

# **Lexham English Bible**

Old Testament  
(Psalms s.d. Malachi)

# Psalms

**1** <sup>1</sup> Blessed is the person who does not follow the advice of wicked people, take the path of sinners, or join the company of mockers.

<sup>2</sup> Rather, he delights in the teachings of the LORD and reflects on his teachings day and night.

<sup>3</sup> He is like a tree planted beside streams—a tree that produces fruit in season and whose leaves do not wither. He succeeds in everything he does.

<sup>4</sup> Wicked people are not like that. Instead, they are like husks that the wind blows away.

<sup>5</sup> That is why wicked people will not be able to stand in the judgment and sinners will not be able to stand where righteous people gather.

<sup>6</sup> The LORD knows the way of righteous people, but the way of wicked people will end.

**2** <sup>1</sup> Why do the nations gather together? Why do their people devise useless plots?

<sup>2</sup>Kings take their stands. Rulers make plans together against the LORD and against his Messiah by saying,

<sup>3</sup>"Let's break apart their chains and shake off their ropes."

<sup>4</sup>The one enthroned in heaven laughs. The Lord makes fun of them.

<sup>5</sup>Then he speaks to them in his anger. In his burning anger he terrifies them by saying,

<sup>6</sup>"I have installed my own king on Zion, my holy mountain."

<sup>7</sup>I will announce the LORDS decree. He said to me: "You are my Son. Today I have become your Father.

<sup>8</sup>Ask me, and I will give you the nations as your inheritance and the ends of the earth as your own possession.

<sup>9</sup>You will break them with an iron scepter. You will smash them to pieces like pottery."

<sup>10</sup>Now, you kings, act wisely. Be warned, you rulers of the earth!

<sup>11</sup>Serve the LORD with fear, and rejoice with trembling.

<sup>12</sup>Kiss the Son, or he will become angry and you will die on your way because his

anger will burst into flames. Blessed is everyone who takes refuge in him.

**3**<sup>1</sup> A psalm by David when he fled from his son Absalom. O LORD, look how my enemies have increased! Many are attacking me.

<sup>2</sup> Many are saying about me, "Even with God on his side, he won't be victorious." Selah

<sup>3</sup> But you, O LORD, are a shield that surrounds me. You are my glory. You hold my head high.

<sup>4</sup> I call aloud to the LORD, and he answers me from his holy mountain. Selah

<sup>5</sup> I lie down and sleep. I wake up again because the LORD continues to support me.

<sup>6</sup> I am not afraid of the tens of thousands who have taken positions against me on all sides.

<sup>7</sup> Arise, O LORD! Save me, O my God! You have slapped all my enemies in the face. You have smashed the teeth of wicked people.

<sup>8</sup> Victory belongs to the LORD! May your blessing rest on your people. Selah

**4**<sup>1</sup> For the choir director; with stringed instruments; a psalm by David.

Answer me when I call, O God of my righteousness. You have freed me from my troubles. Have pity on me, and hear my prayer!

<sup>2</sup> You important people, how long are you going to insult my honor? How long are you going to love what is empty and seek what is a lie? Selah

<sup>3</sup> Know that the LORD singles out godly people for himself. The LORD hears me when I call to him.

<sup>4</sup> Tremble and do not sin. Think about this on your bed and remain quiet. Selah

<sup>5</sup> Offer the sacrifices of righteousness by trusting the LORD.

<sup>6</sup> Many are saying, "Who can show us anything good?" Let the light of your presence shine on us, O LORD.

<sup>7</sup> You put more joy in my heart than when their grain and new wine increase.

<sup>8</sup> I fall asleep in peace the moment I lie down because you alone, O LORD, enable me to live securely.

**5**<sup>1</sup> For the choir director; for flutes; a psalm by David. Open your ears

to my words, O LORD. Consider my innermost thoughts.

<sup>2</sup>Pay attention to my cry for help, my king and my God, because I pray only to you.

<sup>3</sup>In the morning, O LORD, hear my voice. In the morning I lay my needs in front of you, and I wait.

<sup>4</sup>You are not a God who takes pleasure in wickedness. Evil will never be your guest.

<sup>5</sup>Those who brag cannot stand in your sight. You hate all troublemakers.

<sup>6</sup>You destroy those who tell lies. The LORD is disgusted with bloodthirsty and deceitful people.

<sup>7</sup>But I will enter your house because of your great mercy. Out of reverence for you, I will bow toward your holy temple.

<sup>8</sup>O LORD, lead me in your righteousness because of those who spy on me. Make your way in front of me smooth.

<sup>9</sup>Nothing in their mouths is truthful. Destruction comes from their hearts. Their throats are open graves. They flatter with their tongues.

<sup>10</sup>Condemn them, O God. Let their own schemes be their downfall. Throw them

out for their many crimes because they have rebelled against you.

<sup>11</sup> But let all who take refuge in you rejoice. Let them sing with joy forever. Protect them, and let those who love your name triumph in you.

<sup>12</sup> You bless righteous people, O LORD. Like a large shield, you surround them with your favor.

**6**<sup>1</sup> For the choir director; with stringed instruments, on the sheminith; a psalm by David. O LORD, do not punish me in your anger or discipline me in your rage.

<sup>2</sup> Have pity on me, O LORD, because I am weak. Heal me, O LORD, because my bones shake with terror.

<sup>3</sup> My soul has been deeply shaken with terror. But you, O LORD, how long?

<sup>4</sup> Come back, O LORD. Rescue me. Save me because of your mercy!

<sup>5</sup> In death, no one remembers you. In the grave, who praises you?

<sup>6</sup> I am worn out from my groaning. My eyes flood my bed every night. I soak my couch with tears.

<sup>7</sup> My eyes blur from grief. They fail because of my enemies.

<sup>8</sup>Get away from me, all you troublemakers, because the LORD has heard the sound of my crying.

<sup>9</sup>The LORD has heard my plea for mercy. The LORD accepts my prayer.

<sup>10</sup>All my enemies will be put to shame and deeply shaken with terror. In a moment they will retreat and be put to shame.

**7**<sup>1</sup> A shiggaion by David; he sang it to the LORD about the slanderous words of Cush, a descendant of Benjamin. O LORD my God, I have taken refuge in you. Save me, and rescue me from all who are pursuing me.

<sup>2</sup>Like a lion they will tear me to pieces and drag me off with no one to rescue me.

<sup>3</sup>O LORD my God, if I have done this if my hands are stained with injustice,

<sup>4</sup>if I have paid back my friend with evil or rescued someone who has no reason to attack me

<sup>5</sup>then let the enemy chase me and catch me. Let him trample my life into the ground. Let him lay my honor in the dust. Selah

<sup>6</sup>Arise in anger, O LORD. Stand up against the fury of my attackers. Wake up, my God. You have already pronounced judgment.

<sup>7</sup>Let an assembly of people gather around you. Take your seat high above them.

<sup>8</sup>The LORD judges the people of the world. Judge me, O LORD, according to my righteousness, according to my integrity.

<sup>9</sup>Let the evil within wicked people come to an end, but make the righteous person secure, O righteous God who examines thoughts and emotions.

<sup>10</sup>My shield is God above, who saves those whose motives are decent.

<sup>11</sup>God is a fair judge, a God who is angered by injustice every day.

<sup>12</sup>If a person does not change, God sharpens his sword. By bending his bow, he makes it ready to shoot.

<sup>13</sup>He prepares his deadly weapons and turns them into flaming arrows.

<sup>14</sup>See how that person conceives evil, is pregnant with harm, and gives birth to lies.

<sup>15</sup>He digs a pit and shovels it out. Then he falls into the hole that he made for others.

<sup>16</sup>His mischief lands back on his own head. His violence comes down on top of him.

<sup>17</sup>I will give thanks to the LORD for his righteousness. I will make music to praise the name of the LORD Most High.

**8**<sup>1</sup>For the choir director; on the gittith; a psalm by David. O LORD, our Lord, how majestic is your name throughout the earth! Your glory is sung above the heavens.

<sup>2</sup>From the mouths of little children and infants, you have built a fortress against your opponents to silence the enemy and the avenger.

<sup>3</sup>When I look at your heavens, the creation of your fingers, the moon and the stars that you have set in place

<sup>4</sup>what is a mortal that you remember him or the Son of Man that you take care of him?

<sup>5</sup>You have made him a little lower than yourself. You have crowned him with glory and honor.

<sup>6</sup>You have made him rule what your hands created. You have put everything under his control:

<sup>7</sup>all the sheep and cattle, the wild animals,

<sup>8</sup>the birds, the fish, whatever swims in the currents of the seas.

<sup>9</sup>O LORD, our Lord, how majestic is your name throughout the earth!

**9**<sup>1</sup>For the choir director; according to muth labben; a psalm by David. I will give you thanks, O LORD, with all my heart. I will tell about all the miracles you have done.

<sup>2</sup>I will find joy and be glad about you. I will make music to praise your name, O Most High.

<sup>3</sup>When my enemies retreat, they will stumble and die in your presence.

<sup>4</sup>You have defended my just cause: You sat down on your throne as a fair judge.

<sup>5</sup>You condemned nations. You destroyed wicked people. You wiped out their names forever and ever.

<sup>6</sup>The enemy is finished in ruins forever. You have uprooted their cities. Even the memory of them has faded.

<sup>7</sup> Yet, the LORD is enthroned forever. He has set up his throne for judgment.

<sup>8</sup> He alone judges the world with righteousness. He judges its people fairly.

<sup>9</sup> The LORD is a stronghold for the oppressed, a stronghold in times of trouble.

<sup>10</sup> Those who know your name trust you, O LORD, because you have never deserted those who seek your help.

<sup>11</sup> Make music to praise the LORD, who is enthroned in Zion. Announce to the nations what he has done.

<sup>12</sup> The one who avenges murder has remembered oppressed people. He has never forgotten their cries.

<sup>13</sup> Have pity on me, O LORD. Look at what I suffer because of those who hate me. You take me away from the gates of death

<sup>14</sup> so that I may recite your praises one by one in the gates of Zion and find joy in your salvation.

<sup>15</sup> The nations have sunk into the pit they have made. Their feet are caught in the net they have hidden to trap others.

<sup>16</sup>The LORD is known by the judgment he has carried out. The wicked person is trapped by the work of his own hands.

Higgaion Selah

<sup>17</sup>Wicked people, all the nations who forget God, will return to the grave.

<sup>18</sup>Needy people will not always be forgotten. Nor will the hope of oppressed people be lost forever.

<sup>19</sup>Arise, O LORD. Do not let mortals gain any power. Let the nations be judged in your presence.

<sup>20</sup>Strike them with terror, O LORD. Let the nations know that they are only mortal. Selah

**10**<sup>1</sup>Why are you so distant, LORD? Why do you hide yourself in times of trouble?

<sup>2</sup>The wicked person arrogantly pursues oppressed people. He will be caught in the schemes that he planned.

<sup>3</sup>The wicked person boasts about his selfish desires. He blesses robbers, but he curses the LORD.

<sup>4</sup>He turns up his nose and says, "God doesn't care." His every thought concludes, "There is no God."

<sup>5</sup> He always seems to succeed. Your judgments are beyond his understanding. He spits at all his opponents.

<sup>6</sup> He says to himself, "Nothing can shake me. Ill never face any trouble."

<sup>7</sup> His mouth is full of cursing, deception, and oppression. Trouble and wrongdoing are on the tip of his tongue.

<sup>8</sup> He waits in ambush in the villages. From his hiding places he kills innocent people. His eyes are on the lookout for victims.

<sup>9</sup> He lies in his hiding place like a lion in his den. He hides there to catch oppressed people. He catches oppressed people when he draws them into his net.

<sup>10</sup> His victims are crushed. They collapse, and they fall under the weight of his power.

<sup>11</sup> He says to himself, "God has forgotten. He has hidden his face. He will never see it!"

<sup>12</sup> Arise, O LORD! Lift your hand, O God. Do not forget oppressed people!

<sup>13</sup> Why does the wicked person despise God? Why does he say to himself, "God doesnt care"?

<sup>14</sup>You have seen it; yes, you have taken note of trouble and grief and placed them under your control. The victim entrusts himself to you. You alone have been the helper of orphans.

<sup>15</sup>Break the arm of the wicked and evil person. Punish his wickedness until you find no more.

<sup>16</sup>The LORD is king forever and ever. The nations have vanished from his land.

<sup>17</sup>You have heard the desire of oppressed people, O LORD. You encourage them. You pay close attention to them

<sup>18</sup>in order to provide justice for orphans and oppressed people so that no mere mortal will terrify them again.

**11** <sup>1</sup>For the choir director; by David. I have taken refuge in the LORD. How can you say to me: "Flee to your mountain like a bird?"

<sup>2</sup>Wicked people bend their bows. They set their arrows against the strings to shoot in the dark at people whose motives are decent.

<sup>3</sup>When the foundations of life are undermined, what can a righteous person do?"

<sup>4</sup>The LORD is in his holy temple. The LORDS throne is in heaven. His eyes see. They examine Adams descendants.

<sup>5</sup>The LORD tests righteous people, but he hates wicked people and the ones who love violence.

<sup>6</sup>He rains down fire and burning sulfur upon wicked people. He makes them drink from a cup filled with scorching wind.

<sup>7</sup>The LORD is righteous. He loves a righteous way of life. Decent people will see his face.

**12**<sup>1</sup>For the choir director; on the sheminith; a psalm by David. Help, O LORD. No godly person is left. Faithful people have vanished from among Adams descendants!

<sup>2</sup>All people speak foolishly. They speak with flattering lips. They say one thing but mean another.

<sup>3</sup>May the LORD cut off every flattering lip and every bragging tongue

<sup>4</sup>that has said, "We will overcome with our tongues. With lips such as ours, who can be our master?"

<sup>5</sup>"Because oppressed people are robbed and needy people groan, I will now

arise," says the LORD. "I will provide safety for those who long for it."

<sup>6</sup>The promises of the LORD are pure, like silver refined in a furnace and purified seven times.

<sup>7</sup>O LORD, you will protect them. You will keep each one safe from those people forever.

<sup>8</sup>Wicked people parade around when immorality increases among Adams descendants.

**13**<sup>1</sup> For the choir director; a psalm by David. How long, O LORD? Will you forget me forever? How long will you hide your face from me?

<sup>2</sup>How long must I make decisions alone with sorrow in my heart day after day? How long will my enemy triumph over me?

<sup>3</sup>Look at me! Answer me, O LORD my God! Light up my eyes, or else I will die

<sup>4</sup>and my enemy will say, "I have overpowered him." My opponents will rejoice because I have been shaken.

<sup>5</sup>But I trust your mercy. My heart finds joy in your salvation.

<sup>6</sup>I will sing to the LORD because he has been good to me.

**14**<sup>1</sup> For the choir director; by David.  
Godless fools say in their hearts,  
"There is no God." They are corrupt.  
They do disgusting things. There is no  
one who does good things.

<sup>2</sup>The LORD looks down from heaven  
on Adams descendants to see if there  
is anyone who acts wisely, if there is  
anyone who seeks help from God.

<sup>3</sup>Everyone has turned away. Together  
they have become rotten to the core. No  
one, not even one person, does good  
things.

<sup>4</sup>Are all those troublemakers, those  
who devour my people as if they were  
devouring food, so ignorant that they do  
not call on the LORD?

<sup>5</sup>There they arepanicstricken because  
God is with the person who is righteous.

<sup>6</sup>They put the advice of oppressed  
people to shame because the LORD is  
their refuge.

<sup>7</sup>If only salvation for Israel would come  
from Zion! When the LORD restores the  
fortunes of his people, Jacob will rejoice.  
Israel will be glad.

**15**<sup>1</sup> A psalm by David. O LORD, who may stay in your tent? Who may live on your holy mountain?

<sup>2</sup> The one who walks with integrity, does what is righteous, and speaks the truth within his heart.

<sup>3</sup> The one who does not slander with his tongue, do evil to a friend, or bring disgrace on his neighbor.

<sup>4</sup> The one who despises those rejected by God but honors those who fear the LORD. The one who makes a promise and does not break it, even though he is hurt by it.

<sup>5</sup> The one who does not collect interest on a loan or take a bribe against an innocent person. Whoever does these things will never be shaken.

**16**<sup>1</sup> A miktam by David. Protect me, O God, because I take refuge in you.

<sup>2</sup> I said to the LORD, "You are my Lord. Without you, I have nothing good."

<sup>3</sup> Those who lead holy lives on earth are the noble ones who fill me with joy.

<sup>4</sup> Those who quickly chase after other gods multiply their sorrows. I will not pour out their sacrificial offerings of

blood or use my lips to speak their names.

<sup>5</sup>The LORD is my inheritance and my cup. You are the one who determines my destiny.

<sup>6</sup>Your boundary lines mark out pleasant places for me. Indeed, my inheritance is something beautiful.

<sup>7</sup>I will praise the LORD, who advises me. My conscience warns me at night.

<sup>8</sup>I always keep the LORD in front of me. When he is by my side, I cannot be moved.

<sup>9</sup>That is why my heart is glad and my soul rejoices. My body rests securely

<sup>10</sup>because you do not abandon my soul to the grave or allow your holy one to decay.

<sup>11</sup>You make the path of life known to me. Complete joy is in your presence. Pleasures are by your side forever.

**17** <sup>1</sup>A prayer by David. Hear my plea for justice, O LORD. Pay attention to my cry. Open your ears to my prayer, which comes from lips free from deceit.

<sup>2</sup>Let the verdict of my innocence come directly from you. Let your eyes observe what is fair.

<sup>3</sup>You have probed my heart. You have confronted me at night. You have tested me like silver, but you found nothing wrong. I have determined that my mouth will not sin.

<sup>4</sup>I have avoided cruelty because of your word. In spite of what others have done,  
<sup>5</sup>my steps have remained firmly in your paths. My feet have not slipped.

<sup>6</sup>I have called on you because you answer me, O God. Turn your ear toward me. Hear what I have to say.

<sup>7</sup>Reveal your miraculous deeds of mercy, O Savior of those who find refuge by your side from those who attack them.

<sup>8</sup>Guard me as if I were the pupil in your eye. Hide me in the shadow of your wings.

<sup>9</sup>Hide me from wicked people who violently attack me, from my deadly enemies who surround me.

<sup>10</sup>They have shut out all feeling. Their mouths have spoken arrogantly.

<sup>11</sup>They have tracked me down. They have surrounded me. They have focused their attention on throwing me to the ground.

<sup>12</sup>Each one of them is like a lion eager to tear its prey apart and like a young lion crouching in hiding places.

<sup>13</sup>Arise, O LORD; confront them! Bring them to their knees! With your sword rescue my life from wicked people.

<sup>14</sup>With your power rescue me from mortals, O LORD, from mortals who enjoy their inheritance only in this life. You fill their bellies with your treasure. Their children are satisfied with it, and they leave what remains to their children.

<sup>15</sup>I will see your face when I am declared innocent. When I wake up, I will be satisfied with seeing you.

**18**<sup>1</sup>For the choir director; by David, the servant of the LORD. He sang this song to the LORD when the LORD rescued him from all his enemies, especially from Saul. He said, I love you, O LORD, my strength.

<sup>2</sup>The LORD is my rock and my fortress and my Savior, my God, my rock in whom I take refuge, my shield, and the strength of my salvation, my stronghold.

<sup>3</sup>The LORD should be praised. I called on him, and I was saved from my enemies.

<sup>4</sup>The ropes of death had become tangled around me. The torrents of destruction had overwhelmed me.

<sup>5</sup>The ropes of the grave had surrounded me. The clutches of death had confronted me.

<sup>6</sup>I called on the LORD in my distress. I cried to my God for help. He heard my voice from his temple, and my cry for help reached his ears.

<sup>7</sup>Then the earth shook and quaked. Even the foundations of the mountains trembled. They shook violently because he was angry.

<sup>8</sup>Smoke went up from his nostrils, and a raging fire came out of his mouth. Glowing coals flared up from it.

<sup>9</sup>He spread apart the heavens and came down with a dark cloud under his feet.

<sup>10</sup>He rode on one of the angels as he flew, and he soared on the wings of the wind.

<sup>11</sup>He made the darkness his hiding place, the dark rain clouds his covering.

<sup>12</sup>Out of the brightness in front of him, those rain clouds passed by with hailstones and lightning.

<sup>13</sup>The LORD thundered in the heavens. The Most High made his voice heard with hailstones and lightning.

<sup>14</sup>He shot his arrows and scattered them. He flashed streaks of lightning and threw them into confusion.

<sup>15</sup>Then the ocean floor could be seen. The foundations of the earth were laid bare at your stern warning, O LORD, at the blast of the breath from your nostrils.

<sup>16</sup>He reached down from high above and took hold of me. He pulled me out of the raging water.

<sup>17</sup>He rescued me from my strong enemy and from those who hated me, because they were too strong for me.

<sup>18</sup>On the day when I faced disaster, they confronted me, but the LORD came to my defense.

<sup>19</sup>He brought me out to a wide open place. He rescued me because he was pleased with me.

<sup>20</sup>The LORD rewarded me because of my righteousness, because my hands are clean. He paid me back

<sup>21</sup> because I have kept the ways of the LORD and I have not wickedly turned away from my God,

<sup>22</sup> because all his judgments are in front of me and I have not turned away from his laws.

<sup>23</sup> I was innocent as far as he was concerned. I have kept myself from guilt.

<sup>24</sup> The LORD paid me back because of my righteousness, because he can see that my hands are clean.

<sup>25</sup> In dealing with faithful people you are faithful, with innocent people you are innocent,

<sup>26</sup> with pure people you are pure. In dealing with devious people you are clever.

<sup>27</sup> You save humble people, but you bring down a conceited look.

<sup>28</sup> O LORD, you light my lamp. My God turns my darkness into light.

<sup>29</sup> With you I can attack a line of soldiers. With my God I can break through barricades.

<sup>30</sup> God's way is perfect! The promise of the LORD has proven to be true. He is a shield to all those who take refuge in him.

<sup>31</sup> Who is God but the LORD? Who is a rock except our God?

<sup>32</sup> God arms me with strength and makes my way perfect.

<sup>33</sup> He makes my feet like those of a deer and gives me sure footing on high places.

<sup>34</sup> He trains my hands for battle so that my arms can bend an archers bow of bronze.

<sup>35</sup> You have given me the shield of your salvation. Your right hand supports me. Your gentleness makes me great.

<sup>36</sup> You make a wide path for me to walk on so that my feet do not slip.

<sup>37</sup> I chased my enemies and caught up with them. I did not return until I had ended their lives.

<sup>38</sup> I wounded them so badly that they were unable to get up. They fell under my feet.

<sup>39</sup> You armed me with strength for battle. You made my opponents bow at my feet.

<sup>40</sup> You made my enemies turn their backs to me, and I destroyed those who hated me.

<sup>41</sup> They cried out for help, but there was no one to save them. They cried out to the LORD, but he did not answer them.

<sup>42</sup> I beat them into a powder as fine as the dust blown by the wind. I threw them out as though they were dirt on the streets.

<sup>43</sup> You rescued me from my conflicts with the people. You made me the leader of nations. A people I did not know will serve me:

<sup>44</sup> As soon as they hear of me, they will obey me. Foreigners will cringe in front of me.

<sup>45</sup> Foreigners will lose heart, and they will tremble when they come out of their fortifications.

<sup>46</sup> The LORD lives! Thanks be to my rock! May God my Savior be honored.

<sup>47</sup> God gives me vengeance! He brings people under my authority.

<sup>48</sup> He saves me from my enemies. You lift me up above my opponents. You rescue me from violent people.

<sup>49</sup> That is why I will give thanks to you, O LORD, among the nations and make music to praise your name.

<sup>50</sup>He gives great victories to his king. He shows mercy to his anointed, to David, and to his descendant forever.

**19**<sup>1</sup>For the choir director; a psalm by David. The heavens declare the glory of God, and the sky displays what his hands have made.

<sup>2</sup>One day tells a story to the next. One night shares knowledge with the next

<sup>3</sup>without talking, without words, without their voices being heard.

<sup>4</sup>Yet, their sound has gone out into the entire world, their message to the ends of the earth. He has set up a tent in the heavens for the sun,

<sup>5</sup>which comes out of its chamber like a bridegroom. Like a champion, it is eager to run its course.

<sup>6</sup>It rises from one end of the heavens. It circles around to the other. Nothing is hidden from its heat.

<sup>7</sup>The teachings of the LORD are perfect. They renew the soul. The testimony of the LORD is dependable. It makes gullible people wise.

<sup>8</sup>The instructions of the LORD are correct. They make the heart rejoice.

The command of the LORD is radiant. It makes the eyes shine.

<sup>9</sup>The fear of the LORD is pure. It endures forever. The decisions of the LORD are true. They are completely fair.

<sup>10</sup>They are more desirable than gold, even the finest gold. They are sweeter than honey, even the drippings from a honeycomb.

<sup>11</sup>As your servant I am warned by them. There is a great reward in following them.

<sup>12</sup>Who can notice every mistake? Forgive my hidden faults.

<sup>13</sup>Keep me from sinning. Do not let anyone gain control over me. Then I will be blameless, and I will be free from any great offense.

<sup>14</sup>May the words from my mouth and the thoughts from my heart be acceptable to you, O LORD, my rock and my defender.

**20**<sup>1</sup>For the choir director; a psalm by David. The LORD will answer you in times of trouble. The name of the God of Jacob will protect you.

<sup>2</sup>He will send you help from his holy place and support you from Zion.

<sup>3</sup> He will remember all your grain offerings and look with favor on your burnt offerings. Selah

<sup>4</sup> He will give you your hearts desire and carry out all your plans.

<sup>5</sup> We will joyfully sing about your victory. We will wave our flags in the name of our God. The LORD will fulfill all your requests.

<sup>6</sup> Now I know that the LORD will give victory to his anointed king. He will answer him from his holy heaven with mighty deeds of his powerful hand.

<sup>7</sup> Some rely on chariots and others on horses, but we will boast in the name of the LORD our God.

<sup>8</sup> They will sink to their knees and fall, but we will rise and stand firm.

<sup>9</sup> Give victory to the king, O LORD. Answer us when we call.

**21** <sup>1</sup> For the choir director; a psalm by David. The king finds joy in your strength, O LORD. What great joy he has in your victory!

<sup>2</sup> You gave him his hearts desire. You did not refuse the prayer from his lips. Selah

<sup>3</sup>You welcomed him with the blessings of good things and set a crown of fine gold on his head.

<sup>4</sup>He asked you for life. You gave him a long life, forever and ever.

<sup>5</sup>Because of your victory his glory is great. You place splendor and majesty on him.

<sup>6</sup>Yes, you made him a blessing forever. You made him glad with the joy of your presence.

<sup>7</sup>Indeed, the king trusts the LORD, and through the mercy of the Most High, he will not be moved.

<sup>8</sup>Your hand will discover all your enemies. Your powerful hand will find all who hate you.

<sup>9</sup>When you appear, you will make them burn like a blazing furnace. The LORD will swallow them up in his anger. Fire will devour them.

<sup>10</sup>You will destroy their children from the earth and their offspring from among Adams descendants.

<sup>11</sup>Although they scheme and plan evil against you, they will not succeed.

<sup>12</sup>They turn their backs and flee because you aim your bow at their faces.

<sup>13</sup> Arise, O LORD, in your strength. We will sing and make music to praise your power.

**22** <sup>1</sup> For the choir director; according to ayyeleth hashachar; a psalm by David. My God, my God, why have you abandoned me? Why are you so far away from helping me, so far away from the words of my groaning?

<sup>2</sup> My God, I cry out by day, but you do not answer also at night, but I find no rest.

<sup>3</sup> Yet, you are holy, enthroned on the praises of Israel.

<sup>4</sup> Our ancestors trusted you. They trusted, and you rescued them.

<sup>5</sup> They cried to you and were saved. They trusted you and were never disappointed.

<sup>6</sup> Yet, I am a worm and not a man. I am scorned by humanity and despised by people.

<sup>7</sup> All who see me make fun of me. Insults pour from their mouths. They shake their heads and say,

<sup>8</sup> "Put yourself in the LORDS hands. Let the LORD save him! Let God rescue him since he is pleased with him!"

<sup>9</sup>Indeed, you are the one who brought me out of the womb, the one who made me feel safe at my mothers breasts.

<sup>10</sup>I was placed in your care from birth. From my mothers womb you have been my God.

<sup>11</sup>Do not be so far away from me. Trouble is near, and there is no one to help.

<sup>12</sup>Many bulls have surrounded me. Strong bulls from Bashan have encircled me.

<sup>13</sup>They have opened their mouths to attack me like ferocious, roaring lions.

<sup>14</sup>I am poured out like water, and all my bones are out of joint. My heart is like wax. It has melted within me.

<sup>15</sup>My strength is dried up like pieces of broken pottery. My tongue sticks to the roof of my mouth. You lay me down in the dust of death.

<sup>16</sup>Dogs have surrounded me. A mob has encircled me. They have pierced my hands and feet.

<sup>17</sup>I can count all my bones. People stare. They gloat over me.

<sup>18</sup>They divide my clothes among themselves. They throw dice for my clothing.

<sup>19</sup>Do not be so far away, O LORD. Come quickly to help me, O my strength.

<sup>20</sup>Rescue my soul from the sword, my life from vicious dogs.

<sup>21</sup>Save me from the mouth of the lion and from the horns of wild oxen. You have answered me.

<sup>22</sup>I will tell my people about your name. I will praise you within the congregation.

<sup>23</sup>All who fear the LORD, praise him! All you descendants of Jacob, glorify him! Stand in awe of him, all you descendants of Israel.

<sup>24</sup>The LORD has not despised or been disgusted with the plight of the oppressed one. He has not hidden his face from that person. The LORD heard when that oppressed person cried out to him for help.

<sup>25</sup>My praise comes from you while I am among those assembled for worship. I will fulfill my vows in the presence of those who fear the LORD.

<sup>26</sup>Oppressed people will eat until they are full. Those who look to the LORD will praise him. May you live forever.

<sup>27</sup>All the ends of the earth will remember and return to the LORD. All the families from all the nations will worship you

<sup>28</sup>because the kingdom belongs to the LORD and he rules the nations.

<sup>29</sup>All prosperous people on earth will eat and worship. All those who go down to the dust will kneel in front of him, even those who are barely alive.

<sup>30</sup>There will be descendants who serve him, a generation that will be told about the Lord.

<sup>31</sup>They will tell people yet to be born about his righteousness that he has finished it.

**23**<sup>1</sup> A psalm by David. The LORD is my shepherd. I am never in need.

<sup>2</sup>He makes me lie down in green pastures. He leads me beside peaceful waters.

<sup>3</sup>He renews my soul. He guides me along the paths of righteousness for the sake of his name.

<sup>4</sup>Even though I walk through the dark valley of death, because you are with me, I fear no harm. Your rod and your staff give me courage.

<sup>5</sup>You prepare a banquet for me while my enemies watch. You anoint my head with oil. My cup overflows.

<sup>6</sup>Certainly, goodness and mercy will stay close to me all the days of my life, and I will remain in the LORDS house for days without end.

**24**<sup>1</sup>A psalm by David. The earth and everything it contains are the LORDS. The world and all who live in it are his.

<sup>2</sup>He laid its foundation on the seas and set it firmly on the rivers.

<sup>3</sup>Who may go up the LORDS mountain? Who may stand in his holy place?

<sup>4</sup>The one who has clean hands and a pure heart and does not long for what is false or lie when he is under oath.

<sup>5</sup>This person will receive a blessing from the LORD and righteousness from God, his savior.

<sup>6</sup>This is the person who seeks him, who searches for the face of the God of Jacob. Selah

<sup>7</sup> Lift your heads, you gates. Be lifted, you ancient doors, so that the king of glory may come in.

<sup>8</sup> Who is this king of glory? The LORD, strong and mighty! The LORD, heroic in battle!

<sup>9</sup> Lift your heads, you gates. Be lifted, you ancient doors, so that the king of glory may come in.

<sup>10</sup> Who, then, is this king of glory? The LORD of Armies is the king of glory!  
Selah

**25** <sup>1</sup> By David. To you, O LORD, I lift my soul.

<sup>2</sup> I trust you, O my God. Do not let me be put to shame. Do not let my enemies triumph over me.

<sup>3</sup> No one who waits for you will ever be put to shame, but all who are unfaithful will be put to shame.

<sup>4</sup> Make your ways known to me, O LORD, and teach me your paths.

<sup>5</sup> Lead me in your truth and teach me because you are God, my savior. I wait all day long for you.

<sup>6</sup> Remember, O LORD, your compassionate and merciful deeds. They have existed from eternity.

<sup>7</sup> Do not remember the sins of my youth or my rebellious ways. Remember me, O LORD, in keeping with your mercy and your goodness.

<sup>8</sup> The LORD is good and decent. That is why he teaches sinners the way they should live.

<sup>9</sup> He leads humble people to do what is right, and he teaches them his way.

<sup>10</sup> Every path of the LORD is one of mercy and truth for those who cling to his promise and written instructions.

<sup>11</sup> For the sake of your name, O LORD, remove my guilt, because it is great.

<sup>12</sup> Who, then, is this person that fears the LORD? He is the one whom the LORD will teach which path to choose.

<sup>13</sup> He will enjoy good things in life, and his descendants will inherit the land.

<sup>14</sup> The LORD advises those who fear him. He reveals to them the intent of his promise.

<sup>15</sup> My eyes are always on the LORD. He removes my feet from traps.

<sup>16</sup> Turn to me, and have pity on me. I am lonely and oppressed.

<sup>17</sup> Relieve my troubled heart, and bring me out of my distress.

<sup>18</sup>Look at my misery and suffering, and forgive all my sins.

<sup>19</sup>See how my enemies have increased in number, how they have hated me with vicious hatred!

<sup>20</sup>Protect my life, and rescue me! Do not let me be put to shame. I have taken refuge in you.

<sup>21</sup>Integrity and honesty will protect me because I wait for you.

<sup>22</sup>Rescue Israel, O God, from all its troubles!

**26** <sup>1</sup>By David. Judge me favorably, O LORD, because I have walked with integrity and I have trusted you without wavering.

<sup>2</sup>Examine me, O LORD, and test me. Look closely into my heart and mind.

<sup>3</sup>I see your mercy in front of me. I walk in the light of your truth.

<sup>4</sup>I did not sit with liars, and I will not be found among hypocrites.

<sup>5</sup>I have hated the mob of evildoers and will not sit with wicked people.

<sup>6</sup>I will wash my hands in innocence. I will walk around your altar, O LORD,

<sup>7</sup>so that I may loudly sing a hymn of thanksgiving and tell about all your miracles.

<sup>8</sup>O LORD, I love the house where you live, the place where your glory dwells.

<sup>9</sup>Do not sweep away my soul along with hardened sinners or my life along with bloodthirsty people.

<sup>10</sup>Evil schemes are in their hands. Their right hands are full of bribes.

<sup>11</sup>But I walk with integrity. Rescue me, and have pity on me.

<sup>12</sup>My feet stand on level ground. I will praise the LORD with the choirs in worship.

**27** <sup>1</sup>By David. The LORD is my light and my salvation. Who is there to fear? The LORD is my life's fortress. Who is there to be afraid of?

<sup>2</sup>Evildoers closed in on me to tear me to pieces. My opponents and enemies stumbled and fell.

<sup>3</sup>Even though an army sets up camp against me, my heart will not be afraid. Even though a war breaks out against me, I will still have confidence in the LORD.

<sup>4</sup>I have asked one thing from the LORD. This I will seek: to remain in the LORDS house all the days of my life in order to gaze at the LORDS beauty and to search for an answer in his temple.

<sup>5</sup>He hides me in his shelter when there is trouble. He keeps me hidden in his tent. He sets me high on a rock.

<sup>6</sup>Now my head will be raised above my enemies who surround me. I will offer sacrifices with shouts of joy in his tent. I will sing and make music to praise the LORD.

<sup>7</sup>Hear, O LORD, when I cry aloud. Have pity on me, and answer me.

<sup>8</sup>When you said, "Seek my face," my heart said to you, "O LORD, I will seek your face."

<sup>9</sup>Do not hide your face from me. Do not angrily turn me away. You have been my help. Do not leave me! Do not abandon me, O God, my savior!

<sup>10</sup>Even if my father and mother abandon me, the LORD will take care of me.

<sup>11</sup>Teach me your way, O LORD. Lead me on a level path because I have enemies who spy on me.

<sup>12</sup>Do not surrender me to the will of my opponents. False witnesses have risen against me. They breathe out violence.

<sup>13</sup>I believe that I will see the goodness of the LORD in this world of the living.

<sup>14</sup>Wait with hope for the LORD. Be strong, and let your heart be courageous. Yes, wait with hope for the LORD.

**28**<sup>1</sup>By David. O LORD, I call to you. O my rock, do not turn a deaf ear to me. If you remain silent, I will be like those who go into the pit.

<sup>2</sup>Hear my prayer for mercy when I call to you for help, when I lift my hands toward your most holy place.

<sup>3</sup>Do not drag me away with wicked people, with troublemakers who speak of peace with their neighbors but have evil in their hearts.

<sup>4</sup>Pay them back for what they have done, for their evil deeds. Pay them back for what their hands have done, and give them what they deserve.

<sup>5</sup>The LORD will tear them down and never build them up again, because they never consider what he has done or what his hands have made.

<sup>6</sup>Thank the LORD! He has heard my prayer for mercy!

<sup>7</sup>The LORD is my strength and my shield. My heart trusted him, so I received help. My heart is triumphant; I give thanks to him with my song.

<sup>8</sup>The LORD is the strength of his people and a fortress for the victory of his Messiah.

<sup>9</sup>Save your people, and bless those who belong to you. Be their shepherd, and carry them forever.

**29**<sup>1</sup>A psalm by David. Give to the LORD, you heavenly beings. Give to the LORD glory and power.

<sup>2</sup>Give to the LORD the glory his name deserves. Worship the LORD in his holy splendor.

<sup>3</sup>The voice of the LORD rolls over the water. The God of glory thunders. The LORD shouts over raging water.

<sup>4</sup>The voice of the LORD is powerful. The voice of the LORD is majestic.

<sup>5</sup>The voice of the LORD breaks the cedars. The LORD splinters the cedars of Lebanon.

<sup>6</sup>He makes Lebanon skip along like a calf and Mount Sirion like a wild ox.

<sup>7</sup>The voice of the LORD strikes with flashes of lightning.

<sup>8</sup>The voice of the LORD makes the wilderness tremble. The LORD makes the wilderness of Kadesh tremble.

<sup>9</sup>The voice of the LORD splits the oaks and strips the trees of the forests bare. Everyone in his temple is saying, "Glory!"

<sup>10</sup>The LORD sat enthroned over the flood. The LORD sits enthroned as king forever.

<sup>11</sup>The LORD will give power to his people. The LORD will bless his people with peace.

**30**<sup>1</sup>A psalm by David sung at the dedication of the temple. I will honor you highly, O LORD, because you have pulled me out of the pit and have not let my enemies rejoice over me.

<sup>2</sup>O LORD my God, I cried out to you for help, and you healed me.

<sup>3</sup>O LORD, you brought me up from the grave. You called me back to life from among those who had gone into the pit.

<sup>4</sup>Make music to praise the LORD, you faithful people who belong to him. Remember his holiness by giving thanks.

<sup>5</sup>His anger lasts only a moment. His favor lasts a lifetime. Weeping may last for the night, but there is a song of joy in the morning.

<sup>6</sup>When all was well with me, I said, "I will never be shaken."

<sup>7</sup>O LORD, by your favor you have made my mountain stand firm. When you hid your face, I was terrified.

<sup>8</sup>I will cry out to you, O LORD. I will plead to the Lord for mercy:

<sup>9</sup>"How will you profit if my blood is shed, if I go into the pit? Will the dust of my body give thanks to you? Will it tell about your truth?"

<sup>10</sup>Hear, O LORD, and have pity on me! O LORD, be my helper!

<sup>11</sup>You have changed my sobbing into dancing. You have removed my sackcloth and clothed me with joy

<sup>12</sup>so that my soul may praise you with music and not be silent. O LORD my God, I will give thanks to you forever.

**31** <sup>1</sup>For the choir director; a psalm by David. I have taken refuge in you, O LORD. Never let me be put to shame. Save me because of your righteousness.

<sup>2</sup>Turn your ear toward me. Rescue me quickly. Be a rock of refuge for me, a strong fortress to save me.

<sup>3</sup>Indeed, you are my rock and my fortress. For the sake of your name, lead me and guide me.

<sup>4</sup>You are my refuge, so pull me out of the net that they have secretly laid for me.

<sup>5</sup>Into your hands I entrust my spirit. You have rescued me, O LORD, God of truth.

<sup>6</sup>I hate those who cling to false gods, but I trust the LORD.

<sup>7</sup>I will rejoice and be glad because of your mercy. You have seen my misery. You have known the troubles in my soul.

<sup>8</sup>You have not handed me over to the enemy. You have set my feet in a place where I can move freely.

<sup>9</sup>Have pity on me, O LORD, because I am in distress. My eyes, my soul, and my body waste away from grief.

<sup>10</sup>My life is exhausted from sorrow, my years from groaning. My strength staggers under the weight of my guilt, and my bones waste away.

<sup>11</sup> I have become a disgrace because of all my opponents. I have become someone dreaded by my friends, even by my neighbors. Those who see me on the street run away from me.

<sup>12</sup> I have faded from memory as if I were dead and have become like a piece of broken pottery.

<sup>13</sup> I have heard the whispering of many people terror on every side while they made plans together against me. They were plotting to take my life.

<sup>14</sup> I trust you, O LORD. I said, "You are my God."

<sup>15</sup> My future is in your hands. Rescue me from my enemies, from those who persecute me.

<sup>16</sup> Smile on me. Save me with your mercy.

<sup>17</sup> O LORD, I have called on you, so do not let me be put to shame, Let wicked people be put to shame. Let them be silent in the grave.

<sup>18</sup> Let their lying lips be speechless, since they speak against righteous people with arrogance and contempt.

<sup>19</sup> Your kindness is so great! You reserve it for those who fear you. Adams

descendants watch as you show it to those who take refuge in you.

<sup>20</sup>You hide them in the secret place of your presence from those who scheme against them. You keep them in a shelter, safe from quarrelsome tongues.

<sup>21</sup>Thank the LORD! He has shown me the miracle of his mercy in a city under attack.

<sup>22</sup>When I was panicstricken, I said, "I have been cut off from your sight." But you heard my pleas for mercy when I cried out to you for help.

<sup>23</sup>Love the LORD, all you godly ones! The LORD protects faithful people, but he pays back in full those who act arrogantly.

<sup>24</sup>Be strong, all who wait with hope for the LORD, and let your heart be courageous.

**32**<sup>1</sup>A psalm by David; a maskil.  
Blessed is the person whose disobedience is forgiven and whose sin is pardoned.

<sup>2</sup>Blessed is the person whom the LORD no longer accuses of sin and who has no deceitful thoughts.

<sup>3</sup>When I kept silent about my sins, my bones began to weaken because of my groaning all day long.

<sup>4</sup>Day and night your hand lay heavily on me. My strength shriveled in the summer heat. Selah

<sup>5</sup>I made my sins known to you, and I did not cover up my guilt. I decided to confess them to you, O LORD. Then you forgave all my sins. Selah

<sup>6</sup>For this reason let all godly people pray to you when you may be found. Then raging floodwater will not reach them.

<sup>7</sup>You are my hiding place. You protect me from trouble. You surround me with joyous songs of salvation. Selah

<sup>8</sup>The LORD says, "I will instruct you. I will teach you the way that you should go. I will advise you as my eyes watch over you.

<sup>9</sup>Dont be stubborn like a horse or mule. They need a bit and bridle in their mouth to restrain them, or they will not come near you."

<sup>10</sup>Many heartaches await wicked people, but mercy surrounds those who trust the LORD.

<sup>11</sup> Be glad and find joy in the LORD, you righteous people. Sing with joy, all whose motives are decent.

**33** <sup>1</sup> Joyfully sing to the LORD, you righteous people. Praising the LORD is proper for decent people.

<sup>2</sup> Give thanks with a lyre to the LORD. Make music for him on a tenstringed harp.

<sup>3</sup> Sing a new song to him. Play beautifully and joyfully on stringed instruments.

<sup>4</sup> The word of the LORD is correct, and everything he does is trustworthy.

<sup>5</sup> The LORD loves righteousness and justice. His mercy fills the earth.

<sup>6</sup> The heavens were made by the word of the LORD and all the stars by the breath of his mouth.

<sup>7</sup> He gathers the water in the sea like a dam and puts the oceans in his storehouses.

<sup>8</sup> Let all the earth fear the LORD. Let all who live in the world stand in awe of him.

<sup>9</sup> He spoke, and it came into being. He gave the order, and there it stood.

<sup>10</sup>The LORD blocks the plans of the nations. He frustrates the schemes of the people of the world.

<sup>11</sup>The LORDS plan stands firm forever. His thoughts stand firm in every generation.

<sup>12</sup>Blessed is the nation whose God is the LORD. Blessed are the people he has chosen as his own.

<sup>13</sup>The LORD looks down from heaven. He sees all of Adams descendants.

<sup>14</sup>From the place where he sits enthroned, he looks down upon all who live on earth.

<sup>15</sup>The one who formed their hearts understands everything they do.

<sup>16</sup>No king achieves a victory with a large army. No warrior rescues himself by his own great strength.

<sup>17</sup>Horses are not a guarantee for victory. Their great strength cannot help someone escape.

<sup>18</sup>The LORDS eyes are on those who fear him, on those who wait with hope for his mercy

<sup>19</sup>to rescue their souls from death and keep them alive during a famine.

<sup>20</sup>We wait for the LORD. He is our help and our shield.

<sup>21</sup>In him our hearts find joy. In his holy name we trust.

<sup>22</sup>Let your mercy rest on us, O LORD, since we wait with hope for you.

**34**<sup>1</sup> By David when he pretended to be insane in the presence of Abimelech; Abimelech threw him out, so David left. I will thank the LORD at all times. My mouth will always praise him.

<sup>2</sup>My soul will boast about the LORD. Those who are oppressed will hear it and rejoice.

<sup>3</sup>Praise the LORDS greatness with me. Let us highly honor his name together.

<sup>4</sup>I went to the LORD for help. He answered me and rescued me from all my fears.

<sup>5</sup>All who look to him will be radiant. Their faces will never be covered with shame.

<sup>6</sup>Here is a poor man who called out. The LORD heard him and saved him from all his troubles.

<sup>7</sup>The Messenger of the LORD camps around those who fear him, and he rescues them.

<sup>8</sup>Taste and see that the LORD is good. Blessed is the person who takes refuge in him.

<sup>9</sup>Fear the LORD, you holy people who belong to him. Those who fear him are never in need.

<sup>10</sup>Young lions go hungry and may starve, but those who seek the LORDS help have all the good things they need.

<sup>11</sup>Come, children, listen to me. I will teach you the fear of the LORD.

<sup>12</sup>Which of you wants a full life? Who would like to live long enough to enjoy good things?

<sup>13</sup>Keep your tongue from saying evil things and your lips from speaking deceitful things.

<sup>14</sup>Turn away from evil, and do good. Seek peace, and pursue it!

<sup>15</sup>The LORDS eyes are on righteous people. His ears hear their cry for help.

<sup>16</sup>The LORD confronts those who do evil in order to wipe out all memory of them from the earth.

<sup>17</sup>Righteous people cry out. The LORD hears and rescues them from all their troubles.

<sup>18</sup>The LORD is near to those whose hearts are humble. He saves those whose spirits are crushed.

<sup>19</sup>The righteous person has many troubles, but the LORD rescues him from all of them.

<sup>20</sup>The LORD guards all of his bones. Not one of them is broken.

<sup>21</sup>Evil will kill wicked people, and those who hate righteous people will be condemned.

<sup>22</sup>The LORD protects the souls of his servants. All who take refuge in him will never be condemned.

**35** <sup>1</sup>By David. O LORD, attack those who attack me. Fight against those who fight against me.

<sup>2</sup>Use your shields, both small and large. Arise to help me.

<sup>3</sup>Hold your spear to block the way of those who pursue me. Say to my soul, "I am your savior."

<sup>4</sup>Let those who seek my life be put to shame and disgraced. Let those who plan my downfall be turned back in confusion.

<sup>5</sup> Let them be like husks blown by the wind as the Messenger of the LORD chases them.

<sup>6</sup> Let their path be dark and slippery as the Messenger of the LORD pursues them.

<sup>7</sup> For no reason they hid their net in a pit. For no reason they dug the pit to trap me.

<sup>8</sup> Let destruction surprise them. Let the net that they hid catch them. Let them fall into their own pit and be destroyed.

<sup>9</sup> My soul will find joy in the LORD and be joyful about his salvation.

<sup>10</sup> All my bones will say, "O LORD, who can compare with you? You rescue the weak person from the one who is too strong for him and weak and needy people from the one who robs them."

<sup>11</sup> Malicious people bring charges against me. They ask me things I know nothing about.

<sup>12</sup> I am devastated because they pay me back with evil instead of good.

<sup>13</sup> But when they were sick, I wore sackcloth. I humbled myself with fasting. When my prayer returned unanswered,

<sup>14</sup>I walked around as if I were mourning for my friend or my brother. I was bent over as if I were mourning for my mother.

<sup>15</sup>Yet, when I stumbled, they rejoiced and gathered together. They gathered together against me. Unknown attackers tore me apart without stopping.

<sup>16</sup>With crude and abusive mockers, they grit their teeth at me.

<sup>17</sup>O Lord, how long will you look on? Rescue me from their attacks. Rescue my precious life from the lions.

<sup>18</sup>I will give you thanks in a large gathering. I will praise you in a crowd of worshipers.

<sup>19</sup>Do not let my treacherous enemies gloat over me. Do not let those who hate me for no reason wink at me.

<sup>20</sup>They do not talk about peace. Instead, they scheme against the peaceful people in the land.

<sup>21</sup>They open their big mouths and say about me, "Aha! Aha! Our own eyes have seen it."

<sup>22</sup>You have seen it, O LORD. Do not remain silent. O Lord, do not be so far away from me.

<sup>23</sup>Wake up, and rise to my defense.  
Plead my case, O my God and my Lord.

<sup>24</sup>Judge me by your righteousness, O  
LORD my God. Do not let them gloat  
over me

<sup>25</sup>or think, "Aha, just what we wanted!"  
Do not let them say, "We have swallowed  
him up."

<sup>26</sup>Let those who gloat over my  
downfall be thoroughly put to shame  
and confused. Let those who promote  
themselves at my expense be clothed  
with shame and disgrace.

<sup>27</sup>Let those who are happy when I  
am declared innocent joyfully sing and  
rejoice. Let them continually say, "The  
LORD is great. He is happy when his  
servant has peace."

<sup>28</sup>Then my tongue will tell about your  
righteousness, about your praise all day  
long.

**36** <sup>1</sup>For the choir director; by David,  
the LORDS servant. There is an  
inspired truth about the wicked person  
who has rebellion in the depths of his  
heart: He is not terrified of God.

<sup>2</sup>He flatters himself and does not hate  
or even recognize his guilt.

<sup>3</sup>The words from his mouth are nothing but trouble and deception. He has stopped doing what is wise and good.

<sup>4</sup>He invents trouble while lying on his bed and chooses to go the wrong direction. He does not reject evil.

<sup>5</sup>O LORD, your mercy reaches to the heavens, your faithfulness to the skies.

<sup>6</sup>Your righteousness is like the mountains of God, your judgments like the deep ocean. You save people and animals, O LORD.

<sup>7</sup>Your mercy is so precious, O God, that Adams descendants take refuge in the shadow of your wings.

<sup>8</sup>They are refreshed with the rich foods in your house, and you make them drink from the river of your pleasure.

<sup>9</sup>Indeed, the fountain of life is with you. In your light we see light.

<sup>10</sup>Continue to show your mercy to those who know you and your righteousness to those whose motives are decent.

<sup>11</sup>Do not let the feet of arrogant people step on me or the hands of wicked people push me away.

<sup>12</sup>Look at the troublemakers who have fallen. They have been pushed down and are unable to stand up again.

**37** <sup>1</sup>By David. Do not be preoccupied with evildoers. Do not envy those who do wicked things.

<sup>2</sup>They will quickly dry up like grass and wither away like green plants.

<sup>3</sup>Trust the LORD, and do good things. Live in the land, and practice being faithful.

<sup>4</sup>Be happy with the LORD, and he will give you the desires of your heart.

<sup>5</sup>Entrust your ways to the LORD. Trust him, and he will act on your behalf.

<sup>6</sup>He will make your righteousness shine like a light, your just cause like the noonday sun.

<sup>7</sup>Surrender yourself to the LORD, and wait patiently for him. Do not be preoccupied with an evildoer who succeeds in his way when he carries out his schemes.

<sup>8</sup>Let go of anger, and leave rage behind. Do not be preoccupied. It only leads to evil.

<sup>9</sup>Evildoers will be cut off from their inheritance, but those who wait with hope for the LORD will inherit the land.

<sup>10</sup>In a little while a wicked person will vanish. Then you can carefully examine where he was, but there will be no trace of him.

<sup>11</sup>Oppressed people will inherit the land and will enjoy unlimited peace.

<sup>12</sup>The wicked person plots against a righteous one and grits his teeth at him.

<sup>13</sup>The Lord laughs at him because he has seen that his time is coming.

<sup>14</sup>Wicked people pull out their swords and bend their bows to kill oppressed and needy people, to slaughter those who are decent.

<sup>15</sup>But their own swords will pierce their hearts, and their bows will be broken.

<sup>16</sup>The little that the righteous person has is better than the wealth of many wicked people.

<sup>17</sup>The arms of wicked people will be broken, but the LORD continues to support righteous people.

<sup>18</sup>The LORD knows the daily struggles of innocent people. Their inheritance will last forever.

<sup>19</sup>They will not be put to shame in trying times. Even in times of famine they will be satisfied.

<sup>20</sup>But wicked people will disappear. The LORDS enemies will vanish like the best part of a meadow. They will vanish like smoke.

<sup>21</sup>A wicked person borrows, but he does not repay. A righteous person is generous and giving.

<sup>22</sup>Those who are blessed by him will inherit the land. Those who are cursed by him will be cut off.

<sup>23</sup>A persons steps are directed by the LORD, and the LORD delights in his way.

<sup>24</sup>When he falls, he will not be thrown down headfirst because the LORD holds on to his hand.

<sup>25</sup>I have been young, and now I am old, but I have never seen a righteous person abandoned or his descendants begging for food.

<sup>26</sup>He is always generous and lends freely. His descendants are a blessing.

<sup>27</sup>Avoid evil, do good, and live forever.

<sup>28</sup>The LORD loves justice, and he will not abandon his godly ones. They will be

kept safe forever, but the descendants of wicked people will be cut off.

<sup>29</sup>Righteous people will inherit the land and live there permanently.

<sup>30</sup>The mouth of the righteous person reflects on wisdom. His tongue speaks what is fair.

<sup>31</sup>The teachings of his God are in his heart. His feet do not slip.

<sup>32</sup>The wicked person watches the righteous person and seeks to kill him.

<sup>33</sup>But the LORD will not abandon him to the wicked persons power or condemn him when he is brought to trial.

<sup>34</sup>Wait with hope for the LORD, and follow his path, and he will honor you by giving you the land. When wicked people are cut off, you will see it.

<sup>35</sup>I have seen a wicked person acting like a tyrant, spreading himself out like a large cedar tree.

<sup>36</sup>But he moved on, and now there is no trace of him. I searched for him, but he could not be found.

<sup>37</sup>Notice the innocent person, and look at the decent person, because the peacemaker has a future.

<sup>38</sup>But rebels will be completely destroyed. The future of wicked people will be cut off.

<sup>39</sup>The victory for righteous people comes from the LORD. He is their fortress in times of trouble.

<sup>40</sup>The LORD helps them and rescues them. He rescues them from wicked people. He saves them because they have taken refuge in him.

**38**<sup>1</sup>A psalm by David; to be kept in mind. O LORD, do not angrily punish me or discipline me in your wrath.

<sup>2</sup>Your arrows have struck me. Your hand has struck me hard.

<sup>3</sup>No healthy spot is left on my body because of your rage. There is no peace in my bones because of my sin.

<sup>4</sup>My guilt has overwhelmed me. Like a heavy load, it is more than I can bear.

<sup>5</sup>My wounds smell rotten. They fester because of my stupidity.

<sup>6</sup>I am bent over and bowed down very low. All day I walk around in mourning.

<sup>7</sup>My insides are filled with burning pain, and no healthy spot is left on my body.

<sup>8</sup>I am numb and completely devastated. I roar because my hearts in turmoil.

<sup>9</sup>You know all my desires, O Lord, and my groaning has not been hidden from you.

<sup>10</sup>My heart is pounding. I have lost my strength. Even the light of my eyes has left me.

<sup>11</sup>My loved ones and my friends keep their distance and my relatives stand far away because of my sickness.

<sup>12</sup>Those who seek my life lay traps for me. Those who are out to harm me talk about ruining me. All day long they think of ways to deceive me.

<sup>13</sup>But I am like a person who cannot hear and like a person who cannot speak.

<sup>14</sup>I am like one who cannot hear and who can offer no arguments.

<sup>15</sup>But I wait with hope for you, O LORD. You will answer, O Lord, my God.

<sup>16</sup>I said, "Do not let them gloat over me. When my foot slips, do not let them promote themselves at my expense."

<sup>17</sup>I am ready to fall. I am continually aware of my pain.

<sup>18</sup>I confess my guilt. My sin troubles me.

<sup>19</sup>My mortal enemies are growing stronger. Many hate me for no reason.

<sup>20</sup>They pay me back with evil instead of good, and they accuse me because I try to do what is good.

<sup>21</sup>Do not abandon me, O LORD. O my God, do not be so distant from me.

<sup>22</sup>Come quickly to help me, O Lord, my savior.

**39**<sup>1</sup>For the choir director; for Jeduthun; a psalm by David. I said, "I will watch my ways so that I do not sin with my tongue. I will bridle my mouth while wicked people are in my presence."

<sup>2</sup>I remained totally speechless. I kept silent, although it did me no good. While I was deep in thought, my pain grew worse.

<sup>3</sup>My heart burned like a fire flaring up within me. Then I spoke with my tongue:

<sup>4</sup>"Teach me, O LORD, about the end of my life. Teach me about the number of days I have left so that I may know how temporary my life is.

<sup>5</sup>Indeed, you have made the length of my days only a few inches. My life span is nothing compared to yours. Certainly,

everyone alive is like a whisper in the wind. Selah

<sup>6</sup>Each person who walks around is like a shadow. They are busy for no reason. They accumulate riches without knowing who will get them."

<sup>7</sup>And now, Lord, what am I waiting for? My hope is in you!

<sup>8</sup>Rescue me from all my rebellious acts. Do not disgrace me in front of godless fools.

<sup>9</sup>I remained speechless. I did not open my mouth because you are the one who has done this.

<sup>10</sup>Remove the sickness you laid upon me. My life is over because you struck me with your hand.

<sup>11</sup>With stern warnings you discipline people for their crimes. Like a moth you eat away at what is dear to them. Certainly, everyone is like a whisper in the wind. Selah

<sup>12</sup>Listen to my prayer, O LORD. Open your ear to my cry for help. Do not be deaf to my tears, for I am a foreign resident with you, a stranger like all my ancestors.

<sup>13</sup>Look away from me so that I may smile again before I go away and am no more.

**40**<sup>1</sup>For the choir director; a psalm by David. I waited patiently for the LORD. He turned to me and heard my cry for help.

<sup>2</sup>He pulled me out of a horrible pit, out of the mud and clay. He set my feet on a rock and made my steps secure.

<sup>3</sup>He placed a new song in my mouth, a song of praise to our God. Many will see this and worship. They will trust the LORD.

<sup>4</sup>Blessed is the person who places his confidence in the LORD and does not rely on arrogant people or those who follow lies.

<sup>5</sup>You have done many miraculous things, O LORD my God. You have made many wonderful plans for us. No one compares to you! I will tell others about your miracles, which are more than I can count.

<sup>6</sup>You were not pleased with sacrifices and offerings. You have dug out two ears for me. You did not ask for burnt offerings or sacrifices for sin.

<sup>7</sup>Then I said, "I have come! (It is written about me in the scroll of the book.)

<sup>8</sup>I am happy to do your will, O my God." Your teachings are deep within me.

<sup>9</sup>I will announce the good news of righteousness among those assembled for worship. I will not close my lips. You know that, O LORD.

<sup>10</sup>I have not buried your righteousness deep in my heart. I have been outspoken about your faithfulness and your salvation. I have not hidden your mercy and your truth from those assembled for worship.

<sup>11</sup>Do not withhold your compassion from me, O LORD. May your mercy and your truth always protect me.

<sup>12</sup>Countless evils have surrounded me. My sins have caught up with me so that I can no longer see. They outnumber the hairs on my head. I have lost heart.

<sup>13</sup>O LORD, please rescue me! Come quickly to help me, O LORD!

<sup>14</sup>Let all those who seek to end my life be confused and put to shame. Let those

who want my downfall be turned back and disgraced.

<sup>15</sup>Let those who say to me, "Aha! Aha!" be stunned by their own shame.

<sup>16</sup>Let all who seek you rejoice and be glad because of you. Let those who love your salvation continually say, "The LORD is great!"

<sup>17</sup>But I am oppressed and needy. May the Lord think of me. You are my help and my savior. O my God, do not delay!

**41** <sup>1</sup>For the choir director; a psalm by David. Blessed is the one who has concern for helpless people. The LORD will rescue him in times of trouble.

<sup>2</sup>The LORD will protect him and keep him alive. He will be blessed in the land. Do not place him at the mercy of his enemies.

<sup>3</sup>The LORD will support him on his sickbed. You will restore this person to health when he is ill.

<sup>4</sup>I said, "O LORD, have pity on me! Heal my soul because I have sinned against you."

<sup>5</sup>My enemies say terrible things about me: "When will he die, and when will his family name disappear?"

<sup>6</sup>When one of them comes to visit me, he speaks foolishly. His heart collects gossip. Then he leaves to tell others.

<sup>7</sup>Everyone who hates me whispers about me. They think evil things about me and say,

<sup>8</sup>"A devilish disease has attached itself to him. He will never leave his sickbed."

<sup>9</sup>Even my closest friend whom I trusted, the one who ate my bread, has lifted his heel against me.

<sup>10</sup>Have pity on me, O LORD! Raise me up so that I can pay them back

<sup>11</sup>and my enemy cannot shout in triumph over me. When you do this, I know that you are pleased with me.

<sup>12</sup>You defend my integrity, and you set me in your presence forever.

<sup>13</sup>Thank the LORD God of Israel through all eternity! Amen and amen!

**42**<sup>1</sup>For the choir director; a maskil by Korah's descendants. As a deer longs for flowing streams, so my soul longs for you, O God.

<sup>2</sup>My soul thirsts for God, for the living God. When may I come to see God's face?

<sup>3</sup> My tears are my food day and night. People ask me all day long, "Where is your God?"

<sup>4</sup> I will remember these things as I pour out my soul: how I used to walk with the crowd and lead it in a procession to God's house. I sang songs of joy and thanksgiving while crowds of people celebrated a festival.

<sup>5</sup> Why are you discouraged, my soul? Why are you so restless? Put your hope in God, because I will still praise him. He is my savior and my God.

<sup>6</sup> My soul is discouraged. That is why I will remember you in the land of Jordan, on the peaks of Hermon, on Mount Mizar.

<sup>7</sup> One deep sea calls to another at the roar of your waterspouts. All the whitecaps on your waves have swept over me.

<sup>8</sup> The LORD commands his mercy during the day, and at night his song is with me a prayer to the God of my life.

<sup>9</sup> I will ask God, my rock, "Why have you forgotten me? Why must I walk around in mourning while the enemy oppresses me?"

<sup>10</sup>With a shattering blow to my bones, my enemies taunt me. They ask me all day long, "Where is your God?"

<sup>11</sup>Why are you discouraged, my soul? Why are you so restless? Put your hope in God, because I will still praise him. He is my savior and my God.

**43** <sup>1</sup>Judge me, O God, and plead my case against an ungodly nation. Rescue me from deceitful and unjust people.

<sup>2</sup>You are my fortress, O God! Why have you rejected me? Why must I walk around in mourning while the enemy oppresses me?

<sup>3</sup>Send your light and your truth. Let them guide me. Let them bring me to your holy mountain and to your dwelling place.

<sup>4</sup>Then let me go to the altar of God, to God my highest joy, and I will give thanks to you on the lyre, O God, my God.

<sup>5</sup>Why are you discouraged, my soul? Why are you so restless? Put your hope in God, because I will still praise him. He is my savior and my God.

**44**<sup>1</sup> For the choir director; a maskil by Korah's descendants. O God, we have heard it with our own ears. Our ancestors have told us about the miracle you performed in their day, in days long ago.

<sup>2</sup> By your power you forced nations out of the land, but you planted our ancestors there. You shattered many groups of people, but you set our ancestors free.

<sup>3</sup> It was not with their swords that they took possession of the land. They did not gain victory with their own strength. It was your right hand, your arm, and the light of your presence that did it, because you were pleased with them.

<sup>4</sup> You alone are my king, O God. You won those victories for Jacob.

<sup>5</sup> With you we can walk over our enemies. With your name we can trample those who attack us.

<sup>6</sup> I do not rely on my bow, and my sword will never save me.

<sup>7</sup> But you saved us from our enemies. You put to shame those who hate us.

<sup>8</sup> All day long we praise our God. We give thanks to you forever. Selah

<sup>9</sup>But now you have rejected and disgraced us. You do not even go along with our armies.

<sup>10</sup>You make us retreat from the enemy. Those who hate us rob us at will.

<sup>11</sup>You hand us over to be butchered like sheep and scatter us among the nations.

<sup>12</sup>You sell your people for almost nothing, and at that price you have gained nothing.

<sup>13</sup>You made us a disgrace to our neighbors and an object of ridicule and contempt to those around us.

<sup>14</sup>You made our defeat a proverb among the nations so that people shake their heads at us.

<sup>15</sup>All day long my disgrace is in front of me. Shame covers my face

<sup>16</sup>because of the words of those who insult and slander us, because of the presence of the enemy and the avenger.

<sup>17</sup>Although all of this happened to us, we never forgot you. We never ignored your promise.

<sup>18</sup>Our hearts never turned away. Our feet never left your path.

<sup>19</sup>Yet, you crushed us in a place for jackals and covered us with the shadow of death.

<sup>20</sup>If we forgot the name of our God or stretched out our hands to pray to another god,

<sup>21</sup>wouldnt God find out, since he knows the secrets in our hearts?

<sup>22</sup>Indeed, we are being killed all day long because of you. We are thought of as sheep to be slaughtered.

<sup>23</sup>Wake up! Why are you sleeping, O Lord? Awake! Do not reject us forever!

<sup>24</sup>Why do you hide your face? Why do you forget our suffering and misery?

<sup>25</sup>Our souls are bowing in the dust. Our bodies cling to the ground.

<sup>26</sup>Arise! Help us! Rescue us because of your mercy!

**45**<sup>1</sup>For the choir director; according to shoshannim; a maskil by Korahs descendants; a love song. My heart is overflowing with good news. I will direct my song to the king. My tongue is a pen for a skillful writer.

<sup>2</sup>You are the most handsome of Adams descendants. Grace is poured on your

lips. That is why God has blessed you forever.

<sup>3</sup>O warrior, strap your sword to your side with your splendor and majesty.

<sup>4</sup>Ride on victoriously in your majesty for the cause of truth, humility, and righteousness. Let your right hand teach you aweinspiring things.

<sup>5</sup>Your arrows are sharp in the heart of the kings enemies. Nations fall beneath you.

<sup>6</sup>Your throne, O God, is forever and ever. The scepter in your kingdom is a scepter for justice.

<sup>7</sup>You have loved what is right and hated what is wrong. That is why God, your God, has anointed you, rather than your companions, with the oil of joy.

<sup>8</sup>All your robes are fragrant with myrrh, aloes, and cassia. From ivory palaces the music of stringed instruments delights you.

<sup>9</sup>The daughters of kings are among your noble ladies. The queen takes her place at your right hand and wears gold from Ophir.

<sup>10</sup>Listen, daughter! Look closely! Turn your ear toward me. Forget your people, and forget your fathers house.

<sup>11</sup>The king longs for your beauty. He is your Lord. Worship him.

<sup>12</sup>The people of Tyre, the richest people, want to win your favor with a gift.

<sup>13</sup>The daughter of the king is glorious inside the palace. Her dress is embroidered with gold.

<sup>14</sup>Wearing a colorful gown, she is brought to the king. Her bridesmaids follow her. They will be brought to you.

<sup>15</sup>With joy and delight they are brought in. They enter the palace of the king.

<sup>16</sup>Your sons will take the place of your father. You will make them princes over the whole earth.

<sup>17</sup>I will cause your name to be remembered throughout every generation. That is why the nations will give thanks to you forever and ever.

**46**<sup>1</sup>For the choir director; a song by the descendants of Korah; according to alamoath. God is our refuge and strength, an everpresent help in times of trouble.

<sup>2</sup>That is why we are not afraid even when the earth quakes or the mountains topple into the depths of the sea.

<sup>3</sup>Water roars and foams, and mountains shake at the surging waves. Selah

<sup>4</sup>There is a river whose streams bring joy to the city of God, the holy place where the Most High lives.

<sup>5</sup>God is in that city. It cannot fall. God will help it at the break of dawn.

<sup>6</sup>Nations are in turmoil, and kingdoms topple. The earth melts at the sound of Gods voice.

<sup>7</sup>The LORD of Armies is with us. The God of Jacob is our stronghold. Selah

<sup>8</sup>Come, see the works of the LORD, the devastation he has brought to the earth.

<sup>9</sup>He puts an end to wars all over the earth. He breaks an archers bow. He cuts spears in two. He burns chariots.

<sup>10</sup>Let go of your concerns! Then you will know that I am God. I rule the nations. I rule the earth.

<sup>11</sup>The LORD of Armies is with us. The God of Jacob is our stronghold. Selah

**47** <sup>1</sup>For the choir director; a psalm by Korahs descendants. Clap your

hands, all you people. Shout to God with a loud, joyful song.

<sup>2</sup>We must fear the LORD, the Most High. He is the great king of the whole earth.

<sup>3</sup>He brings people under our authority and puts nations under our feet.

<sup>4</sup>He chooses our inheritance for us, the pride of Jacob, whom he loved. Selah

<sup>5</sup>God has gone up with a joyful shout. The LORD has gone up with the sound of a rams horn.

<sup>6</sup>Make music to praise God. Play music for him! Make music to praise our king. Play music for him!

<sup>7</sup>God is the king of the whole earth. Make your best music for him!

<sup>8</sup>God rules the nations. He sits upon his holy throne.

<sup>9</sup>The influential people from the nations gather together as the people of the God of Abraham. The rulers of the earth belong to God. He rules everything.

**48**<sup>1</sup>A song; a psalm by Korahs descendants. The LORD is great. He should be highly praised. His holy mountain is in the city of our God.

<sup>2</sup>Its beautiful peak is the joy of the whole earth. Mount Zion is on the northern ridge. It is the city of the great king.

<sup>3</sup>God is in its palaces. He has proved that he is a stronghold.

<sup>4</sup>The kings have gathered. They marched together.

<sup>5</sup>When they saw Mount Zion, they were astonished. They were terrified and ran away in fear.

<sup>6</sup>Trembling seized them like the trembling that a woman experiences during labor.

<sup>7</sup>With the east wind you smash the ships of Tarshish.

<sup>8</sup>The things we had only heard about, we have now seen in the city of the LORD of Armies, in the city of our God. God makes Zion stand firm forever. Selah

<sup>9</sup>Inside your temple we carefully reflect on your mercy, O God.

<sup>10</sup>Like your name, O God, your praise reaches to the ends of the earth. Your right hand is filled with righteousness.

<sup>11</sup>Let Mount Zion be glad and the cities of Judah rejoice because of your judgments.

<sup>12</sup>Walk around Zion. Go around it.  
Count its towers.

<sup>13</sup>Examine its embankments. Walk  
through its palaces. Then you can tell  
the next generation,

<sup>14</sup>"This God is our God forever and  
ever. He will lead us beyond death."

**49**<sup>1</sup>For the choir director; a psalm  
by Korah's descendants. Listen to  
this, all you people. Open your ears, all  
who live in the world

<sup>2</sup>common people and important ones,  
rich people and poor ones.

<sup>3</sup>My mouth will speak wise sayings, the  
insights I have carefully considered.

<sup>4</sup>I will turn my attention to a proverb. I  
will explain my riddle with the music of a  
lyre.

<sup>5</sup>Why should I be afraid in times of  
trouble, when slanderers surround me  
with evil?

<sup>6</sup>They trust their riches and brag about  
their abundant wealth.

<sup>7</sup>No one can ever buy back another  
person or pay God a ransom for his life.

<sup>8</sup>The price to be paid for his soul is too  
costly. He must always give up

<sup>9</sup>in order to live forever and never see the pit.

<sup>10</sup>Indeed, one can see that wise people die, that foolish and stupid people meet the same end. They leave their riches to others.

<sup>11</sup>Although they named their lands after themselves, their graves have become their homes for ages to come, their dwelling places throughout every generation.

<sup>12</sup>But mortals will not continue here with what they treasure. They are like animals that die.

<sup>13</sup>This is the final outcome for fools and their followers who are delighted by what they say: Selah

<sup>14</sup>Like sheep, they are driven to hell with death as their shepherd. (Decent people will rule them in the morning.) Their forms will decay in the grave, far away from their comfortable homes.

<sup>15</sup>But God will buy me back from the power of hell because he will take me. Selah

<sup>16</sup>Do not be afraid when someone becomes rich, when the greatness of his house increases.

<sup>17</sup> He will not take anything with him when he dies. His greatness cannot follow him.

<sup>18</sup> Even though he blesses himself while he is alive (and they praise you when you do well for yourself),

<sup>19</sup> he must join the generation of his ancestors, who will never see light again.

<sup>20</sup> Mortals, with what they treasure, still don't have understanding. They are like animals that die.

**50** <sup>1</sup> A psalm by Asaph. The LORD, the only true God, has spoken. He has summoned the earth from where the sun rises to where it sets.

<sup>2</sup> God shines from Zion, the perfection of beauty.

<sup>3</sup> Our God will come and will not remain silent. A devouring fire is in front of him and a raging storm around him.

<sup>4</sup> He summons heaven and earth to judge his people:

<sup>5</sup> "Gather around me, my godly people who have made a pledge to me through sacrifices."

<sup>6</sup> The heavens announce his righteousness because God is the judge. Selah

<sup>7</sup> "Listen, my people, and I will speak. Listen, Israel, and I will testify against you: I am God, your God!

<sup>8</sup> I am not criticizing you for your sacrifices or burnt offerings, which are always in front of me.

<sup>9</sup> But I will not accept another young bull from your household or a single male goat from your pens.

<sup>10</sup> Every creature in the forest, even the cattle on a thousand hills, is mine.

<sup>11</sup> I know every bird in the mountains. Everything that moves in the fields is mine.

<sup>12</sup> If I were hungry, I would not tell you, because the world and all that it contains are mine.

<sup>13</sup> Do I eat the meat of bulls or drink the blood of goats?

<sup>14</sup> Bring your thanks to God as a sacrifice, and keep your vows to the Most High.

<sup>15</sup> Call on me in times of trouble. I will rescue you, and you will honor me."

<sup>16</sup> But God says to wicked people, "How dare you quote my decrees and mouth my promises!

<sup>17</sup>You hate discipline. You toss my words behind you.

<sup>18</sup>When you see a thief, you want to make friends with him. You keep company with people who commit adultery.

<sup>19</sup>You let your mouth say anything evil. Your tongue plans deceit.

<sup>20</sup>You sit and talk against your own brother. You slander your own mothers son.

<sup>21</sup>When you did these things, I remained silent. That made you think I was like you. I will argue my point with you and lay it all out for you to see.

<sup>22</sup>Consider this, you people who forget God. Otherwise, I will tear you to pieces, and there will be no one left to rescue you.

<sup>23</sup>Whoever offers thanks as a sacrifice honors me. I will let everyone who continues in my way see the salvation that comes from God."

**51** <sup>1</sup>For the choir director; a psalm by David when the prophet Nathan came to him after Davids adultery with Bathsheba. Have pity on me, O God, in keeping with your mercy. In keeping

with your unlimited compassion, wipe out my rebellious acts.

<sup>2</sup>Wash me thoroughly from my guilt, and cleanse me from my sin.

<sup>3</sup>I admit that I am rebellious. My sin is always in front of me.

<sup>4</sup>I have sinned against you, especially you. I have done what you consider evil. So you hand down justice when you speak, and you are blameless when you judge.

<sup>5</sup>Indeed, I was born guilty. I was a sinner when my mother conceived me.

<sup>6</sup>Yet, you desire truth and sincerity. Deep down inside me you teach me wisdom.

<sup>7</sup>Purify me from sin with hyssop, and I will be clean. Wash me, and I will be whiter than snow.

<sup>8</sup>Let me hear sounds of joy and gladness. Let the bones that you have broken dance.

<sup>9</sup>Hide your face from my sins, and wipe out all that I have done wrong.

