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Joshua

Chapter 1

¹ Now it came about after the death of Moses the servant of Yahweh, that Yahweh spoke to Joshua the son of Nun, Moses' chief assistant, saying, ² "Moses, my servant, is dead. Now therefore, arise, cross over this Jordan, you and all this people, into the land that I am giving to them—to the people of Israel. ³ I have given you every place where the sole of your foot will walk. I have given it to you, just as I promised to Moses. ⁴ From the wilderness and Lebanon, as far as the great river, the Euphrates, all the land of the Hittites, and to the Great Sea, where the sun goes down, will be your land. ⁵ No one will be able to stand before you all the days of your life. I will be with you as I was with Moses. I will not abandon you or leave you. ⁶ Be strong and courageous. You will cause this people to inherit the land that I swore to their ancestors I would give to them. ⁷ Be strong and very courageous. Be careful to obey all the law my servant Moses commanded you. Do not turn from it to the right or to the left, so that you may be successful wherever you go. ⁸ This book of the law must not leave your mouth. You must meditate on it day and night so that you can be careful to do all that is written in it. Then you will be prosperous and successful. ⁹ Have I not commanded you? Be strong and courageous! Do not be afraid. Do not be discouraged. Yahweh your God is with you wherever you go."

¹⁰ Then Joshua commanded the leaders of the people, ¹¹ "Go through the camp and command the people, 'Prepare provisions for yourselves. In three days you will cross over this Jordan and go in and possess the land that Yahweh your God is giving you to possess.'"

¹² To the Reubenites, the Gadites and the half tribe of Manasseh, Joshua said, ¹³ "Call to mind the word that Moses the servant of Yahweh, commanded you when he said, 'Yahweh your God is giving you rest, and he is giving you this land.' ¹⁴ Your wives, your little ones, and your livestock will stay in the land that Moses gave you beyond the Jordan. But your mighty warriors will go over with your brothers and help them ¹⁵ until Yahweh has given your brothers rest just as he has given it to you. Then they also will take possession of the land Yahweh your God gives them. Then you will return to your own land and possess it, the land that Moses the servant of Yahweh gave you beyond the Jordan, where the sun rises." ¹⁶ Then they answered Joshua, saying, "All that you have commanded us we will do, and wherever you send us we will go. ¹⁷ We will obey you just as we obeyed Moses. Only may Yahweh your God be with you, as he was with Moses. ¹⁸ Whoever rebels against your commands and disobeys the words you have commanded them will be put to death. Only be strong and courageous."

Chapter 2

¹ Then Joshua son of Nun secretly sent two men out from Shittim as spies. He said, "Go, look over the land, especially Jericho." They went away and came to the house of a prostitute whose name was Rahab, and they lodged there. ² It was told to the king of Jericho, "Look, men of Israel have come here to spy on the land." ³ The king of Jericho sent word to Rahab and said, "Bring out the men who have come to you who entered your house, for they have come to spy on the whole land." ⁴ But the woman had taken the two men and hidden them. She replied, "Yes, the men came to me, but I did not know where they were from." ⁵ They left when it was dusk, when it was time for the city gate to shut. I do not know where they went. You will probably catch them if you hurry after them." ⁶ But she had taken them up to the roof and hidden them with the stalks of flax that she had laid out on the roof. ⁷ So the men pursued them on the road that leads to the fords of the Jordan. The gate was shut as soon as the pursuers went out.

⁸ The men had not yet lain down for the night, when she came up to them on the roof. ⁹ She said, "I know that Yahweh has given you the land and that the fear of you has come upon us. All those who live in the land will melt away before you. ¹⁰ We have heard how Yahweh dried up the water of the Sea of Reeds for you when you came out of Egypt. We also heard what you did to the two kings of the Amorites on the other side of the Jordan—Sihon and Og—whom you completely destroyed. ¹¹ As soon as we had heard it, our hearts melted and there was no courage left in anyone—for Yahweh your God, he is God in heaven above and on the earth below. ¹² Now then, please swear to me by Yahweh that, just as I have been kind to you, you will also deal kindly with my father's house. Give me a sure sign ¹³ that you will spare the lives of my father, mother, brothers, sisters and all their families, and that you will deliver our souls from death." ¹⁴ The men said to her, "Our life for yours, even to death! If you do not speak about our business, then, when Yahweh gives us this land we will be merciful and faithful to you."

¹⁵ So she let them down out through the window using a rope. The house in which she lived was built into the wall of the city. ¹⁶ She said to them, "Go in the hills and hide or the pursuers will find you. Hide there for three days until the pursuers have returned. Then go on your way." ¹⁷ The men said to her, "We will be free from the oath you made us swear to if you do not do this. ¹⁸ When we come into the land, you must tie this scarlet rope in the window through which you let us down, and you will gather into the house your father and mother, your brothers and all your father's household. ¹⁹ Whoever goes out of the doors of your house into the street, their blood will be upon their own heads and we will be guiltless. But if a hand is laid upon any who is with you in the house, his blood will be on our head. ²⁰ But if you speak about our business, we will be free from the oath you made us swear." ²¹ Rahab replied, "May what you say be done." She sent them away and they left. Then she tied the scarlet rope in the window.

²² They left and went up into the hills and they stayed there three days until their pursuers returned. The pursuers searched all along the road and found nothing. ²³ The two men returned and crossed over and came back to Joshua son of Nun, and they told him everything that had happened to them. ²⁴ They said to Joshua, "Truly Yahweh has given this land to us. All the inhabitants of the land are melting away because of us."

Chapter 3

¹ Joshua got up early in the morning, and they set out from Shittim. They came to the Jordan, he and all the people of Israel, and they camped there before they crossed over. ² After three days, the officers went through the middle of the camp; ³ they commanded the people, "When you see the ark of the covenant of Yahweh your God, and the priests from the Levites carrying it, you must leave this place and follow it. ⁴ There must be a distance between you and it of about two thousand cubits. Do not come close to it, so that you can see which way to go, since you have not gone this way before." ⁵ Joshua said to the people, "Consecrate yourselves tomorrow, for Yahweh will do wonders among you." ⁶ Then Joshua said to the priests, "Take up the ark of the covenant, and pass in front of the people." So they picked up the ark of the covenant and went in front of people.

⁷ Yahweh said to Joshua, "This day I will make you a great man in the eyes of all Israel. They will know that as I was with Moses, I will be with you. ⁸ You will command the priests who carry the ark of the covenant, 'When you have come to the edge of the waters of the Jordan, you must stand still in the Jordan River.'" ⁹ Then Joshua said to the people of Israel, "Come here, and listen to the words of Yahweh your God." ¹⁰ And Joshua said, "By this you will know that the living God is among you and will drive out from before you the Canaanites, the Hittites, the Hivites, the Perizzites, the Girgashites, the Amorites, and the Jebusites. ¹¹ Look! The ark of the covenant of the Lord of all the earth crosses over ahead of you into the Jordan. ¹² Now choose twelve men from the tribes of Israel, one man from each. ¹³ When the soles of the feet of the priests who carry the ark of Yahweh, the Lord of all the earth, touch the waters of the Jordan, the waters of the Jordan will be cut off, and even the waters that flow down from upstream will stop flowing and they will stand in one heap."

¹⁴ So when the people set out from their tents to cross over the Jordan, the priests who carried the ark of the covenant went ahead of the people. ¹⁵ As soon as those who were carrying the ark had come to the Jordan, and the feet of the priests who carried the chest were dipped in the edge of the water—now the Jordan overflows all its banks throughout the time of the harvest—¹⁶ the waters that flowed down from upstream stood up in one heap. The water stopped flowing from a great distance. The waters stopped flowing from Adam, the city that is beside Zarethan, all the way down to the sea of the Arabah, the Salt Sea. The people crossed over near Jericho. ¹⁷ The priests who carried the ark of the covenant of Yahweh stood on dry ground in the middle of the Jordan until all the people of Israel crossed over on dry ground.

Chapter 4

¹ When all the people crossed over the Jordan, Yahweh said to Joshua, ² "Choose twelve men for yourselves from among the people, one man from each tribe. ³ Give them this command: 'Take up twelve stones from the middle of the Jordan where the priests are standing on the dry ground, and bring them over with you and lay them down in the place where you will spend the night tonight.'" ⁴ Then Joshua called the twelve men whom he had chosen from the tribes of Israel, one from each tribe. ⁵ Joshua said to them, "Go over before the ark of Yahweh your God into the middle of the Jordan. Each of you is to take up a stone upon his shoulder, according to the number of the tribes of the people of Israel. ⁶ This will be a sign in your midst for you when your children ask in days to come, 'What do these stones mean to you?' ⁷ Then you will say to them, 'The waters of the Jordan were cut off before the ark of the covenant of Yahweh. When it passed over the Jordan, the waters of the Jordan were cut off. So these stones will be a memorial to the people of Israel forever.'"

⁸ The people of Israel did just as Joshua commanded, and they picked up twelve stones from the middle of the Jordan, as Yahweh said to Joshua. They set the stones up according to the number of the tribes of the people of Israel. They carried the stones with them, over to the place where they camped and they set them down there. ⁹ Then Joshua set up twelve stones in the middle of the Jordan River, in the place where the feet of the priests who carried the ark of the covenant stood. The memorial is there to this day. ¹⁰ The priests who carried the ark stood in the middle of the Jordan until everything that Yahweh commanded Joshua to tell the people was completed, according to all that Moses had commanded Joshua. The people hurried and they crossed over. ¹¹ When all the people had finished crossing over, the ark of Yahweh and the priests crossed over before the people. ¹² The tribe of Reuben, the tribe of Gad, and the half tribe of Manasseh passed before the people of Israel formed up as an army, just as Moses said to them. ¹³ About forty thousand men equipped for war passed before Yahweh, for battle on the plains of Jericho. ¹⁴ On that day Yahweh made Joshua great in the eyes of all Israel. They honored him—just as they honored Moses—all his days.

¹⁵ Then Yahweh spoke to Joshua, ¹⁶ "Command the priests who carry the ark of the testimony to come up out of the Jordan." ¹⁷ So, Joshua commanded the priests, "Come up out of the Jordan." ¹⁸ When the priests carrying the ark of the covenant of Yahweh came up out of the middle of the Jordan, and the soles of their feet were lifted up out on dry ground, then the waters of the Jordan returned to their place and overflowed its banks, just as they were four days before.

¹⁹ The people came up out of the Jordan on the tenth day of the first month. They camped in Gilgal, east of Jericho. ²⁰ The twelve stones that they took out of the Jordan, Joshua set up in Gilgal. ²¹ He said to the people of Israel, "When your descendants ask their fathers in times to come, 'What are these stones?' ²² tell your children, 'This is where Israel crossed over the Jordan on dry ground.' ²³ Yahweh your God dried up the waters of the Jordan for you, until you had crossed over, just as Yahweh your God did to the Sea of Reeds, which he dried up for us until we passed over, ²⁴ so that all the peoples of the earth may know that the hand of Yahweh is mighty, and that you will honor Yahweh your God forever."

Chapter 5

¹ As soon as all the kings of the Amorites on the west side of the Jordan, and all the kings of the Canaanites, who were along the coast of the Great Sea, heard that Yahweh had dried up the waters of the Jordan until the people of Israel had crossed over, their hearts melted, and there was no longer any spirit in them because of the people of Israel. ^[1]

² At that time Yahweh said to Joshua, "Make flint knives and once more circumcise all the sons of Israel."

³ Then Joshua made himself flint knives and he circumcised all the sons of Israel at Gibeath Haaraloth. ⁴ This is the reason Joshua circumcised them: All the males who had come out of Egypt, including all the men of war, had died in the wilderness along the way, after they came out from Egypt. ⁵ Though all the males who came out of Egypt were circumcised, still, none of the boys born in the wilderness on the way out of Egypt had been circumcised. ⁶ For the people of Israel walked forty years in the wilderness until all the people, that is, all the men of war who had come out of Egypt, died, because they did not obey the voice of Yahweh. Yahweh swore to them that he would not let them see the land that he had sworn to their ancestors that he would give to us, a land flowing with milk and honey. ⁷ It was their children that Yahweh raised up in their place that Joshua circumcised, because they had not been circumcised on the way. ⁸ When they were all circumcised, they remained where they were in the camp until they healed. ⁹ Then Yahweh said to Joshua, "This day I have rolled away the disgrace of Egypt from you." So, the name of that place has been called Gilgal until this present day.

¹⁰ The people of Israel camped at Gilgal. They kept the Passover on the fourteenth day of the month, in the evening, on the plains of Jericho. ¹¹ On the day after Passover, that same day, they ate some of the produce of the land, unleavened bread and roasted grain. ¹² The manna stopped on the day after they ate the produce of the land. There was no longer manna for the people of Israel, but they ate the produce of the land of Canaan that year.

¹³ When Joshua was near Jericho, he lifted up his eyes and looked, and behold, a man was standing in front of him; he had drawn his sword and it was in his hand. Joshua went to him and said, "Are you for us or for our enemies?" ¹⁴ He said, "Neither. For I am the commander of the army of Yahweh. Now I have come." Then Joshua lay facedown on the ground to worship and said to him, "What does my master say to his servant?" ¹⁵ The commander of Yahweh's army said to Joshua, "Take off your sandals from your feet, because the place you are standing is holy." That is what Joshua did.

Footnotes

5:1 ^[1]Some modern translations have

Chapter 6

¹ Now all the entrances to Jericho were closed because of the army of Israel. No one went out and no one came in. ² Yahweh said to Joshua, "See, I have delivered Jericho into your hand, its king, and its mighty warriors. ³ You must march around the city, all the men of war going around the city one time. You must do this for six days. ⁴ Seven priests must carry seven trumpets of rams' horns before the ark. On the seventh day, you must march around the city seven times, and the priests must sound blasts on the trumpets. ⁵ Then they must sound a long blast with the ram's horn, and when you hear the sound of the trumpet all the people must shout with a great shout, and the wall of the city will fall down flat. The soldiers must attack, each one going straight ahead." ⁶ Then Joshua son of Nun called the priests and said to them, "Take up the ark of the covenant, and let seven priests carry seven trumpets of rams' horns in front of the ark of Yahweh." ⁷ He said to the people, "Go over and march around the city, and the armed men will go ahead of the ark of Yahweh."

⁸ Just as Joshua had said to the people, the seven priests carried the seven trumpets of rams' horns before Yahweh. As they advanced, they gave a blast on the trumpets. The ark of the covenant of Yahweh followed after them. ⁹ Armed men walked before the priests, and they made a blast on their trumpets, but then the rear guard walked up behind the ark, and the priests blew their trumpets continually. ¹⁰ But Joshua commanded the people, saying, "Do not shout. No sound must leave your mouths until the day I tell you to shout. Only then you must shout." ¹¹ So he caused the ark of Yahweh to go around the city one time that day. Then they entered their camp, and they stayed the night in the camp.

¹² Then Joshua got up early in the morning, and the priests picked up the ark of Yahweh. ¹³ The seven priests, who were carrying the seven trumpets of rams' horns in front of the ark of Yahweh, walked steadily and gave blasts on the trumpets. Armed soldiers were walking in front of them. But when the rear guard walked after the ark of Yahweh, then the trumpets gave out continual blasts. ¹⁴ They marched around the city one time the second day and returned to the camp. They did this for six days.

¹⁵ It was on the seventh day that they got up early, as dawn was breaking, and they marched around the city in the same way that was their pattern, this time for seven times. It was on this day that they marched around the city seven times. ¹⁶ It was on the seventh day, when the priests gave a blast with the trumpets, that Joshua commanded the people, "Shout! For Yahweh has given you the city. ¹⁷ The city and all that is in it will be set apart to Yahweh for destruction. Only Rahab the prostitute will live—she and all the ones with her in her house—because she hid the messengers we sent. ¹⁸ But as for you, be on guard about taking the things set apart for destruction, so that after you mark them for destruction, you do not then take any of them. If you do this, you will make the camp of Israel something that must be destroyed and you will bring trouble on it. ¹⁹ All the silver, gold, and the things made of bronze and iron are set apart to Yahweh. They must go into the treasury of Yahweh." ²⁰ So the people gave a great shout, and they blew on the trumpets. Now when the people heard the trumpet sound, they gave a great shout, the wall fell down flat, and every man charged straight in and captured the city. ²¹ They completely destroyed all that was in the city by the edge of the sword—man and woman, young and old, cattle, sheep and donkeys.

²² Then Joshua said to the two men who had spied out the land, "Go into the prostitute's house. Bring out the woman and all who are with her, as you swore to her." ²³ So the young men who had been spies went in and brought Rahab out. They brought out her father, mother, brothers, and all the relatives that were with her. They brought them to a place outside the camp of Israel. ²⁴ They burned the city and everything in it. Only the silver, gold, and the vessels of bronze and iron were put into the treasury of the house of Yahweh. ²⁵ But Joshua allowed Rahab the prostitute, her father's household, and all that were with her to live. She lives in Israel to this day because she hid the messengers whom Joshua sent to spy on Jericho. ²⁶ Then Joshua commanded them at that time with an oath, and he said, "Cursed is the man in Yahweh's sight who rebuilds this city, Jericho. At the cost of his firstborn son, he will lay the foundation, and at the cost of his youngest son, he will set up its gates."

²⁷ So Yahweh was with Joshua, and his fame spread throughout the land.

Chapter 7

¹ But the people of Israel acted unfaithfully regarding the things that were set apart for destruction. Achan son of Karmi son of Zabdi son of Zerah, from the tribe of Judah, took some things that were set apart for destruction, and Yahweh's anger burned against the people of Israel.

² Joshua sent men from Jericho to Ai, which was near Beth Aven, east of Bethel. He said to them, "Go up and spy out the land." So the men went up and spied out Ai. ³ When they returned to Joshua, they said to him, "Do not send all the people up to Ai. Send only two or three thousand men to go up and attack Ai. Do not make all the people labor in battle, for they are few in number." ⁴ So only about three thousand men went up from the army, but these ran away from the men of Ai. ⁵ The men of Ai killed about thirty-six men as they pursued them from the city gate as far as to the stone quarries, and they killed them as they were going down a hill. The hearts of the people melted and became like water.

⁶ Then Joshua tore his garments. He and the elders of Israel put dust on their heads and lay facedown on the ground in front of the ark of Yahweh, remaining there until evening. ⁷ Then Joshua said, "Ah, Yahweh Lord, why have you brought this people across the Jordan at all? To give us into the hands of the Amorites to destroy us? If only we made a different decision and we had stayed on the other side of the Jordan!" ⁸ Lord, what can I say, after Israel has turned their backs before their enemies? ⁹ For the Canaanites and all the inhabitants of the land will hear of it. They will surround us and make the people of the earth forget our name. What will you do for your great name?"

¹⁰ Yahweh said to Joshua, "Get up! Why are you lying there on your face?" ¹¹ Israel has sinned. They have broken my covenant which I commanded them. They have stolen some of the things that were set apart. They have stolen and then also hidden their sin by putting what they have taken among their own belongings. ¹² As a result, the people of Israel cannot stand before their enemies. They turned their backs from their enemies because they themselves have been set apart for destruction. I will not be with you any more unless you destroy the things that should have been destroyed, but are still among you. ¹³ Get up! Consecrate the people to me and say to them, 'Consecrate yourselves for tomorrow. For Yahweh, the God of Israel says, "There are things set apart to be destroyed that are still among you, Israel. You cannot stand against your enemies until you remove from among you all the things that were set apart to be destroyed."' ¹⁴ In the morning, you must present yourselves by your tribes. The tribe that Yahweh selects will come near by their clans. The clan that Yahweh selects must come near by each household. The household that Yahweh selects must come near one by one. ¹⁵ It will happen that the one who is selected and who has those things that were set apart for destruction, he will be burned, he and all he has, because he has broken the covenant of Yahweh and because he has done a disgraceful thing in Israel."

¹⁶ So, Joshua got up early in the morning and brought Israel near, tribe by tribe, and the tribe of Judah was selected. ¹⁷ Joshua brought the clans of Judah near, and the clan of the Zerahites was selected. He brought near the clan of the Zerahites person by person, and Zabdi was selected. ¹⁸ He brought Zabdi's household near, person by person, and Achan son of Karmi, son of Zabdi, son of Zerah, from the tribe of Judah, was selected. ¹⁹ Then Joshua said to Achan, "My son, give glory to Yahweh, the God of Israel, and give praise to him. Please tell me what you have done. Do not hide it from me." ²⁰ Achan answered Joshua, "Truly, I have sinned against Yahweh, the God of Israel. This is what I did: ²¹ When I saw among the plunder a beautiful coat from Babylon, two hundred shekels of silver, and a bar of gold weighing fifty shekels, I desired them and took them. They are hidden in the ground in the middle of my tent, and the silver is under it."

²² Joshua sent messengers, who ran to the tent and there were the things. When they looked, they found them hidden in his own tent, and the silver under them. ²³ They took the items from the middle of the tent and brought them to Joshua and to all the people of Israel. They poured them out before Yahweh. ²⁴ Then Joshua, and all Israel with him, took Achan son of Zerah, and the silver, the coat, the bar of gold, his sons and daughters, his cattle, donkeys, sheep, and his tent and all that he had, and they brought them up to the Valley of Achor. ²⁵ Then Joshua said, "Why have you troubled us? Yahweh will trouble you today." All Israel stoned him with stones. Then they stoned the rest with stones and burned them with fire. ²⁶ They set up over him a great heap of stones that is here until this day. Yahweh turned away his burning anger. Therefore the name of the place has been called the Valley of Achor until this present day.

Chapter 8

¹ Yahweh said to Joshua, "Do not fear; do not be discouraged. Take with you all the people of war. Go up to Ai. See, I have given into your hand the king of Ai, his people, his city, and his land. ² You will do to Ai and her king as you have done to Jericho and her king, except that you will take the plunder and the livestock for yourselves. Set an ambush behind the city."

³ So Joshua got up and took all the men of war up to Ai. Then Joshua chose thirty thousand men—mighty warriors—and he sent them out at night. ⁴ He commanded them, "Look, you will lie in ambush against the city, behind it. Do not go very far from the city, but all of you be ready. ⁵ I and all the men with me will approach the city, and when they come out to attack us, we will run away from them just as before. ⁶ They will come out after us until we have drawn them away from the city. They will say, 'They are running away from us as they did the last time.' So we will run away from them. ⁷ Then you come up out of your place of hiding, and you will capture the city. Yahweh your God will give it into your hand. ⁸ When you capture the city, you will set it on fire. You will do this when you obey the command given in the word of Yahweh. See, I have commanded you." ⁹ Joshua sent them out, and they went to the place of ambush, and they hid between Bethel and Ai to the west of Ai. But Joshua slept that night among the people.

¹⁰ Joshua got up early in the morning and got his soldiers ready, Joshua and the elders of Israel, and they attacked the people of Ai. ¹¹ All the fighting men who were with him went up and approached the city. They came near the city and camped on the north side of Ai. Now there was a valley between them and Ai. ¹² He took about five thousand men and set them in ambush on the west side of the city between Bethel and Ai. ¹³ They positioned all the soldiers, the main army on the north side of the city, and the rear guard on the west side of the city. Joshua spent that night in the valley. ¹⁴ It came about when the king of Ai saw it, he and his army got up early and rushed out to attack Israel at a certain place that was overlooking the Jordan River valley. He did not know that an ambush was waiting to attack from behind the city. ¹⁵ Joshua and all Israel let themselves be defeated before them, and they fled toward the wilderness. ¹⁶ All the people who were in the city were called together to go after them, and they went after Joshua and they were drawn away from the city. ¹⁷ There was not a man left in Ai and Bethel who had not gone out to pursue Israel. They abandoned the city and left it open as they pursued Israel.

¹⁸ Yahweh said to Joshua, "Point that spear in your hand toward Ai, for I will give Ai into your hand." Joshua held out the spear that was in his hand toward the city. ¹⁹ The soldiers hiding in ambush quickly rushed out of their place as he reached out with his hand. They ran and entered the city and captured it. They quickly set the city on fire. ²⁰ The men of Ai turned and looked back. They saw the smoke from the city rising into the sky, and they could not escape this way or that. For the Israelite soldiers who had fled into the wilderness now turned back to face those who were pursuing them. ²¹ When Joshua and all Israel saw the ambush had captured the city with the smoke rising, they turned around and killed the men of Ai. ²² The others came out from the city against them, so that they were in the midst of Israel, some on this side and some on that side. Israel attacked the men of Ai; none remained of those who survived or escaped. ²³ They kept the king of Ai, whom they captured alive, and they brought him to Joshua.

²⁴ It came about when Israel had finished killing all the inhabitants of Ai in the field near the wilderness where they pursued them, and when all of them, to the very last one, had fallen by the edge of the sword, all Israel returned to Ai. They attacked it with the edge of the sword. ²⁵ All those who fell that day, both men and women, were twelve thousand, all the people of Ai. ²⁶ Joshua did not draw back his hand with which he had reached out while holding his spear, until he had completely destroyed all the people of Ai. ²⁷ Israel took only the livestock and the plunder from the city for themselves, just as Yahweh had commanded Joshua. ²⁸ Joshua burned Ai and turned it into a heap of ruins forever. It is a devastated place to this day. ²⁹ He hanged the king of Ai on a tree until evening. When the sun was going down, Joshua gave the command and they took the king's body down from the tree and threw it in front of the city gate. There they set up a great heap of stones on top of it. That heap remains there to this day.

³⁰ Then Joshua built an altar to Yahweh, the God of Israel, on Mount Ebal, ³¹ just as Moses the servant of Yahweh had commanded the people of Israel, as it was written in the book of the law of Moses: "An altar from uncut stones, on which no one has wielded an iron tool." He offered on the altar burnt offerings to Yahweh, and they sacrificed peace offerings. ³² There, in the presence of the people of Israel, he wrote on the stones a copy of the law of Moses. ³³ All Israel, their elders, officers, and their judges stood on both

sides of the ark before the priests and Levites who carried the ark of the covenant of Yahweh—the foreigner as well as the native born—half of them stood in front of Mount Gerizim and the other half stood in front of Mount Ebal. They blessed the people of Israel, just as Moses the servant of Yahweh had commanded them at first. ³⁴ Afterward, Joshua read all the words of the law, the blessings and the curses, just as they had been written in the book of the law. ³⁵ There was not one word from all that Moses commanded that Joshua did not read in front of the assembly of Israel, including the women, the little children, and the foreigners who lived among them.

Chapter 9

¹ Then all the kings who lived beyond the Jordan in the hill country, and in the lowlands along the shore of the Great Sea toward Lebanon—the Hittites, Amorites, Canaanites, Perizzites, Hivites, and the Jebusites—

² these gathered themselves together under one command, to wage war against Joshua and Israel.

³ When the inhabitants of Gibeon heard what Joshua had done to Jericho and to Ai, ⁴ they acted with a cunning plan. They went as messengers. They took worn-out sacks and put them on their donkeys. They also took old wineskins that were worn, torn, and had been repaired. ^[1]⁵ They put old and patched sandals on their feet, and dressed in old, worn-out clothing. All the bread in their food supply was dry and moldy. ⁶ Then they went to Joshua in the camp at Gilgal and said to him and to the men of Israel, "We have traveled from a very far country, so now make a covenant with us." ⁷ The men of Israel said to the Hivites, "Perhaps you live near us. How can we make a covenant with you?" ⁸ They said to Joshua, "We are your servants." Joshua said to them, "Who are you? Where did you come from?" ⁹ They said to him, "Your servants have come here from a land very far away, because of the fame of Yahweh your God. We have heard a report about him and about everything that he did in Egypt— ¹⁰ and everything that he did to the two kings of the Amorites on the other side of the Jordan—to Sihon king of Heshbon, and to Og king of Bashan who was at Ashtaroth. ¹¹ Our elders and all the inhabitants of our country said to us, 'Take provisions in your hand for the journey. Go to meet them and say to them, 'We are your servants. Make a treaty with us.' ¹² This is our bread, it was still warm when we took it from our houses on the day we set out to come to you. But now, see, it is dry and moldy. ¹³ These wineskins were new when we filled them, and look, now they are leaking. Our garments and our sandals are worn out from a very long journey.'" ¹⁴ So the Israelites took some of their provisions, but they did not consult with Yahweh for guidance. ¹⁵ Joshua made peace with them and made a covenant with them, to let them live. The leaders of the people also swore a vow to them.

¹⁶ Three days after the Israelites made this covenant with them, they learned that they were their neighbors and that they lived nearby. ¹⁷ Then the people of Israel set out and came to their cities on the third day. Their cities were Gibeon, Kephirah, Beeroth, and Kiriath Jearim. ¹⁸ The people of Israel did not attack them because their leaders had taken an oath about them before Yahweh, the God of Israel. The whole community was grumbling against their leaders. ¹⁹ But all the leaders said to all the people, "We have taken an oath concerning them by Yahweh, the God of Israel, and now we cannot harm them. ²⁰ This is what we will do to them: To avoid any wrath that may come on us because of the oath we swore to them, we will let them live." ²¹ The leaders said to their people, "Let them live." So, the Gibeonites became cutters of wood and drawers of water for all the Israelites, just as the leaders said about them.

²² Joshua called for them and said, "Why did you deceive us when you said, 'We are very far from you', when you live right here among us? ²³ Now, because of this, you are cursed and some of you will always be slaves, those who cut wood and draw water for the house of my God." ²⁴ They answered Joshua and said, "Because it was told to your servants that Yahweh your God commanded his servant Moses to give you all the land, and to destroy all the inhabitants of the land before you—so we were very afraid for our lives because of you. That is why we did this thing. ²⁵ Now, look, you hold us in your power. Whatever seems good and right for you to do to us, do it." ²⁶ So Joshua did this for them: He delivered them out of the control of the people of Israel, so that the people of Israel did not kill them. ²⁷ That day Joshua made the Gibeonites cutters of wood and drawers of water for the community, and for the altar of Yahweh, to this day, in the place that Yahweh chooses.

Footnotes

9:4 ^[1] Instead of

Chapter 10

¹ Now when Adoni-Zedek king of Jerusalem heard that Joshua had captured Ai and had completely destroyed it (just as he had done to Jericho and its king), he also heard how the people of Gibeon had made peace with Israel and were living among them. ² The people of Jerusalem were very afraid because Gibeon was a large city, like one of the royal cities. It was larger than Ai, and all its men were mighty warriors. ³ So Adoni-Zedek king of Jerusalem sent a message to Hoham king of Hebron, to Piram king of Jarmuth, to Japhia king of Lachish, and to Debir king of Eglon: ⁴ "Come up to me and help me. Let us attack Gibeon because they have made peace with Joshua and with the people of Israel." ⁵ The five kings of the Amorites—the king of Jerusalem, the king of Hebron, the king of Jarmuth, the king of Lachish, and the king of Eglon—came up, they and all of their armies. They encamped near Gibeon, and they attacked it.

⁶ The people of Gibeon sent a message to Joshua and to the army at Gilgal. They said, "Hurry! Do not withdraw your hands from your servants. Come up to us quickly and save us. Help us, for all the kings of the Amorites who live in the hill country have gathered together to attack us." ⁷ Joshua went up from Gilgal, he and all the men of war with him, and all the mighty warriors. ⁸ Yahweh said to Joshua, "Do not be afraid of them. I have given them into your hand. Not one of them will be able to stop your attack." ⁹ Joshua came upon them suddenly, having marched all night from Gilgal. ¹⁰ Yahweh confused the enemy before Israel, and Israel killed them with a great slaughter at Gibeon and pursued them on the road going up to Beth Horon, and they killed them on the road to Azekah and Makkedah. ¹¹ As they ran away from Israel, down the hill from Beth Horon, Yahweh threw large stones down from heaven upon them all the way to Azekah, and they died. There were more who died because of the hailstones than who were killed with the sword by the men of Israel.

¹² Then Joshua spoke to Yahweh on the day Yahweh gave the men of Israel victory over the Amorites. This is what Joshua said to Yahweh before Israel,

"Sun, be still at Gibeon,
and moon, in the Valley of Aijalon."

¹³ The sun stood still,
and the moon stopped moving
until the nation took vengeance
on their enemies.

Is this not written in the Book of Jashar?

The sun stayed
in the middle of the sky;
it did not go down
for about a whole day.

¹⁴ There has been no other day like it before or after it, when Yahweh obeyed the voice of a human being. For Yahweh was waging war on behalf of Israel.

¹⁵ Joshua and all Israel with him returned to the camp at Gilgal.

¹⁶ Now the five kings had escaped and hidden themselves in the cave at Makkedah. ¹⁷ It was told to Joshua, "They have been found!—the five kings hidden in the cave at Makkedah!" ¹⁸ Joshua said, "Roll large stones against the mouth of the cave and place soldiers there to guard them. ¹⁹ Do not stay yourselves. Pursue your enemies and attack them from the rear. Do not permit them to enter into their cities, because Yahweh your God has given them into your hand." ²⁰ Joshua and the sons of Israel had finished slaughtering them with a very great slaughter, until they were almost completely destroyed; only a few survivors who escaped reached the fortified cities. ²¹ Then the whole army returned in peace to Joshua at the camp at Makkedah. No one dared to say one word against any of the people of Israel.

²² Then Joshua said, "Open the mouth of the cave and out of the cave bring to me these five kings." ²³ They did as he said. They brought to him these five kings from the cave—the king of Jerusalem, the king of Hebron, the king of Jarmuth, the king of Lachish, and the king of Eglon. ²⁴ When they brought the kings to Joshua, he summoned every man of Israel. He said to the commanders of the soldiers who had

gone into battle with him, "Put your feet on their necks." So they came up and put their feet on their necks. ²⁵ Then Joshua said to them, "Do not be afraid and do not be dismayed. Be strong and courageous. This is what Yahweh will do to all your enemies you are going to fight." ²⁶ Then Joshua struck the kings. He hung them on five trees. They hung on the trees until evening. ²⁷ When it was sunset, Joshua gave orders, and they took them down from the trees and threw them into the cave where they had hidden themselves. They put large stones over the mouth of the cave. Those stones remain there to this very day.

²⁸ In this way, Joshua captured Makkedah on that day and killed everyone there with the sword, including its king. He completely destroyed everyone in it. He left no survivor in it. He did to the king of Makkedah just as he had done to the king of Jericho.

²⁹ Joshua and all Israel passed on from Makkedah to Libnah. He went into battle against Libnah. ³⁰ Yahweh also gave it into the hand of Israel—along with their king. Joshua struck it with the edge of the sword and every person in it. He left no survivor in it. He did to its king just as he had done to the king of Jericho.

³¹ Then Joshua and all Israel with him passed on from Libnah to Lachish. He camped by it and waged war against it. ³² Yahweh gave Lachish into the hand of Israel. Joshua captured it on the second day and struck it with the edge of the sword, and every person in it, just as he had done to Libnah.

³³ Then Horam, king of Gezer, came up to help Lachish. Joshua attacked him and his army until there was not even one survivor left.

³⁴ Then Joshua and all Israel passed on from Lachish to Eglon. They camped by it and waged war against it, ³⁵ and captured it that same day. They struck it with the edge of the sword and they completely destroyed everyone in it, as Joshua had done to Lachish.

³⁶ Then Joshua and all Israel passed on from Eglon to Hebron. They waged war against it. ³⁷ They captured it and struck it with the edge of the sword, together with its king and its villages, and all the people in it. They left no survivors. Just as they had done to Eglon, they totally destroyed it and every person in it.

³⁸ Then Joshua turned, and all the army of Israel with him, and they passed on to Debir and waged war against it. ³⁹ They captured it, its king and all its nearby villages. They struck them with the edge of the sword and completely destroyed every person in it. They left no survivor. They did to Debir and its king as they had done to Libnah and its king and to Hebron.

⁴⁰ Joshua conquered all the land, the hill country, the Negev, the lowlands, and the foothills. Of all their kings he left not one survivor. He completely destroyed everything that breathed, just as Yahweh, the God of Israel, had commanded. ⁴¹ Joshua struck them from Kadesh Barnea to Gaza, and all the country of Goshen to Gibeon. ⁴² Joshua captured all these kings and their land at one time because Yahweh, the God of Israel, fought for Israel. ⁴³ Then Joshua, and all Israel with him, returned to the camp at Gilgal.

Chapter 11

¹ When Jabin, king of Hazor, heard this, he sent a message to Jobab, king of Madon, to the king of Shimron, and to the king of Akshaph. ² He also sent the message to the kings who were in the northern hill country, in the Jordan River valley south of Kinnereth, in the lowlands, and in Naphoth Dor to the west. ³ He also sent a message to the Canaanites to the east and west, the Amorites, the Hittites, the Perizzites, the Jebusites in the hill country, and the Hivites by Mount Hermon in the land of Mizpah. ⁴ All their armies came out with them, a great number of soldiers, in number like the sand on the seashore. They had a great number of horses and chariots. ⁵ All these kings met at the appointed time, and they camped at the waters of Merom to wage war with Israel.

⁶ Yahweh said to Joshua, "Do not be afraid in their presence, because tomorrow at this time I am giving them all to Israel as dead men. You will hamstring their horses, and you will burn their chariots." ⁷ Joshua and all the men of war came. They arrived suddenly at the waters of Merom, and attacked the enemy. ⁸ Yahweh gave the enemy into the hand of Israel, and they struck them and pursued them to Sidon, Misrephoth Maim, and to the Valley of Mizpah to the east. They struck them until not even one survivor of them was left. ⁹ Joshua did to them just as Yahweh told him. He hamstrung the horses and burned the chariots.

¹⁰ Joshua turned back at that time and captured Hazor. He struck its king with the sword. (Hazor had been head of all these kingdoms.) ¹¹ They struck with the sword every living creature that was there, and he set them apart to be destroyed, so there was not any living creature left alive. Then he burned Hazor. ¹² Joshua captured all the cities of these kings. He also captured all their kings and struck them with the edge of the sword. He completely destroyed them with the edge of the sword, just as Moses the servant of Yahweh had commanded. ¹³ Israel did not burn any of the cities built on mounds, except Hazor. It alone Joshua burned. ¹⁴ The army of Israel took all the plunder from these cities along with the livestock for themselves. They killed every human being with the edge of the sword until all were dead. They left alive no creature that breathed. ¹⁵ Just as Yahweh had commanded his servant Moses, in the same way, Moses commanded Joshua, and so Joshua did it. He left nothing undone of all that Yahweh commanded Moses to do.

¹⁶ Joshua took all that land: the hill country, all the Negev, all the land of Goshen, the foothills, the Jordan River valley, the hill country of Israel and its lowlands. ¹⁷ From Mount Halak near Edom, and going north as far as Baal Gad in the valley near Lebanon below Mount Hermon, he captured all their kings and put them to death. ¹⁸ Joshua waged war for a long time with all the kings. ¹⁹ Not one city made peace with the army of Israel except the Hivites who lived in Gibeon. Israel captured all the rest of the cities in battle. ²⁰ For it was Yahweh who hardened their hearts so they would wage war against Israel, so that they might be devoted to destruction without mercy, just as he had instructed Moses.

²¹ Then Joshua came at that time and he destroyed the Anakim. He did this in the hill country, at Hebron, Debir, Anab, and in all the hill country of Judah, and in all the hill country of Israel. Joshua completely destroyed them and their cities. ²² None of the Anakim were left in the land of Israel except at Gaza, Gath, and Ashdod. ²³ So Joshua captured the whole land, just as Yahweh said to Moses. Joshua gave it as an inheritance to Israel, assigned to each of their tribes. Then the land had rest from the wars.

Chapter 12

¹ Now these are the kings of the land, whom the men of Israel conquered. The people of Israel took possession of the land on the east side of the Jordan where the sun rises, from the Valley of the Arnon River to Mount Hermon, and all the Arabah to the east.

² Sihon, king of the Amorites, lived in Heshbon. He ruled from Aroer, which is on the rim of the Arnon Gorge from the middle of the valley, and half of Gilead down to the Jabbok River on the border of the Ammonites.

³ Sihon also ruled over the Arabah to the Sea of Kinnereth, to the east, to the Sea of the Arabah (the Salt Sea) eastward, all the way to Beth Jeshimoth and southward, toward the foot of the slopes of Mount Pisgah.

⁴ Og, king of Bashan, one of the remnant of the Rephaim, lived in Ashtaroth and Edrei. ⁵ He ruled over Mount Hermon, Salekah, and all Bashan, to the border of the Geshurites and the Maakathites, and half of Gilead, to the border of Sihon, king of Heshbon.

⁶ Moses the servant of Yahweh, and the people of Israel had defeated them, and Moses the servant of Yahweh, gave the land as a possession to the Reubenites, the Gadites, and the half tribe of Manasseh.

⁷ These are the kings of the land whom Joshua and the people of Israel defeated on the west side of the Jordan, from Baal Gad in the valley near Lebanon to Mount Halak near Edom. Joshua gave land to the tribes of Israel for them to possess. ⁸ He gave them the hill country, the lowlands, the Arabah, the sides of the mountains, the wilderness, and the Negev—the land of the Hittites, Amorites, Canaanites, Perizzites, Hivites, and Jebusites. ⁹ The kings included the king of Jericho, the king of Ai which is beside Bethel, ¹⁰ the king of Jerusalem, the king of Hebron, ¹¹ the king of Jarmuth, the king of Lachish, ¹² the king of Eglon, the king of Gezer, ¹³ the king of Debir, the king of Geder, ¹⁴ the king of Hormah, the king of Arad, ¹⁵ the king of Libnah, the king of Adullam, ¹⁶ the king of Makkedah, the king of Bethel, ¹⁷ the king of Tappuah, the king of Hopher, ¹⁸ the king of Aphek, the king of Lasharon, ¹⁹ the king of Madon, the king of Hazor, ²⁰ the king of Shimron Meron, the king of Akshaph, ²¹ the king of Taanach, the king of Megiddo, ²² the king of Kedesh, the king of Jokneam in Carmel, ²³ the king of Dor in Naphoth Dor, the king of Goyim in Gilgal, ²⁴ and the king of Tirzah. The number of kings was thirty-one in all.

Chapter 13

¹ Now Joshua was very old when Yahweh said to him, "You are very old, but there is still very much land to capture.

² This is the land that still remains: All the regions of the Philistines, and all those of the Geshurites, ³ from Shihor, which is east of Egypt, and northward to the border of Ekron, which is considered property of the Canaanites; the five rulers of the Philistines, those of Gaza, Ashdod, Ashkelon, Gath, and Ekron; the territory of the Avvites ⁴ in the south; all the lands of the Canaanites, from Arah that belongs to the Sidonians, as far as Aphek which is on the border of the Amorites; ⁵ the land of Byblos, ^[1] all of Lebanon toward the east, from Baal Gad below Mount Hermon to Lebo Hamath.

⁶ Also, all the inhabitants of the hill country from Lebanon as far as Misrephoth Maim, including all the people of Sidon—I will drive them out before the army of Israel. Be sure to assign the land to Israel as an inheritance, as I commanded you. ⁷ Divide this land as an inheritance to the nine tribes and to the half tribe of Manasseh."

⁸ With the other half of the tribe of Manasseh, the Reubenites and the Gadites had received their inheritance that Moses, the servant of Yahweh, gave them on the east side of the Jordan,

⁹ from Aroer, which is on the edge of the Arnon River gorge (including the city that is in the middle of the gorge), to all the plateau of Medeba as far as Dibon; ¹⁰ all the cities of Sihon, king of the Amorites, who ruled in Heshbon, to the border of the Ammonites; ¹¹ Gilead, and the region of the Geshurites and Maakathites, all of Mount Hermon, all Bashan to Salekah; ¹² all the kingdom of Og in Bashan, who reigned in Ashtaroth and Edrei—these are what was left of the remnant of the Rephaim—Moses struck them and drove them out. ¹³ But the people of Israel did not drive out the Geshurites or the Maakathites, and so Geshur and Maakah live in the midst of Israel to this day.

¹⁴ To the tribe of Levi alone Moses gave no inheritance. The offerings of Yahweh, the God of Israel, made by fire, are their inheritance, as God said to Moses.

¹⁵ Moses gave an inheritance to the tribe of Reuben, clan by clan.

¹⁶ Their territory was from Aroer, on the edge of the Arnon River gorge, and the city that is in the middle of the valley, and all the plateau by Medeba. ¹⁷ Reuben also received Heshbon and all its cities that are in the plateau, Dibon, and Bamoth Baal, and Beth Baal Meon, ¹⁸ and Jahaz, and Kedemoth, and Mephaath, ¹⁹ and Kiriathaim, and Sibmah, and Zereth Shahar on the hill of the valley. ²⁰ Reuben also received Beth Peor, the slopes of Pisgah, Beth Jeshimoth, ²¹ all the cities of the plateau, and all the kingdom of Sihon king of the Amorites, who had reigned in Heshbon, whom Moses had defeated together with the leaders of Midian, Evi, Rekem, Zur, Hur and Reba, the princes of Sihon, who had lived in the land. ²² The people of Israel also killed with the sword Balaam son of Beor, who practiced divination, among the rest of those they had killed. ²³ The border of the tribe of Reuben is the Jordan River; this is their boundary. This was the inheritance of the tribe of Reuben, given to each of their clans, with their cities and villages.

²⁴ This is what Moses gave to the tribe of Gad, clan by clan:

²⁵ Their territory was Jazer, all the cities of Gilead and half the land of the Ammonites, to Aroer, which is east of Rabbah, ²⁶ from Heshbon to Ramath Mizpah and Betonim, from Mahanaim to the territory of Debir. ²⁷ In the valley, Moses gave them Beth Haram, Beth Nimrah, Sukkoth, and Zaphon, the rest of the kingdom of Sihon king of Heshbon, with the Jordan as a border, to the lower end of the Sea of Kinnereth, eastward beyond the Jordan. ²⁸ This is the inheritance of the tribe of Gad, clan by clan, with their cities and villages.

²⁹ Moses gave an inheritance to the half tribe of Manasseh. It was assigned to the half tribe of the descendants of Manasseh, clan by clan.

³⁰ Their territory was from Mahanaim, all Bashan, all the kingdom of Og king of Bashan, and all the towns of Jair, which are in Bashan, sixty cities; ³¹ half of Gilead, and Ashtaroth and Edrei (the royal cities

of Og in Bashan). These were assigned to the descendants of Makir son of Manasseh—half of the people of Makir, clan by clan.

³² This is the inheritance that Moses assigned to them on the plains of Moab, beyond the Jordan east of Jericho. ³³ Moses did not give an inheritance to the tribe of Levi. Yahweh, the God of Israel, is their inheritance, just as he said to them.

Footnotes

13:5 ^[1]Some modern English translations read,

Chapter 14

¹ These are the areas of land that the people of Israel received as their inheritance in the land of Canaan, which Eleazar the priest, Joshua son of Nun, and the leaders of the tribal clans of Israel allotted to them.

² Their inheritance was selected by lot for the nine and one-half tribes, just as Yahweh had commanded by the hand of Moses. ³ For Moses had given the inheritance of the two and one-half tribes beyond the Jordan, but to the Levites he gave no inheritance. ⁴ The tribe of Joseph was actually two tribes, Manasseh and Ephraim. The Levites were given no portion of the inheritance in the land, but only certain cities to live in, with their pasturelands for livestock and for their own material resources. ⁵ The people of Israel did as Yahweh commanded Moses, so they assigned the land.

⁶ Then the tribe of Judah came to Joshua at Gilgal. Caleb son of Jephunneh the Kenizzite, said to him, "You know what Yahweh said to Moses the man of God concerning you and me at Kadesh Barnea. ⁷ I was forty years old when Moses the servant of Yahweh sent me from Kadesh Barnea to spy on the land. I brought him a report again as it was in my heart to make. ⁸ But my brothers who went up with me made the heart of the people melt with fear. But I completely followed Yahweh my God. ⁹ Moses swore on that day, saying, 'Surely the land on which your foot has walked will be an inheritance for you and for your children forever, because you have completely followed Yahweh my God.' ¹⁰ Now, look! Yahweh has kept me alive these forty-five years, just as he said—from the time when Yahweh spoke this word to Moses, while Israel walked in the wilderness. Now, look! I am this day eighty-five years old. ¹¹ I am still as strong this day as I was in the day that Moses sent me out. My strength is now as my strength was then, for war and for going and coming. ¹² Now therefore give me this hill country, which Yahweh promised me on that day. For you heard on that day that the Anakim were there with great fortified cities. It may be that Yahweh will be with me and that I will drive them out, just as Yahweh said."

¹³ Then Joshua blessed him and gave Hebron as an inheritance to Caleb son of Jephunneh. ¹⁴ Therefore Hebron became the inheritance of Caleb son of Jephunneh the Kenizzite to this day, because he completely followed Yahweh, the God of Israel. ¹⁵ Now the name of Hebron formerly was Kiriath Arba. (Arba had been the greatest man among the Anakim.) Then the land had rest from war.

Chapter 15

¹ The assignment of land for the tribe of the people of Judah, clan by clan, extended south to the border of Edom, with the wilderness of Zin being the farthest point to the south. ² Their border on the south ran from the end of the Salt Sea, from the bay that faces to the south. ³ Their boundary next went out to the south of the hill of Akrabbim and passed along to Zin, and went up south of Kadesh Barnea, along by Hezron, and up to Addar, where it turned about to Karka. ⁴ It passed along to Azmon, went by the brook of Egypt, and came to its end at the sea. This was their south boundary. ⁵ The eastern boundary was the Salt Sea, at the mouth of the Jordan. The border on the north ran from the bay of the sea at the mouth of the Jordan. ⁶ It went up to Beth Hoglah and passed along north of Beth Arabah. Then it went up to the Stone of Bohan the son of Reuben. ⁷ Then the border went up to Debir from the Valley of Achor, and so northward, turning toward Gilgal, which is opposite the hill of Adummim, which is on the south side of the valley. Then the border passed along to the springs of En Shemesh and went to En Rogel. ⁸ Then the border went up the Valley of Ben Hinnom to the south side of the Jebusite city (that is, Jerusalem). Then it went up to the top of the hill that lies over the Valley of Hinnom, on the west, which is at the northern end of the Valley of Rephaim. ⁹ Then the border extended from the top of the hills to the spring of Nephtoah, and went out from there to the cities of Mount Ephron. Then the border bends around to Baalah (the same as Kiriath Jearim). ¹⁰ Then the border circled around west of Baalah to Mount Seir, and passed along to the side of Mount Jearim on the north (the same as Kesalon), went down to Beth Shemesh, and crossed over to Timnah. ¹¹ The border went out beside the northern hill of Ekron, and then it bent around to Shikkeron and passed along to Mount Baalah, and from there it went to Jabneel. The border ended at the sea. ¹² The western boundary was the Great Sea and its coastline. This is the border around the tribe of Judah, clan by clan.

¹³ In keeping with the commandment of Yahweh to Joshua, Joshua gave Caleb son of Jephunneh an assignment of land among the tribe of Judah, Kiriath Arba, that is, Hebron (Arba was the father of Anak). ¹⁴ Caleb drove out from there the three sons of Anak: Sheshai, Ahiman and Talmai, descendants of Anak. ¹⁵ He went up from there against the inhabitants of Debir (the name of Debir was formerly Kiriath Sepher). ¹⁶ Caleb said, "The man who attacks Kiriath Sepher and captures it, to him I will give Aksah my daughter as a wife." ¹⁷ When Othniel son of Kenaz, Caleb's brother, captured it, Caleb gave him Aksah his daughter as a wife. ¹⁸ Soon after that, Aksah came to Othniel and urged him to ask her father for a field. When she got off her donkey, Caleb said to her, "What do you want?" ¹⁹ Aksah replied, "Do me a special favor, since you have given me the land of the Negev: Also give me some springs of water." Then Caleb gave her the upper springs and lower springs.

²⁰ This was the inheritance of the tribe of Judah, clan by clan.

²¹ The cities belonging to the tribe of Judah in the extreme south, toward the border of Edom, were Kabzeel, Eder, Jagur, ²² Kinah, Dimonah, Adadah, ²³ Kedesh, Hazor, Ithnan, ²⁴ Ziph, Telem, Bealoth. ²⁵ Hazor Hadattah, Kerioth Hezron (this was also known as Hazor), ²⁶ Amam, Shema, Moladah, ²⁷ Hazar Gaddah, Heshmon, Beth Pelet, ²⁸ Hazar Shual, Beersheba, Biziothiah. ²⁹ Baalah, Iyim, Ezem, ³⁰ Eltolad, Kesil, Hormah, ³¹ Ziklag, Madmannah, Sansannah, ³² Lebaoth, Shilhim, Ain, and Rimmon. These were twenty-nine cities in all, including their villages.

³³ In the lowlands there were Eshtaol, Zorah, Ashnah, ³⁴ Zanoah, En Gannim, Tappuah, Enam, ³⁵ Jarmuth, Adullam, Sokoh, Azekah, ³⁶ Shaaraim, Adithaim, and Gederah (that is, Gederothaim). These were fourteen cities in number, including their villages.

³⁷ Zenan, Hadashah, Migdal Gad, ³⁸ Dilean, Mizpah, Joktheel, ³⁹ Lachish, Bozkath, Eglon. ⁴⁰ Kabbon, Lahmas, Kitlish, ⁴¹ Gederoth, Beth Dagon, Naamah, Makkedah. These were sixteen cities in number, including their villages.

⁴² Libnah, Ether, Ashan, ⁴³ Iphtah, Ashnah, Nezib, ⁴⁴ Keilah, Akzib, Mareshah. These were nine cities, including their villages.

⁴⁵ Ekron, with its surrounding towns and villages; ⁴⁶ from Ekron to the Great Sea, all the settlements that were near Ashdod, including their villages.

⁴⁷ Ashdod, its surrounding towns, including their villages; Gaza, its surrounding towns including their villages; to the brook of Egypt, and to the Great Sea with its coastline.

⁴⁸ In the hill country, Shamir, Jattir, Sokoh, ⁴⁹ Dannah, Kiriath Sannah (that is, Debir), ⁵⁰ Anab, Eshtemoh, Anim, ⁵¹ Goshen, Holon, and Giloh. These were eleven cities, including their villages.

⁵² Arab, Dumah, Eshan, ⁵³ Janim, Beth Tappuah, Aphekah, ⁵⁴ Humtah, Kiriath Arba (that is, Hebron), and Zior. These were nine cities, including their villages.

⁵⁵ Maon, Carmel, Ziph, Juttah, ⁵⁶ Jezreel, Jokdeam, Zanoah, ⁵⁷ Kain, Gibeah, and Timnah. These were ten cities, including their villages.

⁵⁸ Halhul, Beth Zur, Gedor, ⁵⁹ Maarath, Beth Anoth, and Eltekon. These were six cities, including their villages.

⁶⁰ Kiriath Baal (that is, Kiriath Jearim), and Rabbah. These were two cities, including their villages.

⁶¹ In the wilderness, there were Beth Arabah, Middin, Sekakah, ⁶² Nibshan, the City of Salt, and En Gedi. These were six cities, including their villages.

⁶³ But as for the Jebusites, the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the tribe of Judah could not drive them out, so the Jebusites live there with the tribe of Judah to this day.

Chapter 16

¹ The assignment of land for the tribe of Joseph extended from the Jordan at Jericho, east of the springs of Jericho, into the wilderness, going up from Jericho through the hill country of Bethel. ² Then it went from Bethel to Luz and passed along to Ataroth, the territory of the Arkites. ³ Then it went down westward to the territory of the Japhletites, as far as the territory of Lower Beth Horon, and then on to Gezer; it ended at the sea.

⁴ It was in this way that the tribes of Joseph, Manasseh and Ephraim received their inheritance.

⁵ The territory of the tribe of Ephraim, clan by clan: The border of their inheritance on the east went from Ataroth Addar as far as Upper Beth Horon, ⁶ and from there it continued to the sea. From Mikmethath on the north it turned eastward toward Taanath Shiloh and passed beyond it on the east to Janoah. ⁷ Then it went down from Janoah to Ataroth and to Naarah, and then reached Jericho, ending at the Jordan. ⁸ From Tappuah the border went westward to the brook of Kanah and ended at the sea. This was the inheritance of the tribe of Ephraim, clan by clan, ⁹ together with the cities that were chosen for the tribe of Ephraim within the inheritance of the tribe of Manasseh—all the cities, including their villages.

¹⁰ They did not drive out the Canaanites who lived in Gezer, so that the Canaanites live within Ephraim to this day, but these people were made to do forced labor.

Chapter 17

¹ This was the assignment of land for the tribe of Manasseh (who was the firstborn of Joseph)—that is, for Makir, who was Manasseh's firstborn and who himself was the father of Gilead. Makir's descendants were assigned the land of Gilead and Bashan, because Makir had been a man of war. ² Land was assigned to the rest of the tribe of Manasseh, given to their clans—Abiezer, Helek, Asriel, Shechem, Hepher, and Shemida. These were the male descendants of Manasseh son of Joseph, presented by their clans. ³ Now Zelophehad son of Hepher son of Gilead son of Makir son of Manasseh had no sons, but only daughters. The names of his daughters were Mahlah, Noah, Hoglah, Milkah, and Tirzah. ⁴ They approached Eleazar the priest, Joshua son of Nun, and the leaders, and they said, "Yahweh commanded Moses to give to us an inheritance along with our brothers." So, following the commandment of Yahweh, he gave those women an inheritance among the brothers of their father. ⁵ Ten parcels of land were assigned to Manasseh in Gilead and Bashan, which is on the other side of the Jordan, ⁶ because the daughters of Manasseh received an inheritance along with his sons. The land of Gilead was assigned to the rest of the descendants of Manasseh.

⁷ The territory of Manasseh reached from Asher to Mikmethath, which is east of Shechem. Then the border went southward to those living near the spring of Tappuah. ⁸ (The land of Tappuah belonged to Manasseh, but the town of Tappuah on the border of Manasseh belonged to the people of Ephraim.) ⁹ The border went down to the brook of Kanah. These cities south of the brook among the towns of Manasseh belonged to Ephraim. The border of Manasseh was on the north side of the brook, and it ended at the sea. ¹⁰ The land to the south belonged to Ephraim, and the land to the north was Manasseh's; the sea was the border. On the north side Asher can be reached, and to the east, Issachar. ¹¹ Also in Issachar and in Asher, Manasseh possessed Beth Shan and its villages, Ibleam and its villages, the inhabitants of Dor and its villages, the inhabitants of Endor and its villages, the inhabitants of Taanach and its villages, and the inhabitants of Megiddo and its villages (and the third city is Napheth).

¹² Yet the tribe of Manasseh could not take possession of those cities, for the Canaanites continued to live in this land. ¹³ When the people of Israel grew strong, they put the Canaanites to forced labor, but did not completely drive them out.

¹⁴ Then the descendants of Joseph spoke to Joshua, saying, "Why have you given us only one assignment of land and one portion for an inheritance, since we are a people great in number, and all along Yahweh has blessed us?" ¹⁵ Joshua said to them, "If you are a people great in number, go up by yourselves to the forest and there clear the ground for yourselves in the land of the Perizzites and of the Rephaim. Do this, since the hill country of Ephraim is too small for you." ¹⁶ The descendants of Joseph said, "The hill country is not enough for us. But all the Canaanites who live in the valley have chariots of iron, both those who are in Beth Shan and its villages, and those who are in the Valley of Jezreel." ¹⁷ Then Joshua said to the house of Joseph—to Ephraim and Manasseh, "You are a people great in number, and you have great power. You must not have only one piece of land assigned to you. ¹⁸ The hill country will also be yours. Though it is a forest, you will clear it and take possession of it to its farthest borders. You will drive out the Canaanites, even though they have chariots of iron, and even though they are strong."

Chapter 18

¹ Then the whole assembly of the people of Israel met together at Shiloh. They set up the tent of meeting there and they conquered the land before them. ² There were still seven tribes among the people of Israel whose inheritance had not been assigned. ³ Joshua said to the people of Israel, "How long will you put off going into the land that Yahweh, the God of your ancestors, has given you? ⁴ Appoint for yourselves three men from each tribe, and I will send them out. They will set out and survey the land up and down. They will write out a description of it with a view to their inheritances, and then they will come back to me. ⁵ They will divide it into seven sections. Judah will remain in their territory on the south, and the house of Joseph will continue in their territory in the north. ⁶ You will describe the land in seven sections and bring the description here to me. I will cast lots for you here before Yahweh our God. ⁷ The Levites have no portion among you, for the priesthood of Yahweh is their inheritance. Gad, Reuben, and the half tribe of Manasseh have received their inheritance, beyond the Jordan. This is the inheritance that Moses the servant of Yahweh gave them."

⁸ So the men got up and went. Joshua commanded those who went to write the description of the land, saying, "Go up and down in the land and write a description of it and return to me. I will cast lots for you here before Yahweh at Shiloh." ⁹ The men left and walked up and down in the land and wrote a description of it in a scroll by its cities in seven sections, listing the cities in each section. Then they returned to Joshua in the camp at Shiloh. ¹⁰ Then Joshua cast lots for them at Shiloh before Yahweh. It was there that Joshua assigned the land to the people of Israel, and to each was given his portion of the land.

¹¹ The assignment of land for the tribe of Benjamin came up clan by clan. The territory of their assigned land was located between the descendants of Judah and the descendants of Joseph. ¹² On the north side, their border began at the Jordan. The border went up to the ridge north of Jericho, and then up through the hill country westward. There it reached the wilderness of Beth Aven. ¹³ From there the border passed along south in the direction of Luz (the same place as Bethel). Then the border went down to Ataroth Addar, by the mountain that lies south of Beth Horon. ¹⁴ The boundary then went in another direction: On the western side it turned toward the south, heading toward the mountain across from Beth Horon. This boundary ended at Kiriath Baal (that is, Kiriath Jearim), a city that belonged to the tribe of Judah. This formed the border on the western side. ¹⁵ The south side began just outside of Kiriath Jearim. The border went from there to Ephron, to the spring of the waters of Nephtoah. ¹⁶ The boundary then went down to the border of the mountain which was opposite the Valley of Ben Hinnom, which was at the northern end of the Valley of Rephaim. It then went down to the Valley of Hinnom, south of the slope of the Jebusites, and continued down to En Rogel. ¹⁷ It turned northward, going in the direction of En Shemesh, and from there it went out to Geliloth, which was opposite the ascent of Adummim. Then it went down to the Stone of Bohan the son of Reuben. ¹⁸ It passed on to the north of the shoulder of Beth Arabah and down to the Arabah. ¹⁹ The border passed on to the north shoulder of Beth Hoglah. The border ended at the north bay of the Salt Sea, at the southern end of the Jordan. This was the boundary on the south. ²⁰ The Jordan formed its border on the eastern side. This was the inheritance of the tribe of Benjamin, and it was given clan by clan, border after border, all around.

²¹ Now the cities of the tribe of Benjamin, clan by clan, were Jericho, Beth Hoglah, Emek Keziz, ²² Beth Arabah, Zemaraim, Bethel, ²³ Avvim, Parah, Ophrah, ²⁴ Kephrah Ammoni, Ophni, and Geba. There were twelve cities, including their villages. ²⁵ There were also the cities of Gibeon, Ramah, Beeroth, ²⁶ Mizpah, Kephirah, Mozah, ²⁷ Rekem, Irpeel, Taralah, ²⁸ Zelah, Haeleph, Jebus (the same as Jerusalem), Gibeah, and Kiriath. There were fourteen cities, including their villages. This was the inheritance of Benjamin for their clans.

Chapter 19

¹ The second casting of lots fell to Simeon, clan by clan. Their inheritance was in the middle of the inheritance that belonged to the tribe of Judah. ² They had for their inheritance Beersheba, Sheba, Moladah, ³ Hazar Shual, Balah, Ezem, ⁴ Eltolad, Bethul, and Hormah. ⁵ Simeon also had Ziklag, Beth Markaboth, Hazar Susah, ⁶ Beth Lebaoth, and Sharuhén. These were thirteen cities, including their villages. ⁷ Simeon also had Ain, Rimmon, Ether, and Ashan. These were four cities, including their villages. ⁸ These were together, including the villages around these cities as far as Baalath Beer (the same as Ramah in the Negev). This was the inheritance of the tribe of Simeon, clan by clan. ⁹ The inheritance of the tribe of Simeon formed part of the territory of the tribe of Judah. Because the portion of land assigned to the tribe of Judah was too large for them, the tribe of Simeon received their inheritance out of the middle of their portion.

¹⁰ The third casting of lots fell to the tribe of Zebulun, clan by clan. The border of their inheritance began at Sarid. ¹¹ Their border went up westward toward Maralah and touched Dabbesheth; then it extended to the brook that was opposite Jokneam. ¹² From Sarid the border turned eastward toward the sunrise and went to the border of Kisloth Tabor. From there it went to Daberath and then up to Japhia. ¹³ From there it passed on eastward to Gath Hopher, and then to Eth Kazin; next it went to Rimmon and turned toward Neah. ¹⁴ The border made a turn to the north to Hannathon and ended at the Valley of Iphtah El. ¹⁵ This region included the cities of Kattath, Nahalal, Shimron, Idalah, and Bethlehem. There were twelve cities, including their villages.

¹⁶ This was the inheritance of the tribe of Zebulun, clan by clan, including these cities, including their villages.

¹⁷ The fourth casting of lots fell to Issachar, clan by clan. ¹⁸ Their territory included Jezreel, Chesulloth, Shunem, ¹⁹ Hapharaim, Shion, and Anaharath. ²⁰ It also included Rabbith, Kishion, Ebez, ²¹ Remeth, En Gannim, En Haddah, and Beth Pазzez. ²² Their border also touched Tabor, Shahazumah, and Beth Shemesh, and ended at the Jordan. There were sixteen cities, including their villages.

²³ This was the inheritance of the tribe of Issachar, according to their clans—the cities, including their villages.

²⁴ The fifth casting of lots fell to the tribe of Asher, clan by clan. ²⁵ Their territory included Helkath, Hali, Beten, Akshaph, ²⁶ Allammelek, Amad, and Mishall. On the west the boundary extended to Carmel and Shihor Libnath. ²⁷ Then it turned eastward to Beth Dagon and went as far as Zebulun, and then to the Valley of Iphtah El, northward to Beth Emek and Neiel. Then it continued on to Kabul toward the north. ²⁸ It then went on to Abdon, Rehob, Hammon, and Kanah, as far as Greater Sidon. ²⁹ The border turned back to Ramah, and then to the fortified city of Tyre. Then the border turned to Hosah and ended at the sea, in the region of Akzib, ³⁰ Ummah, Aphek, and Rehob. There were twenty-two cities, including their villages.

³¹ This was the inheritance of the tribe of Asher, clan by clan—the cities, including their villages.

³² The sixth casting of lots fell to the tribe of Naphtali, clan by clan. ³³ Their border ran from Heleph, from the oak at Zaanannim, on to Adami Nekeb and Jabneel, as far as Lakkum; it ended at the Jordan. ³⁴ The border turned westward to Aznoth Tabor and went on to Hukkok; it touched Zebulun on the south, and reached to Asher on the west and Judah on the east at the Jordan River. ³⁵ The fortified cities were Ziddim, Zer, Hammath, Rakkath, Kinnereth, ³⁶ Adamah, Ramah, Hazor, ³⁷ Kedesh, Edrei, and En Hazor. ³⁸ There were also Iron, Migdal El, Horem, Beth Anath, and Beth Shemesh. There were nineteen cities, including their villages.

³⁹ This was the inheritance of the tribe of Naphtali, clan by clan—the cities, including their villages.

⁴⁰ The seventh casting of lots fell to the tribe of Dan, clan by clan. ⁴¹ The territory of its inheritance included Zorah, Eshtaol, Ir Shemesh, ⁴² Shaalabbin, Aijalon, and Ithlah. ⁴³ It also included Elon, Timnah, Ekron, ⁴⁴ Eltekeh, Gibbethon, Baalath, ⁴⁵ Jehud, Bene Berak, Gath Rimmon, ⁴⁶ Me Jarkon, and Rakkon along with the territory across from Joppa. ⁴⁷ When the territory of the tribe of Dan was lost to them, Dan

attacked Leshem and took it. They struck it with the sword, took possession of it, and settled in it. They called Leshem Dan, after the name of their ancestor Dan.

48 This was the inheritance of the tribe of Dan, clan by clan—the cities, including their villages.

49 When they finished the allocation of the land as an inheritance, the people of Israel gave an inheritance among themselves to Joshua son of Nun. **50** By the command of Yahweh they gave him the city for which he asked, Timnath Serah in the hill country of Ephraim. He rebuilt the city and lived there.

51 These are the inheritances that Eleazar the priest, Joshua son of Nun, and the leaders of the tribal clans of Israel assigned by lot at Shiloh, before Yahweh, at the entrance of the tent of meeting. So they finished assigning the land.

Chapter 20

¹ Then Yahweh said to Joshua, ² "Speak to the people of Israel, saying, 'Appoint the cities of refuge of which I spoke to you by the hand of Moses. ³ Do this so that one who kills a person by accident or unknowingly can go there. These cities will be a place of refuge from the avenger of blood. ⁴ He will run to one of those cities and will stand at the entrance of the city gate, and explain his case to the elders of that city. Then they will take him into the city and give him a place for him to live among them. ⁵ If the avenger of blood pursues him there, then the people of the city must not hand the one who killed him over to the authorities. They must not do this because he killed his neighbor by accident, and he had no hatred toward him in the past. ⁶ He must stay in that city until he has stood before the assembly for judgment, until the death of the one who was serving as high priest in those days. Then the one who had accidentally killed the person may return to his own town and his own home, to the town from which he fled.'"

⁷ So the Israelites selected Kedesh in Galilee in the hill country of Naphtali, Shechem in the hill country of Ephraim, and Kiriath Arba (the same as Hebron) in the hill country of Judah. ⁸ Beyond the Jordan east of Jericho, they selected Bezer in the wilderness on the plateau from the tribe of Reuben; Ramoth Gilead, from the tribe of Gad; and Golan in Bashan, from the tribe of Manasseh. ⁹ These were the cities selected for all the people of Israel and for the foreigners sojourning among them, so that anyone who killed a person unintentionally could run to them for safety. This person would not die by the hand of the avenger of blood, until the accused person would first stand before the assembly.

Chapter 21

¹ Then the tribal leaders of the Levites came to Eleazar the priest, to Joshua son of Nun, and to the leaders of the families of their ancestors within the people of Israel. ² They said to them at Shiloh in the land of Canaan, "Yahweh commanded you by the hand of Moses to give to us cities to live in, with the pasturelands for our livestock." ³ So by the command of Yahweh, the people of Israel gave out of their inheritance the following cities, including their pasturelands, to the Levites.

⁴ The casting of lots for the clans of the Kohathites gave this result: The priests—the descendants of Aaron who were from the Levites—received thirteen cities given from the tribe of Judah, from the tribe of Simeon, and from the tribe of Benjamin.

⁵ The rest of Kohath's descendants received by lot ten cities from the clans of the tribes of Ephraim, Dan, and from the half tribe of Manasseh.

⁶ Then the people descended from Gershon were given, by the casting of lots, thirteen cities from the clans of the tribes of Issachar, Asher, Naphtali, and the half tribe of Manasseh in Bashan.

⁷ The people who were descendants of Merari, clan by clan, received twelve cities from the tribes of Reuben, Gad, and Zebulun.

⁸ So the people of Israel gave, by casting lots, these cities (including their pasturelands) to the Levites, just as Yahweh had commanded by the hand of Moses.

⁹ From the tribes of Judah and Simeon, they assigned land to the following cities, here listed by name. ¹⁰ These cities were given to the descendants of Aaron, who were among the clans of the Kohathites, who in turn were from the tribe of Levi. For the first casting of lots had fallen to them. ¹¹ The Israelites gave them Kiriath Arba (Arba had been the father of Anak), the same place as Hebron, in the hill country of Judah, with the pasturelands around it. ¹² But the fields of the city, including their villages, were already given to Caleb son of Jephunneh, as his possession.

¹³ To the descendants of Aaron the priest they gave Hebron with its pasturelands—which was a city of refuge for anyone who killed another unintentionally—and Libnah with its pasturelands, ¹⁴ Jattir with its pasturelands, and Eshtemoa with its pasturelands. ¹⁵ They also gave Holon with its pasturelands, Debir with its pasturelands, ¹⁶ Ain with its pasturelands, Juttah with its pasturelands, and Beth Shemesh with its pasturelands. There were nine cities that were given from these two tribes. ¹⁷ From the tribe of Benjamin were given Gibeon with its pasturelands, Geba with its pasturelands, ¹⁸ Anathoth with its pasturelands, and Almon with its pasturelands—four cities.

¹⁹ The cities given to the priests, the descendants of Aaron, were thirteen cities in all, including their pasturelands.

²⁰ As for the rest of the Kohathites who belong to the Kohathite clans of the Levites—they had cities given to them from the tribe of Ephraim by the casting of lots. ²¹ To them were given Shechem with its pasturelands in the hill country of Ephraim—a city of refuge for anyone who killed a person unintentionally—Gezer with its pasturelands, ²² Kibzaim with its pasturelands, and Beth Horon with its pasturelands—four cities in all. ²³ From the tribe of Dan, the clan of Kohath was given Eltekeh with its pasturelands, Gibbethon with its pasturelands, ²⁴ Aijalon with its pasturelands, and Gath Rimmon with its pasturelands—four cities in all. ²⁵ From the half tribe of Manasseh, the clan of Kohath was given Taanach with its pasturelands and Gath Rimmon with its pasturelands—two cities.

²⁶ There were ten cities in all for the rest of the clans of the Kohathites, including their pasturelands.

²⁷ From the half tribe of Manasseh, to clans of Gershon, these were other Levite clans, and they gave Golan in Bashan with its pasturelands—a city of refuge for anyone who killed another unintentionally, along with Be Eshterah with its pasturelands—two cities in all.

²⁸ To the clans of Gershon they also gave Kishion from the tribe of Issachar, along with its pasturelands, Daberath with its pasturelands, ²⁹ Jarmuth with its pasturelands, and En Gannim with its pasturelands—four cities.

³⁰ From the tribe of Asher, they gave Mishal with its pasturelands, Abdon with its pasturelands, ³¹ Helkath with its pasturelands, and Rehob with its pasturelands—four cities in all.

³² From the tribe of Naphtali, they gave the clans of Gershon Kedesh in Galilee with its pasturelands—a city of refuge for anyone who killed another unintentionally; Hammoth Dor with its pasturelands, and Kartan with its pasturelands—three cities in all.

³³ There were thirteen cities in all, out of the clans of Gershon, including their pasturelands.

³⁴ To the rest of the Levites—the clans of Merari—were given out of the tribe of Zebulun: Jokneam with its pasturelands, Kartah with its pasturelands, ³⁵ Dimnah with its pasturelands, and Nahalal with its pasturelands—four cities in all.

³⁶ To the clans of Merari were given from the tribe of Reuben: Bezer with its pasturelands, Jahaz with its pasturelands, ³⁷ Kedemoth with its pasturelands, and Mephaath with its pasturelands—four cities.

³⁸ Out of the tribe of Gad they were given Ramoth in Gilead with its pasturelands—a city of refuge for anyone who killed another unintentionally—and Mahanaim with its pasturelands. ³⁹ The clans of Merari were also given Heshbon with its pasturelands, and Jazer with its pasturelands. These were four cities in all.

⁴⁰ All these were the cities of the several clans of Merari, who were from the tribe of Levi—twelve cities in all were given to them by the casting of lots.

⁴¹ The cities of the Levites taken from the middle of the land possessed by the people of Israel were forty-eight cities, including their pasturelands. ⁴² These cities each had its surrounding pasturelands. It was this way with all these cities.

⁴³ So Yahweh gave to Israel all the land that he swore to give to their ancestors. The Israelites took possession of it and settled there. ⁴⁴ Then Yahweh gave them rest on every side, just as he had sworn to their ancestors. Not one of their enemies could defeat them. Yahweh gave all their enemies into their hand. ⁴⁵ Not one thing among all the good promises that Yahweh had spoken to the house of Israel failed to come true. All of them came to be.

