 3: 3 ourselves were once foolish, **d,** led

**DISOBEY** → DISOBEDIENT
Lev 26:27 But if, despite this, you **d** me,
1Pe 2: 8 stumble because they **d** the word,
Sir 1:28 Do not **d** the fear of the Lord;

**DISPERSION**
Jn 7:35 Does he intend to go to the **D**

**DISQUALIFIED*** → DISQUALIFY
1Co 9:27 to others I myself should not be **d.**

**DISQUALIFY*** → DISQUALIFIED
Col 2:18 Do not let anyone **d** you,

**DISSENSION** → DISSENSIONS
1Co 12:25 there may be no **d** within the body,
1Ti 6: 4 From these come envy, **d,** slander,

**DISSENSIONS** → DISSENSION
Gal 5:20 strife, jealousy, anger, quarrels, **d,**
Tit 3: 9 stupid controversies, genealogies, **d,**

**DISTINCTION** → DISTINCTIONS
Ex 8:23 I will make a **d** between my people
Lev 11:47 make a **d** between the unclean and
Eze 22:26 have made no **d** between the holy
Ro 3:22 For there is no **d,**

**DISTINCTIONS*** → DISTINCTION
Jas 2: 4 you not made **d** among yourselves,

**DISTRESS** → DISTRESSED
Dt 4:30 In your **d,** when all these things
Jdg 2:15 and they were in great **d.**
2Sa 22: 7 In my **d** I called upon the LORD:
Ps 81: 7 In **d** you called, and I rescued you;
Jer 30: 7 it is a time of **d** for Jacob:
Lk 21:23 For there will be great **d** on the earth
Ro 8:35 Will hardship, or **d,** or persecution,
Sir 2:11 and saves in time of **d.**

**DISTRESSED** → DISTRESS
La 1:20 See, O LORD, how **d** I am:

**DISTRIBUTED**
Jos 13:32 the inheritances that Moses **d**
Ps 112: 9 They have **d** freely,
Ac 4:35 it was **d** to each as any had need.
Heb 2: 4 gifts of the Holy Spirit, **d** according

**DIVIDE** → DIVIDED
Ex 14:16 your hand over the sea and **d** it,
Ps 22:18 **d** my clothes among themselves,
Lk 23:34 And they cast lots to **d** his clothing.

**DIVIDED** → DIVIDE
Lev 11: 3 Any animal that has **d** hoofs
Ps 136:13 who **d** the Red Sea in two,
Lk 11:18 If Satan also is **d** against himself,

**DIVINATION** → DIVINE
Dt 18:10 who practices **d,** or is a soothsayer,
1Sa 15:23 For rebellion is no less a sin than **d,**
2Ki 17:17 they used **d** and augury:

**DIVINE** → DIVINATION
Ro 1:20 his eternal power and **d** nature,
2Pe 1: 4 become participants of the **d** nature.

**DIVORCE** → DIVORCED
Dt 24: 1 so he writes her a certificate of **d,**
Isa 50: 1 Where is your mother's bill of **d**
Jer 3: 8 sent her away with a decree of **d;**
Mal 2:16 For I hate **d,** says the LORD,
Mt 5:31 let him give her a certificate of **d.'**
19: 3 a man to **d** his wife for any cause?"
1Co 7:11 the husband should not **d** his wife.
Sir 7:26 Do not **d** her;

**DIVORCED** → DIVORCE
Lev 21: 7 neither shall they marry a woman **d**
Mt 5:32 whoever marries a **d** woman

**DOCTOR***
Lk 4:23 this proverb, **'D,** cure yourself!'

**DOCTRINE** → DOCTRINES
Eph 4:14 blown about by every wind of **d,**
1Ti 1: 3 not to teach any different **d,**
2Ti 4: 3 people will not put up with sound **d,**
Tit 1: 9 able both to preach with sound **d**

**DOCTRINES** → DOCTRINE
Mk 7: 7 teaching human precepts as **d.'**

**DOEG***
Edomite; Saul's chief shepherd; murdered 85 priests at Nob (1Sa 21:7; 22:6-23; Ps 52).

**DOERS** → DOES, DONE
Jas 1:22 But be **d** of the word,

**DOES** → DOERS
Ps 135: 6 Whatever the LORD pleases he **d,**
Ecc 3:14 whatever God **d** endures forever;
Mk 3:35 **d** the will of God is my brother

**DOG** → DOGS
Jdg 7: 5 as a **d** laps, you shall put to one side
Pr 26:11 Like a **d** that returns to its vomit
2Pe 2:22 "The **d** turns back to its own vomit,"

**DOGS** → DOG
Mt 7: 6 "Do not give what is holy to **d;**
15:26 children's food and throw it to the **d**
Php 3: 2 Beware of the **d,** beware of the evil
Rev 22:15 Outside are the **d** and sorcerers

**DOMINION**
Ge 1:26 and let them have **d** over

Ps 22:28 For **d** belongs to the LORD.
Da 7:14 His **d** is an everlasting **d**
Ro 6:14 For sin will have no **d** over you,
Rev 1:6 to him be glory and **d** forever

**DONE** → DOERS
Mt 6:10 Your will be **d**, on earth as it is in
26:42 unless I drink it, your will be **d**."
Rev 16:17 from the throne, saying, "It is **d**!"
21:6 Then he said to me, "It is **d**!

**DONKEY**
Nu 22:30 But the **d** said to Balaam,
Jdg 15:15 he found a fresh jawbone of a **d**,
Zec 9:9 humble and riding on a **d**,
Mt 21:5 humble, and mounted on a **d**,

**DOOM** → DOOMED
Dt 32:35 their **d** comes swiftly.
Ps 81:15 and their **d** would last forever.

**DOOMED** → DOOM
Ps 102:20 to set free those who were **d** to die;
1Co 2:6 of this age, who are **d** to perish.

**DOOR** → DOORPOSTS
Mt 7:7 knock, and the **d** will be opened for
Lk 13:24 Strive to enter through the narrow **d**
Rev 3:20 I am standing at the **d**, knocking;

**DOORPOSTS** → DOOR
Ex 12:7 the blood and put it on the two **d**

**DORCAS***
Disciple; raised from the dead (Ac 9:36-43).

**DOUBLE** → DOUBLE-TONGUED
Ex 22:7 then the thief, if caught, shall pay **d**.
Dt 21:17 giving him a **d** portion of all that he
1Sa 1:5 but to Hannah he gave a **d** portion,
2Ki 2:9 me inherit a **d** share of your spirit."
Rev 18:6 and repay her **d** for her deeds;

**DOUBLE-TONGUED** → DOUBLE, TONGUE
1Ti 3:8 likewise must be serious, not **d**,
Sir 5:14 Do not be called **d** and do not

**DOUBT** → DOUBTED, DOUBTING
Mt 14:31 of little faith, why did you **d**?"
Jn 20:27 Do not **d** but believe."

**DOUBTED*** → DOUBT
Mt 28:17 they worshiped him; but some **d**.

**DOUBTING*** → DOUBT
Jas 1:6 But ask in faith, never **d**,

**DOUGH**
Ex 12:39 **d** that they had brought out of Egypt
Gal 5:9 yeast leavens the whole batch of **d**.

**DOVE**
Ge 8:8 Then he sent out the **d** from him,
Mk 1:10 Spirit descending like a **d** on him.

**DRAGON**
Isa 27:1 and he will kill the **d** that
Rev 12:3 a great red **d**, with seven heads and
20:2 seized the **d**, that ancient serpent,
Bel 1:23 in that place there was a great **d**,

**DRANK** → DRINK
Ex 24:11 beheld God, and they ate and **d**.
Mk 14:23 and all of them **d** from it.
1Co 10:4 and all **d** the same spiritual drink.

**DRAW**
Jn 12:32 will **d** all people to myself."
Jas 4:8 **D** near to God, and he will **d** near

**DREAM** → DREAMED, DREAMER, DREAMS
1Ki 3:5 LORD appeared to Solomon in a **d**
Da 7:1 Daniel had a **d** and visions of his
Joel 2:28 your old men shall **d** dreams,
Mt 1:20 of the Lord appeared to him in a **d**
Ac 2:17 and your old men shall **d** dreams.

**DREAMED** → DREAM
Ge 28:12 he **d** that there was a ladder set up
41:1 Pharaoh **d** that he was standing by
Da 2:1 Nebuchadnezzar **d** such dreams
2Es 13:1 After seven days I **d** a dream in the

**DREAMER*** → DREAM
Ge 37:19 to one another, "Here comes this **d**.

**DREAMS** → DREAM
Nu 12:6 I speak to them in **d**.
1Sa 28:6 LORD did not answer him, not by **d**,
Sir 34:7 For **d** have deceived many,

**DRIED** → DRY
Ge 8:13 the waters were **d** up from the earth;
Jos 5:1 had **d** up the waters of the Jordan
Isa 51:10 Was it not you who **d** up the sea,

**DRINK** → DRANK, DRUNK, DRUNKARD, DRUNKENNESS
Ge 19:33 So they made their father **d** wine
Ex 32:6 the people sat down to eat and **d**,
Ecc 9:7 and **d** your wine with a merry heart;
Isa 22:13 eat and **d**, for tomorrow we die."
Mt 20:22 to **d** the cup that I am about to **d**?"
Jn 18:11 not to **d** the cup that the Father has
Ro 14:17 kingdom of God is not food and **d**
1Co 12:13 we were all made to **d** of one Spirit.
Rev 14:10 also **d** the wine of God's wrath,

**DRIVE** → DROVE
Ex 23:30 Little by little I will **d** them out
Nu 33:52 you shall **d** out all the inhabitants of
Jos 13:13 Yet the Israelites did not **d** out the
Mk 11:15 to **d** out those who were selling
Jn 6:37 comes to me I will never **d** away;

**DROSS**
Ps 119:119 wicked of the earth you count as **d**;
Isa 1:25 I will smelt away your **d** as with lye
Eze 22:18 house of Israel has become **d** to me;

**DROVE** → DRIVE
Jos 24:18 the LORD **d** out before us all the
Mk 1:12 Spirit immediately **d** him out into

**DRUNK** → DRINK
Ge 9:21 some of the wine and became **d**,
1Sa 1:13 therefore Eli thought she was **d**.
SS 5:1 drink, and be **d** with love.
Jn 2:10 after the guests have become **d**.
Ac 2:15 these are not **d**, as you suppose,
Eph 5:18 Do not get **d** with wine,
Jdt 13:2 on his bed, for he was dead **d**.

**DRUNKARD** → DRINK
Pr 23:21 for the **d** and the glutton will come
Mt 11:19 they say, 'Look, a glutton and a **d**,
1Co 5:11 is an idolater, reviler, **d**, or robber.
1Ti 3:3 not a **d**, not violent but gentle,

**DRUNKENNESS** → DRINK
Ecc 10:17 for strength, and not for **d**!
Gal 5:21 **d**, carousing, and things like these.
Tob 4:15 to excess or let **d** go with you

**DRY** → DRIED
Ge 1:9 and let the **d** land appear."
Ex 14:16 may go into the sea on **d** ground.
Jos 3:17 were crossing over on **d** ground,
Jdg 6:37 and it is **d** on all the ground,
Eze 37:4 **d** bones, hear the word of the LORD.

**DUE**
1Ch 16:29 Ascribe to the LORD the glory **d** his
Ps 28:4 render them their **d** reward.
Mal 1:6 a father, where is the honor **d** me?
Ro 13:7 Pay to all what is **d** them—

**DULL**
Isa 6:10 Make the mind of this people **d**,
59:1 nor his ear too **d** to hear.
Mt 13:15 For this people's heart has grown **d**,

**DUST**
Ge 2:7 LORD God formed man from the **d**
3:14 and **d** you shall eat all the days of
13:16 offspring like the **d** of the earth;
1Sa 2:8 He raises up the poor from the **d**;
Ps 103:14 he remembers that we are **d**.
Ecc 3:20 from the **d**, and all turn to **d** again.
Na 1:3 and the clouds are the **d** of his feet.
Mt 10:14 shake off the **d** from your feet
1Co 15:47 man was from the earth, a man of **d**;

**DWELL** → DWELLING, DWELLS
Ex 25:8 so that I may **d** among them.
1Ki 8:27 But will God indeed **d** on the earth?
Ps 23:6 and I shall **d** in the house of
Eph 3:17 that Christ may **d** in your hearts
Col 1:19 fullness of God was pleased to **d**,
Rev 21:3 He will **d** with them as their God;

**DWELLING** → DWELL
Lev 26:11 I will place my **d** in your midst,
Dt 12:11 will choose as a **d** for his name:
Ps 90:1 our **d** place in all generations.
Jn 14:2 my Father's house there are many **d**
2Co 5:2 to be clothed with our heavenly **d**—
Eph 2:22 spiritually into a **d** place for God.

**DWELLS** → DWELL
Jn 14:10 but the Father who **d** in me
Ro 7:17 but sin that **d** within me.
1Co 3:16 and that God's Spirit **d** in you?
Col 2:9 the whole fullness of deity **d** bodily.

**DYING** → DEAD
2Co 6:9 as **d**, and see—we are alive;
Php 1:21 living is Christ and **d** is gain.

## E

**EAGLE** → EAGLES, EAGLES'
Eze 1:10 the left side, and the face of an **e**;
17:3 A great **e**, with great wings and long
Rev 4:7 fourth living creature like a flying **e**.
2Es 11:1 an **e** that had twelve feathered wings

**EAGLES** → EAGLE
Isa 40:31 shall mount up with wings like **e**,

**EAGLES'** → EAGLE
Ex 19:4 and how I bore you on **e** wings
Da 7:4 like a lion and had **e** wings.

**EAR** → EARS
Isa 64:4 has heard, no **e** has perceived.
Lk 22:51 he touched his **e** and healed him.
1Co 2:9 "What no eye has seen, nor **e** heard,
Rev 2:7 Let anyone who has an **e** listen

**EARLY**
Dt 11:14 the **e** rain and the later rain,
Lk 24:22 were at the tomb **e** this morning,
Jas 5:7 receives the **e** and the late rains.

**EARS** → EAR
Dt 29:4 or eyes to see, or **e** to hear.
Isa 35:5 and the **e** of the deaf unstopped;
Mt 11:15 Let anyone with **e** listen!
2Ti 4:3 sound doctrine, but having itching **e**,

**EARTH** → EARTHLY, EARTHQUAKE, EARTHQUAKES
Ge 1:1 God created the heavens and the **e**,
6:11 the **e** was corrupt in God's sight,
Ex 19:5 Indeed, the whole **e** is mine,
Ps 47:2 a great king over all the **e**.
Isa 6:3 the whole **e** is full of his glory."
65:17 to create new heavens and a new **e**;
Jer 23:24 Do I not fill heaven and **e**?
Mt 5:5 the meek, for they will inherit the **e**.
24:35 Heaven and **e** will pass away,
Lk 5:24 has authority on **e** to forgive sins"—
2Pe 3:13 wait for new heavens and a new **e**,
Rev 21:1 I saw a new heaven and a new **e**;
Sir 40:11 All that is of **e** returns to **e**,

**EARTHLY** → EARTH
Jn 3:12 If I have told you about **e** things
2Co 5:1 if the **e** tent we live in is destroyed.

**EARTHQUAKE** → EARTH, QUAKE
1Ki 19:11 but the LORD was not in the **e**;
Mt 28:2 And suddenly there was a great **e**;
Ac 16:26 Suddenly there was an **e**,
Rev 6:12 I looked, and there came a great **e**;
2Es 3:19 four gates of fire and **e** and wind

**EARTHQUAKES** → EARTH, QUAKE
Mt 24:7 be famines and **e** in various places:
2Es 9:3 there shall appear in the world **e**,

**EASIER** → EASY
Mt 9: 5 is **e**, to say, 'Your sins are forgiven,'
Lk 16: 17 it is **e** for heaven and earth to pass
18: 25 **e** for a camel to go through the eye

**EAST**
Ge 2: 8 planted a garden in Eden, in the **e**;
Ps 103: 12 as far as the **e** is from the west,
Mt 2: 1 wise men from the **E** came to

**EASY** → EASIER
Mt 7: 13 road is **e** that leads to destruction,
11: 30 For my yoke is **e**, and my burden is

**EAT** → ATE, EATING, EATS
Ge 2: 16 freely **e** of every tree of the garden;
Ex 12: 11 This is how you shall **e** it:
Lev 3: 17 not **e** any fat or any blood.
11: 4 you shall not **e** the following:
Ecc 2: 24 nothing better for mortals than to **e**
Mt 26: 26 to the disciples, and said, "Take, **e**;
Ac 10: 13 "Get up, Peter; kill and **e**."
1Co 10: 31 whether you **e** or drink, or whatever
Rev 3: 20 I will come in to you and **e** with you

**EATING** → EAT
Lk 7: 34 the Son of Man has come **e** and
Ro 14: 2 Some believe in **e** anything,
1Co 8: 4 as to the **e** of food offered to idols,

**EATS** → EAT
Jn 6: 51 **e** of this bread will live forever;
1Co 11: 27 **e** the bread or drinks the cup of the

**EDEN**
Ge 2: 8 a garden in **E**, in the east;
Isa 51: 3 and will make her wilderness like **E**,
Eze 28: 13 You were in **E**, the garden of God;

**EDOM** → =ESAU
Ge 25: 30 (Therefore he was called **E**.)
Nu 20: 18 But **E** said to him, "You shall not
Ob 1: 1 says the Lord GOD concerning **E**:
Mal 1: 4 If **E** says, "We are shattered but we

**EFFORT**
Gal 2: 17 in our **e** to be justified in Christ,
Eph 4: 3 every **e** to maintain the unity of the
Heb 4: 11 make every **e** to enter that rest,
2Pe 1: 5 make every **e** to support your faith

**EGYPT**
Ge 12: 10 So Abram went down to **E** to reside
37: 28 And they took Joseph to **E**.
47: 27 Thus Israel settled in the land of **E**,
Ex 1: 8 Now a new king arose over **E**,
12: 40 in **E** was four hundred thirty years.
Jos 15: 47 to the Wadi of **E**, and the Great Sea
Ne 9: 18 God who brought you up out of **E**,'
Ps 78: 51 He struck all the firstborn in **E**,
Hos 11: 1 and out of **E** I called my son.
Mt 2: 15 "Out of **E** I have called my son."
Rev 11: 8 prophetically called Sodom and **E**,

**EHUD**
Judge of Israel (Jdg 3:12-30).

**ELAH**
1. Son of Baasha; king of Israel (1Ki 16:6-14).
2. Valley in which David fought Goliath (1Sa 17:2, 19; 21:9).

**ELDER** → ELDERS
Ge 25: 23 the **e** shall serve the younger."
Ro 9: 12 "The **e** shall serve the younger."
1Ti 5: 19 any accusation against an **e** except
1Pe 5: 1 as an **e** myself and a witness of the

**ELDERS** → ELDER
Ex 24: 1 and seventy of the **e** of Israel,
Jdg 2: 7 days of the **e** who outlived Joshua,
Isa 3: 14 enters into judgment with the **e**
Mt 27: 12 accused by the chief priests and **e**,
Mk 7: 3 thus observing the tradition of the **e**;
1Ti 5: 17 the **e** who rule well be considered
Jas 5: 14 **e** of the church and have them pray
1Pe 5: 5 must accept the authority of the **e**.
Rev 4: 4 on the thrones are twenty-four **e**,
Sus 1: 61 they took action against the two **e**,

**ELEAZAR**
1. Third son of Aaron (Ex 6:23-25). Succeeded Aaron as high priest (Nu 20:26; Dt 10:6). Allotted land to tribes (Jos 14:1). Death (Jos 24:33).
2. Brother of Judas Maccabeus (1Mc 2:5; 6:43-46).

**ELECT** → ELECTION
Mt 24: 22 sake of the **e** those days will be cut
Mk 13: 22 to lead astray, if possible, the **e**.
Wis 4: 15 grace and mercy are with his **e**,
2Es 16: 73 Then the tested quality of my **e**

**ELECTION*** → ELECT
Ro 9: 11 God's purpose of **e** might continue,
11: 28 but as regards **e** they are beloved,
2Pe 1: 10 eager to confirm your call and **e**,

**ELEMENTS**
Heb 5: 12 the basic **e** of the oracles of God.
2Pe 3: 10 and the **e** will be dissolved with fire,

**ELEVEN**
Mt 28: 16 Now the **e** disciples went to Galilee,
Ac 1: 26 and he was added to the **e** apostles.

**ELI**
1. High priest in youth of Samuel (1Sa 1-4). Blessed Hannah (1Sa 1:12-18); raised Samuel (1Sa 2:11-26). Prophesied against because of wicked sons (1Sa 2:27-36). Death of Eli and sons (1Sa 4:11-22).
2. "Eli, Eli, lema sabachthani?" (Mt 27:46).

**ELIAKIM** → =JEHOIAKIM
1. Original name of Jehoiakim (2Ki 23:34; 2Ch 36:4).
2. Hezekiah's palace administrator (2Ki 18:17-37; 19:2; Isa 36:1-22; 37:2).

**ELIEZER**
1. Servant of Abraham (Ge 15:2).
2. Son of Moses (Ex 18:4; 1Ch 23:15-17).

**ELIHU**
A friend of Job (Job 32-37).

**ELIJAH**
Prophet; predicted famine in Israel (1Ki 17:1; Jas 5:17). Fed by ravens (1Ki 17:2-6). Raised Sidonian widow's son (1Ki 17:7-24). Defeated prophets of Baal at Carmel (1Ki 18:16-46). Ran from Jezebel (1Ki 19:1-9). Prophesied death of Azariah (2Ki 1). Succeeded by Elishah (1Ki 19:19-21; 2Ki 2:1-18). Taken to heaven in whirlwind (2Ki 2:11-12; Sir 48:1-12; 1Mc 2:58).
Return prophesied (Mal 4:5-6); equated with John the Baptist (Mt 17:9-13; Mk 9:9-13; Lk 1:17). Appeared with Moses in transfiguration of Jesus (Mt 17:1-8; Mk 9:1-8).

**ELIMELECH**
Ru 1: 3 But **E**, the husband of Naomi, died,

**ELIPHAZ**
A friend of Job (Job 4-5; 15; 22; 42:7, 9).

**ELISHA**
Prophet; successor of Elijah (1Ki 19:16-21; Sir 48:12-14); inherited his mantle (2Ki 2:1-18). Purified bad water (2Ki 2:19-22). Cursed young men (2Ki 2:23-25). Aided Israel's defeat of Moab (2Ki 3). Provided widow with oil (2Ki 4:1-7). Raised Shunammite woman's son (2Ki 4:8-37). Purified food (2Ki 4:38-41). Fed 100 men (2Ki 4:42-44). Healed Naaman's leprosy (2Ki 5). Made axhead float (2Ki 6:1-7). Captured Arameans (2Ki 6:8-23). Political adviser to Israel (2Ki 6:24-8:6; 9:1-3; 13:14-19), Aram (2Ki 8:7-15). Death (2Ki 13:20).

**ELIZABETH***
Mother of John the Baptist (Lk 1:5-58).

**ELKANAH**
Husband of Hannah, father of Samuel (1Sa 1-2).

**EMMANUEL*** → =IMMANUEL
Mt 1: 23 and they shall name him **E**,"

**EMMAUS**
Lk 24: 13 were going to a village called **E**,

**EMPEROR**
Mt 22: 17 Is it lawful to pay taxes to the **e**, or
Jn 19: 12 you are no friend of the **e**.

**EMPTIED** → EMPTY
1Co 1: 17 cross of Christ might not be **e** of its
Php 2: 7 but **e** himself, taking the form of

**EMPTY** → EMPTIED, EMPTY-HANDED
Ru 1: 21 the LORD has brought me back **e**;
Isa 55: 11 it shall not return to me **e**,
Mt 6: 7 do not heap up **e** phrases
Eph 5: 6 no one deceive you with **e** words,

**EMPTY-HANDED** → EMPTY, HAND
Ex 23: 15 No one shall appear before me **e**.
Ru 3: 17 not go back to your mother-in-law **e**

**EN-GEDI**
1Sa 23: 29 and lived in the strongholds of **E**.

**ENCOURAGE** → ENCOURAGEMENT
1Th 4: 18 **e** one another with these words.
1Pe 5: 12 written this short letter to **e** you

**ENCOURAGEMENT** → ENCOURAGE
Ac 4: 36 Barnabas (which means "son of **e**").
Ro 15: 5 God of steadfastness and **e** grant
Php 2: 1 If then there is any **e** in Christ,

**END** → ENDS
Ge 6: 13 determined to make an **e** of all flesh,
Pr 14: 12 but its **e** is the way to death.
Ecc 12: 12 making many books there is no **e**,
Mt 24: 13 But the one who endures to the **e**
28: 20 always, to the **e** of the age."
Jn 13: 1 he loved them to the **e**.
Ro 10: 4 For Christ is the **e** of the law so that
Rev 22: 13 the beginning and the **e**."

**ENDOR***
1Sa 28: 7 "There is a medium at **E**."

**ENDS** → END
Ps 2: 8 the **e** of the earth your possession.
Isa 40: 28 the Creator of the **e** of the earth.
Ro 10: 18 their words to the **e** of the world."
1Co 13: 8 Love never **e**. But as for prophecies,

**ENDURANCE** → ENDURE
Lk 8: 15 and bear fruit with patient **e**.
Ro 5: 3 knowing that suffering produces **e**,
1Ti 6: 11 godliness, faith, love, **e**,
Heb 10: 36 For you need **e**, so that when you
Jas 1: 3 the testing of your faith produces **e**;
2Pe 1: 6 and self-control with **e**, and **e** with
Rev 1: 9 and the kingdom and the patient **e**,

**ENDURE** → ENDURANCE, ENDURED, ENDURES
Ps 89: 29 his throne as long as the heavens **e**.
Mal 3: 2 who can **e** the day of his coming,
1Co 10: 13 out so that you may be able to **e** it.
2Ti 2: 12 if we **e**, we will also reign with him;

**ENDURED** → ENDURE
Heb 12: 2 that was set before him **e** the cross,

**ENDURES** → ENDURE
1Ch 16: 41 for his steadfast love **e** forever.
Mt 13: 21 but **e** only for a while,
Jn 6: 27 for the food that **e** for eternal life,
1Co 13: 7 hopes all things, **e** all things.
1Pe 1: 25 but the word of the Lord **e** forever."
Sir 40: 17 and almsgiving **e** forever.
Bar 4: 1 the law that **e** forever.

**ENEMIES** → ENEMY
Ex 23: 22 be an enemy to your **e** and a foe to
Est 9: 5 the Jews struck down all their **e**
Ps 110: 1 until I make your **e** your footstool."
Mt 5: 44 But I say to you, Love your **e** and
Lk 20: 43 until I make your **e** your footstool."
Ro 5: 10 For if while we were **e**,
12: 20 "if your **e** are hungry, feed them;
Jdt 8: 35 to take vengeance on our **e**."
1Mc 4: 36 said, "See, our **e** are crushed;

**ENEMY** → ENEMIES, ENMITY
Mt 13: 39 the **e** who sowed them is the devil;
1Co 15: 26 The last **e** to be destroyed is death.
Jas 4: 4 of the world becomes an **e** of God.

### ENGAGED
Mt 1:18 mother Mary had been **e** to Joseph.

### ENJOY → ENJOYMENT
Ecc 3:22 that all should **e** their work.
9:9 **E** life with the wife whom you love.

### ENJOYMENT → ENJOY
Ecc 8:15 So I commend **e,** for there is nothing
1Ti 6:17 with everything for our **e.**

### ENLIGHTENED → LIGHT
Ro 10:2 have a zeal for God, but it is not **e.**
Eph 1:18 with the eyes of your heart **e,**
Heb 6:4 those who have once been **e,**

### ENLIGHTENS* → LIGHT
Jn 1:9 The true light, which **e** everyone.

### ENMITY → ENEMY
Ge 3:15 put **e** between you and the woman,
Jas 4:4 with the world is **e** with God?

### ENOCH
Walked with God and taken by him (Ge 5:18-24; Heb 11:5; Sir 44:16). Prophet (Jude 14).

### ENSLAVE → SLAVE
1Co 9:27 but I punish my body and **e** it.
Gal 2:4 so that they might **e** us—

### ENSLAVED → SLAVE
Ro 6:6 and we might no longer be **e** to sin.
Gal 4:9 want to be **e** to them again?

### ENTER → ENTRY
Ex 40:35 Moses was not able to **e** the tent
Nu 20:24 not **e** the land that I have given to
Ps 95:11 I swore, "They shall not **e** my rest."
Mt 5:20 will never **e** the kingdom of heaven.
7:13 **"E** through the narrow gate:
Mk 10:15 as a little child will never **e** it."
Jn 3:5 no one can **e** the kingdom of God
Heb 3:11 "They will not **e** my rest.'"
10:19 have confidence to **e** the sanctuary
Rev 21:27 But nothing unclean will **e** it,

### ENTHRONED → THRONE
1Ch 13:6 the LORD, who is **e** on the cherubim,
Ps 9:7 But the LORD sits **e** forever,

### ENTRUST → TRUST
Jn 2:24 Jesus on his part would not **e**
1Pe 4:19 **e** themselves to a faithful Creator.

### ENTRUSTED → TRUST
Lk 12:48 the one to whom much has been **e,**
2Ti 1:12 guard until that day what I have **e** to
Jude 1:3 the faith that was once for all **e** to

### ENVY
Pr 23:17 Do not let your heart **e** sinners,
Mk 7:22 deceit, licentiousness, **e,** slander,
Ro 1:29 Full of **e,** murder, strife, deceit,
Jas 3:16 For where there is **e** and selfish

### EPHOD
Ex 28:6 They shall make the **e** of gold,
Jdg 8:27 Gideon made an **e** of it and put it in

### EPHRAIM
1. Second son of Joseph (Ge 41:52; 46:20). Blessed as firstborn by Jacob (Ge 48). Tribe of numbered (Nu 1:33; 26:37), blessed (Dt 33:17), allotted land (Jos 16:4-9; Eze 48:5), failed to fully possess (Jos 16:10; Jdg 1:29).
2. Term for the Northern Kingdom (Isa 7:17; Hos 5).

### EQUAL → EQUALITY
Isa 40:25 you compare me, or who is my **e?**
46:5 will you liken me and make me **e,**
Jn 5:18 thereby making himself **e** to God.

### EQUALITY* → EQUAL
Php 2:6 not regard **e** with God as something

### ERROR
Lev 5:18 for the **e** that you committed
Ro 1:27 the due penalty for their **e.**
1Jn 4:6 the spirit of truth and the spirit of **e.**
Wis 1:12 Do not invite death by the **e** of your

### ESAU → =EDOM
Firstborn of Isaac, twin of Jacob (Ge 25:21-26). Also called Edom (Ge 25:30). Sold Jacob his birthright (Ge 25:29-34); lost blessing (Gen 27). Married Hittites (Ge 26:34), Ishmaelites (Ge 28:6-9). Reconciled to Jacob (Gen 33). Genealogy (Ge 36). The LORD chose Jacob over Esau (Mal 1:2-3), but gave Esau land (Dt 2:2-12). Descendants eventually obliterated (Ob 1-21; Jer 49:7-22).

### ESCAPE
Ge 7:7 went into the ark to **e** the waters of
Ps 68:20 the Lord, belongs **e** from death.
Ro 2:3 you will **e** the judgment of God?
1Th 5:3 and there will be no **e!**
Heb 12:25 how much less will we **e** if we reject
2Pe 1:4 you may **e** from the corruption

### ESTABLISH → ESTABLISHED
Ge 6:18 But I will **e** my covenant with you;
Dt 28:9 LORD will **e** you as his holy people,
Ps 89:4 "I will **e** your descendants forever.
Eze 16:60 **e** with you an everlasting covenant.
Ro 10:3 and seeking to **e** their own,
Heb 8:8 when I will **e** a new covenant with

### ESTABLISHED → ESTABLISH
2Sa 7:16 your throne shall be **e** forever.
Ps 89:2 your steadfast love is **e** forever;
103:19 The LORD has **e** his throne in the
Jer 10:12 who **e** the world by his wisdom,
2Pe 1:12 you know them already and are **e** in

### ESTHER
Jewess, originally named Hadassah, who lived in Persia; cousin of Mordecai (Est 2:7). Chosen queen of Xerxes (Est 2:8-18). Persuaded by Mordecai to foil Haman's plan to exterminate the Jews (Est 3-4). Revealed Haman's plans to Xerxes, resulting in Haman's death (Est 7), the Jews' preservation (Est 8-9), Mordecai's exaltation (Est 8:15; 9:4; 10). Decreed celebration of Purim (Est 9:18-32). See Additions to Esther.

### ETERNAL → ETERNITY
Mt 25:46 but the righteous into **e** life."
Mk 10:17 what must I do to inherit **e** life?"
Jn 3:16 may not perish but may have **e** life.
10:28 I give them **e** life, and they will
Ro 5:21 **e** life through Jesus Christ our Lord.
2Co 4:17 an **e** weight of glory beyond all
Heb 5:9 the source of **e** salvation for all who
1Jn 5:13 may know that you have **e** life.

### ETERNITY → ETERNAL
Isa 57:15 high and lofty one who inhabits **e,**
2Pe 3:18 glory both now and to the day of **e.**
Wis 2:23 made us in the image of his own **e,**
Sir 42:21 he is from all **e** one and the same.

### ETHIOPIANS
Jer 13:23 Can **E** change their skin

### EUNUCH → EUNUCHS
Jer 38:7 Ebed-melech the Ethiopian, a **e**
Ac 8:27 Now there was an Ethiopian **e,**

### EUNUCHS → EUNUCH
Isa 56:4 To the **e** who keep my sabbaths,
Mt 19:12 made themselves **e** for the sake of the

### EUPHRATES
Ge 2:14 And the fourth river is the **E.**
15:18 Egypt to the great river, the river **E,**
Rev 16:12 poured his bowl on the great river **E**

### EUTYCHUS*
Ac 20:9 A young man named **E,**

### EVANGELIST* → EVANGELISTS
Ac 21:8 went into the house of Philip the **e,**
2Ti 4:5 do the work of an **e,** carry out your

### EVANGELISTS* → EVANGELIST
Eph 4:11 some **e,** some pastors and teachers,

### EVE*
Ge 3:20 The man named his wife **E,**
4:1 Now the man knew his wife **E,**
2Co 11:3 afraid that as the serpent deceived **E**
1Ti 2:13 For Adam was formed first, then **E:**
Tob 8:6 his wife **E** as a helper and support.

### EVENING
Ge 1:5 there was **e** and there was morning.
Ecc 11:6 at **e** do not let your hands be idle;
Zec 14:7 for at **e** time there shall be light.

### EVERLASTING → LAST
Ge 9:16 remember the **e** covenant between
Ps 90:2 from **e** to **e** you are God.
Isa 9:6 God, **E** Father, Prince of Peace.
40:28 The LORD is the **e** God,
Jer 31:3 I have loved you with an **e** love;
Da 4:3 His kingdom is an **e** kingdom,

### EVERY → EVERYTHING
Ge 7:23 He blotted out **e** living thing that
Ex 11:5 **E** firstborn in the land of Egypt
Dt 8:3 **e** word that comes from the mouth
Ecc 12:14 God will bring **e** deed into judgment
Isa 45:23 "To me **e** knee shall bow,
Mt 12:25 **"E** kingdom divided against itself
Ro 14:11 **e** knee shall bow to me, and **e** tongue
Php 2:10 at the name of Jesus **e** knee should
2Ti 3:17 equipped for **e** good work.
1Jn 4:1 Beloved, do not believe **e** spirit,
Rev 21:4 he will wipe **e** tear from their eyes.

### EVERYTHING → EVERY
Ge 1:31 God saw **e** that he had made,
Ex 19:8 **"E** that the LORD has spoken we will
Ecc 3:1 For **e** there is a season,
1Co 10:31 do **e** for the glory of God.
1Ti 4:4 For **e** created by God is good,
2Pe 1:3 divine power has given us **e** needed

### EVIDENCE
Dt 17:6 On the **e** of two or three witnesses
Mt 18:16 by the **e** of two or three witnesses.
Sus 1:43 men have given false **e** against me.

### EVIL → EVILDOER, EVILDOERS
Ge 2:9 tree of the knowledge of good and **e.**
3:5 be like God, knowing good and **e."**
6:5 their hearts was only **e** continually.
Ex 32:22 the people, that they are bent on **e.**
Dt 13:5 So you shall purge the **e** from your
Jdg 2:11 Then the Israelites did what was **e**
Ps 23:4 the darkest valley, I fear no **e;**
Pr 8:13 The fear of the LORD is hatred of **e.**
Ecc 12:14 secret thing, whether good or **e.**
Isa 5:20 you who call **e** good and good **e,**
Mt 6:13 but rescue us from the **e** one.
12:35 **e** person brings **e** things out of an **e**
Lk 11:13 who are **e,** know how to give good
Jn 17:15 to protect them from the **e** one.
Ro 12:17 Do not repay anyone **e** for **e,**
Eph 5:16 of the time, because the days are **e.**
1Ti 6:10 of money is a root of all kinds of **e,**
1Pe 2:16 use your freedom as a pretext for **e.**
1Jn 5:18 and the **e** one does not touch them.
2Jn 1:11 to welcome is to participate in the **e**
3Jn 1:11 do not imitate what is **e** but imitate
Tob 12:7 Do good and **e** will not overtake
Sir 7:1 Do no **e,** and **e** will never overtake

### EVILDOER → EVIL
Ps 52:6 and will laugh at the **e,** saying,
Mt 5:39 But I say to you, Do not resist an **e.**

### EVILDOERS → EVIL
2Sa 7:10 and **e** shall afflict them no more,
Ps 34:16 The face of the LORD is against **e,**
Lk 13:27 go away from me, all you **e!'**
1Pe 2:12 though they malign you as **e,**

### EXALT → EXALTED, EXALTS
Ex 15:2 my father's God, and I will **e** him.
Pr 4:8 Prize her highly, and she will **e** you;
Isa 25:1 I will **e** you, I will praise your name;
Lk 14:11 who **e** themselves will be humbled,
Jas 4:10 before the Lord, and he will **e** you.

### EXALTED → EXALT
Ps 57:5 Be **e,** O God, above the heavens.
97:9 you are **e** far above all gods.

Isa 2: 11 the LORD alone will be **e** in that day.
Php 2: 9 highly **e** him and gave him the name

**EXALTS** → EXALT
Pr 14: 34 Righteousness **e** a nation,
Sir 7: 11 for there is One who humbles and **e.**

**EXAMINE**
1Co 11: 28 **E** yourselves, and only then eat of
2Co 13: 5 **E** yourselves to see whether you
Sir 18: 20 Before judgment comes, **e** yourself;

**EXAMPLE** → EXAMPLES
Jn 13: 15 For I have set you an **e,**
Php 3: 17 according to the **e** you have in us.

**EXAMPLES** → EXAMPLE
1Co 10: 6 these things occurred as **e** for us,
1Pe 5: 3 but be **e** to the flock.

**EXCEL** → EXCELLENCE, EXCELLENT
1Co 14: 12 strive to **e** in them for building up
Sir 33: 23 **E** in all that you do;

**EXCELLENCE** → EXCEL
Php 4: 8 if there is any **e** and if there is

**EXCELLENT** → EXCEL
Isa 28: 29 in counsel, and **e** in wisdom.
1Co 12: 31 I will show you a still more **e** way.
Heb 1: 4 the name he has inherited is more **e**

**EXCEPT**
2Sa 22: 32 And who is a rock, **e** our God?
Mt 11: 27 no one knows the Son **e** the Father,
Lk 11: 29 be given to it **e** the sign of Jonah.
Jn 14: 6 No one comes to the Father **e**

**EXCHANGED**
Ps 106: 20 They **e** the glory of God for the
Ro 1: 23 **e** the glory of the immortal God

**EXCUSE**
Jn 15: 22 but now they have no **e** for their sin.
Ro 1: 20 So they are without **e;**

**EXHORT**
Tit 2: 15 **e** and reprove with all authority.
Heb 3: 13 But **e** one another every day,

**EXILE** → EXILES
2Ki 25: 11 carried into **e** the rest of the people
Ezr 6: 21 of Israel who had returned from **e,**

**EXILES** → EXILE
1Pe 2: 11 I urge you as aliens and **e**

**EXIST** → EXISTED, EXISTS
1Co 8: 6 are all things and for whom we **e,**
Heb 2: 10 and through whom all things **e,**

**EXISTED** → EXIST
2Pe 3: 5 the word of God heavens **e** long ago
Rev 4: 11 by your will they **e** and were created

**EXISTS** → EXIST
Ps 119: 89 The LORD **e** forever;
Heb 11: 6 that he **e** and that he rewards those

**EXPECTING**
Lk 6: 35 and lend, **e** nothing in return.
Php 3: 20 that we are **e** a Savior,

**EXPLAIN** → EXPLAINED, EXPLAINING
2Ch 9: 2 Solomon that he could not **e** to her.
Da 5: 12 to interpret dreams, **e** riddles,

**EXPLAINED** → EXPLAIN
Mk 4: 34 but he **e** everything in private to his

**EXPLAINING** → EXPLAIN
2Ti 2: 15 rightly **e** the word of truth.

**EXPOSE** → EXPOSED
Mt 1: 19 unwilling to **e** her to public disgrace
Eph 5: 11 of darkness, but instead **e** them.

**EXPOSED** → EXPOSE
Jn 3: 20 so that their deeds may not be **e.**
Eph 5: 13 everything **e** by the light becomes
Heb 10: 33 sometimes being publicly **e** to abuse

**EYE** → EYES, EYEWITNESSES
Ex 21: 24 **e** for **e,** tooth for tooth,
Ps 17: 8 Guard me as the apple of the **e;**
Mt 5: 29 If your right **e** causes you to sin,
5: 38 An **e** for an **e** and a tooth for a tooth.
7: 3 see the speck in your neighbor's **e,**
Mk 10: 25 to go through the **e** of a needle
1Co 15: 52 in the twinkling of an **e,** at the last
Rev 1: 7 the clouds; every **e** will see him,

**EYES** → EYE
Ge 3: 7 Then the **e** of both were opened,
Dt 29: 4 or **e** to see, or ears to hear.
2Ch 16: 9 **e** of the LORD range throughout the
Ps 121: 1 I lift up my **e** to the hills—
Pr 3: 7 Do not be wise in your own **e;**
22: 12 The **e** of the LORD keep watch over
Isa 11: 3 He shall not judge by what his **e** see,
Jer 9: 1 and my **e** a fountain of tears,
Eze 1: 18 rims of all four were full of **e** all
Da 10: 6 lightning, his **e** like flaming torches,
Zec 4: 10 "These seven are the **e** of the LORD,
Mt 9: 30 And their **e** were opened.
13: 15 that they might not look with their **e,**
Lk 24: 31 their **e** were opened, and they
Eph 1: 18 with the **e** of your heart enlightened,
1Pe 3: 12 **e** of the Lord are on the righteous,
1Jn 2: 16 of the flesh, the desire of the **e,**
Rev 1: 14 his **e** were like a flame of fire,
4: 6 full of **e** in front and behind:
21: 4 he will wipe every tear from their **e.**

**EYEWITNESSES'** → EYE, WITNESS
Lk 1: 2 who from the beginning were **e**
2Pe 1: 16 but we had been **e** of his majesty.

**EZEKIEL**
Priest called to be prophet to the exiles (Eze 1-3; Sir 49:8). Symbolically acted out destruction of Jerusalem (Eze 4-5; 12; 24).

**EZRA**
Priest and teacher of the Law who led a return of exiles to Israel to reestablish temple and worship (Ezr 7-8). Corrected intermarriage of priests (Ezr 9-10; 1Es 8-9). Read Law at celebration of Feast of Tabernacles (Ne 8; 1Es 9:37-55). Participated in dedication of Jerusalem's walls (Ne 12).

## F

**FACE** → FACES
Ge 1: 2 darkness covered the **f** of the deep.
32: 30 saying, "For I have seen God **f** to **f,**
Ex 3: 6 Moses hid his **f,** for he was afraid to
34: 30 the skin of his **f** was shining,
Nu 6: 25 LORD make his **f** to shine upon you,
12: 8 With him I speak **f** to **f—**
Ps 4: 6 Let the light of your **f** shine on us.
Isa 54: 8 wrath for a moment I hid my **f**
Eze 39: 29 I will never again hide my **f** from
Lk 9: 29 the appearance of his **f** changed,
2Co 3: 7 not gaze at Moses' **f** because of the glory
Rev 1: 16 his **f** was like the sun shining with

**FACES** → FACE
Eze 1: 6 Each had four **f,** and each
2Co 3: 18 And all of us, with unveiled **f,**
Rev 9: 7 their **f** were like human **f,**

**FACTIONS'**
1Co 11: 19 there have to be **f** among you,
Gal 5: 20 anger, quarrels, dissensions, **f,**

**FADE** → FADES
Ps 37: 2 for they will soon **f** like the grass,
Isa 64: 6 We all **f** like a leaf,

**FADES** → FADE
Isa 40: 7 The grass withers, the flower **f,**
1Pe 5: 4 crown of glory that never **f** away.

**FAIL** → FAILED
Dt 31: 6 he will not **f** you or forsake you."
Jos 1: 5 I will not **f** you or forsake you.
Eze 47: 12 will not wither nor their fruit **f,**
Mk 8: 18 Do you have eyes, and **f** to see?

**FAILED** → FAIL
Jos 23: 14 pass for you, not one of them has **f.**
1Ki 8: 56 not one word has **f** of all his good
Ro 9: 6 not as though the word of God had **f**

**FAINT**
Ps 142: 3 When my spirit is **f,** you know my
Isa 40: 31 they shall walk and not **f.**

**FAITH** → FAITHFUL, FAITHFULNESS, FAITHLESS
Ps 146: 6 in them; who keeps **f** forever;
Isa 7: 9 If you do not stand firm in **f,**
Hab 2: 4 but the righteous live by their **f.**
Mt 17: 20 have **f** the size of a mustard seed,
Mk 2: 5 When Jesus saw their **f,** he said to
Lk 7: 50 the woman, "Your **f** has saved you;
18: 8 comes, will he find **f** on earth?"
Ac 3: 16 and the **f** that is through Jesus
Ro 1: 17 one who is righteous will live by **f."**
3: 28 that a person is justified by **f** apart
1Co 13: 13 And now **f,** hope, and love abide,
Gal 3: 11 one who is righteous will live by **f."**
Eph 4: 5 one Lord, one **f,** one baptism,
Php 3: 9 righteousness from God based on **f.**
1Ti 6: 11 pursue righteousness, godliness, **f,**
2Ti 4: 7 finished the race, I have kept the **f.**
Heb 11: 1 **f** is the assurance of things hoped
12: 2 the pioneer and perfecter of our **f,**
Jas 2: 17 **f** by itself, if it has no works, is dead
2Pe 1: 1 a **f** as precious as ours through the
1Jn 5: 4 that conquers the world, our **f.**
Jude 1: 3 the **f** that was once for all entrusted
Rev 2: 13 and you did not deny your **f** in me
Sir 40: 12 but good **f** will last forever.

**FAITHFUL** → FAITH
Dt 32: 4 A **f** God, without deceit, just and
Ps 4: 3 LORD has set apart the **f** for himself;
116: 15 is the death of his **f** ones.
Mic 7: 2 The **f** have disappeared from the
Zec 8: 3 Jerusalem shall be called the **f** city,
Mt 24: 45 "Who then is the **f** and wise slave,
1Co 10: 13 God is **f,** and he will not let you be
1Th 5: 24 The one who calls you is **f,**
Heb 10: 23 for he who has promised is **f.**
1Pe 4: 19 to a **f** Creator,
1Jn 1: 9 is **f** and just will forgive us our sins
Rev 1: 5 **f** witness, the firstborn of the dead,
19: 11 Its rider is called **F** and True,
Wis 3: 9 the **f** will abide with him in love,
Sir 4: 16 If they remain **f,** they will inherit

**FAITHFULNESS** → FAITH
Ex 34: 6 abounding in steadfast love and **f,**
Jos 24: 14 and serve him in sincerity and in **f;**
Ps 26: 3 and I walk in **f** to you.
36: 5 to the heavens, your **f** to the clouds.
Pr 16: 6 By loyalty and **f** iniquity is atoned
Isa 11: 5 and **f** the belt around his loins.
Jer 31: 3 I have continued my **f** to you.
La 3: 23 new every morning; great is your **f.**
Hos 4: 1 There is no **f** or loyalty, and no
Ro 3: 3 faithlessness nullify the **f** of God?
Gal 5: 22 patience, kindness, generosity, **f,**

**FAITHLESS** → FAITH
Jer 3: 14 Return, O **f** children, says the LORD,
Mt 17: 17 "You **f** and perverse generation,
2Ti 2: 13 if we are **f,** he remains faithful—
Rev 21: 8 But as for the cowardly, the **f,**

**FALL** → FALLEN, FALLING, FELL
Ps 91: 7 A thousand may **f** at your side,
Pr 16: 18 and a haughty spirit before a **f.**
Lk 10: 18 "I watched Satan **f** from heaven like
Ro 9: 33 a rock that will make them **f,**
1Co 10: 12 watch out that you do not **f.**
Heb 10: 31 a fearful thing to **f** into the hands of
Sir 28: 23 Those who forsake the Lord will **f**

**FALLEN** → FALL
2Sa 1: 19 How the mighty have **f!**
Isa 14: 12 **f** from heaven, O Day Star,
21: 9 he responded, "**F,** **f** is Babylon;
Rev 9: 1 I saw a star that had **f** from heaven
18: 2 "**F,** **f** is Babylon the great!

**FALLING** → FALL
Lk 22:44 [like great drops of blood **f** down]
Jude 1:24 him who is able to keep you from **f,**

**FALSE**
Dt 5:20 Neither shall you bear **f** witness
2Ki 17:15 went after **f** idols and became **f;**
Mt 7:15 "Beware of **f** prophets, who come to
Mk 13:22 **F** messiahs and **f** prophets will
Heb 6:18 impossible that God would prove **f,**
2Pe 2:1 there will be **f** teachers among you,
Rev 16:13 and from the mouth of the **f** prophet.
20:10 where the beast and the **f** prophet
LtJ 6:8 but they are **f** and cannot speak.
Sus 1:61 convicted them of bearing **f** witness;

**FAMILIES** → FAMILY
Ac 3:25 all the **f** of the earth shall be blessed.
Tit 1:11 are upsetting whole **f** by teaching

**FAMILY** → FAMILIES
Pr 6:19 and one who sows discord in a **f.**
Gal 6:10 especially for those of the **f** of faith.
Eph 3:15 from whom every **f** in heaven and
1Pe 2:17 Love the **f** of believers.

**FAMINE**
Ge 12:10 Now there was a **f** in the land.
41:27 They are seven years of **f.**
Ru 1:1 there was a **f** in the land,
Ps 37:19 in the days of **f** they have abundance
Am 8:11 not a **f** of bread, or a thirst for water,
Ac 11:28 there would be a severe **f** over all
Ro 8:35 or distress, or persecution, or **f,**

**FAR**
Nu 16:3 "You have gone too **f!**
1Sa 7:12 "Thus **f** the LORD has helped us."
Isa 57:19 Peace, peace, to the **f** and the near,
Jer 23:23 and not a God **f** off?
Mk 7:6 but their hearts are **f** from me:
12:34 are not **f** from the kingdom of God."

**FAST** → FASTED, FASTING
Isa 58:5 Is such the **f** that I choose,
Mt 6:16 "And whenever you **f,**
Lk 18:12 I **f** twice a week; I give

**FASTED** → FAST
Mt 4:2 He **f** forty days and forty nights.

**FASTING** → FAST
Mt 6:16 so as to show others that they are **f.**

**FATHER** → FATHER'S
Ge 2:24 a man leaves his **f** and his mother
Ex 20:12 Honor your **f** and your mother,
21:15 Whoever strikes **f** or mother shall
2Sa 7:14 I will be a **f** to him, and he shall be
Ps 89:26 cry to me, 'You are my **F,** my God,
Pr 28:24 Anyone who robs **f** or mother and
Isa 8:4 child knows how to call "My **f**" or
9:6 Mighty God, Everlasting **F,** Prince
Jer 3:19 I thought you would call me, My **F,**
Mal 1:6 If then I am a **f,** where is the honor
Mt 6:9 Our **F** in heaven, hallowed be your
28:19 the name of the **F** and of the Son and
Lk 18:20 Honor your **f** and mother.'"
Jn 5:18 but was also calling God his own **F,**
8:44 You are from your **f** the devil,
14:6 comes to the **F** except through me.
Ro 8:15 When we cry, "Abba! **F!**"
Gal 4:6 into our hearts, crying, "Abba! **F!**"
Eph 6:2 "Honor your **f** and mother"—
Heb 1:5 be his **F,** and he will be my Son"?
12:9 to be subject to the **F** of spirits
Jas 1:17 coming down from the **F** of lights,
Rev 3:5 confess your name before my **F**
Wis 2:16 and boasts that God is his **f,**
Sir 3:3 who honor their **f** atone for sins,

**FATHER'S** → FATHER
Lk 2:49 that I must be in my **F** house?"
Jn 1:14 the glory as of a **f** only son,
2:16 making my **F** house a marketplace!"
10:29 can snatch it out of the **F** hand.
14:2 **F** house there are many dwelling

**FAULT**
Ro 9:19 "Why then does he still find **f?**
Sir 11:7 Do not find **f** before you investigate;

**FAVOR** → FAVORITISM
Ge 6:8 Noah found **f** in the sight of the
Ex 33:12 you have also found **f** in my sight.'
Ps 30:5 his **f** is for a lifetime.
Isa 49:8 In a time of **f** I have answered you,
Zec 11:7 I named **F,** the other I named Unity,
Lk 4:19 proclaim the year of the Lord's **f."**

**FAVORITISM*** → FAVOR
Jas 2:1 with your acts of **f** really believe

**FEAR** → AFRAID, FEARED FEARFULLY, FEARS
Ge 22:12 for now I know that you **f** God,
Dt 6:13 The LORD your God you shall **f;**
Ps 19:9 the **f** of the LORD is pure, enduring
23:4 the darkest valley, I **f** no evil;
27:1 and my salvation; whom shall I **f?**
Pr 1:7 **f** of the LORD is the beginning of
Ecc 12:13 **F** God, and keep his commandments
Mt 10:28 rather **f** him who can destroy both
Mk 5:36 "Do not **f,** only believe."
Php 2:12 work out your own salvation with **f**
1Pe 3:14 Do not **f** what they **f,**
1Jn 4:18 but perfect love casts out **f;**
Rev 14:7 **"F** God and give him glory,
Sir 1:11 The **f** of the Lord is glory

**FEARED** → FEAR
Ex 14:31 the people **f** the LORD and believed
Job 1:1 **f** God and turned away from evil.
Hag 1:12 and the people **f** the LORD.

**FEARFULLY*** → FEAR
Ps 139:14 I am **f** and wonderfully made.

**FEARS** → FEAR
Ps 34:4 and delivered me from all my **f.**
Pr 31:30 a woman who **f** the LORD is to be
Jdt 16:16 whoever **f** the Lord is great forever.
Sir 15:1 Whoever **f** the Lord will do this,

**FED** → FEED
Dt 8:16 **f** you in the wilderness with manna
Ps 80:5 have **f** them with the bread of tears,
Eze 34:8 but the shepherds have **f** themselves,

**FEED** → FED
Isa 40:11 He will **f** his flock like a shepherd:
65:25 wolf and the lamb shall **f** together,
Jn 21:15 Jesus said to him, "**F** my lambs."
Ro 12:20 "if your enemies are hungry, **f** them;

**FEET** → FOOT
Ps 8:6 you have put all things under their **f,**
119:105 Your word is a lamp to my **f**
Da 2:33 its **f** partly of iron and partly of clay.
Mt 22:44 I put your enemies under your **f"?**
Lk 24:39 Look at my hands and my **f;**
Jn 13:5 and began to wash the disciples' **f**
Ro 16:20 shortly crush Satan under your **f.**
1Co 15:25 put all his enemies under his **f.**
Heb 1:13 enemies a footstool for your **f"?**
Rev 1:15 his **f** were like burnished bronze,

**FELLOWSHIP**
Ac 2:42 to the apostles' teaching and **f,**
2Co 6:14 Or what **f** is there between light and
1Jn 1:3 and truly our **f** is with the Father and

**FEMALE**
Ge 1:27 male and **f** he created them.
Mk 10:6 'God made them male and **f.'**
Gal 3:28 there is no longer male and **f;**

**FESTIVAL** → FESTIVALS
Ex 23:14 in the year you shall hold a **f** for me.
1Co 5:8 Therefore, let us celebrate the **f,**

**FESTIVALS** → FESTIVAL
Lev 23:2 are the appointed **f** of the LORD
Ne 10:33 the new moons, the appointed **f,**
Col 2:16 of food and drink or of observing **f,**

**FEVER**
Dt 28:22 will afflict you with consumption, **f,**
Mk 1:30 mother-in-law was in bed with a **f,**

**FEW**
Ps 105:12 When they were **f** in number,
Ecc 5:2 therefore let your words be **f.**
Mt 22:14 many are called, but **f** are chosen."
Lk 13:23 "Lord, will only a **f** be saved?"

**FIELD** → FIELDS
Pr 31:16 She considers a **f** and buys it;
Mt 6:28 Consider the lilies of the **f,** how
13:44 is like treasure hidden in a **f,**
24:40 Then two will be in the **f;**
1Co 3:9 you are God's **f,** God's building.

**FIELDS** → FIELD
Lk 2:8 there were shepherds living in the **f,**
Jn 4:35 see how the **f** are ripe for harvesting.

**FIG** → FIGS
Ge 3:7 and they sewed **f** leaves together
Hab 3:17 Though the **f** tree does not blossom,
Mt 24:32 "From the **f** tree learn its lesson:
Lk 13:6 "A man had a **f** tree planted in his

**FIGHT** → FOUGHT
Ex 14:14 The LORD will **f** for you,
Ps 35:1 **f** against those who **f** against me!
1Ti 1:18 you may **f** the good **f,**
2Ti 4:7 I have fought the good **f,**

**FIGS** → FIG
Jer 24:1 LORD showed me two baskets of **f**
Lk 6:44 **F** are not gathered from thorns,

**FILL** → FILLED, FULL, FULLNESS
Ge 1:28 and **f** the earth and subdue it;
9:1 fruitful and multiply, and **f** the earth.
Ps 72:19 may his glory **f** the whole earth.
Jer 23:24 Do I not **f** heaven and earth?
Eph 4:10 so that he might **f** all things.)

**FILLED** → FILL
Ex 1:7 so that the land was **f** with them.
40:34 glory of the LORD **f** the tabernacle.
1Ki 8:11 glory of the LORD **f** the house of the
Eze 43:5 the glory of the LORD **f** the temple.
Lk 1:15 he will be **f** with the Holy Spirit,
Ac 2:4 were **f** with the Holy Spirit and
Eph 5:18 but be **f** with the Spirit,

**FILTHY**
Isa 64:6 righteous deeds are like a **f** cloth.
Zec 3:3 Joshua was dressed with **f** clothes
Rev 22:11 and the **f** still be **f,**

**FIND** → FINDS, FOUND
Nu 32:23 and be sure your sin will **f** you out.
Dt 4:29 you will **f** him if you search after
Jer 29:13 you search for me, you will **f** me;
Mt 11:29 and you will **f** rest for your souls.
16:25 lose their life for my sake will **f** it.
Lk 11:9 search, and you will **f;**

**FINDS** → FIND
Pr 8:35 For whoever **f** me **f** life and obtains
18:22 He who **f** a wife **f** a good thing,

**FINGER**
Ex 8:19 "This is the **f** of God!"
Dt 9:10 tablets written with the **f** of God;
Mt 23:4 themselves are unwilling to lift a **f**
Lk 11:20 if it is by the **f** of God that I cast out

**FINISHED**
Ge 2:2 on the seventh day God **f** the work
Ex 40:33 So Moses **f** the work.
Jn 19:30 received the wine, he said, "It is **f."**
Sir 38:8 God's works will never be **f;**

**FIRE** → FIERY
Ex 3:2 appeared to him in a flame of **f** out
13:21 and in a pillar of **f** by night, to give
Lev 9:24 **F** came out from the LORD and
Nu 11:1 the **f** of the LORD burned against
Dt 4:24 the LORD your God is a devouring **f,**
1Ki 19:12 but the LORD was not in the **f;**

2Ki 2: 11 a chariot of **f** and horses of **f** separated
2Ch 7: 1 **f** came down from heaven and
Isa 66: 24 their **f** shall not be quenched,
Da 3: 25 walking in the middle of the **f,**
Zec 2: 5 For I will be a wall of **f** all around it,
Mal 3: 2 For he is like a refiner's **f** and like
Mt 3: 11 baptize you with the Holy Spirit and **f.**
Mk 9: 43 to go to hell, to the unquenchable **f.**
Ac 2: 3 Divided tongues, as of **f,** appeared
1Co 3: 13 the **f** will test what sort of work each
Heb 12: 29 indeed our God is a consuming **f.**
Jas 3: 6 And the tongue is a **f.**
2Pe 3: 10 elements will be dissolved with **f,**
Rev 20: 14 the second death, the lake of **f;**
Sir 7: 17 punishment of the ungodly is **f** and

### FIRM → FIRMLY

Ex 14: 13 "Do not be afraid, stand **f,**
Isa 7: 9 If you do not stand **f** in faith,
2Co 1: 24 because you stand **f** in the faith.
Eph 6: 13 having done everything, to stand **f.**
Heb 3: 6 if we hold **f** the confidence

### FIRMAMENT

Ps 19: 1 and the **f** proclaims his handiwork.
150: 1 praise him in his mighty **f!**

### FIRMLY → FIRM

Ps 119: 89 your word is **f** fixed in heaven.
Ecc 12: 11 like nails **F** fixed are the collected

### FIRST → FIRSTBORN

Ge 1: 5 and there was morning, the **f** day.
Nu 18: 15 The **f** issue of the womb of all
Pr 8: 22 the **f** of his acts of long ago.
Isa 41: 4 I, the LORD, am **f,**
Mt 6: 33 But strive **f** for the kingdom of God
Mk 10: 31 But many who are **f** will be last, and the last will be **f."**
16: 2 very early on the **f** day of the week,
Jn 2: 11 Jesus did this, the **f** of his signs,
Ac 11: 26 disciples were **f** called "Christians."
Ro 1: 16 to the Jew **f** and also to the Greek.
1Co 15: 45 it is written, "The **f** man, Adam,
1Th 4: 16 and the dead in Christ will rise **f.**
1Jn 4: 19 We love because he **f** loved us.
Rev 1: 17 I am the **f** and the last,
20: 5 This is the **f** resurrection.
21: 1 the **f** heaven and the **f** earth

### FIRSTBORN → BEAR, FIRST

Ex 4: 22 'Thus says the LORD: Israel is my **f**
12: 29 the LORD struck down all the **f**
13: 2 Consecrate to me all the **f;**
Ps 78: 51 He struck all the **f** in Egypt,
Zec 12: 10 as one weeps over a **f.**
Lk 2: 7 And she gave birth to her **f** son and
Col 1: 15 invisible God, the **f** of all creation;
Heb 1: 6 when he brings the **f** into the world,
Rev 1: 5 faithful witness, the **f** of the dead,
Sir 36: 17 whom you have named your **f,**
2Es 6: 58 whom you have called your **f,**

### FISH

Ge 1: 26 have dominion over the **f** of the sea,
Jnh 2: 1 his God from the belly of the **f,**
Mt 7: 10 Or if the child asks for a **f,** will give
Jn 6: 9 has five barley loaves and two **f.**

### FIVE

1Sa 17: 40 chose **f** smooth stones from the wadi
Mt 14: 19 Taking the **f** loaves and the two fish,
1Co 14: 19 church I would rather speak **f** words

### FLAME

Ex 3: 2 in a **f** of fire out of a bush:
Isa 10: 17 and his Holy One a **f;**
Rev 19: 12 His eyes are like a **f** of fire,
Aza 1: 26 drove the fiery **f** out of the furnace,

### FLED → FLEE

Ex 2: 15 But Moses **f** from Pharaoh.
1Sa 19: 18 Now David **f** and escaped:
Mk 14: 50 All of them deserted him and **f.**
Rev 12: 6 the woman **f** into the wilderness,
20: 11 and the heaven **f** from his presence,

### FLEE → FLED

Ps 11: 1 **"F** like a bird to the mountains;
139: 7 where can I **f** from your presence?
Isa 30: 17 A thousand shall **f** at the threat of
1Co 10: 14 **f** from the worship of idols.
Jas 4: 7 Resist the devil, and he will **f** from

### FLESH

Ge 2: 23 is bone of my bones and **f** of my **f;**
2: 24 and they become one **f.**
Job 19: 26 then in my **f** I shall see God,
Eze 36: 26 of stone and give you a heart of **f.**
Mt 16: 17 For **f** and blood has not revealed this
26: 41 but the **f** is weak."
Jn 1: 14 the Word became **f** and lived among
3: 6 What is born of the **f** is **f,**
Ro 8: 4 to the **f** but according to the Spirit.
2Co 12: 7 a thorn was given me in the **f,**
Gal 5: 19 Now the works of the **f** are obvious:
Eph 6: 12 not against enemies of blood and **f,**
1Pe 1: 24 "All **f** is like grass and all its glory
1Jn 4: 2 that Jesus Christ has come in the **f**

### FLOCK

Isa 40: 11 He will feed his **f** like a shepherd;
Eze 34: 22 I will save my **f,** and they shall no
Mt 26: 31 the sheep of the **f** will be scattered.'
Lk 12: 32 "Do not be afraid, little **f,**
Jn 10: 16 So there will be one **f,** one shepherd.
1Pe 5: 3 but be examples to the **f.**

### FLOGGED

Jn 19: 1 Pilate took Jesus and had him **f.**
Ac 5: 40 the apostles, they had them **f.**

### FLOOD

Ge 7: 7 the ark to escape the waters of the **f.**
9: 15 waters shall never again become a **f**
Ps 29: 10 The LORD sits enthroned over the **f;**
2Pe 2: 5 a **f** on a world of the ungodly;
Sir 40: 10 and on their account the **f** came.