<sup>10</sup>Create a clean heart in me, O God, and renew a faithful spirit within me.

<sup>11</sup> Do not force me away from your presence, and do not take your Holy Spirit from me.

<sup>12</sup> Restore the joy of your salvation to me, and provide me with a spirit of willing obedience.

<sup>13</sup> Then I will teach your ways to those who are rebellious, and sinners will return to you.

<sup>14</sup> Rescue me from the guilt of murder, O God, my savior. Let my tongue sing joyfully about your righteousness!

<sup>15</sup> O Lord, open my lips, and my mouth will tell about your praise.

<sup>16</sup> You are not happy with any sacrifice. Otherwise, I would offer one to you. You are not pleased with burnt offerings.

<sup>17</sup> The sacrifice pleasing to God is a broken spirit. O God, you do not despise a broken and sorrowful heart.

<sup>18</sup> Favor Zion with your goodness. Rebuild the walls of Jerusalem.

<sup>19</sup> Then you will be pleased with sacrifices offered in the right spirit with burnt offerings and whole burnt offerings. Young bulls will be offered on your altar.

**52**<sup>1</sup> For the choir director; a maskil; a psalm by David when Doeg (who was from Edom) told Saul that David had come to Ahimelechs home. Why do you brag about the evil youve done, you hero? The mercy of God lasts all day long!

<sup>2</sup>Your tongue makes up threats. Its like a sharp razor, you master of deceit.

<sup>3</sup>You prefer evil to good. You prefer lying to speaking the truth. Selah

<sup>4</sup>You love every destructive accusation, you deceitful tongue!

<sup>5</sup>But God will ruin you forever. He will grab you and drag you out of your tent. He will pull your roots out of this world of the living. Selah

<sup>6</sup>Righteous people will see this and be struck with fear. They will laugh at you and say,

<sup>7</sup>"Look at this person who refused to make God his fortress! Instead, he trusted his great wealth and became strong through his greed."

<sup>8</sup>But I am like a large olive tree in Gods house. I trust the mercy of God forever and ever.

<sup>9</sup>I will give thanks to you forever for what you have done. In the presence of your godly people, I will wait with hope in your good name.

**53**<sup>1</sup> For the choir director; according to mahalath, a maskil by David. Godless fools say in their hearts, "There is no God." They are corrupt. They do disgusting things. There is no one who does good things.

<sup>2</sup>God looks down from heaven on Adams descendants to see if there is anyone who acts wisely, if there is anyone who seeks help from God.

<sup>3</sup>Everyone has fallen away. Together they have become rotten to the core. No one, not even one person, does good things.

<sup>4</sup>Are all those troublemakers, those who devour my people as if they were devouring food, so ignorant that they do not call on God?

<sup>5</sup>There they arepanicstrickenbut there was no reason to panic, because God has scattered the bones of those who set up camp against you. You put them to shame. After all, God has rejected them.

<sup>6</sup>If only salvation for Israel would come from Zion! When God restores the fortunes of his people, Jacob will rejoice. Israel will be glad.

**54** <sup>1</sup>For the choir director; on stringed instruments; a maskil by David when people from the city of Ziph told Saul that David was hiding among them. O God, save me by your name, and defend me with your might.

<sup>2</sup>O God, hear my prayer, and open your ears to the words from my mouth.

<sup>3</sup>Strangers have attacked me. Ruthless people seek my life. They do not think about God. Selah

<sup>4</sup>God is my helper! The Lord is the provider for my life.

<sup>5</sup>My enemies spy on me. Pay them back with evil. Destroy them with your truth!

<sup>6</sup>I will make a sacrifice to you along with a freewill offering. I will give thanks to your good name, O LORD.

<sup>7</sup>Your name rescues me from every trouble. My eyes will gloat over my enemies.

**55** <sup>1</sup>For the choir director; on stringed instruments; a maskil by David. Open your ears to my prayer,

O God. Do not hide from my plea for mercy.

<sup>2</sup>Pay attention to me, and answer me. My thoughts are restless, and I am confused

<sup>3</sup>because my enemy shouts at me and a wicked person persecutes me. They bring misery crashing down on me, and they attack me out of anger.

<sup>4</sup>My heart is in turmoil. The terrors of death have seized me.

<sup>5</sup>Fear and trembling have overcome me. Horror has overwhelmed me.

<sup>6</sup>I said, "If only I had wings like a dove I would fly away and find rest.

<sup>7</sup>Indeed, I would run far away. I would stay in the desert. Selah

<sup>8</sup>I would hurry to find shelter from the raging wind and storm."

<sup>9</sup>Completely confuse their language, O Lord, because I see violence and conflict in the city.

<sup>10</sup>Day and night they go around on top of the city walls. Trouble and misery are everywhere.

<sup>11</sup>Destruction is everywhere. Oppression and fraud never leave the streets.

<sup>12</sup>If an enemy had insulted me, then I could bear it. If someone who hated me had attacked me, then I could hide from him.

<sup>13</sup>But it is you, my equal, my best friend, one I knew so well!

<sup>14</sup>We used to talk to each other in complete confidence and walk into Gods house with the festival crowds.

<sup>15</sup>Let death suddenly take wicked people! Let them go into the grave while they are still alive, because evil lives in their homes as well as in their hearts.

<sup>16</sup>But I call on God, and the LORD saves me.

<sup>17</sup>Morning, noon, and night I complain and groan, and he listens to my voice.

<sup>18</sup>With his peace, he will rescue my soul from the war waged against me, because there are many soldiers fighting against me.

<sup>19</sup>God will listen. The one who has sat enthroned from the beginning will deal with them. Selah They never change. They never fear God.

<sup>20</sup>My best friend has betrayed his friends. He has broken his solemn promise.

<sup>21</sup> His speech is smoother than butter, but there is war in his heart. His words are more soothing than oil, but they are like swords ready to attack.

<sup>22</sup> Turn your burdens over to the LORD, and he will take care of you. He will never let the righteous person stumble.

<sup>23</sup> But you, O God, will throw wicked people into the deepest pit. Bloodthirsty and deceitful people will not live out half their days. But I will trust you.

**56** <sup>1</sup> For the choir director; according to yonath elem rechokim; a miktam by David when the Philistines captured him in Gath. Have pity on me, O God, because people are harassing me. All day long warriors oppress me.

<sup>2</sup> All day long my enemies spy on me. They harass me. There are so many fighting against me.

<sup>3</sup> Even when I am afraid, I still trust you.

<sup>4</sup> I praise the word of God. I trust God. I am not afraid. What can mere flesh and blood do to me?

<sup>5</sup> All day long my enemies twist my words. Their every thought is an evil plan against me.

<sup>6</sup>They attack, and then they hide. They watch my every step as they wait to take my life.

<sup>7</sup>With the wrong they do, can they escape? O God, angrily make the nations fall.

<sup>8</sup>(You have kept a record of my wanderings. Put my tears in your bottle. They are already in your book.)

<sup>9</sup>Then my enemies will retreat when I call to you. This I know: God is on my side.

<sup>10</sup>I praise the word of God. I praise the word of the LORD.

<sup>11</sup>I trust God. I am not afraid. What can mortals do to me?

<sup>12</sup>I am bound by my vows to you, O God. I will keep my vows by offering songs of thanksgiving to you.

<sup>13</sup>You have rescued me from death. You have kept my feet from stumbling so that I could walk in your presence, in the light of life.

**57** <sup>1</sup>For the choir director; al tashcheth; a miktam by David when he fled from Saul into the cave. Have pity on me, O God. Have pity on me, because my soul takes refuge in

you. I will take refuge in the shadow of your wings until destructive storms pass by.

<sup>2</sup>I call to God Most High, to the God who does everything for me.

<sup>3</sup>He sends his help from heaven and saves me. He disgraces the one who is harassing me. Selah God sends his mercy and his truth!

<sup>4</sup>My soul is surrounded by lions. I must lie down with man-eating lions. Their teeth are spears and arrows. Their tongues are sharp swords.

<sup>5</sup>May you be honored above the heavens, O God. Let your glory extend over the whole earth.

<sup>6</sup>My enemies spread out a net to catch me. (My soul is bowed down.) They dug a pit to trap me, but then they fell into it. Selah

<sup>7</sup>My heart is confident, O God. My heart is confident. I want to sing and make music.

<sup>8</sup>Wake up, my soul! Wake up, harp and lyre! I want to wake up at dawn.

<sup>9</sup>I want to give thanks to you among the people, O Lord. I want to make music to praise you among the nations

<sup>10</sup>because your mercy is as high as the heavens. Your truth reaches the skies.

<sup>11</sup>May you be honored above the heavens, O God. Let your glory extend over the whole earth.

**58**<sup>1</sup>For the choir director; al tashcheth; a miktam by David. Do you rulers really give fair verdicts? Do you judge Adams descendants fairly?

<sup>2</sup>No, you invent new crimes on earth, and your hands spread violence.

<sup>3</sup>Even inside the womb wicked people are strangers to God. From their birth liars go astray.

<sup>4</sup>They have poisonous venom like snakes. They are like a deaf cobra that shuts its ears

<sup>5</sup>so that it cannot hear the voice of a snake charmer or of anyone trained to cast spells.

<sup>6</sup>O God, knock the teeth out of their mouths. Break the young lions teeth, O LORD.

<sup>7</sup>Let them disappear like water that drains away. When they aim their bows, let their arrows miss the target.

<sup>8</sup>Let them become like a snail that leaves behind a slimy trail or like a stillborn child who never sees the sun.

<sup>9</sup>Let God sweep them away faster than a cooking pot is heated by burning twigs.

<sup>10</sup>Righteous people will rejoice when they see God take revenge. They will wash their feet in the blood of wicked people.

<sup>11</sup>Then people will say, "Righteous people certainly have a reward. There is a God who judges on earth."

**59**<sup>1</sup>For the choir director; al tashcheth; a miktam by David when Saul sent men to watch Davids home and kill him. Rescue me from my enemies, O my God. Protect me from those who attack me.

<sup>2</sup>Rescue me from troublemakers. Save me from bloodthirsty people.

<sup>3</sup>They lie in ambush for me right here! Fierce men attack me, O LORD, but not because of any disobedience,

<sup>4</sup>or any sin, or any guilt on my part. They hurry to take positions against me. Wake up, and help me; see for yourself.

<sup>5</sup> O LORD God of Armies, God of Israel, arise to punish all the nations. Have no pity on any traitors. Selah

<sup>6</sup> They return in the evening. They howl like dogs. They prowl the city.

<sup>7</sup> See what pours out of their mouths—swords from their lips! They think, "Who will hear us?"

<sup>8</sup> O LORD, you laugh at them. You make fun of all the nations.

<sup>9</sup> O my strength, I watch for you! God is my stronghold, my merciful God!

<sup>10</sup> God will come to meet me. He will let me gloat over those who spy on me.

<sup>11</sup> Do not kill them. Otherwise, my people may forget. Make them wander aimlessly by your power. Bring them down, O Lord, our shield,

<sup>12</sup> because of the sins from their mouths and the words on their lips. Let them be trapped by their own arrogance because they speak curses and lies.

<sup>13</sup> Destroy them in your rage. Destroy them until not one of them is left. Then they will know that God rules Jacob to the ends of the earth. Selah

<sup>14</sup> They return in the evening. They howl like dogs. They prowl the city.

<sup>15</sup>They wander around to find something to eat. If they are not full enough, they will stay all night.

<sup>16</sup>But I will sing about your strength. In the morning I will joyfully sing about your mercy. You have been my stronghold and a place of safety in times of trouble.

<sup>17</sup>O my strength, I will make music to praise you! God is my stronghold, my merciful God!

**60**<sup>1</sup>For the choir director; according to shushan eduth; a miktam by David; for teaching. When David fought Aram Naharaim and Aram Zobah, and when Joab came back and killed 12,000 men from Edom in the Dead Sea region. O God, you have rejected us. You have broken down our defenses. You have been angry. Restore us!

<sup>2</sup>You made the land quake. You split it wide open. Heal the cracks in it because it is falling apart.

<sup>3</sup>You have made your people experience hardships. You have given us wine that makes us stagger.

<sup>4</sup>Yet, you have raised a flag for those who fear you so that they can rally to

it when attacked by bows and arrows.  
Selah

<sup>5</sup>Save us with your powerful hand, and answer us so that those who are dear to you may be rescued.

<sup>6</sup>God has promised the following through his holiness: "I will triumph! I will divide Shechem. I will measure the valley of Succoth.

<sup>7</sup>Gilead is mine. Manasseh is mine. Ephraim is the helmet on my head. Judah is my scepter.

<sup>8</sup>Moab is my washtub. I will throw my shoe over Edom. I will shout in triumph over Philistia."

<sup>9</sup>Who will bring me into the fortified city? Who will lead me to Edom?

<sup>10</sup>Isn't it you, O God, who rejected us? Isn't it you, O God, who refused to accompany our armies?

<sup>11</sup>Give us help against the enemy because human assistance is worthless.

<sup>12</sup>With God we will display great strength. He will trample our enemies.

**61** <sup>1</sup>For the choir director; on a stringed instrument; by David. Listen to my cry for help, O God. Pay attention to my prayer.

<sup>2</sup>From the ends of the earth, I call to you when I begin to lose heart. Lead me to the rock that is high above me.

<sup>3</sup>You have been my refuge, a tower of strength against the enemy.

<sup>4</sup>I would like to be a guest in your tent forever and to take refuge under the protection of your wings. Selah

<sup>5</sup>O God, you have heard my vows. You have given me the inheritance that belongs to those who fear your name.

<sup>6</sup>Add days upon days to the life of the king. May his years endure throughout every generation.

<sup>7</sup>May he sit enthroned in the presence of God forever. May mercy and truth protect him.

<sup>8</sup>Then I will make music to praise your name forever, as I keep my vows day after day.

**62**<sup>1</sup>For the choir director; according to Jeduthun; a psalm by David. My soul waits calmly for God alone. My salvation comes from him.

<sup>2</sup>He alone is my rock and my savior my stronghold. I cannot be severely shaken.

<sup>3</sup>How long will all of you attack a person? How long will you try to murder

him, as though he were a leaning wall or a sagging fence?

<sup>4</sup>They plan to force him out of his high position. They are happy to lie. They bless with their mouths, but in their hearts they curse. Selah

<sup>5</sup>Wait calmly for God alone, my soul, because my hope comes from him.

<sup>6</sup>He alone is my rock and my savior my stronghold. I cannot be shaken.

<sup>7</sup>My salvation and my glory depend on God. God is the rock of my strength, my refuge.

<sup>8</sup>Trust him at all times, you people. Pour out your hearts in his presence. God is our refuge. Selah

<sup>9</sup>Common people are only a whisper in the wind. Important people are only a delusion. When all of them are weighed on a scale, they amount to nothing. They are less than a whisper in the wind.

<sup>10</sup>Do not count on extortion to make you rich. Do not hope to gain anything through robbery. When riches increase, do not depend on them.

<sup>11</sup>God has spoken once. I have heard it said twice: "Power belongs to God.

<sup>12</sup> Mercy belongs to you, O Lord. You reward a person based on what he has done."

**63** <sup>1</sup> A psalm by David when he was in the wilderness of Judah. O God, you are my God. At dawn I search for you. My soul thirsts for you. My body longs for you in a dry, parched land where there is no water.

<sup>2</sup> So I look for you in the holy place to see your power and your glory.

<sup>3</sup> My lips will praise you because your mercy is better than life itself.

<sup>4</sup> So I will thank you as long as I live. I will lift up my hands to pray in your name.

<sup>5</sup> You satisfy my soul with the richest foods. My mouth will sing your praise with joyful lips.

<sup>6</sup> As I lie on my bed, I remember you. Through the long hours of the night, I think about you.

<sup>7</sup> You have been my help. In the shadow of your wings, I sing joyfully.

<sup>8</sup> My soul clings to you. Your right hand supports me.

<sup>9</sup> But those who try to destroy my life will go into the depths of the earth.

<sup>10</sup>They will be cut down by swords. Their dead bodies will be left as food for jackals.

<sup>11</sup>But the king will find joy in God. Everyone who takes an oath by God will brag, but the mouths of liars will be shut.

**64**<sup>1</sup>For the choir director; a psalm by David. Hear my voice, O God, when I complain. Protect my life from a terrifying enemy.

<sup>2</sup>Hide me from the secret plots of criminals, from the mob of troublemakers.

<sup>3</sup>They sharpen their tongues like swords. They aim bitter words like arrows

<sup>4</sup>to shoot at innocent people from their hiding places. They shoot at them suddenly, without any fear.

<sup>5</sup>They encourage one another in their evil plans. They talk about setting traps and say, "Who can see them?"

<sup>6</sup>They search for the perfect crime and say, "We have perfected a foolproof scheme!" Human nature and the human heart are a mystery!

<sup>7</sup>But God will shoot them with an arrow. Suddenly, they will be struck dead.

<sup>8</sup>They will trip over their own tongues. Everyone who sees them will shake his head.

<sup>9</sup>Everyone will be afraid and conclude, "This is an act of God!" They will learn from what he has done.

<sup>10</sup>Righteous people will find joy in the LORD and take refuge in him. Everyone whose motives are decent will be able to brag.

**65** <sup>1</sup>For the choir director; a psalm by David; a song. You are praised with silence in Zion, O God, and vows made to you must be kept.

<sup>2</sup>You are the one who hears prayers. Everyone will come to you.

<sup>3</sup>Various sins overwhelm me. You are the one who forgives our rebellious acts.

<sup>4</sup>Blessed is the person you choose and invite to live with you in your courtyards. We will be filled with good food from your house, from your holy temple.

<sup>5</sup>You answer us with aweinspiring acts done in righteousness, O God, our savior, the hope of all the ends of the earth and of the most distant sea,

<sup>6</sup> the one who set the mountains in place with his strength, the one who is clothed with power,

<sup>7</sup> the one who calms the roar of the seas, their crashing waves, and the uproar of the nations.

<sup>8</sup> Those who live at the ends of the earth are in awe of your miraculous signs. The lands of the morning sunrise and evening sunset sing joyfully.

<sup>9</sup> You take care of the earth, and you water it. You make it much richer than it was. (The river of God is filled with water.) You provide grain for them. Indeed, you even prepare the ground.

<sup>10</sup> You drench plowed fields with rain and level their clumps of soil. You soften them with showers and bless what grows in them.

<sup>11</sup> You crown the year with your goodness, and richness overflows wherever you are.

<sup>12</sup> The pastures in the desert overflow with richness. The hills are surrounded with joy.

<sup>13</sup> The pastures are covered with flocks. The valleys are carpeted with grain. All

of them shout triumphantly. Indeed, they sing.

**66**<sup>1</sup> For the choir director; a song; a psalm. Shout happily to God, all the earth!

<sup>2</sup> Make music to praise the glory of his name. Make his praise glorious.

<sup>3</sup> Say to God, "How aweinspiring are your deeds! Your power is so great that your enemies will cringe in front of you.

<sup>4</sup> The whole earth will worship you. It will make music to praise you. It will make music to praise your name." Selah

<sup>5</sup> Come and see what God has done his aweinspiring deeds for Adams descendants.

<sup>6</sup> He turned the sea into dry land. They crossed the river on foot. We rejoiced because of what he did there.

<sup>7</sup> He rules forever with his might. His eyes watch the nations. Rebels will not be able to oppose him. Selah

<sup>8</sup> Thank our God, you nations. Make the sound of his praise heard.

<sup>9</sup> He has kept us alive and has not allowed us to fall.

<sup>10</sup>You have tested us, O God. You have refined us in the same way silver is refined.

<sup>11</sup>You have trapped us in a net. You have laid burdens on our backs.

<sup>12</sup>You let people ride over our heads. We went through fire and water, but then you brought us out and refreshed us.

<sup>13</sup>I will come into your temple with burnt offerings. I will keep my vows to you,

<sup>14</sup>the vows made by my lips and spoken by my own mouth when I was in trouble.

<sup>15</sup>I will offer you a sacrifice of fattened livestock for burnt offerings with the smoke from rams. I will offer cattle and goats. Selah

<sup>16</sup>Come and listen, all who fear God, and I will tell you what he has done for me.

<sup>17</sup>With my mouth I cried out to him. High praise was on my tongue.

<sup>18</sup>If I had thought about doing anything sinful, the Lord would not have listened to me.

<sup>19</sup>But God has heard me. He has paid attention to my prayer.

<sup>20</sup>Thanks be to God, who has not rejected my prayer or taken away his mercy from me.

**67** <sup>1</sup>For the choir director; on stringed instruments; a psalm; a song. May God have pity on us and bless us! May he smile on us. Selah

<sup>2</sup>Then your ways will be known on earth, your salvation throughout all nations.

<sup>3</sup>Let everyone give thanks to you, O God. Let everyone give thanks to you.

<sup>4</sup>Let the nations be glad and sing joyfully because you judge everyone with justice and guide the nations on the earth. Selah

<sup>5</sup>Let the people give thanks to you, O God. Let all the people give thanks to you.

<sup>6</sup>The earth has yielded its harvest. May God, our God, bless us.

<sup>7</sup>May God bless us, and may all the ends of the earth worship him.

**68** <sup>1</sup>For the choir director; a psalm by David; a song. God will arise. His enemies will be scattered. Those who hate him will flee from him.

<sup>2</sup> Blow them away like smoke. Let wicked people melt in Gods presence like wax next to a fire.

<sup>3</sup> But let righteous people rejoice. Let them celebrate in Gods presence. Let them overflow with joy.

<sup>4</sup> Sing to God; make music to praise his name. Make a highway for him to ride through the deserts. The LORD is his name. Celebrate in his presence.

<sup>5</sup> The God who is in his holy dwelling place is the father of the fatherless and the defender of widows.

<sup>6</sup> God places lonely people in families. He leads prisoners out of prison into productive lives, but rebellious people must live in an unproductive land.

<sup>7</sup> O God, when you went in front of your people, when you marched through the desert, Selah

<sup>8</sup> the earth quaked and the sky poured in the presence of the God of Sinai, in the presence of the God of Israel.

<sup>9</sup> You watered the land with plenty of rain, O God. You refreshed it when your land was exhausted.

<sup>10</sup>Your flock settled there. Out of your goodness, O God, you provided for oppressed people.

<sup>11</sup>The Lord gives instructions. The women who announce the good news are a large army.

<sup>12</sup>They say, "The kings of the armies flee; they run away. The women who remained at home will divide the goods.

<sup>13</sup>Though you stayed among the sheep pens, you will be like the wings of a dove covered with silver, its feathers with yellow gold.

<sup>14</sup>Meanwhile, the Almighty was still scattering kings there like snow falling on Mount Zalmon."

<sup>15</sup>The mountain of Bashan is the mountain of God. The mountain of Bashan is the mountain with many peaks.

<sup>16</sup>Why do you look with envy, you mountains with many peaks, at the mountain where God has chosen to live? Certainly, the LORD will live there forever.

<sup>17</sup>The chariots of God are twenty thousand in number, thousands upon

thousands. The Lord is among them. The God of Sinai is in his holy place.

<sup>18</sup>You went to the highest place. You took prisoners captive. You received gifts from people, even from rebellious people, so that the LORD God may live there.

<sup>19</sup>Thanks be to the Lord, who daily carries our burdens for us. God is our salvation. Selah

<sup>20</sup>Our God is the God of victories. The Almighty LORD is our escape from death.

<sup>21</sup>Certainly, God will crush the heads of his enemies and destroy even the hair on the heads of those who continue to be guilty.

<sup>22</sup>The Lord said, "I will bring them back from Bashan. I will bring them back from the depths of the sea

<sup>23</sup>so that you, my people, may bathe your feet in blood and the tongues of your dogs may lick the blood of your enemies."

<sup>24</sup>Your festival processions, O God, can be seen by everyone. They are the processions for my God, my king, into the holy place.

<sup>25</sup>The singers are in front. The musicians are behind them. The young women beating tambourines are between them.

<sup>26</sup>Thank God, the Lord, the source of Israel, with the choirs.

<sup>27</sup>Benjamin, the youngest, is leading them, next the leaders of Judah with their noisy crowds, then the leaders of Zebulun, then the leaders of Naphtali.

<sup>28</sup>Your God has decided you will be strong. Display your strength, O God, as you have for us before.

<sup>29</sup>Kings will bring you gifts because of your temple high above Jerusalem.

<sup>30</sup>Threaten the beast who is among the cattails, the herd of bulls with the calves of the nations, until it humbles itself with pieces of silver. Scatter the people who find joy in war.

<sup>31</sup>Ambassadors will come from Egypt. Sudan will stretch out its hands to God in prayer.

<sup>32</sup>You kingdoms of the world, sing to God. Make music to praise the Lord.  
Selah

<sup>33</sup>God rides through the ancient heaven, the highest heaven. Listen! He

makes his voice heard, his powerful voice.

<sup>34</sup> Acknowledge the power of God. His majesty is over Israel, and his power is in the skies.

<sup>35</sup> God, the God of Israel, is aweinspiring in his holy place. He gives strength and power to his people. Thanks be to God!

**69**<sup>1</sup> For the choir director; according to shoshannim; by David. Save me, O God! The water is already up to my neck!

<sup>2</sup> I am sinking in deep mud. There is nothing to stand on. I am in deep water. A flood is sweeping me away.

<sup>3</sup> I am exhausted from crying for help. My throat is hoarse. My eyes are strained from looking for my God.

<sup>4</sup> Those who hate me for no reason outnumber the hairs on my head. Those who want to destroy me are mighty. They have no reason to be my enemies. I am forced to pay back what I did not steal.

<sup>5</sup> O God, you know my stupidity, and the things of which I am guilty are not hidden from you.

<sup>6</sup>Do not let those who wait with hope for you be put to shame because of me, O Almighty LORD of Armies. Do not let those who come to you for help be humiliated because of me, O God of Israel.

<sup>7</sup>Indeed, for your sake I have endured insults. Humiliation has covered my face.

<sup>8</sup>I have become a stranger to my own brothers, a foreigner to my mothers sons.

<sup>9</sup>Indeed, devotion for your house has consumed me, and the insults of those who insult you have fallen on me.

<sup>10</sup>I cried and fasted, but I was insulted for it.

<sup>11</sup>I dressed myself in sackcloth, but I became the object of ridicule.

<sup>12</sup>Those who sit at the gate gossip about me, and drunkards make up songs about me.

<sup>13</sup>May my prayer come to you at an acceptable time, O LORD. O God, out of the greatness of your mercy, answer me with the truth of your salvation.

<sup>14</sup>Rescue me from the mud. Do not let me sink into it. I want to be rescued

from those who hate me and from the deep water.

<sup>15</sup>Do not let floodwaters sweep me away. Do not let the ocean swallow me up, or the pit close its mouth over me.

<sup>16</sup>Answer me, O LORD, because your mercy is good. Out of your unlimited compassion, turn to me.

<sup>17</sup>I am in trouble, so do not hide your face from me. Answer me quickly!

<sup>18</sup>Come close, and defend my soul. Set me free because of my enemies.

<sup>19</sup>You know that I have been insulted, put to shame, and humiliated. All my opponents are in front of you.

<sup>20</sup>Insults have broken my heart, and I am sick. I looked for sympathy, but there was none. I looked for people to comfort me, but I found no one.

<sup>21</sup>They poisoned my food, and when I was thirsty, they gave me vinegar to drink.

<sup>22</sup>Let the table set for them become a trap and a snare for their friends.

<sup>23</sup>Let their vision become clouded so that they cannot see. Let their thighs continually shake.

<sup>24</sup> Pour your rage on them. Let your burning anger catch up with them.

<sup>25</sup> Let their camp be deserted and their tents empty.

<sup>26</sup> They persecute the one you have struck, and they talk about the pain of those you have wounded.

<sup>27</sup> Charge them with one crime after another. Do not let them be found innocent.

<sup>28</sup> Let their names be erased from the Book of Life. Do not let them be listed with righteous people.

<sup>29</sup> I am suffering and in pain. Let your saving power protect me, O God.

<sup>30</sup> I want to praise the name of God with a song. I want to praise its greatness with a song of thanksgiving.

<sup>31</sup> This will please the LORD more than sacrificing an ox or a bull with horns and hoofs.

<sup>32</sup> Oppressed people will see this and rejoice. May the hearts of those who look to God for help be refreshed.

<sup>33</sup> The LORD listens to needy people. He does not despise his own who are in prison.

<sup>34</sup> Let heaven and earth, the seas, and everything that moves in them, praise him.

<sup>35</sup> When God saves Zion, he will rebuild the cities of Judah. His servants will live there and take possession of it.

<sup>36</sup> The descendants of his servants will inherit it. Those who love him will live there.

**70**<sup>1</sup> For the choir director; by David; to be kept in mind. Come quickly to rescue me, O God! Come quickly to help me, O LORD!

<sup>2</sup> Let those who seek my life be confused and put to shame. Let those who want my downfall be turned back and disgraced.

<sup>3</sup> Let those who say, "Aha! Aha!" be turned back because of their own shame.

<sup>4</sup> Let all who seek you rejoice and be glad because of you. Let those who love your salvation continually say, "God is great!"

<sup>5</sup> But I am oppressed and needy. O God, come to me quickly. You are my help and my savior. O LORD, do not delay!

**71** <sup>1</sup>I have taken refuge in you, O LORD. Never let me be put to shame.

<sup>2</sup>Rescue me and free me because of your righteousness. Turn your ear toward me, and save me.

<sup>3</sup>Be a rock on which I may live, a place where I may always go. You gave the order to save me! Indeed, you are my rock and my fortress.

<sup>4</sup>My God, free me from the hands of a wicked person, from the grasp of one who is cruel and unjust.

<sup>5</sup>You are my hope, O Almighty LORD. You have been my confidence ever since I was young.

<sup>6</sup>I depended on you before I was born. You took me from my mother's womb. My songs of praise constantly speak about you.

<sup>7</sup>I have become an example to many people, but you are my strong refuge.

<sup>8</sup>My mouth is filled with your praise, with your glory all day long.

<sup>9</sup>Do not reject me when I am old or abandon me when I lose my strength.

<sup>10</sup>My enemies talk about me. They watch me as they plot to take my life.

<sup>11</sup> They say, "God has abandoned him. Pursue him and grab him because there is no one to rescue him."

<sup>12</sup> O God, do not be so distant from me. O my God, come quickly to help me.

<sup>13</sup> Let those who accuse me come to a shameful end. Let those who want my downfall be covered with disgrace and humiliation.

<sup>14</sup> But I will always have hope. I will praise you more and more.

<sup>15</sup> My mouth will tell about your righteousness, about your salvation all day long. Even then, it is more than I can understand.

<sup>16</sup> I will come with the mighty deeds of the Almighty LORD. I will praise your righteousness, yours alone.

<sup>17</sup> O God, you have taught me ever since I was young, and I still talk about the miracles you have done.

<sup>18</sup> Even when I am old and gray, do not abandon me, O God. Let me live to tell the people of this age what your strength has accomplished, to tell about your power to all who will come.

<sup>19</sup>Your righteousness reaches to the heavens, O God. You have done great things. O God, who is like you?

<sup>20</sup>You have made me endure many terrible troubles. You restore me to life again. You bring me back from the depths of the earth.

<sup>21</sup>You comfort me and make me greater than ever.

<sup>22</sup>Because of your faithfulness, O my God, even I will give thanks to you as I play on a lyre. I will make music with a harp to praise you, O Holy One of Israel.

<sup>23</sup>My lips will sing with joy when I make music to praise you. My soul, which you have rescued, also will sing joyfully.

<sup>24</sup>My tongue will tell about your righteousness all day long, because those who wanted my downfall have been disgraced and put to shame.

**72**<sup>1</sup> By Solomon. O God, give the king your justice and the king's son your righteousness

<sup>2</sup>so that he may judge your people with righteousness and your oppressed people with justice.

<sup>3</sup>May the mountains bring peace to the people and the hills bring righteousness.

<sup>4</sup> May he grant justice to the people who are oppressed. May he save the children of needy people and crush their oppressor.

<sup>5</sup> May they fear you as long as the sun and moon shine throughout every generation.

<sup>6</sup> May he be like rain that falls on freshly cut grass, like showers that water the land.

<sup>7</sup> May righteous people blossom in his day. May there be unlimited peace until the moon no longer shines.

<sup>8</sup> May he rule from sea to sea, from the Euphrates River to the ends of the earth.

<sup>9</sup> May the people of the desert kneel in front of him. May his enemies lick the dust.

<sup>10</sup> May the kings from Tarshish and the islands bring presents. May the kings from Sheba and Seba bring gifts.

<sup>11</sup> May all kings worship him. May all nations serve him.

<sup>12</sup> He will rescue the needy person who cries for help and the oppressed person who has no one's help.

<sup>13</sup>He will have pity on the poor and needy and will save the lives of the needy.

<sup>14</sup>He will rescue them from oppression and violence. Their blood will be precious in his sight.

<sup>15</sup>May he live long. May the gold from Sheba be given to him. May the people pray for him continually. May they praise him all day long.

<sup>16</sup>May there be plenty of grain in the land. May it wave in the breeze on the mountaintops, its fruit like the treetops of Lebanon. May those from the city flourish like the grass on the ground.

<sup>17</sup>May his name endure forever. May his name continue as long as the sun shines. May all nations be blessed through him and call him blessed.

<sup>18</sup>Thank the LORD God, the God of Israel, who alone does miracles.

<sup>19</sup>Thanks be to his glorious name forever. May the whole earth be filled with his glory. Amen and amen!

<sup>20</sup>The prayers by David, son of Jesse, end here.

**73**<sup>1</sup> A psalm by Asaph. God is truly good to Israel, to those whose lives are pure.

<sup>2</sup> But my feet had almost stumbled. They had almost slipped

<sup>3</sup> because I was envious of arrogant people when I saw the prosperity that wicked people enjoy.

<sup>4</sup> They suffer no pain. Their bodies are healthy.

<sup>5</sup> They have no drudgery in their lives like ordinary people. They are not plagued with problems like others.

<sup>6</sup> That is why they wear arrogance like a necklace and acts of violence like clothing.

<sup>7</sup> Their eyes peer out from their fat faces, and their imaginations run wild.

<sup>8</sup> They ridicule. They speak maliciously. They speak arrogantly about oppression.

<sup>9</sup> They verbally attack heaven, and they order people around on earth.

<sup>10</sup> That is why God's people turn to wickedness and swallow their words.

<sup>11</sup> Then wicked people ask, "What does God know?" "Does the Most High know anything?"

<sup>12</sup>Look how wicked they are! They never have a worry. They grow more and more wealthy.

<sup>13</sup>I've received no reward for keeping my life pure and washing my hands of any blame.

<sup>14</sup>I'm plagued with problems all day long, and every morning my punishment begins again.

<sup>15</sup>If I had said, "I will continue to talk like that," I would have betrayed God's people.

<sup>16</sup>But when I tried to understand this, it was too difficult for me.

<sup>17</sup>Only when I came into God's holy place did I finally understand what would happen to them.

<sup>18</sup>You put them in slippery places and make them fall into ruin.

<sup>19</sup>They are suddenly destroyed. They are completely swept away by terror!

<sup>20</sup>As someone gets rid of a dream when he wakes up, so you, O Lord, get rid of the thought of them when you wake up.

<sup>21</sup>When my heart was filled with bitterness and my mind was seized with envy,

<sup>22</sup>I was stupid, and I did not understand. I was like a dumb animal in your presence.

<sup>23</sup>Yet, I am always with you. You hold on to my right hand.

<sup>24</sup>With your advice you guide me, and in the end you will take me to glory.

<sup>25</sup>As long as I have you, I don't need anyone else in heaven or on earth.

<sup>26</sup>My body and mind may waste away, but God remains the foundation of my life and my inheritance forever.

<sup>27</sup>Without a doubt, those who are far from you will die. You destroy all who are unfaithful to you.

<sup>28</sup>Being united with God is my highest good. I have made the Almighty LORD my refuge so that I may report everything that he has done.

**74**<sup>1</sup> A maskil by Asaph. Why, O God, have you rejected us forever? Why does your anger smolder against the sheep in your care?

<sup>2</sup>Remember your congregation. Long ago you made it your own. You bought this tribe to be your possession. This tribe is Mount Zion, where you have made your home.

<sup>3</sup> Turn your steps toward these pathetic ruins. The enemy has destroyed everything in the holy temple.

<sup>4</sup> Your opponents have roared inside your meeting place. They have set up their own emblems as symbols.

<sup>5</sup> Starting from its entrance, they hacked away like a woodcutter in a forest.

<sup>6</sup> They smashed all its carved paneling with axes and hatchets.

<sup>7</sup> They burned your holy place to the ground. They dishonored the place where you live among us.

<sup>8</sup> They said to themselves, "We will crush them." They burned every meeting place of God in the land.

<sup>9</sup> We no longer see miraculous signs. There are no prophets anymore. No one knows how long this will last.

<sup>10</sup> How long, O God, will the enemy insult us? Will the enemy despise you forever?

<sup>11</sup> Why do you hold back your hand, especially your right hand? Take your hands out of your pockets. Destroy your enemies!

<sup>12</sup>And yet, from long ago God has been my king, the one who has been victorious throughout the earth.

<sup>13</sup>You stirred up the sea with your own strength. You smashed the heads of sea monsters in the water.

<sup>14</sup>You crushed the heads of Leviathan and gave them to the creatures of the desert for food.

<sup>15</sup>You opened the springs and brooks. You dried up the everflowing rivers.

<sup>16</sup>The day and the night are yours. You set the moon and the sun in their places.

<sup>17</sup>You determined all the boundaries of the earth. You created summer and winter.

<sup>18</sup>Remember how the enemy insulted you, O LORD. Remember how an entire nation of godless fools despised your name.

<sup>19</sup>Do not hand over the soul of your dove to wild animals. Do not forget the life of your oppressed people forever.

<sup>20</sup>Consider your promise because every dark corner of the land is filled with violence.

<sup>21</sup> Do not let oppressed people come back in disgrace. Let weak and needy people praise your name.

<sup>22</sup> Arise, O God! Fight for your own cause! Remember how godless fools insult you all day long.

<sup>23</sup> Do not forget the shouting of your opponents. Do not forget the uproar made by those who attack you.

**75** <sup>1</sup> For the choir director; a tashcheth; a psalm by Asaph; a song. We give thanks to you, O God; we give thanks. You are present, and your miracles confirm that.

<sup>2</sup> When I choose the right time, I will judge fairly.

<sup>3</sup> When the earth and everyone who lives on it begin to melt, I will make its foundations as solid as rock. Selah

<sup>4</sup> I said to those who brag, "Dont brag," and to wicked people, "Dont raise your weapons.

<sup>5</sup> Dont raise your weapons so proudly or speak so defiantly."

<sup>6</sup> The authority to reward someone does not come from the east, from the west, or even from the wilderness.

<sup>7</sup> God alone is the judge. He punishes one person and rewards another.

<sup>8</sup> A cup is in the LORDS hand. (Its foaming wine is thoroughly mixed with spices.) He will empty it, and all the wicked people on earth will have to drink every last drop.

<sup>9</sup> But I will speak about your miracles forever. I will make music to praise the God of Jacob.

<sup>10</sup> I will destroy all the weapons of wicked people, but the weapons of righteous people will be raised proudly.

**76** <sup>1</sup> For the choir director; on stringed instruments; a psalm by Asaph; a song. God is known in Judah. His name is great in Israel.

<sup>2</sup> His tent is in Salem. His home is in Zion.

<sup>3</sup> There he destroyed flaming arrows, shields, swords, and weapons of war. Selah

<sup>4</sup> You are the radiant one. You are more majestic than the ancient mountains.

<sup>5</sup> Brave people were robbed. They died. None of the warriors were able to lift a hand.

<sup>6</sup>At your stern warning, O God of Jacob, chariot riders and horses were put to sleep.

<sup>7</sup>You alone must be feared! Who can stand in your presence when you become angry?

<sup>8</sup>From heaven you announced a verdict. The earth was fearful and silent

<sup>9</sup>when you rose to judge, O God, when you rose to save every oppressed person on earth. Selah

<sup>10</sup>Even angry mortals will praise you. You will wear the remainder of their anger.

<sup>11</sup>Make vows to the LORD your God, and keep them. Let everyone around him bring gifts to the one who must be feared.

<sup>12</sup>He cuts short the lives of influential people. He terrifies the kings of the earth.

**77** <sup>1</sup>For the choir director; according to Jeduthun; a psalm by Asaph. Loudly, I cried to God. Loudly, I cried to God so that he would open his ears to hear me.

<sup>2</sup>On the day I was in trouble, I went to the Lord for help. At night I stretched

out my hands in prayer without growing tired. Yet, my soul refused to be comforted.

<sup>3</sup>I sigh as I remember God. I begin to lose hope as I think about him. Selah

<sup>4</sup>(You keep my eyelids open.) I am so upset that I cannot speak.

<sup>5</sup>I have considered the days of old, the years long ago.

<sup>6</sup>I remember my song in the night and reflect on it. My spirit searches for an answer:

<sup>7</sup>Will the Lord reject me for all time? Will he ever accept me?

<sup>8</sup>Has his mercy come to an end forever? Has his promise been canceled throughout every generation?

<sup>9</sup>Has God forgotten to be merciful? Has he locked up his compassion because of his anger? Selah

<sup>10</sup>Then I said, "It makes me feel sick that the power of the Most High is no longer the same."

<sup>11</sup>I will remember the deeds of the LORD. I will remember your ancient miracles.

<sup>12</sup>I will reflect on all your actions and think about what you have done.

<sup>13</sup>O God, your ways are holy! What god is as great as our God?

<sup>14</sup>You are the God who performs miracles. You have made your strength known among the nations.

<sup>15</sup>With your might you have defended your people, the descendants of Jacob and Joseph. Selah

<sup>16</sup>The water saw you, O God. The water saw you and shook. Even the depths of the sea trembled.

<sup>17</sup>The clouds poured out water. The sky thundered. Even your arrows flashed in every direction.

<sup>18</sup>The sound of your thunder rumbled in the sky. Streaks of lightning lit up the world. The earth trembled and shook.

<sup>19</sup>Your road went through the sea. Your path went through raging water, but your footprints could not be seen.

<sup>20</sup>Like a shepherd, you led your people. You had Moses and Aaron take them by the hand.

**78**<sup>1</sup>A maskil by Asaph. Open your ears to my teachings, my people. Turn your ears to the words from my mouth.

<sup>2</sup>I will open my mouth to illustrate points. I will explain what has been hidden long ago,

<sup>3</sup>things that we have heard and known about, things that our parents have told us.

<sup>4</sup>We will not hide them from our children. We will tell the next generation about the LORDS power and great deeds and the miraculous things he has done.

<sup>5</sup>He established written instructions for Jacobs people. He gave his teachings to Israel. He commanded our ancestors to make them known to their children

<sup>6</sup>so that the next generation would know them. Children yet to be born would learn them. They will grow up and tell their children

<sup>7</sup>to trust God, to remember what he has done, and to obey his commands.

<sup>8</sup>Then they will not be like their ancestors, a stubborn and rebellious generation. Their hearts were not loyal. Their spirits were not faithful to God.

<sup>9</sup>The men of Ephraim, wellequipped with bows and arrows, turned and ran on the day of battle.

<sup>10</sup>They had not been faithful to Gods promise. They refused to follow his teachings.

<sup>11</sup>They forgot what he had done the miracles that he had shown them.

<sup>12</sup>In front of their ancestors he performed miracles in the land of Egypt, in the fields of Zoan.

<sup>13</sup>He divided the sea and led them through it. He made the waters stand up like a wall.

<sup>14</sup>He guided them by a cloud during the day and by a fiery light throughout the night.

<sup>15</sup>He split rocks in the desert. He gave them plenty to drink, an ocean of water.

<sup>16</sup>He made streams come out of a rock. He made the water flow like rivers.

<sup>17</sup>They continued to sin against him, to rebel in the desert against the Most High.

<sup>18</sup>They deliberately tested God by demanding the food they craved.

<sup>19</sup>They spoke against God by saying, "Can God prepare a banquet in the desert?"

<sup>20</sup>True, he did strike a rock, and water did gush out, and the streams did

overflow. But can he also give us bread or provide us, his people, with meat?"

<sup>21</sup> When the LORD heard this, he became furious. His fire burned against Jacob and his anger flared up at Israel

<sup>22</sup> because they did not believe God or trust him to save them.

<sup>23</sup> In spite of that, he commanded the clouds above and opened the doors of heaven.

<sup>24</sup> He rained manna down on them to eat and gave them grain from heaven.

<sup>25</sup> Humans ate the bread of the mighty ones, and God sent them plenty of food.

<sup>26</sup> He made the east wind blow in the heavens and guided the south wind with his might.

<sup>27</sup> He rained meat down on them like dust, birds like the sand on the seashore.

<sup>28</sup> He made the birds fall in the middle of his camp, all around his dwelling place.

<sup>29</sup> They ate more than enough. He gave them what they wanted,

<sup>30</sup> but they still wanted more. While the food was still in their mouths,

<sup>31</sup> the anger of God flared up against them. He killed their strongest men

and slaughtered the best young men in Israel.

<sup>32</sup>In spite of all this, they continued to sin, and they no longer believed in his miracles.

<sup>33</sup>He brought their days to an end like a whisper in the wind. He brought their years to an end in terror.

<sup>34</sup>When he killed some of them, the rest searched for him. They turned from their sins and eagerly looked for God.

<sup>35</sup>They remembered that God was their rock, that the Most High was their defender.

<sup>36</sup>They flattered him with their mouths and lied to him with their tongues.

<sup>37</sup>Their hearts were not loyal to him. They were not faithful to his promise.

<sup>38</sup>But he is compassionate. He forgave their sin. He did not destroy them. He restrained his anger many times. He did not display all of his fury.

<sup>39</sup>He remembered that they were only flesh and blood, a breeze that blows and does not return.

<sup>40</sup>How often they rebelled against him in the wilderness! How often they caused him grief in the desert!

<sup>41</sup> Again and again they tested God, and they pushed the Holy One of Israel to the limit.

<sup>42</sup> They did not remember his power the day he freed them from their oppressor,

<sup>43</sup> when he performed his miraculous signs in Egypt, his wonders in the fields of Zoan.

<sup>44</sup> He turned their rivers into blood so that they could not drink from their streams.

<sup>45</sup> He sent a swarm of flies that bit them and frogs that ruined them.

<sup>46</sup> He gave their crops to grasshoppers and their produce to locusts.

<sup>47</sup> He killed their vines with hail and their fig trees with frost.

<sup>48</sup> He let the hail strike their cattle and bolts of lightning strike their livestock.

<sup>49</sup> He sent his burning anger, rage, fury, and hostility against them. He sent an army of destroying angels.

<sup>50</sup> He cleared a path for his anger. He did not spare them. He let the plague take their lives.

<sup>51</sup> He slaughtered every firstborn in Egypt, the ones born in the tents of Ham when their fathers were young.

<sup>52</sup> But he led his own people out like sheep and guided them like a flock through the wilderness.

<sup>53</sup> He led them safely. They had no fear while the sea covered their enemies.

<sup>54</sup> He brought them into his holy land, to this mountain that his power had won.

<sup>55</sup> He forced nations out of their way and gave them the land of the nations as their inheritance. He settled the tribes of Israel in their own tents.

<sup>56</sup> They tested God Most High and rebelled against him. They did not obey his written instructions.

<sup>57</sup> They were disloyal and treacherous like their ancestors. They were like arrows shot from a defective bow.

<sup>58</sup> They made him angry because of their illegal worship sites. They made him furious because they worshiped idols.

<sup>59</sup> When God heard, he became furious. He completely rejected Israel.

<sup>60</sup> He abandoned his dwelling place in Shiloh, the tent where he had lived among humans.

<sup>61</sup> He allowed his power to be taken captive and handed his glory over to an oppressor.

<sup>62</sup> He let swords kill his people. He was furious with those who belonged to him.

<sup>63</sup> Fire consumed his best young men, so his virgins heard no wedding songs.

<sup>64</sup> His priests were cut down with swords. The widows of his priests could not even weep for them.

<sup>65</sup> Then the Lord woke up like one who had been sleeping, like a warrior sobering up from too much wine.

<sup>66</sup> He struck his enemies from behind and disgraced them forever.

<sup>67</sup> He rejected the tent of Joseph. He did not choose the tribe of Ephraim,

<sup>68</sup> but he chose the tribe of Judah, Mount Zion which he loved.

<sup>69</sup> He built his holy place to be like the high heavens, like the earth which he made to last for a long time.

<sup>70</sup> He chose his servant David. He took him from the sheep pens.

<sup>71</sup> He brought him from tending the ewes that had lambs so that David could be the shepherd of the people of Jacob,

of Israel, the people who belonged to the LORD.

<sup>72</sup>With unselfish devotion David became their shepherd. With skill he guided them.

**79**<sup>1</sup>A psalm by Asaph. O God, the nations have invaded the land that belongs to you. They have dishonored your holy temple. They have left Jerusalem in ruins.

<sup>2</sup>They have given the dead bodies of your servants to the birds for food. They have given the flesh of your godly ones to the animals.

<sup>3</sup>They have shed the blood of your people around Jerusalem as though it were water. There is no one to bury your people.

<sup>4</sup>We have become a disgrace to our neighbors, an object of ridicule and contempt to those around us.

<sup>5</sup>How long, O LORD? Will you remain angry forever? Will your fury continue to burn like fire?

<sup>6</sup>Pour your fury on the nations that do not know you, on the kingdoms that have not called you.

<sup>7</sup>They have devoured Jacob. They have destroyed his home.

<sup>8</sup>Do not hold the crimes of our ancestors against us. Reach out to us soon with your compassion, because we are helpless.

<sup>9</sup>Help us, O God, our savior, for the glory of your name. Rescue us, and forgive our sins for the honor of your name.

<sup>10</sup>Why should the nations be allowed to say, "Where is their God?" Let us watch as the nations learn that there is punishment for shedding the blood of your servants.

<sup>11</sup>Let the groans of prisoners come into your presence. With your powerful arm rescue those who are condemned to death.

<sup>12</sup>Pay each one of our neighbors back with seven times the number of insults they used to insult you, O Lord.

<sup>13</sup>Then we, your people, the flock in your pasture, will give thanks to you forever. We will praise you throughout every generation.

**80**<sup>1</sup>For the choir director; according to shoshannim eduth; by Asaph;

a psalm. Open your ears, O Shepherd of Israel, the one who leads the descendants of Joseph like sheep, the one who is enthroned over the angels.

<sup>2</sup>Appear in front of Ephraim, Benjamin, and Manasseh. Wake up your power, and come to save us.

<sup>3</sup>O God, restore us and smile on us so that we may be saved.

<sup>4</sup>O LORD God, commander of armies, how long will you smolder in anger against the prayer of your people?

<sup>5</sup>You made them eat tears as food. You often made them drink their own tears.

<sup>6</sup>You made us a source of conflict to our neighbors, and our enemies made fun of us.

<sup>7</sup>O God, commander of armies, restore us and smile on us so that we may be saved.

<sup>8</sup>You brought a vine from Egypt. You forced out the nations and planted it.

<sup>9</sup>You cleared the ground for it so that it took root and filled the land.

<sup>10</sup>Its shade covered the mountains. Its branches covered the mighty cedars.

<sup>11</sup> It reached out with its branches to the Mediterranean Sea. Its shoots reached the Euphrates River.

<sup>12</sup> Why did you break down the stone fences around this vine? All who pass by are picking its fruit.

<sup>13</sup> Wild boars from the forest graze on it. Wild animals devour it.

<sup>14</sup> O God, commander of armies, come back! Look from heaven and see! Come to help this vine.

<sup>15</sup> Take care of what your right hand planted, the son you strengthened for yourself.

<sup>16</sup> The vine has been cut down and burned. Let them be destroyed by the threatening look on your face.

<sup>17</sup> Let your power rest on the man you have chosen, the son of man you strengthened for yourself.

<sup>18</sup> Then we will never turn away from you. Give us life again, and we will call on you.

<sup>19</sup> O LORD God, commander of armies, restore us, and smile on us so that we may be saved.

**81** <sup>1</sup> For the choir director; on the gittith; by Asaph. Sing joyfully to

God, our strength. Shout happily to the God of Jacob.

<sup>2</sup>Begin a psalm, and strike a tambourine. Play lyres and harps with their pleasant music.

<sup>3</sup>Blow the rams horn on the day of the new moon, on the day of the full moon, on our festival days.

<sup>4</sup>This is a law for Israel, a legal decision from the God of Jacob.

<sup>5</sup>These are the instructions God set in place for Joseph when Joseph rose to power over Egypt. I heard a message I did not understand:

<sup>6</sup>"I removed the burden from his shoulder. His hands were freed from the basket.

<sup>7</sup>When you were in trouble, you called out to me, and I rescued you. I was hidden in thunder, but I answered you. I tested your loyalty at the oasis of Meribah. Selah

<sup>8</sup>Listen, my people, and I will warn you. Israel, if you would only listen to me!

<sup>9</sup>Never keep any strange god among you. Never worship a foreign god.

<sup>10</sup>I am the LORD your God, the one who brought you out of Egypt. Open your mouth wide, and I will fill it.

<sup>11</sup>"But my people did not listen to me. Israel wanted nothing to do with me.

<sup>12</sup>So I let them go their own stubborn ways and follow their own advice.

<sup>13</sup>If only my people would listen to me! If only Israel would follow me!

<sup>14</sup>I would quickly defeat their enemies. I would turn my power against their foes.

<sup>15</sup>Those who hate the LORD would cringe in front of him, and their time for punishment would last forever.

<sup>16</sup>But I would feed Israel with the finest wheat and satisfy them with honey from a rock."

**82**<sup>1</sup> A psalm by Asaph. God takes his place in his own assembly. He pronounces judgment among the gods:

<sup>2</sup>"How long are you going to judge unfairly? How long are you going to side with wicked people?" Selah

<sup>3</sup>Defend weak people and orphans. Protect the rights of the oppressed and the poor.

<sup>4</sup>Rescue weak and needy people. Help them escape the power of wicked people.

<sup>5</sup>Wicked people do not know or understand anything. As they walk around in the dark, all the foundations of the earth shake.

<sup>6</sup>I said, "You are gods. You are all sons of the Most High.

<sup>7</sup>You will certainly die like humans and fall like any prince."

<sup>8</sup>Arise, O God! Judge the earth, because all the nations belong to you.

**83** <sup>1</sup>A song; a psalm by Asaph. O God, do not remain silent. Do not turn a deaf ear to me. Do not keep quiet, O God.

<sup>2</sup>Look, your enemies are in an uproar. Those who hate you hold their heads high.

<sup>3</sup>They make plans in secret against your people and plot together against those you treasure.

<sup>4</sup>They say, "Let's wipe out their nation so that the name of Israel will no longer be remembered."

<sup>5</sup>They agree completely on their plan. They form an alliance against you:

<sup>6</sup> the tents from Edom and Ishmael,  
Moab and Hagar,

<sup>7</sup> Gebal, Ammon, and Amalek, Philistia,  
along with those who live in Tyre.

<sup>8</sup> Even Assyria has joined them. They  
helped the descendants of Lot. Selah

<sup>9</sup> Do to them what you did to Midian, to  
Sisera and Jabin at the Kishon River.

<sup>10</sup> They were destroyed at Endor. They  
became manure to fertilize the ground.

<sup>11</sup> Treat their influential people as you  
treated Oreb and Zeeb. Treat all their  
leaders like Zebah and Zalmunna.

<sup>12</sup> They said, "Let's take God's  
pasturelands for ourselves."

<sup>13</sup> O my God, blow them away like  
tumbleweeds, like husks in the wind.

<sup>14</sup> Pursue them with your storms, and  
terrify them with your windstorms

<sup>15</sup> the way fire burns a forest and flames  
set mountains on fire.

<sup>16</sup> Let their faces blush with shame, O  
LORD, so that they must look to you for  
help.

<sup>17</sup> Let them be put to shame and  
terrified forever. Let them die in disgrace

<sup>18</sup>so that they must acknowledge you. Your name is the LORD. You alone are the Most High God of the whole earth.

**84** <sup>1</sup>For the choir director; on the gittith; a psalm by Korahs descendants. Your dwelling place is lovely, O LORD of Armies!

<sup>2</sup>My soul longs and yearns for the LORDS courtyards. My whole body shouts for joy to the living God.

<sup>3</sup>Even sparrows find a home, and swallows find a nest for themselves. There they hatch their young near your altars, O LORD of Armies, my king and my God.

<sup>4</sup>Blessed are those who live in your house. They are always praising you. Selah

<sup>5</sup>Blessed are those who find strength in you. Their hearts are on the road that leads to you.

<sup>6</sup>As they pass through a valley where balsam trees grow, they make it a place of springs. The early rains cover it with blessings.

<sup>7</sup>Their strength grows as they go along until each one of them appears in front of God in Zion.

<sup>8</sup>O LORD God, commander of armies, hear my prayer. Open your ears, O God of Jacob. Selah

<sup>9</sup>Look at our shield, O God. Look with favor on the face of your anointed one.

<sup>10</sup>One day in your courtyards is better than a thousand anywhere else. I would rather stand in the entrance to my Gods house than live inside wicked peoples homes.

<sup>11</sup>The LORD God is a sun and shield. The LORD grants favor and honor. He does not hold back any blessing from those who live innocently.

<sup>12</sup>O LORD of Armies, blessed is the person who trusts you.

**85** <sup>1</sup>For the choir director; a psalm by Korahs descendants. You favored your land, O LORD. You restored the fortunes of Jacob.

<sup>2</sup>You removed your peoples guilt. You pardoned all their sins. Selah

<sup>3</sup>You laid aside all your fury. You turned away from your burning anger.

<sup>4</sup>Restore us, O God, our savior. Put an end to your anger against us.

<sup>5</sup> Will you be angry with us forever?  
Will you ever let go of your anger in the  
generations to come?

<sup>6</sup> Wont you restore our lives again so  
that your people may find joy in you?

<sup>7</sup> Show us your mercy, O LORD, by  
giving us your salvation.

<sup>8</sup> I want to hear what God the LORD  
says, because he promises peace to his  
people, to his godly ones. But they must  
not go back to their stupidity.

<sup>9</sup> Indeed, his salvation is near those  
who fear him, and his glory will remain  
in our land.

<sup>10</sup> Mercy and truth have met.  
Righteousness and peace have kissed.

<sup>11</sup> Truth sprouts from the ground, and  
righteousness looks down from heaven.

<sup>12</sup> The LORD will certainly give us what  
is good, and our land will produce crops.

<sup>13</sup> Righteousness will go ahead of him  
and make a path for his steps.

**86** <sup>1</sup> A prayer by David. Turn your ear  
toward me, O LORD. Answer me,  
because I am oppressed and needy.

<sup>2</sup> Protect me, because I am faithful to  
you. Save your servant who trusts you.  
You are my God.

<sup>3</sup> Have pity on me, O Lord, because I call out to you all day long.

<sup>4</sup> Give me joy, O Lord, because I lift my soul to you.

<sup>5</sup> You, O Lord, are good and forgiving, full of mercy toward everyone who calls out to you.

<sup>6</sup> Open your ears to my prayer, O LORD. Pay attention when I plead for mercy.

<sup>7</sup> When I am in trouble, I call out to you because you answer me.

<sup>8</sup> No god is like you, O Lord. No one can do what you do.

<sup>9</sup> All the nations that you have made will bow in your presence, O Lord. They will honor you.

<sup>10</sup> Indeed, you are great, a worker of miracles. You alone are God.

<sup>11</sup> Teach me your way, O LORD, so that I may live in your truth. Focus my heart on fearing you.

<sup>12</sup> I will give thanks to you with all my heart, O Lord my God. I will honor you forever

<sup>13</sup> because your mercy toward me is great. You have rescued me from the depths of hell.

<sup>14</sup>O God, arrogant people attack me, and a mob of ruthless people seeks my life. They think nothing of you.

<sup>15</sup>But you, O Lord, are a compassionate and merciful God. You are patient, always faithful and ready to forgive.

<sup>16</sup>Turn toward me, and have pity on me. Give me your strength because I am your servant. Save me because I am the son of your female servant.

<sup>17</sup>Grant me some proof of your goodness so that those who hate me may see it and be put to shame. You, O LORD, have helped me and comforted me.

**87** <sup>1</sup>By Korahs descendants; a psalm; a song. The city the LORD has founded stands on holy mountains.

<sup>2</sup>The LORD loves the city of Zion more than any other place in Jacob.

<sup>3</sup>Glorious things are said about you, O city of God! Selah

<sup>4</sup>The LORD says, "I will add Egypt and Babylon as well as Philistia, Tyre, and Sudan to the list of those who acknowledge me. Each nation will claim that it was born there."

<sup>5</sup>But it will be said of Zion, "Every race is born in it. The Most High will make it secure."

<sup>6</sup>The LORD will record this in the Book of Nations: "Every race claims that it was born there." Selah

<sup>7</sup>Singers and dancers will sing, "Zion is the source of all our blessings."

**88**<sup>1</sup>A song; a psalm by Korahs descendants; for the choir director; according to mahalath leannoth; a maskil by Heman the Ezrahite. O LORD God, my savior, I cry out to you during the day and at night.

<sup>2</sup>Let my prayer come into your presence. Turn your ear to hear my cries.

<sup>3</sup>My soul is filled with troubles, and my life comes closer to the grave.

<sup>4</sup>I am numbered with those who go into the pit. I am like a man without any strength

<sup>5</sup>abandoned with the dead, like those who have been killed and lie in graves, like those whom you no longer remember, who are cut off from your power.

<sup>6</sup>You have put me in the bottom of the pit in deep, dark places.

<sup>7</sup>Your rage lies heavily on me. You make all your waves pound on me. Selah

<sup>8</sup>You have taken my friends far away from me. You made me disgusting to them. I'm shut in, and I can't get out.

<sup>9</sup>My eyes grow weak because of my suffering. All day long I call out to you, O LORD. I stretch out my hands to you in prayer.

<sup>10</sup>Will you perform miracles for those who are dead? Will the spirits of the dead rise and give thanks to you? Selah

<sup>11</sup>Will anyone tell about your mercy in Sheol or about your faithfulness in Abaddon?

<sup>12</sup>Will anyone know about your miracles in that dark place or about your righteousness in the place where forgotten people live?

<sup>13</sup>I cry out to you for help, O LORD, and in the morning my prayer will come into your presence.

<sup>14</sup>Why do you reject my soul, O LORD? Why do you hide your face from me?

<sup>15</sup>Ever since I was young, I have been suffering and near death. I have endured your terrors, and now I am in despair.

<sup>16</sup>Your burning anger has swept over me. Your terrors have destroyed me.

<sup>17</sup>They swirl around me all day long like water. They surround me on all sides.

<sup>18</sup>You have taken my loved ones and friends far away from me. Darkness is my only friend!

**89**<sup>1</sup> A maskil by Ethan the Ezrahite. I will sing forever about the evidence of your mercy, O LORD. I will tell about your faithfulness to every generation.

<sup>2</sup>I said, "Your mercy will last forever. Your faithfulness stands firm in the heavens."

<sup>3</sup>You said, "I have made a promise to my chosen one. I swore this oath to my servant David:

<sup>4</sup>I will make your dynasty continue forever. I built your throne to last throughout every generation." Selah

<sup>5</sup>O LORD, the heavens praise your miracles and your faithfulness in the assembly of the holy ones.

<sup>6</sup>Who in the skies can compare with the LORD? Who among the heavenly beings is like the LORD?

<sup>7</sup> God is terrifying in the council of the holy ones. He is greater and more aweinspiring than those who surround him.

<sup>8</sup> O LORD God of Armies, who is like you? Mighty LORD, even your faithfulness surrounds you.

<sup>9</sup> You rule the raging sea. When its waves rise, you quiet them.

<sup>10</sup> You crushed Rahab; it was like a corpse. With your strong arm you scattered your enemies.

<sup>11</sup> The heavens are yours. The earth is also yours. You made the world and everything in it.

<sup>12</sup> You created north and south. Mount Tabor and Mount Hermon sing your name joyfully.

<sup>13</sup> Your arm is mighty. Your hand is strong. Your right hand is lifted high.

<sup>14</sup> Righteousness and justice are the foundations of your throne. Mercy and truth stand in front of you.

<sup>15</sup> Blessed are the people who know how to praise you. They walk in the light of your presence, O LORD.

<sup>16</sup>They find joy in your name all day long. They are joyful in your righteousness

<sup>17</sup>because you are the glory of their strength. By your favor you give us victory.

<sup>18</sup>Our shield belongs to the LORD. Our king belongs to the Holy One of Israel.

<sup>19</sup>Once in a vision you said to your faithful ones: "I set a boy above warriors. I have raised up one chosen from the people.

<sup>20</sup>I found my servant David. I anointed him with my holy oil.

<sup>21</sup>My hand is ready to help him. My arm will also give him strength.

<sup>22</sup>No enemy will take him by surprise. No wicked person will mistreat him.

<sup>23</sup>I will crush his enemies in front of him and defeat those who hate him.

<sup>24</sup>My faithfulness and mercy will be with him, and in my name he will be victorious.

<sup>25</sup>I will put his left hand on the sea and his right hand on the rivers.

<sup>26</sup>He will call out to me, You are my Father, my God, and the rock of my salvation.

<sup>27</sup> Yes, I will make him the firstborn. He will be the Most High to the kings of the earth.

<sup>28</sup> My mercy will stay with him forever. My promise to him is unbreakable.

<sup>29</sup> I will make his dynasty endure forever and his throne like the days of heaven.

<sup>30</sup> "If his descendants abandon my teachings and do not live by my rules,

<sup>31</sup> if they violate my laws and do not obey my commandments,

<sup>32</sup> then with a rod I will punish their rebellion and their crimes with beatings.

<sup>33</sup> But I will not take my mercy away from him or allow my truth to become a lie.

<sup>34</sup> I will not dishonor my promise or alter my own agreement.

<sup>35</sup> On my holiness I have taken an oath once and for all: I will not lie to David.

<sup>36</sup> His dynasty will last forever. His throne will be in my presence like the sun.

<sup>37</sup> Like the moon his throne will stand firm forever. It will be like a faithful witness in heaven."

<sup>38</sup> But you have despised, rejected, and become angry with your anointed one.

<sup>39</sup> You have refused to recognize the promise to your servant and have thrown his crown into the dirt.

<sup>40</sup> You have broken through all his walls and have laid his fortified cities in ruins.

<sup>41</sup> (Everyone who passed by robbed him. He has become the object of his neighbors scorn.)

<sup>42</sup> You held the right hand of his enemies high and made all of his adversaries rejoice.

<sup>43</sup> You even took his sword out of his hand and failed to support him in battle.

<sup>44</sup> You put an end to his splendor and hurled his throne to the ground.

<sup>45</sup> You cut short the days of his youth and covered him with shame. Selah

<sup>46</sup> How long, O LORD? Will you hide yourself forever? How long will your anger continue to burn like fire?

<sup>47</sup> Remember how short my life is! Have you created Adams descendants for no reason?

<sup>48</sup> Can a mortal go on living and never see death? Who can set himself free from the power of the grave? Selah

<sup>49</sup>Where is the evidence of your mercy, Lord? You swore an oath to David on the basis of your faithfulness.

<sup>50</sup>Remember, O LORD, how your servant has been insulted. Remember how I have carried in my heart the insults from so many people.

<sup>51</sup>Your enemies insulted me. They insulted your Messiah every step he took.

<sup>52</sup>Thank the LORD forever. Amen and amen!

**90**<sup>1</sup>A prayer by Moses, the man of God. O Lord, you have been our refuge throughout every generation.

<sup>2</sup>Before the mountains were born, before you gave birth to the earth and the world, you were God. You are God from everlasting to everlasting.

<sup>3</sup>You turn mortals back into dust and say, "Return, descendants of Adam."

<sup>4</sup>Indeed, in your sight a thousand years are like a single day, like yesterday already past like an hour in the night.

<sup>5</sup>You sweep mortals away. They are a dream. They sprout again in the morning like cut grass.

<sup>6</sup>In the morning they blossom and sprout. In the evening they wither and dry up.

<sup>7</sup>Indeed, your anger consumes us. Your rage terrifies us.

<sup>8</sup>You have set our sins in front of you. You have put our secret sins in the light of your presence.

<sup>9</sup>Indeed, all our days slip away because of your fury. We live out our years like one long sigh.

<sup>10</sup>Each of us lives for 70 years or even 80 if we are in good health. But the best of them bring trouble and misery. Indeed, they are soon gone, and we fly away.

<sup>11</sup>Who fully understands the power of your anger? A person fears you more when he better understands your fury.

<sup>12</sup>Teach us to number each of our days so that we may grow in wisdom.

<sup>13</sup>Return, LORD! How long? Change your plans about us, your servants.

<sup>14</sup>Satisfy us every morning with your mercy so that we may sing joyfully and rejoice all our days.

<sup>15</sup> Make us rejoice for as many days as you have made us suffer, for as many years as we have experienced evil.

<sup>16</sup> Let us, your servants, see what you can do. Let our children see your glorious power.

<sup>17</sup> Let the kindness of the Lord our God be with us. Make us successful in everything we do. Yes, make us successful in everything we do.

**91** <sup>1</sup> Whoever lives under the shelter of the Most High will remain in the shadow of the Almighty.

<sup>2</sup> I will say to the LORD, "You are my refuge and my fortress, my God in whom I trust."

<sup>3</sup> He is the one who will rescue you from hunters traps and from deadly plagues.

<sup>4</sup> He will cover you with his feathers, and under his wings you will find refuge. His truth is your shield and armor.

<sup>5</sup> You do not need to fear terrors of the night, arrows that fly during the day,

<sup>6</sup> plagues that roam the dark, epidemics that strike at noon.

<sup>7</sup> They will not come near you, even though a thousand may fall dead beside you or ten thousand at your right side.

<sup>8</sup>You only have to look with your eyes to see the punishment of wicked people.

<sup>9</sup>You, O LORD, are my refuge! You have made the Most High your home.

<sup>10</sup>No harm will come to you. No sickness will come near your house.

<sup>11</sup>He will put his angels in charge of you to protect you in all your ways.

<sup>12</sup>They will carry you in their hands so that you never hit your foot against a rock.

<sup>13</sup>You will step on lions and cobras. You will trample young lions and snakes.

<sup>14</sup>Because you love me, I will rescue you. I will protect you because you know my name.

<sup>15</sup>When you call to me, I will answer you. I will be with you when you are in trouble. I will save you and honor you.

<sup>16</sup>I will satisfy you with a long life. I will show you how I will save you.

**92**<sup>1</sup>A psalm; a song; for the day of worship. It is good to give thanks to the LORD, to make music to praise your name, O Most High.

<sup>2</sup>It is good to announce your mercy in the morning and your faithfulness in the evening

<sup>3</sup> on a tenstringed instrument and a harp and with a melody on a lyre.

<sup>4</sup> You made me find joy in what you have done, O LORD. I will sing joyfully about the works of your hands.

<sup>5</sup> How spectacular are your works, O LORD! How very deep are your thoughts!

<sup>6</sup> A stupid person cannot know and a fool cannot understand

<sup>7</sup> that wicked people sprout like grass and all troublemakers blossom like flowers, only to be destroyed forever.

<sup>8</sup> But you, O LORD, are highly honored forever.

<sup>9</sup> Now look at your enemies, O LORD. Now look at your enemies. They disappear, and all troublemakers are scattered.

<sup>10</sup> But you make me as strong as a wild bull, and soothing lotion is poured on me.

<sup>11</sup> My eyes gloat over those who spy on me. My ears hear the cries of evildoers attacking me.

<sup>12</sup> Righteous people flourish like palm trees and grow tall like the cedars in Lebanon.

<sup>13</sup>They are planted in the LORDS house.  
They blossom in our Gods courtyards.

<sup>14</sup>Even when they are old, they still  
bear fruit. They are always healthy and  
fresh.

<sup>15</sup>They make it known that the LORD is  
decent. He is my rock. He is never unfair.

**93** <sup>1</sup>The LORD rules as king! He is  
clothed with majesty. The LORD  
has clothed himself; he has armed  
himself with power. The world was set in  
place; it cannot be moved.

<sup>2</sup>Your throne was set in place a long  
time ago. You are eternal.

<sup>3</sup>The ocean rises, O LORD. The ocean  
rises with a roar. The ocean rises with its  
pounding waves.

<sup>4</sup>The LORD above is mighty mightier  
than the sound of raging water, mightier  
than the foaming waves of the sea.

<sup>5</sup>Your written testimonies are  
completely reliable. O LORD, holiness  
is what makes your house beautiful for  
days without end.

**94** <sup>1</sup>O LORD, God of vengeance, O  
God of vengeance, appear!

<sup>2</sup>Arise, O Judge of the earth. Give  
arrogant people what they deserve.

<sup>3</sup> How long, O LORD, will wicked people triumph? How long?

<sup>4</sup> They ramble. They speak arrogantly. All troublemakers brag about themselves.

<sup>5</sup> They crush your people, O LORD. They make those who belong to you suffer.

<sup>6</sup> They kill widows and foreigners, and they murder orphans.

<sup>7</sup> They say, "The LORD doesn't see it. The God of Jacob doesn't even pay attention to it."

<sup>8</sup> Pay attention, you stupid people! When will you become wise, you fools?

<sup>9</sup> God created ears. Do you think he can't hear? He formed eyes. Do you think he can't see?

<sup>10</sup> He disciplines nations. Do you think he can't punish? He teaches people. Do you think he doesn't know anything?

<sup>11</sup> The LORD knows that people's thoughts are pointless.

<sup>12</sup> O LORD, blessed is the person whom you discipline and instruct from your teachings.

<sup>13</sup> You give him peace and quiet from times of trouble while a pit is dug to trap wicked people.

<sup>14</sup>The LORD will never desert his people or abandon those who belong to him.

<sup>15</sup>The decisions of judges will again become fair, and everyone whose motives are decent will pursue justice.

<sup>16</sup>Who will stand up for me against evildoers? Who will stand by my side against troublemakers?

<sup>17</sup>If the LORD had not come to help me, my soul would have quickly fallen silent in death.

<sup>18</sup>When I said, "My feet are slipping," your mercy, O LORD, continued to hold me up.

<sup>19</sup>When I worried about many things, your assuring words soothed my soul.

<sup>20</sup>Are wicked rulers who use the law to do unlawful things able to be your partners?

<sup>21</sup>They join forces to take the lives of righteous people. They condemn innocent people to death.

<sup>22</sup>The LORD has become my stronghold. My God has become my rock of refuge.

<sup>23</sup>He has turned their own wickedness against them. He will destroy them because of their sins. The LORD our God will destroy them.

**95** <sup>1</sup> Come, let's sing joyfully to the LORD. Let's shout happily to the rock of our salvation.

<sup>2</sup> Let's come into his presence with a song of thanksgiving. Let's shout happily to him with psalms.

<sup>3</sup> The LORD is a great God and a great king above all gods.

<sup>4</sup> In his hand are the deep places of the earth, and the mountain peaks are his.

<sup>5</sup> The sea is his. He made it, and his hands formed the dry land.

<sup>6</sup> Come, let's worship and bow down. Let's kneel in front of the LORD, our maker,

<sup>7</sup> because he is our God and we are the people in his care, the flock that he leads. If only you would listen to him today!

<sup>8</sup> "Do not be stubborn like my people were at Meribah, like the time at Massah in the desert.

<sup>9</sup> Your ancestors challenged me and tested me there, although they had seen what I had done.

<sup>10</sup> For 40 years I was disgusted with those people. So I said, They are a

people whose hearts continue to stray.  
They have not learned my ways.

<sup>11</sup>That is why I angrily took this solemn oath: They will never enter my place of rest!"

**96** <sup>1</sup>Sing to the LORD a new song!  
Sing to the LORD, all the earth!

<sup>2</sup>Sing to the LORD! Praise his name!  
Day after day announce that the LORD  
saves his people.

<sup>3</sup>Tell people about his glory. Tell all the  
nations about his miracles.

<sup>4</sup>The LORD is great! He should be  
highly praised. He should be feared more  
than all other gods

<sup>5</sup>because all the gods of the nations are  
idols. The LORD made the heavens.

<sup>6</sup>Splendor and majesty are in his  
presence. Strength and beauty are in his  
holy place.

<sup>7</sup>Give to the LORD, you families of the  
nations. Give to the LORD glory and  
power.

<sup>8</sup>Give to the LORD the glory he  
deserves. Bring an offering, and come  
into his courtyards.

<sup>9</sup>Worship the LORD in his holy splendor.  
Tremble in his presence, all the earth!

<sup>10</sup>Say to the nations, "The LORD rules as king!" The earth stands firm; it cannot be moved. He will judge people fairly.

<sup>11</sup>Let the heavens rejoice and the earth be glad. Let the sea and everything in it roar like thunder.

<sup>12</sup>Let the fields and everything in them rejoice. Then all the trees in the forest will sing joyfully

<sup>13</sup>in the LORDS presence because he is coming. He is coming to judge the earth. He will judge the world with righteousness and its people with his truth.

**97** <sup>1</sup>The LORD rules as king. Let the earth rejoice. Let all the islands be joyful.

<sup>2</sup>Clouds and darkness surround him. Righteousness and justice are the foundations of his throne.