Chapter 22

¹ At that time Joshua called the Reubenites, the Gadites, and the half tribe of Manasseh. ² He said to them, "You have done everything that Moses the servant of Yahweh commanded you. You have obeyed my voice in all that I commanded you. ³ You have not deserted your brothers these many days, down to this present day, and you have fulfilled the duties required by the commandments of Yahweh your God. ⁴ Now Yahweh your God has given rest to your brothers, just as he promised them. Therefore turn and go to your tents in the land you possess, which Moses the servant of Yahweh gave you on the other side of the Jordan. ⁵ Just be very careful to observe the commandments and the law that Moses the servant of Yahweh commanded you, to love Yahweh your God, to walk in all his ways, to keep his commandments, and to cling to him and worship him with all your heart and with all your soul." ⁶ So Joshua blessed them and sent them away, and they went back to their tents.

⁷ Now to one-half of the tribe of Manasseh Moses had given an inheritance in Bashan, but to the other half Joshua gave an inheritance beside their brothers in the land west of the Jordan. Joshua sent them away to their tents; he blessed them ⁸ and said to them, "Return to your tents with much money, and with very much livestock, and with silver and gold, and with bronze and iron, and with very many garments. Divide the plunder from your enemies with your brothers." ⁹ So the descendants of Reuben, the descendants of Gad, and the half tribe of Manasseh returned home, leaving the people of Israel at Shiloh, which is in the land of Canaan. They left to go to the region of Gilead, to their own land, which they themselves possessed, in obedience to the commandment of Yahweh, by the hand of Moses.

¹⁰ When they came to the Jordan that is in the land of Canaan, the Reubenites and the Gadites and the half tribe of Manasseh built an altar beside the Jordan, a very large and prominent altar. ¹¹ The people of Israel heard about this and said, "Look! The people of Reuben, Gad, and the half tribe of Manasseh have built an altar at the front of the land of Canaan, at Geliloth, in the region near the Jordan, on the side that belongs to the people of Israel." ¹² When the people of Israel heard of it, the whole assembly of the people of Israel gathered together at Shiloh to go up to make war against them.

¹³ Then the people of Israel sent messengers to the Reubenites, the Gadites, and the half tribe of Manasseh, in the land of Gilead. They also sent Phinehas son of Eleazar, the priest, ¹⁴ and with him ten leaders, one from each of the tribal families of Israel, and every one of them was the head of a family among the clan of Israel. ¹⁵ They came to the people of Reuben, Gad, and the half tribe of Manasseh, in the land of Gilead, and they spoke to them: ¹⁶ "The whole assembly of Yahweh says this, 'What is this unfaithfulness that you have committed against the God of Israel, by turning this day from following Yahweh by building yourself an altar this day in rebellion against Yahweh?' ¹⁷ Was the iniquity of Peor not enough for us? Yet we have not even now cleansed ourselves from it. There was a plague on the assembly of Yahweh for that sin. ¹⁸ Must you also turn away from following Yahweh at this present day? If you also rebel against Yahweh today, tomorrow he will be angry with the whole assembly of Israel. ¹⁹ If the land that you possess is defiled, then you should pass over into the land where Yahweh's tabernacle stands and take for yourselves a possession among us. Only do not rebel against Yahweh, nor rebel against us by building an altar for yourselves other than the altar of Yahweh our God. ²⁰ Did not Achan son of Zerah, act faithlessly in the matter of those things that had been reserved for God? Did not wrath fall on the entire community of Israel? That man did not perish alone for his iniquity."

²¹ Then the tribes of Reuben, Gad, and the half tribe of Manasseh replied in answer to the heads of the clans of Israel: ²² "The Mighty One, God, Yahweh! The Mighty One, God, Yahweh!—He knows, and let Israel itself know! If it was in rebellion or in unfaithfulness against Yahweh, do not deliver us on this day ²³ for having built an altar to turn ourselves away from following Yahweh. If we built that altar in order to offer on it burnt offerings, grain offerings, or sacrifices of peace offerings, then let Yahweh make us pay for it. ²⁴ No! We did it for fear that in time to come your children might say to our children, 'What have you to do with Yahweh, the God of Israel?' ²⁵ For Yahweh has made the Jordan a border between us and you. You people of Reuben and people of Gad, you have nothing to do with Yahweh.' So your children might make our children cease to worship Yahweh. ²⁶ So we said, 'Let us now build an altar, not for burnt offerings nor for any sacrifices, ²⁷ but to be a witness between us and you, and between our generations after us, that we will perform the service of Yahweh before him, with our burnt offerings and with our sacrifices and with our peace offerings, so that your children will never say to our children in time to come, 'You have no share in Yahweh.'" ²⁸ So we said, 'If this should be said to us or to our descendants in time to come, we would say, "Look! This is a copy of the altar of Yahweh, which our ancestors made, not

for burnt offerings, nor for sacrifices, but as a witness between us and you." ²⁹ May it be far from us that we should rebel against Yahweh, and today turn away from following him by building an altar for burnt offerings, for grain offerings, or for sacrifices, other than the altar of Yahweh our God that is before his tabernacle."

³⁰ When Phinehas the priest and the leaders of the people, that is, the heads of the clans of Israel who were with him, heard the words that the people of Reuben, Gad, and Manasseh said, that it was good in their eyes. ³¹ Phinehas son of Eleazar the priest said to the people of Reuben, Gad, and Manasseh, "Today we know that Yahweh is among us, because you have not committed this act of faithlessness against him. Now you have rescued the people of Israel out of the hand of Yahweh." ³² Then Phinehas son of Eleazar the priest, and the leaders returned from the Reubenites and the Gadites, out of the land of Gilead, back to the land of Canaan, to the people of Israel, and brought back word to them. ³³ Their report was good in the eyes of the people of Israel. The people of Israel blessed God and spoke no more about making war against the Reubenites and the Gadites, in order to destroy the land where they had settled. ³⁴ The Reubenites and the Gadites named the altar "Witness," for they said, "It is a witness between us that Yahweh is God."

Chapter 23

¹ After many days, when Yahweh had given rest to Israel from all their enemies that were around them, and Joshua was old and well advanced in years, ² Joshua called for all Israel—for their elders, for their leaders, for their judges, and for their officials—and he said to them, "I am old and well advanced in years. ³ You have seen everything that Yahweh your God has done to all these nations for your sake, for it is Yahweh your God who has fought for you. ⁴ Look! I have assigned to you the nations that remain to be conquered as an inheritance for your tribes, along with all the nations I have already destroyed, from the Jordan to the Great Sea in the west. ⁵ Yahweh your God will drive them out. He will push them out from you. He will seize their land, and you will take possession of their land, just as Yahweh your God promised to you. ⁶ So be very strong, so that you keep and do all that is written in the book of the law of Moses, turning aside from it neither to the right hand nor to the left, ⁷ so you may not mix with these nations that remain among you or mention the names of their gods, swear by them, worship them, or bow down to them. ⁸ Instead, you must cling to Yahweh your God just as you have done to this day. ⁹ For Yahweh has driven out before you large, strong nations. As for you, no one has been able to stand before you to this present day. ¹⁰ Any single man of your number will make a thousand run away, for Yahweh your God, is the one who fights for you, just as he promised you. ¹¹ Pay particular attention, so that you love Yahweh your God. ¹² But if you turn back and cling to the survivors of these nations who remain among you, or if you intermarry with them, or if you come together with them and they with you, ¹³ then know for certain that Yahweh your God will no longer drive these nations out from among you. Instead, they will become a snare and a trap for you, whips on your backs and thorns in your eyes, until you perish from this good land that Yahweh your God has given you.

¹⁴ Now I am going the way of all the earth, and you know with all your hearts and souls that not one word has failed to come true of all the good things that Yahweh your God promised about you. All these things have come about for you. Not one of them has failed. ¹⁵ But just as every word Yahweh your God promised you has been fulfilled, so Yahweh will bring on you all the evil things until he has destroyed you from this good land that Yahweh your God has given you. ¹⁶ He will do this if you break the covenant of Yahweh your God, which he commanded you to keep. If you go and worship other gods and bow down to them, then the anger of Yahweh will be kindled against you, and you will quickly perish from the good land that he has given you."

Chapter 24

¹ Then Joshua gathered all the tribes of Israel to Shechem and called for the elders of Israel, for their leaders, for their judges, and for their officers, and they presented themselves before God. ² Joshua said to all the people, "This is what Yahweh, the God of Israel, says, 'Your ancestors long ago lived beyond the Euphrates River—Terah, the father of Abraham and the father of Nahor—and they worshiped other gods. ³ But I took your father Abraham from beyond the Euphrates and led him into the land of Canaan and gave him many descendants through his son Isaac. ⁴ Then to Isaac I gave Jacob and Esau. I gave Esau the hill country of Seir to possess, but Jacob and his children went down to Egypt. ⁵ I sent Moses and Aaron, and I afflicted the Egyptians with plagues. After that, I brought you out. ⁶ I brought your ancestors out of Egypt, and you came to the sea. The Egyptians pursued them with chariots and horsemen as far as the Sea of Reeds. ⁷ When your ancestors called out to Yahweh, he put darkness between you and the Egyptians. He brought the sea to come over them and cover them. You saw what I did in Egypt. Then you lived in the wilderness for a long time. ⁸ I brought you to the land of the Amorites, who lived on the other side of the Jordan. They fought with you, and I gave them into your hand. You took possession of their land, and I destroyed them before you. ⁹ Then Balak son of Zippor, king of Moab, got up and attacked Israel. He sent and called for Balaam son of Beor, to curse you. ¹⁰ But I did not listen to Balaam. Indeed, he blessed you. So I rescued you out of his hand. ¹¹ You went over the Jordan and came to Jericho. The leaders of Jericho fought against you, along with the Amorites, the Perizzites, the Canaanites, the Hittites, the Girgashites, the Hivites, and the Jebusites. I gave you victory over them and put them under your control. ¹² I sent the hornet before you, which drove them and the two kings of the Amorites out before you. It did not happen by your sword or by your bow. ¹³ I gave you land on which you had not worked and cities that you had not built, and now you live in them. You eat the fruit of vineyards and olive orchards that you did not plant.'

¹⁴ Now fear Yahweh and worship him with all integrity and faithfulness; get rid of the gods that your ancestors worshiped beyond the Euphrates and in Egypt, and worship Yahweh. ¹⁵ If it seems wrong in your eyes for you to worship Yahweh, choose for yourselves this day whom you will serve, whether the gods your ancestors worshiped beyond the Euphrates, or the gods of the Amorites, in whose land you live. But as for me and my house, we will worship Yahweh."

¹⁶ The people answered and said, "We would never abandon Yahweh to serve other gods, ¹⁷ for it is Yahweh our God who brought us and our ancestors up from the land of Egypt, out of the house of slavery, and who did those great signs in our sight, and who preserved us in all the way that we went, and among all the nations through whom we passed. ¹⁸ Then Yahweh drove out before us all the peoples, including the Amorites who lived in the land. So we too will worship Yahweh, for he is our God."

¹⁹ But Joshua said to the people, "You cannot serve Yahweh, for he is a holy God; he is a jealous God; he will not forgive your transgressions and sins. ²⁰ If you abandon Yahweh and worship foreign gods, then he will turn and do you harm. He will consume you, after he has done good to you." ²¹ But the people said to Joshua, "No, we will worship Yahweh." ²² Then Joshua said to the people, "You are witnesses against yourselves that you have chosen for yourselves Yahweh, to worship him." They said, "We are witnesses." ²³ "Now put away the foreign gods that are with you, and turn your heart to Yahweh, the God of Israel." ²⁴ The people said to Joshua, "We will worship Yahweh our God. We will listen to his voice." ²⁵ Joshua made a covenant with the people that day. He put in place decrees and laws at Shechem. ²⁶ Joshua wrote these words in the Book of the law of God. He took a large stone and set it up there beneath the oak tree that was beside Yahweh's sanctuary. ²⁷ Joshua said to all the people, "Look, this stone will be a testimony against us. It has heard all the words Yahweh said to us. So it will be a witness against you, should you ever deny your God." ²⁸ So Joshua sent the people away, each to his own inheritance.

²⁹ After these things Joshua son of Nun, the servant of Yahweh, died, being 110 years old. ³⁰ They buried him within the border of his own inheritance, at Timnath Serah, which is in the hill country of Ephraim, north of Mount Gaash. ³¹ Israel worshiped Yahweh all of Joshua's days, and all the days of the elders who outlived Joshua, those who had experienced the deeds that Yahweh had done for Israel.

³² The bones of Joseph, which the people of Israel brought up out of Egypt—they buried them at Shechem, in the piece of land that Jacob had bought from the sons of Hamor, the father of Shechem. He bought it for one hundred pieces of silver, and it became an inheritance for the descendants of Joseph. ³³

Eleazar son of Aaron also died. They buried him at Gibeah, the city of Phinehas his son, which had been given to him. It was in the hill country of Ephraim.

Book: Judges

Judges

Chapter 1

¹ After the death of Joshua, the people of Israel asked Yahweh, saying, "Who first will attack the Canaanites for us, to fight against them?" ² Yahweh said, "Judah will attack. See, I have given them control of this land." ³ The men of Judah said to men of Simeon, their brothers, "Come up with us into our territory that was assigned to us that together we may fight against the Canaanites. We in turn will go with you to the territory that was assigned to you." So the tribe of Simeon went with them. ⁴ The men of Judah attacked, and Yahweh gave them victory over the Canaanites and the Perizzites. They killed ten thousand of them at Bezek. ⁵ They found Adoni-Bezek at Bezek, and they fought against him and defeated the Canaanites and the Perizzites. ⁶ But Adoni-Bezek fled, and they pursued him and caught him, and they cut off his thumbs and his big toes. ⁷ Adoni-Bezek said, "Seventy kings, who had their thumbs and their big toes cut off, picked up food from under my table. As I have done, even so God has done to me." They brought him to Jerusalem, and he died there.

⁸ The men of Judah fought against the city of Jerusalem and took it. They attacked it with the edge of the sword and they set the city on fire. ⁹ After that, the men of Judah went down to fight against the Canaanites who lived in the hill country, in the Negev, and the lowlands. ¹⁰ Judah advanced against the Canaanites who lived in Hebron (the name of Hebron was previously Kiriath Arba), and they defeated Sheshai, Ahiman, and Talmai.

¹¹ From there the men of Judah advanced against the inhabitants of Debir (the name of Debir was previously Kiriath Sepher). ¹² Caleb said, "Whoever attacks Kiriath Sepher and takes it, I will give him Aksah, my daughter, to be his wife." ¹³ Othniel, son of Kenaz (Caleb's younger brother) captured Debir, so Caleb gave him Aksah, his daughter, to be his wife. ¹⁴ Soon Aksah came to Othniel, and she urged him to ask her father to give her a field. As she was getting off her donkey, Caleb asked her, "What can I do for you?" ¹⁵ She said to him, "Give me a blessing. Since you have given me the land of the Negev, also give me springs of water." So Caleb gave her the upper springs and the lower springs.

¹⁶ The descendants of Moses' father-in-law the Kenite went up from the City of Palms with the people of Judah, into the wilderness of Judah, which is in the Negev, to live with the people of Judah near Arad. ¹⁷ The men of Judah went with the men of Simeon their brothers and they attacked the Canaanites who inhabited Zephath and they completely destroyed it. The name of the city was called Hormah. ¹⁸ The people of Judah also captured Gaza and the land around it, Ashkelon and the land around it, and Ekron and the land around it. ¹⁹ Yahweh was with the people of Judah and they took possession of the hill country, but they could not drive out the inhabitants of the plains because they had iron chariots. ²⁰ Hebron was given to Caleb (like Moses had said), and he drove out from there the three sons of Anak. ²¹ But the people of Benjamin did not drive out the Jebusites who inhabited Jerusalem. So the Jebusites have lived with the people of Benjamin in Jerusalem to this day.

²² The house of Joseph prepared to attack Bethel, and Yahweh was with them. ²³ They sent out men to spy on Bethel (the city that was formerly named Luz). ²⁴ The spies saw a man coming out of the city, and they said to him, "Show us, please, how to get into the city, and we will be kind to you." ²⁵ He showed them a way into the city, and so they attacked the city with the edge of the sword, but they let the man and all his family get away. ²⁶ Then the man went to the land of the Hittites and built a city and called it Luz, which is its name to this day.

²⁷ The people of Manasseh did not drive out the people living in the cities of Beth Shan and its villages, or Taanach and its villages, or those who lived in Dor and its villages, or those who lived in Ibleam and its villages, or those who lived in Megiddo and its villages, because the Canaanites were determined to live in that land. ²⁸ When Israel became strong, they forced the Canaanites to serve them with hard labor, but they never drove them out completely.

29 Ephraim did not drive out the Canaanites who lived in Gezer, so the Canaanites continued to live in Gezer among them.

30 Zebulun did not drive out the people living in Kitron, or the people living in Nahalol, and so the Canaanites continued to live among them, but Zebulun forced the Canaanites to serve them with hard labor.

31 Asher did not drive out the people living in Akko, or the people living in Sidon, or those living in Ahlab, Akzib, Helbah, Aphek, or Rehob. **32** So the tribe of Asher lived among the Canaanites (those who lived in the land), because they did not drive them out.

33 The tribe of Naphtali did not drive out those who were living in Beth Shemesh, or those living in Beth Anath. So the tribe of Naphtali lived among the Canaanites (the people who were living in that land). However, the inhabitants of Beth Shemesh and Beth Anath were forced into hard labor for Naphtali.

34 The Amorites forced the tribe of Dan out into the hill country, not allowing them to come down to the plain. **35** So the Amorites lived at Mount Heres, in Aijalon, and in Shaalbim, but the military might of the house of Joseph conquered them, and they were forced to serve them with hard labor. **36** The border of the Amorites ran from the hill of Akrabbim at Sela up into the hill country.

Chapter 2

¹ The angel of Yahweh went up from Gilgal to Bokim, and said, "I brought you up from Egypt, and have brought you to the land I swore to give to your fathers. I said, 'I will never break my covenant with you. ² You must make no covenant with those who live in this land. You must break down their altars.' But you have not listened to my voice. What is this that you have done? ³ So now I say, 'I will not drive the Canaanites out before you, but they will become thorns in your sides, and their gods will become a trap for you.'" ⁴ When the angel of Yahweh spoke these words to all the people of Israel, the people shouted and wept. ⁵ They called the name of that place Bokim. There they offered sacrifices to Yahweh.

⁶ Now when Joshua had sent the people on their way, the people of Israel went, each to his own property, to take ownership of the land. ⁷ The people served Yahweh during the lifetime of Joshua and of the elders who outlived him, those who had seen all of Yahweh's great deeds he had done for Israel. ⁸ Joshua son of Nun the servant of Yahweh, died at the age of 110 years old. ⁹ They buried him within the border of his property in Timnath Heres, in the hill country of Ephraim, north of Mount Gaash. ¹⁰ All that generation was also gathered to their fathers. Another generation grew up after them who did not know Yahweh or the deeds he had done for Israel.

¹¹ The people of Israel did what was evil in the sight of Yahweh and they served the Baals. ¹² They broke away from Yahweh, the God of their fathers, who had brought them out of the land of Egypt. They went after other gods, the very gods of the peoples who were around them, and they bowed down to them. They provoked Yahweh to anger because ¹³ they broke away from Yahweh and worshiped Baal and the Ashtoreths. ¹⁴ The anger of Yahweh burned against Israel, and he gave them to the raiders who stole their possessions from them. He sold them as slaves who were held by the strength of their enemies around them, so they could no longer defend themselves against their enemies. ¹⁵ Wherever Israel went out to fight, Yahweh's hand was against them to defeat them, just as he had sworn to them and they were in terrible distress.

¹⁶ Then Yahweh raised up judges, who saved them out of the hand of those who were stealing their possessions. ¹⁷ Yet they would not listen to their judges. They were unfaithful to Yahweh and gave themselves like prostitutes to other gods and worshiped them. They soon turned aside from the way their fathers had lived—those who had obeyed the commandments of Yahweh—but they themselves did not do so. ¹⁸ When Yahweh raised up judges for them, Yahweh helped the judges and delivered them from the hand of their enemies all the days the judge lived. Yahweh had pity on them as they groaned because of those who oppressed them and afflicted them. ¹⁹ But when the judge died, they would turn away and do things that were even more corrupt than their fathers had done. They would go after other gods to serve them and worship them. They refused to give up any of their evil deeds or their stubborn ways. ²⁰ The anger of Yahweh burned against Israel; he said, "Because this nation has broken the terms of my covenant that I had set in place for their fathers—because they have not listened to my voice— ²¹ I will not, from now on, drive out from before them any of the nations that Joshua left when he died. ²² I will do this so that I may test Israel, whether or not they will keep the way of Yahweh and walk in it, as their fathers kept it." ²³ That is why Yahweh left those nations and did not drive them out quickly and give them into the hand of Joshua.

Chapter 3

¹ Now Yahweh left these nations to test Israel, namely everyone in Israel who had not experienced any of the wars fought in Canaan. ² (He did this to teach warfare to the new generation of the people of Israel who had not known it before.) ³ These are the nations: the five rulers of the Philistines, all the Canaanites, the Sidonians, and the Hivites who lived in the Lebanon mountains, from Mount Baal Hermon to Lebo Hamath. ⁴ These nations were left as a means by which Yahweh would test Israel, to confirm whether they would obey the commands he gave their ancestors through Moses. ⁵ So the people of Israel lived among the Canaanites, the Hittites, the Amorites, the Perizzites, the Hivites, and the Jebusites. ⁶ Their daughters they took to be their wives, and their own daughters they gave to their sons, and they served their gods.

⁷ The people of Israel did what was evil in the sight of Yahweh and forgot Yahweh their God. They worshiped the Baals and the Asherahs. ⁸ Therefore, the anger of Yahweh was set on fire against Israel, and he sold them into the hand of Cushan-Rishathaim king of Aram Naharaim. The people of Israel served Cushan-Rishathaim for eight years. ⁹ When the people of Israel called out to Yahweh, Yahweh raised up someone who would come to help the people of Israel, and who would rescue them: Othniel son of Kenaz (Caleb's younger brother). ¹⁰ Yahweh's Spirit empowered him, and he judged Israel and he went out to war. Yahweh gave him victory over Cushan-Rishathaim king of Aram. The hand of Othniel defeated Cushan-Rishathaim. ¹¹ The land had peace for forty years. Then Othniel son of Kenaz died.

¹² After that, the people of Israel again did what was evil in the sight of Yahweh, and Yahweh gave strength to Eglon king of Moab to overpower Israel. ¹³ Eglon joined with the Ammonites and the Amalekites and they went and defeated Israel, and they took possession of the City of Palms. ¹⁴ The people of Israel served Eglon the king of Moab for eighteen years.

¹⁵ When the people of Israel called out to Yahweh, Yahweh raised up a deliverer for them, Ehud son of Gera, a Benjamite, a left-handed man. The people of Israel sent him, with their tribute payment, to Eglon king of Moab. ¹⁶ Ehud made himself a sword that had two edges, one cubit in length; he bound it to his right thigh under his clothing. ¹⁷ He gave the tribute payment to King Eglon of Moab. (Now Eglon was a very fat man.) ¹⁸ After Ehud had presented the tribute payment, he left with those who had carried it in. ¹⁹ As for Ehud himself, however, when he reached the place where the carved images were made near Gilgal, he turned and went back, and he said, "I have a secret message for you, my king." Eglon said, "Silence!" So all those serving him left the room. ²⁰ Ehud came to him. The king was sitting by himself, alone in the coolness of the upper room. Ehud said, "I have a message from God for you." The king got up out of his seat. ²¹ Ehud reached with his left hand and took the sword from his right thigh, and he stabbed it into the king's body. ²² The hilt of the sword also went into him following the blade. The tip of the sword came out of his back and the fat closed over it, for Ehud did not pull the sword out of his belly. ²³ Then Ehud went out on the porch and closed the doors of the upper room behind him and locked them.

²⁴ After Ehud had gone, the king's servants came; they saw that the doors of the upper room were locked, so they thought, "Surely he is relieving himself in the coolness of the upper room." ²⁵ They were growing more concerned until they felt they were neglecting their duty when the king still did not open the doors to the upper room. So they took the key and opened them, and there lay their master, fallen to the floor, dead.

²⁶ While the servants were waiting, wondering what they should do, Ehud escaped and passed beyond the place where there were carved images of idols, and so he escaped to Seirah. ²⁷ When he arrived, he blew a ram's horn in the hill country of Ephraim. Then the people of Israel went down with him from the hills, and he was leading them. ²⁸ He said to them, "Follow me, for Yahweh is about to defeat your enemies, the Moabites." They followed him and they captured the fords of the Jordan across from the Moabites, and they did not allow anyone to cross the river. ²⁹ At that time they killed about ten thousand men of Moab, and all were strong and capable men. Not one escaped. ³⁰ So that day Moab was subdued by the strength of Israel, and the land had rest for eighty years.

³¹ After Ehud the next judge was Shamgar son of Anath who killed 600 men of the Philistines with a stick used to goad oxen. He also delivered Israel from danger.

Footnotes

3:3 ^[1]Some modern English translations read,

Chapter 4

¹ After Ehud died, the people of Israel once again did what was evil in the sight of Yahweh. ² Yahweh sold them into the hand of Jabin king of Canaan who reigned in Hazor. The commander of his army was named Sisera, and he lived in Harosheth Haggoyim. ³ The people of Israel called out to Yahweh for help, because Sisera had nine hundred iron chariots and he oppressed the people of Israel with force for twenty years.

⁴ Now Deborah, a prophetess (the wife of Lappidoth), was a leading judge in Israel at that time. ⁵ She used to sit under the palm of Deborah between Ramah and Bethel in the hill country of Ephraim, and the people of Israel came to her to settle their disputes. ⁶ She sent for Barak son of Abinoam from Kedesh in Naphtali. She said to him, "Yahweh, the God of Israel, commands you, 'Go to Mount Tabor, and take with you ten thousand men from Naphtali and Zebulun.' ⁷ I will draw out Sisera, the commander of Jabin's army, to meet you by the Kishon River, with his chariots and his army, and I will give you victory over him.'" ⁸ Barak said to her, "If you go with me, I will go, but if you do not go with me, I will not go." ⁹ She said, "I will certainly go with you. However, the road on which you are going will not lead to your honor, for Yahweh will sell Sisera into the hand of a woman." Then Deborah got up and went with Barak to Kedesh. ¹⁰ Barak called for the men of Zebulun and Naphtali to come together at Kedesh. Ten thousand men followed him, and Deborah went along with him.

¹¹ Now Heber (the Kenite) had separated himself from the Kenites—they were the descendants of Hobab (Moses' father-in-law)—and he pitched his tent by the oak in Zaanannim near Kedesh.

¹² When they told Sisera that Barak son of Abinoam had gone up to Mount Tabor, ¹³ Sisera called out all his chariots, nine hundred iron chariots, and all the soldiers who were with him, from Harosheth Haggoyim to the Kishon River. ¹⁴ Deborah said to Barak, "Go! For this is the day in which Yahweh has given you victory over Sisera. Is not Yahweh leading you?" So Barak went down from Mount Tabor with ten thousand men following him. ¹⁵ Yahweh confused Sisera and all his chariots and all his army with the edge of the sword. And Sisera got down from his chariot and ran away on foot. ¹⁶ But Barak pursued the chariots and the army to Harosheth Haggoyim, and the whole army of Sisera was killed by the edge of the sword, and not a man survived.

¹⁷ But Sisera ran away on foot to the tent of Jael, the wife of Heber the Kenite, for there was peace between Jabin the king of Hazor and the clan of Heber the Kenite. ¹⁸ Jael went out to meet Sisera and said to him, "Turn aside, my master; turn aside to me and do not be afraid." So he turned aside to her and came into her tent, and she covered him with a blanket. ¹⁹ He said to her, "Please give me a little water to drink, for I am thirsty." She opened a leather bag of milk and gave him drink, and then she covered him up again. ²⁰ He said to her, "Stand at the opening of the tent. If someone comes and asks you, 'Is anyone here?', say 'No'." ²¹ Then Jael (the wife of Heber) took a tent peg and a hammer in her hand and went in secretly to him, for he was in a deep sleep, and she hammered the tent peg into the side of his head until it went down into the ground, and he died. ²² As Barak was pursuing Sisera, Jael went out to meet him and said to him, "Come, I will show you the man you are looking for." So he went in with her, and there lay Sisera dead, with the tent peg in the side of his head.

²³ So on that day God subdued Jabin, the king of Canaan, before the people of Israel. ²⁴ The might of the people of Israel grew stronger and stronger against Jabin the king of Canaan, until they destroyed him.

Chapter 5

- ¹ On that day Deborah and Barak son of Abinoam sang this song:
- ² "When the leaders take the lead in Israel,
when the people volunteer—
praise Yahweh!
- ³ Listen, you kings! Pay attention, you rulers!
I, I will sing to Yahweh;
I will sing praises to Yahweh,
the God of Israel.
- ⁴ Yahweh, when you went out from Seir,
when you marched from Edom,
the earth shook, and the skies also trembled;
also the clouds poured down water.
- ⁵ The mountains quaked before the face of Yahweh;
even Mount Sinai quaked before the face of Yahweh,
the God of Israel.
- ⁶ In the days of Shamgar (son of Anath),
in the days of Jael,
the main roads were abandoned,
and those who walked only used the winding paths.
- ⁷ There were few rural people in Israel,
until I, Deborah, arose—
arose as a mother in Israel!
- ⁸ When they chose new gods,
there was fighting at the city gates
and yet there were no shields or spears seen
among forty thousand in Israel.
- ⁹ My heart goes out to the commanders of Israel,
along with the people who gladly volunteered—
we bless Yahweh for them!
- ¹⁰ Think about this—you who ride on white donkeys
sitting on rugs for saddles,
and you who walk along the road.
- ¹¹ Hear the voices of those who sing
at the watering places.
There they tell again of Yahweh's righteous deeds,
and the righteous actions of his warriors in Israel.
Then the people of Yahweh went down to the city gates.
- ¹² Awake, awake, Deborah!
Awake, awake, sing a song!
Get up, Barak,
and capture your prisoners, you son of Abinoam.
- ¹³ Then the survivors came down to the nobles;
the people of Yahweh came down to me with the warriors.
- ¹⁴ They came from Ephraim, whose root is in Amalek;
the people of Benjamin followed you.
From Makir commanders came down,
and from Zebulun those who carry an officer's staff.
- ¹⁵ My princes in Issachar were with Deborah;
and Issachar was with Barak
rushing after him into the valley under his command.
Among the clans of Reuben
there were great searchings of heart.
- ¹⁶ Why did you sit between the fireplaces,
listening to the shepherds playing their pipes for their flocks?
As for the clans of Reuben
there were great searchings of heart.
- ¹⁷ Gilead stayed on the other side of the Jordan;

- and Dan, why did he wander about on ships?
Asher remained on the coast
and lived close to his harbors.
- 18 Zebulun was a people who despised their lives to the point of death,
and Naphtali, also, on the field of battle.
- 19 The kings came, they fought;
the kings of Canaan fought at Taanach
by the waters of Megiddo.
But they took away no silver as plunder.
- 20 From heaven the stars fought,
from their paths across the heavens they fought against Sisera.
- 21 The Kishon River swept them away,
that old river, the Kishon River.
March on my soul, be strong!
- 22 Then came the sound of horses' hooves—
galloping, the galloping of his mighty ones.
- 23 'Curse Meroz!' says the angel of Yahweh.
'Surely curse its inhabitants!—
because they did not come to help Yahweh—
to help Yahweh in the battle against the mighty warriors.'
- 24 Jael is blessed more than all other women,
Jael (the wife of Heber the Kenite),
she is more blessed than all the women who live in tents.
- 25 The man asked for water, and she gave him milk;
she brought him butter in a dish fit for princes.
- 26 She put her hand to the tent peg,
and her right hand to the laborer's hammer;
with the hammer she struck Sisera, she crushed his head.
She smashed his skull into pieces when she pierced him through the side of his head.
- 27 He collapsed between her feet, he fell and he lay there.
Between her feet he fell limp.
The place he collapsed is where he was violently killed.
- 28 Out of a window she looked—
the mother of Sisera looked through the lattice and she called out in sadness,
'Why has it taken his chariot so long to come?
Why have the hoofbeats of the horses that pull his chariots been delayed?'
- 29 Her wisest princesses replied,
and she gave herself the same answer:
- 30 'Have they not found and divided up the plunder—
a womb, two wombs for every man;
the plunder of dyed fabric for Sisera,
the plunder of dyed fabric embroidered,
two pieces of dyed fabric embroidered for the necks of those who plunder?'
- 31 So may all your enemies perish, Yahweh!
But your friends be like the sun when it rises in its might."

Then the land had peace for forty years.

Chapter 6

¹ The people of Israel did what was evil in the sight of Yahweh, and he gave them into the hand of Midian for seven years. ² The power of Midian oppressed Israel. Because of Midian, the people of Israel made shelters for themselves from the dens in the hills, the caves, and the strongholds. ³ It happened that any time the Israelites planted their crops, the Midianites and the Amalekites and the people from the east would attack the Israelites. ⁴ They would set up their camp on the land and destroy the crops, all the way to Gaza. They would leave no food in Israel, neither sheep nor cattle nor donkeys. ⁵ Whenever they and their livestock and tents came up, they would come as a swarm of locusts, and it was impossible to count either the people or their camels. They invaded the land in order to destroy it. ⁶ Midian weakened the people of Israel so severely that the people of Israel called out to Yahweh.

⁷ When the people of Israel called out to Yahweh because of Midian, ⁸ Yahweh sent a prophet to the people of Israel. The prophet said to them, "This is what Yahweh, the God of Israel, says: 'I brought you up from Egypt; I brought you out of the house of slavery. ⁹ I rescued you from the hand of the Egyptians, and from the hand of all who were oppressing you. I drove them out before you, and I gave you their land. ¹⁰ I said to you, 'I am Yahweh your God; I commanded you not to worship the gods of the Amorites, in whose land you are living.' But you have not obeyed my voice."

¹¹ Now the angel of Yahweh came and sat under the oak in Ophrah, which belonged to Joash (the Abiezrite), while Gideon, Joash's son, was threshing wheat in the winepress—to hide it from the Midianites. ¹² The angel of Yahweh appeared to him and said to him, "Yahweh is with you, you strong warrior!" ¹³ Gideon said to him, "Oh, my master, if Yahweh is with us, why then has all this happened to us? Where are all his wonderful deeds that our fathers told us about, when they said, 'Did not Yahweh bring us up from Egypt?' But now Yahweh has abandoned us and gave us into the hand of Midian." ¹⁴ Yahweh looked at him and said, "Go in the strength you already have. Deliver Israel from the hand of Midian. Have I not sent you?" ¹⁵ Gideon said to him, "Please, Lord, how can I deliver Israel? See, my clan is the weakest in Manasseh, and I am the least important in my father's house." ¹⁶ Yahweh said to him, "I will be with you, and you will defeat the entire Midianite army as one man." ¹⁷ Gideon said to him, "If you are pleased with me, then give me a sign that it is you who is speaking to me. ¹⁸ Please, do not leave here, until I come to you and bring out my gift and set it before you." Yahweh said, "I will wait until you return."

¹⁹ Gideon went and prepared a young goat and from an ephah of flour he made unleavened bread. He put the meat in a basket, and he put the broth in a pot and brought them to him under the oak tree, and presented them. ²⁰ The angel of God said to him, "Take the meat and the unleavened bread and put them on this rock, and pour out the broth over them." That is what Gideon did. ²¹ Then the angel of Yahweh reached out with the end of the staff in his hand. With it he touched the flesh and the unleavened bread; a fire went up out of the rock and consumed the meat and the unleavened bread. Then the angel of Yahweh went away and Gideon could no longer see him. ²² Gideon understood that this was the angel of Yahweh. Gideon said, "Ah, Lord Yahweh! For I have seen the angel of Yahweh face to face!" ²³ Yahweh said to him, "Peace to you! Do not be afraid, you will not die." ²⁴ So Gideon built an altar there to Yahweh. He called it, "Yahweh is Peace." To this day it still stands at Ophrah of the clan of Abiezer.

²⁵ That night Yahweh said to him, "Take your father's bull, and a second bull that is seven years old, and tear down the altar of Baal that belongs to your father, and cut down the Asherah that is beside it. ²⁶ Build an altar to Yahweh your God on the top of this place of refuge, and construct it the correct way. Offer the second bull as a burnt offering, using the wood from the Asherah that you cut down." ²⁷ So Gideon took ten of his servants and did as Yahweh had told him. But because he was too afraid of his father's household and the men of the town to do it during the day, he did it at night.

²⁸ In the morning when the men of the town got up, the altar of Baal was broken down, and the Asherah that was beside it was cut down, and the second bull had been offered on the altar that had been built. ²⁹ The men of the city said to one another, "Who has done this?" When they talked with others and searched for answers, they said, "Gideon son of Joash has done this thing." ³⁰ Then the men of the town said to Joash, "Bring out your son so that he may be put to death, because he broke down the altar of Baal, and because he cut down the Asherah beside it." ³¹ Joash said to all who opposed him, "Will you plead the case for Baal? Will you save him? Whoever pleads the case for him, let him be put to death while it is still

morning. If Baal is a god, let him defend himself when someone breaks his altar down." ³² Therefore on that day they called Gideon "Jerub-Baal," because he said, "Let Baal defend himself against him," because Gideon broke down Baal's altar.

³³ Now all the Midianites, the Amalekites, and the people of the east gathered together. They crossed over the Jordan and camped in the Valley of Jezreel. ³⁴ But the Spirit of Yahweh clothed Gideon. Gideon blew a trumpet, calling out the clan of Abiezer, so they might follow him. ³⁵ He sent messengers all throughout Manasseh, and they too, were called out to follow him. He also sent messengers to Asher, Zebulun, and Naphtali, and they went up to meet him.

³⁶ Gideon said to God, "If you intend to use me to save Israel, as you have said— ³⁷ Look, I am putting a woolen fleece on the threshing floor. If there is dew only on the fleece, and it is dry on all the ground, then I will know that you will use me to save Israel, as you said." ³⁸ This is what happened—Gideon rose early the next morning, he pressed the fleece together, and wrung out the dew from the fleece, enough to fill a bowl with water. ³⁹ Then Gideon said to God, "Do not be angry with me, I will speak one more time. Please allow me one more test using the fleece. This time make the fleece dry, and let there be dew on all the ground around it." ⁴⁰ God did what he asked for that night. The fleece was dry, and there was dew on all the ground around it.

Chapter 7

¹ Then Jerub-Baal (that is, Gideon) rose up early, and all the people who were with him, and they encamped beside the spring of Harod. The camp of Midian was to their north in the valley near the hill of Moreh.

² Yahweh said to Gideon, "There are too many soldiers for me to give you victory over the Midianites, so that Israel may not boast over me, saying, 'Our own power has saved us.' ³ Now therefore, proclaim in the ears of the people and say, 'Whoever is afraid, whoever trembles, let him return and depart from Mount Gilead.'" So twenty-two thousand people went away, and ten thousand remained.

⁴ Yahweh said to Gideon, "The people are still too many. Take them down to the water, and I will make their number smaller for you there. If I say to you, 'This one will go with you,' he will go with you; but if I say, 'This one will not go with you,' he will not go." ⁵ So Gideon brought the people down to the water, and Yahweh said to him, "Separate everyone who laps up the water, as a dog laps, from those who kneel down to drink." ⁶ Three hundred men lapped. The rest of the men kneeled down to drink water. ⁷ Yahweh said to Gideon, "With the three hundred men who lapped, I will rescue you and give you victory over the Midianites. Let every other man go back to his own place." ⁸ So those who were chosen took their supplies and their trumpets. Gideon sent away all the men of Israel, every man to his tent, but he kept the three hundred men. Now the Midian camp was down below him in the valley.

⁹ That same night Yahweh said to him, "Get up! Attack the camp, for I am going to give you victory over it. ¹⁰ But if you are afraid to go down, go down to the camp with Purah your servant, ¹¹ and listen to what they are saying, and your courage will be strengthened to attack the camp." So Gideon went with Purah his servant, down to the guard posts of the camp. ¹² The Midianites, the Amalekites, and all the people of the east settled along in the valley, as thick as a cloud of locusts. Their camels were more than could be counted; they were more in number than the grains of the sand on the seashore. ¹³ When Gideon arrived there, a man was telling a dream to his companion. The man said, "Look! I had a dream, and I saw a round loaf of barley bread tumbling into the camp of Midian. It came to the tent, and hit it so hard that it fell down and turned it upside down, so that it lay flat." ¹⁴ The other man said, "This is nothing other than the sword of Gideon the son of Joash, a man of Israel. God has given him victory over Midian and all their army."

¹⁵ When Gideon heard the retelling of the dream and its interpretation, he bowed down in worship. He went back to the camp of Israel and said, "Get up! Yahweh has given you victory over the Midian army."

¹⁶ He divided the three hundred men into three groups, and he gave them all rams' horns and empty jars, with torches inside each jar. ¹⁷ He said to them, "Look at me and do what I do. Watch! When I come to the edge of the camp, you must do what I do. ¹⁸ When I blow the ram's horn, I and all who are with me, then blow your ram's horns also on every side of the entire camp and shout, 'For Yahweh and for Gideon!'"

¹⁹ So Gideon and the hundred men who were with him came to the edge of the camp, right at the beginning of the middle watch. Just as the Midianites were changing guard, they blew the rams' horns and broke the jars that were in their hands. ²⁰ The three companies blew the rams' horns and broke the jars. They held the torches in their left hands and the rams' horns in their right hands to blow them. They shouted out, "The sword of Yahweh and of Gideon." ²¹ Every man stood in his place around the camp and all the Midianite army ran. They shouted and ran away. ²² When they blew the three hundred rams' horns, Yahweh set every Midianite man's sword against his comrades and against all their army. The army fled as far as Beth Shittah toward Zererah, as far as the border of Abel Meholah, near Tabbath. ²³ The men of Israel from Naphtali, Asher, and all Manasseh were called out, and they went after Midian.

²⁴ Gideon sent messengers throughout all the hill country of Ephraim, saying, "Go down against Midian and take control of the Jordan River, as far as Beth Barah, to stop them." So all the men of Ephraim were summoned and took control of the waters, as far as Beth Barah and the Jordan River. ²⁵ They captured the two princes of Midian, Oreb and Zeeb. They killed Oreb at the rock of Oreb, and they killed Zeeb at the winepress of Zeeb. They went after the Midianites, and they brought the heads of Oreb and Zeeb to Gideon, who was on the other side of the Jordan.

Chapter 8

¹ The men of Ephraim said to Gideon, "What is this you have done to us? You did not call us when you went to fight against Midian." Then they had a violent argument with him. ² He said to them, "What have I done now compared to you? Are not the gleanings of Ephraim's grapes better than the full grape harvest of Abiezer?" ³ God has given you victory over the princes of Midian—Oreb and Zeeb! What have I accomplished compared to you?" Their anger toward him died down when he said this.

⁴ Gideon came to the Jordan and crossed over it, he and the three hundred men who were with him. They were exhausted, yet they still kept up the pursuit. ⁵ He said to the men of Sukkoth, "Please give loaves of bread to the people who follow me, for they are exhausted, and I am pursuing Zebah and Zalmunna, the kings of Midian." ⁶ Then the officials of Sukkoth said, "Are the hands of Zebah and Zalmunna now in your hand? Why should we give bread to your army?" ⁷ Gideon said, "When Yahweh has given us victory over Zebah and Zalmunna, I will thresh your skin with desert thorns and briers." ⁸ He went up from there to Peniel and spoke to the people there in the same way, but the men of Peniel answered him just as the men of Sukkoth had answered. ⁹ He spoke also to the men of Peniel and said, "When I come again in peace, I will break down this tower."

¹⁰ Now Zebah and Zalmunna were in Karkor with their army, about fifteen thousand men, all who remained out of the entire army of the people of the East, for there had fallen 120,000 men who drew the sword. ¹¹ Gideon went up the road taken by tent dwellers, past Nobah and Jogbehah. He defeated the enemy army, because they were not expecting an attack. ¹² Zebah and Zalmunna fled, and as Gideon pursued them, he captured the two kings of Midian—Zebah and Zalmunna—and set their whole army into a panic.

¹³ Gideon, son of Joash, returned from the battle going through the pass of Heres. ¹⁴ He caught a young man of Sukkoth and questioned him. The young man wrote down the names of seventy-seven officials and elders of Sukkoth. ¹⁵ Gideon came to the men of Sukkoth and said, "Look at Zebah and Zalmunna, about whom you mocked me and said, 'Have you already conquered Zebah and Zalmunna? We do not know that we should give bread to your army.'" ¹⁶ Gideon took the elders of the city, and he punished the men of Sukkoth with the desert thorns and briers. ¹⁷ Then he broke down the tower of Peniel and killed the men of that city.

¹⁸ Then Gideon said to Zebah and Zalmunna, "What kind of men did you kill at Tabor?" They answered, "As you are, so were they. Every one of them looked like the son of a king." ¹⁹ Gideon said, "They were my brothers, the sons of my mother. As Yahweh lives, if you had saved them alive, I would not kill you." ²⁰ He said to Jether (his firstborn), "Get up and kill them!" But the young man did not draw his sword for he was afraid, because he was still a young boy. ²¹ Then Zebah and Zalmunna said, "Get up yourself and kill us! For as the man is, so is his strength." Gideon rose and killed Zebah and Zalmunna. He also took off the crescent-shaped ornaments that were on their camels' necks.

²² Then the men of Israel said to Gideon, "Rule over us—you, your son, and your grandson—because you have saved us out of the hand of Midian." ²³ Gideon said to them, "I will not rule over you, neither will my son rule over you. Yahweh will rule over you." ²⁴ Gideon said to them, "Let me make a request of you, that every one of you give me the earrings from his plunder." (The Midianites had golden earrings because they were Ishmaelites.) ²⁵ They answered, "We are glad to give them to you." They spread out a cloak and every man threw on it the earrings from his plunder. ²⁶ The weight of the golden earrings that he requested was 1,700 shekels of gold. This plunder was in addition to the crescent ornaments, the pendants, the purple clothing that was worn by the kings of Midian, and in addition to the chains that had been around their camels' necks. ²⁷ Gideon made an ephod out of the earrings and put it in his city, in Ophrah, and all Israel prostituted themselves by worshiping it there. It became a trap for Gideon and for those in his house. ²⁸ So Midian was subdued before the people of Israel and they did not raise their heads up again. So the land had peace for forty years in the days of Gideon.

²⁹ Jerub-Baal, son of Joash, went and lived in his own house. ³⁰ Gideon had seventy sons who were his descendants, for he had many wives. ³¹ His concubine, who was in Shechem, also bore him a son, and Gideon gave him the name Abimelek. ³² Gideon, son of Joash, died at a good old age and was buried in the tomb of Joash his father, at Ophrah of the clan of Abiezer.

³³ It came about, as soon as Gideon was dead, the people of Israel turned again and prostituted themselves by worshiping the Baals. They made Baal-Berith their god. ³⁴ The people of Israel did not remember to honor Yahweh, their God, who had rescued them from the hand of all their enemies on every side. ³⁵ They did not keep their promises to the house of Jerub-Baal (that is, Gideon), in return for all the good he had done in Israel.

Chapter 9

¹ Abimelek son of Jerub-Baal went to his mother's relatives at Shechem and he said to them and to the whole clan of his mother's family, ² "Please say this, so that all the leaders in Shechem may hear, 'Which is better for you, that all seventy sons of Jerub-Baal rule over you, or that just one rule over you?' Remember that I am your bone and your flesh." ³ His mother's relatives spoke for him to the leaders of Shechem, and they agreed to follow Abimelek, for they said, "He is our brother." ⁴ They gave him seventy pieces of silver out of the house of Baal-Berith, and Abimelek used the silver to hire worthless and reckless men, who traveled with him. ⁵ Abimelek went to his father's house at Ophrah, and upon one stone he murdered his seventy brothers, the sons of Jerub-Baal. Only Jotham was left, the youngest son of Jerub-Baal, for he hid himself. ⁶ All the leaders of Shechem and Beth Millo came together and they went and made Abimelek king, beside the oak near the pillar which is in Shechem.

⁷ When Jotham was told about this, he went and stood on the top of Mount Gerizim. He shouted and said to them, "Listen to me, you leaders of Shechem, so that God may listen to you. ⁸ The trees once went out to anoint a king over them. For they said to the olive tree, 'Reign over us.' ⁹ But the olive tree said to them, 'Should I give up my abundance, by which gods and men are honored, to sway over the other trees?' ¹⁰ The trees said to the fig tree, 'Come and reign over us.' ¹¹ But the fig tree said to them, 'Should I give up my sweetness and my good fruit, just so I could return and sway over the other trees?' ¹² The trees said to the vine, 'Come and reign over us.' ¹³ The vine said to them, 'Should I give up my new wine, which makes gods and mankind glad, and return and sway over the other trees?' ¹⁴ Then said all the trees to the thornbush, 'Come and reign over us.' ¹⁵ The thornbush said to the trees, 'If you truly want to anoint me as king over you, then come and find refuge under my shade. If not, then let fire come out of the thornbush and let it burn up the cedars of Lebanon.' ¹⁶ Now therefore, if you have acted in truth and honesty, when you made Abimelek king, and if you have done well concerning Jerub-Baal and his house, and if you have punished him as he deserves— ¹⁷ and to think that my father fought for you, risked his life, and rescued you out of the hand of Midian— ¹⁸ but today you have risen up against my father's house and have killed his sons, seventy persons, upon one stone. Then you have made Abimelek, the son of his female servant, king over the leaders of Shechem, because he is your relative. ¹⁹ If you acted with faithfulness and integrity with Jerub-Baal and his house, then you should rejoice in Abimelek, and let him also rejoice in you. ²⁰ But if not, let fire come out from Abimelek and burn up the men of Shechem and Beth Millo. Let fire come out from the men of Shechem and Beth Millo, to burn up Abimelek." ²¹ Jotham fled and ran away, and he went to Beer. He lived there because it was far away from Abimelek, his brother.

²² Abimelek ruled over Israel for three years. ²³ God sent an evil spirit between Abimelek and the leaders of Shechem. The leaders of Shechem betrayed the trust they had with Abimelek. ²⁴ God did this so the violence done to the seventy sons of Jerub-Baal might be avenged and their blood be laid on Abimelek their brother, and the men of Shechem would be held responsible because they helped him murder his brothers. ²⁵ So the leaders of Shechem positioned men to lie in wait on the hilltops that they might ambush him, and they robbed all who passed by them along that road. This was reported to Abimelek.

²⁶ Gaal son of Ebed came with his relatives and they went over to Shechem. The leaders of Shechem had confidence in him. ²⁷ They went out into the field and gathered grapes from the vineyards, and they trampled on them. They held a festival in the house of their god, where they ate and drank, and they cursed Abimelek. ²⁸ Gaal son of Ebed, said, "Who is Abimelek, and who is Shechem, that we should serve him? Is he not the son of Jerub-Baal? Is Zebul not his overseer? Serve the men of Hamor, Shechem's father! Why should we serve Abimelek? ²⁹ I wish that this people were under my command! Then would I remove Abimelek. I would say to Abimelek, 'Call out all your army.'"

³⁰ When Zebul, the official of the city, heard the words of Gaal son of Ebed his anger was kindled. ³¹ He sent messengers to Abimelek in order to deceive, saying, "See, Gaal son of Ebed and his relatives are coming to Shechem, and they are stirring up the city against you. ³² Now, get up during the night, you and the soldiers with you, and prepare an ambush in the fields. ³³ Then in the morning, as soon as the sun is up, rise early and make a raid on the city. When he and the people with him come out against you, do whatever you can to them."

³⁴ So Abimelek got up during the night, he and all the men who were with him, and they set an ambush against Shechem—dividing into four units. ³⁵ Gaal son of Ebed went out and stood in the entrance of the city gate. Abimelek and the men who were with him came out of their hiding place. ³⁶ When Gaal saw the men, he said to Zebul, "See, men are coming down from the hilltops!" Zebul said to him, "You are seeing the shadows on the hills like they are men." ³⁷ Gaal spoke again and said, "Look, men are coming down in the middle of the land, and one unit is coming by way of the oak of the diviners." ³⁸ Then Zebul said to him, "Where are your proud words now, you who said, 'Who is Abimelek that we should serve him?' Are these not the men you despised? Go out now and fight against them." ³⁹ Gaal went out and he was leading the men of Shechem, and he fought Abimelek. ⁴⁰ Abimelek chased him, and Gaal fled before him. Many fell with deadly wounds before the entrance to the city gate.

⁴¹ Abimelek stayed in Arumah. Zebul forced Gaal and his relatives out of Shechem. ⁴² On the next day the people of Shechem went out into the field, and this was reported to Abimelek. ⁴³ He took his people, divided them into three units, and they set an ambush in the fields. He looked and saw the people coming out from the city and he attacked and killed them. ⁴⁴ Abimelek and the units that were with him attacked and blocked the entrance to the city gate. The other two units attacked all who were in the field and killed them. ⁴⁵ Abimelek fought against the city all that day. He captured the city, and killed the people who were in it. He broke down the city walls and sowed it with salt.

⁴⁶ When all the leaders of the tower of Shechem heard of it, they entered the stronghold of the house of El-Berith. ⁴⁷ Abimelek was told that all the leaders had gathered together at the tower of Shechem. ⁴⁸ Abimelek went up to Mount Zalmon, he and all the men who were with him. Abimelek took an ax and cut off branches. He put it on his shoulder and ordered the men with him, "What you have seen me do, hurry and do as I have done." ⁴⁹ So every one cut off branches and followed Abimelek. They piled them against the wall of the tower, and they set the stronghold on fire, so that all the people of the tower of Shechem also died, about a thousand men and women.

⁵⁰ Then Abimelek went to Thebez, and he encamped against Thebez and captured it. ⁵¹ But there was a strong tower in the city, and all the men and women and all the leaders of the city fled to it and shut themselves in. Then they went up to the roof of the tower. ⁵² Abimelek came to the tower and fought against it, and he came up near to the door of the tower to burn it. ⁵³ But a woman dropped an upper millstone on Abimelek's head and it crushed his skull. ⁵⁴ Then he called urgently to the young man who was his armor-bearer, and said to him, "Draw your sword and kill me, so no one will say about me, 'A woman killed him.'"⁵⁵ So his young man pierced him through, and he died. ⁵⁵ When the men of Israel saw that Abimelek was dead, they went home. ⁵⁶ So God avenged the evil of Abimelek that he did to his father by killing his seventy brothers. ⁵⁷ God made all the evil of the men of Shechem turn back on their own heads and on them came the curse of Jotham son of Jerub-Baal.

Chapter 10

¹ After Abimelek, Tola son of Puah son of Dodo, a man from Issachar who lived in Shamir, in the hill country of Ephraim, arose to deliver Israel. ² He judged Israel twenty-three years. He died and was buried in Shamir.

³ He was followed by Jair the Gileadite. He judged Israel twenty-two years. ⁴ He had thirty sons who rode on thirty donkeys, and they had thirty cities, which are called Havvoth Jair to this day, which are in the land of Gilead. ⁵ Jair died and was buried in Kamon.

⁶ The people of Israel added to the evil they had done in the sight of Yahweh and worshiped the Baals, the Ashtoreths, the gods of Aram, the gods of Sidon, the gods of Moab, the gods of the people of Ammon, and the gods of the Philistines. They abandoned Yahweh and no longer worshiped him. ⁷ Yahweh burned with anger toward Israel, and he sold them into the hand of the Philistines and into the hand of the Ammonites. ⁸ They crushed and oppressed the people of Israel that year, and for eighteen years they oppressed all the people of Israel who were beyond the Jordan in the land of the Amorites, which is in Gilead. ⁹ Then the Ammonites crossed over the Jordan to fight against Judah, against Benjamin, and against the house of Ephraim, so that Israel was greatly distressed.

¹⁰ Then the people of Israel called out to Yahweh, saying, "We have sinned against you, because we abandoned our God and worshiped the Baals." ¹¹ Yahweh said to the people of Israel, "Did I not deliver you from the Egyptians, the Amorites, the Ammonites, the Philistines, ¹² and also from the Sidonians? The Amalekites and the Maonites oppressed you; you called out to me, and I delivered you from their power.

¹³ Yet you abandoned me again and worshiped other gods. Therefore, I will not keep adding to the times I deliver you. ¹⁴ Go and call out to the gods that you have worshiped. Let them rescue you when you have trouble." ¹⁵ The people of Israel said to Yahweh, "We have sinned. Do to us whatever seems good to you. Only please, rescue us this day." ¹⁶ They got rid of the foreign gods among them and they worshiped Yahweh. Then Yahweh could bear Israel's misery no longer.

¹⁷ Then the Ammonites were summoned and set up camp in Gilead. The people of Israel came together and set up their camp at Mizpah. ¹⁸ The leaders of the people of Gilead said one to another, "Who is the man who will begin to fight the Ammonites? He will become the leader over all those who are living in Gilead."

Chapter 11

¹ Now Jephthah the Gileadite was a mighty warrior, but he was the son of a prostitute. Gilead was his father. ² Gilead's wife also gave birth to his other sons. When his wife's sons grew up, they forced Jephthah to leave the house and said to him, "You are not going to inherit anything from our father's household. You are the son of another woman." ³ So Jephthah fled from his brothers and lived in the land of Tob, and worthless men gathered around Jephthah and they traveled with him.

⁴ Some days later, the people of Ammon made war against Israel. ⁵ When the people of Ammon made war against Israel, the elders of Gilead went to bring Jephthah back from the land of Tob. ⁶ They said to Jephthah, "Come and be our leader that we may fight with the people of Ammon." ⁷ Jephthah said to the elders of Gilead, "You hated me and forced me to leave my father's house. Why do you come to me now when you are in trouble?" ⁸ The elders of Gilead said to Jephthah, "That is why we are turning to you now; come with us and fight with the people of Ammon, and you will become the leader over all who live in Gilead." ⁹ Jephthah said to the elders of Gilead, "If you bring me home again to fight against the people of Ammon, and if Yahweh gives us victory over them, I will be your leader." ¹⁰ The elders of Gilead said to Jephthah, "May Yahweh be witness between us if we do not do as we say!" ¹¹ So Jephthah went with the elders of Gilead, and the people made him leader and commander over them. When he was before Yahweh in Mizpah, Jephthah repeated all the promises he made.

¹² Then Jephthah sent messengers to the king of the people of Ammon, saying, "What is this conflict between us? Why have you come with force to take our land?" ¹³ The king of the people of Ammon answered to the messengers of Jephthah, "Because when Israel came up out of Egypt, they seized my land from the Arnon to the Jabbok, over to the Jordan. Now give back those lands in peace." ¹⁴ Again Jephthah sent messengers to the king of the people of Ammon, ¹⁵ and he said, "This is what Jephthah says: Israel did not take the land of Moab and the land of the people of Ammon, ¹⁶ but they came up from Egypt, and Israel went through the wilderness to the Sea of Reeds and on to Kadesh. ¹⁷ When Israel sent messengers to the king of Edom, saying, 'Please let us pass through your land,' the king of Edom would not listen. They also sent messengers to the king of Moab, but he refused. So Israel stayed at Kadesh. ¹⁸ Then they went through the wilderness and turned away from the land of Edom and the land of Moab, and they went along the east side of the land of Moab and they camped on the other side of the Arnon. But they did not go into the territory of Moab, for the Arnon was Moab's border. ¹⁹ Israel sent messengers to Sihon, king of the Amorites, who ruled in Heshbon; Israel said to him, 'Please, let us pass through your land to the place that is ours.' ²⁰ But Sihon did not trust Israel to pass through his territory. So Sihon gathered all his army together and camped at Jahaz, and there he fought against Israel. ²¹ Then Yahweh, the God of Israel, gave Sihon and all his people into the hand of Israel and they defeated them. So Israel took all the land of the Amorites who lived in that country. ²² They took over everything within the territory of the Amorites, from the Arnon to the Jabbok, and from the wilderness to the Jordan. ²³ So then Yahweh, the God of Israel, has driven out the Amorites before his people Israel, and should you now take possession of their land? ²⁴ Will you not take over the land that Chemosh, your god, gives you? So whatever land Yahweh our God has given us, we will take over. ²⁵ Now are you really better than Balak son of Zippor, king of Moab? Did he dare to have an argument with Israel? Did he ever wage war against them? ²⁶ While Israel lived for three hundred years in Heshbon and its villages, and in Aroer and its villages, and in all the cities that are along the banks of the Arnon—why then did you not take them back during that time? ²⁷ I have not done you wrong, but you are doing me wrong by attacking me. Yahweh, the judge, will decide today between the people of Israel and the people of Ammon."

²⁸ But the king of the people of Ammon rejected the warning Jephthah sent him.

²⁹ Then the Spirit of Yahweh came on Jephthah, and he passed through Gilead and Manasseh, and passed through Mizpah of Gilead, and from Mizpah of Gilead he passed through to the people of Ammon. ³⁰ Jephthah made a vow to Yahweh and said, "If you give me victory over the people of Ammon, ³¹ then whatever comes out of the doors of my house to meet me when I return in peace from the people of Ammon will belong to Yahweh, and I will offer it up as a burnt offering." ³² So Jephthah passed through to the people of Ammon to fight against them, and Yahweh gave him victory. ³³ He attacked them and caused a great slaughter from Aroer as far as Minnith—twenty cities—and to Abel Keramim. So the people of Ammon were subdued before the people of Israel.

³⁴ Jephthah came to his home at Mizpah, and there his daughter came out to meet him with tambourines and with dancing. She was his only child, and besides her he had neither son nor daughter. ³⁵ As soon as he saw her, he tore his clothes and said, "Oh! My daughter! You have crushed me with sorrow, and you have become one who troubles me! For I have opened my mouth to Yahweh, and I cannot turn back on my promise." ³⁶ She said to him, "My father, you have made a vow to Yahweh, do to me everything you promised, because Yahweh has taken vengeance for you against your enemies, the Ammonites." ³⁷ She said to her father, "Let this promise be kept for me. Leave me alone for two months, that I may leave and go down to the hills and grieve over my virginity, I and my companions." ³⁸ He said, "Go." He sent her away for two months. She left him, she and her companions, and they grieved her virginity in the hills. ³⁹ At the end of two months she returned to her father, who did with her according to the promise of the vow he had made. Now she had never known a man, and it became a custom in Israel ⁴⁰ that the daughters of Israel every year, for four days, would retell the story of the daughter of Jephthah the Gileadite.

Chapter 12

¹ A call went out to the men of Ephraim; they passed through Zaphon and said to Jephthah, "Why did you pass through to fight against the people of Ammon and did not call us to go with you? We will burn your house down over you." ² Jephthah said to them, "I and my people were in a great conflict with the people of Ammon. When I called you, you did not rescue me from them." ³ When I saw that you did not rescue me, I put my life in my own hand and passed through against the people of Ammon, and Yahweh gave me victory. Why have you come to fight against me today?" ⁴ Jephthah gathered together all the men of Gilead and he fought against Ephraim. The men of Gilead attacked the men of Ephraim because they said, "You Gileadites are fugitives in Ephraim—in Ephraim and Manasseh." ⁵ The Gileadites captured the fords of the Jordan leading to Ephraim. When any of the survivors of Ephraim said, "Let me go over the river," the men of Gilead would say to him, "Are you an Ephraimite?" If he said, "No," ⁶ then they would say to him, "Say: Shibboleth," and if he said "Sibboleth" (for he could not pronounce the word correctly), the Gileadites would seize him and kill him at the fords of the Jordan. Forty-two thousand Ephraimites were killed at that time.

⁷ Jephthah served as a judge over Israel for six years. Then Jephthah the Gileadite died and was buried in one of the cities of Gilead.

⁸ After him, Ibzan of Bethlehem served as a judge over Israel. ⁹ He had thirty sons. He gave away thirty daughters in marriage and he brought from the outside thirty daughters of other men for his sons. He judged Israel for seven years. ¹⁰ Ibzan died and was buried at Bethlehem. ¹¹ After him Elon the Zebulunite served as judge over Israel. He judged Israel for ten years. ¹² Elon the Zebulunite died and was buried in Aijalon in the land of Zebulun.

¹³ After him, Abdon son of Hillel the Pirathonite served as a judge over Israel. ¹⁴ He had forty sons and thirty grandsons. They rode on seventy donkeys, and he judged Israel for eight years. ¹⁵ Abdon son of Hillel the Pirathonite died and was buried in Pirathon in the land of Ephraim in the hill country of the Amalekites.

Chapter 13

¹ The people of Israel again did what was evil in the sight of Yahweh, and he gave them into the hand of the Philistines for forty years.

² There was a man from Zorah, of the clan of the Danites, whose name was Manoah. His wife was barren and so she had not given birth. ³ The angel of Yahweh appeared to the woman and said to her, "See now, you have been barren, and you have not given birth, but you will conceive and you will give birth to a son. ⁴ Now be careful not to drink wine or strong drink, and do not eat anything unclean.

⁵ Look, you will become pregnant and give birth to a son. No razor will be used upon his head, for the boy will be a Nazirite to God from the womb, and he will begin to deliver Israel from the hand of the Philistines." ⁶ Then the woman came and told her husband, "A man of God came to me, and his appearance was like that of an angel of God, very terrible. I did not ask him where he came from, and he did not tell me his name. ⁷ He said to me, 'Look! You will become pregnant, and you will give birth to a son. So then drink no wine or strong drink, and do not eat any food that the law declares to be unclean, because the boy will be a Nazirite to God from the time he is in your womb until the day of his death.'"

⁸ Then Manoah prayed to Yahweh and said, "Oh, Lord, please let the man of God you sent come again to us so that he may teach us what we are to do for the child who soon will be born." ⁹ God listened to the voice of Manoah, and the angel of God came to the woman again when she was sitting in the field. But Manoah her husband was not with her. ¹⁰ So the woman ran quickly and told her husband, "Look! The man has appeared to me—the one who came to me the other day!" ¹¹ Manoah got up and followed his wife. When he came to the man, he said, "Are you the man who spoke with my wife?" The man said, "I am." ¹² So Manoah said, "Now may your words come true. What will be the rules for the child, and what will be his work?" ¹³ The angel of Yahweh said to Manoah, "She must carefully do everything that I said to her. ¹⁴ She may not eat anything that comes from the vines, and do not let her drink wine or strong drink or eat anything unclean. She must obey everything I have commanded her to do."

¹⁵ Manoah said to the angel of Yahweh, "Please stay for a while, to give us time to prepare a young goat for you." ¹⁶ The angel of Yahweh said to Manoah, "Even if I stay, I will not eat your food. But if you prepare a burnt offering, offer it to Yahweh." (Manoah did not know that he was the angel of Yahweh.) ¹⁷ Manoah said to the angel of Yahweh, "What is your name, so we may honor you when your words come true?" ¹⁸ The angel of Yahweh said to him, "Why do you ask my name? It is wonderful!" ¹⁹ So Manoah took the young goat with the grain offering and offered them on the rock to Yahweh. He did something marvelous while Manoah and his wife were watching. ²⁰ When the flame went up from the altar toward the sky, the angel of Yahweh went up in the flame of the altar. Manoah and his wife saw this and lay facedown on the ground.

²¹ The angel of Yahweh did not appear again to Manoah or his wife. Then Manoah knew that he was the angel of Yahweh. ²² Manoah said to his wife, "We are sure to die, because we have seen God!" ²³ But his wife said to him, "If Yahweh wanted to kill us, he would not have received the burnt offering and the grain offering we gave him. He would not have shown us all these things, nor at this time would he have let us hear such things." ²⁴ Later the woman gave birth to a son, and called his name Samson. The boy grew up and Yahweh blessed him. ²⁵ Yahweh's Spirit began to stir him in Mahaneh Dan, between Zorah and Eshtaol.

Chapter 14

¹ Samson went down to Timnah, and there he saw a woman, one of the daughters of the Philistines. ² When he returned, he told his father and mother, "I saw a woman in Timnah, one of the daughters of the Philistines. Now get her for me to be my wife." ³ His father and mother said to him, "Is there not a woman among the daughters of your relatives, or among all our people? Are you going to take a wife from the uncircumcised Philistines?" Samson said to his father, "Get her for me, for when I look at her, she pleases me." ⁴ But his father and his mother did not know that this matter came from Yahweh, for he desired to create a conflict with the Philistines (for at that time the Philistines were ruling Israel).

⁵ Then Samson went down to Timnah with his father and his mother, and they came to the vineyards of Timnah. And, look, there one of the young lions came up and was roaring at him. ⁶ Yahweh's Spirit suddenly came on him, and he tore the lion apart as easily as he would have torn apart a small goat, and he had nothing in his hand. But he did not tell his father or his mother what he had done. ⁷ He went and spoke with the woman, and when he looked at her, she pleased Samson. ⁸ A few days later when he returned to marry her, he turned aside to look for the carcass of the lion. And, look, there was a swarm of bees and honey in what was left of the lion's body. ⁹ He scraped up the honey in his hands and went on, eating as he went. When he came to his father and his mother, he gave some to them, and they ate. But he did not tell them he had taken the honey out of what was left of the lion's body.

¹⁰ Samson's father went down to where the woman was, and Samson gave a feast there, for this was the custom of the young men. ¹¹ As soon as her relatives saw him, they brought him thirty of their friends to be with him. ¹² Samson said to them, "Let me now tell you a riddle. If one of you can find it out and tell me the answer during the seven days of the feast, I will give out thirty linen robes and thirty sets of clothes. ¹³ But if you cannot tell me the answer, then you will give me thirty linen robes and thirty sets of clothes." They said to him, "Tell us your riddle, so we may hear it." ¹⁴ He said to them,

"Out of the eater was something to eat;
out of the strong was something sweet."

But his guests could not find the answer in three days.

¹⁵ On the fourth day they said to Samson's wife, "Trick your husband so that he may tell us the answer to the riddle, or we will burn up you and your father's house. Did you invite us here in order to make us poor?" ¹⁶ Samson's wife started to weep in front of him; she said, "All you do is hate me! You do not love me. You have told a riddle to some of my people, but you have not told me the answer." Samson said to her, "Look here, if I have not told my father or my mother, should I tell you?" ¹⁷ She cried during the seven days that their feast lasted. On the seventh day he told her the answer because she pressured him very much. She told the answer to the relatives of her people. ¹⁸ Before the sun went down on the seventh day the men of the city said to him,

"What is sweeter than honey?
What is stronger than a lion?"

Samson said to them,

"If you had not plowed with my heifer,
you would not have found the answer to my riddle."

¹⁹ Then Yahweh's Spirit suddenly came on Samson with power. Samson went down to Ashkelon and killed thirty of their men. He took their plunder, and he gave their clothes to those who had explained the riddle. Burning with anger, he went up to his father's house. ²⁰ Samson's wife was given to his best friend.

Chapter 15

¹ After some days, during the time of wheat harvest, Samson took a young goat and went to visit his wife. He said to himself, "I will go to my wife's room." But her father would not allow him to go in. ² Her father said, "I really thought you hated her, so I gave her to your friend. Her younger sister is more beautiful than she is, is she not? Take her instead." ³ Samson said to them, "This time I will be innocent in regard to the Philistines when I hurt them." ⁴ Samson went and caught three hundred foxes and he tied together each pair, tail to tail. Then he took torches and tied them in the middle of each pair of tails. ⁵ When he had set the torches on fire, he let the foxes go into the standing grain of the Philistines, and they set fire to both the stacked grain and the grain standing in the field, along with the vineyards and the olive orchards. ⁶ The Philistines asked, "Who did this?" They were told, "Samson, the Timnite's son-in-law, did this because the Timnite took Samson's wife and gave her to his friend." Then the Philistines went and burned up her and her father. ⁷ Samson said to them, "If this is what you do, I will get my revenge against you, and after that is done, I will stop." ⁸ Then he cut them to pieces, hip and thigh, with a great slaughter. Then he went down and lived in a cave in the cliff of Etam.

⁹ Then the Philistines came up and encamped in Judah and spread out in Lehi. ¹⁰ The men of Judah said, "Why have you come up against us?" They said, "We have come up so we may capture Samson, and do to him as he has done to us." ¹¹ Then three thousand men of Judah went down to the cave in the cliff of Etam, and they said to Samson, "Do you not know that the Philistines are rulers over us? What is this you have done to us?" Samson said to them, "They did to me, and so I have done to them." ¹² They said to Samson, "We have come down to tie you up and give you into the hands of the Philistines." Samson said to them, "Swear to me that you will not kill me yourselves." ¹³ They said to him, "No, we will only tie you with ropes and hand you over to them. We promise we will not kill you." Then they tied him up with two new ropes and brought him up from the rock.

¹⁴ When he came to Lehi, the Philistines came shouting as they met him. Then Yahweh's Spirit came on him with power. The ropes on his arms became like burnt flax, and they fell off his hands. ¹⁵ Samson found a fresh jawbone of a donkey, and he picked it up and killed a thousand men with it. ¹⁶ Samson said,

"With the jawbone of a donkey, heaps upon heaps,
with the jawbone of a donkey I have killed a thousand men."

¹⁷ When Samson finished speaking, he threw away the jawbone, and he called the place Ramath Lehi. ¹⁸ Samson was very thirsty and called on Yahweh and said, "You have given this great victory to your servant. But now will I die of thirst and fall into the hands of those who are uncircumcised?" ¹⁹ God split open the hollow place that is at Lehi and water came out. When he drank, his strength returned and he revived. So he called the name of that place En Hakkore, and it is at Lehi to this day. ²⁰ Samson judged Israel in the days of the Philistines for twenty years.

Chapter 16

¹ Samson went to Gaza and saw a prostitute there, and he went to her. ² The Gazites were told, "Samson has come here." The Gazites surrounded the place and in secret, they waited for him all night at the city gate. They kept silent all night. They had said, "Let us wait until daylight, and then let us kill him." ³ Samson lay in bed until midnight. At midnight he got up and he took hold of the city gate and its two posts. He pulled them up out of the ground, bar and all, put them on his shoulders, and carried them up to the top of the hill, in front of Hebron.

⁴ After this, Samson came to love a woman who lived in the Valley of Sorek. Her name was Delilah. ⁵ The rulers of the Philistines came up to her, and said to her, "Trick Samson to see where his great strength lies, and by what means we may overpower him, that we may bind him in order to humiliate him. Do this, and each one of us will give you 1,100 pieces of silver." ⁶ Then Delilah said to Samson, "Please, tell me how is it that you are so strong, and how could anyone bind you, so you might be controlled?" ⁷ Samson said to her, "If they tie me with seven fresh bowstrings that have not been dried, then I will become weak and be like any other man." ⁸ Then the rulers of the Philistines brought up to Delilah seven fresh bowstrings that had not been dried, and she tied Samson up with them. ⁹ Now she had men hiding in secret, staying in her inner room. She said to him, "The Philistines are upon you, Samson!" But he broke the bowstrings like a thread of yarn when it touches the fire. So the secret of his strength was not discovered.

¹⁰ Then Delilah said to Samson, "This is how you have deceived me and told me lies. Please, tell me how you can be overpowered." ¹¹ He said to her, "If they tie me up with new ropes which have never been used for work, I will become weak and like any other man." ¹² So Delilah took new ropes and tied him up with them, and said to him, "The Philistines are upon you, Samson!" The men lying in wait were in the inner room. But Samson tore off the ropes from his arms like they were a piece of thread.

¹³ Delilah said to Samson, "Until now you have deceived me and told me lies. Tell me how you may be overpowered." Samson said to her, "If you weave seven locks of my hair into a fabric on a loom, and then nail that to the loom, I will be like any other man." ¹⁴ While he slept, Delilah wove seven locks of his hair into the fabric on the loom and nailed it to the loom, and she said to him, "The Philistines are upon you, Samson!" He woke from his sleep and he pulled out the fabric and the pin from the loom.

¹⁵ She said to him, "How can you say, 'I love you,' when you do not share your secrets with me? You have mocked me these three times and have not told me how you have such great strength." ¹⁶ Every day she pressed him hard with her words, and she pressured him so much that he wished he would die. ¹⁷ So Samson told her everything and said to her, "I have never had a razor cut the hair on my head, for I have been a Nazirite for God from my mother's womb. If my head is shaved, then my strength will leave me, and I will become weak and be like every other man."