### FLOW → FLOWING, FLOWS

Zec 14: 8 waters shall **f** out from Jerusalem,
Jn 7: 38 'Out of the believer's heart shall **f**

### FLOWER

Isa 40: 7 The grass withers, the **f** fades,
1Pe 1: 24 The grass withers, and the **f** falls,

### FLOWING → FLOW

Ex 3: 8 a land **f** with milk and honey,
Jos 5: 6 a land **f** with milk and honey.
Eze 47: 1 water was **f** from below the
Rev 22: 1 **f** from the throne of God and

### FOE

Ex 23: 22 and a **f** to your foes.
Ps 60: 11 O grant us help against the **f,**

### FOLLOW → FOLLOWED

Ex 16: 4 whether they will **f** my instruction
Dt 6: 14 Do not **f** other gods, any of the gods
1Ki 18: 21 If the LORD is God, **f** him;
Ps 23: 6 mercy shall **f** me all the days of my
Lk 9: 23 take up their cross daily and **f** me.
Jn 10: 27 I know them, and they **f** me.
Rev 14: 4 these **f** the Lamb wherever he goes.

### FOLLOWED → FOLLOW

Jdg 2: 12 they **f** other gods, from among the
Jer 9: 14 have stubbornly **f** their own hearts
Mk 1: 18 they left their nets and **f** him.
Rev 13: 3 the whole earth **f** the beast.

### FOLLY → FOOL

Pr 13: 16 but the fool displays **f.**
26: 4 not answer fools according to their **f**
Ecc 2: 13 that wisdom excels **f** as light excels
Mk 7: 22 envy, slander, pride, **f.**

### FOOD → FOODS

Ge 1: 30 I have given every green plant for **f.**
9: 3 thing that lives shall be **f** for you:
Ps 136: 25 who gives **f** to all flesh,
Mt 6: 25 Is not life more than **f,**
Jn 6: 55 for my flesh is true **f** and my blood
1Co 8: 8 **"F** will not bring us close to God."
1Mc 1: 63 to die rather than to be defiled by **f**

### FOODS → FOOD

Mk 7: 19 (Thus he declared all **f** clean.)
1Ti 4: 3 and demand abstinence from **f,**

### FOOL → FOLLY, FOOLISH, FOOLISHNESS, FOOLS

Pr 15: 5 A **f** despises a parent's instruction,
20: 3 but every **f** is quick to quarrel.
Mt 5: 22 'You **f,**' you will be liable to the
2Co 11: 21 I am speaking as a **f**—I also dare to

### FOOLISH → FOOL

Pr 17: 25 **F** children are a grief to their father
Jer 5: 21 O **f** and senseless people,
Mt 7: 26 like a **f** man who built his house
25: 2 Five of them were **f,** and five were
1Co 1: 20 Has not God made **f** the wisdom of
Gal 3: 1 **f** Galatians! Who has bewitched
Tit 3: 3 For we ourselves were once **f,**

### FOOLISHNESS → FOOL

1Co 1: 18 cross is **f** to those who are perishing,
3: 19 wisdom of this world is **f** with God.

### FOOLS → FOOL

Ps 14: 1 **F** say in their hearts, "There is no God."
Pr 1: 7 **f** despise wisdom and instruction.
10: 21 but **f** die for lack of sense.
Ecc 5: 4 for he has no pleasure in **f.**
Ro 1: 22 Claiming to be wise, they became **f;**
1Co 4: 10 We are **f** for the sake of Christ,

### FOOT → FEET, FOOTSTOOL

Ps 91: 12 will not dash your **f** against a stone.
Mt 18: 8 or your **f** causes you to stumble,
Lk 4: 11 not dash your **f** against a stone.'"

### FOOTSTOOL → FOOT

Ps 110: 1 until I make your enemies your **f."**
Isa 66: 1 is my throne and the earth is my **f;**
Heb 10: 13 until his enemies would be made a **f**

### FORCES

Mt 5: 41 and if anyone **f** you to go one mile,
Eph 6: 12 spiritual **f** of evil in the heavenly

### FOREHEAD → FOREHEADS

Ex 13: 9 and as a reminder on your **f,**
1Sa 17: 49 and struck the Philistine on his **f;**
Rev 13: 16 marked on the right hand or the **f,**

### FOREHEADS → FOREHEAD

Eze 9: 4 and put a mark on the **f** of those
Rev 7: 3 of our God with a seal on their **f."**
20: 4 not received its mark on their **f**

### FOREIGN → FOREIGNER, FOREIGNERS

Jos 24: 23 "Then put away the **f** gods that are
Ps 81: 9 you shall not bow down to a **f** god.

### FOREIGNER → FOREIGN

Ex 12: 43 no **f** shall eat of it.
1Co 14: 11 and the speaker a **f** to me.

### FOREIGNERS → FOREIGN

1Co 14: 21 by the lips of **f** I will speak to this
Heb 11: 13 were strangers and **f** on the earth.

### FOREKNEW* → KNOW

Ro 8: 29 whom he **f** he also predestined to
11: 2 not rejected his people whom he **f.**

### FORERUNNER* → RUN

Heb 6: 20 a **f** on our behalf, has entered,

### FORESEEING* → SEE

Ac 2: 31 **F** this, David spoke of the
Gal 3: 8 **f** that God would justify the Gentiles

### FORESKIN

Ge 17: 14 circumcised in the flesh of his **f**
Dt 10: 16 Circumcise, then, the **f** of your heart

### FORETOLD → TELL

Isa 43: 9 and **f** to us the former things?
Ac 3: 18 this way God fulfilled what he had **f**

### FOREVER

Ge 3: 22 the tree of life, and eat, and live **f"**
6: 3 spirit shall not abide in mortals **f,**
Ex 3: 15 This is my name **f,** and this my title

2Sa 7:13 the throne of his kingdom **f.**
1Ch 16:15 Remember his covenant **f.**
Ps 19:9 fear of the LORD is pure, enduring **f;**
110:4 "You are a priest **f** according to the
117:2 faithfulness of the LORD endures **f.**
Ecc 3:14 that whatever God does endures **f;**
Isa 40:8 the word of our God will stand **f.**
51:6 but my salvation will be **f,**
Jn 6:51 eats of this bread will live **f;**
14:16 another Advocate, to be with you **f,**
Heb 5:6 "You are a priest **f,** according to the
13:8 the same yesterday and today and **f.**
1Pe 1:25 but the word of the Lord endures **f."**
Rev 1:18 I am alive **f** and ever;
11:15 and he will reign **f** and ever."
22:5 and they will reign **f** and ever.
Wis 5:15 But the righteous live **f,**

## FORFEIT

Mk 8:36 the whole world and **f** their life?

## FORGAVE → FORGIVE

Ps 32:5 and you **f** the guilt of my sin.
85:2 You **f** the iniquity of your people;
Col 2:13 when he **f** us all our trespasses,

## FORGET → FORGOT, FORGOTTEN

Dt 4:23 So be careful not to **f** the covenant
6:12 take care that you do not **f** the LORD,
Ps 137:5 If I **f** you, O Jerusalem, let my right
Pr 4:5 Get wisdom; get insight: do not **f,**
Isa 49:15 these may **f,** yet I will not **f** you.

## FORGIVE → FORGAVE, FORGIVEN, FORGIVENESS, FORGIVING

Ge 18:26 **f** the whole place for their sake."
Ex 32:32 But now, if you will only **f** their sin
Nu 14:20 the LORD said, "I do **f,**
1Ki 8:30 your dwelling place; heed and **f.**
Ne 9:17 But you are a God ready to **f,**
Ps 79:9 and **f** our sins, for your name's sake.
Eze 16:63 when I **f** you all that you have done,
Da 9:19 O Lord, hear; O Lord, **f;**
Mt 6:12 And **f** us our debts, as we
Lk 5:24 has authority on earth to **f** sins"—
1Jn 1:9 is faithful and just will **f** us our sins
Sir 5:6 he will **f** the multitude of my sins."
Man 1:13 **f** me, O Lord, **f** me!

## FORGIVEN → FORGIVE

Lev 4:20 for them, and they shall be **f.**
Ps 32:1 are those whose transgression is **f,**
Mt 6:12 as we also have **f** our debtors.
12:31 against the Spirit will not be **f.**
Mk 2:9 to the paralytic, 'Your sins are **f,'**
Ac 2:38 so that your sins may be **f;**
Ro 4:7 are those whose iniquities are **f,**
Eph 4:32 as God in Christ has **f** you.

## FORGIVENESS → FORGIVE

Mk 1:4 a baptism of repentance for the **f**
3:29 against the Holy Spirit can never have **f,**
Col 1:14 we have redemption, the **f** of sins.
Heb 9:22 the shedding of blood there is no **f**

## FORGIVING → FORGIVE

Ex 34:7 **f** iniquity and transgression and sin,
Ps 86:5 For you, O Lord, are good and **f,**
Eph 4:32 **f** one another, as God in Christ has

## FORGOT → FORGET

Dt 32:18 you **f** the God who gave you birth.
Jer 23:27 just as their ancestors **f** my name
Hos 2:13 and went after her lovers, and **f** me,
Bar 4:8 You **f** the everlasting God,

## FORGOTTEN → FORGET

Ps 77:9 Has God **f** to be gracious?
Isa 49:14 forsaken me, my Lord has **f** me."
Heb 12:5 And you have **f** the exhortation

## FORM → FORMED, FORMLESS

Ex 20:4 in the **f** of anything that is in heaven
Lk 3:22 descended upon him in bodily **f**

## FORMED → FORM

Ge 2:7 the LORD God **f** man from the dust
Ps 139:15 you **f** my inmost parts;
Gal 4:19 until Christ is **f** in you.

## FORMLESS* → FORM

Ge 1:2 the earth was a **f** void and darkness
Wis 11:17 created the world out of **f** matter.

## FORNICATION → FORN CATOR, FORNICATORS

Mk 7:21 that evil intentions come: **f,**
1Co 6:13 meant not for **f** but for the Lord,
Gal 5:19 works of the flesh are obvious: **f,**
Rev 19:2 who corrupted the earth with her **f,**

## FORNICATOR* → FORNICATION

1Co 6:18 but the **f** sins against the body itself.
Eph 5:5 that no **f** or impure person,
Sir 23:17 To a **f** all bread is sweet;

## FORNICATORS → FORNICATION

1Ti 1:10 **f,** sodomites, slave traders, liars,
Rev 22:15 and sorcerers and **f** and murderers

## FORSAKE → FORSAKEN

Dt 31:6 he will not fail you or **f** you."
Jos 1:5 I will not fail you or **f** you.
Jer 17:13 All who **f** you shall be put to shame;
Heb 13:5 "I will never leave you or **f** you."

## FORSAKEN → FORSAKE

Ps 9:10 O LORD, have not **f** those who seek
22:1 my God, why have you **f** me?
Mt 27:46 my God, why have you **f** me?"
2Co 4:9 persecuted, but not **f;**

## FORTRESS

2Sa 22:2 The LORD is my rock, my **f,** and my
Ps 71:3 for you are my rock and my **f.**

## FORTUNES

Dt 30:3 LORD your God will restore your **f**
Jer 32:44 I will restore their **f,** says the LORD.

## FORTY

Ge 7:4 rain on the earth for **f** days and **f**
Nu 14:34 **f** days, for every day a year,
1Ki 19:8 **f** days and **f** nights to Horeb
Jnh 3:4 And he cried out, "**F** days more,
Mt 4:2 He fasted **f** days and **f** nights,
Heb 3:17 with whom was he angry **f** years?
2Es 14:42 They sat **f** days; they wrote

## FOUGHT → FIGHT

Jos 10:42 the LORD God of Israel **f** for Israel.
2Ti 4:7 I have **f** the good fight,
Rev 12:7 and his angels **f** against the dragon.

## FOUND → FIND

Isa 55:6 Seek the LORD while he may be **f,**
65:1 be **f** by those who did not seek me.
Lk 15:24 he was lost and is **f."**
Ro 10:20 **f** by those who did not seek me;
Rev 20:15 not **f** written in the book of life was

## FOUNDATION → FOUNDATIONS

1Ki 6:37 **f** of the house of the LORD was laid,
Ezr 3:6 **f** of the temple of the LORD was not
Isa 28:16 See, I am laying in Zion a **f** stone,
1Co 3:11 that **f** is Jesus Christ.
Eph 2:20 built upon the **f** of the apostles and
2Ti 2:19 But God's firm **f** stands,

## FOUNDATIONS → FOUNDATION

Heb 11:10 looked forward to the city that has **f,**
Rev 21:14 the wall of the city has twelve **f,**

## FOUNTAIN

Ps 36:9 For with you is the **f** of life;
Pr 16:22 Wisdom is a **f** of life to one who
Jer 9:1 and my eyes a **f** of tears,
Joel 3:18 a **f** shall come forth from the house
Zec 13:1 a **f** shall be opened for the house of

## FOUR

Eze 1:5 something like **f** living creatures.
10:14 Each one had **f** faces:
Rev 4:6 are **f** living creatures,

## FOXES

Jdg 15:4 went and caught three hundred **f,**
Lk 9:58 Jesus said to him, "**F** have holes,

## FRAGRANCE → FRAGRANT

2Co 2:14 spreads in every place the **f**

## FRAGRANT → FRAGRANCE

Ex 25:6 anointing oil and for the **f** incense,
Eph 5:2 a **f** offering and sacrifice to God.

## FRANKINCENSE → INCENSE

Isa 60:6 They shall bring gold and **f,**
Mt 2:11 gifts of gold, **f,** and myrrh.

## FREE → FREED, FREEDOM, FREEWILL

Ex 21:2 in the seventh he shall go out a **f**
Ps 146:7 The LORD sets the prisoners **f;**
Jn 8:32 and the truth will make you **f,"**
Ro 6:23 but the **f** gift of God is eternal life
1Co 9:21 not **f** from God's law but am under
Gal 3:28 there is no longer slave or **f,**
Eph 6:8 whether we are slaves or **f.**

## FREED → FREE

Ac 2:24 having **f** him from death,
Rev 1:5 **f** us from our sins by his blood,

## FREEDOM → FREE

2Co 3:17 the Spirit of the Lord is, there is **f.**
Gal 5:1 For **f** Christ has set us free.
1Pe 2:16 not use your **f** as a pretext for evil.

## FREEWILL → FREE, WILL

Ex 35:29 as a **f** offering to the LORD.
Ps 54:6 With a **f** offering I will sacrifice to

## FRIEND → FRIENDS, FRIENDSHIP

Ex 33:11 as one speaks to a **f.**
Pr 17:17 A **f** loves at all times,
18:24 but a true **f** sticks closer than one's
Mt 11:19 a **f** of tax collectors and sinners!'
Jas 2:23 and he was called the **f** of God.
4:4 a **f** of the world becomes an enemy
Sir 7:18 Do not exchange a **f** for money,

## FRIENDS → FRIEND

Job 2:11 when Job's three **f** heard of all
Jn 15:13 to lay down one's life for one's **f.**
Sir 6:15 Faithful **f** are beyond price;

## FRIENDSHIP → FRIEND

Ps 25:14 The **f** of the LORD is for those who
Jas 4:4 know that **f** with the world is enmity

## FRINGES*

Nu 15:38 to make **f** on the corners of their
Mt 23:5 phylacteries broad and their **f** long.

## FRUIT → FRUITFUL, FRUITLESS, FRUITS

Ge 3:6 she took of its **f** and ate;
Dt 28:4 Blessed shall be the **f** of your womb,
Ps 1:3 which yield their **f** in its season,
Pr 8:19 My **f** is better than gold,
Eze 47:12 will not wither nor their **f** fail,
Hos 14:2 and we will offer the **f** of our lips.
Mt 3:8 Bear **f** worthy of repentance.
Lk 6:44 for each tree is known by its own **f.**
Jn 15:2 branch that bears **f** he prunes to make
it bear more **f.**
Col 1:10 as you bear **f** in every good work
Heb 13:15 the **f** of lips that confess his name.
Rev 22:2 tree of life with its twelve kinds of **f,**

## FRUITFUL → FRUIT

Ge 1:22 Be **f** and multiply and fill the waters
9:1 said to them, "Be **f** and multiply.
Ex 1:7 the Israelites were **f** and prolific;

## FRUITS → FRUIT

Ex 23:16 of the first **f** of your labor,
Pr 3:9 with the first **f** of all your produce;
Mt 7:16 You will know them by their **f.**
Ro 8:23 who have the first **f** of the Spirit,
1Co 15:23 in his own order: Christ the first **f,**
Rev 14:4 as first **f** for God and the Lamb,

## FULFILL → FULFILLED, FULFILLING

Ps 20:5 May the LORD **f** all your petitions.
Ecc 5:4 **F** what you vow.
Mt 5:17 I have come not to abolish but to **f.**
Gal 6:2 way you will **f** the law of Christ.
Jas 2:8 really **f** the royal law according to

**FULFILLED** → FULFILL
Mk 1:15 "The time is **f,** and the kingdom
Lk 24:44 prophets, and the psalms must be **f."**
Ro 8: 4 requirement of the law might be **f**

**FULFILLING** → FULFILL
Ro 9:31 did not succeed in **f** that law.
13:10 love is the **f** of the law.

**FULL** → FILL
Isa 6: 3 the whole earth is **f** of his glory."
Eze 10:12 were **f** of eyes all around.
37: 1 it was **f** of bones.
Mt 6:22 your whole body will be **f** of light:
Jn 1:14 **f** of grace and truth.
Rev 4: 6 **f** of eyes in front and behind:
Sir 42:16 work of the Lord is **f** of his glory.

**FULLNESS** → FILL
Jn 1:16 From his **f** we have all received,
1Co 10:26 "the earth and its **f** are the Lord's."
Gal 4: 4 But when the **f** of time had come,
Eph 3:19 may be filled with all the **f** of God.
Col 1:19 in him all the **f** of God was pleased

**FURNACE**
Isa 48:10 have tested you in the **f** of adversity.
Da 3: 6 be thrown into a **f** of blazing fire."
Mt 13:42 will throw them into the **f** of fire.
Aza 1:26 of the Lord came down into the **f**

**FURNITURE**
Ex 25: 9 the tabernacle and of all its **f,**

**FURY**
Ps 2: 5 and terrify them in his **f,**
La 2: 4 he has poured out his **f** like fire.
Ro 2: 8 there will be wrath and **f.**
Rev 16:19 the wine-cup of the **f** of his wrath.

**FUTILE**
Ro 1:21 but they became **f** in their thinking,
1Co 3:20 thoughts of the wise, that they are **f.**

**FUTURE**
Pr 24:20 for the evil have no **f;**
Jer 31:17 hope for your **f,** says the LORD:
1Co 3:22 life or death or the present or the **f—**
1Ti 6:19 of a good foundation for the **f,**

## G

**GABRIEL***
Angel who interpreted Daniel's visions (Da 8:16-26; 9:20-27); announced births of John (Lk 1:11-20), Jesus (Lk 1:26-38).

**GAD**
1. Son of Jacob by Zilpah (Ge 30:9-11; 35:26; 1Ch 2:2). Tribe of blessed (Ge 49:19; Dt 33:20-21), numbered (Nu 1:25; 26:18), allotted land east of the Jordan (Nu 32; 34:14; Jos 18:7; 22), west (Eze 48:27-28), 12,000 from (Rev 7:5).
2. Prophet; seer of David (1Sa 22:5; 2Sa 24:11-19; 1Ch 29:29).

**GAIN**
Ecc 1: 3 What do people **g** from all the toil
Lk 9:25 if they **g** the whole world,
Php 1:21 living is Christ and dying is **g.**
3: 8 in order that I may **g** Christ
1Ti 6: 5 that godliness is a means of **g.**

**GALILEAN** → GALILEE
Mt 26:69 "You also were with Jesus the **G."**

**GALILEANS** → GALILEE
Ac 2: 7 not all these who are speaking **G?**

**GALILEE** → GALILEAN, GALILEANS
Isa 9: 1 beyond the Jordan, **G** of the nations.
Mt 4:15 across the Jordan, **G** of the Gentiles
Jn 7:41 the Messiah does not come from **G,**

**GAMALIEL**
Pharisee (Ac 5:34-39), teacher of Paul (Ac 22:5).

**GARDEN**
Ge 2: 8 the LORD God planted a **g** in Eden,
Eze 28:13 You were in Eden, the **g** of God;
Jn 19:41 and in the **g** there was a new tomb

**GARMENT** → GARMENTS
Ge 39:12 she caught hold of his **g,**
Dt 22: 5 nor shall a man put on a woman's **g;**
Ps 102:26 they will all wear out like a **g,**
Lk 5:36 a new **g** and sews it on an old **g;**

**GARMENTS** → GARMENT
Ge 3:21 the LORD God made **g** of skins for
Isa 61:10 clothed me with the **g** of salvation,

**GATE** → GATES
Mt 7:13 "Enter through the narrow **g;**
Jn 10: 7 I am the **g** for the sheep.
Heb 13:12 Jesus also suffered outside the city **g**

**GATES** → GATE
Ge 24:60 offspring gain possession of the **g**
Dt 6: 9 of your house and on your **g,**
Ps 100: 4 Enter his **g** with thanksgiving,
Mt 16:18 and the **g** of Hades will not prevail
Rev 21:21 And the twelve **g** are twelve pearls,

**GATH**
1Sa 17: 4 Goliath, of **G,** whose height was six
2Sa 1:20 Tell it not in **G,** proclaim it not in

**GATHER** → GATHERED, INGATHERING
Ex 16: 4 and **g** enough for that day.
Ru 2: 7 and **g** among the sheaves behind
Isa 11:12 and **g** the dispersed of Judah from
Mt 12:30 does not **g** with me scatters.
Lk 13:34 to **g** your children together as

**GATHERED** → GATHER
Mt 18:20 two or three are **g** in my name,
2Th 2: 1 Christ and our being **g** together
Rev 14:19 and **g** the vintage of the earth,

**GAVE** → GIVE
Ge 28: 4 land that God **g** to Abraham."
Ex 31:18 he **g** him the two tablets of the
1Ki 4:29 God **g** Solomon very great wisdom,
Ne 9:15 you **g** them bread from heaven,
Ecc 12: 7 the breath returns to God who **g** it.
Mt 25:35 for I was hungry and you **g** me food,
Jn 1:12 **g** power to become children of God,
3:16 loved the world that he **g** his only Son,
Ro 8:32 but **g** him up for all of us,
Eph 4:11 The gifts he **g** were that some would
1Ti 2: 6 who **g** himself a ransom

**GEDALIAH**
Governor of Judah (2Ki 25:22-26; Jer 39-41).

**GEHAZI***
Servant of Elisha (2Ki 4:12-5:27; 8:4-5).

**GENEALOGIES** → GENEALOGY
1Ch 9: 1 So all Israel was enrolled by **g;**
Ne 7:64 among those enrolled in the **g,**

**GENEALOGY** → GENEALOGIES
Mt 1: 1 of the **g** of Jesus the Messiah,

**GENERATION** → GENERATIONS
Ge 15:16 come back here in the fourth **g;**
Ex 20: 6 steadfast love to the thousandth **g**
34: 7 to the third and the fourth **g."**
Da 4:34 his kingdom endures from **g** to **g,**
Mt 12:39 evil and adulterous **g** asks for a sign,
Lk 21:32 this **g** will not pass away

**GENERATIONS** → GENERATION
Isa 51: 8 and my salvation to all **g,**
Lk 1:48 now on all **g** will call me blessed:

**GENEROSITY** → GENEROUS
Ro 12: 8 the giver, in **g;**
Gal 5:22 joy, peace, patience, kindness, **g,**

**GENEROUS** → GENEROSITY
Ro 10:12 and is **g** to all who call on him.
Jas 1:17 Every **g** act of giving,

**GENTILE** → GENTILES
Mt 18:17 as a **G** and a tax collector.
Gal 2:14 live like a **G** and not like a Jew.
1Mc 1:14 according to **G** custom.

**GENTILES** → GENTILE
Lk 21:24 until the times of the **G** are fulfilled.
Ac 15:19 those **G** who are turning to God,
Ro 3:29 Is he not the God of **G** also?
Gal 3: 8 God would justify the **G** by faith,
Eph 4:17 must no longer live as the **G** live,
Tob 1:11 from eating the food of the **G,**
1Mc 1:11 and make a covenant with the **G**
2Es 4:23 Israel has been given over to the **G**

**GENTLE** → GENTLENESS
Pr 15: 4 A **g** tongue is a tree of life,
Mt 11:29 for I am **g** and humble in heart,
1Pe 3: 4 with the lasting beauty of a **g**

**GENTLENESS** → GENTLE
Gal 5:23 **g,** and self-control. There is no law
Php 4: 5 Let your **g** be known to everyone.
1Ti 6:11 godliness, faith, love, endurance, **g,**

**GETHSEMANE**
Mk 14:32 They went to a place called **G;**

**GHOST**
Mt 14:26 were terrified, saying, "It is a **g!"**
Lk 24:39 for a **g** does not have flesh and

**GIANT** → GIANTS
Sir 47: 4 In his youth did he not kill a **g,**

**GIANTS** → GIANT
1Ch 20: 4 was one of the descendants of the **g;**
Sir 16: 7 He did not forgive the ancient **g**

**GIBEON**
Jos 10:12 "Sun, stand still at **G,** and Moon, in
1Ki 3: 5 **G** the LORD appeared to Solomon

**GIDEON** → =JERUBBAAL
Judge, also called Jerubbaal; freed Israel from Midianites (Jdg 6-8; Heb 11:32). The fleece (Jdg 8:36-40).

**GIFT** → GIFTS
Nu 18: 7 I give your priesthood as a **g;**
Ecc 5:19 this is the **g** of God.
Mt 5:23 So when you are offering your **g** at
Jn 4:10 "If you knew the **g** of God,
Ac 2:38 will receive the **g** of the Holy Spirit.
Ro 6:23 but the free **g** of God is eternal life
1Co 7: 7 each has a particular **g** from God.
Jas 1:17 with every perfect **g,** is from above.
Rev 21: 6 the thirsty I will give water as a **g**

**GIFTS** → GIFT
Dt 12: 6 and your donations, your votive **g,**
Mt 2:11 offered him **g** of gold, frankincense.
Lk 11:13 how to give good **g** to your children,
Ro 11:29 for the **g** and the calling of God are
1Co 12: 1 Now concerning spiritual **g,**
Eph 4: 8 he gave **g** to his people."
Sir 32:13 who fills you with his good **g.**

**GILGAL**
Jos 5: 9 so that place is called **G** to this day.
1Sa 7:16 a circuit year by year to Bethel, **G,**

**GIRL**
Ex 1:16 but if it is a **g,** she shall live."
Mk 5:41 which means, "Little **g,** get up!"

**GIVE** → GAVE, GIVEN, GIVER, GIVES
Ge 9: 3 the green plants, I **g** you everything.
12: 7 your offspring I will **g** this land."
1Ki 3: 5 said, "Ask what I should **g** you."
Pr 25:21 If your enemies are hungry, **g** them
30:15 leech has two daughters: **"G, g,"**
Eze 36:26 A new heart I will **g** you,
Mt 6:11 **G** us this day our daily bread.
7: 6 "Do not **g** what is holy to dogs;
Mk 10:45 to **g** his life a ransom for many."
Jn 10:28 I **g** them eternal life, and they will
Ac 20:35 more blessed to **g** than to receive.'"
Tob 12: 9 who **g** alms will enjoy a full life,
Sir 7:10 do not neglect to **g** alms.

**GIVEN** → GIVE
Mt 7: 7 "Ask, and it will be **g** you;
Mk 4:25 to those who have, more will be **g;**
Lk 22:19 "This is my body, which is **g** for
Ro 5: 5 the Holy Spirit that has been **g** to us.
Sir 35:12 Give to the Most High as he has **g**

**GIVER** → GIVE
Ro 12: 8 the **g**, in generosity;
2Co 9: 7 for God loves a cheerful **g**.

**GIVES** → GIVE
2Co 3: 6 the letter kills, but the Spirit **g** life.
Jas 4: 6 But he **g** all the more grace;

**GLAD** → GLADNESS
Ps 16: 9 Therefore my heart is **g**, and my
90: 15 Make us **g** as many days as you
Pr 10: 1 A wise child makes a **g** father,
Mt 5: 12 and be **g**, for your reward is great in
Ac 2: 26 heart was **g**, and my tongue rejoiced

**GLADNESS** → GLAD
Ps 100: 2 Worship the LORD with **g**;
Pr 10: 28 The hope of the righteous ends in **g**,
Isa 16: 10 Joy and **g** are taken away from the
Jer 31: 13 and give them **g** for sorrow,
Zep 3: 17 he will rejoice over you with **g**,
Heb 1: 9 has anointed you with the oil of **g**

**GLASS**
Rev 4: 6 there is something like a sea of **g**,
21: 18 the city is pure gold, clear as **g**.

**GLEAN**
Dt 24: 21 do not **g** what is left;
Ru 2: 2 Let me go to the field and **g** among

**GLOOM**
Isa 9: 1 there will be no **g** for those who
Joel 2: 2 a day of darkness and **g**,
Heb 12: 18 and darkness, and **g**, and a tempest,

**GLORIFIED** → GLORY
Lev 10: 3 before all the people I will be **g**.'"
Jn 13: 31 "Now the Son of Man has been **g**,
17: 4 **g** you on earth by finishing the work
Ac 3: 13 has **g** his servant Jesus,
Ro 8: 30 those whom he justified he also **g**,

**GLORIFY** → GLORY
Ps 86: 12 and I will **g** your name forever.
Jn 17: 1 **g** your Son so that the Son may **g** you,
1Co 6: 20 therefore **g** God in your body.
2Co 9: 13 you **g** God by your obedience to
Rev 15: 4 who will not fear and **g** your name?
Sir 43: 30 **G** the Lord and exalt him as much

**GLORIOUS** → GLORY
Jas 2: 1 in our **g** Lord Jesus Christ?
Jdt 16: 13 O Lord, you are great and **g**,
Aza 1: 3 and **g** is your name forever!

**GLORY** → GLORIFIED, GLORIFY, GLORIOUS
Ex 24: 16 The **g** of the LORD settled on Mount
33: 18 Moses said, "Show me your **g**,
40: 34 **g** of the LORD filled the tabernacle.
1Sa 4: 21 "The **g** has departed from Israel."
1Ki 8: 11 **g** of the LORD filled the house of the
Ps 8: 5 crowned them with **g** and honor.
19: 1 heavens are telling the **g** of God:
24: 7 that the King of **g** may come in.
Isa 6: 3 the whole earth is full of his **g**."
40: 5 the **g** of the LORD shall be revealed,
Eze 11: 23 **g** of the LORD ascended from the
44: 4 **g** of the LORD filled the temple of
Hos 4: 7 they changed their **g** into shame.
Mt 25: 31 the Son of Man comes in his **g**,
Lk 2: 14 "**G** to God in the highest heaven,
Jn 1: 14 and we have seen his **g**,
12: 41 Isaiah said this because he saw his **g**
Ro 3: 23 sinned and fall short of the **g** of God;
8: 18 not worth comparing with the **g**
9: 4 the **g**, the covenants, the giving of
1Co 10: 31 do everything for the **g** of God.
2Co 4: 17 for an eternal weight of **g** beyond
Heb 1: 3 reflection of God's **g** and the exact
2Pe 1: 17 conveyed to him by the Majestic **G**,
Rev 4: 11 to receive **g** and honor and power,
21: 23 for the **g** of God is its light,
Sir 1: 11 The fear of the Lord is **g** and
Bar 5: 4 "Righteous Peace, Godly **G**."
1Mc 1: 40 dishonor now grew as great as her **g**

**GLUTTON**
Pr 23: 21 and the **g** will come to poverty,
Mt 11: 19 they say, 'Look, a **g** and a drunkard,

**GNASHING**
Mt 8: 12 will be weeping and **g** of teeth."
25: 30 will be weeping and **g** of teeth.'

**GNAT***
Mt 23: 24 strain out a **g** but swallow a camel!

**GO**
Ex 5: 1 the God of Israel: 'Let my people **g**,
Jos 1: 9 God is with you wherever you **g**."
Ru 1: 16 Where you **g**, I will **g**;
Mt 28: 19 **G** therefore and make disciples of
Jn 14: 3 if I **g** and prepare a place for you,

**GOAT** → GOATS
Lev 16: 9 Aaron shall present the **g** on which
Da 8: 21 The male **g** is the king of Greece,

**GOATS** → GOAT
Ps 50: 13 or drink the blood of **g**?
Mt 25: 32 separates the sheep from the **g**,
Heb 10: 4 for the blood of bulls and **g**

***GOD** → GOD'S, GODDESS, GODLESS, GODLINESS, GODLY, GODS
Ge 1: 1 In the beginning when **G** created
1: 27 So **G** created humankind in his image,
3: 5 be like **G**, knowing good and evil."
6: 2 sons of **G** saw that they were fair;
17: 1 and said to him, "I am **G** Almighty;
Ex 3: 4 **G** called to him out of the bush,
15: 2 this is my **G**, and I will praise him,
20: 5 I the LORD your **G** am a jealous **G**,
34: 6 a **G** merciful and gracious, slow to
Nu 23: 19 **G** is not a human being,
Dt 4: 7 a **g** so near to it as the LORD our **G**
6: 5 love the LORD your **G** with all your
Jos 22: 34 between us that the LORD is **G**."
1Sa 2: 2 there is no Rock like our **G**,
1Ki 8: 27 will **G** indeed dwell on the earth?
18: 24 the **g** who answers by fire is indeed **G**.
2Ki 17: 7 sinned against the LORD their **G**,
2Ch 2: 5 for our **G** is greater than other gods.
Ezr 6: 16 the dedication of this house of **G**
Ne 8: 18 read from the book of the law of **G**.
Ps 19: 1 heavens are telling the glory of **G**;
22: 1 My **G**, my **G**, why have you forsaken
46: 1 **G** is our refuge and strength,
46: 10 "Be still, and know that I am **G**!
47: 7 For **G** is the king of all the earth;
53: 1 Fools say in their hearts, "There is no **G**."
68: 20 Our **G** is a **G** of salvation,
90: 2 everlasting to everlasting you are **G**.
136: 2 O give thanks to the **G** of gods,
145: 1 I will extol you, my **G** and King,
Ecc 12: 13 Fear **G**, and keep his
Isa 9: 6 Wonderful Counselor, Mighty **G**,
12: 2 Surely **G** is my salvation;
40: 28 The LORD is the everlasting **G**,
44: 6 besides me there is no **g**.
Jer 10: 10 But the LORD is the true **G**;
Eze 28: 2 proud and you have said, "I am a **g**;
Hos 12: 6 But as for you, return to your **G**,
Am 4: 12 prepare to meet your **G**,
Mic 6: 8 and to walk humbly with your **G**?
Hab 3: 18 I will exult in the **G** of my salvation.
Mal 2: 10 Has not one **G** created us?
Mt 1: 23 which means, "**G** is with us."
4: 4 that comes from the mouth of **G**.'"
4: 7 not put the Lord your **G** to the test.'
4: 10 written, 'Worship the Lord your **G**,
6: 24 You cannot serve **G** and wealth.
27: 40 If you are the Son of **G**,
Mk 1: 1 news of Jesus Christ, the Son of **G**.
2: 7 Who can forgive sins but **G** alone?"
10: 9 what **G** has joined together, let no
12: 30 the Lord your **G** with all your heart,
Lk 2: 14 "Glory to **G** in the highest heaven,
18: 19 No one is good but **G** alone.
22: 70 "Are you, then, the Son of **G**?"
Jn 1: 1 was with **G**, and the Word was **G**.
1: 18 It is **G** the only Son,
3: 16 **G** so loved the world that he gave his only Son,
5: 18 calling **G** his own Father, thereby making himself equal to **G**.
20: 28 "My Lord and my **G**!"
Ac 5: 29 "We must obey **G** rather than any
Ro 4: 3 "Abraham believed **G**, and it was
6: 23 gift of **G** is eternal life in Christ
8: 31 If **G** is for us, who is against us?
1Co 10: 31 do everything for the glory of **G**.
2Co 4: 4 Christ, who is the image of **G**,
6: 16 we are the temple of the living **G**;
Eph 4: 6 one **G** and Father of all,
Php 2: 6 though he was in the form of **G**,
Col 1: 19 fullness of **G** was pleased to dwell,
Tit 2: 13 of our great **G** and Savior, Jesus
Heb 4: 12 the word of **G** is living and active.
10: 31 to fall into the hands of the living **G**.
12: 29 indeed our **G** is a consuming fire.
Jas 2: 23 "Abraham believed **G**,
4: 8 Draw near to **G**, and he will draw
1Jn 1: 5 **G** is light and in him there is no
4: 16 **G** is love, and those who abide
5: 2 love **G** and obey his commandments
Jude 1: 21 keep yourselves in the love of **G**;
Rev 4: 8 "Holy, holy, holy, the Lord **G**
19: 13 his name is called The Word of **G**.
22: 5 for the Lord **G** will be their light,
Tob 4: 19 At all times bless the Lord **G**,
Sir 32: 14 seeks **G** will accept his discipline,
Bar 4: 8 You forgot the everlasting **G**,
Bel 1: 4 But Daniel worshiped his own **G**,
Man 1: 1 Lord Almighty, **G** of our ancestors,
2Es 16: 67 Indeed, **G** is the judge; fear him!

**†GOD** → †LORD
Ge 15: 2 But Abram said, "O Lord **G**,
2Sa 7: 18 "Who am I, O Lord **G**,
Isa 25: 8 Lord **G** will wipe away the tears
61: 1 The spirit of the Lord **G** is upon me,

**GOD'S** → *GOD
Mt 27: 43 for he said, 'I am **G** Son.'"
27: 54 "Truly this man was **G** Son!"
Ro 2: 4 that **G** kindness is meant to lead you
1Co 3: 9 you are **G** field, **G** building.
3: 16 you are **G** temple and that **G** Spirit
Heb 1: 3 reflection of **G** glory and the exact imprint of **G**
1Jn 3: 2 Beloved, we are **G** children now;

**GODDESS** → *GOD
1Ki 11: 5 Astarte the **g** of the Sidonians,
Ac 19: 27 the temple of the great **g** Artemis

**GODLESS** → *GOD
Job 8: 13 the hope of the **g** shall perish,
Ps 119: 122 do not let the **g** oppress me.
1Ti 1: 9 for the **g** and sinful,
2Pe 3: 7 judgment and destruction of the **g**,

**GODLINESS** → *GOD
1Ti 4: 7 Train yourself in **g**,
6: 5 imagining that **g** is a means of gain.
2Ti 3: 5 outward form of **g** but denying its
Tit 1: 1 truth that is in accordance with **g**,
2Pe 1: 3 everything needed for life and **g**,
Wis 10: 12 **g** is more powerful than anything

**GODLY** → *GOD
Mal 2: 15 the one God desire? **G** offspring.
2Co 7: 10 For **g** grief produces a repentance
2Ti 3: 12 to live a **g** life in Christ Jesus will
Tit 2: 12 are self-controlled, upright, and **g**,
2Pe 2: 9 how to rescue the **g** from trial,
Sir 37: 12 But associate with a **g** person
Bar 5: 4 "Righteous Peace, **G** Glory."

**GODS** → *GOD
Ge 31: 19 stole her father's household **g**,
Ex 12: 12 **g** of Egypt I will execute judgments:
20: 3 you shall have no other **g** before me.
Jdg 2: 17 they lusted after other **g** and bowed

2Ki 17: 7 They had worshiped other **g**
Jn 10: 34 in your law, 'I said, you are **g**'?
1Co 8: 5 so-called **g** in heaven or on earth—

### GOG
Eze 38: 18 **G** comes against the land of Israel,
Rev 20: 8 **G** and Magog, in order to gather

### GOLD
Ex 20: 23 make for yourselves gods of **g**,
25: 17 shall make a mercy seat of pure **g**;
25: 31 shall make a lampstand of pure **g**.
28: 6 They shall make the ephod of **g**, of
32: 31 have made for themselves gods of **g**,
1Ki 6: 21 the inside of the house with pure **g**,
Job 28: 15 It cannot be gotten for **g**,
119: 127 love your commandments more than **g**,
Isa 60: 17 Instead of bronze I will bring **g**,
Ac 3: 6 Peter said, "I have no silver or **g**,
1Pe 1: 7 being more precious than **g** that.
Rev 21: 21 and the street of the city is pure **g**,
Tob 12: 8 better to give alms than to lay up **g**,
Sir 31: 5 who loves **g** will not be justified:

### GOLGOTHA
Mt 27: 33 **G** (which means Place of a Skull),

### GOLIATH
Giant killed by David (1Sa 17: 21:9; Sir 47:4).

### GOMORRAH
Ge 19: 24 LORD rained on Sodom and **G** sulfur
Isa 1: 9 like Sodom, and become like **G**.
Jude 1: 7 Sodom and **G** and the surrounding

### GOOD → BEST, BETTER, GOODNESS
Ge 1: 31 and indeed, it was very **g**.
2: 9 tree of the knowledge of **g** and evil.
3: 22 become like one of us, knowing **g**
50: 20 to me, God intended it for **g**,
Dt 6: 18 Do what is right and **g** in the sight
2Ch 7: 3 "For he is **g**, for his steadfast love
Ps 14: 1 there is no one who does **g**.
34: 8 O taste and see that the LORD is **g**;
84: 11 No **g** thing does the LORD withhold
Pr 18: 22 He who finds a wife finds a **g** thing,
Ecc 12: 14 every secret thing, whether **g** or evil.
Isa 52: 7 who brings **g** news, who announces
Mt 5: 45 his sun rise on the evil and on the **g**,
13: 8 Other seeds fell on **g** soil and
25: 21 'Well done, **g** and trustworthy slave;
Mk 10: 18 No one is **g** but God alone.
Lk 2: 10 I am bringing you **g** news of great
6: 43 "No **g** tree bears bad fruit,
Jn 10: 11 "I am the **g** shepherd.
Ro 7: 16 I agree that the law is **g**.
12: 2 is **g** and acceptable and perfect.
12: 21 but overcome evil with **g**.
Eph 2: 10 created in Christ Jesus for **g** works,
1Ti 4: 4 For everything created by God is **g**,
Heb 10: 1 the law has only a shadow of the **g**
1Pe 3: 17 For it is better to suffer for doing **g**,
Tob 4: 9 laying up a **g** treasure for yourself
Aza 1: 67 to the Lord, for he is **g**,

### GOODNESS → GOOD
Ex 33: 19 will make all my **g** pass before you,
Ps 23: 6 Surely **g** and mercy shall follow me
Heb 6: 5 tasted the **g** of the word of God and
2Pe 1: 5 support your faith with **g**, and **g**

### GOSHEN
Ge 45: 10 You shall settle in the land of **G**,
Ex 8: 22 day I will set apart the land of **G**,

### GOSPEL
Mk 8: 35 and for the sake of the **g**,
Ro 1: 16 For I am not ashamed of the **g**;
1Co 9: 16 woe to me if I do not proclaim the **g**
2Co 4: 3 And even if our **g** is veiled,
Gal 1: 6 and are turning to a different **g**—
Php 1: 27 life in a manner worthy of the **g**
Rev 14: 6 an eternal **g** to proclaim to those

### GOSSIP
Pr 11: 13 A **g** goes about telling secrets,
2Co 12: 20 selfishness, slander, **g**, conceit,

### GRACE → GRACIOUS
Jn 1: 14 father's only son, full of **g** and truth.
1: 16 we have all received, **g** upon **g**,
Ac 15: 11 that we will be saved through the **g**
Ro 3: 24 are now justified by his **g** as a gift,
6: 1 in sin in order that **g** may abound?
6: 14 you are not under law but under **g**,
11: 6 otherwise **g** would no longer be **g**,
2Co 12: 9 "My **g** is sufficient for you,
Gal 5: 4 you have fallen away from **g**,
Eph 2: 5 by **g** you have been saved—
2Th 2: 16 through **g** gave us eternal comfort
Tit 2: 11 For the **g** of God has appeared,
Heb 4: 16 approach the throne of **g** with
Jas 4: 6 But he gives all the more **g**;
1Pe 5: 10 the God of all **g**,
Jude 1: 4 who pervert the **g** of our God into
Rev 22: 21 The **g** of the Lord Jesus be with all
Wis 3: 9 **g** and mercy are upon his holy ones,
2Es 2: 32 and my **g** will not fail."

### GRACIOUS → GRACE
Ex 34: 6 the LORD, a God merciful and **g**,
Nu 6: 25 to shine upon you, and be **g** to you;
Ezr 8: 22 of our God is **g** to all who seek him,
Ne 9: 31 for you are a **g** and merciful God.
Ps 77: 9 Has God forgotten to be **g**?
116: 5 **G** is the LORD, and righteous;
Col 4: 6 Let your speech always be **g**,

### GRAFTED
Ro 11: 17 were **g** in their place to share the

### GRAIN
Lev 2: 1 presents a **g** offering to the LORD.
Dt 25: 4 an ox while it is treading out the **g**.
Mk 2: 23 disciples began to pluck heads of **g**,
1Ti 5: 18 an ox while it is treading out the **g**,"

### GRAPES
Nu 13: 23 a branch with a single cluster of **g**,
Isa 5: 2 to yield **g**, but it yielded wild **g**,
Jer 31: 29 "The parents have eaten sour **g**,
Mt 7: 16 Are **g** gathered from thorns, or figs
Rev 14: 18 vine of the earth, for its **g** are ripe."

### GRASS
Isa 40: 6 All people are **g**, their constancy is
Mt 6: 30 if God so clothes the **g** of the field,
1Pe 1: 24 "All flesh is like **g** and all its glory

### GRATIFY*
Ro 13: 14 for the flesh, to **g** its desires.
Gal 5: 16 do not **g** the desires of the flesh.

### GRAVE → GRAVES
Ps 49: 14 straight to the **g** they descend.
Isa 53: 9 They made his **g** with the wicked

### GRAVES → GRAVE
Eze 37: 12 and bring you up from your **g**,
Lk 11: 44 For you are like unmarked **g**,

### GRAY
Pr 16: 31 **G** hair is a crown of glory;
Sir 6: 18 **g** hair you will still find wisdom.

### GREAT → GREATER, GREATEST
Ge 1: 16 God made the two **g** lights—
12: 2 I will make of you a **g** nation,
Ex 32: 11 **g** power and with a mighty hand?
Dt 10: 17 the **g** God, mighty and awesome,
Ne 8: 6 Ezra blessed the LORD, the **g** God.
Ps 95: 3 the LORD is a **g** God, and a **g** King
Jer 10: 6 you are **g**, and your name is **g**
La 3: 23 **g** is your faithfulness.
Da 9: 4 "Ah, Lord, **g** and awesome God,
Joel 2: 11 Truly the day of the LORD is **g**;
Mt 4: 16 sat in darkness have seen a **g** light,
13: 46 on finding one pearl of **g** value,
20: 26 whoever wishes to be **g** among you
Eph 2: 4 the **g** love with which he loved us
Tit 2: 13 of the glory of our **g** God and Savior
Heb 2: 3 if we neglect so **g** a salvation?
12: 1 by so **g** a cloud of witnesses,
13: 20 the **g** shepherd of the sheep,
Rev 12: 9 The **g** dragon was thrown down,
14: 8 "Fallen, fallen is Babylon the **g**!
20: 11 I saw a **g** white throne and the one
Jdt 16: 13 O Lord, you are **g** and glorious,
Sir 17: 29 How **g** is the mercy of the Lord,

### GREATER → GREAT
Ex 18: 11 that the LORD is **g** than all gods,
Mt 12: 6 something **g** than the temple is here.
Mk 12: 31 no other commandment **g** than these
Jn 14: 12 in fact, will do **g** works than these,
15: 13 No one has **g** love than this,
1Jn 4: 4 for the one who is in you is **g** than

### GREATEST → GREAT
Mt 22: 38 the **g** and first commandment.
Lk 9: 48 the least among all of you is the **g**."
1Co 13: 13 and the **g** of these is love.

### GREECE → GREEK, GREEKS
Da 8: 21 The male goat is the king of **G**,
1Mc 1: 1 had previously become king of **G**,)

### GREED → GREEDY
Mt 23: 25 but inside they are full of **g**
Lk 12: 15 on your guard against all kinds of **g**;
Col 3: 5 evil desire, and **g** (which is idolatry)

### GREEDY → GREED
Pr 28: 25 The **g** person stirs up strife,
1Co 6: 10 the **g**, drunkards, revilers, robbers—
Tit 1: 7 to wine or violent or **g** for gain;

### GREEK → GREECE
Jn 19: 20 in Hebrew, in Latin, and in **G**.
Ro 1: 16 to the Jew first and also to the **G**.
Gal 3: 28 There is no longer Jew or **G**,

### GREEKS → GREECE
1Co 1: 22 demand signs and **G** desire wisdom,

### GREEN
Ge 1: 30 I have given every **g** plant for food."
Ps 23: 2 makes me lie down in **g** pastures;

### GREW → GROW
1Sa 2: 21 boy Samuel **g** up in the presence of
Isa 53: 2 he **g** up before him like a young
Lk 1: 80 child **g** and became strong in spirit,
2: 40 child **g** and became strong, filled

### GRIEF → GRIEVE, GRIEVED
La 3: 32 causes **g**, he will have compassion
2Co 7: 9 your **g** led to repentance;

### GRIEVE → GRIEF
Eph 4: 30 do not **g** the Holy Spirit of God,
1Th 4: 13 not **g** as others do who have no hope

### GRIEVED → GRIEF
Isa 63: 10 they rebelled and **g** his holy spirit;
Mt 26: 38 "I am deeply **g**, even to death;

### GRINDING
Lk 17: 35 will be two women **g** meal together;

### GROAN → GROANING
Ro 8: 23 **g** inwardly while we wait for
2Co 5: 2 For in this tent we **g**, longing to be
2Es 16: 39 and the world will **g**,

### GROANING → GROAN
Ex 2: 24 heard their **g**, and God remembered
Jdg 2: 18 would be moved to pity by their **g**
Ps 22: 1 from the words of my **g**?

### GROUND
Ge 2: 7 formed man from the dust of the **g**,
3: 17 cursed is the **g** because of you;
Ex 3: 5 which you are standing is holy **g**."
Isa 53: 2 and like a root out of dry **g**;
Mt 13: 5 Other seeds fell on rocky **g**,
Sir 33: 10 All human beings come from the **g**,

### GROW → GREW, GROWTH
Isa 11: 1 and a branch shall **g** out of his roots.
Eze 47: 12 will **g** all kinds of trees for food.
Col 1: 10 as you **g** in the knowledge of God.
2Pe 3: 18 But **g** in the grace and knowledge of

### GROWTH → GROW
1Co 3: 7 but only God who gives the **g**.
Col 2: 19 grows with a **g** that is from God.

**GUARANTEE** → GUARANTEED
2Co 5: 5 who has given us the Spirit as a **g.**
Heb 7: 22 Jesus has also become the **g** of a

**GUARANTEED*** → GUARANTEE
Ro 4: 16 promise may rest on grace and be **g**
Heb 6: 17 he **g** it by an oath.

**GUARD** → GUARDIAN, GUARDS
Pr 2: 11 and understanding will **g** you.
2Th 3: 3 and **g** you from the evil one.
2Ti 1: 12 to **g** until that day what I have

**GUARDIAN** → GUARD
1Pe 2: 25 to the shepherd and **g** of your souls.
Sir 51: 12 *Give thanks to the g of Israel,*

**GUARDS** → GUARD
Ps 127: 1 Unless the LORD **g** the city.
Mt 28: 4 the **g** shook and became like dead

**GUIDANCE** → GUIDE
Pr 11: 14 Where there is no **g,** a nation falls.

**GUIDE** → GUIDANCE
Ps 48: 14 He will be our **g** forever.
Isa 58: 11 The LORD will **g** you continually,
Lk 6: 39 Can a blind person **g** a blind person?
Jn 16: 13 he will **g** you into all the truth;

**GUILT** → GUILTY
Lev 5: 15 as your **g** offering to the LORD.
Ps 32: 5 and you forgave the **g** of my sin.
Hos 14: 2 say to him, "Take away all **g;**
Zec 3: 9 I will remove the **g** of this land

**GUILTY** → GUILT
Ex 23: 7 for I will not acquit the **g.**
Nu 14: 18 but by no means clearing the **g,**
Mk 3: 29 but is **g** of an eternal sin"—
Sus 1: 53 the innocent and acquitting the **g,**

## H

**HABAKKUK**
Prophet to Judah (Hab 1:1; 3:1; Bel 1:33-39).

**HADASSAH** → See ESTHER

**HADES**
Mt 16: 18 and the gates of **H** will not prevail
Ac 2: 27 not abandon my soul to **H,**
Rev 1: 18 I have the keys of Death and of **H.**
20: 14 **H** were thrown into the lake of fire.
Sir 21: 10 but at its end is the pit of **H.**

**HAGAR**
Servant of Sarah, wife of Abraham, mother of Ishmael (Ge 16:1-6; 25:12). Driven away by Sarah while pregnant (Ge 16:5-16); after birth of Isaac (Ge 21:9-21; Gal 4:21-31).

**HAGGAI***
Post-exilic prophet who encouraged rebuilding of the temple (Ezr 5:1; 6:14; Hag 1-2; 1Es 6:1; 7:3; 2Es 1:40).

**HAIL** → HAILSTONES
Ex 9: 19 will die when the **h** comes down
Rev 8: 7 came **h** and fire, mixed with blood,

**HAILSTONES** → HAIL
Jos 10: 11 of the **h** than the Israelites killed
Rev 16: 21 and huge **h,** each weighing about

**HAIR** → HAIRS
Jdg 16: 22 **h** of his head began to grow again
Lk 7: 44 her tears and dried them with her **h.**
1Co 11: 6 for a woman to have her **h** cut off
1Ti 2: 9 not with their **h** braided, or with

**HAIRS** → HAIR
Ps 40: 12 more than the **h** of my head,
Mt 10: 30 the **h** of your head are all counted.

**HALF**
Est 5: 3 even to the **h** of my kingdom."
Mk 6: 23 give you, even **h** of my kingdom."
Lk 19: 8 **h** of my possessions, Lord, I will

**HALLELUJAH**
Rev 19: 1 multitude in heaven, saying, **"H!**
Tob 13: 17 and all her houses will cry, **'H!**

**HALLOWED**
Ge 2: 3 blessed the seventh day and **h** it.
Mt 6: 9 Father in heaven, **h** be your name.

**HAM**
Son of Noah (Ge 5:32; 1Ch 1:4), father of Canaan (Ge 9:18; 10:6-20; 1Ch 1:8-16). Saw Noah's nakedness (Ge 9:20-27).

**HAMAN**
Agagite nobleman honored by Xerxes (Est 3:1-2). Plotted to exterminate the Jews because of Mordecai (Est 3:3-15). Forced to honor Mordecai (Est 5-6). Plot exposed by Esther (Est 5:1-8; 7:1-8). Hanged (Est 7:9-10). See also Additions to Esther.

**HANANIAH** → =SHADRACH
1. False prophet; adversary of Jeremiah (Jer 28).
2. Original name of Shadrach Da 1:6-19; 2:17).

**HAND** → EMPTY-HANDED, HANDED, HANDS
Ex 3: 19 unless compelled by a mighty **h.**
15: 6 Your right **h,** O LORD, glorious in
Dt 19: 21 tooth for tooth, **h** for **h,** foot for foot
1Ki 18: 44 cloud no bigger than a person's **h** is
Ps 16: 8 he is at my right **h,** I shall not be
98: 1 right **h** and his holy arm have gotten
110: 1 says to my lord, "Sit at my right **h**
Pr 3: 16 Long life is in her right **h;**
Isa 5: 25 and his **h** is stretched out still.
Da 5: 5 the fingers of a human **h** appeared
Hab 2: 16 The cup in the LORD's right **h** will
Mt 3: 12 His winnowing fork is in his **h,**
Mk 9: 43 If your **h** causes you to stumble, cut
Lk 20: 42 said to my Lord, "Sit at my right **h,**
Jn 10: 28 will snatch them out of my **h.**
Ro 8: 34 raised, who is at the right **h** of God,
1Co 12: 15 would say, "Because I am not a **h,**
Heb 10: 12 "he sat down at the right **h** of God."
Rev 1: 16 In his right **h** he held seven stars,
5: 1 saw in the right **h** of the one seated
Jdt 9: 10 by the **h** of a woman.

**HANDED** → HAND
Mt 27: 26 he **h** him over to be crucified.
Ro 4: 25 **h** over to death for our trespasses

**HANDS** → HAND
Ps 24: 4 who have clean **h** and pure hearts,
115: 7 They have **h,** but do not feel;
Ecc 11: 6 at evening do not let your **h** be idle;
Isa 49: 16 inscribed you on the palms of my **h;**
Da 2: 45 was cut from the mountain not by **h,**
Lk 23: 46 into your **h** I commend my spirit."
24: 40 he showed them his **h** and his feet.
Jn 3: 35 has placed all things in his **h.**
Ac 8: 18 the laying on of the apostles' **h,**
Ro 10: 21 "All day long I have held out my **h**
Heb 6: 2 laying on of **h,** resurrection of the
10: 31 to fall into the **h** of the living God.

**HANNAH***
Wife of Elkanah, mother of Samuel (1Sa 1). Prayer at dedication of Samuel (1Sa 2:1-10). Blessed (1Sa 2:18-21).

**HAPPY**
Ps 1: 1 **H** are those who do not follow the
33: 12 **H** is the nation whose God is the LORD,
84: 12 **h** is everyone who trusts in you.
Pr 3: 13 **H** are those who find wisdom,
Ecc 3: 12 nothing better for them than to be **h**
Tob 13: 14 **H** are those who love you,
Sir 1: 13 who fear the Lord will have a **h** end;

**HARD** → HARD-HEARTED, HARDEN, HARDENED, HARDENING, HARDSHIP, HARDSHIPS
Ex 1: 14 made their lives bitter with **h** service
Jer 32: 17 Nothing is too **h** for you.
Mt 7: 14 the road is **h** that leads to life,
19: 23 **h** for a rich person to enter the

**HARD-HEARTED*** → HARD, HEART
Dt 15: 7 do not be **h** or tight-fisted toward
Pr 28: 14 one who is **h** will fall into calamity,
Mt 19: 8 you were so **h** that Moses allowed

**HARDEN** → HARD
Ex 4: 21 but I will **h** his heart,
Ps 95: 8 Do not **h** your hearts, as at Meribah,
Heb 3: 8 not **h** your hearts as in the rebellion.

**HARDENED** → HARD
Ex 10: 20 But the LORD **h** Pharaoh's heart,
Mk 8: 17 Are your hearts **h?**
Ro 11: 7 elect obtained it, but the rest were **h,**
2Co 3: 14 But their minds were **h.**

**HARDENING*** → HARD
Ro 11: 25 a **h** has come upon part of Israel.

**HARDSHIP** → HARD
Ro 8: 35 Will **h,** or distress, or persecution.

**HARDSHIPS** → HARD
2Co 12: 10 content with weaknesses, insults, **h,**

**HARM**
Ge 50: 20 though you intended to do **h** to me,
Ne 6: 2 But they intended to do me **h.**
Pr 12: 21 No **h** happens to the righteous,
Jer 29: 11 plans for your welfare and not for **h,**
1Pe 3: 13 who will **h** you if you are eager

**HARP** → HARPS
Ps 150: 3 praise him with lute and **h!**
Rev 5: 8 each holding a **h** and golden bowls

**HARPS** → HARP
1Ch 15: 16 on **h** and lyres and cymbals,
Ne 12: 27 with cymbals, **h,** and lyres.
Ps 137: 2 the willows there we hung up our **h.**

**HARSHLY**
Dt 26: 6 When the Egyptians treated us **h**
Col 3: 19 your wives and never treat them **h.**
1Ti 5: 1 Do not speak **h** to an older man,

**HARVEST** → HARVESTING
Ge 8: 22 the earth endures, seedtime and **h,**
Ex 23: 16 You shall observe the festival of **h,**
Mt 13: 39 **h** is the end of the age, and the
Lk 10: 2 He said to them, "The **h** is plentiful.
Rev 14: 15 the **h** of the earth is fully ripe."

**HARVESTING*** → HARVEST
Jn 4: 35 and see how the fields are ripe for **h.**

**HASTENING***
Zep 1: 14 day of the LORD is near, near and **h**
2Pe 3: 12 and **h** the coming of the day of God.

**HATE** → HATED, HATING
Ps 45: 7 righteousness and **h** wickedness.
97: 10 The LORD loves those who **h** evil;
Pr 13: 5 The righteous **h** falsehood,
Ecc 3: 8 a time to love, and a time to **h;**
Am 5: 15 **H** evil and love good, and establish
Mal 2: 16 For I **h** divorce, says the LORD,
Mt 5: 43 your neighbor and **h** your enemy.'
Lk 6: 27 do good to those who **h** you,
Jn 7: 7 The world cannot **h** you, but it hates
Ro 7: 15 but I do the very thing I **h.**

**HATED** → HATE
Jn 15: 18 aware that it **h** me before it **h** you.
Ro 9: 13 loved Jacob, but I have **h** Esau."

**HATES** → HATE
Dt 16: 22 things that the LORD your God **h.**
Pr 6: 16 six things that the LORD **h,**
Jn 15: 23 Whoever **h** me **h** my Father also.
Sir 15: 13 The Lord **h** all abominations;

**HAUGHTY**
Pr 6: 17 **h** eyes, a lying tongue, and hands
16: 18 and a **h** spirit before a fall.
1Ti 6: 17 command them not to be **h,**

**HAY***
1Co 3: 12 precious stones, wood, **h,** straw—

**HEAD** → BEHEADED, HEADS
Isa 59: 17 and a helmet of salvation on his **h;**
Mt 8: 20 of Man has nowhere to lay his **h."**
Mk 6: 28 brought his **h** on a platter,
1Co 11: 3 Christ is the **h** of every man, and the husband is the **h** of his wife,

Eph 1: 22 has made him the **h** over all things

### HEADS → HEAD

Eze 11: 21 bring their deeds upon their own **h,**
Rev 12: 3 a great red dragon, with seven **h**

### HEAL → HEALED, HEALING, HEALS, HEALTH, HEALTHY

Dt 32: 39 and I make alive; I wound and I **h;**
Ecc 3: 3 a time to kill, and a time to **h;**
Isa 57: 19 says the LORD: and I will **h** them.
Jer 3: 22 I will **h** your faithlessness.
Hos 14: 4 I will **h** their disloyalty; I will love
Jn 12: 40 and turn—and I would **h** them."

### HEALED → HEAL

Isa 6: 10 their minds, and turn and be **h."**
53: 5 and by his bruises we are **h.**
Hos 11: 3 but they did not know that I **h** them.
Jas 5: 16 one another, so that you may be **h.**
1Pe 2: 24 by his wounds you have been **h.**

### HEALING → HEAL

Pr 12: 18 but the tongue of the wise brings **h.**
Eze 47: 12 for food, and their leaves for **h."**
Mal 4: 2 shall rise, with **h** in its wings.
1Co 12: 9 another gifts of **h** by the one Spirit,
Rev 22: 2 leaves of the tree are for the **h** of
Sir 38: 2 gift of **h** comes from the Most High.

### HEALS → HEAL

Ex 15: 26 for I am the LORD who **h** you."
Ps 103: 3 iniquity, who **h** all your diseases,
Wis 16: 12 your word, O Lord, that **h** all people

### HEALTH → HEAL

3Jn 1: 2 and that you may be in good **h,**
Sir 30: 15 **H** and fitness are better than any

### HEALTHY → HEAL

Lk 11: 34 If your eye is **h,** your whole body

### HEAR → HEARD, HEARERS, HEARING, HEARS

Dt 6: 4 **H,** O Israel: The LORD is our God,
31: 13 may **h** and learn to fear the LORD
1Ki 8: 30 O **h** in heaven your dwelling place;
Isa 59: 1 nor his ear too dull to **h.**
Jer 5: 21 who have ears, but do not **h.**
Eze 37: 4 dry bones, **h** the word of the LORD.
Mt 13: 17 to **h** what you **h,** but did not **h** it.
Mk 12: 29 answered, "The first is, **'H,** O Israel:
Lk 7: 22 the lepers are cleansed, the deaf **h,**
Heb 3: 7 says, "Today, if you **h** his voice,
Sir 5: 11 Be quick to **h,** but deliberate in

### HEARD → HEAR

Isa 40: 21 not known? Have you not **h?**
1Co 2: 9 "What no eye has seen, nor ear **h,**
1Jn 1: 3 to you what we have seen and **h** so
Rev 22: 8 I, John, am the one who **h** and saw

### HEARERS → HEAR

Ro 2: 13 For it is not the **h** of the law who
Jas 1: 22 merely **h** who deceive themselves.

### HEARING → HEAR

Pr 18: 13 one gives answer before **h,**
Am 8: 11 but of **h** the words of the LORD.
1Co 12: 17 If the whole body were **h,**

### HEARS → HEAR

Ps 69: 33 For the LORD **h** the needy,
Pr 15: 29 but he **h** the prayer of the righteous.
Mt 7: 24 then who **h** these words of mine
Jn 5: 24 I tell you, anyone who **h** my word
1Jn 5: 14 according to his will, he **h** us.
Rev 22: 18 I warn everyone who **h** the words

### HEART → BROKENHEARTED, HARD-HEARTED, HEART'S, HEARTLESS, HEARTS, TENDERHEARTED

Ge 6: 6 and it grieved him to his **h.**
Ex 4: 21 but I will harden his **h,**
14: 4 I will harden Pharaoh's **h,**
Dt 6: 5 the LORD your God with all your **h,**
30: 14 in your mouth and in your **h** for you
Jos 22: 5 all your **h** and with all your soul."
1Sa 16: 7 but the LORD looks on the **h."**
Ps 19: 14 meditation of my **h** be acceptable to
51: 10 Create in me a clean **h,** O God,
Pr 3: 5 Trust in the LORD with all your **h,**
7: 3 write them on the tablet of your **h.**
Jer 9: 26 of Israel is uncircumcised in **h.**
Eze 36: 26 A new **h** I will give you,
Mt 5: 8 "Blessed are the pure in **h,** for they
5: 28 adultery with her in his **h.**
Mk 12: 30 the Lord your God with all your **h,**
Lk 12: 34 treasure is, there your **h** will be also.
Ro 2: 29 circumcision is a matter of the **h—**
10: 9 believe in your **h** that God raised
Heb 10: 22 let us approach with a true **h** in full
Sir 1: 12 The fear of the Lord delights the **h,**
Aza 1: 16 Yet with a contrite **h** and
Man 1: 11 And now I bend the knee of my **h,**

### HEART'S → HEART

Ps 20: 4 May he grant you your **h** desire,
Ro 10: 1 my **h** desire and prayer to God for

### HEARTLESS* → HEART

Ro 1: 31 foolish, faithless, **h,** ruthless.