<sup>3</sup>Fire spreads ahead of him. It burns his enemies who surround him.

<sup>4</sup>His flashes of lightning light up the world. The earth sees them and trembles.

<sup>5</sup>The mountains melt like wax in the presence of the LORD, in the presence of the Lord of the whole earth.

<sup>6</sup>The heavens tell about his righteousness, and all the people of the world see his glory.

<sup>7</sup>Everyone who worships idols and brags about false gods will be put to shame. All the gods will bow to him.

<sup>8</sup>Zion hears about this and rejoices. The people of Judah are delighted with your judgments, O LORD.

<sup>9</sup>You, O LORD, the Most High, are above the whole earth. You are highest. You are above all the gods.

<sup>10</sup>Let those who love the LORD hate evil. The one who guards the lives of his godly ones will rescue them from the power of wicked people.

<sup>11</sup>Light dawns for righteous people and joy for those whose motives are decent.

<sup>12</sup>Find joy in the LORD, you righteous people. Give thanks to him as you remember how holy he is.

**98**<sup>1</sup>A psalm. Sing a new song to the LORD because he has done miraculous things. His right hand and his holy arm have gained victory for him.

<sup>2</sup>The LORD has made his salvation known. He has uncovered his righteousness for the nations to see.

<sup>3</sup> He has not forgotten to be merciful and faithful to Israel's descendants. All the ends of the earth have seen how our God saves them.

<sup>4</sup> Shout happily to the LORD, all the earth. Break out into joyful singing, and make music.

<sup>5</sup> Make music to the LORD with a lyre, with a lyre and the melody of a psalm,  
<sup>6</sup> with trumpets and the playing of a rams horn. Shout happily in the presence of the king, the LORD.

<sup>7</sup> Let the sea, everything in it, the world, and those who live in it roar like thunder.

<sup>8</sup> Let the rivers clap their hands and the mountains sing joyfully

<sup>9</sup> in the LORDS presence because he is coming to judge the earth. He will judge the world with justice and its people with fairness.

**99**<sup>1</sup> The LORD rules as king. Let the people tremble. He is enthroned over the angels. Let the earth quake.

<sup>2</sup> The LORD is mighty in Zion. He is high above all people.

<sup>3</sup> Let them give thanks to your great and fearful name. He is holy!

<sup>4</sup>The king's strength is that he loves justice. You have established fairness. You have done what is fair and right for Jacob.

<sup>5</sup>Highly honor the LORD our God. Bow down at his footstool. He is holy!

<sup>6</sup>Moses and Aaron were among his priests. Samuel was among those who prayed to him. They called to the LORD, and he answered them.

<sup>7</sup>He spoke to them from a column of smoke. They obeyed his written instructions and the laws that he gave them.

<sup>8</sup>O LORD, our God, you answered them. You showed them that you are a forgiving God and that you are a God who punishes their sinful deeds.

<sup>9</sup>Highly honor the LORD our God. Bow at his holy mountain. The LORD our God is holy!

**100**<sup>1</sup> A psalm of thanksgiving.  
Shout happily to the LORD, all the earth.

<sup>2</sup>Serve the LORD cheerfully. Come into his presence with a joyful song.

<sup>3</sup>Realize that the LORD alone is God. He made us, and we are his. We are his people and the sheep in his care.

<sup>4</sup>Enter his gates with a song of thanksgiving. Come into his courtyards with a song of praise. Give thanks to him; praise his name.

<sup>5</sup>The LORD is good. His mercy endures forever. His faithfulness endures throughout every generation.

**101** <sup>1</sup>A psalm by David. I will sing about mercy and justice. O LORD, I will make music to praise you.

<sup>2</sup>I want to understand the path to integrity. When will you come to me? I will live in my own home with integrity.

<sup>3</sup>I will not put anything wicked in front of my eyes. I hate what unfaithful people do. I want no part of it.

<sup>4</sup>I will keep far away from devious minds. I will have nothing to do with evil.

<sup>5</sup>I will destroy anyone who secretly slanders his neighbor. I will not tolerate anyone with a conceited look or arrogant heart.

<sup>6</sup>My eyes will be watching the faithful people in the land so that they may

live with me. The person who lives with integrity will serve me.

<sup>7</sup>The one who does deceitful things will not stay in my home. The one who tells lies will not remain in my presence.

<sup>8</sup>Every morning I will destroy all the wicked people in the land to rid the LORDS city of all troublemakers.

**102**<sup>1</sup>A prayer by someone who is suffering, when he is weary and pours out his troubles in the LORDS presence. O LORD, hear my prayer, and let my cry for help come to you.

<sup>2</sup>Do not hide your face from me when I am in trouble. Turn your ear toward me. Answer me quickly when I call.

<sup>3</sup>My days disappear like smoke. My bones burn like hot coals.

<sup>4</sup>My heart is beaten down and withered like grass because I have forgotten about eating.

<sup>5</sup>I am nothing but skin and bones because of my loud groans.

<sup>6</sup>I am like a desert owl, like an owl living in the ruins.

<sup>7</sup>I lie awake. I am like a lonely bird on a rooftop.

<sup>8</sup>All day long my enemies insult me. Those who ridicule me use my name as a curse.

<sup>9</sup>I eat ashes like bread and my tears are mixed with my drink

<sup>10</sup>because of your hostility and anger, because you have picked me up and thrown me away.

<sup>11</sup>My days are like a shadow that is getting longer, and I wither away like grass.

<sup>12</sup>But you, O LORD, remain forever. You are remembered throughout every generation.

<sup>13</sup>You will rise and have compassion on Zion, because it is time to grant a favor to it. Indeed, the appointed time has come.

<sup>14</sup>Your servants value Zions stones, and they pity its rubble.

<sup>15</sup>The nations will fear the LORDS name. All the kings of the earth will fear your glory.

<sup>16</sup>When the LORD builds Zion, he will appear in his glory.

<sup>17</sup>He will turn his attention to the prayers of those who have been

abandoned. He will not despise their prayers.

<sup>18</sup>This will be written down for a future generation so that a people yet to be created may praise the LORD:

<sup>19</sup>"The LORD looked down from his holy place high above. From heaven he looked at the earth.

<sup>20</sup>He heard the groans of the prisoners and set free those who were condemned to death.

<sup>21</sup>The LORDS name is announced in Zion and his praise in Jerusalem

<sup>22</sup>when nations and kingdoms gather to worship the LORD."

<sup>23</sup>He has weakened my strength along the way. He has reduced the number of my days.

<sup>24</sup>I said, "My God, dont take me now in the middle of my life. Your years continue on throughout every generation.

<sup>25</sup>Long ago you laid the foundation of the earth. Even the heavens are the works of your hands.

<sup>26</sup>They will come to an end, but you will still go on. They will all wear out like clothing. You will change them like clothes, and they will be thrown away.

<sup>27</sup> But you remain the same, and your life will never end.

<sup>28</sup> The children of your servants will go on living here. Their descendants will be secure in your presence."

**103** <sup>1</sup> By David. Praise the LORD, my soul! Praise his holy name, all that is within me.

<sup>2</sup> Praise the LORD, my soul, and never forget all the good he has done:

<sup>3</sup> He is the one who forgives all your sins, the one who heals all your diseases,

<sup>4</sup> the one who rescues your life from the pit, the one who crowns you with mercy and compassion,

<sup>5</sup> the one who fills your life with blessings so that you become young again like an eagle.

<sup>6</sup> The LORD does what is right and fair for all who are oppressed.

<sup>7</sup> He let Moses know his ways. He let the Israelites know the things he had done.

<sup>8</sup> The LORD is compassionate, merciful, patient, and always ready to forgive.

<sup>9</sup> He will not always accuse us of wrong or be angry with us forever.

<sup>10</sup>He has not treated us as we deserve for our sins or paid us back for our wrongs.

<sup>11</sup>As high as the heavens are above the earth that is how vast his mercy is toward those who fear him.

<sup>12</sup>As far as the east is from the west that is how far he has removed our rebellious acts from himself.

<sup>13</sup>As a father has compassion for his children, so the LORD has compassion for those who fear him.

<sup>14</sup>He certainly knows what we are made of. He bears in mind that we are dust.

<sup>15</sup>Human life is as shortlived as grass. It blossoms like a flower in the field.

<sup>16</sup>When the wind blows over the flower, it disappears, and there is no longer any sign of it.

<sup>17</sup>But from everlasting to everlasting, the LORDS mercy is on those who fear him. His righteousness belongs to their children and grandchildren,

<sup>18</sup>to those who are faithful to his promise, to those who remember to follow his guiding principles.

<sup>19</sup>The LORD has set his throne in heaven. His kingdom rules everything.

<sup>20</sup>Praise the LORD, all his angels, you mighty beings who carry out his orders and are ready to obey his spoken orders.

<sup>21</sup>Praise the LORD, all his armies, his servants who carry out his will.

<sup>22</sup>Praise the LORD, all his creatures in all the places of his empire. Praise the LORD, my soul!

**104**<sup>1</sup>Praise the LORD, my soul! O LORD my God, you are very great. You are clothed with splendor and majesty.

<sup>2</sup>You cover yourself with light as though it were a robe. You stretch out the heavens as though they were curtains.

<sup>3</sup>You lay the beams of your home in the water. You use the clouds for your chariot. You move on the wings of the wind.

<sup>4</sup>You make your angels winds and your servants flames of fire.

<sup>5</sup>You set the earth on its foundations so that it can never be shaken.

<sup>6</sup>You covered the earth with an ocean as though it were a robe. Water stood above the mountains

<sup>7</sup>and fled because of your threat. Water ran away at the sound of your thunder.

<sup>8</sup>The mountains rose and the valleys sank to the place you appointed for them.

<sup>9</sup>Water cannot cross the boundary you set and cannot come back to cover the earth.

<sup>10</sup>You make water gush from springs into valleys. It flows between the mountains.

<sup>11</sup>Every wild animal drinks from them. Wild donkeys quench their thirst.

<sup>12</sup>The birds live by the streams. They sing among the branches.

<sup>13</sup>You water the mountains from your home above. You fill the earth with the fruits of your labors.

<sup>14</sup>You make grass grow for cattle and make vegetables for humans to use in order to get food from the ground.

<sup>15</sup>You make wine to cheer human hearts, olive oil to make faces shine, and bread to strengthen human hearts.

<sup>16</sup>The LORDS trees, the cedars in Lebanon which he planted, drink their fill.

<sup>17</sup>Birds build their nests in them. Storks make their homes in fir trees.

<sup>18</sup>The high mountains are for wild goats. The rocks are a refuge for badgers.

<sup>19</sup>He created the moon, which marks the seasons, and the sun, which knows when to set.

<sup>20</sup>He brings darkness, and it is nighttime, when all the wild animals in the forest come out.

<sup>21</sup>The young lions roar for their prey and seek their food from God.

<sup>22</sup>When the sun rises, they gather and lie down in their dens.

<sup>23</sup>Then people go to do their work, to do their tasks until evening.

<sup>24</sup>What a large number of things you have made, O LORD! You made them all by wisdom. The earth is filled with your creatures.

<sup>25</sup>The sea is so big and wide with countless creatures, living things both large and small.

<sup>26</sup>Ships sail on it, and Leviathan, which you made, plays in it.

<sup>27</sup>All of them look to you to give them their food at the right time.

<sup>28</sup>You give it to them, and they gather it up. You open your hand, and they are filled with blessings.

<sup>29</sup>You hide your face, and they are terrified. You take away their breath, and they die and return to dust.

<sup>30</sup>You send out your Spirit, and they are created. You renew the face of the earth.

<sup>31</sup>May the glory of the LORD endure forever. May the LORD find joy in what he has made.

<sup>32</sup>He looks at the earth, and it trembles. He touches the mountains, and they smoke.

<sup>33</sup>I will sing to the LORD throughout my life. I will make music to praise my God as long as I live.

<sup>34</sup>May my thoughts be pleasing to him. I will find joy in the LORD.

<sup>35</sup>May sinners vanish from the world. May there no longer be any wicked people. Praise the LORD, my soul!  
Hallelujah!

**105**<sup>1</sup> Give thanks to the LORD. Call on him. Make known among the nations what he has done.

<sup>2</sup>Sing to him. Make music to praise him. Meditate on all the miracles he has performed.

<sup>3</sup>Brag about his holy name. Let the hearts of those who seek the LORD rejoice.

<sup>4</sup>Search for the LORD and his strength. Always seek his presence.

<sup>5</sup>Remember the miracles he performed, the amazing things he did, and the judgments he pronounced,

<sup>6</sup>you descendants of his servant Abraham, you descendants of Jacob, his chosen ones.

<sup>7</sup>He is the LORD our God. His judgments are pronounced throughout the earth.

<sup>8</sup>He always remembers his promise, the word that he commanded for a thousand generations,

<sup>9</sup>the promise that he made to Abraham, and his sworn oath to Isaac.

<sup>10</sup>He confirmed it as a law for Jacob, as an everlasting promise to Israel,

<sup>11</sup>by saying, "I will give you the land of Canaan. It is your share of the inheritance."

<sup>12</sup>While the people of Israel were few in number, a small group of foreigners living in that land,

<sup>13</sup>they wandered from nation to nation, from one kingdom to another.

<sup>14</sup>He didnt permit anyone to oppress them. He warned kings about them:

<sup>15</sup>"Do not touch my anointed ones or harm my prophets."

<sup>16</sup>He brought famine to the land. He took away their food supply.

<sup>17</sup>He sent a man ahead of them. He sent Joseph, who was sold as a slave.

<sup>18</sup>They hurt his feet with shackles, and cut into his neck with an iron collar.

<sup>19</sup>The LORDS promise tested him through fiery trials until his prediction came true.

<sup>20</sup>The king sent someone to release him. The ruler of nations set him free.

<sup>21</sup>He made Joseph the master of his palace and the ruler of all his possessions.

<sup>22</sup>Joseph trained the kings officers the way he wanted and taught his respected leaders wisdom.

<sup>23</sup>Then Israel came to Egypt. Jacob lived as a foreigner in the land of Ham.

<sup>24</sup>The LORD made his people grow rapidly in number and stronger than their enemies.

<sup>25</sup>He changed their minds so that they hated his people, and they dealt treacherously with his servants.

<sup>26</sup>He sent his servant Moses, and he sent Aaron, whom he had chosen.

<sup>27</sup>They displayed his miraculous signs among them and did amazing things in the land of Ham.

<sup>28</sup>He sent darkness and made their land dark. They did not rebel against his orders.

<sup>29</sup>He turned their water into blood and caused their fish to die.

<sup>30</sup>He made their land swarm with frogs, even in the kings bedrooms.

<sup>31</sup>He spoke, and swarms of flies and gnats infested their whole territory.

<sup>32</sup>He gave them hail and lightning instead of rain throughout their land.

<sup>33</sup>He struck their grapevines and fig trees and smashed the trees in their territory.

<sup>34</sup>He spoke, and countless locusts and grasshoppers came.

<sup>35</sup> They devoured all the plants in the land. They devoured the crops in the fields.

<sup>36</sup> He killed all the firstborn sons, the first ones born in the land when their fathers were young.

<sup>37</sup> He brought Israel out with silver and gold, and no one among his tribes stumbled.

<sup>38</sup> The Egyptians were terrified of Israel, so they were glad when Israel left.

<sup>39</sup> He spread out a cloud as a protective covering and a fire to light up the night.

<sup>40</sup> The Israelites asked, and he brought them quail and filled them with bread from heaven.

<sup>41</sup> He opened a rock, and water gushed and flowed like a river through the dry places.

<sup>42</sup> He remembered his holy promise to his servant Abraham.

<sup>43</sup> He brought his people out with joy, his chosen ones with a song of joy.

<sup>44</sup> He gave them the lands of other nations, and they inherited what others had worked for

<sup>45</sup> so that they would obey his laws and follow his teachings. Hallelujah!

**106** <sup>1</sup> Hallelujah! Give thanks to the LORD because he is good, because his mercy endures forever.

<sup>2</sup> Who can speak about all the mighty things the LORD has done? Who can announce all the things for which he is worthy of praise?

<sup>3</sup> Blessed are those who defend justice and do what is right at all times.

<sup>4</sup> Remember me, O LORD, when you show favor to your people. Come to help me with your salvation

<sup>5</sup> so that I may see the prosperity of your chosen ones, find joy in our peoples happiness, and brag with the people who belong to you.

<sup>6</sup> We have sinned, and so did our ancestors. We have done wrong. We are guilty.

<sup>7</sup> When our ancestors were in Egypt, they gave no thought to your miracles. They did not remember your numerous acts of mercy, so they rebelled at the sea, the Red Sea.

<sup>8</sup> He saved them because of his reputation so that he could make his mighty power known.

<sup>9</sup>He angrily commanded the Red Sea, and it dried up. He led them through deep water as though it were a desert.

<sup>10</sup>He rescued them from the power of the one who hated them. He rescued them from the enemy.

<sup>11</sup>Water covered their adversaries. Not one Egyptian survived.

<sup>12</sup>Then our ancestors believed what he said. They sang his praise.

<sup>13</sup>They quickly forgot what he did. They did not wait for his advice.

<sup>14</sup>They had an unreasonable desire for food in the wilderness. In the desert they tested God.

<sup>15</sup>He gave them what they asked for. He also gave them a degenerative disease.

<sup>16</sup>In the camp certain men became envious of Moses. They also became envious of Aaron, the LORDS holy one.

<sup>17</sup>The ground split open and swallowed Dathan. It buried Abirams followers.

<sup>18</sup>A fire broke out among their followers. Flames burned up wicked people.

<sup>19</sup>At Mount Horeb they made a statue of a calf. They worshiped an idol made of metal.

<sup>20</sup>They traded their glorious God for the statue of a bull that eats grass.

<sup>21</sup>They forgot God, their savior, the one who did spectacular things in Egypt,

<sup>22</sup>miracles in the land of Ham, and terrifying things at the Red Sea.

<sup>23</sup>God said he was going to destroy them, but Moses, his chosen one, stood in his way to prevent him from exterminating them.

<sup>24</sup>They refused to enter the pleasant land. They did not believe what he said.

<sup>25</sup>They complained in their tents. They did not obey the LORD.

<sup>26</sup>Raising his hand, he swore that he would kill them in the wilderness,

<sup>27</sup>kill their descendants among the nations, and scatter them throughout various lands.

<sup>28</sup>They joined in worshiping the god Baal while they were at Peor, and they ate what was sacrificed to the dead.

<sup>29</sup>They infuriated God by what they did, and a plague broke out among them.

<sup>30</sup>Then Phinehas stood between God and the people, and the plague was stopped.

<sup>31</sup> Because of this, Phinehas was considered righteous forever, throughout every generation.

<sup>32</sup> They made God angry by the water at Meribah. Things turned out badly for Moses because of what they did,

<sup>33</sup> since they made him bitter so that he spoke recklessly.

<sup>34</sup> They did not destroy the people as the LORD had told them.

<sup>35</sup> Instead, they intermarried with other nations. They learned to do what other nations did,

<sup>36</sup> and they worshiped their idols, which became a trap for them.

<sup>37</sup> They sacrificed their sons and daughters to demons.

<sup>38</sup> They shed innocent blood, the blood of their own sons and daughters whom they sacrificed to the idols of Canaan. The land became polluted with blood.

<sup>39</sup> They became filthy because of what they did. They behaved like prostitutes.

<sup>40</sup> The LORD burned with anger against his own people. He was disgusted with those who belonged to him.

<sup>41</sup> He handed them over to other nations, and those who hated them ruled them.

<sup>42</sup> Their enemies oppressed them and made them subject to their power.

<sup>43</sup> He rescued them many times, but they continued to plot rebellion against him and to sink deeper because of their sin.

<sup>44</sup> He saw that they were suffering when he heard their cry for help.

<sup>45</sup> He remembered his promise to them. In keeping with his rich mercy, he changed his plans.

<sup>46</sup> He let them find compassion from all those who held them captive.

<sup>47</sup> Rescue us, O LORD our God, and gather us from the nations so that we may give thanks to your holy name and make your praise our glory.

<sup>48</sup> Thanks be to the LORD God of Israel from everlasting to everlasting. Let all the people say amen. Hallelujah!

**107** <sup>1</sup> Give thanks to the LORD because he is good, because his mercy endures forever.

<sup>2</sup> Let the people the LORD defended repeat these words. They are the people

he defended from the power of their enemies

<sup>3</sup>and gathered from other countries, from the east and from the west, from the north and from the south.

<sup>4</sup>They wandered around the desert on a deserted road without finding an inhabited city.

<sup>5</sup>They were hungry and thirsty. They began to lose hope.

<sup>6</sup>In their distress they cried out to the LORD. He rescued them from their troubles.

<sup>7</sup>He led them on a road that went straight to an inhabited city.

<sup>8</sup>Let them give thanks to the LORD because of his mercy. He performed his miracles for Adams descendants.

<sup>9</sup>He gave plenty to drink to those who were thirsty. He filled those who were hungry with good food.

<sup>10</sup>Those who lived in the dark, in death's shadow were prisoners in misery. They were held in iron chains

<sup>11</sup>because they had rebelled against Gods words and had despised the advice given by the Most High.

<sup>12</sup> So he humbled them with hard work. They fell down, but no one was there to help them.

<sup>13</sup> In their distress they cried out to the LORD. He saved them from their troubles.

<sup>14</sup> He brought them out of the dark, out of death's shadow. He broke apart their chains.

<sup>15</sup> Let them give thanks to the LORD because of his mercy. He performed his miracles for Adam's descendants.

<sup>16</sup> He shattered bronze gates and cut iron bars in two.

<sup>17</sup> Fools suffered because of their disobedience and because of their crimes.

<sup>18</sup> All food was disgusting to them, and they came near death's gates.

<sup>19</sup> In their distress they cried out to the LORD. He saved them from their troubles.

<sup>20</sup> He sent his message and healed them. He rescued them from the grave.

<sup>21</sup> Let them give thanks to the LORD because of his mercy. He performed his miracles for Adam's descendants.

<sup>22</sup>Let them bring songs of thanksgiving as their sacrifice. Let them tell in joyful songs what he has done.

<sup>23</sup>Those who sail on the sea in ships, who do business on the high seas,

<sup>24</sup>have seen what the LORD can do, the miracles he performed in the depths of the sea.

<sup>25</sup>He spoke, and a storm began to blow, and it made the waves rise high.

<sup>26</sup>The sailors aboard ship rose toward the sky. They plunged into the depths. Their courage melted in the face of disaster.

<sup>27</sup>They reeled and staggered like drunks, and all their skills as sailors became useless.

<sup>28</sup>In their distress they cried out to the LORD. He led them from their troubles.

<sup>29</sup>He made the storm calm down, and the waves became still.

<sup>30</sup>The sailors were glad that the storm was quiet. He guided them to the harbor they had longed for.

<sup>31</sup>Let them give thanks to the LORD because of his mercy. He performed his miracles for Adams descendants.

<sup>32</sup> Let them glorify him when the people are gathered for worship. Let them praise him in the company of respected leaders.

<sup>33</sup> He changes rivers into a desert, springs into thirsty ground,

<sup>34</sup> and fertile ground into a layer of salt because of the wickedness of the people living there.

<sup>35</sup> He changes deserts into lakes and dry ground into springs.

<sup>36</sup> There he settles those who are hungry, and they build cities to live in.

<sup>37</sup> They plant in fields and vineyards that produce crops.

<sup>38</sup> He blesses them, and their numbers multiply, and he does not allow a shortage of cattle.

<sup>39</sup> They became few in number and were humiliated because of oppression, disaster, and sorrow.

<sup>40</sup> He poured contempt on their influential people and made them stumble around in a pathless desert.

<sup>41</sup> But now he lifts needy people high above suffering and makes their families like flocks.

<sup>42</sup>Decent people will see this and rejoice, but all the wicked people will shut their mouths.

<sup>43</sup>Let those who think they are wise pay attention to these things so that they may understand the LORDS blessings.

**108**<sup>1</sup>A song; a psalm by David. My heart is confident, O God. I want to sing and make music even with my soul.

<sup>2</sup>Wake up, harp and lyre! I want to wake up at dawn.

<sup>3</sup>I want to give thanks to you among the people, O LORD. I want to make music to praise you among the nations

<sup>4</sup>because your mercy is higher than the heavens. Your truth reaches the skies.

<sup>5</sup>May you be honored above the heavens, O God. Let your glory extend over the whole earth.

<sup>6</sup>Save us with your powerful hand, and answer us so that those who are dear to you may be rescued.

<sup>7</sup>God has promised the following through his holiness: "I will triumph! I will divide Shechem. I will measure the valley of Succoth.

<sup>8</sup>Gilead is mine. Manasseh is mine.  
Ephraim is the helmet on my head.  
Judah is my scepter.

<sup>9</sup>Moab is my washtub. I will throw my  
shoe over Edom. I will shout in triumph  
over Philistia."

<sup>10</sup>Who will bring me into the fortified  
city? Who will lead me to Edom?

<sup>11</sup>Isn't it you, O God, who rejected  
us? Isn't it you, O God, who refused to  
accompany our armies?

<sup>12</sup>Give us help against the enemy  
because human assistance is worthless.

<sup>13</sup>With God we will display great  
strength. He will trample our enemies.

**109**<sup>1</sup> For the choir director; a  
psalm by David. O God, whom  
I praise, do not turn a deaf ear to me.

<sup>2</sup>Wicked and deceitful people have  
opened their mouths against me. They  
speak against me with lying tongues.

<sup>3</sup>They surround me with hateful words.  
They fight against me for no reason.

<sup>4</sup>In return for my love, they accuse me,  
but I pray for them.

<sup>5</sup>They reward me with evil instead of  
good and with hatred instead of love.

<sup>6</sup>I said, "Appoint the evil one to oppose him. Let Satan stand beside him.

<sup>7</sup>When he stands trial, let him be found guilty. Let his prayer be considered sinful.

<sup>8</sup>Let his days be few in number. Let someone else take his position.

<sup>9</sup>"Let his children become fatherless and his wife a widow.

<sup>10</sup>Let his children wander around and beg. Let them seek help far from their ruined homes.

<sup>11</sup>Let a creditor take everything he owns. Let strangers steal what he has worked for.

<sup>12</sup>Let no one be kind to him anymore. Let no one show any pity to his fatherless children.

<sup>13</sup>Let his descendants be cut off and their family name be wiped out by the next generation.

<sup>14</sup>Let the LORD remember the guilt of his ancestors and not wipe out his mothers sin.

<sup>15</sup>Let their guilt and sin always remain on record in front of the LORD. Let the LORD remove every memory of him from the earth,

<sup>16</sup>because he did not remember to be kind. "He drove oppressed, needy, and brokenhearted people to their graves.

<sup>17</sup>He loved to put curses on others, so he, too, was cursed. He did not like to bless others, so he never received a blessing.

<sup>18</sup>He wore cursing as though it were clothing, so cursing entered his body like water and his bones like oil.

<sup>19</sup>Let cursing be his clothing, a belt he always wears."

<sup>20</sup>This is how the LORD rewards those who accuse me, those who say evil things against me.

<sup>21</sup>O LORD Almighty, deal with me out of the goodness of your name. Rescue me because of your mercy.

<sup>22</sup>I am oppressed and needy. I can feel the pain in my heart.

<sup>23</sup>I fade away like a lengthening shadow. I have been shaken off like a grasshopper.

<sup>24</sup>My knees give way because I have been fasting. My body has become lean, without any fat.

<sup>25</sup>I have become the victim of my enemies insults. They look at me and shake their heads.

<sup>26</sup>Help me, O LORD my God. Save me because of your mercy.

<sup>27</sup>Then they will know that this is your doing, that you, O LORD, are the one who saved me.

<sup>28</sup>They may curse, but you will bless. Let those who attack me be ashamed, but let me rejoice.

<sup>29</sup>Let those who accuse me wear disgrace as though it were clothing. Let them be wrapped in their shame as though it were a robe.

<sup>30</sup>With my mouth I will give many thanks to the LORD. I will praise him among many people,

<sup>31</sup>because he stands beside needy people to save them from those who would condemn them to death.

**110**<sup>1</sup>A psalm by David. The LORD said to my Lord, "Sit in the highest position in heaven until I make your enemies your footstool."

<sup>2</sup>The LORD will extend your powerful scepter from Zion. Rule your enemies who surround you.

<sup>3</sup>Your people will volunteer when you call up your army. Your young people will come to you in holy splendor like dew in the early morning.

<sup>4</sup>The LORD has taken an oath and will not change his mind: "You are a priest forever, in the way Melchizedek was a priest."

<sup>5</sup>The Lord is at your right side. He will crush kings on the day of his anger.

<sup>6</sup>He will pass judgment on the nations and fill them with dead bodies. Throughout the earth he will crush their heads.

<sup>7</sup>He will drink from the brook along the road. He will hold his head high.

**111** <sup>1</sup>Hallelujah! I will give thanks to the LORD with all my heart in the company of decent people and in the congregation.

<sup>2</sup>The LORDS deeds are spectacular. They should be studied by all who enjoy them.

<sup>3</sup>His work is glorious and majestic. His righteousness continues forever.

<sup>4</sup>He has made his miracles unforgettable. The LORD is merciful and compassionate.

<sup>5</sup>He provides food for those who fear him. He always remembers his promise.

<sup>6</sup>He has revealed the power of his works to his people by giving them the lands of other nations as an inheritance.

<sup>7</sup>His works are done with truth and justice. All his guiding principles are trustworthy.

<sup>8</sup>They last forever and ever. They are carried out with truth and decency.

<sup>9</sup>He has sent salvation to his people. He has ordered that his promise should continue forever. His name is holy and terrifying.

<sup>10</sup>The fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom. Good sense is shown by everyone who follows Gods guiding principles. His praise continues forever.

**112**<sup>1</sup>Hallelujah! Blessed is the person who fears the LORD and is happy to obey his commands.

<sup>2</sup>His descendants will grow strong on the earth. The family of a decent person will be blessed.

<sup>3</sup>Wealth and riches will be in his home. His righteousness continues forever.

<sup>4</sup>Light will shine in the dark for a decent person. He is merciful, compassionate, and fair.

<sup>5</sup>All goes well for the person who is generous and lends willingly. He earns an honest living.

<sup>6</sup>He will never fail. A righteous person will always be remembered.

<sup>7</sup>He is not afraid of bad news. His heart remains secure, full of confidence in the LORD.

<sup>8</sup>His heart is steady, and he is not afraid. In the end he will look triumphantly at his enemies.

<sup>9</sup>He gives freely to poor people. His righteousness continues forever. His head is raised in honor.

<sup>10</sup>The wicked person sees this and becomes angry. He angrily grits his teeth and disappears. The hope that wicked people have will vanish.

**113**<sup>1</sup> Hallelujah! You servants of the LORD, praise him. Praise the name of the LORD.

<sup>2</sup>Thank the name of the LORD now and forever.

<sup>3</sup>From where the sun rises to where the sun sets, the name of the LORD should be praised.

<sup>4</sup>The LORD is high above all the nations. His glory is above the heavens.

<sup>5</sup>Who is like the LORD our God? He is seated on his high throne.

<sup>6</sup>He bends down to look at heaven and earth.

<sup>7</sup>He lifts the poor from the dust. He lifts the needy from a garbage heap.

<sup>8</sup>He seats them with influential people, with the influential leaders of his people.

<sup>9</sup>He makes a woman who is in a childless home a joyful mother.

Hallelujah!

**114**<sup>1</sup> When Israel left Egypt, when Jacobs family left people who spoke a foreign language,

<sup>2</sup> Judah became his holy place and Israel became his kingdom.

<sup>3</sup> The Red Sea looked at this and ran away. The Jordan River turned back.

<sup>4</sup> The mountains jumped like rams. The hills jumped like lambs.

<sup>5</sup> Red Sea, why did you run away?  
Jordan River, what made you turn back?

<sup>6</sup>Mountains, what made you jump like rams? Hills, what made you jump like lambs?

<sup>7</sup>Earth, tremble in the presence of the Lord, in the presence of the God of Jacob.

<sup>8</sup>He turns a rock into a pool filled with water and turns flint into a spring flowing with water.

**115**<sup>1</sup> Don't give glory to us, O LORD. Don't give glory to us. Instead, give glory to your name because of your mercy and faithfulness.

<sup>2</sup>Why should other nations say, "Where is their God?"

<sup>3</sup>Our God is in heaven. He does whatever he wants.

<sup>4</sup>Their idols are made of silver and gold. They were made by human hands.

<sup>5</sup>They have mouths, but they cannot speak. They have eyes, but they cannot see.

<sup>6</sup>They have ears, but they cannot hear. They have noses, but they cannot smell.

<sup>7</sup>They have hands, but they cannot feel. They have feet, but they cannot walk. They cannot even make a sound with their throats.

<sup>8</sup>Those who make idols end up like them. So does everyone who trusts them.

<sup>9</sup>Israel, trust the LORD. He is your helper and your shield.

<sup>10</sup>Descendants of Aaron, trust the LORD. He is your helper and your shield.

<sup>11</sup>If you fear the LORD, trust the LORD. He is your helper and your shield.

<sup>12</sup>The LORD, who is always thinking about us, will bless us. He will bless the descendants of Israel. He will bless the descendants of Aaron.

<sup>13</sup>He will bless those who fear the LORD, from the least important to the most important.

<sup>14</sup>May the LORD continue to bless you and your children.

<sup>15</sup>You will be blessed by the LORD, the maker of heaven and earth.

<sup>16</sup>The highest heaven belongs to the LORD, but he has given the earth to the descendants of Adam.

<sup>17</sup>Those who are dead do not praise the LORD, nor do those who go into the silence of the grave.

<sup>18</sup>But we will thank the LORD now and forever. Hallelujah!

**116**<sup>1</sup> I love the LORD because he hears my voice, my pleas for mercy.

<sup>2</sup> I will call on him as long as I live because he turns his ear toward me.

<sup>3</sup> The ropes of death became tangled around me. The horrors of the grave took hold of me. I experienced pain and agony.

<sup>4</sup> But I kept calling on the name of the LORD: "Please, LORD, rescue me!"

<sup>5</sup> The LORD is merciful and righteous. Our God is compassionate.

<sup>6</sup> The LORD protects defenseless people. When I was weak, he saved me.

<sup>7</sup> Be at peace again, my soul, because the LORD has been good to you.

<sup>8</sup> You saved me from death. You saved my eyes from tears and my feet from stumbling.

<sup>9</sup> I will walk in the LORDS presence in this world of the living.

<sup>10</sup> I kept my faith even when I said, "I am suffering terribly."

<sup>11</sup> I also said when I was panicstricken, "Everyone is undependable."

<sup>12</sup> How can I repay the LORD for all the good that he has done for me?

<sup>13</sup>I will take the cup of salvation and call on the name of the LORD.

<sup>14</sup>I will keep my vows to the LORD in the presence of all his people.

<sup>15</sup>Precious in the sight of the LORD is the death of his faithful ones.

<sup>16</sup>O LORD, I am indeed your servant. I am your servant, the son of your female servant. You have freed me from my chains.

<sup>17</sup>I will bring a song of thanksgiving to you as a sacrifice. I will call on the name of the LORD.

<sup>18</sup>I will keep my vows to the LORD in the presence of all his people,

<sup>19</sup>in the courtyards of the LORDS house, in the middle of Jerusalem.  
Hallelujah!

**117** <sup>1</sup>Praise the LORD, all you nations! Praise him, all you people of the world!

<sup>2</sup>His mercy toward us is powerful. The LORDS faithfulness endures forever.  
Hallelujah!

**118** <sup>1</sup>Give thanks to the LORD because he is good, because his mercy endures forever.

<sup>2</sup> Israel should say, "His mercy endures forever."

<sup>3</sup> The descendants of Aaron should say, "His mercy endures forever."

<sup>4</sup> Those who fear the LORD should say, "His mercy endures forever."

<sup>5</sup> During times of trouble I called on the LORD. The LORD answered me and set me free from all of them.

<sup>6</sup> The LORD is on my side. I am not afraid. What can mortals do to me?

<sup>7</sup> The LORD is on my side as my helper. I will see the defeat of those who hate me.

<sup>8</sup> It is better to depend on the LORD than to trust mortals.

<sup>9</sup> It is better to depend on the LORD than to trust influential people.

<sup>10</sup> All the nations surrounded me, but armed with the name of the LORD, I defeated them.

<sup>11</sup> They surrounded me. Yes, they surrounded me, but armed with the name of the LORD, I defeated them.

<sup>12</sup> They swarmed around me like bees, but they were extinguished like burning thornbushes. So armed with the name of the LORD, I defeated them.

<sup>13</sup>They pushed hard to make me fall,  
but the LORD helped me.

<sup>14</sup>The LORD is my strength and my  
song. He is my savior.

<sup>15</sup>The sound of joyful singing and  
victory is heard in the tents of righteous  
people. The right hand of the LORD  
displays strength.

<sup>16</sup>The right hand of the LORD is held  
high. The right hand of the LORD displays  
strength.

<sup>17</sup>I will not die, but I will live and tell  
what the LORD has done.

<sup>18</sup>The LORD disciplined me severely,  
but he did not allow me to be killed.

<sup>19</sup>Open the gates of righteousness for  
me. I will go through them and give  
thanks to the LORD.

<sup>20</sup>This is the gate of the LORD through  
which righteous people will enter.

<sup>21</sup>I give thanks to you, because you  
have answered me. You are my savior.

<sup>22</sup>The stone that the builders rejected  
has become the cornerstone.

<sup>23</sup>The LORD is responsible for this, and  
it is amazing for us to see.

<sup>24</sup>This is the day the LORD has made.  
Let's rejoice and be glad today!

<sup>25</sup>We beg you, O LORD, save us! We beg you, O LORD, give us success!

<sup>26</sup>Blessed is the one who comes in the name of the LORD. We bless you from the LORDS house.

<sup>27</sup>The LORD is God, and he has given us light. March in a festival procession with branches to the horns of the altar.

<sup>28</sup>You are my God, and I give thanks to you. My God, I honor you highly.

<sup>29</sup>Give thanks to the LORD because he is good, because his mercy endures forever.

**119**<sup>1</sup> Blessed are those whose lives have integrity, those who follow the teachings of the LORD.

<sup>2</sup> Blessed are those who obey his written instructions. They wholeheartedly search for him.

<sup>3</sup> They do nothing wrong. They follow his directions.

<sup>4</sup> You have commanded that your guiding principles be carefully followed.

<sup>5</sup> I pray that my ways may become firmly established so that I can obey your laws.

<sup>6</sup> Then I will never feel ashamed when I study all your commandments.

<sup>7</sup> I will give thanks to you as I learn your regulations, which are based on your righteousness.

<sup>8</sup> I will obey your laws. Never abandon me.

<sup>9</sup> How can a young person keep his life pure? He can do it by holding on to your word.

<sup>10</sup> I wholeheartedly searched for you. Do not let me wander away from your commandments.

<sup>11</sup> I have treasured your promise in my heart so that I may not sin against you.

<sup>12</sup> Thanks be to you, O LORD. Teach me your laws.

<sup>13</sup> With my lips I have repeated every regulation that comes from your mouth.

<sup>14</sup> I find joy in the way shown by your written instructions more than I find joy in all kinds of riches.

<sup>15</sup> I want to reflect on your guiding principles and study your ways.

<sup>16</sup> Your laws make me happy. I never forget your word.

<sup>17</sup> Be kind to me so that I may live and hold on to your word.

<sup>18</sup> Uncover my eyes so that I may see the miraculous things in your teachings.

<sup>19</sup>I am a foreigner in this world. Do not hide your commandments from me.

<sup>20</sup>My soul is overwhelmed with endless longing for your regulations.

<sup>21</sup>You threaten arrogant people, who are condemned and wander away from your commandments.

<sup>22</sup>Remove the insults and contempt that have fallen on me because I have obeyed your written instructions.

<sup>23</sup>Even though influential people plot against me, I reflect on your laws.

<sup>24</sup>Indeed, your written instructions make me happy. They are my best friends.

<sup>25</sup>I am close to death. Give me a new life as you promised.

<sup>26</sup>I told you what I have done, and you answered me. Teach me your laws.

<sup>27</sup>Help me understand your guiding principles so that I may reflect on your miracles.

<sup>28</sup>I am drowning in tears. Strengthen me as you promised.

<sup>29</sup>Turn me away from a life of lies. Graciously provide me with your teachings.

<sup>30</sup>I have chosen a life of faithfulness. I have set your regulations in front of me.

<sup>31</sup>I have clung tightly to your written instructions. O LORD, do not let me be put to shame.

<sup>32</sup>I will eagerly pursue your commandments because you continue to increase my understanding.

<sup>33</sup>Teach me, O LORD, how to live by your laws, and I will obey them to the end.

<sup>34</sup>Help me understand so that I can follow your teachings. I will guard them with all my heart.

<sup>35</sup>Lead me on the path of your commandments, because I am happy with them.

<sup>36</sup>Direct my heart toward your written instructions rather than getting rich in underhanded ways.

<sup>37</sup>Turn my eyes away from worthless things. Give me a new life in your ways.

<sup>38</sup>Keep your promise to me so that I can fear you.

<sup>39</sup>Take away insults, which I dread, because your regulations are good.

<sup>40</sup>I long for your guiding principles. Give me a new life in your righteousness.

<sup>41</sup> Let your blessings reach me, O LORD.  
Save me as you promised.

<sup>42</sup> Then I will have an answer for the  
one who insults me since I trust your  
word.

<sup>43</sup> Do not take so much as a single word  
of truth from my mouth. My hope is  
based on your regulations.

<sup>44</sup> I will follow your teachings forever  
and ever.

<sup>45</sup> I will walk around freely because I  
sought out your guiding principles.

<sup>46</sup> I will speak about your written  
instructions in the presence of kings and  
not feel ashamed.

<sup>47</sup> Your commandments, which I love,  
make me happy.

<sup>48</sup> I lift my hands in prayer because of  
your commandments, which I love. I will  
reflect on your laws.

<sup>49</sup> Remember the word you gave me.  
Through it you gave me hope.

<sup>50</sup> This is my comfort in my misery:  
Your promise gave me a new life.

<sup>51</sup> Arrogant people have mocked me  
with cruelty, yet I have not turned away  
from your teachings.

<sup>52</sup>I remembered your regulations from long ago, O LORD, and I found comfort in them.

<sup>53</sup>I am burning with anger because of wicked people, who abandon your teachings.

<sup>54</sup>Your laws have become like psalms to me in this place where I am only a foreigner.

<sup>55</sup>At night I remember your name, O LORD, and I follow your teachings.

<sup>56</sup>This has happened to me because I have obeyed your guiding principles.

<sup>57</sup>You are my inheritance, O LORD. I promised to hold on to your words.

<sup>58</sup>With all my heart I want to win your favor. Be kind to me as you promised.

<sup>59</sup>I have thought about my life, and I have directed my feet back to your written instructions.

<sup>60</sup>Without any hesitation I hurry to obey your commandments.

<sup>61</sup>Though the ropes of wicked people are tied around me, I never forget your teachings.

<sup>62</sup>At midnight I wake up to give thanks to you for the regulations, which are based on your righteousness.

<sup>63</sup>I am a friend to everyone who fears you and to everyone who follows your guiding principles.

<sup>64</sup>Your mercy, O LORD, fills the earth. Teach me your laws.

<sup>65</sup>You have treated me well, O LORD, as you promised.

<sup>66</sup>Teach me to use good judgment and knowledge, because I believe in your commandments.

<sup>67</sup>Before you made me suffer, I used to wander off, but now I hold on to your word.

<sup>68</sup>You are good, and you do good things. Teach me your laws.

<sup>69</sup>Arrogant people have smeared me with lies, yet I obey your guiding principles with all my heart.

<sup>70</sup>Their hearts are cold and insensitive, yet I am happy with your teachings.

<sup>71</sup>It was good that I had to suffer in order to learn your laws.

<sup>72</sup>The teachings that come from your mouth are worth more to me than thousands in gold or silver.

<sup>73</sup>Your hands created me and made me what I am. Help me understand so that I may learn your commandments.

<sup>74</sup> Those who fear you will see me and rejoice, because my hope is based on your word.

<sup>75</sup> I know that your regulations are fair, O LORD, and that you were right to make me suffer.

<sup>76</sup> Let your mercy comfort me as you promised.

<sup>77</sup> Let your compassion reach me so that I may live, because your teachings make me happy.

<sup>78</sup> Let arrogant people be put to shame because they lied about me, yet I reflect on your guiding principles.

<sup>79</sup> Let those who fear you turn to me so that they can come to know your written instructions.

<sup>80</sup> Let my heart be filled with integrity in regard to your laws so that I will not be put to shame.

<sup>81</sup> My soul is weak from waiting for you to save me. My hope is based on your word.

<sup>82</sup> My eyes have become strained from looking for your promise. I ask, "When will you comfort me?"

<sup>83</sup> Although I have become like a shriveled and dried out wineskin, I have not forgotten your laws.

<sup>84</sup> What is left of my life? When will you bring those who persecute me to justice?

<sup>85</sup> Arrogant people have dug pits to trap me in defiance of your teachings.

<sup>86</sup> (All your commandments are reliable.) Those people persecute me with lies. Help me!

<sup>87</sup> They almost wiped me off the face of the earth. But I did not abandon your guiding principles.

<sup>88</sup> Give me a new life through your mercy so that I may obey the written instructions, which came from your mouth.

<sup>89</sup> O LORD, your word is established in heaven forever.

<sup>90</sup> Your faithfulness endures throughout every generation. You set the earth in place, and it continues to stand.

<sup>91</sup> All things continue to stand today because of your regulations, since they are all your servants.

<sup>92</sup> If your teachings had not made me happy, then I would have died in my misery.

<sup>93</sup>I will never forget your guiding principles, because you gave me a new life through them.

<sup>94</sup>I am yours. Save me, because I have searched for your guiding principles.

<sup>95</sup>The wicked people have waited for me in order to destroy me, yet I want to understand your written instructions.

<sup>96</sup>I have seen a limit to everything else, but your commandments have no limit.

<sup>97</sup>Oh, how I love your teachings! They are in my thoughts all day long.

<sup>98</sup>Your commandments make me wiser than my enemies, because your commandments are always with me.

<sup>99</sup>I have more insight than all my teachers, because your written instructions are in my thoughts.

<sup>100</sup>I have more wisdom than those with many years of experience, because I have obeyed your guiding principles.

<sup>101</sup>I have kept my feet from walking on any evil path in order to obey your word.

<sup>102</sup>I have not neglected your regulations, because you have taught me.

<sup>103</sup>How sweet the taste of your promise is! It tastes sweeter than honey.

<sup>104</sup> From your guiding principles I gain understanding. That is why I hate every path that leads to lying.

<sup>105</sup> Your word is a lamp for my feet and a light for my path.

<sup>106</sup> I took an oath, and I will keep it. I took an oath to follow your regulations, which are based on your righteousness.

<sup>107</sup> I have suffered so much. Give me a new life, O LORD, as you promised.

<sup>108</sup> Please accept the praise I gladly give you, O LORD, and teach me your regulations.

<sup>109</sup> I always take my life into my own hands, but I never forget your teachings.

<sup>110</sup> Wicked people have set a trap for me, but I have never wandered away from your guiding principles.

<sup>111</sup> Your written instructions are mine forever. They are the joy of my heart.

<sup>112</sup> I have decided to obey your laws. They offer a reward that never ends.

<sup>113</sup> I hate twofaced people, but I love your teachings.

<sup>114</sup> You are my hiding place and my shield. My hope is based on your word.

<sup>115</sup>Get away from me, you evildoers, so that I can obey the commandments of my God.

<sup>116</sup>Help me God, as you promised, so that I may live. Do not turn my hope into disappointment.

<sup>117</sup>Hold me, and I will be safe, and I will always respect your laws.

<sup>118</sup>You reject all who wander away from your laws, because their lies mislead them.

<sup>119</sup>You get rid of all wicked people on earth as if they were rubbish. That is why I love your written instructions.

<sup>120</sup>My body shudders in fear of you, and I am afraid of your regulations.

<sup>121</sup>I have done what is fair and right. Do not leave me at the mercy of those who oppress me.

<sup>122</sup>Guarantee my wellbeing. Do not let arrogant people oppress me.

<sup>123</sup>My eyes are strained from looking for you to save me and from looking for the fulfillment of your righteous promise.

<sup>124</sup>Treat me with kindness, and teach me your laws.

<sup>125</sup>I am your servant. Help me understand so that I may come to know your written instructions.

<sup>126</sup>It is time for you to act, O LORD. Even though people have abolished your teachings,

<sup>127</sup>I love your commandments more than gold, more than pure gold.

<sup>128</sup>I follow the straight paths of your guiding principles. I hate every pathway that leads to lying.

<sup>129</sup>Your written instructions are miraculous. That is why I obey them.

<sup>130</sup>Your word is a doorway that lets in light, and it helps gullible people understand.

<sup>131</sup>I open my mouth and pant because I long for your commandments.

<sup>132</sup>Turn toward me, and have pity on me as you have pledged to do for those who love your name.

<sup>133</sup>Make my steps secure through your promise, and do not let any sin control me.

<sup>134</sup>Save me from human oppression so that I may obey your guiding principles.

<sup>135</sup>Smile on me, and teach me your laws.

<sup>136</sup>Streams of tears flow from my eyes because others do not follow your teachings.

<sup>137</sup>You are righteous, O LORD, and your regulations are fair.

<sup>138</sup>You have issued your written instructions. They are fair and completely dependable.

<sup>139</sup>My devotion for your words consumes me, because my enemies have forgotten your words.

<sup>140</sup>Your promise has been thoroughly tested, and I love it.

<sup>141</sup>I am unimportant and despised, yet I never forget your guiding principles.

<sup>142</sup>Your righteousness is an everlasting righteousness, and your teachings are reliable.

<sup>143</sup>Trouble and hardship have found me, but your commandments still make me happy.

<sup>144</sup>Your written instructions are always right. Help me understand them so that I will live.

<sup>145</sup>I have called out with all my heart. Answer me, O LORD. I want to obey your laws.

<sup>146</sup>I have called out. Save me, so that I can obey your written instructions.

<sup>147</sup>I got up before dawn, and I cried out for help. My hope is based on your word.

<sup>148</sup>My eyes are wide open throughout the nighttime hours to reflect on your word.

<sup>149</sup>In keeping with your mercy, hear my voice. O LORD, give me a new life guided by your regulations.

<sup>150</sup>Those who carry out plots against me are near, yet they are far away from your teachings.

<sup>151</sup>You are near, O LORD, and all your commandments are reliable.

<sup>152</sup>Long ago I learned from your written instructions that you made them to last forever.

<sup>153</sup>Look at my misery, and rescue me, because I have never forgotten your teachings.

<sup>154</sup>Plead my case for me, and save me. Give me a new life as you promised.

<sup>155</sup>Wicked people are far from being saved, because they have not searched for your laws.

<sup>156</sup>Your acts of compassion are many in number, O LORD. Give me a new life guided by your regulations.

<sup>157</sup>I have many persecutors and opponents, yet I have not turned away from your written instructions.

<sup>158</sup>I have seen traitors, and I am filled with disgust. They have not accepted your promise.

<sup>159</sup>See how I have loved your guiding principles! O LORD, in keeping with your mercy, give me a new life.

<sup>160</sup>There is nothing but truth in your word, and all of your righteous regulations endure forever.

<sup>161</sup>Influential people have persecuted me for no reason, but it is only your words that fill my heart with terror.

<sup>162</sup>I find joy in your promise like someone who finds a priceless treasure.

<sup>163</sup>I hate lying; I am disgusted with it. I love your teachings.

<sup>164</sup>Seven times a day I praise you for your righteous regulations.

<sup>165</sup>There is lasting peace for those who love your teachings. Nothing can make those people stumble.

<sup>166</sup>I have waited with hope for you to save me, O LORD. I have carried out your commandments.

<sup>167</sup>I have obeyed your written instructions. I have loved them very much.

<sup>168</sup>I have followed your guiding principles and your written instructions, because my whole life is in front of you.

<sup>169</sup>Let my cry for help come into your presence, O LORD. Help me understand as you promised.

<sup>170</sup>Let my plea for mercy come into your presence. Rescue me as you promised.

<sup>171</sup>Let my lips pour out praise because you teach me your laws.

<sup>172</sup>Let my tongue sing about your promise because all your commandments are fair.

<sup>173</sup>Let your hand help me because I have chosen to follow your guiding principles.

<sup>174</sup>I have longed for you to save me, O LORD, and your teachings make me happy.

<sup>175</sup>Let my soul have new life so that it can praise you. Let your regulations help me.

<sup>176</sup>I have wandered away like a lost lamb. Search for me, because I have never forgotten your commandments.

**120**<sup>1</sup>A song for going up to worship. When I was in trouble, I cried out to the LORD, and he answered me.

<sup>2</sup>O LORD, rescue me from lying lips and from a deceitful tongue.

<sup>3</sup>You deceitful tongue, what can the LORD give you? What more can he do for you?

<sup>4</sup>He will give you a warriors sharpened arrows and redhot coals.

<sup>5</sup>How horrible it is to live as a foreigner in Meshech or to stay in the tents of Kedar.

<sup>6</sup>I have lived too long with those who hate peace.

<sup>7</sup>I am for peace, but when I talk about it, they only talk about war.

**121**<sup>1</sup>A song for going up to worship. I look up toward the mountains. Where can I find help?

<sup>2</sup> My help comes from the LORD, the maker of heaven and earth.

<sup>3</sup> He will not let you fall. Your guardian will not fall asleep.

<sup>4</sup> Indeed, the Guardian of Israel never rests or sleeps.

<sup>5</sup> The LORD is your guardian. The LORD is the shade over your right hand.

<sup>6</sup> The sun will not beat down on you during the day, nor will the moon at night.

<sup>7</sup> The LORD guards you from every evil. He guards your life.

<sup>8</sup> The LORD guards you as you come and go, now and forever.

**122** <sup>1</sup> A song by David for going up to worship. I was glad when they said to me, "Let's go to the house of the LORD."

<sup>2</sup> Our feet are standing inside your gates, Jerusalem.

<sup>3</sup> Jerusalem is built to be a city where the people are united.

<sup>4</sup> All of the LORDS tribes go to that city because it is a law in Israel to give thanks to the name of the LORD.

<sup>5</sup>The court of justice sits there. It consists of princes who are Davids descendants.

<sup>6</sup>Pray for the peace of Jerusalem: "May those who love you prosper.

<sup>7</sup>May there be peace inside your walls and prosperity in your palaces."

<sup>8</sup>For the sake of my relatives and friends, let me say, "May it go well for you!"

<sup>9</sup>For the sake of the house of the LORD our God, I will seek what is good for you.

**123**<sup>1</sup> A song for going up to worship. I look up to you, to the one who sits enthroned in heaven.

<sup>2</sup>As servants depend on their masters, as a maid depends on her mistress, so we depend on the LORD our God until he has pity on us.

<sup>3</sup>Have pity on us, O LORD. Have pity on us because we have suffered more than our share of contempt.

<sup>4</sup>We have suffered more than our share of ridicule from those who are carefree. We have suffered more than our share of contempt from those who are arrogant.

**124**<sup>1</sup> A song by David for going up to worship. "If the LORD

had not been on our side" (Israel should repeat this.)

<sup>2</sup>"If the LORD had not been on our side when people attacked us,

<sup>3</sup>then they would have swallowed us alive when their anger exploded against us.

<sup>4</sup>Then the floodwaters would have swept us away. An overflowing stream would have washed us away.

<sup>5</sup>Then raging water would have washed us away."

<sup>6</sup>Thank the LORD, who did not let them sink their teeth into us.

<sup>7</sup>We escaped like a bird caught in a hunters trap. The trap was broken, and we escaped.

<sup>8</sup>Our help is in the name of the LORD, the maker of heaven and earth.

**125**<sup>1</sup>A song for going up to worship. Those who trust the LORD are like Mount Zion, which can never be shaken. It remains firm forever.

<sup>2</sup>As the mountains surround Jerusalem, so the LORD surrounds his people now and forever.

<sup>3</sup>A wicked ruler will not be allowed to govern the land set aside for righteous

people. That is why righteous people do not use their power to do wrong.

<sup>4</sup>Do good, O LORD, to those who are good, to those whose motives are decent.

<sup>5</sup>But when people become crooked, the LORD will lead them away with troublemakers. Let there be peace in Israel!

**126** <sup>1</sup>A song for going up to worship. When the LORD restored the fortunes of Zion, it was as if we were dreaming.

<sup>2</sup>Then our mouths were filled with laughter and our tongues with joyful songs. Then the nations said, "The LORD has done spectacular things for them."

<sup>3</sup>The LORD has done spectacular things for us. We are overjoyed.

<sup>4</sup>Restore our fortunes, O LORD, as you restore streams to dry riverbeds in the Negev.

<sup>5</sup>Those who cry while they plant will joyfully sing while they harvest.

<sup>6</sup>The person who goes out weeping, carrying his bag of seed, will come home singing, carrying his bundles of grain.

**127** <sup>1</sup>A song by Solomon for going up to worship. If the LORD does not build the house, it is useless for the builders to work on it. If the LORD does not protect a city, it is useless for the guard to stay alert.

<sup>2</sup>It is useless to work hard for the food you eat by getting up early and going to bed late. The LORD gives food to those he loves while they sleep.

<sup>3</sup>Children are an inheritance from the LORD. They are a reward from him.

<sup>4</sup>The children born to a man when he is young are like arrows in the hand of a warrior.

<sup>5</sup>Blessed is the man who has filled his quiver with them. He will not be put to shame when he speaks with his enemies in the city gate.

**128** <sup>1</sup>A song for going up to worship. Blessed are all who fear the LORD and live his way.

<sup>2</sup>You will certainly eat what your own hands have provided. Blessings to you! May things go well for you!

<sup>3</sup>Your wife will be like a fruitful vine inside your home. Your children will be like young olive trees around your table.

<sup>4</sup>This is how the LORD will bless the person who fears him.

<sup>5</sup>May the LORD bless you from Zion so that you may see Jerusalem prospering all the days of your life.

<sup>6</sup>May you live to see your children's children. Let there be peace in Israel!

**129**<sup>1</sup>A song for going up to worship. "From the time I was young, people have attacked me" (Israel should repeat this.)

<sup>2</sup>"From the time I was young, people have attacked me, but they have never overpowered me.

<sup>3</sup>They have plowed my back like farmers plow fields. They made long slashes like furrows."

<sup>4</sup>The LORD is righteous. He has cut me loose from the ropes that wicked people tied around me.

<sup>5</sup>Put to shame all those who hate Zion. Force them to retreat.

<sup>6</sup>Make them be like grass on a roof, like grass that dries up before it produces a stalk.

<sup>7</sup>It will never fill the barns of those who harvest or the arms of those who gather bundles.

<sup>8</sup>Those who pass by will never say to them, "May you be blessed by the LORD" or "We bless you in the name of the LORD."

**130**<sup>1</sup> A song for going up to worship. O LORD, out of the depths I call to you.

<sup>2</sup>O Lord, hear my voice. Let your ears be open to my pleas for mercy.

<sup>3</sup>O LORD, who would be able to stand if you kept a record of sins?

<sup>4</sup>But with you there is forgiveness so that you can be feared.

<sup>5</sup>I wait for the LORD, my soul waits, and with hope I wait for his word.

<sup>6</sup>My soul waits for the LORD more than those who watch for the morning, more than those who watch for the morning.

<sup>7</sup>O Israel, put your hope in the LORD, because with the LORD there is mercy and with him there is unlimited forgiveness.

<sup>8</sup>He will rescue Israel from all its sins.

**131**<sup>1</sup> A song by David for going up to worship. O LORD, my heart is not conceited. My eyes do not look down on others. I am not involved in things too big or too difficult for me.

<sup>2</sup> Instead, I have kept my soul calm and quiet. My soul is content as a weaned child is content in its mothers arms.

<sup>3</sup> Israel, put your hope in the LORD now and forever.

**132**<sup>1</sup> A song for going up to worship. O LORD, remember David and all the hardships he endured.

<sup>2</sup> Remember how he swore an oath to the LORD and made this vow to the Mighty One of Jacob:

<sup>3</sup> "I will not step inside my house,  
<sup>4</sup> get into my bed, shut my eyes, or close my eyelids

<sup>5</sup> until I find a place for the LORD, a dwelling place for the Mighty One of Jacob."

<sup>6</sup> Now, we have heard about the ark of the promise being in Ephrathah. We have found it in Jaar.

<sup>7</sup> Lets go to his dwelling place. Lets worship at his footstool.

<sup>8</sup> O LORD, arise, and come to your resting place with the ark of your power.

<sup>9</sup> Clothe your priests with righteousness. Let your godly ones sing with joy.

<sup>10</sup> For the sake of your servant David, do not reject your anointed one.

<sup>11</sup> The LORD swore an oath to David. This is a truth he will not take back: "I will set one of your own descendants on your throne.

<sup>12</sup> If your sons are faithful to my promise and my written instructions that I will teach them, then their descendants will also sit on your throne forever."

<sup>13</sup> The LORD has chosen Zion. He wants it for his home.

<sup>14</sup> "This will be my resting place forever. Here I will sit enthroned because I want Zion.

<sup>15</sup> I will certainly bless all that Zion needs. I will satisfy its needy people with food.

<sup>16</sup> I will clothe its priests with salvation. Then its godly ones will sing joyfully.

<sup>17</sup> There I will make a horn sprout up for David. I will prepare a lamp for my anointed one.

<sup>18</sup> I will clothe his enemies with shame, but the crown on my anointed one will shine."

**133**<sup>1</sup> A song by David for going up to worship. See how good and pleasant it is when brothers and sisters live together in harmony!

<sup>2</sup>It is like fine, scented oil on the head, running down the beard down Aarons beard running over the collar of his robes.

<sup>3</sup>It is like dew on Mount Hermon, dew which comes down on Zions mountains. That is where the LORD promised the blessing of eternal life.

**134**<sup>1</sup>A song for going up to worship. Praise the LORD, all you servants of the LORD, all who stand in the house of the LORD night after night.

<sup>2</sup>Lift your hands toward the holy place, and praise the LORD.

<sup>3</sup>May the LORD, the maker of heaven and earth, bless you from Zion.

**135**<sup>1</sup>Hallelujah! Praise the name of the LORD. Praise him, you servants of the LORD

<sup>2</sup>who are standing in the house of the LORD, in the courtyards of the house of our God.

<sup>3</sup>Praise the LORD because he is good. Make music to praise his name because his name is beautiful.

<sup>4</sup>The LORD chose Jacob to be his own and chose Israel to be his own special treasure.

<sup>5</sup>I know that the LORD is great, that our Lord is greater than all the false gods.

<sup>6</sup>The LORD does whatever he wants in heaven or on earth, on the seas or in all the depths of the oceans.

<sup>7</sup>He is the one who makes the clouds rise from the ends of the earth, who makes lightning for the thunderstorms, and who brings wind out of his storerooms.

<sup>8</sup>He is the one who killed every firstborn male in Egypt. He killed humans and animals alike.

<sup>9</sup>He sent miraculous signs and amazing things into the heart of Egypt against Pharaoh and all his officials.

<sup>10</sup>He is the one who defeated many nations and killed mighty kings:

<sup>11</sup>King Sihon of the Amorites, King Og of Bashan, and all the kingdoms in Canaan.

<sup>12</sup>He gave their land as an inheritance, an inheritance to his people Israel.

<sup>13</sup>O LORD, your name endures forever.  
O LORD, you will be remembered  
throughout every generation.

<sup>14</sup>The LORD will provide justice for  
his people and have compassion on his  
servants.

<sup>15</sup>The idols of the nations are made  
of silver and gold. They were made by  
human hands.

<sup>16</sup>They have mouths, but they cannot  
speak. They have eyes, but they cannot  
see.

<sup>17</sup>They have ears, but they cannot  
hear. They cannot breathe.

<sup>18</sup>Those who make idols end up like  
them. So does everyone who trusts  
them.

<sup>19</sup>Descendants of Israel, praise the  
LORD. Descendants of Aaron, praise the  
LORD.

<sup>20</sup>Descendants of Levi, praise the  
LORD. You people who fear the LORD,  
praise the LORD.

<sup>21</sup>Thank the LORD in Zion. Thank the  
one who lives in Jerusalem. Hallelujah!

**136** <sup>1</sup>Give thanks to the LORD  
because he is good, because  
his mercy endures forever.

<sup>2</sup> Give thanks to the God of gods because his mercy endures forever.

<sup>3</sup> Give thanks to the Lord of lords because his mercy endures forever.

<sup>4</sup> Give thanks to the only one who does miraculous things because his mercy endures forever.

<sup>5</sup> to the one who made the heavens by his understanding because his mercy endures forever.

<sup>6</sup> to the one who spread out the earth on the water because his mercy endures forever.

<sup>7</sup> to the one who made the great lights because his mercy endures forever.

<sup>8</sup> the sun to rule the day because his mercy endures forever.

<sup>9</sup> the moon and stars to rule the night because his mercy endures forever.

<sup>10</sup> Give thanks to the one who killed the firstborn males in Egypt because his mercy endures forever.

<sup>11</sup> He brought Israel out from among them because his mercy endures forever.

<sup>12</sup> with a mighty hand and a powerful arm because his mercy endures forever.

<sup>13</sup> Give thanks to the one who divided the Red Sea because his mercy endures forever.

<sup>14</sup> He led Israel through the middle of it because his mercy endures forever.

<sup>15</sup> He swept Pharaoh and his army into the Red Sea because his mercy endures forever.

<sup>16</sup> Give thanks to the one who led his people through the desert because his mercy endures forever.

<sup>17</sup> Give thanks to the one who defeated powerful kings because his mercy endures forever.

<sup>18</sup> He killed mighty kings because his mercy endures forever.

<sup>19</sup> King Sihon of the Amorites because his mercy endures forever.

<sup>20</sup> and King Og of Bashan because his mercy endures forever.

<sup>21</sup> He gave their land as an inheritance because his mercy endures forever.

<sup>22</sup> as an inheritance for his servant Israel because his mercy endures forever.

<sup>23</sup> He remembered us when we were humiliated because his mercy endures forever.

<sup>24</sup> He snatched us from the grasp of our enemies because his mercy endures forever.

<sup>25</sup> He gives food to every living creature because his mercy endures forever.

<sup>26</sup> Give thanks to the God of heaven because his mercy endures forever.

**137** <sup>1</sup> By the rivers of Babylon, we sat down and cried as we remembered Zion.

<sup>2</sup> We hung our lyres on willow trees.

<sup>3</sup> It was there that those who had captured us demanded that we sing. Those who guarded us wanted us to entertain them. They said, "Sing a song from Zion for us!"

<sup>4</sup> How could we sing the LORDS song in a foreign land?

<sup>5</sup> If I forget you, Jerusalem, let my right hand forget how to play the lyre.

<sup>6</sup> Let my tongue stick to the roof of my mouth if I dont remember you, if I dont consider Jerusalem my highest joy.

<sup>7</sup> O LORD, remember the people of Edom. Remember what they did the day Jerusalem was captured. They said, "Tear it down! Tear it down to its foundation."

<sup>8</sup>You destructive people of Babylon, blessed is the one who pays you back with the same treatment you gave us.

<sup>9</sup>Blessed is the one who grabs your little children and smashes them against a rock.

**138**<sup>1</sup> By David. I will give thanks to you with all my heart. I will make music to praise you in front of the false gods.

<sup>2</sup>I will bow toward your holy temple. I will give thanks to your name because of your mercy and truth. You have made your name and your promise greater than everything.

<sup>3</sup>When I called, you answered me. You made me bold by strengthening my soul.

<sup>4</sup>All the kings of the earth will give thanks to you, O LORD, because they have heard the promises you spoke.

<sup>5</sup>They will sing this about the ways of the LORD: "The LORDS honor is great!"

<sup>6</sup>Even though the LORD is high above, he sees humble people close up, and he recognizes arrogant people from a distance.

<sup>7</sup>Even though I walk into the middle of trouble, you guard my life against the

anger of my enemies. You stretch out your hand, and your right hand saves me.

<sup>8</sup>The LORD will do everything for me. O LORD, your mercy endures forever. Do not let go of what your hands have made.

**139**<sup>1</sup> For the choir director; a psalm by David. O LORD, you have examined me, and you know me.

<sup>2</sup>You alone know when I sit down and when I get up. You read my thoughts from far away.

<sup>3</sup>You watch me when I travel and when I rest. You are familiar with all my ways.

<sup>4</sup>Even before there is a single word on my tongue, you know all about it, LORD.

<sup>5</sup>You are all around me in front of me and in back of me. You lay your hand on me.

<sup>6</sup>Such knowledge is beyond my grasp. It is so high I cannot reach it.

<sup>7</sup>Where can I go to get away from your Spirit? Where can I run to get away from you?

<sup>8</sup>If I go up to heaven, you are there. If I make my bed in hell, you are there.

<sup>9</sup>If I climb upward on the rays of the morning sun or land on the most distant shore of the sea where the sun sets,

<sup>10</sup>even there your hand would guide me and your right hand would hold on to me.

<sup>11</sup>If I say, "Let the darkness hide me and let the light around me turn into night,"

<sup>12</sup>even the darkness is not too dark for you. Night is as bright as day. Darkness and light are the same to you.

<sup>13</sup>You alone created my inner being. You knitted me together inside my mother.

<sup>14</sup>I will give thanks to you because I have been so amazingly and miraculously made. Your works are miraculous, and my soul is fully aware of this.

<sup>15</sup>My bones were not hidden from you when I was being made in secret, when I was being skillfully woven in an underground workshop.

<sup>16</sup>Your eyes saw me when I was only a fetus. Every day of my life was recorded in your book before one of them had taken place.

<sup>17</sup>How precious are your thoughts concerning me, O God! How vast in number they are!

<sup>18</sup>If I try to count them, there would be more of them than there are grains of sand. When I wake up, I am still with you.

<sup>19</sup>I wish that you would kill wicked people, O God, and that bloodthirsty people would leave me alone.

<sup>20</sup>They say wicked things about you. Your enemies misuse your name.

<sup>21</sup>Shouldnt I hate those who hate you, O LORD? Shouldnt I be disgusted with those who attack you?

<sup>22</sup>I hate them with all my heart. They have become my enemies.

<sup>23</sup>Examine me, O God, and know my mind. Test me, and know my thoughts.

<sup>24</sup>See whether I am on an evil path. Then lead me on the everlasting path.

**140**<sup>1</sup>For the choir leader; a psalm by David. Rescue me from evil people, O LORD. Keep me safe from violent people.

<sup>2</sup>They plan evil things in their hearts. They start fights every day.

<sup>3</sup>They make their tongues as sharp as a snake's fang. Their lips hide the venom of poisonous snakes. Selah

<sup>4</sup>Protect me from the hands of wicked people, O LORD. Keep me safe from violent people. They try to trip me.

<sup>5</sup>Arrogant people have laid a trap for me. They have spread out a net with ropes. They have set traps for me along the road. Selah

<sup>6</sup>I said to the LORD, "You are my God." O LORD, open your ears to hear my plea for pity.

<sup>7</sup>O LORD Almighty, the strong one who saves me, you have covered my head in the day of battle.

<sup>8</sup>O LORD, do not give wicked people what they want. Do not let their evil plans succeed, or they will become arrogant. Selah

<sup>9</sup>Let the heads of those who surround me be covered with their own threats.

<sup>10</sup>Let burning coals fall on them. Let them be thrown into a pit, never to rise again.

<sup>11</sup>Do not let slanderers prosper on earth. Let evil hunt down violent people with one blow after another.

<sup>12</sup>I know that the LORD will defend the rights of those who are oppressed and the cause of those who are needy.

<sup>13</sup>Indeed, righteous people will give thanks to your name. Decent people will live in your presence.

**141** <sup>1</sup>A psalm by David. O LORD, I cry out to you, "Come quickly." Open your ears to me when I cry out to you.

<sup>2</sup>Let my prayer be accepted as sweet-smelling incense in your presence. Let the lifting up of my hands in prayer be accepted as an evening sacrifice.

<sup>3</sup>O LORD, set a guard at my mouth. Keep watch over the door of my lips.

<sup>4</sup>Do not let me be persuaded to do anything evil or to become involved with wickedness, with people who are troublemakers. Do not let me taste their delicacies.

<sup>5</sup>A righteous person may strike me or correct me out of kindness. It is like lotion for my head. My head will not refuse it, because my prayer is directed against evil deeds.

<sup>6</sup>When their judges are thrown off a cliff, they will listen to what I have to say. It will sound pleasant to them.

<sup>7</sup>As someone plows and breaks up the ground, so our bones will be planted at the mouth of the grave.

<sup>8</sup>My eyes look to you, LORD Almighty. I have taken refuge in you. Do not leave me defenseless.

<sup>9</sup>Keep me away from the trap they set for me and from the traps set by troublemakers.

<sup>10</sup>Let wicked people fall into their own nets, while I escape unharmed.

**142**<sup>1</sup> A maskil by David when he was in the cave; a prayer. Loudly, I cry to the LORD. Loudly, I plead with the LORD for mercy.

<sup>2</sup>I pour out my complaints in his presence and tell him my troubles.

<sup>3</sup>When I begin to lose hope, you already know what I am experiencing. My enemies have hidden a trap for me on the path where I walk.

<sup>4</sup>Look to my right and see that no one notices me. Escape is impossible for me. No one cares about me.

<sup>5</sup>I call out to you, O LORD. I say, "You are my refuge, my own inheritance in this world of the living."

<sup>6</sup>Pay attention to my cry for help because I am very weak. Rescue me from those who pursue me because they are too strong for me.

<sup>7</sup>Release my soul from prison so that I may give thanks to your name. Righteous people will surround me because you are good to me.

**143**<sup>1</sup> A psalm by David. O LORD, listen to my prayer. Open your ears to hear my urgent requests. Answer me because you are faithful and righteous.

<sup>2</sup>Do not take me to court for judgment, because there is no one alive who is righteous in your presence.

<sup>3</sup>The enemy has pursued me. He has ground my life into the dirt. He has made me live in dark places like those who have died long ago.

<sup>4</sup>That is why I begin to lose hope and my heart is in a state of shock.

<sup>5</sup>I remember the days long ago. I reflect on all that you have done. I

carefully consider what your hands have made.

<sup>6</sup>I stretch out my hands to you in prayer. Like parched land, my soul thirsts for you. Selah

<sup>7</sup>Answer me quickly, O LORD. My spirit is worn out. Do not hide your face from me, or I will be like those who go into the pit.

<sup>8</sup>Let me hear about your mercy in the morning, because I trust you. Let me know the way that I should go, because I long for you.

<sup>9</sup>Rescue me from my enemies, O LORD. I come to you for protection.

<sup>10</sup>Teach me to do your will, because you are my God. May your good Spirit lead me on level ground.

<sup>11</sup>O LORD, keep me alive for the sake of your name. Because you are righteous, lead me out of trouble.

<sup>12</sup>In keeping with your mercy, wipe out my enemies and destroy all who torment me, because I am your servant.

**144**<sup>1</sup>By David. Thank the LORD, my rock, who trained my hands to fight and my fingers to do battle,

<sup>2</sup> my merciful one, my fortress, my stronghold, and my savior, my shield, the one in whom I take refuge, and the one who brings people under my authority.

<sup>3</sup> O LORD, what are humans that you should care about them? What are mere mortals that you should think about them?

<sup>4</sup> Humans are like a breath of air. Their life span is like a fleeting shadow.

<sup>5</sup> O LORD, bend your heaven low, and come down. Touch the mountains, and they will smoke.

<sup>6</sup> Hurl bolts of lightning, and scatter them. Shoot your arrows, and throw them into confusion.

<sup>7</sup> Stretch out your hands from above. Snatch me, and rescue me from raging waters and from foreigners hands.

<sup>8</sup> Their mouths speak lies. Their right hands take false pledges.

<sup>9</sup> O God, I will sing a new song to you. I will sing a psalm to you on a tenstringed harp.

<sup>10</sup> You are the one who gives victory to kings. You are the one who snatches your servant David away from a deadly sword.

<sup>11</sup> Snatch me, and rescue me from foreigners hands. Their mouths speak lies. Their right hands take false pledges.

<sup>12</sup> May our sons be like fullgrown, young plants. May our daughters be like stately columns that adorn the corners of a palace.

<sup>13</sup> May our barns be filled with all kinds of crops. May our sheep give birth to thousands of lambs, tens of thousands in our fields.

<sup>14</sup> May our cattle have many calves. May no one break in, and may no one be dragged out. May there be no cries of distress in our streets.

<sup>15</sup> Blessed are the people who have these blessings! Blessed are the people whose God is the LORD!

**145** <sup>1</sup> A song of praise by David. I will highly praise you, my God, the king. I will bless your name forever and ever.

<sup>2</sup> I will bless you every day. I will praise your name forever and ever.

<sup>3</sup> The LORD is great, and he should be highly praised. His greatness is unsearchable.

<sup>4</sup> One generation will praise your deeds to the next. Each generation will talk about your mighty acts.

<sup>5</sup> I will think about the glorious honor of your majesty and the miraculous things you have done.

<sup>6</sup> People will talk about the power of your terrifying deeds, and I will tell about your greatness.

<sup>7</sup> They will announce what they remember of your great goodness, and they will joyfully sing about your righteousness.