¹⁸ When Delilah saw that he had told her the truth about everything, she sent and called for the rulers of the Philistines, saying, "Come up again, for he has told me everything." Then the rulers of the Philistines went up to her, bringing the silver in their hands. ¹⁹ She had him fall asleep in her lap. She called for a man to shave off the seven locks of his head, and she began to subdue him, for his strength had left him. ²⁰ She said, "The Philistines are upon you, Samson!" He woke up out of his sleep and said, "I will get out like the other times and shake myself free." But he did not know that Yahweh had left him. ²¹ The Philistines captured him and put out his eyes. They brought him down to Gaza and bound him with bronze shackles. He turned the millstone at the prison house. ²² But the hair on his head began to grow again after it had been shaved.

²³ The rulers of the Philistines gathered together to offer a great sacrifice to Dagon their god, and to rejoice. They said, "Our god has conquered Samson, our enemy, and put him in our hands." ²⁴ When the people saw him, they praised their god, for they said, "Our god has conquered our enemy and given him to us—the destroyer of our country, who killed many of us."

²⁵ When they were celebrating, they said, "Call for Samson, that he may make us laugh." They called for Samson out of the prison and he made them laugh. They made him stand between the pillars. ²⁶ Samson said to the boy who held his hand, "Permit me to touch the pillars on which the building rests, so that I can lean against them." ²⁷ Now the house was full of men and women. All the rulers of the Philistines

were there. There were on the roof about three thousand men and women, who were looking on while Samson was entertaining them.

28 Samson called to Yahweh and said, "Lord Yahweh, call me to mind! Please strengthen me only this once, God, so that I may have revenge in one blow on the Philistines for taking my two eyes." **29** Samson held on to the two middle pillars on which the building rested, and he leaned against them, one pillar with his right hand, and the other with his left. **30** Samson said, "Let me die with the Philistines!" He stretched out with his strength and the building fell on the rulers and on all the people who were in it. So the dead that he killed when he died were more than those he killed during his life. **31** Then his brothers and all the house of his father came down. They took him, brought him back and buried him between Zorah and Eshtaol in the burial place of Manoah, his father. Samson had judged Israel for twenty years.

Chapter 17

¹ There was a man in the hill country of Ephraim, and his name was Micah. ² He said to his mother, "The 1,100 pieces of silver that were taken from you, about which you spoke a curse, and which I heard—look here! I have the silver with me. I stole it." His mother said, "May Yahweh bless you, my son!" ³ He restored the 1,100 pieces of silver to his mother and his mother said, "I set apart this silver to Yahweh, for my son to make a carved image and a cast metal figure. So now, I restore it to you." ⁴ When he restored the money to his mother, his mother took two hundred pieces of silver and gave them to a metal worker who made them into a carved image and a cast metal figure, and they were placed in the house of Micah. ⁵ The man Micah had a house of idols and he made an ephod and household gods, and he hired one of his sons to become his priest. ⁶ In those days there was no king in Israel, and everyone did what was right in his own eyes.

⁷ Now there was a young man of Bethlehem in Judah, of the clan of Judah, who was a Levite. He stayed there to fulfill his duties. ⁸ The man left Bethlehem in Judah to go and find a place to live. As he journeyed, he came to Micah's house in the hill country of Ephraim. ⁹ Micah said to him, "Where do you come from?" The man said to him, "I am a Levite of Bethlehem in Judah, and I am traveling to find a place where I might live." ¹⁰ Micah said to him, "Stay with me, and be to me a father and a priest. I will give you ten pieces of silver a year, a suit of clothes, and your food." So the Levite went into his house. ¹¹ The Levite was content to live with the man, and the young man became to Micah like one of his sons. ¹² Micah set apart the Levite for sacred duties, and the young man became his priest, and was in Micah's house. ¹³ Then Micah said, "Now I know that Yahweh will do good for me, because this Levite has become my priest."

Chapter 18

¹ In those days there was no king in Israel. The tribe of the descendants of Dan was looking for a territory to live in, for up to that day they had not received any inheritance from among the tribes of Israel. ² The people of Dan sent five men from the whole number of their tribe, men who were experienced warriors from Zorah and from Eshtaol, to scout the land on foot, and to look it over. They said to them, "Go and look over the land." They came to the hill country of Ephraim, to the house of Micah, and they spent the night there. ³ When they were near Micah's house, they recognized the speech of the young Levite. So they stopped and asked him, "Who brought you here? What are you doing in this place? Why are you here?" ⁴ He said to them, "This is what Micah has done for me: He has hired me to become his priest." ⁵ They said to him, "Please seek the advice of God, so we may know whether the journey we are going on will be successful." ⁶ The priest said to them, "Go in peace. Yahweh will lead you in the way you should go."

⁷ Then the five men left and came to Laish, and they saw that the people were living in safety, in the same way the Sidonians lived, undisturbed and secure. There was no one who conquered them or who oppressed them in any way in the land. They lived far away from the Sidonians and had no dealings with anyone. ⁸ They returned to their tribe in Zorah and Eshtaol. Their relatives asked them, "What is your report?" ⁹ They said, "Come! Let us attack them! We have seen the land and it is very good. Are you doing nothing? Do not be slow to attack and conquer the land." ¹⁰ When you go, you will come to a secure people, and the land is wide! God has given it to you—a place that does not lack anything in the land."

¹¹ Six hundred men of the tribe of Dan, armed with weapons of war, set out from Zorah and Eshtaol. ¹² They went up and camped at Kiriath Jearim, in Judah. This is why people called that place Mahaneh Dan to this day; it is west of Kiriath Jearim. ¹³ They went away from there to the hill country of Ephraim and came to the house of Micah.

¹⁴ Then the five men who had gone to scout the country of Laish said to their relatives, "Do you know that in these houses there are an ephod, household gods, a carved image, and a cast metal figure? Decide now what you will do." ¹⁵ So they turned in there and came to the house of the young man, the Levite, at the house of Micah, and they greeted him. ¹⁶ Now the six hundred Danites, armed with weapons of war, stood at the entrance of the gate. ¹⁷ The five men who had gone to scout out the land went there and they took the carved figure, the ephod, the household gods, and the cast metal figure, while the priest stood by the opening of the gate with the six hundred men armed with weapons of war. ¹⁸ When these went into Micah's house and took the carved image, the ephod, the household gods, and the cast metal figure, the priest said to them, "What are you doing?" ¹⁹ They said to him, "Be quiet! Put your hand on your mouth and come with us, and be to us a father and a priest. Is it better for you to be priest for the house of one man, or to be priest for a tribe and a clan in Israel?" ²⁰ The priest's heart was glad. He took the ephod, the household gods, and the carved figure, and went along with the people.

²¹ So they turned and went away, putting the little children, their livestock and their valuable possessions in front of them. ²² When they were a good distance from the house of Micah, the men who were in the houses near Micah's house were called together, and they caught up with the Danites. ²³ They shouted to the Danites, and they turned and said to Micah, "Why have you been called together?" ²⁴ He said, "You stole the gods that I made, you have taken my priest, and you are leaving. What else do I have left? How can you ask me, 'What is bothering you?'" ²⁵ The people of Dan said to him, "You should not let us hear you say anything, or some very angry men will attack you, and you and your family will be killed." ²⁶ Then the people of Dan went their way. When Micah saw that they were too strong for him, he turned and went back to his house.

²⁷ The people of Dan took what Micah had made, as well as his priest, and they came to Laish, to a people who were undisturbed and secure and they struck them with the edge of the sword and burned the city.

²⁸ There was no one to rescue them because it was a long way from Sidon, and they had no dealings with anyone. It was in the valley that is near Beth Rehob. The Danites rebuilt the city and lived there. ²⁹ They named the city Dan, the name of Dan their ancestor, who was one of Israel's sons. But the name of the city used to be Laish. ³⁰ The people of Dan set up the carved figure for themselves. Jonathan son of Gershom, son of Moses, he and his sons were priests for the tribe of the Danites until the day of the land's

captivity. ³¹ So they worshiped Micah's carved figure that he made as long as the house of God was at Shiloh.

Chapter 19

¹ In those days, when there was no king in Israel, there was a man, a Levite, living for a while in the most remote area of the hill country of Ephraim. He took for himself a woman, a concubine from Bethlehem in Judah. ² But his concubine acted like a prostitute against him; she left him and went back to her father's house in Bethlehem of Judah. She stayed there for four months. ³ Then her husband got up and went after her in order to persuade her to come back. His servant was with him, and a yoke of donkeys. She brought him into her father's house. When the girl's father saw him, he was glad to meet him. ⁴ His father-in-law, the girl's father, persuaded him to stay for three days. They ate and drank, and they spent the night there. ⁵ On the fourth day they got up early and he prepared to go, but the girl's father said to his son-in-law, "Strengthen yourself with a bit of bread, then you may go." ⁶ So the two of them sat down to eat and drink together. Then the girl's father said, "Please be willing to spend the night and have a good time." ⁷ When the Levite got up to leave, the father of the young woman urged him to stay, so he changed his plan and spent the night there again. ⁸ On the fifth day he woke up early to leave, but the girl's father said, "Strengthen yourself, and wait until the afternoon." So the two of them had a meal. ⁹ When the Levite and his concubine and his servant rose up to depart, his father-in-law, the girl's father said to him, "See now, the day is advancing toward evening. Please stay another night, and have a good time. You can get up early tomorrow and go back home."

¹⁰ But the Levite was not willing to spend the night. He got up and left. He went toward Jebus (that is Jerusalem). He had a pair of saddled donkeys—and his concubine was with him. ¹¹ When they were near Jebus, the day was nearly over, and the servant said to his master, "Come, let us turn aside to the city of the Jebusites and spend the night in it." ¹² His master said to him, "We will not turn aside into a city of foreigners who do not belong to the people of Israel. We will go on to Gibeah." ¹³ The Levite said to his young man, "Come, let us go to one of those other places, and spend the night in Gibeah or Ramah." ¹⁴ So they went on, and the sun set as they came near to Gibeah, in the territory of Benjamin. ¹⁵ They turned aside there to spend the night in Gibeah. They went and sat down in the city square, but no one took them into his house for the night.

¹⁶ But then an old man was coming from his work in the field that evening. He was from the hill country of Ephraim, and he was staying for a while in Gibeah. But the men living in that place were Benjamites. ¹⁷ He raised his eyes and saw the traveler in the city square. The old man said, "Where are you going? Where are you coming from?" ¹⁸ The Levite said to him, "We are on our way from Bethlehem in Judah to the most remote part of the hill country of Ephraim, which is where I come from. I went to Bethlehem in Judah, and I am going to the house of Yahweh, but there is no one who will take me into his house. ¹⁹ We have straw and feed for our donkeys, and there is bread and wine for me and your female servant here, and for this young man with your servants. We lack nothing." ²⁰ The old man greeted them, "Peace be with you! I will take care of all your needs. Only do not spend the night in the square." ²¹ So the man brought the Levite into his house and gave feed to the donkeys. They washed their feet and ate and drank.

²² While they were making their hearts glad, some men of the city, worthless men, surrounded the house, beating on the door. They spoke to the old man, the master of the house, saying, "Bring out the man who came into your house, so we can know him." ²³ The man, the master of the house, went out to them and said to them, "No, my brothers, please do not do this evil thing! Since this man is a guest in my house, do not do this act of disgraceful folly! ²⁴ See, my virgin daughter and his concubine are here. Let me bring them out now. Violate them and do with them whatever you like. But do not do such an act of disgraceful folly to this man!" ²⁵ But the men would not listen to him, so the man seized his concubine and brought her out to them. They raped her and abused her all throughout the night, and at dawn they let her go. ²⁶ At dawn the woman came and she fell down at the door of the man's house where her master was, and she lay there until it was light.

²⁷ Her master rose up in the morning and opened the doors of the house and went out to go on his way. He could see his concubine lying there at the door, with her hands on the threshold. ²⁸ The Levite said to her, "Get up. Let us go." But there was no answer. He put her on the donkey, and the man set out for home. ²⁹ When the Levite came to his house, he took a knife, and he took hold of his concubine, and cut her up, limb by limb, into twelve pieces, and sent the pieces everywhere throughout Israel. ³⁰ All who saw

this said, "Such a thing has never been done or seen from the day the people of Israel came up out of the land of Egypt to this present day. Think about it! Give us advice! Tell us what to do!"

Chapter 20

¹ Then all the people of Israel—from Dan to Beersheba, including the land of Gilead also—came out, and the congregation assembled together as one man before Yahweh at Mizpah. ² The leaders of all the people, of all the tribes of Israel, took their places in the assembly of the people of God—400,000 footmen ready to fight with the sword. ³ Now the people of Benjamin heard that the people of Israel had gone up to Mizpah. The people of Israel said, "Tell us how this wicked thing happened." ⁴ The Levite, the husband of the woman who had been murdered, answered, "I came to Gibeah in the territory that belongs to Benjamin, I and my concubine, to spend the night. ⁵ During the night, the leaders of Gibeah attacked me, surrounding the house, intending to kill me. They raped my concubine, and she died. ⁶ I took my concubine and cut her body into pieces, and sent them into each region of Israel's inheritance, because they have committed wickedness and an act of disgraceful folly in Israel. ⁷ Now, all you people of Israel, give your advice and counsel here."

⁸ All the people arose together as one man, and they said, "None of us will go to his tent, and none of us will return to his house! ⁹ But now this is what we must do to Gibeah: We will attack it as the lot directs us. ¹⁰ We will take ten men of a hundred throughout all the tribes of Israel, and one hundred of a thousand, and one thousand of ten thousand, to get provisions for these people, so that when they come to Gibeah in Benjamin, they may punish them for the act of disgraceful folly they committed in Israel." ¹¹ So all the men of Israel assembled against the city, united as one man.

¹² The tribes of Israel sent men through all the tribe of Benjamin, saying, "What is this wickedness that was done among you? ¹³ Therefore, give us those wicked men of Gibeah, so we may put them to death, and so we will completely remove this evil from Israel." But the Benjamites would not listen to the voice of their brothers, the people of Israel. ¹⁴ Then the sons of Benjamin came together out of the cities to Gibeah to get ready to fight against the sons of Israel. ¹⁵ The people of Benjamin brought together from their cities to fight on that day twenty-six thousand soldiers who were trained to fight with the sword. In addition, there were seven hundred of their chosen men from the inhabitants of Gibeah. ¹⁶ Among all these soldiers were seven hundred chosen men who were left-handed. Each of them could sling a stone at a hair and not miss.

¹⁷ The people of Israel, not counting the number from Benjamin, numbered 400,000 men, who were trained to fight with the sword. All of these were men of war. ¹⁸ The people of Israel arose, went up to Bethel, and asked for advice from God. They asked, "Who first will attack the people of Benjamin for us?" Yahweh said, "Judah will attack first."

¹⁹ The sons of Israel got up in the morning and they moved their camp near Gibeah. ²⁰ The men of Israel went out to fight against Benjamin. They set up their battle positions against them at Gibeah. ²¹ The people of Benjamin came out of Gibeah, and they killed twenty-two thousand men from among Israel on that day. ²² But the men of Israel strengthened themselves and they formed the battle line in the same place where they had taken positions on the first day. ²³ Then the people of Israel went up and they wept before Yahweh until evening, and they sought direction from Yahweh. They said, "Should we go again to fight against our brothers, the people of Benjamin?" Yahweh said, "Attack them!"

²⁴ So the people of Israel went against the soldiers of Benjamin the second day. ²⁵ On the second day, Benjamin went out against them from Gibeah and they killed eighteen thousand men from the people of Israel. All were men who trained to fight with the sword. ²⁶ Then all the people of Israel, all the people, went up to Bethel and wept, and there they sat before Yahweh and they fasted that day until the evening and offered burnt offerings and peace offerings before Yahweh. ²⁷ The people of Israel asked Yahweh—for the ark of the covenant of God was there in those days, ²⁸ and Phinehas, son of Eleazar son of Aaron, was serving before the ark in those days—"Should we go out to battle once more against the people of Benjamin, our brothers, or stop?" Yahweh said, "Attack, for tomorrow I will help you defeat them."

²⁹ So Israel set men in secret places around Gibeah. ³⁰ The people of Israel fought against the people of Benjamin for the third day, and they formed their battle lines against Gibeah as they had done before. ³¹ The people of Benjamin went and fought against the people, and they were drawn away from the city. They began to kill some of the people. There were about thirty men of Israel who died in the fields and on the roads. One of the roads went up to Bethel, and the other went to Gibeah. ³² Then the people of

Benjamin said, "They are defeated and they are running away from us, just as at first." But the people Israel said, "Let us run back and draw them away from the city to the roads." ³³ All the men of Israel rose up out of their places and formed themselves into lines for battle at Baal Tamar. Then the people of Israel who had been hiding in secret places ran out from their places from Maareh Gibeah. ³⁴ Ten thousand chosen men out of all Israel came out against Gibeah, and the fighting was fierce, but the Benjamites did not know that disaster was close to them. ³⁵ Yahweh defeated Benjamin before Israel. On that day, the people of Israel destroyed 25,100 men of Benjamin. All these who died were those who had been trained to fight with the sword.

³⁶ So the people of Benjamin saw they were defeated. The men of Israel had given ground to Benjamin, because they were trusting in the men they had placed in hidden positions outside Gibeah. ³⁷ Then the men who were hiding got up and hurried, and they rushed into Gibeah, and they struck all the city with the edge of the sword. ³⁸ The arranged signal between the men of Israel and the men hiding in secret would be that a great cloud of smoke would rise up out of the city. ³⁹ When the signal was sent the men of Israel would turn from the battle. Now Benjamin began to attack and they killed about thirty men of Israel, and they said, "It is sure that they are defeated before us, as in the first battle." ⁴⁰ But when a pillar of smoke began to rise up out of the city, the Benjamites turned and saw the smoke rising to the sky from the whole city. ⁴¹ Then the men of Israel turned against them. The men of Benjamin were terrified, for they saw that disaster had come on them. ⁴² So they ran away from the men of Israel, escaping on the way to the wilderness. But the fighting overtook them. The men of Israel came out of the cities and destroyed them where they stood. ⁴³ They surrounded the Benjamites, chased them and trampled them down at Nohah, all the way to the east side of Gibeah. ⁴⁴ From the tribe of Benjamin, eighteen thousand people died, all of them men who were distinguished in battle. ⁴⁵ They turned and fled toward the wilderness to the rock of Rimmon. The Israelites killed five thousand more of them along the roads. They kept going after them, following them closely all the way to Gidom, and there they killed two thousand more. ⁴⁶ All the soldiers of Benjamin who fell that day were twenty-five thousand—men who were trained to fight with the sword; all of them were distinguished in battle. ⁴⁷ But six hundred men turned and fled to the wilderness, toward the rock of Rimmon. For four months they stayed at the rock of Rimmon. ⁴⁸ And the men of Israel turned back against the descendants of Benjamin and struck down with the edge of the sword the entire city, the animals and everything that they found. They also burned down every town in their path.

Chapter 21

¹ Now the men of Israel had sworn at Mizpah, "None of us will give his daughter to marry a Benjamite." ² Then the people went to Bethel and sat there before God until the evening, and with loud voices they wept bitterly. ³ They called out, "Why, Yahweh, God of Israel, has this happened to Israel, that one of our tribes should be missing today?" ⁴ The next day the people got up early and built an altar there and offered burnt offerings and peace offerings. ⁵ The people of Israel said, "Which of all the tribes of Israel did not come up in the assembly to Yahweh?" For they had made an important oath concerning anyone who did not come up to Yahweh at Mizpah. They said, "He would certainly be put to death." ⁶ The people of Israel had compassion for their brother Benjamin. They said, "Today one tribe has been cut off from Israel. ⁷ Who will provide wives for those who are left, since we have made an oath to Yahweh that we will not let any of them marry our daughters?"

⁸ They said, "Which of the tribes of Israel did not come up to Yahweh at Mizpah?" It was found that no one had come to the assembly from Jabesh Gilead. ⁹ For when the people were set out in an orderly manner, behold, none of the inhabitants of Jabesh Gilead were there. ¹⁰ The assembly sent twelve thousand of their bravest men with instructions to go and strike the inhabitants of Jabesh Gilead with the edge of the sword, including the women and children. ¹¹ "Do this: Every male and every woman who has known a man by lying with him you will devote to destruction." ¹² The men found among those living in Jabesh Gilead four hundred young virgins who had not known a man by lying with him, and they took them to the camp at Shiloh in Canaan.

¹³ The entire assembly sent a message and told the people of Benjamin who were at the rock of Rimmon that they were offering them peace. ¹⁴ The Benjamites returned at that time and they were given the women of Jabesh Gilead who had been kept alive, but there were not enough women for all of them. ¹⁵ The people had compassion on Benjamin, because Yahweh had made a division between the tribes of Israel.

¹⁶ Then the elders of the assembly said, "How will we arrange wives for the Benjamites who are left, since the women of Benjamin have been killed?" ¹⁷ They said, "There must be an inheritance for the escaped remnant of Benjamin, so that a tribe is not destroyed from Israel. ¹⁸ We cannot give them wives from our daughters, for the people of Israel had sworn, saying, 'Cursed be anyone who gives a wife to Benjamin.'" ¹⁹ So they said, "You know there is a feast for Yahweh every year at Shiloh (which is north of Bethel, east of the road that goes up from Bethel to Shechem, and south of Lebonah)." ²⁰ They instructed the men of Benjamin, saying, "Go and hide in secret and wait in the vineyards. ²¹ Watch for the time when the girls from Shiloh come out to dance, then rush out of the vineyards and each one of you should grab a wife from the girls of Shiloh, then go back to the land of Benjamin. ²² When their fathers or their brothers come to protest to us, we will say to them, 'Show us favor! Let them remain because we did not get wives for each man during the war. You are innocent, since you did not give your daughters to them.'" ²³ The people of Benjamin did so. They took the number of wives that they needed from the girls who were dancing and they carried them off to be their wives. They went and returned to the place of their inheritance. They rebuilt the towns and lived in them. ²⁴ Then the people of Israel left that place and went home, each one to his own tribe and clan, and each one to his own inheritance.

²⁵ In those days there was no king in Israel. Everyone did what was right in his own eyes.

Book: Ruth

Ruth

Chapter 1

¹ It happened in the days when the judges ruled that there was a famine in the land, and a certain man of Bethlehem of Judah went to live as a foreigner in the country of Moab with his wife and his two sons. ² The name of the man was Elimelek, and the name of his wife was Naomi. The names of his two sons were Mahlon and Kilion, who were Ephrathites of Bethlehem of Judah. They arrived at the country of Moab and lived there. ³ Then Elimelek, Naomi's husband, died, and she was left alone with her two sons. ⁴ These sons took wives from the women of Moab; the name of one was Orpah, and the name of the other was Ruth. They lived there for about ten years. ⁵ Then both Mahlon and Kilion died, and the woman was left without her two sons and without her husband. ⁶ Then she arose with her daughters-in-law and returned from the country of Moab because she had heard in the country of Moab that Yahweh had provided for his people's needs by giving them food. ⁷ So she left the place where she had been with her two daughters-in-law, and they walked down the road to return to the land of Judah. ⁸ Naomi said to her two daughters-in-law, "Go, return, each of you, to your mother's house. May Yahweh show kindness toward you, as you have shown kindness toward the dead and toward me. ⁹ May Yahweh grant you that you find rest, each of you in the house of another husband." Then she kissed them, and they raised their voices and cried. ¹⁰ They said to her, "No! We will return with you to your people." ¹¹ But Naomi said, "Turn back, my daughters! Why will you go with me? Do I still have sons in my womb for you, so that they may become your husbands? ¹² Turn back, my daughters, go your own way, for I am too old to have a husband. If I said, 'I hope I get a husband tonight,' and then give birth to sons, ¹³ would you therefore wait until they were grown? Would you choose not to marry a husband? No, my daughters! It is exceedingly bitter to me for your sake that the hand of Yahweh has gone out against me." ¹⁴ Then her daughters-in-law lifted up their voices and cried again. Orpah kissed her mother-in-law farewell, but Ruth held on to her.

¹⁵ Naomi said, "Listen, your sister-in-law has gone back to her people and to her gods. Return with your sister-in-law." ¹⁶ But Ruth said, "Do not urge me to leave you, to turn back from following you, for where you go, I will go; where you stay, I will stay; your people will be my people, and your God will be my God. ¹⁷ Where you die, I will die, and there I will be buried. May Yahweh punish me, and even more, if anything but death ever separates us." ¹⁸ When Naomi saw that Ruth was determined to go with her, she stopped arguing with her.

¹⁹ So the two traveled until they came to the town of Bethlehem. It happened that when they arrived in Bethlehem, the entire town was very excited about them. The women said, "Is this Naomi?" ²⁰ But she said to them, "Do not call me Naomi. Call me Bitter, for the Almighty has dealt very bitterly with me. ²¹ I went out full, but Yahweh has brought me back again empty. So why do you call me Naomi, seeing that Yahweh has testified against me and the Almighty has afflicted me?" ²² So Naomi and Ruth the Moabite woman, her daughter-in-law, returned from the country of Moab. They came to Bethlehem at the beginning of the barley harvest.

Chapter 2

¹ Now Naomi had a relative of her husband, a man of great wealth of the clan of Elimelek, and his name was Boaz. ² Ruth, the Moabite woman, said to Naomi, "Now let me go and glean what remains among the ears of grain in the fields. I will follow anyone in whose eyes I will find favor." So Naomi said to her, "Go, my daughter." ³ Ruth went and gleaned what remained in the fields after they had harvested it. She happened to come to the portion of the fields belonging to Boaz, who was of the clan of Elimelek. ⁴ Behold, Boaz came from Bethlehem and said to the reapers, "May Yahweh be with you." They answered him, "May Yahweh bless you." ⁵ Then Boaz said to his servant who was supervising the reapers, "What man does this young woman belong to?" ⁶ The servant supervising the reapers answered and said, "It is the young Moabite woman who came back with Naomi from the land of Moab." ⁷ She said to me, 'Please let me glean and gather among the bundles of cut grain after the reapers.' So she came here and has continued from the morning until now, except that she rested a little in the house." ^[1]

⁸ Then Boaz said to Ruth, "Are you not listening to me, my daughter? Do not go and glean in another field; do not leave my field. Instead, stay here and work with my young female workers." ⁹ Keep your eyes only on the field where the men are reaping and follow behind the other women. Have I not instructed the men not to touch you? Whenever you are thirsty, you may go to the waterpots and drink the water that the young men have drawn." ¹⁰ Then she fell on her face before Boaz and bowed to the ground. She said to him, "Why have I found such favor in your eyes that you should be concerned about me, a foreigner?"

¹¹ Boaz answered and said to her, "It has been reported to me, all that you have done since the death of your husband. You have left your father, mother, and the land of your birth to follow your mother-in-law and to come to a people you do not know." ¹² May Yahweh reward you for your deed. May you receive full payment from Yahweh, the God of Israel, under whose wings you have found refuge." ¹³ Then she said, "Let me find favor in your eyes, my master, for you have comforted me, and you have spoken kindly to me, though I am not one of your female servants."

¹⁴ At mealtime Boaz said to Ruth, "Come here, and eat some of the bread, and dip your morsel in the wine vinegar." She sat beside the reapers, and he offered her some roasted grain. She ate until she was satisfied and left the rest of it. ¹⁵ As she got up to glean, Boaz commanded his young men, saying, "Let her glean even among the bundles of cut grain, and do not humiliate her." ¹⁶ Also pull out for her some ears of grain from the bundles, and leave them for her to glean, and do not rebuke her."

¹⁷ So she gleaned in the field until evening. Then she beat out the ears of grain that she had gleaned, and the grain was about an ephah of barley. ¹⁸ She lifted it up and went into the city. Then her mother-in-law saw what she had gleaned. Ruth also brought out the roasted grain left from her meal and gave it to her.

¹⁹ Her mother-in-law said to her, "Where have you gleaned today? Where did you go to work? May the man who was concerned about you be blessed." Then Ruth told her mother-in-law about the man who owned the field where she had worked. She said, "The name of the man who owns the field where I worked today is Boaz." ²⁰ Naomi said to her daughter-in-law, "May he be blessed by Yahweh, who has not left off his loyalty to the living and to the dead." Naomi said to her, "That man is near of kin to us, one of our kinsman-redeemers." ²¹ Ruth the Moabite woman said, "Indeed, he said to me, 'You should keep close to my young men until they have finished all my harvest.'" ²² Naomi said to Ruth her daughter-in-law, "It is good, my daughter, that you go out with his young female workers, so that they do not harm you in another field." ²³ So she stayed close to Boaz's female workers in order to glean to the end of the barley harvest and the wheat harvest. She lived with her mother-in-law.

Footnotes

2:7 ^[1]Some modern translations read

Chapter 3

¹ Naomi, her mother-in-law, said to her, "My daughter, should I not seek a place for you to rest, so that things may go well for you?" ² Now Boaz, the man whose young female workers you have been with, is he not our kinsman? Look, he will be winnowing barley tonight at the threshing floor. ³ Therefore, wash yourself, anoint yourself, put on your best clothes, and go down to the threshing floor. But do not make yourself known to the man until he finishes eating and drinking. ^[1]⁴ But when he lies down, take notice of the place where he lies down so that later you can go to him, uncover his feet, and lie down there. Then he will explain to you what to do." ⁵ Ruth said to Naomi, "I will do everything you say."

⁶ So she went down to the threshing floor, and she followed the instructions her mother-in-law had given her. ⁷ When Boaz had eaten and drunk and his heart was merry, he went to lie down at the end of the pile of grain. Then she came softly, uncovered his feet, and lay down. ⁸ It came about at midnight that the man was startled. He turned over, and right there a woman was lying at his feet! ⁹ He said, "Who are you?" She answered, "I am Ruth, your female servant. Spread your cloak over your female servant, for you are a near kinsman." ¹⁰ Boaz said, "My daughter, may you be blessed by Yahweh. You have made your latest kindness better than the first, because you have not gone after any of the young men, whether poor or rich. ¹¹ Now, my daughter, do not be afraid! I will do for you all that you say, because all the city of my people knows that you are a worthy woman. ¹² It is true that I am a kinsman, but there is a kinsman nearer than I. ¹³ Stay here tonight, and in the morning, if he will perform for you the duty of a kinsman, good, let him do the kinsman's duty. But if he will not do the duty of a kinsman for you, then I will do it, by the life of Yahweh. Lie down until the morning."

¹⁴ So she lay at his feet until the morning. But she rose up before anyone could recognize another person. For Boaz had said, "Let it not be known that the woman came to the threshing floor." ¹⁵ Then Boaz said, "Bring your shawl and hold it out." When she did so, he measured six large measures of barley into it and put the load on her. Then he went into the city. ¹⁶ When Ruth came to her mother-in-law, she said, "How did you do, my daughter?" Then Ruth told her all that the man had done for her. ¹⁷ She said, "These six measures of barley are what he gave me, for he said, 'Do not go empty to your mother-in-law.'" ¹⁸ Then Naomi said, "Stay here, my daughter, until you know how the matter will turn out, for the man will not rest until he has finished this thing today."

Footnotes

3:3 ^[1]The copies of the ancient Hebrew text have,

Chapter 4

¹ Now Boaz went up to the gate and sat down there. Soon, the near kinsman of whom Boaz had spoken came by. Boaz said to him, "My friend, come over and sit down here." The man came over and sat down. ² Then Boaz took ten men of the elders of the city and said, "Sit down here." So they sat down. ³ Boaz said to the near kinsman, "Naomi, who has returned from the country of Moab, is selling the parcel of land that was our brother Elimelek's. ⁴ I thought to uncover your ears and say to you, 'Buy it in the presence of those who are sitting here, and in the presence of the elders of my people.' If you wish to redeem it, redeem it. But if you do not wish to redeem it, then tell me, so that I may know, for there is no one to redeem it besides you, and I am after you." Then the other man said, "I will redeem it." ⁵ Then Boaz said, "On the day that you buy the field from the hand of Naomi, you must also take Ruth the Moabite woman, the widow of a dead man, in order to raise up the name of the dead on his inheritance." ⁶ Then the near kinsman said, "I cannot redeem it for myself without destroying my own inheritance. You take my right of redemption for yourself, for I cannot redeem it."

⁷ Now this was the custom in former times in Israel concerning the redemption and exchange of goods. To confirm all things, a man took off his sandal and gave it to his neighbor; this was the manner of making legal agreements in Israel. ⁸ So the near kinsman said to Boaz, "Buy it for yourself," and he took off his sandal. ⁹ Then Boaz said to the elders and to all the people, "You are witnesses today that I have bought all that was Elimelek's and all that was Kilion's and Mahlon's from the hand of Naomi. ¹⁰ Also Ruth the Moabite woman, the wife of Mahlon, I have acquired to be my wife, in order that I might raise up the name of the dead man on his inheritance, so that his name will not be cut off from among his brothers and from the gate of his place. Today you are witnesses!" ¹¹ All the people who were in the gate and the elders said, "We are witnesses. May Yahweh make the woman who has come into your house like Rachel and Leah, the two who built up the house of Israel; and may you prosper in Ephrathah and be renowned in Bethlehem. ¹² May your house be like the house of Perez, whom Tamar bore to Judah, through the offspring that Yahweh will give you with this young woman."

¹³ So Boaz took Ruth, and she became his wife. He went to her, and Yahweh enabled her to conceive, and she bore a son. ¹⁴ The women said to Naomi, "May Yahweh be blessed, who has not left you today without a near kinsman, this baby. May his name be famous in Israel. ¹⁵ May he be for you a restorer of life and a nourisher of your old age, for your daughter-in-law, who loves you, who is better to you than seven sons, has borne him." ¹⁶ Naomi took the child, laid him in her bosom, and took care of him. ¹⁷ The women of the neighborhood gave him a name, saying, "A son has been born to Naomi." They named him Obed. He became the father of Jesse, who became the father of David.

¹⁸ Now these were the descendants of Perez: Perez became the father of Hezron,

¹⁹ Hezron became the father of Ram, Ram became the father of Amminadab,

²⁰ Amminadab became the father of Nahshon, Nahshon became the father of Salmon,

²¹ Salmon became the father of Boaz, Boaz became the father of Obed,

²² Obed became the father of Jesse, and Jesse became the father of David.

Book: 1 Samuel

1 Samuel

Chapter 1

¹ There was a certain man of Ramathaim of the Zuphites, of the hill country of Ephraim; his name was Elkanah son of Jeroham son of Elihu son of Tohu son of Zuph, an Ephraimite. ^[1]² He had two wives; the name of the first was Hannah, and the name of the second was Peninnah. Peninnah had children, but Hannah had none. ³ This man went from his city year after year to worship and to sacrifice to Yahweh of hosts in Shiloh. The two sons of Eli, Hophni and Phinehas, priests to Yahweh, were there. ⁴ When the day came for Elkanah to sacrifice each year, he always gave portions of the meat to Peninnah his wife, and to all her sons and her daughters. ⁵ But to Hannah he always gave a double portion, for he loved Hannah, although Yahweh had closed her womb. ⁶ Her rival provoked her severely in order to irritate her, because Yahweh had closed her womb. ⁷ So year after year, when she went up to the house of Yahweh with her family, her rival always provoked her. Therefore she used to weep and eat nothing. ⁸ Elkanah her husband always said to her, "Hannah, why do you weep? Why do you not eat? Why is your heart sad? Am I not better to you than ten sons?"

⁹ On one of these occasions, Hannah rose up after they had finished eating and drinking in Shiloh. Now Eli the priest was sitting upon his seat by the doorway to the temple of Yahweh. ¹⁰ She was deeply distressed; she prayed to Yahweh and wept bitterly. ¹¹ She made a vow and said, "Yahweh of hosts, if you will look on the affliction of your servant and call me to mind, and do not forget your servant, but give your servant a son, then I will give him to Yahweh all the days of his life, and no razor will ever touch his head."

¹² As she continued praying before Yahweh, Eli watched her mouth. ¹³ Hannah spoke in her heart. Her lips moved, but her voice was not heard. Therefore Eli thought she was drunk. ¹⁴ Eli said to her, "How long will you be drunk? Get rid of your wine." ¹⁵ Hannah answered, "No, my master, I am a woman of a sorrowful spirit. I have drunk neither wine nor strong drink, but I have been pouring out my soul before Yahweh. ¹⁶ Do not consider your servant to be a worthless woman; I have been speaking out of the abundance of my great concern and provocation." ¹⁷ Then Eli answered and said, "Go in peace; may the God of Israel grant the request that you have asked him for." ¹⁸ She said, "Let your servant find favor in your eyes." Then the woman went her way and ate; her face was no longer sad.

¹⁹ They rose early in the morning and worshiped before Yahweh, and then they returned again to their house in Ramah. Elkanah knew Hannah his wife, and Yahweh remembered her. ²⁰ When the time came, Hannah conceived and gave birth to a son. She called his name Samuel, saying, "Because I have asked for him from Yahweh."

²¹ Once again, Elkanah and all his house went up to offer to Yahweh the yearly sacrifice and pay his vow. ²² But Hannah did not go; she had said to her husband, "I will not go until the child is weaned; then I will bring him, so that he may appear before Yahweh and live there forever." ²³ Elkanah her husband said to her, "Do what seems good to you. Wait until you have weaned him; only, may Yahweh confirm his word." So the woman stayed and nursed her son until she weaned him. ²⁴ When she had weaned him, she took him with her, along with a three-year-old bull, ^[2] one ephah of meal, and a bottle of wine, and brought him to the house of Yahweh in Shiloh. Now the child was still young. ²⁵ They killed the bull, and they brought the child to Eli. ²⁶ She said, "Oh, my master! As you live, my master, I am the woman who stood here next to you praying to Yahweh. ²⁷ For this child I prayed and Yahweh has given me my petition which I asked of him. ²⁸ I have given him to Yahweh, as long as he lives he is lent to Yahweh." Then he worshiped Yahweh there. ^[3]

Footnotes

1:1 ^[1]Some modern translations have

1:24 ^[2]Some translations of the copies of the ancient Hebrew text have

1:28 ^[3]Some modern translations have

Chapter 2

¹ Hannah prayed and said,

"My heart rejoices in Yahweh.
My horn is exalted in Yahweh.
My mouth boasts over my enemies,
because I rejoice in your salvation.

² There is no one holy like Yahweh,
for there is none besides you;
there is no rock like our God.

³ Boast no more so very proudly;
let no arrogance come out of your mouth.
For Yahweh is a God of knowledge;
by him acts are weighed.

⁴ The bows of the mighty men are broken,
but those who stumble are girded with strength.

⁵ Those who were full have hired themselves out for bread;
those who were hungry have stopped being hungry.
Even the barren one gives birth to seven,
but the woman who has many children becomes weak.

⁶ Yahweh kills and brings to life.
He brings down to Sheol and raises up.

⁷ Yahweh makes some people poor and some rich.
He humbles, but he also lifts up.

⁸ He raises up the poor out of the dust.
He lifts the needy from the ash heap
to make them sit with princes
and inherit the seat of honor.
For the pillars of the earth are Yahweh's
and he has set the world upon them.

⁹ He will guard the feet of his faithful people,
but the wicked will be put to silence in darkness,
for no one will prevail by strength.

¹⁰ Those who oppose Yahweh will be broken to pieces;
he will thunder against them from heaven.
Yahweh will judge the ends of the earth;
he will give strength to his king
and exalt the horn of his anointed."

¹¹ Then Elkanah went to Ramah, to his house. The child served Yahweh in the presence of Eli the priest.

¹² Now the sons of Eli were worthless men. They did not know Yahweh. ¹³ The custom of the priests with the people was that when any man offered a sacrifice, the priest's servant would come with a three-pronged fork in his hand, while the meat was boiling. ¹⁴ He would stick it into the pan, or kettle, or cauldron, or pot. All that the fork brought up the priest would take for himself. They did this in Shiloh with all of Israel that came there. ¹⁵ Worse, before they burned the fat, the priest's servant came, and said to the man who was sacrificing, "Give meat to roast for the priest; for he will not accept boiled meat from you, but only raw." ¹⁶ If the man said to him, "They must burn the fat first, and then take as much as you want." Then he would say, "No, you will give it me now; if not, I will take it by force." ¹⁷ The sin of these young men was very great before Yahweh, for they despised Yahweh's offering.

¹⁸ But Samuel served Yahweh as a child clothed with a linen ephod. ¹⁹ His mother would make him a little robe and bring it to him from year to year, when she came up with her husband to offer the yearly sacrifice. ²⁰ Eli would bless Elkanah and his wife and say, "May Yahweh give you more children by this woman because of the request she made of Yahweh." Then they would return to their own home. ²¹ Yahweh again helped Hannah, and again she conceived. She bore three sons and two daughters. Meanwhile, the child Samuel grew before Yahweh.

²² Now Eli was very old; he heard all that his sons were doing to all Israel, and how they were lying with the women who were serving at the entrance to the tent of meeting. ²³ He said to them, "Why do you do such things? For I hear of your evil actions from all these people. ²⁴ No, my sons; for it is not a good report that I hear. You make Yahweh's people disobey. ²⁵ If one man sins against another, God will judge him; but if a man sins against Yahweh, who will speak for him?" But they would not listen to the voice of their father, because Yahweh intended to kill them. ²⁶ The child Samuel grew up, and increased in favor with Yahweh and also with men.

²⁷ Now a man of God came to Eli and said to him, "Yahweh says, 'Did I not reveal myself to the house of your father when they were in Egypt in bondage to the house of Pharaoh? ²⁸ I chose him out of all the tribes of Israel to be my priest, to go up to my altar, and to burn incense, to wear an ephod before me. I gave to the house of your father all the offerings of the people of Israel made with fire. ²⁹ Why, then, do you scorn my sacrifices and offerings, which I commanded in the place where I live? Why do you honor your sons above me by making yourselves fat with the best of every offering of my people Israel?' ³⁰ Therefore, Yahweh, the God of Israel, declares, 'I promised that your house and the house of your father should walk before me forever.' But now Yahweh declares, 'Far be it from me to do this, for I will honor those who honor me, but those who despise me will be lightly esteemed. ³¹ See, the days are coming when I will cut off your strength and the strength of your father's house, so that there will no longer be any old man in your house. ³² You will see distress in the place where I live. Although good will be given to Israel, there will no longer be any old man in your house. ³³ Any one of you that I do not cut off from my altar, I will cause your eyes to fail, and I will cause grief in your heart, then all the increase of your house will die while men. ³⁴ This will be the sign for you that will come on your two sons, on Hophni and Phinehas: They will both die on the same day. ³⁵ I will raise up for myself a faithful priest who will do what is in my heart and in my soul. I will build him a sure house; and he will walk before my anointed king forever. ³⁶ Everyone who is left in your house will come and bow down to him, asking for a piece of silver and a loaf of bread, and will say, "Please assign me to one of the priests' positions so I can eat a piece of bread.'"

Chapter 3

¹ The child Samuel served Yahweh under Eli. Yahweh's word was rare in those days; there was no frequent prophetic vision. ² At that time, Eli, whose eyesight had begun to grow dim so that he could not see well, was lying down in his own bed. ³ The lamp of God had not yet gone out, and Samuel was lying down in the temple of Yahweh, where the ark of God was. ⁴ Yahweh called to Samuel, who said, "Here I am." ⁵ Samuel ran to Eli and said, "Here I am, for you called me." Eli said, "I did not call you; lie down again." So Samuel went and lay down. ⁶ Yahweh called again, "Samuel." Again Samuel rose and went to Eli and said, "Here I am, for you called me." Eli answered, "I did not call you, my son; lie down again." ⁷ Now Samuel did not yet have any experience of Yahweh, nor had any message from Yahweh ever been revealed to him. ⁸ Yahweh called Samuel again the third time. Again Samuel got up and went to Eli and said, "Here I am, for you called me." Then Eli realized that Yahweh had called the boy. ⁹ Then Eli said to Samuel, "Go and lie down again; if he calls you again, you must say, 'Speak, Yahweh, for your servant is listening.'" So Samuel went and lay down in his own place once more.

¹⁰ Yahweh came and stood; he called as at the other times, "Samuel, Samuel." Then Samuel said, "Speak, for your servant is listening." ¹¹ Yahweh said to Samuel, "See, I am about to do something in Israel at which the ears of everyone who hears it will tingle. ¹² On that day I will carry out against Eli everything I have said about his house, from beginning to end. ¹³ I have told him that I am about to judge his house once for all for the iniquity that he knew about, because his sons brought a curse upon themselves and he did not stop them. ¹⁴ Because of this I have sworn to the house of Eli that the iniquity of his house will never be atoned for by sacrifice or offering."

¹⁵ Samuel lay down until morning; then he opened the doors of the house of Yahweh. But Samuel was afraid to tell Eli about the vision. ¹⁶ Then Eli called Samuel and said, "Samuel, my son." Samuel said, "Here I am." ¹⁷ He said, "What was the word he spoke to you? Please do not hide it from me. May God do so to you, and even more, if you hide anything from me of all the words that he spoke to you." ¹⁸ Samuel told him everything; he hid nothing from him. Eli said, "It is Yahweh. Let him do what seems good to him."

¹⁹ Samuel grew up, and Yahweh was with him, and he let none of his prophetic words fall to the ground.

²⁰ All Israel from Dan to Beersheba knew that Samuel was appointed to be a prophet of Yahweh. ²¹ Yahweh appeared again in Shiloh, for he revealed himself to Samuel in Shiloh by his word.

Chapter 4

¹ The word of Samuel came to all of Israel.

Now Israel went out to battle against the Philistines. They set up camp at Ebenezer, and the Philistines set up camp at Aphek. ² The Philistines lined up for battle against Israel. When the battle spread, Israel was defeated by the Philistines, who killed about four thousand men on the field of battle. ³ When the people came into the camp, the elders of Israel said, "Why has Yahweh defeated us today before the Philistines? Let us bring the ark of the covenant of Yahweh here from Shiloh, that it may be here with us, that it might keep us safe from the hands of our enemies." ⁴ So the people sent men to Shiloh; from there they carried the ark of the covenant of Yahweh of hosts, who sits above the cherubim. The two sons of Eli, Hophni and Phinehas, were there with the ark of the covenant of God.

⁵ When the ark of the covenant of Yahweh came into the camp, all of the people of Israel gave a great shout of joy, and the earth resounded. ⁶ When the Philistines heard the noise of the joyful shouting, they said, "What does this loud joyful shouting in the camp of the Hebrews mean?" Then they realized that the ark of Yahweh had come into the camp. ⁷ The Philistines were afraid; they said, "A god has come into the camp." They said, "Woe to us! Nothing like this has happened before!" ⁸ Woe to us! Who will protect us from the strength of these mighty gods? These are the gods who attacked the Egyptians with many different kinds of plagues in the wilderness. ⁹ Take courage, and be men, you Philistines, or you will become slaves to the Hebrews, as they have been slaves to you. Be men, and fight." ¹⁰ The Philistines fought, and Israel was defeated. Every man fled to his tent, and the slaughter was very great; for thirty thousand footmen from Israel fell. ¹¹ The ark of God was taken, and the two sons of Eli, Hophni and Phinehas, died.

¹² A man of Benjamin ran from the battle line and came to Shiloh the same day, arriving with his clothes torn and earth on his head. ¹³ When he arrived, Eli was sitting on his seat by the road watching because his heart trembled with concern for the ark of God. When the man entered the city and told the news, the whole city cried out. ¹⁴ When Eli heard the noise of the outcry, he said, "What is the meaning of this uproar?" The man quickly came and told Eli. ¹⁵ Now Eli was ninety-eight years old; his eyes did not focus, and he could not see. ¹⁶ The man said to Eli, "I am the one who came from the battle line. I fled from the battle today." Eli said, "How did it go, my son?" ¹⁷ The man who brought the news answered and said, "Israel fled from the Philistines. Also, there has been a great slaughter among the people. Also, your two sons, Hophni and Phinehas, are dead, and the ark of God has been taken." ¹⁸ When he mentioned the ark of God, Eli fell over backward from his seat by the side of the gate. His neck was broken, and he died, because he was old and heavy. He had judged Israel for forty years.

¹⁹ Now his daughter-in-law, the wife of Phinehas, was pregnant and about to give birth. When she heard the news that the ark of God was captured and that her father-in-law and her husband were dead, she knelt down and gave birth, but her labor pains overwhelmed her. ²⁰ About the time of her death the women attending to her said, "Do not be afraid, for you have given birth to a son." But she did not answer or take what they said to heart. ²¹ She called the child Ichabod, saying, "The glory has gone away from Israel!" for the ark of God had been captured, and because of her father-in-law and her husband. ²² She said, "The glory has gone away from Israel, because the ark of God has been captured."

Chapter 5

¹ Now the Philistines had captured the ark of God, and they brought it from Ebenezer to Ashdod. ² The Philistines took the ark of God, brought it into the house of Dagon, and set it up beside Dagon. ³ When the people of Ashdod got up early the next day, behold, Dagon had fallen facedown on the ground before the ark of Yahweh. So they took Dagon and set him up in his place again. ⁴ But when they got up early the next morning, behold, Dagon had fallen facedown on the ground before the ark of Yahweh. The head of Dagon and both of his hands were lying cut off on the threshold. Only the trunk of Dagon remained. ⁵ This is why, even today, the priests of Dagon and anyone who comes into Dagon's house does not step on the threshold of Dagon in Ashdod.

⁶ Yahweh's hand was heavy upon the people of Ashdod. He destroyed them and afflicted them with tumors, both Ashdod and its territories. ⁷ When the men of Ashdod realized what was happening, they said, "The ark of the God of Israel must not stay with us, because his hand is hard against us and against Dagon our god." ⁸ So they sent for and gathered together all of the rulers of the Philistines; they said to them, "What should we do with the ark of the God of Israel?" They answered, "Let the ark of the God of Israel be brought around to Gath." So they carried the ark of the God of Israel there. ⁹ But after they brought it around, Yahweh's hand was against the city, causing a very great tumult. He afflicted the men of the city, both small and great; and tumors broke out on them. ¹⁰ So they sent the ark of God to Ekron. But as soon as the ark of God came into Ekron, the Ekronites cried out, saying, "They have brought to us the ark of the God of Israel to kill us and our people." ¹¹ So they sent for and gathered together all of the rulers of the Philistines; they said to them, "Send away the ark of the God of Israel, and let it return to its own place, so that it does not kill us and our people." For there was a deathly tumult throughout the city; the hand of God was very heavy there. ¹² The men who did not die were afflicted with the tumors, and the cry of the city went up to the heavens.

Chapter 6

¹ Now the ark of Yahweh was in the country of the Philistines for seven months. ² Then the Philistines called for the priests and the diviners; they said to them, "What should we do with the ark of Yahweh? Tell us how we should send it back to its own country." ³ The priests and diviners said, "If you send back the ark of the God of Israel, do not send it without a gift; by all means send him a guilt offering. Then you will be healed, and you will know why his hand has not been lifted off of you until now." ⁴ Then they said, "What should the guilt offering be that we are returning to him?" They replied, "Five golden tumors and five golden mice, five being the number that is the same as the number of the rulers of the Philistines. For the same plague afflicted you and your rulers. ⁵ So you must make models of your tumors, and models of your mice that are ruining the land, and give glory to the God of Israel. Perhaps he will lift his hand from you, from your gods, and from your land. ⁶ Why should you harden your hearts, as the Egyptians and Pharaoh hardened their hearts? That was when the God of Israel dealt severely with them; did not the Egyptians send away the people, and they left? ⁷ Now then, prepare a new cart with two nursing cows that have never been yoked. Tie the cows to the cart, but take their calves home, away from them. ⁸ Take the ark of Yahweh and place it on the cart, and put the figures of gold, which you are returning to him as a guilt offering, in a box beside it. Send it off and let it go its way, ⁹ but watch. If it goes up the road to its own land toward Beth Shemesh, then it is Yahweh who has caused us this great harm. But if not, then we will know that it is not his hand that afflicted us; it happened to us by chance."

¹⁰ The men did as they were told; they took two nursing cows, tied them to the cart, and confined their calves at home. ¹¹ They put the ark of Yahweh on the cart, together with a box containing the golden mice and the castings of their tumors. ¹² The cows went straight in the direction of Beth Shemesh. They went along one highway, lowing as they went, and they did not turn aside either to the right or to the left. The rulers of the Philistines followed after them to the border of Beth Shemesh. ¹³ Now the people of Beth Shemesh were harvesting their wheat in the valley. When they lifted up their eyes and saw the ark, they rejoiced. ¹⁴ The cart came into the field of Joshua from the town of Beth Shemesh and stopped there. A great stone was there, and they split the wood from the cart, and offered the cows as a burnt offering to Yahweh. ¹⁵ The Levites took down the ark of Yahweh and the box that was with it, where the golden figures were, and put them on the great stone. The men of Beth Shemesh offered burnt offerings and made sacrifices the same day to Yahweh. ¹⁶ When the five rulers of the Philistines saw this, they returned that day to Ekron.

¹⁷ These are the golden tumors which the Philistines returned for a guilt offering to Yahweh—one for Ashdod, one for Gaza, one for Ashkelon, one for Gath, and one for Ekron. ¹⁸ The golden mice were the same in number as the number of all the cities of the Philistines belonging to the five rulers, both fortified cities and country villages. The great stone, beside which they set down the ark of Yahweh, remains a witness to this day in the field of Joshua the Bethshemite.

¹⁹ Yahweh attacked some of the men of Beth Shemesh because they had looked into the ark of Yahweh. He killed 50,070 men. The people mourned, because Yahweh had given the people a great blow. ^[1]²⁰ The men of Beth Shemesh said, "Who is able to stand before Yahweh, this holy God? To whom will the ark go up from us?" ²¹ They sent messengers to the inhabitants of Kiriath Jearim, saying, "The Philistines have brought back the ark of Yahweh; come down and take it back with you."

Footnotes

6:19 ^[1]Instead of

Chapter 7

¹ The men of Kiriath Jearim came, took the ark of Yahweh, and brought it into the house of Abinadab on the hill. They set apart his son Eleazar to keep the ark of Yahweh. ² From the day the ark remained in Kiriath Jearim, a long time passed, twenty years. All the house of Israel lamented and wished to turn to Yahweh. ³ Samuel said to the entire house of Israel, "If you return to Yahweh with your whole heart, remove the foreign gods and the Ashtoreths from among you, turn your hearts to Yahweh, and worship him only, then he will rescue you from the hand of the Philistines." ⁴ Then the people of Israel removed the Baals and the Ashtoreths, and worshiped Yahweh only. ⁵ Then Samuel said, "Bring together all Israel to Mizpah, and I will pray to Yahweh for you." ⁶ They gathered at Mizpah, drew water and poured it out before Yahweh. They fasted that day and said, "We have sinned against Yahweh." It was there that Samuel decided disputes for the people of Israel and led the people. ⁷ Now when the Philistines heard the people of Israel had gathered at Mizpah, the rulers of the Philistines attacked Israel. When the people of Israel heard of it, they were afraid of the Philistines. ⁸ Then the people of Israel said to Samuel, "Do not stop calling out to Yahweh our God for us, so he will save us from the hand of the Philistines." ⁹ Samuel took a nursing lamb and offered it as a whole burnt offering to Yahweh. Then Samuel cried out to Yahweh for Israel, and Yahweh answered him. ¹⁰ As Samuel was offering up the burnt offering, the Philistines approached to attack Israel. But Yahweh thundered with a loud sound that day against the Philistines and threw them into confusion, and they were routed before Israel. ¹¹ The men of Israel went from Mizpah, and they pursued the Philistines and killed them as far as below Beth Kar.

¹² Then Samuel took a stone and set it between Mizpah and Shen. He named it Ebenezer, saying, "Thus far Yahweh has helped us." ¹³ So the Philistines were subdued and they did not enter the border of Israel. The hand of Yahweh was against the Philistines all the days of Samuel. ¹⁴ The towns that the Philistines had taken from Israel were restored to Israel, from Ekron to Gath; Israel brought back their territory from the Philistines. Then there was peace between Israel and the Amorites.

¹⁵ Samuel judged Israel all the days of his life. ¹⁶ Each year he went on a circuit to Bethel, to Gilgal, and to Mizpah. He decided disputes for Israel in all these places. ¹⁷ Then he would return to Ramah, because his house was there; and there also he decided disputes for Israel. He also built an altar there to Yahweh.

Chapter 8

¹ When Samuel was old, he made his sons judges over Israel. ² The name of his firstborn was Joel, and the name of his second son was Abijah. They were judges in Beersheba. ³ His sons did not walk in his ways, but chased after dishonest gain. They took bribes and perverted justice.

⁴ Then all the elders of Israel gathered together and came to Samuel at Ramah. ⁵ They said to him, "Look, you are old, and your sons do not walk in your ways. Appoint for us a king to judge us like all the nations."

⁶ But it displeased Samuel when they said, "Give us a king to judge us." So Samuel prayed to Yahweh. ⁷ Yahweh said to Samuel, "Obey the voice of the people in everything they say to you; for they have not rejected you, but they have rejected me from being king over them. ⁸ The same deeds they have done since the day I brought them out of Egypt—abandoning me and serving other gods—they are now doing also to you. ⁹ Now listen to them; but warn them solemnly and let them know by what ordinances the king will reign over them."

¹⁰ So Samuel told all the words of Yahweh to the people who were asking for a king. ¹¹ He said, "These will be the ordinances of the king who will reign over you. He will take your sons and appoint them to his chariots and to be his horsemen, and to run before his chariots. ¹² He will appoint for himself captains of thousands and captains of fifties. He will make some plow his ground, some reap his harvest, and some make his weapons of war and the equipment for his chariots. ¹³ He will also take your daughters to be perfumers, cooks, and bakers. ¹⁴ He will take the very best of your fields, your vineyards, and your olive orchards, and give them to his servants. ¹⁵ He will take a tenth of your grain and of your vineyards and give to his officers and his servants. ¹⁶ He will take your male servants and your female servants and the best of your cattle ^[1] and your donkeys; he will put them all to work for him. ¹⁷ He will take the tenth of your flocks, and you will be his slaves. ¹⁸ Then on that day you will cry out because of your king whom you have chosen for yourselves; but Yahweh will not answer you on that day."

¹⁹ But the people refused to listen to Samuel; they said, "No! There must be a king over us ²⁰ so that we might be like all the other nations, and so that our king may judge us and go out before us and fight our battles." ²¹ When Samuel heard all the words of the people he repeated them in the ears of Yahweh. ²² Yahweh said to Samuel, "Obey their voice and cause a king to reign over them." So Samuel said to the men of Israel, "Every man must go to his own city."

Footnotes

8:16 ^[1]The Hebrew text can be read as:

Chapter 9

¹ There was a man from Benjamin, a man of great wealth. His name was Kish son of Abiel son of Zeror son of Bekorath son of Aphiah, the son of a Benjamite. ² He had a son named Saul, a handsome young man. There was no man among the people of Israel who was a more handsome person than he. From his shoulders upward he was taller than any of the people. ³ Now the donkeys of Kish, Saul's father, were lost. So Kish said to Saul his son, "Take one of the servants with you; arise and go search for the donkeys." ⁴ So Saul passed through the hill country of Ephraim and went through the land of Shalisha, but they did not find them. Then they passed through the land of Shaalim, but they were not there. Then he passed through the land of the Benjamites, but they did not find them.

⁵ When they came to the land of Zuph, Saul said to his servant who was with him, "Come, let us go back, or my father may stop caring for the donkeys and become anxious about us." ⁶ But the servant said to him, "See now, there is a man of God in this city. He is a man who is held in honor; everything that he says comes true. Let us go there; maybe he can tell us which way we should go on our journey." ⁷ Then Saul said to his servant, "But if we go, what can we bring the man? For the bread in our sack is gone, and there is no present to bring to the man of God. What do we have?" ⁸ The servant answered Saul and said, "Here, I have with me one-fourth of a shekel of silver that I will give to the man of God, to tell us which way we should go." ⁹ (Formerly in Israel, when a man went to seek the knowledge of God's will, he said, "Come, let us go to the seer." For today's prophet was formerly called a seer.) ¹⁰ Then Saul said to his servant, "Well said. Come, let us go." So they went to the city where the man of God was.

¹¹ As they went up the hill to the city, they found young women coming out to draw water; Saul and his servant said to them, "Is the seer here?" ¹² They answered, and said, "He is; see, he is just ahead of you. Hurry up, for he is coming to the city today, because the people are sacrificing today at the high place." ¹³ As soon as you enter the city you will find him, before he goes up to the high place to eat. The people will not eat until he comes, because he will bless the sacrifice; afterwards those who are invited will eat. Now go up, for you will find him immediately." ¹⁴ So they went up to the city. As they were entering the city, they saw Samuel coming out toward them, to go up to the high place.

¹⁵ Now the day before Saul came, Yahweh had revealed to Samuel: ¹⁶ "Tomorrow about this time I will send you a man from the land of Benjamin, and you will anoint him to be prince over my people Israel. He will save my people from the hand of the Philistines. For I have looked on my people with pity because their cry for help has come to me." ¹⁷ When Samuel saw Saul, Yahweh told him, "Here is the man I told you about! He is the one who will rule over my people." ¹⁸ Then Saul came close to Samuel in the gate and said, "Tell me where is the house of the seer?" ¹⁹ Samuel answered Saul and said, "I am the seer. Go up before me to the high place, for today you will eat with me. In the morning I will let you go, and I will tell you everything that is on your mind." ²⁰ As for your donkeys that were lost three days ago, do not worry about them, for they have been found. Then on whom are all the desires of Israel set? Is it not on you and all your father's house?" ²¹ Saul answered and said, "Am I not a Benjamite, from the smallest of the tribes of Israel? Is not my clan the least of all the clans of the tribe of Benjamin? Why then have you spoken to me in this manner?"

²² So Samuel took Saul and his servant, brought them into the hall, and seated them at the head place of those who had been invited, who were about thirty people. ²³ Samuel said to the cook, "Bring the portion which I gave to you, of which I said to you, 'Put it aside.'" ²⁴ So the cook took up the thigh and what was on it and set it before Saul. Then Samuel said, "See what has been kept is set before you. Eat it, because it has been kept for you until the appointed time, from the time when I said, 'I have invited the people.'" So Saul ate with Samuel that day.

²⁵ When they had come down from the high place into the city, Samuel spoke with Saul on the rooftop. ²⁶ Then at the break of dawn, Samuel called to Saul on the rooftop and said, "Get up, so I can send you on your way." So Saul got up, and both he and Samuel went out into the street. ²⁷ As they were going to the outskirts of the city, Samuel said to Saul, "Tell the servant to go ahead of us"—and he went ahead—"but you must stay here awhile, that I may announce the message of God to you."

Chapter 10

¹ Then Samuel took a flask of oil, poured it on Saul's head, and kissed him. He said, "Has not Yahweh anointed you to be a ruler over his inheritance?" ² When you leave me today, you will find two men near Rachel's tomb, in the territory of Benjamin at Zelzah. They will say to you, "The donkeys that you were looking for have been found. Now your father has stopped caring about the donkeys and is anxious about you, saying, 'What should I do about my son?'" ³ Then you will go on further from there, and you will come to the oak of Tabor. Three men going to God at Bethel will meet you there, one carrying three young goats, another carrying three loaves of bread, and another carrying a skin of wine. ⁴ They will greet you and give you two loaves of bread, which you will take from their hands. ⁵ After that, you will come to the hill of God, where the garrison of the Philistines is. When you arrive at the city, you will meet a group of prophets coming down from the high place with a lute, a tambourine, a flute, and a harp before them; they will be prophesying. ⁶ The Spirit of Yahweh will rush upon you, and you will prophesy with them, and you will be changed into a different man. ⁷ Now, when these signs come to you, do whatever your hand finds to do, for God is with you. ⁸ Go down before me to Gilgal. Then I will come down to you to offer burnt offerings and to sacrifice peace offerings. Wait seven days until I come to you and show you what you must do."

⁹ When Saul turned his back to leave Samuel, God gave him another heart. Then all these signs came to pass that day. ¹⁰ When they came to the hill, a group of prophets met him, and the Spirit of God rushed upon him so that he prophesied with them. ¹¹ When everyone who knew him before saw him prophesying with the prophets, the people said to each other, "What has happened to the son of Kish? Is Saul one of the prophets now?" ¹² A man who was from that same place answered, "Then who is their father?" Because of this, it became a saying, "Is Saul also one of the prophets?" ¹³ When he finished prophesying, he came to the high place.

¹⁴ Then Saul's uncle said to him and his servant, "Where did you go?" He replied, "To search for the donkeys. When we saw that we could not find them, we went to Samuel." ¹⁵ Saul's uncle said, "Please tell me what Samuel said to you." ¹⁶ Saul replied to his uncle, "He told us plainly that the donkeys had been found." But he did not tell him about the matter of the kingdom, of which Samuel had spoken.

¹⁷ Now Samuel called the people together before Yahweh at Mizpah. ¹⁸ He said to the people of Israel, "This is what Yahweh, the God of Israel says: 'I brought up Israel out of Egypt, and I rescued you from the hand of the Egyptians, and from the hand of all the kingdoms that oppressed you.' ¹⁹ But today you have rejected your God, who saves you from all of your calamities and your distresses; and you have said to him, 'Set a king over us.' Now present yourselves before Yahweh by your tribes and by your clans." ²⁰ So Samuel brought all the tribes of Israel near, and the tribe of Benjamin was chosen. ²¹ Then he brought the tribe of Benjamin near by their clans; and the clan of the Matrites was chosen; and Saul son of Kish was chosen. But when they went looking for him, he could not be found. ²² Then the people wanted to ask God more questions, "Is there still another man to come?" Yahweh answered, "He has hidden himself among the baggage." ²³ Then they ran and retrieved Saul from there. When he stood among the people, he was taller than any of the people from his shoulders upward. ²⁴ Then Samuel said to the people, "Do you see the man whom Yahweh has chosen? There is no one like him among all the people!" All the people shouted, "Long live the king!"

²⁵ Then Samuel told the people the customs and rules of kingship, wrote them down in a book, and placed it before Yahweh. Samuel then sent all the people away, each man to his own house. ²⁶ Saul also went to his home at Gibeah, and with him went some strong men, whose hearts God had touched. ²⁷ But some worthless men said, "How can this man save us?" These people despised Saul and did not bring him any gifts. But Saul kept silent. ^[1]

Footnotes

10:27 ^[1] Some modern translations add to this verse the following paragraph:

Chapter 11

¹ Then Nahash the Ammonite went and besieged Jabesh Gilead. All the men of Jabesh said to Nahash, "Make a covenant with us, and we will serve you." ² Nahash the Ammonite replied, "On this condition will I make a treaty with you, that I gouge out all of your right eyes, and in this way bring disgrace on all Israel." ³ Then the elders of Jabesh replied to him, "Leave us alone for seven days, so that we may send messengers to all the territory of Israel. Then, if there is no one to save us, we will surrender to you." ⁴ The messengers came to Gibeah, where Saul lived, and told the people what had happened. All the people wept loudly. ⁵ Now Saul was following the oxen out of the field. Saul said, "What is wrong with the people that they are weeping?" They told Saul what the men of Jabesh had said.

⁶ When Saul heard what they said, the Spirit of God rushed upon him, and he was very angry. ⁷ He took a yoke of oxen, cut them into pieces, and sent them throughout all the territory of Israel with the messengers. He said, "Whoever does not come out after Saul and after Samuel, this is what will be done to his oxen." Then the terror of Yahweh fell on the people, and they came out together as one man. ⁸ When he mustered them at Bezek, the people of Israel were three hundred thousand, and the men of Judah thirty thousand. ⁹ They said to the messengers that came, "You will tell the men of Jabesh Gilead, 'Tomorrow, by the time the sun is hot, deliverance will be yours.'" So the messengers went and told the men of Jabesh, and they were glad. ¹⁰ Then the men of Jabesh said to Nahash, "Tomorrow we will surrender to you, and you can do to us whatever seems good to you." ¹¹ The next day Saul put the people in three groups. They came into the middle of the camp during the morning watch, and they attacked and defeated the Ammonites until the heat of the day. Those who survived were scattered, so that no two of them were left together.

¹² Then the people said to Samuel, "Who was it who said, 'Will Saul reign over us?' Bring the men, so we can put them to death." ¹³ But Saul said, "No one must be put to death this day, because today Yahweh has brought about deliverance in Israel."

¹⁴ Then Samuel said to the people, "Come, let us go to Gilgal and renew the kingship there." ¹⁵ So all the people went to Gilgal and made Saul king before Yahweh in Gilgal. There they sacrificed peace offerings before Yahweh, and Saul and all the men of Israel rejoiced greatly.

Chapter 12

¹ Samuel said to all Israel, "I have listened to everything you said to me, and I have set a king to reign over you. ² Now, here is the king walking before you; and I am old and gray; and, my sons are with you. I have walked before you from my youth until today. ³ Here I am; testify against me before Yahweh and before his anointed one. Whose ox have I taken? Whose donkey have I taken? Whom have I defrauded? Whom have I oppressed? From whose hand have I taken a bribe to blind my eyes with? Testify against me, and I will restore it to you." ⁴ They said, "You have not defrauded us, oppressed us, or stolen anything from any man's hand." ⁵ He said to them, "Yahweh is witness against you, and his anointed one is witness today, that you have found nothing in my hand." They replied, "Yahweh is witness."

⁶ Samuel said to the people, "It is Yahweh who appointed Moses and Aaron, and who brought your fathers up from the land of Egypt. ⁷ Now then, present yourself, so that I may plead with you before Yahweh about all of the righteous deeds of Yahweh, which he did for you and your fathers. ⁸ When Jacob came to Egypt, and your ancestors cried out to Yahweh, then Yahweh sent Moses and Aaron, who led your ancestors out of Egypt and they settled in this place. ⁹ But they forgot Yahweh their God; he sold them into the hand of Sisera, captain of the armies of Hazor, into the hand of the Philistines, and into the hand of the king of Moab; these all fought against your ancestors. ¹⁰ They cried out to Yahweh and said, 'We have sinned, because we have abandoned Yahweh and have served the Baals and the Ashtoreths. But now rescue us from the hand of our enemies, and we will serve you.' ¹¹ So Yahweh sent Jerub-Baal, Bedan, Jephthah, and Samuel, and gave you victory over your enemies all around you, so that you lived in security. ¹² When you saw that Nahash the king of the people of Ammon came against you, you said to me, 'No, a king must rule over us'—even though Yahweh your God was your king. ¹³ Now here is the king whom you have chosen, whom you have asked for and whom Yahweh has now appointed as king over you. ¹⁴ If you fear Yahweh, serve him, obey his voice, and not rebel against the command of Yahweh, then both you and the king who reigns over you will be followers of Yahweh your God. ¹⁵ If you do not obey the voice of Yahweh, but rebel against the commands of Yahweh, then Yahweh's hand will be against you, as it was against your ancestors. ¹⁶ Even now present yourself and see this great thing which Yahweh will do before your eyes. ¹⁷ Is it not the wheat harvest today? I will call upon Yahweh, that he may send thunder and rain. Then you will know and see that your wickedness is great, which you have done in the sight of Yahweh, in asking for yourselves a king." ¹⁸ So Samuel called to Yahweh; and that same day Yahweh sent thunder and rain. Then all the people greatly feared Yahweh and Samuel.

¹⁹ Then all the people said to Samuel, "Pray for your servants to Yahweh your God, so that we do not die. For we have added to all our sins this evil in asking for a king for ourselves." ²⁰ Samuel replied, "Do not be afraid. You have done all this evil, but do not turn away from Yahweh, but serve Yahweh with all your heart. ²¹ Do not turn away after empty things that cannot profit or rescue you, because they are useless. ²² For the sake of his great name, Yahweh will not reject his people, because it has pleased Yahweh to make you a people for himself. ²³ As for me, far be it from me that I should sin against Yahweh by ceasing to pray for you. I will teach you the way that is good and right. ²⁴ Only fear Yahweh and serve him in truth with all your heart. Consider the great things he has done for you. ²⁵ But if you persist in doing evil, both you and your king will be destroyed."

Chapter 13

¹ Saul was thirty years old when he began to reign; when he had reigned forty years over Israel, ² he chose three thousand men of Israel. Two thousand were with him in Mikdash and in the hill country of Bethel, while a thousand were with Jonathan in Gibeah of Benjamin. The rest of the soldiers he sent home, each man to his tent. ³ Jonathan defeated the garrison of the Philistines that was at Geba and the Philistines heard of it. Then Saul blew the ram's horn throughout all the land, saying, "Let the Hebrews hear." ⁴ All Israel heard that Saul had defeated the garrison of the Philistines, and also that Israel had become a rotten smell to the Philistines. Then the soldiers were summoned together to join Saul at Gilgal.

⁵ The Philistines gathered together to fight against Israel, with three thousand chariots, six thousand men to drive the chariots, and troops as numerous as the sand on the seashore. They came up and encamped at Mikdash, east of Beth Aven. ⁶ When the men of Israel saw that they were in trouble—for the people were distressed, the people hid in caves, in the underbrush, in rocks, in wells, and in pits. ⁷ Some of the Hebrews went over the Jordan to the land of Gad and Gilead. But Saul was still at Gilgal, and all the people followed him trembling.

⁸ He waited seven days, the time Samuel had set. But Samuel did not come to Gilgal, and the people were scattering from Saul. ⁹ Saul said, "Bring me the burnt offering and the peace offerings." Then he offered the burnt offering. ¹⁰ As soon as he finished offering the burnt offering Samuel arrived. Saul went out to meet him and to greet him. ¹¹ Then Samuel said, "What have you done?" Saul replied, "When I saw that the people were leaving me, and that you did not come within the set time, and that the Philistines had assembled at Mikdash, ¹² I said, 'Now the Philistines will come down against me at Gilgal, and I have not sought the favor of Yahweh.' So I forced myself to offer the burnt offering." ¹³ Then Samuel said to Saul, "You have acted foolishly. You have not kept the command of Yahweh your God that he commanded you. For then Yahweh would have established your rule over Israel forever. ¹⁴ But now your rule will not continue. Yahweh has sought out a man after his own heart, and Yahweh has appointed him to be prince over his people, because you have not obeyed what he commanded you." ¹⁵ Then Samuel arose and went up from Gilgal to Gibeah of Benjamin.

Then Saul numbered the people who were present with him, about six hundred men. ¹⁶ Saul, his son Jonathan, and the people who were present with them, stayed in Geba of Benjamin. But the Philistines camped at Mikdash. ¹⁷ Raiders came from the camp of the Philistines in three groups. One group turned toward Ophrah, to the land of Shual. ¹⁸ Another group turned toward Beth Horon, and another group turned toward the border that overlooks the Valley of Zeboyim toward the wilderness.

¹⁹ No blacksmith could be found throughout all of Israel, because the Philistines said, "Otherwise the Hebrews would make swords or spears for themselves." ²⁰ But all the men of Israel used to go down to the Philistines, each to sharpen his plow points, his mattock, his ax, and his sickle. ²¹ The charge was two-thirds of a shekel for the plow points, and the mattocks, and one-third of a shekel for sharpening axes and for straightening the goads. ²² So on the day of battle, there were no swords or spears found in the hands of any of the soldiers who were with Saul and Jonathan; only Saul and his son Jonathan had them. ²³ The garrison of the Philistines went out to the pass of Mikdash.

Chapter 14

¹ One day, Jonathan son of Saul said to the young man who was his armor bearer, "Come, let us go over to the Philistines' garrison on the other side." But he did not tell his father. ² Saul was staying on the outskirts of Gibeah under the pomegranate tree that is in Migron. About six hundred men were with him, ³ including Ahijah son of Ahitub (Ichabod's brother) son of Phinehas son of Eli, the priest of Yahweh at Shiloh, who wore an ephod. The people did not know that Jonathan was gone. ⁴ On each side of the pass through which Jonathan wanted to go in order to get to the Philistines' garrison, there was a rocky cliff on one side and another rocky cliff on the other side. One rocky cliff was named Bozez and the other rocky cliff was named Seneh. ⁵ One rocky cliff stood on the north in front of Mikdash, and the other on the south in front of Geba.