### HEARTS → HEART

Ps 95: 8 not harden your **h,** as at Meribah,
Jer 31: 33 and I will write it on their **h;**
Mk 7: 6 but their **h** are far from me;
Jn 14: 1 "Do not let your **h** be troubled.
Ro 2: 15 law requires is written on their **h,**
Eph 3: 17 Christ may dwell in your **h** through
Col 3: 15 the peace of Christ rule in your **h,**
Heb 3: 8 do not harden your **h** as in the
10: 16 I will put my laws in their **h,**
2Pe 1: 19 and the morning star rises in your **h.**
1Jn 3: 20 for God is greater than our **h,**
Rev 2: 23 the one who searches minds and **h,**

### HEAVEN → HEAVENLY, HEAVENS

Ge 14: 19 by God Most High, maker of **h** and
28: 12 the top of it reaching to **h;**
Ex 16: 4 "I am going to rain bread from **h**
Dt 30: 12 "Who will go up to **h** for us,
31: 28 and call **h** and earth to witness
1Ki 8: 27 **h** and the highest **h** cannot contain
Job 16: 19 now, in fact, my witness is in **h,**
Ecc 3: 1 and a time for every matter under **h:**
Isa 14: 12 you are fallen from **h,** O Day Star,
Jer 23: 24 Do I not fill **h** and earth?
Mt 3: 2 "Repent, for the kingdom of **h** has
6: 9 Father in **h,** hallowed be your name.
24: 35 **H** and earth will pass away,
26: 64 and coming on the clouds of **h."**
Mk 10: 21 and you will have treasure in **h;**
Lk 10: 18 "I watched Satan fall from **h** like a
19: 38 Peace in **h,** and glory in the highest **h!"**
24: 51 and was carried up into **h.**
Jn 3: 13 No one has ascended into **h** except the one who descended from **h,**
Ac 1: 11 same way as you saw him go into **h.**
Ro 10: 6 'Who will ascend into **h?'"**
2Co 12: 2 was caught up to the third **h—**
Php 3: 20 But our citizenship is in **h,**
1Th 1: 10 to wait for his Son from **h,**
Heb 9: 24 but he entered into **h** itself.
2Pe 1: 18 heard this voice come from **h,**
Rev 4: 1 and there in **h** a door stood open!
21: 1 I saw a new **h** and a new earth;

### HEAVENLY → HEAVEN

Mt 5: 48 as your **h** Father is perfect.
2Co 5: 2 longing to be clothed with our **h**
Eph 1: 3 spiritual blessing in the **h** places,
Heb 3: 1 holy partners in a **h** calling,

### HEAVENS → HEAVEN

Ge 1: 1 when God created the **h** and
11: 4 and a tower with its top in the **h,**
Dt 10: 14 the heaven of **h** belong to the LORD
Ps 57: 5 Be exalted, O God, above the **h.**
115: 16 The **h** are the LORD's **h,**
Isa 65: 17 to create new **h** and a new earth;
Jer 10: 11 The gods who did not make the **h**
Eph 4: 10 who ascended far above all the **h,**
Heb 4: 14 priest who has passed through the **h,**
2Pe 3: 10 the **h** will pass away with a loud

### HEAVY

Mt 23: 4 They tie up **h** burdens, hard to bear,
Mk 14: 40 for their eyes were very **h;**

### HEBREW → HEBREWS

Jnh 1: 9 "I am a **H,"** he replied.
Jn 19: 20 and it was written in **H,** in Latin,
Php 3: 5 of Benjamin, a **H** born of Hebrews;

### HEBREWS → HEBREW

Ex 3: 18 The LORD, the God of the **H,** has
2Co 11: 22 Are they **H?** So am I.
Jdt 10: 12 "I am a daughter of the **H,**

### HEBRON

Ge 13: 18 the oaks of Mamre, which are at **H;**
2Sa 2: 11 The time that David was king in **H**

### HEEL

Ge 3: 15 your head, and you will strike his **h.**
25: 26 with his hand gripping Esau's **h;**
Ps 41: 9 has lifted the **h** against me.
Jn 13: 18 has lifted his **h** against me.'

### HEIGHT → HIGH

Ro 8: 39 nor **h,** nor depth, nor anything else
Eph 3: 18 and length and **h** and depth,

### HEIGHTS → HIGH

Ps 148: 1 the heavens; praise him in the **h!**
Hab 3: 19 and makes me tread upon the **h.**

### HEIR → HEIRS

Ge 15: 4 "This man shall not be your **h;**
Gal 4: 7 then also an **h,** through God.
Heb 1: 2 whom he appointed **h** of all things,

### HEIRS → HEIR

Ro 8: 17 **h, h** of God and joint **h** with Christ—
Eph 3: 6 the Gentiles have become fellow **h,**
1Pe 3: 7 also **h** of the gracious gift of life—

### HELL

Mt 10: 28 both soul and body in **h.**
Mk 9: 43 to have two hands and to go to **h,**
2Pe 2: 4 cast them into **h** and committed
2Es 2: 29 so that your children may not see **h.**

### HELMET

Isa 59: 17 and a **h** of salvation on his head;
Eph 6: 17 Take the **h** of salvation, and the

### HELP → HELPED, HELPER, HELPS

Ex 18: 4 "The God of my father was my **h,**
Ps 33: 20 he is our **h** and shield.
46: 1 a very present **h** in trouble.
Mk 9: 24 "I believe; **h** my unbelief!"
Heb 2: 18 able to **h** those who are being tested.
4: 16 receive mercy and find grace to **h**
Jdt 6: 21 called on the God of Israel for **h,**
Sir 2: 6 Trust in him, and he will **h** you;

### HELPED → HELP

1Sa 7: 12 "Thus far the LORD has **h** us."
Ps 118: 13 I was falling, but the LORD **h** me.
Isa 49: 8 on a day of salvation I have **h** you;

### HELPER → HELP

Ge 2: 18 I will make him a **h** as his partner."
Ps 30: 10 O LORD, be my **h!"**
Heb 13: 6 Lord is my **h;** I will not be afraid.
Tob 8: 6 Eve as a **h** and support.

### HELPS → HELP

Ps 37: 40 The LORD **h** them and rescues them;
Ro 8: 26 the Spirit **h** us in our weakness;

### HERBS

Ex 12: 8 with unleavened bread and bitter **h.**

### HERMON

Dt 3: 8 from the Wadi Arnon to Mount **H**
Ps 133: 3 It is like the dew of **H,**

### HEROD → HERODIANS

1. King of Judea; tried to kill Jesus (Mt 2; Lk 1:5).
2. Son of 1. Tetrarch of Galilee who arrested and beheaded John the Baptist (Mt 14:1-12; Mk 6:14-29; Lk 3:1, 19-20; 9:7-9); tried Jesus (Lk 23:6-15).

3. Grandson of 1. King of Judea who killed James (Ac 12:2); arrested Peter (Ac 12:3-19). Death (Ac 12:19-23).

### HERODIANS → HEROD

Mk 3: 6 immediately conspired with the **H**
12: 13 some **H** to trap him in what he said.

### HERODIAS*

Wife of Herod the Tetrarch who persuaded her daughter to ask for John the Baptist's head (Mt 14:1-12; Mk 6:14-29; Lk 3:19).

### HEWN

Ex 20: 25 do not build it of **h** stones;
Mk 15: 46 laid it in a tomb that had been **h**

### HEZEKIAH

King of Judah (Sir 48:17-25). Restored the temple and worship (2Ch 29-31). Sought the LORD for help against Assyria (2Ki 18-19; 2Ch 32:1-23; Isa 36-37). Illness healed (2Ki 20:1-11; 2Ch 32:24-26; Isa 38). Judged for showing Babylonians his treasures (2Ki 20:12-21; 2Ch 32:31; Isa 39).

### HID → HIDE

Ge 3: 8 and his wife **h** themselves from the
Ex 2: 2 a fine baby, she **h** him three months.
3: 6 Moses **h** his face, for he was afraid
Jos 6: 17 live because she **h** the messengers
1Ki 18: 13 **h** a hundred of the LORD's prophets
Isa 49: 2 in the shadow of his hand he **h** me;
54: 8 wrath for a moment I **h** my face
Mt 25: 25 and **h** your talent in the ground.

### HIDDEN → HIDE

Ps 19: 12 Clear me from **h** faults.
Pr 2: 4 and search for it as for **h** treasures—
Isa 40: 27 "My way is **h** from the LORD.
Mt 13: 44 is like treasure **h** in a field.
Mk 4: 22 nothing **h**, except to be disclosed;
Col 3: 3 your life is **h** with Christ in God.
Rev 2: 17 the **h** manna, and I will give a white
Sir 42: 20 and nothing is **h** from him.

### HIDE → HID, HIDDEN

Dt 31: 17 I will forsake them and **h** my face
Ps 13: 1 How long will you **h** your face
17: 8 **h** me in the shadow of your wings,

### HIGH → HEIGHT, HEIGHTS, HIGHER, HIGHEST, HIGHLY

Ge 14: 18 he was priest of God Most **H.**
1Ki 3: 2 were sacrificing at the **h** places,
Ps 91: 1 live in the shelter of the Most **H,**
Mt 4: 8 a very **h** mountain and showed him
17: 1 and led them up a **h** mountain,
Mk 5: 7 Jesus, Son of the Most **H** God?
Eph 4: 8 "When he ascended on **h** he made
Heb 2: 17 a merciful and faithful **h** priest
7: 26 that we should have such a **h** priest,

### HIGHER → HIGH

Ps 61: 2 Lead me to the rock that is **h** than I;
Isa 55: 9 so are my ways **h** than your ways

### HIGHEST → HIGH

1Ki 8: 27 the **h** heaven cannot contain you,
Mt 21: 9 Hosanna in the **h** heaven!"
Lk 2: 14 "Glory to God in the **h** heaven,

### HIGHLY → HIGH

Ps 47: 9 to God; he is **h** exalted.
Ro 12: 3 not to think of yourself more **h** than

### HILL → HILLS

Ps 15: 1 Who may dwell on your holy **h?**
Isa 40: 4 every mountain and **h** be made low;
Mt 5: 14 A city built on a **h** cannot be hid.
Lk 3: 5 mountain and **h** shall be made low,

### HILLS → HILL

1Ki 20: 23 "Their gods are gods of the **h,**
Ps 50: 10 the cattle on a thousand **h.**

### HINDER

1Sa 14: 6 nothing can **h** the LORD from saving
Isa 43: 13 I work and who can **h** it?
1Pe 3: 7 so that nothing may **h** your prayers.

### HIP

Ge 32: 25 Jacob's **h** was put out of joint

### HIRAM

King of Tyre: helped David build his palace (2Sa 5:11-12; 1Ch 14:1); helped Solomon build the temple (1Ki 5; 2Ch 2) and his navy (1Ki 9:10-27; 2Ch 8).

### HITTITE → HITTITES

Ge 23: 10 Ephron the **H** answered Abraham
2Sa 11: 3 the wife of Uriah the **H."**

### HITTITES → HITTITE

Dt 20: 17 **H** and the Amorites, the Canaanites
Ezr 9: 1 Canaanites, the **H,** the Perizzites,

### HOLD → HOLDS

Ps 73: 23 you **h** my right hand.
Isa 41: 13 I, the LORD your God, **h** your right
Jn 20: 17 Jesus said to her, "Do not **h** on to
Col 1: 17 and in him all things **h** together.

### HOLDS → HOLD

Ps 37: 24 for the LORD **h** us by the hand.
Rev 2: 1 who **h** the seven stars in his right
Wis 1: 7 which **h** all things together

### HOLES

Hag 1: 6 to put them into a bag with **h.**
Mt 8: 20 Jesus said to him, "Foxes have **h,**

### HOLINESS → HOLY

Ex 15: 11 Who is like you, majestic in **h,**
Dt 32: 51 by failing to maintain my **h** among
Ps 89: 35 and for all I have sworn by my **h;**
Ro 1: 4 according to the spirit of **h** by
2Co 6: 6 kindness, **h** of spirit, genuine love,
1Ti 2: 15 continue in faith and love and **h,**
Heb 12: 14 **h** without which no one will see the

### HOLOFERNES

Assyrian general (Jdt 2:4). Beguiled and beheaded by Judith (Jdt 10-13).

### HOLY → HOLINESS

Ex 3: 5 which you are standing is **h** ground.
20: 8 the sabbath day, and keep it **h.**
26: 33 the **h** place from the most **h.**
29: 37 the altar shall be most **h;**
Lev 11: 44 and be **h,** for I am **h.**
Jos 5: 15 for the place where you stand is **h."**
1Sa 2: 2 "There is no **H** One like the LORD,
Ps 2: 6 set my king on Zion, my **h** hill."
11: 4 The LORD is in his **h** temple;
Isa 6: 3 **"H, h, h** is the LORD of hosts;
40: 25 who is my equal? says the **H** One.
Da 9: 24 and to anoint a most **h** place.
Mt 1: 18 to be with child from the **H** Spirit.
3: 11 baptize you with the **H** Spirit and
24: 15 sacrilege standing in the **h** place,
Mk 1: 24 who you are, the **H** One of God."
3: 29 against the **H** Spirit can never have
Lk 3: 22 the **H** Spirit descended upon him in
11: 13 heavenly Father give the **H** Spirit
Jn 14: 26 But the Advocate, the **H** Spirit,
Ac 2: 4 were filled with the **H** Spirit and
2: 27 your **H** One experience corruption.
5: 3 your heart to lie to the **H** Spirit
Ro 12: 1 living sacrifice, **h** and acceptable to
Eph 1: 4 to be **h** and blameless
4: 30 do not grieve the **H** Spirit of God,
Heb 6: 4 and have shared in the **H** Spirit,
1Pe 1: 16 "You shall be **h,** for I am **h."**
1Jn 2: 20 have been anointed by the **H** One,
Jude 1: 14 with ten thousands of his **h** ones,
Rev 4: 8 **H, h, h,** the Lord God the Almighty
21: 2 I saw the **h** city, the new Jerusalem,
Wis 4: 15 he watches over his **h** ones.
1Mc 1: 15 and abandoned the **h** covenant.
2Es 14: 22 send the **h** spirit into me,

### HOME → HOMELESS, HOMETOWN

Dt 6: 7 when you are at **h** and when you
Ps 68: 6 God gives the desolate a **h**
Jn 14: 23 to them and make our **h** with them.
2Co 5: 8 the body and at **h** with the Lord.

### HOMELESS* → HOME

Isa 58: 7 the **h** poor into your house;
1Co 4: 11 poorly clothed and beaten and **h,**

### HOMETOWN → HOME, TOWN

Mk 6: 4 not without honor, except in their **h.**

### HONEST

Lev 19: 36 have **h** balances, **h** weights,
Pr 16: 11 **H** balances and scales are the

### HONEY

Ex 3: 8 a land flowing with milk and **h,**
Jdg 14: 8 bees in the body of the lion, and **h.**
1Sa 14: 26 honeycomb, the **h** was dripping out;
Ps 19: 10 sweeter also than **h,** and drippings
Mt 3: 4 and his food was locusts and wild **h.**

### HONOR → HONORABLE, HONORED, HONORS

Dt 5: 16 **H** your father and your mother,
1Ch 29: 12 Riches and **h** come from you,
Ps 8: 5 and crowned them with glory and **h.**
Ecc 10: 1 little folly outweighs wisdom and **h.**
Isa 29: 13 and **h** me with their lips,
Mal 1: 6 a father, where is the **h** due me?
Mt 13: 57 not without **h** except in their own
15: 4 For God said, **'H** your father and
Jn 12: 26 serves me, the Father will **h.**
Ro 13: 7 **h** to whom **h** is due.
Eph 6: 2 **"H** your father and mother"—
1Ti 5: 17 considered worthy of double **h,**
Heb 2: 7 crowned them with glory and **h,**
Rev 4: 11 to receive glory and **h** and power,
Tob 4: 3 **H** your mother and do not

### HONORABLE → HONOR

Php 4: 8 whatever is true, whatever is **h,**

### HONORED → HONOR

Hag 1: 8 I may take pleasure in it and be **h,**
1Co 12: 26 if one member is **h,** all rejoice

### HONORS → HONOR

Mal 1: 6 A son **h** his father, and servants
Mt 15: 8 'This people **h** me with their lips,

### HOOFS

Lev 11: 3 Any animal that has divided **h**

### HOOK → HOOKS

Mt 17: 27 go to the sea and cast a **h;**

### HOOKS → HOOK

Isa 2: 4 and their spears into pruning **h;**
Joel 3: 10 and your pruning **h** into spears;

### HOPE → HOPED, HOPES

Job 17: 15 where then is my **h?**
Ps 62: 5 for my **h** is from him.
146: 5 whose **h** is in the LORD their God,
Pr 23: 18 and your **h** will not be cut off.
Isa 8: 17 and I will **h** in him.
Jer 14: 8 O **h** of Israel, its savior in time of
La 3: 21 and therefore I have **h:**
Mt 12: 21 in his name the Gentiles will **h."**
Ro 5: 5 and **h** does not disappoint us,
12: 12 Rejoice in **h,** be patient in suffering,
1Co 13: 13 And now faith, **h,** and love abide,
Col 1: 27 Christ in you, the **h** of glory,
1Th 5: 8 and for a helmet the **h** of salvation.
Heb 6: 19 this **h,** a sure and steadfast anchor
7: 19 the introduction of a better **h,**
1Pe 1: 3 a living **h** through the resurrection
1Jn 3: 3 all who have this **h** in him purify
Sir 34: 15 their **h** is in him who saves them.
Sus 1: 60 who saves those who **h** in him.

### HOPED → HOPE

Heb 11: 1 faith is the assurance of things **h** for,
1Pe 3: 5 the holy women who **h** in God

### HOPES → HOPE

1Co 13: 7 believes all things, **h** all things,

### HOREB → =SINAI

Ex 3: 1 came to **H,** the mountain of God.
Dt 5: 2 God made a covenant with us at **H.**
1Ki 19: 8 forty days and forty nights to **H**

**HORN** → HORNS
Ps 18: 2 and the **h** of my salvation,
Da 7: 8 when another **h** appeared,
8: 5 The goat had a **h** between its eyes.

**HORNS** → HORN
Ge 22: 13 caught in a thicket by its **h.**
Ex 27: 2 make **h** for it on its four corners;
Da 7: 7 that preceded it, and it had ten **h.**
8: 3 Both **h** were long, but one
Zec 1: 18 And I looked up and saw four **h.**
Rev 5: 6 having seven **h** and seven eyes,
9: 13 from the four **h** of the golden altar
17: 3 and it had seven heads and ten **h.**

**HORSE** → HORSES
Ex 15: 1 **h** and rider he has thrown into the
Ps 33: 17 The war **h** is a vain hope for victory,
Zec 1: 8 I saw a man riding on a red **h!**
Rev 6: 2 I looked, and there was a white **h!**
19: 11 and there was a white **h!**

**HORSES** → HORSE
2Ki 2: 11 a chariot of fire and **h** of fire
Ps 20: 7 pride in chariots, and some in **h,**
Joel 2: 4 They have the appearance of **h,**
Rev 9: 7 appearance the locusts were like **h**
19: 14 following him on white **h.**

**HOSANNA**
Mk 11: 10 **H** in the highest heaven!"
Jn 12: 13 went out to meet him, shouting, **"H!**

**HOSEA**
Prophet whose wife and family pictured the unfaithfulness of Israel (Hos 1-3).

**HOSHEA** → =JOSHUA
1. Original name of Joshua (Nu 13:8, 16).
2. Last king of Israel (2Ki 15:30; 17:1-6).

**HOSPITABLE*** → HOSPITALITY
1Ti 3: 2 temperate, sensible, respectable, **h,**
Tit 1: 8 but he must be **h,** a lover
1Pe 4: 9 Be **h** to one another without

**HOSPITALITY*** → HOSPITABLE
Ro 12: 13 of the saints; extend **h** to strangers.
1Ti 5: 10 has brought up children, shown **h,**
Heb 13: 2 not neglect to show **h** to strangers,

**HOST** → HOSTS
Dt 4: 19 all the **h** of heaven,
2Ki 17: 16 worshiped all the **h** of heaven
Lk 2: 13 angel a multitude of the heavenly **h,**

**HOSTILE** → HOSTILITY
Ro 8: 7 that is set on the flesh is **h** to God;
Col 1: 21 once estranged and **h** in mind,

**HOSTILITY** → HOSTILE
Eph 2: 14 the dividing wall, that is, the **h**
Heb 12: 3 Consider him who endured such **h**

**HOSTS** → HOST
1Sa 1: 3 and to sacrifice to the LORD of **h**
Ps 46: 7 The LORD of **h** is with us;
Isa 48: 2 the LORD of **h** is his name.

**HOT**
Rev 3: 15 you are neither cold nor **h.**

**HOUR**
Mt 6: 27 by worrying add a single **h** to your
24: 36 about that day and **h** no one knows,
Jn 2: 4 My **h** has not yet come."
17: 1 "Father, the **h** has come;
Rev 3: 10 I will keep you from the **h** of trial
14: 7 for the **h** of his judgment has come;

**HOUSE** → HOUSEHOLD, HOUSES, HOUSETOP, HOUSETOPS, STOREHOUSE
Ex 20: 17 shall not covet your neighbor's **h;**
2Sa 7: 11 that the LORD will make you a **h.**
1Ch 22: 1 "Here shall be the **h** of the LORD
Ezr 1: 5 rebuild the **h** of the LORD in
Ps 69: 9 zeal for your **h** that has consumed
127: 1 Unless the LORD builds the **h,**
Pr 9: 1 Wisdom has built her **h,** she has
Isa 56: 7 my **h** shall be called a **h** of prayer
Mt 7: 24 like a wise man who built his **h**
21: 13 'My **h** shall be called a **h** of prayer';
Mk 3: 25 And if a **h** is divided against itself,
Jn 2: 17 "Zeal for your **h** will consume me."
14: 2 In my Father's **h** there are many
1Pe 2: 5 be built into a spiritual **h,**

**HOUSEHOLD** → HOUSE
Jos 24: 15 and my **h,** we will serve the LORD."
Mic 7: 6 enemies are members of your own **h**
Mt 10: 36 will be members of one's own **h.**
1Ti 3: 4 He must manage his own **h** well,
Tit 2: 5 good managers of the **h,** kind,
1Pe 4: 17 judgment to begin with the **h** of God

**HOUSES** → HOUSE
Ex 12: 27 passed over the **h** of the Israelites in
Mt 19: 29 everyone who has left **h** or brothers

**HOUSETOP** → HOUSE
Mt 24: 17 the one on the **h** must not go down

**HOUSETOPS** → HOUSE
Mt 10: 27 whispered, proclaim from the **h.**

**HULDAH***
Prophetess inquired by Hilkiah for Josiah (2Ki 22; 2Ch 34:14-28).

**HUMAN** → HUMANKIND
Ge 6: 7 blot out from the earth the **h** beings
Ps 8: 4 are **h** beings that you are mindful
Da 2: 34 a stone was cut out, not by **h** hands,
5: 5 the fingers of a **h** hand appeared
Hos 11: 4 I led them with cords of **h** kindness,
Mt 15: 9 teaching **h** precepts as doctrines.'"
Ac 5: 29 obey God rather than any **h**
1Co 2: 13 in words not taught by **h** wisdom
Php 2: 7 being born in **h** likeness.
Rev 4: 7 with a face like a **h** face,
Jdt 8: 16 for God is not like a **h** being,

**HUMANKIND** → HUMAN
Ge 1: 26 "Let us make **h** in our image,
Mk 2: 27 "The sabbath was made for **h,**
1Ti 2: 5 one mediator between God and **h,**

**HUMBLE** → HUMBLED, HUMBLY, HUMILITY
Nu 12: 3 Now the man Moses was very **h,**
Dt 8: 16 to **h** you and to test you,
Ps 25: 9 He leads the **h** in what is right,
149: 4 he adorns the **h** with victory.
Isa 57: 15 to revive the spirit of the **h,**
Zep 2: 3 Seek the LORD, all you **h** of the land
Mt 11: 29 for I am gentle and **h** in heart,
21: 5 **h,** and mounted on a donkey,
Jas 4: 10 **H** yourselves before the Lord,
1Pe 5: 5 but gives grace to the **h."**
Sir 3: 20 but by the **h** he is glorified.

**HUMBLED** → HUMBLE
Ps 119: 71 It is good for me that I was **h,**
Lk 14: 11 all who exalt themselves will be **h,**
Php 2: 8 he **h** himself and became obedient

**HUMBLY*** → HUMBLE
Mic 6: 8 and to walk **h** with your God?

**HUMILITY** → HUMBLE
Pr 15: 33 and **h** goes before honor.
Zep 2: 3 seek righteousness, seek **h;**
Php 2: 3 but in **h** regard others as better than
Col 3: 12 with compassion, kindness, **h,**
1Pe 5: 5 must clothe yourselves with **h**
Sir 1: 27 fidelity and **h** are his delight.

**HUNDRED**
Ge 17: 17 born to a man who is a **h** years old?
Isa 65: 20 one who dies at a **h** years will be
Ro 4: 19 (for he was about a **h** years old).

**HUNG**
Dt 21: 23 **h** on a tree is under God's curse.
Ps 137: 2 the willows there we **h** up our harps.
Mk 9: 42 if a great millstone were **h** around

**HUNGER** → HUNGRY
Dt 8: 3 He humbled you by letting you **h,**
Mt 5: 6 "Blessed are those who **h** and thirst
Rev 7: 16 will **h** no more, and thirst no more;

**HUNGRY** → HUNGER
Ps 50: 12 "If I were **h,** I would not tell you,
146: 7 who gives food to the **h.**
Pr 25: 21 If your enemies are **h,** give them
Mt 12: 1 his disciples were **h,** and they began
Jn 6: 35 comes to me will never be **h,**
Ro 12: 20 "if your enemies are **h,** feed them;

**HUSBAND** → HUSBANDS
Ge 3: 6 and she also gave some to her **h,**
3: 16 yet your desire shall be for your **h,**
Pr 31: 28 her **h** too, and he praises her:
Isa 54: 5 For your Maker is your **h,**
Jer 31: 32 they broke, though I was their **h,**
Hos 2: 16 the LORD, you will call me, "My **h,"**
1Co 7: 10 wife should not separate from her **h**
Eph 5: 23 **h** is the head of the wife just as
Rev 21: 2 as a bride adorned for her **h.**
Sir 26: 1 Happy is the **h** of a good wife;

**HUSBANDS** → HUSBAND
Jn 4: 18 for you have had five **h,**
Eph 5: 25 **H,** love your wives, just as Christ
Col 3: 18 Wives, be subject to your **h,**
Tit 2: 4 the young women to love their **h,**
1Pe 3: 7 **H,** in the same way, show

**HUSHAI**
Wise man of David; foiled Absalom's revolt (2Sa 15:32-37; 16:15-17:16).

**HYMN** → HYMNS
Mt 26: 30 When they had sung the **h,**
Sir 44: 1 **H** IN HONOR OF OUR ANCESTORS

**HYMNS** → HYMN
Eph 5: 19 psalms and **h** and spiritual songs
Col 3: 16 in your hearts sing psalms, **h,**
Aza 1: 1 singing **h** to God and blessing the

**HYPOCRISY** → HYPOCRITE, HYPOCRITES
Mt 23: 28 but inside you are full of **h** and
Mk 12: 15 knowing their **h,** he said to them,
Lk 12: 1 of the Pharisees, that is, their **h.**
Jas 3: 17 without a trace of partiality or **h.**

**HYPOCRITE** → HYPOCRISY
Lk 6: 42 You **h,** first take the log out of your
Sir 1: 29 Do not be a **h** before others,

**HYPOCRITES** → HYPOCRISY
Mt 6: 5 you pray, do not be like the **h;**
23: 13 to you, scribes and Pharisees, **h!**
Mk 7: 6 prophesied rightly about you **h,**

**HYSSOP**
Ex 12: 22 a bunch of **h,** dip it in the blood that
Nu 19: 6 The priest shall take cedarwood, **h,**
Ps 51: 7 Purge me with **h,** and I shall be
Jn 19: 29 full of the wine on a branch of **h**

## I

**I AM**
Ex 3: 14 God said to Moses, **"I AM** WHO I AM."
Isa 44: 6 **I am** the first and **I am** the last;
Mt 28: 20 **I am** with you always, to the end of
Mk 8: 29 "But who do you say that **I am?"**
Jn 6: 35 to them, **"I am** the bread of life.
8: 12 **"I am** the light of the world.
8: 58 before Abraham was, **I am."**
9: 5 **I am** the light of the world."
10: 7 **I am** the gate for the sheep.
10: 11 **"I am** the good shepherd.
11: 25 **"I am** the resurrection and the life.
14: 6 **"I am** the way, and the truth, and
15: 1 **"I am** the true vine, and my Father
Rev 1: 8 **"I am** the Alpha and the Omega,"
22: 20 "Surely **I am** coming soon."

**IDLE**
Ecc 11: 6 evening do not let your hands be **i;**
2Th 3: 7 were not **i** when we were with you,

**IDOL** → IDOLS
Ex 20: 4 shall not make for yourself an **i,**
Isa 40: 19 An **i?**—A workman casts it,

1Co 10: 19 or that an **i** is anything?

**IDOLS** → IDOL
Ex 34: 17 You shall not make cast **i.**
2Ki 17: 15 went after false **i** and became false:
Ps 115: 4 Their **i** are silver and gold.
1Co 8: 1 concerning food sacrificed to **i:**
1Mc 1: 43 they sacrificed to **i** and profaned the

**IGNORANCE** → IGNORANT
Ac 17: 30 overlooked the times of human **i,**
1Pe 2: 15 silence the **i** of the foolish.

**IGNORANT** → IGNORANCE
Heb 5: 2 He is able to deal gently with the **i**
2Pe 3: 16 the **i** and unstable twist to their own

**ILL** → ILLNESS
1Co 11: 30 many of you are weak and **i,**

**ILLEGITIMATE**
Jn 8: 41 said to him, "We are not **i** children;
Heb 12: 8 then you are **i** and not his children.

**ILLNESS** → ILL
Dt 7: 15 will turn away from you every **i;**
Ps 41: 3 their **i** you heal all their infirmities.

**IMAGE** → IMAGES
Ge 1: 26 "Let us make humankind in our **i,**
Dt 27: 15 who makes an idol or casts an **i,**
1Co 15: 49 the **i** of the man of heaven.
Col 1: 15 He is the **i** of the invisible God,
Rev 20: 4 not worshiped the beast or its **i** and
Sir 17: 3 and made them in his own **i.**

**IMAGES** → IMAGE
Nu 33: 52 destroy all their cast **i,**
Ps 97: 7 All worshipers of **i** are put to shame,

**IMITATE** → IMITATORS
Heb 13: 7 their way of life, and **i** their faith.
3Jn 1: 11 not **i** what is evil but **i** what is good.

**IMITATORS** → IMITATE
1Co 11: 1 Be **i** of me, as I am of Christ.
Eph 5: 1 be **i** of God, as beloved children,

**IMMANUEL*** → =EMMANUEL
Isa 7: 14 bear a son, and shall name him **I.**
8: 8 fill the breadth of your land, O **I.**

**IMMORAL** → IMMORALITY
1Co 5: 9 not to associate with sexually **i**
Heb 12: 16 an **i** and godless person,

**IMMORALITY** → IMMORAL
2Co 12: 21 sexual **i,** and licentiousness
Jude 1: 7 indulged in sexual **i** and pursued
Sir 41: 17 Be ashamed of sexual **i,**

**IMMORTAL** → IMMORTALITY
Ro 1: 23 the glory of the **i** God for images
1Ti 1: 17 To the King of the ages, **i,** invisible,

**IMMORTALITY** → IMMORTAL
1Co 15: 53 and this mortal body must put on **i.**
1Ti 6: 16 It is he alone who has **i** and dwells

**IMPERISHABLE**
1Co 9: 25 a perishable wreath, but we an **i** one.
15: 52 and the dead will be raised **i,**
1Pe 1: 4 and into an inheritance that is **i,**

**IMPORTANCE*** → IMPORTANT
1Co 15: 3 of first **i** what I in turn had received:

**IMPORTANT** → IMPORTANCE
Mk 12: 33 much more **i** than all whole burnt

**IMPOSSIBLE**
Zec 8: 6 should it also seem **i** to me,
Mt 17: 20 and nothing will be **i** for you."
Mk 10: 27 "For mortals it is **i,** but not for God;
Heb 11: 6 without faith it is **i** to please God,

**IMPURE*** → IMPURITY
Eph 5: 5 that no fornicator or **i** person,
1Th 2: 3 not spring from deceit or **i** motives

**IMPURITY** → IMPURE
Zec 13: 1 to cleanse them from sin and **i.**
Gal 5: 19 fornication, **i,** licentiousness,
1Th 4: 7 did not call us to **i** but in holiness.

**INCENSE** → FRANKINCENSE
Ex 25: 6 anointing oil and for the fragrant **i,**

**INCLINATION**
Ge 6: 5 and that every **i** of the thoughts
Ecc 11: 9 Follow the **i** of your heart and

**INCREASE** → INCREASED
Ge 3: 16 greatly **i** your pangs in childbearing;
Lk 17: 5 said to the Lord, "**I** our faith!"
Jn 3: 30 He must **i,** but I must decrease."

**INCREASED** → INCREASE
Ro 5: 20 but where sin **i,** grace abounded all

**INDEBTED*** → DEBT
Lk 11: 4 forgive everyone **i** to us.

**INDEPENDENT***
1Co 11: 11 not **i** of man or man **i** of woman.

**INFANTS**
Ps 8: 2 Out of the mouths of babes and **i**
Mt 21: 16 'Out of the mouths of **i** and nursing
1Co 14: 20 **i** in evil, but in thinking be adults.

**INFIRMITIES**
Isa 53: 4 borne our **i** and carried our diseases;
Mt 8: 17 took our **i** and bore our diseases."

**INGATHERING** → GATHER
Ex 23: 16 You shall observe the festival of **i**

**INHERIT** → INHERITANCE
Lev 20: 24 You shall **i** their land,
Ps 37: 11 But the meek shall **i** the land,
Zec 2: 12 The LORD will **i** Judah as his portion
Lk 10: 25 "what must I do to **i** eternal life?"
1Co 6: 9 wrongdoers will not **i** the kingdom
Heb 1: 14 sake of those who are to **i** salvation?

**INHERITANCE** → INHERIT
Ex 34: 9 and take us for your **i,"**
Eph 1: 11 In Christ we have also obtained an **i,**
Heb 9: 15 the promised eternal **i.**

**INIQUITIES** → INIQUITY
Lev 16: 22 goat shall bear on itself all their **i**
Ps 103: 10 nor repay us according to our **i.**
Isa 53: 11 and he shall bear their **i.**
Ro 4: 7 are those whose **i** are forgiven,
Rev 18: 5 and God has remembered her **i.**

**INIQUITY** → INIQUITIES
Ex 34: 7 forgiving **i** and transgression and sin
Ps 103: 3 who forgives all your **i,**
Isa 53: 6 LORD has laid on him the **i** of us all.
Tit 2: 14 that he might redeem us from all **i**

**INJURY**
Lev 24: 20 the **i** inflicted is the **i** to be suffered.

**INJUSTICE**
Hos 10: 13 wickedness, you have reaped **i,**
Ro 9: 14 Is there **i** on God's part?

**INN***
Lk 2: 7 there was no place for them in the **i.**
10: 34 brought him to an **i,** and took care

**INNER** → INWARDLY
Mt 24: 26 He is in the **i** rooms,' do not believe
2Co 4: 16 our **i** nature is being renewed day
1Pe 3: 4 let your adornment be the **i** self

**INNOCENCE** → INNOCENT
Ps 26: 6 I wash my hands in **i,**
Hos 8: 5 long will they be incapable of **i?**

**INNOCENT** → INNOCENCE
Pr 6: 17 tongue, and hands that shed **i** blood,
Mt 10: 16 be wise as serpents and **i** as doves.
27: 24 "I am **i** of this man's blood;

**INQUIRE** → INQUIRED
Dt 12: 30 do not **i** concerning their gods,

**INQUIRED** → INQUIRE
Zep 1: 6 not sought the LORD or **i** of him.

**INSCRIBED** → INSCRIPTION
Da 10: 21 what is **i** in the book of truth.
Rev 19: 12 he has a name **i** that no one

**INSCRIPTION** → INSCRIBED
Mk 15: 26 The **i** of the charge against him read.
2Ti 2: 19 foundation stands, bearing this **i:**

**INSIGHT**
Pr 3: 5 and do not rely on your own **i.**
Eph 1: 8 With all wisdom and **i**
Sir 6: 37 It is he who will give **i** to your mind.

**INSPIRED**
Ex 35: 34 And he has **i** him to teach.
2Ti 3: 16 All scripture is **i** by God and is

**INSTITUTED** → INSTITUTION
Ro 13: 1 that exist have been **i** by God.

**INSTITUTION*** → INSTITUTED
Nu 10: 8 this shall be a perpetual **i** for you
1Pe 2: 13 the authority of every human **i,**

**INSTRUCT** → INSTRUCTED, INSTRUCTION, INSTRUCTOR
Dt 17: 10 observing everything they **i** you.
Ne 9: 20 You gave your good spirit to **i** them,
Ro 15: 14 and able to **i** one another.
1Co 14: 19 in order to **i** others also,

**INSTRUCTED** → INSTRUCT
Isa 40: 13 or as his counselor has **i** him?
Jn 8: 28 these things as the Father **i** me.

**INSTRUCTION** → INSTRUCT
Pr 8: 10 Take my **i** instead of silver,
Mic 4: 2 For out of Zion shall go forth **i,**
Ro 15: 4 in former days was written for our **i,**
1Ti 1: 5 But the aim of such **i** is love
Sir 51: 26 and let your souls receive **i;**

**INSTRUCTOR** → INSTRUCT
Mt 23: 10 for you have one **i,** the Messiah.

**INSULTS**
Ps 69: 9 the **i** of those who insult you have
Lk 22: 65 heaping many other **i** on him.
2Co 12: 10 I am content with weaknesses, **i,**

**INTEGRITY**
Job 27: 5 until I die I will not put away my **i**
Pr 14: 32 the righteous find a refuge in their **i.**
Tit 2: 7 and in your teaching show **i,** gravity,

**INTELLIGENCE** → INTELLIGENT
Pr 8: 5 acquire **i,** you who lack it.
Sir 22: 11 fool, for he has left **i** behind.

**INTELLIGENT** → INTELLIGENCE
Pr 11: 12 but an **i** person remains silent.
Ecc 9: 11 nor riches to the **i,**

**INTENDED** → INTENTIONS
Ge 50: 20 **i** to do harm to me, God **i** it for good,
Jer 18: 10 the good that I had **i** to do to it.

**INTENTIONS** → INTENDED
Mk 7: 21 the human heart, that evil **i** come:
Heb 4: 12 judge the thoughts and **i** of the heart.

**INTERCEDES** → INTERCESSION
Ro 8: 26 Spirit **i** with sighs too deep for

**INTERCESSION*** → INTERCEDES
1Sa 2: 25 against the LORD, who can make **i?"**
Isa 53: 12 and made **i** for the transgressors.
Heb 7: 25 he always lives to make **i** for them.

**INTERMARRY** → MARRIAGE
Dt 7: 3 Do not **i** with them, giving your

**INTERPRET** → INTERPRETATION, INTERPRETATIONS
Ge 41: 15 no one who can **i** it.
Mt 16: 3 cannot **i** the signs of the times.
1Co 12: 30 Do all speak in tongues? Do all **i?**

**INTERPRETATION** → INTERPRET
Da 2: 4 and we will reveal the **i."**
1Co 12: 10 to another the **i** of tongues.
2Pe 1: 20 scripture is a matter of one's own **i,**
2Es 12: 10 "This is the **i** of this vision

**INTERPRETATIONS** → INTERPRET
Ge 40: 8 to them, "Do not **i** belong to God?

### INVADE → INVADED
La 1:10 the nations **i** her sanctuary.
Na 1:15 never again shall the wicked **i** you;

### INVADED → INVADE
2Ki 17: 5 the king of Assyria **i** all the land

### INVISIBLE
Col 1:15 He is the image of the **i** God.
1Ti 1:17 To the King of the ages, immortal, **i**,

### INVITE → INVITED, INVITES
Lk 14:13 when you give a banquet, **i** the poor.

### INVITED → INVITE
Rev 19: 9 Blessed are those who are **i** to

### INVITES → INVITE
1Co 10:27 If an unbeliever **i** you to a meal
Sir 13: 9 When an influential person **i** you,

### INVOKE
Ex 23:13 Do not **i** the names of other gods;
1Pe 1:17 If you **i** as Father the one who

### INWARDLY → INNER
Ro 2:29 a person is a Jew who is one **i**,
8:23 groan **i** while we wait for adoption,

### IRON
Ps 2: 9 shall break them with a rod of **i**,
Pr 27:17 **I** sharpens **i**, and one person
Da 2:33 its legs of **i**, its feet partly of **i**
Rev 19:15 he will rule them with a rod of **i**;

### IRREVOCABLE
Ro 11:29 gifts and the calling of God are **i**.

### ISAAC
Son of Abraham by Sarah (Ge 17:19; 21:1-7; 1Ch 1:28). Abrahamic covenant perpetuated with (Ge 17:21; 26:2-5). Offered up by Abraham (Ge 22; Heb 11:17-19). Rebekah taken as wife (Ge 24). Inherited Abraham's estate (Ge 25:5). Father of Esau and Jacob (Ge 25:19-26; 1Ch 1:34). Nearly lost Rebekah to Abimelech (Ge 26:1-11). Covenant with Abimelech (Ge 26:12-31). Tricked into blessing Jacob (Ge 27). Death (Ge 35:27-29). Father of Israel (Ex 3:6; Dt 29:13; Ro 9:10).

### ISAIAH
Prophet to Judah (Isa 1:1). Called by the LORD (Isa 6). Announced judgment to Ahaz (Isa 7), deliverance from Assyria to Hezekiah (2Ki 19; Isa 36-37), deliverance from death to Hezekiah (2Ki 20:1-11; Isa 38). Chronicler of Judah's history (2Ch 26:22; 32:32).

### ISCARIOT
Mt 10: 4 Judas **I**, the one who betrayed him.
Lk 22: 3 Satan entered into Judas called **I**,

### ISHBAAL*
Son of Saul; would-be king (2Sa 2:8-4:12).

### ISHMAEL
Son of Abraham by Hagar (Ge 16; 1Ch 1:28). Blessed, but not son of covenant (Ge 17:18-21; Gal 4:21-31). Sent away by Sarah (Ge 21:8-21). Children (Ge 25:12-18; 1Ch 1:29-31). Death (Ge 25:17).

### ISRAEL → ISRAELITE, ISRAELITES, =JACOB
1. Name given to Jacob (Ge 32:28; 35:10).
2. Corporate name of Jacob's descendants; often specifically Northern Kingdom.
Ge 49:28 All these are the twelve tribes of **I**,
Ex 28:11 with the names of the sons of **I**;
Nu 24:17 and a scepter shall rise out of **I**;
Dt 6: 4 Hear, O **I**: The LORD is our God.
Ps 125: 5 Peace be upon **I**!
Jer 31:31 a new covenant with the house of **I**
Hos 11: 1 When **I** was a child, I loved him,
Mt 2: 6 who is to shepherd my people **I**.'"
Mk 12:29 answered, "The first is, 'Hear, O **I**:
Lk 22:30 judging the twelve tribes of **I**.
Ac 1: 6 you will restore the kingdom to **I**?"
Ro 9: 6 not all Israelites truly belong to **I**,
Heb 8: 8 a new covenant with the house of **I**
Rev 7: 4 out of every tribe of the people of **I**:
Sir 17:17 but **I** is the Lord's own portion.

### ISRAELITE → ISRAEL
Jn 1:47 an **I** in whom there is no deceit!"
Ro 11: 1 I myself am an **I**, a descendant of

### ISRAELITES → ISRAEL
Ex 2:23 The **I** groaned under their slavery,
29:45 I will dwell among the **I**, and I will

### ISSACHAR
Son of Jacob by Leah (Ge 30:18; 35:23; 1Ch 2:1). Tribe of blessed (Ge 49:14-15; Dt 33:18-19), numbered (Nu 1:29; 26:25), allotted land (Jos 19:17-23; Eze 48:25), assisted Deborah (Jdg 5:15), 12,000 from (Rev 7:7).

### ITCHING
2Ti 4: 3 sound doctrine, but having **i** ears,

## J

### JACOB → =ISRAEL
1. Son of Isaac, younger twin of Esau (Ge 26:21-26; 1Ch 1:34). Bought Esau's birthright (Ge 26:29-34); tricked Isaac into blessing him (Ge 27:1-37). Fled to Haran (Ge 28:1-5). Abrahamic covenant perpetuated through (Ge 28:13-15; Mal 1:2). Vision at Bethel (Ge 28:10-22). Served Laban for Rachel and Leah (Ge 29:1-30). Children (Ge 29:31-30:24; 35:16-26; 1Ch 2-9). Flocks increased (Ge 30:25-43). Returned to Canaan (Ge 31). Wrestled with God; name changed to Israel (Ge 32:22-32). Reconciled to Esau (Ge 33). Returned to Bethel (Ge 35:1-15). Favored Joseph (Ge 37:3). Sent sons to Egypt during famine (Ge 42-43). Settled in Egypt (Ge 46). Blessed Ephraim and Manasseh (Ge 48). Blessed sons (Ge 49:1-28; Heb 11:21). Death (Ge 49:29-33). Burial (Ge 50:1-14).
2. Corporate name of Jacob's descendants; often specifically Northern Kingdom.
Ps 135: 4 the LORD has chosen **J** for himself.
Mic 7:20 You will show faithfulness to **J**
Ro 9:13 "I have loved **J**,
1Mc 1:28 house of **J** was clothed with shame.

### JAEL*
Woman who killed the Canaanite general, Sisera (Jdg 4:17-22; 5:6, 24-27).

### JAIRUS
Synagogue ruler whose daughter Jesus raised (Mk 5:22-43; Lk 8:41-56).

### JAMES
1. Apostle; brother of John (Mt 4:21-22; 10:2; Mk 3:17; Lk 5:1-10). At transfiguration (Mt 17:1-13; Mk 9:1-13; Lk 9:28-36). Killed by Herod (Ac 12:2).
2. Apostle (Mt 10:3; Mk 3:18; Lk 6:15).
3. Brother of Jesus (Mt 13:55; Mk 6:3; Lk 24:10; Gal 1:19) and Judas (Jude 1). With believers before Pentecost (Ac 1:13). Leader of church at Jerusalem (Ac 12:17; 15; 21:18; Gal 2:9, 12). Author of epistle (Jas 1:1).

### JAPHETH
Son of Noah (Ge 5:32; 1Ch 1:4-5). Blessed (Ge 9:18-28). Sons of (Ge 10:2-5).

### JAR → JARS
1Ki 17:14 The **j** of meal will not be emptied
Mk 14: 3 alabaster **j** of very costly ointment
Lk 22:10 man carrying a **j** of water will meet

### JARS → JAR
Jn 2: 6 there were six stone water **j** for
2Co 4: 7 But we have this treasure in clay **j**,

### JEALOUS
Ex 34:14 whose name is **J**, is a **j** God).
Dt 4:24 God is a devouring fire, a **j** God.
32:16 They made him **j** with strange gods,
Eze 39:25 and I will be **j** for my holy name.
Ro 10:19 "I will make you **j** of those

### JEBUSITES
Ex 3: 8 the Perizzites, the Hivites, and the **J**.
Jos 15:63 Judah could not drive out the **J**,

### JECONIAH → See JEHOIACHIN

### JEHOAHAZ
1. Son of Jehu; king of Israel (2Ki 13:1-9).
2. Son of Josiah; king of Judah (2Ki 23:31-34; 2Ch 36:1-4).

### JEHOASH → =JOASH
1. Son of Ahaziah, king of Judah (2Ki 12). See Joash, 1.
2. Son of Jehoahaz; king of Israel. Defeat of Aram prophesied by Elisha (2Ki 13:10-25). Defeated Amaziah in Jerusalem (2Ki 14:1-16). See Joash, 2.

### JEHOIACHIN → =CONIAH, =JECONIAH
Son of Jehoiakim; king of Judah exiled by Nebuchadnezzar (2Ki 24:8-17; 2Ch 36:8-10; Eze 1:2). Status improved (2Ki 25:27-30; Jer 52:31-34).

### JEHOIADA
Priest who sheltered Joash from Athaliah (2Ki 11-12; 2Ch 22:11-24:16).

### JEHOIAKIM → =ELIAKIM
Son of Josiah; made king of Judah by Nebuchadnezzar (2Ki 23:34-24:6; 2Ch 36:4-8; Jer 22:18-23). Burned scroll of Jeremiah's prophecies (Jer 36).

### JEHORAM → =JORAM
1. Son of Jehoshaphat; king of Judah. Prophesied against by Elijah; killed by the LORD (2Ch 21). See Joram, 1.
2. Son of Ahab; king of Israel (2Ch 22:5). Joined Jehoshaphat against Moab (2Ki 3). See Joram, 2.

### JEHOSHAPHAT
1. Son of Asa; king of Judah. Strengthened his kingdom (2Ch 17). Joined with Ahab against Aram (2Ki 22; 2Ch 18). Established judges (2Ch 19). Joined Joram against Moab (2Ki 3; 2Ch 20).
2. Valley of judgment (Joel 3:2, 12).

### JEHU
1. Prophet against Baasha (2Ki 16:1-7).
2. King of Israel. Anointed by Elijah to obliterate house of Ahab (1Ki 19:16-17); anointed by servant of Elisha (2Ki 9:1-13). Killed Joram and Ahaziah (2Ki 9:14-29; 2Ch 22:7-9). Jezebel (2Ki 9:30-37), relatives of Ahab (2Ki 10:1-17; Hos 1:4), ministers of Baal (2Ki 10:18-29). Death (2Ki 10:30-36).

### JEPHTHAH
Judge from Gilead who delivered Israel from Ammon (Jdg 10:6-12:7). Made rash vow concerning his daughter (Jdg 11:30-40).

### JEREMIAH
Prophet to Judah (Jer 1:1-3). Called by the LORD (Jer 1). Put in stocks (Jer 20:1-3). Threatened for prophesying (Jer 11:18-23; 26). Opposed by Hananiah (Jer 28). Scroll burned (Jer 36). Imprisoned (Jer 37). Thrown into cistern (Jer 38). Forced to Egypt with those fleeing Babylonians (Jer 43).

### JERICHO
Jos 6: 2 "See, I have handed **J** over to you,
1Ki 16:34 In his days Hiel of Bethel built **J**;
Lk 18:35 As he approached **J**, a blind man

### JEROBOAM
1. Official of Solomon; rebelled to become first king of Israel (1Ki 11:26-40; 12:1-20; 2Ch 10). Idolatry (1Ki 12:25-33; Tob 1:5; Sir 47:23); judgment for (1Ki 13-14; 2Ch 13).
2. Son of Jehoash; king of Israel (1Ki 14:23-29).

### JERUSALEM
2Sa 5: 5 and at **J** he reigned over all Israel
15:29 carried the ark of God back to **J**,
2Ki 25:10 broke down the walls around **J**.
Ezr 2: 1 they returned to **J** and Judah,
Ne 2:17 Come, let us rebuild the wall of **J**,
Isa 40: 2 Speak tenderly to **J**,
La 1: 8 **J** sinned grievously, so she has
Da 9:25 went out to restore and rebuild **J**
Joel 3: 1 I restore the fortunes of Judah and **J**,
Mic 4: 2 and the word of the LORD from **J**,
Zec 1:14 I am very jealous for **J** and for Zion,
14: 8 living waters shall flow out from **J**,
Mt 23:37 "**J**, **J**, the city that kills the prophets
Lk 4: 9 Then the devil took him to **J**,
Gal 4:25 corresponds to the present **J**,

Heb 12:22 of the living God, the heavenly **J.**
Rev 21: 2 And I saw the holy city, the new **J.**
1Mc 1:29 and he came to **J** with a large force.

## JESSE
Father of David (Ru 4:17-22; 1Sa 16; 1Ch 2:12-17).

## JESUS
1. Jesus the Messiah.

**LIFE:** Genealogy (Mt 1:1-17; Lk 3:21-37). Birth announced (Mt 1:18-25; Lk 1:26-45). Birth (Mt 2:1-12; Lk 2:1-40). Escape to Egypt (Mt 2:13-23). As a boy in the temple (Lk 2:41-52). Baptism (Mt 3:13-17; Mk 1:9-11; Lk 3:21-22; Jn 1:32-34). Temptation (Mt 4:1-11; Mk 1:12-13; Lk 4:1-13). Ministry in Galilee (Mt 4:12-18:35; Mk 1:14-9:50; Lk 4:14-13:9; Jn 1:35-2:11; 4; 6). Transfiguration (Mt 17:1-8; Mk 9:2-8; Lk 9:28-36), on the way to Jerusalem (Mt 19-20; Mk 10; Lk 13:10-19:27), in Jerusalem (Mt 21-25; Mk 11-13; Lk 19:28-21:38; Jn 2:12-3:36; 5; 7-12). Last supper (Mt 26:17-35; Mk 14:12-31; Lk 22:1-38; Jn 13-17). Arrest and trial (Mt 26:36-27:31; Mk 14:43-15:20; Lk 22:39-23:25; Jn 18:1-19:16). Crucifixion (Mt 27:32-66; Mk 15:21-47; Lk 23:26-55; Jn 19:28-42). Resurrection and appearances (Mt 28; Mk 16; Lk 24; Jn 20-21; Ac 1:1-11; 7:56; 9:3-6; 1Co 15:1-8; Rev 1:1-20).

**MIRACLES.** *Healings:* official's son (Jn 4:43-54), demoniac in Capernaum (Mk 1:23-26; Lk 4:33-35), Peter's mother-in-law (Mt 8:14-17; Mk 1:29-31; Lk 4:38-39), leper (Mt 8:2-4; Mk 1:40-45; Lk 5:12-16), paralytic (Mt 9:1-8; Mk 2:1-12; Lk 5:17-26), cripple (Jn 5:1-9), shriveled hand (Mt 12:10-13; Mk 3:1-5; Lk 6:6-11), centurion's servant (Mt 8:5-13; Lk 7:1-10), widow's son raised (Lk 7:11-17), demoniac (Mt 12:22-23; Lk 11:14), Gadarene demoniacs (Mt 8:28-34; Mk 5:1-20; Lk 8:26-39), woman's bleeding and Jairus' daughter (Mt 9:18-26; Mk 5:21-43; Lk 8:40-56), blind man (Mt 9:27-31), mute man (Mt 9:32-33), Canaanite woman's daughter (Mt 15:21-28; Mk 7:24-30), deaf man (Mk 7:31-37), blind man (Mk 8:22-26), demoniac boy (Mt 17:14-18; Mk 9:14-29; Lk 9:37-43), ten lepers (Lk 17:11-19), man born blind (Jn 9:1-7). Lazarus raised (Jn 11), crippled woman (Lk 13:11-17), man with dropsy (Lk 14:1-6), two blind men (Mt 20:29-34; Mk 10:46-52; Lk 18:35-43), Malchus' ear (Lk 22:50-51). *Other Miracles:* water to wine (Jn 2:1-11), catch of fish (Lk 5:1-11), storm stilled (Mt 8:23-27; Mk 4:37-41; Lk 8:22-25), 5,000 fed (Mt 14:15-21; Mk 6:35-44; Lk 9:10-17; Jn 6:1-14), walking on water (Mt 14:25-33; Mk 6:48-52; Jn 6:15-21), 4,000 fed (Mt 15:32-39; Mk 8:1-9), money from fish (Mt 17:24-27), fig tree cursed (Mt 21:18-22; Mk 11:12-14), catch of fish (Jn 21:1-14).

**MAJOR TEACHING:** Sermon on the Mount (Mt 5-7; Lk 6:17-49), to Nicodemus (Jn 3), to Samaritan woman (Jn 4), Bread of Life (Jn 6:22-59), at Feast of Tabernacles (Jn 7-8), woes to Pharisees (Mt 23; Lk 11:37-54), Good Shepherd (Jn 10:1-18), Olivet Discourse (Mt 24-25; Mk 13; Lk 21:5-36), Upper Room Discourse (Jn 13-16).

**PARABLES:** Sower (Mt 13:3-23; Mk 4:3-25; Lk 8:5-18), seed's growth (Mk 4:26-29), wheat and weeds (Mt 13:24-30, 36-43), mustard seed (Mt 13:31-32; Mk 4:30-32), yeast (Mt 13:33; Lk 13:20-21), hidden treasure (Mt 13:44), valuable pearl (Mt 13:45-46), net (Mt 13:47-51), house owner (Mt 13:52), good Samaritan (Lk 10:25-37), unmerciful servant (Mt 18:15-35), lost sheep (Mt 18:10-14; Lk 15:4-7), lost coin (Lk 15:8-10), prodigal son (Lk 15:11-32), dishonest manager (Lk 16:1-13), rich man and Lazarus (Lk 16:19-31), persistent widow (Lk 18:1-8), Pharisee and tax collector (Lk 18:9-14), payment of workers (Mt 20:1-16), tenants and the vineyard (Mt 21:28-46; Mt 12:1-12; Lk 20:9-19), wedding banquet (Mt 22:1-14), faithful servant (Mt 24:45-51), ten virgins (Mt 25:1-13), talents (Mt 25:1-30; Lk 19:12-27).

**DISCIPLES** see APOSTLES. Call (Jn 1:35-51; Mt 4:18-22; 9:9; Mk 1:16-20; 2:13-14; Lk 5:1-11, 27-28). Named Apostles (Mk 3:13-19; Lk 6:12-16). Twelve sent out (Mt 10; Mk 6:7-11; Lk 9:1-5). Seventy sent out (Lk 10:1-24). Defection of (Jn 6:60-71; Mt 26:56; Mk 14:50-52). Final commission (Mt 28:16-20; Jn 21:15-23; Ac 1:3-8).

Ac 9: 5 "I am **J,** whom you are persecuting.
1Co 8: 6 and one Lord, **J** Christ,
Php 2: 10 name of **J** every knee should bend,
2Th 2: 1 the coming of our Lord **J** Christ
1Ti 1: 15 **J** came into the world to save
Heb 12: 2 to **J** the pioneer and perfecter of our
13: 8 **J** Christ is the same yesterday and
1Jn 1: 7 the blood of **J** his Son cleanses us
Rev 1: 1 The revelation of **J** Christ,
22: 20 Amen. Come, Lord **J!**

2. Disciple, also called Justus (Col 4:11).
3. Writer of Sirach (Sir Pr:1; 50:27; 51:1).

## JETHRO
Father-in-law and adviser of Moses (Ex 3:1; 4:18; 18). Also known as Reuel (Ex 2:18).

## JEW → JEWS, JUDAISM
Est 10: 3 Mordecai the **J** was next in rank to
Zec 8: 23 shall take hold of a **J,**
Ro 1: 16 to the **J** first and also to the Greek.
2: 29 a person is a **J** who is one inwardly,
1Co 9: 20 To the Jews I became as a **J,**
Col 3: 11 there is no longer Greek and **J,**

## JEWEL → JEWELS
Pr 20: 15 by knowledge are a precious **j,**
Rev 21: 19 of the city are adorned with every **j;**

## JEWELS → JEWEL
Pr 3: 15 She is more precious than **j,**
Isa 54: 12 your gates of **j,** and all your wall
Rev 17: 4 adorned with gold and **j** and pearls,

## JEWS → JEW
Ne 4: 1 enraged, and he mocked the **J,**
Est 3: 13 to kill, and to annihilate all **J,**
Mt 2: 2 who has been born king of the **J?**
27: 11 "Are you the King of the **J?"**
Jn 4: 22 for salvation is from the **J.**
Ro 3: 29 Or is God the God of **J** only?

## JEZEBEL*
Sidonian wife of Ahab (1Ki 16:31). Promoted Baal worship (1Ki 16:32-33). Killed prophets of the LORD (1Ki 18:4, 13). Opposed Elijah (1Ki 19:1-2). Had Naboth killed (1Ki 21). Death (1Ki 21:17-24; 2Ki 9:30-37). Metaphor of immorality (Rev 2:20).

## JEZREEL
2Ki 10: 7 in baskets and sent them to him at **J.**
Hos 1: 4 the LORD said to him, "Name him **J;**

## JOAB
Nephew of David (1Ch 2:16). Commander of his army (2Sa 8:16). Victorious over Ammon (2Sa 10; 1Ch 19), Rabbah (2Sa 11; 1Ch 20), Jerusalem (1Ch 11:6), Absalom (2Sa 18), Sheba (2Sa 20). Killed Abner (2Sa 3:22-39), Amasa (2Sa 20:1-13). Numbered David's army (2Sa 24; 1Ch 21). Sided with Adonijah (1Ki 1:17, 19). Killed by Benaiah (1Ki 2:5-6, 28-35).

## JOASH → =JEHOASH
1. Son of Ahaziah; king of Judah. Sheltered from Athaliah by Jehoiada (2Ki 11; 2Ch 22:10-23:21). Repaired temple (2Ch 24). See Jehoash, 1.
2. Son of Jehoahaz, king of Israel (2Ki 13; 2Ch 25:17-25). See Jehoash, 2.

## JOB
Wealthy man from Uz; feared God (Job 1:1-5). Integrity tested by disaster (Job 1:6-22), personal affliction (Job 2). Maintained innocence in debate with three friends (Job 3-31), Elihu (Job 32-37). Rebuked by the LORD (Job 38-41). Vindicated and restored to greater stature by the LORD (Job 42). Example of righteousness (Eze 14:14, 20; Sir 49:9).

## JOEL
1. Son of Samuel (1Sa 8:2; 1Ch 6:28).
2. Prophet (Joel 1:1; Ac 2:16).

## JOHANAN
1. First high priest in the temple (1Ch 6:9-10).
2. Jewish leader who tried to save Gedaliah from assassination (Jer 40:13-14); took Jews, including Jeremiah, to Egypt (Jer 40-43).

## JOHN
1. Son of Zechariah and Elizabeth (Lk 1). Called the Baptist (Mt 3:1-12; Mk 1:2-8). Witness to Jesus (Mt 3:11-12; Mk 1:7-8; Lk 3:15-18; Jn 1:6-35; 3:27-30; 5:33-36). Doubts about Jesus (Mt 11:2-6; Lk 7:18-23). Arrest (Mt 4:12; Mk 1:14). Execution (Mt 14:1-12; Mk 6:14-29; Lk 9:7-9). Ministry compared to Elijah (Mt 11:7-19; Mk 9:11-13; Lk 7:24-35).

2. Apostle; brother of James (Mt 4:21-22; 10:2; Mk 3:17; Lk 5:1-10). At transfiguration (Mt 17:1-13; Mk 9:1-13; Lk 9:28-36). Desire to be greatest (Mk 10:35-45). Leader of church at Jerusalem (Ac 4:1-3; Gal 2:9). Elder who wrote epistles (2Jn 1; 3Jn 1). Prophet who wrote Revelation (Rev 1:1; 22:8).

3. Cousin of Barnabas, co-worker with Paul. (Ac 12:12-13:13; 15:37; see Mark).

4. Son of Simon Maccabeus (1Mc 13:53; 16).

## JOIN → JOINED
Eze 37: 17 and **j** them together into one stick,
2Ti 1: 8 **j** with me in suffering for the gospel

## JOINED → JOIN
Mt 19: 6 what God has **j** together, let no one
Eph 2: 21 the whole structure is **j** together and

## JOINT → JOINTS
Ge 32: 25 and Jacob's hip was put out of **j**
Ps 22: 14 and all my bones are out of **j;**
Ro 8: 17 heirs of God and **j** heirs with Christ

## JOINTS → JOINT
Heb 4: 12 soul from spirit, **j** from marrow;

## JONAH
Prophet in days of Jeroboam II (2Ki 14:25). Called to Nineveh; fled to Tarshish (Jnh 1:1-3). Cause of storm; thrown into sea (Jnh 1:4-16). Swallowed by fish (Jnh 1:17). Prayer (Jnh 2). Preached to Nineveh (Jnh 3). Attitude reproved by the LORD (Jnh 4). Sign of (Mt 12:39-41; Lk 11:29-32).

## JONATHAN
1. Son of Saul (1Sa 13:16; 1Ch 8:33). Valiant warrior (1Sa 13-14). Relation to David (1Sa 18:1-4; 19-20; 23:16-18). Killed at Gilboa (1Sa 31). Mourned by David (2Sa 1).

2. Brother and successor of Judas Maccabeus (1Mc 2:5; 9:28-31).

## JOPPA
Jnh 1: 3 down to **J** and found a ship going
Ac 9: 43 he stayed in **J** for some time with

## JORAM → =JEHORAM
1. Son of Jehoshaphat; king of Judah (2Ki 8:16-24). See Jehoram, 1.

2. Son of Ahab; king of Israel. Killed with Ahaziah by Jehu (2Ki 8:25-29; 9:14-26; 2Ch 22:5-9). See Jehoram, 2.

## JORDAN
Ge 13: 10 the plain of the **J** was well watered
Nu 34: 12 the boundary shall go down to the **J,**
Jos 3: 17 dry ground in the middle of the **J,**
Mt 3: 6 were baptized by him in the river **J,**

## JOSEPH → =BARNABAS, =BARSABBAS
1. Son of Jacob by Rachel (Ge 30:24; 1Ch 2:2). Favored by Jacob, hated by brothers (Ge 37:3-4). Dreams (Ge 37:5-11). Sold by brothers (Ge 37:12-36). Served Potiphar; imprisoned by false accusation (Ge 39). Interpreted dreams of Pharaoh's servants (Ge 40), of Pharaoh (Ge 41:4-40). Made greatest in Egypt (Ge 41:41-57). Sold grain to brothers (Ge 42-45). Brought Jacob and sons to Egypt (Ge 46-47). Sons Ephraim and Manasseh blessed (Ge 48). Blessed (Ge 49:22-26; Dt 33:13-17). Death (Ge 50:22-26; Ex 13:19; Heb 11:22). 12,000 from (Rev 7:8).