<sup>8</sup> The LORD is merciful, compassionate, patient, and always ready to forgive.

<sup>9</sup> The LORD is good to everyone and has compassion for everything that he has made.

<sup>10</sup> Everything that you have made will give thanks to you, O LORD, and your faithful ones will praise you.

<sup>11</sup> Everyone will talk about the glory of your kingdom and will tell the descendants of Adam about your might

<sup>12</sup> in order to make known your mighty deeds and the glorious honor of your kingdom.

<sup>13</sup>Your kingdom is an everlasting kingdom. Your empire endures throughout every generation.

<sup>14</sup>The LORD supports everyone who falls. He straightens the backs of those who are bent over.

<sup>15</sup>The eyes of all creatures look to you, and you give them their food at the proper time.

<sup>16</sup>You open your hand, and you satisfy the desire of every living thing.

<sup>17</sup>The LORD is fair in all his ways and faithful in everything he does.

<sup>18</sup>The LORD is near to everyone who prays to him, to every faithful person who prays to him.

<sup>19</sup>He fills the needs of those who fear him. He hears their cries for help and saves them.

<sup>20</sup>The LORD protects everyone who loves him, but he will destroy all wicked people.

<sup>21</sup>My mouth will speak the praise of the LORD, and all living creatures will praise his holy name forever and ever.

**146**<sup>1</sup> Hallelujah! Praise the LORD,  
my soul!

<sup>2</sup>I want to praise the LORD throughout my life. I want to make music to praise my God as long as I live.

<sup>3</sup>Do not trust influential people, mortals who cannot help you.

<sup>4</sup>When they breathe their last breath, they return to the ground. On that day their plans come to an end.

<sup>5</sup>Blessed are those who receive help from the God of Jacob. Their hope rests on the LORD their God,

<sup>6</sup>who made heaven, earth, the sea, and everything in them. The LORD remains faithful forever.

<sup>7</sup>He brings about justice for those who are oppressed. He gives food to those who are hungry. The LORD sets prisoners free.

<sup>8</sup>The LORD gives sight to blind people. The LORD straightens the backs of those who are bent over. The LORD loves righteous people.

<sup>9</sup>The LORD protects foreigners. The LORD gives relief to orphans and widows. But he keeps wicked people from reaching their goal.

<sup>10</sup>The LORD rules as king forever.  
Zion, your God rules throughout every  
generation. Hallelujah!

**147** <sup>1</sup>Hallelujah! It is good to  
sing psalms to our God. It is  
pleasant to sing his praise beautifully.

<sup>2</sup>The LORD is the builder of Jerusalem.  
He is the one who gathers the outcasts  
of Israel together.

<sup>3</sup>He is the healer of the brokenhearted.  
He is the one who bandages their  
wounds.

<sup>4</sup>He determines the number of stars.  
He gives each one a name.

<sup>5</sup>Our Lord is great, and his power  
is great. There is no limit to his  
understanding.

<sup>6</sup>The LORD gives relief to those who  
are oppressed. He brings wicked people  
down to the ground.

<sup>7</sup>Sing to the LORD a song of  
thanksgiving. Make music to our God  
with a lyre.

<sup>8</sup>He covers the sky with clouds. He  
provides rain for the ground. He makes  
grass grow on the mountains.

<sup>9</sup>He is the one who gives food to animals and to young ravens when they call out.

<sup>10</sup>He finds no joy in strong horses, nor is he pleased by brave soldiers.

<sup>11</sup>The LORD is pleased with those who fear him, with those who wait with hope for his mercy.

<sup>12</sup>Praise the LORD, Jerusalem! Praise your God, Zion!

<sup>13</sup>He makes the bars across your gates strong. He blesses the children within you.

<sup>14</sup>He is the one who brings peace to your borders and satisfies your hunger with the finest wheat.

<sup>15</sup>He is the one who sends his promise throughout the earth. His word travels with great speed.

<sup>16</sup>He is the one who sends snow like wool and scatters frost like ashes.

<sup>17</sup>He is the one who throws his hailstones like breadcrumbs. Who can withstand his chilling blast?

<sup>18</sup>He sends out his word and melts his hailstones. He makes wind blow and water flow.

<sup>19</sup>He speaks his word to Jacob, his laws and judicial decisions to Israel.

<sup>20</sup>He has done nothing like this for any other nation. The other nations do not know the decisions he has handed down. Hallelujah!

**148**<sup>1</sup> Hallelujah! Praise the LORD from the heavens. Praise him in the heights above.

<sup>2</sup>Praise him, all his angels. Praise him, his entire heavenly army.

<sup>3</sup>Praise him, sun and moon. Praise him, all shining stars.

<sup>4</sup>Praise him, you highest heaven and the water above the sky.

<sup>5</sup>Let them praise the name of the LORD because they were created by his command.

<sup>6</sup>He set them in their places forever and ever. He made it a law that no one can break.

<sup>7</sup>Praise the LORD from the earth. Praise him, large sea creatures and all the ocean depths,

<sup>8</sup>lightning and hail, snow and fog, strong winds that obey his commands,

<sup>9</sup>mountains and all hills, fruit trees and all cedar trees,

<sup>10</sup>wild animals and all domestic animals, crawling animals and birds,

<sup>11</sup>kings of the earth and all its people, officials and all judges on the earth,

<sup>12</sup>young men and women, old and young together.

<sup>13</sup>Let them praise the name of the LORD because his name is high above all others. His glory is above heaven and earth.

<sup>14</sup>He has given his people a strong leader, someone praiseworthy for his faithful ones, for the people of Israel, the people who are close to him. Hallelujah!

**149**<sup>1</sup> Hallelujah! Sing a new song to the LORD. Sing his praise in the assembly of godly people.

<sup>2</sup>Let Israel find joy in their creator. Let the people of Zion rejoice over their king.

<sup>3</sup>Let them praise his name with dancing. Let them make music to him with tambourines and lyres,

<sup>4</sup>because the LORD takes pleasure in his people. He crowns those who are oppressed with victory.

<sup>5</sup>Let godly people triumph in glory. Let them sing for joy on their beds.

<sup>6</sup>Let the high praises of God be in their throats and twoedged swords in their hands

<sup>7</sup>to take vengeance on the nations, to punish the people of the world,

<sup>8</sup>to put their kings in chains and their leaders in iron shackles,

<sup>9</sup>to carry out the judgment that is written against them. This is an honor that belongs to all his godly ones.

Hallelujah!

**150**<sup>1</sup> Hallelujah! Praise God in his holy place. Praise him in his mighty heavens.

<sup>2</sup>Praise him for his mighty acts. Praise him for his immense greatness.

<sup>3</sup>Praise him with sounds from horns. Praise him with harps and lyres.

<sup>4</sup>Praise him with tambourines and dancing. Praise him with stringed instruments and flutes.

<sup>5</sup>Praise him with loud cymbals. Praise him with crashing cymbals.

<sup>6</sup>Let everything that breathes praise the LORD! Hallelujah!

# Proverbs

**1** <sup>1</sup> The proverbs of Solomon, Davids son who was king of Israel, given <sup>2</sup> to grasp wisdom and discipline, to understand deep thoughts,

<sup>3</sup> to acquire the discipline of wise behavior, righteousness and justice and fairness

<sup>4</sup> to give insight to gullible people, to give knowledge and foresight to the young

<sup>5</sup> a wise person will listen and continue to learn, and an understanding person will gain direction

<sup>6</sup> to understand a proverb and a clever saying, the words of wise people and their riddles.

<sup>7</sup> The fear of the LORD is the beginning of knowledge. Stubborn fools despise wisdom and discipline.

<sup>8</sup> My son, listen to your fathers discipline, and do not neglect your mothers teachings,

<sup>9</sup>because discipline and teachings are a graceful garland on your head and a golden chain around your neck.

<sup>10</sup>My son, if sinners lure you, do not go along.

<sup>11</sup>If they say, "Come with us. Let's set an ambush to kill someone. Let's hide to ambush innocent people for fun.

<sup>12</sup>We'll swallow them alive like the grave, like those in good health who go into the pit.

<sup>13</sup>We'll find all kinds of valuable possessions. We'll fill our homes with stolen goods.

<sup>14</sup>Join us. We'll split the loot equally."

<sup>15</sup>My son, do not follow them in their way. Do not even set foot on their path,

<sup>16</sup>because they rush to do evil and hurry to shed blood.

<sup>17</sup>It does no good to spread a net within the sight of any bird.

<sup>18</sup>But these people set an ambush for their own murder. They go into hiding only to lose their lives.

<sup>19</sup>This is what happens to everyone who is greedy for unjust gain. Greed takes away his life.

<sup>20</sup>Wisdom sings her song in the streets. In the public squares she raises her voice.

<sup>21</sup>At the corners of noisy streets she calls out. At the entrances to the city she speaks her words,

<sup>22</sup>"How long will you gullible people love being so gullible? How long will you mockers find joy in your mocking? How long will you fools hate knowledge?

<sup>23</sup>"Turn to me when I warn you. I will generously pour out my spirit for you. I will make my words known to you.

<sup>24</sup>"I called, and you refused to listen. I stretched out my hands to you, and no one paid attention.

<sup>25</sup>You ignored all my advice. You did not want me to warn you.

<sup>26</sup>I will laugh at your calamity. I will make fun of you when panic strikes you,

<sup>27</sup>when panic strikes you like a violent storm, when calamity strikes you like a wind storm, when trouble and anguish come to you.

<sup>28</sup>"They will call to me at that time, but I will not answer. They will look for me, but they will not find me,

<sup>29</sup> because they hated knowledge and did not choose the fear of the LORD.

<sup>30</sup> They refused my advice. They despised my every warning.

<sup>31</sup> They will eat the fruit of their lifestyle. They will be stuffed with their own schemes.

<sup>32</sup> "Gullible people kill themselves because of their turning away. Fools destroy themselves because of their indifference.

<sup>33</sup> But whoever listens to me will live without worry and will be free from the dread of disaster."

**2**<sup>1</sup> My son, if you take my words to heart and treasure my commands within you,

<sup>2</sup> if you pay close attention to wisdom, and let your mind reach for understanding,

<sup>3</sup> if indeed you call out for insight, if you ask aloud for understanding,

<sup>4</sup> if you search for wisdom as if it were money and hunt for it as if it were hidden treasure,

<sup>5</sup> then you will understand the fear of the LORD and you will find the knowledge of God.

<sup>6</sup>The LORD gives wisdom. From his mouth come knowledge and understanding.

<sup>7</sup>He has reserved priceless wisdom for decent people. He is a shield for those who walk in integrity

<sup>8</sup>in order to guard those on paths of justice and to watch over the way of his godly ones.

<sup>9</sup>Then you will understand what is right and just and fair every good course in life.

<sup>10</sup>Wisdom will come into your heart. Knowledge will be pleasant to your soul.

<sup>11</sup>Foresight will protect you. Understanding will guard you.

<sup>12</sup>Wisdom will save you from the way of evil, from the person who speaks devious things,

<sup>13</sup>from those who abandon the paths of righteousness to walk the ways of darkness,

<sup>14</sup>from those who enjoy doing evil, from those who find joy in the deviousness of evil.

<sup>15</sup>Their paths are crooked. Their ways are devious.

<sup>16</sup>Wisdom will also save you from an adulterous woman, from a loose woman with her smooth talk,

<sup>17</sup>who leaves her husband, the closest friend of her youth, and forgets her marriage vows to her God.

<sup>18</sup>Her house sinks down to death. Her ways lead to the souls of the dead.

<sup>19</sup>None who have sex with her come back. Nor do they ever reach the paths of life.

<sup>20</sup>So walk in the way of good people and stay on the paths of righteous people.

<sup>21</sup>Decent people will live in the land. People of integrity will remain in it.

<sup>22</sup>But wicked people will be cut off from the land and treacherous people will be torn from it.

**3**<sup>1</sup> My son, do not forget my teachings, and keep my commands in mind,  
<sup>2</sup>because they will bring you long life, good years, and peace.

<sup>3</sup>Do not let mercy and truth leave you. Fasten them around your neck. Write them on the tablet of your heart.

<sup>4</sup>Then you will find favor and much success in the sight of God and humanity.

<sup>5</sup>Trust the LORD with all your heart, and do not rely on your own understanding.

<sup>6</sup>In all your ways acknowledge him, and he will make your paths smooth.

<sup>7</sup>Do not consider yourself wise. Fear the LORD, and turn away from evil.

<sup>8</sup>Then your body will be healed, and your bones will have nourishment.

<sup>9</sup>Honor the LORD with your wealth and with the first and best part of all your income.

<sup>10</sup>Then your barns will be full, and your vats will overflow with fresh wine.

<sup>11</sup>Do not reject the discipline of the LORD, my son, and do not resent his warning,

<sup>12</sup>because the LORD warns the one he loves, even as a father warns a son with whom he is pleased.

<sup>13</sup>Blessed is the one who finds wisdom and the one who obtains understanding.

<sup>14</sup>The profit gained from wisdom is greater than the profit gained from silver. Its yield is better than fine gold.

<sup>15</sup>Wisdom is more precious than jewels, and all your desires cannot equal it.

<sup>16</sup>Long life is in wisdom's right hand. In wisdom's left hand are riches and honor.

<sup>17</sup>Wisdom's ways are pleasant ways,  
and all its paths lead to peace.

<sup>18</sup>Wisdom is a tree of life for those who  
take firm hold of it. Those who cling to it  
are blessed.

<sup>19</sup>By Wisdom the LORD laid  
the foundation of the earth. By  
understanding he established the  
heavens.

<sup>20</sup>By his knowledge the deep waters  
were divided, and the skies dropped  
dew.

<sup>21</sup>My son, do not lose sight of these  
things. Use priceless wisdom and  
foresight.

<sup>22</sup>Then they will mean life for you, and  
they will grace your neck.

<sup>23</sup>Then you will go safely on your way,  
and you will not hurt your foot.

<sup>24</sup>When you lie down, you will not be  
afraid. As you lie there, your sleep will  
be sweet.

<sup>25</sup>Do not be afraid of sudden terror or  
of the destruction of wicked people when  
it comes.

<sup>26</sup>The LORD will be your confidence. He  
will keep your foot from getting caught.

<sup>27</sup> Do not hold back anything good from those who are entitled to it when you have the power to do so.

<sup>28</sup> When you have the good thing with you, do not tell your neighbor, "Go away! Come back tomorrow. I'll give you something then."

<sup>29</sup> Do not plan to do something wrong to your neighbor while he is sitting there with you and suspecting nothing.

<sup>30</sup> Do not quarrel with a person for no reason if he has not harmed you.

<sup>31</sup> Do not envy a violent person. Do not choose any of his ways.

<sup>32</sup> The devious person is disgusting to the LORD. The LORD'S intimate advice is with decent people.

<sup>33</sup> The LORD curses the house of wicked people, but he blesses the home of righteous people.

<sup>34</sup> When he mocks the mockers, he is gracious to humble people.

<sup>35</sup> Wise people will inherit honor, but fools will bear disgrace.

**4**<sup>1</sup> Sons, listen to your fathers discipline, and pay attention in order to gain understanding.

<sup>2</sup>After all, I have taught you well. Do not abandon my teachings.

<sup>3</sup>When I was a boy learning from my father, when I was a tender and only child of my mother,

<sup>4</sup>they used to teach me and say to me, "Cling to my words wholeheartedly. Obey my commands so that you may live.

<sup>5</sup>Acquire wisdom. Acquire understanding. Do not forget. Do not turn away from the words that I have spoken.

<sup>6</sup>Do not abandon wisdom, and it will watch over you. Love wisdom, and it will protect you.

<sup>7</sup>The beginning of wisdom is to acquire wisdom. Acquire understanding with all that you have.

<sup>8</sup>Cherish wisdom. It will raise you up. It will bring you honor when you embrace it.

<sup>9</sup>It will give you a graceful garland for your head. It will hand you a beautiful crown."

<sup>10</sup>My son, listen and accept my words, and they will multiply the years of your life.

<sup>11</sup> I have taught you the way of wisdom. I have guided you along decent paths.

<sup>12</sup> When you walk, your stride will not be hampered. Even if you run, you will not stumble.

<sup>13</sup> Cling to discipline. Do not relax your grip on it. Keep it because it is your life.

<sup>14</sup> Do not stray onto the path of wicked people. Do not walk in the way of evil people.

<sup>15</sup> Avoid it. Do not walk near it. Turn away from it, and keep on walking.

<sup>16</sup> Wicked people cannot sleep unless they do wrong, and they are robbed of their sleep unless they make someone stumble.

<sup>17</sup> They eat food obtained through wrongdoing and drink wine obtained through violence.

<sup>18</sup> But the path of righteous people is like the light of dawn that becomes brighter and brighter until it reaches midday.

<sup>19</sup> The way of wicked people is like deep darkness. They do not know what makes them stumble.

<sup>20</sup> My son, pay attention to my words. Open your ears to what I say.

<sup>21</sup> Do not lose sight of these things.  
Keep them deep within your heart

<sup>22</sup> because they are life to those who  
find them and they heal the whole body.

<sup>23</sup> Guard your heart more than anything  
else, because the source of your life  
flows from it.

<sup>24</sup> Remove dishonesty from your mouth.  
Put deceptive speech far away from your  
lips.

<sup>25</sup> Let your eyes look straight ahead and  
your sight be focused in front of you.

<sup>26</sup> Carefully walk a straight path, and all  
your ways will be secure.

<sup>27</sup> Do not lean to the right or to the left.  
Walk away from evil.

**5**<sup>1</sup> My son, pay attention to my  
wisdom. Open your ears to my  
understanding

<sup>2</sup> so that you may act with foresight and  
speak with insight.

<sup>3</sup> The lips of an adulterous woman drip  
with honey. Her kiss is smoother than  
oil,

<sup>4</sup> but in the end she is as bitter as  
wormwood, as sharp as a twoedged  
sword.

<sup>5</sup> Her feet descend to death. Her steps lead straight to hell.

<sup>6</sup> She doesn't even think about the path of life. Her steps wander, and she doesn't realize it.

<sup>7</sup> But now, sons, listen to me, and do not turn away from what I say to you.

<sup>8</sup> Stay far away from her. Do not even go near her door.

<sup>9</sup> Either you will surrender your reputation to others and the rest of your years to some cruel person,

<sup>10</sup> or strangers will benefit from your strength and you will have to work hard in a pagan's house.

<sup>11</sup> Then you will groan when your end comes, when your body and flesh are consumed. You will say,

<sup>12</sup> "Oh, how I hated discipline! How my heart despised correction!

<sup>13</sup> I didn't listen to what my teachers said to me, nor did I keep my ear open to my instructors.

<sup>14</sup> I almost reached total ruin in the assembly and in the congregation."

<sup>15</sup> Drink water out of your own cistern and running water from your own well.

<sup>16</sup>Why should water flow out of your spring? Why should your streams flow into the streets?

<sup>17</sup>They should be yours alone, so do not share them with strangers.

<sup>18</sup>Let your own fountain be blessed, and enjoy the girl you married when you were young,

<sup>19</sup>a loving doe and a graceful deer. Always let her breasts satisfy you. Always be intoxicated with her love.

<sup>20</sup>Why should you, my son, be intoxicated with an adulterous woman and fondle a loose womans breast?

<sup>21</sup>Each persons ways are clearly seen by the LORD, and he surveys all his actions.

<sup>22</sup>A wicked person will be trapped by his own wrongs, and he will be caught in the ropes of his own sin.

<sup>23</sup>He will die for his lack of discipline and stumble around because of his great stupidity.

**6**<sup>1</sup>My son, if you guarantee a loan for your neighbor or pledge yourself for a stranger with a handshake,

<sup>2</sup>you are trapped by the words of your own mouth, caught by your own promise.

<sup>3</sup>Do the following things, my son, so that you may free yourself, because you have fallen into your neighbors hands: Humble yourself, and pester your neighbor.

<sup>4</sup>Dont let your eyes rest or your eyelids close.

<sup>5</sup>Free yourself like a gazelle from the hand of a hunter and like a bird from the hand of a hunter.

<sup>6</sup>Consider the ant, you lazy bum. Watch its ways, and become wise.

<sup>7</sup>Although it has no overseer, officer, or ruler,

<sup>8</sup>in summertime it stores its food supply. At harvest time it gathers its food.

<sup>9</sup>How long will you lie there, you lazy bum? When will you get up from your sleep?

<sup>10</sup>"Just a little sleep, just a little slumber, just a little nap."

<sup>11</sup>Then your poverty will come to you like a drifter, and your need will come to you like a bandit.

<sup>12</sup>A goodfornothing scoundrel is a person who has a dishonest mouth.

<sup>13</sup>He winks his eye, makes a signal with his foot, and points with his fingers.

<sup>14</sup>He devises evil all the time with a twisted mind. He spreads conflict.

<sup>15</sup>That is why disaster will come on him suddenly. In a moment he will be crushed beyond recovery.

<sup>16</sup>There are six things that the LORD hates, even seven that are disgusting to him:

<sup>17</sup>arrogant eyes, a lying tongue, hands that kill innocent people,

<sup>18</sup>a mind devising wicked plans, feet that are quick to do wrong,

<sup>19</sup>a dishonest witness spitting out lies, and a person who spreads conflict among relatives.

<sup>20</sup>My son, obey the command of your father, and do not disregard the teachings of your mother.

<sup>21</sup>Fasten them on your heart forever. Hang them around your neck.

<sup>22</sup>When you walk around, they will lead you. When you lie down, they will watch over you. When you wake up, they will talk to you

<sup>23</sup> because the command is a lamp, the teachings are a light, and the warnings from discipline are the path of life

<sup>24</sup> to keep you from an evil woman and from the smooth talk of a loose woman.

<sup>25</sup> Do not desire her beauty in your heart. Do not let her catch you with her eyes.

<sup>26</sup> A prostitute's price is only a loaf of bread, but a married woman hunts for your life itself.

<sup>27</sup> Can a man carry fire in his lap without burning his clothes?

<sup>28</sup> Can anyone walk on red-hot coals without burning his feet?

<sup>29</sup> So it is with a man who has sex with his neighbor's wife. None who touch her will escape punishment.

<sup>30</sup> People do not despise a thief who is hungry when he steals to satisfy his appetite,

<sup>31</sup> but when he is caught, he has to repay it seven times. He must give up all the possessions in his house.

<sup>32</sup> Whoever commits adultery with a woman has no sense. Whoever does this destroys himself.

<sup>33</sup> An adulterous man will find disease and dishonor, and his disgrace will not be blotted out,

<sup>34</sup> because jealousy arouses a husband's fury. The husband will show no mercy when he takes revenge.

<sup>35</sup> No amount of money will change his mind. The largest bribe will not satisfy him.

**7** <sup>1</sup> My son, pay attention to my words. Treasure my commands that are within you.

<sup>2</sup> Obey my commands so that you may live. Follow my teachings just as you protect the pupil of your eye.

<sup>3</sup> Tie them on your fingers. Write them on the tablet of your heart.

<sup>4</sup> Say to wisdom, "You are my sister." Give the name "my relative" to understanding

<sup>5</sup> in order to guard yourself from an adulterous woman, from a loose woman with her smooth talk.

<sup>6</sup> From a window in my house I looked through my screen.

<sup>7</sup> I was looking at gullible people when I saw a young man without much sense among youths.

<sup>8</sup>He was crossing a street near her corner and walking toward her house  
<sup>9</sup>in the twilight, in the evening, in the dark hours of the night.

<sup>10</sup>A woman with an ulterior motive meets him. She is dressed as a prostitute.

<sup>11</sup>She is loud and rebellious. Her feet will not stay at home.

<sup>12</sup>One moment she is out on the street, the next she is at the curb, on the prowl at every corner.

<sup>13</sup>She grabs him and kisses him and brazenly says to him,

<sup>14</sup>"I have some sacrificial meat. Today I kept my vows.

<sup>15</sup>That's why I came to meet you. Eagerly, I looked for you, and I've found you.

<sup>16</sup>I've made my bed, with colored sheets of Egyptian linen.

<sup>17</sup>I've sprinkled my bed with myrrh, aloes, and cinnamon.

<sup>18</sup>Come, let's drink our fill of love until morning. Let's enjoy making love,

<sup>19</sup>because my husband's not home. He has gone on a long trip.

<sup>20</sup>He took lots of money with him. He won't be home for a couple of weeks."

<sup>21</sup>With all her seductive charms, she persuades him. With her smooth lips, she makes him give in.

<sup>22</sup>He immediately follows her like a steer on its way to be slaughtered, like a ram hobbling into captivity

<sup>23</sup>until an arrow pierces his heart, like a bird darting into a trap. He does not realize that it will cost him his life.

<sup>24</sup>Now, sons, listen to me. Pay attention to the words from my mouth.

<sup>25</sup>Do not let your heart be turned to her ways. Do not wander onto her paths,

<sup>26</sup>because she has brought down many victims, and she has killed all too many.

<sup>27</sup>Her home is the way to hell and leads to the darkest vaults of death.

**8**<sup>1</sup> Does not wisdom call out? Does not understanding raise its voice?

<sup>2</sup>Wisdom takes its stand on high ground, by the wayside where the roads meet,

<sup>3</sup>near the gates to the city. At the entrance wisdom sings its song,

<sup>4</sup>"I am calling to all of you, and my appeal is to all people.

<sup>5</sup>You gullible people, learn how to be sensible. You fools, get a heart that has understanding.

<sup>6</sup>Listen! I am speaking about noble things, and my lips will say what is right.

<sup>7</sup>My mouth expresses the truth, and wickedness is disgusting to my lips.

<sup>8</sup>Everything I say is fair, and there is nothing twisted or crooked in it.

<sup>9</sup>All of it is clear to a person who has understanding and right to those who have acquired knowledge.

<sup>10</sup>Take my discipline, not silver, and my knowledge rather than fine gold,

<sup>11</sup>because wisdom is better than jewels. Nothing you desire can equal it.

<sup>12</sup>"I, Wisdom, live with insight, and I acquire knowledge and foresight.

<sup>13</sup>To fear the LORD is to hate evil. I hate pride, arrogance, evil behavior, and twisted speech.

<sup>14</sup>Advice and priceless wisdom are mine. I, Understanding, have strength.

<sup>15</sup>Through me kings reign, and rulers decree fair laws.

<sup>16</sup>Through me princes rule, so do nobles and all fair judges.

<sup>17</sup>I love those who love me. Those eagerly looking for me will find me.

<sup>18</sup>I have riches and honor, lasting wealth and righteousness.

<sup>19</sup>What I produce is better than gold, pure gold. What I yield is better than fine silver.

<sup>20</sup>I walk in the way of righteousness, on the paths of justice,

<sup>21</sup>to give an inheritance to those who love me and to fill their treasuries.

<sup>22</sup>"The LORD already possessed me long ago, when his way began, before any of his works.

<sup>23</sup>I was appointed from everlasting from the first, before the earth began.

<sup>24</sup>I was born before there were oceans, before there were springs filled with water.

<sup>25</sup>I was born before the mountains were settled in their places and before the hills,

<sup>26</sup>when he had not yet made land or fields or the first dust of the world.

<sup>27</sup>"When he set up the heavens, I was there. When he traced the horizon on the surface of the ocean,

<sup>28</sup>when he established the skies above,  
when he determined the currents in the  
ocean,

<sup>29</sup>when he set a limit for the sea so the  
waters would not overstep his command,  
when he traced the foundations of the  
earth,

<sup>30</sup>I was beside him as a master  
craftsman. I made him happy day after  
day, I rejoiced in front of him all the  
time,

<sup>31</sup>found joy in his inhabited world, and  
delighted in the human race.

<sup>32</sup>"Now, sons, listen to me. Blessed are  
those who follow my ways.

<sup>33</sup>Listen to discipline, and become wise.  
Do not leave my ways.

<sup>34</sup>Blessed is the person who listens to  
me, watches at my door day after day,  
and waits by my doorposts.

<sup>35</sup>Whoever finds me finds life and  
obtains favor from the LORD.

<sup>36</sup>Whoever sins against me harms  
himself. All those who hate me love  
death."

**9**<sup>1</sup>Wisdom has built her house. She  
has carved out her seven pillars.

<sup>2</sup>She has prepared her meat. She has mixed her wine. She has set her table.

<sup>3</sup>She has sent out her servant girls. She calls from the highest places in the city,

<sup>4</sup>"Whoever is gullible turn in here!" She says to a person without sense,

<sup>5</sup>"Come, eat my bread, and drink the wine I have mixed.

<sup>6</sup>Stop being gullible and live. Start traveling the road to understanding."

<sup>7</sup>Whoever corrects a mocker receives abuse. Whoever warns a wicked person gets hurt.

<sup>8</sup>Do not warn a mocker, or he will hate you. Warn a wise person, and he will love you.

<sup>9</sup>Give advice to a wise person, and he will become even wiser. Teach a righteous person, and he will learn more.

<sup>10</sup>The fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom. The knowledge of the Holy One is understanding.

<sup>11</sup>You will live longer because of me, and years will be added to your life.

<sup>12</sup>If you are wise, your wisdom will help you. If you mock, you alone will be held responsible.

<sup>13</sup>The woman Stupidity is loud, gullible, and ignorant.

<sup>14</sup>She sits at the doorway of her house. She is enthroned on the high ground of the city

<sup>15</sup>and calls to those who pass by, those minding their own business,

<sup>16</sup>"Whoever is gullible turn in here!" She says to a person without sense,

<sup>17</sup>"Stolen waters are sweet, and food eaten in secret is tasty."

<sup>18</sup>But he does not know that the souls of the dead are there, that her guests are in the depths of hell.

**10**<sup>1</sup>The proverbs of Solomon: A wise son makes his father happy, but a foolish son brings grief to his mother.

<sup>2</sup>Treasures gained dishonestly profit no one, but righteousness rescues from death.

<sup>3</sup>The LORD will not allow a righteous person to starve, but he intentionally ignores the desires of a wicked person.

<sup>4</sup>Lazy hands bring poverty, but hardworking hands bring riches.

<sup>5</sup>Whoever gathers in the summer is a wise son. Whoever sleeps at harvest time brings shame.

<sup>6</sup>Blessings cover the head of a righteous person, but violence covers the mouths of wicked people.

<sup>7</sup>The name of a righteous person remains blessed, but the names of wicked people will rot away.

<sup>8</sup>The one who is truly wise accepts commands, but the one who talks foolishly will be thrown down headfirst.

<sup>9</sup>Whoever lives honestly will live securely, but whoever lives dishonestly will be found out.

<sup>10</sup>Whoever winks with his eye causes heartache. The one who talks foolishly will be thrown down headfirst.

<sup>11</sup>The mouth of a righteous person is a fountain of life, but the mouths of wicked people conceal violence.

<sup>12</sup>Hate starts quarrels, but love covers every wrong.

<sup>13</sup>Wisdom is found on the lips of a person who has understanding, but a rod is for the back of one without sense.

<sup>14</sup>Those who are wise store up knowledge, but the mouth of a stubborn fool invites ruin.

<sup>15</sup>The rich person's wealth is his strong city. Poverty ruins the poor.

<sup>16</sup>A righteous persons reward is life. A wicked persons harvest is sin.

<sup>17</sup>Whoever practices discipline is on the way to life, but whoever ignores a warning strays.

<sup>18</sup>Whoever conceals hatred has lying lips. Whoever spreads slander is a fool.

<sup>19</sup>Sin is unavoidable when there is much talk, but whoever seals his lips is wise.

<sup>20</sup>The tongue of a righteous person is pure silver. The hearts of wicked people are worthless.

<sup>21</sup>The lips of a righteous person feed many, but stubborn fools die because they have no sense.

<sup>22</sup>It is the LORDS blessing that makes a person rich, and hard work adds nothing to it.

<sup>23</sup>Like the laughter of a fool when he carries out an evil plan, so is wisdom to a person who has understanding.

<sup>24</sup>That which wicked people dread happens to them, but the LORD grants the desire of righteous people.

<sup>25</sup>When the storm has passed, the wicked person has vanished, but the

righteous person has an everlasting foundation.

<sup>26</sup> Like vinegar to the teeth, like smoke to the eyes, so is the lazy person to those who send him on a mission.

<sup>27</sup> The fear of the LORD lengthens the number of days, but the years of wicked people are shortened.

<sup>28</sup> The hope of righteous people leads to joy, but the eager waiting of wicked people comes to nothing.

<sup>29</sup> The way of the LORD is a fortress for an innocent person but a ruin to those who are troublemakers.

<sup>30</sup> A righteous person will never be moved, but wicked people will not continue to live in the land.

<sup>31</sup> The mouth of a righteous person increases wisdom, but a devious tongue will be cut off.

<sup>32</sup> The lips of a righteous person announce good will, but the mouths of wicked people are devious.

**11** <sup>1</sup> Dishonest scales are disgusting to the LORD, but accurate weights are pleasing to him.

<sup>2</sup> Arrogance comes, then comes shame, but wisdom remains with humble people.

<sup>3</sup> Integrity guides decent people, but hypocrisy leads treacherous people to ruin.

<sup>4</sup> Riches are of no help on the day of fury, but righteousness saves from death.

<sup>5</sup> The righteousness of innocent people makes their road smooth, but wicked people fall by their own wickedness.

<sup>6</sup> Decent people are saved by their righteousness, but treacherous people are trapped by their own greed.

<sup>7</sup> At the death of a wicked person, hope vanishes. Moreover, his confidence in strength vanishes.

<sup>8</sup> A righteous person is rescued from trouble, and a wicked person takes his place.

<sup>9</sup> With his talk a godless person can ruin his neighbor, but righteous people are rescued by knowledge.

<sup>10</sup> When righteous people prosper, a city is glad. When wicked people die, there are songs of joy.

<sup>11</sup> With the blessing of decent people a city is raised up, but by the words of wicked people, it is torn down.

<sup>12</sup>A person who despises a neighbor has no sense, but a person who has understanding keeps quiet.

<sup>13</sup>Whoever gossips gives away secrets, but whoever is trustworthy in spirit can keep a secret.

<sup>14</sup>A nation will fall when there is no direction, but with many advisers there is victory.

<sup>15</sup>Whoever guarantees a stranger's loan will get into trouble, but whoever hates the closing of a deal remains secure.

<sup>16</sup>A gracious woman wins respect, but ruthless men gain riches.

<sup>17</sup>A merciful person helps himself, but a cruel person hurts himself.

<sup>18</sup>A wicked person earns dishonest wages, but whoever spreads righteousness earns honest pay.

<sup>19</sup>As righteousness leads to life, so whoever pursues evil finds his own death.

<sup>20</sup>Devious people are disgusting to the LORD, but he is delighted with those whose ways are innocent.

<sup>21</sup>Certainly, an evil person will not go unpunished, but the descendants of righteous people will escape.

<sup>22</sup> Like a gold ring in a pig's snout, so is a beautiful woman who lacks good taste.

<sup>23</sup> The desire of righteous people ends only in good, but the hope of wicked people ends only in fury.

<sup>24</sup> One person spends freely and yet grows richer, while another holds back what he owes and yet grows poorer.

<sup>25</sup> A generous person will be made rich, and whoever satisfies others will himself be satisfied.

<sup>26</sup> People will curse the one who hoards grain, but a blessing will be upon the head of the one who sells it.

<sup>27</sup> Whoever eagerly seeks good searches for good will, but whoever looks for evil finds it.

<sup>28</sup> Whoever trusts his riches will fall, but righteous people will flourish like a green leaf.

<sup>29</sup> Whoever brings trouble upon his family inherits only wind, and that stubborn fool becomes a slave to the wise in heart.

<sup>30</sup> The fruit of a righteous person is a tree of life, and a winner of souls is wise.

<sup>31</sup> If the righteous person is rewarded on earth, how much more the wicked person and the sinner!

**12**<sup>1</sup> Whoever loves discipline loves to learn, but whoever hates correction is a dumb animal.

<sup>2</sup> A good person obtains favor from the LORD, but the LORD condemns everyone who schemes.

<sup>3</sup> A person cannot stand firm on a foundation of wickedness, and the roots of righteous people cannot be moved.

<sup>4</sup> A wife with strength of character is the crown of her husband, but the wife who disgraces him is like bone cancer.

<sup>5</sup> The thoughts of righteous people are fair. The advice of wicked people is treacherous.

<sup>6</sup> The words of wicked people are a deadly ambush, but the words of decent people rescue.

<sup>7</sup> Overthrow wicked people, and they are no more, but the families of righteous people continue to stand.

<sup>8</sup> A person will be praised based on his insight, but whoever has a twisted mind will be despised.

<sup>9</sup> Better to be unimportant and have a slave than to act important and have nothing to eat.

<sup>10</sup> A righteous person cares even about the life of his animals, but the compassion of wicked people is nothing but cruelty.

<sup>11</sup> Whoever works his land will have plenty to eat, but the one who chases unrealistic dreams has no sense.

<sup>12</sup> A wicked person delights in setting a trap for other evil people, but the roots of righteous people produce fruit.

<sup>13</sup> An evil person is trapped by his own sinful talk, but a righteous person escapes from trouble.

<sup>14</sup> One person enjoys good things as a result of his speaking ability. Another is paid according to what his hands have accomplished.

<sup>15</sup> A stubborn fool considers his own way the right one, but a person who listens to advice is wise.

<sup>16</sup> When a stubborn fool is irritated, he shows it immediately, but a sensible person hides the insult.

<sup>17</sup> A truthful witness speaks honestly, but a lying witness speaks deceitfully.

<sup>18</sup>Careless words stab like a sword, but the words of wise people bring healing.

<sup>19</sup>The word of truth lasts forever, but lies last only a moment.

<sup>20</sup>Deceit is in the heart of those who plan evil, but joy belongs to those who advise peace.

<sup>21</sup>No lasting harm comes to a righteous person, but wicked people have lots of trouble.

<sup>22</sup>Lips that lie are disgusting to the LORD, but honest people are his delight.

<sup>23</sup>A sensible person discreetly hides knowledge, but foolish minds preach stupidity.

<sup>24</sup>Hardworking hands gain control, but lazy hands do slave labor.

<sup>25</sup>A persons anxiety will weigh him down, but an encouraging word makes him joyful.

<sup>26</sup>A righteous person looks out for his neighbor, but the path of wicked people leads others astray.

<sup>27</sup>A lazy hunter does not catch his prey, but a hardworking person becomes wealthy.

<sup>28</sup>Everlasting life is on the way of righteousness. Eternal death is not along its path.

**13**<sup>1</sup> A wise son listens to his fathers discipline, but a mocker does not listen to reprimands.

<sup>2</sup>A person eats well as a result of his speaking ability, but the appetite of treacherous people craves violence.

<sup>3</sup>Whoever controls his mouth protects his own life. Whoever has a big mouth comes to ruin.

<sup>4</sup>A lazy person craves food and there is none, but the appetite of hardworking people is satisfied.

<sup>5</sup>A righteous person hates lying, but a wicked person behaves with shame and disgrace.

<sup>6</sup>Righteousness protects the honest way of life, but wickedness ruins a sacrifice for sin.

<sup>7</sup>One person pretends to be rich but has nothing. Another pretends to be poor but has great wealth.

<sup>8</sup>A persons riches are the ransom for his life, but the poor person does not pay attention to threats.

<sup>9</sup>The light of righteous people beams brightly, but the lamp of wicked people will be snuffed out.

<sup>10</sup>Arrogance produces only quarreling, but those who take advice gain wisdom.

<sup>11</sup>Wealth gained through injustice dwindles away, but whoever gathers little by little has plenty.

<sup>12</sup>Delayed hope makes one sick at heart, but a fulfilled longing is a tree of life.

<sup>13</sup>Whoever despises God's words will pay the penalty, but the one who fears God's commands will be rewarded.

<sup>14</sup>The teachings of a wise person are a fountain of life to turn one away from the grasp of death.

<sup>15</sup>Good sense brings favor, but the way of treacherous people is always the same.

<sup>16</sup>Any sensible person acts with knowledge, but a fool displays stupidity.

<sup>17</sup>An undependable messenger gets into trouble, but a dependable envoy brings healing.

<sup>18</sup>Poverty and shame come to a person who ignores discipline, but whoever pays

attention to constructive criticism will be honored.

<sup>19</sup>A fulfilled desire is sweet to the soul, but turning from evil is disgusting to fools.

<sup>20</sup>Whoever walks with wise people will be wise, but whoever associates with fools will suffer.

<sup>21</sup>Disaster hunts down sinners, but righteous people are rewarded with good.

<sup>22</sup>Good people leave an inheritance to their grandchildren, but the wealth of sinners is stored away for a righteous person.

<sup>23</sup>When poor people are able to plow, there is much food, but a person is swept away where there is no justice.

<sup>24</sup>Whoever refuses to spank his son hates him, but whoever loves his son disciplines him from early on.

<sup>25</sup>A righteous person eats to satisfy his appetite, but the bellies of wicked people are always empty.

**14**<sup>1</sup>The wisest of women builds up her home, but a stupid one tears it down with her own hands.

<sup>2</sup>Whoever lives right fears the LORD, but a person who is devious in his ways despises him.

<sup>3</sup>Because of a stubborn fool's words a whip is lifted against him, but wise people are protected by their speech.

<sup>4</sup>Where there are no cattle, the feeding trough is empty, but the strength of an ox produces plentiful harvests.

<sup>5</sup>A trustworthy witness does not lie, but a dishonest witness breathes lies.

<sup>6</sup>A mocker searches for wisdom without finding it, but knowledge comes easily to a person who has understanding.

<sup>7</sup>Stay away from a fool, because you will not receive knowledge from his lips.

<sup>8</sup>The wisdom of a sensible person guides his way of life, but the stupidity of fools misleads them.

<sup>9</sup>Stubborn fools make fun of guilt, but there is forgiveness among decent people.

<sup>10</sup>The heart knows its own bitterness, and no stranger can share its joy.

<sup>11</sup>The houses of wicked people will be destroyed, but the tents of decent people will continue to expand.

<sup>12</sup>There is a way that seems right to a person, but eventually it ends in death.

<sup>13</sup>Even while laughing a heart can ache, and joy can end in grief.

<sup>14</sup>A heart that turns from God becomes bored with its own ways, but a good person is satisfied with Gods ways.

<sup>15</sup>A gullible person believes anything, but a sensible person watches his step.

<sup>16</sup>A wise person is cautious and turns away from evil, but a fool is careless and overconfident.

<sup>17</sup>A shorttempered person acts stupidly, and a person who plots evil is hated.

<sup>18</sup>Gullible people are gifted with stupidity, but sensible people are crowned with knowledge.

<sup>19</sup>Evil people will bow to good people. Wicked people will bow at the gates of a righteous person.

<sup>20</sup>A poor person is hated even by his neighbor, but a rich person is loved by many.

<sup>21</sup>Whoever despises his neighbor sins, but blessed is the one who is kind to humble people.

<sup>22</sup> Don't those who stray plan what is evil, while those who are merciful and faithful plan what is good?

<sup>23</sup> In hard work there is always something gained, but idle talk leads only to poverty.

<sup>24</sup> The crown of wise people is their wealth. The stupidity of fools is just that stupidity!

<sup>25</sup> An honest witness saves lives, but one who tells lies is dangerous.

<sup>26</sup> In the fear of the LORD there is strong confidence, and his children will have a place of refuge.

<sup>27</sup> The fear of the LORD is a fountain of life to turn one away from the grasp of death.

<sup>28</sup> A large population is an honor for a king, but without people a ruler is ruined.

<sup>29</sup> A person of great understanding is patient, but a short temper is the height of stupidity.

<sup>30</sup> A tranquil heart makes for a healthy body, but jealousy is like bone cancer.

<sup>31</sup> Whoever oppresses the poor insults his maker, but whoever is kind to the needy honors him.

<sup>32</sup>A wicked person is thrown down by his own wrongdoing, but even in his death a righteous person has a refuge.

<sup>33</sup>Wisdom finds rest in the heart of an understanding person. Even fools recognize this.

<sup>34</sup>Righteousness lifts up a nation, but sin is a disgrace in any society.

<sup>35</sup>A king is delighted with a servant who acts wisely, but he is furious with one who acts shamefully.

**15**<sup>1</sup>A gentle answer turns away rage, but a harsh word stirs up anger.

<sup>2</sup>The tongues of wise people give good expression to knowledge, but the mouths of fools pour out a flood of stupidity.

<sup>3</sup>The eyes of the LORD are everywhere. They watch evil people and good people.

<sup>4</sup>A soothing tongue is a tree of life, but a deceitful tongue breaks the spirit.

<sup>5</sup>A stubborn fool despises his father's discipline, but whoever appreciates a warning shows good sense.

<sup>6</sup>Great treasure is in the house of a righteous person, but trouble comes along with the income of a wicked person.

<sup>7</sup>The lips of wise people spread knowledge, but a foolish attitude does not.

<sup>8</sup>A sacrifice brought by wicked people is disgusting to the LORD, but the prayers of decent people please him.

<sup>9</sup>The way of wicked people is disgusting to the LORD, but he loves those who pursue righteousness.

<sup>10</sup>Discipline is a terrible burden to anyone who leaves the right path. Anyone who hates a warning will die.

<sup>11</sup>If Sheol and Abaddon lie open in front of the LORD how much more the human heart!

<sup>12</sup>A mocker does not appreciate a warning. He will not go to wise people.

<sup>13</sup>A joyful heart makes a cheerful face, but with a heartache comes depression.

<sup>14</sup>The mind of a person who has understanding searches for knowledge, but the mouths of fools feed on stupidity.

<sup>15</sup>Every day is a terrible day for a miserable person, but a cheerful heart has a continual feast.

<sup>16</sup>Better to have a little with the fear of the LORD than great treasure and turmoil.

<sup>17</sup> Better to have a dish of vegetables where there is love than juicy steaks where there is hate.

<sup>18</sup> A hothead stirs up a fight, but one who holds his temper calms disputes.

<sup>19</sup> The path of lazy people is like a thorny hedge, but the road of decent people is an open highway.

<sup>20</sup> A wise son makes his father happy, but a foolish child despises its mother.

<sup>21</sup> Stupidity is fun to the one without much sense, but a person who has understanding forges straight ahead.

<sup>22</sup> Without advice plans go wrong, but with many advisers they succeed.

<sup>23</sup> A person is delighted to hear an answer from his own mouth, and a timely wordoh, how good!

<sup>24</sup> The path of life for a wise person leads upward in order to turn him away from hell below.

<sup>25</sup> The LORD tears down the house of an arrogant person, but he protects the property of widows.

<sup>26</sup> The thoughts of evil people are disgusting to the LORD, but pleasant words are pure to him.

<sup>27</sup> Whoever is greedy for unjust gain brings trouble to his family, but whoever hates bribes will live.

<sup>28</sup> The heart of a righteous person carefully considers how to answer, but the mouths of wicked people pour out a flood of evil things.

<sup>29</sup> The LORD is far from wicked people, but he hears the prayers of righteous people.

<sup>30</sup> A twinkle in the eye delights the heart. Good news refreshes the body.

<sup>31</sup> The ear that listens to a lifegiving warning will be at home among wise people.

<sup>32</sup> Whoever ignores discipline despises himself, but the person who listens to warning gains understanding.

<sup>33</sup> The fear of the LORD is discipline leading to wisdom, and humility comes before honor.

**16** <sup>1</sup> The plans of the heart belong to humans, but an answer on the tongue comes from the LORD.

<sup>2</sup> A person thinks all his ways are pure, but the LORD weighs motives.

<sup>3</sup> Entrust your efforts to the LORD, and your plans will succeed.

<sup>4</sup>The LORD has made everything for his own purpose, even wicked people for the day of trouble.

<sup>5</sup>Everyone with a conceited heart is disgusting to the LORD. Certainly, such a person will not go unpunished.

<sup>6</sup>By mercy and faithfulness, peace is made with the LORD. By the fear of the LORD, evil is avoided.

<sup>7</sup>When a person's ways are pleasing to the LORD, he makes even his enemies to be at peace with him.

<sup>8</sup>Better a few possessions gained honestly than many gained through injustice.

<sup>9</sup>A person may plan his own journey, but the LORD directs his steps.

<sup>10</sup>When a divine revelation is on a king's lips, he cannot voice a wrong judgment.

<sup>11</sup>Honest balances and scales belong to the LORD. He made the entire set of weights.

<sup>12</sup>Wrongdoing is disgusting to kings because a throne is established through righteousness.

<sup>13</sup>Kings are happy with honest words, and whoever speaks what is right is loved.

<sup>14</sup>A king's anger announces death, but a wise man makes peace with him.

<sup>15</sup>When the king is cheerful, there is life, and his favor is like a cloud bringing spring rain.

<sup>16</sup>How much better it is to gain wisdom than gold, and the gaining of understanding should be chosen over silver.

<sup>17</sup>The highway of decent people turns away from evil. Whoever watches his way preserves his own life.

<sup>18</sup>Pride precedes a disaster, and an arrogant attitude precedes a fall.

<sup>19</sup>Better to be humble with lowly people than to share stolen goods with arrogant people.

<sup>20</sup>Whoever gives attention to the LORDS word prospers, and blessed is the person who trusts the LORD.

<sup>21</sup>The person who is truly wise is called understanding, and speaking sweetly helps others learn.

<sup>22</sup>Understanding is a fountain of life to the one who has it, but stubborn fools punish themselves with their stupidity.

<sup>23</sup> A wise person's heart controls his speech, and what he says helps others learn.

<sup>24</sup> Pleasant words are like honey from a honeycomb sweet to the spirit and healthy for the body.

<sup>25</sup> There is a way that seems right to a person, but eventually it ends in death.

<sup>26</sup> A laborer's appetite works to his advantage, because his hunger drives him on.

<sup>27</sup> A worthless person plots trouble, and his speech is like a burning fire.

<sup>28</sup> A devious person spreads quarrels. A gossip separates the closest of friends.

<sup>29</sup> A violent person misleads his neighbor and leads him on a path that is not good.

<sup>30</sup> Whoever winks his eye is plotting something devious. Whoever bites his lips has finished his evil work.

<sup>31</sup> Silver hair is a beautiful crown found in a righteous life.

<sup>32</sup> Better to get angry slowly than to be a hero. Better to be eventempered than to capture a city.

<sup>33</sup> The dice are thrown, but the LORD determines every outcome.

**17** <sup>1</sup> Better a bite of dry bread eaten in peace than a family feast filled with strife.

<sup>2</sup> A wise slave will become master over a son who acts shamefully, and he will share the inheritance with the brothers.

<sup>3</sup> The crucible is for refining silver and the smelter for gold, but the one who purifies hearts by fire is the LORD.

<sup>4</sup> An evildoer pays attention to wicked lips. A liar opens his ears to a slanderous tongue.

<sup>5</sup> Whoever makes fun of a poor person insults his maker. Whoever is happy to see someones distress will not escape punishment.

<sup>6</sup> Grandchildren are the crown of grandparents, and parents are the glory of their children.

<sup>7</sup> Refined speech is not fitting for a godless fool. How much less does lying fit a noble person!

<sup>8</sup> A bribe seems like a jewel to the one who gives it. Wherever he turns, he prospers.

<sup>9</sup> Whoever forgives an offense seeks love, but whoever keeps bringing up the issue separates the closest of friends.

<sup>10</sup>A reprimand impresses a person who has understanding more than a hundred lashes impress a fool.

<sup>11</sup>A rebel looks for nothing but evil. Therefore, a cruel messenger will be sent to punish him.

<sup>12</sup>Better to meet a bear robbed of its cubs than a fool carried away with his stupidity.

<sup>13</sup>Whoever pays back evil for good evil will never leave his home.

<sup>14</sup>Starting a quarrel is like opening a floodgate, so stop before the argument gets out of control.

<sup>15</sup>Whoever approves of wicked people and whoever condemns righteous people is disgusting to the LORD.

<sup>16</sup>Why should a fool have money in his hand to buy wisdom when he doesn't have a mind to grasp anything?

<sup>17</sup>A friend always loves, and a brother is born to share trouble.

<sup>18</sup>A person without good sense closes a deal with a handshake. He guarantees a loan in the presence of his friend.

<sup>19</sup>Whoever loves sin loves a quarrel. Whoever builds his city gate high invites destruction.

<sup>20</sup> A twisted mind never finds happiness, and one with a devious tongue repeatedly gets into trouble.

<sup>21</sup> The parent of a fool has grief, and the father of a godless fool has no joy.

<sup>22</sup> A joyful heart is good medicine, but depression drains one's strength.

<sup>23</sup> A wicked person secretly accepts a bribe to corrupt the ways of justice.

<sup>24</sup> Wisdom is directly in front of an understanding person, but the eyes of a fool are looking around all over the world.

<sup>25</sup> A foolish son is a heartache to his father and bitter grief to his mother.

<sup>26</sup> To punish an innocent person is not good. To strike down noble people is not right.

<sup>27</sup> Whoever has knowledge controls his words, and a person who has understanding is even-tempered.

<sup>28</sup> Even a stubborn fool is thought to be wise if he keeps silent. He is considered intelligent if he keeps his lips sealed.

**18**<sup>1</sup> A loner is out to get what he wants for himself. He opposes all sound reasoning.

<sup>2</sup>A fool does not find joy in understanding but only in expressing his own opinion.

<sup>3</sup>When wickedness comes, contempt also comes, and insult comes along with disgrace.

<sup>4</sup>The words of a persons mouth are like deep waters. The fountain of wisdom is an overflowing stream.

<sup>5</sup>It is not good to be partial toward a wicked person, thereby depriving an innocent person of justice.

<sup>6</sup>By talking, a fool gets into an argument, and his mouth invites a beating.

<sup>7</sup>A fools mouth is his ruin. His lips are a trap to his soul.

<sup>8</sup>The words of a gossip are swallowed greedily, and they go down into a persons innermost being.

<sup>9</sup>Whoever is lazy in his work is related to a vandal.

<sup>10</sup>The name of the LORD is a strong tower. A righteous person runs to it and is safe.

<sup>11</sup>A rich persons wealth is his strong city and is like a high wall in his imagination.

<sup>12</sup> Before destruction a persons heart is arrogant, but humility comes before honor.

<sup>13</sup> Whoever gives an answer before he listens is stupid and shameful.

<sup>14</sup> A persons spirit can endure sickness, but who can bear a broken spirit?

<sup>15</sup> The mind of a person who has understanding acquires knowledge. The ears of wise people seek knowledge.

<sup>16</sup> A gift opens doors for the one who gives it and brings him into the presence of great people.

<sup>17</sup> The first to state his case seems right until his neighbor comes to crossexamine him.

<sup>18</sup> Flipping a coin ends quarrels and settles issues between powerful people.

<sup>19</sup> An offended brother is more resistant than a strong city, and disputes are like the locked gate of a castle tower.

<sup>20</sup> A persons speaking ability provides for his stomach. His talking provides him a living.

<sup>21</sup> The tongue has the power of life and death, and those who love to talk will have to eat their own words.

<sup>22</sup>Whoever finds a wife finds something good and has obtained favor from the LORD.

<sup>23</sup>A poor person is timid when begging, but a rich person is blunt when replying.

<sup>24</sup>Friends can destroy one another, but a loving friend can stick closer than family.

**19**<sup>1</sup> Better to be a poor person who lives innocently than to be one who talks dishonestly and is a fool.

<sup>2</sup>A person without knowledge is no good. A person in a hurry makes mistakes.

<sup>3</sup>The stupidity of a person turns his life upside down, and his heart rages against the LORD.

<sup>4</sup>Wealth adds many friends, but a poor person is separated from his friend.

<sup>5</sup>A lying witness will not go unpunished. One who tells lies will not escape.

<sup>6</sup>Many try to win the kindness of a generous person, and everyone is a friend to a person who gives gifts.

<sup>7</sup>The entire family of a poor person hates him. How much more do his friends keep their distance from him!

When he chases them with words, they are gone.

<sup>8</sup>A person who gains sense loves himself. One who guards understanding finds something good.

<sup>9</sup>A lying witness will not go unpunished. One who tells lies will die.

<sup>10</sup>Luxury does not fit a fool, much less a slave ruling princes.

<sup>11</sup>A person with good sense is patient, and it is to his credit that he overlooks an offense.

<sup>12</sup>The rage of a king is like the roar of a lion, but his favor is like dew on the grass.

<sup>13</sup>A foolish son ruins his father, and a quarreling woman is like constantly dripping water.

<sup>14</sup>Home and wealth are inherited from fathers, but a sensible wife comes from the LORD.

<sup>15</sup>Laziness throws one into a deep sleep, and an idle person will go hungry.

<sup>16</sup>Whoever obeys the law preserves his life, but whoever despises the LORDS ways will be put to death.

<sup>17</sup>Whoever has pity on the poor lends to the LORD, and he will repay him for his good deed.

<sup>18</sup>Discipline your son while there is still hope. Do not be the one responsible for his death.

<sup>19</sup>A person who has a hot temper will pay for it. If you rescue him, you will have to do it over and over.

<sup>20</sup>Listen to advice and accept discipline so that you may be wise the rest of your life.

<sup>21</sup>Many plans are in the human heart, but the advice of the LORD will endure.

<sup>22</sup>Loyalty is desirable in a person, and it is better to be poor than a liar.

<sup>23</sup>The fear of the LORD leads to life, and such a person will rest easy without suffering harm.

<sup>24</sup>A lazy person puts his fork in his food. He doesn't even bring it back to his mouth.

<sup>25</sup>Strike a mocker, and a gullible person may learn a lesson. Warn an understanding person, and he will gain more knowledge.

<sup>26</sup>A son who assaults his father and who drives away his mother brings shame and disgrace.

<sup>27</sup>If you stop listening to instruction, my son, you will stray from the words of knowledge.

<sup>28</sup>A worthless witness mocks justice, and the mouths of wicked people swallow up trouble.

<sup>29</sup>Punishments are set for mockers and beatings for the backs of fools.

**20**<sup>1</sup>Wine makes people mock, liquor makes them noisy, and everyone under their influence is unwise.

<sup>2</sup>The rage of a king is like the roar of a lion. Whoever makes him angry forfeits his life.

<sup>3</sup>Avoiding a quarrel is honorable. After all, any stubborn fool can start a fight.

<sup>4</sup>A lazy person does not plow in the fall. He looks for something in the harvest but finds nothing.

<sup>5</sup>A motive in the human heart is like deep water, and a person who has understanding draws it out.

<sup>6</sup>Many people declare themselves loyal, but who can find someone who is really trustworthy?

<sup>7</sup> A righteous person lives on the basis of his integrity. Blessed are his children after he is gone.

<sup>8</sup> A king who sits on his throne to judge sifts out every evil with his eyes.

<sup>9</sup> Who can say, "I've made my heart pure. I'm cleansed from my sin"?

<sup>10</sup> A double standard of weights and measures both are disgusting to the LORD.

<sup>11</sup> Even a child makes himself known by his actions, whether his deeds are pure or right.

<sup>12</sup> The ear that hears, the eye that sees the LORD made them both.

<sup>13</sup> Do not love sleep or you will end up poor. Keep your eyes open, and you will have plenty to eat.

<sup>14</sup> "Bad! Bad!" says the buyer. Then, as he goes away, he brags about his bargain.

<sup>15</sup> There are gold and plenty of jewels, but the lips of knowledge are precious gems.

<sup>16</sup> Hold on to the garment of one who guarantees a stranger's loan, and hold responsible the person who makes a loan on behalf of a foreigner.

<sup>17</sup> Food gained dishonestly tastes sweet to a person, but afterwards his mouth will be filled with gravel.

<sup>18</sup> Plans are confirmed by getting advice, and with guidance one wages war.

<sup>19</sup> Whoever goes around as a gossip tells secrets. Do not associate with a person whose mouth is always open.

<sup>20</sup> The lamp of the person who curses his father and mother will be snuffed out in total darkness.

<sup>21</sup> An inheritance quickly obtained in the beginning will never be blessed in the end.

<sup>22</sup> Do not say, "I'll get even with you!" Wait for the LORD, and he will save you.

<sup>23</sup> A double standard of weights is disgusting to the LORD, and dishonest scales are no good.

<sup>24</sup> The LORD is the one who directs a person's steps. How then can anyone understand his own way?

<sup>25</sup> It is a trap for a person to say impulsively, "This is a holy offering!" and later to have second thoughts about those vows.

<sup>26</sup>A wise king scatters the wicked and then runs them over.

<sup>27</sup>A persons soul is the LORDS lamp. It searches his entire innermost being.

<sup>28</sup>Mercy and truth protect a king, and with mercy he maintains his throne.

<sup>29</sup>While the glory of young men is their strength, the splendor of older people is their silver hair.

<sup>30</sup>Brutal beatings cleanse away wickedness. Such beatings cleanse the innermost being.

**21** <sup>1</sup>The kings heart is like streams of water. Both are under the LORDS control. He turns them in any direction he chooses.

<sup>2</sup>A person thinks everything he does is right, but the LORD weighs hearts.

<sup>3</sup>Doing what is right and fair is more acceptable to the LORD than offering a sacrifice.

<sup>4</sup>A conceited look and an arrogant attitude, which are the lamps of wicked people, are sins.

<sup>5</sup>The plans of a hardworking person lead to prosperity, but everyone who is always in a hurry ends up in poverty.

<sup>6</sup>Those who gather wealth by lying are wasting time. They are looking for death.

<sup>7</sup>The violence of wicked people will drag them away since they refuse to do what is just.

<sup>8</sup>The way of a guilty person is crooked, but the behavior of those who are pure is moral.

<sup>9</sup>Better to live on a corner of a roof than to share a home with a quarreling woman.

<sup>10</sup>The mind of a wicked person desires evil and has no consideration for his neighbor.

<sup>11</sup>When a mocker is punished, a gullible person becomes wise, and when a wise person is instructed, he gains knowledge.

<sup>12</sup>A righteous person wisely considers the house of a wicked person. He throws wicked people into disasters.

<sup>13</sup>Whoever shuts his ear to the cry of the poor will call and not be answered.

<sup>14</sup>A gift given in secret calms anger, and a secret bribe calms great fury.

<sup>15</sup>When justice is done, a righteous person is delighted, but troublemakers are terrified.

<sup>16</sup>A person who wanders from the way of wise behavior will rest in the assembly of the dead.

<sup>17</sup>Whoever loves pleasure will become poor. Whoever loves wine and expensive food will not become rich.

<sup>18</sup>Wicked people become a ransom for righteous people, and treacherous people will take the place of decent people.

<sup>19</sup>Better to live in a desert than with a quarreling and angry woman.

<sup>20</sup>Costly treasure and wealth are in the home of a wise person, but a fool devours them.

<sup>21</sup>Whoever pursues righteousness and mercy will find life, righteousness, and honor.

<sup>22</sup>A wise man attacks a city of warriors and pulls down the strong defenses in which they trust.

<sup>23</sup>Whoever guards his mouth and his tongue keeps himself out of trouble.

<sup>24</sup>An arrogant, conceited person is called a mocker. His arrogance knows no limits.

<sup>25</sup>The desire of a lazy person will kill him because his hands refuse to work.

<sup>26</sup>All day long he feels greedy, but a righteous person gives and does not hold back.

<sup>27</sup>The sacrifice of wicked people is disgusting, especially if they bring it with evil intent.

<sup>28</sup>A lying witness will die, but a person who listens to advice will continue to speak.

<sup>29</sup>A wicked person puts up a bold front, but a decent person's way of life is his own security.

<sup>30</sup>No wisdom, no understanding, and no advice can stand up against the LORD.

<sup>31</sup>The horse is made ready for the day of battle, but the victory belongs to the LORD.

**22**<sup>1</sup> A good name is more desirable than great wealth. Respect is better than silver or gold.

<sup>2</sup>The rich and the poor have this in common: the LORD is the maker of them all.

<sup>3</sup>Sensible people foresee trouble and hide from it, but gullible people go ahead and suffer the consequence.

<sup>4</sup> On the heels of humility (the fear of the LORD) are riches and honor and life.

<sup>5</sup> A devious person has thorns and traps ahead of him. Whoever guards himself will stay far away from them.

<sup>6</sup> Train a child in the way he should go, and even when he is old he will not turn away from it.

<sup>7</sup> A rich person rules poor people, and a borrower is a slave to a lender.

<sup>8</sup> Whoever plants injustice will harvest trouble, and this weapon of his own fury will be destroyed.

<sup>9</sup> Whoever is generous will be blessed because he has shared his food with the poor.

<sup>10</sup> Drive out a mocker, and conflict will leave. Quarreling and abuse will stop.

<sup>11</sup> Whoever loves a pure heart and whoever speaks graciously has a king as his friend.

<sup>12</sup> The LORDS eyes watch over knowledge, but he overturns the words of a treacherous person.

<sup>13</sup> A lazy person says, "Theres a lion outside! Ill be murdered in the streets!"

<sup>14</sup>The mouth of an adulterous woman is a deep pit. The one who is cursed by the LORD will fall into it.

<sup>15</sup>Foolishness is firmly attached to a child's heart. Spanking will remove it far from him.

<sup>16</sup>Oppressing the poor for profit or giving to the rich certainly leads to poverty.

<sup>17</sup>Open your ears, and hear the words of wise people, and set your mind on the knowledge I give you.

<sup>18</sup>It is pleasant if you keep them in mind so that they will be on the tip of your tongue,

<sup>19</sup>so that your trust may be in the LORD. Today I have made them known to you, especially to you.

<sup>20</sup>Didn't I write to you previously with advice and knowledge

<sup>21</sup>in order to teach you the words of truth so that you can give an accurate report to those who send you?

<sup>22</sup>Do not rob the poor because they are poor or trample on the rights of an oppressed person at the city gate,

<sup>23</sup> because the LORD will plead their case and will take the lives of those who rob them.

<sup>24</sup> Do not be a friend of one who has a bad temper, and never keep company with a hothead,

<sup>25</sup> or you will learn his ways and set a trap for yourself.

<sup>26</sup> Do not be found among those who make deals with a handshake, among those who guarantee other peoples loans.

<sup>27</sup> If you have no money to pay back a loan, why should your bed be repossessed?

<sup>28</sup> Do not move an ancient boundary marker that your ancestors set in place.

<sup>29</sup> Do you see a person who is efficient in his work? He will serve kings. He will not serve unknown people.

**23** <sup>1</sup> When you sit down to eat with a ruler, pay close attention to what is in front of you,

<sup>2</sup> and put a knife to your throat if you have a big appetite.

<sup>3</sup> Do not crave his delicacies, because this is food that deceives you.

<sup>4</sup> Do not wear yourself out getting rich.  
Be smart enough to stop.

<sup>5</sup> Will you catch only a fleeting glimpse  
of wealth before it is gone? It makes  
wings for itself like an eagle flying into  
the sky.

<sup>6</sup> Do not eat the food of one who is  
stingy, and do not crave his delicacies.

<sup>7</sup> As he calculates the cost to himself,  
this is what he does: He tells you, "Eat  
and drink," but he doesn't really mean it.

<sup>8</sup> You will vomit the little bit you  
have eaten and spoil your pleasant  
conversation.

<sup>9</sup> Do not talk directly to a fool, because  
he will despise the wisdom of your  
words.

<sup>10</sup> Do not move an ancient boundary  
marker or enter fields that belong to  
orphans,

<sup>11</sup> because the one who is responsible  
for them is strong. He will plead their  
case against you.

<sup>12</sup> Live a more disciplined life, and listen  
carefully to words of knowledge.

<sup>13</sup> Do not hesitate to discipline a child.  
If you spank him, he will not die.

<sup>14</sup> Spank him yourself, and you will save his soul from hell.

<sup>15</sup> My son, if you have a wise heart, my heart will rejoice as well.

<sup>16</sup> My heart rejoices when you speak what is right.

<sup>17</sup> Do not envy sinners in your heart. Instead, continue to fear the LORD.

<sup>18</sup> There is indeed a future, and your hope will never be cut off.

<sup>19</sup> My son, listen, be wise, and keep your mind going in the right direction.

<sup>20</sup> Do not associate with those who drink too much wine, with those who eat too much meat,

<sup>21</sup> because both a drunk and a glutton will become poor. Drowsiness will dress a person in rags.

<sup>22</sup> Listen to your father since you are his son, and do not despise your mother because she is old.

<sup>23</sup> Buy truth (and do not sell it), that is, buy wisdom, discipline, and understanding.

<sup>24</sup> A righteous person's father will certainly rejoice. Someone who has a wise son will enjoy him.

<sup>25</sup> May your father and your mother be glad. May she who gave birth to you rejoice.

<sup>26</sup> My son, give me your heart. Let your eyes find happiness in my ways.

<sup>27</sup> A prostitute is a deep pit. A loose woman is a narrow well.

<sup>28</sup> She is like a robber, lying in ambush. She spreads unfaithfulness throughout society.

<sup>29</sup> Who has trouble? Who has misery? Who has quarrels? Who has a complaint? Who has wounds for no reason? Who has bloodshot eyes?

<sup>30</sup> Those who drink glass after glass of wine and mix it with everything.

<sup>31</sup> Do not look at wine because it is red, because it sparkles in the cup, because it goes down smoothly.

<sup>32</sup> Later it bites like a snake and strikes like a poisonous snake.

<sup>33</sup> Your eyes will see strange sights, and your mouth will say embarrassing things.

<sup>34</sup> You will be like someone lying down in the middle of the sea or like someone lying down on top of a ship's mast, saying,

<sup>35</sup>"They strike me, but I feel no pain. They beat me, but I'm not aware of it. Whenever I wake up, I'm going to look for another drink."

**24**<sup>1</sup> Do not envy evil people or wish you were with them,  
<sup>2</sup> because their minds plot violence, and their lips talk trouble.

<sup>3</sup> With wisdom a house is built. With understanding it is established.

<sup>4</sup> With knowledge its rooms are filled with every kind of riches, both precious and pleasant.

<sup>5</sup> A strong man knows how to use his strength, but a person with knowledge is even more powerful.

<sup>6</sup> After all, with the right strategy you can wage war, and with many advisers there is victory.

<sup>7</sup> Matters of wisdom are beyond the grasp of a stubborn fool. At the city gate he does not open his mouth.

<sup>8</sup> Whoever plans to do evil will be known as a schemer.

<sup>9</sup> Foolish scheming is sinful, and a mocker is disgusting to everyone.

<sup>10</sup> If you faint in a crisis, you are weak.

<sup>11</sup> Rescue captives condemned to death, and spare those staggering toward their slaughter.

<sup>12</sup> When you say, "We didn't know this," won't the one who weighs hearts take note of it? Won't the one who guards your soul know it? Won't he pay back people for what they do?

<sup>13</sup> Eat honey, my son, because it is good. Honey that flows from the honeycomb tastes sweet.

<sup>14</sup> The knowledge of wisdom is like that for your soul. If you find it, then there is a future, and your hope will never be cut off.

<sup>15</sup> You wicked one, do not lie in ambush at the home of a righteous person. Do not rob his house.

<sup>16</sup> A righteous person may fall seven times, but he gets up again. However, in a disaster wicked people fall.

<sup>17</sup> Do not be happy when your enemy falls, and do not feel glad when he stumbles.

<sup>18</sup> The LORD will see it, he won't like it, and he will turn his anger away from that person.

<sup>19</sup> Do not get overly upset with evildoers. Do not envy wicked people,  
<sup>20</sup> because an evil person has no future, and the lamps of wicked people will be snuffed out.

<sup>21</sup> Fear the LORD, my son. Fear the king as well. Do not associate with those who always insist upon change,

<sup>22</sup> because disaster will come to them suddenly. Who knows what misery both may bring?

<sup>23</sup> These also are the sayings of wise people: Showing partiality as a judge is not good.

<sup>24</sup> Whoever says to a guilty person, "You are innocent," will be cursed by people and condemned by nations.

<sup>25</sup> But people will be pleased with those who convict a guilty person, and a great blessing will come to them.

<sup>26</sup> Giving a straight answer is like a kiss on the lips.

<sup>27</sup> Prepare your work outside, and get things ready for yourself in the field. Afterwards, build your house.

<sup>28</sup> Do not testify against your neighbor without a reason, and do not deceive with your lips.

<sup>29</sup>Do not say, "I'll treat him as he treated me. I'll pay him back for what he has done to me."

<sup>30</sup>I passed by a lazy persons field, the vineyard belonging to a person without sense.

<sup>31</sup>I saw that it was all overgrown with thistles. The ground was covered with weeds, and its stone fence was torn down.

<sup>32</sup>When I observed this, I took it to heart. I saw it and learned my lesson.

<sup>33</sup>"Just a little sleep, just a little slumber, just a little nap."

<sup>34</sup>Then your poverty will come like a drifter, and your need will come like a bandit.

**25**<sup>1</sup>These also are Solomons proverbs that were copied by the men of King Hezekiah of Judah.

<sup>2</sup>It is the glory of God to hide things but the glory of kings to investigate them.

<sup>3</sup>Like the high heavens and the deep earth, so the mind of kings is unsearchable.

<sup>4</sup>Take the impurities out of silver, and a vessel is ready for the silversmith to mold.

<sup>5</sup>Take a wicked person away from the presence of a king, and justice will make his throne secure.

<sup>6</sup>Do not brag about yourself in front of a king or stand in the spot that belongs to notable people,

<sup>7</sup>because it is better to be told, "Come up here," than to be put down in front of a prince whom your eyes have seen.

<sup>8</sup>Do not be in a hurry to go to court. What will you do in the end if your neighbor disgraces you?

<sup>9</sup>Present your argument to your neighbor, but do not reveal another person's secret.

<sup>10</sup>Otherwise, when he hears about it, he will humiliate you, and his evil report about you will never disappear.

<sup>11</sup>Like golden apples in silver settings, so is a word spoken at the right time.

<sup>12</sup>Like a gold ring and a fine gold ornament, so is constructive criticism to the ear of one who listens.

<sup>13</sup>Like the coolness of snow on a harvest day, so is a trustworthy messenger to those who send him: He refreshes his masters.

<sup>14</sup> Like a dense fog or a dust storm, so is a person who brags about a gift that he does not give.

<sup>15</sup> With patience you can persuade a ruler, and a soft tongue can break bones.

<sup>16</sup> When you find honey, eat only as much as you need. Otherwise, you will have too much and vomit.

<sup>17</sup> Do not set foot in your neighbors house too often. Otherwise, he will see too much of you and hate you.

<sup>18</sup> Like a club and a sword and a sharp arrow, so is a person who gives false testimony against his neighbor.

<sup>19</sup> Like a broken tooth and a lame foot, so is confidence in an unfaithful person in a time of crisis.

<sup>20</sup> Like taking off a coat on a cold day or pouring vinegar on baking soda, so is singing songs to one who has an evil heart.

<sup>21</sup> If your enemy is hungry, give him some food to eat, and if he is thirsty, give him some water to drink.

<sup>22</sup> In this way you will make him feel guilty and ashamed, and the LORD will reward you.

<sup>23</sup> As the north wind brings rain, so a whispering tongue brings angry looks.

<sup>24</sup> Better to live on a corner of a roof than to share a home with a quarreling woman.

<sup>25</sup> Like cold water to a thirsty soul, so is good news from far away.

<sup>26</sup> Like a muddied spring and a polluted well, so is a righteous person who gives in to a wicked person.

<sup>27</sup> Eating too much honey is not good, and searching for honor is not honorable.

<sup>28</sup> Like a city broken into and left without a wall, so is a person who lacks selfcontrol.

**26** <sup>1</sup> Like snow in summertime and rain at harvest time, so honor is not right for a fool.

<sup>2</sup> Like a fluttering sparrow, like a darting swallow, so a hastily spoken curse does not come to rest.

<sup>3</sup> A whip is for the horse, a bridle is for the donkey, and a rod is for the backs of fools.

<sup>4</sup> Do not answer a fool with his own stupidity, or you will be like him.

<sup>5</sup> Answer a fool with his own stupidity, or he will think he is wise.

<sup>6</sup>Whoever uses a fool to send a message cuts off his own feet and brings violence upon himself.

<sup>7</sup>Like a lame persons limp legs, so is a proverb in the mouths of fools.

<sup>8</sup>Like tying a stone to a sling, so is giving honor to a fool.

<sup>9</sup>Like a thorn stuck in a drunks hand, so is a proverb in the mouths of fools.

<sup>10</sup>Like many people who destroy everything, so is one who hires fools or drifters.

<sup>11</sup>As a dog goes back to its vomit, so a fool repeats his stupidity.

<sup>12</sup>Have you met a person who thinks he is wise? There is more hope for a fool than for him.

<sup>13</sup>A lazy person says, "Theres a ferocious lion out on the road! Theres a lion loose in the streets!"

<sup>14</sup>As a door turns on its hinges, so the lazy person turns on his bed.

<sup>15</sup>A lazy person puts his fork in his food. He wears himself out as he brings it back to his mouth.

<sup>16</sup>A lazy person thinks he is wiser than seven people who give a sensible answer.

<sup>17</sup> Like grabbing a dog by the ears, so is a bystander who gets involved in someone else's quarrel.

<sup>18</sup> Like a madman who shoots flaming arrows, arrows, and death,

<sup>19</sup> so is the person who tricks his neighbor and says, "I was only joking!"

<sup>20</sup> Without wood a fire goes out, and without gossip a quarrel dies down.

<sup>21</sup> As charcoal fuels burning coals and wood fuels fire, so a quarrelsome person fuels a dispute.

<sup>22</sup> The words of a gossip are swallowed greedily, and they go down into a person's innermost being.