⁶ Jonathan said to his young armor bearer, "Come, let us cross over to the garrison of these uncircumcised fellows. It may be that Yahweh will work on our behalf, for nothing can stop Yahweh from saving by many or by few people." ⁷ His armor bearer replied, "Do everything that is in your heart. Go ahead, see, I am with you, to obey all your commands." ⁸ Then Jonathan said, "We will cross over to the men, and we will show ourselves to them." ⁹ If they say to us, 'Wait there until we come over to you'—then we will stay in our place and will not cross over to them. ¹⁰ But if they reply, 'Come over to us,' then we will cross over; because Yahweh has given them into our hand. This will be the sign to us." ¹¹ So both of them revealed themselves to the garrison of the Philistines. The Philistines said, "Look, Hebrews are coming out of the holes where they have hidden themselves." ¹² Then the men of the garrison called to Jonathan and his armor bearer, and said, "Come up to us, and we will show you something." Jonathan said to his armor bearer, "Follow after me, because Yahweh has given them into the hand of Israel." ¹³ Jonathan climbed up on his hands and feet, and his armor bearer followed behind him. The Philistines were put to death before Jonathan, and his armor bearer put some to death behind him. ¹⁴ That first attack that Jonathan and his armor bearer made, killed about twenty men within an area of half an acre. ¹⁵ There was a panic in the camp, in the field, and among the people. Even the garrison and the raiders panicked. The earth quaked, and there was a great panic.

¹⁶ Then Saul's watchmen in Gibeah of Benjamin looked; the crowd of Philistine soldiers was dispersing, and they were going here and there. ¹⁷ Then Saul said to the people that were with him, "Count and see who is missing from us." When they had counted, Jonathan and his armor bearer were missing. ¹⁸ Saul said to Ahijah, "Bring the ark of God here," for at that time it was with the people of Israel. ¹⁹ While Saul was talking to the priest, the commotion in the camp of the Philistines was continuing and increasing. Then Saul said to the priest, "Withdraw your hand." ²⁰ Saul and all the people who were with him rallied and went into battle. Every Philistine's sword was against his fellow countrymen, and there was very great tumult. ²¹ Now those Hebrews who previously had been with the Philistines, and who had gone with them into the camp, even they joined with Israel who were with Saul and Jonathan. ²² When all the men of Israel who had hidden themselves in the hills near Ephraim heard that the Philistines were fleeing, even they chased after them in battle. ²³ So Yahweh saved Israel that day, and the battle passed beyond Beth Aven.

²⁴ That day the men of Israel were distressed because Saul had put the people under an oath and said, "Cursed be the man that eats any food until evening and I am avenged on my enemies." So none of the troops tasted food. ²⁵ Then all the people entered the forest and there was honey upon the ground. ²⁶ When the people entered into the forest, the honey flowed, but no one put his hand to his mouth for the people feared the curse. ²⁷ But Jonathan had not heard that his father had bound the people with an oath. He reached out the tip of the staff that was in his hand and dipped it in the honeycomb. He raised his hand to his mouth, and his eyes brightened. ²⁸ Then one of the people, answered, "Your father strictly charged the people with an oath, by saying, 'Cursed be the man that eats food on this day,' even though the people are weak from hunger." ²⁹ Then Jonathan said, "My father has made trouble for the land. See how my eyes have become brightened because I tasted a little of this honey." ³⁰ How much better if the people had eaten freely today of the plunder from their enemies that they found? Because now the slaughter has not been great among the Philistines."

³¹ They attacked the Philistines that day from Mikdash to Aijalon. The people were very weary. ³² The people rushed greedily on the plunder and took sheep, cattle and calves, and killed them on the ground. The people ate them with the blood. ³³ Then they told Saul, "Look, the people are sinning against Yahweh

by eating with the blood." Saul said, "You have acted unfaithfully. Now, roll a big stone here to me." ³⁴ Saul said, "Go out among the people, and tell them, 'Let every man bring his cattle and his sheep, and slaughter them here and eat them. Do not sin against Yahweh by eating meat with the blood.'" So each of the people brought his own ox with him that night and killed it there. ³⁵ Saul built an altar to Yahweh, which was the first altar that he built to Yahweh.

³⁶ Then Saul said, "Let us pursue the Philistines by night and plunder them until the morning light; let us not leave one of them alive." They replied, "Do whatever seems good to you." But the priest said, "Let us approach God here." ³⁷ Saul asked God, "Should I pursue the Philistines? Will you give them into the hand of Israel?" But God did not answer him that day. ³⁸ Then Saul said, "Come here, all you leaders of the people; learn and see how this sin has happened today. ³⁹ For, as Yahweh lives, who saves Israel, even if it is in Jonathan my son, he will surely die." But none of the men among all the people answered him. ⁴⁰ Then he said to all Israel, "You must stand on one side, and I and Jonathan my son will be on the other." The people said to Saul, "Do what seems good to you." ⁴¹ Saul said, "Yahweh, God of Israel! If this sin has been committed by me or by my son Jonathan, then, Yahweh, God of Israel, give the Urim. But if this sin has been committed by your people Israel, give the Thummim." ^[1] Then Jonathan and Saul were taken by lot, but the army was exonerated. ⁴² Then Saul said, "Cast lots between me and Jonathan my son." Then Jonathan was taken by lot.

⁴³ Then Saul said to Jonathan, "Tell me what you have done." Jonathan told him, "I tasted a little honey with the end of the rod that was in my hand. Here I am; I will die." ⁴⁴ Saul said, "God do so and more also to me, if you do not die, Jonathan." ⁴⁵ Then the people said to Saul, "Should Jonathan die, who has accomplished this great salvation for Israel? Far from it! As Yahweh lives, not one hair of his head will fall to the ground, for he has worked with God today." So the people ransomed Jonathan so that he did not die. ⁴⁶ Then Saul stopped pursuing the Philistines, and the Philistines went to their own place.

⁴⁷ When Saul had taken the kingship over Israel, he fought against all his enemies on every side. He fought against Moab, the Ammonites, Edom, the kings of Zobah, and the Philistines. Wherever he turned, he inflicted punishment on them. ⁴⁸ He acted with great courage and defeated the Amalekites. He rescued Israel out of the hands of those who plundered them.

⁴⁹ The sons of Saul were Jonathan, Ishvi, and Malki-Shua. The names of his two daughters were Merab, the firstborn, and Michal, the younger. ⁵⁰ The name of Saul's wife was Ahinoam; she was the daughter of Ahimaaz. The name of the captain of his army was Abner son of Ner, Saul's uncle. ⁵¹ Kish was Saul's father; and Ner, the father of Abner, was the son of Abiel.

⁵² There was hard fighting against the Philistines all the days of Saul. When Saul saw any mighty man, or any valiant man, he attached him to himself.

Footnotes

14:41 ^[1]The ULB is following the ancient Greek translation in the quotation. The Hebrew copies have:

Chapter 15

¹ Samuel said to Saul, "Yahweh sent me to anoint you king over his people Israel. Now listen to the words of Yahweh. ² This is what Yahweh of hosts says, 'I have noted what Amalek did to Israel in opposing them on the way, when they came up from Egypt. ³ Now go and attack Amalek and completely destroy all that they have. Do not spare them, but put to death both man and woman, child and infant, cattle and sheep, camel and donkey.'"

⁴ Saul summoned the people and numbered them at the city of Telaim—two hundred thousand footmen, and ten thousand men of Judah. ⁵ Then Saul came to the city of Amalek and waited in the valley. ⁶ Then Saul said to the Kenites, "Go, depart, come out from among the Amalekites, so I do not destroy you along with them. For you showed kindness to all the people of Israel, when they came from Egypt." So the Kenites moved away from the Amalekites. ⁷ Then Saul attacked the Amalekites, from Havilah as far as Shur, which is east of Egypt. ⁸ Then he took Agag the king of the Amalekites alive; he completely destroyed all the people with the edge of the sword. ⁹ But Saul and the people spared Agag, as well as the best of the sheep and cattle, fattened calves and the lambs. Everything that was good, they did not destroy. But they completely destroyed anything that was despised and worthless.

¹⁰ Then the word of Yahweh came to Samuel, saying, ¹¹ "I regret that I have set Saul to reign as king, for he has turned back from following me and has not performed my commandments." Samuel was angry; he cried out to Yahweh all night. ¹² Samuel got up early to meet Saul in the morning. Samuel was told, "Saul came to Carmel and he set up a monument to himself, then turned and proceeded on down to Gilgal." ¹³ Then Samuel came to Saul, and Saul said to him, "Blessed are you by Yahweh! I have fulfilled the command of Yahweh." ¹⁴ Samuel said, "What then is this bleating of sheep in my ears, and the lowing of the cattle that I hear?" ¹⁵ Saul replied, "They have brought them from the Amalekites. For the people spared the best of the sheep and cattle, to sacrifice to Yahweh your God. The rest we have completely destroyed." ¹⁶ Then Samuel said to Saul, "Wait, and I will tell you what Yahweh has said to me tonight." Saul said to him, "Speak!"

¹⁷ Samuel said, "Though you are little in your own sight, were you not made the head of the tribes of Israel? Then Yahweh anointed you king over Israel, ¹⁸ and Yahweh sent you on your way and said, 'Go and completely destroy the sinners, the Amalekites, and fight against them until they are destroyed.' ¹⁹ Why did you not obey the voice of Yahweh? Why did you rush to the plunder and do what was evil in the sight of Yahweh?" ²⁰ Then Saul said to Samuel, "I have indeed obeyed the voice of Yahweh, and have gone on the way that Yahweh sent me. I have captured Agag, the king of Amalek, and have completely destroyed the Amalekites. ²¹ But the people took some of the booty—sheep and cattle, the best of the things devoted to destruction, to sacrifice to Yahweh your God in Gilgal." ²² Samuel replied, "Has Yahweh as much delight in burnt offerings and sacrifices, as in obeying the voice of Yahweh? Obedience is better than sacrifice, and to listen is better than the fat of rams. ²³ For rebellion is like the sin of divination, and stubbornness is like wickedness and idolatry. Because you have rejected the word of Yahweh, he has also rejected you from being king."

²⁴ Then Saul said to Samuel, "I have sinned; for I have broken Yahweh's commandment and your words, because I was afraid of the people and obeyed their voice. ²⁵ Now, please pardon my sin, and return with me so that I may worship Yahweh." ²⁶ Samuel said to Saul, "I will not go back with you; for you have rejected the word of Yahweh, and Yahweh has rejected you from being king over Israel." ²⁷ As Samuel turned to leave, Saul took hold of the hem of his robe, and it tore. ²⁸ Samuel said to him, "Yahweh has torn the kingdom of Israel from you today and has given it to a neighbor of yours, one who is better than you. ²⁹ Also, the Strength of Israel will not lie nor change his mind; for he is not a man, that he should change his mind." ³⁰ Then Saul said, "I have sinned. But please honor me now before the elders of my people and before Israel. Turn again with me, that I may worship Yahweh your God." ³¹ So Samuel turned again after Saul, and Saul worshiped Yahweh.

³² Then Samuel said, "Bring Agag the king of the Amalekites here to me." Agag came to him confined with chains and said, "Surely death is bitter." ³³ Samuel replied, "As your sword has made women childless, so must your mother be childless among women." Then Samuel chopped Agag to pieces before Yahweh at Gilgal.

³⁴ Samuel went to Ramah, and Saul went up to his house at Gibeah of Saul. ³⁵ Samuel did not see Saul until the day of his death, for he mourned for Saul. Yahweh regretted that he had made Saul king over Israel.

Chapter 16

¹ Yahweh said to Samuel, "How long will you mourn for Saul, since I have rejected him from being king over Israel? Fill your horn with oil and go. I will send you to Jesse of Bethlehem, for I have selected for myself a king among his sons." ² Samuel said, "How can I go? If Saul hears of it, he will kill me." Yahweh said, "Take a heifer with you and say, 'I have come to sacrifice to Yahweh.'" ³ Call Jesse to the sacrifice, and I will show you what you will do. You will anoint for me the one whom I tell you." ⁴ Samuel did as Yahweh said and went to Bethlehem. The elders of the city were trembling as they came to meet him and said, "Are you coming in peace?" ⁵ He said, "In peace; I have come to sacrifice to Yahweh. Prepare to set yourselves apart and come with me to the sacrifice." Then he set apart Jesse and his sons and invited them to the sacrifice.

⁶ When they came, he looked at Eliab and said to himself that Yahweh's anointed was certainly standing before him. ⁷ But Yahweh said to Samuel, "Do not look at his outward appearance, or on the height of his stature; because I have rejected him. For Yahweh does not see as man sees; man looks on the outward appearance, but Yahweh looks on the heart." ⁸ Then Jesse called Abinadab and made him pass before Samuel. Then Samuel said, "Neither has Yahweh chosen this one." ⁹ Jesse then made Shammah pass by, but Samuel said, "Neither has Yahweh chosen this one." ¹⁰ Jesse made seven of his sons pass before Samuel. Then Samuel said to Jesse, "Yahweh has not chosen any of these." ¹¹ Then Samuel said to Jesse, "Are these all the boys?" He replied, "There remains yet the youngest, but he is tending the sheep." Samuel said to Jesse, "Send and get him; for we will not sit down until he comes here." ¹² Jesse sent and brought him in. Now this son was ruddy and had beautiful eyes and a handsome appearance. Yahweh said, "Arise, anoint him; for he is the one." ¹³ Then Samuel took the horn of oil and anointed him in the middle of his brothers. The Spirit of Yahweh rushed on David from that day forward. Then Samuel rose up and went to Ramah.

¹⁴ Now the Spirit of Yahweh left Saul, and a harmful spirit from Yahweh tormented him instead. ¹⁵ Saul's servants said to him, "See now, a harmful spirit from God is tormenting you." ¹⁶ Let our master now command your servants who are before you to search for a man who is a skillful player on the harp. Then when the harmful spirit from God is on you, he will play it and you will be well." ¹⁷ Saul said to his servants, "Find me a man that can play well and bring him to me." ¹⁸ Then one of the young men answered, and said, "I have seen a son of Jesse the Bethlehemite, who is skillful in playing, a strong, courageous man, a man of war, one prudent in speech, a handsome man; and Yahweh is with him." ¹⁹ So Saul sent messengers to Jesse, and said, "Send me your son David, who is with the sheep." ²⁰ Jesse took a donkey loaded with bread, a container of wine, and a young goat, and sent them with his son David to Saul. ²¹ Then David came to Saul and entered his service. Saul loved him greatly, and he became his armor bearer. ²² Saul sent to Jesse, saying, "Let David stand before me, for he has found favor in my eyes." ²³ Whenever the harmful spirit from God was upon Saul, David took the harp and played it. So Saul would be refreshed and well, and the harmful spirit would depart from him.

Chapter 17

¹ Now the Philistines gathered their armies for battle. They were gathered at Sokoh, which belongs to Judah. They had encamped between Sokoh and Azekah, in Ephes Dammim. ² Saul and the men of Israel gathered and encamped in the Valley of Elah, and drew up their battle line to meet the Philistines. ³ The Philistines stood on a mountain on one side, and Israel stood on a mountain on the other side with a valley between them. ⁴ A strong man came out of the Philistines' camp, a man named Goliath of Gath, whose height was six cubits and a span. ⁵ He had a helmet of bronze on his head, and he was clothed in scale armor of bronze that weighed five thousand shekels. ⁶ He had bronze armor on his legs and a javelin of bronze between his shoulders. ⁷ The staff of his spear was large, with a loop of cord for throwing it like the cord on a weaver's beam. His spear's head weighed six hundred shekels of iron. His shield bearer went before him. ⁸ He stood and shouted to the ranks of Israel, "Why have you come out to draw up for battle? Am I not a Philistine, and are you not servants of Saul? Choose a man for yourselves and let him come down to me. ⁹ If he is able to fight with me and kill me, then will we be your servants. But if I defeat him and kill him, then you will be our servants and serve us." ¹⁰ Again the Philistine said, "I defy the ranks of Israel today. Give me a man so we may fight together." ¹¹ When Saul and all Israel heard what the Philistine said, they were discouraged and greatly afraid.

¹² Now David was the son of the Ephrathite of Bethlehem in Judah, whose name was Jesse. He had eight sons. Jesse was an old man in the days of Saul, very old among men. ¹³ The three oldest sons of Jesse had followed Saul to the battle. The names of his three sons who went to the battle were Eliab the firstborn, second to him Abinadab, and the third Shammah. ¹⁴ David was the youngest. The three oldest followed Saul. ¹⁵ Now David went back and forth between Saul's army and his father's sheep at Bethlehem, in order to feed them. ¹⁶ For forty days the Philistine strong man came near morning and evening to present himself for battle.

¹⁷ Then Jesse said to his son David, "Take to your brothers an ephah of this roasted grain and these ten loaves, and carry them quickly to the camp for your brothers. ¹⁸ Also bring these ten cheeses to the captain of their thousand. Look to the well-being of your brothers, and bring back some evidence that they are doing well. ¹⁹ Your brothers are with Saul and all the men of Israel in the Valley of Elah, fighting the Philistines." ²⁰ David got up early in the morning and left the flock in the care of a shepherd. He took the supplies and left, as Jesse commanded him. He came to the camp as the army was going out to the battlefield shouting the war cry. ²¹ Then Israel and the Philistines lined up for battle, army against army. ²² David left his belongings with the keeper of supplies, ran to the army, and greeted his brothers. ²³ As he talked with them, the strong man, the Philistine of Gath, Goliath by name, came out of the ranks of the Philistines and said the same words as before, and David heard them. ²⁴ When all the men of Israel saw the man, they fled from him and were very afraid. ²⁵ The men of Israel said, "Have you seen this man who has come up? He has come to defy Israel. The king will give great riches to the man who kills him, and he will give his daughter to him in marriage, and will make his father's house free from taxation in Israel." ²⁶ David said to the men who stood by him, "What will be done for the man who kills this Philistine and takes away the disgrace from Israel? Who is this uncircumcised Philistine that he should defy the armies of the living God?" ²⁷ Then the people repeated what they had been saying and told him, "So it will be done for the man who kills him."

²⁸ Eliab his oldest brother heard when he spoke to the men. Eliab's anger was kindled against David, and he said, "Why did you come down here? With whom have you left those few sheep in the wilderness? I know your pride, and the mischief in your heart; for you have come down here so that you might see the battle." ²⁹ David said, "What have I done now? Was it not just a question?" ³⁰ He turned away from him toward another, and spoke in the same way. The people answered the same thing as before.

³¹ When the words that David said were heard, soldiers repeated them to Saul, and he sent for David. ³² Then David said to Saul, "Let no man's heart fail because of that Philistine; your servant will go and fight with this Philistine." ³³ Saul said to David, "You are not able to go against this Philistine to fight with him; for you are only a youth, and he a man of war from his youth." ³⁴ But David said to Saul, "Your servant used to shepherd his father's sheep. When a lion or a bear came and took a lamb out of the flock, ³⁵ I chased after him and attacked him, and rescued it out of his mouth. When he rose up against me, I caught him by his beard, struck him, and put him to death. ³⁶ Your servant has killed both a lion and a bear. This

uncircumcised Philistine will be like one of them, since he has defied the armies of the living God." ³⁷ David said, "Yahweh rescued me from the paw of the lion and from the paw of the bear. He will rescue me from the hand of this Philistine." Then Saul said to David, "Go, and may Yahweh be with you." ³⁸ Saul clothed David with his armor. He put a helmet of bronze upon his head, and he clothed him with a coat of chainmail. ³⁹ David strapped his sword on his armor. But he was not able to walk, because he had not trained with them. Then David said to Saul, "I cannot go out to fight with these, for I have not trained with them." So David put them off. ⁴⁰ He took his staff in his hand and chose five smooth stones out of the brook; he put them in his shepherd's pouch. His sling was in his hand as he approached the Philistine.

⁴¹ The Philistine came and approached David, with his shield bearer in front of him. ⁴² When the Philistine looked around and saw David, he despised him, for he was only a boy, and ruddy, with a handsome appearance. ⁴³ Then the Philistine said to David, "Am I a dog, that you come to me with sticks?," and the Philistine cursed David by his gods. ⁴⁴ The Philistine said to David, "Come to me, and I will give your flesh to the birds of the heavens and to the wild animals of the field." ⁴⁵ David replied to the Philistine, "You come to me with a sword, a spear, and a javelin. But I come to you in the name of Yahweh of hosts, the God of the armies of Israel, whom you have defied. ⁴⁶ Today Yahweh will give me victory over you, and I will kill you and remove your head from your body. Today I will give the dead bodies of the Philistine army to the birds of the heavens and to the wild beasts of the earth, so that all the earth may know that there is a God in Israel, ⁴⁷ and that all this gathering may know that Yahweh does not save with sword or spear. For the battle is Yahweh's, and he will give you into our hand." ⁴⁸ When the Philistine rose and approached David, then David ran quickly toward the enemy army to meet him. ⁴⁹ David put his hand in his bag, took a stone from it, slung it, and hit the Philistine in the forehead. The stone sank into the Philistine's forehead, and he fell on his face to the ground.

⁵⁰ David defeated the Philistine with a sling and with a stone. He hit the Philistine and put him to death. There was no sword in David's hand. ⁵¹ Then David ran and stood over the Philistine and took his sword, drew it out of the sheath, killed him, and cut off his head with it. When the Philistines saw that their mighty man was dead, they fled. ⁵² Then the men of Israel and of Judah rose with a shout, and chased after the Philistines as far as the valley and the gates of Ekron. The dead Philistines lay along the way to Shaaraim, all the way to Gath and Ekron. ⁵³ The people of Israel returned from hotly pursuing the Philistines, and they plundered their camp. ⁵⁴ David took the head of the Philistine and brought it to Jerusalem, but he put his armor in his tent.

⁵⁵ When Saul saw David go out against the Philistine, he said to Abner, the captain of the army, "Abner, whose son is this youth?" Abner said, "As you live, king, I do not know." ⁵⁶ The king said, "Ask those who might know, whose son the boy is." ⁵⁷ When David returned from killing the Philistine, Abner took him, and brought him before Saul with the head of the Philistine in his hand. ⁵⁸ Saul said to him, "Whose son are you, young man?" David answered, "I am the son of your servant Jesse the Bethlehemite."

Chapter 18

¹ When he had finished speaking to Saul, the soul of Jonathan was bound to the soul of David, and Jonathan loved him as his own soul. ² Saul took David into his service that day; he did not let him return to his father's house. ³ Then Jonathan and David made a covenant of friendship because Jonathan loved him as his own soul. ⁴ Jonathan took off the robe that he was wearing and gave it to David with his armor, as well as his sword, bow, and belt. ⁵ David went out wherever Saul sent him, and he succeeded. Saul set him over the men of war. This was pleasing in the eyes of all the people and also in the sight of Saul's servants.

⁶ As they came home from defeating the Philistines, the women came from all the cities of Israel, singing and dancing, to meet King Saul, with tambourines, with joy, and with musical instruments. ⁷ The women sang one to another as they played. They sang:

"Saul has killed his thousands,
and David his ten thousands."

⁸ Saul was very angry, and this song displeased him. He said, "They have ascribed to David ten thousands, but they have ascribed only thousands to me. What more can he have but the kingship?" ⁹ Saul looked at David with suspicion from that day on.

¹⁰ The next day a harmful spirit from God rushed upon Saul and he prophesied within the house. So David played his instrument, as he did each day. Saul had a spear in his hand. ¹¹ Saul threw the spear, for he thought, "I will pin David to the wall." But David escaped from Saul's presence twice in this way. ¹² Saul was afraid of David, because Yahweh was with him, but was no longer with Saul. ¹³ So Saul removed him from his presence and appointed him a commander of a thousand. In this way David went out and came in before the people. ¹⁴ David was prospering in all his ways, for Yahweh was with him. ¹⁵ When Saul saw that he prospered, he stood in awe of him. ¹⁶ But all Israel and Judah loved David, for he went out and came in before them.

¹⁷ Then Saul said to David, "Here is my oldest daughter Merab. I will give her to you as a wife. Only be courageous for me and fight Yahweh's battles." For Saul thought, "Let not my hand be on him, but let the hand of the Philistines be on him." ¹⁸ David said to Saul, "Who am I, and who are my relatives, or my father's clan in Israel, that I should be son-in-law to the king?" ¹⁹ But at the time when Merab, Saul's daughter, should have been given to David, she was given to Adriel the Meholathite as a wife. ²⁰ But Michal, Saul's daughter, loved David. They told Saul, and this pleased him. ²¹ Then Saul thought, "I will give her to him, so that she can be a trap for him, and that the hand of the Philistines may be against him." So Saul said to David a second time, "You will be my son-in-law."

²² Saul commanded his servants, "Speak with David in private, and say, 'See, the king takes pleasure in you, and all his servants love you. Now then, become the king's son-in-law.'" ²³ So Saul's servants spoke these words to David. Then David said, "Is it a small matter to you to be the king's son-in-law, since I am a poor man, and lightly esteemed?" ²⁴ The servants of Saul reported to him the words which David spoke. ²⁵ Then Saul said, "Say this to David, 'The king does not desire any price for the bride except a hundred foreskins of the Philistines, to be avenged from the king's enemies.'" Now Saul thought to make David fall by the hand of the Philistines. ²⁶ When his servants told David these words, it pleased David to be the king's son-in-law. ²⁷ Before those days had expired, David went with his men and killed two hundred Philistines. David brought their foreskins, and they gave them in full number to the king, so that he might be the king's son-in-law. So Saul gave him Michal his daughter as his wife. ²⁸ When Saul saw, and he knew that Yahweh was with David, and that Michal, Saul's daughter, loved him, ²⁹ Saul was even more afraid of David. Saul was continually David's enemy.

³⁰ Then the princes of the Philistines came out for battle, and as often as they came out, David behaved more prudently than all the servants of Saul, so that his name was highly regarded.

Chapter 19

¹ Saul said to Jonathan his son and to all his servants that they should kill David. But Jonathan, Saul's son, took great pleasure in David. ² So Jonathan told David, "Saul my father seeks to kill you. Therefore be on your guard in the morning and hide yourself in a secret place. ³ I will go out and stand beside my father in the field where you are, and I will speak with my father about you. If I learn anything, I will tell you." ⁴ Jonathan spoke well of David to Saul his father and said to him, "Do not let the king sin against his servant David. For he has not sinned against you, and his deeds have brought you good. ⁵ For he took his life in his hand and killed the Philistine. Yahweh brought about great salvation for all Israel. You saw it and rejoiced. Why would you sin against innocent blood by killing David for no reason?" ⁶ Saul listened to Jonathan. Saul swore, "As Yahweh lives, he will not be put to death." ⁷ Then Jonathan called David, and Jonathan told him all these things. Jonathan brought David to Saul, and he was in his presence as before.

⁸ There was war again, and David went out and fought with the Philistines and defeated them with a great slaughter. They fled before him. ⁹ A harmful spirit from Yahweh came on Saul as he sat in his house with his spear in his hand, and as David was playing his instrument. ¹⁰ Saul tried to pin David to the wall with the spear, but he slipped away from Saul's presence, so that Saul drove the spear into the wall. David fled and escaped that night. ¹¹ Saul sent messengers to David's house to watch him that he might kill him in the morning. Michal, David's wife, told him, "If you do not save your life tonight, tomorrow you will be killed." ¹² So Michal let David down through the window. He went and fled, and escaped. ¹³ Michal took a household idol and laid it in the bed. Then she put a pillow of goats' hair at its head, and covered it with the clothes. ¹⁴ When Saul sent messengers to take David, she said, "He is sick." ¹⁵ Then Saul sent the messengers to see David; he said, "Bring him up to me in the bed, so that I may kill him." ¹⁶ When the messengers came in, behold, the household idol was in the bed along with the pillow of goats' hair at its head. ¹⁷ Saul said to Michal, "Why have you deceived me and let my enemy go, so that he has escaped?" Michal answered Saul, "He said to me, 'Let me go. Why should I kill you?'"

¹⁸ Now David fled and escaped, and went to Samuel in Ramah and told him all that Saul had done to him. Then he and Samuel went and stayed in Naioth. ¹⁹ It was told to Saul, saying, "See, David is at Naioth in Ramah." ²⁰ Then Saul sent messengers to capture David. When they saw the company of the prophets prophesying, and Samuel standing as head over them, the Spirit of God came on the messengers of Saul, and they also prophesied. ²¹ When Saul was told this, he sent other messengers, and they also prophesied. So Saul sent messengers again the third time, and they also prophesied. ²² Then he also went to Ramah and came to the deep well that is in Seku. He asked, "Where are Samuel and David?" Someone said, "See, they are at Naioth in Ramah." ²³ Saul went to Naioth in Ramah. Then the Spirit of God came upon him, and as he went he prophesied until he came to Naioth in Ramah. ²⁴ He stripped off his clothes and also prophesied before Samuel. He lay naked all that day and all that night. This is why they ask, "Is Saul also among the prophets?"

Chapter 20

¹ Then David fled from Naioth in Ramah and came and said to Jonathan, "What have I done? What is my iniquity? What is my sin before your father, that he seeks to take my life?" ² Jonathan said to David, "Far from it; you will not die. My father does nothing either great or small without telling it to me. Why should my father hide this thing from me? It is not so." ³ Yet David vowed again and said, "Your father knows well that I have found favor in your eyes. He has said, 'Do not let Jonathan know this, or he will be grieved.' But as truly as Yahweh lives, and as you live, there is but a step between me and death." ⁴ Then Jonathan said to David, "Whatever you say, I will do for you." ⁵ David said to Jonathan, "Tomorrow is the new moon, and I ought to sit down to eat with the king. But let me go, so that I may hide myself in the field until the third day at evening." ⁶ If your father misses me at all, then say, 'David earnestly asked leave of me that he might run to Bethlehem his city, because it is the yearly sacrifice there for all the clan.' ⁷ If he says, 'It is well,' your servant will have peace. But if he is very angry, then know that he has decided on evil. ⁸ Therefore deal kindly with your servant. For you have brought your servant into a covenant of Yahweh with you. But if there is iniquity in me, kill me yourself; for why then should you bring me to your father?" ⁹ Jonathan said, "Far be it from you! If I learned my father decided harm to come upon you, would I not tell you?" ¹⁰ Then David said to Jonathan, "Who will tell me if by chance your father should answer you roughly?" ¹¹ Jonathan said to David, "Come, let us go out into the field." So they both went out into the field.

¹² Jonathan said to David, "May Yahweh, the God of Israel, be witness. When I have questioned my father around this time tomorrow, or the third day, see, if there is good will toward David, will I not then send to you and make it known to you?" ¹³ If it pleases my father to do you harm, may Yahweh do to Jonathan and more also if I do not make it known to you and send you away, so that you may go in peace. May Yahweh be with you, as he has been with my father. ¹⁴ If I am still alive, will you not show me the covenant faithfulness of Yahweh, that I may not die? ¹⁵ Do not cut off your covenant faithfulness from my house forever—not even when Yahweh cuts off every one of the enemies of David from the face of the earth." ¹⁶ So Jonathan made a covenant with the house of David and said, "May Yahweh require an accounting from the hand of the enemies of David."

¹⁷ Jonathan made David vow again because of the love that he had for him, because he loved him as he loved his own soul. ¹⁸ Then Jonathan said to him, "Tomorrow is the new moon. You will be missed because your seat will be empty." ¹⁹ When you have stayed three days, go down quickly and come to the place where you hid yourself when this matter began, and stay by the stone Ezel. ²⁰ I will shoot three arrows to the side of it, as though I were shooting at a target. ²¹ Then I will send my young man and say to him, 'Go find the arrows.' If I say to the young boy, 'Look, the arrows are on this side of you; get them,' then come; for there will be safety for you and not harm, as Yahweh lives. ²² "But if I say to the young man, 'Look, the arrows are beyond you,' then go your way, for Yahweh has sent you away. ²³ As for the agreement of which you and I have spoken, see, Yahweh is between you and me forever."

²⁴ So David hid himself in the field. When the new moon came, the king sat down to eat food. ²⁵ The king sat on his seat, as usual, on the seat by the wall. Jonathan stood up, and Abner sat by Saul's side. But David's place was empty. ²⁶ Yet Saul did not say anything that day, because he thought, "Something has happened to him. He is not clean; surely he is not clean." ²⁷ But on the second day, the day after the new moon, David's place was empty. Saul said to Jonathan his son, "Why has the son of Jesse not come to the meal either yesterday or today?" ²⁸ Jonathan answered Saul, "David earnestly asked permission from me to go to Bethlehem. ²⁹ He said, 'Please let me go. For our family has a sacrifice in the city, and my brother has ordered me to be there. Now, if I have found favor in your eyes, please let me go and see my brothers.' For this reason he has not come to the king's table."

³⁰ Then Saul's anger burned against Jonathan, and he said to him, "You son of a perverse, rebellious woman! Do I not know that you have chosen the son of Jesse to your own shame, and to the shame of your mother's nakedness?" ³¹ For as long as the son of Jesse lives on the earth, neither you nor your kingdom will be established. Now then, send and bring him to me, for he must surely die." ³² Jonathan answered Saul his father, "For what reason should he be put to death? What has he done?" ³³ Then Saul threw his spear at him to kill him. So Jonathan knew that his father was determined to put David to death. ³⁴

Jonathan got up from the table in fierce anger and ate no food the second day of the month, for he was grieved over David, because his father had dishonored him.

³⁵ In the morning, Jonathan went out into the field to the appointment with David, and a young man was with him. ³⁶ He said to his young man, "Run and find the arrows that I shoot." As the young man ran, he shot an arrow beyond him. ³⁷ When the young man came to the place where the arrow that Jonathan shot had landed, Jonathan called after the young man, and said, "Is not the arrow beyond you?" ³⁸ Then Jonathan called after the young man, "Hurry, be quick, do not stay!" So Jonathan's young man gathered up the arrows and came to his master. ³⁹ But the young man did not know anything. Only Jonathan and David knew the matter. ⁴⁰ Jonathan gave his weapons to his young man and said to him, "Go, take them to the city." ⁴¹ As soon as the young man was gone, David stood up from behind the mound, lay facedown on the ground, and bowed himself three times. They kissed one another and wept together, with David weeping the more. ^[1]⁴² Jonathan said to David, "Go in peace, because we have both sworn in the name of Yahweh and said, 'May Yahweh be between you and me, and between my descendants and your descendants, forever.'" Then David stood up and left, and Jonathan returned to the city.

Footnotes

20:41 ^[1]The copies of the ancient Hebrew text read,

Chapter 21

¹ Then David came to Nob to see Ahimelek the priest. Ahimelek came to meet David trembling and said to him, "Why are you alone and have no one with you?" ² David said to Ahimelek the priest, "The king has sent me on a mission and has said to me, 'Let no one know anything about the business I am sending you, and what I have commanded you.' I have directed the young men to a certain place." ³ Now then what do you have on hand? Give me five loaves of bread, or whatever is here." ⁴ The priest answered David and said, "There is no ordinary bread on hand, but there is holy bread—if the young men have kept themselves from women." ⁵ David answered the priest, "Surely women have been kept from us for the past three days, as usual when I set out. The things belonging to the young men have been set apart even on ordinary missions. How much more today will what they have be set apart!" ⁶ So the priest gave him the bread that was set apart. For there was no bread there except the bread of the presence, which was removed from before Yahweh, in order to put hot bread in its place on the day it was taken away.

⁷ Now one of the servants of Saul was there that day, detained before Yahweh. His name was Doeg the Edomite, the chief of Saul's shepherds. ⁸ David said to Ahimelek, "Now is there not here on hand any spear or sword? For I brought neither my sword nor my weapons with me, because the king's business was urgent." ⁹ The priest said, "The sword of Goliath the Philistine, whom you killed in the Valley of Elah, is here wrapped in a cloth behind the ephod. If you want to take that, take it, for there is no other weapon here." David said, "There is no other sword like that one; give it to me."

¹⁰ David arose and fled that day from Saul and went to Achish, the king of Gath. ¹¹ Achish's servants said to him, "Is not this David, the king of the land? Did they not sing to one another about him in dances,

'Saul has killed his thousands,
and David his ten thousands?'"

¹² David took these words to heart and was very afraid of Achish, the king of Gath. ¹³ He changed his behavior before them and pretended to be insane in their hands; he made marks on the doors of the gate and let his saliva run down his beard. ¹⁴ Then Achish said to his servants, "Look, you see the man is mad. Why have you brought him to me? ¹⁵ Do I lack madmen, so that you have brought this fellow to behave like one in my presence? Will this fellow really come into my house?"

Chapter 22

¹ So David left there and escaped to the cave of Adullam. When his brothers and all his father's house heard it, they went down there to him. ² Everyone who was in distress, everyone who was in debt, and everyone who was discontented—they all gathered to him. David became captain over them. There were about four hundred men with him.

³ Then David went from there to Mizpah in Moab. He said to the king of Moab, "Please let my father and my mother go out with you until I know what God will do for me." ^[1]⁴ He left them with the king of Moab. His father and mother stayed with him the whole time that David was in his stronghold. ⁵ Then the prophet Gad said to David, "Do not stay in your stronghold. Leave and go into the land of Judah." So David left there and went into the forest of Hereth.

⁶ Saul heard that David had been discovered, along with the men who were with him. Now Saul was sitting in Gibeah under the tamarisk tree on a hill, with his spear in his hand, and all his servants were standing around him. ⁷ Saul said to his servants who stood around him, "Listen now, people of Benjamin! Will the son of Jesse give every one of you fields and vineyards? Will he make you all captains of thousands and captains of hundreds, ⁸ in exchange for all of you plotting against me? None of you informs me when my son makes a covenant with the son of Jesse. None of you is sorry for me. None of you informs me that my son has incited my servant David against me. Today he hides and waits for me so he may attack me." ⁹ Then Doeg the Edomite, who stood by the servants of Saul, answered, "I saw the son of Jesse come to Nob, to Ahimelek son of Ahitub. ¹⁰ He prayed to Yahweh that he might help him, and he gave him provisions and the sword of Goliath the Philistine."

¹¹ Then the king sent someone to summon the priest Ahimelek son of Ahitub and all his father's house, the priests who were in Nob. All of them came to the king. ¹² Saul said, "Listen now, son of Ahitub." He answered, "Here I am, my master." ¹³ Saul said to him, "Why have you plotted against me, you and the son of Jesse, in that you have given him bread, and a sword, and have prayed to God that he might help him, so that he might rise up against me, to hide in secret, as he does today?" ¹⁴ Then Ahimelek answered the king and said, "Who among all your servants is so faithful as David, who is the king's son-in-law and is over your bodyguard, and is honored in your house? ¹⁵ Is today the first time I have prayed to God to help him? Far be it from me! Do not let the king impute anything to his servant or to all the house of my father. For your servant knows nothing of this whole matter." ¹⁶ The king replied, "You will surely die, Ahimelek, you and all your father's house." ¹⁷ The king said to the guard that stood around him, "Turn and kill the priests of Yahweh. Because their hand also is with David, and because they knew that he fled, but did not reveal it to me." But the servants of the king would not put out their hand to kill the priests of Yahweh. ¹⁸ Then the king said to Doeg, "Turn and kill the priests." So Doeg the Edomite turned and attacked the priests; he killed eighty-five persons who wore a linen ephod that day. ¹⁹ He also put to the sword Nob, the city of the priests, both men and women, children and infants, and its cattle, donkeys and sheep, he put to the sword.

²⁰ But one of the sons of Ahimelek son of Ahitub, named Abiathar, escaped and fled after David. ²¹ Abiathar told David that Saul had killed Yahweh's priests. ²² David said to Abiathar, "I knew on that day, when Doeg the Edomite was there, that he would surely tell Saul. I am responsible for every death in your father's family! ²³ Stay with me and do not be afraid. For the one who seeks your life seeks mine as well. You will be safe with me."

Footnotes

22:3 ^[1]Some ancient translations have,

Chapter 23

¹ They told David, "Look, the Philistines are fighting against Keilah and are robbing the threshing floors."

² So David prayed to Yahweh for help and asked him, "Should I go and attack these Philistines?" Yahweh said to David, "Go and attack the Philistines and save Keilah." ³ David's men said to him, "See, we are afraid here in Judah. How much more then if we go to Keilah against the armies of the Philistines?" ⁴ Then David prayed to Yahweh for help yet again. Yahweh answered him, "Arise, go down to Keilah. For I will give you victory over the Philistines." ⁵ David and his men went to Keilah and fought with the Philistines. He led away their cattle and struck them with a great slaughter. So David saved the inhabitants of Keilah. ⁶ When Abiathar son of Ahimelek had fled to David at Keilah, he came down with an ephod in his hand.

⁷ Saul was told that David had gone to Keilah. Saul said, "God has given him into my hand. For he is shut in because he has entered a city that has gates and bars." ⁸ Saul summoned all his forces for battle, to go down to Keilah, to besiege David and his men. ⁹ David knew that Saul was plotting harm against him. He said to Abiathar the priest, "Bring the ephod here." ¹⁰ Then David said, "Yahweh, the God of Israel, your servant has indeed heard that Saul seeks to come to Keilah, to destroy the city for my sake. ¹¹ Will the men of Keilah surrender me into his hand? Will Saul come down, as your servant has heard? Yahweh, the God of Israel, I beg you, please tell your servant." Yahweh said, "He will come down." ¹² Then David said, "Will the men of Keilah surrender me and my men into the hand of Saul?" Yahweh said, "They will surrender you." ¹³ Then David and his men, who were about six hundred, got up and went away from Keilah, and they went from place to place. It was told Saul that David had escaped from Keilah, and he stopped the pursuit. ¹⁴ David stayed in the strongholds in the wilderness, in the hill country in the wilderness of Ziph. Saul looked for him every day, but God did not give him into his hand.

¹⁵ David saw that Saul had come out to seek his life; now David was in the wilderness of Ziph at Horesh.

¹⁶ Then Jonathan, Saul's son, got up and went to David at Horesh, and strengthened his hand in God. ¹⁷ He said to him, "Do not be afraid. For the hand of Saul my father will not find you. You will be king over Israel, and I will be next to you. Saul my father also knows this." ¹⁸ They made a covenant before Yahweh. David remained at Horesh, and Jonathan went home.

¹⁹ Then Ziphites came to Saul at Gibeah and said, "Is not David hiding among us in the strongholds at Horesh, on the hill of Hakilah, which is south of Jeshimon?" ²⁰ Now come down, king! According to your desire, come down! Our part will be to surrender him into the king's hand." ²¹ Saul said, "May you be blessed by Yahweh. For you have had compassion on me. ²² Go, make even more sure. Learn and find out where his hiding place is and who has seen him there. It is told to me that he is very crafty. ²³ So look, and learn all of the places where he hides himself. Come back to me with sure information, and then I will return with you. If he is in the land, I will search him out among all the thousands of Judah."

²⁴ Then they rose up and went to Ziph ahead of Saul. Now David and his men were in the wilderness of Maon, in the Arabah to the south of Jeshimon. ²⁵ Saul and his men went to seek him. But David was told of it, so he went down to a rocky hill and lived in the wilderness of Maon. When Saul heard it, he chased David in the wilderness of Maon. ²⁶ Saul went on one side of the mountain, and David and his men were going on the other side of the mountain. David hurried to get away from Saul. As Saul and his men were surrounding David and his men to take them, ²⁷ a messenger came to Saul and said, "Hurry and come, for the Philistines have made a raid against the land." ²⁸ So Saul returned from pursuing David and went against the Philistines. Therefore that place was called Sela Hammahlekoth. ²⁹ David went up from there and lived in the strongholds of En Gedi.

Chapter 24

¹ When Saul returned from chasing the Philistines, he was told, "David is in the wilderness of En Gedi." ² Then Saul took three thousand chosen men from all Israel and went to seek David and his men on the Rocks of the Wild Goats. ³ He came to sheep pens on the way, where there was a cave. Saul went inside to cover his feet. Now David and his men were sitting far back in the cave. ⁴ David's men said to him, "This is the day of which Yahweh spoke when he said to you, 'I will give your enemy into your hand, for you to do with him as you wish.'" Then David arose and quietly crept forward and cut off the corner of Saul's robe. ⁵ Afterward David's heart afflicted him because he had cut a corner off Saul's robe. ⁶ He said to his men, "May Yahweh forbid that I should do this thing to my master, Yahweh's anointed, to put out my hand against him, seeing he is Yahweh's anointed." ⁷ So David rebuked his men with these words, and did not permit them to attack Saul. Saul stood up, left the cave, and went on his way.

⁸ Afterward, David also stood up, left the cave, and called out after Saul: "My master the king." When Saul looked behind him, David bowed with his face to the ground and showed him respect. ⁹ David said to Saul, "Why do you listen to the men who say, 'See, David is seeking your harm?' ¹⁰ Today your eyes have seen how Yahweh put you into my hand when we were in the cave. Some told me to kill you, but I spared you. I said, 'I will not put out my hand against my master; for he is Yahweh's anointed.' ¹¹ See, my father, see the corner of your robe in my hand. For the fact that I cut off the corner of your robe and did not kill you, you may know and see that there is no evil or treason in my hand, and I have not sinned against you, even though you hunt my life to take it. ¹² May Yahweh judge between you and me, and may Yahweh avenge me against you, but my hand must not be against you. ¹³ As the proverb of the ancients says, 'Out of the wicked comes wickedness.' But my hand will not be against you. ¹⁴ After whom has the king of Israel come out? After whom do you pursue? After a dead dog! After a flea! ¹⁵ May Yahweh be judge and give judgment between you and me, and see to it, and plead my cause and permit me to escape from your hand."

¹⁶ When David had finished speaking these words to Saul, Saul said, "Is this your voice, my son David?" Saul lifted up his voice and wept. ¹⁷ He said to David, "You are more righteous than I am. For you have repaid me good, where I have repaid you evil. ¹⁸ You have declared today how you have done good to me, for you did not kill me when Yahweh had put me at your mercy. ¹⁹ For if a man finds his enemy, will he let him go safely? May Yahweh reward you with good for what you have done to me today. ²⁰ Now, I know that you will surely be king and that the kingdom of Israel will be established in your hand. ²¹ Swear to me by Yahweh that you will not cut off my descendants after me, and that you will not destroy my name out of my father's house." ²² So David made an oath to Saul. Then Saul went home, but David and his men went up to the stronghold.

Chapter 25

¹ Now Samuel died. All Israel gathered together and mourned for him, and they buried him in his house at Ramah. Then David rose and went down to the wilderness of Paran.

² There was a man in Maon, whose possessions were in Carmel. The man was very wealthy. He had three thousand sheep and one thousand goats. He was shearing his sheep in Carmel. ³ The man's name was Nabal, and the name of his wife was Abigail. The woman was intelligent and beautiful in appearance. But the man was harsh and evil in his dealings. He was a descendant of the house of Caleb. ⁴ David heard in the wilderness that Nabal was shearing his sheep. ⁵ So David sent ten young men. David said to the young men, "Go up to Carmel, go to Nabal, and greet him in my name. ⁶ You will say to him, 'Live in prosperity. Peace to you and peace to your house, and peace be to all that you have. ⁷ I hear that you have shearers. Your shepherds have been with us, and we did them no harm, and they missed nothing the whole time they were in Carmel. ⁸ Ask your young men, and they will tell you. Now let my young men find favor in your eyes, for we have come on a festive day. Please give whatever you have on hand to your servants and to your son David.'"

⁹ When David's young men arrived, they said all of this to Nabal in David's name and then waited. ¹⁰ Nabal answered David's servants, "Who is David, and who is the son of Jesse? There are many servants these days who are breaking away from their masters. ¹¹ Should I take my bread and my water and my meat that I have killed for my shearers, and give it to men who come from I do not know where?" ¹² So David's young men turned away and came back, and told him everything that was said. ¹³ David said to his men, "Every man strap on his sword." So every man strapped on his sword. David also strapped on his sword. About four hundred men followed after David, and two hundred stayed by the baggage.

¹⁴ But one of the young men told Abigail, Nabal's wife; he said, "David sent messengers out of the wilderness to greet our master, and he screamed at them. ¹⁵ Yet the men were very good to us. We were not harmed and did not miss anything as long as we went with them when we were in the fields. ¹⁶ They were a wall to us both day and night, all the while we were with them tending the sheep. ¹⁷ Therefore know this and consider what you will do, for evil is plotted against our master, and against his whole house. He is such a worthless fellow that one cannot reason with him."

¹⁸ Then Abigail hurried and took two hundred loaves, two bottles of wine, five sheep already prepared, five measures of parched grain, one hundred clusters of raisins, and two hundred cakes of figs, and laid them on donkeys. ¹⁹ She said to her young men, "Go on before me, and I will come after you." But she did not tell her husband Nabal. ²⁰ As she rode on her donkey and came down by the cover of the mountain, David and his men came down toward her, and she met them. ²¹ Now David had said, "Surely in vain have I guarded all that this man has in the wilderness, so that nothing was missed of all that belonged to him, and he has returned me evil for good. ²² May God do so to the enemies of David, and more also, if by the morning I leave so much as one male of all who belong to him."

²³ When Abigail saw David, she hurried and got down from her donkey and lay before David facedown and bowed herself to the ground. ²⁴ She lay at his feet and said, "On me alone, my master, be the guilt. Please let your servant speak to you, and listen to the words of your servant. ²⁵ Let not my master regard this worthless fellow, Nabal, for as his name is, so is he. Nabal is his name, and folly is with him. But I your servant did not see the young men of my master, whom you sent. ²⁶ Now then, my master, as Yahweh lives, and as you live, since Yahweh has restrained you from bloodshed, and from avenging yourself with your own hand, now let your enemies, and those who seek to do evil to my master, be like Nabal. ²⁷ Now let this present that your servant has brought to my master be given to the young men who follow my master. ²⁸ Please forgive the trespass of your servant, for Yahweh will certainly make my master a sure house, because my master is fighting the battles of Yahweh; and evil will not be found in you so long as you live. ²⁹ Though men rise up to pursue you to take your life, yet the life of my master will be bound in the bundle of the living by Yahweh your God; and he will sling away the lives of your enemies, as from the pocket of a sling. ³⁰ Yahweh will have done for my master everything he promised you, and has appointed you leader over Israel. ³¹ This will not cause grief or a troubled heart to my master—that you have poured out innocent blood, or because my master attempted to rescue himself. For when Yahweh will do good for my master, remember your servant."

³² David said to Abigail, "May Yahweh, the God of Israel, be blessed, he who sent you to meet me today.

³³ Your wisdom is blessed and you are blessed, because you have kept me today from bloodshed and from avenging myself with my own hand! ³⁴ For in truth, as Yahweh, the God of Israel, lives, he who has kept me from hurting you, unless you had hurried to come meet me, there would certainly have not been left to Nabal so much as one male baby by the morning light." ³⁵ So David received from her hand what she had brought him; he said to her, "Go up in peace to your house; see, I have listened to your voice and have accepted you."

³⁶ Abigail went back to Nabal; behold, he was holding a feast in his house, like the feast of a king; and Nabal's heart was merry within him, for he was very drunk. So she told him nothing at all until the morning light. ³⁷ It came about in the morning, when the wine had gone out of Nabal, that his wife told him these things; his heart died within him, and he became like a stone. ³⁸ It came about ten days later that Yahweh attacked Nabal so that he died.

³⁹ When David heard that Nabal was dead, he said, "May Yahweh be blessed, who has avenged the scorn I have received from the hand of Nabal and has kept back his servant from doing wrong. He has turned Nabal's evil action back on his own head." Then David sent and spoke to Abigail, to take her to himself as wife. ⁴⁰ When David's servants had come to Abigail at Carmel, they spoke to her and said, "David has sent us to you to take you to him as his wife." ⁴¹ She arose, bowed herself with her face to the ground, and said, "See, your female servant is a servant to wash the feet of the servants of my master." ⁴² Abigail hurried and arose, and rode on a donkey with five servant girls of hers who followed her; and she followed David's messengers and became his wife.

⁴³ Now David had also taken Ahinoam of Jezreel as a wife; both of them became his wives. ⁴⁴ Also, Saul had given Michal his daughter, David's wife, to Paltiel son of Laish, who was of Gallim.

Chapter 26

¹ The Ziphites came to Saul at Gibeah and said, "Is not David hiding in the hill of Hakilah, which is before Jeshimon?" ² Then Saul arose and went down to the wilderness of Ziph, having three thousand chosen men of Israel with him, to seek David in the wilderness of Ziph. ³ Saul camped on the hill of Hakilah, which is before Jeshimon, by the road. But David was staying in the wilderness, and he saw that Saul was coming after him into the wilderness. ⁴ So David sent out spies and learned that Saul had indeed come. ⁵ David arose and went to the place where Saul had camped; he saw the place where Saul lay, and Abner son of Ner, the general of his army; Saul lay in the camp, and the people were camped around him, all asleep.

⁶ Then David said to Ahimelek the Hittite, and to Abishai son of Zeruiah, the brother of Joab, "Who will go down with me to Saul in the camp?" Abishai said, "I! I will go down with you." ⁷ So David and Abishai went to the army by night. Saul was there sleeping inside the camp with his spear stuck in the ground beside his head. Abner and his soldiers lay around him. ⁸ Then Abishai said to David, "Today God has put your enemy into your hand. Now please let me pin him to the ground with the spear with just one blow. I will not strike him a second time." ⁹ David said to Abishai, "Do not destroy him; for who can extend his hand against Yahweh's anointed one and be guiltless?" ¹⁰ David said, "As Yahweh lives, Yahweh will kill him, or his day will come to die, or he will go into battle and perish. ¹¹ May Yahweh forbid that I should extend my hand against his anointed one; but now, I beg you, take the spear that is at his head and the jar of water, and let us go." ¹² So David took the spear and the jar of water from Saul's head, and they got away. No one saw them or knew about it, nor did anyone wake up, for they were all asleep, because a deep sleep from Yahweh had fallen on them.

¹³ Then David went over to the other side and stood on the top of the mountain far off; a great distance was between them. ¹⁴ David shouted out to the people and to Abner son of Ner; he said, "Do you not answer, Abner?" Then Abner answered and said, "Who are you who is shouting to the king?" ¹⁵ David said to Abner, "Are not you a courageous man? Who is like you in Israel? Why then have you not kept watch over your master the king? For someone came in to destroy the king your master. ¹⁶ This thing you have done is not good. As Yahweh lives, you deserve to die because you have not kept watch over your master, Yahweh's anointed one. Now see where the king's spear is and the jar of water that was near his head!"

¹⁷ Saul recognized David's voice and said, "Is that your voice, my son David?" David said, "It is my voice, my master, king." ¹⁸ He said, "Why does my master pursue his servant? What have I done? What evil is in my hand? ¹⁹ Now therefore, I beg you, let my master the king listen to the words of his servant. If it is Yahweh who has stirred you up against me, may he be pleased with an offering; but if it is human beings, may they be cursed in the sight of Yahweh, for they have today driven me out, that I should not cling to the inheritance of Yahweh; they have said to me, 'Go worship other gods.' ²⁰ Now therefore, do not let my blood fall to the earth away from Yahweh's presence; for the king of Israel has come out to search for the one flea as when one hunts a partridge in the mountains."

²¹ Then Saul said, "I have sinned. Return, David, my son; for I will harm you no more, because my life was precious in your eyes today. See, I have played the fool and have made a very bad mistake." ²² David answered and said, "See, your spear is here, king! Let one of the young men come over and get it and bring it to you. ²³ May Yahweh pay each man for his righteousness and his faithfulness; because Yahweh put you into my hand today, but I would not strike his anointed. ²⁴ See, as your life was precious in my eyes today, so may my life be much valued in the eyes of Yahweh, and may he rescue me out of all trouble." ²⁵ Then Saul said to David, "May you be blessed, David my son! You will certainly do great things and you will succeed in them." So David went his way, and Saul returned to his place.

Chapter 27

¹ David said in his heart, "I will now perish one day by Saul's hand; there is nothing better for me than to escape into the land of the Philistines; Saul will give up looking for me any more within all the borders of Israel; in this way I will escape out of his hand." ² David arose and passed over, he and the six hundred men who were with him, to Achish son of Maok, the king of Gath. ³ David lived with Achish at Gath, he and his men, each man with his own household, and David with his two wives, Ahinoam the Jezreelite woman, and Abigail the Carmelite woman, Nabal's wife. ⁴ Saul was told that David had fled to Gath, so he looked for him no longer.

⁵ David said to Achish, "If I have found favor in your eyes, let them give me a place in one of the cities in the country, that I may live there. Why should your servant live in the royal city with you?" ⁶ So that day Achish gave him Ziklag; that is why Ziklag belongs to the kings of Judah to this very day. ⁷ The number of days that David lived in the land of the Philistines was a full year and four months.

⁸ David and his men attacked various places, making raids on the Geshurites, the Girzites, and the Amalekites; for those nations were the inhabitants of the land, as you go to Shur, as far as the land of Egypt. They had been living there in the land from ancient times. ^[1]⁹ David attacked the land and saved neither man nor woman alive. He took away the sheep and cattle, the donkeys, the camels, and the clothing. Then he returned and went back to Achish. ¹⁰ Achish would say, "Against whom have you made a raid today?" David would answer, "Against the south of Judah," or "Against the south of the Jerahmeelites," or "Against the south of the Kenites." ¹¹ David would keep neither man nor woman alive to bring them to Gath, saying, "So that they cannot say about us, 'David did such and such.'" This was what he did all the while he was living in the country of the Philistines. ¹² Achish believed David, saying, "He has made his people Israel utterly abhor him; he will therefore be my servant forever."

Footnotes

27:8 ^[1]Instead of

Chapter 28

¹ It came about in those days that the Philistines gathered their armies together for battle to fight with Israel. Achish said to David, "Know for certain that you will go out with me in the army, you and your men." ² David said to Achish, "That being the case, you will know what your servant can do." Achish said to David, "Then I will make you my bodyguard all your days."

³ Now Samuel had died, and all Israel had lamented him and buried him in Ramah, in his own city. Also, Saul had banned sorcerers and spiritists from the land. ⁴ Then the Philistines gathered themselves together and came and camped at Shunem; and Saul gathered all Israel together, and they camped at Gilboa. ⁵ When Saul saw the army of the Philistines, he was afraid, and his heart trembled very much. ⁶ Saul prayed to Yahweh for help, but Yahweh did not answer him—neither by dreams, nor by Urim, nor by prophets. ⁷ Then Saul said to his servants, "Find me a woman who is a sorceress, so that I may go to her and seek her advice." His servants said to him, "See, there is a woman in Endor who is a sorceress."

⁸ So Saul disguised himself, putting on other clothing and went, he and two men with him. They went to the woman by night. He said, "Divine for me by a spirit and bring up for me the one I name." ⁹ The woman said to him, "See, you know what Saul has done, how he has banned sorcerers and spiritists from the land. So why are you setting a trap for my life, to make me die?" ¹⁰ Saul swore to her by Yahweh and said, "As Yahweh lives, no punishment will happen to you for this thing." ¹¹ Then the woman said, "Whom should I bring up to you?" Saul said, "Bring up Samuel for me." ¹² When the woman saw Samuel, she cried with a loud voice and spoke to Saul, saying, "Why have you deceived me? For you are Saul." ¹³ The king said to her, "Do not be afraid. What do you see?" The woman said to Saul, "I see a god coming up out of the earth." ¹⁴ He said to her, "What does he look like?" She said, "An old man is coming up; he is clothed with a robe." Then Saul knew it was Samuel, and he bowed with his face to the ground and showed him respect.

¹⁵ Samuel said to Saul, "Why have you disturbed me and brought me up?" Saul answered, "I am very distressed, for the Philistines are waging war against me, and God has left me and does not answer me any more, neither by prophets, nor by dreams. Therefore I have called you, that you may make known to me what I will do." ¹⁶ Samuel said, "What then do you ask me, since Yahweh has left you, and he has become your enemy?" ¹⁷ Yahweh has done to you what he said he would. Yahweh has torn the kingdom out of your hand and he has given it to someone else—to David. ¹⁸ Because you did not obey the voice of Yahweh and did not carry out his fierce wrath on Amalek, he has therefore done this today to you. ¹⁹ Yahweh will give Israel along with you into the hand of the Philistines, and tomorrow you and your sons will be with me. Yahweh will also give the army of Israel into the hand of the Philistines."

²⁰ Then Saul immediately fell his full length on the ground and was very afraid because of the words of Samuel. There was no strength in him, for he had eaten no food all that day, neither that whole night. ²¹ The woman came to Saul and saw that he was very troubled, She said to him, "See, your woman servant has listened to your voice; I have put my life in my hand and have listened to the words that you said to me. ²² Now therefore, I beg you, listen also to the voice of your woman servant, and let me set a little food in front of you. Eat so that you may gain strength for when you go on your way." ²³ But Saul refused and said, "I will not eat." But his servants, together with the woman, compelled him, and he listened to their voice. So he rose from the ground and sat on the bed. ²⁴ The woman had a fatted calf in the house; she hurried and killed it; she took flour, kneaded it, and baked unleavened bread with it. ²⁵ She brought it before Saul and his servants, and they ate. Then they got up and left that night.

Chapter 29

¹ Now the Philistines gathered together all their army at Aphek, and Israel camped by the spring that is in Jezreel. ² The princes of the Philistines passed on by hundreds and by thousands; David and his men passed on in the rear guard with Achish. ³ Then the princes of the Philistines said, "What are these Hebrews doing here?" Achish said to the other princes of the Philistines, "Is not this David, the servant of Saul, the king of Israel, who has been with me these days, or rather these years, and I have found no fault with him since he came away to me to this day?" ⁴ But the princes of the Philistines were angry with him and said, "Send the man back, that he may return to the place you assigned him. He will not go down with us into battle, for he will become our adversary during the fighting. For how else could he make himself acceptable to his master than by taking the heads of our own men?" ⁵ Is this not David of whom they sang one to another in dances, saying,

'Saul has killed his thousands,
and David his ten thousands?'

⁶ Then Achish called David and said to him, "As Yahweh lives, you have been good, and your going out and your coming in with me in the army is good in my view; for I have found nothing wrong with you since the day of your coming to me to this very day. Nevertheless, the princes are not favorable to you. ⁷ So now return and go in peace, so that you do not displease the princes of the Philistines." ⁸ David said to Achish, "But what have I done? What have you found in your servant as long as I have been before you to this day, that I may not go and fight against the enemies of my master the king?" ⁹ Achish answered and said to David, "I know that you are as blameless in my sight as an angel of God; nevertheless, the princes of the Philistines have said, 'He must not go up with us to the battle.'" ¹⁰ So now rise up early in the morning with the servants of your master who have come with you; as soon as you are up early in the morning and have light, go away." ¹¹ So David rose up early, he and his men, to leave in the morning, to return into the land of the Philistines. But the Philistines went up to Jezreel.

Chapter 30

¹ It came about, when David and his men had come to Ziklag on the third day, that the Amalekites had made a raid upon the Negev and on Ziklag. They attacked Ziklag, burned it, ² and captured the women and everyone who was in it, both small and great. They killed no one, but carried them off as they went on their way. ³ When David and his men came to the city, it was burned, and their wives, their sons, and their daughters were taken captive. ⁴ Then David and the people that were with him raised their voices and wept until they had no more power to weep. ⁵ David's two wives were taken captive, Ahinoam the Jezreelite woman, and Abigail the wife of Nabal the Carmelite. ⁶ David was greatly distressed, for the people were talking about stoning him, for all the people were bitter in spirit, each man for his sons and daughters; but David strengthened himself in Yahweh, his God.

⁷ David said to Abiathar son of Ahimelek, the priest, "I beg you, bring the ephod here for me." Abiathar brought the ephod to David. ⁸ David prayed to Yahweh for direction, saying, "If I pursue after this troop, will I overtake them?" Yahweh answered him, "Pursue, for you will certainly overtake them, and you will surely recover everything." ⁹ So David went, he and the six hundred men who were with him; they came to the brook Besor, where those who were left behind stayed. ¹⁰ But David kept pursuing, he and four hundred men; for two hundred had stayed behind, who were so weak that they could not go over the brook Besor.

¹¹ They found an Egyptian in a field and brought him to David; they gave him bread, and he ate; they gave him water to drink; ¹² and they gave him a piece of a cake of figs and two clusters of raisins. When he had eaten, he gained strength again, for he had eaten no bread nor drunk any water for three days and three nights. ¹³ David said to him, "To whom do you belong? Where do you come from?" He said, "I am a young man of Egypt, servant to an Amalekite; my master left me because three days ago I fell sick. ¹⁴ We made a raid on the Negev of the Kerethites, and what belongs to Judah, and the Negev of Caleb, and we burned Ziklag." ¹⁵ David said to him, "Will you bring me down to this raiding party?" The Egyptian said, "Swear to me by God that you will not kill me or betray me up into the hands of my master, and I will bring you down to this raiding party."

¹⁶ When the Egyptian had brought David down, the raiders were spread out over all the ground, eating and drinking and celebrating because of all the booty they had taken out of the land of the Philistines and from the land of Judah. ¹⁷ David attacked them from the twilight to the evening of the next day. Not a man escaped except for four hundred young men, who rode on camels and fled. ¹⁸ David recovered all that the Amalekites had taken; and David rescued his two wives. ¹⁹ Nothing was missing, neither small nor great, neither sons nor daughters, neither booty, nor anything that the raiders had taken for themselves. David brought back everything. ²⁰ David took all the flocks and the herds, which the men drove ahead of the other livestock. They said, "This is David's booty."

²¹ David came to the two hundred men who had been too weak to follow him, the ones the others had made to stay at the brook Besor. These men went ahead to meet David and the people who were with him. When David came to these people, he greeted them. ²² Then all the wicked men and worthless fellows among those who had gone with David said, "Because these men did not go with us, we will not give them any of the booty that we have recovered. However, each man may lead away his wife and children and go." ²³ Then David said, "You must not act like this, my brothers, with what Yahweh has given to us. He has preserved us and given into our hand the marauding band that came against us. ²⁴ Who will listen to you in this matter? For as the share is for anyone who goes into battle, so also will the share be for anyone who waits by the baggage; they will share and share alike." ²⁵ It has been so from that day to this day, for David made it a statute and a decree for Israel.

²⁶ When David came to Ziklag, he sent some of the booty to the elders of Judah, to his friends, saying, "See, here is a present for you from the booty from Yahweh's enemies." ²⁷ He also sent some to the elders who were in Bethel, and to those who were in Ramoth of the South, and to those who were in Jattir, ²⁸ and to those who were in Aroer, and to those who were in Siphmoth, and to those who were in Eshtemoa. ²⁹ He also sent some to the elders who were in Rakal, and to those who were in the cities of the Jerahmeelites, and to those who were in the cities of the Kenites, ³⁰ and to those who were in Hormah, and to those who were in Bor Ashan, and to those who were in Athak, ³¹ and to those who were in Hebron, and to all the places where David himself and his men habitually went.

Chapter 31

¹ Now the Philistines fought against Israel. The men of Israel fled from before the Philistines and fell down dead on Mount Gilboa. ² The Philistines closely pursued Saul and his sons. The Philistines killed Jonathan, Abinadab, and Malki-Shua, his sons. ³ The battle went heavily against Saul, and the archers overtook him. He was in severe pain because of them. ⁴ Then Saul said to his armor bearer, "Draw your sword and thrust me through with it. Otherwise, these uncircumcised will come and abuse me." But his armor bearer would not, for he was very afraid. So Saul took his own sword and fell on it. ⁵ When his armor bearer saw that Saul was dead, he fell on his sword in the same way and died with him. ⁶ So Saul died, his three sons, and his armor bearer—these men all died together that same day.

⁷ When the men of Israel who were on the other side of the valley, and those beyond the Jordan, saw that the men of Israel had fled, and that Saul and his sons were dead, they abandoned their cities and fled, and the Philistines came and lived in them. ⁸ It came about on the next day, when the Philistines came to strip the dead, that they found Saul and his three sons fallen on Mount Gilboa. ⁹ They cut off his head and stripped off his armor, and sent messengers into the land of the Philistines throughout to carry the news to their idols' temples and to the people. ¹⁰ They put his armor in the temple of the Ashtoreths, and they fastened his body to the city wall of Beth Shan. ¹¹ When the inhabitants of Jabesh Gilead heard of what the Philistines had done to Saul, ¹² all the fighting men arose and went all night and took the body of Saul and the bodies of his sons from the wall of Beth Shan. They went to Jabesh and burned them there. ¹³ Then they took their bones and buried them under a tamarisk tree in Jabesh, and fasted for seven days.

Book: 2 Samuel

2 Samuel

Chapter 1

¹ After the death of Saul, David returned from attacking the Amalekites and remained in Ziklag for two days. ² On the third day, a man came from Saul's camp with his clothes torn and with dirt on his head. When he came to David he fell to the ground and bowed down. ³ David said to him, "Where did you come from?" He answered, "I escaped from the camp of Israel." ⁴ David said to him, "Please tell me how things went." He answered, "The people fled from the battle. Many have fallen and many are dead. Saul and Jonathan his son are also dead." ⁵ David said to the young man, "How do you know that Saul and Jonathan his son are dead?" ⁶ The young man replied, "By chance I happened to be on Mount Gilboa, and there Saul was leaning on his spear, and chariots and riders were about to catch up with him. ⁷ Saul turned around and saw me and called out to me. I answered, 'Here I am.' ⁸ He said to me, 'Who are you?' I answered him, 'I am an Amalekite.' ⁹ He said to me, 'Please stand over me and kill me, for great suffering has taken hold of me, but life is still in me.' ¹⁰ So I stood over him and killed him, because I knew that he would not live after he had fallen. Then I took the crown that was on his head and the band that was on his arm, and brought them here to you, my master."

¹¹ Then David tore his clothes, and all the men with him did the same. ¹² They mourned, wept, and fasted until evening for Saul, for Jonathan his son, for the people of Yahweh, and for the house of Israel because they had fallen by the sword. ¹³ David said to the young man, "Where are you from?" He answered, "I am the son of a foreigner in the land, an Amalekite." ¹⁴ David said to him, "Why were you not afraid to destroy Yahweh's anointed king with your own hand?" ¹⁵ David called one of the young men and said, "Go and kill him." So that man went and struck him down, and the Amalekite died. ¹⁶ Then David said to the dead Amalekite, "Your blood is on your head because your own mouth has testified against you and said, 'I have killed Yahweh's anointed king.'"

¹⁷ Then David sang this lament about Saul and Jonathan his son. ¹⁸ He commanded the people to teach this Song of the Bow to the sons of Judah, which has been written in the Book of Jashar.

¹⁹ "Your glory, Israel, is dead, killed on your high places!
How the mighty have fallen!

²⁰ Do not tell it in Gath,
do not proclaim it in the streets of Ashkelon,
so that the daughters of the Philistines may not rejoice,
so that the daughters of the uncircumcised may not celebrate.

²¹ Mountains of Gilboa,
let there not be dew or rain on you,
nor fields giving grain for offerings,
for there the shield of the mighty was defiled.
The shield of Saul is no longer anointed with oil.

²² From the blood of those who have been killed,
from the bodies of the mighty,
the bow of Jonathan did not turn back,
and the sword of Saul did not return empty.

²³ Saul and Jonathan were loved and gracious in life,
and in their death they were not separated.
They were swifter than eagles,
they were stronger than lions.

²⁴ You daughters of Israel, weep over Saul,
who clothed you in scarlet as well as jewels,
and who put ornaments of gold on your clothing.

²⁵ How the mighty have fallen in the midst of the battle!
Jonathan is killed on your high places.

²⁶ I am distressed for you, my brother Jonathan.
You were very dear to me.

Your love to me was wonderful,
exceeding the love of women.
²⁷ How the mighty have fallen,
and the weapons of war perished!"

Chapter 2

¹ After this David asked Yahweh and said, "Should I go up to one of the cities of Judah?" Yahweh replied to him, "Go up." David said, "To which city should I go?" Yahweh replied, "To Hebron." ² So David went up with his two wives, Ahinoam from Jezreel, and Abigail from Carmel, the widow of Nabal. ³ David brought the men who were with him, who each brought his family, to the cities of Hebron, where they began to live. ⁴ Then men from Judah came and anointed David king over the house of Judah.

They told David, "The men of Jabesh Gilead have buried Saul." ⁵ So David sent messengers to the men of Jabesh Gilead and said to them, "You are blessed by Yahweh, since you have shown this loyalty to your master Saul and have buried him. ⁶ Now may Yahweh show you steadfast love and faithfulness. I also will show you this goodness because you have done this thing. ⁷ Now then, let your hands be strong; be courageous for Saul your master is dead, and the house of Judah has anointed me king over them."

⁸ But Abner son of Ner, commander of Saul's army, took Ish-Bosheth son of Saul and brought him to Mahanaim. ⁹ He made Ish-Bosheth king over Gilead, Asher, Jezreel, Ephraim, Benjamin, and over all Israel. ¹⁰ Ish-Bosheth son of Saul, was forty years old when he began to reign over Israel, and he reigned two years. But the house of Judah followed David. ¹¹ The time that David was king in Hebron over the house of Judah was seven years and six months.

¹² Abner son of Ner, and the servants of Ish-Bosheth son of Saul, went out from Mahanaim to Gibeon. ¹³ Joab son of Zeruiah and the servants of David went out and met them by the pool of Gibeon. There they sat down, one group on one side of the pool and the other on the other side. ¹⁴ Abner said to Joab, "Let the young men arise and compete before us." Then Joab said, "Let them arise." ¹⁵ Then the young men got up and gathered together, twelve for Benjamin and Ish-Bosheth son of Saul, and twelve from servants of David. ¹⁶ Each man seized his opponent by the head and thrust his sword into the side of his opponent, and they fell down together. Therefore that place was called "Helkath Hazzurim," or "Field of Swords," which is in Gibeon. ¹⁷ The battle was very severe that day and Abner and the men of Israel were defeated before the servants of David.

¹⁸ The three sons of Zeruiah were there: Joab, and Abishai, and Asahel. Asahel was swift in his feet like a wild gazelle. ¹⁹ Asahel closely pursued Abner and followed him without turning away in any direction. ²⁰ Abner looked behind him and said, "Is that you Asahel?" He answered, "It is I." ²¹ Abner said to him, "Turn aside to your right or to your left, and seize one of the young men and take his armor." But Asahel would not turn aside. ²² So Abner said again to Asahel, "Stop pursuing me. Why should I strike you to the ground? How then could I hold up my face to Joab, your brother?" ²³ But Asahel refused to turn aside, and so Abner stabbed him in the body with the blunt end of his spear, so that the spear came out the other side. Asahel fell down and died there. So it came about that anyone who arrived at the place where Asahel fell down and died, he stopped and stood still.

²⁴ But Joab and Abishai pursued Abner. When the sun was going down, they came to the hill of Ammah, which is near Giah by the road to the wilderness of Gibeon. ²⁵ The men of Benjamin gathered themselves together behind Abner and stood on the top of the hill. ²⁶ Then Abner called to Joab and said, "Must the sword devour forever? Do you not know it will be bitter in the end? How long will it be before you tell your men to stop pursuing their brothers?" ²⁷ Joab replied, "Just as God lives, if you had not said that, my soldiers would have pursued their brothers until the morning!" ²⁸ So Joab blew the ram's horn, and all his men stopped and did not pursue Israel anymore, nor did they fight anymore. ²⁹ Abner and his men traveled all that night through the Arabah. They crossed the Jordan, marched all the next morning, and then reached Mahanaim.

³⁰ Joab returned from pursuing Abner. He assembled all his people, from whom were missing Asahel and nineteen of David's servants. ³¹ But the servants of David had slaughtered from Benjamin and of Abner's men 360 men who died. ³² Then they took up Asahel and buried him in the tomb of his father, which was in Bethlehem. Joab and his men traveled all night, and the day dawned on them at Hebron.

Chapter 3

¹ Now there was a long war between the house of Saul and the house of David. David grew stronger and stronger, but the house of Saul grew weaker and weaker.

² Sons were born to David in Hebron. His firstborn was Amnon, by Ahinoam from Jezreel.

³ His second son, Kileab, was born to Abigail, the widow of Nabal from Carmel. The third, Absalom, was son of Maakah, daughter of Talmai, king of Geshur.

⁴ David's fourth son, Adonijah, was the son of Haggith. His fifth son was Shephatiah son of Abital,

⁵ and the sixth, Ithream, was the son of David's wife Eglah. These sons were born to David in Hebron.