2. Husband of Mary mother of Jesus (Mt 1:16-24; 2:13-19; Lk 1:27; 2; Jn 1:45).

3. Disciple from Arimathea; buried Jesus in his tomb (Mt 27:57-61; Mk 15:43-47; Lk 24:50-52).

4. Original name of Barnabas (Ac 4:36).

### JOSHUA → =HOSHEA, =JESHUA

1. Son of Nun: name changed from Hoshea (Nu 13:8, 16; 1Ch 7:27). Fought Amalekites under Moses (Ex 17:9-14). Servant of Moses on Sinai (Ex 24:13; 32:17). Spied Canaan (Nu 13). With Caleb, allowed to enter land (Nu 14:6, 30). Succeeded Moses (Dt 1:38; 31:1-8; 34:9).

Charged Israel to conquer Canaan (Jos 1). Crossed Jordan (Jos 3-4). Circumcised sons of wilderness wanderings (Jos 5). Conquered Jericho (Jos 6), Ai (Jos 7-8), five kings at Gibeon (Jos 10:1-28), southern Canaan (Jos 10:29-43), northern Canaan (Jos 11-12). Defeated at Ai (Jos 7). Deceived by Gibeonites (Jos 9). Renewed covenant (Jos 8:30-35; 24:1-27). Divided land among tribes (Jos 13-22). Last words (Jos 23). Death (Jos 24:28-31).

2. High priest during rebuilding of temple (Hag 1-2; Zec 3:1-9; 6:11). See Jeshua.

### JOSIAH

Son of Amon; king of Judah (2Ki 21:26; 1Ch 3:14). Prophesied (1Ki 13:2). Book of the Law discovered during his reign (2Ki 22; 2Ch 34:14-31). Reforms (2Ki 23:1-25; 2Ch 34:1-13; 35:1-19; Sir 49:1-4). Killed in battle (2Ki 23:29-30; 2Ch 35:20-27).

### JOTHAM

1. Son of Gideon (Jdg 9).

2. Son of Azariah (Uzziah); king of Judah (2Ki 15:32-38; 2Ch 26:21-27:9).

### JOY → JOYFUL

Ne 8:10 the **j** of the LORD is your strength."
Job 20:5 **j** of the godless is but for a moment?
Ps 51:12 Restore to me the **j** of your salvation
Pr 21:15 When justice is done, it is a **j** to the
Isa 12:3 With **j** you will draw water from
35:10 everlasting **j** shall be upon their
La 2:15 of beauty, the **j** of all the earth?"
Mt 28:8 tomb quickly with fear and great **j,**
Mk 4:16 they immediately receive it with **j.**
Lk 1:44 the child in my womb leaped for **j.**
2:10 bringing you good news of great **j**
Jn 16:22 no one will take your **j** from you.
Ro 14:17 but righteousness and peace and **j** in
Gal 5:22 the fruit of the Spirit is love, **j,**
Php 4:1 I love and long for, my **j** and crown.
Heb 12:2 **j** that was set before him endured
Jas 1:2 consider it nothing but **j,**
Tob 13:17 Jerusalem will sing hymns of **j,**
Bar 5:9 For God will lead Israel with **j,**

### JOYFUL → JOY

Ps 98:4 Make a **j** noise to the LORD,
Jdt 14:9 and made a **j** noise in their town.

### JUBILEE

Lev 25:10 It shall be a **j** for you:
Nu 36:4 when the **j** of the Israelites comes,

### JUDAH → JUDEA

1. Son of Jacob by Leah (Ge 29:35; 35:23; 1Ch 2:1). Did not want to kill Joseph (Ge 37:26-27). Among Canaanites, fathered Perez by Tamar (Ge 38). Tribe of blessed as ruling tribe (Ge 49:8-12; Dt 33:7), numbered (Nu 1:27; 26:22), allotted land (Jos 15; Eze 48:7), failed to fully possess (Jos 15:63; Jdg 1:1-20).

2. Name used for Southern Kingdom.

2Sa 2:4 David king over the house of **J.**
La 1:3 **J** has gone into exile with suffering
Joel 3:1 when I restore the fortunes of **J** and
Mic 5:2 who are one of the little clans of **J,**
Mt 2:6 least among the rulers of **J;**
Heb 7:14 our Lord was descended from **J,**
Rev 5:5 See, the Lion of the tribe of **J,**

### JUDAISM → JEW

Ac 13:43 devout converts to **J** followed Paul
Gal 1:13 no doubt, of my earlier life in **J.**

### JUDAS → =BARSABBAS, =JUDE, =THADDAEUS, MACCABEUS

1. Apostle; son of James (Lk 6:16; Jn 14:22; Ac 1:13). Probably also called Thaddaeus (Mt 10:3; Mk 3:18).

2. Brother of James and Jesus (Mt 13:55; Mk 6:3), also called Jude (Jude 1).

3. Christian prophet (Ac 15:22-32).

4. Apostle, also called Iscariot, who betrayed Jesus (Mt 10:4; 26:14-56; Mk 3:19; 14:10-50; Lk 6:16; 22:3-53; Jn 6:71; 12:4; 13:2-30; 18:2-11). Suicide of (Mt 27:3-5; Ac 1:16-25).

5. Leader of the Maccabean revolt (1Mc 2:4, 66). Recaptured Jerusalem and rededicated the temple and altar (1Mc 4:36-61). Death of (1Mc 9).

### JUDE → See JUDAS, 2

### JUDEA → JUDAH

Mt 2:1 Jesus was born in Bethlehem of **J,**
Lk 3:1 Pontius Pilate was governor of **J,**
Ac 1:8 my witnesses in Jerusalem, in all **J**

### JUDGE → JUDGED, JUDGES, JUDGMENT, JUDGMENTS

Ge 16:5 the LORD **j** between you and me!"
Ex 2:14 made you a ruler and **j** over us?
1Sa 2:10 LORD will **j** the ends of the earth:
Ps 96:13 for he is coming to **j** the earth.
Isa 11:3 He shall not **j** by what his eyes see,
Jer 11:20 O LORD of hosts, who **j** righteously,
Eze 34:17 I shall **j** between sheep and sheep,
Lk 6:37 not **j,** and you will not be judged;
Jn 7:24 Do not **j** by appearances,
18:31 "Take him yourselves and **j** him
Ac 4:19 rather than to God, you must **j;**
Ro 3:6 then how could God **j** the world?
1Co 6:2 that the saints will **j** the world?
2Ti 4:1 who is to **j** the living and the dead,
Heb 12:23 and to God the **j** of all,
Jas 5:9 See, the **J** is standing at the doors!
Rev 20:4 on them were given authority to **j.**
Sir 35:15 for the Lord is the **j,**

### JUDGED → JUDGE

Mt 7:1 not judge, so that you may not be **j.**
1Co 11:31 if we **j** ourselves, we would not be **j.**
Jas 3:1 know that we who teach will be **j**
Rev 20:12 dead were **j** according to their works

### JUDGES → JUDGE

Jdg 2:16 Then the LORD raised up **j,**
Lk 11:19 Therefore they will be your **j.**
Jas 4:11 evil against the law and **j** the law:
Rev 19:11 righteousness he **j** and makes war.
Sir 16:12 **j** a person according to one's deeds.

### JUDGMENT → JUDGE

Ex 6:6 arm and with mighty acts of **j.**
Ps 1:5 wicked will not stand in the **j,**
119:66 Teach me good **j** and knowledge,
Ecc 12:14 God will bring every deed into **j,**
Jer 25:31 he is entering into **j** with all flesh,
Da 7:22 **j** was given for the holy ones of the
Mal 3:5 Then I will draw near to you for **j;**
Mt 11:24 day of **j** it will be more tolerable for
Jn 16:11 about **j,** because the ruler
Ro 14:10 we will all stand before the **j** seat of
2Co 5:10 all of us must appear before the **j**
Heb 9:27 to die once, and after that the **j,**
10:27 but a fearful prospect of **j,**
Jas 2:13 mercy triumphs over **j.**
1Pe 4:17 for **j** to begin with the household of
1Jn 4:17 may have boldness on the day of **j,**
Rev 18:10 For in one hour your **j** has come."
Wis 12:12 Or will resist your **j?**
Sir 18:20 Before **j** comes, examine yourself;
2Es 7:70 the things that pertain to the **j.**

### JUDGMENTS → JUDGE

Ps 119:75 LORD, that your **j** are right,
Ro 11:33 How unsearchable are his **j** and
Rev 19:2 for his **j** are true and just;

### JUDITH

Virtuous widow and heroine of the deuterocanonical book of Judith (Jdt 8-16).

### JUST → JUSTICE, JUSTIFICATION, JUSTIFIED, JUSTIFY

Ge 18:25 Judge of all the earth do what is **j?"**
Dt 32:4 without deceit, **j** and upright is he;
Ps 111:7 works of his hands are faithful and **j**
Eze 33:17 "The way of the Lord is not **j,"**
Ro 7:12 the commandment is holy and **j** and
1Jn 1:9 he who is faithful and **j** will forgive
Rev 15:3 **J** and true are your ways, King of
Tob 3:2 O Lord, and all your deeds are **j;**
Sir 18:2 the Lord alone is **j,**

### JUSTICE → JUST

Ex 23:6 not pervert the **j** due to your poor
1Ki 7:7 pronounce judgment, the Hall of **J,**
Job 19:7 I call aloud, but there is no **j.**
37:23 he is great in power and **j,**
Ps 33:5 He loves righteousness and **j;**
106:3 Happy are those who observe **j,**
Pr 21:15 **j** is done, it is a joy to the righteous.
Isa 30:18 For the LORD is a God of **j;**
42:4 until he has established **j** in the earth
Jer 9:24 I act with steadfast love, **j,**
Hos 12:6 to your God, hold fast to love and **j,**
Am 5:24 But let **j** roll down like waters,
Mal 2:17 by asking, "Where is the God of **j?"**
Lk 11:42 and neglect **j** and the love of God:

### JUSTIFICATION → JUST

Ro 4:25 trespasses and was raised for our **j.**
2Co 3:9 more does the ministry of **j** abound
Gal 2:21 for if **j** comes through the law,

### JUSTIFIED → JUST

Job 32:2 he **j** himself rather than God;
Mt 12:37 for by your words you will be **j,**
Ro 3:24 they are now **j** by his grace as a gift,
5:1 Therefore, since we are **j** by faith,
10:10 believes with the heart and so is **j,**
Gal 2:16 that we might be **j** by faith in Christ,
Jas 2:24 is **j** by works and not by faith alone.

### JUSTIFY → JUST

Ro 3:30 and he will **j** the circumcised on the
Gal 3:8 that God would **j** the Gentiles

## K

### KADESH → KADESH-BARNEA

Nu 20:1 and the people stayed in **K.**
Dt 1:46 you had stayed at **K** as many days

### KADESH-BARNEA → KADESH

Nu 32:8 sent them from **K** to see the land.

### KEEP → KEEPER, KEEPS, KEPT

Ge 17:9 for you, you shall **k** my covenant,
Ex 19:5 obey my voice and **k** my covenant,
Nu 6:24 The LORD bless you and **k** you:
Dt 5:10 love me and **k** my commandments,
Ne 1:5 love him and **k** his commandments:
Pr 7:2 **k** my commandments and live,
Ecc 3:6 time to **k,** and a time to throw away:
12:13 Fear God, and **k** his commandments
Lk 17:33 those who lose their life will **k** it.
Jude 1:24 Now to him who is able to **k** you
Rev 22:9 those who **k** the words of this book.
Sir 1:26 wisdom, **k** the commandments,

### KEEPER → KEEP

Ge 4:9 am I my brother's **k?"**
Ps 121:5 The LORD is your **k;**

### KEEPS → KEEP

Ps 121:3 he who **k** you will not slumber.
Jas 2:10 whoever **k** the whole law but fails

### KEPT → KEEP

Mt 19:20 said to him, "I have **k** all these:
Jn 17:6 and they have **k** your word.
2Ti 4:7 finished the race, I have **k** the faith.

### KEY → KEYS

Isa 22:22 on his shoulder the **k** of the house
Lk 11:52 taken away the **k** of knowledge;
Rev 3:7 true one, who has the **k** of David.

### KEYS* → KEY

Mt 16:19 you the **k** of the kingdom of heaven.
Rev 1:18 I have the **k** of Death and of Hades.

### KIDNAPS'
Ex 21:16 Whoever **k** a person, whether

### KIDRON
2Sa 15:23 the king crossed the Wadi **K.**
Jn 18:1 his disciples across the **K** valley

### KILL → KILLED, KILLS
Ex 4:23 now I will **k** your firstborn son.'"
Ecc 3:3 a time to **k,** and a time to heal;
Mt 10:28 not fear those who **k** the body but cannot **k** the soul;
Mk 14:1 to arrest Jesus by stealth and **k** him;

### KILLED → KILL
Mk 9:31 after being **k,** he will rise again."
Ac 3:15 and you **k** the Author of life,
Ro 7:11 deceived me and through it **k** me.
2Co 6:9 as punished, and yet not **k;**

### KILLS → KILL
1Sa 2:6 The LORD **k** and brings to life;
2Co 3:6 the letter **k,** but the Spirit gives life.

### KIND → KINDNESS, KINDS
Ge 6:20 two of every **k** shall come in to you,
Ps 145:17 and **k** in all his doings.
1Co 13:4 Love is patient; love is **k;**
Eph 4:32 and be **k** to one another,

### KINDNESS → KIND
Pr 31:26 teaching of **k** is on her tongue.
Hos 11:4 I led them with cords of human **k,**
Ro 2:4 **k** is meant to lead you to repentance
Gal 5:22 joy, peace, patience, **k,** generosity,

### KINDS → KIND
Lev 19:19 not sow your field with two **k** of
1Co 12:10 to another various **k** of tongues,
1Ti 6:10 of money is a root of all **k** of evil,

### KING → KINGDOM, KINGS
Ex 1:8 Now a new **k** arose over Egypt,
Dt 17:14 and you say, "I will set a **k** over me,
1Sa 8:7 rejected me from being **k** over them.
2Sa 2:4 there they anointed David **k** over
Ps 2:6 set my **k** on Zion, my holy hill."
10:16 The LORD is **k** forever and ever;
Isa 6:5 have seen the **K,** the LORD of hosts!
Jer 10:10 living God and the everlasting **K.**
Mt 2:2 who has been born **k** of the Jews?
27:37 "This is Jesus, the **K** of the Jews."
Lk 19:38 "Blessed is the **k** who comes in the
Jn 1:49 You are the **K** of Israel!"
1Ti 1:17 To the **K** of the ages, immortal,
Rev 19:16 "**K** of kings and Lord of lords."
Tob 10:13 Lord of heaven and earth, **K** over all
Jdt 9:12 **K** of all your creation,

### KINGDOM → KING
Ex 19:6 you shall be for me a priestly **k** and
2Sa 7:12 and I will establish his **k.**
1Ki 11:31 "See, I am about to tear the **k**
Ps 145:13 Your **k** is an everlasting **k,**
Da 4:3 His **k** is an everlasting **k,**
Mt 4:17 "Repent, for the **k** of heaven has
5:3 for theirs is the **k** of heaven.
6:10 Your **k** come. Your will be done,
13:24 "The **k** of heaven may be compared
Mk 6:23 I will give you, even half of my **k."**
10:24 how hard it is to enter the **k** of God!
12:34 You are not far from the **k** of God."
13:8 and **k** against **k;**
Lk 17:21 in fact, the **k** of God is among you."
22:16 not eat it until it is fulfilled in the **k**
Jn 18:36 "My **k** is not from this world.
Ac 1:6 you will restore the **k** to Israel?"
Ro 14:17 the **k** of God is not food and drink
1Co 6:9 wrongdoers will not inherit the **k**
Eph 5:5 any inheritance in the **k** of Christ
Col 1:13 transferred us into the **k** of his
1Th 2:12 calls you into his own **k** and glory.
Heb 12:28 receiving a **k** that cannot be shaken,
2Pe 1:11 entry into the eternal **k** of our Lord
Rev 11:15 world has become the **k** of our Lord
Wis 10:10 she showed him the **k** of God,

### KINGS → KING
Ge 17:6 and **k** shall come from you.
Ps 2:2 The **k** of the earth set themselves,
138:4 All the **k** of the earth shall praise
Pr 8:15 By me **k** reign, and rulers decree
Isa 52:15 **k** shall shut their mouths because of
Da 7:24 of this kingdom ten **k** shall arise.
Ac 4:26 The **k** of the earth took their stand,
1Ti 6:15 the King of **k** and Lord of lords,
Rev 19:16 "King of **k** and Lord of lords."
Sir 51:12 *Give thanks to the King of the* **k** *of* **k,**

### KISS
Ps 2:12 **k** his feet, or he will be angry,
SS 1:2 Let him **k** me with the kisses of his
Mt 26:48 "The one I will **k** is the man; arrest
2Co 13:12 Greet one another with a holy **k.**

### KNEE → KNEES
Isa 45:23 "To me every **k** shall bow,
Ro 14:11 says the Lord, every **k** shall bow to
Php 2:10 at the name of Jesus every **k** should

### KNEEL → KNELT
Ps 95:6 let us **k** before the LORD, our Maker

### KNEES → KNEE
1Ki 19:18 the **k** that have not bowed to Baal,
Eph 3:14 I bow my **k** before the Father,

### KNELT → KNEEL
2Ch 6:13 he **k** on his knees in the presence of
Lk 22:41 about a stone's throw, **k** down,

### KNEW → KNOW
Dt 34:10 whom the LORD **k** face to face,
Jer 1:5 I formed you in the womb I **k** you,
Mt 7:23 will declare to them, 'I never **k** you;
Ro 1:21 they **k** God, they did not honor him

### KNOCK → KNOCKING
Lk 11:9 **k,** and the door will be opened for

### KNOCKING → KNOCK
Rev 3:20 I am standing at the door, **k;**

### KNOW → FOREKNEW, KNEW, KNOWING, KNOWLEDGE, KNOWN, KNOWS
Ge 22:12 for now I **k** that you fear God,
Ex 6:7 **k** that I am the LORD your God,
1Ki 8:39 only you **k** what is in every human
Job 19:25 For I **k** that my Redeemer lives,
Ps 46:10 "Be still, and **k** that I am God!
Ecc 8:16 I applied my mind to **k** wisdom,
Isa 1:3 Israel does not **k,** my people do not
Jer 31:34 **"K** the LORD," for they shall all **k**
Mt 6:3 left hand **k** what your right hand is
24:42 do not **k** on what day your Lord is
Lk 11:13 **k** how to give good gifts to your
22:34 denied three times that you **k** me."
Jn 10:14 I **k** my own and my own **k** me,
13:35 will **k** that you are my disciples,
21:24 and we **k** that his testimony is true.
Ac 1:7 **k** the times or periods that the
Ro 8:28 We **k** that all things work together
1Co 8:2 Anyone who claims to **k** something
13:12 I **k** only in part; then I will **k** fully,
Eph 3:19 **k** the love of Christ that surpasses
Php 3:10 to **k** Christ and the power of his
Tit 1:16 profess to **k** God, but they deny him
Heb 8:11 **'K** the Lord,' for they shall all **k** me,
1Jn 2:4 Whoever says, "I have come to **k**
3:16 **k** love by this, that he laid down his
Rev 3:3 not **k** at what hour I will come to

### KNOWING → KNOW
Ge 3:22 like one of us, **k** good and evil;
Jn 18:4 Jesus, **k** all that was to happen to
Php 3:8 surpassing value of **k** Christ Jesus
Heb 13:2 have entertained angels without **k** it.

### KNOWLEDGE → KNOW
Ge 2:9 the tree of the **k** of good and evil,
Job 21:22 Will any teach God **k,**
Pr 1:7 of the LORD is the beginning of **k;**
8:10 and **k** rather than choice gold;
Ecc 1:18 who increase **k** increase sorrow,
Isa 11:2 spirit of **k** and the fear of the LORD,
Hos 4:6 people are destroyed for lack of **k;**
Lk 11:52 you have taken away the key of **k;**
Ro 11:33 riches and wisdom and **k** of God!
1Co 8:1 **K** puffs up, but love builds up.
Eph 3:19 the love of Christ that surpasses **k,**
Col 2:3 the treasures of wisdom and **k,**
1Ti 6:20 of what is falsely called **k;**
2Pe 1:5 goodness, and goodness with **k,**
1Jn 2:20 and all of you have **k,**
Sir 3:25 without **k** there is no wisdom.

### KNOWN → KNOW
Ps 139:1 you have searched me and **k** me.
Lk 6:44 for each tree is **k** by its own fruit.
Jn 1:18 Father's heart, who has made him **k.**
Ro 7:7 I would not have **k** sin.
1Co 2:16 For who has **k** the mind of the Lord
Eph 1:9 made **k** to us the mystery of his will,

### KNOWS → KNOW
Ps 94:11 The LORD **k** our thoughts,
103:14 For he **k** how we were made;
Mt 6:8 your Father **k** what you need before
24:36 about that day and hour no one **k,**
Ro 8:27 **k** what is the mind of the Spirit,
2Ti 2:19 "The Lord **k** those who are his,"
1Jn 4:7 loves is born of God and **k** God,
Sir 42:18 Most High **k** all that may be known;

### KORAH → KORAHITES
Levite; led rebels against Moses (Nu 16; Jude 11).

### KORAHITES → KORAH
Psalms of: Pss 42; 44-49; 84; 85; 87; 88.

## L

### LABAN
Brother of Rebekah (Ge 24:29), father of Rachel and Leah (Ge 29:16). Received Abraham's servant (Ge 24:29-51). Provided daughters as wives for Jacob in exchange for Jacob's service (Ge 29:1-30). Provided flocks for Jacob's service (Ge 30:25-43). Pursued and covenanted with Jacob (Ge 31).

### LABOR → LABORER
Ex 1:11 to oppress them with forced **l.**
20:9 Six days you shall **l** and do all your
Jn 4:38 reap that for which you did not **l.**

### LABORER → LABOR
Lev 19:13 the wages of a **l** until morning.
Lk 10:7 for the **l** deserves to be paid.
1Ti 5:18 and, "The **l** deserves to be paid."

### LACKED → LACKING
Dt 2:7 with you; you have **l** nothing."

### LACKING → LACKED
Ecc 1:15 and what is **l** cannot be counted.
Lk 18:22 "There is still one thing **l.**
Col 1:24 completing what is **l** in Christ's

### LADDER
Ge 28:12 that there was a **l** set up on the earth,

### LAID → LAY
Isa 53:6 the LORD has **l** on him the iniquity
Mk 16:6 Look, there is the place they **l** him.
1Jn 3:16 that he **l** down his life for us—

### LAKE
Rev 19:20 were thrown alive into the **l** of fire
20:14 This is the second death, the **l** of fire

### LAMB → LAMBS
Ge 22:8 "God himself will provide the **l** for
Ex 12:21 and slaughter the passover **l.**
Isa 53:7 like a **l** that is led to the slaughter,
Mk 14:12 when the Passover **l** is sacrificed,
Jn 1:29 **L** of God who takes away the sin of
1Co 5:7 For our paschal **l,** Christ, has been
1Pe 1:19 like that of a **l** without defect or
Rev 5:12 the **L** that was slaughtered to
21:23 and its lamp is the **L.**

### LAMBS → LAMB
Isa 40:11 he will gather the **l** in his arms,
Jn 21:15 Jesus said to him, "Feed my **l."**

**LAME**
Isa 35: 6 then the **l** shall leap like a deer,
Zep 3: 19 And I will save the **l** and gather the
Mt 11: 5 the **l** walk, the lepers are cleansed,

**LAMENTATION**
La 2: 5 in daughter Judah mourning and **l**,

**LAMP** → LAMPS, LAMPSTAND, LAMPSTANDS
1Ki 11: 36 servant David may always have a **l**
Ps 18: 28 It is you who light my **l**;
119: 105 Your word is a **l** to my feet and a
Mt 5: 15 lighting a **l** puts it under the bushel
6: 22 "The eye is the **l** of the body.
Rev 22: 5 they need no light of **l** or sun,

**LAMPS** → LAMP
Ex 25: 37 You shall make the seven **l** for it:
Mt 25: 1 Ten bridesmaids took their **l** and

**LAMPSTAND** → LAMP
Ex 25: 31 You shall make a **l** of pure gold.
Zec 4: 2 And I said, "I see a **l** all of gold,
1Mc 4: 50 and lit the lamps on the **l**,

**LAMPSTANDS** → LAMP
Rev 1: 20 the seven **l** are the seven churches.
11: 4 the two **l** that stand before the Lord

**LAND**
Ge 1: 10 God called the dry **l** Earth,
12: 7 your offspring I will give this **l**."
Ex 3: 8 a **l** flowing with milk and honey,
20: 2 brought you out of the **l** of Egypt,
Nu 13: 2 to spy out the **l** of Canaan,
Jos 11: 23 So Joshua took the whole **l**,
Jdg 1: 27 Canaanites continued to live in that **l**
2Ki 17: 5 the king of Assyria invaded all the **l**
25: 21 So Judah went into exile out of its **l**,
2Ch 7: 14 will forgive their sin and heal their **l**,
Ps 37: 11 But the meek shall inherit the **l**,
Jer 22: 29 O **l**, **l**, **l**, hear the word of the LORD!
Da 11: 41 He shall come into the beautiful **l**,
Mal 4: 6 come and strike the **l** with a curse.

**LANGUAGE**
Ge 11: 9 LORD confused the **l** of all the earth:
Ac 2: 6 speaking in the native **l** of each.

**LAP**
Jdg 7: 5 who **l** the water with their tongues,
Pr 16: 33 The lot is cast into the **l**,

**LASHES**
Dt 25: 3 Forty **l** may be given but not more;
2Co 11: 24 from the Jews the forty **l** minus one.

**LAST** → EVERLASTING
2Sa 23: 1 Now these are the **l** words of David:
Isa 44: 6 I am the first and I am the **l**;
Mt 19: 30 first will be **l**, and the **l** will be first.
Mk 9: 35 first must be **l** of all and servant of
1Co 15: 26 **l** enemy to be destroyed is death.
15: 52 twinkling of an eye, at the **l** trumpet.
2Ti 3: 1 that in the **l** days distressing times
Heb 1: 2 **l** days he has spoken to us by a Son,
1Jn 2: 18 Children, it is the **l** hour!
Rev 1: 17 I am the first and the **l**,

**LAUGH** → LAUGHINGSTOCK, LAUGHTER
Ge 18: 13 said to Abraham, "Why did Sarah **l**,
Ecc 3: 4 a time to weep, and a time to **l**;
Lk 6: 21 you who weep now, for you will **l**.

**LAUGHINGSTOCK** → LAUGH
Ps 44: 14 the nations, a **l** among the peoples,
La 3: 14 have become the **l** of all my people,

**LAUGHTER** → LAUGH
Ps 126: 2 Then our mouth was filled with **l**,
Jas 4: 9 Let your **l** be turned into mourning

**LAW** → LAWFUL, LAWLESSNESS
Dt 1: 5 Moses undertook to expound this **l**
31: 9 Then Moses wrote down this **l**,
Jos 1: 8 book of the **l** shall not depart out of
Ps 1: 2 their delight is in the **l** of the LORD,
119: 97 Oh, how I love your **l**!
Jer 31: 33 I will put my **l** within them,
Mt 5: 17 come to abolish the **l** or the prophets
23: 23 the weightier matters of the **l**:
Lk 24: 44 written about me in the **l** of Moses,
Jn 1: 17 **l** indeed was given through Moses;
Ro 6: 14 you are not under **l** but under grace.
10: 4 For Christ is the end of the **l** so that
Gal 2: 19 through the **l** I died to the **l**,
Heb 10: 1 Since the **l** has only a shadow of the
Jas 2: 10 For whoever keeps the whole **l** but
1Mc 2: 48 They rescued the **l** out of the hands

**LAWFUL** → LAW
Mt 12: 12 So it is **l** to do good on the sabbath."
1Co 6: 12 "All things are **l** for me,"
10: 23 "All things are **l**," but

**LAWLESSNESS** → LAW
2Th 2: 7 the mystery of **l** is already at work,
1Jn 3: 4 commits sin is guilty of **l**; sin is **l**.
Sir 21: 3 All **l** is like a two-edged sword:

**LAY** → LAID
Mt 8: 20 of Man has nowhere to **l** his head."
28: 6 Come, see the place where he **l**.
Jn 10: 15 And I **l** down my life for the sheep.
1Co 3: 11 no one can **l** any foundation other

**LAZARUS***
1. Poor man in Jesus' parable (Lk 16:19-31).
2. Brother of Mary and Martha whom Jesus raised from the dead (Jn 11:1-12:19).

**LAZY**
Ex 5: 17 He said, "You are **l**, **l**;
Pr 13: 4 The appetite of the **l** craves,

**LEAD** → LEADER, LEADERS, LEADS, LED
Ex 32: 34 **l** the people to the place
Ps 61: 2 **L** me to the rock that is higher than
Isa 11: 6 and a little child shall **l** them,
Mk 13: 22 to **l** astray, if possible, the elect.
Ro 2: 4 meant to **l** you to repentance?

**LEADER** → LEAD
1Ch 28: 4 for he chose Judah as **l**,
Ro 12: 8 the **l**, in diligence;

**LEADERS** → LEAD
Isa 3: 12 O my people, your **l** mislead you,
Lk 19: 47 the **l** of the people kept looking for
Heb 13: 7 Remember your **l**, those who spoke

**LEADS** → LEAD
Ps 23: 2 he **l** me beside still waters;
Mk 13: 5 "Beware that no one **l** you astray.
Ro 6: 16 obedience, which **l** to righteousness

**LEAH**
Wife of Jacob (Ge 29:16-30); bore six sons and one daughter (Ge 29:31-30:21; 34:1; 35:23; Ru 4:11).

**LEAPING**
1Ch 15: 29 and saw King David **l** and dancing;
Ac 3: 8 walking and **l** and praising God.

**LEARN** → LEARNED, LEARNING
Dt 4: 10 that they may **l** to fear me as long as
Isa 1: 17 **l** to do good; seek justice,
1Ti 2: 11 Let a woman **l** in silence with full

**LEARNED** → LEARN
Jn 6: 45 **l** from the Father comes to me.
Php 4: 11 I have **l** to be content with whatever

**LEARNING** → LEARN
Jn 7: 15 "How does this man have such **l**,
Ac 26: 24 Too much **l** is driving you insane!"

**LEAST** → LESS
Mt 2: 6 are by no means **l** among the rulers
5: 19 called **l** in the kingdom of heaven;
Lk 9: 48 **l** among all of you is the greatest."

**LEAVE** → LEFT
Nu 11: 20 'Why did we ever **l** Egypt?'"
Mk 10: 7 this reason a man shall **l** his father
Jn 14: 18 not **l** you orphaned; I am coming to
Heb 13: 5 said, "I will never **l** you or forsake

**LEAVEN** → LEAVENS
Ex 12: 15 on the first day you shall remove **l**

**LEAVENS** → LEAVEN
Gal 5: 9 A little yeast **l** the whole batch of

**LEAVES**
Ge 3: 7 and they sewed fig **l** together
Eze 47: 12 and their **l** for healing."
Rev 22: 2 **l** of the tree are for the healing of

**LEBANON**
Dt 11: 24 from the wilderness to the **L** and
Isa 40: 16 **L** would not provide fuel enough,

**LED** → LEAD
Isa 53: 7 like a lamb that is **l** to the slaughter,
Jer 50: 6 their shepherds have **l** them astray,
Hos 11: 4 I **l** them with cords of human
Mt 4: 1 Then Jesus was **l** up by the Spirit
27: 31 they **l** him away to crucify him.
Lk 21: 8 "Beware that you are not **l** astray;
Ro 8: 14 For all who are **l** by the Spirit

**LEFT** → LEAVE
Dt 28: 14 either to the right or to the **l**,
Mt 6: 3 your **l** hand know what your right
25: 33 his right hand and the goats at the **l**.
Lk 17: 34 one will be taken and the other **l**.

**LEGION**
Lk 8: 30 He said, **"L"**; for many demons

**LEGS**
Da 10: 6 **l** like the gleam of burnished bronze
Jn 19: 33 they did not break his **l**.
Rev 10: 1 and his **l** like pillars of fire.

**LENDER**
Pr 22: 7 the borrower is the slave of the **l**.

**LEPER** → LEPROUS
Mt 8: 2 and there was a **l** who came to him
26: 6 in the house of Simon the **l**,

**LEPERS** → LEPROUS
Lk 7: 22 the lame walk, the **l** are cleansed,

**LEPROUS** → LEPER, LEPERS
Ex 4: 6 he took it out, his hand was **l**,
Nu 12: 10 Miriam had become **l**,

**LESS** → LEAST
Ex 30: 15 and the poor shall not give **l**,
Ezr 9: 13 punished us **l** than our iniquities

**LETTER**
Mt 5: 18 not one **l**, not one stroke of a **l**,
2Co 3: 6 the **l** kills, but the Spirit gives life.

**LEVI** → LEVITES, LEVITICAL, =MATTHEW
1. Son of Jacob by Leah (Ge 29:34; 46:11; 1Ch 2:1). With Simeon avenged rape of Dinah (Ge 34). Tribe of blessed (Ge 49:5-7; Dt 33:8-11), chosen as priests (Nu 3-4), numbered (Nu 3:39; 26:62), given cities, but not land (Nu 18: 35; Dt 10:9; Jos 13:14; 21), land (Eze 48:8-22), 12,000 from (Rev 7:7).
2. See Matthew.

**LEVIATHAN**
Job 41: 1 you draw out **L** with a fishhook,
Ps 74: 14 You crushed the heads of **L**;
2Es 6: 49 and the name of the other **L**.

**LEVITES** → LEVI
Nu 1: 53 **L** shall camp around the tabernacle
Jos 14: 4 no portion was given to the **L** in the
Ne 8: 9 **L** who taught the people said to all

**LEVITICAL** → LEVI
Heb 7: 11 attainable through the **l** priesthood

**LIAR** → LIE
Pr 19: 22 and it is better to be poor than a **l**.
Jn 8: 44 for he is a **l** and the father of lies.
Ro 3: 4 Although everyone is a **l**,
1Jn 2: 22 **l** but the one who denies that Jesus

**LIARS** → LIE
1Ti 1: 10 sodomites, slave traders, **l**, perjurers,
Rev 21: 8 the sorcerers, the idolaters, and all **l**,

### LIBERTY
Lev 25: 10 shall proclaim **l** throughout the land
Isa 61: 1 to proclaim **l** to the captives,
1Co 8: 9 this **l** of yours does not somehow

### LICENTIOUSNESS
Mk 7: 22 avarice, wickedness, deceit, **l**, envy,
Gal 5: 19 fornication, impurity, **l**,
Jude 1: 4 pervert the grace of our God into **l**

### LIE → LIAR, LIARS, LIES, LYING
Nu 23: 19 that he should **l**, or a mortal,
Ps 23: 2 makes me **l** down in green pastures;
Isa 11: 6 leopard shall **l** down with the kid,
Ac 5: 3 your heart to **l** to the Holy Spirit
1Jn 2: 21 know that no **l** comes from the truth.

### LIES → LIE
Ps 5: 6 You destroy those who speak **l**;
Php 3: 13 forgetting what **l** behind and straining forward to what **l** ahead,

### LIFE → LIVE
Ge 2: 7 into his nostrils the breath of **l**;
2: 9 the tree of **l** also in the midst of the
9: 5 require a reckoning for human **l**.
Ex 21: 23 then you shall give **l** for **l**,
Dt 12: 23 for the blood is the **l**,
30: 19 Choose **l** so that you and your
Ps 34: 12 Which of you desires **l**, and covets
Pr 18: 21 Death and **l** are in the power of the tongue,
Ecc 7: 12 that wisdom gives **l** to the one who
Isa 53: 10 you make his **l** an offering for sin,
Da 12: 2 shall awake, some to everlasting **l**,
Mt 7: 14 and the road is hard that leads to **l**,
10: 39 Those who find their **l** will lose it,
20: 28 to give his **l** a ransom for many."
Mk 10: 30 and in the age to come eternal **l**.
Lk 12: 25 a single hour to your span of **l**?
Jn 1: 4 in him was **l**, and the **l** was the light
3: 15 believes in him may have eternal **l**.
6: 35 said to them, "I am the bread of **l**.
11: 25 "I am the resurrection and the **l**.
14: 6 "I am the way, and the truth, and the **l**.
Ac 3: 15 and you killed the Author of **l**,
Ro 5: 21 eternal **l** through Jesus Christ our
8: 38 convinced that neither death, nor **l**,
2Co 3: 6 the letter kills, but the Spirit gives **l**.
Eph 4: 1 to lead a **l** worthy of the calling
Php 4: 3 whose names are in the book of **l**.
1Jn 3: 14 that we have passed from death to **l**
5: 20 He is the true God and eternal **l**.
Rev 2: 8 who was dead and came to **l**:
20: 4 came to **l** and reigned with Christ
20: 12 book was opened, the book of **l**.
22: 2 the tree of **l** with its twelve kinds
Sir 4: 12 Whoever loves her loves **l**,
2Es 8: 52 the tree of **l** is planted,

### LIFTED
Isa 52: 13 he shall be exalted and **l** up,
Jn 3: 14 so must the Son of Man be **l** up,

### LIGHT → ENLIGHTENED, ENLIGHTENS, LIGHTS
Ge 1: 3 "Let there be **l**"; and there was **l**.
Ex 13: 21 pillar of fire by night, to give them **l**,
Ps 27: 1 The LORD is my **l** and my salvation;
Pr 4: 18 the path of the righteous is like the **l**
Ecc 2: 13 that wisdom excels folly as **l** excels
Isa 9: 2 in darkness have seen a great **l**;
42: 6 as a covenant to the people, a **l**
60: 1 Arise, shine; for your **l** has come,
Mt 4: 16 in darkness have seen a great **l**,
5: 14 "You are the **l** of the world.
11: 30 my yoke is easy, and my burden is **l**.
Jn 1: 9 true **l**, which enlightens everyone.
8: 12 saying, "I am the **l** of the world.
Ro 13: 12 and put on the armor of **l**;
2Co 11: 14 Satan disguises himself as an angel of **l**.
1Pe 2: 9 of darkness into his marvelous **l**.
1Jn 1: 7 walk in the **l** as he himself is in the **l**
Rev 22: 5 for the Lord God will be their **l**,

### LIGHTNING
Ex 19: 16 third day there was thunder and **l**,
Da 10: 6 body was like beryl, his face like **l**,
Lk 10: 18 from heaven like a flash of **l**.
Rev 4: 5 from the throne are flashes of **l**,

### LIGHTS → LIGHT
Ge 1: 16 God made the two great **l**—
Jas 1: 17 coming down from the Father of **l**,

### LIKE → LIKENESS
Ge 3: 5 be **l** God, knowing good and evil."
Ex 15: 11 "Who is **l** you, O LORD, among the
2Sa 7: 22 for there is no one **l** you,
Ps 113: 5 Who is **l** the LORD our God,
Isa 46: 9 I am God, and there is no one **l** me,
Jer 10: 6 There is none **l** you, O LORD;
Lk 13: 18 "What is the kingdom of God **l**?
1Co 13: 11 When I was a child, I spoke **l** a child
Rev 1: 13 I saw one **l** the Son of Man,
10: 1 his face was **l** the sun,
16: 15 ("See, I am coming **l** a thief!

### LIKENESS → LIKE
Ge 1: 26 in our image, according to our **l**;
Ro 8: 3 his own Son in the **l** of sinful flesh,
Php 2: 7 of a slave, being born in human **l**.

### LILIES
Lk 12: 27 Consider the **l**, how they grow;

### LINE
Isa 28: 10 **l** upon **l**, **l** upon **l**, here a little,
Am 7: 7 with a plumb **l** in his hand.

### LINEN
Ex 26: 1 with ten curtains of fine twisted **l**,
Da 10: 5 and saw a man clothed in **l**,
Rev 19: 8 for the fine **l** is the righteous deeds

### LION → LION'S, LIONS
1Sa 17: 34 and whenever a **l** or a bear came,
Ecc 9: 4 a living dog is better than a dead **l**.
Isa 11: 7 and the **l** shall eat straw like the ox.
Da 7: 4 first was like a **l** and had eagles'
Rev 4: 7 the first living creature like a **l**,
5: 5 See, the **L** of the tribe of Judah,

### LION'S → LION
2Ti 4: 17 So I was rescued from the **l** mouth.

### LIONS → LION
Da 6: 20 able to deliver you from the **l**?"

### LIPS
Dt 23: 23 Whatever your **l** utter you must
Job 2: 10 Job did not sin with his **l**.
Isa 6: 5 am lost, for I am a man of unclean **l**,
Mt 15: 8 with their **l**, but their hearts are far
Heb 13: 15 the fruit of **l** that confess his name.

### LISTEN → LISTENS
Ex 23: 22 But if you **l** attentively to his voice
2Ki 17: 40 They would not **l**, however,
Ps 5: 2 **L** to the sound of my cry, my King
Pr 4: 1 **L**, children, to a father's instruction,
Ecc 5: 1 **l** is better than the sacrifice offered
Mk 9: 7 my Son, the Beloved; **l** to him!"
Lk 16: 31 'If they do not **l** to Moses and the
Ac 3: 22 You must **l** to whatever he tells you.
Jas 1: 19 be quick to **l**, slow to speak,
Sir 11: 8 Do not answer before you **l**,

### LISTENS → LISTEN
Jn 18: 37 Everyone who belongs to the truth **l**
1Jn 4: 6 Whoever knows God **l** to us,

### LITTLE
Ex 16: 18 who gathered **l** had no shortage;
Ps 8: 5 have made them a **l** lower than God,
Pr 15: 16 Better is a **l** with the fear of
Mt 8: 26 "Why are you afraid, you of **l** faith?
19: 14 "Let the **l** children come to me,
2Co 8: 15 one who had **l** did not have too **l**."
Gal 5: 9 A **l** yeast leavens the whole batch of
Rev 10: 2 He held a **l** scroll open in his hand.
Sir 29: 23 Be content with **l** or much,

### LIVE → ALIVE, LIFE, LIVED, LIVES, LIVING
Ge 3: 22 and eat, and **l** forever"—
Ex 1: 16 but if it is a girl, she shall **l**."
33: 20 for no one shall see me and **l**."
Lev 18: 5 by doing so one shall **l**:
Dt 8: 3 one does not **l** by bread alone,
Ps 91: 1 **l** in the shelter of the Most High,
Hab 2: 4 but the righteous **l** by their faith,
Mt 4: 4 'One does not **l** by bread alone,
Jn 11: 25 even though they die, will **l**,
Ro 1: 17 one who is righteous will **l** by faith."
14: 8 If we **l**, we **l** to the Lord,
2Co 5: 15 those who **l** might **l** no longer for
Gal 3: 12 does works of the law will **l**
Wis 5: 15 But the righteous **l** forever,
Sir 34: 14 those who fear the Lord will **l**,

### LIVED → LIVE
Ro 14: 9 to this end Christ died and **l** again,

### LIVES → LIVE
Job 19: 25 For I know that my Redeemer **l**,
Ps 18: 46 The LORD **l**! Blessed be my rock,
Jn 11: 26 and everyone who **l** and believes
Ro 6: 10 but the life he **l**, he **l** to God,
1Jn 3: 16 to lay down our **l** for one another,
Rev 15: 7 of God, who **l** forever and ever;
Tob 13: 1 "Blessed be God who **l** forever,

### LIVING → LIVE
Ge 2: 7 and the man became a **l** being,
3: 20 because she was the mother of all **l**,
6: 19 And of every **l** thing, of all flesh,
Dt 5: 26 the voice of the **l** God speaking out
Jer 2: 13 forsaken me, the fountain of **l** water,
Zec 14: 8 that day **l** waters shall flow out from
Mt 16: 16 the Messiah, the Son of the **l** God."
Jn 4: 10 he would have given you **l** water."
6: 51 I am the **l** bread that came down
Ro 12: 1 present your bodies as a **l** sacrifice,
2Co 6: 16 For we are the temple of the **l** God;
Heb 4: 12 the word of God is **l** and active,
1Pe 2: 4 **l** stone, though rejected by mortals

### LOAVES
Mk 6: 41 Taking the five **l** and the two fish,
8: 6 and he took the seven **l**,

### LOCK
Mt 23: 13 you **l** people out of the kingdom of

### LOCUST → LOCUSTS
2Ch 6: 28 if there is plague, blight, mildew, **l**,
Joel 2: 25 years that the swarming **l** has eaten,

### LOCUSTS → LOCUST
Ex 10: 4 I will bring **l** into your country,
Mt 3: 4 and his food was **l** and wild honey,
Rev 9: 3 from the smoke came **l** on the earth,

### LOG
Mt 7: 3 do not notice the **l** in your own eye?

### LONELY → ALONE
Ps 25: 16 for I am **l** and afflicted,
La 1: 1 How **l** sits the city that once was full

### LONG → LONGING
Ex 20: 12 that your days may be **l** in the land
Ps 13: 1 How **l**, O LORD?
Pr 3: 16 **L** life is in her right hand;
1Co 11: 14 that if a man wears **l** hair,
1Pe 1: 12 things into which angels **l** to look!
2: 2 Like newborn infants, **l** for the pure,
Rev 6: 10 how **l** will it be before you judge

### LONGING → LONG
Ro 8: 19 the creation waits with eager **l** for
2Co 5: 2 **l** to be clothed with our heavenly

### LOOK → LOOKED, LOOKS
Ex 3: 6 for he was afraid to **l** at God.
Ps 8: 3 When I **l** at your heavens,
80: 14 **l** down from heaven, and see;
Lk 24: 39 **L** at my hands and my feet;

### LOOKED → LOOK
Ge 19: 26 But Lot's wife, behind him, **l** back,
Ex 2: 25 God **l** upon the Israelites,

Sir 16: 29 Then the Lord I upon the earth.

**LOOKS** → LOOK

1Sa 16: 7 but the LORD I on the heart."
Ps 14: 2 The LORD I down from heaven
Mt 5: 28 who I at a woman with lust

***LORD** → *LORD'S, LORDS

Ge 18: 27 take it upon myself to speak to the L
Ex 4: 10 Moses said to the LORD, "O my L,
Dt 10: 17 God is God of gods and L of lords,
Ps 16: 2 I say to the LORD, "You are my L;
110: 1 The LORD says to my l,
Isa 6: 1 I saw the L sitting on a throne, high
Da 2: 47 God is God of gods and L of kings
Mic 1: 2 the L from his holy temple.
Mt 7: 22 many will say to me, 'L, L,
9: 38 the L of the harvest to send out
12: 8 the Son of Man is I of the sabbath."
Mk 1: 3 'Prepare the way of the L,
12: 29 the L our God, the L is one:
Lk 2: 11 who is the Messiah, the L.
10: 27 "You shall love the L your God
19: 38 who comes in the name of the L!
Jn 13: 13 You call me Teacher and L—
20: 28 "My L and my God!"
Ac 2: 34 'The L said to my L, "Sit at my
Ro 4: 24 in him who raised Jesus our L
10: 12 the same L is L of all and
1Co 2: 16 who has known the mind of the L
8: 6 and one L, Jesus Christ,
2Co 3: 17 Now the L is the Spirit,
Eph 4: 5 one L, one faith, one baptism,
Php 2: 11 that Jesus Christ is L, to the glory
4: 5 The L is near.
Col 3: 13 just as the L has forgiven you,
1Th 4: 15 are left until the coming of the L,
1Ti 6: 15 the King of kings and L of lords,
Heb 12: 14 without which no one will see the L.
Jas 4: 10 Humble yourselves before the L,
1Pe 3: 15 in your hearts sanctify Christ as L.
2Pe 3: 9 The L is not slow about his promise,
Jude 1: 4 and deny our only Master and L,
Rev 4: 8 "Holy, holy, holy, the L God
19: 16 "King of kings and L of lords."
22: 20 Amen. Come, L Jesus!
Jdt 6: 19 L God of heaven, see their
Wis 8: 3 and the L of all loves her.
Sir 1: 1 All wisdom is from the L,
Aza 1: 35 Bless the L, all you works of the L;
Sus 1: 2 and one who feared the L.

**†LORD** → †GOD, †LORD'S

Ge 2: 7 L God formed man from the dust of
6: 6 the L was sorry that he had made
13: 4 Abram called on the name of the L.
18: 14 Is anything too wonderful for the L?
22: 14 that place "The L will provide":
Ex 3: 15 shall say to the Israelites, 'The L,
5: 2 But Pharaoh said, "Who is the L,
6: 7 know that I am the L your God,
15: 3 The L is a warrior; the L is his name.
34: 6 and proclaimed, "The L, the L,
Lev 19: 2 for I the L your God am holy.
Nu 6: 24 The L bless you and keep you:
14: 18 'The L is slow to anger,
Dt 6: 4 The L is our God, the L alone.
Jos 24: 15 my household, we will serve the L."
1Sa 2: 2 "There is no Holy One like the L,
1Ki 8: 11 of the L filled the house of the L.
18: 21 If the L is God, follow him;
1Ch 16: 11 Seek the L and his strength,
Ezr 7: 10 his heart to study the law of the L,
Ne 8: 10 the joy of the L is your strength."
Job 1: 21 the L gave, and the L has taken
42: 12 The L blessed the latter days
Ps 1: 2 their delight is in the law of the L,
10: 16 The L is king forever and ever;
18: 1 I love you, O L, my strength.
23: 1 The L is my shepherd, I shall not
33: 12 Happy is the nation whose God is the L
84: 11 For the L God is a sun and shield;
110: 1 The L says to my lord,
113: 5 Who is like the L our God,
125: 2 so the L surrounds his people,
128: 1 Happy is everyone who fears the L,
145: 18 The L is near to all who call on him,
150: 6 that breathes praise the L!
Pr 1: 7 fear of the L is the beginning of
3: 5 Trust in the L with all your heart,
19: 23 The fear of the L is life indeed;
21: 2 but the L weighs the heart.
Isa 2: 11 L alone will be exalted in that day,
6: 3 "Holy, holy, holy is the L of hosts;
33: 22 the L is our judge, the L is our ruler,
53: 6 the L has laid on him the iniquity
64: 8 Yet, O L, you are our Father;
Jer 4: 4 Circumcise yourselves to the L,
31: 34 "Know the L," for they shall all
32: 27 I am the L, the God of all flesh;
La 3: 25 The L is good to those who wait for
Eze 3: 23 and the glory of the L stood there,
10: 18 the glory of the L went out from
37: 4 O dry bones, hear the word of the L.
44: 4 glory of the L filled the temple
48: 35 time on shall be, The L is There.
Hos 14: 1 Return, O Israel, to the L your God.
Joel 1: 15 For the day of the L is near,
Am 5: 6 Seek the L and live,
Ob 1: 15 the day of the L is near against all
Na 1: 3 The L is slow to anger but great in
Zep 1: 14 The great day of the L is near,
Zec 14: 9 the L will be one and his name one.
Mal 3: 6 For I the L do not change;
4: 5 and terrible day of the L comes.

***LORD'S** → *LORD

Mk 12: 11 was the L doing, and it is amazing
Lk 4: 19 to proclaim the year of the L favor."
Ro 14: 8 or whether we die, we are the L.
1Co 10: 26 the earth and its fullness are the L."
Sir 17: 17 but Israel is the L own portion.

**†LORD'S** → †LORD

Nu 11: 23 "Is the L power limited?
Dt 32: 9 the L own portion was his people,
Ps 24: 1 The earth is the L and all that is in it
Isa 59: 1 the L hand is not too short to save,
Ob 1: 21 and the kingdom shall be the L.

**LORDS** → *LORD

Dt 10: 17 God is God of gods and Lord of l,
Ps 136: 3 O give thanks to the Lord of l,
1Co 8: 5 there are many gods and many l—
Rev 19: 16 "King of kings and Lord of l."

**LOSE** → LOSS, LOST

Mk 8: 35 who l their life for my sake,
Jn 12: 25 Those who love their life l it,
2Co 4: 1 in this ministry, we do not l heart.
Heb 12: 3 you may not grow weary or l heart.
2Jn 1: 8 do not l what we have worked for,

**LOSS** → LOSE

1Co 3: 15 burned up, the builder will suffer l;
Php 3: 8 I regard everything as l because of
Sir 32: 24 who trusts the Lord will not suffer l.

**LOST** → LOSE

Ps 119: 176 I have gone astray like a l sheep;
Jer 50: 6 My people have been l sheep;
Eze 34: 16 I will seek the l, and I will bring
Mt 10: 6 to the l sheep of the house of Israel.
Lk 15: 6 I have found my sheep that was l.'
19: 10 came to seek out and to save the l."

**LOT** → LOT'S, LOTS

1. Nephew of Abraham (Ge 11:27; 12:5). Chose to live in Sodom (Ge 13). Rescued from four kings (Ge 14). Rescued from Sodom (Ge 19:1-29; 2Pe 2:7). Fathered Moab and Ammon (Ge 19:30-38).

2. Object cast to make decisions.

Nu 33: 54 You shall apportion the land by l
Est 3: 7 they cast Pur—which means "the l"
Pr 16: 33 The l is cast into the lap,
Jnh 1: 7 cast lots, and the l fell on Jonah.
Ac 1: 26 and the l fell on Matthias;

**LOT'S** → LOT, 1

Ge 19: 26 L wife, behind him, looked back,
Lk 17: 32 Remember L wife.

**LOTS** → LOT, 2

Ps 22: 18 and for my clothing they cast l.
Mt 27: 35 among themselves by casting l;

**LOVE** → BELOVED, LOVED, LOVER, LOVERS, LOVES

Ex 20: 6 but showing steadfast l to the
34: 6 and abounding in steadfast l and
Lev 19: 18 shall l your neighbor as yourself:
Nu 14: 18 and abounding in steadfast l,
Dt 6: 5 You shall l the LORD your God
2Sa 7: 15 not take my steadfast l from him,
1Ki 11: 2 Solomon clung to these in l.
2Ch 6: 42 Remember your steadfast l
Ezr 3: 11 his steadfast l endures forever
Ne 1: 5 steadfast l with those who l him
Ps 18: 1 I l you, O LORD, my strength.
86: 5 abounding in steadfast l to all who
116: 1 I l the LORD, because he has heard
119: 97 Oh, how I l your law!
136: 1 for his steadfast l endures forever.
Pr 5: 19 you be intoxicated always by her l.
8: 17 I l those who l me,
19: 8 To get wisdom is to l oneself;
Ecc 3: 8 a time to l, and a time to hate;
SS 1: 2 For your l is better than wine,
8: 6 for l is strong as death,
Isa 54: 8 but with everlasting l I will have
La 3: 22 steadfast l of the LORD never ceases,
Da 9: 4 steadfast l with those who l you
Hos 6: 4 Your l is like a morning cloud,
11: 4 of human kindness, with bands of l,
14: 4 heal their disloyalty; I will l them
Joel 2: 13 and abounding in steadfast l,
Jnh 4: 2 and abounding in steadfast l,
Mt 5: 44 L your enemies and pray
6: 24 either hate the one and l the other,
Mk 12: 31 shall l your neighbor as yourself.'
Lk 6: 32 For even sinners l those who l them,
10: 27 "You shall l the Lord your God
Jn 12: 25 Those who l their life lose it,
13: 34 new commandment, that you l one
14: 15 "If you l me, you will keep my
15: 13 No one has greater l than this,
21: 16 "Simon son of John, do you l me?"
Ro 5: 8 But God proves his l for us in that
12: 9 Let l be genuine; hate what is evil,
13: 8 anything, except to l one another;
1Co 8: 1 Knowledge puffs up, but l builds up,
13: 4 L is patient; l is kind;
13: 13 and the greatest of these is l.
Gal 5: 6 is faith working through l,
5: 22 the fruit of the Spirit is l, joy,
Eph 3: 19 l of Christ that surpasses knowledge
5: 25 Husbands, l your wives,
Col 3: 14 Above all, clothe yourselves with l,
1Th 5: 8 put on the breastplate of faith and l,
1Ti 6: 10 For the l of money is a root of all
Tit 2: 2 in faith, in l, and in endurance,
Heb 10: 24 provoke one another to l and good
13: 5 your lives free from the l of money,
Jas 2: 8 shall l your neighbor as yourself."
1Pe 1: 8 you have not seen him, you l him;
2Pe 1: 7 and mutual affection with l.
1Jn 2: 15 not l the world or the things in the
3: 1 See what l the Father has given us,
3: 16 We know l by this, that he laid
5: 3 For the l of God is this,
2Jn 1: 6 And this is l, that we walk according
Jude 1: 21 keep yourselves in the l of God;
Rev 2: 4 abandoned the l you had at first.
Sir 2: 15 and those who l him keep his ways,
7: 30 With all your might l your Maker,
Bel 1: 38 have not forsaken those who l you."
1Mc 4: 33 with the sword of those who l you,

**LOVED** → LOVE

Dt 4: 37 And because he l your ancestors,

Jer 31: 3 have I you with an everlasting love:
Hos 11: 1 When Israel was a child, I l him.
Mal 1: 2 I have l you, says the LORD.
Jn 3: 16 God so l the world that he gave his
13: 1 he l them to the end.
15: 9 the Father has l me, so I have l you:
15: 12 love one another as I have l you.
Gal 2: 20 who l me and gave himself for me.
Eph 5: 2 Christ l us and gave himself up for
1Jn 4: 19 We love because he first l us.

**LOVER** → LOVE
Ps 99: 4 Mighty King, l of justice,
Ecc 5: 10 l of money will not be satisfied with
1Ti 3: 3 quarrelsome, and not a l of money.

**LOVERS** → LOVE
Jer 3: 1 have played the whore with many l;
La 1: 2 all her l she has no one to comfort
Hos 2: 5 For she said, "I will go after my l;
Lk 16: 14 Pharisees, who were l of money,
2Ti 3: 2 For people will be l of themselves.

**LOVES** → LOVE
Ps 33: 5 He l righteousness and justice;
Pr 3: 12 for the LORD reproves the one he l,
17: 17 A friend l at all times,
Mt 10: 37 Whoever l father or mother more
Lk 7: 47 to whom little is forgiven, l little."
Ro 13: 8 who l another has fulfilled the law.
Eph 5: 28 He who l his wife l himself.
Heb 12: 6 Lord disciplines those whom he l,
1Jn 4: 7 who l is born of God and knows
Rev 1: 5 who l us and freed us from our sins
Wis 8: 3 and the Lord of all l her.
Sir 4: 12 Whoever l her l life.

**LOW** → LOWER, LOWLY
Ps 136: 23 who remembered us in our l estate,
Isa 40: 4 every mountain and hill be made l;
Lk 3: 5 mountain and hill shall be made l,

**LOWER** → LOW
Ps 8: 5 have made them a little l than God,
Heb 2: 7 made them for a little while l than

**LOWLY** → LOW
Pr 16: 19 It is better to be of a l spirit
Lk 1: 52 their thrones, and lifted up the l;
Ro 12: 16 but associate with the l;
Jdt 9: 11 But you are the God of the l,

**LOYAL** → LOYALTY
2Sa 22: 26 With the l you show yourself l;
Da 11: 32 who are l to their God

**LOYALTY** → LOYAL
Dt 7: 9 God who maintains covenant l
Ru 3: 10 this last instance of your l
Ps 101: 1 I will sing of l and of justice;
Hos 4: 1 There is no faithfulness or l,

**LUKE***
Associate of Paul (Col 4:14; 2Ti 4:11; Phm 24).

**LUKEWARM***
Rev 3: 16 because you are l, and neither cold

**LUST** → LUSTS
Mt 5: 28 looks at a woman with l has already
2Pe 1: 4 that is in the world because of l,

**LUSTS** → LUST
Ro 1: 24 gave them up in the l of their hearts
Eph 4: 22 old self, corrupt and deluded by its l
2Pe 3: 3 scoffing and indulging their own l

**LYDIA**
Ac 16: 14 named L, a worshiper of God,

**LYING** → LIE
1Ki 22: 23 a l spirit in the mouth of all these
Pr 6: 17 a l tongue, and hands that shed
Hos 4: 2 Swearing, l, and murder,
Wis 1: 11 and a l mouth destroys the soul.

**LYRE**
1Sa 18: 10 while David was playing the l,
Ps 33: 2 Praise the LORD with the l;
Da 3: 5 pipe, l, trigon, harp, drum,

## M

**MACCABEUS** → JUDAS
1Mc 2: 66 Judas M has been a mighty warrior

**MACEDONIA**
Ac 16: 9 a man of M pleading with him and

**MADE** → MAKE
Ge 1: 31 God saw everything that he had m,
2: 22 he m into a woman and brought her
3: 21 the LORD God m garments of skins
6: 6 was sorry that he had m humankind
15: 18 the LORD m a covenant with Abram,
Ex 20: 11 For in six days the LORD m heaven
36: 8 the workers m the tabernacle with
Ps 8: 5 have m them a little lower than God
118: 24 This is the day that the LORD has m;
139: 14 I am fearfully and wonderfully m,
Jer 27: 5 outstretched arm have m the earth,
Mk 2: 27 "The sabbath was m for humankind,
Ac 2: 36 that God has m him both Lord and
Eph 2: 5 m us alive together with Christ—
Rev 14: 7 and worship him who m heaven
Sir 43: 33 For the Lord has m all things,

**MADNESS**
Dt 28: 28 The LORD will afflict you with m,
Ecc 9: 3 m is in their hearts while they live,

**MAGDALENE**
Mt 27: 56 Among them were Mary M,

**MAGICIANS**
Ex 7: 11 and they also, the m of Egypt,
Da 2: 2 So the king commanded that the m,

**MAGNIFIES*** → MAGNIFY
Lk 1: 46 Mary said, "My soul m the Lord,

**MAGNIFY** → MAGNIFIES
Ps 34: 3 O m the LORD with me,

**MAJESTIC** → MAJESTY
Ex 15: 11 Who is like you, m in holiness,
Ps 8: 1 how m is your name in all the earth!
2Pe 1: 17 conveyed to him by the M Glory,

**MAJESTY** → MAJESTIC
1Ch 29: 11 the glory, the victory, and the m;
Ps 93: 1 The LORD is king, he is robed in m;
Isa 53: 2 or m that we should look at him,
Heb 1: 3 sat down at the right hand of the M
2Pe 1: 16 we had been eyewitnesses of his m,

**MAKE** → MADE, MAKER
Ge 1: 26 "Let us m humankind in our image,
2: 18 will m him a helper as his partner."
12: 2 I will m of you a great nation,
Ex 20: 4 You shall not m for yourself an idol,
32: 1 "Come, m gods for us, who shall go
Nu 6: 25 LORD m his face to shine upon you,
Isa 61: 8 I will m an everlasting covenant
66: 22 and the new earth, which I will m,
Jer 31: 31 when I will m a new covenant with
Mt 28: 19 and m disciples of all nations,
Mk 1: 17 and I will m you fish for people."

**MAKER** → MAKE
Ge 14: 19 God Most High, m of heaven and
Job 4: 17 beings be pure before their M?
Ps 95: 6 kneel before the LORD, our M!
Isa 54: 5 For your M is your husband,
Sir 7: 30 With all your might love your M,

**MALACHI***
Post-exilic prophet (Mal 1:1; 2:8s 1:40).

**MALE**
Ge 1: 27 m and female he created them.
17: 10 m among you shall be circumcised.
Lev 20: 13 If a man lies with a m as with a
Mt 19: 4 'made them m and female.'
Rev 12: 5 she gave birth to a son, a m child,

**MALICE**
Ro 1: 29 wickedness, evil, covetousness, m,
1Co 5: 8 the old yeast, the yeast of m and

**MAN** → MEN
Ge 2: 7 LORD God formed m from the dust
2: 18 not good that the m should be alone;
32: 24 m wrestled with him until daybreak.
1Sa 13: 14 sought out a m after his own heart;
Mt 9: 6 Son of M has authority on earth to
Lk 6: 5 The Son of M is lord of the sabbath.
Jn 9: 35 "Do you believe in the Son of M?"
1Co 11: 3 that Christ is the head of every m,
Rev 1: 13 I saw one like the Son of M,
14: 14 cloud was one like the Son of M,

**MANAGE** → MANAGERS
1Ti 3: 4 He must m his own household well,
5: 14 children, and m their households,

**MANAGERS*** → MANAGE
Tit 2: 5 chaste, good m of the household,

**MANASSEH**
1. Firstborn of Joseph (Ge 41:51; 46:20). Blessed by Jacob but not as firstborn (Ge 48). Tribe of blessed (Dt 33:17), numbered (Nu 1:35; 26:34), half allotted land east of Jordan (Nu 32; Jos 13:8-33), half west (Jos 16; Eze 48:4), failed to fully possess (Jos 17:12-13; Jdg 1:27), 12,000 from (Rev 7:6).
2. Son of Hezekiah; king of Judah (2Ki 21:1-18; 2Ch 33:1-20). Judah exiled for his detestable sins (2Ki 21:10-15). Repented (2Ch 33:12-19; Man 1-15).

**MANGER**
Lk 2: 12 in bands of cloth and lying in a m."

**MANNA**
Ex 16: 31 The house of Israel called it m;
Jos 5: 12 The m ceased on the day they ate
Jn 6: 49 ate the m in the wilderness,
Rev 2: 17 I will give some of the hidden m,

**MANNER**
1Co 11: 27 cup of the Lord in an unworthy m
Php 1: 27 life in a m worthy of the gospel

**MANTLE**
1Ki 19: 19 and threw his m over him.
2Ki 2: 8 Elijah took his m and rolled it up,

**MANY**
Isa 53: 12 yet he bore the sin of m,
Mt 22: 14 m are called, but few are chosen."
Mk 10: 45 and to give his life a ransom for m."
Jn 20: 30 Now Jesus did m other signs in the
Ro 12: 5 who are m, are one body in Christ,

**MARAH**
Ex 15: 23 That is why it was called M,

**MARK** → MARKED, MARKS
1. Cousin of Barnabas (Ac 12:12; 15:37-39; Col 4:10; 2Ti 4:11; Phm 24; 1Pe 5:13), see John.
2. Brand or symbol:
Ge 4: 15 And the LORD put a m on Cain,
Eze 9: 6 but touch no one who has the m.
Rev 14: 9 receive a m on their foreheads or
19: 20 who had received the m of the beast

**MARKED** → MARK
Hab 1: 12 you have m them for judgment;
Eph 1: 13 m with the seal of the promised

**MARKET** → MARKETPLACE
Mk 7: 4 not eat anything from the m unless
1Co 10: 25 Eat whatever is sold in the meat m

**MARKETPLACE** → MARKET
Jn 2: 16 Stop making my Father's house a m

**MARKS** → MARK
1Co 7: 18 to remove the m of circumcision.
Gal 6: 17 I carry the m of Jesus branded on
1Mc 1: 15 and removed the m of circumcision,

**MARRIAGE** → INTERMARRY, MARRIED, MARRIES
Mt 22: 30 are given in m, but are like angels
Heb 13: 4 Let m be held in honor by all,
Rev 19: 7 for the m of the Lamb has come,

**MARRIED** → MARRIAGE
Mal 2: 11 has m the daughter of a foreign god,
Mk 12: 23 For the seven had m her."
1Ti 3: 2 be above reproach, m only once,
Tit 1: 6 m only once, whose children are

**MARRIES** → MARRIAGE
Mk 10: 11 and **m** another commits adultery
Ro 7: 3 if she **m** another man, she is not an
1Co 7: 28 and if a virgin **m,** she does not sin.