<sup>23</sup> Like a clay pot covered with cheap silver, so is smooth talk that covers up an evil heart.

<sup>24</sup> Whoever is filled with hate disguises it with his speech, but inside he holds on to deceit.

<sup>25</sup> When he talks charmingly, do not trust him because of the seven disgusting things in his heart.

<sup>26</sup> His hatred is deceitfully hidden, but his wickedness will be revealed to the community.

<sup>27</sup> Whoever digs a pit will fall into it.  
Whoever rolls a stone will have it roll  
back on him.

<sup>28</sup> A lying tongue hates its victims, and  
a flattering mouth causes ruin.

**27** <sup>1</sup> Do not brag about tomorrow,  
because you do not know what  
another day may bring.

<sup>2</sup> Praise should come from another  
person and not from your own mouth,  
from a stranger and not from your own  
lips.

<sup>3</sup> A stone is heavy, and sand weighs a  
lot, but annoyance caused by a stubborn  
fool is heavier than both.

<sup>4</sup> Anger is cruel, and fury is  
overwhelming, but who can survive  
jealousy?

<sup>5</sup> Open criticism is better than  
unexpressed love.

<sup>6</sup> Wounds made by a friend are intended  
to help, but an enemy's kisses are too  
much to bear.

<sup>7</sup> One who is full despises honey, but  
to one who is hungry, even bitter food  
tastes sweet.

<sup>8</sup> Like a bird wandering from its nest, so  
is a husband wandering from his home.

<sup>9</sup>Perfume and incense make the heart glad, but the sweetness of a friend is a fragrant forest.

<sup>10</sup>Do not abandon your friend or your father's friend. Do not go to a relative's home when you are in trouble. A neighbor living nearby is better than a relative far away.

<sup>11</sup>Be wise, my son, and make my heart glad so that I can answer anyone who criticizes me.

<sup>12</sup>Sensible people foresee trouble and hide. Gullible people go ahead and suffer.

<sup>13</sup>Hold on to the garment of one who guarantees a stranger's loan, and hold responsible the person who makes a loan in behalf of a foreigner.

<sup>14</sup>Whoever blesses his friend early in the morning with a loud voice his blessing is considered a curse.

<sup>15</sup>Constantly dripping water on a rainy day is like a quarreling woman.

<sup>16</sup>Whoever can control her can control the wind. He can even pick up olive oil with his right hand.

<sup>17</sup>As iron sharpens iron, so one person sharpens the wits of another.

<sup>18</sup>Whoever takes care of a fig tree can eat its fruit, and whoever protects his master is honored.

<sup>19</sup>As a face is reflected in water, so a person is reflected by his heart.

<sup>20</sup>Hell and decay are never satisfied, and a person's eyes are never satisfied.

<sup>21</sup>The crucible is for refining silver and the smelter for gold, but a person is tested by the praise given to him.

<sup>22</sup>If you crush a stubborn fool in a mortar with a pestle along with grain, even then his stupidity will not leave him.

<sup>23</sup>Be fully aware of the condition of your flock, and pay close attention to your herds.

<sup>24</sup>Wealth is not forever. Nor does a crown last from one generation to the next.

<sup>25</sup>When grass is cut short, the tender growth appears, and vegetables are gathered on the hills.

<sup>26</sup>Lambs will provide you with clothing, and the money from the male goats will buy a field.

<sup>27</sup> There will be enough goat milk to feed you, to feed your family, and to keep your servant girls alive.

**28**<sup>1</sup> A wicked person flees when no one is chasing him, but righteous people are as bold as lions.

<sup>2</sup> When a country is in revolt, it has many rulers, but only with a person who has understanding and knowledge will it last a long time.

<sup>3</sup> A poor person who oppresses poorer people is like a driving rain that leaves no food.

<sup>4</sup> Those who abandon Gods teachings praise wicked people, but those who follow Gods teachings oppose wicked people.

<sup>5</sup> Evil people do not understand justice, but those who seek the LORD understand everything.

<sup>6</sup> Better to be a poor person who has integrity than to be rich and doubledealing.

<sup>7</sup> Whoever follows Gods teachings is a wise son. Whoever associates with gluttons disgraces his father.

<sup>8</sup>Whoever becomes wealthy through unfair loans and interest collects them for the one who is kind to the poor.

<sup>9</sup>Surely the prayer of someone who refuses to listen to God's teachings is disgusting.

<sup>10</sup>Whoever leads decent people into evil will fall into his own pit, but innocent people will inherit good things.

<sup>11</sup>A rich person is wise in his own eyes, but a poor person with understanding sees right through him.

<sup>12</sup>When righteous people triumph, there is great glory, but when wicked people rise, people hide themselves.

<sup>13</sup>Whoever covers over his sins does not prosper. Whoever confesses and abandons them receives compassion.

<sup>14</sup>Blessed is the one who is always fearful of sin, but whoever is hardhearted falls into disaster.

<sup>15</sup>Like a roaring lion and a charging bear, so a wicked ruler is a threat to poor people.

<sup>16</sup>A leader without understanding taxes his people heavily, but those who hate unjust gain will live longer.

<sup>17</sup> A person burdened with the guilt of murder will be a fugitive down to his grave. No one will help him.

<sup>18</sup> Whoever lives honestly will be safe. Whoever lives dishonestly will fall all at once.

<sup>19</sup> Whoever works his land will have plenty to eat. Whoever chases unrealistic dreams will have plenty of nothing.

<sup>20</sup> A trustworthy person has many blessings, but anyone in a hurry to get rich will not escape punishment.

<sup>21</sup> Showing partiality is not good, because some people will turn on you even for a piece of bread.

<sup>22</sup> A stingy person is in a hurry to get rich, not realizing that poverty is about to overtake him.

<sup>23</sup> Whoever criticizes people will be more highly regarded in the future than the one who flatters with his tongue.

<sup>24</sup> The one who robs his father or his mother and says, "It isn't wrong!" is a companion to a vandal.

<sup>25</sup> A greedy person stirs up a fight, but whoever trusts the LORD prospers.

<sup>26</sup>Whoever trusts his own heart is a fool. Whoever walks in wisdom will survive.

<sup>27</sup>Whoever gives to the poor lacks nothing. Whoever ignores the poor receives many curses.

<sup>28</sup>When wicked people rise, people hide. When they die, righteous people increase.

**29**<sup>1</sup>A person who will not bend after many warnings will suddenly be broken beyond repair.

<sup>2</sup>When righteous people increase, the people of God rejoice, but when a wicked person rules, everybody groans.

<sup>3</sup>A person who loves wisdom makes his father happy, but one who pays prostitutes wastes his wealth.

<sup>4</sup>By means of justice, a king builds up a country, but a person who confiscates religious contributions tears it down.

<sup>5</sup>A person who flatters his neighbor is spreading a net for him to step into.

<sup>6</sup>To an evil person sin is bait in a trap, but a righteous person runs away from it and is glad.

<sup>7</sup> A righteous person knows the just cause of the poor. A wicked person does not understand this.

<sup>8</sup> Mockers create an uproar in a city, but wise people turn away anger.

<sup>9</sup> When a wise person goes to court with a stubborn fool, he may rant and rave, but there is no peace and quiet.

<sup>10</sup> Bloodthirsty people hate an innocent person, but decent people seek to protect his life.

<sup>11</sup> A fool expresses all his emotions, but a wise person controls them.

<sup>12</sup> If a ruler pays attention to lies, all his servants become wicked.

<sup>13</sup> A poor person and an oppressor have this in common: The LORD gives both of them sight.

<sup>14</sup> When a king judges the poor with honesty, his throne will always be secure.

<sup>15</sup> A spanking and a warning produce wisdom, but an undisciplined child disgraces his mother.

<sup>16</sup> When wicked people increase, crime increases, but righteous people will witness their downfall.

<sup>17</sup> Correct your son, and he will give you peace of mind. He will bring delight to your soul.

<sup>18</sup> Without prophetic vision people run wild, but blessed are those who follow Gods teachings.

<sup>19</sup> A slave cannot be disciplined with words. He will not respond, though he may understand.

<sup>20</sup> Have you met a person who is quick to answer? There is more hope for a fool than for him.

<sup>21</sup> Pamper a slave from childhood, and later he will be ungrateful.

<sup>22</sup> An angry person stirs up a fight, and a hothead does much wrong.

<sup>23</sup> A persons pride will humiliate him, but a humble spirit gains honor.

<sup>24</sup> Whoever is a thiefs partner hates his own life. He will not testify under oath.

<sup>25</sup> A persons fear sets a trap for him, but one who trusts the LORD is safe.

<sup>26</sup> Many seek an audience with a ruler, but justice for humanity comes from the LORD.

<sup>27</sup> An unjust person is disgusting to righteous people. A decent person is disgusting to wicked people.

**30**<sup>1</sup> The words of Agur, son of Jakeh. Agurs prophetic revelation. [To God] This mans declaration: "Im weary, O God. Im weary and worn out, O God.

<sup>2</sup> Im more like a dumb animal than a human being. I dont even have human understanding.

<sup>3</sup> I havent learned wisdom. I dont have knowledge of the Holy One.

<sup>4</sup> [To the audience] "Who has gone up to heaven and come down? Who has gathered the wind in the palm of his hand? Who has wrapped water in a garment? Who has set up the earth from one end to the other? What is his name or the name of his son? Certainly, you must know!

<sup>5</sup> "Every word of God has proven to be true. He is a shield to those who come to him for protection.

<sup>6</sup> Do not add to his words, or he will reprimand you, and you will be found to be a liar.

<sup>7</sup> [To God] "Ive asked you for two things. Dont keep them from me before I die:

<sup>8</sup>Keep vanity and lies far away from me. Don't give me either poverty or riches. Feed me only the food I need,

<sup>9</sup>or I may feel satisfied and deny you and say, Who is the LORD? or I may become poor and steal and give the name of my God a bad reputation.

<sup>10</sup>[To the audience] "Do not slander a slave to his master. The slave will curse you, and you will be found guilty."

<sup>11</sup>A certain kind of person curses his father and does not bless his mother.

<sup>12</sup>A certain kind of person thinks he is pure but is not washed from his own feces.

<sup>13</sup>A certain kind of person looks around arrogantly and is conceited.

<sup>14</sup>A certain kind of person, whose teeth are like swords and whose jaws are like knives, devours oppressed people from the earth and people from among humanity.

<sup>15</sup>The bloodsucking leech has two daughters "Give!" and "Give!" Three things are never satisfied. Four never say, "Enough!":

<sup>16</sup> the grave, a barren womb, a land that never gets enough water, a fire that does not say, "Enough!"

<sup>17</sup> The eye that makes fun of a father and hates to obey a mother will be plucked out by ravens in the valley and eaten by young vultures.

<sup>18</sup> Three things are too amazing to me, even four that I cannot understand:

<sup>19</sup> an eagle making its way through the sky, a snake making its way over a rock, a ship making its way through high seas, a man making his way with a virgin.

<sup>20</sup> This is the way of a woman who commits adultery: She eats, wipes her mouth, and says, "I haven't done anything wrong!"

<sup>21</sup> Three things cause the earth to tremble, even four it cannot bear up under:

<sup>22</sup> a slave when he becomes king, a godless fool when he is filled with food,

<sup>23</sup> a woman who is unloved when she gets married, a maid when she replaces her mistress.

<sup>24</sup> Four things on earth are small, yet they are very wise:

<sup>25</sup>Ants are not a strong species, yet they store their food in summer.

<sup>26</sup>Rock badgers are not a mighty species, yet they make their home in the rocks.

<sup>27</sup>Locusts have no king, yet all of them divide into swarms by instinct.

<sup>28</sup>A lizard you can hold in your hands, yet it can even be found in royal palaces.

<sup>29</sup>There are three things that walk with dignity, even four that march with dignity:

<sup>30</sup>a lion, mightiest among animals, which turns away from nothing,

<sup>31</sup>a strutting rooster, a male goat, a king at the head of his army.

<sup>32</sup>If you are such a godless fool as to honor yourself, or if you scheme, you had better put your hand over your mouth.

<sup>33</sup>As churning milk produces butter and punching a nose produces blood, so stirring up anger produces a fight.

**31** <sup>1</sup>The sayings of King Lemuel, a prophetic revelation, used by his mother to discipline him.

<sup>2</sup>"What, my son? What, son to whom I gave birth? What, son of my prayers?

<sup>3</sup> Don't give your strength to women or your power to those who ruin kings.

<sup>4</sup> "It is not for kings, Lemuel. It is not for kings to drink wine or for rulers to crave liquor.

<sup>5</sup> Otherwise, they drink and forget what they have decreed and change the standard of justice for all oppressed people.

<sup>6</sup> Give liquor to a person who is dying and wine to one who feels resentful.

<sup>7</sup> Such a person drinks and forgets his poverty and does not remember his trouble anymore.

<sup>8</sup> "Speak out for the one who cannot speak, for the rights of those who are doomed.

<sup>9</sup> Speak out, judge fairly, and defend the rights of oppressed and needy people."

<sup>10</sup> "Who can find a wife with a strong character? She is worth far more than jewels.

<sup>11</sup> Her husband trusts her with all his heart, and he does not lack anything good.

<sup>12</sup> She helps him and never harms him all the days of her life.

<sup>13</sup>"She seeks out wool and linen with care and works with willing hands.

<sup>14</sup>She is like merchant ships. She brings her food from far away.

<sup>15</sup>She wakes up while it is still dark and gives food to her family and portions of food to her female slaves.

<sup>16</sup>"She picks out a field and buys it. She plants a vineyard from the profits she has earned.

<sup>17</sup>She puts on strength like a belt and goes to work with energy.

<sup>18</sup>She sees that she is making a good profit. Her lamp burns late at night.

<sup>19</sup>"She puts her hands on the distaff, and her fingers hold a spindle.

<sup>20</sup>She opens her hands to oppressed people and stretches them out to needy people.

<sup>21</sup>She does not fear for her family when it snows because her whole family has a double layer of clothing.

<sup>22</sup>She makes quilts for herself. Her clothes are made of linen and purple cloth.

<sup>23</sup>"Her husband is known at the city gates when he sits with the leaders of the land.

<sup>24</sup>"She makes linen garments and sells them and delivers belts to the merchants.

<sup>25</sup>She dresses with strength and nobility, and she smiles at the future.

<sup>26</sup>"She speaks with wisdom, and on her tongue there is tender instruction.

<sup>27</sup>She keeps a close eye on the conduct of her family, and she does not eat the bread of idleness.

<sup>28</sup>Her children and her husband stand up and bless her. In addition, he sings her praises, by saying,

<sup>29</sup>Many women have done noble work, but you have surpassed them all!

<sup>30</sup>"Charm is deceptive, and beauty evaporates, but a woman who has the fear of the LORD should be praised.

<sup>31</sup>Reward her for what she has done, and let her achievements praise her at the city gates."

# Ecclesiastes

**1** <sup>1</sup>The words of the spokesman, the son of David and the king in Jerusalem.

<sup>2</sup>"Absolutely pointless!" says the spokesman. "Absolutely pointless! Everything is pointless."

<sup>3</sup>What do people gain from all their hard work under the sun?

<sup>4</sup>Generations come, and generations go, but the earth lasts forever.

<sup>5</sup>The sun rises, and the sun sets, and then it rushes back to the place where it will rise again.

<sup>6</sup>The wind blows toward the south and shifts toward the north. Round and round it blows. It blows in a full circle.

<sup>7</sup>All streams flow into the sea, but the sea is never full. The water goes back to the place where the streams began in order to start flowing again.

<sup>8</sup>All of these sayings are wornout phrases. They are more than anyone can express, comprehend, or understand.

<sup>9</sup>Whatever has happened before will happen again. Whatever has been done before will be done again. There is nothing new under the sun.

<sup>10</sup>Can you say that anything is new? It has already been here long before us.

<sup>11</sup>Nothing from the past is remembered. Even in the future, nothing will be remembered by those who come after us.

<sup>12</sup>I, the spokesman, have been king of Israel in Jerusalem.

<sup>13</sup>With all my heart I used wisdom to study and explore everything done under heaven. Mortals are weighed down with a terrible burden that God has placed on them.

<sup>14</sup>I have seen everything that is done under the sun. Look at it! It's all pointless. It's like trying to catch the wind.

<sup>15</sup>No one can straighten what is bent. No one can count what is not there.

<sup>16</sup>I thought to myself, "I have grown wiser than anyone who has ruled Jerusalem before me. I've had a lot of experience with wisdom and knowledge."

<sup>17</sup>I've used my mind to understand wisdom and knowledge as well as madness and stupidity. Now I know that this is like trying to catch the wind.

<sup>18</sup>With a lot of wisdom comes a lot of heartache. The greater your knowledge, the greater your pain.

**2**<sup>1</sup>I thought to myself, "Now I want to experiment with pleasure and enjoy myself." But even this was pointless.

<sup>2</sup>I thought, "Laughter doesn't make any sense. What does pleasure accomplish?"

<sup>3</sup>I explored ways to make myself feel better by drinking wine. I also explored ways to do some foolish things. During all that time, wisdom continued to control my mind. I was able to determine whether this was good for mortals to do during their brief lives under heaven.

<sup>4</sup>I accomplished some great things: I built houses for myself. I planted vineyards for myself.

<sup>5</sup>I made gardens and parks for myself. I planted every kind of fruit tree in them.

<sup>6</sup>I made pools to water the forest of growing trees.

<sup>7</sup>I bought male and female slaves. In addition, slaves were born in my

household. I owned more herds and flocks than anyone in Jerusalem before me.

<sup>8</sup>I also gathered silver and gold for myself. I gathered the treasures of kings and provinces. I provided myself with male and female singers and the pleasures men have with one concubine after another.

<sup>9</sup>So I grew richer than anyone in Jerusalem before me. Yet, my wisdom remained with me.

<sup>10</sup>If something appealed to me, I did it. I allowed myself to have any pleasure I wanted, since I found pleasure in my work. This was my reward for all my hard work.

<sup>11</sup>But when I turned to look at all that I had accomplished and all the hard work I had put into it, I saw that it was all pointless. It was like trying to catch the wind. I gained nothing from any of my accomplishments under the sun.

<sup>12</sup>Then I turned my attention to experience wisdom, madness, and foolishness. For instance, what can the man who replaces the king do? Only what has already been done.

<sup>13</sup>But I saw that wisdom has an advantage over foolishness as light has an advantage over darkness.

<sup>14</sup>A wise person uses the eyes in his head, but a fool walks in the dark. But I have also come to realize that the same destiny waits for both of them.

<sup>15</sup>I thought to myself, "If the destiny that waits for the fool waits for me as well, then what is the advantage in being wise?" So I thought that even this is pointless.

<sup>16</sup>Neither the wise person nor the fool will be remembered for long, since both will be forgotten in the days to come. Both the wise person and the fool will die.

<sup>17</sup>So I came to hate life because everything done under the sun seemed wrong to me. Everything was pointless. It was like trying to catch the wind.

<sup>18</sup>I came to hate everything for which I had worked so hard under the sun, because I will have to leave it to the person who replaces me.

<sup>19</sup>Who knows whether that person will be wise or foolish? He will still have control over everything under the sun

for which I worked so hard and used my wisdom. Even this is pointless.

<sup>20</sup>Then I fell into despair over everything for which I had worked so hard under the sun.

<sup>21</sup>Here is someone who had worked hard with wisdom, knowledge, and skill. Yet, he must turn over his estate to someone else, who didnt work for it. Even this is pointless and a terrible tragedy.

<sup>22</sup>What do people get from all of their hard work and struggles under the sun?

<sup>23</sup>Their entire life is filled with pain, and their work is unbearable. Even at night their minds dont rest. Even this is pointless.

<sup>24</sup>There is nothing better for people to do than to eat, drink, and find satisfaction in their work. I saw that even this comes from the hand of God.

<sup>25</sup>Who can eat or enjoy themselves without God?

<sup>26</sup>God gives wisdom, knowledge, and joy to anyone who pleases him. But to the person who continues to sin, he gives the job of gathering and collecting wealth. The sinner must turn his wealth

over to the person who pleases God. Even this is pointless. Its like trying to catch the wind.

**3**<sup>1</sup> Everything has its own time, and there is a specific time for every activity under heaven:

<sup>2</sup> a time to be born and a time to die, a time to plant and a time to pull out what was planted,

<sup>3</sup> a time to kill and a time to heal, a time to tear down and a time to build up,

<sup>4</sup> a time to cry and a time to laugh, a time to mourn and a time to dance,

<sup>5</sup> a time to scatter stones and a time to gather them, a time to hug and a time to stop hugging,

<sup>6</sup> a time to start looking and a time to stop looking, a time to keep and a time to throw away,

<sup>7</sup> a time to tear apart and a time to sew together, a time to keep quiet and a time to speak out,

<sup>8</sup> a time to love and a time to hate, a time for war and a time for peace.

<sup>9</sup> What do working people gain from their hard labor?

<sup>10</sup>I have seen mortals weighed down with a burden that God has placed on them.

<sup>11</sup>It is beautiful how God has done everything at the right time. He has put a sense of eternity in peoples minds. Yet, mortals still cant grasp what God is doing from the beginning to the end of time.

<sup>12</sup>I realize that theres nothing better for them to do than to be cheerful and enjoy what is good in their lives.

<sup>13</sup>It is a gift from God to be able to eat and drink and experience the good that comes from every kind of hard work.

<sup>14</sup>I realize that whatever God does will last forever. Nothing can be added to it, and nothing can be taken away from it. God does this so that people will fear him.

<sup>15</sup>Whatever has happened in the past is present now. Whatever is going to happen in the future has already happened in the past. God will call the past to account.

<sup>16</sup>I saw something else under the sun: There is wickedness where justice should

be found. There is wickedness where righteousness should be found.

<sup>17</sup>I thought to myself, "God will judge righteous people as well as wicked people, because there is a specific time for every activity and every work that is done."

<sup>18</sup>I thought to myself, "God is going to test humans in order to show them that they are like animals."

<sup>19</sup>Humans and animals have the same destiny. One dies just like the other. All of them have the same breath of life. Humans have no advantage over animals. All of life is pointless.

<sup>20</sup>All life goes to the same place. All life comes from the ground, and all of it goes back to the ground.

<sup>21</sup>Who knows whether a human spirit goes upward or whether an animal spirit goes downward to the earth?

<sup>22</sup>I saw that theres nothing better for people to do than to enjoy their work because that is their lot in life. Who will allow them to see what will happen after them?

**4**<sup>1</sup>Next, I turned to look at all the acts of oppression that make people

suffer under the sun. Look at the tears of those who suffer! No one can comfort them. Their oppressors have all the power. No one can comfort those who suffer.

<sup>2</sup>I congratulate the dead, who have already died, rather than the living, who still have to carry on.

<sup>3</sup>But the person who hasn't been born yet is better off than both of them. He hasn't seen the evil that is done under the sun.

<sup>4</sup>Then I saw that all hard work and skillful effort come from rivalry. Even this is pointless. It's like trying to catch the wind.

<sup>5</sup>A fool folds his hands and wastes away.

<sup>6</sup>One handful of peace and quiet is better than two handfuls of hard work and of trying to catch the wind.

<sup>7</sup>Next, I turned to look at something pointless under the sun:

<sup>8</sup>There are people who are all alone. They have no children or other family members. So there is no end to all the hard work they have to do. Their eyes are never satisfied with riches.

But they never ask themselves why they are working so hard and depriving themselves of good things. Even this is pointless and a terrible tragedy.

<sup>9</sup>Two people are better than one because together they have a good reward for their hard work.

<sup>10</sup>If one falls, the other can help his friend get up. But how tragic it is for the one who is all alone when he falls. There is no one to help him get up.

<sup>11</sup>Again, if two people lie down together, they can keep warm, but how can one person keep warm?

<sup>12</sup>Though one person may be overpowered by another, two people can resist one opponent. A triplebraided rope is not easily broken.

<sup>13</sup>A young man who is poor and wise is better than an old, foolish king who won't take advice any longer.

<sup>14</sup>A young man came out of prison to rule as king, even though he had been born in poverty in that same kingdom.

<sup>15</sup>I saw all living people moving about under the sun. They sided with the second young man, the king's successor.

<sup>16</sup>There was no end to all those people, everyone whom he led. But those who will come later will not be happy with the successor. Even this is pointless. Its like trying to catch the wind.

**5**<sup>1</sup> Watch your step when you go to the house of God. It is better to go there and listen than to bring the sacrifices fools bring. Fools are unaware that they are doing something evil.

<sup>2</sup> Dont be in a hurry to talk. Dont be eager to speak in the presence of God. Since God is in heaven and you are on earth, limit the number of your words.

<sup>3</sup> Daydreaming comes when there are too many worries. Careless speaking comes when there are too many words.

<sup>4</sup> When you make a promise to God, dont be slow to keep it because God doesnt like fools. Keep your promise.

<sup>5</sup> It is better not to make a promise than to make one and not keep it.

<sup>6</sup> Dont let your mouth talk you into committing a sin. Dont say in the presence of a temple messenger, "My promise was a mistake!" Why should God become angry at your excuse and destroy what youve accomplished?

<sup>7</sup>In spite of many daydreams, pointless actions, and empty words, you should still fear God.

<sup>8</sup>Dont be surprised if you see poor people being oppressed, denied justice, or denied their rights in any district. One authority is watching over another, and they both have authorities watching over them.

<sup>9</sup>Yet, a king is an advantage for a country with cultivated fields.

<sup>10</sup>Whoever loves money will never be satisfied with money. Whoever loves wealth will never be satisfied with more income. Even this is pointless.

<sup>11</sup>As the number of goods increase, so do the number of people who consume them. What do owners gain from all their goods except the opportunity to look at them?

<sup>12</sup>The sleep of working people is sweet, whether they eat a little or a lot. But the full stomachs that rich people have will not allow them to sleep.

<sup>13</sup>There is a painful tragedy that I have seen under the sun: Riches lead to the downfall of those who hoard them.

<sup>14</sup> These hoarded riches were then lost in bad business deals. The owners had children, but now they have nothing to give them.

<sup>15</sup> They came from their mothers womb naked. They will leave as naked as they came. They wont even be able to take a handful of their earnings with them from all their hard work.

<sup>16</sup> This also is a painful tragedy: They leave exactly as they came. What advantage do they gain from working so hard for the wind?

<sup>17</sup> They spend their entire lives in darkness, in constant frustration, sickness, and resentment.

<sup>18</sup> At last I have seen what is good and beautiful: It is to eat and drink and to enjoy the good in all our hard work under the sun during the brief lives God gives us. That is our lot in life.

<sup>19</sup> It is a gift from God when God gives some people wealth and possessions, the power to enjoy them, the ability to accept their lot in life, and the ability to rejoice in their own hard work.

<sup>20</sup> These people wont give much thought to their brief lives because God keeps

them occupied with the joy in their hearts.

**6**<sup>1</sup> There is a tragedy that I have seen under the sun. It is a terrible one for mortals.

<sup>2</sup> God gives one person riches, wealth, and honor so that he doesn't lack anything he wants. Yet, God doesn't give him the power to enjoy any of them. Instead, a stranger enjoys them. This is pointless and is a painful tragedy.

<sup>3</sup> Suppose a rich person wasn't satisfied with good things while he was alive and didn't even get an honorable burial after he died. Suppose he had a hundred children and lived for many years. No matter how long he would have lived, it still would have been better for him to have been born dead.

<sup>4</sup> A stillborn baby arrives in a pointless birth and goes out into the darkness. The darkness then hides its name.

<sup>5</sup> Though it has never seen the sun or known anything, the baby finds more rest than the rich person.

<sup>6</sup> Even if the rich person lives two thousand years without experiencing

anything good dont we all go to the same place?

<sup>7</sup> Everything that people work so hard for goes into their mouths, but their appetite is never satisfied.

<sup>8</sup> What advantage does a wise person have over a fool? What advantage does a poor person have in knowing how to face life?

<sup>9</sup> It is better to look at what is in front of you than to go looking for what you want. Even this is pointless. Its like trying to catch the wind.

<sup>10</sup> Whatever has happened in the past already has a name. Mortals are already known for what they are. Mortals cannot argue with the one who is stronger than they.

<sup>11</sup> The more words there are, the more pointless they become. What advantage do mortals gain from this?

<sup>12</sup> Who knows what may be good for mortals while they are alive, during the brief, pointless days they live? Mortals pass by like a shadow. Who will tell them about their future under the sun?

**7**<sup>1</sup> A good name is better than expensive perfume, and the day you die is better than the day you're born.

<sup>2</sup> It is better to go to a funeral than to a banquet because that is where everyone will end up. Everyone who is alive should take this to heart!

<sup>3</sup> Sorrow is better than laughter because, in spite of a sad face, the heart can be joyful.

<sup>4</sup> The minds of wise people think about funerals, but the minds of fools think about banquets.

<sup>5</sup> It is better to listen to wise people who reprimand you than to fools who sing your praises.

<sup>6</sup> The laughter of a fool is like the crackling of thorns burning under a pot. Even this is pointless.

<sup>7</sup> Oppression can turn a wise person into a fool, and a bribe can corrupt the mind.

<sup>8</sup> The end of something is better than its beginning. It is better to be patient than arrogant.

<sup>9</sup> Don't be quick to get angry, because anger is typical of fools.

<sup>10</sup>Don't ask, "Why were things better in the old days than they are now?" It isn't wisdom that leads you to ask this!

<sup>11</sup>Wisdom is as good as an inheritance. It is an advantage to everyone who sees the sun.

<sup>12</sup>Wisdom protects us just as money protects us, but the advantage of wisdom is that it gives life to those who have it.

<sup>13</sup>Consider what God has done! Who can straighten what God has bent?

<sup>14</sup>When times are good, be happy. But when times are bad, consider this: God has made the one time as well as the other so that mortals cannot predict their future.

<sup>15</sup>I have seen it all in my pointless life: Righteous people die in spite of being righteous. Wicked people go on living in spite of being wicked.

<sup>16</sup>Don't be too virtuous, and don't be too wise. Why make yourself miserable?

<sup>17</sup>Don't be too wicked, and don't be a fool. Why should you die before your time is up?

<sup>18</sup>It's good to hold on to the one and not let go of the other, because the one

who fears God will be able to avoid both extremes.

<sup>19</sup>Wisdom will help a wise person more than ten rulers can help a city.

<sup>20</sup>Certainly, there is no one so righteous on earth that he always does what is good and never sins.

<sup>21</sup>Don't take everything that people say to heart, or you may hear your own servant cursing you.

<sup>22</sup>Your conscience knows that you have cursed others many times.

<sup>23</sup>I used wisdom to test all of this. I said, "I want to be wise, but it is out of my reach."

<sup>24</sup>Whatever wisdom may be, it is out of reach. It is deep, very deep. Who can find out what it is?

<sup>25</sup>I turned my attention to study, to explore, and to seek out wisdom and the reason for things. I learned that wickedness is stupid and foolishness is madness.

<sup>26</sup>I find that a woman whose thoughts are like traps and snares is more bitter than death itself. Even her hands are like chains. Whoever pleases God will escape

her, but she will catch whoever continues to sin.

<sup>27</sup> The spokesman said, "This is what I've found: I added one thing to another in order to find a reason for things.

<sup>28</sup> I am still seeking a reason for things, but have not found any. I found one man out of a thousand who had it, but out of all these I didn't find one woman.

<sup>29</sup> I have found only this: God made people decent, but they looked for many ways to avoid being decent."

**8**<sup>1</sup> Who is really wise? Who knows how to explain things? Wisdom makes one's face shine, and it changes one's grim look.

<sup>2</sup> I advise you to obey the king's commands because of the oath you took in God's presence.

<sup>3</sup> Don't be in a hurry to leave the king's service. Don't take part in something evil, because he can do whatever he pleases.

<sup>4</sup> Since a king's word has such power, no one can ask him what he is doing.

<sup>5</sup> Whoever obeys his commands will avoid trouble. The mind of a wise person will know the right time and the right way to act.

<sup>6</sup>There is a right time and a right way to act in every situation. Yet, a terrible human tragedy hangs over people.

<sup>7</sup>They don't know what the future will bring. So who can tell them how things will turn out?

<sup>8</sup>No one has the power to prevent the spirit of life from leaving. No one has control over the day of his own death. There is no way to avoid the war against death. Wickedness will not save wicked people from dying.

<sup>9</sup>I have seen all of this, and I have carefully considered all that is done under the sun whenever one person has authority to hurt others.

<sup>10</sup>Then I saw wicked people given an honorable burial. They used to go in and out of the holy place. They were praised in the city for doing such things. Even this is pointless.

<sup>11</sup>When a sentence against a crime isn't carried out quickly, people are encouraged to commit crimes.

<sup>12</sup>A sinner may commit a hundred crimes and yet live a long life. Still, I know with certainty that it will go well

for those who fear God, because they fear him.

<sup>13</sup>But it will not go well for the wicked. They will not live any longer. Their lives are like shadows, because they don't fear God.

<sup>14</sup>There is something being done on earth that is pointless. Righteous people suffer for what the wicked do, and wicked people get what the righteous deserve. I say that even this is pointless.

<sup>15</sup>So I recommend the enjoyment of life. People have nothing better to do under the sun than to eat, drink, and enjoy themselves. This joy will stay with them while they work hard during their brief lives which God has given them under the sun.

<sup>16</sup>When I carefully considered how to study wisdom and how to look at the work that is done on earth (even going without sleep day and night),

<sup>17</sup>then I saw everything that God has done. No one is able to grasp the work that is done under the sun. However hard a person may search for it, he will not find its meaning. Even though a wise

person claims to know, he is not able to grasp it.

**9**<sup>1</sup> Now, I have carefully thought about all this, and I explain it in this way: Righteous people and wise people, along with their accomplishments, are in God's hands. No one knows whether there will be love or hatred.

<sup>2</sup> Everything turns out the same way for everyone. All people will share the same destiny, whether they are righteous, wicked, or good, clean or unclean, whether they offer sacrifices or don't offer sacrifices. Good people are treated like sinners. People who take oaths are treated like those who are afraid to take oaths.

<sup>3</sup> This is the tragedy of everything that happens under the sun: Everyone shares the same destiny. Moreover, the hearts of mortals are full of evil. Madness is in their hearts while they are still alive. After that, they join the dead.

<sup>4</sup> But all who are among the living have hope, because a living dog is better than a dead lion.

<sup>5</sup> The living know that they will die, but the dead don't know anything. There is

no more reward for the dead when the memory of them has faded.

<sup>6</sup>Their love, their hate, and their passions have already vanished. They will never again take part in anything that happens under the sun.

<sup>7</sup>Go, enjoy eating your food, and drink your wine cheerfully, because God has already accepted what youve done.

<sup>8</sup>Always wear clean clothes, and never go without lotion on your head.

<sup>9</sup>Enjoy life with your wife, whom you love, during all your brief, pointless life. God has given you your pointless life under the sun. This is your lot in life and what you get for the hard work that you do under the sun.

<sup>10</sup>Whatever presents itself for you to do, do it with all your might, because there is no work, planning, knowledge, or skill in the grave where youre going.

<sup>11</sup>I saw something else under the sun. The race isnt won by fast runners, or the battle by heroes. Wise people dont necessarily have food. Intelligent people dont necessarily have riches, and skilled people dont necessarily receive special

treatment. But time and unpredictable events overtake all of them.

<sup>12</sup>No one knows when his time will come. Like fish that are caught in a cruel net or birds caught in a snare, humans are trapped by a disaster when it suddenly strikes them.

<sup>13</sup>I also have seen this example of wisdom under the sun, and it made a deep impression on me.

<sup>14</sup>There was a small town with a few soldiers in it, and a powerful king came to attack it. He surrounded it and blockaded it.

<sup>15</sup>A poor, wise person was found in that town. He saved the town using his wisdom. But no one remembered that poor person.

<sup>16</sup>So I said, "Wisdom is better than strength," even though that poor person's wisdom was despised, and no one listened to what he said.

<sup>17</sup>One should pay more attention to calm words from wise people than shouting from a ruler of fools.

<sup>18</sup>Wisdom is better than weapons of war, but one sinner can destroy much that is good.

**10**<sup>1</sup> Dead flies will make a bottle of perfume stink, and then it is spoiled. A little foolishness outweighs wisdom and honor.

<sup>2</sup> A wise person's heart leads the right way. The heart of a fool leads the wrong way.

<sup>3</sup> Even when a fool goes walking, he has no sense and shows everyone else that he is a fool.

<sup>4</sup> If a ruler becomes angry with you, don't resign your position. If you remain calm, you can make up for serious offenses.

<sup>5</sup> There is a tragedy that I've seen under the sun, an error often made by rulers.

<sup>6</sup> Foolish people are often given high positions, and rich people are left to fill lower positions.

<sup>7</sup> I have seen slaves sitting on horses and influential people going on foot like slaves.

<sup>8</sup> Whoever digs a pit may fall into it. Whoever breaks through a stone wall may be bitten by a snake.

<sup>9</sup> Whoever works in a stone quarry may get hurt. Whoever splits wood may be injured.

<sup>10</sup>If an ax is blunt and the edge isn't sharpened, then one has to use more strength. But wisdom prepares the way for success.

<sup>11</sup>If a snake bites before it has been charmed, then there is no advantage in being a snake charmer.

<sup>12</sup>A wise person's words win favors, but a fool's lips are self-destructive.

<sup>13</sup>A fool starts out by talking foolishness and ends up saying crazy things that are dangerous.

<sup>14</sup>He never stops talking. No one knows what the future will bring, or what will happen after death. Who can say!

<sup>15</sup>Fools wear themselves out with hard work, because they don't even know the way to town.

<sup>16</sup>How horrible it will be for any country where the king used to be a servant and where the high officials throw parties in the morning.

<sup>17</sup>A country is blessed when the king is from a noble family and when the high officials eat at the right time in order to get strength and not to get drunk.

<sup>18</sup>A roof sags because of laziness. A house leaks because of idle hands.

<sup>19</sup>A meal is made for laughter, and wine makes life pleasant, but money is the answer for everything.

<sup>20</sup>Dont curse the king even in your thoughts, and dont curse rich people even in your bedroom. A bird may carry your words, or some winged creature may repeat what you say.

**11** <sup>1</sup>Throw your bread on the surface of the water, because you will find it again after many days.

<sup>2</sup>Divide what you have into seven parts, or even into eight, because you dont know what disaster may happen on earth.

<sup>3</sup>If the clouds are full of rain, they will let it pour down on the earth. If a tree falls north or south, the tree will remain where it fell.

<sup>4</sup>Whoever watches the wind will never plant. Whoever looks at the clouds will never harvest.

<sup>5</sup>Just as you dont know how the breath of life enters the limbs of a child within its mothers womb, you also dont understand how God, who made everything, works.

<sup>6</sup>Plant your seed in the morning, and don't let your hands rest until evening. You don't know whether this field or that field will be profitable or whether both of them will turn out equally well.

<sup>7</sup>Light is sweet, and it is good for one's eyes to see the sun.

<sup>8</sup>Even though people may live for many years, they should enjoy every one of them. But they should also remember there will be many dark days. Everything that is coming is pointless.

<sup>9</sup>You young people should enjoy yourselves while you're young. You should let your hearts make you happy when you're young. Follow wherever your heart leads you and whatever your eyes see. But realize that God will make you give an account for all these things when he judges everyone.

<sup>10</sup>Get rid of what troubles you or wears down your body, because childhood and youth are pointless.

**12**<sup>1</sup>Remember your Creator when you are young, before the days of trouble come and the years catch up with you. They will make you say, "I have found no pleasure in them."

<sup>2</sup>Remember your Creator before the sun, the light, the moon, and the stars turn dark, and the clouds come back with rain.

<sup>3</sup>Remember your Creator when those who guard the house tremble, strong men are stooped over, the women at the mill stop grinding because there are so few of them, and those who look out of the windows see a dim light.

<sup>4</sup>Remember your Creator when the doors to the street are closed, the sound of the mill is muffled, you are startled at the sound of a bird, and those who sing songs become quiet.

<sup>5</sup>Remember your Creator when someone is afraid of heights and of dangers along the road, the almond tree blossoms, the grasshopper drags itself along, and the caper bush has no fruit. Mortals go to their eternal rest, and mourners go out in the streets.

<sup>6</sup>Remember your Creator before the silver cord is snapped, the golden bowl is broken, the pitcher is smashed near the spring, and the water wheel is broken at the cistern.

<sup>7</sup> Then the dust of mortals goes back to the ground as it was before, and the breath of life goes back to God who gave it.

<sup>8</sup> "Absolutely pointless!" says the spokesman. "Everything is pointless!"

<sup>9</sup> Besides being wise, the spokesman also taught the people what he knew. He very carefully thought about it, studied it, and arranged it in many proverbs.

<sup>10</sup> The spokesman tried to find just the right words. He wrote the words of truth very carefully.

<sup>11</sup> Words from wise people are like spurs. Their collected sayings are like nails that have been driven in firmly. They come from one shepherd.

<sup>12</sup> Be warned, my children, against anything more than these. People never stop writing books. Too much studying will wear out your body.

<sup>13</sup> After having heard it all, this is the conclusion: Fear God, and keep his commands, because this applies to everyone.

<sup>14</sup> God will certainly judge everything that is done. This includes every secret thing, whether it is good or bad.

# The Song of Songs

**1** <sup>1</sup>The most beautiful song of Solomon.

<sup>2</sup>[Bride] Let him kiss me with the kisses of his mouth. Your expressions of love are better than wine,

<sup>3</sup>better than the fragrance of cologne. (Cologne should be named after you.) No wonder the young women love you!

<sup>4</sup>Take me with you. Lets run away. The king has brought me into his private rooms. [The chorus of young women] We will celebrate and rejoice with you. We will praise your expressions of love more than wine. How right it is that the young women love you!

<sup>5</sup>[Bride] Young women of Jerusalem, I am dark and lovely like Kedars tents, like Solomons curtains.

<sup>6</sup>Stop staring at me because I am so dark. The sun has tanned me. My brothers were angry with me. They made me the caretaker of the vineyards. I have not even taken care of my own vineyard.

<sup>7</sup> Please tell me, you whom I love, where do you graze your flock? Where does your flock lie down at noon? Tell me, or I will be considered a prostitute wandering among the flocks of your companions.

<sup>8</sup> [The chorus of young women] If you do not know, most beautiful of women, follow the tracks of the flocks, and graze your young goats near the shepherds tents.

<sup>9</sup> [Groom] My true love, I compare you to a mare among Pharaohs stallions.

<sup>10</sup> Your cheeks are lovely with ornaments, your neck with strings of pearls.

<sup>11</sup> [The chorus of young women] We will make gold ornaments with silver beads for you.

<sup>12</sup> [Bride] While the king is at his table, my perfume fills the air with its fragrance.

<sup>13</sup> My beloved is a pouch of myrrh that lies at night between my breasts.

<sup>14</sup> My beloved is a bouquet of henna flowers in the vineyards of En Gedi.

<sup>15</sup> [Groom] Look at you! You are beautiful, my true love! Look at you!

You are so beautiful! Your eyes are like doves!

<sup>16</sup> [Bride] Look at you! You are handsome, my beloved, so pleasing to me! The leafscattered ground will be our couch.

<sup>17</sup> The cedars will be the walls of our house. The cypress trees will be our rafters.

**2**<sup>1</sup> I am a rose of Sharon, a lily growing in the valleys.

<sup>2</sup> [Groom] Like a lily among thorns, so is my true love among the young women.

<sup>3</sup> [Bride] Like an apple tree among the trees in the forest, so is my beloved among the young men. I want to sit in his shadow. His fruit tastes sweet to me.

<sup>4</sup> He leads me into a banquet room and looks at me with love.

<sup>5</sup> Strengthen me with raisins and refresh me with apples because I am weak from love.

<sup>6</sup> His left hand is under my head. His right hand caresses me.

<sup>7</sup> Young women of Jerusalem, swear to me by the gazelles or by the does in the field that you will not awaken love or arouse love before its proper time.

<sup>8</sup>[Bride] I hear my beloved's voice.  
Look! Here he comes, sprinting over the mountains, racing over the hills.

<sup>9</sup>My beloved is like a gazelle or a young stag. Look! There he stands behind our wall, peeking through the window, looking through the lattice.

<sup>10</sup>My beloved said to me, "Get up, my true love, my beautiful one, and come with me.

<sup>11</sup>Look! The winter is past. The rain is over and gone.

<sup>12</sup>Blossoms appear in the land. The time of the songbird has arrived. The cooing of the mourning dove is heard in our land.

<sup>13</sup>The green figs ripen. The grapevines bloom and give off a fragrance. Get up, my true love, my beautiful one, and come with me.

<sup>14</sup>My dove, in the hiding places of the rocky crevices, in the secret places of the cliffs, let me see your figure and hear your voice. Your voice is sweet, and your figure is lovely."

<sup>15</sup>Catch the foxes for us, the little foxes that ruin vineyards. Our vineyards are blooming.

<sup>16</sup>My beloved is mine, and I am his. He is the one who grazes his flock among the lilies.

<sup>17</sup>When the day brings a cooling breeze and the shadows flee, turn around, my beloved. Run like a gazelle or a young stag on the mountains that separate us!

**3**<sup>1</sup> [Bride] Night after night on my bed I looked for the one I love. I looked for him but did not find him.

<sup>2</sup>I will get up now and roam around the city, in the streets, and in the squares. I will look for the one I love. I looked for him but did not find him.

<sup>3</sup>The watchmen making their rounds in the city found me. I asked, "Have you seen the one I love?"

<sup>4</sup>I had just left them when I found the one I love. I held on to him and would not let him go until I had brought him into my mothers house, into the bedroom of the one who conceived me.

<sup>5</sup>Young women of Jerusalem, swear to me by the gazelles or by the does in the field, that you will not awaken love or arouse love before its proper time.

<sup>6</sup>[The chorus of young women] Who is this young woman coming up from the

wilderness like clouds of smoke? She is perfumed with myrrh and incense made from the merchants scented powders.

<sup>7</sup>Look! Solomons sedan chair! Sixty soldiers from the army of Israel surround it.

<sup>8</sup>All of them are skilled in using swords, experienced in combat. Each one has his sword at his side and guards against the terrors of the night.

<sup>9</sup>King Solomon had a carriage made for himself from the wood of Lebanon.

<sup>10</sup>He had its posts made out of silver, its top out of gold, its seat out of purple fabric. Its insidewith inlaid scenes of love was made by the young women of Jerusalem.

<sup>11</sup>Young women of Zion, come out and look at King Solomon! Look at his crown, the crown his mother placed on him on his wedding day, his day of joyful delight.

**4**<sup>1</sup> [Groom] Look at you! You are beautiful, my true love. Look at you! You are so beautiful. Your eyes behind your veil are like doves. Your hair is like a flock of goats moving down Mount Gilead.

<sup>2</sup>Your teeth are like a flock of sheep about to be sheared, sheep that come up from the washing. All of them bear twins, and not one has lost its young.

<sup>3</sup>Your lips are like scarlet thread. Your mouth is lovely. Your temples behind your veil are like slices of pomegranate.

<sup>4</sup>Your neck is like Davids beautifullydesigned tower. A thousand round shields belonging to soldiers are hung on it.

<sup>5</sup>Your breasts are like two fawns, like twin gazelles grazing among the lilies.

<sup>6</sup>When the day brings a cool breeze and the shadows flee, I will go to the mountain of myrrh and the hill of incense.

<sup>7</sup>You are beautiful in every way, my true love. There is no blemish on you.

<sup>8</sup>You will come with me from Lebanon, from Lebanon as my bride. You will travel with me from the peak of Mount Amana, from the mountain peaks in Senir and Hermon, from the lairs of lions, from the mountains of leopards.

<sup>9</sup>My bride, my sister, you have charmed me. You have charmed me with a single

glance from your eyes, with a single strand of your necklace.

<sup>10</sup>How beautiful are your expressions of love, my bride, my sister! How much better are your expressions of love than wine and the fragrance of your perfume than any spice.

<sup>11</sup>Your lips drip honey, my bride. Honey and milk are under your tongue. The fragrance of your clothing is like the fragrance of Lebanon.

<sup>12</sup>My bride, my sister is a garden that is locked, a garden that is locked, a spring that is sealed.

<sup>13</sup>You are paradise that produces pomegranates and the best fruits, henna flowers and nard,

<sup>14</sup>nard and saffron, calamus, cinnamon, and all kinds of incense, myrrh, aloes, and all the best spices.

<sup>15</sup>You are a spring for gardens, a well of living water flowing from Lebanon.

<sup>16</sup>[Bride] Awake, north wind! Come, south wind! Blow on my garden! Let its spices flow from it. Let my beloved come to his garden, and let him eat his own precious fruit.

**5**<sup>1</sup> [Groom] My bride, my sister, I will come to my garden. I will gather my myrrh with my spice. I will eat my honeycomb with my honey. I will drink my wine with my milk. Eat, my friends! Drink and become intoxicated with expressions of love!

<sup>2</sup> [Bride] I sleep, but my mind is awake. Listen! My beloved is knocking. [Groom] Open to me, my true love, my sister, my dove, my perfect one. My head is wet with dew, my hair with the dewdrops of night.

<sup>3</sup> [Bride] I have taken off my clothes! Why should I put them on again? I have washed my feet! Why should I get them dirty again?

<sup>4</sup> My beloved put his hand through the keyhole. My heart throbbed for him.

<sup>5</sup> I got up to open for my beloved. My hands dripped with myrrh, and my fingers were drenched with liquid myrrh, on the handles of the lock.

<sup>6</sup> I opened for my beloved, but my beloved had turned away. He was gone! I almost died when he left. I looked for him, but I did not find him. I called for him, but he did not answer me.

<sup>7</sup>The watchmen making their rounds in the city found me. They struck me! They wounded me! Those watchmen on the walls took my robe from me!

<sup>8</sup>Young women of Jerusalem, swear to me that if you find my beloved you will tell him I am hopelessly lovesick.

<sup>9</sup>[The chorus of young women] Most beautiful of women, what makes your beloved better than any other beloved? What makes your beloved better than any other beloved that you make us swear this way?

<sup>10</sup>[Bride] My beloved is dazzling yet ruddy. He stands out among 10,000 men.

<sup>11</sup>His head is the finest gold. His hair is wavy, black as a raven.

<sup>12</sup>His eyes are set like doves bathing in milk.

<sup>13</sup>His cheeks are like a garden of spices, a garden that produces scented herbs. His lips are lilies that drip with myrrh.

<sup>14</sup>His hands are disks of gold set with emerald. His chest is a block of ivory covered with sapphires.

<sup>15</sup>His legs are columns of marble set on bases of pure gold. His form is like Lebanon, choice as the cedars.

<sup>16</sup>His mouth is sweet in every way. Everything about him is desirable! This is my beloved, and this is my friend, young women of Jerusalem.

**6**<sup>1</sup> [The chorus of young women] Where did your beloved go, most beautiful of women? Where did your beloved turn? We will look for him with you.

<sup>2</sup> [Bride] My beloved went to his garden, to the beds of spices, to graze his flock in the gardens and gather lilies.

<sup>3</sup>I am my beloveds, and my beloved is mine. He is the one who grazes his flock among the lilies.

<sup>4</sup> [Groom] You are beautiful, my true love, like Tirzah, lovely like Jerusalem, aweinspiring like those great cities.

<sup>5</sup>Turn your eyes away from me. They enchant me! Your hair is like a flock of goats moving down from Gilead.

<sup>6</sup>Your teeth are like a flock of sheep, sheep that come up from the washing. All of them bear twins, and not one has lost its young.

<sup>7</sup>Your temples behind your veil are like slices of pomegranate.

<sup>8</sup>There are 60 queens, 80 concubines, and countless virgins,

<sup>9</sup>but she is unique, my dove, my perfect one. Her mother thinks she is unique. She is pure to the one who gave birth to her. Her sisters saw her and blessed her. Queens and concubines saw her and praised her.

<sup>10</sup>[The chorus of young women] Who is this young woman? She looks like the dawn. She is beautiful like the moon, pure like the sun, aweinspiring like those heavenly bodies.

<sup>11</sup>[Bride] I went to the walnut grove to look at the blossoms in the valley, to see if the grapevine had budded and if the pomegranates were in bloom.

<sup>12</sup>I did not know that I had become like the chariots of my noble people.

<sup>13</sup>[The chorus of young women] Come back! Come back, young woman from Shulam! Come back! Come back so that we may look at you! [Bride] Why do you look at me, the young woman from Shulam, as you look at the dance of Mahanaim?

**7**<sup>1</sup> [The chorus of young women]  
How beautiful are your feet in their sandals, noble daughter! The curves of your thighs are like ornaments, like the work of an artists hands.

<sup>2</sup>Your navel is a round bowl. May it always be filled with spiced wine. Your waist is a bundle of wheat enclosed in lilies.

<sup>3</sup>Your breasts are like two fawns, twins of a gazelle.

<sup>4</sup>Your neck is like an ivory tower. Your eyes are like pools in Heshbon, pools by the gate of Bath Rabbim. Your nose is like a Lebanese tower facing Damascus.

<sup>5</sup>You hold your head as high as Mount Carmel. Your dangling curls are royal beauty. Your flowing locks could hold a king captive.

<sup>6</sup>[Groom] How beautiful and charming you are, my love, with your elegance.

<sup>7</sup>Young woman, your figure is like a palm tree, and your breasts are like its clusters.

<sup>8</sup>I thought, "I will climb the palm tree and take hold of its fruit." May your breasts be like clusters on the vine. May

the fragrance of your breath be like apples.

<sup>9</sup>May your mouth taste like the best wine[Bride]that goes down smoothly to my beloved and glides over the lips of those about to sleep.

<sup>10</sup>I am my beloveds, and he longs for me.

<sup>11</sup>Come, my beloved. Lets go into the field. Lets spend the night among the henna flowers.

<sup>12</sup>Lets go to the vineyards early. Lets see if the vines have budded, if the grape blossoms have opened, if the pomegranates are in bloom. There I will give you my love.

<sup>13</sup>The mandrakes give off a fragrance, and at our door are all kinds of precious fruits. I have saved new and old things for you alone, my beloved.

**8**<sup>1</sup>If only you were my brother, one who nursed at my mothers breasts. If I saw you on the street, I would kiss you, and no one would look down on me.

<sup>2</sup>I would lead you. I would bring you into my mothers house. (She is the one who was my teacher.) I would give you

some spiced wine to drink, some juice squeezed from my pomegranates.

<sup>3</sup>His left hand is under my head. His right hand caresses me.

<sup>4</sup>Young women of Jerusalem, swear to me that you will not awaken love or arouse love before its proper time!

<sup>5</sup>[The chorus of young women] Who is this young woman coming from the wilderness with her arm around her beloved? [Bride] Under the apple tree I woke you up. There your mother went into labor with you. There she went into labor and gave birth to you!

<sup>6</sup>Wear me as a signet ring on your heart, as a ring on your hand. Love is as overpowering as death. Devotion is as unyielding as the grave. Loves flames are flames of fire, flames that come from the LORD.

<sup>7</sup>Raging water cannot extinguish love, and rivers will never wash it away. If a man exchanged all his familys wealth for love, people would utterly despise him.

<sup>8</sup>[The brothers] We have a little sister, and she has no breasts. What will we do for our sister on the day she becomes engaged?

<sup>9</sup>If she is a wall, we will build a silver barrier around her. If she is a door, we will barricade her with cedar boards.

<sup>10</sup>[Bride] I am a wall, and my breasts are like towers. So he considers me to be one who has found peace.

<sup>11</sup>Solomon had a vineyard at Baal Hamon. He entrusted that vineyard to caretakers. Each one was to bring 25 pounds of silver in exchange for its fruit.

<sup>12</sup>My own vineyard is in front of me. That 25 pounds is yours, Solomon, and 5 pounds go to those who take care of its fruit.

<sup>13</sup>[Groom] Young woman living in the gardens, while your friends are listening to your voice, let me hear

<sup>14</sup>[Bride] Come away quickly, my beloved. Run like a gazelle or a young stag on the mountains of spices.

# Isaiah

**1** <sup>1</sup>This is the vision which Isaiah, son of Amoz, saw about Judah and Jerusalem at the time of Kings Uzziah, Jotham, Ahaz, and Hezekiah.

<sup>2</sup>Listen, heaven, and pay attention, earth! The LORD has spoken, "I raised my children and helped them grow, but they have rebelled against me.

<sup>3</sup>Oxen know their owners, and donkeys know where their masters feed them. But Israel doesn't know its owner. My people don't understand who feeds them.

<sup>4</sup>"How horrible it will be for a nation that sins. Its people are loaded down with guilt. They are descendants of evildoers and destructive children. They have abandoned the LORD. They have despised the Holy One of Israel. They have turned their backs on him.

<sup>5</sup>"Why do you still want to be beaten? Why do you continue to rebel? Your whole head is infected. Your whole heart is failing.

<sup>6</sup>From the bottom of your feet to the top of your head there is no healthy spot left on your body only bruises, sores, and fresh wounds. They havent been cleansed, bandaged, or soothed with oil.

<sup>7</sup>"Your country is devastated. Your cities are burned down. Your fields are destroyed right before your eyes by foreigners. Your fields are devastated and taken over by foreigners.

<sup>8</sup>My people Zion are left like a hut in a vineyard, like a shack in a cucumber field, like a city under attack."

<sup>9</sup>If the LORD of Armies hadnt left us a few survivors, we would have been like Sodom and Gomorrah.

<sup>10</sup>Listen to the word of the LORD, you rulers of Sodom! Pay attention to the teachings from our God, you people of Gomorrah!

<sup>11</sup>The LORD asks, "What do your many animal sacrifices mean to me? Ive had enough of your burnt offerings of rams and enough fat from your fattened calves. Im not pleased with the blood of bulls, lambs, or male goats.

<sup>12</sup>When you appear in my presence, who asked you to trample on my courtyards?

<sup>13</sup>Don't bring any more worthless grain offerings. Your incense is disgusting to me, so are your New Moon Festivals, your days of worship, and the assemblies you call. I can't stand your evil assemblies.

<sup>14</sup>I hate your New Moon Festivals and your appointed festivals. They've become a burden to me, and I'm tired of putting up with them.

<sup>15</sup>So when you stretch out your hands in prayer, I will turn my eyes away from you. Even though you offer many prayers, I will not listen because your hands are covered with blood.

<sup>16</sup>"Wash yourselves! Become clean! Get your evil deeds out of my sight. Stop doing evil.

<sup>17</sup>Learn to do good. Seek justice. Arrest oppressors. Defend orphans. Plead the case of widows."

<sup>18</sup>"Come on now, let's discuss this!" says the LORD. "Though your sins are bright red, they will become as white as snow. Though they are dark red, they will become as white as wool.

<sup>19</sup>If you are willing and obedient, you will eat the best from the land.

<sup>20</sup>But if you refuse and rebel, you will be destroyed by swords." The LORD has spoken.

<sup>21</sup>How the faithful town has become a prostitute! She was full of justice, and righteousness lived in her. But now murderers live there!

<sup>22</sup>Your silver is not pure. Your wine is watered down.

<sup>23</sup>Your rulers are rebels, friends with thieves. They all love bribes and run after gifts. They never defend orphans. They don't notice the widows' pleas.

<sup>24</sup>That's why the Lord, the LORD of Armies, the Mighty One of Israel, says, "How horrible it will be when I take revenge on my opponents! I will avenge myself against my enemies.

<sup>25</sup>I will turn my power against you. I will remove your impurities with bleach. I will get rid of all your impurities.

<sup>26</sup>I will give you judges like you had long ago, advisers like you had in the beginning. After that you will be called the Righteous City, the Faithful Town."

<sup>27</sup> Zion will be pardoned by the LORDS justice, and those who return will be pardoned by the LORDS righteousness.

<sup>28</sup> Rebels and sinners will be crushed at the same time, and those who abandon the LORD will come to an end.

<sup>29</sup> You will be ashamed of the oaks that you wanted to worship and embarrassed by the garden that you have chosen for your gods.

<sup>30</sup> You will be like an oak whose leaves wither and like a garden without water.

<sup>31</sup> Strong people will become tinder for a fire, and their work will be the spark. Both of them will burn together, and there will be no one to put out the fire.

**2**<sup>1</sup> This is the message which Isaiah, son of Amoz, saw about Judah and Jerusalem.

<sup>2</sup> In the last days the mountain of the LORDS house will be established as the highest of the mountains and raised above the hills. All the nations will stream to it.

<sup>3</sup> Then many people will come and say, "Let's go to the mountain of the LORD, to the house of the God of Jacob. He will teach us his ways so that we may live by

them." The teachings will go out from Zion. The word of the LORD will go out from Jerusalem.

<sup>4</sup>Then he will judge disputes between nations and settle arguments between many people. They will hammer their swords into plowblades and their spears into pruning shears. Nations will never fight against each other, and they will never train for war again.

<sup>5</sup>Come, descendants of Jacob, let's live in the light of the LORD.

<sup>6</sup>LORD, you have abandoned your people, the descendants of Jacob, because they are filled with Eastern influences. They are fortunetellers like the Philistines, and they make deals with foreigners.

<sup>7</sup>Their land is filled with silver and gold, and there is no end to their treasures. Their land is filled with horses, and there is no end to their chariots.

<sup>8</sup>Their land is filled with idols, and they worship what their hands have shaped and what their fingers have molded.

<sup>9</sup>People will be brought down. Everyone will be humbled. Do not forgive them.

<sup>10</sup>Go in among the rocks and hide underground because of the LORDS terrifying presence and the honor of his majesty.

<sup>11</sup>The eyes of arrogant people will be humbled. High and mighty people will be brought down. On that day the LORD alone will be honored.

<sup>12</sup>The LORD of Armies will have his day against all who are arrogant and conceited and all who are proud of themselves (they will be humbled),

<sup>13</sup>against all the towering and mighty cedars of Lebanon and all the oaks of Bashan,

<sup>14</sup>against all the high mountains and all the lofty hills,

<sup>15</sup>against every high tower and every fortified wall,

<sup>16</sup>against all the large ships of Tarshish and all the beautiful boats.

<sup>17</sup>Then arrogant people will be brought down, and high and mighty people will be humbled. On that day the LORD alone will be honored.

<sup>18</sup>Then idols will disappear completely.

<sup>19</sup>People will go into caves in the rocks and into holes in the ground because of

the LORDS terrifying presence and the honor of his majesty when he rises to terrify the earth.

<sup>20</sup>On that day people will throw to the moles and the bats the silver and gold idols that they made for themselves to worship.

<sup>21</sup>They will go into caves in the rocks and into cracks in the cliffs because of the LORDS terrifying presence and the honor of his majesty when he rises to terrify the earth.

<sup>22</sup>Stop trusting people. Their life is in their nostrils. How can they be worth anything?

**3**<sup>1</sup>See now, the Lord, the LORD of Armies, is going to take from Jerusalem and Judah every kind of support and their entire supply of food and water.

<sup>2</sup>He will take their heroes and soldiers, judges and prophets, fortunetellers and statesmen,

<sup>3</sup>military leaders and civilian leaders, counselors, skilled workers, and experts in magic.

<sup>4</sup>"I will make boys their leaders. Children will govern them."

<sup>5</sup> People will oppress each other, and everyone will oppress his neighbor. The young will make fun of the old, and common people will make fun of their superiors.

<sup>6</sup> A person will grab one of his relatives from his fathers family and say, "You have a coat. Youll be our leader. This pile of ruins will be under your control."

<sup>7</sup> When that day comes the relative will cry out, "Im not a doctor! I dont have any food or a coat in my home. Dont make me a leader of our family."

<sup>8</sup> Jerusalem has stumbled, and Judah has fallen, because what they say and what they do is against the LORD. They are defiant in his honored presence.

<sup>9</sup> The look on their faces will be held against them. They boast about their sins, which are like those of the people of Sodom. They dont even bother to hide them. How horrible it will be for these people, because they have brought disaster on themselves.

<sup>10</sup> Tell the righteous that blessings will come to them. They will taste the fruit of their labor.

<sup>11</sup> How horrible it will be for the wicked! Disaster will strike them. What they have done will be done to them.

<sup>12</sup> "Children will oppress my people. Women will rule them. My people, your guides mislead you, and you don't know which way to go."

<sup>13</sup> The LORD takes his place in the courtroom. He stands to judge his people.

<sup>14</sup> The LORD presents his case to the respected leaders and the officials of his people: "You have burned down the vineyard! Your houses are filled with goods stolen from the poor."

<sup>15</sup> The Almighty LORD of Armies asks, "How can you crush my people and grind the faces of the poor into the ground?"

<sup>16</sup> The LORD adds, "The women of Zion are arrogant. They walk with their noses in the air, making seductive glances, taking short little steps, jingling the ankle bracelets on their feet."

<sup>17</sup> The Lord will cause sores to appear on the heads of the women of Zion, and the LORD will make their foreheads bare.

<sup>18</sup>On that day the Lord will take away their fine things: jingling anklets, headbands, crescentshaped necklaces,  
<sup>19</sup>pendants, bracelets, scarfs,  
<sup>20</sup>hats, ankle bracelets, blouses, perfume boxes, charms,  
<sup>21</sup>signet rings, nose rings,  
<sup>22</sup>fine robes, coats, shawls, purses,  
<sup>23</sup>mirrors, underwear, headdresses, and veils.

<sup>24</sup>Instead of the smell of perfume, there will be the smell of decay. They will wear ropes instead of belts. They will have bald heads instead of beautiful hair. They will wear sackcloth instead of expensive clothes. Their beauty will be scarred.

<sup>25</sup>Women, your warriors will die in combat. Your mighty men will die in battle.

<sup>26</sup>The gates of Zion will cry and grieve, and Zion will sit on the ground, exhausted.

**4**<sup>1</sup>When that day comes, seven women will grab one man and say, "Well eat our own food and provide our own clothes. Just let us marry you for your name. Take away our disgrace."

<sup>2</sup>When that day comes, the branch of the LORD will be beautiful and wonderful. The fruit of the land will be the pride and joy of Israels survivors.

<sup>3</sup>Then whoever is left in Zion and whoever remains in Jerusalem will be called holy, everyone who is recorded among the living in Jerusalem.

<sup>4</sup>The Lord will wash away the filth of Zions people. He will clean bloodstains from Jerusalem with a spirit of judgment and a spirit of burning.

<sup>5</sup>The LORD will create a cloud of smoke during the day and a glowing flame of fire during the night over the whole area of Mount Zion and over the assembly. His glory will cover everything.

<sup>6</sup>It will be a shelter from the heat during the day as well as a refuge and hiding place from storms and rain.

**5**<sup>1</sup> Let me sing a lovesong to my beloved about his vineyard: My beloved had a vineyard on a fertile hill.

<sup>2</sup>He dug it up, removed its stones, planted it with the choicest vines, built a watchtower in it, and made a winepress in it. Then he waited for it to produce

good grapes, but it produced only sour, wild grapes.

<sup>3</sup>Now then, you inhabitants of Jerusalem and Judah, judge between me and my vineyard!

<sup>4</sup>What more could have been done for my vineyard than what I have already done for it? When I waited for it to produce good grapes, why did it produce only sour, wild grapes?

<sup>5</sup>Now then, let me tell you what I will do to my vineyard. I will tear away its hedge so that it can be devoured and tear down its wall so that it can be trampled.

<sup>6</sup>I will make it a wasteland. It will never be pruned or hoed. Thorns and weeds will grow in it, and I will command the clouds not to rain on it.

<sup>7</sup>The vineyard of the LORD of Armies is the nation of Israel, and the people of Judah are the garden of his delight. He hoped for justice but saw only slaughter, for righteousness but heard only cries of distress.

<sup>8</sup>How horrible it will be for you who acquire house after house and buy field

after field until theres nothing left and you have to live by yourself in the land.

<sup>9</sup>With my own ears I heard the LORD of Armies say, "Many houses will become empty. Large, beautiful houses will be without people to live in them.

<sup>10</sup>A tenacre vineyard will produce only six gallons of wine, and two quarts of seed will produce only four quarts of grain."

<sup>11</sup>How horrible it will be for those who get up early to look for a drink, who sit up late until they are drunk from wine.

<sup>12</sup>At their feasts there are lyres and harps, tambourines and flutes, and wine. Yet, they dont pay attention to what the LORD is doing or see what his hands have done.

<sup>13</sup>"My people will go into exile because they dont understand what Im doing. Honored men will starve, and common people will be parched with thirst."

<sup>14</sup>That is why the graves appetite increases. It opens its mouth very wide so that honored people and common people will go down into it. Those who are noisy and joyous will go down into it.

<sup>15</sup> People will be brought down. Everyone will be humbled. And the eyes of arrogant people will be humbled.

<sup>16</sup> The LORD of Armies will be honored when he judges. The holy God will show himself to be holy when he does what is right.

<sup>17</sup> Then lambs will graze as if they were in their own pasture, and foreigners will eat among the ruins of the rich.

<sup>18</sup> How horrible it will be for those who string people along with lies and empty promises, whose lives are sinful.

<sup>19</sup> They say, "Let God hurry and quickly do his work so that we may see what he has in mind. Let the plan of the Holy One of Israel happen quickly so that we may understand what he is doing."

<sup>20</sup> How horrible it will be for those who call evil good and good evil, who turn darkness into light and light into darkness, who turn what is bitter into something sweet and what is sweet into something bitter.

<sup>21</sup> How horrible it will be for those who think they are wise and consider themselves to be clever.

<sup>22</sup>How horrible it will be for those who are heroes at drinking wine, who are champions at mixing drinks,

<sup>23</sup>who declare the guilty innocent for a bribe, who take away the rights of righteous people.

<sup>24</sup>As flames burn up straw and dry grass shrivels in flames, so their roots will rot, and their blossoms will blow away like dust. They have rejected the teachings of the LORD of Armies and have despised the word of the Holy One of Israel.

<sup>25</sup>That's why the anger of the LORD burns hot against his people, and he is ready to use his power to strike them down. The hills tremble, and dead bodies lie like garbage in the streets. Even after all this, his anger has not disappeared, and he is still ready to use his power.

<sup>26</sup>The LORD raises up a flag for the nations far away. With a whistle he signals those at the ends of the earth. Look, they are coming very quickly!

<sup>27</sup>None of them grow tired or stumble. None of them slumber or sleep. The belts on their waists aren't loose or their sandal straps broken.

<sup>28</sup>Their arrows are sharpened; all their bows are ready to shoot. Their horses hoofs are as hard as flint. Their chariot wheels are as quick as the wind.

<sup>29</sup>They roar like a lioness. They growl like a young lion. They growl as they snatch their prey and carry it off to where no one can rescue it.

<sup>30</sup>On that day they will roar over their prey as the sea roars. If they look at the land, they will see only darkness and distress. Even the light will be darkened by thick clouds.

**6**<sup>1</sup>In the year King Uzziah died, I saw the Lord sitting on a high and lofty throne. The bottom of his robe filled the temple.

<sup>2</sup>Angels were standing above him. Each had six wings: With two they covered their faces, with two they covered their feet, and with two they flew.

<sup>3</sup>They called to each other and said, "Holy, holy, holy is the LORD of Armies! The whole earth is filled with his glory."

<sup>4</sup>Their voices shook the foundations of the doorposts, and the temple filled with smoke.

<sup>5</sup>So I said, "Oh, no! I'm doomed. Every word that passes through my lips is sinful. I live among people with sinful lips. I have seen the king, the LORD of Armies!"

<sup>6</sup>Then one of the angels flew to me. In his hand was a burning coal that he had taken from the altar with tongs.

<sup>7</sup>He touched my mouth with it and said, "This has touched your lips. Your guilt has been taken away, and your sin has been forgiven."

<sup>8</sup>Then I heard the voice of the Lord, saying, "Whom will I send? Who will go for us?" I said, "Here I am. Send me!"

<sup>9</sup>And he said, "Go and tell these people, No matter how closely you listen, you'll never understand. No matter how closely you look, you'll never see.

<sup>10</sup>Make these people closeminded. Plug their ears. Shut their eyes. Otherwise, they may see with their eyes, hear with their ears, understand with their minds, and return and be healed."

<sup>11</sup>I asked, "How long, O Lord?" And he replied, "Until the cities lie in ruins with no one living in them, the houses have

no people, and the land is completely desolate.

<sup>12</sup>The LORD will send his people far away, and a large area in the middle of the land will be abandoned.

<sup>13</sup>Even if one out of ten people is left in it, the land will be burned again. When a sacred oak or an oak is cut down, a stump is left. The holy seed will be the lands stump."

**7**<sup>1</sup>When Ahaz, son of Jotham and grandson of Uzziah, was king of Judah, Arams King Rezin and Israels King Pekah, son of Remaliah, went to Jerusalem to attack it, but they couldnt defeat it.

<sup>2</sup>When word reached Davids family that the Arameans had made an alliance with Ephraim, the hearts of the king and his people were shaken as the trees of the forest are shaken by the wind.

<sup>3</sup>Then the LORD said to Isaiah, "Go out with your son Shear Jashub to meet Ahaz at the end of the ditch of the Upper Pool on the road to the Laundrymans Field.

<sup>4</sup>Say to him, Be careful, stay calm, and dont be afraid. Dont lose heart

because of the fierce anger of Rezin from Aram and Remaliahs son. These two are smoldering logs.

<sup>5</sup>Aram, Ephraim, and Remaliahs son have planned evil against you, saying,

<sup>6</sup>Lets march against Judah, tear it apart, divide it among ourselves, and set up Tabeels son as its king.

<sup>7</sup>This is what the Almighty LORD says: It wont take place; it wont happen.

<sup>8</sup>The capital of Aram is Damascus, and the leader of Damascus is Rezin. Ephraim will be shattered within 65 years so that it will no longer be a nation.

<sup>9</sup>The capital of Ephraim is Samaria, and the leader of Samaria is Remaliahs son. If you dont remain faithful, you wont remain standing.

<sup>10</sup>Again the LORD spoke to Ahaz,

<sup>11</sup>"Ask the LORD your God for a sign. It can be anything you want."

<sup>12</sup>But Ahaz answered, "I wont ask; I wouldnt think of testing the LORD."

<sup>13</sup>"Listen now, descendants of David," Isaiah said. "Isnt it enough that you try the patience of mortals? Must you also try the patience of my God?"

<sup>14</sup> So the Lord himself will give you this sign: A virgin will become pregnant and give birth to a son, and she will name him Immanuel [God Is With Us].

<sup>15</sup> He will eat cheese and honey until he knows how to reject evil and choose good.

<sup>16</sup> Indeed, before the boy knows how to reject evil and choose good, the land of the two kings who terrify you will be deserted.

<sup>17</sup> "The LORD will bring on you, your people, and your ancestors family a time unlike any since Ephraim broke away from Judah. He will bring the king of Assyria.

<sup>18</sup> On that day the LORD will whistle for the flies that are at the distant branches of the Nile River in Egypt and for the bees that are in Assyria.

<sup>19</sup> All of them will come and settle in the deep valleys, in the cracks in the cliffs, on all the thornbushes, and at all the water holes.

<sup>20</sup> "On that day the Lord will hire the king of Assyria from beyond the Euphrates River to be a razor to shave

the hair on your head, the hair on your legs, and even your beard.

<sup>21</sup> On that day a person will keep alive a young cow and two sheep.

<sup>22</sup> That person will eat cheese, because they will produce so much milk. Everyone who is left in the land will eat cheese and honey.

<sup>23</sup> On that day, in every place where there were 1,000 vines (worth 1,000 pieces of silver), there will be briars and thorns.

<sup>24</sup> People will come there with bows and arrows to hunt because the whole land will be filled with briars and thorns.

<sup>25</sup> And you will no longer be able to go to all the hills which used to be cultivated because they will be filled with briars and thorns. It will be a place for turning oxen loose and letting sheep run."

**8**<sup>1</sup> The LORD said to me, "Take a large writing tablet, and write on it with a pen: Maher Shalal Hash Baz [The Looting Will Come Quickly; the Prey Will Be Easy].

<sup>2</sup> I will have these dependable witnesses testify: the priest Uriah and Zechariah (son of Jeberechiah)."

<sup>3</sup>I slept with the prophet. She became pregnant and gave birth to a son. The LORD told me, "Name him Maher Shalal Hash Baz.

<sup>4</sup>Before the boy knows how to say Daddy or Mommy, the wealth of Damascus and the loot from Samaria will be carried away to the king of Assyria."

<sup>5</sup>The LORD spoke to me again. He said, <sup>6</sup>"These people have rejected the gently flowing water of Shiloah and find joy in Rezin and Remaliahs son."

<sup>7</sup>That is why the Lord is going to bring against them the raging and powerful floodwaters of the Euphrates River the king of Assyria with all his power. It will overflow all its channels and go over all its banks.

<sup>8</sup>It will sweep through Judah. It will overflow and pass through; it will be neckhigh. Its outspread wings will extend over your whole country, O Immanuel.

<sup>9</sup>Be broken, you people. Be terrified. Listen, all you distant parts of the earth. Prepare for battle, but be terrified. Prepare for battle, but be terrified.

<sup>10</sup>Make plans for battle, but they will never succeed. Give orders, but they

wont be carried out, because God is with us!

<sup>11</sup> This is what the LORD said with his powerful hand on me. He warned me not to follow the ways of these people:

<sup>12</sup> "Dont say that everything these people call a conspiracy is a conspiracy. Dont fear what they fear. Dont let it terrify you."