⁶ It came about during the war between the house of Saul and the house of David that Abner made himself strong in the house of Saul. ⁷ Saul had a concubine whose name was Rizpah, the daughter of Aiah. Ish-Bosheth said to Abner, "Why have you gone to my father's concubine?" ⁸ Then Abner was very angry at the words of Ish-Bosheth and said, "Am I a dog's head that belongs to Judah? Today I am showing faithfulness to the house of Saul, your father, to his brothers, and to his friends, by not delivering you into the hand of David. But now you accuse me of iniquity concerning this woman?" ⁹ May God do so to me, Abner, and more also, if I do not do for David as Yahweh has sworn to him, ¹⁰ to transfer the kingdom from the house of Saul and set up the throne of David over Israel and over Judah, from Dan to Beersheba." ¹¹ Ish-Bosheth could not answer Abner another word, because he feared him.

¹² Then Abner sent messengers to David to speak for him saying, "Whose land is this? Make a covenant with me, and you will see that my hand is with you, to bring all Israel to you." ¹³ David answered, "Good, I will make a covenant with you. But one thing I require from you is that you cannot see my face unless you first bring Michal, Saul's daughter, when you come to see me." ¹⁴ Then David sent messengers to Ish-Bosheth, Saul's son, saying, "Give me my wife Michal, to whom I betrothed to myself at the price of one hundred Philistine foreskins." ¹⁵ So Ish-Bosheth sent for Michal and took her from her husband, Paltiel son of Laish. ¹⁶ Her husband went with her, weeping as he went, and followed her to Bahurim. Then Abner said to him, "Return home now." So he returned.

¹⁷ Abner spoke with the elders of Israel saying, "In the past you were trying to have David be king over you. ¹⁸ Now do it. For Yahweh has spoken of David saying, 'By the hand of my servant David I will save my people Israel from the hand of the Philistines and from the hand of all their enemies.'" ¹⁹ Abner also spoke personally to the people of Benjamin. Then Abner went also to speak with David in Hebron to explain everything that Israel and the whole house of Benjamin desired to accomplish. ²⁰ When Abner and twenty of his men arrived in Hebron to see David, David had a feast prepared for them. ²¹ Abner explained to David, "I will arise and gather all Israel to you, my master the king, so that they may make a covenant with you, so that you may reign over all that you desire." So David sent Abner away, and Abner left in peace.

²² Then the servants of David and Joab came from a raid and brought much plunder with them. But Abner was not with David in Hebron. David had sent him away, and Abner had left in peace. ²³ When Joab and all the army with him arrived, they told Joab, "Abner son of Ner came to the king, and the king has sent him away, and Abner left in peace." ²⁴ Then Joab came to the king and said, "What have you done? Look, Abner came to you! Why have you sent him away, and he is gone?" ²⁵ Do you not know that Abner son of Ner came to deceive you and to discover your plans and learn everything you are doing?" ²⁶ When Joab left David, he sent messengers after Abner, and they brought him back from the well of Sirah, but David did not know this.

²⁷ When Abner returned to Hebron, Joab took him aside in the middle of the gate to speak with him quietly. There Joab stabbed him in the stomach and so that Abner died. In this way, Joab avenged the blood of Asahel his brother. ²⁸ When David heard about this he said, "I and my kingdom are innocent before Yahweh forever regarding the blood of Abner son of Ner." ²⁹ May his blood fall upon the head of Joab and upon all his father's house! May Joab's house never be without someone who has a running sore or leprosy or who is lame and must walk with a staff or who is killed by the sword or does not have

enough food." ³⁰ So Joab and Abishai his brother killed Abner, because he had killed their brother Asahel at Gibeon in battle.

³¹ David said to Joab and to all the people who were with him, "Tear your clothes, gird yourselves with sackcloth, and mourn before Abner's body." Now King David walked behind the body in the funeral procession. ³² They buried Abner in Hebron. The king wept and cried loudly at the tomb of Abner, and all the people also wept. ³³ The king lamented for Abner and sang,

"Should Abner die as a fool dies?

³⁴ Your hands were not bound.

Your feet were not shackled.

As a man falls before the sons of injustice, so you have fallen."

Once more all the people wept over him. ³⁵ All the people came to make David eat while it was still day, but David swore, "May God do so to me, and more also, if I taste bread or anything else before the sun goes down." ³⁶ All the people took notice of David's grief, and it pleased them, as whatever the king did pleased them. ³⁷ So all the people and all Israel understood that day that it was not the king's desire to kill Abner son of Ner. ³⁸ The king said to his servants, "Do you not know that a prince and a great man has fallen this day in Israel? ³⁹ Now I am weak today, though I am an anointed king. These men, the sons of Zeruiah, are too severe for me. May Yahweh repay the evildoer by punishing him for his wickedness, as he deserves."

Chapter 4

¹ When Ish-Bosheth, Saul's son, heard that Abner was dead in Hebron, his hands became weak, and all Israel was troubled. ² Now Saul's son had two men who were captains of groups of soldiers. The name of one was Baanah and the other Rekab, sons of Rimmon the Beerothite, who was from the people of Benjamin (for Beeroth is also considered part of Benjamin, ³ and the Beerothites fled to Gittaim and have been living there until this very time).

⁴ Now Jonathan, Saul's son, had a son who was crippled in his feet. He was five years old when the news about Saul and Jonathan came from Jezreel. His nurse picked him up to flee, but in her hurry, Jonathan's son fell and became lame. His name was Mephibosheth.

⁵ So the sons of Rimmon the Beerothite, Rekab and Baanah, traveled during the heat of the day to the house of Ish-Bosheth, as he was resting at noon. ⁶ The woman guarding the door had fallen asleep while sifting wheat, and Rekab and Baanah walked in quietly and passed her. ⁷ So after they entered the house, they attacked him and killed him as he was lying on his bed in his room. Then they cut off his head and carried it away, traveling on the road all night to the Arabah. ⁸ They brought the head of Ish-Bosheth to David at Hebron, and they said to the king, "Look, this is the head of Ish-Bosheth son of Saul, your enemy, who sought your life. Today Yahweh has avenged our master the king against Saul and his descendants." ⁹ David answered Rekab and Baanah his brother, the sons of Rimmon the Beerothite; he said to them, "As Yahweh lives, who delivered my life from every trouble, ¹⁰ when someone told me, 'Look, Saul is dead,' thinking he was bringing good news, I seized him and killed him at Ziklag. That was the reward I gave him for his news. ¹¹ How much more, when wicked men have killed an innocent person in his own house on his bed, should I not now require his blood from your hand and completely remove you from the earth?" ¹² Then David gave orders to the young men, and they killed them and cut off their hands and feet and hung them up beside the pool at Hebron. But they took the head of Ish-Bosheth and buried it in the grave of Abner in Hebron.

Chapter 5

¹ Then all the tribes of Israel came to David at Hebron and said, "Look, we are your flesh and bone." ² In the recent past, when Saul was king over us, it was you who led the Israelite army. Yahweh said to you, "You will shepherd my people Israel, and you will become ruler over Israel." ³ So all the elders of Israel came to the king at Hebron, and King David made a covenant with them before Yahweh. They anointed David king over Israel. ⁴ David was thirty years old when he began to reign, and he reigned forty years. ⁵ In Hebron he reigned over Judah seven years and six months, and in Jerusalem he reigned thirty-three years over all Israel and Judah.

⁶ The king and his men went to Jerusalem against the Jebusites, the inhabitants of the land. They said to David, "You will not come here except to be turned away by the blind and the lame. David cannot come here." ⁷ Nevertheless, David captured the stronghold of Zion, which now is the city of David. ⁸ At that time David said, "Those who attack the Jebusites will have to go through the water shaft to reach the 'lame and the blind' who are David's enemies." That is why people say, "The 'blind and the lame' must not enter the palace." ⁹ So David lived in the stronghold and called it the city of David. He fortified around it, from the terrace toward the inside. ¹⁰ David became very powerful because Yahweh, the God of hosts, was with him.

¹¹ Then Hiram king of Tyre sent messengers to David, and cedar trees, carpenters, and masons. They built a house for David. ¹² David knew that Yahweh had established him as king over Israel, and that he had exalted his kingdom for the sake of his people Israel.

¹³ After David left Hebron and came to Jerusalem, he took more concubines and wives in Jerusalem, and more sons and daughters were born to him. ¹⁴ These were the names of the children who were born to him in Jerusalem: Shammua, Shobab, Nathan, Solomon, ¹⁵ Ibhar, Elishua, Nepheg, Japhia, ¹⁶ Elishama, Eliada, and Eliphelet.

¹⁷ Now when the Philistines heard that David had been anointed as king over Israel, they all went out looking for him. But David heard about it and went down to the stronghold. ¹⁸ Now the Philistines had come and spread out in the Valley of Rephaim. ¹⁹ Then David asked for help from Yahweh. He said, "Should I attack the Philistines? Will you give victory over them?" Yahweh said to David, "Attack, for I will certainly give you victory over the Philistines." ²⁰ So David attacked at Baal Perazim, and there he defeated them. He commented, "Yahweh has burst through my enemies before me like a bursting flood of water." So he called the name of that place Baal Perazim. ²¹ The Philistines left their idols there, and David and his men carried them away.

²² Then the Philistines came up again and spread out once more in the Valley of Rephaim. ²³ So David sought help from Yahweh again, and Yahweh said to him, "You must not attack their front, but rather circle around behind them and come on them through the balsam woods." ²⁴ When you hear the sound of marching in the wind blowing through the balsam treetops, then attack with force. Do this because Yahweh will have gone out before you to attack the army of the Philistines." ²⁵ So David did as Yahweh had commanded him. He killed Philistines from Geba all the way to Gezer.

Chapter 6

¹ Now David again gathered together all the chosen men of Israel, thirty thousand. ² David arose and went with all his men who were with him from Baalah in Judah to bring up from there the ark of God, which is called by the name of Yahweh of hosts, who sits enthroned over the cherubim. ³ They set the ark of God on a new cart. They brought it out of Abinadab's house, which was on a hill. Uzzah and Ahio, his sons, were guiding the new cart. ⁴ They brought the cart out of Abinadab's house on the hill with the ark of God on it. Ahio was walking in front of the ark. ⁵ Then David and all the house of Israel began to play before Yahweh, celebrating with instruments made of fir wood, harps, lyres, tambourines, rattles, and cymbals.

⁶ When they came to the threshing floor of Nakon, the oxen stumbled, and Uzzah reached out with his hand to grab the ark of God, and he took hold of it. ⁷ Then the anger of Yahweh burned against Uzzah. God attacked him there for his sin. Uzzah died there by the ark of God. ⁸ David was angry because Yahweh had attacked Uzzah, and he called the name of that place Perez Uzzah. That place is called Perez Uzza to this day. ⁹ David was afraid of Yahweh that day. He said, "How can the ark of Yahweh come to me?" ¹⁰ So David was not willing to take the ark of Yahweh with him into the city of David. Instead, he put it aside in the house of Obed-Edom the Gittite. ¹¹ The ark of Yahweh remained in the house of Obed-Edom the Gittite for three months. So Yahweh blessed him and all his household. ¹² Now King David was told, "Yahweh has blessed Obed-Edom's house and everything that belongs to him because of the ark of God." So David went and brought up the ark of God from Obed-Edom's house to the city of David with joy. ¹³ When those who were carrying the ark of Yahweh had gone six steps, he sacrificed an ox and a fattened calf. ¹⁴ David danced before Yahweh with all his might; he was wearing only a linen ephod. ¹⁵ So David and all the house of Israel brought up the ark of Yahweh with shouting and the sound of rams' horns.

¹⁶ Now as the ark of Yahweh came into the city of David, Michal, daughter of Saul, looked out the window. She saw King David leaping and dancing before Yahweh. Then she despised him in her heart. ¹⁷ They brought in the ark of Yahweh and put it in its place, in the middle of the tent that David had set up for it. Then David offered burnt offerings and fellowship offerings before Yahweh. ¹⁸ When David had finished sacrificing the burnt offerings and the fellowship offerings, he blessed the people in the name of Yahweh of hosts. ¹⁹ Then he distributed among all the people, the whole multitude of Israel, both to men and women, a loaf of bread, a portion of meat, and a cake of raisins. Then all the people left; each one returned to his own house.

²⁰ Then David returned to bless his family. Michal, the daughter of Saul, came out to meet David and said, "How honored the king of Israel was today, who undressed himself today before the eyes of the slave girls among his servants, like one of the crude fellows who shamelessly undresses himself!" ²¹ David responded to Michal, "I did that before Yahweh, who chose me above your father and above all his family, who appointed me leader over the people of Yahweh, over Israel. Before Yahweh I will be joyful! ²² I will be even more undignified than this, and I will be humiliated in my own eyes. But by these slave girls you have spoken about, I will be honored." ²³ So Michal, the daughter of Saul, had no children to the day of her death.

Chapter 7

¹ It happened that after the king had settled in his house, and after Yahweh had given him rest from all his surrounding enemies, ² the king said to Nathan the prophet, "Look, I am living in a house of cedar, but the ark of God is staying in the middle of a tent."

³ Then Nathan said to the king, "Go, do what is in your heart, for Yahweh is with you."

⁴ But that same night the word of Yahweh came to Nathan, saying: ⁵ "Go and tell David my servant, 'This is what Yahweh says: Will you build me a house in which to live?' ⁶ For I have not lived in a house from the day that I brought up the people of Israel out of Egypt until this present day. Rather, I have been moving about in a tent, a tabernacle. ⁷ In all places where I have moved among all the people of Israel, did I ever say anything to anyone from the tribes of Israel whom I appointed to shepherd my people Israel, saying, 'Why have you not built me a house of cedar?'"

⁸ "Now then, tell my servant David, 'This is what Yahweh of hosts says: I took you from the pasture, from following the sheep, so that you would be ruler over my people Israel. ⁹ I have been with you wherever you went. I have cut off all your enemies from before you. Now I will make your name great, like the names of the great ones of the earth. ¹⁰ I will appoint a place for my people Israel and will plant them there, so that they may live in their own place and be troubled no more. No longer will wicked people oppress them, as they did before, ¹¹ as they were doing from the days that I commanded judges to be over my people Israel. Now I will give you rest from all your enemies.

"Moreover, Yahweh declares to you that Yahweh will make you a house. ¹² When your days are fulfilled and you lie down with your fathers, I will raise up a descendant after you, one who will come out from your body, and I will establish his kingdom. ¹³ He will build a house for my name, and I will establish the throne of his kingdom forever. ¹⁴ I will be a father to him, and he will be my son. When he commits iniquity, I will discipline him with the rod of men and with the whipping of the sons of men. ¹⁵ But my covenant faithfulness will not leave him, as I took it from Saul, whom I removed from before you. ¹⁶ Your house and kingdom will be confirmed forever before you. Your throne will be established forever."

¹⁷ Nathan spoke to David and reported to him all these words, and he told him about the entire vision.

¹⁸ Then David the king went in and sat before Yahweh and said, "Who am I, Lord Yahweh, and what is my family that you have brought me to this point? ¹⁹ Now this was a small thing in your sight, Lord Yahweh. You have even spoken about your servant's family for a great while to come, and have shown me future generations, Lord Yahweh!

²⁰ "What more can I, David, say to you? You have known your servant, Lord Yahweh. ²¹ For your word's sake, and to fulfill your own purpose, you have done this great thing and revealed it to your servant.

²² "Therefore you are great, Lord Yahweh, for there is no one like you, and there is no God besides you, as we have heard with our own ears. ²³ What nation is like your people Israel, the one nation on earth whom you, God, went and rescued for yourself? You did this so that they would become a people for yourself, to make a name for yourself, and to do great and fearful deeds for your land. You drove out nations and their gods from before your people, whom you rescued from Egypt. ²⁴ You established Israel as your own people forever, and you, Yahweh, became their God.

²⁵ "So now, Yahweh God, may the promise that you made concerning your servant and his family be established forever. Do as you have spoken. ²⁶ May your name be forever great, so the people will say, 'Yahweh of hosts is the God of Israel,' while the house of me, David, your servant is established before you.

²⁷ "For you, Yahweh of hosts, the God of Israel, have revealed to your servant that you will build him a house. That is why I, your servant, have found courage to pray to you. ²⁸ Now, Lord Yahweh, you are God, and your words are trustworthy, and you have made this good promise to your servant. ²⁹ Now then, let it please you to bless the house of your servant, so that it may continue forever before you. For you, Lord Yahweh, have said these things, and with your blessing your servant's house will be blessed forever."

Chapter 8

¹ After this it came about that David defeated the Philistines and subdued them. So David took Metheg Ammah from the control of the Philistines.

² Then he defeated Moab and measured their men with a line by making them lie down on the ground. He measured off two lines to put to death, and one full line to keep alive. So the Moabites became servants to David and began to pay him tribute.

³ David then defeated Hadadezer son of Rehob, the king of Zobah, as Hadadezer was traveling to recover his rule by the Euphrates River. ⁴ David captured from him 1,700 chariots and twenty thousand footmen. David hamstringed all the chariot horses, but reserved enough of them for a hundred chariots. ⁵ When the Arameans of Damascus came to help Hadadezer king of Zobah, David killed twenty-two thousand Aramean men. ⁶ Then David put garrisons in Aram of Damascus, and the Arameans became servants to him and brought him tribute. Yahweh gave victory to David wherever he went. ⁷ David took the golden shields that were on Hadadezer's servants and brought them to Jerusalem. ⁸ From Tebah and Berothai, cities of Hadadezer, King David took very much bronze.

⁹ When Tou, king of Hamath, heard that David had defeated all the army of Hadadezer, ¹⁰ Tou sent Hadoram his son to King David to greet him and to bless him, because David had fought against Hadadezer and defeated him, and because Hadadezer had waged war against Tou. Hadoram brought with himself objects of silver, gold, and bronze. ¹¹ King David dedicated these objects to Yahweh, together with the silver and gold that he had dedicated, which came from all the nations that he had conquered— ¹² from Aram, Moab, the people of Ammon, the Philistines, and Amalek, along with all of the plundered goods of Hadadezer son of Rehob, the king of Zobah.

¹³ David's name was well known when he returned from conquering the Arameans in the Valley of Salt, with their eighteen thousand men. ¹⁴ He placed garrisons throughout all of Edom, and all the Edomites became servants to him. Yahweh gave victory to David wherever he went.

¹⁵ David reigned over all Israel, and he administered justice and righteousness to all his people. ¹⁶ Joab son of Zeruiah was the commander of the army, and Jehoshaphat son of Ahilud was recorder. ¹⁷ Zadok son of Ahitub and Ahimelek son of Abiathar were priests, and Seraiah was scribe. ¹⁸ Benaiah son of Jehoiada was in charge of the Kerethites and Pelethites, and David's sons were the priests. ^[1]

Footnotes

8:18 ^[1]The ancient Greek translations and some modern translations have this as it is in 1 Chronicles 18:17,

Chapter 9

¹ David said, "Is there anyone left in Saul's family to whom I may show kindness for Jonathan's sake?" ² There was in Saul's family a servant whose name was Ziba, and they called him to David. The king said to him, "Are you Ziba?" He replied, "Yes. I am your servant." ³ So the king said, "Is there not anyone left of Saul's family to whom I may show the kindness of God?" Ziba replied to the king, "Jonathan still has a son, who is lame in his feet." ⁴ The king said to him, "Where is he?" Ziba replied to the king, "Look, he is in the house of Makir son of Ammiel in Lo Debar." ⁵ Then King David sent and had him brought out of the house of Makir son of Ammiel from Lo Debar. ⁶ So Mephibosheth son of Jonathan son of Saul, came to David and bowed down his face to the floor in honor of David. David said, "Mephibosheth." He answered, "See, I am your servant!" ⁷ David said to him, "Do not be afraid, for I will surely show you kindness for Jonathan your father's sake, and I will restore to you all the land of Saul your grandfather, and you will always eat at my table." ⁸ Mephibosheth bowed and said, "What is your servant, that you should look with favor on such a dead dog as I am?"

⁹ Then the king called to Ziba, Saul's servant, and said to him, "All that belonged to Saul and his family I have given to your master's grandson. ¹⁰ You, your sons, and your servants must till the land for him and you must harvest the crops so that your master's grandson will have food to eat. For Mephibosheth, your master's grandson, must always eat at my table." Now Ziba had fifteen sons and twenty servants. ¹¹ Then Ziba said to the king, "Your servant will do all that my master the king commands his servant." The king added, "As for Mephibosheth he will eat at my table, as one of the king's sons." ¹² Mephibosheth had a young son whose name was Mika. All who lived in the house of Ziba were servants of Mephibosheth. ¹³ So Mephibosheth lived in Jerusalem, and he always ate at the king's table, though he was lame in both his feet.

Chapter 10

¹ It came about later that the king of the people of Ammon died, and that Hanun his son became king in his place. ² David said, "I will show kindness to Hanun son of Nahash, as his father showed kindness to me." So David sent his servants to comfort Hanun concerning his father. His servants entered the land of the people of Ammon. ³ But the leaders of the people of Ammon said to Hanun their master, "Do you really think that David is honoring your father because he has sent men to comfort you? Has not David sent his servants to you to look at the city, to spy it out, in order to overthrow it?" ⁴ So Hanun took David's servants, shaved off half their beards, cut off their garments up to their buttocks, and sent them away. ⁵ When they explained this to David, he sent to meet with them, for the men were deeply ashamed. The king said, "Stay at Jericho until your beards have grown back, and then return."

⁶ When the people of Ammon saw that they had become a stench to David, the people of Ammon sent messengers and hired the Arameans of Beth Rehob and Zobah, twenty thousand foot soldiers, and the king of Maakah with a thousand men, and the men of Tob with twelve thousand men. ⁷ When David heard of it, he sent Joab and all the army of soldiers. ⁸ The Ammonites came out and formed a line of battle at the entrance to their city gate, while the Arameans of Zobah and of Rehob, and the men of Tob and Maakah, stood by themselves in the open fields.

⁹ When Joab saw the battle lines facing him both in front and behind, he chose some of Israel's best fighters and arranged them against the Arameans. ¹⁰ The rest of his people he put into the hand of Abishai his brother, and he set them out in position to fight against the army of Ammon. ¹¹ Joab said, "If the Arameans are too strong for me, then you, Abishai, must rescue me. But if the army of Ammon is too strong for you, then I will come and rescue you. ¹² Be strong, and let us show ourselves to be strong for our people and for the cities of our God, for Yahweh will do what is good for his purpose." ¹³ So Joab and the soldiers of his army advanced to the battle against the Arameans, who were forced to flee before the army of Israel. ¹⁴ When the army of Ammon saw that the Arameans had fled, they also fled from Abishai and went back into the city. Then Joab returned from the people of Ammon and went back to Jerusalem.

¹⁵ When the Arameans saw that they were being defeated by Israel, they gathered themselves together again. ¹⁶ Then Hadarezer sent for Aramean troops from beyond the Euphrates River. They came to Helam, and Shobak, the commander of Hadarezer's army, went before them. ¹⁷ When David was told this, he gathered all Israel together, crossed the Jordan, and arrived at Helam. The Arameans arranged themselves in battle lines against David and fought him. ¹⁸ The Arameans fled from Israel, and David killed seven hundred of their men in chariots and forty thousand horsemen. Shobak the commander of their army was wounded and died there. ¹⁹ When all the kings who were servants of Hadarezer saw that they were defeated by Israel, they made peace with Israel and became their subjects. So the Arameans were afraid to help the people of Ammon anymore.

Chapter 11

¹ It came about in the spring of the year, at the time when kings normally go to war, that David sent out Joab, his servants, and all the army of Israel. They destroyed the army of Ammon and besieged Rabbah. But David stayed in Jerusalem.

² So it came about one evening that David got up from his bed and walked on the roof of his palace. From there he happened to see a woman who was bathing, and the woman was very beautiful to look at. ³ So David sent and he asked people who would know about the woman. Someone said, "Is not this Bathsheba, the daughter of Eliam, and is she not the wife of Uriah the Hittite?" ⁴ David sent messengers and took her; she came to him, and he lay with her (for she had just purified herself from her uncleanness). Then she returned to her house. ⁵ The woman conceived, and she sent and told David; she said, "I am pregnant."

⁶ Then David sent to Joab saying, "Send me Uriah the Hittite." So Joab sent Uriah to David. ⁷ When Uriah arrived, David asked him how Joab was, how the army was doing, and how the war was going. ⁸ David said to Uriah, "Go down to your house and wash your feet." So Uriah left the king's palace, and the king sent a gift for Uriah after he left. ⁹ But Uriah lay down at the door of the king's palace with all the servants of his master, and he did not go down to his house. ¹⁰ When they told David, "Uriah did not go down to his house," David said to Uriah, "Have you not come from a journey? Why did you not go down to your house?" ¹¹ Uriah answered David, "The ark, and Israel and Judah are staying in tents, and my master Joab and my master's servants are camped in an open field. How then can I go into my house to eat and to drink and to lie with my wife? As sure as you are alive, I will not do this." ¹² So David said to Uriah, "Stay here today also, and tomorrow I will let you leave." So Uriah stayed in Jerusalem that day and the next day. ¹³ When David called him, he ate and drank before him, and David made him drunk. At evening Uriah went out to lie on his bed with the servants of his master; he did not go down to his house.

¹⁴ So in the morning David wrote a letter to Joab, and sent it by the hand of Uriah. ¹⁵ David wrote in the letter saying, "Set Uriah at the very front of the most severe battle, and then withdraw from him, that he may be hit and die." ¹⁶ So as Joab watched the siege upon the city, he assigned Uriah to the place where he knew the strongest enemy soldiers would be fighting. ¹⁷ When the men of the city went out and fought against Joab's army, some of the servants of David fell, and Uriah the Hittite was also killed there. ¹⁸ When Joab sent word to David about everything concerning the war, ¹⁹ he commanded the messenger, saying, "When you have finished telling all the things concerning the war to the king, ²⁰ it may happen that the king will become angry, and he will say to you, 'Why did you go so near to the city to fight? Did you not know that they would shoot from the wall?' ²¹ Who killed Abimelek son of Jerub-Besheth? Did not a woman cast an upper millstone on him from the wall, so that he died at Thebez? Why did you go so near the wall?" Then you must answer, 'Your servant Uriah the Hittite is dead also.'"

²² So the messenger left and went to David and told him everything that Joab had sent him to say. ²³ Then the messenger said to David, "The enemy were stronger than we were at first; they came out to us into the field, but we drove them back to the entrance of the gate. ²⁴ Then their shooters shot at your soldiers from off the wall, and some of the king's servants were killed, and your servant Uriah the Hittite was killed too." ²⁵ Then David said to the messenger, "Say this to Joab, 'Do not let this displease you, for the sword devours one as well as another. Make your battle even stronger against the city, and overthrow it,' and encourage him."

²⁶ So when the wife of Uriah heard that Uriah her husband was dead, she lamented deeply for her husband. ²⁷ When her sorrow passed, David sent and took her home to his palace, and she became his wife and bore him a son. But what David had done displeased Yahweh.

Chapter 12

¹ Then Yahweh sent Nathan to David. He came to him and said, "There were once two men in a city. One man was rich and the other poor. ² The rich man had a great number of sheep and cattle, ³ but the poor man had nothing except one little ewe lamb, which he had bought and fed and raised. It grew up together with him and with his children. The lamb even ate with him and drank from his own cup, and it lay in his bosom and was like a daughter to him. ⁴ One day a visitor came to the rich man, but the rich man was unwilling to take one of his own sheep or cattle to prepare a meal for him. Instead, he took the poor man's ewe lamb and cooked it for his visitor." ⁵ David was hot with anger against the rich man, and he raged to Nathan, "As Yahweh lives, the man who has done this deserves to be put to death. ⁶ He must pay back the lamb four times over because he did such a thing, and because he had no pity on the poor man."

⁷ Then Nathan said to David, "You are that man! Yahweh, the God of Israel, says, 'I anointed you king over Israel, and I rescued you out of the hand of Saul. ⁸ I gave you your master's house, and your master's wives into your arms. I also gave you the house of Israel and Judah. But if that had been too little, I would have given you many other things in addition. ⁹ So why have you despised the commands of Yahweh, so as to do what is evil in his sight? You have struck down Uriah the Hittite with the sword and have taken his wife to be your own wife. You killed him with the sword of the army of Ammon. ¹⁰ So now the sword will never leave your house, because you have despised me and have taken the wife of Uriah the Hittite as your wife.' ¹¹ Yahweh says, 'Look, I will raise up disaster against you out of your own house. Before your own eyes, I will take your wives and give them to your neighbor, and he will lie with your wives in broad daylight. ¹² For you committed your sin secretly, but I will do this thing before all Israel, in the sunlight.'" ¹³ Then David said to Nathan, "I have sinned against Yahweh." Nathan replied to David, "Yahweh also has passed over your sin. You will not be killed. ¹⁴ However, because by this act you have despised Yahweh, the child who is born to you will surely die." ¹⁵ Then Nathan left and went home.

Yahweh attacked the child that Uriah's wife bore to David, and he was very sick. ¹⁶ David then implored God for the boy. David fasted and went inside and lay all night on the floor. ¹⁷ The elders of his house arose and stood beside him, to raise him up from the floor, but he would not get up, and he would not eat with them. ¹⁸ It came about on the seventh day that the child died. David's servants were afraid to tell him that the child was dead, for they said, "Look, while the child was still alive we spoke to him, and he did not listen to our voice. What might he do to himself if we tell him that the boy is dead?!" ¹⁹ But when David saw that his servants were whispering together, David realized that the child was dead. He said to his servants, "Is the child dead?" They answered, "He is dead." ²⁰ Then David arose from the floor and washed himself, anointed himself, and changed his clothes. He went to the tabernacle of Yahweh and worshiped there, and then he came back to his own palace. When he asked for it, they set food before him, and he ate. ²¹ Then his servants said to him, "Why have you done this? You fasted and wept for the child while he was alive, but when the child died, you got up and ate." ²² David answered, "While the child was still alive I fasted and wept. I said, 'Who knows whether or not Yahweh will be gracious to me, that the child may live?' ²³ But now he is dead, so why should I fast? Can I bring him back again? I will go to him, but he will not return to me."

²⁴ David comforted Bathsheba his wife, and went to her and lay with her. Later she gave birth to a son, and the child was named Solomon. Yahweh loved him ²⁵ and he sent word through Nathan the prophet to name him Jedidiah, because Yahweh loved him.

²⁶ Now Joab fought against Rabbah of the Ammonites, and he captured the royal city. ²⁷ So Joab sent messengers to David and said, "I have fought against Rabbah, and I have taken the city's water supply. ²⁸ Now therefore gather the rest of the army together and camp against the city and take it, because if I take the city, it will be named after me." ²⁹ So David gathered all the army together and went to Rabbah; he fought against the city and captured it. ³⁰ David took the crown from their king's head—it weighed a talent of gold, and there was a precious stone in it. The crown was placed on David's own head. Then he brought out the plunder of the city in large quantities. ³¹ He brought out the people who were in the city and forced them to work with saws, iron picks, and axes; he also made them work at brick kilns. David required all the cities of the people of Ammon to do this labor. Then David and all the army returned to Jerusalem.

Chapter 13

¹ It came about after this that David's son Absalom had a beautiful sister whose name was Tamar, and David's son Amnon loved her. ² Amnon was so frustrated that he became sick because of his sister Tamar. She was a virgin, and it seemed impossible to Amnon to do anything to her. ³ But Amnon had a friend whose name was Jonadab son of Shimeah, David's brother. Jonadab was a very shrewd man. ⁴ Jonadab said to Amnon, "Why, son of the king, are you depressed every morning? Will you not tell me?" So Amnon answered him, "I love Tamar, my brother Absalom's sister." ⁵ Then Jonadab said to him, "Lie down on your bed and pretend to be sick. When your father comes to see you, ask him, 'Would you please send my sister Tamar to give me something to eat and cook it before me, so that I may see it and eat it from her hand?'" ⁶ So Amnon lay down and pretended to be sick. When the king came to see him, Amnon said to the king, "Please send my sister Tamar to make some food for my sickness in front of me so that I may eat from her hand."

⁷ Then David sent word to Tamar at his palace, saying, "Go now to your brother Amnon's house and prepare food for him." ⁸ So Tamar went to her brother Amnon's house where he was lying down. She took dough and kneaded it and formed bread in his sight, and then she baked it. ⁹ She took the pan and gave the bread to him, but he refused to eat. Then Amnon said to the others present, "Send everyone out, away from me." So everyone went out from him. ¹⁰ So Amnon said to Tamar, "Bring the food into my room that I may eat from your hand." So Tamar took the bread that she had made, and brought it into the room of Amnon her brother. ¹¹ When she had brought the food to him, he took hold of her and said to her, "Come, lie with me, my sister." ¹² She answered him, "No, my brother, do not force me, for nothing like this should be done in Israel. Do not do this disgraceful thing! ¹³ How could I be rid of my shame? What about you? You would be like one of the fools in Israel! Now, please speak to the king, for he would not keep me from you." ¹⁴ However Amnon would not listen to her, and he was stronger than she was, and he overpowered her, and he lay with her.

¹⁵ Then Amnon hated Tamar with extreme hatred. The hatred with which he hated her was even greater than the love with which he had loved her. Amnon said to her, "Get up and go." ¹⁶ But she responded to him, "No! Because this great evil of making me leave is even worse than what you did to me!" But Amnon did not listen to her. ¹⁷ Instead, he called his personal servant and said, "Take this woman away from me, and bolt the door after her." ¹⁸ Then his servant brought her out and bolted the door after her. Tamar was wearing a beautifully decorated garment because the king's daughters who were virgins dressed in such robes. ¹⁹ Tamar put ashes on her head and tore her beautifully decorated garment. She put her hands on her head and walked away, crying aloud as she went.

²⁰ Absalom her brother said to her, "Has Amnon your brother been with you? But now keep quiet, my sister. He is your brother. Do not take this thing to heart." So Tamar remained alone in her brother Absalom's house. ²¹ But when King David heard of all these things, he was very angry. ²² Absalom said nothing to Amnon, for Absalom hated him for what he had done to her and how he had disgraced his sister Tamar.

²³ It came about after two full years that Absalom had sheep shearers working at Baal Hazor, which is near Ephraim, and Absalom invited all the king's sons to visit there. ²⁴ Absalom went to the king and said, "See now, your servant has sheep shearers. Please, may the king and his servants go with me, your servant." ²⁵ The king answered Absalom, "No, my son, all of us should not go because we would be a burden to you." Absalom begged the king, but he would not go, but he gave him his blessing. ²⁶ Then Absalom said, "If not, please let my brother Amnon go with us." So the king said to him, "Why should Amnon go with you?" ²⁷ Absalom pressed David, and so he let Amnon and all the king's sons go with him. ²⁸ Absalom commanded his servants saying, "Listen closely. When Amnon begins to be affected by the wine, and when I say to you, 'Attack Amnon,' then put him to death. Do not be afraid. Have I not commanded you? Be courageous and brave." ²⁹ So Absalom's servants did to Amnon as he had commanded them. Then all the king's sons arose, and every man mounted his mule and fled.

³⁰ So it came about, while they were on the road, that the news came to David saying, "Absalom has killed all the king's sons, and there is not one of them left." ³¹ Then the king arose and tore his clothes, and lay on the floor; all his servants stood by with their clothes torn. ³² Jonadab son of Shimeah, David's brother, answered and said, "Let not my master believe that they have killed all the young men who are

the king's sons, for Amnon only is dead. Absalom has planned this from the day that Amnon violated his sister Tamar. ³³ So therefore let not my master the king take this report to heart, so as to believe that all the king's sons are dead, for Amnon only is dead."

³⁴ Absalom fled away. A servant keeping watch raised his eyes and saw many people coming on the road on the hillside west of him. ³⁵ Then Jonadab said to the king, "Look, the king's sons are coming. It is just as your servant said." ³⁶ So it came about when he finished speaking, the king's sons arrived and raised their voices and wept. The king and all his servants also wept bitterly.

³⁷ But Absalom fled and went to Talmai son of Ammihud, the king of Geshur. David mourned for his son every day. ³⁸ So Absalom fled and went to Geshur, where he was for three years. ³⁹ The mind of King David longed to go out to see Absalom, for he was comforted concerning Amnon and his death.

Chapter 14

¹ Now Joab son of Zeruiah knew that the king's heart went out to Absalom. ² So Joab sent word to Tekoa and had a wise woman brought to him. He said to her, "Please pretend you are a mourner and put on mourning clothes. Please do not anoint yourself with oil, but be like a woman who has mourned a long time for the dead." ³ Then go to the king and speak to him about what I will describe." So Joab told her the words she was to say to the king.

⁴ When the woman from Tekoa spoke to the king, she lay facedown on the ground and said, "Help me, king." ⁵ The king said to her, "What is wrong?" She answered, "The truth is that I am a widow, and my husband is dead. ⁶ I, your servant, had two sons, and they fought with each other in the field, and there was no one to separate them. One struck the other and killed him. ⁷ Now the whole clan has risen against your servant, and they say, 'Give into our hand the man who struck his brother, so that we may put him to death, to pay for the life of his brother whom he killed.' So they would also destroy the heir. Thus they will put out the burning coal that I have left, and they will leave for my husband neither name nor descendant on the surface of the earth."

⁸ So the king said to the woman, "Go to your house, and I will command something to be done for you." ⁹ The woman of Tekoa replied to the king, "My master, king, may the guilt be on me and on my father's family. The king and his throne are guiltless." ¹⁰ The king replied, "Whoever says anything to you, bring him to me, and he will not touch you anymore." ¹¹ Then she said, "Please, may the king call to mind Yahweh your God, so that the avenger of blood will not destroy anyone further, so that they will not destroy my son." The king replied, "As Yahweh lives, not one hair of your son will fall to the ground."

¹² Then the woman said, "Please let your servant speak a further word to my master the king." He said, "Speak on." ¹³ So the woman said, "Why then have you devised such a thing against the people of God? For in saying this thing, the king is like someone who is guilty, because the king has not brought back home again his banished son. ¹⁴ For we all must die, and we are like water spilled on the ground, which cannot be gathered up again. But God will not take away life. Rather, he devises a way for those who were driven away not to remain outcast. ¹⁵ Now then, seeing that I have come to speak this thing to my master the king, it is because the people have made me afraid. So your servant said to herself, 'I will now speak to the king. It may be that the king will perform the request of his servant. ¹⁶ Perhaps the king will listen to me and deliver his servant from the hand of the man who would destroy me and my son together, out of the inheritance God gave us.' ¹⁷ Then your servant prayed, 'Yahweh, please let the word of my master the king give me relief, for as an angel of God, so is my master the king in telling good from evil.' May Yahweh your God be with you."

¹⁸ Then the king answered and said to the woman, "Please do not hide from me anything that I will ask you." The woman replied, "Let my master the king now speak." ¹⁹ The king said, "Is not the hand of Joab with you in all this?" The woman answered and said, "As you live, my master the king, no one can escape to the right hand or to the left from anything that my master the king has spoken. It was your servant Joab who commanded me and told me to say these things that your servant has spoken. ²⁰ Your servant Joab has done this to change the course of what is happening. My master is wise, like the wisdom of an angel of God, and he knows everything that is happening in the land."

²¹ So the king said to Joab, "See now, I will do this thing. Go then, and bring the young man Absalom back." ²² So Joab lay facedown on the ground in honor and gratitude to the king. Joab said, "Today your servant knows that I have found favor in your eyes, my master, king, in that the king has performed the request of his servant." ²³ So Joab arose, went to Geshur, and brought Absalom back to Jerusalem. ²⁴ The king said, "He may return to his own house, but he may not see my face." So Absalom returned to his own house, but did not see the king's face.

²⁵ Now in all Israel there was no one praised for his handsomeness more than Absalom. From the sole of his foot to the top of his head there was no blemish in him. ²⁶ When he cut the hair of his head at the end of every year, because it was heavy on him, he weighed his hair; it would weigh about two hundred shekels, which is measured by the weight of the king's standard. ²⁷ To Absalom were born three sons and one daughter, whose name was Tamar. She was a beautiful woman.

28 Absalom lived two full years in Jerusalem, without seeing the king's face. **29** Then Absalom sent word for Joab to send him to the king, but Joab would not come to him. So Absalom sent word a second time, but Joab still did not come. **30** So Absalom said to his servants, "See, Joab's field is near mine, and he has barley there. Go and set it on fire." So Absalom's servants set the field on fire. **31** Then Joab arose and came to Absalom at his house, and said to him, "Why have your servants set my field on fire?" **32** Absalom answered Joab, "Look, I sent word to you saying, 'Come here so I may send you to the king to say, "Why did I come from Geshur? It would be better for me to still be there. Now therefore let me see the king's face, and if I am guilty, let him kill me."'" **33** So Joab went to the king and told him. When the king called for Absalom, he came to the king and bowed low to the ground before the king, and the king kissed Absalom.

Chapter 15

¹ It came about after this that Absalom prepared a chariot and horses for himself, with fifty men to run before him. ² Absalom would get up early and stand beside the road leading to the city gate. When any man had a dispute to come to the king for judgment, Absalom would call to him and say, "From what city have you come?" Then the man would answer, "Your servant is from one of the tribes of Israel." ³ So Absalom would say to him, "Look, your case is good and in the right, but there is no one empowered by the king to hear your case." ⁴ Absalom would add, "I wish that I were made judge in the land, so that every man who had any dispute or cause might come to me, and I would bring him justice!" ⁵ So it came about that when any man came to Absalom to honor him, Absalom would put out his hand and take hold of him and kiss him. ⁶ Absalom acted in this way to all Israel who came to the king for judgment. So Absalom stole the hearts of the men of Israel.

⁷ It came about at the end of four years that Absalom said to the king, "Please let me go and pay a vow that I have made to Yahweh in Hebron. ⁸ For your servant made a vow while I was living at Geshur in Aram, saying, 'If Yahweh will indeed bring me again to Jerusalem, then I will worship Yahweh.'" ⁹ So the king said to him, "Go in peace." So Absalom arose and went to Hebron. ¹⁰ But then Absalom sent spies throughout all the tribes of Israel, saying, "As soon as you hear the sound of the ram's horn, then you must say, 'Absalom is king in Hebron.'" ¹¹ With Absalom went two hundred men from Jerusalem, who were invited. They went in their innocence, not knowing anything that Absalom had planned. ¹² While Absalom offered sacrifices, he sent for Ahithophel from his hometown of Giloh. He was David's counselor. Absalom's conspiracy was strong, for the people following Absalom were constantly increasing.

¹³ A messenger came to David saying, "The hearts of the men of Israel are following after Absalom." ¹⁴ So David said to all his servants who were with him at Jerusalem, "Arise and let us flee, or none of us will escape from Absalom. Prepare to leave immediately, or he will quickly overtake us, and he will bring down disaster on us and attack the city with the edge of the sword." ¹⁵ The king's servants said to the king, "Look, your servants are ready to do whatever our master the king decides." ¹⁶ The king left and all his family after him, but the king left ten women, who were concubines, to keep the palace. ¹⁷ After the king went out and all the people after him, they stopped at the last house. ¹⁸ All his servants marched with him, and before him went all the Kerethites, and all the Pelethites, and all the Gittites—six hundred men who had followed him from Gath marched with the king.

¹⁹ Then the king said to Ittai the Gittite, "Why will you come with us? Return and stay with the king, for you are a foreigner and an exile. Return to your own place. ²⁰ Since you just left yesterday, why should I make you wander all over with us? I do not even know where I am going. So return and take your fellow countrymen with you, and may steadfast love and faithfulness go with you." ²¹ But Ittai answered the king and said, "As Yahweh lives, and as my master the king lives, surely in whatever place where my master the king goes, there also will your servant go, whether that means living or dying." ²² So David said to Ittai, "Go ahead and continue with us." So Ittai the Gittite marched with the king, along with all his men and all the families who were with him. ²³ All the country wept with a loud voice as all the people passed by over the Kidron Valley, and as the king also himself crossed over. All the people traveled on the road toward the wilderness.

²⁴ Even Zadok with all the Levites, carrying the ark of the covenant of God, were present. They set the ark of God down, and then Abiathar joined them. They waited until all the people had passed by out of the city. ²⁵ The king said to Zadok, "Carry the ark of God back into the city. If I find favor in the eyes of Yahweh, he will bring me back here and show me again the ark and the place where he lives. ²⁶ But if he says, 'I am not pleased with you,' look, here am I, let him do to me whatever seems good to him." ²⁷ The king also said to Zadok the priest, "Are you not a seer? Return into the city in peace, and your two sons with you, Ahimaaz your son, and Jonathan son of Abiathar. ²⁸ See, I will wait at the fords of the wilderness until word comes from you to inform me." ²⁹ So Zadok and Abiathar carried the ark of God back into Jerusalem, and they stayed there.

³⁰ But David ascended barefoot and weeping up the Mount of Olives, and he had his head covered. Every man of the people who were with him covered his head, and they went up weeping as they walked. ³¹ Someone told David saying, "Ahithophel is among the conspirators with Absalom." So David prayed, "O Yahweh, please turn Ahithophel's advice into foolishness." ³² It came about that when David arrived at

the top of the road, where God used to be worshiped, Hushai the Arkite came to meet him with his coat torn and earth on his head. ³³ David said to him, "If you travel with me, then you will be a burden to me. ³⁴ But if you return to the city and say to Absalom, 'I will be your servant, king, as I have been your father's servant in time past, so will I now be your servant,' then you will confuse Ahithophel's advice for me. ³⁵ Will you not have the priests Zadok and Abiathar with you? So whatever you hear in the king's palace, you must tell it to Zadok and Abiathar the priests. ³⁶ See that they have there with them their two sons, Ahimaaz, Zadok's son, and Jonathan, Abiathar's son. You must send to me by their hand everything that you hear." ³⁷ So Hushai, David's friend, came into the city as Absalom arrived and entered into Jerusalem.

Chapter 16

¹ When David had gone a short distance over the summit of the hill, Ziba the servant of Mephibosheth met him with a couple of saddled donkeys; on them were two hundred loaves of bread, one hundred clusters of raisins, and one hundred bunches of figs, and a skin of wine. ² The king said to Ziba, "Why did you bring these things?" Ziba replied, "The donkeys are for the king's household to ride on, the bread and fig cakes are for your young men to eat, and the wine is for anyone who is faint in the wilderness to drink." ³ The king said, "Then where is your master's grandson?" Ziba replied to the king, "Look, he has stayed behind in Jerusalem, for he said, 'Today the house of Israel will restore my father's kingdom to me.'" ⁴ Then the king said to Ziba, "Look, all that belonged to Mephibosheth now belongs to you." Ziba answered, "I bow in humility to you, my master, king. Let me find favor in your eyes."

⁵ When King David approached Bahurim, a man from the family of the clan of Saul came out from there. His name was Shimei son of Gera, and he cursed as he came out. ⁶ He threw stones at David and at all of the king's servants, in spite of the people and mighty men who were on the king's right and left. ⁷ Shimei called out in cursing, "Go away, get out of here, you man of blood, you worthless man!" ⁸ Yahweh has repaid all of you for the blood you shed within the family of Saul, in whose place you have reigned. Yahweh has given the kingdom into the hand of Absalom your son. You have come to ruin because you are a man of blood."

⁹ Then Abishai son of Zeruiah, said to the king, "Why should this dead dog curse my master the king? Please let me go over and take off his head." ¹⁰ But the king said, "What have I to do with you, sons of Zeruiah? Perhaps he is cursing me because Yahweh has said to him, 'Curse David.' Who then could say to him, 'Why are you cursing the king?'" ¹¹ So David said to Abishai and to all his servants, "Look, my son, who was born from my body, wants to take my life. How much more may this Benjamite now desire my ruin? Leave him alone and let him curse, for Yahweh has commanded him to do it." ¹² Perhaps Yahweh will look at the misery unleashed on me, and repay me with good for his cursing me today." ¹³ So David and his men traveled on the road, while Shimei went beside him up on the hillside, cursing and throwing dust and stones at him as he went. ¹⁴ Then the king and all the people who were with him became weary, and he rested when they stopped for the night.

¹⁵ As for Absalom and all the people of the men of Israel who were with him, they came to Jerusalem, and Ahithophel was with him. ¹⁶ It came about when Hushai the Arkite, David's friend, had come to Absalom, that Hushai said to Absalom, "Long live the king! Long live the king!" ¹⁷ Absalom said to Hushai, "Is this your loyalty to your friend? Why did you not go with him?" ¹⁸ Hushai said to Absalom, "No! The one whom Yahweh and this people and all the men of Israel have chosen, that is the man to whom I will belong, and I will stay with him. ¹⁹ Also, what man should I serve? Should I not serve in the presence of his son? As I have served in your father's presence, I will serve in your presence."

²⁰ Then Absalom said to Ahithophel, "Give us your advice about what we should do." ²¹ Ahithophel answered Absalom, "Go to your father's concubines, whom he has left to keep the palace, and all Israel will hear that you have become a stench to your father. Then the hands of all who are with you will be strong." ²² So they spread for Absalom a tent on the top of the palace, and Absalom went to his father's concubines in the sight of all Israel. ²³ Now the advice of Ahithophel that he gave in those days was as if a man heard from the mouth of God himself. That was how all of Ahithophel's advice was viewed by both David and Absalom.

Chapter 17

¹ Then Ahithophel said to Absalom, "Now let me choose twelve thousand men, and I will arise and pursue David tonight." ² I will come on him while he is weary and weak and will surprise him with fear. The people who are with him will flee, and I will attack only the king. ³ I will bring back all the people to you, like a bride coming to her husband, and all the people will be at peace under you." ⁴ What Ahithophel said pleased Absalom and all the elders of Israel.

⁵ Then Absalom said, "Now call Hushai the Arkite, too, and let us hear what he says." ⁶ When Hushai had come to Absalom, Absalom explained to him what Ahithophel had said and then asked Hushai, "Should we do what Ahithophel has said? If not, tell us what you advise." ⁷ So Hushai said to Absalom, "The advice that Ahithophel has given this time is not good." ⁸ Hushai added, "You know your father and his men are strong warriors, and that they are bitter, and they are like a bear robbed of her cubs in a field. Your father is a man of war; he will not sleep with the army tonight. ⁹ Look, right now he is probably hidden in some pit or in some other place. It will happen that when some of your men have been killed at the beginning of an attack, that whoever hears it will say, 'A slaughter has taken place among the soldiers who follow Absalom.' ¹⁰ Then even the bravest soldiers, whose hearts are like the heart of a lion, will be afraid because all Israel knows that your father is a mighty man, and that the men who are with him are very strong. ¹¹ So I advise you that all Israel should be gathered together to you, from Dan to Beersheba, as numerous as the sands that are by the sea, and that you go to battle in person. ¹² Then we will come on him wherever he may be found, and we will cover him as the dew falls on the ground. We will not leave even one of his men, or him himself, alive. ¹³ If he retreats into a city, then all Israel will bring ropes to that city and we will drag it into the river, until there is no longer even a small stone found there." ¹⁴ Then Absalom and the men of Israel said, "Hushai the Arkite's advice is better than Ahithophel's." Yahweh had ordained the rejection of Ahithophel's good advice in order to bring destruction on Absalom.

¹⁵ Then Hushai said to Zadok and to Abiathar the priests, "Ahithophel advised Absalom and the elders of Israel in such and such a way, but I have advised something else. ¹⁶ Now then, go quickly and report to David; say to him, 'Do not camp tonight at the fords of the wilderness, but by all means cross over, or the king will be swallowed up along with all the people who are with him.'" ¹⁷ Now Jonathan and Ahimaaz were staying at the spring of Rogel. A female servant used to go and inform them what they needed to know, for they could not risk being seen going into the city. When the message came, then they were to go and tell King David. ¹⁸ But a young man saw them this time and told Absalom. So Jonathan and Ahimaaz went away quickly and came to the house of a man in Bahurim, who had a well in his courtyard, into which they descended. ¹⁹ The man's wife took the covering for the well and spread it over the well's opening, and tossed grain over it, so no one knew Jonathan and Ahimaaz were in the well. ²⁰ Absalom's servants came to the woman of the house and said, "Where are Ahimaaz and Jonathan?" The woman told them, "They have crossed over the river." So after they had looked around and could not find them, they returned to Jerusalem.

²¹ It came about after they had left that Jonathan and Ahimaaz came up out of the well. They went to report to King David; they said to him, "Get up and cross quickly over the water because Ahithophel has given such and such advice about you." ²² Then David arose and all the people who were with him, and they crossed over the Jordan. By morning daylight not one of them had failed to cross over the Jordan. ²³ When Ahithophel saw that his advice had not been followed, he saddled his donkey and went to his house in his own city. He set his house in order and hanged himself. So he died and was buried in the tomb of his father.

²⁴ Then David came to Mahanaim. As for Absalom, he crossed over the Jordan, he and all the men of Israel with him. ²⁵ Absalom had set Amasa over the army instead of Joab. Amasa was the son of a man named Jether the Ishmaelite ^[1], who went to Abigail, who was the daughter of Nahash and sister of Zeruiah, the mother of Joab. ²⁶ Then Israel and Absalom camped in the land of Gilead.

²⁷ It came about when David had come to Mahanaim, that Shobi son of Nahash from Rabbah of the Ammonites, and Makir son of Ammiel from Lo Debar, and Barzillai the Gileadite from Rogelim, ²⁸ brought sleeping mats and blankets, bowls and pots, and wheat, barley flour, roasted grain, beans, lentils, ²⁹ honey, butter, sheep, and milk curds from the herd, so that David and the people with him could eat. These men had said, "The people are hungry, weary, and thirsty in the wilderness."

Footnotes

17:25 ^[1]Scholars disagree about whether the word describing Jether should be "Ishmaelite," as it is in the ancient Greek translation, or "Israelite," as it is in the ancient Hebrew text. Some scholars believe that "Israelite" is a scribal error in the Hebrew. "Ishmaelite" is the word used in a parallel passage, 1 Chronicles 2:17, in both the ancient Hebrew and Greek texts.

Chapter 18

¹ David counted the soldiers who were with him and appointed captains of thousands and captains of hundreds over them. ² Then David sent out the army, one-third under the command of Joab, another third under the command of Abishai son of Zeruiah, Joab's brother, and still another third under the command of Ittai the Gittite. The king said to the army, "I will certainly go out with you myself, too." ³ But the men said, "You must not go to battle, for if we flee away they will not care about us, or if half of us die they will not care. But you are worth ten thousand of us! Therefore it is better that you be ready to help us from the city." ⁴ So the king answered them, "I will do whatever seems best to you." The king stood by the city gate while all the army went out by hundreds and by thousands. ⁵ The king commanded Joab, Abishai, and Ittai saying, "Deal gently for my sake with the young man, with Absalom." All the people heard that the king had given the captains this command about Absalom.

⁶ So the army went out into the countryside against Israel; the battle spread into the forest of Ephraim. ⁷ The army of Israel was defeated there before the servants of David; there was a great slaughter there that day of twenty thousand men. ⁸ The battle spread throughout the whole countryside, and more men were consumed by the forest than by the sword.

⁹ Absalom happened to meet some of David's servants. Absalom was riding his mule, and the mule went under the thick branches of a large oak tree, and his head was caught up in the tree branches. He was left dangling between the ground and the sky while the mule he was riding kept going. ¹⁰ Someone saw this and told Joab, "Look, I saw Absalom hanging in an oak tree!" ¹¹ Joab said to the man who told him about Absalom, "Look! You saw him! Why did you not strike him down to the ground? I would have given you ten silver shekels and a belt." ¹² The man replied to Joab, "Even if I received a thousand silver shekels, still I would not have reached out my hand against the king's son, because we all heard the king command you, Abishai, and Ittai, saying, 'No one must touch the young man Absalom.'" ¹³ If I had risked my life by a falsehood (and there is nothing hidden from the king), you would have abandoned me." ¹⁴ Then Joab said, "I will not wait for you." So Joab took three javelins in his hand and thrust them through the heart of Absalom, while he was still alive and hanging from the oak. ¹⁵ Then ten young men who carried Joab's armor surrounded Absalom, attacked him, and killed him.

¹⁶ Then Joab blew the ram's horn, and the army returned from pursuing Israel, for Joab held back the army. ¹⁷ They took Absalom and threw him into a large pit in the forest; they buried his body under a very large pile of stones, while all Israel fled, every man to his own tent. ¹⁸ Now Absalom, while still alive, had built for himself a large stone pillar in the King's Valley, for he said, "I have no son to carry along the memory of my name." He named the pillar after his own name, so it is called Absalom's Monument to this very day.

¹⁹ Then Ahimaaz son of Zadok said, "Let me now run to the king with the good news, how Yahweh has rescued him from the hand of his enemies." ²⁰ Joab answered him, "You will not be the bearer of news today; you must do it another day. Today you will bear no news because the king's son is dead." ²¹ Then Joab said to a Cushite, "Go, tell the king what you have seen." The Cushite bowed down to Joab, and ran. ²² Then Ahimaaz son of Zadok said again to Joab, "Regardless of what may happen, please let me also run and follow the Cushite." Joab replied, "Why do you want to run, my son, seeing that you will have no reward for the news?" ²³ "Whatever happens," said Ahimaaz, "I will run." So Joab answered him, "Run." Then Ahimaaz ran by the way of the plain, and outran the Cushite.

²⁴ Now David was sitting between the inner and outer gates. The watchman had gone up to the roof of the gate to the wall and raised his eyes. As he looked, he saw a man approaching, running alone. ²⁵ The watchman shouted out and told the king. Then the king said, "If he is alone, there is news in his mouth." The runner came closer and neared the city. ²⁶ Then the watchman noticed another man running, and the watchman called to the gatekeeper; he said, "Look, there is another man running alone." The king said, "He is also bringing news." ²⁷ So the watchman said, "I think the running of the man in front is like the running of Ahimaaz son of Zadok." The king said, "He is a good man and is coming with good news."

²⁸ Then Ahimaaz called out and said to the king, "All is well." He bowed himself before the king with his face to the ground and said, "Blessed be Yahweh your God! He has delivered the men who lifted up their hand against my master the king." ²⁹ So the king replied, "Is it well with the young man Absalom?" Ahimaaz answered, "When Joab sent me, the king's servant, to you, king, I saw a great disturbance, but I

did not know what it was." ³⁰ Then the king said, "Turn aside and stand here." So Ahimaaz turned aside, and stood still.

³¹ Immediately then the Cushite arrived and said, "There is good news for my master the king, for Yahweh has avenged you today from all who rose up against you." ³² Then the king said to the Cushite, "Is it well with the young man Absalom?" The Cushite answered, "The enemies of my master the king, and all who rise up against you to do harm to you, should be as that young man is." ³³ Then the king was deeply unnerved, and he went up to the room over the gate and wept. As he went he grieved, "My son Absalom, my son, my son Absalom! I wish I had died instead of you, Absalom, my son, my son!"

Chapter 19

¹ Joab was told, "Look, the king is weeping and mourning for Absalom." ² So the victory that day was turned into mourning for all the army, for the army heard it said that day, "The king is mourning for his son." ³ The soldiers had to sneak quietly into the city that day, like people who are ashamed sneak away when they run from battle. ⁴ The king covered his face and cried in a loud voice, "My son Absalom, Absalom, my son, my son!" ⁵ Then Joab entered into the house to the king and said to him, "You have shamed the faces of all your servants today, who have saved your life today, and the lives of your sons and of your daughters, and the lives of your wives, and the lives of your concubines, ⁶ because you love those who hate you, and you hate those who love you. For today you have shown that commanders and servants are nothing to you. Today I believe that if Absalom had lived, and we all had died, then that would have pleased you. ⁷ Now therefore get up and go out and speak kindly to your servants, for I swear by Yahweh, if you do not go, not one man will remain with you tonight. That would be worse for you than all the disasters that have ever happened to you from your youth until now." ⁸ So the king got up and sat in the city gate, and all the people were told, "Look, the king is sitting in the gate," and all the people came before the king.

So Israel fled, every man to his tent. ⁹ All the people were arguing with each other throughout all the tribes of Israel saying, "The king rescued us out of the hand of our enemies, and he saved us out of the hand of the Philistines, but now he has run out of the land because of Absalom. ¹⁰ Absalom, whom we anointed over us, has died in battle. So why do you say nothing about bringing the king back?"

¹¹ King David sent to Zadok and to Abiathar the priests saying, "Speak to the elders of Judah saying, 'Why are you the last to bring the king back to his palace, since the talk of all Israel favors the king, to bring him back to his palace?' ¹² You are my brothers, my flesh and bone. Why then are you the last to bring back the king?' ¹³ Then say to Amasa, 'Are you not my flesh and my bone? God do so to me, and more also, if you are not captain of my army from now on in the place of Joab.'" ¹⁴ So he won the hearts of all the men of Judah as one man. They sent to the king saying, "Return, you and all your servants." ¹⁵ So the king returned and came to the Jordan. Now the men of Judah came to Gilgal to go to meet the king and then to bring the king across the Jordan.

¹⁶ Shimei son of Gera, the Benjamite, who was from Bahurim, hurried down with the men of Judah to meet King David. ¹⁷ There were one thousand men from Benjamin with him, and Ziba the servant of Saul, and his fifteen sons and twenty servants with him. They crossed through the Jordan in the presence of the king. ¹⁸ They crossed to bring over the king's family and to do whatever he thought good. Shimei son of Gera bowed down before the king just before he began to cross the Jordan. ¹⁹ Shimei said to the king, "Do not, my master, find me guilty or call to mind the wrong your servant did the day my master the king left Jerusalem. Please, may the king not take it to heart. ²⁰ For your servant knows that I have sinned. See, that is why I have come today as the first from all the family of Joseph to come down to meet my master the king."

²¹ But Abishai son of Zeruiah answered and said, "Should not Shimei be put to death for this, because he cursed Yahweh's anointed?" ²² Then David said, "What have I to do with you, you sons of Zeruiah, that you should today be adversaries to me? Will any man be put to death today in Israel? For do I not know that today I am king over Israel?" ²³ So the king said to Shimei, "You will not die." So the king promised him with an oath.

²⁴ Then Mephibosheth son of Saul came down to meet the king. He had not dressed his feet, or trimmed his beard, or washed his clothes from the day the king left until the day he came home in peace. ²⁵ So when he came from Jerusalem to meet the king, the king said to him, "Why did you not go with me, Mephibosheth?" ²⁶ He answered, "My master the king, my servant deceived me, for I said, 'I will saddle a donkey so I may ride on it and go with the king, because your servant is lame.' ²⁷ My servant Ziba has slandered me, your servant, to my master the king. But my master the king is like an angel of God. Therefore, do what is good in your eyes. ²⁸ For all my father's house were dead men before my master the king, but you set your servant among those who ate at your own table. What right therefore have I that I should still cry any more to the king?" ²⁹ Then the king said to him, "Why explain anything further? I have decided that you and Ziba will divide the fields." ³⁰ So Mephibosheth replied to the king, "Yes, let him take it all, since my master the king has come safely to his own home."

31 Then Barzillai the Gileadite came down from Rogelim to cross over the Jordan with the king, and he accompanied the king over the Jordan. **32** Now Barzillai was a very old man, eighty years old. He had furnished the king with provisions while he stayed at Mahanaim, for he was a very wealthy man. **33** The king said to Barzillai, "Come over with me, and I will provide for you to stay with me in Jerusalem." **34** Barzillai replied to the king, "How many days are left in the years of my life, that I should go up with the king to Jerusalem? **35** I am eighty years old. Can I distinguish between good and bad? Can your servant taste what I eat or what I drink? Can I hear any more the voice of singing men and singing women? Why then should your servant be a burden to my master the king? **36** Your servant would like to just go over the Jordan with the king. Why should the king repay me with such a reward? **37** Please let your servant return back home, so I may die in my own city by the grave of my father and my mother. But see, here is your servant Kimham. Let him cross over with my master the king, and do for him what seems good to you." **38** The king answered, "Kimham will go over with me, and I will do for him what seems good to you, and whatever you desire from me, I do that for you." **39** Then all the people crossed the Jordan, and the king crossed over, and the king kissed Barzillai and blessed him. Then Barzillai returned to his own home.

40 So the king crossed over to Gilgal, and Kimham crossed over with him. All the army of Judah brought the king over, and also half the army of Israel. **41** Soon all the men of Israel began to come to the king and say to the king, "Why have our brothers, the men of Judah, stolen you away and brought the king and his family over the Jordan, and all David's men with him?" **42** So the men of Judah answered the men of Israel, "It is because the king is more closely related to us. Why then are you angry about this? Have we eaten anything that the king had to pay for? Has he given us any gifts?" **43** The men of Israel answered the men of Judah, "We have ten tribes related to the king, so we have even more right to David than you. Why then did you despise us? Was not our proposal to bring back our king the first to be heard?" But the words of the men of Judah were even more severe than the words of the men of Israel.

Chapter 20

¹ There also happened to be at the same place a worthless man whose name was Sheba son of Bikri, a Benjamite. He blew the ram's horn and said, "We have no part in David, neither have we any inheritance in the son of Jesse. Let every man go back to his tent, Israel!"

² So all the men of Israel deserted David and followed Sheba son of Bikri. But the men of Judah followed closely their king, from the Jordan all the way to Jerusalem.

³ When David came to his palace at Jerusalem, he took the ten concubines whom he had left to keep the palace, and he put them in a house under guard. He provided for their needs, but he did not go to them any longer. So they were shut up to the day of their death, living as if they were widows.

⁴ Then the king said to Amasa, "Call the men of Judah together within three days; you must be here, too."

⁵ So Amasa went to call Judah, but he was delayed beyond the time that the king had appointed for him. ⁶ So David said to Abishai, "Now Sheba son of Bikri will do us more harm than Absalom did. Take your master's servants and pursue after him, or he will find fortified cities and escape out of our sight." ⁷ Then Joab's men went out after him, along with the Kerethites and the Pelethites and all the mighty warriors. They left Jerusalem to pursue Sheba son of Bikri. ⁸ When they were at the great stone which is at Gibeon, Amasa came to meet them. Joab was wearing the battle armor that he had put on, which included a belt around his waist with a sheathed sword fastened to it. As he walked forward, the sword fell out. ⁹ So Joab said to Amasa, "Is it well with you, my cousin?" Joab took Amasa by the beard with his right hand to kiss him. ¹⁰ Amasa did not notice the dagger that was in Joab's left hand. Joab stabbed Amasa in the stomach and his bowels spilled out to the ground. Joab did not strike him again, and Amasa died.

So Joab and Abishai his brother pursued Sheba son of Bikri. ¹¹ Then one of Joab's young men stood by Amasa, and the man said, "He who favors Joab, and he who is for David, let him follow Joab." ¹² Amasa lay wallowing in his blood in the middle of the road. When the man saw that all the people stood still, he carried Amasa off of the road and into a field. He threw a garment over him because he saw that everyone who came by him stood still. ¹³ After Amasa was taken off the road, all the men followed on after Joab in pursuit of Sheba son of Bikri.

¹⁴ Sheba passed through all the tribes of Israel to Abel Beth Maakah, and through all the land of the Bikrites, who gathered together and also pursued Sheba. ¹⁵ They caught up with him and besieged him in Abel Beth Maakah. They built up a siege ramp against the city against the wall. All the army who were with Joab were wreaking destruction to break down the wall. ¹⁶ Then a wise woman cried out of the city, "Listen, please listen, Joab! Come near me so I may speak with you." ¹⁷ So Joab came near to her, and the woman said, "Are you Joab?" He answered, "I am." Then she said to him, "Listen to the words of your servant." He answered, "I am listening." ¹⁸ Then she spoke, "They used to say in old times, 'Surely seek advice at Abel,' and that advice would end the matter. ¹⁹ We are a city that is one of the most peaceful and faithful in Israel. You are trying to destroy a city that is a mother in Israel. Why do you want to swallow up the inheritance of Yahweh?" ²⁰ So Joab answered and said, "Far be it, far be it from me, that I should swallow up or destroy. ²¹ That is not true. But a man from the hill country of Ephraim, named Sheba son of Bikri, has lifted up his hand against the king, against David. Give up him alone, and I will withdraw from the city." The woman said to Joab, "His head will be thrown to you over the wall." ²² Then the woman went to all the people in her wisdom. They cut off the head of Sheba son of Bikri, and threw it out to Joab. Then he blew the ram's horn and Joab's men left the city, every man to his tent. Then Joab returned to Jerusalem to the king.

²³ Now Joab was over all the army of Israel, and Benaiah son of Jehoiada was over the Kerethites and over the Pelethites. ²⁴ Adoniram was over the men who did forced labor, and Jehoshaphat son of Ahilud was the recorder. ²⁵ Sheva was scribe and Zadok and Abiathar were priests. ²⁶ Ira the Jairite was David's priest.

Chapter 21

¹ There was a famine in David's time for three years in a row, and David sought the face of Yahweh. So Yahweh said, "This famine is on you because of Saul and his murderous family, because he put the Gibeonites to death." ² So the king called together the Gibeonites and spoke to them. Now the Gibeonites were not from the people of Israel; they were from what remained of the Amorites. The people of Israel had sworn not to kill them, but Saul tried to kill them all anyway in his zeal for the people of Israel and Judah. ³ David said to them, "What should I do for you? How can I make atonement, so that you may bless the people of Yahweh, who inherit his goodness and promises?" ⁴ The Gibeonites responded to him, "It is not a matter of silver or gold between us and Saul or his family. In the same way it is not for us to put to death any man in Israel." David replied, "What are you saying that I should do for you?" ⁵ They answered the king, "The man who tried to kill us all, who schemed against us, so that we are now destroyed and have no place within the borders of Israel— ⁶ let seven men from his descendants be handed over to us, and we will hang them before Yahweh in Gibeah of Saul, the one chosen by Yahweh." So the king said, "I will give them to you."

⁷ But the king spared Mephibosheth son of Jonathan son of Saul, because of Yahweh's oath between them, between David and Jonathan son of Saul. ⁸ But the king took the two sons of Rizpah daughter of Aiah, sons whom she bore to Saul—the two sons were named Armoni and Mephibosheth; and David also took the five sons of Merab ^[1] daughter of Saul, whom she bore to Adriel son of Barzillai the Meholathite. ⁹ He handed them over into the hands of the Gibeonites. They hanged them on the mountain before Yahweh, and they died all seven together. They were put to death during the time of harvest, during the first days at the beginning of barley harvest.

¹⁰ Then Rizpah, the daughter of Aiah, took sackcloth and spread it for herself on the mountain beside the dead bodies, from the beginning of harvest until the rain poured down on them from the sky. She did not allow the birds of the sky to disturb the bodies by day or the wild animals by night. ¹¹ It was told to David what Rizpah, the daughter of Aiah, the concubine of Saul, had done.

¹² So David went and took the bones of Saul and the bones of Jonathan his son from the men of Jabesh Gilead, who had stolen them from the public square of Beth Shan, where the Philistines had hanged them, after the Philistines had killed Saul in Gilboa. ¹³ David took away from there the bones of Saul and the bones of Jonathan his son, and they gathered the bones of the seven men who had been hanged, as well.

¹⁴ They buried the bones of Saul and Jonathan his son in the country of Benjamin in Zela, in the tomb of Kish his father. They performed all that the king commanded. After that God answered their prayers for the land.

¹⁵ Then the Philistines went to war again with Israel. So David went down with his servants and fought against the Philistines. David was overcome with battle fatigue. ¹⁶ Ishbi-Benob, a descendant of the Rapha, whose bronze spear weighed three hundred shekels, and who was armed with a new sword, intended to kill David. ¹⁷ But Abishai son of Zeruiah rescued David, attacked the Philistine, and killed him. Then the men of David swore to him, saying, "You must not go to battle anymore with us, so that you do not put out the lamp of Israel."

¹⁸ It came about after this that there was again a battle with the Philistines at Gob, when Sibbekai the Hushathite killed Saph, who was one of the descendants of the Rapha. ¹⁹ It came about again in a battle with the Philistines at Gob, that Elhanan son of Jair the Bethlehemite killed Goliath the Gittite, the staff of whose spear was like a weaver's beam. ²⁰ It came about in another battle at Gath that there was a man of great height who had six fingers on each hand and six toes on each foot, twenty-four in number. He also was descended from the Rapha. ²¹ When he taunted Israel, Jonathan son of Shimeah, David's brother, killed him. ²² These were descendants of the Rapha in Gath, and they were killed by the hand of David and by the hand of his servants.

Footnotes

21:8 ^[1] Some Hebrew copies and other ancient translations of the Hebrew copies read:

Chapter 22

¹ David sang to Yahweh the words of this song on the day that Yahweh rescued him out of the hand of all his enemies, and out of the hand of Saul. ² He prayed,

"Yahweh is my rock, my fortress,
the one who rescues me.

³ God is my rock.

I take refuge in him.

He is my shield, the horn of my salvation,
my stronghold, and my refuge,
the one who saves me from violence.

⁴ I will call on Yahweh, who is worthy to be praised,
and I will be saved from my enemies.

⁵ For the waves of death surrounded me,
the rushing waters of destruction overwhelmed me.

⁶ The cords of Sheol surrounded me;
the snares of death trapped me.

⁷ In my distress I called to Yahweh;
I called to my God;
he heard my voice from his temple,
and my cry for help went into his ears.

⁸ Then the earth shook and trembled.
The foundations of the heavens trembled
and were shaken, because God was angry.

⁹ Smoke went up from out of his nostrils,
and blazing fire came out of his mouth.
Coals were kindled by it.

¹⁰ He opened the heavens and came down,
and thick darkness was under his feet.

¹¹ He rode on a cherub and flew.
He was seen on the wings of the wind.

¹² He made darkness a tent around him,
gathering heavy rain clouds in the skies.

¹³ From the lightning before him
coals of fire fell.

¹⁴ Yahweh thundered from the heavens.
The Most High shouted.

¹⁵ He shot arrows and scattered his enemies—
lightning bolts and threw them into confusion.

¹⁶ Then the channels of the sea were seen;
the foundations of the world were laid bare
at the rebuke of Yahweh,
at the blast of the breath of his nostrils.

¹⁷ He reached down from above; he took hold of me!
He pulled me out of the surging water.

¹⁸ He rescued me from my strong enemy,
from those who hated me, for they were too strong for me.

¹⁹ They came against me on the day of my distress,
but Yahweh was my support.

²⁰ He also brought me out to a wide open place.
He saved me because he was pleased with me.

²¹ Yahweh has rewarded me to the measure of my righteousness;
he has restored me to the measure of the cleanness of my hands.

²² For I have kept the ways of Yahweh
and have not acted wickedly by turning from my God.

²³ For all his righteous decrees have been before me;
as for his statutes, I have not turned away from them.

²⁴ I have also been innocent before him,

- and I have kept myself from my iniquity.
- 25 Therefore Yahweh has restored me to the measure of my righteousness,
to the degree of my cleanness in his sight.
- 26 To the faithful one, you show yourself to be faithful;
to a man who is blameless, you show yourself to be blameless.
- 27 With the pure you show yourself pure,
but you are perverse to the twisted.
- 28 You save afflicted people,
but your eyes are against the proud, and you humiliate them.
- 29 For you are my lamp, Yahweh.
Yahweh lights up my darkness.
- 30 For by you I can run over a troop;
by my God I can leap over a wall.
- 31 As for God, his way is perfect.
The word of Yahweh is pure.
He is a shield
to everyone who takes refuge in him.
- 32 For who is God except Yahweh,
and who is a rock except our God?
- 33 God is my refuge,
and he leads the blameless person on his path.
- 34 He makes my feet swift like a deer
and places me on the high hills.
- 35 He trains my hands for war,
and my arms to bend a bow of bronze.
- 36 You have given me the shield of your salvation,
and your favor has made me great.
- 37 You have made a wide place for my feet beneath me,
so my feet have not slipped.
- 38 I pursued my enemies and destroyed them.
I did not turn back until they were destroyed.
- 39 I devoured them and smashed them; they cannot rise.
They have fallen under my feet.
- 40 You girded me with strength for battle;
you put under me those who rise up against me.
- 41 You gave me the back of my enemies' necks;
I annihilated those who hated me.
- 42 They cried for help, but no one saved them;
they cried out to Yahweh, but he did not answer them.
- 43 I beat them into fine pieces like dust on the ground,
I trampled them like mud in the streets.
- 44 You also have rescued me from the disputes of my own people.
You have kept me as the head of nations.
A people that I have not known serves me.
- 45 Foreigners were forced to bow to me.
As soon as they heard of me, they obeyed me.
- 46 The foreigners came trembling out of their strongholds.
- 47 Yahweh lives! May my rock be praised.
May God be exalted, the rock of my salvation.
- 48 This is the God who executes vengeance for me,
the one who brings down peoples under me.
- 49 He sets me free from my enemies.
Indeed, you lifted me up above those who rose up against me.
You rescue me from violent men.
- 50 Therefore I will give thanks to you, Yahweh, among the nations;
I will sing praises to your name.
- 51 God gives great victory to his king,
and he shows his covenant loyalty to his anointed one,
to David and to his descendants forever."