**MARTHA***
Sister of Mary and Lazarus (Lk 10:38-42; Jn 11; 12:2).

**MARVELOUS**
Ps 98: 1 for he has done **m** things.
131: 1 things too great and too **m** for me.
Sir 39: 20 and nothing is too **m** for him.

**MARY**
1. Mother of Jesus (Mt 1:16-25; Lk 1:27-56; 2:1-40). With Jesus at temple (Lk 2:41-52), at the wedding in Cana (Jn 2:1-5), questioning his sanity (Mk 3:21), at the cross (Jn 19:25-27). Among disciples (Ac 1:14).
2. Magdalene; former demoniac (Lk 8:2). Helped support Jesus' ministry (Lk 8:1-3). At the cross (Mt 27:56; Mk 15:40; Jn 19:25), burial (Mt 27:61; Mk 15:47). Saw angel after resurrection (Mt 28:1-10; Mk 16:1-9; Lk 24:1-12); also Jesus (Jn 20:1-18).
3. Sister of Martha and Lazarus (Jn 11). Washed Jesus' feet (Jn 12:1-8).
4. Mother of James and Joses; witnessed crucifixion (Mt 27:56; Mk 15:40) and empty tomb (Mk 16:1; Lk 24:10).

**MASTER** → MASTERS, TASKMASTERS
Ge 4: 7 desire is for you, but you must **m** it.
Mal 1: 6 if I am a **m,** where is the respect due
Mt 25: 21 enter into the joy of your **m.'**
Jn 15: 20 Servants are not greater than their **m**
2Pe 2: 1 deny the **M** who bought them—

**MASTERS** → MASTER
Mt 6: 24 "No one can serve two **m;**

**MATTANIAH** → See ZEDEKIAH

**MATTATHIAS**
Priest who started the Maccabean revolt (1Mc 2).

**MATTER**
Ecc 3: 1 a time for every **m** under heaven:
12: 13 end of the **m;** all has been heard.

**MATTHEW*** → =LEVI
Apostle; former tax collector (Mt 9:9-13; 10:3; Mk 3:18; Lk 6:15; Ac 1:13). Also called Levi (Mk 2:14-17; Lk 5:27-32).

**MATTHIAS**
Disciple chosen to replace Judas (Ac 1:23-26).

**MATURE** → MATURITY
1Co 2: 6 among the **m** we do speak wisdom,
Php 3: 15 who are **m** be of the same mind;
Col 4: 12 you may stand **m** and fully assured
Heb 5: 14 But solid food is for the **m,**

**MATURITY** → MATURE
Eph 4: 13 to **m,** to the measure of the full

**MEAN** → MEANING, MEANS
Ex 12: 26 What do you **m** by this observance?
Jos 4: 6 'What do those stones **m** to you?'

**MEANING** → MEAN
Ge 40: 5 and each dream with its own **m.**
Dt 6: 20 "What is the **m** of the decrees

**MEANS** → MEAN
Mt 9: 13 learn what this **m,** 'I desire mercy,
1Co 9: 22 that I might by all **m** save some.

**MEASURE**
Dt 25: 15 have only a full and honest **m,**
Mk 4: 24 **m** you give will be the **m** you get,
Lk 6: 38 A good **m,** pressed down, shaken
Jn 3: 34 for he gives the Spirit without **m.**

**MEAT**
Ex 16: 12 'At twilight you shall eat **m,**
Ro 14: 21 not to eat **m** or drink wine or do

**MEDIA**
Da 8: 20 these are the kings of **M** and Persia.

**MEDIATOR**
Gal 3: 19 ordained through angels by a **m.**
1Ti 2: 5 **m** between God and humankind,
Heb 8: 6 he is the **m** of a better covenant,

**MEDICINE**
Pr 17: 22 A cheerful heart is a good **m,**
Sir 6: 16 Faithful friends are life-saving **m;**

**MEDITATE** → MEDITATION
Jos 1: 8 you shall **m** on it day and night,
Ps 1: 2 on his law they **m** day and night.
119: 15 I will **m** on your precepts.
Wis 12: 22 we may **m** upon your goodness,
Sir 6: 37 and **m** at all times on his

**MEDITATION** → MEDITATE
Ps 19: 14 of my mouth and the **m** of my heart
119: 97 It is my **m** all day long.

**MEDIUM**
Lev 20: 27 A man or a woman who is a **m**
1Ch 10: 13 moreover, he had consulted a **m,**

**MEEK** → MEEKNESS
Ps 37: 11 But the **m** shall inherit the land,
Mt 5: 5 "Blessed are the **m,** for they will

**MEEKNESS** → MEEK
Col 3: 12 kindness, humility, **m,** and patience.
Jas 1: 21 with **m** the implanted word

**MEET** → MEETING
Ex 30: 36 tent of meeting where I shall **m** with
Am 4: 12 prepare to **m** your God.
1Th 4: 17 together with them to **m** the Lord

**MEETING** → MEET
Ex 27: 21 In the tent of **m,** outside the curtain
40: 34 the cloud covered the tent of **m,**

**MELCHIZEDEK**
Ge 14: 18 King **M** of Salem brought out bread
Ps 110: 4 forever according to the order of **M."**
Heb 7: 1 This "King **M** of Salem, priest of

**MELT**
Dt 1: 28 made our hearts **m** by reporting,
Ps 97: 5 The mountains **m** like wax before
2Pe 3: 12 and the elements will **m** with fire?

**MEMBERS**
Ro 7: 23 I see in my **m** another law at war
1Co 6: 15 that your bodies are **m** of Christ?
12: 18 God arranged the **m** in the body,

**MEMORIAL**
Lev 5: 12 a handful of it as its **m** portion,
Jos 4: 7 stones shall be to the Israelites a **m**

**MEN** → MAN
Ge 18: 2 and saw three **m** standing near him.
Da 3: 25 "But I see four **m** unbound,
Mt 2: 1 wise **m** from the East came to
Lk 9: 30 they saw two **m,** Moses and Elijah,
Sir 44: 1 now sing the praises of famous **m,**

**MENAHEM***
King of Israel (2Ki 15:14-23).

**MENE**
Da 5: 25 inscribed: **M, M,** TEKEL, and PARSIN.

**MEPHIBOSHETH**
Son of Jonathan shown kindness by David (2Sa 4:4; 9; 21:7). Accused of siding with Absalom (2Sa 16:1-4; 19:24-30).

**MERCIES** → MERCY
La 3: 22 his **m** never come to an end;
2Co 1: 3 the Father of **m** and the God of all

**MERCIFUL** → MERCY
Dt 4: 31 the LORD your God is a **m** God,
Ps 111: 4 the LORD is gracious and **m.**
Jer 3: 12 not look on you in anger, for I am **m**
Mt 5: 7 "Blessed are the **m,** for they will
Lk 6: 36 Be **m,** just as your Father is **m.**
Heb 2: 17 be a **m** and faithful high priest
Sir 2: 11 the Lord is compassionate and **m;**

**MERCY** → MERCIES, MERCIFUL
Ex 25: 17 make a **m** seat of pure gold;
1Ch 21: 13 of the LORD, for his **m** is very great;
Ps 40: 11 Do not, O LORD, withhold your **m**
Da 9: 9 To the Lord our God belong **m**
Hab 3: 2 in wrath may you remember **m.**
Zec 1: 12 will you withhold **m** from Jerusalem
Mt 9: 13 learn what this means, 'I desire **m,**
23: 23 of the law: justice and **m** and faith.
Ro 9: 15 "I will have **m** on whom I have **m,**
Eph 2: 4 But God, who is rich in **m,**
1Ti 1: 13 **m** because I had acted ignorantly
Tit 3: 5 had done, but according to his **m,**
Heb 4: 16 so that we may receive **m** and find
Jas 2: 13 **m** triumphs over judgment.
Sir 2: 17 for equal to his majesty is his **m,**

**MERIBAH**
Ex 17: 7 He called the place Massah and **M,**
Ps 95: 8 Do not harden your hearts, as at **M,**

**MESHACH** → =MISHAEL
Hebrew exiled to Babylon; name changed from Mishael (Da 1:6-7). Refused defilement by food (Da 1:8-20). Refused to worship idol (Da 3:1-18); saved from furnace (Da 3:19-30).

**MESSAGE** → MESSENGER
Jn 12: 38 "Lord, who has believed our **m,**
1Co 1: 18 the **m** about the cross is foolishness
2Co 5: 19 entrusting the **m** of reconciliation to

**MESSENGER** → MESSAGE
Isa 42: 19 or deaf like my **m** whom I send?
Mt 11: 10 I am sending my **m** ahead of you,
2Co 12: 7 a **m** of Satan to torment me,

**MESSIAH** → CHRIST, MESSIAHS
Mt 16: 16 Peter answered, "You are the **M,**
Lk 2: 11 a Savior, who is the **M,** the Lord.
Ac 2: 36 God has made him both Lord and **M**
Ro 9: 5 according to the flesh, comes the **M,**
Rev 11: 15 kingdom of our Lord and of his **M,**
2Es 7: 28 For my son the **M** shall be revealed

**MESSIAHS** → MESSIAH
Mk 13: 22 False **m** and false prophets will

**MICAH**
1. Idolater from Ephraim (Jdg 17-18).
2. Prophet from Moresheth (Jer 26:18-19; Mic 1:1).

**MICAIAH**
Prophet of the LORD who spoke against Ahab (1Ki 22:1-28; 2Ch 18:1-27).

**MICHAEL**
Archangel (Jude 9); warrior in angelic realm, protector of Israel (Da 10:13, 21; 12:1; Rev 12:7).

**MICHAL***
Daughter of Saul, wife of David (1Sa 14:49; 18:20-28). Warned David of Saul's plot (1Sa 19). Saul gave her to Paltiel (1Sa 25:44); David retrieved her (2Sa 3:13-16). Criticized David for dancing before the ark (2Sa 6:16-23; 1Ch 15:29).

**MIDDLE**
Ge 3: 3 tree that is in the **m** of the garden,
Rev 22: 2 the **m** of the street of the city.

**MIDIAN** → MIDIANITES
Ex 18: 1 Jethro, the priest of **M,** Moses'

**MIDIANITES** → MIDIAN
Ge 37: 36 the **M** had sold him in Egypt to
Nu 31: 2 "Avenge the Israelites on the **M;**

**MIDWIVES**
Ex 1: 17 But the **m** feared God; they did not

**MIGHT** → ALMIGHTY, MIGHTY
2Ch 6: 41 you and the ark of your **m.**
20: 6 In your hand are power and **m,**
Ps 54: 1 and vindicate me by your **m.**
Ecc 9: 10 hand finds to do, do with your **m;**
Zec 4: 6 **m,** nor by power, but by my spirit,
Sir 7: 30 With all your **m** love your Maker,

**MIGHTY** → MIGHT
Ge 49: 24 by the hands of the **M** One of Jacob,
Ex 6: 1 by a **m** hand he will let them go;
Dt 5: 15 a **m** hand and an outstretched arm;
2Sa 1: 19 How the **m** have fallen!
Ps 99: 4 **M** King, lover of justice, you have

Isa 9: 6 Wonderful Counselor, **M** God.
Lk 1: 49 the **M** One has done great things
Rev 18: 8 for **m** is the Lord God who judges

### MILE
Mt 5: 41 one **m**, go also the second **m**.

### MILK
Ex 3: 8 a land flowing with **m** and honey,
Heb 5: 12 You need **m**, not solid food:
1Pe 2: 2 long for the pure, spiritual **m**,

### MILLSTONE → STONE
Lk 17: 2 better for you if a **m** were hung

### MIND → MINDFUL, MINDS
Nu 23: 19 mortal, that he should change his **m**.
1Ch 28: 9 for the LORD searches every **m**,
Ps 110: 4 sworn and will not change his **m**,
Jnh 3: 9 God may relent and change his **m**;
Mt 22: 37 all your soul, and with all your **m**.'
Ro 1: 28 God gave them up to a debased **m**
8: 6 but to set the **m** on the Spirit is life
1Co 2: 16 who has known the **m** of the Lord
Php 2: 5 same **m** be in you that was in Christ
Heb 7: 21 sworn and will not change his **m**,
Sir 37: 17 The **m** is the root of all conduct:

### MINDFUL → MIND
Ps 8: 4 beings that you are **m** of them,
111: 5 he is ever **m** of his covenant.
Heb 2: 6 beings that you are **m** of them,

### MINDS → MIND
2Co 4: 4 blinded the **m** of the unbelievers,
Eph 4: 23 be renewed in the spirit of your **m**,
Php 4: 7 guard your hearts and your **m**

### MINISTER → MINISTERS, MINISTRY
Ex 28: 43 to **m** in the holy place;
Ps 101: 6 that is blameless shall **m** to me.

### MINISTERS → MINISTER
2Co 3: 6 to be **M** of a new covenant,
11: 15 if his **m** also disguise themselves as **m**

### MINISTRY → MINISTER
2Co 5: 18 has given us the **m** of reconciliation;
Eph 4: 12 equip the saints for the work of **m**,
Heb 8: 6 now obtained a more excellent **m**,

### MIRACLES → See also JESUS: MIRACLES
Ps 78: 11 and the **m** that he had shown them.
Ac 19: 11 did extraordinary **m** through Paul,
1Co 12: 29 Are all teachers? Do all work **m**?
Heb 2: 4 signs and wonders and various **m**,

### MIRIAM
Sister of Moses and Aaron (Nu 26:59). Led dancing at Red Sea (Ex 15:20-21). Struck with leprosy for criticizing Moses (Nu 12). Death (Nu 20:1).

### MIRROR
1Co 13: 12 For now we see in a **m**, dimly,
2Co 3: 18 as though reflected in a **m**,
Jas 1: 23 who look at themselves in a **m**;

### MISHAEL → See MESHACH

### MISUSES
Ex 20: 7 not acquit anyone who **m** his name.

### MOAB → MOABITE
Ge 19: 37 bore a son, and named him **M**;
Ru 1: 1 went to live in the country of **M**,
Isa 15: 1 An oracle concerning **M**.

### MOABITE → MOAB
Dt 23: 3 **M** shall be admitted to the assembly

### MOCK → MOCKED
Ps 22: 7 All who see me **m** at me;
Mk 10: 34 they will **m** him, and spit upon him,

### MOCKED → MOCK
1Ki 18: 27 At noon Elijah **m** them, saying,
Gal 6: 7 God is not **m**, for you reap

### MOLECH
Lev 18: 21 to sacrifice them to **M**,

### MOMENT → MOMENTARY
Ex 33: 5 single **m** I should go up among you,
Ps 30: 5 For his anger is but for a **m**;
Isa 54: 7 For a brief **m** I abandoned you,
66: 8 a nation be delivered in one **m**?
1Co 15: 52 in a **m**, in the twinkling of an eye,

### MOMENTARY* → MOMENT
2Co 4: 17 this slight **m** affliction is preparing

### MONEY
Ecc 10: 19 and **m** meets every need.
Mk 11: 15 the tables of the **m** changers
1Ti 3: 3 quarrelsome, and not a lover of **m**,
6: 10 love of **m** is a root of all kinds
Heb 13: 5 your lives free from the love of **m**,

### MONTH
Ex 12: 2 be the first **m** of the year for you.
Eze 47: 12 they will bear fresh fruit every **m**,
Rev 22: 2 producing its fruit each **m**;

### MOON → MOONS
Ge 37: 9 the sun, the **m**, and eleven stars
Dt 17: 3 the sun or the **m** or any of the host
Jos 10: 13 sun stood still, and the **m** stopped,
Joel 2: 31 to darkness, and the **m** to blood,
Ac 2: 20 to darkness and the **m** to blood,
Rev 6: 12 the full **m** became like blood,
21: 23 no need of sun or **m** to shine on it,

### MOONS → MOON
2Ch 8: 13 the new **m**, and the three annual
Col 2: 16 or of observing festivals, new **m**,

### MORALS*
1Co 15: 33 "Bad company ruins good **m**."

### MORDECAI
Benjamite exile who raised Esther (Est 2:5-15). Exposed plot to kill Xerxes (Est 2:19-23). Refused to honor Haman (Est 3:1-6; 5:9-14). Charged Esther to foil Haman's plot against the Jews (Est 4). Xerxes forced Haman to honor Mordecai (Est 6). Mordecai exalted (Est 8-10). Established Purim (Est 9:18-32). See also Additions to Esther.

### MORE → MOST
Ps 19: 10 **M** to be desired are they than gold,
69: 31 will please the LORD **m** than an ox
Ecc 6: 11 The **m** words, the **m** vanity,
Mk 4: 25 to those who have, **m** will be given;
Lk 12: 23 For life is **m** than food,
Ro 8: 37 things we are **m** than conquerors
1Co 12: 31 a still **m** excellent way.
Jas 4: 6 But he gives all the **m** grace;
Rev 7: 16 will hunger no **m**, and thirst no **m**;
21: 4 Death will be no **m**;

### MORIAH*
Ge 22: 2 you love, and go to the land of **M**,
2Ch 3: 1 the LORD in Jerusalem on Mount **M**,

### MORNING
Ge 1: 5 and there was **m**, the first day.
Ps 30: 5 but joy comes with the **m**.
La 3: 23 every **m**; great is your faithfulness.
Lk 24: 22 They were at the tomb early this **m**,
2Pe 1: 19 the day dawns and the **m** star rises
Rev 22: 16 of David, the bright **m** star."

### MORTAL
Nu 23: 19 **m**, that he should change his mind.
1Sa 15: 29 **m**, that he should change his mind."
1Co 15: 53 **m** body must put on immortality.
2Co 5: 4 is **m** may be swallowed up by life.

### MOSES
Levite; brother of Aaron (Ex 6:20; 1Ch 6:3). Put in basket into Nile; discovered and raised by Pharaoh's daughter (Ex 2:1-10). Fled to Midian after killing Egyptian (Ex 2:11-15). Married to Zipporah, fathered Gershom (Ex 2:16-22).

Called by the LORD to deliver Israel (Ex 3-4). Pharaoh's resistance (Ex 5). Ten plagues (Ex 7-11). Passover and Exodus (Ex 12-13). Led Israel through Red Sea (Ex 14). Song of deliverance (Ex 15:1-21). Brought water from rock (Ex 17:1-7). Raised hands to defeat Amalekites (Ex 17:8-16). Delegated judges (Ex 18; Dt 1:9-18).

Received Law at Sinai (Ex 19-23; 25-31; Jn 1:17). Announced Law to Israel (Ex 19:7-8; 24; 35). Broke tablets because of golden calf (Ex 32; Dt 9). Saw glory of the LORD (Ex 33-34). Supervised building of tabernacle (Ex 36-40). Set apart Aaron and priests (Lev 8-9). Numbered tribes (Nu 1-4; 26). Opposed by Aaron and Miriam (Nu 12). Sent spies into Canaan (Nu 13). Announced forty years of wandering for failure to enter land (Nu 14). Opposed by Korah (Nu 16). Forbidden to enter land for striking rock (Nu 20:1-13; Dt 1:37). Lifted bronze snake for healing (Nu 21:4-9; Jn 3:14). Final address to Israel (Dt 1-33). Succeeded by Joshua (Nu 27:12-23; Dt 34). Death and burial by God (Dt 34:5-12). Praise of (Sir 45).

Law of (1Ki 2:3; Ezr 3:2; Mk 12:26; Lk 24:44). Book of (2Ch 25:12; Ne 13:1). Song of (Ex 15:1-21; Rev 15:3). Prayer of (Ps 90).

### MOST → MORE
Ge 14: 18 he was priest of God **M** High.
Ex 26: 33 the holy place from the **m** holy.
Ps 91: 1 live in the shelter of the **M** High,
Mk 5: 7 Jesus, Son of the **M** High God?
Col 4: 5 making the **m** of the time.
Jude 1: 20 yourselves up on your **m** holy faith:

### MOTH
Ps 39: 11 consuming like a **m** what is dear to
Mt 6: 19 where **m** and rust consume and

### MOTHER → MOTHER'S, MOTHERS
Ge 2: 24 a man leaves his father and his **m**
3: 20 because she was the **m** of all living.
Ex 20: 12 Honor your father and your **m**,
Jdg 5: 7 Deborah, arose as a **m** in Israel.
Pr 31: 1 An oracle that his **m** taught him:
Isa 66: 13 As a **m** comforts her child, so I will
Mt 10: 37 loves father or **m** more than me is
Lk 14: 26 and does not hate father and **m**,
Jn 19: 27 to the disciple, "Here is your **m**."
Eph 5: 31 a man will leave his father and **m**
Rev 17: 5 **M** of whores and of earth's
Tob 4: 3 Honor your **m** and do not abandon
Sir 3: 6 who honor their **m** obey the Lord;

### MOTHER'S → MOTHER
Job 1: 21 "Naked I came from my **m** womb,
Pr 1: 8 and do not reject your **m** teaching;
Jn 3: 4 a second time into the **m** womb and

### MOTHERS → MOTHER
Pr 15: 20 but the foolish despise their **m**,
Mk 10: 30 brothers and sisters, **m** and children,

### MOUNT → MOUNTAIN, MOUNTAINS
Ge 22: 14 "On the **m** of the LORD it shall be
Ex 19: 20 the LORD descended upon **M** Sinai,
Dt 11: 29 blessing on **M** Gerizim and the curse
Ps 78: 68 **M** Zion, which he loves.
Mic 4: 7 will reign over them in **M** Zion
Zec 14: 4 the **M** of Olives shall be split in two
Mk 13: 3 he was sitting on the **M** of Olives
Heb 12: 22 But you have come to **M** Zion and
Rev 14: 1 the Lamb, standing on **M** Zion!

### MOUNTAIN → MOUNT
Ex 3: 1 and came to Horeb, the **m** of God.
24: 18 on the **m** for forty days and forty
Isa 2: 2 the **m** of the LORD's house shall be
Da 2: 45 saw that a stone was cut from the **m**
Mt 4: 8 a very high **m** and showed him all
17: 20 you will say to this **m**, 'Move from
2Pe 1: 18 we were with him on the holy **m**.

### MOUNTAINS → MOUNT
Ge 7: 20 the waters swelled above the **m**,
Ps 125: 2 As the **m** surround Jerusalem,
Isa 52: 7 beautiful upon the **m** are the feet of
1Co 13: 2 have all faith, so as to remove **m**,
Rev 16: 20 and no **m** were to be found;

### MOURN → MOURNFUL, MOURNING
Ecc 3: 4 a time to **m**, and a time to dance;
Zec 12: 10 they shall **m** for him,
Mt 5: 4 "Blessed are those who **m**,
Sir 7: 34 but **m** with those who **m**.

**MOURNING** → MOURN
Ps 30: 11 You have turned my **m** into dancing
Isa 61: 3 the oil of gladness instead of **m,**
Rev 21: 4 **m** and crying and pain will be no

**MOUTH** → MOUTHS
Ex 4: 12 Now go, and I will be with your **m**
Dt 8: 3 that comes from the **m** of the LORD.
Ps 19: 14 Let the words of my **m** and
Ecc 5: 2 Never be rash with your **m,**
Isa 49: 2 He made my **m** like a sharp sword,
Mt 4: 4 every word that comes from the **m**
15: 11 it is not what goes into the **m**
Jas 3: 10 From the same **m** come blessing and
Rev 19: 15 From his **m** comes a sharp sword
Sir 28: 25 and a bolt for your **m.**

**MOUTHS** → MOUTH
Ps 115: 5 They have **m,** but do not speak;
Da 6: 22 sent his angel and shut the lions' **m**

**MUCH**
Ps 19: 10 they than gold, even **m** fine gold;
Ecc 12: 12 **m** study is a weariness of the flesh.
Lk 12: 48 to whom **m** has been given, **m** will be required;
Jn 12: 24 but if it dies, it bears **m** fruit.
1Jn 4: 11 since God loved us so **m,**

**MUD**
Jn 9: 6 and spread the **m** on the man's eyes,
2Pe 2: 22 washed only to wallow in the **m."**

**MULTIPLY**
Ge 1: 28 to them, "Be fruitful and **m,**
9: 7 And you, be fruitful and **m,**
Dt 6: 3 that you may **m** greatly in a land

**MULTITUDE** → MULTITUDES
Jas 5: 20 and will cover a **m** of sins.
1Pe 4: 8 for love covers a **m** of sins.

**MULTITUDES** → MULTITUDE
Joel 3: 14 **M, m,** in the valley of decision!
Rev 17: 15 are peoples and **m** and nations

**MURDER** → MURDERER, MURDERERS
Ex 20: 13 You shall not **m.**
Hos 4: 2 lying, and **m,** and stealing and
Mt 5: 21 of ancient times, 'You shall not **m';**

**MURDERER** → MURDER
Nu 35: 16 the **m** shall be put to death.
Jn 8: 44 He was a **m** from the beginning

**MURDERERS** → MURDER
1Jn 3: 15 who hate a brother or sister are **m,**
Rev 21: 8 the faithless, the polluted, the **m,**

**MUSIC**
1Sa 19: 9 while David was playing **m.**
Ps 92: 3 to the **m** of the lute and the harp,

**MUSTARD**
Mt 17: 20 have faith the size of a **m** seed.
Mk 4: 31 It is like a **m** seed, which,

**MUTUAL**
Ro 12: 10 love one another with **m** affection;
Heb 13: 1 Let **m** love continue.

**MYRRH**
Mt 2: 11 gifts of gold, frankincense, and **m.**
Mk 15: 23 offered him wine mixed with **m;**

**MYSTERY**
Da 2: 19 **m** was revealed to Daniel in a vision
Ro 11: 25 I want you to understand this **m:**
1Co 15: 51 Listen, I will tell you a **m!**
Eph 3: 4 my understanding of the **m** of Christ
1Ti 3: 9 must hold fast to the **m** of the faith
Rev 17: 5 a name, a **m:** "Babylon the great,

**MYTHS**
2Pe 1: 16 did not follow cleverly devised **m**

## N

**NAAMAN**
Aramean general whose leprosy was cleansed by Elisha (2Ki 5; Lk 4:27).

**NABAL**
Wealthy Carmelite the LORD killed for refusing to help David (1Sa 25). David married Abigail, his widow (1Sa 25:39-42).

**NABOTH**
Jezreelite killed for his vineyard (1Ki 21). Ahab's family punished (1Ki 21:17-24; 2Ki 9:21-37).

**NADAB**
1. Firstborn of Aaron (Ex 6:23); killed with Abihu for offering unauthorized fire (Lev 10; Nu 3:4).
2. Son of Jeroboam I; king of Israel (1Ki 15:25-32).

**NAHUM**
Prophet against Nineveh (Na 1:1; Tob 14:4).

**NAILING*** → NAILS
Col 2: 14 He set this aside, **n** it to the cross.

**NAILS** → NAILING
Ecc 12: 11 like **n** firmly fixed are the collected
Jn 20: 25 put my finger in the mark of the **n**

**NAKED** → NAKEDNESS
Ge 2: 25 the man and his wife were both **n,**
Job 1: 21 **"N** I came from my mother's womb, and **n** shall
2Co 5: 3 taken it off we will not be found **n.**

**NAKEDNESS** → NAKED
Ro 8: 35 or persecution, or famine, or **n,**

**NAME** → NAME'S, NAMES
Ge 2: 19 every living creature, that was its **n.**
4: 26 people began to invoke the **n** of
12: 2 bless you, and make your **n** great,
Ex 3: 15 my **n** forever, and this my title
20: 7 wrongful use of the **n** of the LORD
34: 5 and proclaimed the **n,** "The LORD."
Nu 17: 2 Write each man's **n** on his staff.
Dt 12: 11 as a dwelling for his **n:**
Ps 9: 10 know your **n** put their trust in you,
Pr 18: 10 The **n** of the LORD is a strong tower;
Isa 42: 8 I am the LORD, that is my **n;**
Eze 20: 9 But I acted for the sake of my **n,**
Joel 2: 32 on the **n** of the LORD shall be saved;
Zec 14: 9 the LORD will be one and his **n** one.
Mt 1: 21 a son, and you are to **n** him Jesus,
6: 9 Father in heaven, hallowed be your **n.**
28: 19 baptizing them in the **n** of the Father
Jn 1: 12 received him, who believed in his **n,**
20: 31 believing you may have life in his **n.**
Ac 4: 12 for there is no other **n** under heaven
Php 2: 9 gave him the **n** that is above every **n**
Rev 13: 17 **n** of the beast or the number of its **n.**
19: 13 his **n** is called The Word of God.
22: 4 and his **n** will be on their foreheads.
Sir 2: 17 and equal to his **n** are his works.

**NAME'S** → NAME
Ps 23: 3 in right paths for his **n** sake.

**NAMES** → NAME
Ge 2: 20 The man gave **n** to all cattle.
Ex 28: 9 engrave on them the **n** of the sons
Mt 10: 2 are the **n** of the twelve apostles:
Rev 21: 14 the twelve **n** of the twelve apostles

**NAOMI***
Wife of Elimelech, mother-in-law of Ruth (Ru 1:2, 4). Left Bethlehem for Moab during famine (Ru 1:1). Returned a widow, with Ruth (Ru 1:6-22). Advised Ruth to seek marriage with Boaz (Ru 2:17-3:4). Cared for Ruth's son Obed (Ru 4:13-17).

**NAPHTALI**
Son of Jacob by Bilhah (Ge 30:8; 35:25; 1Ch 2:2). Tribe of blessed (Ge 49:21; Dt 33:23), numbered (Nu 1:43; 26:50), allotted land (Jos 19:32-39; Eze 48:3), failed to fully possess (Jdg 1:33), supported Deborah (Jdg 4:10; 5:18), David (1Ch 12:34), 12,000 from (Rev 7:6).

**NARROW**
Lk 13: 24 "Strive to enter through the **n** door;

**NATHAN**
Prophet and chronicler of Israel's history (1Ch 29:29; 2Ch 9:29). Announced the Davidic covenant (2Sa 7; 1Ch 17). Denounced David's sin with Bathsheba (2Sa 12). Supported Solomon (1Ki 1).

**NATHANAEL** → =BARTHOLOMEW?
Apostle (Jn 1:45-49; 21:2). Probably also called Bartholomew (Mt 10:3).

**NATION** → NATIONS
Ge 12: 2 I will make of you a great **n,** and
Ex 32: 10 and of you I will make a great **n."**
Ps 33: 12 Happy is the **n** whose God is the LORD
Pr 14: 34 Righteousness exalts a **n,**
Isa 2: 4 **n** shall not lift up sword against **n,**
66: 8 a **n** be delivered in one moment?
Mt 24: 7 For **n** will rise against **n,**
1Pe 2: 9 a holy **n,** God's own people,

**NATIONS** → NATION
Ge 18: 18 the **n** of the earth shall be blessed in
2Ki 17: 15 followed the **n** that were around
Ps 47: 8 God is king over the **n;**
Isa 2: 2 all the **n** shall stream to it.
42: 1 he will bring forth justice to the **n.**
Am 9: 12 and all the **n** who are called
Mt 28: 19 and make disciples of all **n,**
Mk 11: 17 a house of prayer for all the **n'?**
Ro 4: 18 become "the father of many **n,"**
Rev 22: 2 the tree are for the healing of the **n.**

**NATURAL** → NATURE
Nu 16: 29 If these people die a **n** death,
Ro 11: 21 if God did not spare the **n** branches,

**NATURE** → NATURAL
Ro 1: 20 his eternal power and divine **n,**
2Pe 1: 4 become participants of the divine **n.**

**NAZARETH**
Mt 2: 23 made his home in a town called **N,**
Jn 1: 46 Can anything good come out of **N?**
19: 19 "Jesus of **N,** the King of the Jews."

**NAZIRITE**
Nu 6: 2 make a special vow, the vow of a **n,**
Jdg 13: 5 boy shall be a **n** to God from birth.

**NEAR** → NEARSIGHTED
Dt 4: 7 has a god so **n** to it as the LORD
30: 14 No, the word is very **n** to you;
Isa 55: 6 call upon him while he is **n;**
Zep 1: 14 The great day of the LORD is **n,**
Lk 10: 9 'The kingdom of God has come **n**
Jas 4: 8 Draw **n** to God, and he will draw **n** to
Rev 22: 10 of this book, for the time is **n.**

**NEARSIGHTED*** → NEAR, SEE
2Pe 1: 9 lacks these things is **n** and blind,

**NEBUCHADNEZZAR**
Babylonian king, also spelled Nebuchadrezzar. Subdued and exiled Judah (2Ki 24-25; 2Ch 36; Jer 39). Dreams interpreted by Daniel (Da 2; 4). Worshiped God (Da 3:28-29; 4:34-37).

**NECK** → STIFF-NECKED
Pr 3: 22 your soul and adornment for your **n.**
Mt 18: 6 were fastened around your **n**

**NECO**
Pharaoh who killed Josiah (2Ki 23:29-30; 2Ch 35:20-22), deposed Jehoahaz (2Ki 23:33-35; 2Ch 36:3-4).

**NEED** → NEEDY
Mt 6: 8 for your Father knows what you **n**
1Co 12: 21 to the hand, "I have no **n** of you,"
Heb 4: 16 and find grace to help in time of **n.**
1Jn 2: 27 you do not **n** anyone to teach you.

**NEEDLE**
Lk 18: 25 a camel to go through the eye of a **n**

**NEEDY** → NEED
1Sa 2: 8 he lifts the **n** from the ash heap,
Job 29: 16 I was a father to the **n,**
Ps 113: 7 and lifts the **n** from the ash heap,

**NEGLECT**
Lk 11: 42 and **n** justice and the love of God;
1Ti 4: 14 Do not **n** the gift that is in you,

Heb 2: 3 escape if we **n** so great a salvation?

### NEHEMIAH

Cupbearer of Artaxerxes (Ne 2:1); governor of Israel (Ne 8:9). Returned to Jerusalem to rebuild walls (Ne 2-6). With Ezra, reestablished worship (Ne 8). Prayer confessing nation's sin (Ne 9). Dedicated wall (Ne 12). Story of the miraculous fire (2Mc 1).

### NEIGHBOR

Lev 19: 18 shall love your **n** as yourself:
Dt 5: 20 bear false witness against your **n.**
Mt 19: 19 You shall love your **n** as yourself."
Jas 2: 8 "You shall love your **n** as yourself."

### NESTS

Mt 8: 20 and birds of the air have **n;**
Lk 13: 19 made **n** in its branches."

### NEVER

Ps 15: 5 do these things shall **n** be moved.
La 3: 22 steadfast love of the LORD **n** ceases.
Da 2: 44 will set up a kingdom that shall **n**
Mt 7: 23 will declare to them, 'I **n** knew you;
Jn 10: 28 eternal life, and they will **n** perish.
1Co 13: 8 Love **n** ends. But as for prophecies,
Heb 13: 5 he has said, "I will **n** leave you or

### NEW

Ex 1: 8 Now a **n** king arose over Egypt,
Ps 33: 3 Sing to him a **n** song;
Ecc 1: 9 there is nothing **n** under the sun.
Isa 43: 19 I am about to do a **n** thing;
65: 17 create **n** heavens and a **n** earth;
Jer 31: 31 I will make a **n** covenant with the
La 3: 23 they are **n** every morning;
Eze 36: 26 A **n** heart I will give you,
Mt 9: 17 is **n** wine put into old wineskins;
Mk 1: 27 A **n** teaching—with authority!
Lk 22: 20 is the **n** covenant in my blood.
Jn 13: 34 I give you a **n** commandment.
2Co 3: 6 to be ministers of a **n** covenant,
Col 3: 10 clothed yourselves with the **n** self,
Heb 8: 8 when I will establish a **n** covenant
1Pe 1: 3 mercy he has given us a **n** birth into
2Pe 3: 13 we wait for **n** heavens and a **n** earth,
1Jn 2: 7 writing you no **n** commandment.
Rev 21: 1 I saw a **n** heaven and a **n** earth;
21: 2 I saw the holy city, the **n** Jerusalem,
21: 5 "See, I am making all things **n.**"

### NEWS

Isa 52: 7 who brings good **n,** who announces
Mt 11: 5 the poor have good **n** brought to
Mk 1: 15 repent, and believe in the good **n."**

### NICODEMUS

Pharisee who visted Jesus at night (Jn 3). Argued for fair treatment of Jesus (Jn 7:50-52). With Joseph, prepared Jesus for burial (Jn 19:38-42).

### NIGHT → NIGHTS

Ge 1: 5 and the darkness he called **N.**
Ex 13: 21 a pillar of fire by **n,** to give them
Jos 1: 8 you shall meditate on it day and **n,**
Mt 24: 43 part of the **n** the thief was coming,
1Th 5: 2 Lord will come like a thief in the **n.**
Rev 22: 5 And there will be no more **n;**

### NIGHTS → NIGHT

Ge 7: 12 on the earth forty days and forty **n.**
Ex 24: 18 mountain for forty days and forty **n,**
1Ki 19: 8 of that food forty days and forty **n**
Jnh 1: 17 of the fish three days and three **n.**
Mt 4: 2 He fasted forty days and forty **n,**
12: 40 for three days and three **n** the Son

### NILE

Ex 7: 17 will strike the water that is in the **N,**

### NINEVEH

Jnh 1: 2 "Go at once to **N,** that great city,
Na 1: 1 An oracle concerning **N.**
Mt 12: 41 The people of **N** will rise up at the

### NOAH

Righteous man (Eze 14:14, 20) called to build ark (Ge 6-8; Heb 11:7; 1Pe 3:20; 2Pe 2:5). God's covenant with (Ge 9:1-17). Drunkenness of (Ge 9:18-23). Blessed sons, cursed Canaan (Ge 9:24-27). Praised (Sir 44:17-18).

### NOISE

Ex 32: 17 "There is a **n** of war in the camp."
Ps 66: 1 Make a joyful **n** to God, all the earth
2Pe 3: 10 will pass away with a loud **n,**

### NOON

Am 8: 9 I will make the sun go down at **n,**
Mk 15: 33 When it was **n,** darkness came over

### NORTH

Jer 4: 6 I am bringing evil from the **n,**
Da 11: 6 come to the king of the **n** to ratify

### NOTHING

Ecc 1: 9 there is **n** new under the sun.
Jer 32: 17 **N** is too hard for you.
Mt 17: 20 and **n** will be impossible for you."
Jn 15: 5 apart from me you can do **n.**
1Co 13: 2 but do not have love, I am **n.**
Sir 39: 20 and **n** is too marvelous for him.

### NULLIFY

Ro 3: 3 **n** the faithfulness of God?
Gal 2: 21 I do not **n** the grace of God;

### NUMBER → NUMBERED, NUMEROUS

Nu 1: 45 So the whole **n** of the Israelites,
26: 51 the **n** of the Israelites enrolled:
Ro 11: 25 until the full **n** of the Gentiles has
Rev 13: 18 Its **n** is six hundred sixty-six.

### NUMBERED → NUMBER

2Sa 24: 10 because he had **n** the people.

### NUMEROUS → NUMBER

Ge 17: 2 and will make you exceedingly **n."**
Ex 1: 9 the Israelite people are more **n**
Zec 10: 8 shall be as **n** as they were before.

### NURSING

Isa 49: 15 Can a woman forget her **n** child,

## O

### OATH

Dt 7: 8 and kept the **o** that he swore to your
Ne 13: 25 them take an **o** in the name of God,
Ps 132: 11 a sure **o** from which he will not turn
Heb 7: 20 This was confirmed with an **o;**

### OBADIAH

1. Believer who sheltered 100 prophets from Jezebel (1Ki 18:1-16).
2. Prophet against Edom (Ob 1; 2Es 1:39).

### OBEDIENCE → OBEY

Ro 5: 19 so by the one man's **o** the many will
Heb 5: 8 learned **o** through what he suffered;

### OBEDIENT → OBEY

Ex 24: 7 spoken we will do, and we will be **o.**
Php 2: 8 and became **o** to the point of death

### OBEY → OBEDIENCE, OBEDIENT, OBEYED

Ex 19: 5 if you **o** my voice and keep my
Dt 12: 28 Be careful to **o** all these words that
Jos 24: 24 we will serve, and him we will **o."**
Mt 28: 20 **o** everything that I have commanded
Ac 5: 29 "We must **o** God rather than any
Eph 6: 1 Children, **o** your parents in the Lord,
1Jn 5: 3 love of God is this, that we **o** his

### OBEYED → OBEY

Jer 3: 13 have not **o** my voice, says the LORD.
Heb 11: 8 By faith Abraham **o** when he was

### OBSERVE

Lev 20: 8 Keep my statutes, and **o** them;
Ps 119: 8 I will **o** your statutes;

### OBSTACLE

1Co 9: 12 **o** in the way of the gospel of Christ.
2Co 6: 3 are putting no **o** in anyone's way,

### OBTAIN → OBTAINED

Ro 11: 7 Israel failed to **o** what it was seeking
2Ti 2: 10 that they may also **o** the salvation

### OBTAINED → OBTAIN

Php 3: 12 Not that I have already **o** this
Heb 8: 6 Jesus has now **o** a more excellent

### ODOR

Ge 8: 21 the LORD smelled the pleasing **o,**
Ex 29: 18 it is a pleasing **o,** an offering

### OFFENSE

Mk 6: 3 And they took **o** at him.
Gal 5: 11 **o** of the cross has been removed.

### OFFER → OFFERING, OFFERINGS

Ps 4: 5 **O** right sacrifices, and put your trust
Hos 14: 2 and we will **o** the fruit of our lips.
Heb 9: 25 Nor was it to **o** himself again and

### OFFERING → OFFER

Ge 4: 4 LORD had regard for Abel and his **o,**
22: 8 will provide the lamb for a burnt **o,**
2Ch 7: 1 heaven and consumed the burnt **o**
Ps 40: 6 Sacrifice and **o** you do not desire,
Da 11: 31 shall abolish the regular burnt **o**
Eph 5: 2 a fragrant **o** and sacrifice to God.
Heb 10: 14 For by a single **o** he has perfected
1Mc 4: 44 what to do about the altar of burnt **o.**

### OFFERINGS → OFFER

1Sa 15: 22 the LORD as great delight in burnt **o**
Hos 6: 6 of God rather than burnt **o.**
Mk 12: 33 important than all whole burnt **o**
1Mc 1: 45 to forbid burnt **o** and sacrifices

### OFFSPRING

Ge 3: 15 and between your **o** and hers;
12: 7 "To your **o** I will give this land."
2Sa 7: 12 I will raise up your **o** after you,

### OHOLIAB

Craftsman who worked on the tabernacle (Ex 31:6; 35:34; 36:1-2; 38:23).

### OIL

Ex 25: 6 **o** for the lamps, spices for the anointing **o**
Dt 14: 23 your wine, and your **o,** as well
Ps 23: 5 you anoint my head with **o;**
Heb 1: 9 with the **o** of gladness beyond your
Jas 5: 14 anointing them with **o** in the name

### OLD

Ge 21: 7 I have borne him a son in his **o** age."
Ps 74: 12 Yet God my King is from of **o,**
Mk 2: 22 puts new wine into **o** wineskins;
Ro 4: 19 he was about a hundred years **o),**
Eph 4: 22 your **o** self, corrupt and deluded by

### OLIVE → OLIVES

Zec 4: 3 And by it there are two **o** trees,
Ro 11: 17 and you, a wild **o** shoot,
Rev 11: 4 two **o** trees and the two lampstands

### OLIVES → OLIVE

Zec 14: 4 Mount of **O** shall be split in two
Mt 24: 3 he was sitting on the Mount of **O,**

### OMEGA

Rev 1: 8 "I am the Alpha and the **O,"**

### OMRI

King of Israel (1Ki 16:21-26).

### ONCE → ONE

Ex 30: 10 **O** a year Aaron shall perform the
Ro 6: 10 he died, he died to sin, **o** for all;
Heb 7: 27 this he did **o** for all when he offered
9: 27 it is appointed for mortals to die **o,**

### ONE → FIRST, ONCE

Ge 2: 24 and they become **o** flesh.
Zec 14: 9 the LORD will be **o** and his name **o.**
Mk 12: 29 the Lord our God, the Lord is **o;**
Jn 10: 30 The Father and I are **o."**
1Co 12: 13 For in the **o** Spirit we were all baptized
Eph 4: 5 **o** Lord, **o** faith, **o** baptism,

### ONLY

Ge 22: 2 "Take your son, your **o** son Isaac,
1Ki 18: 22 "I, even I **o,** am left a prophet
Jn 1: 14 the glory as of a father's **o** son,
3: 16 that he gave his **o** Son,

1Ti 1: 17 the **o** God, be honor and glory
1Jn 4: 9 God sent his **o** Son into the world so

**OPEN** → OPENED, OPENS
Isa 53: 7 so he did not **o** his mouth.
Rev 5: 2 "Who is worthy to **o** the scroll

**OPENED** → OPEN
Ge 3: 7 Then the eyes of both were **o,**
Da 7: 10 in judgment, and the books were **o.**
Zec 13: 1 a fountain shall be **o** for the house
Lk 11: 9 knock, and the door will be **o** for
Heb 10: 20 new and living way that he **o** for us
Rev 20: 12 book was **o,** the book of life.

**OPENS** → OPEN
Rev 3: 7 who **o** and no one will shut,

**OPPORTUNITY**
Mt 26: 16 began to look for an **o** to betray him.
Gal 5: 13 not use your freedom as an **o** for

**OPPRESSED** → OPPRESSION
Ge 15: 13 shall be **o** for four hundred years;
Ex 1: 12 But the more they were **o,**
Ps 146: 7 who executes justice for the **o;**
Isa 53: 7 He was **o,** and he was afflicted,
Jdt 9: 11 God of the lowly, helper of the **o,**

**OPPRESSION** → OPPRESSED
Jer 9: 6 **O** upon **o,** deceit upon deceit!
Eze 45: 9 Put away violence and **o,**

**ORACLES**
Ro 3: 2 entrusted with the **o** of God.

**ORDAIN** → ORDINANCE, ORDINANCES
Ex 29: 9 shall then **o** Aaron and his sons.
1Ti 5: 22 Do not **o** anyone hastily,

**ORDER**
Ps 110: 4 according to the **o** of Melchizedek."
Heb 5: 10 according to the **o** of Melchizedek.

**ORDINANCE** → ORDAIN
Ex 12: 17 your generations as a perpetual **o.**
29: 9 shall be theirs by a perpetual **o.**

**ORDINANCES** → ORDAIN
Ps 19: 9 **o** of the LORD are true and righteous

**ORIGIN**
Mt 21: 26 But if we say, 'Of human **o,**'
Ac 5: 38 or this undertaking is of human **o,**

**ORNAMENTS**
Ex 33: 6 stripped themselves of their **o,**
1Pe 3: 3 by wearing gold **o** or fine clothing;

**ORPHAN** → ORPHANED, ORPHANS
Ex 22: 22 You shall not abuse any widow or **o.**
Hos 14: 3 In you the **o** finds mercy."

**ORPHANED** → ORPHAN
Jn 14: 18 will not leave you **o;** I am coming

**ORPHANS** → ORPHAN
Jas 1: 27 to care for **o** and widows in their
Sir 4: 10 Be a father to **o,** and be like a

**OTHER** → OTHERS
Ex 20: 3 you shall have no **o** gods before me.
Jdg 2: 19 following **o** gods,
2Ki 17: 7 They had worshiped **o** gods
Isa 45: 5 I am the LORD, and there is no **o;**
Mt 6: 24 to the one and despise the **o.**

**OTHERS** → OTHER
Lk 6: 31 Do to **o** as you would have them do
Php 2: 3 but in humility regard **o** as better

**OTHNIEL**
Nephew of Caleb (Jos 15:15-19; Jdg 1:12-15). Judge who freed Israel from Aram (Jdg 3:7-11).

**OUTSIDE**
Lk 11: 39 Pharisees clean the **o** of the cup and
Heb 13: 12 Jesus also suffered **o** the city gate in
Rev 22: 15 **O** are the dogs and sorcerers and

**OUTSTRETCHED** → STRETCH
Ex 6: 6 I will redeem you with an **o** arm
Ps 136: 12 an **o** arm, for his steadfast love
Jer 27: 5 by my great power and my **o** arm

**OUTWARD**
1Sa 16: 7 they look on the **o** appearance,
2Co 5: 12 those who boast in **o** appearance
2Ti 3: 5 the **o** form of godliness but denying

**OVERCOME**
Jn 1: 5 and the darkness did not **o** it.
Ro 12: 21 Do not be **o** by evil, but **o** evil with
1Jn 2: 14 and you have **o** the evil one.

**OVERSHADOW*** → OVERSHADOWED
Lk 1: 35 power of the Most High will **o** you;

**OVERSHADOWED** → OVERSHADOW
Lk 9: 34 a cloud came and **o** them;

**OWE** → OWES
Mt 18: 28 he said, 'Pay what you **o.**'
Ro 13: 8 **O** no one anything, except to love

**OWN**
Isa 53: 6 we have all turned to our **o** way,
Jer 31: 30 But all shall die for their **o** sins;
Jn 1: 11 He came to what was his **o,** and his **o** people did not accept him.
10: 18 but I lay it down of my **o** accord.
1Co 6: 19 and that you are not your **o?**

**OX** → OXEN
Dt 25: 4 not muzzle an **o** while it is treading
Isa 65: 25 the lion shall eat straw like the **o;**
Eze 1: 10 the face of an **o** on the left side,
1Ti 5: 18 not muzzle an **o** while it is treading
Rev 4: 7 the second living creature like an **o,**

## P

**PAGANS**
1Co 5: 1 that is not found even among **p;**
12: 2 You know that when you were **p,**

**PAIN** → PAINS
Ge 3: 16 in **p** you shall bring forth children,
1Pe 2: 19 endure **p** while suffering unjustly.
Rev 21: 4 and crying and **p** will be no more,

**PAINS** → PAIN
Ro 8: 22 creation has been groaning in labor **p**
1Th 5: 3 as labor **p** come upon a pregnant

**PALM** → PALMS
Jn 12: 13 So they took branches of **p** trees
Rev 7: 9 robed in white, with **p** branches in

**PALMS** → PALM
Isa 49: 16 I have inscribed you on the **p** of my

**PANGS**
Ge 3: 16 increase your **p** in childbearing;
Mk 13: 8 but the beginning of the birth **p.**
Rev 12: 2 and was crying out in birth **p,**

**PARABLE** → PARABLES
Ps 78: 2 I will open my mouth in a **p;**
Mt 13: 18 "Hear then the **p** of the sower.

**PARABLES** → PARABLE; See also JESUS: PARABLES
Mt 13: 35 I will open my mouth to speak in **p;**
Sir 39: 2 penetrates the subtleties of **p;**

**PARADISE**
Lk 23: 43 today you will be with me in **P."**
2Co 12: 4 was caught up into **P** and heard
Rev 2: 7 tree of life that is in the **p** of God.
2Es 8: 52 for you that **p** is opened,

**PARALYTIC** → PARALYZED
Mt 9: 2 saw their faith, he said to the **p,**

**PARALYZED** → PARALYTIC
Jn 5: 3 many invalids—blind, lame, and **p.**
Ac 8: 7 who were **p** or lame were cured.

**PARCHMENTS***
2Ti 4: 13 also the books, and above all the **p.**

**PARDON**
Ex 34: 9 **p** our iniquity and our sin,
Isa 55: 7 our God, for he will abundantly **p.**

**PARENT** → PARENTS
Dt 8: 5 that as a **p** disciplines a child
Eze 18: 20 nor a **p** suffer for the iniquity of a

**PARENTS** → PARENT
Mal 4: 6 turn the hearts of **p** to their children
Lk 1: 17 turn the hearts of **p** to their children,
Eph 6: 1 Children, obey your **p** in the Lord,
Sir 48: 10 turn the hearts of **p** to their children,

**PART** → APART
1Co 13: 9 For we know only in **p,** and we prophesy only in **p;**

**PARTAKE**
1Co 10: 17 for we all **p** of the one bread.

**PARTIALITY**
Dt 16: 19 distort justice; you must not show **p;**
Pr 24: 23 **P** in judging is not good.
Ro 2: 11 For God shows no **p.**
Jas 3: 17 without a trace of **p** or hypocrisy.
Sir 35: 15 and with him there is no **p.**

**PARTICIPANTS** → PARTICIPATE
2Pe 1: 4 may become **p** of the divine nature.

**PARTICIPATE*** → PARTICIPANTS
1Ti 5: 22 and do not **p** in the sins of others;
2Jn 1: 11 for to welcome is to **p** in the evil

**PARTNER** → PARTNERS, PARTNERSHIP
Pr 2: 17 who forsakes the **p** of her youth
1Co 7: 15 But if the unbelieving **p** separates,

**PARTNERS** → PARTNER
1Co 10: 20 not want you to be **p** with demons.
Heb 3: 1 holy **p** in a heavenly calling,

**PARTNERSHIP*** → PARTNER
2Co 6: 14 **p** is there between righteousness

**PASHHUR**
Priest; opponent of Jeremiah (Jer 20:1-6).

**PASS** → PASSED, PASSING
Ex 12: 13 when I see the blood, I will **p** over
33: 19 make all my goodness **p** before you,
Am 5: 17 I will **p** through the midst of you,
Mt 24: 35 Heaven and earth will **p** away, but my words will not **p**
2Pe 3: 10 then the heavens will **p** away

**PASSED** → PASS
Ge 15: 17 torch **p** between these pieces.
Ex 12: 27 he **p** over the houses of the Israelites
33: 22 with my hand until I have **p** by;
2Co 5: 17 everything old has **p** away;
1Jn 3: 14 that we have **p** from death to life
Rev 21: 4 for the first things have **p** away."

**PASSING** → PASS
1Co 7: 31 present form of this world is **p** away
1Jn 2: 17 the world and its desire are **p** away,

**PASSIONS**
Gal 5: 24 have crucified the flesh with its **p**
2Ti 2: 22 Shun youthful **p** and pursue

**PASSOVER**
Ex 12: 11 It is the **p** of the LORD.
Dt 16: 1 the month of Abib by keeping the **p**
Mk 14: 12 when the **P** lamb is sacrificed,

**PASTORS***
Eph 4: 11 evangelists, some **p** and teachers,

**PASTURE** → PASTURES
Ps 100: 3 his people, and the sheep of his **p.**
Jer 50: 7 the LORD, the true **p,** the LORD,

**PASTURES** → PASTURE
Ps 23: 2 He makes me lie down in green **p;**

**PATH** → PATHS
Ps 16: 11 You show me the **p** of life.
119: 105 lamp to my feet and a light to my **p.**
Mt 13: 4 he sowed, some seeds fell on the **p,**

**PATHS** → PATH
Ps 23: 3 in right **p** for his name's sake.
Pr 3: 6 and he will make straight your **p.**
Mt 3: 3 of the Lord, make his **p** straight.'"
Heb 12: 13 and make straight **p** for your feet,

**PATIENCE** → PATIENT
Mic 2: 7 Is the LORD's **p** exhausted?

Ro 2: 4 his kindness and forbearance and **p?**
Gal 5: 22 fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, **p,**
2Pe 3: 15 regard the **p** of our Lord as salvation

### PATIENT → PATIENCE

Lk 8: 15 and bear fruit with **p** endurance.
Ro 12: 12 Rejoice in hope, be **p** in suffering,
1Co 13: 4 Love is **p;** love is kind;
2Pe 3: 9 as some think of slowness, but is **p**

### PATTERN

Ex 25: 40 make them according to the **p** for
Heb 8: 5 make everything according to the **p**

### PAUL → =SAUL

Also called Saul (Ac 13:9). Pharisee from Tarsus (Ac 9:11; Php 3:5). Apostle (Gal 1). At stoning of Stephen (Ac 8:1). Persecuted Church (Ac 9:1-2; Gal 1:13). Vision of Jesus on road to Damascus (Ac 9:4-9; 26:12-18). In Arabia (Gal 1:17). Preached in Damascus; escaped death through the wall in a basket (Ac 9:19-25). In Jerusalem; back to Tarsus (Ac 9:26-30).

Brought to Antioch by Barnabas (Ac 11:22-26). First missionary journey to Cyprus and Galatia (Ac 13-14). Stoned at Lystra (Ac 14:19-20). At Jerusalem council (Ac 15). Split with Barnabas over Mark (Ac 15:36-41).

Second missionary journey with Silas (Ac 16-20). Called to Macedonia (Ac 16:6-10). Freed from prison in Philippi (Ac 16:16-40). In Thessalonica (Ac 17:1-9). Speech in Athens (Ac 17:16-33). In Corinth (Ac 18). In Ephesus (Ac 19). Return to Jerusalem (Ac 20). Farewell to Ephesian elders (Ac 20:13-38). Arrival in Jerusalem (Ac 21:1-26). Arrested (Ac 21:27-36). Addressed crowds (Ac 22). Sanhedrin (Ac 23:1-11). Sent to Caesarea (Ac 23:12-35). Trial before Felix (Ac 24). Festus (Ac 25:1-12). Before Agrippa (Ac 25:13-26:32). Voyage to Rome; shipwreck (Ac 27). Arrival in Rome (Ac 28).

### PAVEMENT

Ex 24: 10 his feet there was something like a **p**
Jn 19: 13 bench at a place called The Stone **P,**

### PAY → REPAY

Ex 22: 4 the thief shall **p** double.
Dt 24: 15 You shall **p** them their wages daily
Mt 22: 17 lawful to **p** taxes to the emperor, or
Ro 13: 7 **P** to all what is due them—

### PEACE → PEACEMAKERS

Lev 26: 6 And I will grant **p** in the land,
Ps 122: 6 Pray for the **p** of Jerusalem:
Isa 26: 3 in **p** because they trust in you.
57: 19 **P, p,** to the far and the near,
57: 21 no **p,** says my God, for the wicked.
Jer 6: 14 saying, **"P, p,"** when there is no **p.**
Mic 5: 5 and he shall be the one of **p.**
Lk 2: 14 on earth **p** among those whom he
Jn 14: 27 **P** I leave with you; my **p** I give
Ro 16: 20 God of **p** will shortly crush Satan
1Co 14: 33 is a God not of disorder but of **p.**
Gal 5: 22 the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, **p,**
Eph 4: 3 unity of the Spirit in the bond of **p.**
Php 4: 7 the **p** of God, which surpasses all
2Ti 2: 22 righteousness, faith, love, and **p,**

### PEACEMAKERS* → PEACE

Mt 5: 9 "Blessed are the **p,** for they will be

### PEARL* → PEARLS

Mt 13: 46 on finding one **p** of great value.
Rev 21: 21 each of the gates is a single **p,**

### PEARLS → PEARL

Mt 7: 6 do not throw your **p** before swine,

### PEKAH*

King of Israel (2Ki 15:25-31; 2Ch 28:6; Isa 7:1).

### PEKAHIAH*

Son of Menahem; king of Israel (2Ki 15:22-26).

### PENALTY

Ro 1: 27 in their own persons the due **p**
2Pe 2: 13 suffering the **p** for doing wrong.

### PENTECOST

Ac 2: 1 When the day of **P** had come,

### PEOPLE → PEOPLES

Ex 5: 1 the God of Israel, 'Let my **p** go.
33: 13 that this nation is your **p."**
Dt 4: 20 a **p** of his very own possession,
32: 9 the LORD's own portion was his **p,**
Ru 1: 16 your **p** shall be my **p.**
2Sa 5: 2 shall be shepherd of my **p** Israel,
Ps 29: 11 the LORD bless his **p** with peace!
125: 2 so the LORD surrounds his **p,**
Isa 40: 1 Comfort, O comfort my **p,** says
42: 6 given you as a covenant to the **p,**
53: 8 for the transgression of my **p.**
Jer 50: 6 My **p** have been lost sheep;
La 1: 1 sits the city that once was full of **p!**
Da 9: 24 "Seventy weeks are decreed for your **p**
Zec 13: 9 I will say, "They are my **p";**
Mt 1: 21 he will save his **p** from their sins."
Jn 11: 50 the **p** than to have the whole nation
18: 14 to have one person die for the **p.**
Ro 9: 25 not my **p** I will call 'my **p,'**
Heb 8: 10 their God, and they shall be my **p.**
1Pe 2: 9 a holy nation, God's own **p,**

### PEOPLES → PEOPLE

Ge 17: 16 kings of **p** shall come from her."
Dt 7: 7 for you were the fewest of all **p.**
Ps 117: 1 Extol him, all you **p!**
Rev 21: 3 they will be his **p,** and God himself

### PERFECT → PERFECTED, PERFECTER, PERFECTION

Lev 22: 21 to be acceptable it must be **p;**
2Sa 22: 31 This God—his way is **p;**
Ps 19: 7 The law of the LORD is **p,** reviving
Mt 5: 48 Be **p,** therefore, as your heavenly Father is **p.**
Ro 12: 2 what is good and acceptable and **p.**
2Co 12: 9 for power is made **p** in weakness."
Heb 7: 19 (for the law made nothing **p);**
1Jn 4: 18 in love, but **p** love casts out fear;

### PERFECTED → PERFECT

Heb 10: 14 For by a single offering he has **p**
1Jn 4: 12 God lives in us, and his love is **p** in

### PERFECTER* → PERFECT

Heb 12: 2 Jesus the pioneer and **p** of our faith,

### PERFECTION → PERFECT

Heb 6: 1 Therefore let us go on toward **p,**
1Jn 2: 5 the love of God has reached **p.**

### PERISH → PERISHABLE

Lev 26: 38 You shall **p** among the nations,
Jos 23: 13 until you **p** from this good land that
Est 4: 16 and if I **p,** I **p."**
Ps 1: 6 but the way of the wicked will **p.**
Lk 21: 18 But not a hair of your head will **p.**
Jn 3: 16 who believes in him may not **p**
2Pe 3: 9 with you, not wanting any to **p,**

### PERISHABLE → PERISH

1Co 9: 25 they do it to receive a **p** wreath,
15: 42 What is sown is **p,** what is raised is
1Pe 1: 23 not of **p** but of imperishable seed,

### PERMANENT → PERMANENTLY

2Co 3: 11 much more has the **p** come in glory!

### PERMANENTLY* → PERMANENT

Heb 7: 24 but he holds his priesthood **p,**

### PERSECUTE → PERSECUTED, PERSECUTION

Mt 5: 44 and pray for those who **p** you,
Ac 9: 4 "Saul, Saul, why do you **p** me?"
Ro 12: 14 Bless those who **p** you; bless

### PERSECUTED → PERSECUTE

Ps 119: 86 I am **p** without cause; help me!
Jn 15: 20 they **p** me, they will persecute you;
2Co 4: 9 **p,** but not forsaken; struck down,
2Ti 3: 12 godly life in Christ Jesus will be **p.**

### PERSECUTION → PERSECUTE

Mt 13: 21 or **p** arises on account of the word,
Ro 8: 35 Will hardship, or distress, or **p,** or
Heb 10: 33 publicly exposed to abuse and **p,**

### PERSEVERANCE* → PERSEVERE

Heb 12: 1 let us run with **p** the race that is set

### PERSEVERE → PERSEVERANCE

Da 12: 12 Happy are those who **p**
Ro 12: 12 be patient in suffering, **p** in prayer.

### PERSIA → PERSIANS

Ezr 1: 1 the spirit of King Cyrus of **P**
Da 8: 20 these are the kings of Media and **P.**

### PERSIANS → PERSIA

Da 6: 15 a law of the Medes and **P** that

### PESTILENCE

Dt 32: 24 burning consumption, bitter **p,**
Ps 91: 6 or the **p** that stalks in darkness,

### PETER → =CEPHAS, =SIMON

Apostle, brother of Andrew, also called Simon (Mt 10:2; Mk 3:16; Lk 6:14; Ac 1:13), and Cephas (Jn 1:42). Confession of Christ (Mt 16:13-20; Mk 8:27-30; Lk 9:18-27). At transfiguration (Mt 17:1-8; Mk 9:2-8; Lk 9:28-36; 2Pe 1:16-18). Caught fish with coin (Mt 17:24-27). Denial of Jesus predicted (Mt 26:31-35; Mk 14:27-31; Lk 22:31-34; Jn 13:31-38). Denied Jesus (Mt 26:69-75; Mk 14:66-72; Lk 22:54-62; Jn 18:15-27). Commissioned by Jesus to shepherd his flock (Jn 21:15-23).

Speech at Pentecost (Ac 2). Healed beggar (Ac 3:1-10). Speech at temple (Ac 3:11-26), before Sanhedrin (Ac 4:1-22). In Samaria (Ac 8:14-25). Sent by vision to Cornelius (Ac 10). Announced salvation of Gentiles in Jerusalem (Ac 11; 15). Freed from prison (Ac 12). Inconsistency at Antioch (Gal 2:11-21). At Jerusalem Council (Ac 15).