<sup>13</sup> Remember that the LORD of Armies is holy. He is the one you should fear and the one you should be terrified of.

<sup>14</sup> He will be a place of safety for you. But he will be a rock that makes people trip and a stumbling block for both kingdoms of Israel. He will be a trap and a snare for those who live in Jerusalem.

<sup>15</sup> Many will stumble. They will fall and be broken. They will be trapped and caught.

<sup>16</sup> Tie up the written instructions. Seal the teachings among my disciples.

<sup>17</sup> I will wait for the LORD, who hides his face from the descendants of Jacob. I will hope in him.

<sup>18</sup> I am here with the children that the LORD has given me. We are signs

and symbols in Israel from the LORD of Armies, who lives on Mount Zion.

<sup>19</sup>People will say to you, "Ask for help from the mediums and the fortunetellers, who whisper and mutter." Shouldn't people ask their God for help instead? Why should they ask the dead to help the living?

<sup>20</sup>They should go to the teachings and to the written instructions. If people don't speak these words, it is because it doesn't dawn on them.

<sup>21</sup>They will pass through the land when they are hardpressed and hungry. When they are hungry, they will be furious. Then they will look up, cursing their king and God.

<sup>22</sup>They will look at the earth and see only distress and gloom. They will go in anguish and be forced into darkness.

**9**<sup>1</sup> But there will be no more gloom for the land that is in distress. God humbled the lands of Zebulun and Naphtali in earlier times. But in the future he will bring glory to the road by the sea, to the land across the Jordan River, to Galilee, where foreigners live.

<sup>2</sup>The people who walk in darkness will see a bright light. The light will shine on those who live in the land of death's shadow.

<sup>3</sup>You will expand the nation and increase its happiness. It will be happy in your presence like those who celebrate the harvest or rejoice when dividing loot.

<sup>4</sup>You will break the yoke that burdens them, the bar that is across their shoulders, and the stick used by their oppressor, as you did in the battle against Midian.

<sup>5</sup>Every warrior's boot marching to the sound of battle and every garment rolled in blood will be burned as fuel in the fire.

<sup>6</sup>A child will be born for us. A son will be given to us. The government will rest on his shoulders. He will be named: Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.

<sup>7</sup>His government and peace will have unlimited growth. He will establish David's throne and kingdom. He will uphold it with justice and righteousness now and forever. The LORD of Armies is determined to do this!

<sup>8</sup>The LORD sent a message against Jacob. The message is against Israel.

<sup>9</sup>All the people of Ephraim and the people who live in Samaria will know it. With arrogant and conceited hearts they will say,

<sup>10</sup>"Bricks have fallen, but we will rebuild with handcut stones. Fig trees have been cut down, but we will replace them with cedars."

<sup>11</sup>The LORD will set Rezin's oppressors against Israel and will stir up its enemies

<sup>12</sup>the Arameans from the east and the Philistines from the west. They will devour Israel with open mouths. Even after all this, his anger will not disappear, and he is still ready to use his power.

<sup>13</sup>But the people have not returned to the one who struck them, nor have they sought the LORD of Armies.

<sup>14</sup>So in one day the LORD will cut off from Israel both head and tail, both palm branches and cattails.

<sup>15</sup>Respected and honored leaders are the head. Prophets who teach lies are the tail.

<sup>16</sup>Those who guide these people lead them astray. Those who are guided by them will be destroyed.

<sup>17</sup>That is why the Lord isn't happy with their young men, nor will he show compassion for their orphans and widows. Every one of them is a godless evildoer, and every mouth speaks foolishness. Even after all this, his anger will not disappear, and he is still ready to use his power.

<sup>18</sup>Surely wickedness burns like fire. It burns up briars and thorns. It sets the underbrush in the forest on fire, and it whirls upward in clouds of smoke.

<sup>19</sup>The land is scorched by the fury of the LORD of Armies, and the people are like fuel for the fire. No one shows concern for others:

<sup>20</sup>On the right, one gobbles up food and is still hungry. On the left, another eats and is never full. Each person eats the flesh from his own arm.

<sup>21</sup>Manasseh is against Ephraim. Ephraim is against Manasseh. Together they attack Judah. Even after all this, his anger will not disappear, and he is still ready to use his power.

**10**<sup>1</sup> How horrible it will be for those who make unjust laws and who make oppressive regulations.

<sup>2</sup> They deprive the poor of justice. They take away the rights of the needy among my people. They prey on widows and rob orphans.

<sup>3</sup> What will you do on the day you are called to account for these things, when the disaster comes from far away? Where will you run for help? Where will you leave your wealth?

<sup>4</sup> Nothings left but to crouch among prisoners and to fall with those who are killed. Even after all this, his anger will not disappear, and he is still ready to use his power.

<sup>5</sup> "How horrible it will be for Assyria! It is the rod of my anger. My fury is the staff in the Assyrians hands.

<sup>6</sup> I send them against a godless nation. In my fury I order them against the people to take their belongings, loot them, and trample on them like mud in the streets.

<sup>7</sup> But thats not what they intend to do. Their minds dont work that way. Their

purpose is to destroy and put an end to many nations.

<sup>8</sup>They ask, Arent all our commanders kings?

<sup>9</sup>Isnt Calno like Carchemish? Isnt Hamath like Arpad? Isnt Samaria like Damascus?

<sup>10</sup>My power has reached kingdoms which have idols. They had more carved statues than Jerusalem or Samaria.

<sup>11</sup>I will do to Jerusalem and its idols what Ive done to Samaria and its idols."

<sup>12</sup>When the Lord has finished all his work on Mount Zion and in Jerusalem, he will punish the king of Assyria for all his boasting and all his arrogance.

<sup>13</sup>The king will say, "I did this with my own two powerful hands. I did this with my wisdom, because I am so clever. Ive eliminated the boundaries of nations. Ive looted treasuries. Ive brought down people like a mighty man.

<sup>14</sup>Ive found the riches of nations as one finds a nest. Ive gathered the whole world as one gathers abandoned eggs. Not one of them flapped a wing, opened its mouth, or peeped."

<sup>15</sup> Can an ax attack the person who cuts with it? Can a saw make itself greater than the person who saws with it? A rod cannot move the person who lifts it. A wooden stick cannot pick up a person.

<sup>16</sup> That is why the Almighty LORD of Armies will send a degenerative disease against brave men. A flame will be turned into a raging fire under his power.

<sup>17</sup> Israel's light will become a flame. Its Holy One will become a fire. He will burn up and devour the weeds and thornbushes in one day.

<sup>18</sup> The majestic forest and the orchard will destroy both body and soul. They will be like a sick person wasting away.

<sup>19</sup> The trees that remain in the forest will be so few that a child could count them.

<sup>20</sup> At that time the remaining few Israelites, the survivors of Jacob's descendants will no longer depend on the one who struck them. They will only depend on the LORD, the Holy One of Israel.

<sup>21</sup> A few, the remaining few of Jacob, will return to the mighty God.

<sup>22</sup> Although your people Israel may be as numerous as the grains of sand on the seashore, only a few will return. Destruction will be complete and fair.

<sup>23</sup> The Almighty LORD of Armies will carry out this destruction throughout the world as he has determined.

<sup>24</sup> The Almighty LORD of Armies says: My people who live in Zion, don't be afraid of the Assyrians when they strike with a rod or when they raise their staff against you as the Egyptians did.

<sup>25</sup> Very soon I will unleash my fury, and my anger will destroy them.

<sup>26</sup> Then the LORD of Armies will raise his whip against them. As he struck down Midian at the Rock of Oreb and raised his staff over the water, so he will lift it as he did in Egypt.

<sup>27</sup> At that time their burden will be removed from your shoulders. Their yoke will be removed from your neck. The yoke will be torn away because you have grown fat.

<sup>28</sup> They come to Aiath. They pass through Migron. They store their equipment at Michmash.

<sup>29</sup>They go through the mountain pass and lodge at Geba for the night. The people in Ramah tremble; the people in Sauls Gibeah flee.

<sup>30</sup>Cry aloud, you people in Gallim! Pay attention, you people in Laishah and miserable Anathoth!

<sup>31</sup>The people in Madmenah flee; those who live in Gebim take shelter.

<sup>32</sup>This day they stopped at Nob. They shake their fist at the mountain of my people Zion, at the mountain of Jerusalem.

<sup>33</sup>Now look! The Almighty LORD of Armies will trim the branches with terrifying power. The highest trees will be cut down. The tallest ones will be brought down.

<sup>34</sup>He will cut down the underbrush of the forest with an ax. Lebanon will fall in front of the Mighty One.

**11** <sup>1</sup>Then a shoot will come out from the stump of Jesse, and a branch from its roots will bear fruit.

<sup>2</sup>The Spirit of the LORD will rest on him the Spirit of wisdom and understanding, the Spirit of advice and power, the Spirit of knowledge and fear of the LORD.

<sup>3</sup> He will gladly bear the fear of the LORD. He will not judge by what his eyes see or decide by what his ears hear.

<sup>4</sup> He will judge the poor justly. He will make fair decisions for the humble people on earth. He will strike the earth with a rod from his mouth. He will kill the wicked with the breath from his lips.

<sup>5</sup> Justice will be the belt around his waist. Faithfulness will be the belt around his hips.

<sup>6</sup> Wolves will live with lambs. Leopards will lie down with goats. Calves, young lions, and yearold lambs will be together, and little children will lead them.

<sup>7</sup> Cows and bears will eat together. Their young will lie down together. Lions will eat straw like oxen.

<sup>8</sup> Infants will play near cobras holes. Toddlers will put their hands into vipers nests.

<sup>9</sup> They will not hurt or destroy anyone anywhere on my holy mountain. The world will be filled with the knowledge of the LORD like water covering the sea.

<sup>10</sup> At that time the root of Jesse will stand as a banner for the people to

gather around. The nations will come to him. His resting place will be glorious.

<sup>11</sup> At that time the Lord will use his power again to recover what remains of his people in Assyria, Upper and Lower Egypt, Sudan, Elam, Babylonia, Hamath, and the islands of the sea.

<sup>12</sup> He will raise a banner for the nations to gather around. He will gather the outcasts of Israel and bring together the scattered people of Judah from the four corners of the earth.

<sup>13</sup> Ephraim's jealousy will vanish, and Judah's opponents will come to an end. Ephraim won't be jealous of Judah, and Judah won't oppose Ephraim.

<sup>14</sup> They will swoop down on the slopes of Philistia in the west. Together they will loot the people of the east. They will conquer Edom and Moab. The people of Ammon will be subject to them.

<sup>15</sup> The LORD will dry up the gulf of the Egyptian Sea. He will wave his hand over the Euphrates River with his scorching wind and divide it into seven streams so that people can walk over it in their sandals.

<sup>16</sup>There will be a highway for the remaining few of his people left in Assyria like there was for Israel when it came out of Egypt.

**12**<sup>1</sup> At that time you will say, "I will praise you, O LORD. Although you had been angry with me, you turned your anger away from me, and you comforted me.

<sup>2</sup>Look! God is my Savior. I am confident and unafraid, because the LORD is my strength and my song. He is my Savior."

<sup>3</sup>With joy you will draw water from the springs of salvation.

<sup>4</sup>At that time you will say, "Praise the LORD. Call on his name. Make his deeds known among the nations. Make them remember that his name is highly honored.

<sup>5</sup>Make music to praise the LORD. He has done wonderful things. Let this be known throughout the earth.

<sup>6</sup>Shout loudly, and sing with joy, people of Zion! The Holy One of Israel is great. He is among you."

**13**<sup>1</sup>This is the divine revelation which Isaiah, son of Amoz, saw about Babylon.

<sup>2</sup>Raise a banner on the bare mountaintop. Call loudly to them. Signal them with your hand to enter the nobles gates.

<sup>3</sup>I've commanded my holy ones. I've called my mighty men to carry out my anger. They find joy in my triumphs.

<sup>4</sup>Listen to the noise on the mountains. It is like the sound of a large army. It is the sound of kingdoms and nations gathering together. The LORD of Armies is assembling his army for battle.

<sup>5</sup>His army is coming from a distant land, from the ends of heaven. The LORD is coming with the weapons of his fury to destroy the whole world.

<sup>6</sup>Cry loudly, for the day of the LORD is near. It will come like destruction from the Almighty.

<sup>7</sup>That is why every hand will hang limp, and everyones courage will fail.

<sup>8</sup>Theyll be terrified. Pain and anguish will seize them. Theyll writhe like a woman giving birth to a child. Theyll look at one another in astonishment. Their faces will be burning red.

<sup>9</sup>The day of the LORD is going to come. It will be a cruel day with fury and fierce

anger. He will make the earth desolate. He will destroy its sinners.

<sup>10</sup>The stars in the sky and their constellations wont show their light anymore. The sun will be dark when it rises. The moon wont shine.

<sup>11</sup>I will punish the world for its evil and the wicked for their wrongdoing. I will put an end to arrogant people and humble the pride of tyrants.

<sup>12</sup>I will make people harder to find than pure gold and human beings more rare than gold from Ophir.

<sup>13</sup>I will make heaven tremble, and the earth will be shaken from its place when the LORD of Armies is angry. At that time he will be very angry.

<sup>14</sup>Theyll be like hunted gazelle and like sheep with no one to gather them. Everyone will return to his own people and flee to his own land.

<sup>15</sup>Whoever is found will be stabbed to death. Whoever is captured will be executed.

<sup>16</sup>Their little children will be smashed to death right before their eyes. Their houses will be looted and their wives raped.

<sup>17</sup> I'm going to stir up the Medes against them. They don't care for silver and aren't happy with gold.

<sup>18</sup> But their bows will smash the youth. They'll have no compassion for babies, nor will they look with pity on children.

<sup>19</sup> Babylon, the jewel of the kingdoms, the proud beauty of the Chaldeans, will be like Sodom and Gomorrah when God destroyed them.

<sup>20</sup> It will never be inhabited again, and no one will live in it for generations. Arabs won't pitch their tents there. Shepherds won't let their flocks rest there.

<sup>21</sup> Desert animals will lie down there. Their homes will be full of owls. Ostriches will live there, and wild goats will skip about.

<sup>22</sup> Hyenas will howl in Babylon's strongholds, and jackals will howl in its luxurious palaces. Its time has almost come. Its days will not be extended.

**14** <sup>1</sup> The LORD will have compassion for Jacob and again choose Israel. He will resettle them in their own country. Foreigners will join them and unite with the descendants of Jacob.

<sup>2</sup> People will take them and bring them to their own place. The nation of Israel will possess nations as male and female slaves in the LORDS land. They will take their captors captive and rule their oppressors.

<sup>3</sup> When that day comes, the LORD will give you relief from your pain and suffering, from the hard slavery you were forced to do.

<sup>4</sup> Then you will mock the king of Babylon with this saying, "How the tyrant has come to an end! How his attacks have come to an end!"

<sup>5</sup> The LORD has broken the staff of the wicked, the scepter of rulers.

<sup>6</sup> They struck the people with fury, with blows that didnt stop. They ruled nations in anger, persecuting them without restraint.

<sup>7</sup> The whole earth rests and is peaceful. It breaks out into shouts of joy.

<sup>8</sup> Even the cypresses rejoice over you. The cedars of Lebanon say, "Since you have fallen, no lumberjack has come to attack us."

<sup>9</sup> Sheol below wakes up to meet you when you come. It wakes up the ghosts

of the dead, all who were leaders on earth. It raises all who were kings of the nations from their thrones.

<sup>10</sup>All of them will greet you, "You also have become weak like us! You have become like one of us!"

<sup>11</sup>Your pride has been brought down to Sheol along with the music of your harps. Maggots are spread out like a bed under you, and worms cover you.

<sup>12</sup>How you have fallen from heaven, you morning star, son of the dawn! How you have been cut down to the ground, you conqueror of nations!

<sup>13</sup>You thought, "I'll go up to heaven and set up my throne above God's stars. I'll sit on the mountain far away in the north where the gods assemble.

<sup>14</sup>I'll go above the top of the clouds. I'll be like the Most High."

<sup>15</sup>But you've been brought down to Sheol, to the deepest part of the pit.

<sup>16</sup>Those who see you stare at you; they look at you closely and say, "Is this the man who made the earth tremble, who shook the kingdoms,

<sup>17</sup> who made the world like a desert and tore down its cities, who didn't let his prisoners go home?"

<sup>18</sup> All the kings of the nations, all of them, have been buried with honor, each in his own tomb.

<sup>19</sup> But you are thrown out of your tomb like a rejected branch. You are covered with those who were killed in battle. You go down to the stones of the pit like a trampled corpse.

<sup>20</sup> You won't be joined by the kings in the tomb, because you have destroyed your land and killed your people. The descendants of the wicked will never be mentioned again.

<sup>21</sup> Prepare a place to slaughter their sons because of their ancestors' guilt. They won't be able to rise, possess the earth, and rebuild cities all over it.

<sup>22</sup> "I'll rise up against them," declares the LORD of Armies. "I'll cut off the name of the survivors from Babylon, its offspring and descendants," declares the LORD.

<sup>23</sup> "It will become the possession of herons. It will become pools of water. I'll

sweep it with the broom of destruction," declares the LORD of Armies.

<sup>24</sup>The LORD of Armies has taken an oath: "It will happen exactly as I've intended. It will turn out exactly as I've planned.

<sup>25</sup>I'll crush Assyria on my land. I'll trample it underfoot on my mountains. Then its yoke will be removed from my people, and its burden will be removed from their shoulders."

<sup>26</sup>This is the plan determined for the whole earth. This is how he will use his power against all the nations.

<sup>27</sup>The LORD of Armies has planned it. Who can stop it? He is ready to use his power. Who can turn it back?

<sup>28</sup>This was the divine revelation in the year King Ahaz died.

<sup>29</sup>All you Philistines, don't rejoice that the rod of the one who struck you is broken, because a viper will come from that snake's root, and his descendant will be a flying, fiery serpent.

<sup>30</sup>The poorest of the poor will eat, and the needy will lie down in safety. But I will put your root to death with famine and kill off your survivors.

<sup>31</sup> Cry loudly in the gate! Cry out in the city! Be frightened, all you Philistines! Smoke comes from the north, and there are no stragglers in its ranks.

<sup>32</sup> How should we answer the messengers from the nations? Tell them that the LORD has laid Zions foundation, and his humble people will find refuge in it.

**15** <sup>1</sup> This is the divine revelation about Moab. In a single night Ar in Moab is laid waste and destroyed! In a single night Kir in Moab is laid waste and destroyed!

<sup>2</sup> The people of Dibon go to the temple, to the worship sites, to cry. Moab wails over Nebo and Medeba. Every head is shaved bald, and every beard is cut off.

<sup>3</sup> In their streets they wear sackcloth. On their roofs and in their city squares everyone wails and cries.

<sup>4</sup> Heshbon and Elealeh also cry out. Their voices are heard as far away as Jahaz. Moabs armed men cry out. Their courage is gone.

<sup>5</sup> My heart cries out for Moab. Its people flee as far as Zoar at Eglath Shelishiyah. They go up the mountain road to Luhith.

They cry loudly over the destruction on the way to Horonaim.

<sup>6</sup>The Nimrim Brook has run dry! The grass dries up, the vegetation withers, and nothing green is left.

<sup>7</sup>That is why they carry the wealth that they have earned and stored up over Willow Ravine.

<sup>8</sup>Cries for help echo throughout the land of Moab. Their wailing echoes as far as Eglaim. Their wailing echoes as far as Beer Elim.

<sup>9</sup>The water in Dimon is red with blood, yet I will bring even more on Dimon. A lion will attack the fugitives from Moab and the survivors from Adamah.

**16**<sup>1</sup> Send lambs to the ruler of the land. Send lambs from Sela through the desert to my people at Mount Zion.

<sup>2</sup>Moabs daughters are like fluttering birds, like scattered nestlings, at the shallow crossings of the Arnon River.

<sup>3</sup>Give us advice. Make a decision. At high noon make your shadow as dark as night. Hide the fugitives. Don't betray the refugees.

<sup>4</sup> Let the fugitives from Moab stay with you a while. Be their refuge from the destroyer. Ruthless people will come to an end. The destruction will end. The one who tramples others will be gone.

<sup>5</sup> Then the LORD will set up a trusted king. He will rule faithfully. He is from the tent of David. He judges and searches for justice. He is quick to do what is right.

<sup>6</sup> Weve heard of the arrogance of Moabs people. They are very arrogant. Weve heard of their boasting, arrogance, and conceit, but their boasts arent true.

<sup>7</sup> That is why Moab will wail. Everyone will wail for Moab. Mourn and grieve over the raisin cakes of Kir Hareseth.

<sup>8</sup> The fields of Heshbon and the vineyards of Sibmah wither. Rulers of the nations have cut off their grapes. The grapevines once reached as far as Jazer and strayed out into the desert. Their shoots had spread out over the sea.

<sup>9</sup> I will cry for the grapevines of Sibmah as Jazer cries for them. I will drench you with my tears, Heshbon and Elealeh. The shouts of joy for your ripened fruits and your harvest will be silenced.

<sup>10</sup>Joy and delight have vanished from the orchards. No songs are sung. No shouts are raised. No one stomps on grapes in the winepresses, because I have put an end to the shouts of joy.

<sup>11</sup>That is why my heart mourns for Moab like a harp. My soul mourns for Kir Hareseth.

<sup>12</sup>When the people of Moab appear at the worship site, they will only wear themselves out. They will come into the holy place to pray, but they won't be able to.

<sup>13</sup>This is the message that the LORD spoke about Moab in the past.

<sup>14</sup>But now the LORD says, "Moab's honor will be despised within three years. I will count them like workers counting the years left of their contracts. In spite of their great number, the survivors will be very few and powerless."

**17** <sup>1</sup>This is the divine revelation about Damascus. "Damascus will no longer be a city. It will become a pile of rubble.

<sup>2</sup>The cities of Aroer will be deserted. These cities will be used for sheep, which

will lie down in them. There will be no one to disturb those sheep.

<sup>3</sup>Fortified cities will disappear from Ephraim, and the kingdom will disappear from Damascus. The remaining few from Aram will share Israels honor," declares the LORD of Armies.

<sup>4</sup>"When that day comes, the honor of Jacobs people will fade away, and they will become skin and bones.

<sup>5</sup>That time will be like harvesting bundles of grain by the armful. It will be like gathering grain in the Rephaim Valley.

<sup>6</sup>Only a few people will survive. They will be like an olive tree that has been beaten. Only two or three olives are left at the top of the highest branch, four or five olives on the rest of the branches," declares the LORD God of Israel.

<sup>7</sup>When that day comes, they will look to their maker, and their eyes will look to the Holy One of Israel.

<sup>8</sup>They wont look to the altars made by their hands or to the Asherah poles or incense altars which their fingers molded.

<sup>9</sup>When that day comes, the fortified cities which other people abandoned because of the Israelites will be like abandoned woods and undergrowth. So it will become a wasteland.

<sup>10</sup>You have forgotten the God of your salvation. You haven't remembered the rock, your stronghold. Instead, you have planted the best plants and have set out the imported grapevines.

<sup>11</sup>On the day you plant, you will make it grow. On the morning you set out the seedling, you will make it sprout. But the harvest will become a rotting pile on a day of grief and incurable pain.

<sup>12</sup>How horrible it will be for many people! They will roar like the roaring sea. The noise that the people make will be like the noise from rushing water.

<sup>13</sup>The people will make noise like raging water. But the LORD will yell at them, and they will run far away. They will be chased away like husks on the mountains being blown by the wind, like whirling dust being blown by a storm.

<sup>14</sup>In the evening there will be sudden terror. Before morning they will be gone.

This will be the fate of those who looted us, the destiny of those who robbed us.

**18**<sup>1</sup> How horrible it will be for the land of whirring wings which lies beyond the rivers of Sudan.

<sup>2</sup> It sends messengers by sea in boats made of reeds skimming over the surface of the water. Go, swift messengers, to a tall and smoothskinned people, a people who are feared far and near, a strong and aggressive nation, whose land is divided by rivers.

<sup>3</sup> Look when someone raises a flag on the mountains. Listen when someone blows a rams horn, all you inhabitants of the world who live on the earth.

<sup>4</sup> This is what the LORD says to me: I will keep quiet and watch from my dwelling place. My presence will be like scorching heat in the sunshine, like heavy dew in the heat of the harvest.

<sup>5</sup> Before the harvest, when blossoms are gone and grapes are ripening from blossoms, he will cut off the shoots with pruning shears and chop off the spreading branches.

<sup>6</sup> They will be left for the birds of prey on the mountains and the wild animals.

The birds of prey will feed on them in the summer, and all the wild animals on earth will feed on them in the winter.

<sup>7</sup>At that time gifts will be brought to the LORD of Armies from a tall and smoothskinned people, a people who are feared far and near, a strong and aggressive nation, whose land is divided by rivers. They will be brought to Mount Zion, the place where the name of the LORD of Armies is.

**19**<sup>1</sup>This is the divine revelation about Egypt. The LORD is riding on a fastmoving cloud and is coming to Egypt. Egypt's idols will tremble in his presence. Egypt's courage will fail.

<sup>2</sup>"I will turn one Egyptian against another. They will fight brother against brother, neighbor against neighbor, city against city, kingdom against kingdom.

<sup>3</sup>The Egyptians will lose courage. I will unravel their plans. They will turn to idols, ghosts, mediums, and fortunetellers.

<sup>4</sup>I will hand over the Egyptians to a harsh master. A strong king will rule them," declares the Almighty LORD of Armies.

<sup>5</sup>The water in the Nile River will be dried up, and the river will be dry and empty.

<sup>6</sup>The canals will stink. Egypt's streams will be emptied and dried up. The reeds and cattails will wither.

<sup>7</sup>The rushes by the Nile, by the edge of the Nile, and all the fields planted beside the Nile will dry up, be blown away, and disappear.

<sup>8</sup>Fishermen will cry. All who cast their lines into the Nile will mourn. Those who spread their nets on the water will sigh.

<sup>9</sup>Linenworkers and weavers will be ashamed.

<sup>10</sup>Egypt's weavers will be crushed. Those who work for money will be distressed.

<sup>11</sup>The leaders of Zoan are nothing but fools. The wisest of Pharaoh's counselors gives stupid advice. How can you tell Pharaoh, "I'm a descendant of wise men, a descendant of ancient kings"?

<sup>12</sup>Where are your wise men now? Let them tell you. Let them explain what the LORD of Armies is planning against Egypt.

<sup>13</sup>The leaders of Zoan are acting foolishly. The leaders of Memphis are led astray. The leaders who are the cornerstones of its tribes mislead the Egyptians.

<sup>14</sup>The LORD mixes up their minds. So they lead the Egyptians astray like a drunk who staggers in his vomit.

<sup>15</sup>No one leaders or followers, important or unimportant can do anything for Egypt.

<sup>16</sup>At that time Egyptians will act like women. They will tremble and be terrified because the LORD of Armies will shake his fist at them.

<sup>17</sup>The land of Judah will terrify the Egyptians. Whenever they are reminded of Judah, they will be terrified of it because of what the LORD of Armies is planning against it.

<sup>18</sup>When that day comes, five cities in Egypt will have people that speak the language of Canaan and swear allegiance to the LORD of Armies. One of the cities will be called Heliopolis.

<sup>19</sup>When that day comes, an altar for the LORD will be in the middle of Egypt,

and a stone marker for the LORD will be near its border.

<sup>20</sup>These objects will be a sign and a witness that the LORD of Armies is in Egypt. When the people cry to the LORD because of those who oppress them, he will send a savior and defender to rescue them.

<sup>21</sup>So the LORD will make himself known to the Egyptians. The Egyptians will know the LORD when that day comes. They will worship with sacrifices and food offerings. They will make vows to the LORD and carry them out.

<sup>22</sup>The LORD will strike Egypt with a plague. When he strikes them, he will also heal them. Then they will come back to the LORD. And he will respond to their prayers and heal them.

<sup>23</sup>When that day comes, a highway will run from Egypt to Assyria. The Assyrians will come to Egypt and the Egyptians to Assyria, and the Egyptians will worship with the Assyrians.

<sup>24</sup>When that day comes, Israel will be onethird of Gods people, along with Egypt and Assyria. They will be a blessing on the earth.

<sup>25</sup>The LORD of Armies will bless them, saying, "My people Egypt, the work of my hands Assyria, and my possession Israel are blessed."

**20**<sup>1</sup>In the year when King Sargon of Assyria sent his commander in chief to fight against Ashdod, he captured it.

<sup>2</sup>At that time the LORD told Isaiah, son of Amoz, "Take off the sackcloth that you are wearing, and take off your sandals!" Isaiah did this and walked around barefoot and naked.

<sup>3</sup>Then the LORD said, "My servant Isaiah has gone barefoot and naked for three years as a sign and as an omen to Egypt and Sudan.

<sup>4</sup>The king of Assyria will lead away both the young and the old captives from Egypt and exiles from Sudan. They will be barefoot and naked. Their buttocks will be exposed in order to disgrace Egypt.

<sup>5</sup>Then the people will be shattered and ashamed because Sudan was their hope and Egypt was their beauty.

<sup>6</sup>When that day comes, those who live on this coastland will say, Look at what

has happened to our hope. We ran to Egypt for help to be rescued from the king of Assyria. How can we escape?"

**21** <sup>1</sup>This is the divine revelation about the desert by the sea. Like a storm sweeping through the Negev, an invader will come from the desert, from a terrifying land.

<sup>2</sup>I was shown a harsh vision. The traitor betrays. The destroyer destroys. Go to war, Elam! Surround them, Media! I will put an end to all the groaning.

<sup>3</sup>That is why my body is full of trembling. Pain grips me like the pain of childbirth. I'm disturbed by what I hear. I'm terrified by what I see.

<sup>4</sup>I'm confused. I'm shaking with terror. The twilight hours I longed for make me tremble.

<sup>5</sup>Set the table. Spread the rugs by the table. Eat. Drink. Get up, you leaders! Prepare your shields for battle!

<sup>6</sup>This is what the Lord says to me: Post a watchman. Have him report whatever he sees.

<sup>7</sup>He will see chariots, pairs of horsemen, riders on donkeys, and riders on camels. Let him watch carefully, very carefully.

<sup>8</sup>The watchman called, "Sir, I stand on the watchtower every day. Every night, I stand guard at my post.

<sup>9</sup>Look! Here come chariots and horsemen in pairs." Then he said, "Babylon has fallen! It has fallen! All the idols they worship lie shattered on the ground."

<sup>10</sup>You, my people, have been threshed and winnowed. I make known to you what I heard from the LORD of Armies, the God of Israel.

<sup>11</sup>This is the divine revelation about Dumah. Someone is calling to me from Seir, "Watchman, how much of the night is left? Watchman, how much of the night is left?"

<sup>12</sup>The watchman answers, "Morning is coming, and night will come again. If you need to ask, come back and ask."

<sup>13</sup>This is the divine revelation about Arabia. You caravan of travelers from the people of Dedan will spend the night in the forest of Arabia.

<sup>14</sup>Bring water for the thirsty, you inhabitants of the land of Tema. Bring food to the fugitives.

<sup>15</sup>They flee from swords, from swords ready to kill, from bows ready to shoot, and from the thick of battle.

<sup>16</sup>This is what the Lord says to me: All of Kedars honor will be gone in another year. I will count it like workers count the years left on their contracts.

<sup>17</sup>The remaining number of archers, Kedars mighty archers, will be few. The LORD God of Israel has spoken.

**22**<sup>1</sup>This is the divine revelation about the valley of Vision. Whats the matter with you? Why do all of you go up on the roofs?

<sup>2</sup>You are a city filled with shouting, a town filled with noise and excitement. Your people werent killed with swords. Your dead didnt die in battle.

<sup>3</sup>All your leaders fled together and were captured without their bows and arrows. All those who were found were taken prisoner before any of them could get far away.

<sup>4</sup>That is why I say, "Turn away from me so that I can cry bitterly. Dont try to comfort me because of the destruction brought on my people."

<sup>5</sup>The Almighty LORD of Armies has chosen a special day. It will be a day of confusion and trampling in the valley of Vision, a day of tearing down walls and crying for help in the mountains.

<sup>6</sup>Elam takes its quiver of arrows, manned chariots, and horsemen. Kir uncovers its shields.

<sup>7</sup>Then your fertile valleys will be filled with chariots, and horsemen will stand ready in front of the gate.

<sup>8</sup>On that day the LORD will remove the defenses of Judah. You will look for weapons in the House of the Forest.

<sup>9</sup>You will see how many places in Davids wall are broken. You will store water in the Lower Pool.

<sup>10</sup>You will count the houses in Jerusalem. You will tear down those houses in order to fortify the walls.

<sup>11</sup>You will build a reservoir between the two walls to hold the water of the Old Pool. You didnt look to Jerusalems maker. You didnt see the one who formed it long ago.

<sup>12</sup>On that day the Almighty LORD of Armies will call for crying and for

mourning, for shaving your heads and for wearing sackcloth.

<sup>13</sup>Instead, you will rejoice, celebrate, slaughter cattle, and butcher sheep. You will eat meat, drink wine, and say, "Let's eat and drink because tomorrow we were going to die."

<sup>14</sup>The LORD of Armies revealed this to me: "Certainly, this wrong will not be forgiven even when you die," says the Almighty LORD of Armies.

<sup>15</sup>This is what the Almighty LORD of Armies says: Go to Shebna, the man in charge of the palace, and say to him,

<sup>16</sup>"What are you doing here? What right do you have to dig a tomb for yourself? What right do you have to cut it out in a prominent place? What right do you have to carve out a resting place for yourself in the rock?"

<sup>17</sup>Look, mighty man! The LORD will throw you out. He will grab you.

<sup>18</sup>He will wrap you up tightly like a turban. He will throw you far away into another land. There you will die. There your splendid chariots will remain. There you will become a disgrace to your master's household.

<sup>19</sup>"I will remove you from your office and do away with your position.

<sup>20</sup>When that day comes, I will call my servant Eliakim, son of Hilkiah.

<sup>21</sup>I will dress him in your linen robe and fasten it with your belt. I will give him your authority, and he will be like a father to those who live in Jerusalem and to the nation of Judah.

<sup>22</sup>I will place the key of the house of David around his neck. What he opens no one will shut. What he shuts no one will open.

<sup>23</sup>I will fasten him firmly in place like a peg, and he will be a source of honor for his fathers household.

<sup>24</sup>They will hang on him the whole weight of his fathers household, descendants and offspring and all the little utensils, from bowls to jars of every kind."

<sup>25</sup>The LORD of Armies declares, "On that day the peg which I firmly fastened in place will be removed. It will be cut off and will fall, and everything hanging on it will be destroyed." The LORD has spoken.

**23**<sup>1</sup> This is the divine revelation about Tyre. Cry loudly, you ships of Tarshish! Your port at Tyre is destroyed. Word has come to the ships from Cyprus.

<sup>2</sup> Be silent, you inhabitants of the coastland, you merchants from Sidon. Your messengers have crossed the sea.

<sup>3</sup> The grain of Shihor is on the Mediterranean. The harvest of the Nile River is brought to Tyre. Tyre became the marketplace for the nations.

<sup>4</sup> Be ashamed, Sidon, because the stronghold by the sea has spoken, "I've never been in labor or given birth. I've raised no sons. I've brought up no daughters."

<sup>5</sup> When the news reaches Egypt, the Egyptians will shudder over the news about Tyre.

<sup>6</sup> Travel to Tarshish! Cry loudly, you inhabitants of the seacoast!

<sup>7</sup> Is this your bustling city founded in the distant past? Is this the city that sent its people to settle in distant lands?

<sup>8</sup> Who planned such a thing against Tyre, the city that produced kings? Its

merchants are princes. Its traders are among the honored people of the world.

<sup>9</sup>The LORD of Armies planned this in order to dishonor all arrogant people and to humiliate all the honored people of the world.

<sup>10</sup>Travel through your country like the Nile, people of Tarshish. You no longer have a harbor.

<sup>11</sup>The LORD has stretched his hand over the sea to shake kingdoms. He has commanded that Canaans fortifications be destroyed.

<sup>12</sup>He says, "You will no longer be joyful, my dear abused people Sidon." Get up, and travel to Cyprus. Even there you will find no rest.

<sup>13</sup>Look at the land of the Babylonians. These people will be gone. Assyria gave this land to the desert animals. Assyria set up battle towers, stripped palaces bare, and turned these places into ruins.

<sup>14</sup>Cry loudly, you ships of Tarshish, because your fortress will be destroyed.

<sup>15</sup>When that day comes, Tyre will be forgotten for 70 years, the lifetime of one king. At the end of the 70 years,

Tyre will be like the prostitute in this song:

<sup>16</sup>"Take your lyre. Go around in the city, you forgotten prostitute. Make sweet music. Sing many songs so that you'll be remembered."

<sup>17</sup>At the end of 70 years the LORD will come to help Tyre. Then she will go back to earning money as a prostitute. She will become a prostitute for all the world's kingdoms.

<sup>18</sup>Her profits and her earnings will be turned over to the LORD for his holy purpose. It won't be stored or hoarded. Her merchandise will belong to those who live in the presence of the LORD so that they will have plenty of food and expensive clothing.

**24**<sup>1</sup>The LORD is going to turn the earth into a desolate wasteland. He will mar the face of the earth and scatter the people living on it.

<sup>2</sup>The same will happen to people and priests, male slaves and masters, female slaves and masters, buyers and sellers, lenders and borrowers, debtors and creditors.

<sup>3</sup>The earth will be completely laid waste and stripped because the LORD has spoken.

<sup>4</sup>The earth dries up and withers. The world wastes away and withers. The great leaders of the earth waste away.

<sup>5</sup>The earth is polluted by those who live on it because they've disobeyed the LORDS teachings, violated his laws, and rejected the everlasting promise.

<sup>6</sup>That is why a curse devours the earth, and its people are punished for their guilt. That is why those who live on the earth are burned up, and only a few people are left.

<sup>7</sup>New wine dries up, and grapevines waste away. All happy people groan.

<sup>8</sup>Joyful tambourine music stops. Noisy celebrations cease. Joyful harp music stops.

<sup>9</sup>People no longer drink wine when they sing. Liquor tastes bad to its drinkers.

<sup>10</sup>The ruined city lies desolate. The entrance to every house is barred shut.

<sup>11</sup>People in the streets call for wine. All joy passes away, and the earths happiness is banished.

<sup>12</sup>The city is left in ruins. Its gate is battered to pieces.

<sup>13</sup>That is the way it will be on earth among the nations. They will be like an olive tree which has been shaken or like what's left after the grape harvest.

<sup>14</sup>They raise their voices. They shout for joy. From the sea they sing joyfully about the LORDS majesty.

<sup>15</sup>Honor the LORD in the east. Honor the name of the LORD God of Israel along the coastlands.

<sup>16</sup>From the ends of the earth we hear songs of praise that honor the Righteous One. But I kept saying, "I'm wasting away! I'm wasting away! How horrible it is for me! Traitors continue to betray, and their treachery grows worse and worse."

<sup>17</sup>Disasters, pits, and traps are in store for those who live on earth.

<sup>18</sup>Whoever flees from news of a disaster will fall into a pit. Whoever climbs out of that pit will be caught in a trap. The floodgates in the sky will be opened, and the foundations of the earth will shake.

<sup>19</sup>The earth will be completely broken. The earth will shake back and forth violently. The earth will stagger.

<sup>20</sup>The earth will stumble like a drunk and sway like a shack in the wind. Its disobedience weighs heavy on it. It will fall and not get up again.

<sup>21</sup>On that day the LORD will punish heavens armies in heaven and earths kings on earth.

<sup>22</sup>Theyll be gathered like prisoners in a jail and locked in prison. After a long time theyll be punished.

<sup>23</sup>The moon will be embarrassed. The sun will be ashamed, because the LORD of Armies will rule on Mount Zion and in Jerusalem. He will be glorious in the presence of his respected leaders.

**25**<sup>1</sup> O LORD, you are my God. I will highly honor you; I will praise your name. You have done miraculous things. You have been completely reliable in carrying out your plans from long ago.

<sup>2</sup>You have turned cities into ruins, fortified cities into piles of rubble, and foreigners palaces into cities that will never be rebuilt.

<sup>3</sup>That is why strong people will honor you, and cities ruled by the world's tyrants will fear you.

<sup>4</sup>You have been a refuge for the poor, a refuge for the needy in their distress, a shelter from the rain, and shade from the heat. (A tyrant's breath is like a rainstorm against a wall,

<sup>5</sup>like heat in a dry land.) You calm the uproar of foreigners. The song of tyrants is silenced like heat that is reduced by the shadow of a cloud.

<sup>6</sup>On this mountain the LORD of Armies will prepare for all people a feast with the best foods, a banquet with aged wines, with the best foods and the finest wines.

<sup>7</sup>On this mountain he will remove the veil of grief covering all people and the mask covering all nations.

<sup>8</sup>He will swallow up death forever. The Almighty LORD will wipe away tears from every face, and he will remove the disgrace of his people from the whole earth. The LORD has spoken.

<sup>9</sup>On that day his people will say, "This is our God; we have waited for him, and now he will save us. This is the LORD;

we have waited for him. Let us rejoice and be glad because he will save us."

<sup>10</sup>The LORDS power will be on this mountain. Moab will be trampled beneath him like straw that is trampled in a pile of manure.

<sup>11</sup>The Moabites will stretch out their hands in the manure like swimmers who stretch out their hands to swim. The LORD will humble those arrogant people despite the movements of their hands.

<sup>12</sup>He will bring down Moabs high fortified walls, level them, and throw them into the dust on the ground.

**26** <sup>1</sup>On that day this song will be sung in the land of Judah: We have a strong city. Its walls and fortifications provide safety.

<sup>2</sup>Open the gates, and let the righteous nation come in, the nation that remains faithful.

<sup>3</sup>With perfect peace you will protect those whose minds cannot be changed, because they trust you.

<sup>4</sup>Trust the LORD always, because the LORD, the LORD alone, is an everlasting rock.

<sup>5</sup> He has brought down those who live high in the towering city. He levels it. He levels it to the ground and throws it into the dust.

<sup>6</sup> Feet trample it, the feet of the oppressed, the footsteps of the poor.

<sup>7</sup> The path of the righteous is level. O Upright One, you make the road of the righteous smooth.

<sup>8</sup> Certainly, we wait with hope for you, O LORD, as we follow the path of your guiding principles. We want to remember you and your name.

<sup>9</sup> With my soul I long for you at night. Yes, with my spirit I eagerly look for you. When your guiding principles are on earth, those who live in the world learn to do what is right.

<sup>10</sup> Although the wicked are shown pity, they do not learn to do what is right. They do what is wrong in the upright land and do not see the majesty of the LORD.

<sup>11</sup> O LORD, your power is visible, but they do not see it. They will see how devoted your people are, and they will be put to shame. Your burning anger will destroy your enemies.

<sup>12</sup>O LORD, you will establish peace for us, since you have done everything for us.

<sup>13</sup>O LORD, our God, you are not the only master to rule us, but we acknowledge only you.

<sup>14</sup>The wicked are dead. They are no longer alive. The spirits of the dead wont rise. You have punished them, destroyed them, and wiped out all memory of them.

<sup>15</sup>You have expanded the nation, O LORD. You have expanded the nation. You are honored. You have extended all the lands boundaries.

<sup>16</sup>O LORD, the people have come to you in trouble. They were humbled by oppression, by your discipline upon them.

<sup>17</sup>O LORD, when we are with you, we are like pregnant women ready to give birth. They writhe and cry out in their labor pains.

<sup>18</sup>We were pregnant; we writhed with labor pains only to give birth to the wind. We werent able to bring salvation to the land, and no new people were born on earth.

<sup>19</sup>Your dead will live. Their corpses will rise. Those who lie dead in the dust will wake up and shout for joy, because your dew is a refreshing dew, and the earth will revive the spirits of the dead.

<sup>20</sup>My people, go to your rooms, and shut the doors behind you. Hide for a little while until his fury has ended.

<sup>21</sup>The LORD is going to come out from his dwelling place to punish those who live on earth for their sins. The earth will uncover the blood shed on it and will no longer cover up its dead bodies.

**27** <sup>1</sup>On that day the LORD will use his fierce and powerful sword to punish Leviathan, that slippery snake, Leviathan, that twisting snake. He will kill that monster which lives in the sea.

<sup>2</sup>On that day sing about a delightful vineyard.

<sup>3</sup>I, the LORD, watch over it. I water it continually. I watch over it day and night so that no one will harm it.

<sup>4</sup>I am no longer angry. If only thorns and briars would confront me! I would fight them in battle and set all of them on fire.

<sup>5</sup>Or else let them come to me for protection. Let them make peace with me. Yes, let them make peace with me.

<sup>6</sup>In times to come Jacob will take root. Israel will blossom, bud, and fill the whole world with fruit.

<sup>7</sup>Will the LORD hurt Israel as he hurt others who hurt them? Will he kill them as he killed others?

<sup>8</sup>He punished Israel by sending it away. He removed it with a fierce blast from the east winds.

<sup>9</sup>In this way the wrongdoings of the descendants of Jacob are covered up. This is the way they will turn from their sins when they turn all the altar stones into powdered chalk and no poles dedicated to the goddess Asherah or incense altars are left standing.

<sup>10</sup>The fortified city is isolated. The homestead is left deserted, abandoned like the desert. Calves will graze there. They will lie down. They will feed on the branches.

<sup>11</sup>When the branches are dried up, they will be broken off. Women will come and build a fire with them. These people don't understand these things. That is why

their maker wont have compassion on them, and their Creator wont have pity on them.

<sup>12</sup>On that day the LORD will begin his threshing from the flowing stream of the Euphrates River to the brook of Egypt. People of Israel, you will be gathered one by one.

<sup>13</sup>On that day a rams horn will be blown loudly. Those who are dying in Assyria and those who are banished to Egypt will come and worship the LORD on the holy mountain in Jerusalem.

**28**<sup>1</sup>How horrible it will be for the arrogant drunks of Ephraim. Their glorious beauty is like a withered flower. They are at the entrance to a fertile valley where they lie drunk from wine.

<sup>2</sup>The Lord has one who is strong and powerful. He is like a hailstorm, a destructive wind. He is like a thunderstorm, an overwhelming flood. He will throw them to the ground forcefully.

<sup>3</sup>The arrogant drunks of Ephraim will be trampled underfoot.

<sup>4</sup>Their glorious beauty is like a withered flower. They are at the entrance to a

fertile valley. They will be like figs that ripened early. As soon as someone sees them, they will be taken and eaten.

<sup>5</sup>When that day comes, the LORD of Armies will be like a glorious crown for his few remaining people.

<sup>6</sup>He will give a spirit of justice to those who judge. He will give strength to those who defend the city gates in battle.

<sup>7</sup>Priests and prophets stagger from wine and wobble from too much liquor. They stagger from too much liquor and become confused from too much wine. They wobble because of their liquor. They stagger when they see visions. They swerve as they judge.

<sup>8</sup>All the tables are covered with vomit and excrement. There isnt a clean place left.

<sup>9</sup>To whom will they make the message understood? To whom will they explain this message? To children just weaned from milk? To those just taken from their mothers breasts?

<sup>10</sup>They speak utter nonsense.

<sup>11</sup>The LORD will speak to these people. He will mock them by speaking in a foreign language.

<sup>12</sup>He will say to them, "This is a place for comfort. This is a place of rest for those who are tired. This is a place for them to rest." But they weren't willing to listen.

<sup>13</sup>The LORD speaks utter nonsense to them. That is why they will fall backwards. That is why they will be hurt, trapped, and captured.

<sup>14</sup>So hear the word of the LORD, you foolish talkers who rule the people in Jerusalem.

<sup>15</sup>You say, "We made a treaty with death and an agreement with the grave. When the overwhelming disaster passes by, it won't matter to us, because we have taken refuge in our lies, and falsehood is our hiding place."

<sup>16</sup>This is what the Almighty LORD says: I am going to lay a rock in Zion, a rock that has been tested, a precious cornerstone, a solid foundation. Whoever believes in him will not worry.

<sup>17</sup>I will make justice a measuring line and righteousness a plumb line. Hail will sweep away your refuge of lies, and floodwaters will wash away your hiding place.

<sup>18</sup>Your treaty with death will be wiped away. Your agreement with the grave will not stand. When the overwhelming disaster passes by, you will be trampled by it.

<sup>19</sup>Each time it passes by it will take you. It will pass by morning after morning, during the day and during the night. Understanding this message brings only terror.

<sup>20</sup>The bed is too short to stretch out on. The blanket is too narrow to serve as a cover.

<sup>21</sup>The LORD will rise as he did on Mount Perazim. He will wake up as he did in Gibeon Valley. He will do his work, his unexpected work, and perform his deeds, his mysterious deeds.

<sup>22</sup>Now stop laughing, or your chains will be tightened, because I have heard that the Almighty LORD of Armies has finally determined to destroy the whole land.

<sup>23</sup>Open your ears, and listen to me! Pay attention, and hear me!

<sup>24</sup>Does a farmer go on plowing every day so he can plant? Does he continue

to break up the soil and make furrows in the ground?

<sup>25</sup>When he has smoothed its surface, doesn't he scatter black cumin seed and plant cumin? Doesn't he plant wild wheat in rows? Doesn't he put barley in its own area and winter wheat at its borders?

<sup>26</sup>God will guide him in judgment, and his God will teach him.

<sup>27</sup>Black cumin isn't threshed with a sledge, and wagon wheels aren't rolled over cumin. Black cumin is beaten with a rod and cumin with a stick.

<sup>28</sup>Grain is ground into flour, but the grinding eventually stops. It will be threshed. The wheels of his cart will roll over it, but his horses won't crush it.

<sup>29</sup>All of this has come from the LORD of Armies. His counsel is wonderful, and his wisdom is great.

**29**<sup>1</sup>How horrible it will be for you Ariel, Ariel, the city where David camped. Let year after year go by. Let your annual festivals go on.

<sup>2</sup>I will torment Ariel, and the city will be filled with people grieving and mourning. The city will become like Ariel.

<sup>3</sup>I will set up war camps all around you. I will blockade you with towers. I will put up mounds of dirt around you.

<sup>4</sup>When you have fallen, you will speak as you lie on the ground. Your words will be muffled by the dust. Your voice will come out of the ground like that of a ghost. Your words will be whispered from the dust.

<sup>5</sup>Your many enemies will be like fine dust. Your many foes will be like husks blown by the wind. All of this will happen suddenly, unexpectedly.

<sup>6</sup>The LORD of Armies will punish you with thunder, earthquakes, and loud noises, with windstorms, rainstorms, and fire storms.

<sup>7</sup>The armies from all the nations will go to war against Ariel. They will go to war against it, blockade it, and torment it. All of this will be like a dream, like a vision in the night.

<sup>8</sup>They will be like hungry people who dream that they're eating and wake up to find they're hungry. They will be like thirsty people who dream that they're drinking and wake up to find they're lightheaded and parched with thirst. This

is what will happen to the armies from all the nations that fight against Mount Zion.

<sup>9</sup>If you confuse yourselves, you will be confused. If you blind yourselves, you will be blinded. You are drunk, but not from wine. You stagger, but not from liquor.

<sup>10</sup>The LORD has poured out on you a spirit of deep sleep. He will shut your eyes. (Your eyes are the prophets.) He will cover your heads. (Your heads are the seers.)

<sup>11</sup>To you all these visions will be like words in a book that is closed and sealed. You give this book to someone who can read, saying, "Please read this." He answers, "I can't read it. It's sealed."

<sup>12</sup>Then you give the book to someone who can't read, saying, "Please read this." He answers, "I can't read."

<sup>13</sup>The Lord says, "These people worship me with their mouths and honor me with their lips. But their hearts are far from me, and their worship of me is based on rules made by humans.

<sup>14</sup>That is why I am going to do something completely amazing for

these people once again. The wisdom of their wise people will disappear. The intelligence of their intelligent people will be hidden."

<sup>15</sup>How horrible it will be for those who try to hide their plans from the LORD. Their deeds are done in the dark, and they say, "No one can see us" and "No one can recognize us."

<sup>16</sup>You turn things upside down! Is the potter no better than his clay? Can something that has been made say about its maker, "He didnt make me"? Can a piece of pottery say about the potter, "He doesnt understand"?

<sup>17</sup>In a very short time Lebanon will be turned into a fertile field and the fertile field will be considered a forest.

<sup>18</sup>When that day comes, the deaf will hear the words written in the book. The blind will see out of their gloom and darkness.

<sup>19</sup>Humble people again will find joy in the LORD. The poorest of people will find joy in the Holy One of Israel.

<sup>20</sup>Tyrants will be gone. Mockers will be finished. All who look for ways to do wrong will come to an end:

<sup>21</sup> those who make people sin with words, those who lay traps for judges, those who, without any reason, deny justice to people who are in the right.

<sup>22</sup> This is what the LORD, who saved Abraham, says about the descendants of Jacob: Jacob will no longer be ashamed. Jacobs face will no longer turn pale.

<sup>23</sup> When they see all their children, the children I made with my hands, they will acknowledge my name as holy. They will treat the Holy One of Jacob as holy. They will stand in terror of the God of Israel.

<sup>24</sup> Then those who are wayward in spirit will gain understanding, and those who complain will accept instruction.

**30**<sup>1</sup> The LORD declares, "How horrible it will be for those rebellious children. They carry out plans, but not mine. They make alliances against my will. They pile sin on top of sin.

<sup>2</sup> They go to Egypt without asking me. They look for shelter under Pharaohs protection and look for refuge in Egypts shadow.

<sup>3</sup> But Pharaohs protection will be their shame, and the refuge in Egypts shadow will be their disgrace.

<sup>4</sup> Although Pharaohs officials are in Zoan and his messengers have reached Hanes,

<sup>5</sup> the people of Judah will be put to shame because that nation cant help them. That nation cant give aid or help to them. It can only offer shame and disgrace."

<sup>6</sup> This is the divine revelation about the animals in the Negev. "My people travel through lands where they experience distress and hardship. Lions and lionesses live there. Vipers and poisonous snakes live there. They carry their riches on the backs of young donkeys and their treasures on the humps of camels to a nation that cant help them.

<sup>7</sup> Egypts help is completely useless. That is why I call it, Rahab who sits still.

<sup>8</sup> Now, write this on a tablet for them, and inscribe it in a book so that it will be there in the future as a permanent witness.

<sup>9</sup>These people are rebellious and deceitful children, children who refuse to listen to the LORDS teachings.

<sup>10</sup>They say to the seers, Dont see the future. They say to those who have visions, Dont have visions that tell us what is right. Tell us what we want to hear. See illusions.

<sup>11</sup>Get out of our way! Stop blocking our path! Get the Holy One of Israel out of our sight."

<sup>12</sup>This is what the Holy One of Israel says: You have rejected this warning, trusted oppression and deceit, and leaned on them.

<sup>13</sup>That is why your sin will be like a high wall with a bulging crack, ready to fall. All of a sudden it will fall.

<sup>14</sup>It will break like pottery. It will be smashed, and nothing will be left of it. No piece will be big enough to carry live coals from a fireplace or to dip water from a reservoir.

<sup>15</sup>This is what the Almighty LORD, the Holy One of Israel, says: You can be saved by returning to me. You can have rest. You can be strong by being quiet

and by trusting me. But you dont want that.

<sup>16</sup>Youve said, "No, well flee on horses." So you flee. Youve added, "Well ride on fast horses." So those who chase you will also be fast.

<sup>17</sup>One thousand people will flee when one person threatens them, and you will flee when five threaten you. Then you will be left alone like a flagpole on top of a mountain, like a signpost on a hill.

<sup>18</sup>The LORD is waiting to be kind to you. He rises to have compassion on you. The LORD is a God of justice. Blessed are all those who wait for him.

<sup>19</sup>You will live in Zion, in Jerusalem. You wont cry anymore. The LORD will certainly have pity on you when you cry for help. As soon as he hears you, he will answer you.

<sup>20</sup>The Lord may give you troubles and hardships. But your teacher will no longer be hidden from you. You will see your teacher with your own eyes.

<sup>21</sup>You will hear a voice behind you saying, "This is the way. Follow it, whether it turns to the right or to the left."

<sup>22</sup>Then you will dishonor your silverplated idols and your goldcovered statues. You will throw them away like clothing ruined by stains. You will say to them, "Get out!"

<sup>23</sup>The Lord will give you rain for the seed that you plant in the ground, and the food that the ground provides will be rich and nourishing. When that day comes, your cattle will graze in large pastures.

<sup>24</sup>The oxen and the donkeys which work the soil will eat a mixture of food that has been winnowed with forks and shovels.

<sup>25</sup>There will be brooks and streams on every lofty mountain and every high hill. When the day of the great slaughter comes, towers will fall.

<sup>26</sup>Then the light of the moon will be like the light of the sun. The light of the sun will be seven times as strong, like the light of seven days. When that day comes, the LORD will bandage his peoples injuries and heal the wounds he inflicted.

<sup>27</sup>The name of the LORD is going to come from far away. His anger is

burning. His burden is heavy. His lips are filled with fury. His tongue is like a devouring flame.

<sup>28</sup>His breath is like an overflowing stream. It rises neck high, sifting the nations with a sieve of destruction, placing a bit in the mouths of the people to lead them astray.

<sup>29</sup>You will sing a song like the song you sing on a festival night. Your hearts will be happy like someone going out with a flute on the way to the LORDS mountain, to the rock of Israel.

<sup>30</sup>The LORD will make his majestic voice heard. He will come down with all his might, with furious anger, with fire storms, windstorms, rainstorms, and hailstones.

<sup>31</sup>At the sound of the LORD, the people of Assyria will be shattered. He will strike them with his rod.

<sup>32</sup>To the sound of tambourines and lyres, the LORD will pound on them. He will fight them in battle, swinging his fists.

<sup>33</sup>Topheth was prepared long ago. It was made ready for the king. It was made deep and wide and piled high

with plenty of burning logs. The LORDS breath will be like a flood of burning sulfur, setting it on fire.

**31** <sup>1</sup>How horrible it will be for those who go to Egypt for help, who rely on horses, who depend on many chariots, who depend on very strong war horses. They dont look to the Holy One of Israel. They dont seek the LORD.

<sup>2</sup>He is wise and can bring about disaster. He doesnt take back his words. He rises against wicked people and against those who help troublemakers.

<sup>3</sup>The Egyptians are humans, not gods. Their horses are flesh and blood, not spirit. When the LORD uses his powerful hand, the one who gives help will stumble, and the one who receives help will fall. Both will die together.

<sup>4</sup>This is what the LORD said to me: A lion, even a young lion, growls over its prey when a crowd of shepherds is called to fight it. It isnt frightened by their voices or disturbed by the noise they make. So the LORD of Armies will come to fight for Mount Zion and its hill.

<sup>5</sup>The LORD of Armies will defend Jerusalem like a hovering bird. He will

defend it and rescue it. He will pass over it and protect it.

<sup>6</sup>You people of Israel, return to the one whom you have so violently rebelled against.

<sup>7</sup>When that day comes, all of you will reject the silver and gold idols that your sinful hands have made.

<sup>8</sup>Then Assyrians will be killed with swords not made by human hands. Swords not made by human hands will destroy them. They will flee from battle, and their young men will be made to do forced labor.

<sup>9</sup>In terror they will run to their stronghold, and their officers will be frightened at the sight of the battle flag. The LORD declares this. His fire is in Zion and his furnace is in Jerusalem.

**32**<sup>1</sup> A king will rule with fairness, and officials will rule with justice.

<sup>2</sup>Then each ruler will be like a shelter from the wind and a hiding place from the rain. They will be like streams on parched ground and the shade of a large rock in a weary land.

<sup>3</sup>Then the vision of those who can see wont be blurred, and the ears of those who can hear will pay attention.

<sup>4</sup>Then those who are reckless will begin to understand, and those who stutter will speak quickly and clearly.

<sup>5</sup>Godless fools will no longer be called nobles, nor will scoundrels be considered gentlemen.

<sup>6</sup>Godless fools speak foolishness, and their minds plan evil in order to do ungodly things. They speak falsely about the LORD. They let people go hungry and withhold water from thirsty people.

<sup>7</sup>The tricks of scoundrels are evil. They devise wicked plans in order to ruin poor people with lies, even when needy people plead for justice.

<sup>8</sup>But honorable people act honorably and stand firm for what is honorable.

<sup>9</sup>Get up, and listen to me, you pampered women. Hear what I say, you overconfident daughters.

<sup>10</sup>In a little less than a year you overconfident women will tremble, because the grape harvest will fail and no fruit will be brought in from the fields.

<sup>11</sup> Shudder, you pampered women.  
Tremble, you overconfident women. Take  
off your clothes, walk around naked, and  
wear sackcloth around your waists.

<sup>12</sup> Beat your breasts as you mourn for  
the fields, for the vines bearing grapes.

<sup>13</sup> Mourn for my peoples land where  
thorns and briars will grow. Mourn for all  
the happy homes in a joyful city.

<sup>14</sup> Palaces will be deserted. Noisy cities  
will be abandoned. Fortresses and  
watchtowers will become permanent  
caves. They will be a delight for wild  
donkeys and pastures for flocks

<sup>15</sup> until the Spirit is poured on us from  
on high. Then the wilderness will be  
turned into a fertile field, and the fertile  
field will be considered a forest.

<sup>16</sup> Then justice will live in the wilderness,  
and righteousness will be at home in the  
fertile field.

<sup>17</sup> Then an act of righteousness will  
bring about peace, calm, and safety  
forever.

<sup>18</sup> My people will live in a peaceful place,  
in safe homes and quiet places of rest.

<sup>19</sup>The forest will be flattened because of hail, and the city will be completely leveled.

<sup>20</sup>Blessed are those who plant beside every stream and those who let oxen and donkeys roam freely.

**33**<sup>1</sup> How horrible it will be for you, you destroyer, although you haven't been destroyed. How horrible it will be for you, you traitor, although you haven't been betrayed. When you've finished destroying, you will be destroyed. When you've finished being a traitor, you will be betrayed.

<sup>2</sup>O LORD, have pity on us. We wait with hope for you. Be our strength in the morning. Yes, be our savior in times of trouble.

<sup>3</sup>People flee from the noise of your army. Nations scatter when you attack.

<sup>4</sup>You nations, your loot is gathered as grasshoppers harvest a crop. Like swarming locusts, people rush for your loot.

<sup>5</sup>The LORD is honored because he lives on high. He will fill Zion with justice and righteousness.

<sup>6</sup>He will be the foundation of your future. The riches of salvation are wisdom and knowledge. The fear of the LORD is your treasure.

<sup>7</sup>Heroes cry in the streets. Messengers of peace cry bitterly.

<sup>8</sup>Highways are deserted. Travelers stop traveling. Agreements are broken. Witnesses are rejected. People are no longer respected.

<sup>9</sup>The country grieves and wastes away. Lebanon is ashamed and is decaying. Sharon has become like a wilderness. Bashan and Carmel are shaken.

<sup>10</sup>The LORD says, "Now I will arise. Now I will get up. Now I will be lifted up."

<sup>11</sup>You will be pregnant with hay. You will give birth to straw. Your breath will be a fire which will burn you up.

<sup>12</sup>People will be cremated. They will be set on fire like dry thornbushes.

<sup>13</sup>Hear what I have done, you people who are far away! Acknowledge my might, you people who are near!

<sup>14</sup>The sinners in Zion are terrified. Trembling seizes the ungodly. Can any of us live through a fire that destroys? Can

any of us live through a fire that burns forever?

<sup>15</sup>The person who does what is right and speaks the truth will live. He rejects getting rich by extortion and refuses to take bribes. He refuses to listen to those who are plotting murders. He doesn't look for evil things to do.

<sup>16</sup>This person will live on high. His stronghold will be a fortress made of rock. He will have plenty of food and a dependable supply of water.

<sup>17</sup>Your eyes will see how handsome the king is. You will see a land that stretches into the distance.

<sup>18</sup>Your mind will be thinking of the terrors in the past. Where are the scribes? Where are the tax collectors? Where are those who counted the towers?

<sup>19</sup>You will no longer see those savage people, those people with an unrecognizable language, with a foreign language that you can't understand.

<sup>20</sup>Look at Zion, the city of our festivals. Your eyes will see Jerusalem as a peaceful place. It is a tent that can't be

moved. Its tent pegs will never be pulled out, and none of its ropes will be broken.

<sup>21</sup> The LORD will be our mighty defender in a place surrounded by wide rivers and streams. Ships with oars won't travel on them. Stately ships won't sail on them.

<sup>22</sup> The LORD is our judge. The LORD is our lawgiver. The LORD is our king. The LORD is our savior.

<sup>23</sup> Your ropes hang loose, your mast isn't secure, and your sail isn't spread out. A large amount of loot will be distributed. Lame people will carry off your loot.

<sup>24</sup> No one who lives in Zion will say, "I'm sick." The sins of its inhabitants will be forgiven.

**34**<sup>1</sup> Come close, you nations, and listen. Pay attention, you people. The earth, everyone in it, the world, and everything on it will listen.

<sup>2</sup> The LORD is angry with all the nations. He is furious with all their armies. He has claimed them for destruction. He has handed them over to be slaughtered.

<sup>3</sup> Their dead bodies will be thrown out. A stench will rise from their corpses. Mountains will be red with their blood.

<sup>4</sup>All the stars in the sky will rot. The heavens will be rolled up like a scroll. The stars will fall like leaves from a grapevine, like green figs from a fig tree.

<sup>5</sup>When my sword is covered with blood in the heavens, it will fall on Edom and on the people I've claimed for destruction.

<sup>6</sup>The LORDS sword is covered with blood. It is covered with fat, with the blood of lambs and goats, with the fat of rams kidneys. The LORD will receive a sacrifice in Bozrah, a huge slaughter in the land of Edom.

<sup>7</sup>Wild oxen will be killed with them, young bulls along with rams. Their land will be drenched with blood. Their dust will be covered with fat.

<sup>8</sup>The LORD will have a day of vengeance, a year of revenge in defense of Zion.

<sup>9</sup>Edoms streams will be turned to tar. Its soil will be turned to burning sulfur. Its land will become blazing tar.

<sup>10</sup>They will not be extinguished day or night, and smoke will always go up from them. Edom will lie in ruins for generations. No one will ever travel through it.

<sup>11</sup> Pelicans and herons will take possession of the land. Owls and crows will live there. He will stretch the measuring line of chaos and the plumb line of destruction over it.

<sup>12</sup> There are no nobles to rule a kingdom. All of its princes have disappeared.

<sup>13</sup> Its palaces are covered with thorns. Its fortresses have nettles and thistles. It will become a home for jackals and a place for ostriches.

<sup>14</sup> Hyenas will meet with jackals. Male goats will call to their mates. Screech owls will rest there and find a resting place for themselves.

<sup>15</sup> Owls will make their nests there, lay eggs, and hatch them. They will gather their young in the shadow of their wings. Vultures also will gather there, each one with its mate.

<sup>16</sup> Search the LORDS book, and read it. Not one of these animals will be missing. Not one will lack a mate, because the LORD has commanded it, and his Spirit will gather them together.

<sup>17</sup> He is the one who throws dice for them, and his hand divides up the land

for them with a measuring line. They will possess it permanently and live there for generations.

**35** <sup>1</sup>The desert and the dry land will be glad, and the wilderness will rejoice and blossom.

<sup>2</sup>Like a lily the land will blossom. It will rejoice and sing with joy. It will have the glory of Lebanon, the majesty of Carmel and Sharon. Everyone will see the glory of the LORD, the majesty of our God.

<sup>3</sup>Strengthen limp hands. Steady weak knees.

<sup>4</sup>Tell those who are terrified, "Be brave; don't be afraid. Your God will come with vengeance, with divine revenge. He will come and rescue you."

<sup>5</sup>Then the eyes of the blind will be opened, and the ears of the deaf will be unplugged.

<sup>6</sup>Then those who are lame will leap like deer, and those who cannot speak will shout for joy. Water will gush out into the desert, and streams will gush out into the wilderness.

<sup>7</sup>Then the hot sand will become a pool, and dry ground will have springs. Grass

will become cattails and rushes in the home of jackals.

<sup>8</sup>A highway will be there, a roadway. It will be called the Holy Road. Sinners wont travel on it. It will be for those who walk on it. Godless fools wont wander onto it.

<sup>9</sup>Lions wont be there. Wild animals wont go on it. They wont be found there. But the people reclaimed by the LORD will walk on it.

<sup>10</sup>The people ransomed by the LORD will return. They will come to Zion singing with joy. Everlasting happiness will be on their heads as a crown. They will be glad and joyful. They will have no sorrow or grief.

**36**<sup>1</sup>In Hezekiahs fourteenth year as king, King Sennacherib of Assyria attacked all the fortified cities of Judah and captured them.

<sup>2</sup>Then the king of Assyria sent his field commander with a large army from Lachish to King Hezekiah at Jerusalem. He stood at the channel for the Upper Pool on the road to Laundrymans Field.

<sup>3</sup>Eliakim, who was in charge of the palace and was the son of Hilkiah,

Shebna the scribe, and Joah, who was the royal historian and the son of Asaph, went out to the field commander.

<sup>4</sup>He said to them, "Tell Hezekiah, This is what the great king, the king of Assyria, says: What makes you so confident?"

<sup>5</sup>You give useless advice about getting ready for war. Whom, then, do you trust for support in your rebellion against me?

<sup>6</sup>Look! When you trust Egypt, you're trusting a broken stick for a staff. If you lean on it, it stabs your hand and goes through it. This is what Pharaoh (the king of Egypt) is like for everyone who trusts him.

<sup>7</sup>Suppose you tell me, "We're trusting the LORD our God." He's the god whose places of worship and altars Hezekiah got rid of. Hezekiah told Judah and Jerusalem, "Worship at this altar."

<sup>8</sup>"Now, make a deal with my master, the king of Assyria. I'll give you 2,000 horses if you can put riders on them.

<sup>9</sup>How can you defeat my masters lowestranging officers when you trust Egypt for chariots and horses?

<sup>10</sup>"Have I come to destroy this country without the LORD on my side? The LORD

said to me, Attack this country, and destroy it."

<sup>11</sup> Then Eliakim, Shebna, and Joah said to the field commander, "Speak to us in Aramaic, since we understand it. Don't speak to us in the Judean language as long as there are people on the wall listening."

<sup>12</sup> But the field commander asked, "Did my master send me to tell these things only to you and your master? Didn't he send me to the men sitting on the wall who will have to eat their own excrement and drink their own urine with you?"

<sup>13</sup> Then the field commander stood and shouted loudly in the Judean language, "Listen to the great king, the king of Assyria.

<sup>14</sup> This is what the king says: Don't let Hezekiah deceive you. He can't rescue you.

<sup>15</sup> Don't let Hezekiah get you to trust the LORD by saying, The LORD will certainly rescue us, and this city will not be put under the control of the king of Assyria.

<sup>16</sup> Don't listen to Hezekiah, because this is what the king of Assyria says: Make peace with me! Come out, and give

yourselves up to me! Everyone will eat from his own grapevine and fig tree and drink from his own cistern.

<sup>17</sup>Then I will come and take you away to a country like your own. Its a country with grain and new wine, a country with bread and vineyards.

<sup>18</sup>Dont let Hezekiah mislead you by saying to you, The LORD will rescue us. Did any of the gods of the nations rescue their countries from the king of Assyria?

<sup>19</sup>Where are the gods of Hamath and Arpad? Where are the gods of Sepharvaim? Did they rescue Samaria from my control?

<sup>20</sup>Did the gods of these countries rescue them from my control? Could the LORD then rescue Jerusalem from my control?"

<sup>21</sup>They were silent and didnt say anything to him because the king commanded them not to answer him.

<sup>22</sup>Then Eliakim, who was in charge of the palace and was son of Hilkiah, Shebna the scribe, and Joah, who was the royal historian and the son of Asaph, went to Hezekiah with their clothes torn

in grief. They told him the message from the field commander.

**37** <sup>1</sup>When King Hezekiah heard the message, he tore his clothes in grief, covered himself with sackcloth, and went into the LORDS temple.

<sup>2</sup>Then he sent Eliakim, who was in charge of the palace, Shebna the scribe, and the leaders of the priests, clothed in sackcloth, to the prophet Isaiah, son of Amoz.

<sup>3</sup>They said to him, "This is what Hezekiah says: Today is a day filled with misery, punishment, and disgrace. We are like a woman who is about to give birth but doesnt have the strength to do it.

<sup>4</sup>The LORD your God may have heard the words of the field commander. His master, the king of Assyria, sent him to defy the living God. The LORD your God may punish him because of the message that the LORD your God heard. Pray for the few people who are left."

<sup>5</sup>So King Hezekiahs men went to Isaiah.

<sup>6</sup>Isaiah answered them, "Say this to your master, This is what the LORD says: Dont be afraid of the message that you

heard when the Assyrian kings assistants slandered me.

<sup>7</sup>Im going to put a spirit in him so that he will hear a rumor and return to his own country. Ill have him assassinated in his own country."

<sup>8</sup>The field commander returned and found the king of Assyria fighting against Libnah. He had heard that the king left Lachish.

<sup>9</sup>Now, Sennacherib heard that King Tirhakah of Sudan was coming to fight him. When he heard this, he again sent messengers to Hezekiah, saying,

<sup>10</sup>"Tell King Hezekiah of Judah, Dont let the god whom you trust deceive you by saying that Jerusalem will not be put under the control of the king of Assyria.

<sup>11</sup>You heard what the kings of Assyria did to all countries, how they totally destroyed them. Will you be rescued?

<sup>12</sup>Did the gods of the nations which my ancestors destroyed rescue Gozan, Haran, Rezeph, and the people of Eden who were in Telassar?

<sup>13</sup>Where is the king of Hamath, the king of Arpad, and the king of the cities of Sepharvaim, Hena, and Ivvah?"

<sup>14</sup>Hezekiah took the letter from the messengers, read it, and went to the LORDS temple. He spread it out in front of the LORD

<sup>15</sup>and prayed to the LORD,

<sup>16</sup>"LORD of Armies, God of Israel, you are enthroned over the angels. You alone are God of the kingdoms of the world. You made heaven and earth.

<sup>17</sup>Turn your ear toward me, LORD, and listen. Open your eyes, LORD, and see. Listen to the entire message that Sennacherib sent to defy the living God.

<sup>18</sup>It is true, LORD, that the kings of Assyria have leveled every country.

<sup>19</sup>They have thrown the gods from these countries into fires because these gods arent real gods. Theyre only wooden and stone statues made by human hands. So the Assyrians have destroyed them.

<sup>20</sup>Now, LORD our God, rescue us from Assyrias control so that all the kingdoms on earth will know that you alone are the LORD."

<sup>21</sup>Then Isaiah, son of Amoz, sent a message to Hezekiah, "This is what the

LORD God of Israel says: You prayed to me about King Sennacherib of Assyria.

<sup>22</sup>This is the message that the LORD speaks to him, My dear people in Zion despise you and laugh at you. My people in Jerusalem shake their heads behind your back.

<sup>23</sup>Whom are you defying and slandering? Against whom are you shouting? Who are you looking at so arrogantly? It is the Holy One of Israel!

<sup>24</sup>Through your servants you defy the Lord and say, "With my many chariots I'll ride up the high mountains, up the slopes of Lebanon. I'll cut down its tallest cedars and its finest cypresses. I'll come to its most distant heights and its most fertile forests.

<sup>25</sup>I'll dig wells and drink water. I'll dry up all the streams of Egypt with the trampling of my feet."

<sup>26</sup>"Havent you heard? I did this long ago. I planned it in the distant past. Now I make it happen so that you will turn fortified cities into piles of rubble.

<sup>27</sup>Those who live in these cities are weak, discouraged, and ashamed. They will be like plants in the field, like fresh,

green grass on the roofs, dried up by the east wind.

<sup>28</sup>I know when you get up and sit down, when you go out and come in, and how you rage against me.

<sup>29</sup>Since you rage against me and your boasting has reached my ears, I will put my hook in your nose and my bridle in your mouth. I will make you go back the way you came.

<sup>30</sup>"And this will be a sign for you, Hezekiah: You will eat what grows by itself this year, and the next year you will eat what comes up by itself. But in the third year you will plant and harvest, plant vineyards, and eat what is produced.

<sup>31</sup>Those few people from the nation of Judah who escape will again take root and produce crops.

<sup>32</sup>Those few people will go out from Jerusalem, and those who escape will go out from Mount Zion. The LORD of Armies is determined to do this.

<sup>33</sup>"This is what the LORD says about the king of Assyria: He will never come into this city, shoot an arrow here, hold a

shield in front of it, or put up dirt ramps to attack it.

<sup>34</sup>He will go back the way he came, and he wont come into this city," declares the LORD of Armies.

<sup>35</sup>"I will shield this city to rescue it for my sake and for the sake of my servant David."

<sup>36</sup>The LORDS angel went out and killed 185,000 soldiers in the Assyrian camp. When the Judeans got up early in the morning, they saw all the corpses.

<sup>37</sup>Then King Sennacherib of Assyria left. He went home to Nineveh and stayed there.

<sup>38</sup>While he was worshiping in the temple of his god Nisroch, Adrammelech and Sharezer, his sons, assassinated him and escaped to the land of Ararat. His son Esarhaddon succeeded him as king.