Chapter 23

¹ Now these are the last words of David—

the declaration of David son of Jesse,
the declaration of the man who was highly honored,
the one anointed by the God of Jacob,
the sweet psalmist of Israel.

² "The Spirit of Yahweh spoke by me,
and his word was on my tongue.

³ The God of Israel spoke,
the Rock of Israel said to me,
"The one who rules righteously over men,
who rules in the fear of God.

⁴ He will be like the morning light when the sun rises,
a morning without clouds,
when the tender grass springs up from the earth
through bright sunshine after rain.

⁵ Indeed, is my family not like this before God?
Has he not made an everlasting covenant with me,
ordered and sure in every way?
Does he not increase my salvation and fulfill my every desire?

⁶ But the worthless will all be like thorns to be thrown away,
because they cannot be gathered by one's hands.

⁷ The man who touches them
must use an iron tool or the shaft of a spear.
They must be burned up where they lie."

⁸ These are the names of David's mighty men: Josheb-Basshebeth the Tahkemonite, was the leader of the officers. He killed eight hundred men on one occasion. ^[1]

⁹ After him was Eleazar son of Dodai the Ahohite, one of the three mighty men. He was with David when they taunted the Philistines who had gathered together to do battle, and when the men of Israel had retreated. ¹⁰ Eleazar stood and fought the Philistines until his hand became weary and his hand stiffened to the grip of his sword. Yahweh brought about a great victory that day. The army returned after Eleazar, only to strip the bodies.

¹¹ After him was Shammah son of Agee, a Hararite. The Philistines gathered together where there was a field of lentils, and the army fled from them. ¹² But Shammah stood in the middle of the field and defended it. He killed the Philistines, and Yahweh brought about a great victory.

¹³ Three of the thirty soldiers went down to David at harvest time, to the cave of Adullam. The army of the Philistines was camped in the Valley of Rephaim. ¹⁴ At that time David was in his stronghold, a cave, while the Philistines had established at Bethlehem. ¹⁵ David was longing for water and said, "If only someone would give me water to drink from the well at Bethlehem, the well that is by the gate!" ¹⁶ So these three mighty men broke through the army of the Philistines and drew water out of the well of Bethlehem, the well at the gate. They took the water and brought it to David, but he refused to drink it. Instead, he poured it out to Yahweh. ¹⁷ Then he said, "Yahweh, far be it from me, that I should do this. Should I drink the blood of men who have risked their lives?" So he refused to drink it.

These things were done by the three mighty.

¹⁸ Abishai, brother of Joab and son of Zeruiah, was captain over the three. He once fought with his spear against three hundred men and killed them. He was renowned along with the three soldiers. ¹⁹ Was he not even more famous than the three? He was made their captain. However, his fame did not equal the fame of the three most famous soldiers.

²⁰ Benaiah from Kabzeel was the son of Jehoiada; he was a strong man who did mighty feats. He killed the two sons of Ariel of Moab. He also went down into a pit and killed a lion while it was snowing. ²¹ Then he killed a very large Egyptian man. The Egyptian had a spear in his hand, but Benaiah fought against

him with only a staff. He seized the spear out of the Egyptian's hand and then killed him with his own spear. ²² Benaiah son of Jehoiada did these feats, and he was named alongside the three mighty men. ²³ He was more highly regarded than the thirty soldiers in general, but he was not regarded quite as highly as the three mighty men. Yet David put him in charge of his bodyguard.

²⁴ The thirty included the following men: Asahel brother of Joab, Elhanan son of Dodo from Bethlehem,

²⁵ Shammah the Harodite, Elikah the Harodite,

²⁶ Helez the Paltite, Ira son of Ikkesh the Tekoite,

²⁷ Abiezer the Anathothite, Sibbekai ^[2] the Hushathite,

²⁸ Zalmon the Ahohite, Maharai the Netophathite;

²⁹ Heled ^[3] son of Baanah the Netophathite, Ithai son of Ribai from Gibeah of the Benjamites,

³⁰ Benaiah the Pirathonite, Hiddai of the valleys of Gaash.

³¹ Abi-Albon the Arbathite, Azmaveth the Barhumite,

³² Eliahba the Shaalbonite, the sons of Jashen, Jonathan son of Shammah the Hararite, ³³ Ahiam son of Sharar the Hararite,

³⁴ Eliphelet son of Ahasbai the Maakathite, Eliam son of Ahithophel the Gilonite,

³⁵ Hezro the Carmelite, Paarai the Arbite,

³⁶ Igal son of Nathan from Zobah, Bani from the tribe of Gad, ^[4]

³⁷ Zelek the Ammonite, Naharai the Beerothite, armor bearer to Joab son of Zeruiah,

³⁸ Ira the Ithrite, Gareb the Ithrite,

³⁹ Uriah the Hittite—thirty-seven in all.

Footnotes

23:8 ^[1]Instead of

23:27 ^[2]Some copies of the ancient Greek translation taken from the ancient Hebrew copies, have the name

23:29 ^[3]Some ancient copies have the spelling of this name to read,

23:36 ^[4]Some modern translations have a different name at this place in the text:

Chapter 24

¹ Again the anger of Yahweh was kindled against Israel, and he moved David against them saying, "Go, count Israel and Judah." ² The king said to Joab the commander of the army, who was with him, "Go throughout all the tribes of Israel, from Dan to Beersheba, and count all the people, so that I may know the total number of men fit for battle." ³ Joab said to the king, "May Yahweh your God multiply the number of people a hundred times, and may the eyes of my master the king see it take place. But why does my master the king want this?" ⁴ Nevertheless, the king's word was final against Joab and against the commanders of the army. So Joab and the commanders went out from the king's presence to count the people of Israel. ⁵ They crossed over the Jordan and encamped near Aroer, south of the city in the valley. Then they traveled on through Gad to Jazer. ⁶ They came to Gilead and to the land of Tahtim Hodshi, then on to Dan Jaan and around toward Sidon. ⁷ They reached the stronghold of Tyre and all the cities of the Hivites and the Canaanites. Then they went out to the Negev in Judah at Beersheba. ⁸ When they had gone throughout all the land, they came back to Jerusalem at the end of nine months and twenty days. ⁹ Then Joab reported the total of the census of the fighting men to the king. There were in Israel 800,000 brave men who drew the sword, and the men of Judah were 500,000 men.

¹⁰ Then David's heart afflicted him after he had counted the men. So he said to Yahweh, "I have greatly sinned by doing this. Now, Yahweh, take away your servant's guilt, for I have acted very foolishly." ¹¹ When David rose up in the morning, the word of Yahweh came to the prophet Gad, David's seer, saying, ¹² "Go say to David: 'This is what Yahweh says: "I am giving you three choices. Choose one of them."'" ¹³ So Gad went to David and said to him, "Will three years of famine come to you in your land? Or will you flee three months from your enemies while they pursue you? Or will there be three days of plague in your land? Now decide what answer I should return to him who sent me." ¹⁴ Then David said to Gad, "I am in deep trouble. Let us fall into Yahweh's hands rather than into the hand of man, for his merciful actions are very great."

¹⁵ So Yahweh sent a plague on Israel from the morning to a fixed time, and seventy thousand people died from Dan to Beersheba. ¹⁶ When the angel reached out with his hand toward Jerusalem to destroy it, Yahweh changed his mind because of the harm it would cause, and he said to the angel who was destroying people, "Enough! Now draw back your hand." At that time the angel of Yahweh was standing at the threshing floor of Araunah the Jebusite. ¹⁷ Then David spoke to Yahweh when he saw the angel who had attacked the people, and said, "I have sinned, and I have acted perversely. But these sheep, what have they done? Please let your hand punish me and my father's family!"

¹⁸ Then Gad came that day to David and said to him, "Go up and build an altar for Yahweh at the threshing floor of Araunah the Jebusite." ¹⁹ So David went up as Gad instructed him to do, as Yahweh had commanded. ²⁰ Araunah looked out and saw the king and his servants approaching. So Araunah went out and bowed to the king with his face to the ground. ²¹ Then Araunah said, "Why has my master the king come to me, his servant?" David replied, "To buy your threshing floor, so I can build an altar for Yahweh, so that the plague may be removed from the people." ²² Araunah said to David, "Take it as your own, my master the king. Do with it what is good in your sight. Look, here are oxen for the burnt offering and threshing sledges and ox yokes for the wood." ²³ All this, my king, I, Araunah, will give to you." Then he said to the king, "May Yahweh your God accept you." ²⁴ The king said to Araunah, "No, I insist on buying it at a price. I will not offer as a burnt offering to Yahweh anything that costs me nothing." So David bought the threshing floor and the oxen for fifty shekels of silver. ²⁵ David built an altar for Yahweh there and offered on it burnt offerings and fellowship offerings. So Yahweh answered the prayer on behalf of the land, and the plague on Israel was confined.

Book: 1 Kings

1 Kings

Chapter 1

¹ When King David was old and advanced in years, they covered him with blankets, but he could not keep warm. ² So his servants said to him, "Let us look for a young virgin for our master the king. Let her serve the king and take care of him. Let her lie in his arms so that our master the king may keep warm." ³ So they searched for a beautiful girl within all the borders of Israel. They found Abishag the Shunammite and brought her to the king. ⁴ The girl was very beautiful. She served the king and took care of him, but the king did not know her.

⁵ At that time, Adonijah son of Haggith exalted himself, saying, "I will be king." So he prepared for himself chariots and horsemen with fifty men to run ahead of him. ⁶ His father had never troubled him, saying, "Why have you done this or that?" Adonijah was also a very handsome man, born next after Absalom. ⁷ He conferred with Joab son of Zeruiah and with Abiathar the priest. They followed Adonijah and helped him. ⁸ But Zadok the priest, Benaiah son of Jehoiada, Nathan the prophet, Shimei, Rei, and the mighty men who belonged to David did not follow Adonijah. ⁹ Adonijah sacrificed sheep, cattle, and fattened calves by the stone of Zohelath, which is beside En Rogel. He invited all his brothers, the king's sons, and all the men of Judah, the king's servants. ¹⁰ But he did not invite Nathan the prophet, Benaiah, the mighty men, or his brother Solomon.

¹¹ Then Nathan spoke to Bathsheba the mother of Solomon, saying, "Have you not heard that Adonijah son of Haggith has become king, and David our master does not know it? ¹² Now therefore let me give you advice, so that you may save your own life and the life of your son Solomon. ¹³ Go to King David; say to him, 'My master the king, did you not swear to your servant, saying, 'Surely Solomon your son will reign after me, and he will sit on my throne?' ¹⁴ Why then is Adonijah reigning?' ¹⁴ While you are there speaking with the king, I will come in after you and confirm your words."

¹⁵ So Bathsheba went into the king's room. The king was very old, and Abishag the Shunammite was serving the king. ¹⁶ Bathsheba bowed down and showed respect before the king. Then the king said, "What do you desire?" ¹⁷ She said to him, "My master, you swore to your servant by Yahweh your God, saying, 'Surely Solomon your son will reign after me, and he will sit on my throne.' ¹⁸ Now, see, Adonijah is king, and you, my master the king, do not know it. ¹⁹ He has sacrificed many cattle, fatted calves, and sheep, and has invited all the sons of the king, Abiathar the priest, and Joab the captain of the army, but he has not invited Solomon your servant. ²⁰ As for you, my master the king, the eyes of all Israel are on you, waiting for you to tell them who will sit on the throne after you, my master. ²¹ Otherwise it will happen, when my master the king lies down with his fathers, that I and my son Solomon will be regarded as criminals."

²² While she was still speaking with the king, Nathan the prophet came in. ²³ The servants told the king, "Nathan the prophet is here." When he came in before the king, he bowed down before the king with his face to the ground. ²⁴ Nathan said, "My master the king, have you said, 'Adonijah will reign after me, and he will sit on my throne?' ²⁵ For he has gone down today and sacrificed a great number of cattle, fatted calves, and sheep. He has invited all the king's sons, the captains of the army, and Abiathar the priest. They are eating and drinking before him, and saying, 'Long live King Adonijah!' ²⁶ But as for me, your servant, Zadok the priest, Benaiah son of Jehoiada, and your servant Solomon, he has not invited us. ²⁷ Has my master the king done this without telling us, your servants, who should sit on the throne after him?"

²⁸ Then King David answered and said, "Call Bathsheba back to me." She came into the king's presence and stood before the king. ²⁹ The king made an oath and said, "As Yahweh lives, who has redeemed my soul out of all trouble, ³⁰ as I vowed to you by Yahweh, the God of Israel, saying, 'Solomon your son will reign after me, and he will sit on my throne in my place,' I will do this today." ³¹ Then Bathsheba bowed down and put her face to the ground and she showed honor to the king and said, "May my master King David live forever!"

³² King David said, "Call to me Zadok the priest, Nathan the prophet, and Benaiah son of Jehoiada." So they came before the king. ³³ The king said to them, "Take with you the servants of your master, and have Solomon my son ride on my own mule and take him down to Gihon. ³⁴ Let Zadok the priest and Nathan the prophet anoint him king over Israel and blow the ram's horn and say, 'Long live King Solomon!' ³⁵ Then you will come up after him, and he will come and sit on my throne; for he will be king in my place. I have appointed him to be ruler over Israel and Judah." ³⁶ Benaiah son of Jehoiada answered the king, and said, "Let it be so! May Yahweh, the God of my master the king, confirm it. ³⁷ As Yahweh has been with my master the king, so may he be with Solomon, and make his throne greater than the throne of my master King David."

³⁸ So Zadok the priest, Nathan the prophet, Benaiah son of Jehoiada, and the Kerethites and the Pelethites went down and had Solomon ride upon King David's mule; they brought him to Gihon. ³⁹ Zadok the priest took the horn of oil out of the tent and anointed Solomon. Then they blew the ram's horn, and all the people said, "Long live King Solomon!" ⁴⁰ Then all the people went up after him, and the people played the flutes and rejoiced with great joy, so that the earth shook with their sound.

⁴¹ Adonijah and all the guests who were with him heard it as they finished eating. When Joab heard the sound of the ram's horn, he said, "Why is there an uproar in the city?" ⁴² While he was still speaking, Jonathan son of Abiathar the priest came. Adonijah said, "Come in, for you are a worthy man and bring good news." ⁴³ Jonathan answered and said to Adonijah, "Our master King David has made Solomon the king, ⁴⁴ and the king has sent with him Zadok the priest, Nathan the prophet, Benaiah son of Jehoiada, and the Kerethites and the Pelethites. They have had Solomon ride on the king's mule. ⁴⁵ Zadok the priest and Nathan the prophet have anointed him king at Gihon, and have come up from there rejoicing, so that the city is in an uproar. This is the noise that you have heard. ⁴⁶ Also, Solomon is sitting on the throne of the kingdom. ⁴⁷ Moreover, the king's servants came to bless our master King David, saying, 'May your God make the name of Solomon better than your name, and make his throne greater than your throne.' Then the king bowed down on the bed. ⁴⁸ The king also said, 'Blessed be Yahweh, the God of Israel, who has given a person to sit on my throne this day, and that my own eyes should see it.'"

⁴⁹ Then all the guests of Adonijah were terrified. They stood up and each man went his way. ⁵⁰ Adonijah was afraid of Solomon and rose up, went, and took hold of the horns of the altar. ⁵¹ Then it was told Solomon, saying, "See, Adonijah is afraid of King Solomon, for he has laid hold on the horns of the altar, saying, 'Let King Solomon swear to me first that he will not kill his servant with the sword.'" ⁵² Solomon said, "If he will show himself a worthy man, not a hair of his will fall to the earth, but if wickedness is found in him, he will die." ⁵³ So King Solomon sent men, who brought Adonijah down from the altar. He came and bowed down to King Solomon, and Solomon said to him, "Go to your house."

Chapter 2

¹ As the day of David's death approached, he commanded Solomon his son, saying, ² "I am going the way of all the earth. Be strong, therefore, and show yourself a man. ³ Keep the commands of Yahweh your God to walk in his ways, to obey his statutes, his commandments, his decisions, and his covenant decrees, being careful to do what is written in the law of Moses, so you may prosper in all you do, wherever you go, ⁴ so that Yahweh may fulfill his word which he spoke concerning me, saying, 'If your descendants carefully watch their conduct, to walk before me faithfully with all their heart and with all their soul, you will never cease to have a man on the throne of Israel.' ⁵ You know also what Joab son of Zeruiah did to me, and what he did to the two commanders of the armies of Israel, to Abner son of Ner, and to Amasa son of Jether, whom he killed. He shed the blood of war in peace and put the blood of war on the belt around his waist and on the sandals on his feet. ⁶ Deal with Joab by the wisdom you have learned, but do not let his gray head go down to Sheol in peace. ⁷ However, show kindness to the sons of Barzillai the Gileadite, and let them be among those who eat at your table, for they came to me when I fled from Absalom your brother. ⁸ Look, there is with you Shimei son of Gera, the Benjamite of Bahurim, who cursed me with a violent curse on the day I went to Mahanaim. Shimei came down to meet me at the Jordan, and I swore to him by Yahweh, saying, 'I will not put you to death with the sword.' ⁹ Now therefore do not let him go free from punishment. You are a wise man, and you will know what you ought to do to him. You will bring his gray head down to Sheol with blood."

¹⁰ Then David lay down with his ancestors and was buried in the city of David. ¹¹ The days that David reigned over Israel were forty years. He had reigned for seven years in Hebron and for thirty-three years in Jerusalem. ¹² Then Solomon sat on the throne of his father David, and his rule was firmly established.

¹³ Then Adonijah son of Haggith came to Bathsheba the mother of Solomon. She said, "Do you come peacefully?" He replied, "Peacefully." ¹⁴ Then he said, "I have something to say to you." So she replied, "Speak." ¹⁵ Adonijah said, "You know that the kingdom was mine, and that all Israel expected me to be king. But things changed, and the kingdom was given to my brother, for it was his from Yahweh. ¹⁶ Now I have one request of you, and do not turn away from my face." Bathsheba said to him, "Speak." ¹⁷ He said, "Please speak to Solomon the king, for he will not turn away from your face, so that he may give me Abishag the Shunammite as my wife." ¹⁸ Bathsheba said, "Very well, I will speak to the king."

¹⁹ Bathsheba therefore went to King Solomon to speak to him for Adonijah. The king rose to meet her and bowed down to her. Then he sat down on his throne and had a throne brought for the king's mother. She sat at his right hand. ²⁰ Then she said, "I wish to ask one small request of you, for you will not turn away from my face." The king answered her, "Ask, my mother, for I will not turn away from your face." ²¹ She said, "Let Abishag the Shunammite be given to Adonijah your brother as his wife." ²² King Solomon answered and said to his mother, "Why do you ask Abishag the Shunammite for Adonijah? Why do you not ask the kingdom for him also, for he is my elder brother—for him, for Abiathar the priest, and for Joab son of Zeruiah?" ²³ Then King Solomon swore by Yahweh, saying, "May God do so to me, and more also, if Adonijah has not spoken this word against his own life. ²⁴ Now therefore as Yahweh lives, who has established me and set me on the throne of David my father, and who has made me a house as he promised, surely Adonijah will be put to death today." ²⁵ So King Solomon sent Benaiah son of Jehoiada, and Benaiah found Adonijah and put him to death.

²⁶ Then to Abiathar the priest the king said, "Go to Anathoth, to your own fields. You are worthy of death, but I will not at this time put you to death, because you carried the ark of the Lord Yahweh before David my father and suffered in every way my father suffered." ²⁷ So Solomon dismissed Abiathar from being priest to Yahweh, that he might fulfill the word of Yahweh, which he had spoken concerning the house of Eli at Shiloh.

²⁸ The news came to Joab, for Joab had supported Adonijah, though he had not supported Absalom. So Joab fled to the tent of Yahweh and took hold of the horns of the altar. ²⁹ It was told King Solomon that Joab had fled to the tent of Yahweh and was now beside the altar. Then Solomon sent Benaiah son of Jehoiada, saying, "Go, execute him." ³⁰ So Benaiah came to the tent of Yahweh and said to him, "The king says, 'Come out.'" Joab replied, "No, I will die here." So Benaiah returned to the king, saying, "Joab said he wanted to die at the altar." ³¹ The king said to him, "Do as he has said. Kill him and bury him so that you may take away from me and from my father's house the blood that Joab shed without cause. ³² May

Yahweh return his blood on his own head, because without the knowledge of my father David he attacked two men more righteous and better than himself and killed them with the sword, Abner son of Ner, the captain of the army of Israel, and Amasa son of Jether, the captain of the army of Judah. ³³ So may their blood return on the head of Joab and on the head of his descendants forever. But to David and his descendants, and to his house, and to his throne, may there be peace forever from Yahweh." ³⁴ Then Benaiah son of Jehoiada went up and attacked Joab and killed him. He was buried in his own house in the wilderness. ³⁵ The king put Benaiah son of Jehoiada over the army in his place, and he put Zadok the priest in Abiathar's place.

³⁶ Then the king sent and called for Shimei, and said to him, "Build yourself a house in Jerusalem and live there, and do not go out from there to any other place. ³⁷ For on the day you go out, and pass over the Kidron Valley, know you for certain that you will surely die. Your blood will be on your own head." ³⁸ So Shimei said to the king, "What you say is good. As my master the king has said, so your servant will do." So Shimei lived in Jerusalem for many days.

³⁹ But at the end of three years, two of the servants of Shimei ran away to Achish son of Maakah, the king of Gath. So they told Shimei, saying, "See, your servants are in Gath." ⁴⁰ Then Shimei arose, saddled his donkey and went to Achish in Gath to seek his servants. He went and brought his servants back from Gath. ⁴¹ When Solomon was told that Shimei had gone from Jerusalem to Gath and had returned, ⁴² the king sent and called for Shimei and said to him, "Did I not make you swear by Yahweh and testify to you, saying, 'Know for certain that on the day you go out and go to any other place, you will surely die'? Then you said to me, 'What I have heard is good.' ⁴³ Why then have you not kept your oath to Yahweh and the command that I gave you?" ⁴⁴ The king also said to Shimei, "You know in your heart all the wickedness that you did to my father David. Therefore Yahweh will return your wickedness on your own head. ⁴⁵ But King Solomon will be blessed and the throne of David will be established before Yahweh forever." ⁴⁶ Then the king gave a command to Benaiah son of Jehoiada. He went out and put Shimei to death.

So the kingdom was well established in Solomon's hand.

Footnotes

2:26 ^[1]The ancient Greek translation simply has,

Chapter 3

¹ Solomon allied himself by marriage with Pharaoh king of Egypt. He took Pharaoh's daughter and brought her into the city of David until he had finished building his own house, the house of Yahweh, and the wall around Jerusalem. ² The people were sacrificing at the high places, because no house had yet been built for the name of Yahweh. ³ Solomon showed his love for Yahweh by walking in the statutes of David his father, except that he sacrificed and burned incense at the high places.

⁴ The king went to Gibeon to sacrifice there, for that was the great high place there. Solomon offered a thousand burnt offerings on that altar. ⁵ Yahweh appeared at Gibeon to Solomon in a dream by night; he said, "Ask! What should I give you?" ⁶ So Solomon said, "You have shown great covenant faithfulness to your servant, David my father, because he walked before you in trustworthiness, in righteousness, and in uprightness of heart. You have kept for him this great covenant faithfulness and have given him a son to sit on his throne today. ⁷ Now Yahweh my God, you have made your servant king in the place of David my father, though I am only a little child. I do not know how to go out or come in. ⁸ Your servant is in the midst of the people whom you have chosen, a great people, too numerous to be numbered or counted. ⁹ So give your servant an understanding heart to judge your people, so that I may discern between good and evil. For who is able to judge this great people of yours?"

¹⁰ This request of Solomon pleased the Lord. ¹¹ So God said to him, "Because you have asked this thing and have not asked for yourself long life or riches or the life of your enemies, but have asked for yourself understanding to discern justice, ¹² see, now I will do all you asked of me when you gave me your request. I give you a wise and an understanding heart, so that there has been no one like you before you, and no one like you will rise up after you. ¹³ I have also given you what you have not asked, both riches and honor, so that there will not be any among the kings like you all your days. ¹⁴ If you will walk in my ways to keep my statutes and my commandments, as your father David walked, then I will lengthen your days." ¹⁵ Then Solomon awoke, and behold, it was a dream. He came to Jerusalem and stood before the ark of the covenant of the Lord. He offered up burnt offerings and peace offerings, and made a feast for all his servants.

¹⁶ Then two women who were prostitutes came to the king and stood before him. ¹⁷ One woman said, "Oh, my master, this woman and I live in the same house, and I gave birth to a child with her in the house. ¹⁸ It happened on the third day after I gave birth that this woman also gave birth. We were together. There was no one else with us in the house, but only the two of us in the house. ¹⁹ Then this woman's son died in the night, because she lay on him. ²⁰ So she arose in the middle of the night and took my son from beside me, while your servant slept, and laid him in her bosom, and laid her dead son at my breast. ²¹ When I rose in the morning to nurse my child, he was dead. But when I had looked at him carefully in the morning, he was not my son, whom I had borne." ²² Then the other woman said, "No, the living one is my son, and the dead one is your son." The first woman said, "No, the dead one is your son, and the living one is my son." This is how they spoke before the king.

²³ Then the king said, "One of you says, 'This is my son who is alive, and your son is dead,' and the other says, 'No, your son is the dead one, and my son is the living one.'" ²⁴ The king said, "Bring me a sword." So they brought a sword before the king. ²⁵ Then the king said, "Divide the living child in two, and give half to this woman and half to the other." ²⁶ Then the woman whose son was alive spoke to the king, for her heart was full of compassion for her son, and she said, "Oh, my master, give her the living child, and by no means kill him." But the other woman said, "He will be neither mine nor yours. Divide him." ²⁷ Then the king answered and said, "Give the first woman the living child, and by no means kill him. She is his mother." ²⁸ When all Israel heard of the judgment which the king had rendered, they feared the king, because they saw that the wisdom of God was in him for giving judgments.

Chapter 4

- ¹ King Solomon was king over all Israel. ² These were his officials: Azariah son of Zadok was the priest.
- ³ Elihoreph and Ahijah sons of Shisha, were secretaries. Jehoshaphat son of Ahilud was the recorder.
- ⁴ Benaiah son of Jehoiada was over the army. Zadok and Abiathar were priests. [\[1\]](#)
- ⁵ Azariah son of Nathan was over the officers. Zabud son of Nathan was a priest and the king's friend.
- ⁶ Ahishar was over the household. Adoniram son of Abda was over the men who were subjected to forced labor.
- ⁷ Solomon had twelve officers over all Israel, who provided food for the king and his household. Each man had to make provision for one month in the year. ⁸ These were their names: Ben-Hur, in the hill country of Ephraim;
- ⁹ Ben-Deker in Makaz, Shaalbim, Beth Shemesh, and Elon Bethhanan;
- ¹⁰ Ben-Hesed, in Arubboth (to him belonged Sokoh and all the land of Hepher);
- ¹¹ Ben-Abinadab, in all Naphoth Dor (he had Taphath the daughter of Solomon as his wife);
- ¹² Baana son of Ahilud, in Taanach and Megiddo, and all Beth Shan that is beside Zarethan below Jezreel, from Beth Shan to Abel Meholah as far as the other side of Jokmeam;
- ¹³ Ben-Geber, in Ramoth Gilead (to him belonged the towns of Jair son of Manasseh, that are in Gilead, and the region of Argob belonged to him, which is in Bashan, sixty great cities with walls and bronze gate bars);
- ¹⁴ Ahinadab son of Iddo, in Mahanaim;
- ¹⁵ Ahimaaz, in Naphtali (he also married Basemath the daughter of Solomon as his wife);
- ¹⁶ Baana son of Hushai, in Asher and Bealoth;
- ¹⁷ Jehoshaphat son of Paruah, in Issachar;
- ¹⁸ Shimei son of Ela, in Benjamin;
- ¹⁹ and Geber son of Uri, in the land of Gilead, the country of Sihon king of the Amorites and of Og king of Bashan, and he was the only deputy who was in the land.
- ²⁰ Judah and Israel were as numerous as the sand by the sea. They were eating and drinking and were rejoicing. ²¹ Solomon ruled over all the kingdoms from the River to the land of the Philistines and to the border of Egypt. They brought tribute and served Solomon all the days of his life. ²² Solomon's provision for one day was thirty cors of fine flour and sixty cors of meal, ²³ ten head of cattle fattened in the stall, twenty head of cattle taken from the pastures, and one hundred sheep, as well as deer, gazelles, roebucks, and fattened fowl. ²⁴ For he had dominion over all the region on this side of the River, from Tiphseh as far as to Gaza, over all the kings on this side of the River, and he had peace on all sides around him. ²⁵ Judah and Israel lived in safety, every man under his vine and under his fig tree, from Dan to Beersheba, all the days of Solomon. ²⁶ Solomon had forty thousand stalls of horses for his chariots, and twelve thousand horsemen. ²⁷ Those officers provided food for King Solomon and for all who came to King Solomon's table, every man in his month. They let nothing be lacking. ²⁸ They also brought to the proper place barley and straw for the chariot horses and riding horses, each one bringing in what he was able.
- ²⁹ God gave Solomon great wisdom and understanding, and wideness of understanding like the sand on the seashore. ³⁰ Solomon's wisdom exceeded the wisdom of all the people of the east and all the wisdom of Egypt. ³¹ He was wiser than all men—than Ethan the Ezrahite, Heman, Kalkol, and Darda, the sons of

Mahol—and his fame reached all the surrounding nations. ³² He spoke three thousand proverbs and his songs were 1,005 in number. ³³ He described the plants, from the cedar that is in Lebanon to the hyssop that grows out of the wall. He explained also about animals, birds, creeping things, and fish. ³⁴ People came from all the nations to hear the wisdom of Solomon. They came from all kings of the earth who had heard of his wisdom.

Footnotes

4:4 ^[1]The ancient Greek translation supports the opinion of some modern scholars that

Chapter 5

¹ Hiram king of Tyre sent his servants to Solomon for he had heard that they had anointed him king in place of his father; for Hiram had always loved David. ² Solomon sent word to Hiram, saying, ³ "You know that David my father could not build a house for the name of Yahweh his God because of the wars that surrounded him, for during his lifetime Yahweh was putting his enemies under the soles of his feet. ⁴ But now, Yahweh my God has given me rest on every side. There is neither adversary nor disaster. ⁵ So I intend to build a temple for the name of Yahweh my God, as Yahweh spoke to David my father, saying, 'Your son, whom I will set on your throne in your place, will build the temple for my name.' ⁶ Now therefore command that they cut cedars from Lebanon for me. My servants will join your servants, and I will pay you for your servants so that you are paid fairly for everything you agreed to do. For you know there is no one among us who knows how to cut timber like the Sidonians."

⁷ When Hiram heard the words of Solomon, he rejoiced greatly and said, "May Yahweh be blessed today, who has given to David a wise son over this great people." ⁸ Hiram sent word to Solomon, saying, "I have heard the message that you have sent to me. I will provide all the wood of cedar and cypress that you desire. ⁹ My servants will bring the trees down from Lebanon to the sea, and I will make them into rafts to go by sea to the place that you direct me. I will have them broken up there, and you will take them away. You will do what I desire by giving food for my household."

¹⁰ So Hiram gave Solomon all the timber of cedar and fir that he desired. ¹¹ Solomon gave Hiram twenty thousand cors of wheat for food to his household and twenty thousand baths of pure oil. Solomon gave this to Hiram year by year. ^[1]¹² Yahweh gave Solomon wisdom, as he promised him. There was peace between Hiram and Solomon, and the two of them made a covenant.

¹³ King Solomon conscripted labor out of all Israel. The forced laborers numbered thirty thousand men.

¹⁴ He sent them to Lebanon, ten thousand a month in shifts. One month they were in Lebanon and two months at home. Adoniram was over the men who were subjected to forced labor. ¹⁵ Solomon had seventy thousand who carried burdens and eighty thousand who were stonecutters in the mountains, ¹⁶ besides Solomon's 3,300 chief officers who were over the work and who supervised the workers. ¹⁷ At the king's command they quarried large precious stones with which to lay the foundation of the temple. ¹⁸ So Solomon's builders and Hiram's builders and the men from Byblos ^[2] did the cutting and prepared the timber and the stones to build the temple.

Footnotes

5:11 ^[1]Some ancient Hebrew copies have:

5:18 ^[2]Some modern English translations read,

Chapter 6

¹ So Solomon began to build the temple of Yahweh. This happened in the 480th year after the people of Israel came out of the land of Egypt, in the fourth year of Solomon's reign over Israel, in the month of Ziv, which is the second month. ² The temple that King Solomon built for Yahweh was sixty cubits long, twenty cubits wide, and thirty cubits high. ³ The portico in front of the temple's main hall was twenty cubits in length, equal to the width of the temple, and ten cubits deep in front of the temple. ⁴ For the house he made windows with frames that made them more narrow at the outside than on the inside. ⁵ Against the walls of the main chamber he built rooms around it, around both the outer room and the inner room. He built rooms all around the sides. ⁶ The lowest story was five cubits wide, the middle was six cubits wide, and the third was seven cubits wide. For on the outside he made offsets in the wall of the house all around so that the beams would not be inserted in the walls of the house. ⁷ The house was built of stones prepared at the quarry. No hammer, ax, or any iron tool was heard in the house while it was being built. ⁸ On the south side of the temple there was an entrance at the ground level, then one went up by stairs to the middle level, and from the middle to the third level. ⁹ So Solomon built the temple and finished it; he covered the house with beams and planks of cedar. ¹⁰ He built the side rooms against the inner chambers of the temple, each side five cubits high; they were joined to the house with timbers of cedar.

¹¹ The word of Yahweh came to Solomon, saying, ¹² "Concerning this temple which you are building, if you walk in my statutes and do justice, keep all my commandments and walk in them, then I will confirm my promise with you that I had made to David your father. ¹³ I will live among the people of Israel and will not abandon them."

¹⁴ So Solomon built the house and finished it. ¹⁵ Then he built the interior walls of the house with boards of cedar. From the floor of the house to the ceiling, he covered them on the inside with wood, and he covered the floor of the house with cypress boards. ¹⁶ He built twenty cubits onto the rear of the house with boards of cedar from the floor to the ceiling. He built this room to be the inner room, the most holy place. ¹⁷ The main hall, that is, the holy place that was in front of the most holy place, was forty cubits long. ¹⁸ There was cedar inside the house, carved in the shape of gourds and open flowers. All was cedar inside. No stonework was visible on the inside. ¹⁹ Solomon prepared the inner room inside the house in order to place the ark of the covenant of Yahweh there. ²⁰ The inner room was twenty cubits in length, twenty cubits in width, and twenty cubits in height. Solomon overlaid the walls with pure gold and covered the altar with cedar wood. ²¹ Solomon overlaid the inside of the temple with pure gold, and he placed chains of gold across the front of the inner room, and overlaid the front with gold. ²² He overlaid the entire interior with gold until all the temple was finished. He also overlaid with gold the whole altar that belonged to the inner room.

²³ Solomon made two cherubim of olivewood, each ten cubits high, for the inner room. ²⁴ One wing of the first cherub was five cubits long and its other wing was also five cubits long. So from the tip of one wing to the tip of the other there was a distance of ten cubits. ²⁵ The other cherub also had a wingspan of ten cubits. Both the cherubim were of the same dimensions and shape. ²⁶ The height of one cherub was ten cubits and the other cherub was the same. ²⁷ Solomon placed the cherubim in the innermost room. The wings of the cherubim were stretched out so that the wing of one touched one wall and the wing of the other cherub touched the other wall. Their wings touched one another in the middle of the most holy place. ²⁸ Solomon overlaid the cherubim with gold.

²⁹ He carved all the walls of the house around about with figures of cherubim, palm trees, and open flowers, in the outer and inner rooms. ³⁰ Solomon overlaid the floor of the house with gold, in both the outer and inner rooms. ³¹ Solomon made doors of olivewood for the entrance to the inner room. The lintel and doorposts had five indented sections. ³² So he made two doors of olivewood, and he made on them carvings of cherubim, palm trees, and open flowers. He overlaid them with gold and he spread the gold on the cherubim and palm trees. ³³ In this way, Solomon also made for the temple entrance doorposts of olive wood having four indented sections ³⁴ and two doors of cypress wood. The two leaves of the one door were folding and the two leaves of the other door were folding. ³⁵ He carved on them cherubim, palm trees, and open flowers, and he evenly overlaid gold on the carved work. ³⁶ He built the inner courtyard with three rows of cut stone and a row of cedar beams.

³⁷ The foundation of the house of Yahweh was laid in the fourth year, in the month of Ziv. ³⁸ In the eleventh year, in the month of Bul, which is the eighth month, the house was finished in all its parts and conforming to all its specifications. Solomon took seven years to build the temple.

Chapter 7

¹ Solomon took thirteen years to build his own palace. ² He built the Palace of the Forest of Lebanon. Its length was one hundred cubits, its width was fifty cubits, and its height was thirty cubits. The palace was built with four rows of cedar pillars with cedar beams on the pillars. ³ The house was roofed with cedar that rested on beams. Those beams were supported by pillars. There were forty-five beams, fifteen in a row. ⁴ There were beams in three rows, and each window was opposite another window in three sets. ⁵ All the doors and posts were made square with beams, and window was opposite window in three sets. ⁶ There was a colonnade fifty cubits long and thirty cubits wide, with a portico in front and pillars and a roof. ⁷ Solomon built the hall of the throne where he was to judge, the hall of justice. It was covered with cedar from the floor to the ceiling. ¹⁸ Solomon's house in which he was to live, in another courtyard within the palace grounds, was designed in a similar way. He also built a house like this for Pharaoh's daughter, whom he had taken as a wife.

⁹ These buildings were adorned with costly hewn stones, precisely measured and cut with a saw and smoothed on all sides. These stones were used from the foundation to the stones on top, and also on the outside to the great court. ¹⁰ The foundation was constructed with very large, costly stones of eight and ten cubits in length. ¹¹ Above were costly hewn stones precisely cut to size, and cedar beams. ¹² The great courtyard surrounding the palace had three rows of cut stone and a row of cedar beams like the courtyard of the temple of Yahweh and the temple portico.

¹³ King Solomon sent for Hiram and brought him from Tyre. ¹⁴ Hiram was the son of a widow of the tribe of Naphtali; his father was a man of Tyre, a craftsman in bronze. Hiram was filled with wisdom and understanding and skill to do great work with bronze. He came to King Solomon to work with bronze for the king. ¹⁵ Hiram fashioned the two pillars of bronze, each eighteen cubits high and twelve cubits in circumference. ¹⁶ He made two capitals of polished bronze to set on the tops of the pillars. The height of each capital was five cubits. ¹⁷ Checker latticework and wreaths of chain work for the capitals decorated the top of the pillars, seven for each capital. ¹⁸ So Hiram made two rows of pomegranates around the top of each pillar to decorate their capitals. ¹⁹ The capitals on the tops of the portico pillars were decorated with lilies, four cubits high. ²⁰ The capitals on these two pillars also included, close to their very top, two hundred pomegranates in rows all around. ²¹ He raised up the pillars at the temple portico. The pillar on the right was named Jakin, and the pillar on the left was named Boaz. ²² On the top of the pillars were decorations like lilies. The fashioning of the pillars was done in this way.

²³ Hiram made the round sea of cast metal, ten cubits from brim to brim. Its height was five cubits, and it was thirty cubits in circumference. ²⁴ Under the brim encircling the sea were gourds, ten in each cubit, cast in one piece with it when that basin was cast. ²⁵ The sea stood on twelve oxen, three looking toward the north, three looking toward the west, three looking toward the south, and three looking toward the east. It was set on top of them, and all their hindquarters were toward the inside. ²⁶ The sea was as thick as the width of a hand, and its brim was forged like the brim of a cup, like a lily blossom. The sea held two thousand baths of water.

²⁷ Hiram made the ten stands of bronze. Each stand was four cubits long and four cubits wide, and the height was three cubits. ²⁸ The work of the stands was like this. They had panels that stood between frames, ²⁹ and on the panels and on the frames were lions, oxen, and cherubim. Above and below the lions and oxen were wreaths of hammered work. ³⁰ Every stand had four bronze wheels and axles, and its four corners had supports beneath for the basin. The supports were cast with wreaths on the side of each one. ³¹ The opening was round like a pedestal, a cubit and a half wide, and was within a crown that rose up a cubit. On the opening were engravings, and their panels were square, not round. ³² The four wheels were underneath the panels, and the axles of the wheels and their housings were in the stand. The height of a wheel was a cubit and a half. ³³ The wheels were forged like chariot wheels. Their housings, rims, spokes, and hubs were all cast metal. ³⁴ There were four handles at the four corners of each stand, forged into the stand itself. ³⁵ In the top of the stands there was a round band half a cubit deep, and on the top of the stand its supports and panels were attached. ³⁶ On the surfaces of the supports and on the panels Hiram engraved cherubim, lions, and palm trees that covered the space available, and they were surrounded by wreaths. ³⁷ He made the ten stands in this manner. All of them were cast in the same molds, and they had one size, and the same shape.

³⁸ Hiram made ten basins of bronze. One basin could hold forty baths of water. Each basin was four cubits across and there was one basin on each of ten stands. ³⁹ He made five stands on the south-facing side of the temple and five on the north-facing side of the temple. He set the sea on the east corner, facing toward the south of the temple.

⁴⁰ Hiram made the basins and the shovels and the sprinkling bowls. Then he finished all the work that he did for King Solomon in the temple of Yahweh:

⁴¹ the two pillars, and the bowl-like capitals that were on top of the two pillars, and the two sets of decorative latticework to cover the two bowl like capitals that were on top of the pillars.

⁴² He made the four hundred pomegranates for the two sets of decorative latticework (two rows of pomegranates for each set of latticework to cover the two bowl-like capitals that were on the pillars);

⁴³ the ten stands, and the ten basins on the stands.

⁴⁴ He made the large basin called the sea with its twelve oxen under it;

⁴⁵ also the pots, shovels, basins, and all the other implements. Hiram made them out of polished bronze, for King Solomon, for the temple of Yahweh. ⁴⁶ The king had cast them in the plain of the Jordan, in the clay ground between Sukkoth and Zarethan. ⁴⁷ Solomon did not weigh all the utensils because there were too many to weigh, because the weight of the bronze could not be measured.

⁴⁸ Solomon had made all the furnishings that were in the temple of Yahweh out of gold: the golden altar and the table on which the bread of the presence was to be placed;

⁴⁹ the lampstands, five on the right side and five on the left, in front of the inner room, were of pure gold, and the flowers, the lamps, and the tongs were of gold.

⁵⁰ Solomon also had made the cups, lamp trimmers, basins, spoons, and incense burners, all of which were made of pure gold; he had sockets of gold made for the doors of the inner room (which was the most holy place), and for the doors of the main hall of the temple.

⁵¹ In this way, all the work that King Solomon directed for the house of Yahweh was finished. So Solomon brought in the things that were set apart by David, his father, and the silver, the gold, and the furnishings, and put them into the storerooms of the house of Yahweh.

Footnotes

7:7 ^[1]There was a repetition of the word for

Chapter 8

¹ Then Solomon assembled the elders of Israel, all the heads of the tribes, and the leaders of the families of the people of Israel, before himself in Jerusalem, to bring up the ark of the covenant of Yahweh from the city of David, that is, Zion. ² All the men of Israel assembled before King Solomon at the feast, in the month of Ethanim, which is the seventh month. ³ All the elders of Israel came, and the priests took up the ark. ⁴ They brought up the ark of Yahweh, the tent of meeting, and all the holy furnishings that were in the tent. The priests and the Levites brought these things up. ⁵ King Solomon and all the assembly of Israel came together before the ark, sacrificing sheep and cattle that could not be counted. ⁶ The priests brought in the ark of the covenant of Yahweh to its place, into the inner room of the house, to the most holy place, under the wings of the cherubim. ⁷ For the cherubim spread out their wings to the place of the ark, and they covered the ark and the poles by which it was carried. ⁸ The poles were so long that their ends were seen from the holy place in front of the inner room, but they could not be seen from outside. They are there to this day. ⁹ There was nothing in the ark except the two tablets of stone that Moses had put there at Horeb, when Yahweh made a covenant with the people of Israel when they came out of the land of Egypt. ¹⁰ It came about that when the priests came out of the holy place, the cloud filled the temple of Yahweh. ¹¹ The priests could not stand to serve because of the cloud, for the glory of Yahweh filled his house.

¹² Then Solomon said, "Yahweh has said

that he would live in thick darkness,

¹³ But I have built you a lofty residence,
a place for you to live in forever."

¹⁴ Then the king turned around and blessed all the assembly of Israel, while all the assembly of Israel was standing. ¹⁵ He said, "May Yahweh, the God of Israel, be praised, who spoke to David my father, and has fulfilled it with his own hands, saying, ¹⁶ 'Since the day that I brought my people Israel out of Egypt, I chose no city out of all the tribes of Israel in which to build a house, in order for my name to be there. However, I chose David to rule over my people Israel.' ¹⁷ Now it was in the heart of David my father to build a house for the name of Yahweh, the God of Israel. ¹⁸ But Yahweh said to David my father, 'In that it was in your heart to build a house for my name, you did well for it to be in your heart. ¹⁹ Nevertheless you will not build the house; instead, your son, one who will be born from your loins, will build the house for my name.' ²⁰ Yahweh has carried out the word that he had said, for I have arisen in the place of David my father, and I sit on the throne of Israel, as Yahweh promised. I have built the house for the name of Yahweh, the God of Israel. ²¹ I have made a place for the ark there, in which is Yahweh's covenant, which he made with our fathers when he brought them out of the land of Egypt."

²² Solomon stood before the altar of Yahweh, before all the assembly of Israel, and spread out his hands toward the heavens. ²³ He said, "Yahweh, God of Israel, there is no God like you in the heavens above or on the earth below, who keeps his covenant faithfulness with your servants who walk before you with all their heart; ²⁴ you who have kept with your servant David my father, what you promised him. Yes, you spoke with your mouth and have fulfilled it with your hand, as it is today. ²⁵ Now then, Yahweh, God of Israel, carry out what you have promised to your servant David my father, when you said, 'You will not fail to have a man in my sight to sit on the throne of Israel, if only your descendants are careful to walk before me, as you have walked before me.' ²⁶ Now then, God of Israel, let your word be confirmed, which you have spoken to your servant David my father.

²⁷ But will God actually live on the earth? Look, the entire universe and heaven itself cannot contain you—how much less can this temple that I have built! ²⁸ Yet please respect this prayer of your servant and his humble request, Yahweh my God; listen to the cry and prayer that your servant prays before you today. ²⁹ May your eyes be open toward this temple night and day, to the place about which you have said, 'My name and my presence will be there'—in order to listen to the prayers that your servant will pray toward this place. ³⁰ So listen to the humble request of your servant and of your people Israel when we pray toward this place. Yes, listen from the place where you live, from the heavens; and when you listen, forgive.

³¹ If a man sins against his neighbor and is required to swear an oath, and if he comes and swears an oath before your altar in this house, ³² listen from the heavens and act. Judge your servants, condemning the wicked and bringing what he has done upon his own head. Declare the innocent not guilty and give to him according to his righteousness.

³³ When your people Israel are defeated by an enemy because they have sinned against you, if they turn back to you, confess your name, pray, and seek your favor in this temple— ³⁴ then please listen in the heavens and forgive the sin of your people Israel; bring them back to the land that you gave to their ancestors.

³⁵ When the skies are shut up and there is no rain because the people have sinned against you—if they pray toward this place, confess your name, and turn from their sin when you have afflicted them— ³⁶ then listen in heaven and forgive the sin of your servants and of your people Israel, when you teach them the good way in which they should walk. Send rain on your land, which you have given to your people as an inheritance.

³⁷ Suppose there is famine in the land, or suppose that there is disease, blight or mildew, locusts or caterpillars; or suppose that an enemy attacks the city gates in their land, or that there is any plague or sickness— ³⁸ and suppose then that prayers and humble requests are made by a person or by all your people Israel—each knowing the plague in his own heart as he spreads out his hands toward this temple.

³⁹ Then listen from heaven, the place where you live, forgive and act, and reward every person for all he does; you know his heart, because you and you only know the hearts of all human beings. ⁴⁰ Do this so that they may fear you all the days that they live on the land that you gave to our ancestors.

⁴¹ In addition, concerning the foreigner who does not belong to your people Israel: When he comes from a distant country because of your name— ⁴² for they will hear of your great name, your mighty hand, and your raised arm—when he comes and prays toward this temple, ⁴³ then please listen from heaven, the place where you live, and do whatever the foreigner asks of you. Do this so that all the peoples on earth may know your name and fear you, as do your own people Israel. Do this so they might know that this house I have built is called by your name.

⁴⁴ Suppose that your people go out to battle against an enemy, by whatever way you may send them, and suppose that they pray to you, Yahweh, toward the city that you have chosen, and toward the house that I have built for your name. ⁴⁵ Then listen in the heavens to their prayer and their request, and help their cause.

⁴⁶ Suppose that they sin against you, since there is no one who does not sin, and suppose that you are angry with them and deliver them to the enemy, so that the enemy takes them away captive to their land, whether distant or near. ⁴⁷ Then suppose that they realize they are in the land where they have been exiled, and suppose that they repent and seek favor from you from the land of their captors. Suppose that they say, 'We have acted perversely and sinned. We have behaved wickedly.' ⁴⁸ Suppose that they return to you with all their heart and with all their soul in the land of their enemies who captured them, and suppose that they pray to you toward their land, which you gave to their ancestors, and toward the city that you chose, and toward the house that I have built for your name. ⁴⁹ Then from heaven, the place where you live, listen to their prayer and their request for help, and you will make matters right for them.

⁵⁰ Forgive your people who have sinned against you, and all their transgressions that they have committed against you, and make them objects of compassion before those who have taken them captive, and cause their captors to have compassion on them. ⁵¹ They are your people and your inheritance, whom you rescued out of Egypt as if from the middle of a furnace where iron is forged. ⁵² May your eyes be open to the humble request of your servant and to the requests of your people Israel, to listen to them whenever they cry to you. ⁵³ For you separated them from among all the peoples of the earth to belong to you and receive your promises, just as you explained by Moses your servant, when you brought our fathers out of Egypt, Lord Yahweh."

⁵⁴ So it was that when Solomon had finished praying all this prayer and request for favor to Yahweh, he arose from before the altar of Yahweh, from kneeling on his knees with his hands spread out toward the heavens. ⁵⁵ He stood and blessed all the assembly of Israel in a loud voice, saying, ⁵⁶ "May Yahweh be praised, who has given rest to his people Israel, keeping all his promises. Not one word has failed out of all Yahweh's good promises that he made with Moses his servant. ⁵⁷ May Yahweh our God be with us, as he was with our ancestors. May he never leave us or abandon us, ⁵⁸ that he may incline our hearts to him,

to live in all his ways and keep his commandments and his regulations and his statutes, which he commanded our fathers. ⁵⁹ Let these words I have spoken, by which I have sought the favor of Yahweh, be near Yahweh our God day and night, so that he may help the cause of his servant and the cause of his people Israel, as every day will require; ⁶⁰ that all the peoples of the earth may know that Yahweh, he is God, and there is no other God! ⁶¹ Therefore let your heart be true to Yahweh our God, to walk in his statutes and keep his commandments, as on this day."

⁶² So the king and all Israel with him offered sacrifices to Yahweh. ⁶³ Solomon offered a sacrifice of fellowship offerings to Yahweh: twenty-two thousand cattle and 120,000 sheep. So the king and all the people of Israel dedicated the house of Yahweh. ⁶⁴ The same day the king set apart the middle of the courtyard in front of the temple of Yahweh, for there he offered the burnt offerings, the grain offerings, and the fat of the fellowship offerings, because the bronze altar that was before Yahweh was too small to receive the burnt offering, the grain offerings, and the fat of the fellowship offerings. ⁶⁵ So Solomon held the feast at that time, and all Israel with him, a great assembly, from Lebo Hamath to the brook of Egypt, before Yahweh our God for seven days and also for another seven days, a total of fourteen days. ⁶⁶ On the eighth day he sent the people away, and they blessed the king and went to their tents with joyful and glad hearts for all the goodness that Yahweh had shown to David, his servant, and to Israel, his people.

Chapter 9

¹ After Solomon had finished building the house of Yahweh and the king's palace, and after he had accomplished all that he desired to do, ² Yahweh appeared to Solomon a second time, as he had appeared to him at Gibeon. ³ Then Yahweh said to him, "I have heard your prayer and your request for favor that you have made before me. I have set apart this house, which you have built, to myself, to put my name there forever. My eyes and my heart will be there for all time. ⁴ As for you, if you walk before me as David your father walked in integrity of heart and in uprightness, obeying all that I have commanded you and keeping my statutes and my decrees, ⁵ then I will establish the throne of your kingdom over Israel forever, as I promised David your father, saying, 'A descendant of yours will never fail to be on the throne of Israel.' ⁶ But if you turn away, you or your children, and do not keep my commandments and my statutes that I have placed before you, and if you go and worship other gods and bow down to them, ⁷ then will I cut off Israel from off the ground that I have given them; and this house that I have set apart to my name, I will cast it out of my sight, and Israel will become an example to be mocked and an object of ridicule among all peoples. ⁸ This temple will become a heap of ruins, and everyone who passes by it will be shocked and will hiss. They will ask, 'Why has Yahweh done this to this land and to this house?' ⁹ Others will answer, 'Because they abandoned Yahweh, their God, who had brought their ancestors out of the land of Egypt, and they laid hold of other gods and bowed down to them and worshiped them. That is why Yahweh has brought all this disaster on them.'" ¹⁰ It came about at the end of twenty years that Solomon had finished building the two buildings, the temple of Yahweh and the king's palace. ¹¹ Now Hiram, the king of Tyre, had furnished Solomon with cedar and cypress trees, and with gold—all that Solomon desired—so King Solomon gave Hiram twenty cities in the land of Galilee. ¹² Hiram came out from Tyre to see the cities that Solomon had given him, but they did not please him. ¹³ So Hiram said, "What cities are these which you have given me, my brother?" Hiram called them the Land of Kabul, which they are still called today. ¹⁴ Hiram had sent to the king 120 talents of gold.

¹⁵ This is the account of the forced labor which King Solomon imposed to build the temple of Yahweh and his own palace, the Millo, the wall of Jerusalem, and Hazor, and Megiddo, and Gezer. ¹⁶ Pharaoh king of Egypt had gone up and taken Gezer. He burned it and killed the Canaanites in the city. Then Pharaoh gave the city to his daughter, Solomon's wife, as a wedding gift. ¹⁷ So Solomon rebuilt Gezer and Beth Horon the Lower, ¹⁸ Baalath and Tamar ^[1] in the wilderness in the land of Judah, ¹⁹ and all the store cities that he possessed, and the cities for his chariots and the cities for his horsemen, and whatever he wished to build for his pleasure in Jerusalem, in Lebanon, and in all the lands under his rule. ²⁰ As for all the people who were left of the Amorites, the Hittites, the Perizzites, the Hivites, and the Jebusites, who were not of the people of Israel, ²¹ their descendants who were left after them in the land, whom the people of Israel were not able to totally destroy—Solomon made them into forced laborers, which they are to this day. ²² However, Solomon made no forced laborers of the people of Israel. They were his soldiers, his servants, his officials, his officers, and commanders of his chariot forces and his horsemen.

²³ These were also the chief officers managing the supervisors who were over Solomon's works, 550 of them, who supervised the people who did the work.

²⁴ Pharaoh's daughter moved from the city of David to the house that Solomon had built for her. Later, Solomon built the Millo.

²⁵ Three times each year Solomon offered burnt offerings and peace offerings on the altar that he built for Yahweh, burning incense with them on the altar that was before Yahweh. So he completed the temple and was now using it.

²⁶ King Solomon built a fleet of ships in Ezion Geber, which is near Elath on the shore of the Red Sea, in the land of Edom. ²⁷ Hiram sent servants to Solomon's fleet, sailors who were familiar with the sea, with Solomon's own servants. ²⁸ They went to Ophir with servants of Solomon. From there they brought back 420 talents of gold for King Solomon.

Footnotes

9:18 [\[1\]](#) is also pronounced

Chapter 10

¹ When the queen of Sheba heard the report about Solomon concerning the name of Yahweh, she came to test him with hard questions. ² She came to Jerusalem with a very long caravan, with camels loaded with spices, much gold, and many precious gemstones. When she arrived, she told Solomon all that was in her heart. ³ Solomon answered all her questions. There was nothing she asked that the king did not answer. ⁴ When the queen of Sheba saw all Solomon's wisdom, the palace that he had built, ⁵ the food on his table, the seating of his servants, the work of his servants and their clothing, also his cupbearers, and the manner in which he offered burnt offerings in the house of Yahweh, there was no more breath in her. ⁶ She said to the king, "It is true, the report that I heard in my own land of your words and your wisdom. ⁷ I did not believe the message until I came here, and now my eyes have seen it. Not half was told me! In wisdom and wealth you have exceeded the report that I heard. ⁸ How blessed are your wives, and how blessed are your servants who constantly stand before you, because they hear your wisdom. ^[1]⁹ May Yahweh your God be praised, who has taken pleasure in you, who placed you on the throne of Israel. Because Yahweh loved Israel forever, he has made you king, for you to do justice and righteousness!" ¹⁰ She gave the king 120 talents of gold and a large amount of spices and precious stones. No greater amount of spices as these that the queen of Sheba gave to King Solomon was ever given to him again.

¹¹ The fleet of Hiram, which brought gold from Ophir, also brought from Ophir a large amount of almug wood and precious stones. ¹² The king made almug wood pillars for the temple of Yahweh and for the king's palace, and harps and lutes for the singers. No such quantity of almug wood has ever come or been seen again to this day.

¹³ King Solomon gave to the queen of Sheba everything she wished for, whatever she asked, in addition to what Solomon gave her of his royal bounty. So she returned to her own land with her servants.

¹⁴ Now the weight of gold that came to Solomon in one year was 666 talents of gold, ¹⁵ besides the gold that the traders and merchants brought. All the kings of Arabia and the governors in the country also brought gold and silver to Solomon. ¹⁶ King Solomon made two hundred large shields of beaten gold. Six hundred shekels of gold went into each one. ¹⁷ He also made three hundred shields of beaten gold. Three minas of gold went into each shield; the king put them into the Palace of the Forest of Lebanon. ¹⁸ Then the king made a great throne of ivory and overlaid it with the finest gold. ¹⁹ There were six steps to the throne, and the back of it had a rounded top. There were armrests on each side of the seat, and two lions standing beside the armrests. ²⁰ Twelve lions stood on the steps, one on each side of each of the six steps. There was no throne like it in any other kingdom. ²¹ All King Solomon's drinking cups were gold, and all the drinking cups in the Palace of the Forest of Lebanon were of pure gold. None were silver, because silver was not considered valuable in Solomon's days. ²² The king had at sea a fleet of ships of Tarshish, along with the fleet of Hiram. Once every three years the fleet brought gold, silver, and ivory, as well as apes and baboons.

²³ So King Solomon exceeded all the kings of the world in riches and in wisdom. ²⁴ All the earth sought the presence of Solomon in order to hear his wisdom, which God had put in his heart. ²⁵ Those who visited brought tribute, vessels of silver and of gold, and clothes, armor, and spices, as well as horses and mules, year after year.

²⁶ Solomon gathered together chariots and horsemen. He had 1,400 chariots and twelve thousand horsemen that he stationed in the chariot cities and with himself in Jerusalem. ²⁷ The king had silver in Jerusalem, as much as the stones on the ground. He made cedar wood to be as abundant as the sycamore fig trees that are in the lowlands. ²⁸ The horses that belonged to Solomon were imported from Egypt, and Kue and the king's merchants purchased them from Kue. ²⁹ Chariots were brought up from Egypt for six hundred shekels of silver each, and horses for 150 shekels each. Many of these were then sold to all the kings of the Hittites and Aram.

Footnotes

10:8 ^[1]Some Hebrew copies have:

Chapter 11

¹ Now King Solomon loved many foreign women including the daughter of Pharaoh—women of the Moabites, Ammonites, Edomites, Sidonians, and Hittites. ² They were from the nations about which Yahweh said to the people of Israel, "You will not go among them to marry, neither will they come among you, for they will certainly turn your heart to their gods." In spite of this command, Solomon was affectionate toward these women in love. ³ Solomon had seven hundred wives, princesses, and three hundred concubines. His wives turned his heart away. ⁴ For when Solomon grew old, his wives turned away his heart after other gods; his heart was not fully surrendered to Yahweh his God, as was the heart of David his father. ⁵ For Solomon followed Ashtoreth, the goddess of the Sidonians, and he followed Molech, the disgusting idol of the Ammonites. ⁶ Solomon did what was evil in the sight of Yahweh; he did not fully follow Yahweh as David his father had done. ⁷ Then Solomon built a high place for Chemosh, the disgusting idol of Moab, on a hill east of Jerusalem, and also for Molech, the disgusting idol of the people of Ammon. ⁸ He also built high places for all his foreign wives, who burned incense and sacrificed to their gods at them.

⁹ Yahweh was angry with Solomon, because his heart had turned away from him, the God of Israel, even though he had appeared to him twice ¹⁰ and commanded him about this very thing, that he should not go after other gods. But Solomon did not obey what Yahweh commanded. ¹¹ Therefore Yahweh said to Solomon, "Because you have done this and have not kept the covenant and my statutes that I have commanded you, I will surely tear the kingdom from you and give it to your servant. ¹² However, for David your father's sake, I will not do it in your lifetime, but I will tear it out of the hand of your son. ¹³ Yet I will not tear away all the kingdom; I will give one tribe to your son for David my servant's sake, and for the sake of Jerusalem, which I have chosen."

¹⁴ Then Yahweh raised up an adversary to Solomon, Hadad the Edomite. He was from the royal family of Edom. ¹⁵ When David was in Edom, Joab the captain of the army had gone up to bury the dead, every man who had been killed in Edom. ¹⁶ Joab and all Israel remained there six months until he had killed every male in Edom. ¹⁷ But Hadad fled to Egypt with other Edomites, his father's servants, when Hadad was still a little child. ¹⁸ They left Midian and came to Paran, from where they took men with them to Egypt, to Pharaoh king of Egypt, who gave him a house and land and food. ¹⁹ Hadad found great favor in the sight of Pharaoh, so that Pharaoh gave him a wife, his own wife's sister, the sister of Tahpenes the queen. ²⁰ The sister of Tahpenes gave birth to Hadad's son. They named him Genubath. Tahpenes raised him in Pharaoh's palace. So Genubath lived in Pharaoh's palace among the children of Pharaoh. ²¹ While he was in Egypt, Hadad heard that David had lain down with his ancestors and that Joab the captain of the army was dead, Hadad said to Pharaoh, "Let me depart, so I may go to my own country." ²² Then Pharaoh said to him, "But what have you lacked with me, that you now seek to go to your own country?" Hadad answered, "Nothing. Please let me go."

²³ God also raised up another adversary to Solomon, Rezon son of Eliada, who had fled from his master Hadadezer king of Zobah. ²⁴ Rezon gathered men to himself and became captain over a marauding band when David killed the men of Zobah. Rezon's men went to Damascus and lived there, and Rezon reigned in Damascus. ²⁵ He was an enemy of Israel all the days of Solomon, along with the trouble that Hadad caused. Rezon abhorred Israel and reigned over Aram.

²⁶ Then Jeroboam son of Nebat, an Ephraimite of Zeredah, a servant of Solomon, whose mother's name was Zeruah, a widow, also lifted up his hand against the king. ²⁷ He lifted up his hand against the king because Solomon had built up the place located at Millo and repaired the opening in the city wall of David his father. ²⁸ Jeroboam was a man of great ability. Solomon saw that the young man was industrious, so he appointed him over all the labor of the house of Joseph. ²⁹ At that time, when Jeroboam went out of Jerusalem, the prophet Ahijah the Shilonite found him on the road. Now Ahijah had dressed in a new garment and the two men were alone in the field. ³⁰ Then Ahijah grabbed hold of the new garment that was on him and tore it into twelve pieces. ³¹ He said to Jeroboam, "Take ten pieces, for Yahweh, the God of Israel, says, 'Look, I will tear the kingdom out of the hand of Solomon and I will give ten tribes to you ³² (but Solomon will have one tribe, for my servant David's sake and for Jerusalem's sake—the city that I have chosen out of all the tribes of Israel), ³³ because they have abandoned me and have worshiped Ashtoreth the goddess of the Sidonians, Chemosh the god of Moab, and Molech the god of the people of

Ammon. They have not walked in my ways, to do what is right in my eyes, and to keep my statutes and my decrees, as did David his father. ³⁴ I will not take the whole kingdom out of Solomon's hand. I have made him ruler all the days of his life, for David my servant's sake whom I chose, the one who kept my commandments and my statutes. ³⁵ But I will take the kingdom out of his son's hand and I will give it to you, ten tribes. ³⁶ I will give one tribe to Solomon's son, so that David my servant may always have a lamp before me in Jerusalem, the city in which I have chosen to put my name. ³⁷ I will take you, and you will rule to fulfill all that you desire, and you will be king over Israel. ³⁸ If you listen to all that I command you, and if you walk in my ways and do what is right in my eyes, to keep my statutes and my commandments, as David my servant did, then I will be with you and will build you a sure house, as I built for David, and will give Israel to you. ³⁹ I will punish the descendants of David, but not forever." ⁴⁰ So Solomon tried to kill Jeroboam. But Jeroboam got up and fled into Egypt, to Shishak king of Egypt, and he remained in Egypt until the death of Solomon.

⁴¹ As for the other matters concerning Solomon, all that he did and his wisdom, are they not written in the book of the events of Solomon? ⁴² Solomon reigned in Jerusalem over all Israel for forty years. ⁴³ He lay down with his ancestors and he was buried in the city of David his father. Rehoboam his son became king in his place.

Chapter 12

¹ Rehoboam went to Shechem, for all Israel was coming to Shechem to make him king. ² It happened that Jeroboam son of Nebat heard of this (for he was still in Egypt, where he had fled from the presence of King Solomon), for Jeroboam had settled down in Egypt. ³ So they sent and called him, and Jeroboam and all the assembly of Israel came and said to Rehoboam, ⁴ "Your father made our yoke heavy. Now make lighter the hard work of your father and make lighter the heavy yoke that he put on us, and we will serve you." ⁵ Rehoboam said to them, "Go away for three days, then come back to me." So the people went away.

⁶ King Rehoboam consulted with the old men who had stood before Solomon his father while he was alive, and he said, "How do you advise me to answer this people?" ⁷ They spoke to him and said, "If you will be a servant today to these people and serve them, and answer them by saying good words to them, then they will always be your servants." ⁸ But Rehoboam ignored the advice that the old men had given him and he consulted with the young men who had grown up with him and stood before him. ⁹ He said to them, "What advice do you give me that we may answer the people who spoke to me and said, 'Lighten the yoke that your father put on us'?" ¹⁰ The young men who had grown up with Rehoboam spoke to him, saying, "Speak to these people who told you that your father Solomon made their yoke heavy but that you must make it lighter. You should say to them, 'My little finger is thicker than my father's waist.' ¹¹ So now, although my father burdened you with a heavy yoke, I will add to your yoke. My father punished you with whips, but I will punish you with scorpions."

¹² So Jeroboam and all the people came to Rehoboam on the third day, as the king had instructed when he said, "Come back to me on the third day." ¹³ The king answered the people roughly and ignored the advice of the old men that they had given him. ¹⁴ He spoke to them following the advice of the young men; he said, "My father burdened you with a heavy yoke, but I will add to your yoke. My father punished you with whips, but I will punish you with scorpions." ¹⁵ So the king did not listen to the people, for it was a turn of events brought about by Yahweh, that he might carry out his word that he had spoken by Ahijah the Shilonite to Jeroboam son of Nebat.

¹⁶ When all Israel saw that the king did not listen to them, the people answered him and said,

"What share do we have in David?
We have no inheritance in the son of Jesse!
Go to your tents, Israel.
Now see to your own house, David."

So Israel went back to their tents. ¹⁷ But as for the people of Israel who lived in the cities of Judah, Rehoboam became king over them. ¹⁸ Then King Rehoboam sent Adoniram, who was over the forced laborers, but all Israel stoned him to death with stones. King Rehoboam fled quickly in his chariot to Jerusalem. ¹⁹ So Israel has been in rebellion against the house of David to this day. ²⁰ It happened that when all Israel heard that Jeroboam had returned, they sent and called him to their assembly and made him king over all Israel. There was no one who followed the family of David, except only the tribe of Judah.

²¹ When Rehoboam arrived in Jerusalem, he assembled all the house of Judah and the tribe of Benjamin; there were 180,000 chosen men who were soldiers, to fight against the house of Israel, to restore the kingdom to Rehoboam son of Solomon. ²² But the word of God came to Shemaiah, the man of God; it said, ²³ "Speak to Rehoboam son of Solomon, king of Judah, to all the house of Judah and Benjamin, and to the rest of the people; say, ²⁴ 'Yahweh says this: You must not attack or fight against your brothers the people of Israel. Each man must return to his home, for this thing has been made to happen by me.'" So they listened to the word of Yahweh and turned back and went their way, and they obeyed his word.

²⁵ Then Jeroboam built Shechem in the hill country of Ephraim, and lived there. He went out from there and built Peniel. ²⁶ Jeroboam thought in his heart, "Now the kingdom will return to the house of David. ²⁷ If these people go up to offer sacrifices in the temple of Yahweh at Jerusalem, then the heart of these people will turn again to their master, to Rehoboam king of Judah. They will kill me and return to Rehoboam king of Judah." ²⁸ So King Jeroboam sought advice and made two calves of gold; he said to the people, "It is too much for you to go up to Jerusalem. Look, these are your gods, Israel, who brought you

up out of the land of Egypt." ²⁹ He set up one in Bethel and the other in Dan. ³⁰ So this act became a sin. The people went to one or the other, all the way to Dan. ³¹ Jeroboam made houses on high places and he also made priests from among all the people, who were not among the sons of Levi. ³² Jeroboam ordained a feast in the eighth month, on the fifteenth day of the month, like the feast that is in Judah, and he went up to the altar. He did so at Bethel, sacrificing to the calves that he had made, and he placed in Bethel the priests of the high places he had made. ³³ Jeroboam went up to the altar that he had made in Bethel on the fifteenth day in the eighth month, in the month he had planned in his own mind; he ordained a feast for the people of Israel and went up to the altar to burn incense.

Footnotes

12:2 ^[1] 2 Chronicles 10:2 is very close to 1 Kings 12:2, that is, the Hebrew consonants are identical, and could support either reading, "settled down" or "returned." The alternate reading would be:

Chapter 13

¹ A man of God came out of Judah by the word of Yahweh to Bethel. Jeroboam was standing by the altar to burn incense. ² He cried against the altar by the word of Yahweh: "Altar, altar! This is what Yahweh says, 'See, a son named Josiah will be born to the family of David, and on you he will sacrifice the priests of the high places who now burn incense on you. On you they will burn human bones.'" ³ Then the man of God gave a sign the same day, saying, "This is the sign that Yahweh has spoken: 'Look, the altar will be split apart, and the ashes on it will be poured out.'" ⁴ When the king heard what the man of God said, that he had cried out against the altar at Bethel, Jeroboam reached out with his hand from the altar, saying, "Seize him." Then the hand with which he had reached out against the man dried up, so that he could not draw it back to himself. ⁵ (The altar was also split apart and the ashes poured out from the altar, as described by the sign that the man of God had given by the word of Yahweh.) ⁶ King Jeroboam answered and said to the man of God, "Plead for the favor of Yahweh your God and pray for me, so that my hand may be restored to me again." So the man of God prayed to Yahweh, and the king's hand was restored to him again, and it became as it was before. ⁷ The king said to the man of God, "Come home with me and refresh yourself, and I will give you a reward." ⁸ The man of God said to the king, "Even if you give me half your possessions, I will not go with you, nor will I eat food or drink water in this place, ⁹ because Yahweh commanded me by his word, 'You will eat no bread nor drink water, nor return by the way that you came.'" ¹⁰ So the man of God left another way and did not return to his home by the way that he had come to Bethel.

¹¹ Now there was an old prophet living in Bethel, and one of his sons came and told him all the things that the man of God had done that day in Bethel. His sons also told him the words that the man of God had spoken to the king. ¹² Their father said to them, "Which way did he go?" Now his sons had seen the way the man of God from Judah had gone. ¹³ So he said to his sons, "Saddle the donkey for me." So they saddled the donkey and he rode off on it. ¹⁴ The old prophet went after the man of God and found him sitting under an oak tree; and he said to him, "Are you the man of God who came from Judah?" He answered, "I am." ¹⁵ Then the old prophet said to him, "Come home with me and eat food." ¹⁶ The man of God answered, "I may not return with you nor go in with you, neither will I eat food nor drink water with you in this place, ¹⁷ because it was commanded to me by the word of Yahweh, 'You will eat no food nor drink water there, nor return by the way that you came.'" ¹⁸ So the old prophet said to him, "I also am a prophet as you are, and an angel spoke to me by the word of Yahweh, saying, 'Bring him back with you into your house, that he may eat food and drink water.'" But he was lying to the man of God. ¹⁹ So the man of God went back with the old prophet and ate food in his house and drank water.

²⁰ As they sat at the table, the word of Yahweh came to the prophet who had brought him back, ²¹ and he cried to the man of God who came from Judah, saying, "Yahweh says, 'Because you have been disobedient to the word of Yahweh and have not kept the command that Yahweh your God gave you, ²² but came back and have eaten food and drunk water in the place about which Yahweh told you to eat no food and drink no water, your body will not be buried in the tomb of your fathers.'" ²³ After he had eaten food and after he had drunk, the prophet saddled the donkey of the man of God, the man who had come back with him. ²⁴ When the man of God was gone, a lion met him on the road and killed him, and his body was left on the road. Then the donkey stood by it, and the lion also stood by the body. ²⁵ When men passed by and saw the body left on the road, and the lion standing by the body, they came and told it in the city where the old prophet lived.

²⁶ When the prophet who had brought him back from the way heard it, he said, "It is the man of God who disobeyed the word of Yahweh. Therefore Yahweh gave him to the lion, which tore him to pieces and killed him, just as the word of Yahweh warned him." ²⁷ So the old prophet spoke to his sons, saying, "Saddle my donkey," and they saddled it. ²⁸ He went and found the body left in the road, and the donkey and the lion standing by the body. The lion had not eaten the body, nor attacked the donkey. ²⁹ The prophet lifted up the body of the man of God, laid it on the donkey, and brought it back. He came to his own city to mourn and to bury him. ³⁰ He laid the body in his own grave, and they mourned over him, saying, "Woe, my brother!" ³¹ Then after he had buried him, the old prophet spoke to his sons, saying, "When I am dead, bury me in the tomb in which the man of God is buried. Lay my bones beside his bones. ³² For the message he declared by the word of Yahweh, against the altar and against all the houses on the high places in the cities of Samaria, will certainly happen."

³³ After this Jeroboam did not turn from his evil way, but continued to appoint common priests for the high places from among all sorts of people. Any who would serve he consecrated as a priest. ³⁴ This matter became sin to the family of Jeroboam and caused his family to be destroyed and to be exterminated from the face of the earth.