### PHARAOH → PHARAOH'S

Ge 41: 14 Then **P** sent for Joseph,
Ex 3: 11 "Who am I that I should go to **P,**
14: 17 I will gain glory for myself over **P**
Ro 9: 17 For the scripture says to **P,**

### PHARAOH'S → PHARAOH

Ex 7: 3 But I will harden **P** heart,
Heb 11: 24 refused to be called a son of **P**

### PHARISEE → PHARISEES

Lk 11: 37 a **P** invited him to dine with him;
Jn 3: 1 a **P** named Nicodemus,
Ac 5: 34 a **P** in the council named Gamaliel,
Php 3: 5 as to the law, a **P;**

### PHARISEES → PHARISEE

Mt 5: 20 that of the scribes and **P,**
16: 6 beware of the yeast of the **P** and
23: 13 "But woe to you, scribes and **P,**

### PHILEMON*

Phm 1: 1 To **P** our dear friend and co-worker,

### PHILIP

1. Apostle (Mt 10:3; Mk 3:18; Lk 6:14; Jn 1:43-48; 14:8; Ac 1:13).

2. Deacon (Ac 6:1-7); evangelist in Samaria (Ac 8:4-25), to Ethiopian (Ac 8:26-40).

### PHILISTINE → PHILISTINES

1Sa 17: 37 save me from the hand of this **P."**
Ps 151: 6 I went out to meet the **P,**

### PHILISTINES → PHILISTINE

Ge 26: 1 Gerar, to King Abimelech of the **P.**
1Sa 5: 1 the **P** captured the ark of God,
17: 1 the **P** gathered their armies for battle
2Sa 8: 1 David attacked the **P** and subdued
Am 1: 8 the remnant of the **P** shall perish,

### PHILOSOPHERS* → PHILOSOPHY

Ac 17: 18 Epicurean and Stoic **p** debated with

### PHILOSOPHY → PHILOSOPHERS

Col 2: 8 no one takes you captive through **p**

### PHINEHAS

1. Grandson of Aaron (Ex 6:25; Jos 22:30-32). Zeal for the LORD (Nu 25:7-13; Ps 106:30).

2. A wicked priest (1Sa 1:3; 2:12-17; 4:1-19).

### PHOEBE*

Ro 16: 1 I commend to you our sister **P,**

**PHYSICAL**
1Co 15:44 It is sown a **p** body, it is raised a
1Ti 4: 8 while **p** training is of some value,

**PHYSICIAN** → PHYSICIANS
Mt 9:12 who are well have no need of a **p,**
Col 4:14 Luke, the beloved **p,** and Demas

**PHYSICIANS** → PHYSICIAN
Job 13: 4 all of you are worthless **p.**
Mk 5:26 had endured much under many **p,**

**PIECES**
Ge 15:17 torch passed between these **p.**
Mt 14:20 what was left over of the broken **p,**
15:37 they took up the broken **p** left over,
Lk 20:18 on that stone will be broken to **p;**

**PIERCED**
Zec 12:10 look on the one whom they have **p,**
Jn 19:37 look on the one whom they have **p."**
Rev 1: 7 even those who **p** him:

**PIG**
Dt 14: 8 the **p,** because it divides the hoof

**PILATE**
Governor of Judea. Questioned Jesus (Mt 27:1-26; Mk 15:15; Lk 22:66-23:25; Jn 18:28-19:16); sent him to Herod (Lk 23:6-12); consented to his crucifixion when crowds chose Barabbas (Mt 27:15-26; Mk 15:6-15; Lk 23:13-25; Jn 19:1-10).

**PILLAR** → PILLARS
Ge 19:26 back, and she became a **p** of salt.
Ex 13:21 and in a **p** of fire by night,

**PILLARS** → PILLAR
Jdg 16:29 Samson grasped the two middle **p**
1Ki 7:15 He cast two **p** of bronze.
Pr 9: 1 she has hewn her seven **p.**

**PIONEER***
Heb 2:10 make the **p** of their salvation perfect
12: 2 Jesus the **p** and perfecter of our faith

**PIT**
Rev 20: 3 into the **p,** and locked and sealed it
Sir 21:10 but at its end is the **p** of Hades.

**PITY**
Dt 7:16 showing them no **p;**
Hos 1: 6 for I will no longer have **p**
2:23 And I will have **p** on Lo-ruhamah,

**PLACE** → PLACES
Ge 28:16 "Surely the LORD is in this **p**—
Ex 26:33 shall separate for you the holy **p**
Ps 24: 3 And who shall stand in his holy **p?**
32: 7 You are a hiding **p** for me;
Jn 14: 3 And if I go and prepare a **p** for you,

**PLACES** → PLACE
Lev 26:30 I will destroy your high **p**
Ps 78:58 him to anger with their high **p;**

**PLAGUE** → PLAGUES
Ex 32:35 the LORD sent a **p** on the people,
Nu 25: 8 So the **p** was stopped among the
Zec 14:12 the **p** with which the LORD will
Rev 11: 6 strike the earth with every kind of **p,**

**PLAGUES** → PLAGUE
Hos 13:14 O Death, where are your **p?**
Rev 15: 1 seven angels with seven **p,** which
22:18 God will add to that person the **p**

**PLAIN**
Ge 13:12 among the cities of the **P** and
Isa 40: 4 and the rough places a **p.**

**PLANNED**
Ex 32:14 his mind about the disaster that he **p**
Isa 46:11 I have **p,** and I will do it.

**PLANT** → PLANTED
Ge 1:29 I have given you every **p** yielding
Ecc 3: 2 time to **p,** and a time to pluck up

**PLANTED** → PLANT
Ge 2: 8 the LORD God **p** a garden in Eden,
Ps 1: 3 like trees **p** by streams of water,
1Co 3: 6 I **p,** Apollos watered, but God gave

**PLEA**
1Ki 8:28 your servant's prayer and his **p,**
La 3:56 heard my **p,** "Do not close your ear

**PLEASE** → PLEASED, PLEASES, PLEASING, PLEASURE
Ps 69:31 will **p** the LORD more than an ox
Ro 8: 8 who are in the flesh cannot **p** God.
15: 3 For Christ did not **p** himself;
1Co 10:33 as I try to **p** everyone in everything
1Th 4: 1 how you ought to live and to **p** God
Heb 11: 6 without faith it is impossible to **p** God,
Sir 2:16 Those who fear the Lord seek to **p**

**PLEASED** → PLEASE
Ps 40:13 Be **p,** O LORD, to deliver me;
Mic 6: 7 Will the LORD be **p** with thousands
Mt 3:17 Beloved, with whom I am well **p."**
Col 1:19 the fullness of God was **p** to dwell,
2Pe 1:17 Beloved, with whom I am well **p."**

**PLEASES** → PLEASE
Ps 115: 3 the heavens; he does whatever he **p.**
1Jn 3:22 commandments and do what **p** him.

**PLEASING** → PLEASE
Ps 104:34 May my meditation be **p** to him,
Eph 5:10 to find out what is **p** to the Lord.
Php 4:18 a sacrifice acceptable and **p** to God.

**PLEASURE** → PLEASE
Pr 21:17 Whoever loves **p** will suffer want;
Eze 18:32 I have no **p** in the death of anyone,
Eph 1: 5 according to the good **p** of his will.
2Ti 3: 4 lovers of **p** rather than lovers of God

**PLENTIFUL** → PLENTY
Lk 10: 2 He said to them, "The harvest is **p,**

**PLENTY** → PLENTIFUL
Php 4:12 and I know what it is to have **p.**

**PLOT** → PLOTTED
Ps 2: 1 and the peoples **p** in vain?
Na 1: 9 Why do you **p** against the LORD?

**PLOTTED** → PLOT
Est 9:24 **p** against the Jews to destroy them,

**PLOWSHARES**
Isa 2: 4 they shall beat their swords into **p,**
Joel 3:10 Beat your **p** into swords, and your

**PLUNDER**
Ex 3:22 and so you shall **p** the Egyptians."
Est 9:10 but they did not touch the **p.**
Eze 39:10 and **p** those who plundered them.

**POISON**
Ps 69:21 They gave me **p** for food,
Jas 3: 8 a restless evil, full of deadly **p.**

**POLE** → POLES
Nu 21: 8 poisonous serpent, and set it on a **p;**
Dt 16:21 not plant any tree as a sacred **p**

**POLES** → POLE
2Ki 17:10 for themselves pillars and sacred **p**

**POLLUTED** → POLLUTES
Ac 15:20 from things **p** by idols and from
Rev 21: 8 the cowardly, the faithless, the **p,**

**POLLUTES*** → POLLUTED
Nu 35:33 blood **p** the land, and no expiation

**POOR** → POVERTY
Ex 23: 6 not pervert the justice due to your **p**
1Sa 2: 8 He raises up the **p** from the dust;
Ps 113: 7 He raises the **p** from the dust,
Pr 19:22 and it is better to be **p** than a liar.
Mt 5: 3 "Blessed are the **p** in spirit,
Mk 10:21 own, and give the money to the **p,**
12:42 **p** widow came and put in two small
Jn 12: 8 You always have the **p** with you,
2Co 6:10 as **p,** yet making many rich;
8: 9 yet for your sakes he became **p,**
Jas 2: 5 Has not God chosen the **p** in the

**PORTION** → APPORTIONED
Dt 32: 9 the LORD's own **p** was his people,
Jos 18: 7 The Levites have no **p** among you,
Ps 142: 5 my **p** in the land of the living."
La 3:24 "The LORD is my **p,"** says my soul,
Sir 17:17 Israel is the Lord's own **p.**

**POSSESS** → POSSESSED, POSSESSION, POSSESSIONS
Dt 28:21 the land that you are entering to **p.**
Ezr 9:11 that you are entering to **p** is a land
Isa 60:21 they shall **p** the land forever.

**POSSESSED** → POSSESS
Mt 8:16 many who were **p** with demons;
Heb 10:34 you yourselves **p** something better

**POSSESSION** → POSSESS
Ex 19: 5 treasured **p** out of all the peoples.
Jos 1:11 to go in to take **p** of the land that
Ps 2: 8 and the ends of the earth your **p.**

**POSSESSIONS** → POSSESS
Lk 12:15 not consist in the abundance of **p."**
1Co 13: 3 If I give away all my **p,**

**POSSIBLE**
Mt 19:26 but for God all things are **p."**
26:39 if it is **p,** let this cup pass from me;

**POTIPHAR***
Egyptian who bought Joseph (Ge 37:36; 39:1-6), sent him to prison (Ge 39:7-30).

**POTTER** → POTTER'S
Isa 64: 8 we are the clay, and you are our **p;**
Ro 9:21 Has the **p** no right over the clay,
Sir 33:13 Like clay in the hand of the **p,**

**POTTER'S** → POTTER
Jer 18: 2 go down to the **p** house,
Mt 27: 7 to buy the **p** field as a place to bury

**POUR** → POURED
Dt 12:16 **p** it out on the ground like water.
Isa 44: 3 I will **p** my spirit upon your
Eze 39:29 I **p** out my spirit upon the house of
Joel 2:28 I will **p** out my spirit on all flesh;
Ac 2:17 I will **p** out my Spirit upon all flesh,
Rev 16: 1 **p** out on the earth the seven bowls

**POURED** → POUR
Mt 26:28 is **p** out for many for the forgiveness
Ac 2:33 he has **p** out this that you both see
Tit 3: 6 This Spirit he **p** out on us richly

**POVERTY** → POOR
Pr 30: 8 give me neither **p** nor riches;
Mk 12:44 out of her **p** has put in everything
2Co 8: 9 by his **p** you might become rich.
Sir 11:14 **p** and wealth, come from the Lord.

**POWER** → POWERFUL, POWERS
Ex 9:16 show you my **p,** and to make
15: 6 right hand, O LORD, glorious in **p**—
1Ch 29:11 O LORD, are the greatness, the **p,**
Ps 68:34 Ascribe **p** to God, whose majesty is
Pr 18:21 and life are in the **p** of the tongue,
Isa 40:29 He gives **p** to the faint.
Zec 4: 6 by might, nor by **p,** but by my spirit,
Mt 22:29 the scriptures nor the **p** of God.
Mk 13:26 coming in clouds' with great **p** and
Ro 1:20 creation of the world his eternal **p**
1Co 1:17 might not be emptied of its **p.**
15:24 and every authority and **p.**
Eph 1:19 the immeasurable greatness of his **p**
Php 3:10 Christ and the **p** of his resurrection
2Ti 3: 5 form of godliness but denying its **p.**
2Pe 1: 3 divine **p** has given us everything
Rev 19: 1 and glory and **p** to our God,
20: 6 these the second death has no **p,**
Jdt 9:14 the God of all **p** and might,
Sir 39:18 and none can limit his saving **p.**

**POWERFUL** → POWER
Mk 1: 7 one who is more **p** than I is coming
1Co 1:26 not many were **p,**
Heb 1: 3 he sustains all things by his **p** word.

**POWERS** → POWER
Ro 8:38 present, nor things to come, nor **p,**
Eph 6:12 against the cosmic **p** of this present

**PRACTICE** → PRACTICES
Mt 23: 3 for they do not **p** what they teach.
Sir 50: 29 For if they put them into **p.**

**PRACTICES** → PRACTICE
Ex 23: 24 or worship them, or follow their **p.**
Col 3: 9 stripped off the old self with its **p**

**PRAISE** → PRAISED, PRAISES
Ex 15: 2 this is my God, and I will **p** him.
Dt 10: 21 He is your **p;** he is your God,
Ps 56: 4 whose word I **p,** in God I trust:
150: 6 that breathes **p** the LORD!
Pr 27: 2 Let another **p** you, and not your own
31: 31 let her works **p** her in the city gates.
Mt 21: 16 nursing babies you have prepared **p**
1Co 14: 15 but I will sing **p** with the mind also.
Rev 19: 5 "**P** our God, all you his servants.
Tob 12: 6 Bless and sing **p** to his name.
Sir 24: 1 THE **P** OF WISDOM Wisdom praises

**PRAISED** → PRAISE
Ps 48: 1 is the LORD and greatly to be **p**
Lk 23: 47 what had taken place, he **p** God and

**PRAISES** → PRAISE
Ps 47: 6 Sing **p** to God, sing **p;**

**PRAY** → PRAYED, PRAYER, PRAYERS
1Sa 12: 23 against the LORD by ceasing to **p**
2Ch 7: 14 humble themselves, **p,** seek my face
Ps 5: 2 King and my God, for to you I **p.**
122: 6 **P** for the peace of Jerusalem:
Jer 7: 16 As for you, do not **p** for this people,
Mt 5: 44 and **p** for those who persecute you,
6: 5 you **p,** do not be like the hypocrites;
Lk 11: 1 teach us to **p,** as John taught his
Ro 8: 26 do not know how to **p** as we ought,
1Co 14: 15 but I will **p** with the mind also;
1Th 5: 17 **p** without ceasing,
Jas 5: 16 and **p** for one another, so that you
Sir 37: 15 But above all **p** to the Most High

**PRAYED** → PRAY
Mk 1: 35 to a deserted place, and there he **p.**
14: 35 threw himself on the ground and **p**

**PRAYER** → PRAY
Ps 6: 9 the LORD accepts my **p.**
Pr 15: 29 but he hears the **p** of the righteous.
Isa 56: 7 house shall be called a house of **p**
Mt 21: 13 house shall be called a house of **p';**
Mk 11: 24 I tell you, whatever you ask for in **p,**
Ro 12: 12 patient in suffering, persevere in **p.**
Jas 5: 16 The **p** of the righteous is powerful

**PRAYERS** → PRAY
Mk 12: 40 the sake of appearance say long **p.**
Heb 5: 7 Jesus offered up **p** and supplications
Rev 5: 8 which are the **p** of the saints.

**PREACH** → PREACHING
Tit 1: 9 able both to **p** with sound doctrine

**PREACHING** → PREACH
1Ti 5: 17 those who labor in **p** and teaching;

**PRECEPT** → PRECEPTS
Isa 28: 10 For it is **p** upon **p, p** upon **p,**

**PRECEPTS** → PRECEPT
Ps 19: 8 the **p** of the LORD are right,
119: 15 I will meditate on your **p,**
Mt 15: 9 teaching human **p** as doctrines.'"

**PRECIOUS**
Ps 72: 14 and **p** is their blood in his sight.
Pr 3: 15 She is more **p** than jewels,
Isa 28: 16 a tested stone, a **p** cornerstone,
1Pe 1: 19 but with the **p** blood of Christ,
2: 6 a cornerstone chosen and **p;**
2Pe 1: 1 received a faith as **p** as ours

**PREDESTINED**
Ro 8: 30 those whom he **p** he also called;

**PREDICTION*** → PREDICTIONS
Isa 44: 26 and fulfills the **p** of his messengers;

**PREDICTIONS*** → PREDICT
Jude 1: 17 the **p** of the apostles of our Lord

**PREPARE** → PREPARED
Ps 23: 5 You **p** a table before me in the
Mal 3: 1 sending my messenger to **p** the way
Mt 3: 3 "**P** the way of the Lord, make his
Jn 14: 2 I have told you that I go to **p** a place

**PREPARED** → PREPARE
Lk 1: 17 make ready a people **p** for the Lord.
1Co 2: 9 God has **p** for those who love him"

**PRESENCE** → PRESENT
Ex 25: 30 the bread of the **P** on the table
33: 14 He said, "My **p** will go with you,
Ps 51: 11 Do not cast me away from your **p,**
139: 7 Or where can I flee from your **p?**
Jn 17: 5 with the glory that I had in your **p**
Heb 9: 24 now to appear in the **p** of God

**PRESENT** → PRESENCE
Ro 6: 13 but **p** yourselves to God as
1Co 3: 22 or death or the **p** or the future—
Eph 5: 27 **p** the church to himself in splendor,
2Ti 2: 15 **p** yourself to God as one approved

**PRESS** → PRESSED
Php 3: 14 I **p** on toward the goal for the prize

**PRESSED** → PRESS
Lk 6: 38 A good measure, **p** down, shaken
Php 1: 23 I am hard **p** between the two:

**PREVAIL** → PREVAILED
1Sa 2: 9 for not by might does one **p.**

**PREVAILED** → PREVAIL
Ge 32: 28 God and with humans, and have **p."**
Hos 12: 4 He strove with the angel and **p,**

**PRICE**
Mt 27: 9 the one on whom a **p** had been set,
1Co 6: 20 For you were bought with a **p;**

**PRIDE** → PROUD
Ps 20: 7 our **p** is in the name of the LORD
Pr 16: 18 **P** goes before destruction,
Mk 7: 22 licentiousness, envy, slander, **p,**
1Jn 2: 16 the desire of the eyes, the **p** in riches
Sir 10: 13 For the beginning of **p** is sin,

**PRIEST** → PRIESTHOOD, PRIESTS
Ge 14: 18 he was **p** of God Most High.
Ex 2: 16 **p** of Midian had seven daughters.
Ne 8: 9 and Ezra the **p** and scribe,
Ps 110: 4 "You are a **p** forever according to
Mk 14: 63 Then the high **p** tore his clothes and
Heb 3: 1 apostle and high **p** of our confession
7: 3 the Son of God, he remains a **p**
10: 21 since we have a great **p** over the

**PRIESTHOOD** → PRIEST
Ex 29: 9 the **p** shall be theirs by a perpetual
Heb 7: 24 but he holds his **p** permanently,
1Pe 2: 5 a holy **p,** to offer spiritual sacrifices

**PRIESTS** → PRIEST
Ex 28: 1 the Israelites, to serve me as **p**—
Dt 31: 9 this law, and gave it to the **p,**
Mic 3: 11 its **p** teach for a price, its prophets
Mk 15: 3 the chief **p** accused him of many
Heb 7: 27 Unlike the other high **p,** he has no
Rev 20: 6 they will be **p** of God and of Christ,

**PRINCE** → PRINCES
Isa 9: 6 Everlasting Father, **P** of Peace.
Eze 37: 25 David shall be their **p** forever.
Da 10: 21 princes except Michael, your **p.**

**PRINCES** → PRINCE
1Sa 2: 8 to make them sit with **p** and inherit
Da 8: 25 even rise up against the Prince of **p.**

**PRISCILLA***
Wife of Aquila, also called Prisca; co-worker with Paul (Ac 18; Ro 16:3; 1Co 16:19; 2Ti 4:19); instructor of Apollos (Ac 18:24-28).

**PRISON** → PRISONER, PRISONERS
Ge 39: 20 he remained there in **p,**
Mt 14: 10 and had John beheaded in the **p.**
Ac 12: 5 While Peter was kept in **p,**
16: 26 foundations of the **p** were shaken;

**PRISONER** → PRISON
Mk 15: 6 at the festival he used to release a **p**
Eph 3: 1 that I Paul am a **p** for Christ Jesus

**PRISONERS** → PRISON
Ps 146: 7 The LORD sets the **p** free;
Isa 61: 1 to the captives, and release to the **p;**

**PRIZE**
1Co 9: 24 but only one receives the **p?**
Php 3: 14 the **p** of the heavenly call of God in

**PROCLAIM** → PROCLAIMED
Ex 33: 19 **p** before you the name, 'The LORD';
Ps 97: 6 The heavens **p** his righteousness;
Mt 10: 27 whispered, **p** from the housetops.
Lk 4: 19 to **p** the year of the Lord's favor."
Ro 10: 8 the word of faith that we **p);**

**PROCLAIMED** → PROCLAIM
Mk 13: 10 the good news must first be **p** to all
Col 1: 23 which has been **p** to every creature

**PRODUCE** → PRODUCES
Nu 18: 12 choice **p** that they give to the LORD,
Jos 5: 11 they ate the **p** of the land,
Pr 3: 9 with the first fruits of all your **p;**

**PRODUCES** → PRODUCE
2Co 7: 10 For godly grief **p** a repentance that
Jas 1: 3 testing of your faith **p** endurance;

**PROFANE**
Lev 22: 32 You shall not **p** my holy name,
1Mc 1: 45 to **p** sabbaths and festivals,

**PROFIT**
Mt 16: 26 For what will it **p** them if they gain
Sir 29: 11 and it will **p** you more than gold.

**PROMISE** → PROMISED, PROMISES
Ps 105: 42 For he remembered his holy **p,**
Ac 2: 39 the **p** is for you, for your children,
Eph 2: 12 and strangers to the covenants of **p,**
1Ti 4: 8 holding **p** for both the present life
2Pe 3: 9 The Lord is not slow about his **p,**

**PROMISED** → PROMISE
Dt 1: 11 and bless you, as he has **p** you!
2Sa 7: 28 **p** this good thing to your servant;
Lk 24: 49 sending upon you what my Father **p**
Ac 13: 23 to Israel a Savior, Jesus, as he **p;**
Eph 1: 13 with the seal of the **p** Holy Spirit:
Heb 10: 23 for he who has **p** is faithful.

**PROMISES** → PROMISE
Jos 21: 45 the good **p** that the LORD had made
Ps 12: 6 **p** of the LORD are **p** that are pure,
2Co 1: 20 every one of God's **p** is a "Yes."
Heb 8: 6 has been enacted through better **p.**

**PROOFS*** → PROVE
Isa 41: 21 bring your **p,** says the King of Jacob
Ac 1: 3 to them by many convincing **p,**

**PROPHECIES** → PROPHESY
1Co 13: 8 as for **p,** they will come to an end;

**PROPHECY** → PROPHESY
Ac 21: 9 daughters who had the gift of **p.**
1Co 12: 10 to another **p,** to another
2Pe 1: 20 that no **p** of scripture is a matter
Rev 22: 18 who hears the words of the **p**

**PROPHESY** → PROPHECIES, PROPHECY, PROPHET, PROPHETS
Joel 2: 28 sons and your daughters shall **p,**
Mt 7: 22 Lord, did we not **p** in your name,
1Co 13: 9 only in part, and we **p** only in part;
Rev 11: 3 my two witnesses authority to **p**

**PROPHET** → PROPHESY
Ex 7: 1 your brother Aaron shall be your **p.**
Dt 18: 18 a **p** like you from among their own
Mal 4: 5 the **p** Elijah before the great and
Lk 4: 24 no **p** is accepted in the prophet's
20: 6 are convinced that John was a **p."**
Rev 16: 13 and from the mouth of the false **p.**
20: 10 where the beast and the false **p** were
1Mc 4: 46 until a **p** should come to tell what

**PROPHETS** → PROPHESY
Nu 11:29 that all the LORD's people were **p,**
1Ki 18:40 said to them, "Seize the **p** of Baal;
Ps 105:15 anointed ones; do my **p** no harm."
Mt 5:17 come to abolish the law or the **p;**
22:40 hang all the law and the **p."**
Lk 24:44 **p,** and the psalms must be fulfilled."
1Co 12:28 the church first apostles, second **p,**
Eph 2:20 the foundation of the apostles and **p,**
4:11 some **p,** some evangelists,
Rev 11:10 these two **p** had been a torment to
18:20 you saints and apostles and **p!**
1Mc 9:27 that **p** ceased to appear among them.

**PROSPER** → PROSPERING, PROSPERITY, PROSPEROUS
Ge 39:3 LORD caused all that he did to **p**
Ps 1:3 In all that they do, they **p.**
Isa 53:10 the will of the LORD shall **p.**

**PROSPERING** → PROSPER
Dt 30:9 will again take delight in **p** you,

**PROSPERITY** → PROSPER
Dt 30:15 have set before you today life and **p,**
Ps 73:3 I saw the **p** of the wicked.
Isa 48:18 your **p** would have been like a river,

**PROSPEROUS** → PROSPER
Jos 1:8 For then you shall make your way **p**

**PROSTITUTE** → PROSTITUTES
Ex 34:15 they **p** themselves to their gods
Jos 2:1 a **p** whose name was Rahab,
1Co 6:15 and make them members of a **p?**
Heb 11:31 By faith Rahab the **p** did not perish

**PROSTITUTES** → PROSTITUTE
Mt 21:31 the **p** are going into the kingdom of
1Co 6:9 idolaters, adulterers, male **p,**
Sir 9:6 Do not give yourself to **p,**

**PROTECT** → PROTECTS
Ps 91:14 I will **p** those who know my name.
Jn 17:11 **p** them in your name that you have

**PROTECTS** → PROTECT
Ps 116:6 The LORD **p** the simple;
Jdt 9:14 no other who **p** the people of Israel

**PROUD** → PRIDE
Ps 94:2 give to the **p** what they deserve!
Pr 21:4 Haughty eyes and a **p** heart—
Jas 4:6 God opposes the **p,** but gives grace
Sir 10:9 How can dust and ashes be **p?**

**PROVE** → PROOFS, PROVED
Heb 6:18 impossible that God would **p** false,

**PROVED** → PROVE
Ro 3:4 let God be **p** true,

**PROVERBS**
1Ki 4:32 He composed three thousand **p,**
Pr 1:1 The **p** of Solomon son of David,
Ecc 12:9 and studying and arranging many **p.**
Sir 39:3 seeks out the hidden meanings of **p**

**PROVIDE** → PROVIDES
Ge 22:8 "God himself will **p** the lamb for
1Co 10:13 testing he will also **p** the way out

**PROVIDES** → PROVIDE
Ps 111:5 He **p** food for those who fear him;
1Ti 6:17 who richly **p** us with everything

**PROVOKE** → PROVOKED
Dt 32:21 **p** them with a foolish nation.
Jer 25:6 not **p** me to anger with the work of
Heb 10:24 how to **p** one another to love

**PROVOKED** → PROVOKE
Ps 78:41 and **p** the Holy One of Israel.

**PROWLS***
1Pe 5:8 your adversary the devil **p** around,

**PRUNES**
Jn 15:2 he **p** to make it bear more fruit.

**PSALM** → PSALMS
Ps 47:7 sing praises with a **p.**
Jdt 16:1 Raise to him a new **p;**

**PSALMS** → PSALM
Lk 24:44 and the **p** must be fulfilled."
Eph 5:19 you sing **p** and hymns and spiritual

**PUBLIC**
Mt 1:19 to expose her to **p** disgrace,
Col 2:15 and made a **p** example of them,
1Ti 4:13 to the **p** reading of scripture,

**PUFFED** → PUFFS
Col 2:18 **p** up without cause by a human way
1Ti 3:6 or he may be **p** up with conceit

**PUFFS*** → PUFFED
1Co 8:1 Knowledge **p** up, but love builds up.

**PUNISH** → PUNISHING, PUNISHMENT
Ex 32:34 I will **p** them for their sin."
2Sa 7:14 I will **p** him with a rod such as
Jer 21:14 I will **p** you according to the fruit of
1Pe 2:14 by him to **p** those who do wrong

**PUNISHING** → PUNISH
Dt 5:9 **p** children for the iniquity of parents
Joel 2:13 in steadfast love, and relents from **p.**

**PUNISHMENT** → PUNISH
Ge 4:13 "My **p** is greater than I can bear!
Isa 53:5 was the **p** that made us whole,
Mt 25:46 these will go away into eternal **p,**
1Jn 4:18 for fear has to do with **p,**

**PURE** → PURIFICATION, PURIFIED, PURIFY, PURITY
2Sa 22:27 with the **p** you show yourself **p,**
Ps 19:9 the fear of the LORD is **p,** enduring
119:9 can young people keep their way **p?**
Hab 1:13 Your eyes are too **p** to behold evil,
Mt 5:8 "Blessed are the **p** in heart, for they
Php 4:8 whatever is **p,** whatever is pleasing,
Tit 1:15 To the **p** all things are **p,**
1Jn 3:3 purify themselves, just as he is **p.**

**PURIFICATION** → PURE
Jn 2:6 water jars for the Jewish rites of **p,**
Heb 1:3 When he had made **p** for sins,

**PURIFIED** → PURE
Da 12:10 Many shall be **p,** cleansed, and
1Pe 1:22 **p** your souls by your obedience to

**PURIFY** → PURE
Tit 2:14 **p** for himself a people of his own
Heb 9:14 **p** our conscience from dead works

**PURIM**
Est 9:26 are called **P,** from the word Pur.

**PURITY** → PURE
2Co 6:6 by **p,** knowledge, patience, kindness
1Pe 3:2 the **p** and reverence of your lives.

**PURPLE**
Ex 25:4 **p,** and crimson yarns and fine linen,
Mk 15:17 And they clothed him in a **p** cloak;

**PURPOSE**
Ps 57:2 to God who fulfills his **p** for me.
Isa 46:10 saying, "My **p** shall stand,
Ro 8:28 who are called according to his **p.**
Eph 3:11 was in accordance with the eternal **p**
2Ti 1:9 works but according to his own **p**

**PURSUE** → PURSUED, PURSUES
Ps 34:14 and do good; seek peace, and **p** it.
Ro 14:19 Let us then **p** what makes for peace
1Ti 6:11 **p** righteousness, godliness, faith,
Sir 27:8 If you **p** justice, you will attain it

**PURSUED** → PURSUE
Ex 14:23 Egyptians **p,** and went into the sea
Ps 18:37 I **p** my enemies and overtook them;

**PURSUES** → PURSUE
Pr 21:21 Whoever **p** righteousness
Sir 31:5 **p** money will be led astray by it.

**PUT**
Isa 42:1 I have **p** my spirit upon him;
Eze 36:27 I will **p** my spirit within you,
Mt 12:18 I will **p** my Spirit upon him,
Eph 6:11 **P** on the whole armor of God,

## Q

**QUAILS**
Ex 16:13 In the evening **q** came up
Nu 11:31 and it brought **q** from the sea and

**QUARRELED** → QUARRELSOME
Ex 17:7 the Israelites **q** and tested the LORD,
Nu 20:3 The people **q** with Moses and said,

**QUARRELSOME** → QUARRELED
1Ti 3:3 not **q,** and not a lover of money.
2Ti 2:24 the Lord's servant must not be **q**

**QUEEN**
1Ki 10:1 the **q** of Sheba heard of the fame of
Est 2:17 and made her **q** instead of Vashti.
Mt 12:42 The **q** of the South will rise up at
Rev 18:7 in her heart she says, 'I rule as a **q;**

**QUESTIONS**
2Ch 9:1 to Jerusalem to test him with hard **q,**
Mt 22:46 anyone dare to ask him any more **q.**

**QUICK** → QUICKLY
Jas 1:19 be **q** to listen, slow to speak,
Sir 5:11 Be **q** to hear, but deliberate

**QUICKLY** → QUICK
Jn 13:27 "Do **q** what you are going to do."
Ro 9:28 execute his sentence on the earth **q**
Gal 1:6 so **q** deserting the one who called

**QUIET**
1Ti 2:2 **q** and peaceable life in all godliness
1Pe 3:4 beauty of a gentle and **q** spirit,

**QUIVER**
Ps 127:5 Happy is the man who has his **q** full of
Isa 49:2 in his **q** he hid me away.

## R

**RABBI**
Mt 23:8 But you are not to be called **r,**
Jn 1:38 **"R"** (which translated means Teacher),

**RACE**
Ecc 9:11 the sun the **r** is not to the swift,
1Co 9:24 that in a **r** the runners all compete,
Heb 12:1 let us run with perseverance the **r**
1Pe 2:9 But you are a chosen **r,** a royal

**RACHEL**
Daughter of Laban (Ge 29:16); wife of Jacob (Ge 29:28); bore two sons (Ge 30:22-24; 35:16-24; 46:19). Stole Laban's gods (Ge 31:19, 32-35). Death (Ge 35:19-20).

**RAHAB**
Prostitute who hid Israelite spies (Jos 2; 6:22-25; Heb 11:31; Jas 2:25). Mother of Boaz (Mt 1:5).

**RAIN** → RAINBOW, RAINED, RAINS
Ge 7:4 For in seven days I will send **r** on
1Ki 17:1 neither dew nor **r** these years,
Isa 45:8 let the skies **r** down righteousness;
Mt 5:45 sends **r** on the righteous and on the
Rev 11:6 so that no **r** may fall during the days

**RAINBOW** → BOW
Rev 4:3 the throne is a **r** that looks like an

**RAINED** → RAIN
Ge 19:24 **r** on Sodom and Gomorrah sulfur
Ex 9:23 LORD **r** hail on the land of Egypt;

**RAINS** → RAIN
Lev 26:4 I will give you your **r** in their season
Jas 5:7 receives the early and the late **r.**

**RAISE** → RISE
Dt 18:15 God will **r** up for you a prophet
Jn 2:19 and in three days I will **r** it up."
2Co 4:14 who raised the Lord Jesus will **r** us

**RAISED** → RISE
Mt 17:23 and on the third day he will be **r."**
Ac 2:24 God **r** him up, having freed him
Ro 4:25 and was **r** for our justification.
1Co 15:4 **r** on the third day in accordance

**RAM** → RAMS
Ge 22:13 and took the **r** and offered it up as

Ex 29: 22 (for it is a **r** of ordination).
Da 8: 3 saw a **r** standing beside the river.

**RAMS** → RAM
1Sa 15: 22 and to heed than the fat of **r.**

**RANSOM** → RANSOMED
Ps 49: 8 For the **r** of life is costly, and can
Mt 20: 28 and to give his life a **r** for many."
1Ti 2: 6 who gave himself a **r** for all

**RANSOMED** → RANSOM
Isa 35: 10 And the **r** of the LORD shall return.
Rev 5: 9 by your blood you **r** for God saints

**RAVENS**
1Ki 17: 6 **r** brought him bread and meat in
Lk 12: 24 Consider the **r:** they neither sow

**READ** → READING
Ex 24: 7 and **r** it in the hearing of the people:
Jos 8: 34 he **r** all the words of the law,
Ne 8: 8 they **r** from the book, from the law
Lk 4: 16 as was his custom. He stood up to **r,**
2Co 3: 15 this very day whenever Moses is **r,**

**READING** → READ
Ac 8: 30 you understand what you are **r?"**

**READY**
Lk 1: 17 **r** a people prepared for the Lord."
Rev 19: 7 and his bride has made herself **r;**

**REAP**
Gal 6: 7 for you **r** whatever you sow.
Rev 14: 15 for the hour to **r** has come,

**REBEKAH**
Sister of Laban, secured as bride for Isaac (Ge 24). Mother of Esau and Jacob (Ge 25:19-26). Taken by Abimelech as sister of Isaac; returned (Ge 26:1-11). Encouraged Jacob to trick Isaac out of blessing (Ge 27:1-17).

**REBEL** → REBELLED, REBELLION
Ex 23: 21 do not **r** against him, for he will
1Sa 12: 14 not **r** against the commandment

**REBELLED** → REBEL
Nu 20: 24 because you **r** against my command
Ne 9: 26 they were disobedient and **r**

**REBELLION** → REBEL
1Sa 15: 23 For **r** is no less a sin than divination,
2Th 2: 3 the **r** comes first and the lawless one

**REBUILD** → BUILD
Ezr 1: 3 and **r** the house of the LORD,
Ne 2: 17 let us **r** the wall of Jerusalem,
Da 9: 25 went out to restore and **r** Jerusalem
Ac 15: 16 and I will **r** the dwelling of David,

**REBUKE**
Ps 6: 1 O LORD, do not **r** me in your anger,
Pr 27: 5 Better is open **r** than hidden love.
Zec 3: 2 said to Satan, "The LORD **r** you,
Mk 8: 32 Peter took him aside and began to **r**
2Ti 4: 2 convince, **r,** and encourage.

**RECEIVE** → RECEIVED
Jn 16: 24 Ask and you will **r,** so that your joy
Ac 2: 38 you will **r** the gift of the Holy Spirit.
20: 35 'It is more blessed to give than to **r.'**
Rev 4: 11 to **r** glory and honor and power,

**RECEIVED** → RECEIVE
Mt 6: 2 I tell you, they have **r** their reward.
Jn 1: 12 But to all who **r** him, who believed
1Co 11: 23 I **r** from the Lord what I also handed

**RECKONED** → RECKONING
Ge 15: 6 LORD **r** it to him as righteousness.
Ro 4: 3 it was **r** to him as righteousness."

**RECKONING** → RECKONED
Ge 9: 5 I will require a **r** for human life.
Sir 2: 14 you do when the Lord's **r** comes?

**RECONCILE** → RECONCILED, RECONCILIATION
Ac 7: 26 were quarreling and tried to **r** them,
Col 1: 20 God was pleased to **r** to himself all

**RECONCILED** → RECONCILE
Mt 5: 24 first be **r** to your brother or sister,
1Co 7: 11 let her remain unmarried or else be **r**

**RECONCILIATION** → RECONCILE
Ro 5: 11 whom we have now received **r,**
2Co 5: 18 and has given us the ministry of **r;**

**RED**
Ex 15: 4 officers were sunk in the **R** Sea.
Mt 16: 3 for the sky is **r** and threatening.'
Rev 12: 3 a great **r** dragon, with seven heads

**REDEEM** → REDEEMED, REDEEMER, REDEMPTION
Ex 6: 6 I will **r** you with an outstretched
2Sa 7: 23 whose God went to **r** it as a people,
Gal 4: 5 to **r** those who were under the law,

**REDEEMED** → REDEEM
Dt 15: 15 and the LORD your God **r** you;
Ps 107: 2 Let the **r** of the LORD say so,

**REDEEMER** → REDEEM
Job 19: 25 For I know that my **R** lives,
Ps 19: 14 O LORD, my rock and my **r.**
Isa 48: 17 Thus says the LORD, your **R,**

**REDEMPTION** → REDEEM
Lk 21: 28 because your **r** is drawing near."
Eph 1: 7 In him we have **r** through his blood,
Heb 9: 12 own blood, thus obtaining eternal **r.**

**REFINE** → REFINED
Jer 9: 7 I will now **r** and test them,
Zec 13: 9 **r** them as one refines silver,

**REFINED** → REFINE
Da 12: 10 shall be purified, cleansed, and **r,**

**REFLECTED** → REFLECTION
2Co 3: 18 though **r** in a mirror,

**REFLECTION** → REFLECTED
1Co 11: 7 since he is the image and **r** of God;
Heb 1: 3 He is the **r** of God's glory

**REFUGE**
Nu 35: 11 select cities to be cities of **r** for you,
Ps 2: 12 Happy are all who take **r** in him.
Pr 30: 5 a shield to those who take **r** in him.
Jer 16: 19 my **r** in the day of trouble,

**REFUSE**
Ex 8: 2 If you **r** to let them go,
Eze 3: 27 and let those who **r** to hear, **r;**
Heb 12: 25 do not **r** the one who is speaking;

**REGARD**
Isa 8: 13 of hosts, him you shall **r** as holy;
Php 2: 6 did not **r** equality with God as
3: 7 these I have come to **r** as loss
Heb 12: 5 not **r** lightly the discipline of the

**REGULATIONS**
Col 2: 20 Why do you submit to **r,**
Heb 9: 10 **r** for the body imposed until the

**REHOBOAM**
Son of Solomon (1Ki 11:43; 1Ch 3:10). Harsh treatment of subjects caused divided kingdom (1Ki 12:1-24; 14:21-31; 2Ch 10-12).

**REIGN** → REIGNS
Ex 15: 18 The LORD will **r** forever and ever."
Ps 146: 10 The LORD will **r** forever,
1Co 15: 25 **r** until he has put all his enemies
2Ti 2: 12 we will also **r** with him;
Rev 11: 15 and he will **r** forever and ever."
22: 5 and they will **r** forever and ever.

**REIGNS** → REIGN
Isa 52: 7 who says to Zion, "Your God **r.**"
Rev 19: 6 the Lord our God the Almighty **r.**

**REJECT** → REJECTED
Ex 20: 5 generation of those who **r** me,
Isa 30: 12 Because you **r** this word,

**REJECTED** → REJECT
1Sa 8: 7 but they have **r** me from being king
Ps 60: 1 O God, you have **r** us, broken our
118: 22 The stone that the builders **r**
Isa 53: 3 He was despised and **r** by others;
Mt 21: 42 'The stone that the builders **r**
1Pe 2: 4 though **r** by mortals yet chosen and

**REJOICE** → REJOICING
Ps 5: 11 But let all who take refuge in you **r;**
118: 24 let us **r** and be glad in it.
Isa 62: 5 so shall your God **r** over you.
Zep 3: 17 he will **r** over you with gladness,
Lk 6: 23 **R** in that day and leap for joy,
Php 4: 4 **R** in the Lord always; again I will say, **R.**

**REJOICING** → REJOICE
2Sa 6: 12 to the city of David with **r;**
Ne 8: 17 And there was very great **r.**
2Co 6: 10 as sorrowful, yet always **r;**

**RELEASE**
Isa 61: 1 liberty to the captives, and **r** to
Mt 27: 15 the governor was accustomed to **r**

**RELENT** → RELENTED
Eze 24: 14 I will not spare, I will not **r.**
Joel 2: 14 whether he will not turn and **r,**
Jnh 3: 9 God may **r** and change his mind;

**RELENTED** → RELENT
1Ch 21: 15 LORD took note and **r** concerning
Jer 4: 28 I have not **r** nor will I turn back.

**RELIGION**
Jas 1: 27 **R** that is pure and undefiled before

**RELY**
2Ch 14: 11 O LORD our God, for we **r** on you,
Pr 3: 5 and do not **r** on your own insight.
Gal 3: 10 all who **r** on the works of the law
Sir 5: 1 Do not **r** on your wealth.

**REMAIN** → REMAINS
1Co 7: 20 Let each of you **r** in the condition
Heb 1: 11 they will perish, but you **r;**

**REMAINS** → REMAIN
Jos 13: 2 This is the land that still **r:**
Heb 7: 3 Son of God, he **r** a priest forever.
10: 26 there no longer **r** a sacrifice for sins,

**REMEMBER** → REMEMBERED, REMEMBRANCE
Ge 9: 15 I will **r** my covenant that is between
Ex 20: 8 **R** the sabbath day, and keep it holy.
Dt 8: 18 But **r** the LORD your God,
Job 10: 9 **R** that you fashioned me like clay;
Ecc 12: 1 **R** your creator in the days of your
Jer 31: 34 and **r** their sin no more.
2Ti 2: 8 **R** Jesus Christ, raised from the dead
Heb 8: 12 and I will **r** their sins no more."
Sir 23: 18 The Most High will not **r** sins."

**REMEMBERED** → REMEMBER
Ex 2: 24 God **r** his covenant with Abraham,
Ps 78: 35 They **r** that God was their rock,
106: 45 For their sake he **r** his covenant,
Rev 16: 19 God **r** great Babylon and gave her

**REMEMBRANCE** → REMEMBER
Lk 22: 19 Do this in **r** of me."

**REMNANT**
Ge 45: 7 before you to preserve for you a **r**
Isa 10: 21 A **r** will return, the **r** of Jacob,
Jer 50: 20 will pardon the **r** that I have spared.
Ro 9: 27 only a **r** of them will be saved;

**REMOVE**
Eze 36: 26 **r** from your body the heart of stone
Lk 22: 42 if you are willing, **r** this cup from

**RENEW** → RENEWAL, RENEWED, RENEWING
Isa 40: 31 for the LORD shall **r** their strength,
La 5: 21 **r** our days as of old—

**RENEWAL** → RENEW
Mt 19: 28 I tell you, at the **r** of all things,
Col 3: 11 In that **r** there is no longer Greek

**RENEWED** → RENEW
2Co 4: 16 inner nature is being **r** day by day.
Eph 4: 23 to be **r** in the spirit of your minds,

**RENEWING*** → RENEW
Ro 12: 2 transformed by the **r** of your minds,

**REPAY** → PAY
Ps 28: 4 **R** them according to their work,
Isa 59: 18 to their deeds, so will he **r;**
Ro 12: 17 Do not **r** anyone evil for evil,
Rev 18: 6 and **r** her double for her deeds;

**REPENT** → REPENTANCE
1Ki 8: 47 **r,** and plead with you in the land
Job 42: 6 and **r** in dust and ashes."
Mt 3: 2 **"R,** for the kingdom of heaven has
Ac 2: 38 **"R,** and be baptized every one of
Rev 16: 9 they did not **r** and give him glory.
Sir 18: 21 and when you have sinned, **r.**

**REPENTANCE** → REPENT
Mk 1: 4 a baptism of **r** for the forgiveness
Lk 3: 8 Bear fruits worthy of **r.**
Ro 2: 4 kindness is meant to lead you to **r?**
2Co 7: 10 **r** that leads to salvation and brings
2Pe 3: 9 any to perish, but all to come to **r.**

**REPROVE**
Pr 19: 25 **r** the intelligent, and they will gain
Tit 2: 15 exhort and **r** with all authority.
Rev 3: 19 **r** and discipline those whom I love.

**REQUIRE**
Dt 10: 12 does the LORD your God **r** of you?
Mic 6: 8 the LORD **r** of you but to do justice,

**RESCUE** → RESCUED, RESCUES
Ps 22: 8 him **r** the one in whom he delights!"
Mt 6: 13 but **r** us from the evil one.
2Pe 2: 9 the Lord knows how to **r** the godly

**RESCUED** → RESCUE
Col 1: 13 has **r** us from the power of darkness
Sir 51: 12 and **r** me in time of trouble.

**RESCUES** → RESCUE
Ps 37: 40 The LORD helps them and **r** them;
Da 6: 27 and **r,** he works signs and wonders
1Th 1: 10 Jesus, who **r** us from the wrath that

**RESIST**
Mt 5: 39 I say to you, Do not **r** an evildoer.
Ro 9: 19 For who can **r** his will?"
Jas 4: 7 **R** the devil, and he will flee from

**RESPECT**
Mal 1: 6 if I am a master, where is the **r** due
Ro 13: 7 **r** to whom **r** is due,

**REST** → RESTED, RESTS
Ex 31: 15 seventh day is a sabbath of solemn **r**
2Sa 7: 11 give you **r** from all your enemies.
Ps 95: 11 swore, "They shall not enter my **r."**
Mt 11: 28 and I will give you **r.**
Heb 4: 10 those who enter God's **r** also cease

**RESTED** → REST
Ge 2: 2 he **r** on the seventh day from all the
Ex 20: 11 all that is in them, but **r** the seventh

**RESTORE** → RESTORES
Dt 30: 3 LORD your God will **r** your fortunes
Ps 51: 12 **R** to me the joy of your salvation,
Da 9: 25 the word went out to **r** and rebuild
Mt 17: 11 "Elijah is indeed coming and will **r**

**RESTORES** → RESTORE
Ps 23: 3 he **r** my soul. He leads me in right

**RESTS** → REST
Ps 16: 9 my body also **r** secure.
Pr 19: 23 one **r** secure and suffers no harm.

**RESURRECTION**
Mt 22: 30 For in the **r** they neither marry nor
Mk 12: 18 Sadducees, who say there is no **r,**
Jn 11: 25 said to her, "I am the **r** and the life.
1Co 15: 12 you say there is no **r** of the dead?
Php 3: 10 know Christ and the power of his **r**
Rev 20: 5 This is the first **r.**
2Es 2: 23 will give you the first place in my **r.**

**RETURN**
Ge 3: 19 you are dust, and to dust you shall **r.**
Dt 30: 2 and **r** to the LORD your God,
Ps 116: 12 What shall I **r** to the LORD
Hos 14: 1 **R,** O Israel, to the LORD your God,
Mal 3: 7 **R** to me, and I will **r** to you,

**REUBEN**
Firstborn of Jacob by Leah (Ge 29:32; 46:8; 1Ch 2:1). Attempted to rescue Joseph (Ge 37:21-30). Lost birthright for sleeping with Bilhah (Ge 35:22; 49:4). Tribe of blessed (Ge 49:3-4; Dt 33:6), numbered (Nu 1:21; 26:7), allotted land east of Jordan (Nu 32; 34:14; Jos 13:15), west (Eze 48:6), failed to help Deborah (Jdg 5:15-16), supported David (1Ch 12:37), 12,000 from (Rev 7:5).

**REVEAL** → REVEALED, REVELATION, REVELATIONS
Mt 11: 27 to whom the Son chooses to **r** him.

**REVEALED** → REVEAL
Isa 40: 5 the glory of the LORD shall be **r,**
Mt 16: 17 flesh and blood has not **r** this to you
Lk 17: 30 on the day that the Son of Man is **r.**
Ro 1: 17 in it the righteousness of God is **r**
2Th 1: 7 the Lord Jesus is **r** from heaven
1Jn 3: 2 we do know is this: when he is **r,**

**REVELATION** → REVEAL
1Co 14: 6 some **r** or knowledge or prophecy
Eph 3: 3 was made known to me by **r,**
Rev 1: 1 The **r** of Jesus Christ, which God

**REVELATIONS** → REVEAL
2Co 12: 1 but I will go on to visions and **r** of

**REVERE** → REVERENCE
Jos 24: 14 "Now therefore **r** the LORD,
Mal 4: 2 But for you who **r** my name the sun
Tob 4: 5 **"R** the Lord all your days,

**REVERENCE** → REVERE
Eph 5: 21 subject to one another out of **r** for
1Pe 3: 2 see the purity and **r** of your lives.

**REVILE** → REVILED
Ex 22: 28 You shall not **r** God, or curse
Mt 5: 11 people **r** you and persecute you

**REVILED** → REVILE
1Co 4: 12 When **r,** we bless;
1Pe 4: 14 If you are **r** for the name of Christ,

**REWARD** → REWARDED
Ps 19: 11 in keeping them there is great **r.**
Isa 40: 10 **r** is with him, and his recompense
Mt 6: 5 I tell you, they have received their **r.**
Lk 6: 23 for surely your **r** is great in heaven;
Heb 11: 26 for he was looking ahead to the **r.**
Rev 22: 12 I am coming soon; my **r** is with me,

**REWARDED** → REWARD
2Sa 22: 21 The LORD **r** me according to my

**RIB**
Ge 2: 22 **r** that the LORD God had taken from

**RICH** → RICHES
Pr 23: 4 Do not wear yourself out to get **r;**
Mt 19: 23 hard for a **r** person to enter the
Lk 12: 21 but are not **r** toward God."
2Co 8: 9 by his poverty you might become **r.**
Eph 2: 4 But God, who is **r** in mercy,
1Ti 6: 18 to do good, to be **r** in good works,
Jas 1: 10 and the **r** in being brought low,

**RICHES** → RICH
Ps 62: 10 if **r** increase, do not set your heart
Pr 30: 8 give me neither poverty nor **r;**
Lk 8: 14 they are choked by the cares and **r**
Ro 11: 33 O the depth of the **r** and wisdom
1Jn 2: 16 the desire of the eyes, the pride in **r**
Sir 13: 24 **R** are good if they are free from sin;

**RID**
Col 3: 8 But now you must get **r** of all such
1Pe 2: 1 **R** yourselves, therefore, of all

**RIDER** → RIDES, RIDING
Rev 19: 11 Its **r** is called Faithful and True,

**RIDES** → RIDER
Dt 33: 26 **r** through the heavens to your help,
Ps 68: 4 a song to him who **r** upon the clouds

**RIDING** → RIDER
Zec 9: 9 humble and **r** on a donkey.

**RIGHT** → BIRTHRIGHT
Ex 15: 6 Your **r** hand, O LORD, glorious in
Dt 6: 18 Do what is **r** and good in the sight
Job 42: 7 have not spoken of me what is **r,**
Ps 110: 1 says to my lord, "Sit at my **r** hand
Pr 14: 12 a way that seems **r** to a person,
Mt 25: 33 sheep at his **r** hand and the goats at
Ac 2: 34 said to my Lord, "Sit at my **r** hand,
Heb 1: 13 "Sit at my **r** hand until I make your
1Pe 3: 14 if you do suffer for doing what is **r,**

**RIGHTEOUS** → RIGHTEOUSNESS
Ge 18: 23 "Will you indeed sweep away the **r**
Job 4: 17 'Can mortals be **r** before God?
Ps 11: 7 For the LORD is **r;** he loves **r** deeds;
Pr 10: 6 Blessings are on the head of the **r,**
11: 23 desire of the **r** ends only in good;
15: 29 but he hears the prayer of the **r.**
Jer 23: 5 I will raise up for David a **r** Branch,
Eze 3: 20 if the **r** turn from their righteousness
Hab 2: 4 but the **r** live by their faith.
Mt 5: 45 rain on the **r** and on the unrighteous.
Mk 2: 17 come to call not the **r** but sinners."
Ro 1: 17 one who is **r** will live by faith."
5: 19 the many will be made **r,**
Heb 10: 38 but my **r** one will live by faith.
1Jn 2: 1 with the Father, Jesus Christ the **r;**
Rev 19: 8 the fine linen is the **r** deeds of the
Wis 5: 15 **r** live forever, and their reward
Sir 35: 22 and does justice for the **r,**

**RIGHTEOUSNESS** → RIGHTEOUS
Ge 15: 6 the LORD reckoned it to him as **r.**
Ps 9: 8 He judges the world with **r;**
Pr 12: 28 In the path of **r** there is life,
Ecc 7: 15 people who perish in their **r,**
Isa 11: 5 **R** shall be the belt around his waist,
Jer 23: 6 be called: "The LORD is our **r."**
Da 9: 24 to bring in everlasting **r,**
12: 3 and those who lead many to **r,**
Hos 10: 12 Sow for yourselves **r;** reap steadfast
Mt 5: 6 those who hunger and thirst for **r,**
Jn 16: 8 about sin and **r** and judgment:
Ro 5: 18 act of **r** leads to justification
10: 4 be **r** for everyone who believes.
Gal 3: 6 and it was reckoned to him as **r,"**
Eph 6: 14 and put on the breastplate of **r.**
1Pe 2: 24 free from sins, we might live for **r;**
2Pe 3: 13 heavens and a new earth, where **r** is
Rev 19: 11 and in **r** he judges and makes war.

**RIPE**
Joel 3: 13 Put in the sickle, for the harvest is **r.**
Jn 4: 35 how the fields are **r** for harvesting.
Rev 14: 15 the harvest of the earth is fully **r."**

**RISE** → ARISE, RAISE, RAISED, ROSE
Nu 24: 17 and a scepter shall **r** out of Israel;
Ps 94: 2 **R** up, O judge of the earth;
Da 12: 13 shall **r** for your reward at the end of
Mal 4: 2 the sun of righteousness shall **r,**
Mt 27: 63 'After three days I will **r** again.'
Eph 5: 14 **R** from the dead, and Christ will
1Th 4: 16 and the dead in Christ will **r** first.

**RIVER** → RIVERS
Ps 46: 4 a **r** whose streams make glad the
Isa 48: 18 prosperity would have been like a **r,**
Eze 47: 12 On the banks, on both sides of the **r,**
Mt 3: 6 baptized by him in the **r** Jordan,
Rev 22: 1 showed me the **r** of the water of life,

**RIVERS** → RIVER
Ps 137: 1 By the **r** of Babylon—there we sat
Rev 8: 10 it fell on a third of the **r** and on the

**ROAD** → CROSSROADS
Mt 7: 13 and the **r** is easy that leads to

**ROAR** → ROARING, ROARS
Ps 46: 3 though its waters **r** and foam,
Jer 25: 30 The LORD will **r** from on high,

**ROARING** → ROAR
1Pe 5: 8 a **r** lion your adversary the devil

**ROARS** → ROAR
Hos 11: 10 the LORD, who **r** like a lion:
Joel 3: 16 The LORD **r** from Zion.

**ROB** → ROBBER, ROBBERS
Mal 3: 8 anyone **r** God? Yet you are robbing

**ROBBER** → ROB
1Co 5: 11 an idolater, reviler, drunkard, or **r**,

**ROBBERS** → ROB
Jer 7: 11 become a den of **r** in your sight?
Mt 21: 13 but you are making it a den of **r**."

**ROBE** → ROBED, ROBES
Ge 37: 3 had made him a long **r** with sleeves.
Ex 28: 4 a breastpiece, an ephod, a **r**,
Jn 19: 5 crown of thorns and the purple **r**.
Rev 6: 11 They were each given a white **r** and
19: 13 He is clothed in a **r** dipped in blood,

**ROBED** → ROBE
Ps 93: 1 LORD is king, he is **r** in majesty;
Rev 15: 6 **r** in pure bright linen,

**ROBES** → ROBE
Mk 12: 38 who like to walk around in long **r**,
Rev 22: 14 Blessed are those who wash their **r**,

**ROCK**
Ex 17: 6 Strike the **r**, and water will come
Nu 20: 8 you shall bring water out of the **r**
1Sa 2: 2 there is no **R** like our God.
Ps 19: 14 O LORD, my **r** and my redeemer.
Isa 44: 8 There is no other **r**; I know not one.
Mt 16: 18 and on this **r** I will build my church,
Mk 15: 46 that had been hewn out of the **r**.
1Pe 2: 8 and a **r** that makes them fall."

**ROD**
2Sa 7: 14 I will punish him with a **r** such as
Ps 2: 9 shall break them with a **r** of iron,
23: 4 your **r** and your staff—they comfort
Pr 13: 24 who spare the **r** hate their children,
Heb 9: 4 and Aaron's **r** that budded,
Rev 2: 27 to rule them with an iron **r**,

**ROLL**
Am 5: 24 But let justice **r** down like waters,
Mk 16: 3 "Who will **r** away the stone for us

**ROOF**
Jos 2: 6 to the **r** and hidden them
2Sa 11: 2 he saw from the **r** a woman bathing;
Mk 2: 4 they removed the **r** above him;

**ROOM**
Mk 14: 15 He will show you a large **r** upstairs,
Ro 12: 19 but leave **r** for the wrath of God;
Eph 4: 27 and do not make **r** for the devil.

**ROOT** → ROOTED
Isa 11: 10 On that day the **r** of Jesse
53: 2 and like a **r** out of dry ground;
Ro 15: 12 "The **r** of Jesse shall come,
1Ti 6: 10 For the love of money is a **r** of all
Rev 5: 5 the tribe of Judah, the **R** of David,

**ROOTED** → ROOT
Eph 3: 17 are being **r** and grounded in love,

**ROSE** → RISE
SS 2: 1 I am a **r** of Sharon, a lily
1Th 4: 14 believe that Jesus died and **r** again,

**ROUGH**
Isa 40: 4 and the **r** places a plain,
Lk 3: 5 and the **r** ways made smooth;

**ROYAL**
Jas 2: 8 if you really fulfill the **r** law
1Pe 2: 9 are a chosen race, a **r** priesthood,

**RUBBISH**
1Co 4: 13 have become like the **r** of the world,
Php 3: 8 and I regard them as **r**,

**RUIN** → RUINS
Eze 21: 27 A **r**, a **r**, a **r**—I will make it!
Zep 1: 15 a day of **r** and devastation,

**RUINS** → RUIN
Ezr 9: 9 the house of our God, to repair its **r**,
Ne 2: 17 Jerusalem lies in **r** with its gates
Ac 15: 16 from its **r** I will rebuild it,
1Co 15: 33 "Bad company **r** good morals."
1Mc 3: 43 "Let us restore the **r** of our people,

**RULE** → RULER, RULER'S, RULERS, RULES
Ge 3: 16 husband, and he shall **r** over you."
Ps 110: 2 **R** in the midst of your foes.
Eph 1: 21 far above all **r** and authority and
Col 3: 15 the peace of Christ **r** in your hearts,
Rev 19: 15 he will **r** them with a rod of iron;

**RULER** → RULE
Ex 2: 14 made you a **r** and judge over us?
Mt 2: 6 a **r** who is to shepherd my people
1Co 15: 24 after he has destroyed every **r**
Rev 1: 5 and the **r** of the kings of the earth.

**RULER'S** → RULE
Ge 49: 10 the **r** staff from between his feet,

**RULERS** → RULE
Ps 2: 2 and the **r** take counsel together,
Isa 40: 23 makes the **r** of the earth as nothing,
Eph 6: 12 against the **r**, against the authorities,

**RULES** → RULE
Ps 66: 7 who **r** by his might forever,
Isa 40: 10 and his arm **r** for him;
2Ti 2: 5 competing according to the **r**,

**RUMORS**
Mt 24: 6 you will hear of wars and **r** of wars;

**RUN** → FORERUNNER, RUNNERS
Isa 40: 31 they shall **r** and not be weary,
Gal 2: 2 or had not **r**, in vain.
Heb 12: 1 let us **r** with perseverance the race

**RUNNERS*** → RUN
1Co 9: 24 that in a race the **r** all compete,

**RUST**
Mt 6: 19 where moth and **r** consume
Lk 6: 12 cannot save themselves from **r**

**RUTH**
Moabitess; widow who went to Bethlehem with mother-in-law Naomi (Ru 1). Gleaned in field of Boaz; shown favor (Ru 2). Proposed marriage to Boaz (Ru 3). Married (Ru 4:1-12); bore Obed, ancestor of David (Ru 4:13-22), Jesus (Mt 1:5).

## S

**SABBATH**
Ex 20: 8 Remember the **S** day, and keep it holy.
2Ch 36: 21 the days that it lay desolate it kept **S**,
Mt 12: 1 through the grainfields on the **S**;
Mk 2: 28 Son of Man is lord even of the **S**."
1Mc 1: 43 to idols and profaned the **S**.

**SACKCLOTH** → CLOTH
Da 9: 3 supplication with fasting and **S** and
Mt 11: 21 would have repented long ago in **S**

**SACRED**
Ex 28: 2 You shall make **S** vestments for
34: 13 and cut down their **S** poles

**SACRIFICE** → SACRIFICED, SACRIFICES
Ex 12: 27 'It is the passover **S** to the LORD,
Lev 3: 1 If the offering is a **S** of well-being,
1Sa 15: 22 Surely, to obey is better than **S**,
Ps 40: 6 **S** and offering you do not desire,
Pr 15: 8 **S** of the wicked is an abomination
Da 9: 27 he shall make **S** and offering cease;
Hos 6: 6 For I desire steadfast love and not **S**,
Mt 9: 13 this means, 'I desire mercy, not **S**.'
Ro 3: 25 put forward as a **S** of atonement
Php 4: 18 a **S** acceptable and pleasing to God.
Heb 13: 15 let us continually offer a **S** of praise
1Jn 2: 2 and he is the atoning **S** for our sins,

**SACRIFICED** → SACRIFICE
1Co 5: 7 our paschal lamb, Christ, has been **S**.
8: 1 Now concerning food **S** to idols:

**SACRIFICES** → SACRIFICE
Mk 12: 33 all whole burnt offerings and **S**."
Heb 7: 27 has no need to offer **S** day after day,

**SADDUCEES**
Mt 16: 6 the yeast of the Pharisees and **S**."
Mk 12: 18 **S**, who say there is no resurrection,

**SAFE** → SAFETY
Ps 37: 28 righteous shall be kept **S** forever,
Pr 18: 10 the righteous run into it and are **S**.

**SAFETY** → SAFE
Dt 12: 10 around so that you live in **S**,
Eze 34: 28 they shall live in **S**,

**SAINTS**
Ps 31: 23 Love the LORD, all you his **S**,
Ro 8: 27 the Spirit intercedes for the **S**
1Co 6: 2 that the **S** will judge the world?
Eph 4: 12 equip the **S** for the work of ministry,
Rev 5: 9 by your blood you ransomed for God **S**

**SALT**
Ge 19: 26 back, and she became a pillar of **S**,
Mt 5: 13 "You are the **S** of the earth;

**SALVATION** → SAVE
Ex 15: 2 and he has become my **S**;
Ps 27: 1 The LORD is my light and my **S**;
51: 12 Restore to me the joy of your **S**,
Isa 12: 3 draw water from the wells of **S**.
52: 7 brings good news, who announces **S**,
La 3: 26 one should wait quietly for the **S**
Hab 3: 18 I will exult in the God of my **S**,
Lk 3: 6 all flesh shall see the **S** of God.'"
Ac 4: 12 There is **S** in no one else,
2Co 6: 2 see, now is the day of **S**!
Php 2: 12 work out your own **S** with fear
Heb 2: 3 escape if we neglect so great a **S**?
2Pe 3: 15 regard the patience of our Lord as **S**,
Rev 19: 1 **S** and glory and power to our God,
Bar 4: 29 everlasting joy with your **S**,

**SAMARIA** → SAMARITAN
1Ki 16: 24 and called the city that he built, **S**,
2Ki 17: 6 the king of Assyria captured **S**;
Jn 4: 4 But he had to go through **S**,
Ac 1: 8 in all Judea and **S**, and to the ends

**SAMARITAN** → SAMARIA
Lk 10: 33 But a **S** while traveling came near
Jn 4: 7 A **S** woman came to draw water,

**SAME**
Ro 10: 12 the **S** Lord is Lord of all
1Co 12: 4 varieties of gifts, but the **S** Spirit;
Heb 13: 8 Jesus Christ is the **S** yesterday and

**SAMSON***
Danite judge. Birth promised (Jdg 13). Married a Philistine, but his wife given away (Jdg 14). Vengeance on the Philistines (Jdg 15). Betrayed by Delilah (Jdg 16:1-22). Death (Jdg 16:23-31). Feats of strength: killed lion (Jdg 14:6), 30 Philistines (Jdg 14:19), 1,000 Philistines with jawbone (Jdg 15:13-17), carried off gates of Gaza (Jdg 16:3), pushed down temple of Dagon (Jdg 16:25-30; Heb 11:32).