**38**<sup>1</sup>In those days Hezekiah became sick and was about to die. The prophet Isaiah, son of Amoz, came to him and said, "This is what the LORD says: Give final instructions to your household, because youre about to die. You wont get well."

<sup>2</sup> Hezekiah turned to the wall and prayed to the LORD.

<sup>3</sup> "Please, LORD, remember how I've lived faithfully and sincerely in your presence. I've done what you consider right." And he cried bitterly.

<sup>4</sup> Then the LORD spoke his word to Isaiah,

<sup>5</sup> "Go and say to Hezekiah, This is what the LORD God of your ancestor David says: I've heard your prayer. I've seen your tears. I'm going to give you 15 more years to live.

<sup>6</sup> I'll rescue you and defend this city from the control of the king of Assyria." (38:21) Then Isaiah said, "Take a fig cake, and place it over the boil so that the king will get well." (38:22) Hezekiah asked, "What is the sign that I'll go to the LORDS temple?"

<sup>7</sup> Isaiah said, "This is your sign from the LORD that he will do what he promises.

<sup>8</sup> The sun made a shadow that went down the stairway of Ahaz's upper palace. I'm going to make the shadow go back ten steps." So the sun on the stairway went back up the ten steps it had gone down.

<sup>9</sup>King Hezekiah of Judah wrote this after he was sick and became well again:

<sup>10</sup>I thought that in the prime of my life I would go down to the gates of Sheol and be robbed of the rest of my life.

<sup>11</sup>I thought that I wouldnt see the LORD in this world. Even with all the people in the world, I thought I would never see another person.

<sup>12</sup>My life was over. You rolled it up like a shepherds tent. You rolled up my life like a weaver. You cut me off from the loom. You ended my life in one day.

<sup>13</sup>I cried out until morning as if a lion had crushed all my bones. You ended my life in one day.

<sup>14</sup>I chirped like swallows and cranes. I cooed like doves. My eyes were tired from looking up to heaven. Ive suffered miserably, O Lord! Please help me!

<sup>15</sup>What can I say now that he has spoken to me? He has done this. I will be careful the rest of my life because of my bitter experience.

<sup>16</sup>Lord, people live in spite of such things, and I have the will to live in spite of them. You give me health and keep me alive.

<sup>17</sup> Now my bitter experience turns into peace. You have saved me and kept me from the rotting pit. You have thrown all my sins behind you.

<sup>18</sup> Sheol doesn't thank you! Death doesn't praise you! Those who go down to the pit cannot expect you to be faithful.

<sup>19</sup> Those who are living praise you as I do today. Fathers make your faithfulness known to their children.

<sup>20</sup> The LORD is going to rescue me, so let us play stringed instruments. We live our lives in the LORDS temple.

<sup>21</sup> (SEE 38: 6)

<sup>22</sup> (SEE 38: 6)

**39**<sup>1</sup> At that time Baladans son, King Merodach Baladan of Babylon, sent letters and a present to Hezekiah. He had heard that Hezekiah had been sick and had recovered.

<sup>2</sup> Hezekiah was so happy with them that he showed the messengers his warehouse: the silver, gold, balsam, fine olive oil, his entire armory, and everything in his treasury. Hezekiah showed them everything in his palace and every corner of his kingdom.

<sup>3</sup>Then the prophet Isaiah came to King Hezekiah and asked, "What did these men say? And where did they come from?" Hezekiah answered, "They came to me from the distant country of Babylon."

<sup>4</sup>Isaiah asked, "What did they see in your palace?" Hezekiah answered, "They saw everything in my palace, and I showed them everything in my treasury."

<sup>5</sup>Isaiah said to Hezekiah, "Hear the word of the LORD of Armies!

<sup>6</sup>The LORD says, The days are going to come when everything in your palace, everything your ancestors have stored up to this day, will be taken away to Babylon. Nothing will be left.

<sup>7</sup>Some of your own descendants will be taken away. They will become officials in the palace of the king of Babylon."

<sup>8</sup>Hezekiah said to Isaiah, "The LORDS word that you have spoken is good." He added, "Just let there be peace and security as long as I live."

**40**<sup>1</sup> "Comfort my people! Comfort them!" says your God.

<sup>2</sup>"Speak tenderly to Jerusalem and announce to it that its time of hard labor is over and its wrongs have been paid for. It has received from the LORD double for all its sins."

<sup>3</sup>A voice cries out in the desert: "Clear a way for the LORD. Make a straight highway in the wilderness for our God.

<sup>4</sup>Every valley will be raised. Every mountain and hill will be lowered. Steep places will be made level. Rough places will be made smooth.

<sup>5</sup>Then the LORDS glory will be revealed and all people will see it together. The LORD has spoken."

<sup>6</sup>A voice called, "Call out!" I asked, "What should I call out?" "Call out: All people are like grass, and all their beauty is like a flower in the field.

<sup>7</sup>Grass dries up, and flowers wither when the LORDS breath blows on them. Yes, people are like grass.

<sup>8</sup>Grass dries up, and flowers wither, but the word of our God will last forever."

<sup>9</sup>Go up a high mountain, Zion. Tell the good news! Call out with a loud voice, Jerusalem. Tell the good news! Raise

your voice without fear. Tell the cities of Judah: "Here is your God!"

<sup>10</sup>The Almighty LORD is coming with power to rule with authority. His reward is with him, and the people he has won arrive ahead of him.

<sup>11</sup>Like a shepherd he takes care of his flock. He gathers the lambs in his arms. He carries them in his arms. He gently helps the sheep and their lambs.

<sup>12</sup>Who has measured the water of the sea with the palm of his hand or measured the sky with the length of his hand? Who has held the dust of the earth in a bushel basket or weighed the mountains on a scale and the hills on a balance?

<sup>13</sup>Who has directed the Spirit of the LORD or instructed him as his adviser?

<sup>14</sup>Whom did he consult? Who gave him understanding? Who taught him the right way? Who taught him knowledge? Who informed him about the way to understanding?

<sup>15</sup>The nations are like a drop in a bucket and are considered to be like dust on a scale. The weight of the islands is like fine dust.

<sup>16</sup>All the trees in Lebanon are not enough to burn an offering. Its wild animals are not enough for a single burnt offering.

<sup>17</sup>All the nations amount to nothing in his presence. He considers them less than nothing and worthless.

<sup>18</sup>To whom, then, can you compare God? To what statue can you compare him?

<sup>19</sup>Craftsmen make idols. Goldsmiths cover them with gold. Silversmiths make silver chains for them.

<sup>20</sup>The poorest people choose wood that will not rot and search out skillful craftsmen to set up idols that will not fall over.

<sup>21</sup>Dont you know? Havent you heard? Havent you been told from the beginning? Dont you understand the foundations of the earth?

<sup>22</sup>God is enthroned above the earth, and those who live on it are like grasshoppers. He stretches out the sky like a canopy and spreads it out like a tent to live in.

<sup>23</sup>He makes rulers unimportant and makes earthly judges worth nothing.

<sup>24</sup>They have hardly been planted. They have hardly been sown. They have hardly taken root in the ground. Then he blows on them and they wither, and a windstorm sweeps them away like straw.

<sup>25</sup>"To whom, then, can you compare me? Who is my equal?" asks the Holy One.

<sup>26</sup>Look at the sky and see. Who created these things? Who brings out the stars one by one? He calls them all by name. Because of the greatness of his might and the strength of his power, not one of them is missing.

<sup>27</sup>Jacob, why do you complain? Israel, why do you say, "My way is hidden from the LORD, and my rights are ignored by my God"?

<sup>28</sup>Dont you know? Havent you heard? The eternal God, the LORD, the Creator of the ends of the earth, doesnt grow tired or become weary. His understanding is beyond reach.

<sup>29</sup>He gives strength to those who grow tired and increases the strength of those who are weak.

<sup>30</sup>Even young people grow tired and become weary, and young men will stumble and fall.

<sup>31</sup>Yet, the strength of those who wait with hope in the LORD will be renewed. They will soar on wings like eagles. They will run and wont become weary. They will walk and wont grow tired.

**41** <sup>1</sup>"Be silent and listen to me, you coastlands. Let the people gain new strength. Let them come near and speak. Let us come together for judgment.

<sup>2</sup>"Who has raised up from the east someone to whom the LORD gives victory with every step he takes? Nations are handed over to him. He defeats kings. With his sword he turns them into dust. With his bow he turns them into straw blown by the wind.

<sup>3</sup>He chases them, marching by safely on a path his feet have never traveled before.

<sup>4</sup>Who has accomplished this? Who has determined the course of history from the beginning? I, the LORD, was there first, and I will be there to the end. I am the one!"

<sup>5</sup>The coastlands have seen him and are afraid. The ends of the earth tremble. They have come near and gathered together.

<sup>6</sup>People help their neighbors and say to their relatives, "Be brave!"

<sup>7</sup>Craftsmen encourage goldsmiths. Metalsmiths encourage blacksmiths who work at their anvils. They say that their soldering is good. And they fasten things with nails so they wont move.

<sup>8</sup>"But you are my servant Israel, Jacob, whom I have chosen, the descendant of Abraham, my dear friend.

<sup>9</sup>I have taken you from the ends of the earth and called you from its most distant places. I said to you, You are my servant. Ive chosen you; I havent rejected you.

<sup>10</sup>Dont be afraid, because I am with you. Dont be intimidated; I am your God. I will strengthen you. I will help you. I will support you with my victorious right hand.

<sup>11</sup>"Everyone who is angry with you will be ashamed and disgraced. Those who oppose you will be reduced to nothing and disappear.

<sup>12</sup>You will search for your enemies, but you will not find them. Those who are at war with you will be reduced to nothing and no longer exist.

<sup>13</sup>I, the LORD your God, hold your right hand and say to you, Don't be afraid; I will help you.

<sup>14</sup>Don't be afraid, Jacob, you worm. You people of Israel, I will help you," declares the LORD, your Defender, the Holy One of Israel.

<sup>15</sup>"I am going to make you into a new threshing sledge with sharp, double-edged teeth. You will thresh the mountains and crush them to dust. You will turn the hills into straw.

<sup>16</sup>You will winnow them. The wind will carry them away. The windstorm will scatter them. But you will find joy in the LORD and praise the Holy One of Israel.

<sup>17</sup>"The poor and needy are looking for water, but there is none. Their tongues are parched with thirst. I, the LORD, will answer them. I, the God of Israel, will not abandon them.

<sup>18</sup>I will make rivers flow on bare hilltops. I will make springs flow through

valleys. I will turn deserts into lakes. I will turn dry land into springs.

<sup>19</sup>I will plant cedar, acacia, myrtle, and wild olive trees in the desert. I will place cedar, fir, and cypress trees together in the wilderness.

<sup>20</sup>People will see and know. Together they will consider and understand that the LORDS power has done this, that the Holy One of Israel has created it.

<sup>21</sup>"Present your case," says the LORD. "Bring forward your best arguments," says Jacobs king.

<sup>22</sup>"Bring your idols so they can tell us whats going to happen. Explain past events that your idols told you about so that we may consider them and know what their outcome will be. Tell us about future events.

<sup>23</sup>Tell us whats going to happen so that we may know that you are gods. Yes, do something, good or evil, to intimidate us and make us afraid.

<sup>24</sup>You are nothing! You cant do anything! Whoever chooses you is disgusting.

<sup>25</sup>"I have raised up someone from the north, and he has come. He will call on

my name from the east. He will attack rulers as if they were mud, as if he were treading on clay like a potter.

<sup>26</sup>Who revealed this from the beginning so that we could know it? Who revealed this from the past so that we could say that he was right? No one revealed it. No one announced it. No one heard your words.

<sup>27</sup>I was the first to tell Zion, Look, here they are. I gave Jerusalem a messenger with the good news.

<sup>28</sup>When I look, there is no one. There is no one to advise them. When I ask them a question, will they give an answer?

<sup>29</sup>All of them are nothing. They cant do anything. Their statues are nothing but air."

**42**<sup>1</sup> Here is my servant, whom I support. Here is my chosen one, with whom I am pleased. I have put my Spirit on him. He will bring justice to the nations.

<sup>2</sup>He will not cry out or raise his voice. He will not make his voice heard in the streets.

<sup>3</sup> He will not break off a damaged cattail. He will not even put out a smoking wick. He will faithfully bring about justice.

<sup>4</sup> He will not be discouraged or crushed until he has set up justice on the earth. The coastlands will wait for his teachings.

<sup>5</sup> The LORD God created the heavens and stretched them out. He shaped the earth and all that comes from it. He gave life to the people who are on it and breath to those who walk on it. This is what the LORD God says:

<sup>6</sup> I, the LORD, have called you to do what is right. I will take hold of your hand. I will protect you. I will appoint you as my promise to the people, as my light to the nations.

<sup>7</sup> You will give sight to the blind, bring prisoners out of prisons, and bring those who live in darkness out of dungeons.

<sup>8</sup> I am the LORD; that is my name. I will not give my glory to anyone else or the praise I deserve to idols.

<sup>9</sup> What I said in the past has come true. I will reveal new things before they happen.

<sup>10</sup> Sing a new song to the LORD. Sing his praise from the ends of the earth,

you people who sail on the seas and all the creatures that live in them, you coastlands and all who live on them.

<sup>11</sup>Let those who live in the desert and its cities raise their voices. Let those who live in the settlements of Kedar praise him. Let those who live in Sela sing for joy. Let them shout from the tops of the mountains.

<sup>12</sup>Let them give glory to the LORD and announce his praise on the coastlands.

<sup>13</sup>The LORD marches out like a warrior. He prepares himself for battle like a soldier. He shouts, gives the battle cry, and overpowers his enemies.

<sup>14</sup>I have been silent for a long time. I kept quiet and held myself back. But like a woman in childbirth I will cry out. I will gasp and pant.

<sup>15</sup>I will lay waste to mountains and hills. I will dry up all their vegetation. I will turn rivers into islands. I will dry up ponds.

<sup>16</sup>I will lead the blind on unfamiliar roads. I will lead them on unfamiliar paths. I will turn darkness into light in front of them. I will make rough places

smooth. These are the things I will do for them, and I will never abandon them.

<sup>17</sup>Then those who trust idols and those who say to statues, "You are our gods" will be turned away and put to shame.

<sup>18</sup>Listen, you deaf people. Look, you blind people, so that you can see.

<sup>19</sup>Who is blind except my servant or deaf like the messenger I send? Who is blind like the one who has my trust or blind like the servant of the LORD?

<sup>20</sup>You have seen much, but you do not observe anything. Your ears are open, but you hear nothing.

<sup>21</sup>The LORD is pleased because he does what is right. He praises the greatness of his teachings and makes them glorious.

<sup>22</sup>But these people are robbed and looted. They are all trapped in pits and hidden in prisons. They have become prey with no one to rescue them. They have become loot with no one to say, "Give it back."

<sup>23</sup>Who among you will listen to this? Is there anyone who will pay attention and listen in the future?

<sup>24</sup>Who gave Jacob away as loot and handed Israel over to robbers? Wasnt

it the LORD, against whom we have sinned? They didnt want to live his way. They didnt obey his teachings.

<sup>25</sup> So he poured out his burning anger and the horrors of war on them. It engulfed them in flames, but they did not understand. It burned them, but they did not take it to heart.

**43**<sup>1</sup> The LORD created Jacob and formed Israel. Now, this is what the LORD says: Do not be afraid, because I have reclaimed you. I have called you by name; you are mine.

<sup>2</sup> When you go through the sea, I am with you. When you go through rivers, they will not sweep you away. When you walk through fire, you will not be burned, and the flames will not harm you.

<sup>3</sup> I am the LORD your God, the Holy One of Israel, your Savior. Egypt is the ransom I exchanged for you. Sudan and Seba are the price I paid for you.

<sup>4</sup> Since you are precious to me, you are honored and I love you. I will exchange others for you. Nations will be the price I pay for your life.

<sup>5</sup>Do not be afraid, because I am with you. I will bring your descendants from the east and gather you from the west.

<sup>6</sup>I will say to the north, "Give them up," and to the south, "Do not keep them." Bring my sons from far away and my daughters from the ends of the earth.

<sup>7</sup>Bring everyone who is called by my name, whom I created for my glory, whom I formed and made.

<sup>8</sup>Bring the people who are blind but still have eyes, the people who are deaf but still have ears.

<sup>9</sup>All nations have gathered together, and people have assembled. Who among them could have revealed this? Who among them could have foretold this to us? They should bring their witnesses to prove that they were right. Let the people hear them. Then they will say that it is true.

<sup>10</sup>"You are my witnesses," declares the LORD. "I have chosen you as my servant so that you can know and believe in me and understand that I am the one who did this. No god was formed before me, and there will be none after me.

<sup>11</sup> I alone am the LORD, and there is no savior except me.

<sup>12</sup> I have revealed it to you, I have saved you, and I have announced it to you. There was no foreign god among you. You are my witnesses that I am God," declares the LORD.

<sup>13</sup> "From the first day I was the one who did this. No one can rescue people from my power. When I do something, who can undo it?"

<sup>14</sup> This is what the LORD, your Defender, the Holy One of Israel, says: For your sake I will send an army to Babylon. I will bring back all the Babylonian refugees in the ships that they take pride in.

<sup>15</sup> I am the LORD, your Holy One, the Creator of Israel, your King.

<sup>16</sup> The LORD makes a path through the sea and a road through the strong currents.

<sup>17</sup> He leads chariots and horses, an army and reinforcements. (They lie down together and do not get up again. They are extinguished and snuffed out like a wick.) This is what the LORD says:

<sup>18</sup> Forget what happened in the past, and do not dwell on events from long ago.

<sup>19</sup> I am going to do something new. It is already happening. Don't you recognize it? I will clear a way in the desert. I will make rivers on dry land.

<sup>20</sup> Wild animals, jackals, and ostriches will honor me. I will provide water in the desert. I will make rivers on the dry land for my chosen people to drink.

<sup>21</sup> I have formed these people for myself. They will praise me.

<sup>22</sup> Jacob, you have not prayed to me. Israel, you have grown tired of me.

<sup>23</sup> You did not bring me sheep for your burnt offerings or honor me with your sacrifices. I did not burden you by requiring grain offerings or trouble you by requiring incense offerings.

<sup>24</sup> You did not buy me any sugar cane with your money or satisfy me with the best part of your sacrifices. Rather, you burdened me with your sins and troubled me with your wrongdoings.

<sup>25</sup> I alone am the one who is going to wipe away your rebellious actions for my

own sake. I will not remember your sins anymore.

<sup>26</sup>Remind me of what happened. Let us argue our case together. State your case so that you can prove you are right.

<sup>27</sup>Your first ancestor sinned, and your priests rebelled against me.

<sup>28</sup>That is why I will corrupt the leaders of the holy place. I will claim Jacob for destruction. I will set up Israel for ridicule.

**44**<sup>1</sup> But now listen, my servant Jacob, Israel, whom I have chosen.

<sup>2</sup>The LORD made you, formed you in the womb, and will help you. This is what the LORD says: Don't be afraid, my servant Jacob, Jeshurun, whom I have chosen.

<sup>3</sup>I will pour water on thirsty ground and rain on dry land. I will pour my Spirit on your offspring and my blessing on your descendants.

<sup>4</sup>They will spring up with the grass as poplars spring up by streams.

<sup>5</sup>One person will say, "I belong to the LORD." Another will call on the name of Jacob. Another will write on his hand,

"The LORDS," and he will adopt the name of Israel.

<sup>6</sup>The LORD is Israels king and defender. He is the LORD of Armies. This is what the LORD says: I am the first and the last, and there is no God except me.

<sup>7</sup>If there is anyone like me, let him say so. Let him tell me what happened when I established my people long ago. Then let him predict what will happen to them.

<sup>8</sup>Dont be terrified or afraid. Didnt I make this known to you long ago? You are my witnesses. Is there any God except me? There is no other rock; I know of none.

<sup>9</sup>All who make idols are nothing. Their precious treasures are worthless. Their own witnesses do not see or know anything, so they will be put to shame.

<sup>10</sup>Nothing comes from making gods or casting metal idols.

<sup>11</sup>Everyone associated with the gods will be put to shame. The craftsmen themselves are only human. Let them all get together and take their stand. They will be frightened and ashamed together.

<sup>12</sup>Blacksmiths shape iron into tools. They work them over the coals and

shape them with hammers, working them with their strong arms. They get hungry, and their strength fails. If they don't drink water, they will faint.

<sup>13</sup>Carpenters measure blocks of wood with chalk lines. They mark them with pens. They carve them with chisels and mark them with compasses. They carve them into forms of people, beautiful people, so the idols can live in shrines.

<sup>14</sup>They cut down cedars for themselves. Then they choose fir trees or oaks. They let them grow strong among the trees in the forest. Then they plant cedars, and the rain makes them grow.

<sup>15</sup>These trees become fuel for people to burn. So they take some of them and warm themselves with them. They start fires and bake bread. They also make gods from these trees and worship them. They make them into carved statues and bow in front of them.

<sup>16</sup>Half of the wood they burn in the fire. Over this half they roast meat that they can eat until they are full. They also warm themselves and say, "Ah! We are warm. We can see the fire!"

<sup>17</sup> But the rest of the wood they make into gods, carved statues. They bow to them and worship them. They pray to them, saying, "Rescue us, because you are our gods."

<sup>18</sup> They don't know or understand anything. Their eyes are plastered shut, so they can't see. And their minds are closed, so they can't understand.

<sup>19</sup> No one stops to think. No one has enough knowledge or understanding to say, "I burned half of the wood in the fire. I also baked bread over its coals. I roasted meat and ate it. Now I am making the rest of the wood into a disgusting thing and bowing to a block of wood."

<sup>20</sup> They eat ashes because they are deceived. Their own misguided minds lead them astray. They can't rescue themselves or ask themselves, "Isn't what I hold in my right hand a false god?"

<sup>21</sup> Remember these things, Jacob: You are my servant, Israel. I formed you; you are my servant. Israel, I will not forget you.

<sup>22</sup>I made your rebellious acts disappear like a thick cloud and your sins like the morning mist. Come back to me, because I have reclaimed you.

<sup>23</sup>Sing with joy, you heavens, because the LORD has done this. Rejoice, you deep places of the earth. Break into shouts of joy, you mountains, you forests and every tree in them. The LORD has reclaimed Jacob. He will display his glory in Israel.

<sup>24</sup>The LORD reclaimed you. He formed you in the womb. This is what the LORD says: I, the LORD, made everything. I stretched out the heavens by myself. I spread out the earth all alone.

<sup>25</sup>I cause the signs of false prophets to fail and make fools of fortunetellers. I make wise men retreat and turn their knowledge into foolishness.

<sup>26</sup>He confirms the word of his servant and fulfills the plan of his messengers. He says about Jerusalem, "It will be inhabited." He says about the cities of Judah, "They will be rebuilt." He says about their ruins, "I will restore them."

<sup>27</sup>He says to the deep water, "Dry up." So I will dry up your rivers.

<sup>28</sup>He says about Cyrus, "He is my shepherd. He will do everything I want him to do." He says about Jerusalem, "It will be rebuilt." He says about the temple, "Your foundation will be laid."

**45** <sup>1</sup>This is what the LORD says about Cyrus, his anointed one: I have held him by his right hand so he could conquer the nations ahead of him, strip kings of their power, and open doors ahead of him so that the gates would not be shut.

<sup>2</sup>I will go ahead of you, Cyrus, and smooth out the rough places. I will break down the bronze doors and cut through the iron bars.

<sup>3</sup>I will give you treasures from dark places and hidden stockpiles. Then you will know that I, the LORD God of Israel, have called you by name.

<sup>4</sup>For the sake of my servant Jacob, Israel, my chosen one, I have called you by name. I have given you a title of honor, although you don't know me.

<sup>5</sup>I am the LORD, and there is no other. There is no other God besides me. I will strengthen you, although you don't know me,

<sup>6</sup>so that from the east to the west people will know that there is no God except me. I am the LORD, and there is no other.

<sup>7</sup>I make light and create darkness. I make blessings and create disasters. I, the LORD, do all these things.

<sup>8</sup>Rain down from above, you heavens, and pour down righteousness, you skies. Let the earth open. Let salvation and righteousness sprout. Let them spring up. I, the LORD, have created them.

<sup>9</sup>How horrible it will be for the one who quarrels with his maker. He is pottery among other earthenware pots. Does the clay ask the one who shapes it, "What are you making?" Does your work say to you, "There are no handles"?

<sup>10</sup>How horrible it will be for the one who says to his father, "Why did you conceive me?" or to his mother, "Why did you go through labor pains for me?"

<sup>11</sup>The LORD is the Holy One and the maker of Israel. This is what the LORD says: Ask me about what is going to happen to my children! Are you going to give me orders concerning my handiwork?

<sup>12</sup>I made the earth and created humans on it. I stretched out the heavens with my own hands. I commanded all the stars to shine.

<sup>13</sup>I prepared Cyrus for my righteous purpose. I will make all his roads straight. He will build my city and let my exiles go free without any payment or any reward, says the LORD of Armies.

<sup>14</sup>This is what the LORD says: The products from Egypt, the merchandise from Sudan, and the important Sabaean will come to you. They will belong to you. They will follow you. They will come to you in chains. They will bow to you and pray to you, "Certainly God is with you alone, and there is no other God."

<sup>15</sup>Certainly, you are a God who has hidden himself. You are the God of Israel, the Savior!

<sup>16</sup>Those who make idols will be ashamed and disgraced. They will go away completely disgraced.

<sup>17</sup>Israel has been saved by the LORD forever. You will never again be ashamed or disgraced.

<sup>18</sup>The LORD created the heavens. God formed the earth and made it. He set it

up. He did not create it to be empty but formed it to be inhabited. This is what the LORD says: I am the LORD, and there is no other.

<sup>19</sup>I havent spoken privately or in some dark corner of the world. I didnt say to Jacobs descendants, "Search for me in vain!" I, the LORD, speak what is fair and say what is right.

<sup>20</sup>Come here, you refugees from the nations. Ignorant people carry wooden idols and pray to gods that cannot save anyone.

<sup>21</sup>Speak and present your case. Yes, let them consult one another. Who revealed this in the distant past and predicted it long ago? Wasnt it I, the LORD? There is no other God except me. There is no other righteous God and Savior besides me.

<sup>22</sup>Turn to me and be saved, all who live at the ends of the earth, because I am God, and there is no other.

<sup>23</sup>I have bound myself with an oath. A word has gone out from my righteous mouth that will not be recalled, "Every knee will bow to me and every tongue will swear allegiance."

<sup>24</sup>It will be said of me, "Certainly, righteousness and strength are found in the LORD alone." All who are angry with him will come to him and be ashamed.

<sup>25</sup>All the descendants of Israel will be declared righteous, and they will praise the LORD.

**46**<sup>1</sup>The god Bel bows down; the god Nebo stoops low. Their statues are seated on animals and cattle. The gods that you carry are burdens, a load for weary people.

<sup>2</sup>These gods stoop low and bow down together. They aren't able to escape with heavy loads. They go away into captivity.

<sup>3</sup>Listen to me, descendants of Jacob, the few people left of the nation of Israel. I've carried you since your birth. I've taken care of you from the time you were born.

<sup>4</sup>Even when you're old, I'll take care of you. Even when your hair turns gray, I'll support you. I made you and will continue to care for you. I'll support you and save you.

<sup>5</sup>To whom will you compare me and make me equal? To whom will you compare me so that we can be alike?

<sup>6</sup>People pour gold out of their bags and weigh silver on scales. They hire a goldsmith. He makes it into a god. They bow down and worship it.

<sup>7</sup>They lift it on their shoulders and carry it. They set the idol in its place, and it stands there. It doesn't move from its place. If they cry to it for help, it can't answer. It can't rescue them from their distress.

<sup>8</sup>Remember this, and take courage. Recall your rebellious acts.

<sup>9</sup>Remember the first events, because I am God, and there is no other. I am God, and there's no one like me.

<sup>10</sup>From the beginning I revealed the end. From long ago I told you things that had not yet happened, saying, "My plan will stand, and I'll do everything I intended to do."

<sup>11</sup>I will call a bird of prey from the east. I will call someone for my plan from a faraway land. I have spoken, and I will bring it about. I have planned it, and I will do it.

<sup>12</sup>Listen to me, you stubborn people who are far from being righteous.

<sup>13</sup> I'll bring my righteousness near; it isn't far away. My salvation will not be delayed. I'll provide salvation for Zion and bring my glory to Israel.

**47** <sup>1</sup> Go, sit in the dirt, virgin princess of Babylon! Sit on the ground, not on a throne, princess of the Babylonians! You will no longer be called soft and delicate.

<sup>2</sup> Take millstones and grind flour. Remove your veil. Take off your skirt. Uncover your legs, and cross the river.

<sup>3</sup> People will see you naked. People will see your shame. I will take revenge. I won't spare anyone.

<sup>4</sup> Our defender is the Holy One of Israel. His name is the LORD of Armies.

<sup>5</sup> Go into the dark, and sit in silence, princess of the Babylonians! You will no longer be called the queen of kingdoms.

<sup>6</sup> I was angry with my people. I dishonored those who belong to me. I put them under your control. You showed them no mercy. You placed a heavy burden on old people.

<sup>7</sup> You said, "I will always be a queen." You didn't carefully consider these things or keep in mind how they would end.

<sup>8</sup>Now then, listen to this, you lover of pleasure. You live securely and say to yourself, "I'm the only one, and there's no one else. I won't live as a widow. I won't suffer the loss of children."

<sup>9</sup>In one day both of these will happen to you instantly: the loss of your children and your husband. All this will happen to you in spite of your evil magic and your many spells.

<sup>10</sup>You feel safe in your wickedness and say, "No one can see me." Your wisdom and knowledge have led you astray, so you say to yourself, "I'm the only one, and there's no one else."

<sup>11</sup>But evil will happen to you. You won't know how to keep it away. Disaster will strike you. You won't be able to stop it. Destruction will overtake you suddenly. You won't expect it.

<sup>12</sup>Keep practicing your spells and your evil magic. You have practiced them ever since you were young. You may succeed. You may cause terror.

<sup>13</sup>You are worn out by your many plans. Let your astrologers and your stargazers, who foretell the future month by month, come to you, rise up, and save you.

<sup>14</sup>They are like straw. Fire burns them. They can't rescue themselves from the flames. There are no glowing coals to keep them warm and no fire for them to sit by.

<sup>15</sup>This is how it will be for those who have worked with you, for those who have been with you ever since you were young. They will go their own ways, and there will be no one to save you.

**48**<sup>1</sup> Listen to this, descendants of Jacob! You are given the name of Israel. You are descended from Judah. You take oaths by the name of the LORD. You acknowledge the God of Israel, but you are not honest or sincere.

<sup>2</sup>You call yourselves citizens of the holy city. You depend on the God of Israel. His name is the LORD of Armies.

<sup>3</sup>From the beginning I revealed to you what would happen. These words came out of my mouth, and I made them known. Suddenly, I acted, and they happened.

<sup>4</sup>I know that you are stubborn. Like iron, you are hardheaded. Like bronze, nothing gets through your thick skull.

<sup>5</sup>That is why I revealed to you what would happen long ago. I told you about them before they happened. I did this so you couldnt say, "My gods have done these things. My carved idols and my metal idols have commanded them to happen."

<sup>6</sup>Youve heard these words. Now look at all this. Wont you admit it? From now on I will reveal to you new things, hidden things that you do not know.

<sup>7</sup>They are created now, not in the past. You havent heard about them before today, so you cant say that you already knew about them.

<sup>8</sup>You have never heard about them. You have never known about them. Your ears have never been open to hear them before. I know that youve acted very treacherously and that you have been called a rebel since you were born.

<sup>9</sup>For my names sake Ill be patient. For my glorys sake Ill hold my anger back from you, rather than destroy you.

<sup>10</sup>I have refined you, but not like silver. I have tested you in the furnace of suffering.

<sup>11</sup> I am doing this for myself, only for myself. Why should my name be dishonored? I will not give my glory to anyone else.

<sup>12</sup> Listen to me, Jacob, Israel, whom I have called. I am the one. I am the first and the last.

<sup>13</sup> My hand laid the foundation of the earth. My right hand stretched out the heavens. When I call for them, they both stand.

<sup>14</sup> Gather together, all of you, and listen. What idol has revealed such things? The LORD loves Cyrus. He will carry out the LORDS plan against Babylon. He will use his strength against the Babylonians.

<sup>15</sup> I alone have spoken. I have called him. I will bring him here, and he will succeed.

<sup>16</sup> Come here. Listen to this: From the beginning I have spoken nothing in private. From the time it took place, I was there. Now the Almighty LORD has sent me and his Spirit.

<sup>17</sup> This is what the LORD, your Defender, the Holy One of Israel, says: I am the LORD your God. I teach you what is best for you. I lead you where you should go.

<sup>18</sup>If only you had listened to my commands! Your peace would be like a river that never runs dry. Your righteousness would be like waves on the sea.

<sup>19</sup>Your descendants would be like sand. Your children would be like its grains. Their names would not be cut off or wiped out in my presence.

<sup>20</sup>Leave Babylon; flee from the Babylonians! Shout for joy as you tell it and announce it. Shout it out to the ends of the earth. Say that the LORD has reclaimed his servant Jacob.

<sup>21</sup>They weren't thirsty when he led them through the deserts. He made water flow from a rock for them. He split a rock, and water gushed out.

<sup>22</sup>"There is no peace for the wicked," says the LORD.

**49**<sup>1</sup> Listen to me, you islands. Pay attention, you people far away. Before I was born, the LORD chose me. While I was in my mother's womb, he recorded my name.

<sup>2</sup>He made my tongue like a sharp sword and hid me in the palm of his hand. He

made me like a sharpened arrow and hid me in his quiver.

<sup>3</sup>He said to me, "You are my servant Israel. I will display my glory through you."

<sup>4</sup>But I said, "I have worked hard for nothing. I have used my strength, but I didn't accomplish anything. Yet, certainly my case is in the LORDS hands, and my reward is with my God."

<sup>5</sup>The LORD formed me in the womb to be his servant in order to bring Jacob back to him and gather Israel to him. (The LORD honors me, and my God has become my strength.)

<sup>6</sup>Now, the Lord says, "You are not just my servant who restores the tribes of Jacob and brings back those in Israel whom I have preserved. I have also made you a light for the nations so that you would save people all over the world."

<sup>7</sup>The LORD is the defender of Israel, its Holy One. This is what the LORD says to the despised one, to the one scorned by the nation, to the slave of rulers: Kings will see you and stand. Princes will see

you and bow. The LORD is faithful. The Holy One of Israel has chosen you.

<sup>8</sup>This is what the LORD says: In the time of favor I will answer you. In the day of salvation I will help you. I will protect you. I will appoint you as my promise to the people. You will restore the land. You will make them inherit the desolate inheritance.

<sup>9</sup>You will say to the prisoners, "Come out," and to those who are in darkness, "Show yourselves." They will graze along every path, and they will find pastures on every bare hill.

<sup>10</sup>They will never be hungry or thirsty, nor will the sun or the burning, hot wind strike them. The one who has compassion on them will lead them and guide them to springs.

<sup>11</sup>I will turn all my mountains into roads, and my highways will be restored.

<sup>12</sup>They will come from far away. They will come from the north and from the west, and they will come from the land of Sinim.

<sup>13</sup>Sing with joy, you heavens! Rejoice, you earth! Break into shouts of joy, you mountains! The LORD has comforted his

people and will have compassion on his humble people.

<sup>14</sup>But Zion said, "The LORD has abandoned me. My Lord has forgotten me."

<sup>15</sup>Can a woman forget her nursing child? Will she have no compassion on the child from her womb? Although mothers may forget, I will not forget you.

<sup>16</sup>I have engraved you on the palms of my hands. Your walls are always in my presence.

<sup>17</sup>Your children will hurry back. Those who destroyed you and laid waste to you will leave you.

<sup>18</sup>Look up, look around, and watch! All of your children are gathering together and returning to you. "I solemnly swear as I live," declares the LORD, "you will wear all of them like jewels and display them on yourself as a bride would."

<sup>19</sup>Though you are destroyed and demolished and your land is in ruins, you will be too crowded for your people now. Those who devoured you will be long gone.

<sup>20</sup>The children taken from you will say to you, "This place is too crowded for me. Make room for me to live here."

<sup>21</sup>Then you will ask yourself, "Who has fathered these children for me? I was childless and unable to have children. I was exiled and rejected. Who raised these children for me? I was left alone. Where have they come from?"

<sup>22</sup>This is what the Almighty LORD says: I will lift my hand to signal the nations. I will raise my flag for the people. They will bring your sons in their arms and carry your daughters on their shoulders.

<sup>23</sup>Then kings will be your foster fathers, and their queens will nurse you. They will bow in front of you with their faces touching the ground. They will lick the dust at your feet. Then you will know that I am the LORD. Those who wait with hope for me will not be put to shame.

<sup>24</sup>Can loot be taken away from mighty men or prisoners be freed from conquerors?

<sup>25</sup>This is what the LORD says: Prisoners will be freed from mighty men. Loot will be taken away from tyrants. I will

fight your enemies, and I will save your children.

<sup>26</sup>I will make your oppressors eat their own flesh, and they will become drunk on their own blood as though it were new wine. Then all humanity will know that I am the LORD, who saves you, the Mighty One of Jacob, who reclaims you.

**50**<sup>1</sup>This is what the LORD says: Where are your mothers divorce papers? Did I give her any to get rid of her? To which of my creditors did I sell you? You were sold because of your sins. I got rid of your mother because of your rebellion.

<sup>2</sup>Why was no one here when I came? Why was no one here to answer when I called? Am I too weak to reclaim you? Don't I have the power to rescue you? I dry up the sea with my command, and I turn rivers into deserts. Their fish stink because there is no water, and people die of thirst.

<sup>3</sup>I clothe the heavens in darkness and cover them with sackcloth.

<sup>4</sup>The Almighty LORD will teach me what to say, so I will know how to encourage

weary people. Morning after morning he will wake me to listen like a student.

<sup>5</sup>The Almighty LORD will open my ears. I will not rebel, nor will I turn away from him.

<sup>6</sup>I will offer my back to those who whip me and my cheeks to those who pluck hairs out of my beard. I will not turn my face away from those who humiliate me and spit on me.

<sup>7</sup>The Almighty LORD helps me. That is why I will not be ashamed. I have set my face like a flint. I know that I will not be put to shame.

<sup>8</sup>The one who pronounces me innocent is near. Who will bring a case against me? Let us confront each other! Who accuses me? Let him confront me!

<sup>9</sup>The Almighty LORD helps me. Who will find me guilty? They will all wear out like a garment. Moths will eat them.

<sup>10</sup>Who among you fears the LORD and obeys his servant? Let those who walk in darkness and have no light trust the name of the LORD and depend upon their God.

<sup>11</sup>But all of you light fires and arm yourselves with flaming torches. So walk

in your own light and among the torches you have lit. This is what you will receive from me: You will be tormented.

**51** <sup>1</sup> Listen to me, you people who pursue what is right and seek the LORD. Look to the rock from which you were cut and to the quarry from which you were dug.

<sup>2</sup> Look to Abraham, your ancestor, and to Sarah, from whom you are descended. When I called Abraham, he was childless. I blessed him and gave him many descendants.

<sup>3</sup> So the LORD will comfort Zion. He will comfort all those who live among its ruins. He will make its desert like Eden. He will make its wilderness like the garden of the LORD. Joy and gladness will be found in it, thanksgiving and the sound of singing.

<sup>4</sup> Pay attention to me, my people. Open your ears to hear me, my nation. My teachings will go out from me. My justice will become a light for the people.

<sup>5</sup> My righteousness is near. My salvation is on the way. I will bring justice to people. The coastlands put their hope in me, and they wait eagerly for me.

<sup>6</sup>Look at the sky. Look at the earth below. The sky will vanish like smoke. The earth will wear out like clothing, and those who live there will die like flies. But my salvation will last forever, and my righteousness will never fail.

<sup>7</sup>Listen to me, you people who know righteousness, you people who have my teachings in your hearts. Don't be afraid of being insulted by people. Don't be discouraged by their ridicule.

<sup>8</sup>Moths will eat them like clothing. Worms will devour them like wool. But my righteousness will last forever, and my salvation will last throughout every generation.

<sup>9</sup>Wake up! Wake up! Clothe yourself with strength, O LORD! Wake up as you did in days long past, as in generations long ago. Didn't you cut Rahab into pieces and stab the serpent?

<sup>10</sup>Didn't you dry up the sea, the water of the great ocean? You made a road in the depths of the sea so that the people reclaimed by the LORD might pass through it.

<sup>11</sup>The people ransomed by the LORD will return. They will come to Zion

singing with joy. Everlasting happiness will be on their heads as a crown. They will be glad and joyful. They will have no sorrow or grief.

<sup>12</sup>I alone am the one who comforts you. Why, then, are you afraid of mortals, who must die, of humans, who are like grass?

<sup>13</sup>Why have you forgotten the LORD, your Creator? He stretched out the heavens and laid the foundations of the earth. Why should you live in constant fear of the fury of those who oppress you, of those who are ready to destroy you? Where is the fury of those who oppress you?

<sup>14</sup>Chained prisoners will be set free. They will not die in prison. They will not go without food.

<sup>15</sup>I am the LORD your God who stirs up the sea and makes its waves roar. My name is the LORD of Armies.

<sup>16</sup>I put my words in your mouth and sheltered you in the palm of my hand. I stretched out the heavens, laid the foundations of the earth, and said to Zion, "You are my people."

<sup>17</sup>Wake up! Wake up! Stand up, Jerusalem! You drank from the cup in the LORDS hand. That cup was filled with his anger. You drank from the bowl, the cup that makes people stagger, and you drained it!

<sup>18</sup>From all the children she gave birth to, there was no one to guide her. From all the children she raised, there was no one to take her by the hand.

<sup>19</sup>Twice as many disasters have happened to you. Who will feel sorry for you? Violence, destruction, famine, and war have happened to you. Who will comfort you?

<sup>20</sup>Your children have fainted. They lie sleeping at every street corner. They are like an antelope caught in a net. They experience the anger of the LORD, the fury of your God.

<sup>21</sup>Listen to this, you humble people who are drunk but not from wine.

<sup>22</sup>The LORD your God defends his people. This is what your master says: Im taking from your hand the cup that makes people stagger, the bowl, the cup of my fury. You will never drink from it again.

<sup>23</sup>I will put it in the hands of those who made you suffer. They said to you, "Lie down so that we can walk over you." So you made your back like the ground and like a street for them to cross.

**52**<sup>1</sup>Wake up! Wake up! Clothe yourself with strength, Zion! Put on your beautiful clothes, holy city of Jerusalem. Godless and evil people will no longer come to you.

<sup>2</sup>Shake the dust from yourselves. Get up, captive Jerusalem. Free yourself from the chains around your neck, captive people of Zion.

<sup>3</sup>This is what the LORD says: You were sold, but no price was paid. You will be bought back, but without money.

<sup>4</sup>This is what the Almighty LORD says: In the beginning my people went to Egypt to live there as foreigners. Later the Assyrians oppressed them for no reason.

<sup>5</sup>So what do I find here? asks the LORD. My people are taken away for no reason. Their rulers are screaming, declares the LORD. And my name is cursed all day long.

<sup>6</sup>Now my people will know my name. When that day comes, they will know that I am the one who says, "Here I am!"

<sup>7</sup>How beautiful on the mountains are the feet of the messenger who announces the good news, "All is well." He brings the good news, announces salvation, and tells Zion that its God rules as king.

<sup>8</sup>Listen! Your watchmen raise their voices and shout together joyfully. When the LORD brings Zion back, they will see it with their own eyes.

<sup>9</sup>Break out into shouts of joy, ruins of Jerusalem. The LORD will comfort his people. He will reclaim Jerusalem.

<sup>10</sup>The LORD will show his holy power to all the nations. All the ends of the earth will see the salvation of our God.

<sup>11</sup>Run away! Run away! Get away from there! Do not touch anything unclean. Get away from it! Make yourselves pure, you Levites who carry the utensils for the LORDS temple.

<sup>12</sup>You will not go away in a hurry, nor will you go away quickly. The LORD will go ahead of you. The God of Israel will guard you from behind.

<sup>13</sup> My servant will be successful. He will be respected, praised, and highly honored.

<sup>14</sup> Many will be shocked by him. His appearance will be so disfigured that he won't look like any other man. His looks will be so disfigured that he will hardly look like a human.

<sup>15</sup> He will cleanse many nations with his blood. Kings will shut their mouths because of him. They will see things that they had never been told. They will understand things that they had never heard.

**53** <sup>1</sup> Who has believed our message? To whom has the LORDS power been revealed?

<sup>2</sup> He grew up in his presence like a young tree, like a root out of dry ground. He had no form or majesty that would make us look at him. He had nothing in his appearance that would make us desire him.

<sup>3</sup> He was despised and rejected by people. He was a man of sorrows, familiar with suffering. He was despised like one from whom people turn their

faces, and we didnt consider him to be worth anything.

<sup>4</sup>He certainly has taken upon himself our suffering and carried our sorrows, but we thought that God had wounded him, beat him, and punished him.

<sup>5</sup>He was wounded for our rebellious acts. He was crushed for our sins. He was punished so that we could have peace, and we received healing from his wounds.

<sup>6</sup>We have all strayed like sheep. Each one of us has turned to go his own way, and the LORD has laid all our sins on him.

<sup>7</sup>He was abused and punished, but he didnt open his mouth. He was led like a lamb to the slaughter. He was like a sheep that is silent when its wool is cut off. He didnt open his mouth.

<sup>8</sup>He was arrested, taken away, and judged. Who would have thought that he would be removed from the world? He was killed because of my peoples rebellion.

<sup>9</sup>He was placed in a tomb with the wicked. He was put there with the rich when he died, although he had done

nothing violent and had never spoken a lie.

<sup>10</sup>Yet, it was the LORDS will to crush him with suffering. When the LORD has made his life a sacrifice for our wrongdoings, he will see his descendants for many days. The will of the LORD will succeed through him.

<sup>11</sup>He will see and be satisfied because of his suffering. My righteous servant will acquit many people because of what he has learned through suffering. He will carry their sins as a burden.

<sup>12</sup>So I will give him a share among the mighty, and he will divide the prize with the strong, because he poured out his life in death and he was counted with sinners. He carried the sins of many. He intercedes for those who are rebellious.

**54**<sup>1</sup> Sing with joy, you childless women who never gave birth to children. Break into shouts of joy, you women who never had birth pains. "There will be more children of women who have been deserted than there are children of married women," says the LORD.

<sup>2</sup>Expand the space of your tent. Stretch out the curtains of your tent, and don't hold back. Lengthen your tent ropes, and drive in the tent pegs.

<sup>3</sup>You will spread out to the right and left. Your descendants will take over other nations, and they will resettle deserted cities.

<sup>4</sup>Don't be afraid, because you won't be put to shame. Don't be discouraged, because you won't be disgraced. You'll forget the shame you've had since you were young. You won't remember the disgrace of your husband's death anymore.

<sup>5</sup>Your husband is your maker. His name is the LORD of Armies. Your defender is the Holy One of Israel. He is called the God of the whole earth.

<sup>6</sup>"The LORD has called you as if you were a wife who was abandoned and in grief, a wife who married young and was rejected," says your God.

<sup>7</sup>"I abandoned you for one brief moment, but I will bring you back with unlimited compassion.

<sup>8</sup>I hid my face from you for a moment in a burst of anger, but I will have

compassion on you with everlasting kindness," says the LORD your defender.

<sup>9</sup>"To me this is like Noah's floodwaters, when I swore an oath that Noah's floodwaters would never cover the earth again. So now I swear an oath not to be angry with you or punish you.

<sup>10</sup>The mountains may move, and the hills may shake, but my kindness will never depart from you. My promise of peace will never change," says the LORD, who has compassion on you.

<sup>11</sup>"You suffering, comfortless, storm-ravaged city! I will rebuild your city with precious stones. I will reset your foundations with sapphires.

<sup>12</sup>I will rebuild your towers with rubies, your gates with sparkling stones, and all your walls with precious stones."

<sup>13</sup>All your children will be taught by the LORD, and your children will have unlimited peace.

<sup>14</sup>You will be established in righteousness. You will be far from oppression, so you will not be afraid. You will be far from destruction, so it won't come near you.

<sup>15</sup>"If anyone attacks you, it will not be my doing. Whoever attacks you will be defeated by you.

<sup>16</sup>I've created blacksmiths to fan the coals into flames and to produce useful weapons. I've also created destroyers to bring destruction.

<sup>17</sup>No weapon that has been made to be used against you will succeed. You will have an answer for anyone who accuses you. This is the inheritance of the LORDS servants. Their victory comes from me," declares the LORD.

**55** <sup>1</sup>"Listen! Whoever is thirsty, come to the water! Whoever has no money can come, buy, and eat! Come, buy wine and milk. You dont have to pay; its free!

<sup>2</sup>Why do you spend money on what cannot nourish you and your wages on what does not satisfy you? Listen carefully to me: Eat what is good, and enjoy the best foods.

<sup>3</sup>Open your ears, and come to me! Listen so that you may live! I will make an everlasting promise to you the blessings I promised to David.

<sup>4</sup> I made him a witness to people, a leader and a commander for people.

<sup>5</sup> You will summon a nation that you don't know, and a nation that doesn't know you will run to you because of the LORD your God, because of the Holy One of Israel. He has honored you."

<sup>6</sup> Seek the LORD while he may be found. Call on him while he is near.

<sup>7</sup> Let wicked people abandon their ways. Let evil people abandon their thoughts. Let them return to the LORD, and he will show compassion to them. Let them return to our God, because he will freely forgive them.

<sup>8</sup> "My thoughts are not your thoughts, and my ways are not your ways," declares the LORD.

<sup>9</sup> "Just as the heavens are higher than the earth, so my ways are higher than your ways, and my thoughts are higher than your thoughts."

<sup>10</sup> "Rain and snow come down from the sky. They do not go back again until they water the earth. They make it sprout and grow so that it produces seed for farmers and food for people to eat.

<sup>11</sup> My word, which comes from my mouth, is like the rain and snow. It will not come back to me without results. It will accomplish whatever I want and achieve whatever I send it to do."

<sup>12</sup> You will go out with joy and be led out in peace. The mountains and the hills will break into songs of joy in your presence, and all the trees will clap their hands.

<sup>13</sup> Cypress trees will grow where thornbushes grew. Myrtle trees will grow where briars grew. This will be a reminder of the LORDS name and an everlasting sign that will never be destroyed.

**56** <sup>1</sup> This is what the LORD says: Preserve justice, and do what is right. My salvation is about to come. My righteousness is about to be revealed.

<sup>2</sup> Blessed is the one who does these things and the person who holds on to them. Blessed is the one who keeps the day of worship from becoming unholy and his hands from doing anything wrong.

<sup>3</sup> Foreigners who have joined the LORD should not say, "The LORD will separate

us from his people." Castrated men should not say, "Were only dead trees!"

<sup>4</sup>This is what the LORD says: I will remember the castrated men who keep my days of worship, choose what pleases me, and faithfully observe the conditions of my promise.

<sup>5</sup>Inside my house and within my walls, I will give them something better than sons and daughters. I will give them a monument and a name. I will give them a permanent name that will not be forgotten.

<sup>6</sup>And I will remember the foreigners who have joined the LORD to worship him, to love the LORDS name, and to be his servants. All of them will keep the day of worship from becoming unholy and will faithfully observe the conditions of my promise.

<sup>7</sup>Then I will bring them to my holy mountain and make them happy in my house of prayer. Their burnt offerings and their sacrifices will be acceptable on my altar, because my house will be called a house of prayer for all nations.

<sup>8</sup>The Almighty LORD, who gathers the scattered people of Israel, declares, "I

will gather still others besides those I have already gathered."

<sup>9</sup>All you animals in the field, all you animals in the forest, come and eat.

<sup>10</sup>Israel's watchmen are blind. None of them know anything. All of them are like dogs that are unable to bark. They lie around dreaming; they love to sleep.

<sup>11</sup>These dogs have huge appetites. They are never full. They are the shepherds, but they don't understand. All of them have turned to go their own ways. Each one seeks his own gain.

<sup>12</sup>Each one cries, "Let me get some wine, and we'll fill ourselves with liquor. And tomorrow will be like today, only better."

**57** <sup>1</sup>Righteous people die, and no one cares. Loyal people are taken away, and no one understands. Righteous people are spared when evil comes.

<sup>2</sup>When peace comes, everyone who has lived honestly will rest on his own bed.

<sup>3</sup>But you come here, you children of witches, you descendants of adulterers and prostitutes!

<sup>4</sup> Whom are you making fun of? Whom are you making a face at? Whom are you sticking out your tongue at? Arent you rebellious children, descendants of liars?

<sup>5</sup> You burn with lust under oak trees and under every large tree. You slaughter children in the valleys and under the cracks in the rocks.

<sup>6</sup> Your idols are among the smooth stones in the ravine. They are your destiny. You have given them wine offerings and sacrificed grain offerings to them. Do you think I am pleased with all this?

<sup>7</sup> Youve made your bed on a high and lofty mountain. Youve gone to offer sacrifices there.

<sup>8</sup> Youve set up your idols beside doors and doorposts. Youve uncovered yourself to the idols. Youve distanced yourself from me. Youve made your bed with them. Youve made a deal with those you have pleasure with in bed. Youve seen them naked.

<sup>9</sup> Youve journeyed to the king with perfumed oils and put on plenty of perfume. Youve sent your ambassadors far away and sent them down to Sheol.

<sup>10</sup>You've tired yourself out with many journeys. You didn't think that it was hopeless. You've found renewed strength, so you didn't faint.

<sup>11</sup>Whom did you dread and fear so much that you lied to me? You haven't remembered me or cared about me. I've been silent for a long time. Is that why you don't fear me?

<sup>12</sup>I'll tell you about your righteous ways and what you have done, but they won't help you.

<sup>13</sup>When you cry for help, let your collection of idols save you. A wind will carry them all away. A breath will take them away. But whoever trusts me will possess the land and inherit my holy mountain.

<sup>14</sup>It will be said: "Build a road! Build a road! Prepare the way! Remove every obstacle in the way of my people!"

<sup>15</sup>The High and Lofty One lives forever, and his name is holy. This is what he says: I live in a high and holy place. But I am with those who are crushed and humble. I will renew the spirit of those who are humble and the courage of those who are crushed.

<sup>16</sup>I will not accuse you forever. I will not be angry with you forever. Otherwise, the spirits, the lives of those I've made, would grow faint in my presence.

<sup>17</sup>I was angry because of their sinful greed, so I punished them, hid from them, and remained angry. But they continued to be sinful.

<sup>18</sup>I've seen their sinful ways, but I'll heal them. I'll guide them and give them rest. I'll comfort them and their mourners.

<sup>19</sup>I'll create praise on their lips: "Perfect peace to those both far and near." "I'll heal them," says the LORD.

<sup>20</sup>But the wicked are like the churning sea. It isn't quiet, and its water throws up mud and slime.

<sup>21</sup>"There is no peace for the wicked," says my God.

**58**<sup>1</sup> Cry aloud! Don't hold back! Raise your voice like a ram's horn. Tell my people about their rebellion and the descendants of Jacob about their sins.

<sup>2</sup>They look for me every day and want to know my ways. They act as if they were a nation that has done what is right and as if they haven't disregarded God's judgment on them. They ask me for

just decrees. They want God to be near them.

<sup>3</sup>Why have we fasted if you are not aware of it? Why have we inflicted pain on ourselves if you dont pay attention? Dont you see that on the days you fast, you do what you want to do? You mistreat all your workers.

<sup>4</sup>Dont you see that when you fast, you quarrel and fight and beat your workers? The way you fast today keeps you from being heard in heaven.

<sup>5</sup>Is this the kind of fasting I have chosen? Should people humble themselves for only a day? Is fasting just bowing your head like a cattail and making your bed from sackcloth and ashes? Is this what you call fasting? Is this an acceptable day to the LORD?

<sup>6</sup>This is the kind of fasting I have chosen: Loosen the chains of wickedness, untie the straps of the yoke, let the oppressed go free, and break every yoke.

<sup>7</sup>Share your food with the hungry, take the poor and homeless into your house, and cover them with clothes when you

see them naked. Don't refuse to help your relatives.

<sup>8</sup>Then your light will break through like the dawn, and you will heal quickly. Your righteousness will go ahead of you, and the glory of the LORD will guard you from behind.

<sup>9</sup>Then you will call, and the LORD will answer. You will cry for help, and he will say, "Here I am!" Get rid of that yoke. Don't point your finger and say wicked things.

<sup>10</sup>If you give some of your own food to feed those who are hungry and to satisfy the needs of those who are humble, then your light will rise in the dark, and your darkness will become as bright as the noonday sun.

<sup>11</sup>The LORD will continually guide you and satisfy you even in sunbaked places. He will strengthen your bones. You will become like a watered garden and like a spring whose water does not stop flowing.

<sup>12</sup>Your people will rebuild the ancient ruins and restore the foundations of past generations. You will be called

the Rebuilder of Broken Walls and the Restorer of Streets Where People Live.

<sup>13</sup>If you stop trampling on the day of worship and doing as you please on my holy day, if you call the day of worship a delight and the LORDS holy day honorable, if you honor it by not going your own way, by not going out when you want, and by not talking idly,

<sup>14</sup>then you will find joy in the LORD. I will make you ride on the heights of the earth. I will feed you with the inheritance of your ancestor Jacob. The LORD has spoken.

**59**<sup>1</sup>The LORD is not too weak to save or his ear too deaf to hear.

<sup>2</sup>But your wrongs have separated you from your God, and your sins have made him hide his face so that he doesnt hear you.

<sup>3</sup>Your hands are stained with blood, and your fingers are stained with sin. You speak lies, and you mutter wicked things.

<sup>4</sup>No one calls for justice, and no one pleads his case truthfully. People trust pointless arguments and speak lies.

They conceive trouble and give birth to evil.

<sup>5</sup>They hatch viper eggs and weave spiderwebs. Those who eat their eggs will die. When an egg is crushed, a poisonous snake is hatched.

<sup>6</sup>Their webs cant be used for clothes, nor can they cover themselves with their works. Their works are evil. Their hands have committed acts of violence.

<sup>7</sup>Their feet run to do evil. They hurry to shed innocent blood. Their plans are evil. Ruin and destruction are on their highways.

<sup>8</sup>They dont know the way of peace. Theres no justice on their highways. Theyve made their paths crooked. Whoever walks on them will never know peace.

<sup>9</sup>That is why justice is far from us, and righteousness doesnt reach us. We hope for light, but we walk in darkness. We hope for brightness, but we walk in gloom.

<sup>10</sup>We grope like blind men along a wall. We grope like people without eyes. We stumble at noon as if it were twilight.

We are like dead people among healthy people.

<sup>11</sup>We all growl like bears. We coo like doves. We hope for justice, but there is none. We hope for salvation, but its far from us.

<sup>12</sup>You are aware of our many rebellious acts. Our sins testify against us. Our rebellious acts are with us. We know our wrongdoings.

<sup>13</sup>We have rebelled and denied the LORD. We have turned away from our God. We have spoken about oppression and revolt. We have conceived and uttered lies in our hearts.

<sup>14</sup>Justice is turned back, and righteousness stands far away. Truth has fallen in the street, and honesty cant come in.

<sup>15</sup>Truth is missing. Those who turn away from evil make themselves victims. The LORD sees it, and hes angry because theres no justice.

<sup>16</sup>He sees that theres no one to help. Hes astounded that theres no one to intercede. So with his own power he wins a victory. His righteousness supports him.

<sup>17</sup> He puts on righteousness like a coat of armor and a helmet of salvation on his head. He wears clothes of vengeance. He wraps himself with fury as a coat.

<sup>18</sup> He will pay them back according to their deeds. He will pay back his opponents with wrath and punish his enemies. He will pay back the people who live on the coastlands.

<sup>19</sup> The people of the west will fear the name of the LORD. Those in the east will fear his glory. He will come like a rushing stream. The wind of the LORD pushes him.

<sup>20</sup> "Then a Savior will come to Zion, to those in Jacob who turn from rebellion," declares the LORD.

<sup>21</sup> "This is my promise to them," says the LORD. "My Spirit, who is on you, and my words that I put in your mouth will not leave you. They will be with your children and your grandchildren permanently," says the LORD.

**60**<sup>1</sup> Arise! Shine! Your light has come, and the glory of the LORD has dawned.

<sup>2</sup> Darkness now covers the earth, and thick darkness covers the nations. But

the LORD dawns, and his glory appears over you.

<sup>3</sup>Nations will come to your light, and kings will come to the brightness of your dawn.

<sup>4</sup>"Look up, look around, and watch. All of your people assemble and come to you. Your sons come from far away. Your daughters are carried in their arms.

<sup>5</sup>Then you will see this and rejoice, and your heart will be thrilled with joy, because the riches of the sea will be brought to you. The wealth of the nations will come to you.

<sup>6</sup>"Many camels will cover your land, young camels from Midian and Ephah. Everyone from Sheba will come. They will bring gold and incense. They will sing the praises of the LORD.

<sup>7</sup>All of the flocks from Kedar will gather and come to you. The rams of Nebaioth will serve you. They will be sacrificed as acceptable offerings on my altar. So I will honor my beautiful temple.

<sup>8</sup>"Who are these people that fly by like clouds, like doves to their nests?

<sup>9</sup>Certainly, the coastlands wait with hope for me. The ships from Tarshish are

the first to bring your children from far away. Their silver and their gold comes with them to honor the name of the LORD your God, the Holy One of Israel, because he has honored you.

<sup>10</sup>"Foreigners will rebuild your walls, and their kings will serve you. In my anger I struck you, but in my favor I have compassion on you.

<sup>11</sup>Your gates will always be open. They will never be closed day or night so that people may bring you the wealth of nations, with their kings led as prisoners.

<sup>12</sup>Nations and kingdoms that do not serve you will be destroyed. The nations will certainly be ruined.

<sup>13</sup>"Lebanon's glory will come to you: Cedar, fir, and cypress trees will come to beautify my holy place, and I will honor the place where my feet rest.

<sup>14</sup>The descendants of those who oppress you will bow in front of you. All who despise you will bow at your feet. They will call you the city of the LORD, Zion, the city of the Holy One of Israel.

<sup>15</sup>"You have been abandoned and hated; no one has passed through you. But now I will make you a source

of everlasting pride, a joy for all generations.

<sup>16</sup>You will drink milk from other nations and nurse at royal breasts. Then you will know that I am the LORD, your Savior, the Mighty One of Jacob, your Defender.

<sup>17</sup>I will bring gold instead of bronze. I will bring silver instead of iron, bronze instead of wood, and iron instead of stone. I will appoint peace as your governor and righteousness as your ruler.

<sup>18</sup>No longer will you hear about violence in your land or desolation and destruction within your borders. You will call your walls Salvation and your gates Praise.

<sup>19</sup>The sun will no longer be your light during the day, nor will the brightness of the moon give you light, But the LORD will be your everlasting light. Your God will be your glory.

<sup>20</sup>Your sun will no longer go down, nor will your moon disappear. The LORD will be your everlasting light, and your days of sadness will be over.

<sup>21</sup>Then all your people will be righteous, and they will possess the land

permanently. They will be the seedling I have planted, the honored work of my hands.

<sup>22</sup>The smallest of them will become a family. The weakest of them will become a mighty nation. At the right time I, the LORD, will make it happen quickly."

**61** <sup>1</sup>The Spirit of the Almighty LORD is with me because the LORD has anointed me to deliver good news to humble people. He has sent me to heal those who are brokenhearted, to announce that captives will be set free and prisoners will be released.

<sup>2</sup>He has sent me to announce the year of the LORDS good will and the day of our Gods vengeance, to comfort all those who grieve.

<sup>3</sup>He has sent me to provide for all those who grieve in Zion, to give them crowns instead of ashes, the oil of joy instead of tears of grief, and clothes of praise instead of a spirit of weakness. They will be called Oaks of Righteousness, the Plantings of the LORD, so that he might display his glory.

<sup>4</sup>They will rebuild the ancient ruins. They will restore the places destroyed

long ago. They will renew the ruined cities, the places destroyed generations ago.

<sup>5</sup> Foreigners will come forward and become shepherds for your flocks, and children of foreigners will work your fields and vineyards.

<sup>6</sup> You will be called the priests of the LORD. You will be called the servants of our God. You will consume the wealth of the nations. You will boast in their splendor.

<sup>7</sup> You will receive a double measure of wealth instead of your shame. You will sing about your wealth instead of being disgraced. That is why you will have a double measure of wealth in your land. You will have everlasting joy.

<sup>8</sup> I, the LORD, love justice. I hate robbery and wrongdoing. I will faithfully reward my peoples work. I will make an everlasting promise to them.

<sup>9</sup> Then their offspring will be known among the nations and their descendants among the people. Everyone who sees them will recognize that they are the descendants whom the LORD has blessed.

<sup>10</sup>I will find joy in the LORD. I will delight in my God. He has dressed me in the clothes of salvation. He has wrapped me in the robe of righteousness like a bridegroom with a priests turban, like a bride with her jewels.

<sup>11</sup>Like the ground that brings forth its crops and like a garden that makes the seed in it grow, so the Almighty LORD will make righteousness and praise spring up in front of all nations.

**62**<sup>1</sup> For Zions sake I will not remain silent. For Jerusalems sake I will not rest, until its righteousness shines like the dawn and its salvation burns brightly like a torch.

<sup>2</sup>The nations will see your righteousness. All kings will see your glory. You will be given a new name that the LORD will announce.

<sup>3</sup>Then you will be a beautiful crown in the hand of the LORD, a royal crown in the hand of your God.

<sup>4</sup>You will no longer be called Deserted, and your land will no longer be called Destroyed. But you will be named My Delight, and your land will be named

Married. The LORD is delighted with you, and your land will be married.

<sup>5</sup>As a young man marries a woman, so your sons will marry you. As a bridegroom rejoices over his bride, so your God will rejoice over you.

<sup>6</sup>I have posted watchmen on your walls, Jerusalem. They will never be silent day or night. Whoever calls on the LORD, do not give yourselves any rest,

<sup>7</sup>and do not give him any rest until he establishes Jerusalem and makes it an object of praise throughout the earth.

<sup>8</sup>The LORD has sworn with his right hand and with his mighty arm, "I will never again let your enemies eat your grain, nor will foreigners drink the new wine which you made."

<sup>9</sup>Those who harvest grain will eat it and praise the LORD. Those who gather grapes will drink wine in my holy courtyards.

<sup>10</sup>Go through! Go through the gates! Prepare a way for the people! Build up! Build up the highway! Clear away the stones! Raise a flag for the people!

<sup>11</sup>The LORD has announced to the ends of the earth: "Tell my people Zion, Your

Savior is coming. His reward is with him, and the people he has won arrive ahead of him."

<sup>12</sup>They will be called Holy People, Those Reclaimed by the LORD, and you will be called Sought After, a City Not Deserted.

**63**<sup>1</sup>Who is this coming from Bozrah in Edom with his clothes stained bright red? Who is this dressed in splendor, going forward with great strength? "It is I, the LORD. I am coming to announce my victory. I am powerful enough to save you."

<sup>2</sup>Why are your clothes red and your garments like those who trample grapes in a winepress?

<sup>3</sup>"I have trampled alone in the winepress. No one was with me. In my anger I trampled on people. In my wrath I stomped on them. Their blood splattered my clothes so all my clothing has been stained.

<sup>4</sup>I planned the day of vengeance. The year for my reclaiming you has come.

<sup>5</sup>I looked, but there was no help. I was astounded that there was no outside support. So with my own power I won a victory. My anger supported me.

<sup>6</sup>In my anger I trampled on people. In my wrath I made them drunk and poured their blood on the ground."

<sup>7</sup>I will acknowledge the LORDS acts of mercy, and sing the praises of the LORD, because of everything that the LORD has done for us. He has done many good things for the nation of Israel because of his compassion and his unlimited mercy.

<sup>8</sup>He said, "They are my people, children who will not lie to me." So he became their Savior.

<sup>9</sup>In all their troubles he was troubled, and he was the Messenger who saved them. In his love and compassion he reclaimed them. He always held them and carried them in the past.

<sup>10</sup>But they rebelled and offended his Holy Spirit. So he turned against them as their enemy; he fought against them.

<sup>11</sup>Then his people remembered Moses and the distant past. Where is the one who brought them out of the sea with the shepherds of his flock? Where is the one who put his Holy Spirit in them?

<sup>12</sup>Where is the one who sent his powerful arm to support the right hand of Moses? Where is the one who divided

the water in front of them to make an everlasting name for himself?

<sup>13</sup>Where is the one who led them through the deep water? Like horses in the wilderness, they didnt stumble.

<sup>14</sup>Like animals going down into a valley, they were given rest by the LORDS Spirit. In this way you guided your people to make an honored name for yourself.

<sup>15</sup>Look down and see from heaven, from your holy and beautiful dwelling. Where is your determination and might? Where is the longing of your heart and your compassion? Dont hold back.

<sup>16</sup>You are our Father. Even though Abraham doesnt know us and Israel doesnt pay attention to us, O LORD, you are our Father. Your name is our Defender From Everlasting.

<sup>17</sup>O LORD, why do you let us wander from your ways and become so stubborn that we are unable to fear you? Return for the sake of your servants. They are the tribes that belong to you.

<sup>18</sup>Your holy people possessed the land for a little while. Our enemies have trampled on your holy place.

<sup>19</sup>We have become like those whom you never ruled, like those who are not called by your name.

**64** <sup>1</sup>If only you would split open the heavens and come down! The mountains would quake at your presence.

<sup>2</sup>Be like the fire that kindles brushwood and makes water boil. Come down to make your name known to your enemies. The nations will tremble in your presence.

<sup>3</sup>When you did aweinspiring things that we didnt expect, you came down and the mountains quaked in your presence.

<sup>4</sup>No one has ever heard, no one has paid attention, and no one has seen any god except you. You help those who wait for you.

<sup>5</sup>You greeted the one who gladly does right and remembers your ways. You showed your anger, because weve sinned. Weve continued to sin for a long time. Can we still be saved?

<sup>6</sup>Weve all become unclean, and all our righteous acts are like permanently stained rags. All of us shrivel like leaves, and our sins carry us away like the wind.

<sup>7</sup> No one calls on your name or tries to hold on to you. You have hidden your face from us. You have let us be ruined by our sins.

<sup>8</sup> But now, LORD, you are our Father. We are the clay, and you are our potter. We are the work of your hands.

<sup>9</sup> Don't be too angry, LORD. Don't remember our sin forever. Now look, we are all your people.

<sup>10</sup> Your holy cities have become a desert. Zion has become a desert. Jerusalem is a wasteland.

<sup>11</sup> Our holy and beautiful temple, where our ancestors praised you, has been burned to the ground. All that we valued has been ruined.

<sup>12</sup> Despite these things, LORD, will you hold back? Will you be silent and make us suffer more than we can bear?

**65** <sup>1</sup> I was ready to answer those who didn't ask. I was found by those who weren't looking for me. I said, "Here I am! Here I am!" to a nation that didn't worship me.

<sup>2</sup> I stretched out my hands all day long to stubborn people. They chose to go the

wrong direction. They followed their own plans.

<sup>3</sup>These people constantly and openly provoked me. They offered sacrifices in gardens and burnt incense on brick altars.

<sup>4</sup>They sat among the graves and spent their nights in caves. They ate pork and in their pots made broth from unclean foods.

<sup>5</sup>They said, "Stay away! Don't touch me! I'm holier than you are." They have become like smoke in my nose, like a smoldering fire all day long.

<sup>6</sup>"Look! It is written in front of me. I will not be silent, but I will repay. I will repay you in full.

<sup>7</sup>I will repay you for your sins and for the sins of your ancestors," says the LORD. They burnt incense on the mountains and slandered me on the hills, so I will be the first to pay them back in full.

<sup>8</sup>This is what the LORD says: When someone finds juice for new wine in a cluster of grapes, another person will say, "Don't destroy it, because there's a blessing in it." In the same way, I will do

this for my servants: I will not destroy everything.

<sup>9</sup>I will bring with me Jacobs descendant, one who will inherit my mountains from Judah. My chosen ones will inherit them. My servants will live there.

<sup>10</sup>The Sharon Plain will be a pasture for flocks. The Achor Valley will be a resting place for cattle and for my people who search for me.

<sup>11</sup>You have abandoned the LORD and forgotten my holy mountain. You have prepared a table for the god of good fortune and offered cups full of spiced wine to the goddess of destiny.

<sup>12</sup>Now I will destine you for death. All of you will bow to be slaughtered. I called, but you didnt answer. I spoke, but you didnt listen. You did what I consider evil. You chose what I dont like.

<sup>13</sup>This is what the LORD God says: My servants will eat, but you will be hungry. My servants will drink, but you will be thirsty. My servants will be glad, but you will be ashamed.

<sup>14</sup>My servants will sing because of the gladness in their hearts. But you will

cry because of your sadness and wail because of your depression.

<sup>15</sup>Your name will be used as a curse by my chosen ones. The Almighty LORD will kill you and call his servants by another name.

<sup>16</sup>Whoever asks for a blessing in the land will be blessed by the God of Truth. Whoever swears an oath in the land will swear by the God of Truth. Past troubles are forgotten. They are hidden from my eyes.

<sup>17</sup>I will create a new heaven and a new earth. Past things will not be remembered. They will not come to mind.

<sup>18</sup>Be glad, and rejoice forever in what I'm going to create, because I'm going to create Jerusalem to be a delight and its people to be a joy.

<sup>19</sup>I will rejoice about Jerusalem and be glad about my people. Screaming and crying will no longer be heard in the city.

<sup>20</sup>There will no longer be an infant who lives for only a few days or an old man who doesn't live a long life. Whoever lives to be a hundred years old will be thought of as young. Whoever dies before he is

a hundred years old will be cursed as a sinner.

<sup>21</sup> They will build houses and live there. They will plant vineyards and eat fruit from them.

<sup>22</sup> They will not build homes and have others live there. They will not plant and have others eat from it. My people will live as long as trees, and my chosen ones will enjoy what they've done.

<sup>23</sup> They will never again work for nothing. They will never again give birth to children who die young, because they will be offspring blessed by the LORD. The LORD will bless their descendants as well.

<sup>24</sup> Before they call, I will answer. While they're still speaking, I will hear.

<sup>25</sup> Wolves and lambs will feed together, lions will eat straw like oxen, and dust will be food for snakes. "They will not hurt or destroy anyone anywhere on my holy mountain," says the LORD.

**66**<sup>1</sup> This is what the LORD says: Heaven is my throne. The earth is my footstool. Where can you build a house or resting place for me?

<sup>2</sup>I have made all these things. "That is why all these things have come into being," declares the LORD. I will pay attention to those who are humble and sorry for their sins and who tremble at my word.

<sup>3</sup>Whoever kills a bull is like someone who kills a person. Whoever sacrifices a lamb is like someone who breaks a dog's neck. Whoever offers a grain sacrifice is like someone who offers pig's blood. Whoever burns incense is like someone who worships an idol. People have certainly chosen their own ways, and their souls delight in detestable things.

<sup>4</sup>So I will choose harsh treatment for them and bring on them what they fear. I called, but no one answered. I spoke, but they didn't listen. They did what I consider evil. They chose what I don't like.

<sup>5</sup>Listen to the word of the LORD, all who tremble at his word. Your relatives, who hate you and exclude you for my name's sake, say, "Let the LORD show his glory; then we will see your joy." But they will be put to shame.

<sup>6</sup> Listen to the uproar from the city. Listen to the sound from the temple. It is the sound of the LORD paying back his enemies as they deserve.

<sup>7</sup> Before a woman goes into labor, she gives birth. Before she has labor pains, she delivers a child.

<sup>8</sup> Who has heard of such a thing? Who has seen such things? Can a country be born in one day? Can a nation be born in a moment? When Zion went into labor, she also gave birth to her children.

<sup>9</sup> "Do I bring a mother to the moment of birth and not let her deliver?" asks the LORD. "Do I cause a mother to deliver and then make her unable to have children?" asks your God.

<sup>10</sup> All who love Jerusalem, be happy and rejoice with her. All who mourn for her, be glad with her.

<sup>11</sup> You will nurse and be satisfied from her comforting breasts. You will nurse to your hearts delight at her full breasts.

<sup>12</sup> This is what the LORD says: I will offer you peace like a river and the wealth of the nations like an overflowing stream. You will nurse and be carried

in Jerusalem's arms and cuddled on her knees.

<sup>13</sup>As a mother comforts her child, so will I comfort you. You will be comforted in Jerusalem.

<sup>14</sup>When you see it, your heart will rejoice and you will flourish like new grass. The power of the LORD will be made known to his servants, but he will condemn his enemies.

<sup>15</sup>The LORD will come with fire and with his chariots like a thunderstorm. He will pay them back with his burning anger and punish them with flames of fire.

<sup>16</sup>The LORD will judge with fire, and he will judge all people with his sword. Many people will be struck dead by the LORD.

<sup>17</sup>People make themselves holy and prepare themselves for their garden rituals. They go into the garden and devour pork, disgusting things, and mice. "They will come to an end at the same time," declares the LORD.

<sup>18</sup>Because of their actions and their thoughts, I am coming to gather the nations of every language. They will come and see my glory.