Chapter 14

¹ At that time Abijah son of Jeroboam became very sick. ² Jeroboam said to his wife, "Please arise and disguise yourself, so you will not be recognized as my wife, and go to Shiloh, because Ahijah the prophet is there; he is the one who spoke about me, saying that I would become king over these people. ³ Take with you ten loaves, some cakes, and a jar of honey, and go to Ahijah. He will tell you what will happen to the child." ⁴ Jeroboam's wife did so; she left and went to Shiloh and came to the house of Ahijah. Now Ahijah could not see; he lost his sight because of old age. ⁵ Yahweh said to Ahijah, "Look, the wife of Jeroboam is coming to seek advice from you regarding her son, for he is sick. Say such and such to her, because when she comes, she will act as if she were some other woman."

⁶ When Ahijah heard the sound of her feet as she came in at the door, he said, "Come in, wife of Jeroboam. Why do you pretend to be someone you are not? I have been sent to you with severe news. ⁷ Go, tell Jeroboam that Yahweh, the God of Israel, says, 'I raised you from among the people to make you the leader over my people Israel. ⁸ I tore the kingdom away from the family of David and gave it to you, yet you have not been like my servant David, who kept my commandments and followed me with all his heart, to do only what was right in my eyes. ⁹ Instead, you have done evil, more than all who were before you. You have made other gods, and you have cast metal images to provoke me to anger, and you have thrust me behind your back. ¹⁰ Therefore, look, I will bring disaster on the house of Jeroboam; I will cut off from you every male child in Israel, whether slave or free, and will completely remove the house of Jeroboam like someone who burns up dung until it is gone. ¹¹ Anyone who belongs to Jeroboam who dies in the city will be eaten by dogs, and anyone who dies in the field will be eaten by the birds of the heavens, for I, Yahweh, have said it.' ¹² So arise, wife of Jeroboam, and go back to your home; when your feet enter the city, the child Abijah will die. ¹³ All Israel will mourn for him and bury him. He is the only one from Jeroboam's family who will go into a grave, because only in him, out of Jeroboam's house, was anything good found in the sight of Yahweh, the God of Israel. ¹⁴ Also, Yahweh will raise up a king of Israel who will cut off the family of Jeroboam on that day. Today is that day, right now. ¹⁵ For Yahweh will attack Israel as a reed is shaken in the water, and he will root up Israel out of this good land that he gave to their ancestors. He will scatter them beyond the Euphrates River, because they have made their Asherah poles and provoked Yahweh to anger. ¹⁶ He will give Israel up because of the sins of Jeroboam, the sins that he has committed, and through which he has led Israel to sin."

¹⁷ So Jeroboam's wife arose and left, and came to Tirzah. As she came to the threshold of her house, the child died. ¹⁸ All Israel buried him and mourned for him, just as it was told to them by the word of Yahweh which he had spoken by his servant Ahijah the prophet.

¹⁹ As for the other matters concerning Jeroboam, how he waged war and how he reigned, see, they are written in the book of the events of the kings of Israel. ²⁰ Jeroboam reigned twenty-two years and then lay down with his ancestors, and Nadab his son became king in his place.

²¹ Now Rehoboam son of Solomon was reigning in Judah. Rehoboam was forty-one years old when he became king, and he reigned seventeen years in Jerusalem, the city that Yahweh had chosen out of all the tribes of Israel in which to put his name. His mother's name was Naamah the Ammonite woman. ²² Judah did what was evil in the sight of Yahweh; they provoked him to jealousy with the sins that they committed, more than everything that their fathers had done. ²³ For they also built for themselves high places, stone pillars, and Asherah poles on every high hill and under every green tree. ²⁴ There were also cultic prostitutes in the land. They did the same disgusting practices as the nations that Yahweh had driven out before the people of Israel.

²⁵ It happened in the fifth year of King Rehoboam that Shishak king of Egypt came up against Jerusalem.

²⁶ He took away the treasures in the house of Yahweh, and the treasures in the king's house. He took everything away; he also took all the shields of gold that Solomon had made. ²⁷ King Rehoboam made shields of bronze in their place and entrusted them into the hands of the commanders of the guard, who guarded the doors to the king's house. ²⁸ It happened that whenever the king entered the house of Yahweh, the guards would carry them; then they would bring them back into the guardhouse.

²⁹ As for the other matters concerning Rehoboam, and all that he did, are they not written in the book of the events of the kings of Judah? ³⁰ There was constant warfare between Rehoboam and Jeroboam. ³¹ So

Rehoboam lay down with his ancestors and was buried with them in the city of David. His mother's name was Naamah the Ammonite woman. Abijah his son became king in his place.

Chapter 15

¹ In the eighteenth year of King Jeroboam son of Nebat, Abijah began to reign over Judah. ² He reigned for three years in Jerusalem. His mother's name was Maakah. She was the daughter of Abishalom. ³ He walked in all the sins that his father had committed before his time; his heart was not devoted to Yahweh his God as the heart of David, his ancestor, had been. ⁴ Nevertheless, for David's sake, Yahweh his God gave him a lamp in Jerusalem by raising up his son after him in order to strengthen Jerusalem. ⁵ God did this because David had done what was right in his eyes; for all the days of his life, he had not turned away from anything that he commanded him, except only in the matter of Uriah the Hittite. ⁶ Now there was war between Rehoboam and Jeroboam all the days of Abijah's life.

⁷ As for the other matters of Abijah, all that he did, are they not written in the book of the events of the kings of Judah? There was war between Abijah and Jeroboam. ⁸ Abijah lay down with his ancestors, and they buried him in the city of David. Asa his son became king in his place.

⁹ In the twentieth year of Jeroboam king of Israel, Asa began to reign over Judah. ¹⁰ He reigned forty-one years in Jerusalem. His grandmother's name was Maakah, the daughter of Abishalom. ¹¹ Asa did what was right in the eyes of Yahweh, as David, his ancestor, had done. ¹² He expelled the cultic prostitutes from the land and removed all the idols that his ancestors had made. ¹³ He also removed Maakah, his grandmother, from being queen, because she had made a disgusting figure out of an Asherah pole. Asa cut down the disgusting figure and burned it at the Kidron Valley. ¹⁴ But the high places were not taken away. Nevertheless, Asa's heart was completely devoted to Yahweh all his days. ¹⁵ He brought into the house of Yahweh the things that were set apart by his father, and his own things that had been set apart that were made of silver and gold, and vessels.

¹⁶ There was war between Asa and Baasha king of Israel, all their days. ¹⁷ Baasha king of Israel, acted aggressively against Judah and built up Ramah, so that he might not allow anyone to leave or enter into the land of Asa king of Judah. ¹⁸ Then Asa took all the silver and gold left in the storerooms in the house of Yahweh, and the storerooms of the king's palace. He put it into the hands of his servants and sent it to Ben-Hadad son of Tabrimmon son of Hezion, the king of Aram, who lived in Damascus. He said, ¹⁹ "Let there be a covenant between me and you, as there was between my father and your father. Look, I have sent to you a gift of silver and gold. Break your covenant with Baasha king of Israel, so that he may leave me alone." ²⁰ Ben-Hadad listened to King Asa and sent the commanders of his armies, and they attacked the cities of Israel. They attacked Ijon, Dan, Abel Beth Maakah, and all Kinnereth, together with all the land of Naphtali. ²¹ It came about that when Baasha heard this, he stopped building up Ramah and went back to Tirzah. ²² Then King Asa made a proclamation to all Judah. No one was exempted. They carried away the stones and timbers of Ramah with which Baasha had been building up the city. Then King Asa used that building material to build up Geba of Benjamin and Mizpah.

²³ As for the other matters of Asa, all his might, all that he did, and the cities he built, are they not written in the book of the events of the kings of Judah? But during his old age he was diseased in his feet.

²⁴ Then Asa lay down with his ancestors and was buried with them in the city of David his father. Jehoshaphat his son became king in his place.

²⁵ Nadab son of Jeroboam began to reign over Israel in the second year of Asa king of Judah; he reigned over Israel two years. ²⁶ He did what was evil in the sight of Yahweh and walked in the way of his father, and in his own sin, by which he led Israel to sin. ²⁷ Baasha son of Ahijah, of the family of Issachar, conspired against Nadab; Baasha killed him down at Gibbethon, which belonged to the Philistines, for Nadab and all Israel were laying siege to Gibbethon. ²⁸ In the third year of Asa king of Judah, Baasha killed Nadab and became king in his place. ²⁹ As soon as he was king, Baasha killed all the family of Jeroboam. He left none of Jeroboam's descendants breathing; in this way he destroyed his royal line, just as Yahweh had spoken by his servant Ahijah the Shilonite, ³⁰ for the sins of Jeroboam which he committed and by which he led Israel to sin, in his anger to which he provoked Yahweh, the God of Israel.

³¹ As for the other matters concerning Nadab, and all that he did, are they not written in the book of the events of the kings of Israel? ³² There was war between Asa and Baasha king of Israel all their days.

³³ In the third year of Asa king of Judah, Baasha son of Ahijah began to reign over all Israel in Tirzah and he reigned twenty-four years. ³⁴ He did what was evil in the sight of Yahweh and walked in the way of Jeroboam and in his sin by which he led Israel to sin.

Chapter 16

¹ The word of Yahweh came to Jehu son of Hanani against Baasha, saying, ² "Although I exalted you out of the dust and made you leader over my people Israel, you have walked in the way of Jeroboam and have made my people Israel to sin, so as to provoke me to anger with their sins. ³ See, I will consume Baasha and his family and I will make your family like the family of Jeroboam son of Nebat. ⁴ The dogs will eat anyone belonging to Baasha who dies in the city, and the birds of the sky will eat anyone who dies in the fields."

⁵ As for the other matters concerning Baasha, what he did, and his might, are they not written in the book of the events of the kings of Israel? ⁶ Baasha lay down with his ancestors and was buried in Tirzah, and Elah his son became king in his place. ⁷ So by the prophet Jehu son of Hanani the word of Yahweh came against Baasha and his family, both because of all the evil that he did in the sight of Yahweh, so as to provoke him to anger with the work of his hands, like the family of Jeroboam, and also because he had killed all of Jeroboam's family.

⁸ In the twenty-sixth year of Asa king of Judah, Elah son of Baasha began to reign over Israel in Tirzah; he reigned two years. ⁹ His servant Zimri, captain of half his chariots, conspired against him. Now Elah was in Tirzah, drinking himself drunk in the house of Arza, who was over the household in Tirzah. ¹⁰ Zimri went in, attacked him, and put him to death in the twenty-seventh year of Asa king of Judah and became king in his place. ¹¹ When Zimri began to reign and was seated on his throne, he killed all the family of Baasha. He did not leave alive a single male belonging to Baasha's relatives or friends. ¹² So Zimri destroyed all the family of Baasha, according to the word of Yahweh which he spoke against Baasha by Jehu the prophet, ¹³ for all the sins of Baasha and the sins of Elah his son that they committed, and by which they had led Israel to sin, so that they provoked Yahweh, the God of Israel, to anger with their idols. ¹⁴ As for the other matters concerning Elah, all that he did, are they not written in the book of the events of the kings of Israel?

¹⁵ In the twenty-seventh year of Asa king of Judah, Zimri reigned only for seven days in Tirzah. Now the army was camped by Gibbethon, which belonged to the Philistines. ¹⁶ The army camped there heard it said, "Zimri has plotted and has killed the king." So that day in the camp, all Israel declared Omri, the commander of the army, king over Israel. ¹⁷ Omri went up from Gibbethon and all Israel with him, and they besieged Tirzah. ¹⁸ So when Zimri saw that the city had been taken, he went into the fortress attached to the king's palace and set fire to the building over him; in this way he died in the flames. ¹⁹ This was for the sins that he had committed in doing what was evil in the sight of Yahweh, by walking in the way of Jeroboam and in the sin that he had committed, so as to lead Israel to sin. ²⁰ As for the other matters concerning Zimri, and the treason that he carried out, are they not written in the book of the events of the kings of Israel?

²¹ Then the people of Israel were divided into two parts. Half of the people followed Tibni son of Ginath, to make him king, and half followed Omri. ²² But the people who followed Omri were stronger than the people who followed Tibni son of Ginath. So Tibni died, and Omri became king. ²³ Omri began to reign over Israel in the thirty-first year of Asa king of Judah, and he reigned twelve years. He reigned from Tirzah for six years. ²⁴ He bought the hill of Samaria from Shemer for two talents of silver. He built a city on the hill and called the name of the city Samaria, after the name of Shemer, the past owner of the hill. ²⁵ Omri did what was evil in the sight of Yahweh and acted more wickedly than all who had been before him. ²⁶ For he walked in all the ways of Jeroboam son of Nebat and in his sins by which he led Israel to sin, to provoke Yahweh, the God of Israel, to be angry with their worthless idols. ²⁷ As for the other matters concerning Omri which he did, and the might that he showed, are they not written in the book of the events of the kings of Israel? ²⁸ So Omri lay down with his ancestors and was buried in Samaria and Ahab his son became king in his place.

²⁹ In the thirty-eighth year of Asa king of Judah, Ahab son of Omri began to reign over Israel. Ahab son of Omri reigned over Israel in Samaria twenty-two years. ³⁰ Ahab son of Omri did what was evil in the sight of Yahweh, more than all those who were before him. ³¹ It was to Ahab a trivial thing to walk in the sins of Jeroboam son of Nebat, so he took as his wife Jezebel the daughter of Ethbaal, king of the Sidonians; he went and worshiped Baal and bowed down to him. ³² He built an altar for Baal in the house of Baal, which he had built in Samaria. ³³ Ahab made an Asherah pole. Ahab did even more to provoke Yahweh, the God

of Israel, to anger than all the kings of Israel who had been before him. ³⁴ During Ahab's rule, Hiel of Bethel rebuilt Jericho. Hiel laid the foundation of the city at the cost of the life of Abiram, his firstborn son; and Segub, his youngest son, lost his life while he was building the gates of the city, in keeping with the word of Yahweh which he spoke by Joshua son of Nun.

Chapter 17

¹ Elijah the Tishbite, from Tishbe in Gilead, said to Ahab, "As Yahweh, the God of Israel lives, before whom I stand, there will not be dew or rain these years unless I say so." ² The word of Yahweh came to Elijah, saying, ³ "Leave from here and go eastward; hide yourself by the brook Kerith, east of the Jordan. ⁴ It will happen that you will drink from the brook, and I have commanded the ravens to feed you there." ⁵ So Elijah went and did as the word of Yahweh commanded. He went to live by the brook Kerith, east of the Jordan. ⁶ The ravens brought him bread and meat in the morning and bread and meat in the evening, and he drank from the brook. ⁷ But after a while the brook dried up because there was no rain in the land.

⁸ The word of Yahweh came to him, saying, ⁹ "Arise, go to Zarephath, which belongs to Sidon, and live there. Look, I have commanded a widow there to provide for you." ¹⁰ So he arose and went to Zarephath, and when he came to the gate of the city a widow was there gathering sticks. So he called to her and said, "Please bring me a little water in a jar so that I may drink." ¹¹ As she was going to get water he called to her, and said, "Please bring me a piece of bread in your hand." ¹² She replied, "As Yahweh your God lives, I do not have any bread, but only a handful of meal in a jar and a little oil in a jug. See, I am gathering two sticks so I may go in and cook it for me and my son, that we may eat it, and die." ¹³ Elijah said to her, "Do not fear. Go and do as you have said, but make me a little bread first and bring it out to me. Then afterward make some for you and for your son." ¹⁴ For Yahweh, the God of Israel, says, 'The jar of meal will not empty, neither will the jug of oil stop flowing, until the day that Yahweh sends rain on the earth.' ¹⁵ So she did as Elijah had told her. She and Elijah, along with her household, ate for many days. ¹⁶ The jar of meal did not empty, neither did the jug of oil stop flowing, just as the word of Yahweh had said, as he had spoken by Elijah.

¹⁷ After these things the woman's son, the woman who owned the house, fell sick. His sickness was so severe that there was no more breath left in him. ¹⁸ So his mother said to Elijah, "What do you have against me, man of God? Have you come to me to remind me of my iniquity and to kill my son?" ¹⁹ Then Elijah replied to her, "Give me your son." He took the boy from her arms and carried him up into the room where he was staying, and he laid the boy on his own bed. ²⁰ He cried to Yahweh and said, "Yahweh my God, have you also brought disaster on the widow with whom I am staying, by killing her son?" ²¹ Then Elijah stretched himself on the child three times; he cried out to Yahweh and said, "Yahweh my God, I beg you, please let this child's life return to him." ²² Yahweh listened to the voice of Elijah; the life of the child returned to him, and he revived. ²³ Elijah took the child and brought him out of his room down into the house; he handed the boy to his mother and said, "See, your son is alive." ²⁴ The woman said to Elijah, "Now I know that you are a man of God, and that the word of Yahweh in your mouth is true."

Chapter 18

¹ So after many days the word of Yahweh came to Elijah, in the third year of the drought, saying, "Go, show yourself to Ahab and I will send rain on the land." ² Elijah went to show himself to Ahab; now the famine was severe in Samaria. ³ Ahab called Obadiah, who was in charge of the palace. Now Obadiah honored Yahweh very much, ⁴ for when Jezebel was killing the prophets of Yahweh, Obadiah took one hundred prophets and hid them by fifties in a cave and fed them with bread and water. ⁵ Ahab said to Obadiah, "Go through the land to all the water springs and brooks. Perhaps we will find grass and save the horses and mules alive, so that we will not lose all the animals." ⁶ So they divided the land between them to pass through it and look for water. Ahab went one way by himself and Obadiah went another way.

⁷ As Obadiah was on the road, Elijah unexpectedly met him. Obadiah recognized him and lay facedown on the ground. He said, "Is it you, my master Elijah?" ⁸ Elijah answered him, "It is I. Go tell your master, 'Look, Elijah is here.'" ⁹ Obadiah replied, "How have I sinned, that you would give your servant into the hand of Ahab, for him to kill me?" ¹⁰ As Yahweh your God lives, there is no nation or kingdom where my master has not sent men to find you. Whenever a nation or kingdom says, 'Elijah is not here,' Ahab makes them take an oath swearing that they could not find you. ¹¹ Yet now you say, 'Go, tell your master that Elijah is here.' ¹² As soon as I am gone from you, the Spirit of Yahweh will carry you some place I do not know. Then when I go and tell Ahab, and when he cannot find you, he will kill me. Yet I, your servant, have worshiped Yahweh from my youth. ¹³ Has it not been told to you, my master, what I did when Jezebel killed the prophets of Yahweh, how I hid one hundred of Yahweh's prophets by fifties in a cave and fed them with bread and water? ¹⁴ Now you say to me, 'Go and tell your master that Elijah is here,' so that he will kill me." ¹⁵ Then Elijah responded, "As Yahweh of hosts lives, before whom I stand, I will surely show myself to Ahab today."

¹⁶ So Obadiah went to meet Ahab, and told him what Elijah said. Then the king went to meet Elijah. ¹⁷ When Ahab saw Elijah, he said to him, "Is it you? You are the one who brings trouble to Israel!" ¹⁸ Elijah answered, "I have not brought trouble to Israel, but you and your father's family are the ones who have caused trouble by abandoning the commandments of Yahweh and by following the Baals. ¹⁹ Now then, send word and gather to me all Israel at Mount Carmel, along with the 450 prophets of Baal and the four hundred prophets of Asherah who eat at Jezebel's table."

²⁰ So Ahab sent word to all the people of Israel and gathered the prophets together at Mount Carmel. ²¹ Elijah came near to all the people and said, "How long will you keep changing your mind? If Yahweh is God, follow him. But if Baal is God, then follow him." Yet the people did not answer him a word. ²² Then Elijah said to the people, "I, I alone, am left as a prophet of Yahweh, but Baal's prophets are 450 men. ²³ So let them give us two bulls. Let them choose one bull for themselves and cut it in pieces, and lay it on the wood, but put no fire under it. Then I will prepare the other bull and lay it on the wood, and put no fire under it. ²⁴ Then you will call on the name of your god, and I will call on the name of Yahweh, and the God who answers by fire, then let him be God." So all the people answered and said, "This is good."

²⁵ So Elijah said to the prophets of Baal, "Choose one bull for yourselves and prepare it first, for you are many people. Then call on the name of your god, but put no fire under the bull." ²⁶ They took the bull that was given to them and prepared it, and they called on the name of Baal from morning until noon, saying, "Baal, hear us." But there was no voice, nor anyone who answered. They danced around the altar they had made. ²⁷ At noon Elijah mocked them and said, "Shout out loudly! He is a god! Perhaps he is thinking, or is relieving himself, or he is traveling on a journey, or perhaps he is sleeping and must be awakened." ²⁸ So they shouted more loudly, and they cut themselves, as they usually did, with swords and spears, until their blood flowed out over themselves. ²⁹ Midday passed, and they were still raving until the time of offering of the evening sacrifice, but there was no voice or anyone to answer; there was no one who paid any attention to their pleadings.

³⁰ Then Elijah said to all the people, "Come near to me," and all the people came near to him. Then he repaired the altar of Yahweh that was lying in ruin. ³¹ Elijah took twelve stones, each stone representing one of the tribes of the sons of Jacob—it was Jacob to whom the word of Yahweh came, saying, "Israel will be your name." ³² With the stones he built an altar in the name of Yahweh and he dug a trench around the altar large enough to contain two seahs of seeds. ³³ He arranged the wood for a fire, cut the bull in pieces, and laid the pieces of the bull on the wood. He said, "Fill four jars with water and pour it on the

burnt offering and on the wood." ³⁴ Then he said, "Do it a second time," and they did it a second time. Once more he said, "Do it a third time," and they did it a third time. ³⁵ The water ran around the altar and filled the trench. ³⁶ It happened at the time of the offering of the evening sacrifice, that Elijah the prophet came near and said, "Yahweh, the God of Abraham, of Isaac, and of Israel, let it be known this day that you are God in Israel, and that I am your servant, and that I have done all these things at your word. ³⁷ Hear me, Yahweh, hear me, that these people may know that you, Yahweh, are God, and that you have turned their heart back again to yourself." ³⁸ Then the fire of Yahweh fell and consumed the burnt offering, as well as the wood, the stones, and the dust, and licked up the water that was in the trench. ³⁹ When all the people saw this, they lay facedown on the ground and said, "Yahweh, he is God! Yahweh, he is God!" ⁴⁰ So Elijah said to them, "Take the prophets of Baal. Do not let one of them escape." So they took them, and Elijah brought the prophets of Baal down to the Kishon River and killed them there.

⁴¹ Elijah said to Ahab, "Get up, eat and drink, for there is the sound of much rain." ⁴² So Ahab went up to eat and to drink. Then Elijah went up to the top of Carmel, bowed himself down on the earth and put his face between his knees. ⁴³ He said to his servant, "Go up now, look toward the sea." His servant went up and looked and said, "There is nothing." So seven times Elijah said, "Go again." ⁴⁴ At the seventh time the servant said, "Look, there is a cloud going up from the sea, as small as a man's hand." Elijah replied, "Go up and say to Ahab, 'Make ready your chariot and go down before the rain stops you.'" ⁴⁵ It happened that in a little while the heavens grew black with clouds and wind, and there was a great rain. Ahab rode and went to Jezreel, ⁴⁶ but the hand of Yahweh was on Elijah. He girded his loins and ran before Ahab to the entrance of Jezreel.

Chapter 19

¹ Ahab told Jezebel all that Elijah had done and how he had killed all the prophets with the sword. ² Then Jezebel sent a messenger to Elijah, saying, "So may the gods do to me, and more also, if I do not make your life like the life of one of those dead prophets by tomorrow about this time." ³ When Elijah heard that, he arose and fled for his life and came to Beersheba, which belongs to Judah, and left his servant there. ⁴ But he himself went a day's journey into the wilderness, and came and sat down under a broom tree. He requested for himself that he might die, and said, "It is enough, now, Yahweh; take away my life, for I am no better than my dead ancestors." ⁵ So he lay down and slept under a broom tree. Suddenly an angel touched him and said to him, "Get up and eat." ⁶ Elijah looked, and near his head was bread that had been baked on coals and a jug of water. So he ate and drank and then lay down again. ⁷ The angel of Yahweh came again a second time and touched him and said, "Get up and eat, because the journey will be too much for you." ⁸ So he arose and ate and drank, and he traveled in the strength of that food forty days and forty nights to Horeb, the mountain of God.

⁹ He went to a cave there and prepared to stay overnight in it. Then the word of Yahweh came to him and said to him, "What are you doing here, Elijah?" ¹⁰ Elijah replied, "I have been very zealous for Yahweh, God of hosts, because the people of Israel have abandoned your covenant, destroyed your altars, and killed your prophets with the sword. Now I, only I, am left and they are also trying to take my life." ¹¹ Yahweh replied, "Go out and stand on the mountain before me." Then Yahweh passed by, and a very strong wind struck the mountains and broke rocks into pieces before Yahweh, but Yahweh was not in the wind. Then after the wind, an earthquake came, but Yahweh was not in the earthquake. ¹² Then after the earthquake a fire came, but Yahweh was not in the fire. Then after the fire, a still small voice came. ¹³ When Elijah heard the voice, he wrapped his face in his cloak, went out, and stood at the entrance of the cave. Then a voice came to him that said, "What are you doing here, Elijah?" ¹⁴ Elijah replied, "I have been very zealous for Yahweh, God of hosts, because the people of Israel have abandoned your covenant, destroyed your altars, and killed your prophets with the sword. Now I, only I, am left and they are also trying to take my life."

¹⁵ Then Yahweh said to him, "Go, return on your way to the wilderness of Damascus, and when you arrive you will anoint Hazael to be king over Aram, ¹⁶ and you will anoint Jehu son of Nimshi to be king over Israel, and you will anoint Elisha son of Shaphat of Abel Meholah to be prophet in your place. ¹⁷ It will happen that Jehu will kill whoever escapes from the sword of Hazael, and that Elisha will kill whoever escapes from the sword of Jehu. ¹⁸ But I will leave for myself seven thousand people in Israel, whose knees have not bent down to Baal, and whose mouths have not kissed him."

¹⁹ So Elijah left from there and found Elisha son of Shaphat, who was plowing with twelve yoke of oxen before him, and he himself was plowing with the twelfth yoke. Elijah walked over to Elisha and draped his cloak on him. ²⁰ Then Elisha left the oxen and ran after Elijah; he said, "Please let me kiss my father and my mother, and then I will follow you." Then Elijah said to him, "Go back, but think about what I have done to you." ²¹ So Elisha returned from Elijah and took the yoke of oxen, killed the animals, and cooked the meat with the wood from the ox yoke. Then he gave it to the people and they ate. Then he arose, went after Elijah and served him.

Chapter 20

¹ Ben-Hadad king of Aram gathered all his army together. There were thirty-two lesser kings with him, and horses and chariots. He went up, besieged Samaria and fought against it. ² He sent messengers into the city to Ahab king of Israel, and said to him, "Ben-Hadad says this: ³ 'Your silver and your gold are mine. Also your wives and children, the best ones, are now mine.'" ⁴ The king of Israel answered and said, "It is as you say, my master, king. I and all that I have are yours." ⁵ The messengers came again and said, "Ben-Hadad says this, 'I sent word to you saying that you must give me your silver, your gold, your wives, and your children. ⁶ But I will send my servants to you tomorrow about this time, and they will search your house and your servants' houses. They will seize with their own hands and take away everything that delights your eyes.'"

⁷ Then the king of Israel called all the elders of the land together and said, "Please take note and see how this man seeks trouble. He has sent word to me in order to take my wives, children, and silver and gold, and I have not refused him." ⁸ All the elders and all the people said to Ahab, "Do not listen to him or consent to his demands." ⁹ So Ahab said to the messengers of Ben-Hadad, "Tell my master the king, 'I agree to everything that you sent your servant to do the first time, but I cannot accept this second demand.'" So the messengers left and took this response to Ben-Hadad. ¹⁰ Then Ben-Hadad sent his reply to Ahab, and said, "May the gods do so to me and more also, if even the ashes of Samaria will be enough for all the people who follow me to have a handful each." ¹¹ The king of Israel answered and said, "Tell Ben-Hadad, 'No one who is girding on his armor should boast as if he were taking it off.'" ¹² Ben-Hadad heard this message as he was drinking, he and the kings under him who were in their tents. Ben-Hadad commanded his servants, "Line yourselves up in position for battle." So they prepared themselves in position of battle to attack the city.

¹³ Then behold, a prophet came to Ahab king of Israel and said, "Yahweh says, 'Have you seen this great army? Look, I will place it into your hand today, and you will know that I am Yahweh.'" ¹⁴ Ahab replied, "By whom?" Yahweh replied and said, "By the young officers who serve the governors of the provinces." Then Ahab said, "Who will begin the battle?" Yahweh answered, "You." ¹⁵ Then Ahab mustered the young officers who served the governors of the provinces. They numbered 232. After them he mustered all the soldiers, all the army of Israel; seven thousand in number.

¹⁶ They went out at noon. Ben-Hadad had been drinking himself drunk in his tent, he and the thirty-two lesser kings who were supporting him. ¹⁷ The young officers who served the governors of the provinces went forward first. Then Ben-Hadad was informed by scouts that he had sent out, "Men are coming out from Samaria." ¹⁸ Ben-Hadad said, "Whether they have come out for peace or war, take them alive." ¹⁹ So the young officers who served the governors of the provinces went out of the city and the army followed them. ²⁰ Each man killed his opponent. The Arameans fled and Israel pursued them. Ben-Hadad the king of Aram escaped on a horse along with some horsemen. ²¹ Then the king of Israel went out and attacked the horses and chariots, and killed the Arameans in a great slaughter.

²² So the prophet came to the king of Israel and said to him, "Go, strengthen yourself, and understand and plan what you are doing, because at the return of the year the king of Aram will come up against you again." ²³ The servants of the king of Aram said to him, "Their god is a god of the hills. That is why they were stronger than we were. But now let us fight against them in the plain, and surely we will be stronger than they are." ²⁴ So you must do this: Remove all the kings from their positions of authority and replace them with military commanders. ²⁵ Raise up an army like the army you lost—horse for horse and chariot for chariot—so we can fight them in the plain. Then surely we will be stronger than they are." So Ben-Hadad listened to their advice and did what they advised.

²⁶ After the beginning of the new year, Ben-Hadad mustered the Arameans and went up to Aphek to fight against Israel. ²⁷ The people of Israel were mustered and supplied to fight against them. The people of Israel camped before them like two little flocks of goats, but the Arameans filled the countryside. ²⁸ Then a man of God came near and spoke to the king of Israel and said, "Yahweh says: 'Because the Arameans have said that Yahweh is a god of the hills, but he is not a god of the valleys, I will place this great army into your hand, and you will know that I am Yahweh.'" ²⁹ So the armies camped opposite each other for seven days. Then on the seventh day the battle started. The people of Israel killed 100,000 Aramean

footmen in one day. ³⁰ The rest fled to Aphek, into the city, and the wall fell on twenty-seven thousand men who were left. Ben-Hadad fled and went into the city, into an inner room.

³¹ Ben-Hadad's servants said to him, "See now, we have heard that the kings of the house of Israel are merciful kings. Please let us put sackcloth around our waists and ropes around our heads, and go out to the king of Israel. Perhaps he will spare your life." ³² So they girded sackcloth on their waists and ropes around their heads and then went to the king of Israel and said, "Your servant Ben-Hadad said, 'Please let me live.'" Ahab said, "Is he still alive? He is my brother." ³³ Now the men were listening for any sign from Ahab, so they quickly answered him, "Yes, your brother Ben-Hadad is alive." Then Ahab said, "Go and bring him." Then Ben-Hadad came to him, and Ahab had him come up into his chariot. ³⁴ Ben-Hadad said to Ahab, "I will restore to you the cities that my father took from your father, and you may make markets for yourself in Damascus, as my father did in Samaria." Ahab replied, "I will let you go with this covenant." So Ahab made a covenant with him and then let him go.

³⁵ A certain man, one of the sons of the prophets, said to one of his companions by the word of Yahweh, "Please hit me." But the man refused to hit him. ³⁶ Then the prophet said to his fellow prophet, "Because you have not obeyed the voice of Yahweh, as soon as you leave me, a lion will kill you." As soon as that man had left him, a lion came upon him and killed him. ³⁷ Then the prophet found another man and said, "Please hit me." So the man hit him and wounded him. ³⁸ Then the prophet left and waited for the king by the road; he had disguised himself with a bandage over his eyes. ³⁹ As the king passed by, the prophet cried out to the king and said, "Your servant went out into the heat of the battle, and a soldier stopped and brought a man to me and said, 'Watch this man. If by any means he goes missing, your life will be given for his life, or you must pay a talent of silver.'" ⁴⁰ But because your servant was busy going here and there, the man escaped." Then the king of Israel said to him, "This is what your punishment will be—you yourself have decided it." ⁴¹ Then the prophet quickly removed the bandage from his eyes, and the king of Israel recognized that he was one of the prophets. ⁴² The prophet said to the king, "Yahweh says, 'Because you have let go from your hand the man whom I had devoted to destruction, your life will take the place of his life, and your people for his people.'" ⁴³ So the king of Israel went to his house resentful and angry, and arrived in Samaria.

Chapter 21

¹ Now some time later, Naboth the Jezreelite had a vineyard in Jezreel, near the palace of Ahab, king of Samaria. ² Ahab spoke to Naboth, saying, "Give me your vineyard, so I can have it as a vegetable garden, because it is near my house. In exchange, I will give you a better vineyard, or, if you prefer, I will pay you its value in money." ³ Naboth replied to Ahab, "May Yahweh forbid that I should give the inheritance of my ancestors to you." ⁴ So Ahab went into his palace resentful and angry because of the answer Naboth the Jezreelite gave him when he said, "I will not give you the inheritance of my ancestors." He lay down on his bed, turned away his face, and refused to eat any food.

⁵ Jezebel his wife came to him and said to him, "Why is your heart so sad, so that you eat no food?" ⁶ He replied to her, "I spoke to Naboth the Jezreelite and said to him, 'Give me your vineyard for money, or if it pleases you, I will give you another vineyard to be yours.' Then he answered me, 'I will not give you my vineyard.'" ⁷ So Jezebel his wife replied to him, "Do you not still rule the kingdom of Israel? Get up and eat; let your heart be happy. I will obtain for you the vineyard of Naboth the Jezreelite." ⁸ So Jezebel wrote letters in Ahab's name, sealed them with his seal, and sent them to the elders and to the nobles who sat with him in meetings, and who lived near Naboth. ⁹ She wrote in the letters, saying, "Proclaim a fast and seat Naboth above the people." ¹⁰ Also place two worthless men with him and let them testify against him, saying, 'You cursed God and the king.'" Then take him out and stone him to death.

¹¹ So the men of his city, the elders and the noblemen who lived in Naboth's city, did as Jezebel had described to them, as was written in the letters that she had sent to them. ¹² They proclaimed a fast and seated Naboth above the people. ¹³ The two dishonest men came in and sat before Naboth; they testified against Naboth in the presence of the people, saying, "Naboth cursed both God and the king." Then they carried him out of the city and stoned him to death. ¹⁴ Then the elders sent word to Jezebel, saying, "Naboth has been stoned and is dead." ¹⁵ So when Jezebel heard that Naboth had been stoned and was dead, she said to Ahab, "Get up and take possession of the vineyard of Naboth the Jezreelite, which he refused to give you for money, because Naboth is not alive, but dead." ¹⁶ When Ahab heard that Naboth was dead, he rose up to go down to the vineyard of Naboth the Jezreelite and take possession of it.

¹⁷ Then the word of Yahweh came to Elijah the Tishbite, saying, ¹⁸ "Get up and go meet Ahab king of Israel, who lives in Samaria. He is in the vineyard of Naboth, where he has gone to take possession of it. ¹⁹ You must speak to him and say that Yahweh says, 'Have you killed and also taken possession?' Then you will tell him that Yahweh says, 'In the place where dogs licked the blood of Naboth, the dogs will lick your blood, yes, your blood.'" ²⁰ Ahab said to Elijah, "Have you found me, my enemy?" Elijah answered, "I have found you, because you have sold yourself to do what is evil in the sight of Yahweh. ²¹ Yahweh says this to you: 'See, I will bring disaster on you and will completely consume and cut off from Ahab every male child and slave and free man in Israel. ²² I will make your family like the family of Jeroboam son of Nebat, and like the family of Baasha son of Ahijah, because you have provoked me to anger and have led Israel to sin.' ²³ Yahweh has also spoken concerning Jezebel, saying, 'The dogs will eat Jezebel beside the wall of Jezreel.' ²⁴ Anyone who belongs to Ahab and dies in the city, the dogs will eat; and the birds of the sky will eat anyone who dies in the field." ²⁵ There was no one like Ahab, who sold himself to do what was evil in the sight of Yahweh, whom Jezebel his wife incited to sin. ²⁶ Ahab behaved abhorrently by following idols, just as all that the Amorites had done, those whom Yahweh had removed before the people of Israel.

²⁷ When Ahab heard these words, he tore his clothes and put sackcloth on his body and fasted, and lay in sackcloth and became very sad. ²⁸ Then the word of Yahweh came to Elijah the Tishbite, saying, ²⁹ "Do you see how Ahab humbles himself before me? Because he humbles himself before me, I will not bring the coming disaster in his days; it is in his son's day that I will bring disaster on his family."

Chapter 22

¹ Three years passed without war between Aram and Israel. ² Then it came about that in the third year, Jehoshaphat the king of Judah went down to the king of Israel. ³ Now the king of Israel had said to his servants, "Do you know that Ramoth Gilead is ours, but that we are doing nothing to take it from the hand of the king of Aram?" ⁴ So he said to Jehoshaphat, "Will you go with me to war at Ramoth Gilead?" Jehoshaphat replied to the king of Israel, "I am like you, my people are like your people, and my horses are like your horses."

⁵ Jehoshaphat said to the king of Israel, "Please seek direction from the word of Yahweh for what you should do first." ⁶ Then the king of Israel gathered the prophets together, four hundred men, and said to them, "Should I go to Ramoth Gilead to battle, or should I not?" They said, "Attack, for the Lord will give it into the hand of the king." ⁷ But Jehoshaphat said, "Is there not here yet another prophet of Yahweh from whom we might seek advice?" ⁸ The king of Israel said to Jehoshaphat, "There is still one man by whom we may seek advice from Yahweh to help, Micaiah son of Imlah, but I hate him because he does not prophesy anything good about me, but only hardships." But Jehoshaphat said, "May the king not say that." ⁹ Then the king of Israel called an officer and commanded, "Bring Micaiah son of Imlah, right away." ¹⁰ Now Ahab the king of Israel and Jehoshaphat the king of Judah were sitting each on a throne, clothed in their robes, in a threshing floor at the entrance of the gate of Samaria, and all the prophets were prophesying before them. ¹¹ Zedekiah son of Kenaanah made himself horns of iron and said, "Yahweh says this: 'With these you will push the Arameans until they are consumed.'" ¹² Then all the prophets prophesied the same, saying, "Attack Ramoth Gilead and win, for Yahweh has given it into the hand of the king."

¹³ The messenger who went to call Micaiah spoke to him, saying, "See now, the words of the prophets declare good things to the king with one mouth. Please let your word be like one of them and say good things." ¹⁴ Micaiah replied, "As Yahweh lives, it is what Yahweh says to me that I will say." ¹⁵ When he came to the king, the king said to him, "Micaiah, should we go to Ramoth Gilead for battle, or not?" Micaiah answered him, "Attack and win. Yahweh will give it into the hand of the king." ¹⁶ Then the king said to him, "How many times must I require you to swear to tell me nothing but the truth in the name of Yahweh?" ¹⁷ So Micaiah said, "I saw all Israel scattered to the mountains, like sheep who have no shepherd, and Yahweh said, 'These have no master. Let every man return to his house in peace.'" ¹⁸ So the king of Israel said to Jehoshaphat, "Did I not tell you that he would not prophesy good concerning me, but only disaster?" ¹⁹ Then Micaiah said, "Therefore hear the word of Yahweh: I saw Yahweh sitting on his throne, and all the host of heaven were standing by him on his right hand and on his left. ²⁰ Yahweh said, 'Who will entice Ahab, so that he may go up and fall at Ramoth Gilead?' One of them said this and another one said that. ²¹ Then a spirit came forward, stood before Yahweh, and said, 'I will entice him.' Yahweh said to him, 'How?' ²² The spirit replied, 'I will go out and be a lying spirit in the mouth of all his prophets.' Yahweh replied, 'You will entice him, and you will also be successful. Go now and do so.' ²³ Now see, Yahweh has put a lying spirit in the mouth of all these prophets of yours, and Yahweh has decreed disaster for you."

²⁴ Then Zedekiah son of Kenaanah, came up, slapped Micaiah on the cheek, and said, "Which way did the Spirit of Yahweh take to go from me to speak to you?" ²⁵ Micaiah said, "Look, you will see on that day when you will go to hide in an inner room." ²⁶ The king of Israel said to his servant, "Seize Micaiah and take him to Amon, the governor of the city, and to Joash, my son. ²⁷ Say to him, 'The king says, Put this man in prison, and feed him the bread of affliction and the water of affliction until I come safely.'" ²⁸ Then Micaiah said, "If you return safely, then Yahweh has not spoken by me." Then he added, "Listen to this, all you people."

²⁹ So Ahab, the king of Israel, and Jehoshaphat, the king of Judah, went up to Ramoth Gilead. ³⁰ The king of Israel said to Jehoshaphat, "I will disguise myself and go into the battle, but you put on your royal robes." So the king of Israel disguised himself and went into the battle. ³¹ Now the king of Aram had commanded the thirty-two captains of his chariots, saying, "Do not attack unimportant or important soldiers. Attack only the king of Israel." ³² It came about that when the captains of the chariots saw Jehoshaphat they said, "Surely that is the king of Israel." They turned to attack him, so Jehoshaphat cried out. ³³ It came about that when the commanders of the chariots saw that it was not the king of Israel, they turned back from pursuing him. ³⁴ But a certain man drew his bow at random and shot the king of

Israel between the joints of his armor. Then Ahab said to the driver of his chariot, "Turn around and carry me out of the battle, for I am badly wounded." ³⁵ The battle grew worse that day and the king was held up in his chariot facing the Arameans. He died in the evening. The blood ran out from his wound into the bottom of the chariot. ³⁶ Then about the time the sun was going down, a cry went up throughout the army, saying, "Every man should go back to his city; and every man should go back to his region!"

³⁷ So King Ahab died and was brought to Samaria, and they buried him in Samaria. ³⁸ They washed the chariot by the pool of Samaria, and the dogs licked up his blood (this was where the prostitutes bathed), just as the word of Yahweh had declared. ³⁹ As for the other matters concerning Ahab, all that he did, the ivory house that he built, and all the cities that he built, are they not written in the book of the events of the kings of Israel? ⁴⁰ So Ahab lay down with his ancestors, and Ahaziah his son became king in his place.

⁴¹ Then Jehoshaphat son of Asa began to reign over Judah in the fourth year of Ahab king of Israel. ⁴² Jehoshaphat was thirty-five years old when he began to reign, and he reigned in Jerusalem twenty-five years. His mother's name was Azubah, the daughter of Shilhi. ⁴³ He walked in the ways of Asa, his father; he did not turn away from them; he did what was right in the eyes of Yahweh. Yet the high places were not taken away. The people were still sacrificing and burning incense on the high places. ⁴⁴ Jehoshaphat made peace with the king of Israel.

⁴⁵ As for the other matters concerning Jehoshaphat, and the might that he showed, and how he waged war, are they not written in the book of the events of the kings of Judah? ⁴⁶ He completely removed from the land the rest of the cultic prostitutes who had remained in the days of his father Asa. ⁴⁷ There was no king in Edom, but a deputy ruled there. ⁴⁸ Jehoshaphat built ships of Tarshish; they were to go to Ophir for gold, but they did not go because the ships were wrecked at Ezion Geber. ⁴⁹ Then Ahaziah son of Ahab said to Jehoshaphat, "Let my servants sail with your servants in the ships." But Jehoshaphat would not allow it. ⁵⁰ Jehoshaphat lay down with his ancestors and was buried with them in the city of David, his ancestor; Jehoram his son became king in his place.

⁵¹ Ahaziah son of Ahab began to reign over Israel in Samaria in the seventeenth year of Jehoshaphat king of Judah, and he reigned two years over Israel. ⁵² He did what was evil in the sight of Yahweh and walked in the way of his father, in the way of his mother, and in the way of Jeroboam son of Nebat, by which he led Israel to sin. ⁵³ He served Baal and worshiped him and so he provoked Yahweh, the God of Israel, to anger, just as his father had done.

Book: 2 Kings

2 Kings

Chapter 1

¹ Moab rebelled against Israel after the death of Ahab. ² Then Ahaziah fell down through the lattice in his upper chamber in Samaria, and was injured. So he sent for messengers and said to them, "Go, ask Baal-Zebub, the god of Ekron, whether I will recover from this injury." ³ But the angel of Yahweh said to Elijah the Tishbite, "Arise, go up to meet the messengers of the king of Samaria, and ask them, 'Is it because there is no God in Israel that you are going to consult with Baal-Zebub, the god of Ekron?' ⁴ Therefore Yahweh says, "You will not come down from the bed to where you have gone up; instead, you will certainly die.'" Then Elijah left.

⁵ When the messengers returned to Ahaziah, he said to them, "Why have you returned?" ⁶ They said to him, "A man came to meet us who said to us, 'Go back to the king who sent you, and say to him, "Yahweh says this: 'Is it because there is no God in Israel that you sent men to consult with Baal-Zebub, the god of Ekron? Therefore you will not come down from the bed to which you have gone up; instead, you will certainly die.'"" ⁷ Ahaziah said to his messengers, "What sort of man was he, the one who came up to meet you and said these words to you?" ⁸ They answered him, "He wore a garment made of hair and had a leather belt wrapped around his waist." So the king replied, "That is Elijah the Tishbite."

⁹ Then the king sent a captain with fifty soldiers to Elijah. The captain went up to Elijah where he was sitting on the top of a hill. The captain spoke to him, "You, man of God, the king has said, 'Come down.'"

¹⁰ Elijah answered and said to the captain, "If I am a man of God, let fire come down from heaven and consume you and your fifty men." Then fire came down from heaven and consumed him and his fifty men.

¹¹ Again King Ahaziah sent to Elijah another captain with fifty soldiers. This captain also said to Elijah, "You, man of God, the king says, 'Come down quickly.'" ¹² Elijah answered and said to them, "If I am a man of God, let fire come down from heaven and consume you and your fifty men." Again the fire of God came down from heaven and consumed him and his fifty men. ¹³ Yet again the king sent a third group of fifty warriors. This captain went up, fell on his knees before Elijah, and sought his favor and said to him, "You, man of God, I ask you, let my life and the life of these fifty servants of yours be precious in your sight. ¹⁴ Indeed, fire came down from heaven and consumed the first two captains with their men, but now let my life be precious in your sight." ¹⁵ The angel of Yahweh said to Elijah, "Go down with him. Do not be afraid of him." So Elijah arose and went down with him to the king. ¹⁶ Later Elijah said to Ahaziah, "This is what Yahweh says, 'You have sent messengers to consult with Baal-Zebub, the god of Ekron. Is it because there is no God in Israel from whom you can ask for information? So now, you will not come down from the bed where you have gone up; you will certainly die.'"

¹⁷ So King Ahaziah died according to the word of Yahweh that Elijah had spoken. Joram began to reign in his place, in the second year of Jehoram son of Jehoshaphat king of Judah, because Ahaziah had no son. ¹⁸ As for the other matters concerning Ahaziah, are they not written in the book of the events of the kings of Israel?

Chapter 2

¹ So it came about, when Yahweh was going to take up Elijah by a whirlwind into heaven, that Elijah left with Elisha from Gilgal. ² Elijah said to Elisha, "Stay here, please, because Yahweh has sent me to Bethel." Elisha replied, "As Yahweh lives, and as you live, I will not leave you." So they went down to Bethel. ³ The sons of the prophets who were at Bethel came to Elisha and said to him, "Do you know that Yahweh will take away your master from you today?" Elisha replied, "Yes, I know it, but do not talk about it." ⁴ Elijah said to him, "Elisha, wait here, please, for Yahweh has sent me to Jericho." Then Elisha replied, "As Yahweh lives, and as you live, I will not leave you." So they went to Jericho. ⁵ Then the sons of the prophets who were at Jericho came to Elisha and said to him, "Do you know that Yahweh will take away your master from you today?" Elisha answered, "Yes, I know it, but do not talk about it." ⁶ Then Elijah said to him, "Stay here, please, for Yahweh has sent me to the Jordan." Elisha replied, "As Yahweh lives, and as you live, I will not leave you." So the two went on. ⁷ Later, fifty of the sons of the prophets stood opposite them at a distance while the two stood by the Jordan. ⁸ Elijah took his cloak, rolled it up, and struck the water with it. The river divided on both sides so that the two of them walked over on dry ground. ⁹ It came about, after they had crossed over, that Elijah said to Elisha, "Ask me what I should do for you before I am taken from you." Elisha replied, "Please let a double portion of your spirit come on me." ¹⁰ Elijah answered, "You have asked for a difficult thing. Nevertheless, if you see me when I am taken from you, this will happen for you, but if not, it will not happen." ¹¹ As they still went on and talked, behold, a chariot of fire and horses of fire appeared, which separated the two men from each other, and Elijah went up by a whirlwind into heaven. ¹² Elisha saw it and cried out, "My father, my father, the chariots of Israel and their horsemen!"

He saw Elijah no more, and he took hold of his own clothes and tore them into two pieces. ¹³ He picked up Elijah's cloak that had fallen off him, and went back to stand by the bank of the Jordan. ¹⁴ He struck the water with Elijah's cloak that had fallen and said, "Where is Yahweh, the God of Elijah?" When he had struck the waters, they divided on both sides and Elisha crossed over.

¹⁵ When the sons of the prophets who were from Jericho saw him across from them, they said, "The spirit of Elijah does rest on Elisha!" So they came to meet him, and bowed themselves to the ground before him. ¹⁶ They said to him, "See now, among your servants there are fifty strong men. Let them go, we ask, and look for your master, in case the Spirit of Yahweh has taken him up and thrown him onto some mountain or into some valley." Elisha answered, "No, do not send them." ¹⁷ But when they urged Elisha until he was ashamed, he said, "Send them." Then they sent fifty men, and they looked for three days, but did not find him. ¹⁸ They came back to Elisha, while he stayed at Jericho, and he said to them, "Did I not say to you, 'Do not go'?"

¹⁹ The men of the city said to Elisha, "See now, the situation of this city is pleasant, as my master can see, but the water is bad and the land is not fruitful." ²⁰ Elisha replied, "Bring me a new bowl and put salt in it," so they brought it to him. ²¹ Elisha went out to the spring of water and threw salt in it; then he said, "Yahweh says this, 'I have healed these waters. From this time on, there will be no more death or unfruitful land.'" ²² So the waters were healed to this day, by the word which Elisha spoke.

²³ Then Elisha went up from there to Bethel. As he was going up the road, young boys came out of the city and mocked him; they said to him, "Go up, you baldhead! Go up, you baldhead!" ²⁴ Elisha looked behind him and saw them; he cursed them in the name of Yahweh. Then two female bears came out of the woods and tore forty-two of the boys apart. ²⁵ Then Elisha went from there to Mount Carmel, and from there he returned to Samaria.

Chapter 3

¹ Now in the eighteenth year of Jehoshaphat king of Judah, Joram son of Ahab began to reign over Israel in Samaria; he reigned twelve years. ² He did what was evil in the sight of Yahweh, but not like his father and his mother; for he removed the sacred stone pillar of Baal that his father had made. ³ Nevertheless he held on to the sins of Jeroboam son of Nebat, who caused Israel to sin; he did not turn away from them.

⁴ Now Mesha king of Moab bred sheep. He had to give to the king of Israel 100,000 lambs and the wool of 100,000 rams. ⁵ But after Ahab died, the king of Moab rebelled against the king of Israel. ⁶ So King Joram left Samaria at that time to mobilize all Israel for war. ⁷ He sent a message to Jehoshaphat king of Judah, saying, "The king of Moab has rebelled against me. Will you go with me against Moab to battle?" ⁸ Jehoshaphat replied, "I will go. I am as you are, my people as your people, my horses as your horses." ⁹ Then he said, "By which way should we attack?" Jehoshaphat answered, "By way of the wilderness of Edom." ¹⁰ So the king of Israel went with the king of Judah and the king of Edom. They wandered around for seven days, and then there was no water for the army or for the animals that went with them. ¹¹ So the king of Israel said, "What is this? Has Yahweh called three kings to give them into the hand of Moab?" ¹² But Jehoshaphat said, "Is there not here a prophet of Yahweh, that we may consult Yahweh by him?" One of the king of Israel's servants answered and said, "Elisha son of Shaphat is here, who poured water on the hands of Elijah." ¹³ Jehoshaphat said, "The word of Yahweh is with him." So the king of Israel, Jehoshaphat, and the king of Edom went down to him.

¹⁴ Elisha said to the king of Israel, "What have I to do with you? Go to the prophets of your father and mother." So the king of Israel said to him, "No, because Yahweh has called these three kings together to give them into the hand of Moab." ¹⁵ Elisha replied, "As Yahweh of hosts lives, before whom I stand, if I did not honor the presence of Jehoshaphat king of Judah, I would not pay any attention to you, or even look at you." ¹⁶ But now bring me a musician." Then it came to pass when the harpist played, the hand of Yahweh came upon Elisha. ¹⁷ He said, "Yahweh says this, 'Make this dry river valley full of trenches.' ¹⁸ For Yahweh says this, 'You will not see wind, neither will you see rain, but this river valley will be filled with water, and you will drink, you and your livestock and all your animals.' ¹⁹ This is an easy thing in the sight of Yahweh. He will also give you victory over the Moabites. ²⁰ You will attack every fortified city and every good city, cut down every good tree, stop up all springs of water, and ruin every good piece of land with rocks." ²¹ So in the morning about the time of offering the sacrifice, waters came from the direction of Edom, and the country was filled with water.

²² Now when all the Moabites heard that the kings had come to fight against them, they summoned everyone who was old enough to gird on armor and older, and they stood at the border. ²³ They awakened early in the morning and the sun reflected on the water. When the Moabites saw the water opposite them, it looked as red as blood. ²⁴ They exclaimed, "This is blood! The kings have certainly been destroyed, and they have killed each other! So now, Moab, let us go plunder them!" ²⁵ When they came to the camp of Israel, Israel rose up and attacked the Moabites, who fled before them. The army of Israel drove the Moabites across the land, killing them. ²⁶ They destroyed the cities, and on every good piece of land every man threw a rock until it was covered up. They stopped up every spring of water and chopped down all the good trees. Only Kir Hareseth was left with its rocks in place. But the soldiers armed with slings surrounded and attacked it. ²⁷ When King Mesha of Moab saw that the battle was lost, he took with him seven hundred swordsmen to break through to the king of Edom, but they failed. ²⁸ Then he took his oldest son, who should have reigned after him, and offered him as a burnt offering upon the wall. So there was great anger against Israel, and the Israelite army left King Mesha and returned to their own land.

Chapter 4

¹ Now the wife of one of the sons of the prophets came crying to Elisha, saying, "Your servant my husband is dead, and you know that your servant feared Yahweh. Now the creditor has come to take my two children to be his slaves." ² So Elisha said to her, "What can I do for you? Tell me what do you have in the house?" She said, "Your servant has nothing in the house, except a pot of oil." ³ Then Elisha said, "Go out to borrow jars from your neighbors, empty jars. Borrow as many as possible. ⁴ Then you must go inside and shut the door behind you and your sons, and pour oil into all those jars; set aside the jars that are full." ⁵ So she left Elisha and shut the door behind her and her sons. They brought the jars to her, and she filled them with oil. ⁶ When the vessels were full, she said to her son, "Bring me another jar." But he said to her, "There are no more jars." Then the oil stopped flowing. ⁷ Then she came and told the man of God. He said, "Go, sell the oil; pay your debt, and live with your sons on the rest."

⁸ One day Elisha walked to Shunem where an important woman lived; she urged him to eat food with her. So as often as Elisha passed by, he would stop there to eat. ⁹ The woman said to her husband, "See now, I realize that this is a holy man of God who is always passing by. ¹⁰ Let us make a little room on the roof for Elisha, and let us put in it a bed, a table, a seat, and a lamp. Then when he comes to us, he will stay there." ¹¹ So when the day came again that Elisha stopped there, he stayed in the room and rested there. ¹² Elisha said to Gehazi his servant, "Call this Shunammite." When he had called her, she stood before him. ¹³ Elisha said to him, "Say to her, 'You have gone to all this trouble to care for us. What can be done for you? Can we speak for you to the king or to the army commander?'" She answered, "I live among my own people." ¹⁴ So Elisha said, "What can we do for her, then?" Gehazi answered, "Indeed, she has no son, and her husband is old." ¹⁵ So Elisha answered, "Call her." When he had called her, she stood in the door. ¹⁶ Elisha said, "At this time of year, in one year's time, you will be holding a son." She said, "No, my master and man of God, do not lie to your servant."

¹⁷ But the woman conceived and gave birth to a son at the same time in the following year, as Elisha had said to her. ¹⁸ When the child had grown, he went out one day to his father, who was with harvesters. ¹⁹ He said to his father, "My head, my head." His father said to his servant, "Carry him to his mother." ²⁰ When the servant had picked him up and brought the boy to his mother, the child sat on her knees until noon and then died. ²¹ So the woman got up and laid the boy on the bed of the man of God, shut the door, and went out. ²² She called to her husband, and said, "Please send me one of the servants and one of the donkeys so that I may hurry to the man of God and then come back." ²³ Her husband said, "Why do you want to go to him today? It is not a new moon nor a Sabbath." She replied, "It will be all right." ²⁴ Then she saddled a donkey and said to her servant, "Drive on quickly; do not slow down for me unless I say so." ²⁵ So she went and came to the man of God at Mount Carmel.

So when the man of God saw her in the distance, he said to Gehazi his servant, "Look, here comes the Shunammite woman. ²⁶ Please run to meet her and say to her, 'Is everything alright with you and with your husband and child?'" She answered, "It is all right." ²⁷ When she came to the man of God at the mountain, she caught hold of his feet. Gehazi came near to push her away, but the man of God said, "Leave her alone, for she is very upset, and Yahweh has hidden the problem from me, and has told me nothing." ²⁸ Then she said, "Did I ask you for a son, my master? Did I not say, 'Do not deceive me'?" ²⁹ Then Elisha said to Gehazi, "Gird your loins and take my staff in your hand. Go to her home. If you meet any man, do not greet him, and if anyone greets you, do not answer him. Lay my staff on the young man's face." ³⁰ But the mother of the young man said, "As Yahweh lives, and as you live, I will not leave you." So Elisha arose and followed her. ³¹ Gehazi hurried on ahead of them and laid the staff on the young man's face, but the young man did not speak or hear. So then Gehazi returned to meet Elisha and told him saying, "The young man has not awakened."

³² When Elisha arrived at the house, the young man was dead and was still on the bed. ³³ So Elisha went in and shut the door on the two of them and prayed to Yahweh. ³⁴ He went up and lay on the child; he put his mouth on his mouth, his eyes on his eyes, and his hands on his hands. He stretched himself out on the boy, and the boy's body grew warm. ³⁵ Then Elisha got up and walked around the room and again went up and stretched himself out on the boy. The child sneezed seven times and then opened his eyes! ³⁶ So Elisha called Gehazi and said, "Call the Shunammite!" So he called her, and when she came into the room,

Elisha said, "Pick up your son." ³⁷ Then she lay facedown on the ground at his feet and bowed to the ground, and then picked up her son and went out.

³⁸ Then Elisha came again to Gilgal. There was famine in the land, and the sons of the prophets were sitting before him. He said to his servant, "Put the large pot on the fire and cook stew for the sons of the prophets." ³⁹ One of them went out into a field to gather vegetables. He found a wild vine and gathered enough wild gourds to fill the fold of his robe. They cut them up and put them into the stew, but did not know what kind they were. ⁴⁰ So they poured out the stew for the men to eat. Later, as they were eating, they cried out and said, "Man of God, there is death in the pot!" So they could not eat it anymore. ⁴¹ But Elisha said, "Bring some flour." He threw it into the pot and said, "Pour it out for the people, so that they may eat." Then there was no longer anything hurtful in the pot.

⁴² A man came from Baal Shalishah to the man of God and brought twenty loaves of barley bread in his sack from the firstfruits and fresh ears of grain. He said, "Give this to the people so they can eat." ⁴³ His servant said, "What, should I set this before a hundred men?" But Elisha said, "Give this to the people, so they can eat, because Yahweh says, 'They will eat and will have some left.'" ⁴⁴ So his servant set it before them; they ate, and left some remaining, just as the word of Yahweh promised.

Chapter 5

¹ Now Naaman, commander of the army of the king of Aram, was a great and honorable man in his master's view, because by him Yahweh had given victory to Aram. He was also a mighty warrior, but he was a leper. ² The Arameans had gone out in raiding parties and had captured a little girl from the land of Israel. She served Naaman's wife. ³ The girl said to her mistress, "I wish that my master were with the prophet who is in Samaria! Then he would heal my master of his leprosy." ⁴ So Naaman went in and told the king what the little girl from the land of Israel had said. ⁵ So the king of Aram said, "Go now, and I will send a letter to the king of Israel." Naaman left and took with him ten talents of silver, six thousand pieces of gold, and ten changes of clothes. ⁶ He also took the letter to the king of Israel that said, "Now when this letter is brought to you, you will see that I have sent Naaman my servant to you, so that you may cure him of his leprosy." ⁷ When the king of Israel had read the letter, he tore his clothes and said, "Am I God, to kill and to make alive, that this man wants me to cure a man of his leprosy? It seems he is seeking to start an argument with me."

⁸ So when Elisha the man of God heard that the king of Israel had torn his clothes, he sent word to the king saying, "Why have you torn your clothes? Let him come now to me, and he will know that there is a prophet in Israel." ⁹ So Naaman came with his horses and with his chariots and stood at the door of Elisha's house. ¹⁰ Elisha sent a messenger to him, saying, "Go and dip yourself into the Jordan seven times, and your flesh will be restored; you will be clean." ¹¹ But Naaman was angry and went away and said, "Look, I thought he would surely come out to me and stand and call on the name of Yahweh his God, and wave his hand over the place and heal my leprosy." ¹² Are not Abanah and Pharpar, the rivers of Damascus, better than all the waters of Israel? Can I not bathe in them and be clean?" So he turned and went away in a rage. ¹³ Then Naaman's servants came near and spoke to him, "My father, if the prophet had commanded you do some difficult thing, would you not have done it? How much more, then, when he says to you, 'Dip yourself and be clean'?" ¹⁴ Then he went down and dipped himself seven times in the Jordan, obeying the instructions of the man of God. His flesh was restored again like the flesh of a little child, and he was healed.

¹⁵ Naaman returned to the man of God, he and all his company, and came and stood before him. He said, "See now, I know that there is no God in all the earth except in Israel. So therefore, please take a gift from your servant." ¹⁶ But Elisha replied, "As Yahweh lives, before whom I stand, I will receive nothing." Naaman urged Elisha to take a gift, but he refused. ¹⁷ So Naaman said, "If not, then I ask you to let there be given to your servant two mule loads of earth, for from now on, your servant will offer neither burnt offering nor sacrifice to any god but Yahweh. ¹⁸ In this one thing may Yahweh pardon your servant, that is, when my king goes into the house of Rimmon to worship there, and he leans on my hand and I bow myself in the house of Rimmon, when I bow myself in the house of Rimmon, may Yahweh pardon your servant in this matter." ¹⁹ Elisha said to him, "Go in peace." So Naaman left.

²⁰ He had traveled only a short distance, when Gehazi the servant of Elisha the man of God said to himself, "Look, my master has spared this Naaman the Aramean by not receiving from his hands gifts that he brought. As Yahweh lives, I will run after him and receive something from him." ²¹ So Gehazi followed after Naaman. When Naaman saw someone running after him, he jumped down from his chariot to meet him and said, "Is everything all right?" ²² Gehazi said, "Everything is all right. My master has sent me, saying, 'See, now two young men of the sons of the prophets have come to me from the hill country of Ephraim. Please give them a talent of silver and two changes of clothes.'" ²³ Naaman replied, "I am very happy to give you two talents." Naaman urged Gehazi and tied two talents of silver in two bags, with two changes of clothes, and laid them on two of his servants, who carried the bags of silver before Gehazi. ²⁴ When Gehazi came to the hill, he took the bags of silver from their hands and hid them in the house; he sent the men away, and they left. ²⁵ When Gehazi went in and stood before his master, Elisha said to him, "Where have you come from, Gehazi?" He answered, "Your servant went nowhere." ²⁶ Elisha said to Gehazi, "Was not my spirit with you when the man turned his chariot to meet you? Is this a time to accept money and clothes, olive orchards and vineyards, sheep and oxen, and male servants and female servants?" ²⁷ So the leprosy of Naaman will be on you and your descendants forever." So Gehazi went out from his presence, a leper as white as snow.

Chapter 6

¹ The sons of the prophets said to Elisha, "See now, the place where we live with you is too small for us all. ² Please let us go to the Jordan, and let every man cut down a tree there, and let us build us a place there where we may live." Elisha answered, "You may go ahead." ³ One of them said, "Please go with your servants." Elisha answered, "I will go." ⁴ So he went with them, and when they came to the Jordan, they began to cut down trees. ⁵ But as one was chopping, the ax head fell into the water; he cried out and said, "Oh no, my master, it was borrowed!" ⁶ So the man of God said, "Where did it fall?" The man showed Elisha the place. He then cut off a stick, threw it in the water, and made the iron float. ⁷ Elisha said, "Pick it up." So the man reached out his hand and grabbed it.

⁸ Now the king of Aram was waging war against Israel. He consulted with his servants, saying, "My camp will be in such and such a place." ⁹ So the man of God sent to the king of Israel, saying, "Be careful not to pass that place, for the Arameans are going down there." ¹⁰ The king of Israel sent a message to the place about which the man of God had spoken and warned him. More than once or twice, when the king went there, he was on his guard. ¹¹ The king of Aram was enraged about these warnings, and he called his servants and said to them, "Will you not tell me who among us is for the king of Israel?" ¹² So one of his servants said, "No, my master, king, for Elisha the prophet in Israel tells the king of Israel the words that you speak in your own bedroom!" ¹³ The king replied, "Go and see where Elisha is so I may send men and capture him." It was told him, "See, he is in Dothan."

¹⁴ So the king sent to Dothan horses, chariots, and a large army. They came by night and surrounded the city. ¹⁵ When the servant of the man of God had risen early and gone outside, behold, a large army with horses and chariots surrounded the city. His servant said to him, "Oh, my master! What will we do?" ¹⁶ Elisha answered, "Do not fear, for those who are with us are more than those who are with them." ¹⁷ Elisha prayed and said, "Yahweh, I beg that you will open his eyes that he may see." Then Yahweh opened the servant's eyes, and he saw. Behold, the mountain was full of horses and chariots of fire around Elisha! ¹⁸ When the Arameans came down to him, Elisha prayed to Yahweh and said, "Strike these people blind, I ask you." So Yahweh made them blind, just as Elisha had asked. ¹⁹ Then Elisha told the Arameans, "This is not the way, neither is this the city. Follow me, and I will bring you to the man whom you are looking for." Then he led them to Samaria.

²⁰ It came about that when they had come into Samaria, Elisha said, "Yahweh, open the eyes of these men that they may see." Yahweh opened their eyes and they saw, and behold, they were in the middle of the city of Samaria. ²¹ The king of Israel said to Elisha, when he saw them, "My father, should I kill them? Should I kill them?" ²² Elisha answered, "You must not kill them. Would you kill those whom you had taken captive with your sword and bow? Put bread and water before them, that they may eat and drink, and go to their master." ²³ So the king prepared much food for them, and when they had eaten and drunk, he sent them away, and they went back to their master. Those bands of Aramean soldiers did not return for a long time into the land of Israel.

²⁴ Later after this Ben-Hadad king of Aram gathered all his army and attacked Samaria and besieged it. ²⁵ So there was a great famine in Samaria. Behold, they besieged it until a donkey's head was sold for eighty pieces of silver, and the fourth part of a kab of dove's dung for five pieces of silver. ²⁶ As the king of Israel was passing by on the wall, a woman cried to him, saying, "Help, my master, king." ²⁷ He said, "If Yahweh does not help you, how can I help you? Is there anything coming from the threshing floor or winepress?" ²⁸ The king continued, "What is troubling you?" She answered, "This woman said to me, 'Give your son so that we may eat him today, and we will eat my son tomorrow.'" ²⁹ So we boiled my son and ate him, and I said to her on the next day, "Give your son that we may eat him, but she has hidden her son." ³⁰ So when the king heard the words of the woman, he tore his clothes (now he was passing by on the wall), and the people looked and saw that he had sackcloth underneath, against his skin. ³¹ Then he said, "May God do so to me, and more also, if the head of Elisha son of Shaphat remains on him today."

³² But Elisha was sitting in his house, and the elders were sitting with him. The king sent a man from before him, but when the messenger came to Elisha, he said to the elders, "See how this son of a murderer has sent to take away my head? Look, when the messenger comes, shut the door, and hold the door shut against him. Is not the sound of his master's feet behind him?" ³³ While he was still talking with

them, behold, the messenger came down to him. The king had said, "Behold, this trouble comes from Yahweh. Why should I wait for Yahweh any longer?"

Chapter 7

¹ Elisha said, "Hear the word of Yahweh. This is what Yahweh says: 'Tomorrow about this time a measure of fine flour will be sold for a shekel, and two measures of barley for a shekel, in the gate of Samaria.'" ² Then the officer on whose hand the king leaned answered the man of God, and said, "See, even if Yahweh should make windows in heaven, can this thing happen?" Elisha replied, "See, you will watch it happen with your own eyes, but you will not eat any of it."

³ Now there were four men with leprosy right outside the city gate. They said one to another, "Why should we sit here until we die? ⁴ If we say that we should go into the city, then the famine is in the city, and we will die there. But if we still sit here, we will still die. Now then, come, let us go to the army of the Arameans. If they keep us alive, we will live, and if they kill us, we will only die." ⁵ So they rose up at twilight to go into the Aramean camp; when they arrived at the outermost part of the camp, there was no one there. ⁶ For the Lord had made the Aramean army hear a noise of chariots, and a noise of horses—the noise of another large army, and they said to each other, "The king of Israel has hired the kings of the Hittites and Egyptians to come against us." ⁷ So the soldiers arose and fled in the twilight; they left their tents, their horses, their donkeys, and the camp as it was, and fled for their lives. ⁸ When the men with leprosy came to the outermost part of the camp, they went into one tent and ate and drank, and carried away silver and gold and clothes, and went and hid them. They came back and entered into another tent and carried plunder away from there also, and went and hid it.

⁹ Then they said to each other, "We are not doing right. This day is a day of good news, but we are keeping quiet about it. If we wait until the morning light, punishment will overtake us. Now then, come, let us go and tell the king's household." ¹⁰ So they went and called the gatekeepers of the city. They told them, saying, "We went to the camp of the Arameans, but there was no one there, not the sound of anyone, but there were the horses tied, and the donkeys tied, and the tents as they were." ¹¹ Then the gatekeepers shouted out the news, and then it was told inside the king's household. ¹² Then the king arose at night and said to his servants, "I will tell you now what the Arameans have done to us. They know that we are hungry, so they have gone out of the camp to hide themselves in the fields. They are saying, 'When they come out of the city, we will take them alive, and get into the city.'" ¹³ One of the king's servants answered and said, "I beg you, let some men take five of the horses that remain, which are left in the city. They are like all the rest of the population of Israel who are left—most are now dead; let us send them and see." ¹⁴ So they took two chariots with horses, and the king sent them after the army of the Arameans, saying, "Go and see." ¹⁵ They went after them to the Jordan, and all the road was full of clothes and equipment that the Arameans had cast away in their hurry. So the messengers returned and told the king.

¹⁶ The people went out and plundered the camp of the Arameans. So a measure of fine flour was sold for a shekel, and two measures of barley for a shekel, just as the word of Yahweh had said. ¹⁷ The king had ordered the officer on whose hand he had leaned to be in charge of the gate, and the people trampled him down in the gateway. He died as the man of God had said, who spoke when the king had come down to him. ¹⁸ So it happened as the man of God had said to the king, saying, "About this time in the gate of Samaria, two measures of barley will be available for a shekel, and a measure of fine flour for a shekel." ¹⁹ That officer had answered the man of God and said, "See, even if Yahweh should make windows in heaven, can this thing happen?" Elisha had said, "See, you will watch it happen with your own eyes, but you will not eat any of it." ²⁰ That is exactly what happened to him, for the people trampled him in the gate, and he died.

Chapter 8

¹ Now Elisha had spoken to the woman whose son he had restored to life. He said to her, "Arise, and go with your household, and stay wherever you can in another land, because Yahweh has called for a famine which will come on this land for seven years." ² So the woman arose and she obeyed the word of the man of God. She went with her household and lived in the land of the Philistines seven years. ³ It came about at the end of seven years that the woman returned from the land of the Philistines, and she went to the king to cry to him for her house and for her land. ⁴ Now the king was talking with Gehazi the servant of the man of God, saying, "Please tell me all the great things that Elisha has done." ⁵ Then as he was telling the king how Elisha had restored to life the child who was dead, the very woman whose son he had restored to life came to cry to the king for her house and for her land. Gehazi said, "My master, king, this is the woman, and this is her son, whom Elisha restored to life." ⁶ When the king asked the woman about her son, she explained it to him. So the king ordered a certain officer for her, saying, "Give back to her all that was hers and all the harvests of her fields since the day that she left the land until now."

⁷ Elisha came to Damascus where Ben-Hadad the king of Aram was sick. The king was told, "The man of God has come here." ⁸ The king said to Hazael, "Take a gift in your hand and go meet the man of God, and consult with Yahweh through him, saying, 'Will I revive from this sickness?'" ⁹ So Hazael went to meet him and took a gift with him of every kind of good thing of Damascus, carried by forty camels. So Hazael came and stood before Elisha and said, "Your son Ben-Hadad king of Aram has sent me to you, saying, 'Will I revive from this sickness?'" ¹⁰ Elisha said to him, "Go, say to Ben-Hadad, 'You will surely revive,' but Yahweh has shown me that he will surely die." ¹¹ Then Elisha stared at Hazael until he was ashamed, and the man of God wept. ¹² Hazael asked, "Why do you weep, my master?" He answered, "Because I know the evil that you will do to the people of Israel. You will set their strongholds on fire, and you will kill their young men with the sword, dash in pieces their little ones, and rip open their pregnant women." ¹³ Hazael replied, "Who is your servant, that he should do this great thing? He is only a dog." Elisha answered, "Yahweh has shown me that you will be king over Aram." ¹⁴ Then Hazael left Elisha and came to his master, who said to him, "What did Elisha say to you?" He answered, "He told me that you would certainly revive." ¹⁵ Then the next day Hazael took the blanket and dipped it in water, and spread it on Ben-Hadad's face so that he died. Then Hazael became king in his place.

¹⁶ In the fifth year of Joram son of Ahab, king of Israel, Jehoram began to reign. He was the son of Jehoshaphat king of Judah. He began to reign when Jehoshaphat was king of Judah. ¹⁷ Jehoram was thirty-two years old when he began to reign, and he reigned for eight years in Jerusalem. ¹⁸ Jehoram walked in the ways of the kings of Israel, as the house of Ahab was doing; for he had Ahab's daughter as his wife, and he did what was evil in Yahweh's sight. ¹⁹ However, because of his servant David, Yahweh did not want to destroy Judah, since he had told David that he would always give him a lamp for his descendants.