**SAMUEL**
Ephraimite judge and prophet (Heb 11:32). Birth prayed for (1Sa 1:10-18). Dedicated to temple by Hannah (1Sa 1:21-28). Raised by Eli (1Sa 2:11, 18-26). Called as prophet (1Sa 3). Led Israel to victory over Philistines (1Sa 7). Asked by Israel for a king (1Sa 8). Anointed Saul as king (1Sa 9-10). Farewell speech (1Sa 12). Rebuked Saul for sacrifice (1Sa 13). Announced rejection of Saul (1Sa 15). Anointed David as king (1Sa 16). Protected David from Saul (1Sa 19:18-24). Death (1Sa 25:1). Returned from dead to condemn Saul (1Sa 28).

**SANCTIFICATION** → SANCTIFY
Ro 6: 19 as slaves to righteousness for **S**.
1Th 4: 3 For this is the will of God, your **S**:

**SANCTIFIED** → SANCTIFY
Ex 29: 43 and it shall be **s** by my glory;
Jn 17: 19 so that they also may be **s** in truth.
1Co 6: 11 But you were washed, you were **s,**

**SANCTIFY** → SANCTIFICATION, SANCTIFIED
Lev 11: 44 **s** yourselves therefore, and be holy,
Heb 13: 12 to **s** the people by his own blood.

**SANCTUARY**
Ex 25: 8 And have them make me a **s,**
1Ch 22: 19 build the **s** of the LORD God
Eze 37: 26 and will set my **s** among them
Da 9: 26 shall destroy the city and the **s.**
Heb 9: 24 Christ did not enter a **s** made by
1Mc 1: 21 He arrogantly entered the **s**
4: 36 cleanse the **s** and dedicate it."

**SAND**
Ge 22: 17 as the stars of heaven and as the **s**
Hos 1: 10 Israel shall be like the **s** of the sea,
Mt 7: 26 foolish man who built his house on **s.**

**SANDALS**
Ex 3: 5 Remove the **s** from your feet,
Mt 3: 11 I am not worthy to carry his **s.**

**SARAH**
Wife of Abraham, originally named Sarai; barren (Ge 11:29-31; 1Pe 3:6). Taken by Pharaoh as Abraham's sister; returned (Ge 12:10-20). Gave Hagar to Abraham; sent her away in pregnancy (Ge 16). Name changed; Isaac promised (Ge 17:15-21; 18:10-15; Heb 11:11). Taken by Abimelech as Abraham's sister; returned (Ge 20). Isaac born; Hagar and Ishmael sent away (Ge 21:1-21; Gal 4:21-31). Death (Ge 23).

**SAT** → SIT
Heb 10: 12 "he **s** down at the right hand of God,
Rev 3: 21 and **s** down with my Father

**SATAN**
1Ch 21: 1 **S** stood up against Israel,
Job 1: 6 and **S** also came among them.
Zec 3: 2 "The LORD rebuke you, O **S!**
Mt 4: 10 Jesus said to him, "Away with you, **S!**
12: 26 If **S** casts out **S,** he is divided
16: 23 said to Peter, "Get behind me, **S!**
2Co 11: 14 **S** disguises himself as an angel of light.
Rev 12: 9 who is called the Devil and **S,**
20: 7 **S** will be released from his prison

**SATISFIED** → SATISFY
Ps 17: 15 I shall be **s,** beholding your likeness.
Joel 2: 26 You shall eat in plenty and be **s,**

**SATISFY** → SATISFIED
Isa 55: 2 labor for that which does not **s?**
Jer 31: 25 I will **s** the weary, and all who are

**SAUL** → =PAUL
1. Benjamite; anointed by Samuel as first king of Israel (1Sa 9-10). Defeated Ammonites (1Sa 11). Rebuked for offering sacrifice (1Sa 13:1-15). Defeated Philistines (1Sa 14). Rejected as king for failing to annihilate Amalekites (1Sa 15). Soothed from evil spirit by David (1Sa 16:14-23). Sent David against Goliath (1Sa 17). Jealousy and attempted murder of David (1Sa 18:1-11). Gave David Michal as wife (1Sa 18:12-30). Second attempt to kill David (1Sa 19). Anger at Jonathan (1Sa 20:26-34). Pursued David; killed priests at Nob (1Sa 22), went to Keilah and Ziph (1Sa 23), life spared by David at En Gedi (1Sa 24) and in his tent (1Sa 26). Rebuked by Samuel's spirit for consulting witch at Endor (1Sa 28). Wounded by Philistines; took his own life (1Sa 31; 1Ch 10). Lamented by David (2Sa 1:17-27). Children (1Sa 14:49-51; 1Ch 8).
2. See Paul.

**SAVE** → SALVATION, SAVED, SAVIOR
Ps 54: 1 **S** me, O God, by your name,
Isa 59: 1 LORD's hand is not too short to **s,**
Jer 15: 20 for I am with you to **s** you
Mt 1: 21 he will **s** his people from their sins."
16: 25 who want to **s** their life will lose it,
Lk 19: 10 came to seek out and to **s** the lost."
Heb 7: 25 to **s** those who approach God

**SAVED** → SAVE
Isa 45: 22 Turn to me and be **s,**
Joel 2: 32 on the name of the LORD shall be **s;**
Mt 10: 22 who endures to the end will be **s.**
Mk 15: 31 He **s** others; he cannot save himself.
Lk 13: 23 "Lord, will only a few be **s?"**
Ac 2: 21 on the name of the Lord shall be **s.'**
16: 30 "Sirs, what must I do to be **s?"**
Ro 10: 13 on the name of the Lord shall be **s."**
Eph 2: 8 For by grace you have been **s**

**SAVIOR** → SAVE
Ps 106: 21 They forgot God, their **S,**
Isa 49: 26 know that I am the LORD your **S,**
Hos 13: 4 and besides me there is no **s.**
Lk 2: 11 this day in the city of David a **S,**
Ac 13: 23 to Israel a **S,** Jesus, as he promised;
1Ti 4: 10 who is the **S** of all people,
Tit 2: 13 of the glory of our great God and **S,**
2Pe 3: 18 knowledge of our Lord and **S** Jesus

**SCARLET**
Isa 1: 18 your sins are like **s,** they shall be
Mt 27: 28 stripped him and put a **s** robe on him

**SCATTER** → SCATTERED
Dt 4: 27 LORD will **s** you among the peoples;
Jer 9: 16 I will **s** them among nations that

**SCATTERED** → SCATTER
Dt 30: 3 the LORD your God has **s** you.
Jer 31: 10 "He who **s** Israel will gather him,
Mk 14: 27 the shepherd, and the sheep will be **s.'**

**SCEPTER**
Ge 49: 10 The **s** shall not depart from Judah,
Nu 24: 17 and a **s** shall rise out of Israel;
Heb 1: 8 righteous **s** is the **s** of your kingdom.

**SCOFFED** → SCOFFERS
Lk 23: 35 but the leaders **s** at him, saying,

**SCOFFERS** → SCOFFED
Ps 1: 1 or sit in the seat of **s;**
Pr 19: 29 Condemnation is ready for **s,**
2Pe 3: 3 that in the last days **s** will come,

**SCRIBES**
Mt 7: 29 having authority, and not as their **s.**
23: 13 "But woe to you, **s** and Pharisees,

**SCRIPTURE** → SCRIPTURES
Lk 4: 21 "Today this **s** has been fulfilled in
Jn 10: 35 and the **s** cannot be annulled—
1Ti 4: 13 attention to the public reading of **s,**
2Ti 3: 16 All **s** is inspired by God and is useful

**SCRIPTURES** → SCRIPTURE
Mt 22: 29 know neither the **s** nor the power
Lk 24: 45 their minds to understand the **s,**
Jn 5: 39 "You search the **s** because you think
1Co 15: 3 our sins in accordance with the **s,**

**SCROLL**
Lk 4: 17 the **s** of the prophet Isaiah was given
Rev 5: 2 to open the **s** and break its seals?"

**SEA**
Ge 1: 26 have dominion over the fish of the **s,**
Ex 15: 1 and rider he has thrown into the **s.**
Dt 30: 13 Neither is it beyond the **s,** that you
Ps 95: 5 The **s** is his, for he made it,
Da 7: 3 great beasts came up out of the **s,**
Mic 7: 19 all our sins into the depths of the **s.**
Rev 4: 6 there is something like a **s** of glass,
13: 1 a beast rising out of the **s** having
21: 1 and the **s** was no more.

**SEAL** → SEALS
Da 8: 26 As for you, **s** up the vision,
2Co 1: 22 by putting his **s** on us and giving us
Eph 1: 13 the **s** of the promised Holy Spirit;
Rev 7: 3 our God with a **s** on their foreheads.
22: 10 not **s** up the words of the prophecy

**SEALS** → SEAL
Rev 5: 2 to open the scroll and break its **s?"**

**SEARCH** → SEARCHES
Dt 4: 29 if you **s** after him with all your heart
Ps 139: 23 **S** me, O God, and know my heart;
Eze 34: 11 I myself will **s** for my sheep,

**SEARCHES** → SEARCH
Ro 8: 27 And God, who **s** the heart,
1Co 2: 10 the Spirit **s** everything,

**SEASON** → SEASONS
Ps 1: 3 which yield their fruit in its **s,**
Ecc 3: 1 For everything there is a **s,**

**SEASONS** → SEASON
Ge 1: 14 let them be for signs and for **s** and
Gal 4: 10 and months, and **s,** and years.
1Th 5: 1 Now concerning the times and the **s,**

**SEAT** → SEATED
Ex 25: 17 make a mercy **s** of pure gold;
Ps 1: 1 or sit in the **s** of scoffers;
Ro 14: 10 stand before the judgment **s** of God.
2Co 5: 10 must appear before the judgment **s**

**SEATED** → SEAT
Lk 22: 69 the Son of Man will be **s** at the right
Eph 1: 20 and **s** him at his right hand
Rev 4: 4 **s** on the thrones are twenty-four elders,
19: 4 and worshiped God who is **s** on

**SECOND** → TWO
Mt 22: 39 And a **s** is like it:
Rev 20: 14 This is the **s** death, the lake of fire;

**SECRET**
Dt 29: 29 The **s** things belong to the LORD
Ro 2: 16 will judge the **s** thoughts of all.

**SECURITY** → SECURE
Pr 12: 3 No one finds **s** by wickedness,
1Th 5: 3 they say, "There is peace and **s,"**

**SEE** → FORESEEING, NEAR-SIGHTED, SEEN, SEES, SIGHT
Ex 12: 13 when I **s** the blood, I will pass over
33: 20 for no one shall **s** me and live."
Ps 115: 5 eyes, but do not **s.**
Jn 9: 25 that though I was blind, now I **s."**
1Co 13: 12 we **s** in a mirror, dimly,
1Jn 3: 2 for we will **s** him as he is.
Rev 1: 7 the clouds; every eye will **s** him,

**SEED** → SEEDS, SEEDTIME
Isa 6: 13 The holy **s** is its stump.
Mt 17: 20 have faith the size of a mustard **s,**
1Pe 1: 23 of perishable but of imperishable **s,**

**SEEDS** → SEED
Mt 13: 8 Other **s** fell on good soil
Mk 4: 31 the smallest of all the **s** on earth;

**SEEK**
1Ch 28: 9 If you **s** him, he will be found by
Ps 34: 10 those who **s** the LORD lack no good
119: 10 With my whole heart I **s** you;
Isa 55: 6 **S** the LORD while he may be found,
65: 1 found by those who did not **s** me.
Lk 19: 10 came to **s** out and to save
Heb 11: 6 that he rewards those who **s** him.
Sir 2: 16 who fear the Lord **s** to please him,

**SEEMS**
Pr 16: 25 there is a way that **s** to be right,
Heb 12: 11 discipline always **s** painful rather

**SEEN** → SEE
Jn 1: 18 No one has ever **s** God.
14: 9 Whoever has **s** me has **s** the Father.
20: 29 Blessed are those who have not **s**
1Pe 1: 8 you have not **s** him, you love him;

**SELF-CONTROL** → SELF-CONTROLLED
1Co 7: 5 tempt you because of your lack of **s.**
2Pe 1: 6 with **s,** and **s** with endurance,

**SELF-CONTROLLED** → SELF-CONTROL
Tit 1: 8 prudent, upright, devout, and **s.**
2: 5 to be **s,** chaste, good managers

**SELFISH** → SELFISHNESS
Ps 119: 36 to your decrees, and not to **s** gain.

Php 1:17 proclaim Christ out of **s** ambition.
Jas 3:14 if you have bitter envy and **s**

### SELFISHNESS* → SELFISH
2Co 12:20 anger, **s**, slander, gossip, conceit.

### SELL
Pr 23:23 Buy truth, and do not **s** it;
Mk 10:21 **s** what you own, and give the money

### SEND → SENT
Ex 33:2 I will **s** an angel before you,
Isa 6:8 And I said, "Here am I; **s** me!"
Jn 3:17 God did not **s** the Son into the world to
14:26 whom the Father will **s** in my name.

### SENNACHERIB
Assyrian king; siege of Jerusalem was overthrown by the LORD following prayer of Hezekiah and Isaiah (2Ki 18:13-19:37; 2Ch 32:1-21; Isa 36-37).

### SENT → SEND
Ex 3:14 'I AM has **s** me to you.'"
Lk 10:16 rejects me rejects the one who **s** me.
Jn 17:18 As you have **s** me into the world,
20:21 the Father has **s** me, so I send you."
1Jn 4:10 and **s** his Son to be the atoning

### SEPARATE → SEPARATED
Mt 19:6 joined together, let no one **s.**"
Ro 8:35 will **s** us from the love of Christ?
1Co 7:10 wife should not **s** from her husband

### SEPARATED → SEPARATE
Lev 20:24 I have **s** you from the peoples.
Heb 7:26 **s** from sinners, and exalted above

### SERPENT → SERPENTS
Ge 3:1 the **s** was more crafty than any other
Nu 21:9 Moses made a **s** of bronze,
2Co 11:3 the **s** deceived Eve by its cunning,
Rev 20:2 He seized the dragon, that ancient **s,**

### SERPENTS → SERPENT
Mt 10:16 wise as **s** and innocent as doves.

### SERVANT → SERVANTS
Ps 19:11 Moreover by them is your **s** warned;
Isa 42:1 Here is my **s,** whom I uphold,
43:10 and my **s** whom I have chosen,
53:11 my **s,** shall make many righteous,
Zec 3:8 going to bring my **s** the Branch.
Lk 1:38 "Here am I, the **s** of the Lord;
Ac 3:13 has glorified his **s** Jesus,
2Ti 2:24 Lord's **s** must not be quarrelsome
Heb 3:5 faithful in all God's house as a **s,**

### SERVANTS → SERVANT
2Ki 17:23 as he had foretold through all his **s**
Jn 15:15 I do not call you **s** any longer,
1Pe 2:16 As **s** of God, live as free people,
Rev 7:3 marked the **s** of our God with a seal

### SERVE
Jos 24:15 my household, we will **s** the LORD."
1Sa 12:20 but **s** the LORD with all your heart:
Mt 6:24 You cannot **s** God and wealth.
Mk 10:45 Son of Man came not to be served but
to **s,**
1Pe 4:10 **s** one another with whatever gift

### SETH
Ge 4:25 she bore a son and named him **S,**

### SETTLE
Ge 26:2 **s** in the land that I shall show you.
Nu 33:53 possession of the land and **s** in it,

### SEVEN → SEVENTH
Ge 7:2 with you **s** pairs of all clean animals,
Ex 25:37 You shall make the **s** lamps for it;
Jos 6:4 march around the city **s** times,
Da 9:25 prince, there shall be **s** weeks;
Mt 18:22 "Not **s** times, but, I tell you,
seventy-seven
Rev 1:12 turning I saw **s** golden lampstands,
5:1 and on the back, sealed with **s** seals;
8:2 I saw the **s** angels who stand before
12:3 a great red dragon, with **s** heads and
15:1 **s** angels with **s** plagues,

### SEVENTH → SEVEN
Ge 2:2 on the **s** day God finished the work
Ex 20:10 the **s** day is a sabbath to the LORD
23:11 but the **s** year you shall let it rest
Heb 4:4 God rested on the **s** day from all his

### SEVENTY → SEVENTY-SEVEN
Ge 46:27 who came into Egypt were **s.**
2Ch 36:21 it kept sabbath, to fulfill **s** years.
Jer 25:12 Then after **s** years are completed,
Da 9:24 **S** weeks are decreed for your people

### SEVENTY-SEVEN → SEVENTY
Mt 18:22 "Not seven times, but, I tell you, **s**

### SEXUAL
1Co 10:8 not indulge in **s** immorality as some

### SHADOW
2Ki 20:11 brought the **s** back the ten intervals.
Ps 17:8 hide me in the **s** of your wings,
91:1 who abide in the **s** of the Almighty,
Mt 4:16 and **s** of death light has dawned."
Col 2:17 are only a **s** of what is to come,

### SHADRACH → =HANANIAH
Hebrew exiled to Babylon; name changed from Hananiah (Da 1:6-7). Refused defilement by food (Da 1:8-20). Refused to worship idol (Da 3:1-18); saved from furnace (Da 3:19-30).

### SHALLUM
King of Israel (2Ki 15:10-16).

### SHALMANESER
King of Assyria; conquered and deported Israel (2Ki 17:3-4; 18:9; Tob 1:2).

### SHAME → ASHAMED, SHAMEFUL
Ps 69:6 who hope in you be put to **s** because
Eze 39:26 They shall forget their **s,** and all
Da 12:2 some to **s** and everlasting contempt.
1Co 1:27 foolish in the world to **s** the wise;
Heb 12:2 endured the cross, disregarding its **s,**
1Jn 2:28 be put to **s** before him at his coming.

### SHAMEFUL → SHAME
2Co 4:2 We have renounced the **s** things
Eph 5:12 For it is **s** even to mention

### SHAMGAR*
Judge; killed 600 Philistines (Jdg 3:31; 5:6).

### SHARE
Nu 18:20 I am your **s** and your possession
Lk 3:11 "Whoever has two coats must **s**
Ro 15:27 for if the Gentiles have come to **s**
Col 1:12 to **s** in the inheritance of the saints
Heb 12:10 in order that we may **s** his holiness.
Jude 1:3 to you about the salvation we **s,**

### SHARP → SHARPENS, SHARPER
Pr 5:4 **s** as a two-edged sword.
Rev 19:15 a **s** sword with which to strike down

### SHARPENS → SHARP
Pr 27:17 Iron **s** iron, and one person **s**

### SHARPER* → SHARP
Heb 4:12 **s** than any two-edged sword,

### SHEBA
1. Benjamite; rebelled against David (2Sa 20).
2. Queen of Sheba (1Ki 10; 2Ch 9; Mt 12:42; Lk 11:31).

### SHECHEM
1. Raped Jacob's daughter Dinah; killed (Ge 34).
2. City where Joshua renewed the covenant (Jos 24). Abimelech as king (Jdg 9).

### SHED → BLOODSHED, SHEDDING
Ge 9:6 shall that person's blood be **s;**
Pr 6:17 and hands that **s** innocent blood,
Mt 23:35 may come all the righteous blood **s**
Rev 16:6 **s** the blood of saints and prophets,

### SHEDDING → SHED
Heb 9:22 without the **s** of blood there is no
12:4 resisted to the point of **s** your blood.

### SHEEP
1Ki 22:17 like **s** that have no shepherd;
Ps 100:3 people, and the **s** of his pasture.
Isa 53:6 All we like **s** have gone astray;
Eze 34:15 myself will be the shepherd of my **s.**
Zec 13:7 shepherd, that the **s** may be scattered;
Mt 9:36 like **s** without a shepherd.
Lk 15:4 a hundred **s** and losing one of them.
Jn 10:7 I am the gate for the **s.**
10:15 And I lay down my life for the **s.**
Heb 13:20 the great shepherd of the **s,**
1Pe 2:25 For you were going astray like **s,**

### SHELTER
Ps 91:1 who live in the **s** of the Most High,
Rev 7:15 is seated on the throne will **s** them.

### SHEM
Son of Noah (Ge 5:32; 6:10). Blessed (Ge 9:26). Descendants (Ge 10:21-31; 11:10-32; Lk 3:36).

### SHEOL
Nu 16:30 and they go down alive into **S,**
Job 26:6 **S** is naked before God,
Ps 139:8 if I make my bed in **S,** you are there.
Isa 28:15 and with **S** we have an agreement;
Hos 13:14 O **S,** where is your destruction?

### SHEPHERD → SHEPHERDS
2Sa 7:7 whom I commanded to **s** my people
Ps 23:1 The LORD is my **s,** I shall not want.
Ecc 12:11 sayings that are given by one **s.**
Isa 40:11 He will feed his flock like a **s;**
Mt 2:6 ruler who is to **s** my people Israel.'"
26:31 strike the **s,** and the sheep of the flock
Jn 10:11 "I am the good **s.**
Heb 13:20 the great **s** of the sheep,
1Pe 5:4 And when the chief **s** appears,

### SHEPHERDS → SHEPHERD
Eze 34:2 prophesy against the **s** of Israel:
Lk 2:8 there were **s** living in the fields,

### SHIELD
Ge 15:1 I am your **s;** your reward shall be
Ps 7:10 God is my **s,** who saves the upright
Eph 6:16 With all of these, take the **s** of faith,

### SHILOH
1Sa 1:24 to the house of the LORD at **S;**

### SHIMEI
Cursed David (2Sa 16:5-14); spared (2Sa 19:16-23). Killed by Solomon (1Ki 2:8-9, 36-46).

### SHINE → SHINES, SHINING
Nu 6:25 LORD make his face to **s** upon you,
Ps 4:6 light of your face **s** on us, O LORD!"
Isa 60:1 **s;** for your light has come,
Da 12:3 Those who are wise shall **s** like the
Mt 5:16 let your light **s** before others,
Eph 5:14 the dead, and Christ will **s** on you."

### SHINES → SHINE
Jn 1:5 The light **s** in the darkness,

### SHINING → SHINE
2Pe 1:19 to this as to a lamp **s** in a dark place.
1Jn 2:8 and the true light is already **s.**

### SHORT
Isa 59:1 the LORD's hand is not too **s** to save,
Mt 24:22 if those days had not been cut **s,**
Ro 3:23 sinned and fall **s** of the glory of God;

### SHOUT
Ps 47:1 **s** to God with loud songs of joy.
Zec 9:9 **S** aloud, O daughter Jerusalem!
Lk 19:40 were silent, the stones would **s** out."

### SHOW → SHOWED
Ge 12:1 to the land that I will **s** you.
Ex 33:18 Moses said, "**S** me your glory.
Ps 85:7 **S** us your steadfast love, O LORD,
Jn 14:8 said to him, "Lord, **s** us the Father,
1Co 12:31 will **s** you a still more excellent way
Rev 4:1 I will **s** you what must take place

### SHOWED → SHOW
Dt 34:1 the LORD **s** him the whole land:
Jn 20:20 he **s** them his hands and his side.

### SHOWERS
Dt 32: 2 rain on grass, like **s** on new growth.
Eze 34: 26 they shall be **s** of blessing.

### SHUT
Isa 22: 22 he shall open, and no one shall **s**;
Da 6: 22 God sent his angel and **s** the lions'
Rev 3: 7 who opens and no one will **s**,

### SICK → SICKNESS
Mt 8: 16 and cured all who were **s**.
9: 12 of a physician, but those who are **s**.
Jas 5: 14 Are any among you **s**?

### SICKLE
Joel 3: 13 Put in the **s**, for the harvest is ripe.
Rev 14: 14 and a sharp **s** in his hand!

### SICKNESS → SICK
Ex 23: 25 I will take **s** away from among you.
Mt 4: 23 and curing every disease and every **s**

### SIDE → ASIDE
Ps 91: 7 A thousand may fall at your **s**,
124: 1 the LORD who was on our **s**
Jn 19: 34 soldiers pierced his **s** with a spear,

### SIFT
Isa 30: 28 to **s** the nations with the sieve of
Lk 22: 31 Satan has demanded to **s** all of you

### SIGHT → SEE
Ge 6: 11 the earth was corrupt in God's **s**,
Ps 72: 14 and precious is their blood in his **s**.
Mt 11: 5 blind receive their **s**, the lame walk,
2Co 5: 7 for we walk by faith, not by **s**.
1Pe 3: 4 which is very precious in God's **s**.

### SIGN → SIGNS
Ge 9: 12 the **s** of the covenant that I make
17: 11 a **s** of the covenant between me
Isa 7: 14 the Lord himself will give you a **s**.
Mt 24: 3 the **s** of your coming and of the end
Mk 8: 12 does this generation ask for a **s**?

### SIGNS → SIGN
Ge 1: 14 be for **s** and for seasons and for days
Ex 7: 3 I will multiply my **s** and wonders in
Da 6: 27 he works **s** and wonders in heaven
Mt 16: 3 cannot interpret the **s** of the times.
Jn 20: 30 Jesus did many other **s** in the
1Co 1: 22 Jews demand **s** and Greeks desire
Rev 16: 14 demonic spirits, performing **s**,

### SILAS
Prophet (Ac 15:22-32); co-worker with Paul on second missionary journey (Ac 16-18; 2Co 1:19). Co-writer with Paul (1Th 1:1; 2Th 1:1); Peter (1Pe 5:12).

### SILENT
Isa 53: 7 a sheep that before its shearers is **s**,
Zep 1: 7 Be **s** before the Lord GOD!
Mk 14: 61 But he was **s** and did not answer.
1Co 14: 34 women should be **s** in the churches.

### SILVER
Ps 66: 10 you have tried us as **s** is tried.
Pr 8: 10 Take my instruction instead of **s**,
Isa 48: 10 I have refined you, but not like **s**;
Zec 13: 9 refine them as one refines **s**,
Mt 26: 15 They paid him thirty pieces of **s**.
Ac 3: 6 But Peter said, "I have no **s** or gold,
1Co 3: 12 on the foundation with gold, **s**,

### SIMEON → =SIMON
1. Son of Jacob by Leah (Ge 29:33; 35:23; 1Ch 2:1). With Levi killed Shechem for rape of Dinah (Ge 34:25-29). Held hostage by Joseph in Egypt (Ge 42:24-43:23). Tribe of blessed (Ge 49:5-7), numbered (Nu 1:23; 26:14), allotted land (Jos 19:1-9; Eze 48:24), 12,000 from (Rev 7:7).
2. Godly Jew who blessed the infant Jesus (2:25-35).
3. See Peter (Ac 15:14; 2Pe 1:1).

### SIMON → =PETER, =SIMEON
1. See Peter.
2. Apostle; the Zealot (Mt 10:4; Mk 3:18; Lk 6:15; Ac 1:13).
3. Samaritan sorcerer (Ac 8:9-24).

### SIMPLE
Ps 19: 7 are sure, making wise the **s**;
Pr 1: 22 O **s** ones, will you love being **s**?
14: 15 The **s** believe everything,

### SIN → SINFUL, SINNED, SINNER, SINNERS, SINS
Ge 4: 7 not do well, **s** is lurking at the door;
Ex 32: 32 if you will only forgive their **s**—
Nu 32: 23 and be sure your **s** will find you out.
1Ki 8: 46 "If they **s** against you—
2Ch 7: 14 forgive their **s** and heal their land.
Ps 119: 11 so that I may not **s** against you.
Isa 53: 12 yet he bore the **s** of many,
Mt 5: 29 If your right eye causes you to **s**,
Jn 1: 29 who takes away the **s** of the world!
Ro 6: 23 For the wages of **s** is death,
2Co 5: 21 made him to be **s** who knew no **s**,
Heb 4: 15 tested as we are, yet without **s**.
1Jn 1: 7 Jesus his Son cleanses us from all **s**.
Tob 12: 10 but those who commit **s**
Wis 10: 13 but delivered him from **s**.
Sir 3: 30 so almsgiving atones for **s**.

### SINAI → =HOREB
Ex 19: 20 the LORD descended upon Mount **S**,
Ps 68: 17 the Lord came from **S** into the holy
Gal 4: 25 Now Hagar is Mount **S** in Arabia

### SINFUL → SIN
Lk 5: 8 from me, Lord, for I am a **s** man!"
Ro 8: 3 Son in the likeness of **s** flesh,
1Mc 1: 10 From them came forth a **s** root,

### SING → SINGERS, SONG, SONGS, SUNG
Ex 15: 1 "I will **s** to the LORD,
Ps 47: 6 **S** praises to God, **s** praises;
Isa 5: 1 **s** for my beloved my love-song
1Co 14: 15 I will **s** praise with the spirit,
Col 3: 16 gratitude in your hearts **s** psalms,
Rev 5: 9 They **s** a new song:
Jdt 16: 13 I will **s** to my God a new song:
Aza 1: 35 **s** praise to him and highly exalt him

### SINGERS → SING
1Ch 15: 16 to appoint their kindred as the **s**
Ezr 2: 70 and the **s**, the gatekeepers,

### SINGLE
Mt 6: 27 worrying add a **s** hour to your span
Rev 21: 21 each of the gates is a **s** pearl,

### SINNED → SIN
Nu 14: 40 LORD has promised, for we have **s**."
Ps 51: 4 Against you, you alone, have I **s**,
La 5: 7 Our ancestors **s**; they are no more,
Ro 3: 23 all have **s** and fall short of the glory of God;
1Jn 1: 10 If we say that we have not **s**,
Sir 18: 21 and when you have **s**, repent.

### SINNER → SIN
Lk 15: 7 over one **s** who repents than
Jas 5: 20 that whoever brings back a **s**

### SINNERS → SIN
Ps 1: 1 or take the path that **s** tread,
Pr 23: 17 Do not let your heart envy **s**,
Lk 6: 33 For even **s** do the same.
Ro 5: 8 we still were **s** Christ died for us.
1Ti 1: 15 Jesus came into the world to save **s**

### SINS → SIN
1Sa 2: 25 but if someone **s** against the LORD,
Ps 103: 10 not deal with us according to our **s**,
Isa 1: 18 your **s** are like scarlet, they shall be
Eze 18: 4 only the person who **s** that shall die.
Mic 7: 19 cast all our **s** into the depths of the
Mt 9: 6 has authority on earth to forgive **s**"—
Mk 1: 5 the river Jordan, confessing their **s**.
Lk 11: 4 forgive us our **s**, for we ourselves
Ac 3: 19 to God so that your **s** may be wiped
1Co 15: 3 Christ died for our **s** in accordance
Heb 9: 28 offered once to bear the **s** of many,
1Jn 1: 9 If we confess our **s**, he who is faithful
Rev 1: 5 loves us and freed us from our **s**
Sir 2: 11 he forgives **s** and saves

### SISTER
Ge 12: 13 Say you are my **s**, so that it may go
20: 2 of his wife Sarah, "She is my **s**."
Pr 7: 4 Say to wisdom, "You are my **s**,"
Mk 3: 35 the will of God is my brother and **s**

### SIT → SAT, SITS
Ps 1: 1 or **s** in the seat of scoffers;
110: 1 says to my lord, "**S** at my right hand
Jer 33: 17 never lack a man to **s** on the throne
Mt 20: 23 to **s** at my right hand and at my left,
Heb 1: 13 "**S** at my right hand until I make

### SITS → SIT
Ps 2: 4 He who **s** in the heavens laughs;
Isa 28: 6 to the one who **s** in judgment,

### SIX
Ex 20: 9 **S** days you shall labor and do all
Pr 6: 16 are **s** things that the LORD hates,
Isa 6: 2 above him; each had **s** wings:
Rev 4: 8 each of them with **s** wings,

### SKILL
Ex 28: 3 whom I have endowed with **s**,
1Ki 7: 14 he was full of **s**, intelligence,

### SKIN
Job 2: 4 Satan answered the LORD, "**S** for **s**!
19: 26 after my **s** has been thus destroyed,
Jer 13: 23 Can Ethiopians change their **s**

### SKULL
2Ki 9: 35 they found no more of her than the **s**
Mt 27: 33 Golgotha (which means Place of a **S**)

### SKY
Dt 28: 23 **s** over your head shall be bronze,
Mt 16: 3 to interpret the appearance of the **s**,
Rev 6: 14 The **s** vanished like a scroll rolling

### SLANDER → SLANDERED
Ps 15: 3 who do not **s** with their tongue,
Pr 10: 18 and whoever utters **s** is a fool.
Mt 15: 19 fornication, theft, false witness, **s**.
1Pe 2: 1 all guile, insincerity, envy, and all **s**.

### SLANDERED → SLANDER
1Co 4: 13 when **s**, we speak kindly.

### SLAUGHTER → SLAUGHTERED
Pr 7: 22 and goes like an ox to the **s**,
Isa 53: 7 like a lamb that is led to the **s**,
Zec 11: 4 a shepherd of the flock doomed to **s**.
Ac 8: 32 "Like a sheep he was led to the **s**,

### SLAUGHTERED → SLAUGHTER
Rev 5: 6 a Lamb standing as if it had been **s**,
6: 9 who had been **s** for the word of God

### SLAVE → ENSLAVE, ENSLAVED, SLAVERY, SLAVES
Ge 21: 10 Cast out this **s** woman with her son;
Mk 10: 44 first among you must be **s** of all.
Jn 8: 34 who commits sin is a **s** to sin.
Gal 3: 28 there is no longer **s** or free,

### SLAVERY → SLAVE
Ex 20: 2 out of the house of **s**;
Ro 7: 14 of the flesh, sold into **s** under sin.
Gal 5: 1 do not submit again to a yoke of **s**.

### SLAVES → SLAVE
Ro 6: 16 are **s** of the one whom you obey,
2Pe 2: 19 people are **s** to whatever masters

### SLEEP → ASLEEP, SLEEPER, SLEEPING
Ge 2: 21 God caused a deep **s** to fall upon
15: 12 a deep **s** fell upon Abram,
Ps 121: 4 keeps Israel will neither slumber nor **s**.
Da 12: 2 Many of those who **s** in the dust of

### SLEEPER → SLEEP
Eph 5: 14 "**S**, awake! Rise from the dead.

### SLEEPING → SLEEP
Mt 9: 24 for the girl is not dead but **s**."
26: 40 to the disciples and found them **s**;

### SLING
1Sa 17: 50 over the Philistine with a **s** and a stone,

### SLIP
Dt 32:35 for the time when their foot shall **s**;
Ps 37:31 their steps do not **s**.

### SLOW → SLOWNESS
Ex 34:6 merciful and gracious, **s** to anger,
Nu 14:18 'The LORD is **s** to anger,
Ps 145:8 **s** to anger and abounding in
Na 1:3 The LORD is **s** to anger but great in
Lk 24:25 and how **s** of heart to believe all that
2Pe 3:9 The Lord is not **s** about his promise,
Tob 12:6 Do not be **s** to acknowledge him.
Sir 5:4 for the Lord is **s** to anger.

### SLOWNESS → SLOW
2Pe 3:9 think of **s**, but is patient with you,

### SMALL → SMALLEST
Jas 3:5 So also the tongue is a **s** member.

### SMALLEST → SMALL
Mk 4:31 is the **s** of all the seeds on earth;

### SMOKE → SMOKING
Ex 19:18 Now Mount Sinai was wrapped in **s**,
Isa 6:4 and the house filled with **s**.
Joel 2:30 blood and fire and columns of **s**.
Rev 15:8 with **s** from the glory of God and

### SMOKING → SMOKE
Ge 15:17 **s** fire pot and a flaming torch passed
Ex 20:18 of the trumpet, and the mountain **s**,

### SNAKE
Ex 4:3 and it became a **s**; and Moses drew
Lk 11:11 will give a **s** instead of a fish?

### SNARE
Ex 23:33 it will surely be a **s** to you.
Jdg 2:3 their gods shall be a **s** to you."

### SNOW
Ps 51:7 and I shall be whiter than **s**.
Isa 1:18 sins are like scarlet, they shall be like **s**;
Da 7:9 his clothing was white as **s**,
Rev 1:14 as white wool, white as **s**;

### SOBER
1Th 5:6 but let us keep awake and be **s**;
2Ti 4:5 always be **s**, endure suffering,

### SODOM
Ge 19:24 rained on **S** and Gomorrah sulfur
Isa 1:9 we would have been like **S**,
Lk 10:12 it will be more tolerable for **S** than
Rev 11:8 city that is prophetically called **S**

### SOLDIERS
Mt 28:12 give a large sum of money to the **s**,
Jn 19:23 When the **s** had crucified Jesus,

### SOLID
1Co 3:2 I fed you with milk, not **s** food,
Heb 5:14 But **s** food is for the mature,

### SOLOMON
Son of David by Bathsheba; king of Judah (2Sa 12:24; 1Ch 3:5, 10). Appointed king by David (1Ki 1); adversaries Adonijah, Joab, Shimei killed by Benaiah (1Ki 2). Asked for wisdom (1Ki 3; 2Ch 1). Judged between two prostitutes (1Ki 3:16-28). Built temple (1Ki 5-7; 2Ch 2-5); prayer of dedication (1Ki 8; 2Ch 6). Visited by Queen of Sheba (1Ki 10; 2Ch 9). Wives turned his heart from God (1Ki 11:1-13). Jeroboam rebelled against (1Ki 11:26-40). Death (1Ki 11:41-43; 2Ch 9:29-31).

Proverbs of (1Ki 4:32; Pr 1:1; 10:1; 25:1); psalms of (Ps 72; 127); song of (SS 1:1).

### SON → SONS
Ge 21:2 conceived and bore Abraham a **s**
Ex 4:23 now I will kill your firstborn **s**.'"
2Sa 7:14 and he shall be a **s** to me.
Ps 2:7 He said to me, "You are my **s**;
Isa 7:14 is with child and shall bear a **s**,
Mt 1:23 virgin shall conceive and bear a **s**,
2:15 "Out of Egypt I have called my **s**."
3:17 from heaven said, "This is my **S**,
12:8 the **S** of Man is lord of the sabbath."
16:16 the Messiah, the **S** of the living God."
Mk 10:45 **S** of Man came not to be served but to
Lk 1:35 he will be called **S** of God.
20:44 so how can he be his **s**?"
Jn 1:34 testified that this is the **S** of God."
3:16 loved the world that he gave his only **S**,
Ro 8:29 be conformed to the image of his **S**,
1Th 1:10 to wait for his **S** from heaven,
Heb 1:2 last days he has spoken to us by a **S**,
1:5 my **S**; today I have begotten you"?
2Pe 1:17 saying, "This is my **S**, my Beloved,
1Jn 4:9 God sent his only **S** into the world
Rev 12:5 she gave birth to a **s**, a male child,
14:14 the cloud was one like the **S** of Man,
Sir 4:10 be like a **s** of the Most High.
2Es 13:32 then my **S** will be revealed.

### SONG → SING
Ex 15:1 sang this **s** to the LORD:
Dt 31:21 **s** will confront them as a witness,
Ps 40:3 He put a new **s** in my mouth,
Rev 5:9 They sing a new **s**: "You are worthy
15:3 and the **s** of the Lamb:

### SONGS → SING
1Ki 4:32 his **s** numbered a thousand and five.
Ps 137:3 "Sing us one of the **s** of Zion!"
Col 3:16 hymns, and spiritual **s** to God.

### SONS → SON
Ge 6:2 the **s** of God saw that they were fair;
35:22 Now the **s** of Jacob were twelve.
Dt 7:3 giving your daughters to their **s**
Ac 2:17 **s** and your daughters shall prophesy,
2Co 6:18 you shall be my **s** and daughters,

### SOON
Isa 56:1 for **s** my salvation will come,
Rev 22:20 says, "Surely I am coming **s**."

### SORCERERS → SORCERY
Rev 22:15 Outside are the dogs and **s** and

### SORCERY → SORCERERS
Gal 5:20 **s**, enmities, strife, jealousy, anger,
Rev 18:23 all nations were deceived by your **s**.

### SORROW → SORROWFUL
Est 9:22 turned for them from **s** into gladness
Ecc 1:18 who increase knowledge increase **s**.
Isa 35:10 and **s** and sighing shall flee away.

### SORROWFUL → SORROW
2Co 6:10 as **s**, yet always rejoicing;

### SOUL → SOULS
Dt 6:5 all your **s**, and with all your might.
Jos 22:5 all your heart and with all your **s**."
Ps 16:9 heart is glad, and my **s** rejoices;
25:1 To you, O LORD, I lift up my **s**.
42:1 so my **s** longs for you, O God.
Mic 6:7 fruit of my body for the sin of my **s**?"
Mt 10:28 fear him who can destroy both **s** and
Heb 4:12 piercing until it divides **s** from spirit
Jas 5:20 will save the sinner's **s** from death
3Jn 1:2 just as it is well with your **s**.
Sir 7:29 With all your **s** fear the Lord,

### SOULS → SOUL
Jer 6:16 walk in it, and find rest for your **s**.
Mt 11:29 and you will find rest for your **s**.
1Pe 2:25 the shepherd and guardian of your **s**.

### SOUND
Eze 1:24 like the **s** of mighty waters,
1Co 15:52 For the trumpet will **s**, and the dead
2Ti 4:3 will not put up with **s** doctrine,
Tit 1:9 able both to preach with **s** doctrine
Rev 1:15 voice was like the **s** of many waters.

### SOUR
Jer 31:29 "The parents have eaten **s** grapes,
Mk 15:36 filled a sponge with **s** wine,

### SOVEREIGN → SOVEREIGNTY
1Ki 4:21 Solomon was **s** over all the
Rev 6:10 "**S** Lord, holy and true, how long

### SOVEREIGNTY → SOVEREIGN
Da 4:34 For his **s** is an everlasting **s**,

### SOW → SOWED, SOWS
Ex 23:10 For six years you shall **s** your land
Ecc 11:6 In the morning **s** your seed,
Hos 10:12 **S** for yourselves righteousness;
Mt 13:3 A sower went out to **s**.
1Co 15:36 **s** does not come to life unless it dies,

### SOWED → SOW
Mt 13:24 to someone who **s** good seed
Lk 13:19 took and **s** in the garden;

### SOWS → SOW
Jn 4:37 'One **s** and another reaps.'
2Co 9:6 who **s** sparingly will also reap

### SPAN
Isa 40:12 marked off the heavens with a **s**,
Mt 6:27 add a single hour to your **s** of life?

### SPARE
Ro 11:21 perhaps he will not **s** you.
2Pe 2:4 if God did not **s** the angels when

### SPARROWS
Lk 12:7 you are of more value than many **s**.

### SPEAK → SPEAKING, SPEECH, SPOKE
Ge 18:27 take it upon myself to **s** to the Lord.
Nu 12:8 With him I **s** face to face—
Dt 18:20 presumes to **s** in my name a word
Job 13:3 But I would **s** to the Almighty,
Ecc 3:7 time to keep silence, and a time to **s**;
Mt 13:13 The reason I **s** to them in parables is
Ac 2:4 began to **s** in other languages,
1Co 12:30 Do all **s** in tongues?
Jas 1:19 be quick to listen, slow to **s**,
Sir 4:25 Never **s** against the truth,

### SPEAKING → SPEAK
1Co 14:39 and do not forbid **s** in tongues;
Eph 4:15 But **s** the truth in love,

### SPEAR → SPEARS
1Sa 19:10 to pin David to the wall with the **s**;
Jn 19:34 the soldiers pierced his side with a **s**,

### SPEARS → SPEAR
Joel 3:10 and your pruning hooks into **s**;
Mic 4:3 and their **s** into pruning hooks;

### SPECK
Mt 7:4 'Let me take the **s** out of your eye,'

### SPECTACLE
1Co 4:9 we have become a **s** to the world,

### SPEECH → SPEAK
Ex 4:10 I am slow of **s** and slow of tongue."
Ps 19:3 There is no **s**, nor are there words;
1Ti 4:12 set the believers an example in **s**
1Jn 3:18 let us love, not in word or **s**,
Sir 4:29 Do not be reckless in your **s**,

### SPICES
Ex 25:6 **s** for the anointing oil and for
Jn 19:40 wrapped it with the **s** in linen cloths,

### SPIES → SPY
Nu 13:32 we have gone through as **s**
Jos 2:1 two men secretly from Shittim as **s**,

### SPIRIT → SPIRITS, SPIRITUAL
Ge 6:3 My **s** shall not abide in mortals forever,
Nu 11:25 **s** rested upon them, they prophesied.
2Ki 2:9 inherit a double share of your **s**."
Ne 9:20 You gave your good **s** to instruct
Job 33:4 The **s** of God has made me,
Ps 31:5 Into your hand I commit my **s**;
51:17 acceptable to God is a broken **s**;
Pr 16:18 and a haughty **s** before a fall.
Isa 42:1 I have put my **s** upon him;
Eze 36:26 and a new **s** I will put within you;
Joel 2:28 I will pour out my **s** on all flesh;
Mt 1:18 to be with child from the Holy **S**.
5:3 "Blessed are the poor in **s**,
12:31 against the **S** will not be forgiven.
26:41 the **s** indeed is willing, but the flesh
Mk 1:8 will baptize you with the Holy **S**."
Jn 3:5 without being born of water and **S**,

4: 24 God is **S,** and those who worship him must worship in S and truth."
6: 63 It is the S that gives life;
14: 26 But the Advocate, the Holy **S,**
Ac 2: 4 of them were filled with the Holy S
Ro 8: 9 not in the flesh: you are in the **S,**
8: 26 the **S** helps us in our weakness:
1Co 6: 19 your body is a temple of the Holy **S**
12: 4 are varieties of gifts, but the same **S;**
2Co 3: 6 the letter kills, but the **S** gives life.
Gal 5: 22 the fruit of the **S** is love, joy, peace,
Eph 1: 13 the seal of the promised Holy **S;**
4: 30 do not grieve the Holy S of God,
5: 18 but be filled with the **S,**
1Th 5: 19 Do not quench the **S.**
Heb 4: 12 piercing until it divides soul from **S,**
1Pe 3: 4 lasting beauty of a gentle and quiet S
1Jn 4: 1 Beloved, do not believe every **S,**
Rev 1: 10 I was in the S on the Lord's day.

**SPIRITS** → SPIRIT

Nu 16: 22 the God of the S of all flesh,
Dt 18: 11 or who consults ghosts or **S,**
Lk 4: 36 power he commands the unclean **S,**
1Co 12: 10 to another the discernment of **S,**
Gal 4: 3 we were enslaved to the elemental **S**
Rev 1: 4 seven **S** who are before his throne.

**SPIRITUAL** → SPIRIT

Ro 7: 14 For we know that the law is **S;**
1Co 2: 13 interpreting **S** things to those who are **S.**
12: 1 Now concerning **S** gifts,
14: 1 Pursue love and strive for the **S** gifts,
15: 46 the **S** that is first, but the physical,
Eph 1: 3 every **S** blessing in the heavenly
Col 1: 9 of God's will in all **S** wisdom
1Pe 2: 2 infants, long for the pure, **S** milk,
2: 5 yourselves be built into a **S** house,

**SPIT**

Mk 14: 65 began to **S** on him, to blindfold him,
Rev 3: 16 am about to **S** you out of my mouth.

**SPLENDOR**

1Ch 16: 29 Worship the LORD in holy **S;**
Eph 5: 27 to present the church to himself in **S,**

**SPOKE** → SPEAK

Mk 4: 33 many such parables he **S** the word
1Co 13: 11 When I was a child, I **S** like a child,
Heb 1: 1 Long ago God **S** to our ancestors in
2Pe 1: 21 moved by the Holy Spirit **S** from

**SPOT**

Eph 5: 27 without a **S** or wrinkle or anything
2Pe 3: 14 at peace, without **S** or blemish;

**SPRING**

Isa 45: 8 earth open, that salvation may **S** up,
Jn 4: 14 a **S** of water gushing up to eternal life."
Rev 21: 6 from the **S** of the water of life.

**SPRINKLE** → SPRINKLED

Nu 8: 7 **S** the water of purification on them,
Eze 36: 25 I will **S** clean water upon you,

**SPRINKLED** → SPRINKLE

Lev 8: 11 He **S** some of it on the altar seven
Heb 10: 22 with our hearts **S** clean from an evil
1Pe 1: 2 and to be **S** with his blood:

**SPY** → SPIES

Nu 13: 2 men to **S** out the land of Canaan,
Jos 6: 25 whom Joshua sent to **S** out Jericho.

**STAFF**

Ge 49: 10 the ruler's **S** from between his feet,
Ex 4: 4 and it became a **S** in his hand—
Nu 17: 6 the **S** of Aaron was among theirs.
Ps 23: 4 your rod and your **S**—they comfort me.
Zec 11: 10 I took my **S** Favor and broke it,

**STAND** → STANDING

Ex 14: 13 "Do not be afraid. **S** firm,
Job 19: 25 at the last he will **S** upon the earth;
Ps 1: 5 wicked will not **S** in the judgment,
Isa 7: 9 If you do not **S** firm in faith,
Mt 12: 25 house divided against itself will **S.**
Ro 14: 4 for the Lord is able to make them **S.**
14: 10 all **S** before the judgment seat of God.
Eph 6: 11 may be able to **S** against the wiles of

**STANDARDS**

Jn 8: 15 You judge by human **S;** I judge no
1Co 1: 26 of you were wise by human **S,**

**STANDING** → STAND

1Co 10: 12 So if you think you are **S,**
Jas 5: 9 See, the Judge is **S** at the doors!
Rev 3: 20 I am **S** at the door, knocking;

**STAR** → STARS

Nu 24: 17 a **S** shall come out of Jacob,
Isa 14: 12 are fallen from heaven, O Day **S,**
Mt 2: 2 For we observed his **S** at its rising,
2Pe 1: 19 day dawns and the morning **S** rises
Rev 9: 1 saw a **S** that had fallen from heaven
22: 16 of David, the bright morning **S."**

**STARS** → STAR

Ge 1: 16 to rule the night—and the **S.**
Job 38: 7 when the morning **S** sang together
Ps 148: 3 praise him, all you shining **S!**
Da 12: 3 like the **S** forever and ever.
Php 2: 15 you shine like **S** in the world.
Rev 1: 16 In his right hand he held seven **S,**
12: 4 a third of the **S** of heaven and threw

**STATUE**

Da 2: 31 there was a great **S,**

**STATUTE** → STATUTES

Lev 16: 29 This shall be a **S** to you forever:
Nu 19: 21 It shall be a perpetual **S** for them.

**STATUTES** → STATUTE

Ge 26: 5 commandments, my **S,** and my laws.
Dt 4: 1 give heed to the **S** and ordinances
Ne 9: 13 good **S** and commandments.
Ps 119: 8 I will observe your **S;**

**STEADFAST**

Ex 34: 6 abounding in **S** love and faithfulness
Nu 14: 18 and abounding in **S** love,
2Sa 7: 15 I will not take my **S** love from him.
Ps 57: 7 My heart is **S,** O God, my heart is **S.**
136: 1 for his **S** love endures forever.
Heb 6: 19 a sure and **S** anchor of the soul,
1Pe 5: 9 Resist him, **S** in your faith,

**STEAL**

Ex 20: 15 You shall not **S.**
Mt 6: 19 and where thieves break in and **S;**
Jn 10: 10 The thief comes only to **S** and kill

**STEPHEN***

Early church leader (Ac 6:5). Arrested (Ac 6:8-15). Speech to Sanhedrin (Ac 7). Stoned (Ac 7:54-60; 8:2; 11:19; 22:20).

**STEPS**

Pr 16: 9 but the LORD directs the **S.**
1Pe 2: 21 so that you should follow in his **S.**

**STIFF-NECKED** → NECK

Ex 32: 9 "I have seen this people, how **S**
Ac 7: 51 "You **S** people, uncircumcised in

**STILL**

Ex 14: 14 and you have only to keep **S."**
Jos 10: 13 sun stood **S,** and the moon stopped,
Ps 46: 10 "Be **S,** and know that I am God!
Mk 4: 39 said to the sea, "Peace! Be **S!"**
Ro 5: 8 we **S** were sinners Christ died for us.
Heb 11: 4 but through his faith he **S** speaks.

**STING**

1Co 15: 55 Where, O death, is your **S?"**

**STONE** → CORNERSTONE, MILLSTONE, STONED, STONES

Ge 28: 18 the **S** that he had put under his head
Ex 28: 10 six of their names on the one **S,**
31: 18 tablets of **S,** written with the finger of
1Sa 17: 50 the Philistine with a sling and a **S,**
Ps 118: 22 The **S** that the builders rejected has
Isa 28: 16 in Zion a foundation **S,** a tested **S,**
Eze 36: 26 from your body the heart of **S**
Mt 4: 6 will not dash your foot against a **S."**
Mk 12: 10 "The **S** that the builders rejected has
16: 3 "Who will roll away the **S** for us
Ro 9: 32 have stumbled over the stumbling **S,**
2Co 3: 3 not on tablets of **S** but on tablets
1Pe 2: 4 living **S,** though rejected by mortals
Rev 2: 17 and I will give a white **S,**

**STONED** → STONE

2Ch 24: 21 by command of the king they **S** him
Ac 14: 19 Then they **S** Paul and dragged him
Heb 11: 37 **S** to death, they were sawn in two,

**STONES** → STONE

Ex 28: 21 twelve **S** with names corresponding
Jos 4: 3 'Take twelve **S** from here out of the
1Sa 17: 40 chose five smooth **S** from the wadi,
Mt 3: 9 God is able from these **S** to raise
Lk 19: 40 were silent, the **S** would shout out."
1Co 3: 12 precious **S,** wood, hay, straw—
1Pe 2: 5 like living **S,** let yourselves be built

**STORE** → SHOREHOUSE, STORING

Pr 7: 1 and **S** up my commandments
Mt 6: 19 Do not **S** up for yourselves treasures

**STOREHOUSE** → HOUSE, STORE

Dt 28: 12 LORD will open for you his rich **S,**
Mal 3: 10 Bring the full tithe into the **S,**

**STORING*** → STORE

Ro 2: 5 you are **S** up wrath for yourself
1Ti 6: 19 **S** up for themselves the treasure of

**STRAIGHT**

Pr 3: 6 and he will make **S** your paths.
Isa 40: 3 **S** in the desert a highway for our God.
Mt 3: 3 way of the Lord, make his paths **S."**
Ac 9: 11 Get up and go to the street called **S,**
Sir 2: 6 make your ways **S,** and hope in him.

**STRANGE** → STRANGER, STRANGERS

Dt 32: 16 They made him jealous with **S** gods,
1Co 14: 21 "By people of **S** tongues and by the

**STRANGER** → STRANGE

Dt 10: 19 You shall also love the **S,**
Mt 25: 35 I was a **S** and you welcomed me,

**STRANGERS** → STRANGE

Dt 10: 19 for you were **S** in the land of Egypt.
Ro 12: 13 extend hospitality to **S.**
Eph 2: 12 and **S** to the covenants of promise,
Heb 11: 13 They confessed that they were **S**

**STRAW**

Ex 5: 10 says Pharaoh, 'I will not give you **S.**
1Co 3: 12 precious stones, wood, hay, **S**—

**STRAY** → ASTRAY

Ps 119: 10 not let me **S** from your commandments.
Pr 22: 6 and when old, they will not **S.**

**STREAM** → STREAMS

Isa 2: 2 all the nations shall **S** to it.
Am 5: 24 righteousness like an ever-flowing **S**

**STREAMS** → STREAM

Ps 1: 3 like trees planted by **S** of water,
42: 1 As a deer longs for flowing **S,**

**STREET**

Pr 1: 20 Wisdom cries out in the **S;**
Mt 6: 5 the synagogues and at the **S** corners,
Rev 21: 21 and the **S** of the city is pure gold,

**STRENGTH** → STRONG

Ex 15: 2 The LORD is my **S** and my might,
1Ch 16: 11 Seek the LORD and his **S,**
Ne 8: 10 for the joy of the LORD is your **S."**
Ps 46: 1 God is our refuge and **S,**
Pr 31: 25 **S** and dignity are her clothing,
Isa 40: 31 for the LORD shall renew their **S,**
Mk 12: 30 all your mind, and with all your **S.'**
1Co 1: 25 God's weakness is stronger than human **S.**
Jdt 9: 11 your **S** does not depend on numbers,
1Mc 3: 19 but **S** comes from Heaven.

**STRENGTHEN** → STRONG

Jdg 16: 28 and **S** me only this once, O God,

Ps 119: 28 **s** me according to your word.
Lk 22: 32 have turned back, **s** your brothers."
Heb 12: 12 hands and **s** your weak knees.

**STRENGTHENS** → STRONG
Isa 40: 29 to the faint, and **s** the powerless.
Php 4: 13 do all things through him who **s** me.

**STRETCH** → OUTSTRETCHED, STRETCHED
Ex 14: 16 and **s** out your hand over the sea
Mk 3: 5 to the man, "**S** out your hand."

**STRETCHED** → STRETCH
2Sa 24: 16 angel **s** out his hand toward Jerusalem
Isa 5: 25 and his hand is **s** out still.

**STRIFE** → STRIVE
Pr 23: 29 Who has sorrow? Who has **s**?
Ro 1: 29 Full of envy, murder, **s**, deceit,
Gal 5: 20 enmities, **s**, jealousy, anger,

**STRIKE**
Ge 3: 15 he will **s** your head, and you will **s**
Ex 17: 6 **S** the rock, and water will come out
Zec 13: 7 **S** the shepherd, that the sheep may
Mal 4: 6 come and **s** the land with a curse.
Mk 14: 27 'I will **s** the shepherd, and the sheep
Rev 19: 15 to **s** down the nations.

**STRIVE** → STRIFE
Mt 6: 33 But **s** first for the kingdom of God
1Co 12: 31 But **s** for the greater gifts.
2Pe 3: 14 **s** to be found by him at peace,

**STRONG** → STRENGTH, STRENGTHEN, STRENGTHENS, STRONGHOLD
Dt 31: 6 Be **s** and bold; have no fear
Jos 1: 6 Be **s** and courageous; for you shall
Ps 140: 7 O LORD, my Lord, my **s** deliverer,
Pr 18: 10 The name of the LORD is a **s** tower;
Ecc 9: 11 nor the battle to the **s**, nor bread to
SS 8: 6 for love is **s** as death, passion fierce
Ro 15: 1 We who are **s** ought to put up with
1Co 1: 27 in the world to shame the **s**;
2Co 12: 10 whenever I am weak, then I am **s**.
Eph 6: 10 be **s** in the Lord and in the strength

**STRONGHOLD** → STRONG
Ps 9: 9 The LORD is a **s** for the oppressed,
Na 1: 7 a **s** in a day of trouble;

**STRUGGLE**
Eph 6: 12 our **s** is not against enemies of
Heb 12: 4 In your **s** against sin you have not yet

**STUBBORN**
Dt 9: 6 for you are a **s** people.
Hos 4: 16 Like a **s** heifer, Israel is **s**;

**STUDY**
Ezr 7: 10 Ezra had set his heart to **s** the law
Ecc 12: 12 much **s** is a weariness of the flesh.

**STUMBLE** → STUMBLING
Ps 37: 24 we **s**, we shall not fall headlong,
Pr 4: 12 and if you run, you will not **s**.
Mt 18: 9 And if your eye causes you to **s**,
Ro 9: 33 a stone that will make people **s**,
1Pe 2: 8 **s** because they disobey the word,

**STUMBLING** → STUMBLE
Eze 14: 3 placed their iniquity as a **s** block
Mt 16: 23 You are a **s** block to me;
Ro 11: 9 a **s** block and a retribution for them;
1Co 8: 9 not somehow become a **s** block to

**STUMP**
Isa 6: 13 The holy seed is its **s**.
11: 1 shall come out from the **s** of Jesse,

**SUBDUE**
Ge 1: 28 and fill the earth and **s** it;
1Ch 17: 10 and I will **s** all your enemies.

**SUBJECT** → SUBJECTED
Ro 13: 1 be **s** to the governing authorities;
Gal 4: 21 who desire to be **s** to the law,
Eph 5: 21 **s** to one another out of reverence

**SUBJECTED** → SUBJECT
Ro 8: 20 for the creation was **s** to futility,
1Co 15: 28 When all things are **s** to him,

**SUBMISSION*** → SUBMIT
1Ti 2: 11 a woman learn in silence with full **s**.
Heb 5: 7 was heard because of his reverent **s**.

**SUBMISSIVE** → SUBMIT
1Ti 3: 4 keeping his children **s** and respectful
Tit 2: 5 kind, being **s** to their husbands,

**SUBMIT** → SUBMISSION, SUBMISSIVE
Ps 81: 11 Israel would not **s** to me.
Gal 5: 1 do not **s** again to a yoke of slavery.
Heb 13: 17 Obey your leaders and **s** to them,

**SUCCEED** → SUCCESS, SUCCESSFUL
Pr 15: 22 but with many advisers they **s**.
Ecc 10: 10 but wisdom helps one to **s**.

**SUCCESS** → SUCCEED
Ps 118: 25 O LORD, we beseech you, give us **s**!
Sir 10: 5 Human **s** is in the hand of the Lord,

**SUCCESSFUL** → SUCCEED
Jos 1: 7 that you may be **s** wherever you go.

**SUDDENLY**
Mal 3: 1 Lord whom you seek will **s** come to
Mk 13: 36 find you asleep when he comes **s**.

**SUFFER** → SUFFERED, SUFFERING, SUFFERINGS, SUFFERS
Lk 22: 15 this Passover with you before I **s**;
24: 46 the Messiah is to **s** and to rise from
Heb 9: 26 then he would have had to **s** again
1Pe 3: 17 For it is better to **s** for doing good,

**SUFFERED** → SUFFER
Php 3: 8 For his sake I have **s** the loss of all
1Pe 2: 21 because Christ also **s** for you,

**SUFFERING** → SUFFER
Job 2: 13 they saw that his **s** was very great.
Isa 53: 3 a man of **s** and acquainted with
Mk 8: 31 Son of Man must undergo great **s**,
Ro 12: 12 Rejoice in hope, be patient in **s**,

**SUFFERINGS** → SUFFER
Ro 8: 18 the **s** of this present time are not
1Pe 4: 13 insofar as you are sharing Christ's **s**,

**SUFFERS** → SUFFER
1Co 12: 26 If one member **s**, all suffer together

**SUFFICIENT**
2Co 12: 9 "My grace is **s** for you,

**SULFUR**
Ge 19: 24 rained on Sodom and Gomorrah **s**
Ps 11: 6 he will rain coals of fire and **s**;
Rev 21: 8 in the lake that burns with fire and **s**,

**SUMMED***
Ro 13: 9 commandment, are **s** up in this word
Gal 5: 14 the whole law is **s** up in a single

**SUN**
Jos 10: 13 And the **s** stood still,
Ps 84: 11 For the LORD God is a **s** and shield;
Ecc 1: 9 there is nothing new under the **s**.
Joel 2: 31 The **s** shall be turned to darkness,
Mal 4: 2 the **s**of righteousness shall rise,
Mt 5: 45 he makes his **s** rise on the evil and
Ac 2: 20 The **s** shall be turned to darkness
Rev 1: 16 his face was like the **s** shining with
19: 17 I saw an angel standing in the **s**,
22: 5 they need no light of lamp or **s**,

**SUPERIOR**
Heb 1: 4 having become as much **s** to angels
7: 7 that the inferior is blessed by the **s**.

**SUPPER**
Lk 22: 20 he did the same with the cup after **s**,
Rev 19: 9 to the marriage **s** of the Lamb."

**SUPPLICATION** → SUPPLICATIONS
Ps 6: 9 The LORD has heard my **s**;
Zec 12: 10 a spirit of compassion and **s**
Eph 6: 18 at all times in every prayer and **s**,

**SUPPLICATIONS** → SUPPLICATION
1Ti 2: 1 then, I urge that **s**, prayers,
Heb 5: 7 Jesus offered up prayers and **s**,

**SUPPORT**
Ps 18: 18 but the LORD was my **s**.
Ro 11: 18 that it is not you that **s** the root.

**SURE**
Nu 32: 23 and be **s** your sin will find you out.
Ps 19: 7 the decrees of the LORD are **s**,
Isa 28: 16 a **s** foundation: "One who trusts
Heb 6: 19 a **s** and steadfast anchor of the soul,

**SURPASSES** → SURPASSING
Eph 3: 19 the love of Christ that **s** knowledge,
Php 4: 7 the peace of God, which **s** all
Sir 25: 11 Fear of the Lord **s** everything;

**SURPASSING** → SURPASSES
Ps 150: 2 according to his **s** greatness!
2Co 9: 14 pray for you because of the **s** grace

**SURPRISE** → SURPRISED
1Th 5: 4 for that day to **s** you like a thief;

**SURPRISED** → SURPRISE
1Pe 4: 12 do not be **s** at the fiery ordeal that is

**SURROUNDED** → SURROUNDS
Lk 21: 20 you see Jerusalem **s** by armies,
Heb 12: 1 **s** by so great a cloud of witnesses,
Rev 20: 9 of the earth and **s** the camp of

**SURROUNDS** → SURROUNDED
Ps 89: 8 Your faithfulness **s** you.
125: 2 so the LORD **s** his people,

**SURVIVORS**
Isa 1: 9 of hosts had not left us a few **s**,
Eze 14: 22 Yet, **s** shall be left in it,

**SUSA**
Ne 1: 1 while I was in **S** the capital,
Est 1: 2 his royal throne in the citadel of **S**,

**SUSANNA**
Righteous woman wrongly accused of immorality (Sus 1:1-44); vindicated by Daniel (Sus 1:45-64).

**SUSTAINS**
Ps 3: 5 for the LORD **s** me.
Heb 1: 3 he **s** all things by his powerful word,

**SWALLOW** → SWALLOWED
Jnh 1: 17 provided a large fish to **s** up Jonah;
Mt 23: 24 You strain out a gnat but **s** a camel!

**SWALLOWED** → SWALLOW
Ge 41: 7 The thin ears **s** up the seven plump
Nu 16: 32 earth opened its mouth and **s** them
1Co 15: 54 "Death has been **s** up in victory."

**SWEAR** → SWORE, SWORN
Dt 10: 20 and by his name you shall **s**.
Ps 24: 4 and do not **s** deceitfully.
Mt 5: 34 Do not **s** at all, either by heaven,

**SWEAT**
Ge 3: 19 By the **s** of your face you shall eat
Lk 22: 44 ‖**s** became like great drops of blood‖

**SWEET** → SWEETER
Ex 15: 25 the water, and the water became **s**.
Ps 119: 103 How **s** are your words to my taste,
Eze 3: 3 in my mouth it was as **s** as honey.
Rev 10: 10 it was **s** as honey in my mouth,

**SWEETER** → SWEET
Jdg 14: 18 "What is **s** than honey?
Ps 19: 10 **s** also than honey, and drippings of

**SWIFT**
Ecc 9: 11 the race is not to the **s**, nor the battle
2Pe 2: 1 bringing **s** destruction on themselves

**SWINE**
Mt 7: 6 do not throw your pearls before **s**,
Mk 5: 12 "Send us into the **s**;
1Mc 1: 47 sacrifice **s** and other unclean animals,

**SWORD** → SWORDS
Ge 3: 24 and a **s** flaming and turning to guard
1Sa 17: 47 LORD does not save by **s** and spear;

1Ch 21: 30 he was afraid of the **s** of the angel
Isa 2: 4 shall not lift up **s** against nation.
49: 2 He made my mouth like a sharp **s,**
Hos 2: 18 and I will abolish the bow, the **s,**
Mt 10: 34 not come to bring peace, but a **s.**
Eph 6: 17 the **s** of the Spirit, which is the word
Heb 4: 12 sharper than any two-edged **s,**
Rev 1: 16 mouth came a sharp, two-edged **s,**
19: 15 a sharp **s** with which to strike down
Sir 21: 3 All lawlessness is like a two-edged **s**

**SWORDS** → SWORD
Isa 2: 4 shall beat their **s** into plowshares.
Joel 3: 10 Beat your plowshares into **s,**

**SWORE** → SWEAR
Ex 6: 8 the land that I **s** to give to Abraham,
32: 13 how you **s** to them by your own self,
Ps 132: 11 The LORD **s** to David a sure oath
Heb 6: 13 by whom to swear, he **s** by himself,

**SWORN** → SWEAR
Ge 22: 16 "By myself I have **s,** says the LORD:
Ps 110: 4 The LORD has **s** and will not change
Heb 7: 21 "The Lord has **s** and will not change

**SYMPATHIZE*** → SYMPATHIZE
Heb 4: 15 unable to **s** with our weaknesses.

**SYMPATHY** → SYMPATHIZE
Php 2: 1 any compassion and **s,**
1Pe 3: 8 all of you, have unity of spirit, **s,**

**SYNAGOGUE** → SYNAGOGUES
Lk 4: 16 he went to the **s** on the sabbath day,
8: 41 man named Jairus, a leader of the **s.**
Ac 18: 26 He began to speak boldly in the **s;**

**SYNAGOGUES** → SYNAGOGUE
Mt 4: 23 teaching in their **s** and proclaiming
Jn 18: 20 always taught in **s** and in the temple,

## T

**TABERNACLE**
Ex 25: 9 concerning the pattern of the **t**
40: 34 the glory of the LORD filled the **t.**
1Ch 6: 48 for all the service of the **t** of the house

**TABITHA*** → See DORCAS

**TABLE** → TABLES
Ex 25: 23 You shall make a **t** of acacia wood.
Ps 23: 5 a **t** before me in the presence of my

**TABLES** → TABLE
Mk 11: 15 overturned the **t** of the money changers

**TABLET** → TABLETS
Pr 3: 3 write them on the **t** of your heart.

**TABLETS** → TABLET
Ex 31: 18 gave him the two **t** of the covenant,
2Co 3: 3 not on **t** of stone but on **t** of human hearts.

**TAKE** → TAKEN, TAKES
Dt 12: 32 do not add to it or **t** anything from
Mt 11: 29 **T** my yoke upon you, and learn
Mk 8: 34 deny themselves and **t** up their cross

**TAKEN** → TAKE
Ecc 3: 14 added to it, nor anything **t** from it:
Heb 11: 5 By faith Enoch was **t** so that he did
Sir 44: 16 Enoch pleased the Lord and was **t**

**TAKES** → TAKE
Jn 1: 29 **t** away the sin of the world!
10: 18 No one **t** it from me,
Rev 22: 19 if anyone **t** away from the words of

**TALENT**
Mt 25: 25 and hid your **t** in the ground.

**TAMAR**
1. Wife of Judah's sons Er and Onan (Ge 38:1-10). Children by Judah (Ge 38:11-30; Mt 1:3).
2. Daughter of David, raped by Amnon (2Sa 13).

**TASTE** → TASTED
Ps 34: 8 O **t** and see that the LORD is good;
Mt 16: 28 not **t** death before they see the Son
Col 2: 21 not handle, Do not **t,** Do not touch"?

**TASTED** → TASTE
Heb 6: 4 and have **t** the heavenly gift,
1Pe 2: 3 you have **t** that the Lord is good.

**TAUGHT** → TEACH
Isa 40: 14 Who **t** him knowledge,
Jn 6: 45 'And they shall all be **t** by God.'

**TAX** → TAXES
Mt 11: 19 a friend of **t** collectors and sinners!'
Lk 18: 10 Pharisee and the other a **t** collector.

**TAXES** → TAX
Mt 22: 17 Is it lawful to pay **t** to the emperor,
Ro 13: 7 **t** to whom **t** are due.

**TEACH** → TAUGHT, TEACHER, TEACHERS, TEACHING
Dt 6: 1 to **t** you to observe in the land that
Ps 90: 12 So **t** us to count our days that we
Jer 31: 34 No longer shall they **t** one another,
Jn 14: 26 will **t** you everything,
Col 3: 16 **t** and admonish one another in all
1Ti 2: 12 I permit no woman to **t** or
1Jn 2: 27 so you do not need anyone to **t** you.

**TEACHER** → TEACH
Ecc 1: 1 words of the **T,** the son of David,
Mt 10: 24 "A disciple is not above the **t,**
Jn 1: 38 "Rabbi" (which translated means **T**)
1Ti 3: 2 respectable, hospitable, an apt **t,**

**TEACHERS** → TEACH
Ps 119: 99 more understanding than all my **t,**
1Co 12: 28 second prophets, third **t;**
Eph 4: 11 evangelists, some pastors and **t,**
Jas 3: 1 Not many of you should become **t,**

**TEACHING** → TEACH
Mk 1: 27 A new **t**—with authority!
Tit 1: 11 by **t** for sordid gain what it is not right
2Jn 1: 9 who does not abide in the **t** of Christ,

**TEAR** → TORN
Mk 2: 21 from the old, and a worse **t** is made.
Rev 7: 17 God will wipe away every **t** from

**TEETH** → TOOTH
Mt 8: 12 will be weeping and gnashing of **t."**

**TEKEL**
Da 5: 27 **T,** you have been weighed on the scales

**TELL** → FORETOLD
Ps 50: 12 "If I were hungry, I would not **t** you,
105: 2 **t** of all his wonderful works.
1Co 15: 51 Listen, I will **t** you a mystery!

**TEMPERATE**
1Ti 3: 2 married only once, **t,** sensible,
Tit 2: 2 Tell the older men to be **t,** serious,

**TEMPLE**
1Sa 3: 3 Samuel was lying down in the **t** of the
2Ch 2: 12 who will build a **t** for the LORD,
Ps 11: 4 The LORD is in his holy **t;**
Mt 4: 5 placed him on the pinnacle of the **t,**
12: 6 something greater than the **t** is here.
Jn 2: 21 was speaking of the **t** of his body.
1Co 3: 16 you are God's **t** and that God's Spirit
Eph 2: 21 and grows into a holy **t** in the Lord;
Rev 21: 22 its **t** is the Lord God the Almighty and
1Mc 4: 48 sanctuary and the interior of the **t,**

**TEMPTATION*** → TEMPTED, TEMPTER
1Ti 6: 9 who want to be rich into **t** and
Jas 1: 12 Blessed is anyone who endures **t.**

**TEMPTED** → TEMPTATION
Mk 1: 13 wilderness forty days, **t** by Satan;
Gal 6: 1 care that you yourselves are not **t.**

**TEMPTER*** → TEMPTATION
Mt 4: 3 The **t** came and said to him,
1Th 3: 5 that somehow the **t** had tempted you

**TEN** → TENTH
Ex 34: 28 the covenant, the **t** commandments.
Da 7: 24 out of this kingdom **t** kings shall arise,
Mt 25: 1 **T** bridesmaids took their lamps and
Rev 17: 12 the **t** horns that you saw are **t** kings

**TENDER** → TENDERHEARTED
Hos 11: 8 my compassion grows warm and **t.**
Lk 1: 78 By the **t** mercy of our God,

**TENDERHEARTED*** → HEART, TENDER
Eph 4: 32 **t,** forgiving one another,

**TENT**
Ex 27: 21 the **t** of meeting, outside the curtain
2Sa 7: 2 but the ark of God stays in a **t."**
2Co 5: 1 the earthly **t** we live in is destroyed,

**TENTH** → TEN
Ge 14: 20 Abram gave him one **t** of everything
Isa 6: 13 Even if a **t** part remain in it,

**TERROR**
Ex 23: 27 I will send my **t** in front of you,
Ps 91: 5 You will not fear the **t** of the night,
Ro 13: 3 rulers are not a **t** to good conduct,

**TEST** → TESTED, TESTING
Dt 6: 16 not put the LORD your God to the **t,**
Lk 4: 12 not put the Lord your God to the **t.'**
10: 25 then a lawyer stood up to **t** Jesus,
2Co 13: 5 indeed, you fail to meet the **t!**
1Jn 4: 1 **t** the spirits to see whether they are
Sir 37: 27 My child, **t** yourself while you live:

**TESTED** → TEST
Ge 22: 1 After these things God **t** Abraham,
Ps 78: 41 They **t** God again and again,
Heb 4: 15 been **t** as we are, yet without sin.

**TESTIFIED** → TESTIFY
Jn 1: 15 (John **t** to him and cried out,
1Pe 1: 11 it **t** in advance to the sufferings

**TESTIFIES** → TESTIFY
1Jn 5: 6 Spirit is the one that **t,**

**TESTIFY** → TESTIFIED, TESTIFIES, TESTIMONY
Jn 15: 26 he will **t** on my behalf.
1Jn 5: 7 There are three that **t:**

**TESTIMONY** → TESTIFY
Nu 35: 30 put to death on the **t** of a single
Mk 14: 59 on this point their **t** did not agree.
Rev 1: 9 the word of God and the **t** of Jesus.

**TESTING** → TEST
1Co 10: 13 No **t** has overtaken you that is not
Jas 1: 3 **t** of your faith produces endurance:

**THADDAEUS*** → =JUDAS
Apostle (Mt 10:3; Mk 3:18); probably also known as Judas son of James (Lk 6:16; Ac 1:13).

**THANK** → THANKS, THANKSGIVING
2Ch 29: 31 bring sacrifices and **t** offerings to
Ps 52: 9 I will **t** you forever,
Sir 35: 4 gives alms sacrifices a **t** offering.

**THANKS** → THANK
1Ch 16: 8 give **t** to the LORD, call on his name,
Ps 107: 1 O give **t** to the LORD, for he is good;
Ro 1: 21 not honor him as God or give **t** to
1Co 11: 24 and when he had given **t,**
2Co 9: 15 **T** be to God for his indescribable
Rev 4: 9 give glory and honor and **t** to

**THANKSGIVING** → THANK
Lev 7: 12 If you offer it for **t,**
Ps 50: 14 Offer to God a sacrifice of **t,**
Php 4: 6 with **t** let your requests be made known
Rev 7: 12 glory and wisdom and **t** and honor

**THEFT** → THIEF
Mt 15: 19 fornication, **t,** false witness, slander.

**THEFTS*** → THIEF
Rev 9: 21 or their fornication or their **t.**

**THIEF** → THEFT, THEFTS, THIEVES
Ex 22: 1 The **t** shall make restitution.
Jn 10: 10 The **t** comes only to steal and kill
1Th 5: 2 day of the Lord will come like a **t** in
Rev 16: 15 ("See, I am coming like a **t!**

**THIEVES** → THIEF
Mt 6: 19 and where **t** break in and steal;
Eph 4: 28 **T** must give up stealing;

**THINK** → THINKING, THOUGHT, THOUGHTS
Ro 12: 3 not to **t** of yourself more highly than
1Co 10: 12 So if you **t** you are standing.

**THINKING** → THINK
Ro 1: 21 but they became futile in their **t,**
1Co 14: 20 infants in evil, but in **t** be adults.

**THIRD** → THREE
Hos 6: 2 on the **t** day he will raise us up,
Mt 26: 44 and prayed for the **t** time,
Lk 18: 33 and on the **t** day he will rise again."
2Co 12: 2 was caught up to the **t** heaven—

**THIRST** → THIRSTY
Mt 5: 6 who hunger and **t** for righteousness,
Rev 7: 16 will hunger no more, and **t** no more;

**THIRSTY** → THIRST
Mt 25: 35 I was **t** and you gave me something
Jn 6: 35 believes in me will never be **t.**
Rev 22: 17 And let everyone who is **t** come.

**THOMAS***
Apostle (Mt 10:3; Mk 3:18; Lk 6:15; Jn 11:16; 14:5; 21:2; Ac 1:13). Doubted resurrection (Jn 20:24-28).

**THORN** → THORNS
2Co 12: 7 a **t** was given me in the flesh,

**THORNS** → THORN
Ge 3: 18 **t** and thistles it shall bring forth for
Mt 13: 7 Other seeds fell among **t,**
Jn 19: 2 the soldiers wove a crown of **t** and

**THOUGHT** → THINK
1Co 13: 11 I spoke like a child, I **t** like a child,
2Co 10: 5 take every **t** captive to obey Christ.

**THOUGHTS** → THINK
Isa 55: 8 For my **t** are not your **t,**
1Co 3: 20 "The Lord knows the **t** of the wise,
Heb 4: 12 judge the **t** and intentions of the heart.

**THOUSAND** → THOUSANDS
Ps 50: 10 the cattle on a **t** hills.
90: 4 **t** years in your sight are like yesterday
2Pe 3: 8 one day is like a **t** years, and a **t** years
Rev 20: 4 and reigned with Christ a **t** years.

**THOUSANDS** → THOUSAND
1Sa 18: 7 has killed his **t,** and David his ten **t."**
Da 7: 10 A thousand **t** served him,
Rev 5: 11 myriads of myriads and **t** of **t,**

**THREE** → THIRD
Ge 18: 2 and saw **t** men standing near him.
Ex 23: 14 **T** times in the year you shall hold a
Mt 18: 20 two or **t** are gathered in my name,
26: 34 you will deny me **t** times."
Mk 8: 31 be killed, and after **t** days rise again.
2Co 12: 8 **T** times I appealed to the Lord
1Jn 5: 7 There are **t** that testify:

**THRONE** → THRONES
2Sa 7: 13 the **t** of his kingdom forever.
Ps 45: 6 Your **t,** O God, endures forever
Isa 6: 1 I saw the Lord sitting on a **t,** high
Jer 33: 21 not have a son to reign on his **t,**
Mt 19: 28 the Son of Man is seated on the **t**
Heb 4: 16 approach the **t** of grace with boldness,
12: 2 his seat at the right hand of the **t**
Rev 4: 10 they cast their crowns before the **t,**
20: 11 I saw a great white **t** and the one

**THRONES** → THRONE
Da 7: 9 **t** were set in place,
Rev 4: 4 Around the throne are twenty-four **t,**

**THROW** → THROWN
Ex 1: 22 Hebrews you shall **t** into the Nile,
Mt 7: 6 do not **t** your pearls before swine,

**THROWN** → THROW
Ex 15: 1 horse and rider he has **t** into the sea.
Da 3: 21 **t** into the furnace of blazing fire.
6: 12 shall be **t** into a den of lions?"
Rev 20: 10 **t** into the lake of fire and sulfur,

**THUMMIM**
Ex 28: 30 you shall put the Urim and the **T,**

**THUNDER** → THUNDERS
Ex 9: 23 and the LORD sent **t** and hail,
Rev 4: 5 and rumblings and peals of **t,**

**THUNDERS** → THUNDER
Rev 10: 3 he shouted, the seven **t** sounded.

**TIBNI***
King of Israel (1Ki 16:21-22).

**TIE**
Pr 6: 21 **t** them around your neck,
Mt 23: 4 **t** up heavy burdens, hard to bear,

**TIME** → TIMES
Est 4: 14 dignity for just such a **t** as this."
Ecc 3: 1 a **t** for every matter under heaven:
Da 7: 25 for a **t,** two times, and half a **t.**
Ro 5: 6 the right **t** Christ died for the ungodly.
2Co 6: 2 See, now is the acceptable **t;**
Gal 4: 4 when the fullness of **t** had come,
Col 4: 5 making the most of the **t.**
Rev 12: 14 for a **t,** and times, and half a **t.**
22: 10 of this book, for the **t** is near.

**TIMES** → TIME
Jos 6: 4 march around the city seven **t,**
Mt 16: 3 cannot interpret the signs of the **t.**
18: 22 seven **t,** but, I tell you, seventy-seven **t.**
Mk 14: 30 you will deny me three **t."**
Sir 20: 12 but pay for it seven **t** over.

**TIMOTHY**
Believer from Lystra (Ac 16:1). Joined Paul on second missionary journey (Ac 16-20). Sent to settle problems at Corinth (1Co 4:17; 16:10). Led church at Ephesus (1Ti 1:3). Co-writer with Paul (1Th 1:1; 2Th 1:1; Phm 1).

**TITHE**
Dt 12: 17 the **t** of your grain, your wine, and
Mal 3: 10 Bring the full **t** into the storehouse,

**TITUS**
Gentile co-worker of Paul (Gal 2:1-3; 2Ti 4:10); sent to Corinth (2Co 2:13; 7-8; 12:18). Crete (Tit 1:4-5).

**TOBIAH**
Enemy of Nehemiah (Ne 2:10-19; 4; 6; 13:4-9).

**TOBIT**
Tob 1: 1 This book tells the story of **T**

**TODAY**
Dt 30: 15 set before you **t** life and prosperity,
Ps 2: 7 my son; **t** I have begotten you.
Lk 23: 43 **t** you will be with me in Paradise."
Heb 1: 5 my Son; **t** I have begotten you"?
13: 8 Christ is the same yesterday and **t** and

**TOGETHER**
Mt 19: 6 God has joined **t,** let no one separate."
Eph 2: 5 made us alive **t** with Christ—

**TOLA**
A judge of Israel (Jdg 10:1-2).

**TOMB**
Mk 15: 46 laid it in a **t** that had been hewn out
Lk 24: 2 the stone rolled away from the **t,**

**TOMORROW**
Isa 22: 13 "Let us eat and drink, for **t** we die."
Mt 6: 34 "So do not worry about **t,**
Jas 4: 14 do not even know what **t** will bring.

**TONGUE** → DOUBLE-TONGUED, TONGUES
Ex 4: 10 I am slow of speech and slow of **t."**
Ps 139: 4 before a word is on my **t,** O LORD,
Pr 18: 21 Death and life are in the power of the **t,**
Isa 45: 23 shall bow, every **t** shall swear."
1Co 14: 19 than ten thousand words in a **t.**
Php 2: 11 every **t** should confess that Jesus Christ
Jas 3: 8 but no one can tame the **t**—
Sir 20: 18 is better than a slip of the **t;**
23: 7 DISCIPLINE OF THE **T**

**TONGUES** → TONGUE
Ac 2: 3 Divided **t,** as of fire, appeared
1Co 12: 10 of **t,** to another the interpretation of **t.**
14: 5 in **t,** unless someone interprets,

**TOOTH** → TEETH
Ex 21: 24 **t** for **t,** hand for hand, foot for foot,
Mt 5: 38 'An eye for an eye and a **t** for a **t.'**

**TORCHES**
Da 10: 6 lightning, his eyes like flaming **t,**
Rev 4: 5 of the throne burn seven flaming **t,**

**TORMENTED**
Rev 20: 10 they will be **t** day and night forever

**TORN** → TEAR
1Sa 28: 17 has **t** the kingdom out of your hand,
Lk 23: 45 curtain of the temple was **t** in two.

**TORTURED**
Mt 18: 34 handed him over to be **t** until
Heb 11: 35 were **t,** refusing to accept release,

**TOUCH**
Ge 3: 3 nor shall you **t** it, or you shall die.'"
Mt 9: 21 only **t** his cloak, I will be made well.
Lk 24: 39 **T** me and see:
Col 2: 21 not handle, Do not taste, Do not **t"?**

**TOWER**
Ge 11: 4 and a **t** with its top in the heavens,
Pr 18: 10 The name of the LORD is a strong **t;**

**TRADITION**
Mt 15: 2 disciples break the **t** of the elders?
Col 2: 8 empty deceit, according to human **t,**

**TRAIN** → TRAINING
Pr 22: 6 **T** children in the right way, and
1Ti 4: 7 **T** yourself in godliness,

**TRAINING** → TRAIN
1Ti 4: 8 while physical **t** is of some value,
2Ti 3: 16 and for **t** in righteousness,

**TRAITOR**
Lk 6: 16 and Judas Iscariot, who became a **t.**

**TRANSFIGURED**
Mt 17: 2 And he was **t** before them,

**TRANSFORM*** → TRANSFORMED
Php 3: 21 will **t** the body of our humiliation

**TRANSFORMED** → TRANSFORM
Ro 12: 2 be **t** by the renewing of your minds,
2Co 3: 18 are being **t** into the same image

**TRANSGRESSION**
→ TRANSGRESSIONS, TRANSGRESSORS
Ex 23: 21 for he will not pardon your **t;**
Da 9: 24 to finish the **t,** to put an end to sin,
Gal 6: 1 if anyone is detected in a **t,**

**TRANSGRESSIONS** → TRANSGRESSION
Ps 103: 12 so far he removes our **t** from us.
Isa 53: 5 But he was wounded for our **t,**

**TRANSGRESSORS** → TRANSGRESSION
Ps 51: 13 Then I will teach **t** your ways,
Isa 53: 12 and was numbered with the **t;**

**TRAP**
Lk 20: 20 in order to **t** him by what he said,
Ro 11: 9 their table become a snare and a **t,**

**TREAD** → TREADING
Mic 7: 19 he will **t** our iniquities under foot,
Rev 19: 15 he will **t** the wine press of the fury

**TREADING** → TREAD
Dt 25: 4 not muzzle an ox while it is **t** out
1Co 9: 9 not muzzle an ox while it is **t** out

**TREASURE** → TREASURED, TREASURES
Ps 119: 11 I **t** your word in my heart,
Mt 6: 21 where your **t** is, there your heart
2Co 4: 7 But we have this **t** in clay jars,
2Ti 1: 14 Guard the good **t** entrusted to you,

**TREASURED** → TREASURE
Ex 19: 5 be my **t** possession out of all the

**TREASURES** → TREASURE
Col 2: 3 are hidden all the **t** of wisdom

**TREE** → TREES
Ge 3: 24 to guard the way to the **t** of life.
Dt 21: 23 hung on a **t** is under God's curse.

Mt 12:33 for the **t** is known by its fruit.
Ac 5:30 had killed by hanging him on a **t.**
Ro 11:24 grafted back into their own olive **t.**
Rev 22: 2 the **t** of life with its twelve kinds

**TREES** → TREE
Ps 96:12 all the **t** of the forest sing for joy
Zec 4:11 "What are these two olive **t** on the
Rev 11: 4 two olive **t** and the two lampstands

**TREMBLE** → TREMBLED, TREMBLING
Ps 114: 7 **T,** O earth, at the presence of the LORD
Hab 3: 6 he looked and made the nations **t.**

**TREMBLED** → TREMBLE
Ex 20:18 they were afraid and **t** and stood at

**TREMBLING** → TREMBLE
Ps 2:11 Serve the LORD with fear, with **t**
Php 2:12 your own salvation with fear and **t;**

**TRESPASS** → TRESPASSES
Ro 5:15 But the free gift is not like the **t.**

**TRESPASSES** → TRESPASS
Mt 6:14 For if you forgive others their **t,**
2Co 5:19 not counting their **t** against them.

**TRIAL** → TRIALS
Lk 11: 4 do not bring us to the time of **t."**
2Pe 2: 9 knows how to rescue the godly from **t,**
Rev 3:10 I will keep you from the hour of **t**

**TRIALS** → TRIAL
Jas 1: 2 whenever you face **t** of any kind,
1Pe 1: 6 you have had to suffer various **t,**

**TRIBE** → TRIBES
Nu 1: 4 A man from each **t** shall be with you
Ps 78:68 but he chose the **t** of Judah,
Rev 5: 5 See, the Lion of the **t** of Judah,

**TRIBES** → TRIBE
Ge 49:28 All these are the twelve **t** of Israel,
Ex 24: 4 to the twelve **t** of Israel.
Mt 19:28 judging the twelve **t** of Israel.
Rev 21:12 inscribed the names of the twelve **t**

**TRIUMPH** → TRIUMPHAL, TRIUMPHS
Ps 112: 8 they will look in **t** on their foes.
Pr 28:12 the righteous **t,** there is great glory,

**TRIUMPHAL*** → TRIUMPH
2Co 2:14 Christ always leads us in **t** procession,

**TRIUMPHS** → TRIUMPH
Jas 2:13 mercy **t** over judgment.

**TROUBLE** → TROUBLED
Job 14: 1 few of days and full of **t,**
Ps 9: 9 a stronghold in times of **t.**
Pr 11: 8 The righteous are delivered from **t,**
Isa 33: 2 our salvation in the time of **t.**
Mt 6:34 Today's **t** is enough for today.
Sir 51:10 do not forsake me in the days of **t,**

**TROUBLED** → TROUBLE
Jn 14: 1 "Do not let your hearts be **t.**

**TRUE** → TRUTH
Ps 119:151 and all your commandments are **t.**
Jn 1: 9 The **t** light, which enlightens
21:24 and we know that his testimony is **t.**
Ro 3: 4 everyone is a liar, let God be proved **t,**
1Jn 5:20 He is the **t** God and eternal life.
Rev 3:14 the Amen, the faithful and **t** witness.
19:11 Its rider is called Faithful and **T,**
22: 6 "These words are trustworthy and **t,**

**TRUMPET** → TRUMPETS
Ex 19:16 a blast of a **t** so loud that all the
Joel 2:15 Blow the **t** in Zion; sanctify a fast;
1Co 15:52 twinkling of an eye, at the last **t.**
1Th 4:16 and with the sound of God's **t,**

**TRUMPETS** → TRUMPET
Nu 10: 2 Make two silver **t;** you shall make
Rev 8: 2 and seven **t** were given to them.

**TRUST** → ENTRUST, ENTRUSTED, TRUSTED, TRUSTEES, TRUSTS, TRUSTWORTHY
Ps 9:10 know your name put their **t** in you,
37: 3 **T** in the LORD, and do good;
119:42 for I **t** in your word.
Pr 3: 5 **T** in the LORD with all your heart,
Isa 12: 2 Surely God is my salvation; I will **t,**
Jer 17: 7 Blessed are those who **t** in the LORD,
Heb 2:13 And again, "I will put my **t** in him."
Sir 2: 6 **T** in him, and he will help you;

**TRUSTED** → TRUST
Ps 22: 4 they **t,** and you delivered them.
Da 3:28 delivered his servants who **t** in him,
6:23 because he had **t** in his God.
Sus 1:35 for her heart **t** in the Lord.

**TRUSTS** → TRUST
Ps 86: 2 save your servant who **t** in you.
Mt 27:43 He **t** in God; let God deliver him

**TRUSTWORTHY** → TRUST
Ps 111: 7 and just; all his precepts are **t.**
Rev 22: 6 "These words are **t** and true,
1Mc 14:41 until a **t** prophet should arise,

**TRUTH** → TRUE
Ps 25: 5 Lead me in your **t,** and teach me,
119:142 and your law is the **t.**
Pr 23:23 Buy **t,** and do not sell it;
Jn 1:17 grace and **t** came through Jesus Christ.
4:23 worship the Father in spirit and **t,**
8:32 and the **t** will make you free."
14: 6 "I am the way, and the **t,** and the life.
14:17 This is the Spirit of **t,**
Eph 4:15 But speaking the **t** in love,
2Ti 2:15 rightly explaining the word of **t.**
Tob 3: 2 all your ways are mercy and **t;**

**TUNIC**
Lk 9: 3 nor money—not even an extra **t.**
Jn 19:23 **t** was seamless, woven in one piece

**TURN** → TURNED
Ex 32:12 **T** from your fierce wrath;
Jos 1: 7 do not **t** from it to the right hand or
Isa 6:10 and **t** and be healed."
45:22 **T** to me and be saved,
Mal 4: 6 He will **t** the hearts of parents to their
Lk 1:17 **t** the hearts of parents to their children

**TURNED** → TURN
Dt 23: 5 your God **t** the curse into a blessing
Isa 53: 6 we have all **t** to our own way,
Ro 3:12 All have **t** aside, together they have

**TWELVE**
Ge 49:28 All these are the **t** tribes of Israel.
Ex 24: 4 the mountain, and set up **t** pillars,
Jos 4: 3 'Take **t** stones from here out of the
Mt 10: 1 Jesus summoned his **t** disciples
Lk 9:17 **t** baskets of broken pieces.
Rev 21:12 inscribed the names of the **t** tribes
22: 2 tree of life with its **t** kinds of fruit,

**TWINKLING***
1Co 15:52 in the **t** of an eye, at the last trumpet

**TWO** → TWICE, TWO-EDGED
Ge 1:16 God made the **t** great lights—
6:19 bring **t** of every kind into the ark,
Ex 31:18 the **t** tablets of the covenant,
Dt 17: 6 of **t** or three witnesses the death
Mt 6:24 "No one can serve **t** masters;
19: 5 and the **t** shall become one flesh'?

**TWO-EDGED** → TWO
Heb 4:12 sharper than any **t** sword,
Rev 1:16 his mouth came a sharp, **t** sword,

**TYRE**
1Ki 5: 1 King Hiram of **T** sent his servants to
Eze 28:12 a lamentation over the king of **T,**
Mt 11:22 be more tolerable for **T** and Sidon

## U

**UNBELIEF** → UNBELIEVER, UNBELIEVERS
Mk 6: 6 And he was amazed at their **u.**
9:24 cried out, "I believe; help my **u!"**
Ro 11:20 were broken off because of their **u,**
1Ti 1:13 because I had acted ignorantly in **u,**

**UNBELIEVER** → UNBELIEF
1Co 10:27 If an **u** invites you to a meal and
2Co 6:15 does a believer share with an **u?**

**UNBELIEVERS** → UNBELIEF
2Co 6:14 Do not be mismatched with **u.**
2Es 15: 4 For all **u** shall die in their unbelief.

**UNCHASTITY***
Mt 5:32 except on the ground of **u,**
19: 9 divorces his wife, except for **u,**

**UNCIRCUMCISED** → UNCIRCUMCISION
Ex 12:48 But no **u** person shall eat of it;
Ac 7:51 people, **u** in heart and ears,
Ro 4:11 he had by faith while he was still **u.**
Col 3:11 circumcised and **u,** barbarian,
1Mc 1:48 and to leave their sons **u.**

**UNCIRCUMCISION** → UNCIRCUMCISED
1Co 7:19 Circumcision is nothing, and **u** is
Gal 5: 6 neither circumcision nor **u** counts

**UNCLEAN** → UNCLEANNESS
Lev 5: 2 when any of you touch any **u** thing
Isa 52:11 Touch no **u** thing;
Mk 3:11 Whenever the **u** spirits saw him,
Rev 21:27 But nothing **u** will enter it,

**UNDER**
Ps 8: 6 you have put all things **u** their feet,
Ac 4:12 for there is no other name **u** heaven
Ro 6:14 since you are not **u** law but **u** grace.
Eph 1:22 And he has put all things **u** his feet

**UNDERSTAND** → UNDERSTANDING
Job 42: 3 I have uttered what I did not **u,**
Pr 2: 5 then you will **u** the fear of the LORD
Hos 14: 9 Those who are wise **u** these things;
Mt 13:15 and **u** with their heart and turn—
Lk 24:45 opened their minds to **u** the scriptures,
Ac 8:30 "Do you **u** what you are reading?"
Eph 5:17 but **u** what the will of the Lord is.

**UNDERSTANDING** → UNDERSTAND
Ex 36: 1 has given skill and **u** to know how
Pr 2: 6 from his mouth come knowledge and **u**
Isa 40:14 and showed him the way of **u?**
Lk 2:47 heard him were amazed at his **u**
Php 4: 7 peace of God, which surpasses all **u,**
2Ti 2: 7 Lord will give you **u** in all things.

**UNEXPECTED**
Mt 24:44 Son of Man is coming at an **u** hour.

**UNFAITHFUL** → UNFAITHFULNESS
Ro 3: 3 What if some were **u?**

**UNFAITHFULNESS** → UNFAITHFUL
1Ch 9: 1 exile in Babylon because of their **u.**

**UNGODLY**
Ro 5: 6 the right time Christ died for the **u.**
2Pe 2: 6 example of what is coming to the **u;**
Sir 12: 5 but do not give to the **u;**

**UNINTENTIONALLY**
Lev 4: 2 When anyone sins **u** in any of
Nu 15:22 if you **u** fail to observe all these

**UNITY**
Ps 133: 1 when kindred live together in **u!**
Eph 4: 3 to maintain the **u** of the Spirit in the

**UNJUST**
Ro 3: 5 That God is **u** to inflict wrath on us?
Heb 6:10 For God is not **u;** he will

**UNLEAVENED**
Ex 12:17 shall observe the festival of **U** bread,
Mt 26:17 first day of **U** Bread the disciples

**UNPRODUCTIVE***
1Co 14:14 my spirit prays but my mind is **u.**
Tit 3:14 so that they may not be **u.**

**UNRIGHTEOUS** → UNRIGHTEOUSNESS
Mt 5:45 rain on the righteous and on the **u.**
2Pe 2: 9 **u** under punishment until the day

**UNRIGHTEOUSNESS** → UNRIGHTEOUS
Ps 92:15 and there is no **u** in him.
1Jn 1: 9 and cleanse us from all **u.**

### UPHOLD
Isa 42: 1 my servant, whom I **u.** my chosen,
Ro 3: 31 On the contrary, we **u** the law.

### UPRIGHT
Job 1: 1 That man was blameless and **u.**
Ps 7: 10 God is my shield, who saves the **u**
Tit 1: 8 a lover of goodness, prudent, **u.**

### UR
Ge 15: 7 LORD who brought you from **U** of

### URIAH
Hittite husband of Bathsheba, killed (2Sa 11).

### URIM
Ex 28: 30 of judgment you shall put the **U**

### USE → USEFUL
Ex 20: 7 not make wrongful **u** of the name of
Gal 5: 13 only do not **u** your freedom as an
2Ti 2: 20 for special **u,** some for ordinary.

### USEFUL → USE
Eph 4: 29 but only what is **u** for building up,
2Ti 3: 16 scripture is inspired by God and is **u**

### UZZIAH → =AZARIAH
Son of Amaziah; king of Judah also known as Azariah (2Ki 15:1-7; 1Ch 6:24; 2Ch 26). Struck with leprosy because of pride (2Ch 26:16-23).

## V

### VAIN → VANITY
Lev 26: 16 You shall sow your seed in **v,**
Ps 2: 1 and the peoples plot in **v?**
Mt 15: 9 in **v** do they worship me.
Php 2: 16 that I did not run in **v** or labor in **v.**

### VALLEY
Ps 23: 4 through the darkest **v,** I fear no evil;
Isa 40: 4 Every **v** shall be lifted up.
Joel 3: 14 multitudes, in the **v** of decision!
Lk 3: 5 Every **v** shall be filled, and every

### VALUE
Mt 13: 46 on finding one pearl of great **v,**
Ro 3: 1 Or what is the **v** of circumcision?
1Ti 4: 8 while physical training is of some **v,**

### VANITY → VAIN
Ecc 1: 2 **v** of vanities! All is **v.**
12: 8 **V** of vanities, says the Teacher; all is **v.**

### VASHTI
Persian queen replaced by Esther (Est 1-2; AdE 1-2).

### VEIL
Ex 34: 33 he put a **v** on his face;
2Co 3: 15 a **v** lies over their minds;

### VENGEANCE → AVENGE, AVENGER, AVENGING
Ps 94: 1 O LORD, you God of **v,**
Isa 34: 8 For the LORD has a day of **v,**
Na 1: 2 the LORD takes **v** on his adversaries

### VICTORY
Pr 21: 31 but the **v** belongs to the LORD.
1Co 15: 54 Death has been swallowed up in **v."**
1Jn 5: 4 the **v** that conquers the world, our faith.

### VINDICATE → VINDICATED
Ps 26: 1 **V** me, O LORD, for I have walked
135: 14 For the LORD will **v** his people,

### VINDICATED → VINDICATE
Job 13: 18 I know that I shall be **v.**
Mt 11: 19 Yet wisdom is **v** by her deeds."
1Ti 3: 16 He was revealed in flesh, **v** in spirit,

### VINE → VINEYARD
Ps 80: 8 You brought a **v** out of Egypt;
Jer 2: 21 Yet I planted you as a choice **v,**
Jn 15: 1 "I am the true **v,** and my Father is
Rev 14: 18 gather the clusters of the **v** of the

### VINEYARD → VINE
1Ki 21: 1 Naboth the Jezreelite had a **v** in
Isa 5: 1 had a **v** on a very fertile hill.
Mt 21: 33 a landowner who planted a **v,**

### VIOLENCE → VIOLENT
Ge 6: 11 and the earth was filled with **v.**
Isa 53: 9 although he had done no **v,**
Hab 2: 17 because of human bloodshed and **v**

### VIOLENT → VIOLENCE
1Ti 3: 3 not **v** but gentle, not quarrelsome,
Tit 1: 7 or addicted to wine or **v** or greedy

### VIPERS
Mt 23: 33 You snakes, you brood of **v!**
Ro 3: 13 venom of **v** is under their lips."

### VIRGIN
Jer 31: 21 Return, O **v** Israel, return to these
Mt 1: 23 the **v** shall conceive and bear a son,
Lk 1: 34 "How can this be, since I am a **v?"**
2Co 11: 2 present you as a chaste **v** to Christ.

### VISION → VISIONS
Isa 22: 1 oracle concerning the valley of **v.**
Da 8: 26 As for you, seal up the **v,**
Ac 26: 19 not disobedient to the heavenly **v,**

### VISIONS → VISION
Nu 12: 6 make myself known to them in **v;**
Eze 1: 1 were opened, and I saw **v** of God.
Da 1: 17 Daniel also had insight into all **v**
Joel 2: 28 and your young men shall see **v,**
Ac 2: 17 and your young men shall see **v,**

### VOICE
Isa 40: 3 A **v** cries out: "In the wilderness
Jn 1: 23 **v** of one crying out in the wilderness
10: 3 and the sheep hear his **v.**
Heb 3: 7 says, "Today, if you hear his **v,**
Rev 3: 20 if you hear my **v** and open the door,

### VOID
Ge 1: 2 the earth was a formless **v**
Mt 15: 6 you make **v** the word of God.

### VOW → VOWS
Ecc 5: 4 Fulfill what you **v.**
Sir 18: 23 Before making a **v,** prepare yourself

### VOWS → VOW
Ps 22: 25 my **v** I will pay before those who fear

## W

### WAGES
Ro 6: 23 For the **w** of sin is death,

### WAIT → WAITS
Ps 27: 14 **W** for the LORD; be strong,
La 3: 26 should **w** quietly for the salvation of
Hab 2: 3 If it seems to tarry, **w** for it;
Ro 8: 23 while we **w** for adoption,
1Th 1: 10 to **w** for his Son from heaven,
Sir 2: 7 fear the Lord, **w** for his mercy;

### WAITS → WAIT
Ps 130: 6 my soul **w** for the Lord more than
Ro 8: 19 the creation **w** with eager longing

### WALK → WALKED
Ge 17: 1 **W** before me, and be blameless,
Dt 10: 12 to **w** in all his ways, to love him,
Ps 23: 4 I **w** through the darkest valley, I fear no
Isa 2: 5 let us **w** in the light of the LORD!
40: 31 they shall **w** and not faint.
Jer 6: 16 **w** in it, and find rest for your souls.
Jn 8: 12 follows me will never **w** in darkness
2Co 5: 7 for we **w** by faith, not by sight.
Rev 21: 24 The nations will **w** by its light,

### WALKED → WALK
Ge 5: 24 Enoch **w** with God; then he was no

### WALL
Jos 6: 20 shout, and the **w** fell down flat;
Ne 2: 17 let us rebuild the **w** of Jerusalem,
Zec 2: 5 I will be a **w** of fire all around it,
Eph 2: 14 has broken down the dividing **w,**

### WANT → WANTING
Ps 23: 1 LORD is my shepherd, I shall not **w.**
Php 3: 10 I **w** to know Christ and the power

### WANTING → WANT
2Pe 3: 9 not **w** any to perish, but all to come to

### WAR → WARRIOR, WARS
Ecc 3: 8 a time for **w,** and a time for peace.
Da 9: 26 and to the end there shall be **w.**
Ro 7: 23 in my members another law at **w**
Rev 19: 11 righteousness he judges and makes **w.**

### WARRIOR → WAR
Ex 15: 3 LORD is a **w;** the LORD is his name.

### WARS → WAR
Mt 24: 6 you will hear of **w** and rumors of **w;**

### WASH → WASHED
Ps 51: 7 **w** me, and I shall be whiter than snow.
Jn 13: 5 and began to **w** the disciples' feet
Rev 22: 14 Blessed are those who **w** their robes,

### WASHED → WASH
1Co 6: 11 you were **w,** you were sanctified,
2Pe 2: 22 sow is **w** only to wallow in the mud.

### WATCH → WATCHES
Lk 2: 8 keeping **w** over their flock by night.
Heb 13: 17 they are keeping **w** over your souls

### WATCHES → WATCH
Ps 1: 6 LORD **w** over the way of the righteous,
Wis 3: 9 and he **w** over his elect.

### WATER → WATERS
Ex 17: 1 no **w** for the people to drink.
Nu 20: 2 there was no **w** for the congregation;
Jer 2: 13 the fountain of living **w,**
Eze 36: 25 I will sprinkle clean **w** upon you,
Mk 1: 8 I have baptized you with **w;**
Jn 2: 9 tasted the **w** that had become wine,
3: 5 without being born of **w** and Spirit,
4: 10 he would have given you living **w,"**
1Jn 5: 6 the one who came by **w** and blood.
Rev 22: 1 showed me the river of the **w** of life,

### WATERS → WATER
Ge 7: 7 the ark to escape the **w** of the flood.
Ex 14: 21 dry land; and the **w** were divided.
Ecc 11: 1 Send out your bread upon the **w,**
Isa 55: 1 who thirsts, come to the **w;**

### WAVERING
Heb 10: 23 confession of our hope without **w,**
Jude 1: 22 have mercy on some who are **w;**

### WAY → WAYS
Ps 1: 6 watches over the **w** of the righteous,
86: 11 Teach me your **w,** O LORD,
Pr 12: 15 Fools think their own **w** is right,
22: 6 Train children in the right **w,**
Isa 40: 3 wilderness prepare the **w** of the LORD,
Mal 3: 1 sending my messenger to prepare the **w**
Mt 3: 3 'Prepare the **w** of the Lord,
Jn 14: 6 "I am the **w,** and the truth, and the life.
Ac 9: 2 found any who belonged to the **W,**
1Co 12: 31 show you a still more excellent **w.**
Heb 10: 20 the new and living **w** that he opened

### WAYS → WAY
Dt 10: 12 to walk in all his **w,** to love him,
Hos 14: 9 For the **w** of the LORD are right,
Rev 15: 3 Just and true are your **w,** King of
Sir 2: 15 who love him keep his **w.**

### WEAK → WEAKNESS, WEAKNESSES
Mt 26: 41 indeed is willing, but the flesh is **w."**
Ro 14: 1 Welcome those who are **w** in faith,
1Co 1: 27 God chose what is **w** in the world
2Co 12: 10 whenever I am **w,** then I am strong.

### WEAKNESS → WEAK
Ro 8: 26 the Spirit helps us in our **w;**
1Co 15: 43 It is sown in **w,** it is raised in power.

### WEAKNESSES → WEAK
2Co 12: 10 I am content with **w,** insults,
Heb 4: 15 to sympathize with our **w,**

### WEALTH
Ps 49: 6 those who trust in their **w** and boast
Pr 19: 4 **W** brings many friends,
Mt 13: 22 and the lure of **w** choke
Rev 5: 12 receive power and **w** and wisdom
Sir 5: 1 Do not rely on your **w,**

**WEAPONS**
Ecc 9: 18 Wisdom is better than **w** of war,
2Co 6: 7 the **w** of righteousness for the right

**WEAR**
Isa 51: 6 the earth will **w** out like a garment,
Mt 6: 31 or 'What will we **w**?'

**WEARY**
Isa 40: 31 they shall run and not be **w,**
Heb 12: 3 you may not grow **w** or lose heart.

**WEDDING**
Jn 2: 1 there was a **w** in Cana of Galilee.

**WEEKS**
Ex 34: 22 You shall observe the festival of **w,**
Lev 23: 15 you shall count off seven **w;**
Da 9: 24 "Seventy **w** are decreed for your

**WEEP** → WEEPING
Ecc 3: 4 a time to **w,** and a time to laugh;
Ro 12: 15 **w** with those who **w.**

**WEEPING** → WEEP
Ps 30: 5 **W** may linger for the night,
Mt 2: 18 Rachel **w** for her children;
8: 12 will be **w** and gnashing of teeth."

**WEIGHED**
1Sa 2: 3 and by him actions are **w.**
Da 5: 27 you have been **w** on the scales

**WELL**
Dt 6: 3 so that it may go **w** with you,
Mt 3: 17 with whom I am **w** pleased."
17: 5 I am **w** pleased; listen to him!"
2Pe 1: 17 with whom I am **w** pleased."

**WEST**
Ps 103: 12 as far as the east is from the **W,**
Isa 43: 5 and from the **w** I will gather you;

**WHEAT**
Mt 13: 25 and sowed weeds among the **w,**
Lk 22: 31 demanded to sift all of you like **w,**
Jn 12: 24 grain of **w** falls into the earth and dies,

**WHIRLWIND** → WIND
2Ki 2: 11 Elijah ascended in a **w** into heaven.
Na 1: 3 His way is in **w** and storm,

**WHITE** → WHITER
Da 7: 9 his clothing was **w** as snow,
Mt 5: 36 cannot make one hair **w** or black.
Rev 1: 14 his hair were **w** as **w** wool, **w** as snow;
20: 11 a great **w** throne and the one who sat

**WHITER** → WHITE
Ps 51: 7 wash me, and I shall be **w** than snow.

**WICKED** → WICKEDNESS
Ge 13: 13 Now the people of Sodom were **w,**
18: 23 the righteous with the **w?**
Ps 1: 5 the **w** will not stand in the judgment,
73: 3 I saw the prosperity of the **w.**
Isa 48: 22 no peace," says the LORD, "for the **w.**"
Eze 18: 23 any pleasure in the death of the **w,**
Da 12: 10 None of the **w** shall understand,

**WICKEDNESS** → WICKED
Ge 6: 5 The LORD saw that the **w** of
Ps 45: 7 you love righteousness and hate **w.**
Lk 11: 39 inside you are full of greed and **w.**

**WIDE**
Mt 7: 13 the gate is **w** and the road is easy

**WIDOW** → WIDOWS
Ex 22: 22 shall not abuse any **w** or orphan.
Ps 146: 9 he upholds the orphan and the **w,**
1Ti 5: 4 If a **w** has children or grandchildren,
Rev 18: 7 I am no **w,** and I will never see grief

**WIDOWS** → WIDOW
1Ti 5: 3 Honor **w** who are really **w.**
Jas 1: 27 to care for orphans and **w** in their

**WIFE** → WIVES
Ge 2: 24 and his mother and clings to his **w,**
Ex 20: 17 shall not covet your neighbor's **w,**
Pr 18: 22 who finds a **w** finds a good thing,
Mt 5: 32 that anyone who divorces his **w,**
19: 3 to divorce his **w** for any cause?"
Eph 5: 28 He who loves his **w** loves himself.
Rev 21: 9 the bride, the **w** of the Lamb."
Tob 8: 6 his **w** Eve as a helper and support.
Sir 26: 3 A good **w** is a great blessing;

**WILD**
Ex 32: 25 saw that the people were running **w**
Mk 1: 13 and he was with the **w** beasts;
Ro 11: 17 a **w** olive shoot,

**WILDERNESS**
Isa 40: 3 the **w** prepare the way of the LORD,
Mt 3: 3 voice of one crying out in the **w:**

**WILL** → FREEWILL, WILLING
Ps 40: 8 I delight to do your **w,** O my God;
143: 10 Teach me to do your **w,**
Isa 53: 10 it was the **w** of the LORD to crush him
Mt 6: 10 Your **w** be done, on earth as it is in
Lk 22: 42 yet, not my **w** but yours be done."
Jn 4: 34 "My food is to do the **w** of him who
Ro 9: 19 For who can resist his **w?"**
Eph 6: 6 doing the **w** of God from the heart.
1Jo 5: 14 if we ask anything according to his **w,**

**WILLING** → WILL
Mt 26: 41 spirit indeed is **w,** but the flesh is weak.
Lk 22: 42 if you are **w,** remove this cup from

**WIND** → WHIRLWIND
1Ki 19: 11 but the LORD was not in the **w;**
Ps 1: 4 like chaff that the **w** drives away.
Ecc 1: 14 all is vanity and a chasing after **w.**
Jn 3: 8 The **w** blows where it chooses,
Ac 2: 2 a sound like the rush of a violent **w,**

**WINE**
Dt 7: 13 your grain and your **w** and your oil,
Ps 104: 15 and **w** to gladden the human heart,
Pr 20: 1 **W** is a mocker, strong drink a
SS 1: 2 For your love is better than **w,**
Mt 9: 17 is new **w** put into old wineskins;
Jn 2: 9 tasted the water that had become **w,**
Eph 5: 18 Do not get drunk with **w,** for that is
Rev 18: 3 have drunk of the **w** of the wrath
Sir 40: 20 **W** and music gladden the heart,

**WINGS**
Ex 19: 4 and how I bore you on eagles' **w**
Ps 17: 8 hide me in the shadow of your **w,**
Mal 4: 2 shall rise, with healing in its **w.**
Lk 13: 34 hen gathers her brood under her **w,**

**WIPE** → WIPED
Isa 25: 8 GOD will **w** away the tears from all faces,
Rev 21: 4 he will **w** every tear from their eyes.

**WIPED** → WIPE
Ac 3: 19 so that your sins may be **w** out,

**WISDOM** → WISE
Dt 4: 6 will show your **w** and discernment
1Ki 4: 29 God gave Solomon very great **w,**
Job 11: 6 the secrets of **w!** For **w** is many-sided.
Pr 1: 20 **W** cries out in the street;
9: 10 fear of the LORD is the beginning of **w,**
Ecc 1: 13 to search out by **w** all that is done
Jer 9: 23 Do not let the wise boast in their **w,**
Mt 13: 54 this man get this **w** and these deeds
Lk 2: 52 Jesus increased in **w** and in years,
Ro 11: 33 the depth of the riches and **w** and
1Co 1: 19 "I will destroy the **w** of the wise,
Col 2: 3 whom are hidden all the treasures of **w**
Jas 3: 17 But the **w** from above is first pure,
Rev 5: 12 wealth and **w** and might and honor
Wis 6: 12 **W** is radiant and unfading,
Sir 1: 1 All **w** is from the Lord,
24: 1 THE PRAISE OF **W**

**WISE** → WISDOM
Dt 4: 6 great nation is a **w** and discerning
Ps 19: 7 are sure, making **w** the simple;
Pr 3: 7 Do not be **w** in your own eyes;
13: 20 walks with the **w** becomes **w,**
Ecc 12: 11 The sayings of the **w** are like goads,
Da 12: 3 are **w** shall shine like the brightness
Mt 25: 2 were foolish, and five were **w.**
1Co 1: 26 not many of you were **w** by human
Eph 5: 15 not as unwise people but as **W,**

**WITHER** → WITHERED, WITHERS
Ps 1: 3 and their leaves do not **w.**
Eze 47: 12 Their leaves will not **w** nor their

**WITHERED** → WITHER
Mt 13: 6 since they had no root, they **w** away.
21: 19 And the fig tree **w** at once.

**WITHERS** → WITHER
Jn 15: 6 is thrown away like a branch and **w;**
1Pe 1: 24 The grass **w,** and the flower falls,

**WITHHOLD**
Ps 84: 11 No good thing does the LORD **w** from
Ro 8: 32 He who did not **w** his own Son,

**WITHOUT**
2Ch 18: 16 like sheep **w** a shepherd;
Pr 19: 2 Desire **w** knowledge is not good,
Mt 9: 36 helpless, like sheep **w** a shepherd.
Jn 3: 34 for he gives the Spirit **w** measure.
Eph 2: 12 no hope and **w** God in the world.
Heb 4: 15 tested as we are, yet **w** sin.

**WITNESS** → EYEWITNESSES, WITNESSES
Dt 19: 15 single **w** shall not suffice to convict
Job 16: 19 in fact, my **w** is in heaven,
Ro 2: 15 their own conscience also bears **w;**
Rev 1: 5 faithful **w,** the firstborn of the dead,

**WITNESSES** → WITNESS
Mt 26: 60 though many false **w** came forward.
Heb 12: 1 surrounded by so great a cloud of **w,**
Rev 11: 3 my two **w** authority to prophesy

**WIVES** → WIFE
1Ki 11: 3 and his **w** turned away his heart.
Eph 5: 22 **W,** be subject to your husbands as
1Pe 3: 1 **W,** in the same way, accept the

**WOE**
Mt 23: 13 "But **w** to you, scribes and Pharisees
Rev 8: 13 **"W, w, w** to the inhabitants of the

**WOLF** → WOLVES
Isa 11: 6 The **w** shall live with the lamb,
Jn 10: 12 sees the **w** coming and leaves the sheep

**WOLVES** → WOLF
Mt 7: 15 but inwardly are ravenous **w.**

**WOMAN** → WOMEN
Ge 2: 22 he made into a **w** and brought her to
3: 15 enmity between you and the **w,**
Ps 113: 9 He gives the barren **w** a home.
Pr 11: 16 A gracious **w** gets honor,
31: 30 **w** who fears the LORD is to be praised.
Isa 54: 1 of the desolate **w** will be more than
Rev 12: 1 a **w** clothed with the sun,
Jdt 16: 5 foiled them by the hand of a **w.**
Sus 1: 2 a very beautiful **w** and one who feared

**WOMB**
Job 1: 21 Naked I came from my mother's **w,**
Ps 139: 13 knit me together in my mother's **w.**
Lk 1: 44 the child in my **w** leaped for joy.

**WOMEN** → WOMAN
Ezr 10: 2 married foreign **w** from the peoples
Mt 24: 41 Two **w** will be grinding meal
Lk 1: 42 "Blessed are you among **w,**
23: 55 **w** who had come with him from
1Pe 3: 5 that the holy **w** who hoped in God

**WONDERFUL** → WONDERS
Ge 18: 14 Is anything too **w** for the LORD?
Jdg 13: 18 do you ask my name? It is too **w."**
Ps 107: 8 for his **w** works to humankind,
Isa 9: 6 named **W** Counselor, Mighty God,

**WONDERS** → WONDERFUL
Ex 3: 20 and strike Egypt with all my **w** that
Ps 136: 4 who alone does great **w,**
Jn 4: 48 signs and **w** you will not believe."
2Th 2: 9 who uses all power, signs, lying **w,**

### WOOD
Dt 28: 64 serve other gods, of **w** and stone.
1Co 3: 12 silver, precious stones, **w**, hay,

### WORD → BYWORD, WORDS
Dt 30: 14 No, the **w** is very near to you;
1Ki 8: 56 not one **w** has failed of all his good
Ps 56: 4 In God, whose **w** I praise,
119: 105 Your **w** is a lamp to my feet and
Pr 30: 5 Every **w** of God proves true;
Isa 40: 8 the **w** of our God will stand forever.
55: 11 my **w** be that goes out from my mouth;
Mk 4: 14 The sower sows the **w.**
Jn 1: 1 In the beginning was the **W,** and the **W** was with God, and the **W** was God.
1: 14 the **W** became flesh and lived among
17: 17 in the truth; your **w** is truth.
Ro 9: 6 as though the **w** of God had failed.
2Ti 2: 15 rightly explaining the **w** of truth.
Jas 1: 22 But be doers of the **w,**
1Jn 2: 5 but whoever obeys his **w,**
Rev 19: 13 his name is called The **W** of God.

### WORDS → WORD
Ex 20: 1 Then God spoke all these **w:**
Dt 11: 18 put these **w** of mine in your heart
Ps 5: 1 Give ear to my **w,** O LORD:
Pr 30: 6 not add to his **w,** or else he will rebuke
Hos 6: 5 killed them by the **w** of my mouth.
Mt 24: 35 but my **w** will not pass away.
Lk 6: 47 hears my **w,** and acts on them.
1Co 2: 13 in **w** not taught by human wisdom
Rev 22: 19 takes away from the **w** of the book

### WORK → WORKS
Ge 2: 2 the seventh day God finished the **w**
Ex 20: 10 you shall not do any **w**—
Ps 8: 3 heavens, the **w** of your fingers,
Jn 6: 27 Do not **w** for the food that perishes,
Php 1: 6 who began a good **w** among you will
2: 12 **w** out your own salvation with fear
2Ti 3: 17 equipped for every good **w.**

### WORKS → WORK
Ps 8: 6 given them dominion over the **w**
92: 5 How great are your **w,** O LORD!
Gal 2: 16 and not by doing the **w** of the law,
5: 19 the **w** of the flesh are obvious:
Eph 2: 9 not the result of **w,** so that no one may
1Ti 6: 18 to do good, to be rich in good **w,**

### WORLD
Ps 9: 8 He judges the **w** with righteousness;
Mt 5: 14 "You are the light of the **w.**
16: 26 gain the whole **w** but forfeit their life?
Jn 1: 10 yet the **w** did not know him.
3: 16 loved the **w** that he gave his only Son,
8: 12 saying, "I am the light of the **w.**
16: 33 courage; I have conquered the **w!"**
1Ti 6: 7 we brought nothing into the **w,**
Jas 4: 4 friend of the **w** becomes an enemy of
1Jn 2: 2 but also for the sins of the whole **w.**
2: 15 not love the **w** or the things in the **w.**
Rev 11: 15 kingdom of the **w** has become the

### WORM
Ps 22: 6 But I am a **w,** and not human;
Mk 9: 48 where their **w** never dies,

### WORRY
Mt 6: 25 do not **w** about your life,
10: 19 not **w** about how you are to speak

### WORSHIP → WORSHIPED
Ex 20: 5 not bow down to them or **w** them;
Ps 100: 2 **W** the LORD with gladness;
Mt 4: 9 if you will fall down and **w** me."
Jn 4: 24 who **w** him must **w** in spirit and truth."
Ro 12: 1 which is your spiritual **w.**
Rev 22: 3 and his servants will **w** him;
Sir 35: 10 Be generous when you **w** the Lord,

### WORSHIPED → WORSHIP
Mt 28: 9 took hold of his feet, and **w** him.
Rev 5: 14 And the elders fell down and **w,**

### WORTHY
2Sa 22: 4 LORD, who is **w** to be praised,
Mt 10: 38 and follow me is not **w** of me.
Eph 4: 1 to lead a life **w** of the calling
Heb 3: 3 Jesus is **w** of more glory than Moses
Rev 4: 11 "You are **w,** our Lord and God,
5: 12 **W** is the Lamb that was slaughtered

### WOUND → WOUNDS
Ex 21: 25 burn for burn, **w** for **w,** stripe for
Rev 13: 3 but its mortal **w** had been healed.

### WOUNDS → WOUND
Ps 147: 3 brokenhearted, and binds up their **w.**
1Pe 2: 24 by his **w** you have been healed.

### WRAPPED
Mk 15: 46 the body, **w** it in the linen cloth.
Lk 2: 7 **w** him in bands of cloth,

### WRATH
Nu 16: 46 For **w** has gone out from the LORD:
Ps 2: 5 Then he will speak to them in his **w,**
6: 1 or discipline me in your **w.**
Pr 15: 1 A soft answer turns away **w,**
Jer 25: 15 my hand this cup of the wine of **w,**
La 4: 11 The LORD gave full vent to his **w;**
Zep 1: 15 That day will be a day of **w,**
Mt 3: 7 you to flee from the **w** to come?
Ro 1: 18 **w** of God is revealed from heaven
1Th 1: 10 rescues us from the **w** that is coming
Rev 6: 17 the great day of their **w** has come,
Sir 16: 11 For mercy and **w** are with the Lord;

### WRESTLED
Ge 32: 24 a man **w** with him until daybreak.

### WRITE → WRITING, WRITTEN, WROTE
Ex 34: 27 LORD said to Moses: **W** these words;
Nu 17: 2 **W** each man's name on his staff.
Dt 6: 9 **w** them on the doorposts of your house
Pr 7: 3 **w** them on the tablet of your heart.
Jer 31: 33 and I will **w** it on their hearts;
Heb 8: 10 and **w** them on their hearts,
Rev 21: 5 **"W** this, for these words are trustworthy

### WRITING → WRITE
Ex 32: 16 and the **w** was the **w** of God,
Da 5: 7 "Whoever can read this **w**
2Es 14: 24 prepare for yourself many **w** tablets,

### WRITTEN → WRITE
Jos 23: 6 to observe and do all that is **w** in
Da 12: 1 who is found **w** in the book.
Lk 24: 44 everything **w** about me in the law
Jn 21: 25 if every one of them were **w** down,
Rev 21: 27 are **w** in the Lamb's book of life.
2Es 14: 44 forty days, ninety-four books were **w.**

### WRONG → WRONGDOING, WRONGED
Nu 5: 7 shall make full restitution for the **w,**
Lk 23: 41 but this man has done nothing **w."**
Ac 23: 9 "We find nothing **w** with this man.
Ro 13: 10 Love does no **w** to a neighbor;

### WRONGDOING → DO, WRONG
Ex 23: 2 You shall not follow a majority in **w**
1Jn 5: 17 All **w** is sin, but there is sin that is not

### WRONGED → WRONG
1Co 6: 7 Why not rather be **w?**

### WROTE → WRITE
Ex 24: 4 And Moses **w** down all the words
34: 28 he **w** on the tablets the words of the
Jn 5: 46 believe me, for he **w** about me.

## Y

### YEAR → YEARS
Ex 23: 14 Three times in the **y** you shall hold a
Heb 10: 1 continually offered **y** after **y,**

### YEARS → YEAR
Ge 1: 14 and for seasons and for days and **y,**
Ex 12: 40 in Egypt was four hundred thirty **y.**
Nu 14: 34 forty **y,** and you shall know my
2Ch 36: 21 it kept sabbath, to fulfill seventy **y.**
Ps 90: 4 For a thousand **y** in your sight are like
Jer 25: 12 Then after seventy **y** are completed,
Da 9: 2 of Jerusalem, namely, seventy **y.**
Gal 4: 10 and months, and seasons, and **y.**
2Pe 3: 8 the Lord one day is like a thousand **y,**
Rev 20: 2 and bound him for a thousand **y,**

### YEAST
Mt 16: 6 beware of the **y** of the Pharisees and
Gal 5: 9 A little **y** leavens the whole batch of

### YESTERDAY
Heb 13: 8 Jesus Christ is the same **y** and today

### YOKE
Mt 11: 30 my **y** is easy, and my burden is light."
Gal 5: 1 not submit again to a **y** of slavery.

### YOUNG → YOUTH
Ps 119: 9 can **y** people keep their way pure?
Joel 2: 28 and your **y** men shall see visions,
Ac 2: 17 and your **y** men shall see visions,

### YOUTH → YOUNG
Ps 71: 5 my trust, O LORD, from my **y.**
Ecc 12: 1 Remember your creator in the days of your **y,**

## Z

### ZACCHAEUS
Lk 19: 2 A man was there named **Z;**

### ZEAL → ZEALOUS
Ps 69: 9 **z** for your house that has consumed me
Isa 37: 32 The **z** of the LORD of hosts will do this.
Jn 2: 17 **"Z** for your house will consume me.
Ro 10: 2 testify that they have a **z** for God.
Php 3: 6 as to **z,** a persecutor of the church;
1Mc 2: 26 Thus he burned with **z** for the law,

### ZEALOUS → ZEAL
Nu 25: 13 because he was **z** for his God,
1Ki 19: 10 "I have been very **z** for the LORD,

### ZEBULUN
Son of Jacob by Leah (Ge 30:20; 35:23; 1Ch 2:1). Tribe of blessed (Ge 49:13; Dt 33:18-19), numbered (Nu 1:31; 26:27), allotted land (Jos 19:10-16; Eze 48:26), failed to fully possess (Jdg 1:30), supported Deborah (Jdg 4:6-10; 5:14, 18), David (1Ch 12:33), 12,000 from (Rev 7:8).

### ZECHARIAH
1. Son of Jeroboam II; king of Israel (2Ki 15:8-12).
2. Post-exilic prophet who encouraged rebuilding of temple (Ezr 5:1; 6:14; Zec 1:1).

### ZEDEKIAH → =MATTANIAH
1. False prophet (1Ki 22:11-24; 2Ch 18:10-23).
2. Mattaniah, son of Josiah (1Ch 3:15), made king of Judah by Nebuchadnezzar (2Ki 24:17-25:7; 2Ch 36:10-14; Jer 37-39; 52:1-11).

### ZEPHANIAH
Prophet; descendant of Hezekiah (Zep 1:1).

### ZERUBBABEL
Descendant of David (1Ch 3:19; Mt 1:3). Led return from exile (Ezr 2:2; Ne 7:7). Governor of Israel; helped rebuild temple (Ezr 3; Hag 1-2; Zec 4).

### ZIMRI
King of Israel (1Ki 16:9-20).

### ZION
2Sa 5: 7 David took the stronghold of **Z,**
Ps 2: 6 I have set my king on **Z,** my holy hill.
48: 2 is the joy of all the earth, Mount **Z,**
78: 68 Mount **Z,** which he loves.
Isa 28: 16 I am laying in **Z** a foundation stone,
Mic 4: 2 For out of **Z** shall go forth instruction,
Zec 9: 9 Rejoice greatly, O daughter **Z!**
Mt 21: 5 "Tell the daughter of **Z,**
Ro 11: 26 "Out of **Z** will come the Deliverer;
1Pe 2: 6 "See, I am laying in **Z** a stone,
Rev 14: 1 the Lamb, standing on Mount **Z!**

### ZIPPORAH*
Daughter of Reuel; wife of Moses (Ex 2:21-22; 4:20-26; 18:1-6).

### ZOPHAR*
One of Job's friends (Job 2:11; 11; 20; 42:9).