²⁰ In Jehoram's days, Edom rebelled against the hand of Judah, and they set a king over themselves. ²¹ Then Jehoram crossed over to Zair with all his chariots. When the Edomites surrounded Jehoram, his chariot commanders rose up and attacked them during the night; but Jehoram's army ran away and went back to their tents. ²² So Edom has been in rebellion against the rule of Judah to this present day. Libnah also revolted at the same time. ²³ As for the other matters concerning Jehoram, all that he did, are they not written in the book of the events of the kings of Judah? ²⁴ Jehoram lay down with his fathers and was buried with them in the city of David. Then Ahaziah his son became king in his place.

²⁵ In the twelfth year of Joram son of Ahab, king of Israel, Ahaziah son of Jehoram, king of Judah, began to reign. ²⁶ Ahaziah was twenty-two years old when he began to reign; he reigned for one year in Jerusalem. His mother's name was Athaliah; she was the daughter of Omri, king of Israel. ²⁷ Ahaziah walked in the ways of the house of Ahab; he did what was evil in the sight of Yahweh, as the house of Ahab was doing, for Ahaziah was a son-in-law to the house of Ahab. ²⁸ Ahaziah went with Joram son of Ahab, to fight against Hazael, king of Aram, at Ramoth Gilead. The Arameans wounded Joram. ²⁹ King Joram returned to be healed in Jezreel of the wounds that the Arameans had given him at Ramah, when he fought against Hazael king of Aram. So Ahaziah son of Jehoram, king of Judah, went down to Jezreel to see Joram son of Ahab, because Joram had been wounded.

Chapter 9

¹ Elisha the prophet called one of the sons of the prophets and said to him, "Gird your loins, then take this little bottle of oil in your hand and go to Ramoth Gilead. ² When you arrive, look for Jehu son of Jehoshaphat son of Nimshi, and go in and make him arise up from among his companions, and conduct him to an inner chamber. ³ Then take the bottle of oil and pour it on his head and say, 'Yahweh says this: "I have anointed you king over Israel."' Then open the door, and run off; do not delay." ⁴ So the young man, the young prophet, went to Ramoth Gilead. ⁵ When he arrived, behold, the captains of the army were sitting. So the young prophet said, "I have come on an errand to you, captain." Jehu replied, "To which of us?" The young prophet answered, "To you, captain." ⁶ So Jehu arose and went into the house, and the prophet poured the oil on his head and said to Jehu, "Yahweh, the God of Israel, says this: 'I have anointed you king over the people of Yahweh, over Israel. ⁷ You must kill the family of Ahab your master so that I may avenge the blood of my servants the prophets and the blood of all the servants of Yahweh who were murdered by the hand of Jezebel. ⁸ For the whole family of Ahab will perish, and I will cut off from Ahab every male child in Israel, whether he is a slave or a free person. ⁹ I will make the house of Ahab like the house of Jeroboam son of Nebat and like the house of Baasha son of Ahijah. ¹⁰ The dogs will eat Jezebel in Jezreel, and there will be no one to bury her.'" Then the prophet opened the door and ran off.

¹¹ Then Jehu came out to the servants of his master, and one said to him, "Is everything all right? Why did this mad fellow come to you?" Jehu answered them, "You know the man and the kinds of things he says."

¹² They said, "That is a lie. Tell us." Jehu answered, "He said this and that to me, and he also said, 'This is what Yahweh says: I have anointed you as king over Israel.'" ¹³ Then each of them quickly took off his outer garment and put it under Jehu at the top of the steps. They blew the ram's horn and said, "Jehu is king."

¹⁴ In this way Jehu son of Jehoshaphat son of Nimshi conspired against Joram. Now Joram had been defending Ramoth Gilead, he and all Israel, because of Hazael king of Aram, ¹⁵ but King Joram had gone back to Jezreel to be healed of the wounds that the Arameans had given him, when he had fought against Hazael king of Aram.

Jehu said to the servants of Joram, "If this is your opinion, then let no one escape and go out of the city, in order to go tell this news in Jezreel." ¹⁶ So Jehu rode in a chariot to Jezreel; for Joram was resting there. Now Ahaziah king of Judah had come down to see Joram.

¹⁷ The watchman was standing on the tower in Jezreel, and he saw the company of Jehu as he came at a distance; he said, "I see a group of men coming." Joram said, "Take a horseman, and send him out to meet them; tell him to say, 'Are you coming in peace?'" ¹⁸ So a man was sent on horseback to meet him; he said, "The king says this: 'Are you coming in peace?'" So Jehu said, "What have you to do with peace? Turn and ride behind me." Then the watchman told the king, "The messenger has met them, but he is not coming back." ¹⁹ Then he sent out a second man on horseback, who came to them and said, "The king says this: 'Are you coming in peace?'" Jehu answered, "What have you to do with peace? Turn and ride behind me." ²⁰ Again the watchman reported, "He has met them, but he is not coming back. For the way that the chariot is being driven is the way that Jehu son of Nimshi drives; he is driving wildly."

²¹ So Joram said, "Get my chariot ready." They prepared his chariot, and Joram king of Israel and Ahaziah king of Judah rode out, each in his chariot, to meet Jehu. They found him at the property of Naboth the Jezreelite. ²² When Joram saw Jehu, he said, "Are you coming in peace, Jehu?" He answered, "What peace is there, when the idolatrous acts of prostitution and witchcraft of your mother Jezebel are so many?" ²³ So Joram turned his chariot and fled and said to Ahaziah, "There is treachery, Ahaziah." ²⁴ Then Jehu drew his bow with his full strength and shot Joram between his shoulders; the arrow went through his heart, and he sank down in his chariot. ²⁵ Then Jehu said to Bidkar his officer, "Pick him up and throw him in the field of Naboth the Jezreelite. Think about how when you and I rode together after Ahab his father, Yahweh placed this prophecy against him: ²⁶ 'Yesterday I saw the blood of Naboth and the blood of his sons—this is Yahweh's declaration—and I will surely make you pay for it on this field—this is Yahweh's declaration. Now then, pick him up and throw him on this field, according to the word of Yahweh.'"

²⁷ When Ahaziah the king of Judah saw this, he fled up the road to Beth Haggan. But Jehu followed him, and said, "Kill him also in the chariot," and they shot him at the ascent of Gur, which is by Ibleam. Ahaziah

fled to Megiddo and died there. ²⁸ His servants carried his body in a chariot to Jerusalem and buried him in his tomb with his fathers in the city of David.

²⁹ Now it was in the eleventh year of Joram son of Ahab that Ahaziah had begun to reign over Judah.

³⁰ When Jehu came to Jezreel, Jezebel heard of it, and she painted her eyes, arranged her hair, and looked out the window. ³¹ As Jehu was entering the gate, she said to him, "Are you coming in peace, you Zimri, your master's murderer?" ³² Jehu looked up at the window and said, "Who is on my side? Who?" Then two or three eunuchs looked out. ³³ So Jehu said, "Throw her down." So they threw Jezebel down, and some of her blood splattered on the wall and the horses, and Jehu trampled her underfoot. ³⁴ When Jehu entered the palace, he ate and drank. Then he said, "See now to this cursed woman and bury her, for she is a king's daughter." ³⁵ They went to bury her, but they found no more of her than the skull, the feet, and the palms of her hands. ³⁶ So they came back and told Jehu. He said, "This is the word of Yahweh which he spoke by his servant Elijah the Tishbite, saying, 'In the land at Jezreel the dogs will eat the flesh of Jezebel, ³⁷ and the body of Jezebel will be like dung on the surface of the fields in the land at Jezreel, so that no one will be able to say, "This is Jezebel."'"

Chapter 10

¹ Now Ahab had seventy descendants in Samaria. Jehu wrote letters and sent them to Samaria, to the rulers of Jezreel, including the elders and the guardians of Ahab's descendants, saying, ² "Your master's descendants are with you, and you also have chariots and horses and a fortified city and armor. So then, as soon as this letter comes to you, ³ select the best and most deserving of your master's descendants and set him on his father's throne, and fight for your master's royal line." ⁴ But they were terrified and said among themselves, "See, the two kings could not stand before Jehu. So how can we stand?" ⁵ Then the man who was in charge of the palace, and the man who was over the city, and the elders also, and they who raised the children, sent word back to Jehu, saying, "We are your servants. We will do everything that you command us. We will not make any man king. Do what is good in your eyes." ⁶ Then Jehu wrote a letter the second time to them, saying, "If you are on my side, and if you will listen to my voice, you must take the heads of the men of your master's descendants, and come to me to Jezreel by tomorrow this time." Now the king's descendants, seventy in number, were with the important men of the city, who were bringing them up. ⁷ So when the letter came to them, they took the king's sons and killed them, seventy persons, put their heads in baskets, and sent them to Jehu in Jezreel. ⁸ A messenger came to Jehu, saying, "They have brought the heads of the king's sons." So he said, "Put them in two heaps at the entrance of the gate until the morning." ⁹ In the morning Jehu went out and stood, and said to all the people, "You are innocent. See, I plotted against my master and killed him, but who killed all these?" ¹⁰ Now you should certainly realize that no part of Yahweh's word, the word that he spoke concerning the family of Ahab, will fall to the ground, for Yahweh has done what he spoke about through his servant Elijah." ¹¹ So Jehu killed all who remained in the family of Ahab in Jezreel, and all his important men, his close friends, and his priests, until no survivor remained to him.

¹² Then Jehu arose and left; he went to Samaria. As he was arriving at Beth Eked of the Shepherds, ¹³ he met brothers of Ahaziah king of Judah. Jehu said to them, "Who are you?" They answered, "We are brothers of Ahaziah, and we are going down to greet the children of the king and the children of Queen Jezebel." ¹⁴ Jehu said to his own men, "Take them alive." So they took them alive and killed them at the well of Beth Eked, all forty-two men. He did not leave any of them alive.

¹⁵ When Jehu had left there, he met Jehonadab son of Rekab coming to meet him. Jehu greeted him and said to him, "Is your heart with me, as my heart is with yours?" Jehonadab answered, "It is." Jehu said, "If it is, give me your hand." So he gave Jehu his hand, and Jehu took Jehonadab up with him into the chariot. ¹⁶ Jehu said, "Come with me and see my zeal for Yahweh." So he had Jehonadab ride along with him in his chariot. ¹⁷ When he came to Samaria, Jehu killed all who remained from Ahab's descendants in Samaria, until he had destroyed Ahab's royal line, just as was told them before by the word of Yahweh, which he had spoken to Elijah.

¹⁸ Then Jehu gathered all the people together and said to them, "Ahab served Baal a little, but Jehu will serve him much. ¹⁹ Now therefore call to me all the prophets of Baal, all his worshipers, and all his priests. Let no one be left out, for I have a great sacrifice to offer to Baal. Whoever does not come will not live." But Jehu did this deceitfully, with the intent to kill the worshipers of Baal. ²⁰ Jehu said, "Announce that there will be an assembly for Baal." So they announced it. ²¹ Then Jehu sent throughout all Israel and all the worshipers of Baal came, so that there was not a man left who did not come. They came into the temple of Baal, and it was filled from one end to another. ²² Jehu said to the man who kept the priest's wardrobe, "Bring out robes for all the worshipers of Baal." So the man brought out robes to them. ²³ So Jehu went with Jehonadab son of Rekab into the house of Baal, and he said to the worshipers of Baal, "Search and make sure that there is no one here with you from the servants of Yahweh, but the worshipers of Baal alone." ²⁴ Then they went in to offer sacrifices and burnt offerings. Now Jehu had chosen eighty men who were standing outside, and he told them, "If any of the men whom I bring into your hands escapes, whoever lets that man escape, his life will be taken for the life of the one who escaped."

²⁵ So then as soon as Jehu finished offering the burnt offering, he said to his bodyguards and to the officers, "Go in and kill them. Let no one come out." So they killed them with the edge of the sword, and the bodyguards and the officers threw them out and went into the inner room of the house of Baal. ²⁶ They dragged out the stone pillars that were in the house of Baal, and they burned them. ²⁷ Then they broke down the pillar of Baal, and destroyed the house of Baal and made it a latrine, which it is to this day. ²⁸ That is how Jehu destroyed Baal worship from Israel.

²⁹ But Jehu did not leave the sins of Jeroboam son of Nebat, by which he made Israel sin—that is, the worship of the golden calves in Bethel and Dan. ³⁰ So Yahweh said to Jehu, "Because you have done well in executing what was right in my eyes, and have done to the house of Ahab according to all that was in my heart, your descendants will sit on the throne of Israel to the fourth generation." ³¹ But Jehu took no care to walk in the law of Yahweh, the God of Israel, with all his heart. He did not turn away from the sins of Jeroboam, by which he made Israel sin.

³² In those days Yahweh began to cut off regions from Israel, and Hazael defeated the Israelites at the borders of Israel, ³³ from the Jordan eastward, all the land of Gilead, the Gadites, and the Reubenites, and the Manassites, from Aroer, which is by the Valley of the Arnon, through Gilead to Bashan. ³⁴ As for the other matters concerning Jehu, and all that he did, and all his power, are they not written in the book of the events of the kings of Israel? ³⁵ Jehu lay down with his ancestors, and they buried him in Samaria. Then Jehoahaz his son became king in his place. ³⁶ The time that Jehu reigned over Israel in Samaria was twenty-eight years.

Chapter 11

¹ Now when Athaliah, the mother of Ahaziah, saw that her son was dead, she arose and killed all the royal children. ² But Jehosheba, a daughter of King Jehoram and sister of Ahaziah, took Joash son of Ahaziah, and hid him away from among the king's sons who were killed, along with his nurse; she put them into a bedroom. They hid him from Athaliah so that he was not killed. ³ He remained with her six years, hidden in the house of Yahweh, while Athaliah reigned over the land.

⁴ In the seventh year, Jehoiada sent messages and brought the commanders of hundreds of the Carites and of the guard, and brought them to himself, into the temple of Yahweh. He made a covenant with them, and he made them swear an oath in the house of Yahweh. Then he showed them the king's son. ⁵ He commanded them, saying, "This is what you must do. A third of you who come on the Sabbath will keep watch over the king's house, ⁶ and a third will be at the Sur Gate, and a third at the gate behind the guardhouse. You shall guard the guardhouse of the temple." ⁷ The two other groups who are not serving on the Sabbath, you must keep the watch over the house of Yahweh for the king. ⁸ You must surround the king, every man with his weapons in his hand. Whoever enters within your ranks, let him be killed. You must stay with the king when he goes out, and when he comes in.

⁹ So the commanders of hundreds obeyed everything Jehoiada the priest commanded. Each one took his men, those who were to come in to serve on the Sabbath, and those who were to stop serving on that Sabbath; and they came to Jehoiada the priest. ¹⁰ Then Jehoiada the priest gave the commanders of hundreds the spears and shields that belonged to King David and that were in the house of Yahweh. ¹¹ So the guards stood, each man with his weapon in his hand, from the right side of the temple to the left side, near the altar and the temple, surrounding the king. ¹² Then Jehoiada brought out the king's son Joash, put the crown on him, and gave him the covenant decrees. Then they made him king and anointed him. They clapped their hands and said, "Long live the king!"

¹³ When Athaliah heard the noise of the guard and of the people, she came to the people in the house of Yahweh. ¹⁴ She looked, and, behold, the king was standing by the pillar, as the custom was, and the captains and the trumpeters were by the king. All the people of the land were rejoicing and blowing trumpets. Then Athaliah tore her clothes and shouted, "Treason! Treason!" ¹⁵ Then Jehoiada the priest ordered the commanders of hundreds who were over the army, saying, "Bring her out between the ranks. Anyone who follows her, kill him with the sword." For the priest had said, "Do not let her be killed in the house of Yahweh." ¹⁶ So they seized her as she reached the horses' entrance to the king's house, and there she was killed.

¹⁷ Then Jehoiada made a covenant between Yahweh and the king and people, that they should be Yahweh's people, and also between the king and the people. ¹⁸ So all the people of the land went to the house of Baal and tore it down. They smashed Baal's altars and his idol figures to pieces, and they killed Mattan, the priest of Baal, in front of those altars. Then Jehoiada the priest appointed guards over the temple of Yahweh. ¹⁹ Jehoiada took with him the commanders of hundreds, the Carites, the guard, and all the people of the land, and together they brought down the king from the house of Yahweh and they went into the king's house, entering by way of the gate of the guards. Joash took his place on the royal throne. ²⁰ So all the people of the land rejoiced, and the city was quiet after Athaliah had been killed with the sword at the king's house.

²¹ Joash was seven years old when he began to reign.

Chapter 12

¹ In the seventh year of Jehu, the reign of Joash began; he reigned for forty years in Jerusalem. His mother's name was Zibiah, of Beersheba. ² Joash did what was right in the eyes of Yahweh all the time, because Jehoiada the priest was instructing him. ³ But the high places were not taken away. The people still sacrificed and burned incense on the high places.

⁴ Joash said to the priests, "All the money that is brought in as sacred offerings into the house of Yahweh, that money for which each person is assessed—whether it is the money collected in the census, or the money received from personal vows, or the money brought in by people motivated by Yahweh in their hearts to give— ⁵ the priests should receive the money from one of their treasurers and repair whatever damage is found in the temple." ⁶ But by the twenty-third year of King Joash, the priests had not repaired anything in the temple. ⁷ Then King Joash called for Jehoiada the priest and for the other priests; he said to them, "Why have you not repaired anything in the temple? Now take no more money from your taxpayers, but take what has been collected for repairs of the temple and give it to those who can make the repairs." ⁸ So the priests consented to take no more money from the people and not repair the temple themselves.

⁹ Then, Jehoiada the priest took a chest, bored a hole in its lid, and set it beside the altar, on the right side as one comes into the house of Yahweh. The priests who were guarding the temple entrance put into it all the money that was brought to the house of Yahweh. ¹⁰ Whenever they saw that there was much money in the chest, the king's scribe and the high priest would come and put the money in bags and then count it, the money found in the temple of Yahweh. ¹¹ They gave the money that was weighed out into the hands of men who took care of the temple of Yahweh. They paid it out to the carpenters and the builders who worked on the temple of Yahweh, ¹² and to the masons and the stonecutters, for buying timber and cutting stone to repair the temple of Yahweh, and for all that was needed to be paid to repair it. ¹³ But the money that was brought into the house of Yahweh did not pay to make for it any silver cups, lamp trimmers, basins, trumpets, or any gold or silver furnishing. ¹⁴ They gave this money to those who did the work of repairing the house of Yahweh. ¹⁵ In addition, they did not require the money paid for repairs to be accounted for by the men who received it and paid it to the workmen, because these men practiced faithfulness. ¹⁶ But the money for the guilt offerings and the money for the sin offerings was not brought into the temple of Yahweh, because it belonged to the priests.

¹⁷ Then Hazael king of Aram attacked and fought against Gath, and took it. Hazael then turned to attack Jerusalem. ¹⁸ Joash king of Judah took all the things that Jehoshaphat and Jehoram and Ahaziah, his fathers, kings of Judah, had set apart, and what he had set apart, and all the gold that was found in the storerooms of the houses of Yahweh and of the king and he sent them to Hazael king of Aram. Then Hazael went away from Jerusalem.

¹⁹ As for the other matters concerning Joash, all that he did, are they not written in the book of the events of the kings of Judah? ²⁰ His servants arose and plotted together; they attacked Joash in Beth Millo, on the way that goes down to Silla. ²¹ Jozabad ^[1] son of Shimeath, and Jehozabad son of Shomer, his servants, attacked him, and he died. They buried Joash with his ancestors in the city of David, and Amaziah, his son, became king in his place.

Footnotes

12:21 ^[1] Some ancient copies have

Chapter 13

¹ In the twenty-third year of Joash son of Ahaziah king of Judah, Jehoahaz son of Jehu began to reign over Israel in Samaria; he reigned seventeen years. ² He did what was evil in the sight of Yahweh and followed the sins of Jeroboam son of Nebat, who caused Israel to sin; and Jehoahaz did not turn away from them. ³ The anger of Yahweh burned against Israel, and he gave them continually into the hand of Hazael king of Aram and into the hand of Ben-Hadad son of Hazael. ⁴ So Jehoahaz implored Yahweh, and Yahweh listened to him because he saw the oppression of Israel, how the king of Aram was oppressing them. ⁵ So Yahweh gave Israel a rescuer, and they escaped from the hand of the Arameans, and the people of Israel began to live in their tents as they had before. ⁶ Nevertheless, they did not depart from the sins of the house of Jeroboam, who caused Israel to sin, and they continued in them; and the Asherah pole remained in Samaria. ⁷ The Arameans left Jehoahaz with only fifty horsemen, ten chariots, and ten thousand footmen, for the king of Aram had destroyed them and made them like the chaff at threshing time. ⁸ As for the other matters concerning Jehoahaz, and all that he did and his power, are they not written in the book of the events of the kings of Israel? ⁹ So Jehoahaz lay down with his ancestors, and they buried him in Samaria. Jehoash his son became king in his place.

¹⁰ In the thirty-seventh year of Joash king of Judah, the reign of Jehoash son of Jehoahaz began over Israel in Samaria; he reigned sixteen years. ¹¹ He did what was evil in the sight of Yahweh. He did not leave behind any of the sins of Jeroboam son of Nebat, by which he had made Israel to sin, but he walked in them. ¹² As for the other matters concerning Jehoash, and all that he did, and his might by which he fought against Amaziah king of Judah, are they not written in the book of the events of the kings of Israel? ¹³ Jehoash lay down with his ancestors, and Jeroboam sat on his throne. Jehoash was buried in Samaria with the kings of Israel.

¹⁴ Now Elisha became sick with an illness by which he later died, so Jehoash the king of Israel came down to him and wept over him. He said, "My father, my father, the chariots of Israel and the horsemen are taking you away!" ¹⁵ Elisha said to him, "Pick up a bow and some arrows," so Joash picked up a bow and some arrows. ¹⁶ Elisha said to the king of Israel, "Put your hand on the bow," so he put his hand on it. Then Elisha laid his hands on the king's hands. ¹⁷ Elisha said, "Open the window eastward," so he opened it. Then Elisha said, "Shoot!", and he shot. Elisha said, "This is Yahweh's arrow of victory, the arrow of victory over Aram, for you will attack the Arameans in Aphek until you have consumed them." ¹⁸ Then Elisha said, "Take the arrows," so Joash took them. He said to the king of Israel, "Strike the ground with them," and he struck the ground three times, then stopped. ¹⁹ But the man of God was angry with him and said, "You should have hit the ground five or six times. Then you would have attacked Aram until you annihilated it, but now you will attack Aram only three times."

²⁰ Then Elisha died, and they buried him. Now marauding bands of Moabites invaded the land at the beginning of the year. ²¹ As they were burying a certain man, they saw a marauding band of Moabites, so they threw the body into Elisha's grave. As soon as the man touched Elisha's bones, he revived and stood up on his feet.

²² Hazael king of Aram oppressed Israel all the days of Jehoahaz. ²³ But Yahweh was gracious to Israel, and had compassion on them and concern for them, because of his covenant with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. So Yahweh did not destroy them, and he still has not driven them away from his presence. ²⁴ Hazael king of Aram died, and Ben-Hadad his son became king in his place. ²⁵ Jehoash son of Jehoahaz took back from Ben-Hadad son of Hazael the cities that had been taken from Jehoahaz his father by war. Jehoash attacked him three times, and he recovered those cities of Israel.

Chapter 14

¹ In the second year of Jehoash son of Jehoahaz, king of Israel, Amaziah son of Joash, king of Judah, began to reign. ² He was twenty-five years old when he began to reign; he reigned twenty-nine years in Jerusalem. His mother's name was Jehoaddan, of Jerusalem. ³ He did what was right in the eyes of Yahweh, yet not like David his father. He did everything that Joash, his father, had done. ⁴ But the high places were not taken away. The people still sacrificed and burned incense at the high places. ⁵ It came about that as soon as his rule was well established, he killed the servants who had murdered his father, the king. ⁶ Yet he did not put to death the sons of the murderers, according to what was written in the book of the law of Moses, as Yahweh had commanded, saying, "Fathers must not be put to death because of their children, neither must the children be put to death because of their fathers. But each one must die for his own sin." ⁷ He killed ten thousand soldiers of Edom in the Valley of Salt; he also took Sela in war and called it Joktheel, which is what it is called to this day.

⁸ Then Amaziah sent messengers to Jehoash son of Jehoahaz son of Jehu king of Israel, saying, "Come, let us meet each other face to face in battle." ⁹ But Jehoash the king of Israel sent messengers back to Amaziah king of Judah, saying, "A thistle that was in Lebanon sent a message to a cedar in Lebanon, saying, 'Give your daughter to my son for a wife,' but a wild beast in Lebanon walked by and trampled down the thistle. ¹⁰ You have indeed attacked Edom, and your heart has lifted you up. Take pride in your victory, but stay at home, for why should you cause yourself trouble and fall, both you and Judah with you?"

¹¹ But Amaziah would not listen. So Jehoash king of Israel attacked and he and Amaziah king of Judah met each other face to face at Beth Shemesh, which belongs to Judah. ¹² Judah was defeated by Israel, and every man fled to his tent. ¹³ Jehoash king of Israel, captured Amaziah, king of Judah son of Jehoash son of Ahaziah, at Beth Shemesh. He came to Jerusalem and tore down the wall of Jerusalem from the Ephraim Gate to the Corner Gate, four hundred cubits in distance. ¹⁴ He took all the gold and silver, all the objects that were found in the house of Yahweh, and the valuable things in the king's palace, with hostages also, and returned to Samaria.

¹⁵ As for the other matters concerning Jehoash, all that he did, his power, and how he fought with Amaziah king of Judah, are they not written in the book of the events of the kings of Israel? ¹⁶ Then Jehoash lay down with his ancestors and was buried in Samaria with the kings of Israel, and Jeroboam, his son, became king in his place.

¹⁷ Amaziah son of Joash, king of Judah, lived fifteen years after the death of Jehoash son of Jehoahaz, king of Israel. ¹⁸ As for the other matters concerning Amaziah, are they not written in the book of the events of the kings of Judah? ¹⁹ They made a conspiracy against Amaziah in Jerusalem, and he fled to Lachish. He fled to Lachish, but they sent men after him to Lachish and killed him there. ²⁰ They brought him back on horses, and he was buried with his ancestors in Jerusalem in the city of David. ²¹ All the people of Judah took Azariah, who was sixteen years old, and made him king in place of his father Amaziah. ²² It was Azariah who rebuilt Elath and restored it to Judah, after King Amaziah lay down with his ancestors.

²³ In the fifteenth year of Amaziah son of Joash king of Judah, Jeroboam son of Jehoash king of Israel began to reign in Samaria; he reigned forty-one years. ²⁴ He did what was evil in the sight of Yahweh. He did not depart from any of the sins of Jeroboam son of Nebat, who had caused Israel to sin. ²⁵ He restored the border of Israel from Lebo Hamath to the Sea of the Arabah, following the commands of the word of Yahweh, the God of Israel, which he had spoken through his servant Jonah son of Amittai, the prophet, who was from Gath Hepher. ²⁶ For Yahweh saw the suffering of Israel, that it was very bitter for everyone, both slave and free, and that there was no rescuer for Israel. ²⁷ But Yahweh had not said that he would blot out the name of Israel from under heaven, so he delivered them by the hand of Jeroboam son of Jehoash.

²⁸ As for the other matters concerning Jeroboam, all that he did, his power, how he waged war and recovered Damascus and Hamath, which had belonged to Judah, for Israel, are they not written in the book of the events of the kings of Israel? ²⁹ Jeroboam lay down with his ancestors, with the kings of Israel, and Zechariah his son became king in his place.

Chapter 15

¹ In the twenty-seventh year of Jeroboam king of Israel, Azariah son of Amaziah king of Judah began to reign. ² Azariah was sixteen years old when he began to reign, and he reigned for fifty-two years in Jerusalem. His mother's name was Jekoliah, and she was from Jerusalem. ³ He did what was right in the eyes of Yahweh, just as his father Amaziah had done. ⁴ However, the high places were not taken away. The people still sacrificed and burned incense at the high places. ⁵ Yahweh afflicted the king so that he was a leper to the day of his death and lived in a separate house. Jotham, the king's son, was over the household and ruled the people of the land. ⁶ As for the other matters concerning Azariah, all that he did, are they not written in the book of the events of the kings of Judah? ⁷ So Azariah lay down with his ancestors; they buried him with his ancestors in the city of David. Jotham, his son, became king in his place.

⁸ In the thirty-eighth year of Azariah king of Judah, Zechariah son of Jeroboam reigned over Israel in Samaria for six months. ⁹ He did what was evil in the sight of Yahweh, as his fathers had done. He did not depart from the sins of Jeroboam son of Nebat, who had caused Israel to sin. ¹⁰ Shallum son of Jabesh conspired against Zechariah, attacked him in Ibleam, and put him to death. Then he became king in his place. ¹¹ As for the other matters concerning Zechariah, they are written in the book of the events of the kings of Israel. ¹² This was the word of Yahweh that he spoke to Jehu, saying, "Your descendants will sit on the throne of Israel to the fourth generation." That is what happened.

¹³ Shallum son of Jabesh began to reign in the thirty-ninth year of Uzziah king of Judah, and he reigned only one month in Samaria. ¹⁴ Menahem son of Gadi went up from Tirzah to Samaria. There he attacked Shallum son of Jabesh, in Samaria. He put him to death and became king in his place. ¹⁵ As for the other matters concerning Shallum and the conspiracy that he formed, they are written in the book of the events of the kings of Israel. ¹⁶ Then Menahem attacked Tiphsah and all who were there, and the borders around Tirzah, because they did not open up the city to him. So he attacked it, and he ripped open all the pregnant women in that village. ¹⁷ In the thirty-ninth year of Azariah king of Judah, Menahem son of Gadi began to reign over Israel; he reigned ten years in Samaria. ¹⁸ He did what was evil in the sight of Yahweh. For his whole life, he did not depart from the sins of Jeroboam son of Nebat, who had caused Israel to sin. ¹⁹ Then Pul the king of Assyria came against the land, and Menahem gave Pul one thousand talents of silver, so that Pul's support might be with him to strengthen the kingdom of Israel in his hand. ²⁰ Menahem exacted this money from Israel by requiring each of the wealthy, powerful men to pay fifty shekels of silver to him to give to the king of Assyria. So the king of Assyria turned back and did not stay there in the land. ²¹ As for the other matters concerning Menahem, and all that he did, are they not written in the book of the events of the kings of Israel? ²² So Menahem lay down with his ancestors, and Pekahiah his son became king in his place.

²³ In the fiftieth year of Azariah king of Judah, Pekahiah son of Menahem began to reign over Israel in Samaria; he reigned two years. ²⁴ He did what was evil in the sight of Yahweh. He did not leave behind the sins of Jeroboam son of Nebat, by which he had caused Israel to sin. ²⁵ Pekahiah had an officer named Pekah son of Remaliah, who conspired against him. Along with fifty men of Gilead, Pekah killed Pekahiah as well as Argob and Arieah in Samaria, in the citadel of the king's palace. Pekah killed Pekahiah and became king in his place. ²⁶ As for the other matters concerning Pekahiah, all that he did, they are written in the book of the events of the kings of Israel.

²⁷ In the fifty-second year of Azariah king of Judah, Pekah son of Remaliah began to reign over Israel in Samaria; he reigned twenty years. ²⁸ He did what was evil in the sight of Yahweh. He did not depart from the sins of Jeroboam son of Nebat, who had caused Israel to sin.

²⁹ In the days of Pekah king of Israel, Tiglath-Pileser king of Assyria came and took Ijon, Abel Beth Maakah, Janoah, Kedesh, Hazor, Gilead, Galilee, and all the land of Naphtali. He carried away the people to Assyria. ³⁰ So Hoshea son of Elah formed a conspiracy against Pekah son of Remaliah. He attacked him and put him to death. Then he became king in his place, in the twentieth year of Jotham son of Uzziah. ³¹ As for the other matters concerning Pekah, all that he did, they are written in the book of the events of the kings of Israel.

³² In the second year of Pekah son of Remaliah, king of Israel, Jotham son of Uzziah, king of Judah began to reign. ³³ He was twenty-five years old when he began to reign; he reigned sixteen years in Jerusalem. His mother's name was Jerushah; she was the daughter of Zadok. ³⁴ Jotham did what was right in the eyes of Yahweh, just as his father Uzziah had done. ³⁵ However, the high places were not taken away. The people still sacrificed and burned incense at the high places. Jotham built the upper gate of the house of Yahweh. ³⁶ As for the other matters concerning Jotham, and all that he did, are they not written in the book of the events of the kings of Judah? ³⁷ In those days Yahweh began to send against Judah Rezin the king of Aram, and Pekah son of Remaliah. ³⁸ Jotham lay down with his ancestors and was buried with his ancestors in the city of David, his ancestor. Then Ahaz, his son, became king in his place.

Footnotes

15:16 ^[1] Instead of

Chapter 16

¹ In the seventeenth year of Pekah son of Remaliah, Ahaz son of Jotham king of Judah, began to reign. ² Ahaz was twenty years old when he began to reign, and he reigned sixteen years in Jerusalem. He did not do what was right in the eyes of Yahweh his God, as David his ancestor had done. ³ Instead, he walked in the way of the kings of Israel. He even made his son pass through the fire, following the detestable practices of the nations whom Yahweh had driven out before the people of Israel. ⁴ He offered sacrifices and burned incense at the high places, on the hilltops, and under every green tree.

⁵ Then Rezin, king of Aram and Pekah son of Remaliah, king of Israel, came up to Jerusalem to attack. They besieged Ahaz, but they could not conquer him. ⁶ At that time, Rezin king of Aram recovered Elath for Aram and drove the Jews out of Elath. Then the Arameans came to Elath, where they have lived to this day.

⁷ So Ahaz sent messengers to Tiglath-Pileser king of Assyria, saying, "I am your servant and your son. Come up and save me from the hand of the king of Aram and from the hand of the king of Israel, who have attacked me." ⁸ So Ahaz took the silver and gold that was found in the house of Yahweh and among the treasures of the king's palace and he sent it as a gift to the king of Assyria. ⁹ Then the king of Assyria listened to him, and the king of Assyria went up against Damascus, conquered it and carried off its people as prisoners to Kir. He also killed Rezin the king of Aram.

¹⁰ King Ahaz went to Damascus to meet Tiglath-Pileser king of Assyria. At Damascus he saw an altar. He sent to Uriah the priest a model of the altar and its pattern and the design for all the workmanship needed. ¹¹ So Uriah the priest built an altar to be just like the plans that King Ahaz had sent from Damascus. He finished it before King Ahaz arrived back from Damascus. ¹² When the king came from Damascus he saw the altar; the king approached the altar and made offerings on it. ¹³ He made his burnt offering and his grain offering, poured out his drink offering, and sprinkled the blood of his fellowship offerings on the altar. ¹⁴ The bronze altar that was before Yahweh—he brought it from the front of the temple, from between his altar and the temple of Yahweh and put it on the north side of his altar. ¹⁵ Then King Ahaz commanded Uriah the priest, saying, "On the large altar burn the morning burnt offering and the evening grain offering, and the king's burnt offering and his grain offering, with the burnt offering of all the people of the land, and their grain offering and their drink offerings. Sprinkle on it all the blood of the burnt offering, and all the blood of the sacrifice. But the bronze altar will be for me to consult for guidance." ¹⁶ Uriah the priest did just what King Ahaz commanded.

¹⁷ Then King Ahaz removed the panels and the basins from the portable stands; he also took down the sea from off the bronze oxen that were under it and put it on a stone pavement. ¹⁸ He removed the covered walkway for the Sabbath that they had built at the temple, along with the king's entry outside the temple of Yahweh, because of the king of Assyria. ¹⁹ As for the other matters concerning Ahaz and what he did, are they not written in the book of the events of the kings of Judah? ²⁰ Ahaz lay down with his ancestors and was buried with his ancestors in the city of David. Hezekiah his son became king in his place.

Chapter 17

¹ In the twelfth year of Ahaz king of Judah, the reign of Hoshea son of Elah began. He ruled in Samaria over Israel for nine years. ² He did what was evil in the sight of Yahweh, yet not as the kings of Israel who were before him. ³ Shalmaneser king of Assyria attacked him, and Hoshea became his servant and brought him tribute. ⁴ Then the king of Assyria realized that Hoshea had been plotting against him, for Hoshea had sent messengers to So king of Egypt; also, he offered no tribute to the king of Assyria, as he had done year by year. So the king of Assyria shut him up and bound him in prison. ⁵ Then the king of Assyria attacked throughout all the land, and attacked Samaria and besieged it for three years. ⁶ In the ninth year of Hoshea, the king of Assyria took Samaria and carried Israel away to Assyria. He put them in Halah, at the Habor River of Gozan, and in the cities of the Medes.

⁷ This captivity happened because the people of Israel had sinned against Yahweh their God, who had brought them up from the land of Egypt, from under the hand of Pharaoh king of Egypt. The people had been worshiping other gods ⁸ and walking in the customs of the nations whom Yahweh had driven out before the people of Israel, and in the customs of the kings of Israel that they had done. ⁹ The people of Israel did secretly—against Yahweh their God—things that were not right. They built for themselves high places in all their cities, from the watchtower to the fortress. ¹⁰ They also set up stone pillars and Asherah poles on every high hill and under every green tree. ¹¹ There they burned incense in all the high places, as the nations had done, those whom Yahweh had carried away before them. The Israelites performed wicked things to provoke Yahweh to anger; ¹² they worshiped idols, about which Yahweh had said to them, "You will not do this thing." ¹³ Yet Yahweh had testified to Israel and to Judah by every prophet and every seer, saying, "Turn from your evil ways and keep my commandments and my statutes, and be careful to keep all the law I commanded your fathers, and that I sent to you by my servants the prophets." ¹⁴ But they would not listen; instead they stiffened their necks like their fathers, who did not trust in Yahweh their God. ¹⁵ They rejected his statutes and the covenant that he had made with their ancestors, and the covenant decrees that he had given to them. They followed useless practices and they themselves became useless. They followed the pagan nations who were around them, those that Yahweh had commanded them not to imitate. ¹⁶ They ignored all the commandments of Yahweh their God. They made cast metal figures of two calves to worship. They made an Asherah pole, and they worshiped all the host of the heavens and Baal. ¹⁷ They made their sons and daughters pass through the fire, they used divination and enchantments, they sold themselves to do that which was evil in the sight of Yahweh, and they provoked him to anger. ¹⁸ Therefore Yahweh was very angry with Israel and removed them out of his sight. There was no one left but the tribe of Judah alone.

¹⁹ Even Judah did not keep the commandments of Yahweh their God, and they followed the customs that Israel had practiced. ²⁰ So Yahweh rejected all the descendants of Israel; he afflicted them and gave them into the hand of those who would take the possession as spoil, until he had cast them out of his sight. ²¹ He tore Israel from the royal line of David, and they made Jeroboam son of Nebat king. Jeroboam drove Israel away from following Yahweh and made them commit a great sin. ²² The people of Israel followed all the sins of Jeroboam and they did not depart from them, ²³ so Yahweh removed Israel from his sight, as he had said through all his servants the prophets that he would. So Israel was carried away out of their own land to Assyria, and it is this way to this present day.

²⁴ The king of Assyria brought people from Babylon and from Kuthah, and from Avva, and from Hamath and Sepharvaim, and placed them in the cities of Samaria in place of the people of Israel. They took over Samaria and lived in its cities. ²⁵ It happened at the beginning of their residence there that they did not honor Yahweh. So Yahweh sent lions among them which killed some of them. ²⁶ So they spoke to the king of Assyria, saying, "The nations that you have carried away and placed in the cities of Samaria do not know the practices required by the god of the land. So he has sent lions among them, and, see, the lions are killing people there because they do not know the practices required by the god of the land."

²⁷ Then the king of Assyria commanded, saying, "Take one of the priests there whom you brought from there, and let him go and live there, and let him teach them the practices required by the god of the land." ²⁸ So one of the priests whom they had carried away from Samaria came and lived in Bethel; he taught them how they should honor Yahweh. ²⁹ Every ethnic group made gods of their own, and put them in the high places that the Samaritans had made—every ethnic group in the cities where they lived. ³⁰ The people of Babylon made Sukkoth Benoth; the people of Kuthah made Nergal; the people of Hamath

made Ashima; ³¹ the Avvites made Nibhaz and Tartak. The Sepharvites burned their children in the fire to Adrammelek and Anammelek, the gods of the Sepharvites. ³² They also honored Yahweh, and appointed from among themselves priests of the high places, who sacrificed for them in the temples at the high places. ³³ They honored Yahweh and also worshiped their own gods, in the customs of the nations from among whom they had been taken away.

³⁴ To this day they persist in their old customs. They neither honor Yahweh, nor do they follow the statutes, the customs, the law, or the commandments that Yahweh gave to the descendants of Jacob, whom he named Israel. ³⁵ When Yahweh made a covenant with them, he commanded them, "You will not fear other gods, nor bow yourselves to them, nor worship them, nor sacrifice to them. ³⁶ But Yahweh, who brought you up from the land of Egypt with great power and with an outstretched arm, it is him you will honor, it is to him you will bow down, and it is to him that you will sacrifice. ³⁷ The statutes and the decrees, the law and the commandments that he wrote for you, you will keep them forever. So you must not fear other gods, ³⁸ and the covenant that I have made with you, you will not forget; neither will you honor other gods. ³⁹ But Yahweh your God is who you will honor. He will rescue you from the might of your enemies." ⁴⁰ They would not listen, because they continued to do what they had done in the past. ⁴¹ So these nations feared Yahweh and they also worshiped their carved figures, and their children did the same—as did their children's children. They continue to do what their ancestors did, up to this day.

Chapter 18

¹ Now in the third year of Hoshea son of Elah, king of Israel, Hezekiah son of Ahaz, king of Judah began to reign. ² He was twenty-five years old when he began to reign; he reigned twenty-nine years in Jerusalem. His mother's name was Abijah; she was the daughter of Zechariah. ³ He did what was right in the eyes of Yahweh, just as David, his ancestor, had done. ⁴ He removed the high places, destroyed the stone pillars, and cut down the Asherah poles. He broke to pieces the bronze serpent that Moses had made, because in those days the people of Israel were burning incense to it; it was called "Nehushtan." ⁵ Hezekiah trusted in Yahweh, the God of Israel, so that after him there was no one like him among all the kings of Judah, nor among the kings who were before him. ⁶ For he held on to Yahweh. He did not stop following him but kept his commandments, which Yahweh commanded Moses. ⁷ So Yahweh was with Hezekiah, and wherever he went he prospered. He rebelled against the king of Assyria and did not serve him. ⁸ He attacked the Philistines to Gaza and the borders around, from the tower of the watchmen to the fortified city.

⁹ In the fourth year of King Hezekiah, which was the seventh year of Hoshea son of Elah king of Israel, Shalmaneser king of Assyria came up against Samaria and besieged it. ¹⁰ At the end of three years they took it, in the sixth year of Hezekiah, which was the ninth year of Hoshea king of Israel; in this way Samaria was captured. ¹¹ So the king of Assyria carried Israel away to Assyria and put them in Halah, and at the Habor River in Gozan, and in the cities of the Medes. ¹² He did this because they did not obey the voice of Yahweh their God, but they violated the terms of his covenant, all that Moses the servant of Yahweh commanded. They refused to listen to it or do it.

¹³ Then in the fourteenth year of King Hezekiah, Sennacherib king of Assyria attacked all the fortified cities of Judah and captured them. ¹⁴ So Hezekiah king of Judah sent word to the king of Assyria, who was at Lachish, saying, "I have offended you. Withdraw from me. Whatever you put on me I will bear." The king of Assyria required Hezekiah king of Judah to pay three hundred talents of silver and thirty talents of gold. ¹⁵ So Hezekiah gave him all the silver that was found in the house of Yahweh and in the treasuries of the king's palace. ¹⁶ Then Hezekiah cut off the gold from the doors of the temple of Yahweh and from the pillars that he had overlaid; he gave the gold to the king of Assyria. ¹⁷ But the king of Assyria mobilized his great army, sending Tartan and Rabsaris and the chief commander from Lachish to King Hezekiah at Jerusalem. They traveled up the roads and arrived outside Jerusalem. They approached the conduit of the upper pool, on the highway of the launderers' field, and stood by it. ¹⁸ When they had called to King Hezekiah, Eliakim son of Hilkiyah, who was over the household, and Shebna the scribe, and Joah son of Asaph, the recorder, went out to meet them.

¹⁹ So the chief commander said to them to tell Hezekiah what the great king, the king of Assyria, said: "What is the source of your confidence? ²⁰ You speak only useless words, saying you have counsel and strength for war. In whom are you trusting, that you should rebel against me? ²¹ Look, you trust in Egypt, this walking stick of crushed reed; if a man leans on it, it will stick into his hand and pierce it. That is what Pharaoh king of Egypt is to anyone who trusts in him. ²² But if you say to me, 'We are trusting in Yahweh our God,' is not he the one whose high places and altars Hezekiah has taken away, and has said to Judah and to Jerusalem, 'You must worship before this altar in Jerusalem'? ²³ Now therefore, I want to make you a good offer from my master the king of Assyria. I will give you two thousand horses, if you are able to find riders for them. ²⁴ How could you resist even one captain of the least of my master's servants? You have put your trust in Egypt for chariots and horsemen! ²⁵ Have I traveled up here without Yahweh to fight against this place and destroy it? Yahweh said to me, 'Attack this land and destroy it.'"

²⁶ Then Eliakim son of Hilkiyah, and Shebna, and Joah said to the chief commander, "Please speak to your servants in the Aramaic language, for we understand it. Do not speak with us in the language of Judah in the ears of the people who are on the wall." ²⁷ But the chief commander said to them, "Has my master sent me to your master and to you to speak these words? Has he not sent me to the men who sit on the wall, who will have to eat their own dung and drink their own urine with you?" ²⁸ Then the chief commander stood and shouted in a loud voice in the language of Judah, saying, "Listen to the word of the great king, the king of Assyria. ²⁹ The king says, 'Do not let Hezekiah deceive you, for he will not be able to rescue you from my power. ³⁰ Do not let Hezekiah make you trust in Yahweh, saying, 'Yahweh will surely rescue us, and this city will not be given into the hand of the king of Assyria.'" ³¹ Do not listen to Hezekiah, for this is what the king of Assyria says: 'Make peace with me and come out to me. Then every

one of you will eat from his own vine and from his own fig tree, and drink from the water in his own cistern. ³² You will do this until I come and take you away to a land like your own land, a land of grain and new wine, a land of bread and vineyards, a land of olive trees and honey, so that you may live and not die.' Do not listen to Hezekiah when he tries to persuade you, saying, 'Yahweh will rescue us.' ³³ Has any of the gods of the peoples rescued them out of the hand of the king of Assyria? ³⁴ Where are the gods of Hamath and Arpad? Where are the gods of Sepharvaim, Hena, and Ivvah? Have they rescued Samaria out of my hand? ³⁵ Among all the gods of the lands, is there any god who has rescued his land from my power? How could Yahweh save Jerusalem from my might?"

³⁶ But the people remained silent and did not respond, for the king had commanded, "Do not answer him." ³⁷ Then Eliakim son of Hilkiah, who was over the household; Shebna the scribe; and Joah son of Asaph, the recorder, came to Hezekiah with their clothes torn, and reported to him the words of the chief commander.

Chapter 19

¹ It came about that when King Hezekiah heard their report, he tore his clothes, covered himself with sackcloth, and went into the house of Yahweh. ² He sent Eliakim, who was over the household, and Shebna the scribe, and the elders of the priests, all covered with sackcloth, to Isaiah son of Amoz, the prophet. ³ They said to him, "Hezekiah says, 'This day is a day of distress, rebuke, and disgrace, for the children have come to the time of birth, but there is no strength for them to be born.' ⁴ It may be that Yahweh your God will hear all the words of the chief commander, whom the king of Assyria his master has sent to defy the living God, and will rebuke the words which Yahweh your God has heard. Now lift up your prayer for the remnant that is still here.'" ⁵ So the servants of King Hezekiah came to Isaiah, ⁶ and Isaiah said to them, "Say to your master: 'Yahweh says, "Do not be afraid of the words that you have heard, with which the servants of the king of Assyria have insulted me." ⁷ Look, I will put a spirit in him, and he will hear a certain report and go back to his own land. I will cause him to fall by the sword in his own land.'"

⁸ Then the chief commander returned and found the king of Assyria fighting against Libnah, for he had heard that the king had gone away from Lachish. ⁹ Then Sennacherib heard that Tirhakah king of Cush and Egypt had mobilized to fight against him, so he sent messengers again to Hezekiah with a message:

¹⁰ "Say to Hezekiah king of Judah, 'Do not let your God in whom you trust deceive you, saying, "Jerusalem will not be given over into the hand of the king of Assyria.'" ¹¹ See, you have heard what the kings of Assyria have done to all lands by destroying them completely. So will you be rescued? ¹² Have the gods of the nations rescued them, the nations that my fathers destroyed: Gozan, Haran, Rezeph, and the people of Eden in Tel Assar? ¹³ Where are the king of Hamath, the king of Arpad, the king of the cities of Sepharvaim, of Hena, and Ivvah?"

¹⁴ Hezekiah received this letter from the messengers and read it. Then he went up to the house of Yahweh and spread it before him. ¹⁵ Then Hezekiah prayed before Yahweh and said, "Yahweh of hosts, God of Israel, you who sit above the cherubim, you are God alone over all the kingdoms of the earth. You made the heavens and the earth. ¹⁶ Incline your ear, Yahweh, and listen. Open your eyes, Yahweh, and see, and hear the words of Sennacherib, which he has sent to mock the living God. ¹⁷ Truly, Yahweh, the kings of Assyria have destroyed the nations and their lands. ¹⁸ They have put their gods into the fire, for they were not gods but the work of men's hands, just wood and stone. So the Assyrians have destroyed them. ¹⁹ Now then, Yahweh our God, save us, I implore you, from his power, so that all the kingdoms of the earth may know that you, Yahweh, are God alone."

²⁰ Then Isaiah son of Amoz sent a message to Hezekiah, saying, "Yahweh, the God of Israel says, 'Because you have prayed to me concerning Sennacherib king of Assyria, I have heard you. ²¹ This is the word that Yahweh has spoken about him:

"The virgin daughter of Zion
despises you and mocks you.
The daughter of Jerusalem
shakes her head at you.

²² Whom have you defied and slandered?
Against whom have you exalted your voice
and lifted up your eyes in pride?
Against the Holy One of Israel!

²³ By your messengers
you have defied the Lord,
and have said,
'With the multitude of my chariots
I have gone up to the heights of the mountains,
to the highest elevations of Lebanon.
I will cut down the tall cedars
and the choice cypress trees there.
I will enter into its farthest parts,
its most fruitful forest.

²⁴ I have dug wells
and have drunk foreign waters.
I dried up all the rivers of Egypt
under the soles of my feet.'

- 25 Have you not heard how I
determined it long ago,
and worked it out in ancient times?
Now I am bringing it to pass.
You are here to reduce impregnable cities
into heaps of ruins.
- 26 Their inhabitants, of little strength,
are shattered and ashamed.
They are plants in the field,
green grass,
the grass on the roof or in the field,
burned before it has grown up.
- 27 But I know your sitting down,
your going out, your coming in,
and your raging against me.
- 28 Because of your raging against me,
and because your arrogance has reached my ears,
I will put my hook in your nose,
and my bit in your mouth;
I will turn you back
the way you came."
- 29 This will be the sign for you:

This year you will eat what grows wild,
and in the second year what grows from that.
But in the third year you must plant and harvest,
plant vineyards and eat their fruit.
- 30 The remnant of the house of Judah that survives
will again take root and bear fruit.
- 31 For from Jerusalem a remnant will come out,
from Mount Zion an escaped remnant will come. The zeal of Yahweh of hosts will do this.
- 32 Therefore Yahweh says this about the king of Assyria:

"He will not come into this city
nor shoot an arrow here.
Neither will he come before it with shield
or build up a siege ramp against it.
- 33 The way by which he came
will be the same way he will leave;
he will not enter this city—
this is Yahweh's declaration."
- 34 For I will defend this city and rescue it,
for my own sake and for my servant David's sake."
- 35 It came about that night that the angel of Yahweh went out and attacked the camp of the Assyrians,
putting to death 185,000 soldiers. When the men arose early in the morning, dead bodies lay everywhere.
- 36 So Sennacherib king of Assyria left Israel and went home and stayed in Nineveh. 37 Later, as he was
worshiping in the house of Nisrok his god, his sons Adrammelek and Sharezer killed him with the sword.
Then they escaped into the land of Ararat. Then Esarhaddon his son became king in his place.
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Chapter 20

¹ In those days Hezekiah was sick to the point of dying. So Isaiah son of Amoz, the prophet came to him, and said to him, "Yahweh says, 'Set your house in order; for you will die, and not live.'" ² Then Hezekiah turned his face to the wall and prayed to Yahweh, saying, ³ "Please, Yahweh, I beg you, call to mind how I have faithfully walked before you with my whole heart, and how I have done what was good in your sight." Then Hezekiah wept loudly. ⁴ Before Isaiah had gone out into the middle courtyard, the word of Yahweh came to him, saying, ⁵ "Turn back, and say to Hezekiah, the leader of my people, 'This is what Yahweh, the God of David your ancestor, says: "I have heard your prayer, and I have seen your tears. I am about to heal you on the third day, and you will go up to the house of Yahweh. ⁶ I will add fifteen years to your life, and I will rescue you and this city from the hand of the king of Assyria, and I will defend this city for my own sake and for my servant David's sake.'"" ⁷ So Isaiah said, "Take a lump of figs." They did so and put it on his boil, and he recovered.

⁸ Hezekiah said to Isaiah, "What will be the sign that Yahweh will heal me, and that I should go up to the temple of Yahweh on the third day?" ⁹ Isaiah replied, "This will be the sign for you from Yahweh, that Yahweh will do the thing that he has spoken. Will the shadow go forward ten steps, or go back ten steps?"

¹⁰ Hezekiah answered, "It is an easy thing for the shadow to go forward ten steps. No, let the shadow go backward ten steps." ¹¹ So Isaiah the prophet cried out to Yahweh, and he brought the shadow ten steps backward, from where it had moved on the stairway of Ahaz.

¹² At that time Marduk-Baladan son of Baladan king of Babylon sent letters and a gift to Hezekiah, for he had heard that Hezekiah had been sick. ¹³ Hezekiah listened to those letters, and then showed the messengers all the palace and his valuable things, the silver, the gold, the spices and precious oil, and the storehouse of his weapons, and all that was found in his storehouses. There was nothing in his house, nor in all his kingdom, that Hezekiah did not show them. ¹⁴ Then Isaiah the prophet came to King Hezekiah and asked him, "What did these men say to you? Where did they come from?" Hezekiah said, "They came from the distant country of Babylon." ¹⁵ Isaiah asked, "What have they seen in your house?" Hezekiah answered, "They have seen everything in my house. There is nothing among my valuable things that I have not shown them."

¹⁶ So Isaiah said to Hezekiah, "Listen to the word of Yahweh: ¹⁷ 'Look, the days are about to come when everything in your palace, the things that your ancestors stored away until this present day, will be carried to Babylon. Nothing will be left, says Yahweh. ¹⁸ Some of your descendants whom you will father will be taken away from you, and they will become eunuchs in the palace of the king of Babylon.'" ¹⁹ Then Hezekiah said to Isaiah, "The word of Yahweh that you have spoken is good." For he thought, "Will there not be peace and stability in my days?" ²⁰ As for the other matters concerning Hezekiah, and all his power, and how he constructed the pool and the conduit, and how he brought water into the city—are they not written in the book of the events of the kings of Judah? ²¹ Hezekiah lay down with his ancestors, and Manasseh his son became king in his place.

Chapter 21

¹ Manasseh was twelve years old when he began to reign; he reigned fifty-five years in Jerusalem. His mother's name was Hephzibah. ² He did what was evil in the sight of Yahweh, like the disgusting things of the nations whom Yahweh had driven out before the people of Israel. ³ For he rebuilt the high places that Hezekiah his father had destroyed, and he built altars for Baal, made an Asherah pole, as Ahab king of Israel had done, and he bowed down to all the host of heaven and worshiped them. ⁴ Manasseh built altars in the house of Yahweh, although Yahweh had commanded, "It is in Jerusalem that my name will be forever." ⁵ He built altars for all the host of heaven in the two courtyards of the house of Yahweh. ⁶ He caused his son to pass through the fire, he performed sorcery and divination and consulted with sorcerers and spiritists. He did much evil in the sight of Yahweh, provoking him to anger. ⁷ The carved figure of Asherah that he had made, he placed it in the house of Yahweh. It was about this house that Yahweh had spoken to David and Solomon his son; he had said: "It is in this house and in Jerusalem, which I have chosen from all the tribes of Israel, that I will put my name forever. ⁸ I will not cause the feet of Israel to wander any more out of the land that I gave to their ancestors, if they will only be careful to obey all that I have commanded them, and to follow all the law that my servant Moses commanded them." ⁹ But the people did not listen, and Manasseh led them to do evil even more than the nations that Yahweh had destroyed before the people of Israel.

¹⁰ So Yahweh spoke by his servants the prophets, saying, ¹¹ "Because Manasseh king of Judah has done these disgusting things, and has acted wickedly more than all that the Amorites who were before him did, and has also made Judah sin with his idols, ¹² therefore Yahweh, the God of Israel, says this: Look, I am about to bring such evil on Jerusalem and Judah that whoever hears of it, both his ears will tingle. ¹³ I will stretch over Jerusalem the measuring line used against Samaria, and the plumb line used against the house of Ahab; I will wipe Jerusalem clean, as a man wipes a dish, wiping it and turning it upside down. ¹⁴ I will throw off the remnant of my inheritance and give them into the hand of their enemies. They will become victims and plunder for all their enemies, ¹⁵ because they have done what is evil in my sight, and have provoked me to anger, since the day their ancestors came out of Egypt, to this day."

¹⁶ Moreover, Manasseh shed much innocent blood, until he had filled Jerusalem from one end to another with death. This was in addition to the sin by which he made Judah to sin, when they did what was evil in the sight of Yahweh. ¹⁷ As for the other matters concerning Manasseh, all that he did, and the sin that he committed, are they not written in the book of the events of the kings of Judah? ¹⁸ Manasseh lay down with his ancestors and was buried in the garden of his own house, in the garden of Uzza. Amon his son became king in his place.

¹⁹ Amon was twenty-two years old when he began to reign; he reigned two years in Jerusalem. His mother's name was Meshullemeth; she was the daughter of Haruz of Jotbah. ²⁰ He did what was evil in the sight of Yahweh, as Manasseh his father had done. ²¹ Amon followed in all the way that his father had walked in and worshiped the idols that his father worshiped, and bowed down to them. ²² He abandoned Yahweh, the God of his fathers, and did not walk in the way of Yahweh. ²³ The servants of Amon conspired against him and put the king to death in his own house. ²⁴ But the people of the land killed all those who had conspired against King Amon, and they made Josiah his son king in his place. ²⁵ As for the other matters concerning Amon that he did, are they not written in the book of the events of the kings of Judah? ²⁶ The people buried him in his tomb in the garden of Uzza, and Josiah his son became king in his place.

Chapter 22

¹ Josiah was eight years old when he began to reign; he reigned thirty-one years in Jerusalem. His mother's name was Jedidah (she was the daughter of Adaiah of Bozkath). ² He did what was right in the eyes of Yahweh. He walked in all the way of David his ancestor, and he did not turn away either to the right or to the left.

³ It came about that in the eighteenth year of King Josiah, he sent Shaphan son of Azaliah son of Meshullam, the scribe, to the house of Yahweh, saying, ⁴ "Go up to Hilkiah the high priest and tell him to count the money that has been brought into the house of Yahweh, which the temple guards have gathered from the people. ⁵ Let it be given into the hand of the workmen who are in charge of the house of Yahweh, and let them give it to the workmen who are in the house of Yahweh, for them to make repairs to damage in the temple. ⁶ Let them give money to the carpenters, the builders, and the masons, and also to buy timber and cut stone to repair the temple." ⁷ But no accounting was required for the money that was given to them, because they handled it faithfully.

⁸ Hilkiah the high priest said to Shaphan the scribe, "I have found the book of the law in the house of Yahweh." So Hilkiah gave the book to Shaphan, and he read it. ⁹ Shaphan went and took the book to the king, and also reported to him, saying, "Your servants have spent the money that was found in the temple and they have given it into the hand of the workmen who supervise the care for the house of Yahweh." ¹⁰ Then Shaphan the scribe said to the king, "Hilkiah the priest has given me a book." Then Shaphan read it to the king. ¹¹ It came about that when the king had heard the words of the book of the law, he tore his clothes. ¹² The king commanded Hilkiah the priest, Ahikam son of Shaphan, Akbor son of Micaiah, Shaphan the scribe, and Asaiah, his own servant, saying, ¹³ "Go and consult with Yahweh for me, and for the people and for all Judah, because of the words of this book that has been found. For great is the anger of Yahweh that has been kindled against us because our ancestors have not listened to the words of this book so as to obey all that was written concerning us."

¹⁴ So Hilkiah the priest, Ahikam, Akbor, Shaphan, and Asaiah went to Huldah the prophetess, the wife of Shallum son of Tikvah son of Harhas, keeper of the wardrobe (she lived in Jerusalem in the second quarter), and they spoke with her. ¹⁵ She said to them, "This is what Yahweh, the God of Israel, says: 'Tell the man who sent you to me, ¹⁶ "This is what Yahweh says: 'See, I will bring disaster to this place and to its inhabitants, according to everything written in the book that the king of Judah has read. ¹⁷ Because they have abandoned me and have burned incense to other gods, so that they might provoke me to anger with all the deeds they have committed—therefore my anger has been kindled against this place, and it will not be extinguished.'" ¹⁸ But to the king of Judah, who sent you to ask Yahweh's will, this is what you will say to him: "Yahweh, the God of Israel says this: 'About the words that you heard, ¹⁹ because your heart was tender, and because you have humbled yourself before Yahweh, when you heard what I said against this place and its inhabitants, that they would become a desolation and a curse, and because you have torn your clothes and wept before me, I also have listened to you—this is Yahweh's declaration. ²⁰ See, I will gather you to your ancestors, and you will be gathered to your grave in peace. Your eyes will not see all the disaster that I will bring upon this place.'"'" So the men took this message back to the king.

Chapter 23

¹ So the king sent messengers who gathered to him all the elders of Judah and of Jerusalem. ² Then the king went up to the house of Yahweh, and all the men of Judah and all the inhabitants of Jerusalem with him, and the priests, prophets, and all the people, from small to great. He then read in their hearing all the words of the book of the Covenant that had been found in the house of Yahweh. ³ The king stood by the pillar and made a covenant before Yahweh, to walk after Yahweh and to keep his commandments, his regulations, and his statutes, with all his heart and all his soul, to confirm the words of this covenant that were written in this book. So all the people agreed to stand by the covenant.

⁴ The king commanded Hilkiah the high priest, the priests under him, and the gatekeepers to bring out of the temple of Yahweh all the vessels that were made for Baal and Asherah, and for all the host of heaven. He burned them outside Jerusalem in the fields in the Kidron Valley and carried their ashes to Bethel. ⁵ He got rid of the idolatrous priests whom the kings of Judah had chosen to burn incense at the high places in the cities of Judah and in the places around Jerusalem—those who burned incense to Baal, to the sun and the moon, to the planets, and to all the host of heaven. ⁶ He brought out the Asherah pole from the temple of Yahweh, outside Jerusalem to the Kidron Valley and burned it there. He crushed it to dust and threw that dust onto the graves of the common people. ⁷ He broke down the houses of the cultic prostitutes in the temple of Yahweh, where the women wove garments for Asherah. ⁸ Josiah brought all the priests out of the cities of Judah and defiled the high places where the priests had burned incense, from Geba to Beersheba. He destroyed the high places at the gates that were at the entrance to the gate of Joshua (the city governor), on the left side of the city gate. ⁹ Although the priests of those high places were not allowed to serve at the altar of Yahweh in Jerusalem, they ate unleavened bread among their brothers. ¹⁰ Josiah defiled Topheth, which is in the Valley of Ben Hinnom, so that no one might cause his son or his daughter to pass through the fire as a sacrifice to Molech. ¹¹ He took away the horses that the kings of Judah had given to the sun. They had been in an area at the entrance to the temple of Yahweh, near the room of Nathan-Melek, the chamberlain. Josiah burned the chariots of the sun. ¹² Josiah the king destroyed the altars that were on the roof of the upper chamber of Ahaz, which the kings of Judah had made, and the altars that Manasseh had made in the two courts of the temple of Yahweh. Josiah smashed them into pieces and threw them into the Kidron Valley. ¹³ The king ruined the high places east of Jerusalem, south of the mount of corruption that Solomon the king of Israel had built for Ashtoreth, the detestable idol of the Sidonians; for Chemosh, the detestable idol of Moab; and for Molech, the detestable idol of the people of Ammon. ¹⁴ He broke the stone pillars into pieces and cut down the Asherah poles and he filled those places with the bones of human beings.

¹⁵ Josiah also completely destroyed the altar that was at Bethel and the high place that Jeroboam son of Nebat (the one who made Israel to sin) had constructed. He also burned that altar and the high place and crushed it to dust. He also burned the Asherah pole. ¹⁶ As Josiah looked over the area, he noticed the graves that were on the hillside. He sent men to take the bones from the graves; then he burned them on the altar, which defiled it. This was according to the word of Yahweh which the man of God had spoken, the man who spoke of these things beforehand. ¹⁷ Then he said, "What monument is that I see?" The men of the city told him, "That is the grave of the man of God who came from Judah and spoke about these things that you have just done against the altar of Bethel." ¹⁸ So Josiah said, "Let it alone. No one should move his bones." So they let his bones alone, along with the bones of the prophet who had come from Samaria. ¹⁹ Then Josiah removed all the houses on the high places that were in the cities of Samaria, which the kings of Israel had made, and that provoked Yahweh to anger. He did to them exactly what had been done at Bethel. ²⁰ He slaughtered all the priests of the high places on the altars and he burned human bones on them. Then he returned to Jerusalem.

²¹ Then the king commanded all the people, saying, "Keep the Passover to Yahweh your God, as it is written in this book of the covenant." ²² Such a Passover celebration had never been held from the days of the judges who ruled Israel, nor in all the days of the kings of Israel or Judah. ²³ But in the eighteenth year of King Josiah this Passover of Yahweh was celebrated in Jerusalem.

²⁴ Josiah also completely removed the sorcerers and spiritists. He also completely removed the fetishes, the idols, and all the disgusting things that were seen in the land of Judah and in Jerusalem, so as to confirm the words of the law which were written in the book that Hilkiah the priest had found in the house of Yahweh. ²⁵ Before Josiah, there had been no king like him, who turned to Yahweh with all his

heart, all his soul, and all his might, who followed all the law of Moses. Nor did any king like Josiah arise after him.

26 Nevertheless, Yahweh did not turn away from the burning of his raging anger, which burned against Judah because of all that Manasseh had done to provoke him to anger. **27** So Yahweh said, "I will also remove Judah out of my sight, as I have removed Israel, and I will throw away this city that I have chosen, Jerusalem, and the house of which I said, 'My name will be there.'"

28 As for the other matters concerning Josiah, everything that he did, are they not written in the book of the events of the kings of Judah? **29** In his days, Pharaoh Necho, king of Egypt, went to fight against the king of Assyria at the Euphrates River. King Josiah went to meet Necho in battle, and Necho killed him at Megiddo. **30** Josiah's servants carried him dead in a chariot from Megiddo, brought him to Jerusalem, and buried him in his own grave. Then the people of the land took Jehoahaz son of Josiah, anointed him, and made him king in his father's place.

31 Jehoahaz was twenty-three years old when he began to reign, and he reigned three months in Jerusalem. His mother's name was Hamutal; she was the daughter of Jeremiah of Libnah. **32** Jehoahaz did what was evil in the sight of Yahweh, like everything that his ancestors had done. **33** Pharaoh Necho put him in chains at Riblah in the land of Hamath, so that he might not reign in Jerusalem. Then Necho imposed a fine on Judah of one hundred talents of silver and one talent of gold. **34** Pharaoh Necho made Eliakim son of Josiah king in the place of Josiah his father, and changed his name to Jehoiakim. But he took Jehoahaz away to Egypt, and Jehoahaz died there. **35** Jehoiakim paid the silver and gold to Pharaoh. In order to meet the demand of Pharaoh, Jehoiakim taxed the land and he forced each man among the people of the land to pay him the silver and gold according to their assessments.

36 Jehoiakim was twenty-five years old when he began to reign, and he reigned eleven years in Jerusalem. His mother's name was Zebidah; she was the daughter of Pedaiah of Rumah. **37** Jehoiakim did what was evil in the sight of Yahweh, just as his ancestors had done.

Chapter 24

¹ In Jehoiakim's days, Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon attacked Judah; Jehoiakim became his servant for three years. Then Jehoiakim turned back and rebelled against Nebuchadnezzar. ² Yahweh sent against Jehoiakim marauding bands of Chaldeans, Arameans, Moabites, and Ammonites; he sent them against Judah to destroy it. This was in conformity with the word of Yahweh that had been spoken through his servants the prophets. ³ It was certainly at the mouth of Yahweh that this came on Judah, to remove them out of his sight, because of the sins of Manasseh, all that he did, ^[1]⁴ and also because of the innocent blood that he shed, for he filled Jerusalem with innocent blood. Yahweh was not willing to pardon that. ⁵ As for the other matters concerning Jehoiakim, and all that he did, are they not written in the book of the events of the kings of Judah? ⁶ Jehoiakim lay down with his ancestors, and Jehoiachin his son became king in his place. ⁷ The king of Egypt did not attack any more out of his land, because the king of Babylon had conquered all the lands that had been controlled by the king of Egypt, from the brook of Egypt to the Euphrates River.

⁸ Jehoiachin was eighteen years old when he began to reign; he reigned in Jerusalem three months. His mother's name was Nehushta; she was the daughter of Elnathan of Jerusalem. ⁹ He did what was evil in the sight of Yahweh; he did all that his father had done.

¹⁰ At that time the servants of Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon attacked Jerusalem and besieged the city.

¹¹ Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon came to the city while his servants were besieging it, ¹² and Jehoiachin the king of Judah went out to the king of Babylon, he, his mother, his servants, his princes, and his officers. The king of Babylon captured him in the eighth year of his own reign. ¹³ Nebuchadnezzar took out from there all the valuable things in the house of Yahweh, and those in the king's palace. He cut into pieces all the golden objects that Solomon king of Israel had made in the temple of Yahweh, as Yahweh had said would happen. ¹⁴ He took into exile all Jerusalem, all the leaders, and all the mighty warriors, ten thousand captives, and all the craftsmen and the smiths. No one was left except the poorest people in the land. ¹⁵ Nebuchadnezzar took Jehoiachin into exile at Babylon, as well as the king's mother, wives, officers, and the nobles of the land. He took them into exile from Jerusalem to Babylon. ¹⁶ All the fighting men, seven thousand in number, and one thousand craftsmen and blacksmiths, all of them strong and fit for fighting—the king of Babylon brought these men into exile at Babylon. ¹⁷ The king of Babylon made Mattaniah, Jehoiachin's father's brother, king in his place, and changed his name to Zedekiah.

¹⁸ Zedekiah was twenty-one years old when he began to reign; he reigned eleven years in Jerusalem. His mother's name was Hamutal; she was the daughter of Jeremiah from Libnah. ¹⁹ He did what was evil in the sight of Yahweh; he did all that Jehoiakim had done. ²⁰ Through Yahweh's anger, all these events happened in Jerusalem and Judah, until he drove them out of his presence. Then Zedekiah rebelled against the king of Babylon.

Footnotes

24:3 ^[1]Some ancient Hebrew copies read,

Chapter 25

¹ It happened that in the ninth year of the reign of King Zedekiah, in the tenth month, and on the tenth day of the month, Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon came with all his army against Jerusalem. He camped opposite it, and they built a siege wall around it. ² So the city was besieged until the eleventh year of King Zedekiah's reign. ³ On the ninth day of the fourth month of that year, the famine was so severe in the city that there was no food for the people of the land. ⁴ Then the city was broken into, and all the fighting men fled at night by the way of the gate between the two walls, by the king's garden, although the Chaldeans were all around the city. The king went in the direction of the Arabah. ⁵ But the army of Chaldeans pursued King Zedekiah and overtook him in the plains of the Jordan River valley near Jericho. All his army was scattered away from him. ⁶ They captured the king and brought him up to the king of Babylon at Riblah, where they passed sentence on him. ⁷ As for Zedekiah's sons, they slaughtered them before his eyes. Then he put out his eyes, bound him in bronze chains, and brought him to Babylon.

⁸ Now in the fifth month, on the seventh day of the month, which was the nineteenth year of the reign of Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon, Nebuzaradan, a servant of the king of Babylon and commander of his bodyguards, came to Jerusalem. ⁹ He burned the house of Yahweh, the king's palace, and all the houses of Jerusalem; also every important building in the city he burned. ¹⁰ As for all the walls around Jerusalem, all the army of the Chaldeans who were under the commander of the bodyguard destroyed them. ¹¹ As for the rest of the people who were left in the city, those who had deserted to the king of Babylon, and the remainder of the population—Nebuzaradan, the commander of the bodyguard, took them away into exile. ¹² But the commander of the bodyguard did leave some of the poorest of the land to work the vineyards and fields.

¹³ As for the bronze pillars that were in the house of Yahweh, and the stands and the bronze sea that were in the house of Yahweh, the Chaldeans broke them into pieces and carried the bronze back to Babylon. ¹⁴ The pots, shovels, lamp trimmers, spoons, and all the utensils of bronze with which the priests had served in the temple—the Chaldeans took them all away. ¹⁵ The censers and the bowls that were made of gold and those made of silver—the captain of the king's guard took them away as well. ¹⁶ The two pillars, the sea, and the stands that Solomon had made for the house of Yahweh contained more bronze than could be weighed. ¹⁷ The height of the first pillar was eighteen cubits, and a capital of bronze was on top of it. The capital was three cubits high, with latticework and pomegranates all around on the capital, all made of bronze. The other pillar and its latticework were the same as the first.

¹⁸ The commander of the bodyguard took Seraiah the chief priest, together with Zephaniah, the second priest, and the three gatekeepers. ¹⁹ From the city he took prisoner an officer who was in charge of soldiers, and five men of those who advised the king, who were still in the city. He also took prisoner the king's army officer responsible for drafting men into the army, along with sixty important men from the land who were in the city. ²⁰ Then Nebuzaradan, the commander of the bodyguard, took them and brought them to the king of Babylon at Riblah. ²¹ The king of Babylon put them to death at Riblah in the land of Hamath. In this way, Judah went out of its land into exile.

²² As for the people who remained in the land of Judah, those whom Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon had left, he put Gedaliah son of Ahikam, son of Shaphan, in charge of them. ²³ Now when all the commanders of the soldiers, they and their men, heard that the king of Babylon had made Gedaliah governor, they went to Gedaliah at Mizpah. These men were Ishmael son of Nethaniah, Johanan son of Kareah, Seraiah son of Tanhumeth the Netophathite, and Jaazaniah son of the Maakathite—they and their men. ²⁴ Gedaliah made an oath to them and to their men, and said to them, "Do not be afraid of the Chaldean officials. Live in the land and serve the king of Babylon, and it will go well with you." ²⁵ But it happened that in the seventh month Ishmael son of Nethaniah son of Elishama, from the royal family, came with ten men and attacked Gedaliah. Gedaliah died, along with the Jews and the Chaldeans who were with him at Mizpah. ²⁶ Then all the people, from the least to the greatest, and the commanders of the soldiers, arose and went to Egypt, because they were afraid of the Chaldeans.

²⁷ It happened later in the thirty-seventh year of the exile of Jehoiachin king of Judah, in the twelfth month, on the twenty-seventh day of the month, that Awel-Marduk king of Babylon released Jehoiachin king of Judah from prison. This happened in the year that Awel-Marduk began to reign. ²⁸ He spoke kindly to him and gave him a seat more honorable than that of the other kings who were with him in

Babylon. ²⁹Awel-Marduk removed Jehoiachin's prison clothes, and Jehoiachin ate regularly at the king's table for the rest of his life. ³⁰A regular food allowance was given to him by the king every day for the rest of his life.