<sup>19</sup>I will set up a sign among them and send some of their survivors to the nations: to Tarshish, Put and Lud, Meshech, Rosh, Tubal, Javan, and to the distant coastlands who have not heard of my fame or seen my glory. They will tell about my glory among the nations.

<sup>20</sup>They will bring all your relatives from every nation like a grain offering to the LORD. "They will come on horses, in chariots, in wagons, on mules and camels to my holy mountain, Jerusalem," declares the LORD. They will come like the people of Israel who bring their grain offerings in clean dishes to the LORDS temple.

<sup>21</sup>"I will make some of them priests and Levites," declares the LORD.

<sup>22</sup>"The new heaven and earth that I am about to make will continue in my presence," declares the LORD. "So your descendants and your name will also continue in my presence.

<sup>23</sup>From one month to the next and from one week to the next all people will come to worship me," declares the LORD.

<sup>24</sup>Then they will go out and look at the corpses of those who have rebelled

against me. The worms that eat them will not die. The fire that burns them will not go out. All humanity will be disgusted by them.

# Jeremiah

**1** <sup>1</sup> These are the words of Jeremiah, son of Hilkiah. He was one of the priests at Anathoth in the territory of Benjamin.

<sup>2</sup> The LORD spoke his word to Jeremiah when King Josiah, son of Amon, was in his thirteenth year as king of Judah.

<sup>3</sup> The LORD also spoke when Jehoiakim, son of Josiah, was king of Judah and during the 11 years that Zedekiah, another son of Josiah, was king of Judah. The LORD continued to speak to Jeremiah until the people of Jerusalem were taken away into captivity in the fifth month of the year.

<sup>4</sup> The LORD spoke his word to me,

<sup>5</sup> "Before I formed you in the womb, I knew you. Before you were born, I set you apart for my holy purpose. I appointed you to be a prophet to the nations."

<sup>6</sup> I, Jeremiah, said, "Almighty LORD, I do not know how to speak. I am only a boy!"

<sup>7</sup> But the LORD said to me, "Don't say that you are only a boy. You will go wherever I send you. You will say whatever I command you to say.

<sup>8</sup> Don't be afraid of people. I am with you, and I will rescue you," declares the LORD.

<sup>9</sup> Then the LORD stretched out his hand and touched my mouth. The LORD said to me, "Now I have put my words in your mouth.

<sup>10</sup> Today I have put you in charge of nations and kingdoms. You will uproot and tear down. You will destroy and overthrow. You will build and plant."

<sup>11</sup> Again the LORD spoke his word to me and asked, "Jeremiah, what do you see?" I answered, "I see a branch of an almond tree."

<sup>12</sup> Then the LORD said to me, "Right. I am watching to make sure that my words come true."

<sup>13</sup> Again the LORD spoke his word to me and asked, "What do you see?" I answered, "I see a boiling pot, and its top is tilted away from the north."

<sup>14</sup>Then the LORD said to me, "Disaster will be poured out from the north on all those who live in the land.

<sup>15</sup>I am going to call every family and kingdom from the north," declares the LORD. "They will come, and they will set up their thrones at the entrance of Jerusalem's gates. They will attack all the walls around the city and all the cities of Judah.

<sup>16</sup>I will pass sentence on my people because of all their wickedness. They abandoned me, burned incense to other gods, and worshiped what their hands have made.

<sup>17</sup>Brace yourself, Jeremiah! Stand up, and say to them whatever I tell you to say. Don't be terrified in their presence, or I will make you even more terrified in their presence.

<sup>18</sup>Today I have made you like a fortified city, an iron pillar, and a bronze wall. You will be able to stand up to the whole land. You will be able to stand up to Judah's kings, its officials, its priests, and all the common people.

<sup>19</sup>They will fight you, but they will not defeat you. I am with you, and I will rescue you," declares the LORD.

**2**<sup>1</sup>The LORD spoke his word to me,  
<sup>2</sup>"Go and announce to Jerusalem, This is what the LORD says: I remember the unfailing loyalty of your youth, the love you had for me as a bride. I remember how you followed me into the desert, into a land that couldn't be farmed.

<sup>3</sup>Israel was set apart for the LORD. It was the best part of the harvest. All who devoured it became guilty, and disaster struck them," declares the LORD.

<sup>4</sup>Listen to the word of the LORD, descendants of Jacob, all the families in the nation of Israel.

<sup>5</sup>This is what the LORD says: What did your ancestors find wrong with me that they went so far away from me? They followed worthless idols and became worthless themselves.

<sup>6</sup>They didn't ask, "Where is the LORD, who brought us from Egypt? He led us through the desert, through a wasteland and its pits, a land of drought and the

shadow of death. No one lives there or travels there."

<sup>7</sup>I brought them into a fertile land to eat its fruit and its produce. They came and made my land unclean. They made my property disgusting.

<sup>8</sup>The priests didnt ask, "Where is the LORD?" Those who deal with my teachings didnt know me. The rulers rebelled against me. The prophets prophesied in the name of Baal and followed statues that couldnt help them.

<sup>9</sup>"That is why I am bringing charges against you," declares the LORD, "and I am bringing charges against your grandchildren.

<sup>10</sup>Go over to the coasts of Cyprus, and see. Send someone to Kedar, and observe closely. See if there has ever been anything like this.

<sup>11</sup>Has any nation ever exchanged gods? (Their gods arent really gods.) Yet, my people have exchanged their Glory for something that doesnt help them.

<sup>12</sup>Be horrified over this, heaven. Be terribly afraid," declares the LORD.

<sup>13</sup>"My people have done two things wrong. They have abandoned me, the

fountain of lifegiving water. They have also dug their own cisterns, broken cisterns that cant hold water.

<sup>14</sup>"Are the people of Israel slaves? Were they born into slavery? Why, then, have they become someones property?

<sup>15</sup>Young lions have roared very loudly at them. Young lions have turned the land into a wasteland. The cities have been burned down, and everyone has left.

<sup>16</sup>People from Noph and Tahpanhes have cracked your skulls, Israel.

<sup>17</sup>You have brought this on yourself by abandoning the LORD your God when he led you on his way.

<sup>18</sup>You wont gain anything by going to Egypt to drink water from the Nile River. You wont gain anything by going to Assyria to drink water from the Euphrates River.

<sup>19</sup>Your own wickedness will correct you, and your unfaithful ways will punish you. You should know and see how evil and bitter it is for you if you abandon the LORD your God and do not fear me," declares the Almighty LORD of Armies.

<sup>20</sup>"Long ago you broke off your yoke, tore off your chains, and said that you wouldnt be a slave. You lay down and acted like a prostitute on every high hill and under every large tree.

<sup>21</sup> I planted you like a choice grapevine from the very best seed. Now you have turned against me and have become a wild vine.

<sup>22</sup> Even if you wash with detergent and use a lot of soap, I would still see the stains from your wickedness," declares the Almighty LORD.

<sup>23</sup> "How can you say that you havent dishonored yourselves and havent followed other godsthe Baals? Look how youve behaved in the valley. Acknowledge what youve done. You are like a young camel that swiftly runs here and there.

<sup>24</sup> You are like a wild donkey that is used to the desert, sniffing the wind while in heat. All who look for you wont get tired. They will find you during your monthly period.

<sup>25</sup> Dont run until your feet are bare and your throats are dry. But you say that its

useless. You love foreign gods and follow them.

<sup>26</sup>"As a thief feels ashamed when hes caught, so the nation of Israel will feel ashamed. Their kings, princes, priests, and prophets will also feel ashamed.

<sup>27</sup>You call wood your father. You call stone your mother. Youve turned your backs, not your faces, to me. But when youre in trouble, you ask me to come and rescue you.

<sup>28</sup>Where are the gods that you made for yourselves? Let them come and rescue you when youre in trouble. You have as many gods as you have cities, Judah!

<sup>29</sup>"Why do you complain about me? All of you have rebelled against me," declares the LORD.

<sup>30</sup>"I have punished your children without results. They didnt respond to correction. You killed my prophets like a raging lion.

<sup>31</sup>"Consider the word of the LORD, people of this generation. Havent I been a desert, a land of thick darkness, for Israel? Why do my people say that they

are free to wander around and no longer come to me?

<sup>32</sup>A young woman can't forget her jewelry or a bride her veils. Yet, my people have forgotten me for countless days.

<sup>33</sup>You carefully planned ways to look for love. You taught your ways to wicked women.

<sup>34</sup>You have the blood from poor and innocent people on your clothes. You didn't kill them for breaking in to your home.

<sup>35</sup>In spite of all this you say, I'm innocent. God will turn his anger from me, because I haven't sinned.

<sup>36</sup>You change your mind so easily. You will be put to shame by Egypt as you were put to shame by Assyria.

<sup>37</sup>You will also leave this place with your hands over your head, because the LORD has rejected those you trust. You will not be helped by them."

**3**<sup>1</sup>A saying: If a man divorces his wife and she leaves him and marries another man, her first husband shouldn't go back to her again. The land would become thoroughly polluted. "You have

acted like a prostitute who has many lovers. And now you want to come back to me!" declares the LORD.

<sup>2</sup>"Look at the bare hills, and see. You have had sex with men in every place. You sat by the roadside waiting for them like a nomad in the desert. You have polluted the land with your prostitution and wickedness.

<sup>3</sup>So the rain has been withheld, and there have been no spring showers. Yet, you have the shameless look of a prostitute, and you refuse to blush.

<sup>4</sup>But now you are calling to me. You say, Father! You have been my companion ever since I was young.

<sup>5</sup>He wont hold a grudge forever. He wont always be angry. You have said and done all the evil things that you could."

<sup>6</sup>When Josiah was king, the LORD asked me, "Did you see what unfaithful Israel did? She went up every high mountain and under every large tree, and she acted like a prostitute there.

<sup>7</sup>I thought that after she had done all this that she would come back to me. But she didnt come back, and her treacherous sister Judah saw her.

<sup>8</sup>Judah saw that I sent unfaithful Israel away because of her adultery and that I gave Israel her divorce papers. But treacherous Judah, her sister, wasn't afraid. She also acted like a prostitute.

<sup>9</sup>Because she wasn't concerned about acting like a prostitute, she polluted the land and committed adultery with standing stones and wood pillars.

<sup>10</sup>Even after all this, Israel's treacherous sister Judah didn't wholeheartedly come back to me. She was deceitful," declares the LORD.

<sup>11</sup>Then the LORD said to me, "Unfaithful Israel was less guilty than treacherous Judah.

<sup>12</sup>Go and proclaim these things to the north: "Come back, unfaithful Israel. It is the LORD speaking. I will no longer frown on you because I'm merciful," declares the LORD. I will no longer be angry with you.

<sup>13</sup>Admit that you've done wrong! You have rebelled against the LORD your God. You have given yourself to strangers under every large tree. You have not obeyed me, declares the LORD.

<sup>14</sup>"Come back, you rebellious people," declares the LORD. "I'm your husband. I will take you, one from every city and two from every family, and bring you to Zion.

<sup>15</sup>I will give you shepherds after my own heart. They will be shepherds who feed you with knowledge and insight.

<sup>16</sup>In those days you will be fertile, and your population will increase in the land," declares the LORD. "People will no longer talk about the ark of the LORDS promise. It will no longer come to mind. They wont remember it, miss it, or make another one.

<sup>17</sup>At that time they will call Jerusalem the throne of the LORD. All nations will gather in Jerusalem because the name of the LORD will be found there. They will no longer follow their own stubborn, evil ways.

<sup>18</sup>In those days the nation of Judah will live with the nation of Israel. They will come together from the land of the north to the land that I gave their ancestors as their own property.

<sup>19</sup>"I wanted to treat you like children and give you a pleasant land, the most

beautiful property among the nations. I thought that you would call me Father and wouldn't turn away from me.

<sup>20</sup>But like a wife who betrays her husband, so you, nation of Israel, betrayed me," declares the LORD.

<sup>21</sup>The sound of crying is heard on the hills. It is the crying and the pleading of the people of Israel. They have become crooked and have forgotten the LORD their God.

<sup>22</sup>"Come back, you rebellious people, and I will forgive you for being unfaithful." Here we are! We have come to you because you are the LORD our God.

<sup>23</sup>Truly, the noise from the hills, from the mountains, is the noise of false worship. Truly, the LORD our God will rescue us.

<sup>24</sup>Ever since we were young, the shameful worship of Baal has taken everything our ancestors worked for, their flocks and herds, their sons and daughters.

<sup>25</sup>We must lie down in our shame and be covered by our disgrace. Ever since we were young, we and our ancestors

have sinned against the LORD our God.  
We havent obeyed the LORD our God.

**4**<sup>1</sup>The LORD declares, "If you come back, Israel, if you come back to me, if you take your disgusting idols out of my sight and you dont wander away from me,

<sup>2</sup>if you take the oath, "As the LORD lives" in an honest, fair, and right way, then the nations will be blessed, and they will be honored by me."

<sup>3</sup>This is what the LORD says to the people of Judah and to Jerusalem: Plow your unplowed fields, and dont plant among thorns.

<sup>4</sup>Be circumcised by the LORD, and get rid of the foreskins of your hearts, people of Judah and inhabitants of Jerusalem. If you dont, my fury will flare up like a fire. It will burn, and no one will be able to put it out, because of the evil you do.

<sup>5</sup>Report this message in Judah. Make it heard in Jerusalem. Say, "Blow the rams horn throughout the land." Shout loudly and say, "Gather together! Lets go into the fortified cities."

<sup>6</sup>Raise the flag to signal people to go to Zion. Take cover! Dont just stand there!

I'm bringing disaster and widespread destruction from the north.

<sup>7</sup>A lion has come out of its lair. A destroyer of nations has set out. He has left his place to destroy your land. Your cities will be ruined, and no one will live in them.

<sup>8</sup>So put on sackcloth, mourn, and cry because the LORDS burning anger hasn't turned away from us.

<sup>9</sup>"When that day comes," declares the LORD, "the king and the leaders will lose their courage. The priests will be stunned. The prophets will be amazed and astonished."

<sup>10</sup>I said, "Almighty LORD, you certainly have deceived these people and Jerusalem. You said that everything would go well for them, but a sword is held at their throats."

<sup>11</sup>At that time it will be said to these people and to Jerusalem: "A hot wind from the heights will blow in the desert on the tracks of my people. It will not be a wind that winnows or cleanses.

<sup>12</sup>It will be a stronger wind than that. It will come from me. Now, I will pass sentence on them."

<sup>13</sup>The enemy comes up like clouds. His chariots are like a raging wind. His horses are faster than eagles. How horrible it will be for us! We will be destroyed!

<sup>14</sup>Jerusalem, wash the evil from your heart so that you may be rescued. Don't continue making evil plans.

<sup>15</sup>A message is heard from Dan, and a report of disaster comes from the mountains of Ephraim.

<sup>16</sup>Warn the nations about these things. Bring them to the attention of Jerusalem. "Hostile troops are coming from a distant country. They are shouting battle cries against the cities of Judah.

<sup>17</sup>They surround them like men guarding a field, because Judah has rebelled against me," declares the LORD.

<sup>18</sup>"You brought this on yourself. This is your punishment. It is bitter. It breaks your heart."

<sup>19</sup>My anguish, my anguish! I writhe in pain. My heart is beating wildly! My heart is pounding! I can't keep quiet because I hear a ram's horn sounding the alarm for war.

<sup>20</sup>One disaster follows another. The whole land is ruined. My tents are suddenly destroyed. Their curtains are torn in an instant.

<sup>21</sup>How long must I see the battle flag and hear the sound of rams horns?

<sup>22</sup>"My people are fools. They dont know me. They are stupid people. They dont understand. They are experts in doing wrong, and they dont know how to do good."

<sup>23</sup>I see the earth. Its formless and empty. I see the sky. Its lights are gone.

<sup>24</sup>I see the mountains. They are shaking, and the hills are swaying.

<sup>25</sup>I see that there are no people, and every bird has flown away.

<sup>26</sup>I see that the fertile land has become a desert, and all its cities are torn down because of the LORD and his burning anger.

<sup>27</sup>This is what the LORD says: The whole earth will be ruined, although I will not destroy it completely.

<sup>28</sup>The earth will mourn, and the sky will grow black. I have spoken, and I have planned it. I wont change my plans, and I wont turn back.

<sup>29</sup>All the people in the city will flee at the sound of riders and archers. They will go off into the thickets and climb among the rocks. The entire city will be abandoned, and no one will live in it.

<sup>30</sup>You are going to be destroyed! What are you going to do? Why do you dress in red and put on gold jewelry? Why do you wear eye shadow? You are making yourself beautiful for nothing. Your lovers reject you; they want to kill you.

<sup>31</sup>I hear a woman in labor. I hear the woman cry with anguish as she gives birth to her first child. My people Zion are gasping for breath. They are stretching out their hands, saying, "How horrible it is for us! We're defenseless in the presence of murderers!"

**5**<sup>1</sup>Walk around the streets of Jerusalem. Look around, and think about these things. Search the city squares. See if you can find anyone who does what is right and seeks the truth. Then I will forgive Jerusalem.

<sup>2</sup>People say, "As the LORD lives." Yet, they lie when they take this oath.

<sup>3</sup>LORD, your eyes look for the truth. You strike these people, but they don't

feel it. You crush them, but they refuse to be corrected. They are more stubborn than rocks. They refuse to turn back.

<sup>4</sup>I thought, "These are poor, foolish people. They don't know the way of the LORD and the justice that God demands.

<sup>5</sup>Let me go to important people and speak to them. They know the way of the LORD and the justice that God demands." But they, too, had broken off their yokes and torn off their chains.

<sup>6</sup>That is why a lion from the forest will attack them. A wolf from the wilderness will destroy them. A leopard will lie in ambush outside their cities. All who leave the cities will be torn to pieces, because they rebel so often and they become more and more unfaithful.

<sup>7</sup>"Why should I forgive you? Your children abandoned me. They took godless oaths. They committed adultery, even though I satisfied their needs. They traveled in crowds to the houses of prostitutes.

<sup>8</sup>They are like well-fed stallions that are wild with desire. They neigh for their neighbors' wives.

<sup>9</sup> "I will punish them for these things," declares the LORD. "I will punish this nation.

<sup>10</sup> "Go among Jerusalem's rows of grapevines and destroy them, but don't destroy all of them. Cut off the branches because they don't belong to the LORD.

<sup>11</sup> "The nations of Israel and Judah are unfaithful to me," declares the LORD.

<sup>12</sup> "They lie about the LORD and say, 'He doesn't exist! Nothing bad will happen to us. We won't experience war or famine.

<sup>13</sup> "The prophets are nothing but windbags. The LORD hasn't spoken through them, so let what they say happen to them."

<sup>14</sup> "This is what the LORD God of Armies says: Because you've talked like this, I'm going to put my words in your mouth like a fire. These people will be like wood. My words will burn them up.

<sup>15</sup> "Nation of Israel, I'm going to bring a nation from far away to attack you," declares the LORD. "It is a nation that has lasted a long time. It is an ancient nation. You don't know the language of this nation. You can't understand what its people say."

<sup>16</sup>Their arrow quivers are like open graves. They are all mighty warriors.

<sup>17</sup>They will devour your harvest and your food. They will devour your sons and your daughters. They will devour your flocks and your cattle. They will devour your grapevines and your fig trees. With their swords they will destroy the fortified cities you trust.

<sup>18</sup>Yet, even in those days, declares the LORD, I wont destroy all of you.

<sup>19</sup>They will ask, "Why has the LORD our God done all this to us?" Answer them, "You have abandoned me and served foreign gods in your land. So you will serve foreigners in a land that isnt yours."

<sup>20</sup>"Tell this to the descendants of Jacob, and make this heard in Judah:

<sup>21</sup>Hear this, you stupid and senseless people! You have eyes, but you cannot see. You have ears, but you cannot hear.

<sup>22</sup>Dont you fear me?" asks the LORD. "Dont you tremble in my presence? I made the sand a boundary for the sea, a permanent barrier that it cannot cross. Although the waves toss continuously,

they can't break through. Although they roar, they can't cross it.

<sup>23</sup> But these people are stubborn and rebellious. They have turned aside and wandered away from me.

<sup>24</sup> They don't say to themselves, We should fear the LORD our God. He sends rain at the right time, the autumn rain and the spring rain. He makes sure that we have harvest seasons.

<sup>25</sup> Your wickedness has turned these things away. Your sins have kept good things away from you.

<sup>26</sup> "Wicked people are found among my people. They lie in ambush like bird catchers. They set traps and catch people.

<sup>27</sup> Like cages filled with birds, their houses are filled with deceit. That is why they become powerful and rich.

<sup>28</sup> They grow big and fat. Their evil deeds have no limits. They have no respect for the rights of others. They have no respect for the rights of orphans. But they still prosper. They don't defend the rights of the poor.

<sup>29</sup> "I will punish them for these things," declares the LORD. "I will punish this nation.

<sup>30</sup> "Something horrible and disgusting is happening in the land:

<sup>31</sup> "Prophets prophesy lies. Priests rule under the prophets' directions, and my people love this. But what will you do in the end?"

**6**<sup>1</sup> "Take cover, people of Benjamin! Run away from Jerusalem! Blow the rams horn in Tekoa. Raise the flag over Beth Hakkerem, because disaster and widespread destruction are coming from the north.

<sup>2</sup> "My people Zion are like lovely pastures.

<sup>3</sup> "With their flocks, shepherds will come to them, pitch their tents all around them, and each of them will tend his own flock.

<sup>4</sup> "The shepherds say, 'Prepare yourselves for war against Zion. Let's attack at noon! How horrible it will be for us. The day is passing, and the shadows of evening are growing longer.'

<sup>5</sup> "Let's attack at night and destroy its palaces."

<sup>6</sup>This is what the LORD of Armies says: Cut down its trees. Build up dirt mounds to attack Jerusalem. This city must be punished. There is nothing but oppression in it.

<sup>7</sup>As a well keeps its water fresh, so Jerusalem keeps its evil fresh. Violence and destruction can be heard in it. I see that it is sick and wounded.

<sup>8</sup>Pay attention to my warning, Jerusalem, or I will turn away from you. I will make your land desolate, a land where no one will live.

<sup>9</sup>This is what the LORD of Armies says: Thoroughly pick through the faithful few of Israel like someone picks through a grapevine. Like someone picking grapes, pass your hand over its branches again.

<sup>10</sup>Whom can I speak to? Whom can I give a warning to? Who will listen? Their ears are plugged, and they aren't able to pay attention. When the LORD speaks his word to them, they show contempt for it and object to it.

<sup>11</sup>I am filled with the anger of the LORD. I am tired of holding it in. "Pour it out on the children in the street and on the gangs of young men. A man and his

wife will be taken away as well as very old people.

<sup>12</sup>Their households, their fields, and their wives will be turned over to others. I will use my power against those who live in the land," declares the LORD.

<sup>13</sup>"All of them, from the least important to the most important, are eager to make money dishonestly. All of them, from prophets to priests, act deceitfully.

<sup>14</sup>They treat my peoples wounds as though they were not serious, saying, Everything is alright! Everything is alright! But its not alright.

<sup>15</sup>Are they ashamed when they do disgusting things? No, theyre not ashamed. They dont even know how to blush. So they will die with those who die. They will be brought down when I punish them," says the LORD.

<sup>16</sup>This is what the LORD says: Stand at the crossroads and look. Ask which paths are the old, reliable paths. Ask which way leads to blessings. Live that way, and find a resting place for yourselves. But you said that you wouldnt live that way.

<sup>17</sup>I posted watchmen over you. Pay attention to the sound of the rams horn. But you said that you wouldnt pay attention.

<sup>18</sup>Listen, you nations, and learn, you witnesses, what will happen to them.

<sup>19</sup>Listen, earth! Im going to bring disaster on these people. It is the result of their own plots, because they wont pay attention to my words. They reject my teachings.

<sup>20</sup>Incense that comes from Sheba is no good to me. Sugar cane that comes from a distant land is no good to me. I wont accept your burnt offerings. Im not pleased with your sacrifices.

<sup>21</sup>This is what the LORD says: Im going to lay stumbling blocks in front of these people. Parents and children will stumble over them. Neighbors and their friends will die.

<sup>22</sup>This is what the LORD says: An army is going to come from the north. A great nation is preparing itself in the distant parts of the earth.

<sup>23</sup>Its people take hold of bows and spears. They are cruel and have no compassion. They sound like the roaring

sea. They ride on horses. They march like soldiers ready for battle against my people Zion.

<sup>24</sup>We have heard the news about them. Our hands hang limp. We are gripped by anguish and pain like a woman giving birth to a child.

<sup>25</sup>Dont go into the field or walk on the road. The enemy has a sword. Terror is all around.

<sup>26</sup>Wear sackcloth, and roll around in ashes, my people. Mourn as if you have lost your only child, and cry bitterly. The destroyer will suddenly attack us.

<sup>27</sup>"Jeremiah, I have put you in charge of testing and refining my people. You will know how to test their ways.

<sup>28</sup>They are all vicious rebels. They go around slandering. They are all like bronze and iron. They corrupt themselves.

<sup>29</sup>The bellows of the blast furnace blow fiercely to make the fire melt away the lead. It is useless to go on refining because the impurities cant be removed.

<sup>30</sup>People will call them useless silver because the LORD has rejected them."

**7**<sup>1</sup> The LORD spoke his word to Jeremiah. He said,

<sup>2</sup>"Stand at the gate of the LORDS house, and announce from there this message: Listen to the word of the LORD, all you people of Judah who go through these gates to worship the LORD.

<sup>3</sup>This is what the LORD of Armies, the God of Israel, says: Change the way you live and act, and I will let you live in this place.

<sup>4</sup>Do not trust the words of this saying, "This is the LORDS temple, the LORDS temple, the LORDS temple!" Its a lie.

<sup>5</sup>"Suppose you really change the way you live and act and you really treat each other fairly.

<sup>6</sup>Suppose you do not oppress foreigners, orphans, and widows, or kill anyone in this place. And suppose you do not follow other gods that lead you to your own destruction.

<sup>7</sup>Then I will let you live in this place, in the land that I gave permanently to your ancestors long ago.

<sup>8</sup>"You are trusting the words of a saying. Its a lie that cannot help you.

<sup>9</sup>You steal, murder, commit adultery, lie when you take oaths, burn incense as an offering to Baal, and run after other gods that you do not know.

<sup>10</sup>Then you stand in my presence in the house that is called by my name. You think that you're safe to do all these disgusting things.

<sup>11</sup>The house that is called by my name has become a gathering place for thieves. I have seen what you are doing," declares the LORD.

<sup>12</sup>"But go to my place that was at Shiloh, where I first made a dwelling place for my name. See what I did to Shiloh because of the evil done by my people Israel.

<sup>13</sup>You have done the same things the people did at Shiloh," declares the LORD. "Although I spoke to you again and again, you did not listen. When I called you, you did not answer.

<sup>14</sup>So what I did to Shiloh I will now do to the house that is called by my name. This is the place I gave to you and to your ancestors, the place where you feel so safe.

<sup>15</sup>I will force you out of my sight as I forced out all your relatives, all of Ephraim's descendants.

<sup>16</sup>"Jeremiah, don't pray for these people. Don't cry or pray for them. Don't plead with me, because I will not listen to you.

<sup>17</sup>Don't you see what they are doing in the cities of Judah and in the streets of Jerusalem?

<sup>18</sup>Children gather wood, fathers light fires, and women knead dough to make cakes for the queen of heaven. They pour out wine offerings to other gods in order to make me furious.

<sup>19</sup>"They aren't really provoking me," declares the LORD. "But they are harming themselves to their own shame.

<sup>20</sup>"This is what the Almighty LORD says: My anger and fury will be poured out on this place, on humans and animals, and on trees and crops. My anger and fury will burn and not be put out.

<sup>21</sup>"This is what the LORD of Armies, the God of Israel, says: Add your burnt offerings to your sacrifices, and eat the meat.

<sup>22</sup>When I brought your ancestors out of Egypt, I did not tell them anything about burnt offerings and sacrifices.

<sup>23</sup>But I did tell them this, Obey me, and I will be your God, and you will be my people. Live the way I told you to live so that things will go well for you.

<sup>24</sup>But they didnt obey me or pay attention to me. They followed their own plans and their stubborn, evil ways. They went backward and not forward.

<sup>25</sup>From the time that your ancestors left Egypt until now, I have sent all my servants the prophets to you again and again.

<sup>26</sup>But you didnt obey me or pay attention to me. You became impossible to deal with, and you were worse than your ancestors.

<sup>27</sup>"Jeremiah, you will say all these things to them, but they will not obey you. You will call to them, but they will not respond to you.

<sup>28</sup>You will say to them, This is the nation that did not obey the LORD their God. They did not accept discipline. Truth has disappeared and vanished from their lips.

<sup>29</sup>"Cut off your hair and throw it away. Sing a song of mourning on the bare hills, because in his anger the LORD has rejected and abandoned the people of this generation.

<sup>30</sup>The people of Judah have done what I consider evil," declares the LORD." They set up their detestable idols in the house that is called by my name. They have made it unclean.

<sup>31</sup>They have built worship sites at Topheth in the valley of Ben Hinnom in order to burn their sons and daughters as sacrifices. I did not ask for this. It never entered my mind.

<sup>32</sup>"That is why the days are coming," declares the LORD, "when that place will no longer be known as Topheth or the valley of Ben Hinnom. Instead, it will be known as Slaughter Valley. They will bury people at Topheth because no other place will be left.

<sup>33</sup>The dead bodies of these people will become food for birds and animals, and no one will be there to frighten them away.

<sup>34</sup>In the cities of Judah and in the streets of Jerusalem, I will banish the

sounds of joy and happiness and the sounds of brides and grooms, because the land will be a wasteland."

**8**<sup>1</sup> The LORD declares, "At that time the bones of the kings and the leaders of Judah, the bones of the priests and the prophets, and the bones of the others who lived in Jerusalem will be taken out of their graves.

<sup>2</sup> They will be spread out and exposed to the sun, the moon, and all the stars in the sky. These are the things that they had loved, served, gone after, sought, and worshiped. Their bones will not be gathered or buried, but they will become manure on the ground.

<sup>3</sup> "Then the few who remain from these wicked people will want to die rather than live where I will scatter them," declares the LORD of Armies.

<sup>4</sup> "Say to them, This is what the LORD says: When someone falls, he gets back up. When someone turns away from me, he returns.

<sup>5</sup> The people of Jerusalem turned away from me without ever returning. They still cling to deceit. They refuse to return.

<sup>6</sup>I have paid attention and listened, but they weren't honest. They don't turn away from their wickedness and ask, "What have we done?" They go their own ways like horses charging into battle.

<sup>7</sup>Even storks know when it's time to return. Mourning doves, swallows, and cranes know when it's time to migrate. But my people don't know that I, the LORD, am urging them to return.

<sup>8</sup>"How can you say that you are wise and that you have the LORDS teachings? The scribes have used their pens to turn these teachings into lies.

<sup>9</sup>Wise people are put to shame, confused, and trapped. They have rejected the word of the LORD. They don't really have any wisdom.

<sup>10</sup>That is why I will give their wives to other men and their fields to new owners. All of them, from the least important to the most important, are eager to make money dishonestly. All of them, from prophets to priests, act deceitfully.

<sup>11</sup>They treat my dear people's wounds as though they were not serious, saying,

"Everything is alright! Everything is alright!" But its not alright.

<sup>12</sup>Are they ashamed that they do disgusting things? No, theyre not ashamed. They dont even know how to blush. So they will die with those who die. They will be brought down when I punish them," says the LORD.

<sup>13</sup>"I would have gathered their harvest," declares the LORD, "but there are no grapes on the vine. There are no figs on the tree, and the leaves have dried up. What I have given them will be taken away."

<sup>14</sup>Why are we just sitting here? Lets get up! Lets go into the fortified cities and die there. The LORD our God has condemned us to die. He has given us poison to drink because we have sinned against the LORD.

<sup>15</sup>We hoped for peace, but nothing good has happened. We hoped for a time of healing, but theres only terror.

<sup>16</sup>The snorting of horses can be heard from Dan. The neighing of stallions makes the whole land tremble. They are coming to devour the land and everything in it, the city and its people.

<sup>17</sup> "I am going to send snakes among you, vipers that can't be charmed. They will bite you," declares the LORD.

<sup>18</sup> Sorrow has overwhelmed me. I am sick at heart!

<sup>19</sup> The cry from my dear people comes from a distant land: "Isn't the LORD in Zion? Isn't Zion's king still there?" They make me furious with their idols, with their foreign gods.

<sup>20</sup> The harvest is past, the summer has ended, and we haven't been saved.

<sup>21</sup> I am crushed because my dear people have been crushed. I mourn; terror grips me.

<sup>22</sup> Isn't there medicine in Gilead? Aren't there doctors there? Then why hasn't the health of my dear people been restored?

**9**<sup>1</sup> "I wish that my head were filled with water and my eyes were a fountain of tears so that I could cry day and night for my dear people who have been killed.

<sup>2</sup> I wish I had a place to stay in the desert. I would abandon my people and go away from them. They are all adulterers, a mob of traitors.

<sup>3</sup>They use their tongues like bows that shoot arrows. Lies and dishonesty rule the land. They go from one evil thing to another, and they don't know me," declares the LORD.

<sup>4</sup>"Beware of your neighbors. Don't trust your relatives. Every relative cheats. Every neighbor goes around slandering.

<sup>5</sup>Everyone cheats his neighbor. No one speaks the truth. My people train their tongues to speak lies. They wear themselves out doing wrong.

<sup>6</sup>Oppression follows oppression. Deceit follows deceit. They refuse to acknowledge me," declares the LORD.

<sup>7</sup>This is what the LORD of Armies says: I will now refine them with fire and test them. What else can I do for my dear people?

<sup>8</sup>Their tongues are like deadly arrows. They speak deceitfully. People speak politely to their neighbors, but they think of ways to set traps for them.

<sup>9</sup>I will punish them for these things, declares the LORD. I will punish this nation. I still won't be satisfied.

<sup>10</sup>I will cry and weep for the mountains. I will sing a funeral song for the pastures

in the wilderness. They are destroyed so that no one can travel through them. No one can hear the sound of cattle. Birds and cattle have fled. They are gone.

<sup>11</sup>I will turn Jerusalem into a pile of rubble, a home for jackals. I will destroy the cities of Judah so that no one can live there.

<sup>12</sup>No one is wise enough to understand this. To whom has the LORD revealed this so that they can explain it? The land dies; it has been ruined like the desert so that no one can travel through it.

<sup>13</sup>The LORD answered, "They've abandoned my teachings that I placed in front of them. They didn't obey me, and they didn't follow them.

<sup>14</sup>They followed their own stubborn ways and other gods—the Baals, as their ancestors taught them."

<sup>15</sup>This is what the LORD of Armies, the God of Israel, says: I am going to feed these people bitterness and give them poison to drink.

<sup>16</sup>I will scatter them among nations that they and their ancestors haven't heard of. I will send armies after them until I've wiped them out.

<sup>17</sup> This is what the LORD of Armies says: Consider this: Call for the women who cry at funerals. Send for those who are the most skilled.

<sup>18</sup> They should come quickly and cry for us. Our eyes will run with tears. Our eyelids will flow with water.

<sup>19</sup> The sound of crying is heard from Zion. "Were ruined! Were very ashamed. We must leave our land because our homes have been torn down."

<sup>20</sup> Listen to the word of the LORD, you women, and open your ears to hear his words. Teach your daughters how to cry. Teach your neighbors funeral songs.

<sup>21</sup> Death has come through our windows and entered our palaces. Death has cut down the children in the streets and the young men in the market places.

<sup>22</sup> This is what the LORD says: Dead bodies will fall like manure on the field. They will be like grain that has been cut but not gathered.

<sup>23</sup> This is what the LORD says: Don't let wise people brag about their wisdom. Don't let strong people brag about their strength. Don't let rich people brag about their riches.

<sup>24</sup>If they want to brag, they should brag that they understand and know me. They should brag that I, the LORD, act out of love, righteousness, and justice on the earth. This kind of bragging pleases me, declares the LORD.

<sup>25</sup>"The days are coming," declares the LORD, "when I will punish all who are circumcised.

<sup>26</sup>I will punish Egypt, Judah, Edom, Ammon, and Moab. I will punish all who shave the hair on their foreheads or live in the desert. Even though these nations are circumcised, all Israel has uncircumcised hearts."

**10**<sup>1</sup> Listen to the message that the LORD has spoken to you, nation of Israel.

<sup>2</sup>This is what the LORD says: Don't learn the practices of the nations. Don't be frightened by the signs in the sky because the nations are frightened by them.

<sup>3</sup>The religion of the people is worthless. Woodcutters cut down trees from the forest. The hands of craftsmen prepare them with axes.

<sup>4</sup> Craftsmen decorate them with silver and gold and fasten them together with hammers and nails so that they wont fall over.

<sup>5</sup> These trees are like scarecrows in cucumber gardens. They arent able to speak. They have to be carried, because they cant walk. Dont be afraid of them. They cant harm you. They cant do you any good either.

<sup>6</sup> No one is like you, O LORD. You are great. Your name is powerful.

<sup>7</sup> Everyone fears you, O King of the Nations. This is what you deserve. No one is like you among all the wise people in the nations or in all their kingdoms.

<sup>8</sup> They are complete idiots. They learn nonsense from wooden idols.

<sup>9</sup> Hammered silver is brought from Tarshish and gold from Uphaz. Craftsmen and goldsmiths shape these metals. The clothing for the idols is blue and purple, all made by skilled workers.

<sup>10</sup> But the LORD is the only God. He is the living God and eternal king. The earth trembles when he is angry. The nations cant endure his fury.

<sup>11</sup> Tell them this: These gods will disappear from the earth and from under heaven because they didn't make heaven and earth.

<sup>12</sup> The LORD made the earth by his power. He set up the world by his skill. He stretched out the world by his understanding.

<sup>13</sup> He speaks, and the water in the sky produces a storm. He makes clouds rise from the ends of the earth. He makes lightning flash with the rain. He brings wind out of his storehouses.

<sup>14</sup> Everyone is stupid and ignorant. Metalsmiths are put to shame by their idols. Their statues are false gods. They can't breathe.

<sup>15</sup> They are worthless jokes. When they are punished, they disappear.

<sup>16</sup> Jacob's God isn't like them. He made everything, and Israel is the tribe that belongs to him. His name is the LORD of Armies.

<sup>17</sup> Pick up your bags. You are being blockaded.

<sup>18</sup> This is what the LORD says: I am going to throw out those who live in the

land at this time and cause trouble for them so that they will feel it.

<sup>19</sup>Oh, I'm wounded! My wound is serious. Then I thought that this is my punishment, and I will bear it.

<sup>20</sup>My tent is destroyed, and all my ropes are broken. My children have left me and have disappeared. There's no one to set up my tent again or put up my tent curtains.

<sup>21</sup>The shepherds are foolish. They don't look to the LORD for help. That is why they won't succeed, and all their flocks will be scattered.

<sup>22</sup>The report has arrived. A tremendous uproar is coming from the land of the north. Its army will destroy Judah's cities and make them homes for jackals.

<sup>23</sup>O LORD, I know that the way humans act is not under their control. Humans do not direct their steps as they walk.

<sup>24</sup>Correct me, O LORD, but please be fair. Don't correct me when you're angry. Otherwise, you'll reduce me to nothing.

<sup>25</sup>Pour out your fury on the nations who don't know you and on people who don't worship you. They have devoured the descendants of Jacob. They have

devoured them completely. They have destroyed their homes.

**11** <sup>1</sup>This is the message that the LORD spoke to Jeremiah. He said, <sup>2</sup>"Listen to the terms of this promise, and tell them to the people of Judah and to those who live in Jerusalem.

<sup>3</sup>Say to them, This is what the LORD, the God of Israel, says: Cursed is anyone who doesn't listen to the terms of this promise.

<sup>4</sup>I made this promise to your ancestors when I brought them out of Egypt, which was an iron smelter. I said, "Obey me, and do everything that I have told you to do. Then you will be my people, and I will be your God.

<sup>5</sup>I will keep the oath I made to your ancestors and give them a land flowing with milk and honey, the land you still have today.'" I answered, "Yes, LORD."

<sup>6</sup>The LORD said to me, "Announce all these things in the cities of Judah and in the streets of Jerusalem: Listen to the terms of this promise, and keep them.

<sup>7</sup>I solemnly warned your ancestors when I brought them out of Egypt, and

the warning still applies to you today. I solemnly warned them to obey me.

<sup>8</sup>But they didn't obey me or pay attention to me. They followed their own stubborn, evil ways. So I punished them, because they did not keep all the terms of the promise, the terms that I commanded them to keep."

<sup>9</sup>The LORD said to me, "Conspiracy exists among the people of Judah and among those who live in Jerusalem.

<sup>10</sup>They've gone back to the evil ways of their ancestors and refused to obey my words. They are following other gods and worshiping them. The nations of Israel and Judah have rejected the promise that I made to their ancestors.

<sup>11</sup>This is what the LORD says: I'm going to bring a disaster on them that they can't escape. Although they will cry out to me, I won't listen to them.

<sup>12</sup>Then the cities of Judah and those who live in Jerusalem will cry to the gods to whom they've been sacrificing. But these gods will never rescue them when they're in trouble.

<sup>13</sup>Judah, you have as many gods as you have cities. You have set up many

altars in Jerusalem to sacrifice to Baal. You have as many altars as there are streets in Jerusalem.

<sup>14</sup>Jeremiah, dont pray for these people. Dont cry or pray for them. I wont listen when they call to me for help in times of trouble.

<sup>15</sup>"What right do these people I love have to be in my house when they do so many devious things? Can the meat from their sacrifices turn disaster away from them? They rejoice when they do evil."

<sup>16</sup>The LORD called you a large olive tree that has beautiful fruit to look at. He will set fire to you with a mighty storm, and your branches will be broken.

<sup>17</sup>The LORD of Armies planted you. He has pronounced disaster on you. This is because of the evil things that Israel and Judah have done. They have made him furious by burning incense as an offering to Baal.

<sup>18</sup>The LORD revealed their plot to me so that I would understand. He showed me what they were doing.

<sup>19</sup>I was like a trusting lamb brought to the slaughter. I didnt know that they

were plotting against me. They were saying, "Let's destroy the tree with its fruit. Let's cut Jeremiah off from this world of the living so that we won't be reminded of him anymore."

<sup>20</sup>O LORD of Armies, you judge fairly and test motives and thoughts. I want to see you take revenge on them, because I've brought my case to you.

<sup>21</sup>This is what the LORD says: The people of Anathoth want to kill you. They say, "Don't prophesy in the name of the LORD, or we'll kill you."

<sup>22</sup>This is what the LORD of Armies says: I'm going to punish them. The young men will die because of war. Their sons and daughters will die because of famine.

<sup>23</sup>I will bring a disaster on the people of Anathoth. It will be a year of punishment. There will be no survivors.

**12**<sup>1</sup>O LORD, even if I would argue my case with you, you would always be right. Yet, I want to talk to you about your justice. Why do wicked people succeed? Why do treacherous people have peace and quiet?

<sup>2</sup>You plant them, and they take root. They grow, and they produce fruit. They speak well of you with their lips, but their hearts are far from you.

<sup>3</sup>You know me, O LORD. You see me and test my devotion to you. Drag them away like sheep to be slaughtered. Prepare them for the day of slaughter.

<sup>4</sup>How long will the land mourn? How long will the plants in every field remain dried up? The animals and the birds are dying, because people are wicked. They think that God doesn't know what they are doing.

<sup>5</sup>"If you have raced against others on foot, and they have tired you out, how can you compete with horses? If you stumble in open country, how can you live in the jungle along the Jordan River?

<sup>6</sup>Even your relatives and members of your father's household betray you. They have also formed a mob to find you. Don't trust them when they say good things about you.

<sup>7</sup>"I have abandoned my nation. I have left my own people. I have handed the people I love over to their enemies.

<sup>8</sup> My people have turned on me like a lion in the forest. They roar at me, so I hate them.

<sup>9</sup> My people are like a colorful bird of prey. Other birds of prey surround it. Go, gather all the animals in the field, and bring them to devour it.

<sup>10</sup> Many shepherds have destroyed my vineyard. They've trampled my property. They've turned my pleasant property into a wasteland.

<sup>11</sup> They've left it a wasteland. Devastated, it mourns in my presence. The whole land is destroyed, but no one takes this to heart.

<sup>12</sup> Looters swarm all over the bare hills in the desert. The LORDS sword destroys them from one end of the land to the other. No one will be safe.

<sup>13</sup> My people planted wheat, but they harvested thorns. They worked until they became sick, but they gained nothing by it. They were disappointed by their harvests because of the burning anger of the LORD.

<sup>14</sup> "This is what I, the LORD, say about all my evil neighbors who take the inheritance that I gave my people Israel:

I am going to uproot those neighbors from their lands. I will also uproot the people of Judah from among them.

<sup>15</sup>After I've uprooted them, I will have compassion on them again. I will return them to their inheritance and to their lands.

<sup>16</sup>Suppose they learn carefully the ways of my people. Suppose they take an oath in my name, As the LORD lives as they taught my people to take an oath in the name of Baal. Then they will build homes among my people.

<sup>17</sup>But suppose they don't listen. Then I will uproot that nation and destroy it," declares the LORD.

**13**<sup>1</sup>This is what the LORD said to me: "Buy a linen belt. Put it around your waist. Don't let it get wet."

<sup>2</sup>So I bought the belt, as the LORD had told me, and put it around my waist.

<sup>3</sup>The LORD spoke his word to me again. He said,

<sup>4</sup>"Take the belt that you bought, the one you're wearing. Go to the Euphrates River, and bury it there in a crack in the rocks."

<sup>5</sup> So I went and buried it by the Euphrates, as the LORD had told me.

<sup>6</sup> After many days the LORD said to me, "Go to the Euphrates, and get the belt from where I told you to bury it."

<sup>7</sup> So I went back to the Euphrates and dug it up. I got the belt from where I had buried it. Now the belt was ruined. It was good for nothing.

<sup>8</sup> Then the LORD spoke his word to me. He said,

<sup>9</sup> "This is what the LORD says: This is how I will destroy Judah's arrogance and Jerusalem's extreme arrogance.

<sup>10</sup> These wicked people refuse to listen to me. They go their own stubborn ways and follow other gods in order to serve them and worship them. They are like this good-for-nothing belt.

<sup>11</sup> As a belt clings to a person's waist, so I have made the entire nation of Israel and the entire nation of Judah cling to me," declares the LORD. "I did this so that they would be my people and bring fame, praise, and honor to me. However, they wouldn't listen.

<sup>12</sup> "Give this message to them, This is what the LORD God of Israel says: Every

bottle will be filled with wine. Then they will say to you, We know that every bottle will be filled with wine.

<sup>13</sup>Say to them, This is what the LORD says: Im going to make everyone who lives in this land drunk. The kings who sit on Davids throne, the priests, the prophets, and all those who live in Jerusalem will become drunk.

<sup>14</sup>Then I will smash them like bottles against each other. I will smash parents and children together, declares the LORD. I will have no pity, mercy, or compassion when I destroy them."

<sup>15</sup>Listen, and pay attention! Dont be arrogant. The LORD has spoken.

<sup>16</sup>Honor the LORD your God before it gets dark, before your feet stumble on the mountains in the twilight. You will look for light, but the LORD will turn it into the shadow of death and change it into deep darkness.

<sup>17</sup>If you wont listen, I will cry secretly over your arrogance. I will cry bitterly, and my eyes will flow with tears because the LORDS flock will be taken captive.

<sup>18</sup>Say to the king and his mother,  
"Come down from your thrones, because  
your crowns have fallen off your heads."

<sup>19</sup>The cities in the Negev will be locked  
up, and there will be no one to reopen  
them. All the people of Judah will be  
taken away into captivity.

<sup>20</sup>Look up, and see those who are  
coming from the north. Where is the  
flock that was given to you your beautiful  
sheep?

<sup>21</sup>What will you say when God makes  
the people you thought were your friends  
your new masters? Wont pain grip you  
like a woman in labor?

<sup>22</sup>If you ask yourself, "Why do these  
things happen to me?" its because you  
have so many sins. Your clothes have  
been torn off and your limbs are bare.

<sup>23</sup>Can Ethiopians change the color of  
their skin or leopards change their spots?  
Can you do good when youre taught to  
do wrong?

<sup>24</sup>"I will scatter you like straw that is  
blown away by a desert wind.

<sup>25</sup>This is your fate, the destiny I have  
planned for you," declares the LORD.

"You have forgotten me and trusted false gods.

<sup>26</sup>I will also tear off your clothes, and your shame will be seen.

<sup>27</sup>I have seen you commit adultery and squeal with delight. I have seen you act like a shameless prostitute on the hills and in the fields. How horrible it will be for you, Jerusalem! Will you ever be clean?"

**14**<sup>1</sup>The LORD spoke his word to Jeremiah about the drought.

<sup>2</sup>Judah mourns; its gates fall apart. The people of Judah sit in mourning on the ground. Their cry goes up from Jerusalem.

<sup>3</sup>Important people send their assistants out for water. They go to the cisterns, but they don't find any water. They come back with their containers empty. They cover their heads, because they are ashamed and disgraced.

<sup>4</sup>The ground is cracked because there has been no rain in the land. The farmers are disappointed. They cover their heads.

<sup>5</sup> Even deer in the fields give birth and abandon their young because there's no grass.

<sup>6</sup> Wild donkeys stand on the bare hills. They sniff the air like jackals. Their eyesight fails because they have no green plants.

<sup>7</sup> Do something, LORD, for the sake of your name, even though our sins testify against us. We have been unfaithful and have sinned against you.

<sup>8</sup> You are Israel's hope, the one who saves it in times of trouble. Why should you be like a stranger in the land, like a traveler who stays only one night?

<sup>9</sup> Why should you be like someone taken by surprise, like a strong man who cannot help? You, O LORD, are among us. We are called by your name. Don't leave us!

<sup>10</sup> This is what the LORD says about these people: They love to wander. They don't keep their feet where they belong. So the LORD isn't happy with them. He will remember their crimes and punish their sins.

<sup>11</sup> The LORD said to me, "Don't pray for the good of these people."

<sup>12</sup>Even if they go without food, I won't listen to their cries for help. Even if they sacrifice burnt offerings and grain offerings, I won't be pleased with them. But I will destroy these people with wars, famines, and plagues."

<sup>13</sup>Then I said, "Almighty LORD, prophets are saying to them, You won't see wars or famines, because I, the LORD, will give you lasting peace in this place."

<sup>14</sup>Then the LORD told me, "These are the lies that the prophets are telling in my name: They claim that I sent them, commanded them, and spoke to them. They dreamed up the visions they tell you. Their predictions are worthless. They are the products of their own imagination."

<sup>15</sup>"I didn't send these prophets. Yet, they prophesy in my name that there will be no wars or famines in this land. So this is what I, the LORD, say about them: Wars and famines will bring an end to these prophets."

<sup>16</sup>The people they prophesy to will be thrown out into the streets of Jerusalem. They will be victims of famines and wars."

No one will bury them, their wives, their sons, or their daughters. I will pour on them the destruction that they deserve.

<sup>17</sup>"Say this to them: My eyes flow with tears day and night without stopping because my dear people will suffer massive destruction. It will be a very serious blow."

<sup>18</sup>If I go to the field, I see those killed because of war. If I go to the city, I see those sick because of famine. Prophets and priests wander through a land they havent heard of.

<sup>19</sup>Have you completely rejected Judah? Do you despise Zion? Why have you struck us so hard that we cannot heal? We hope for peace, but no good comes from it. We hope for a time of healing, but theres only terror.

<sup>20</sup>O LORD, we realize our wickedness and the wrongs done by our ancestors. We have sinned against you.

<sup>21</sup>For the sake of your name, dont despise us. Dont dishonor your glorious throne. Remember your promise to us; dont break it.

<sup>22</sup>The worthless gods of the nations cant make it rain. By themselves, the

skies cant give showers. But you can, O LORD our God. We have hope in you because you do all these things.

**15**<sup>1</sup> Then the LORD said to me, "Even if Moses and Samuel were standing in front of me, I would not feel sorry for these people. Send them away from me, and let them go.

<sup>2</sup> When they ask you where they should go, say to them, This is what the LORD says: Those who are destined to die will die. Those who are destined to die in wars will die in wars. Those who are destined to die in famines will die in famines. Those who are destined to die in captivity will die in captivity.

<sup>3</sup> "I will devise four ways to punish them," declares the LORD. "I will send swords to kill, dogs to drag away, and birds and animals to devour and destroy.

<sup>4</sup> I will make these people a horrifying sight to all the kingdoms on the earth. This will happen because of what Judah's King Manasseh, son of Hezekiah, did in Jerusalem.

<sup>5</sup> No one will take pity on you, Jerusalem. No one will mourn for you.

No one will bother to ask how you are doing.

<sup>6</sup>"You have left me," declares the LORD. "You have turned your back on me. So I will use my power against you and destroy you. I'm tired of showing compassion to you.

<sup>7</sup>"I will separate them with a winnowing shovel at the city gates. I will make them childless. I will destroy my people because they will not change their ways.

<sup>8</sup>Their widows will be more numerous than the grains of sand on the seashore. At noontime I will send a destroyer against the mothers of young men. I will suddenly bring anguish and terror to them.

<sup>9</sup>"A mother who gives birth to seven sons will grow faint and breathe her last. She will die, ashamed and humiliated, while it is still daylight. I will put survivors from these people to death in the presence of their enemies," declares the LORD.

<sup>10</sup>"I'm so miserable! Why did my mother give birth to me? I am a man who argues and quarrels with the whole earth. I

have never lent or borrowed anything. Yet, everyone curses me.

<sup>11</sup>The LORD said, "I will certainly rescue you for a good reason. I will certainly make your enemies plead with you in times of disaster and in times of distress.

<sup>12</sup>(No one can break iron, iron from the north, or bronze.)

<sup>13</sup>I will give away your wealth and treasures as loot as the price for all the sins that you have committed throughout your territory.

<sup>14</sup>I will make you serve your enemies in a land that you havent heard of, because my anger has started a fire. It will burn you."

<sup>15</sup>O LORD, you understand. Remember me, take care of me, and take revenge on those who persecute me. Be patient, and dont take me away. You should know that Ive been insulted because of you.

<sup>16</sup>Your words were found, and I devoured them. Your words are my joy and my hearts delight, because I am called by your name, O LORD God of Armies.

<sup>17</sup>I didnt keep company with those who laugh and have fun. I sat alone because

your hand was on me. You filled me with outrage.

<sup>18</sup>Why is my pain unending and my wound incurable, refusing to heal? Will you disappoint me like a stream that dries up in summertime?

<sup>19</sup>This is what the LORD says: If you will return, I will take you back. If you will speak what is worthwhile and not what is worthless, you will stand in my presence. The people will return to you, but you will not return to them.

<sup>20</sup>I will make you like a solid bronze wall in front of these people. They will fight you, but they will not defeat you. I am with you, and I will save you and rescue you, declares the LORD.

<sup>21</sup>I will rescue you from the power of wicked people and free you from the power of tyrants.

**16**<sup>1</sup>The LORD spoke his word to me. He said,

<sup>2</sup>"Don't marry! Don't have any sons or daughters in this place!

<sup>3</sup>This is what the LORD says about the sons and daughters born in this place and about the mothers and fathers who have children in this land:

<sup>4</sup>They will die horrible deaths. No one will mourn for them or bury them. They will be like manure on the ground. Wars and famines will bring them to an end. Their bodies will be food for birds and animals.

<sup>5</sup>"This is what the LORD says: Don't go into a house where people are grieving. Don't go to mourn or to grieve for them. I'm taking my peace, love, and compassion away from these people," declares the LORD.

<sup>6</sup>"Old and young alike will die in this land. No one will mourn for them or bury them. No one will cut his own body or shave his own head for them.

<sup>7</sup>No one will offer food to comfort those who mourn the dead. No one will give a consoling drink to those who have lost their fathers or mothers.

<sup>8</sup>"Don't even go into a home where there is a banquet. Don't sit with them to eat and drink.

<sup>9</sup>This is what the LORD of Armies, the God of Israel, says: I'm going to put a stop to the sounds of joy and happiness and the sounds of brides and grooms

in this place. This will happen in your lifetime, while you watch.

<sup>10</sup>"When you tell the people all these things, they will ask you, Why does the LORD threaten us with all these disasters? What have we done wrong? How have we sinned against the LORD our God?

<sup>11</sup>Then say to them, Its because your ancestors abandoned me, declares the LORD. They followed other gods, served them, worshiped them, and abandoned me. They didnt obey my teachings.

<sup>12</sup>You have done worse than your ancestors. All of you are following your own stubborn, evil ways that keep you from obeying me.

<sup>13</sup>So I will throw you out of this land into a land that you and your ancestors havent heard of. There you will serve other gods day and night because I will no longer have pity on you.

<sup>14</sup>"That is why the days are coming," declares the LORD, "when people will no longer begin an oath with, The LORD brought the people of Israel out of Egypt. As the LORD lives.

<sup>15</sup>But they will say, The LORD brought the people of Israel out of the land of the north and all the lands where he had scattered them. As the LORD lives. They will say this because I will bring them back to the land that I gave their ancestors.

<sup>16</sup>"I'm going to send for many fishermen," declares the LORD, "and they will catch the people of Israel. After that, I will send for many hunters, and they will hunt for them on every mountain and hill and even in the cracks in the rocks.

<sup>17</sup>I see everything that they do. They can't hide anything from me. Their wickedness can't be hidden; I can see it.

<sup>18</sup>First, I will have them pay twice as much for their wickedness and their sin, because they have polluted my land. They have filled my property with the lifeless statues of their detestable and disgusting idols."

<sup>19</sup>The LORD is my strength and my fortress, my refuge in times of trouble. Nations come to you from the most distant parts of the world and say, "Our

ancestors have inherited lies, worthless and unprofitable gods."

<sup>20</sup>"People can't make gods for themselves. They aren't really gods.

<sup>21</sup>That is what I will teach them. This time I will make my power and my strength known to them. Then they will know that my name is the LORD."

**17** <sup>1</sup>The LORD says, "Judah's sin is written with an iron pen. It is engraved with a diamond point on the tablet of their hearts and on the horns of their altars.

<sup>2</sup>Even their children remember their altars and their poles dedicated to the goddess Asherah beside large trees on high hills

<sup>3</sup>and on mountains in the open country. I will turn your wealth and all your treasures into loot. I will do this because of your worship sites and your sin throughout all your territory.

<sup>4</sup>You will lose the inheritance that I gave you. I will make you serve your enemies in a land that you haven't heard of. I will do this because you have stirred up the fire of my anger. It will burn forever.

<sup>5</sup>"This is what the LORD says: Cursed is the person who trusts humans, who makes flesh and blood his strength and whose heart turns away from the LORD.

<sup>6</sup>He will be like a bush in the wilderness. He will not see when something good comes. He will live in the dry places in the desert, in a salty land where no one can live.

<sup>7</sup>Blessed is the person who trusts the LORD. The LORD will be his confidence.

<sup>8</sup>He will be like a tree that is planted by water. It will send its roots down to a stream. It will not be afraid in the heat of summer. Its leaves will turn green. It will not be anxious during droughts. It will not stop producing fruit.

<sup>9</sup>"The human mind is the most deceitful of all things. It is incurable. No one can understand how deceitful it is.

<sup>10</sup>I, the LORD, search minds and test hearts. I will reward each person for what he has done. I will reward him for the results of his actions.

<sup>11</sup>A person who gets rich dishonestly is like a partridge that hatches eggs it did not lay. During his lifetime, he will

lose his wealth. In the end, he will be a godless fool."

<sup>12</sup>Our holy place is a glorious throne, highly honored from the beginning.

<sup>13</sup>O LORD, the Hope of Israel, all who abandon you will be put to shame. Those who turn away from you will be written in dust, because they abandon the LORD, the fountain of lifegiving water.

<sup>14</sup>Heal me, O LORD, and I will be healed. Rescue me, and I will be rescued. You are the one I praise.

<sup>15</sup>People keep asking me, "Where is the word of the LORD? Let it come."

<sup>16</sup>I have not run away from being your shepherd, and I have not longed for the day of destruction. You know what came out of my mouth.

<sup>17</sup>Do not terrorize me. You are my refuge on the day of disaster.

<sup>18</sup>Put my persecutors to shame, but do not let me be put to shame. Terrify them, but do not let me be terrified. Bring the day of disaster on them, and destroy them completely.

<sup>19</sup>This is what the LORD said to me: Stand at Peoples Gate, where the kings

of Judah go in and out. Then stand at every gate in Jerusalem.

<sup>20</sup>Tell everyone: "Listen to the word of the LORD, you kings of Judah, all the people of Judah, and all those who live in Jerusalem, and go through these gates.

<sup>21</sup>This is what the LORD says: Watch out! If you value your lives, do not carry anything on the day of worship or bring it through the gates of Jerusalem.

<sup>22</sup>Do not bring anything out of your homes on the day of worship. Do not do any work, but observe the day of worship as a holy day, as I told your ancestors.

<sup>23</sup>Your ancestors did not obey me or pay attention to me. They were impossible to deal with and would not listen or accept discipline.

<sup>24</sup>"Now," declares the LORD, "you must listen to me and not bring anything through the gates of this city on the day of worship. You must observe the day of worship as a holy day by not doing any work on it.

<sup>25</sup>If you do this, then the kings and princes who sit on Davids throne will come through the gates of this city. They

and their princes will ride in chariots and on horses along with the people of Judah and those who live in Jerusalem. This city will always have people living in it.

<sup>26</sup>"People will come from the cities of Judah, from all around Jerusalem, from the territory of Benjamin, from the foothills, from the mountains, and from the Negev. They will bring burnt offerings, sacrifices, grain offerings, and incense. They will also bring thank offerings to the LORDS temple.

<sup>27</sup>But you must listen to me and observe the day of worship as a holy day by not carrying anything through the gates of Jerusalem on the day of worship. If you dont do this, I will set its gates on fire. The fire will burn down the palaces in Jerusalem, and you wont be able to put it out."

**18**<sup>1</sup>The LORD spoke his word to Jeremiah. He said,

<sup>2</sup>"Go to the potters house. There I will give you my message."

<sup>3</sup>I went to the potters house, and he was working there at his wheel.

<sup>4</sup>Whenever a clay pot he was working on was ruined, he would rework it into a

new clay pot the way he wanted to make it.

<sup>5</sup>The LORD spoke his word to me. The LORD asked,

<sup>6</sup>"Nation of Israel, cant I do with you as this potter does with clay? Nation of Israel, you are like the clay in the potters hands.

<sup>7</sup>"At one time I may threaten to tear up, break down, and destroy a nation or a kingdom.

<sup>8</sup>But suppose the nation that I threatened turns away from doing wrong. Then I will change my plans about the disaster I planned to do to it.

<sup>9</sup>"At another time I may promise to build and plant a nation or a kingdom.

<sup>10</sup>But suppose that nation does what I consider evil and doesnt obey me. Then I will change my plans about the good that I promised to do to it.

<sup>11</sup>"Now say to the people of Judah and to those who live in Jerusalem, This is what the LORD says: Im going to prepare a disaster and make plans against you. Turn from your evil ways, change your lives, and do good.

<sup>12</sup>"But they will answer, Its useless!  
Well live the way we want to. Well go our  
own stubborn, evil ways.

<sup>13</sup>"This is what the LORD says: Ask  
among the nations if anyone has ever  
heard anything like this. The people of  
Israel have done a very horrible thing.

<sup>14</sup>The rocky slopes of Lebanon are  
never without snow. The cool mountain  
streams never dry up.

<sup>15</sup>But my people have forgotten me.  
They burn incense as an offering to  
worthless idols, and they stumble along  
the way, on the ancient path. They go on  
side roads and not on major highways.

<sup>16</sup>Their land will become desolate  
and something to be hissed at forever.  
Everyone who will pass by it will be  
stunned and shake his head.

<sup>17</sup>Like the east wind I will scatter them  
in front of the enemy. On the day of their  
disaster, I will show them my back, not  
my face."

<sup>18</sup>Then they said, "Lets plot against  
Jeremiah, because the teachings of the  
priests, the advice of wise people, and  
the word of the prophets wont disappear.

Accuse him! Pay no attention to anything he says."

<sup>19</sup>Pay attention to me, O LORD, and listen to what my accusers say.

<sup>20</sup>Good should not be paid back with evil. They dig a pit to take my life. Remember how I stood in your presence and pleaded for them in order to turn your anger away from them.

<sup>21</sup>Now, hand their children over to famine. Pour out their blood by using your sword. Then their wives will become childless widows. Their husbands will be put to death. Their young men will be struck down in battle.

<sup>22</sup>Make them cry out from their homes when you suddenly send troops against them, because they dug a pit to catch me and hid snares for my feet.

<sup>23</sup>But you, O LORD, know that they plan to kill me. Don't forgive their crimes. Don't wipe their sins out of your sight. Make them stumble in your presence. Deal with them when you get angry.

**19**<sup>1</sup>This is what the LORD says: Go and buy a clay jar from a potter. Take along some of the leaders of the

people and some of the leaders of the priests.

<sup>2</sup>Go to the valley of Ben Hinnom at the entrance to Potsherd Gate. Announce there the things I plan to do.

<sup>3</sup>Say, "Listen to the word of the LORD, you kings of Judah and those who live in Jerusalem. This is what the LORD of Armies, the God of Israel, says: I'm going to bring such a disaster on this place that the ears of everyone who hears about it will ring.

<sup>4</sup>"The people, their ancestors, and the kings of Judah have abandoned me. They have made this place unrecognizable by burning incense as an offering to other gods that they hadnt heard of. They have filled this place with the blood of innocent people.

<sup>5</sup>They have built worship sites to burn their children as sacrifices to Baal. I didnt ask them or command them to do this. It never entered my mind.

<sup>6</sup>"That is why the days are coming, declares the LORD, when this place will no longer be called Topheth or the valley of Ben Hinnom. Instead, it will be called Slaughter Valley.

<sup>7</sup> I will smash the plans of Judah and Jerusalem in this place. I will cut them down with swords in front of their enemies and with the hands of those who want to kill them. I will give their bodies as food to birds and to animals.

<sup>8</sup> I will devastate this city. It will become something to hiss at. Everyone who goes by it will be stunned and hiss with contempt at all the disasters that happen to it.

<sup>9</sup> I will make the people eat the flesh of their sons and daughters. They will eat each others flesh during blockades and hardships that their enemies impose on them when they want to kill them."

<sup>10</sup> The LORD says, "Then smash the jar in front of the men who went with you.

<sup>11</sup> Say to them, This is what the LORD of Armies says: I will smash these people and this city as this potters jar was smashed beyond repair. They will bury the dead in Topheth until theres no other place to bury them.

<sup>12</sup> Thats what I will do to this place and to those who live in it, declares the LORD. I will make this city like Topheth.

<sup>13</sup>The houses in Jerusalem, the houses of the kings of Judah, and all the rooftops of the houses will be unclean like this city Topheth. This is because people burned incense to the entire army of heaven and poured out wine offerings to other gods."

<sup>14</sup>Then Jeremiah left Topheth, where the LORD had sent him to prophesy. He stood in the courtyard of the LORDS temple and said to all the people,

<sup>15</sup>"This is what the LORD of Armies, the God of Israel, says: Im going to bring on this city and on all its towns the disasters that I threatened. Theyve become impossible to deal with, and they refuse to obey me."

**20**<sup>1</sup>Now the priest, Immers son Pashhur, the chief officer of the LORDS temple, heard Jeremiah prophesying these things.

<sup>2</sup>Pashhur struck the prophet Jeremiah and put him in prison at Upper Benjamin Gate that was in the LORDS temple.

<sup>3</sup>The next day when Pashhur took Jeremiah out of prison, Jeremiah said to him, "The LORD doesnt call you Pashhur, but he calls you Terror Everywhere.

<sup>4</sup>This is what the LORD says: I'm going to make you terrify yourself and all your friends. Their enemies swords will kill them, and you will see it with your own eyes. I will hand all of Judah over to the king of Babylon. He will take the people away as captives to Babylon or kill them with swords.

<sup>5</sup>I will hand all the riches of this city over to their enemies. This will include all its produce, all its valuables, and all the treasures of the kings of Judah. Their enemies will loot them, take them away, and bring them to Babylon.

<sup>6</sup>And you, Pashhur, and all those who live in your house will go into captivity. You will go to Babylon, and you will die there. You will be buried there together with all your friends to whom you prophesied these lies."

<sup>7</sup>O LORD, you have deceived me, and I was deceived. You overpowered me and won. I've been made fun of all day long. Everyone mocks me.

<sup>8</sup>Each time I speak, I have to cry out and shout, "Violence and destruction!" The word of the LORD has made me the

object of insults and contempt all day long.

<sup>9</sup>I think to myself, "I can forget the LORD and no longer speak his name." But his word is inside me like a burning fire shut up in my bones. I wear myself out holding it in, but I can't do it any longer.

<sup>10</sup>I have heard many people whispering, "Terror is everywhere! Report him! Let's report him!" All my closest friends are waiting to see me stumble. They say, "Maybe he will be tricked. Then we can overpower him and take revenge on him."

<sup>11</sup>But the LORD is on my side like a terrifying warrior. That is why those who persecute me will stumble. They can't win. They will be very ashamed that they can't succeed. Their eternal shame will not be forgotten.

<sup>12</sup>But the LORD of Armies examines the righteous. He sees their motives and thoughts. I want to see you take revenge on them, because I've brought my case to you.

<sup>13</sup> Sing to the LORD! Praise the LORD! He has rescued the lives of needy people from the power of wicked people.

<sup>14</sup> Cursed is the day that I was born, the day that my mother gave birth to me. May it not be blessed.

<sup>15</sup> Cursed is the man who made my father very happy with the news that he had just become the father of a baby boy.

<sup>16</sup> May that man be like the cities that the LORD destroyed without pity. May he hear a cry of alarm in the morning and a battle cry at noon.

<sup>17</sup> If only he had killed me while I was in the womb. Then my mother would have been my grave, and she would have always been pregnant.

<sup>18</sup> Why did I come out of the womb? All I've seen is trouble and grief. I will finish my days in shame.

**21** <sup>1</sup> The LORD spoke his word to Jeremiah when King Zedekiah sent Pashhur, son of Malchiah, and the priest Zephaniah, son of Maaseiah, to Jeremiah. They said,

<sup>2</sup> "Consult the LORD for us, because King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon

is attacking us. Maybe the LORD will perform miracles for us so that Nebuchadnezzar will retreat."

<sup>3</sup>Jeremiah responded to them, "This is what you should say to Zedekiah,

<sup>4</sup>This is what the LORD God of Israel says: I'm going to take your weapons away from you. You are using these weapons to fight the king of Babylon as well as the Babylonians who are now blockading you outside the wall. I will bring the Babylonians inside this city.

<sup>5</sup>I will fight you in anger, fury, and rage with my powerful hand and my mighty arm.

<sup>6</sup>I will defeat those who live in this city, both people and animals. They will die from a terrible plague.

<sup>7</sup>Afterwards, declares the LORD, I will hand over Judah's King Zedekiah, his officials, the people, and everyone else in this city who survives the plague, war, and famine. They will be handed over to King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon and to their enemies who want to kill them. Nebuchadnezzar will kill them with swords. He won't spare them, show them compassion, or care for them.

<sup>8</sup>"Say to these people, This is what the LORD says: I am going to give you the choice of life or death.

<sup>9</sup>Those who live in this city will die in the war, famine, or plague. Those of you who go out and surrender to the Babylonians will live. You will escape with your lives.

<sup>10</sup>I've decided to harm this city, not to do good to it, declares the LORD. It will be handed over to the king of Babylon, and he will burn it down.

<sup>11</sup>"Say to the nation of the king of Judah, Listen to the word of the LORD,

<sup>12</sup>descendants of David. This is what the LORD says: Judge fairly every morning. Rescue those who have been robbed from those who oppress them. Otherwise, my fury will break out and burn like fire. No one will be able to put it out because of the evil things you have done.

<sup>13</sup>"I'm against you, Jerusalem. You are the city that is in the valley and on the rock in the plain," declares the LORD. "But you ask, "Who can attack us? Who can enter our places of refuge?"

<sup>14</sup>"I will punish you because of the evil things you have done," declares the LORD. "I will start a fire in your forests, and it will burn up everything around you."

**22**<sup>1</sup> This is what the LORD says: Go to the palace of the king of Judah, and speak this message there:

<sup>2</sup>"Listen to the word of the LORD, you officials, you people who come into these gates, and you, king of Judah, the one sitting on Davids throne.

<sup>3</sup>"This is what the LORD says: Judge fairly, and do what is right. Rescue those who have been robbed from those who oppress them. Dont mistreat foreigners, orphans, or widows, and dont oppress them. Dont kill innocent people in this place.

<sup>4</sup>If you do what I say, then the kings who sit on Davids throne will ride through the gates of this palace in chariots and on horses along with their officials and their people.

<sup>5</sup>But if you dont do what I say, I will take an oath on myself," declares the LORD, "that this palace will become a pile of rubble.

<sup>6</sup>"This is what the LORD says about the palace of the king of Judah: This palace is like Gilead to me, like the top of Lebanon. I will certainly turn it into a desert, into cities that no one lives in.

<sup>7</sup>I will send people to destroy you. They will have their own weapons. They will cut down your finest cedar trees and throw them on a fire.

<sup>8</sup>"People from many nations will pass by this city and ask each other, Why has the LORD done this to this important city?

<sup>9</sup>The answer will be: They rejected the promise of the LORD their God. They worshiped other gods and served them."

<sup>10</sup>Dont cry for the dead. Dont shake your heads at them. Cry bitterly for those who are taken away, because they wont come back to see their homeland.

<sup>11</sup>This is what the LORD says about King Josiahs son Shallum, who succeeded his father as king of Judah and left this place: He will never come back here again.

<sup>12</sup>He will die in the place where he was taken captive, and he will never see this land again.

<sup>13</sup>"How horrible it will be for the person who builds his house dishonestly and his upper rooms through injustice. He makes his neighbors work for nothing and doesn't pay them for their work.

<sup>14</sup>He says, I will build a large house for myself with big upper rooms. He cuts out windows in it, panels the rooms with cedar, and paints them red.

<sup>15</sup>Do you think you're a better king than others because you use more cedar? Your father ate and drank and did what is fair and right. Everything went well for him.

<sup>16</sup>He defended the cause of the poor and needy. Everything went well for him. Isn't this what it means to know me?" asks the LORD.

<sup>17</sup>"But your eyes and your mind are set on nothing but dishonest profits. You kill innocent people and violently oppress your people."

<sup>18</sup>This is what the LORD says about Jehoiakim, son of Judah's King Josiah: People won't mourn for him and say, "How horrible it is for my brother and sister!" They won't mourn for him and

say, "How horrible it is for my master and his splendor!"

<sup>19</sup>He will receive a donkeys burial. He will be dragged off and thrown outside the gates of Jerusalem.

<sup>20</sup>"Go to Lebanon and cry! Raise your voice in Bashan! Cry out from Abarim, because all your lovers are defeated."

<sup>21</sup>I spoke to you when you were prosperous, but you said that you wouldnt listen. This is how youve been ever since you were young. You dont listen to me.

<sup>22</sup>The wind will blow away all your shepherds, and your lovers will go into captivity. Then you will be ashamed and disgraced by all your wickedness.

<sup>23</sup>You live in Lebanon and have your nest in the cedars. But you will groan when pain strikes you, pain like a woman giving birth to a child.

<sup>24</sup>"As I live," declares the LORD, "even though you, Jehoiakin, son of Judahs King Jehoiakim, are the signet ring on my right hand, I will pull you off my hand.

<sup>25</sup>I will hand you over to those who want to kill you, those you fearKing

Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon and the Babylonians.

<sup>26</sup>I will throw you and your mother into another land. You weren't born there, but you will die there.

<sup>27</sup>You will want to return to this land, but you won't be allowed to come home."

<sup>28</sup>This Jehoiakin is like a rejected and broken pot that no one wants. Is that why he and his descendants will be thrown out and cast into another land they've never heard of?

<sup>29</sup>O land, land, land! Listen to the word of the LORD.

<sup>30</sup>This is what the LORD says: Write this about Jehoiakin: He will be childless. He won't prosper in his lifetime. None of his descendants will succeed him as king. They won't sit on David's throne and rule Judah again.

**23**<sup>1</sup> "How horrible it will be for the shepherds who are destroying and scattering the sheep in my care," declares the LORD.

<sup>2</sup>"This is what I, the LORD God of Israel, said to the shepherds who take care of my people: You have scattered my sheep and chased them away. You

have not taken care of them, so now I will take care of you by punishing you for the evil you have done," declares the LORD.

<sup>3</sup>"Then I will gather the remaining part of my flock from all the countries where I chased them. I will bring them back to their pasture, and they will be fertile and increase in number.

<sup>4</sup>I will put shepherds over them. Those shepherds will take care of them. My sheep will no longer be afraid or terrified, and not one of them will be missing," declares the LORD.

<sup>5</sup>"The days are coming," declares the LORD, "when I will grow a righteous branch for David. He will be a king who will rule wisely. He will do what is fair and right in the land.

<sup>6</sup>In his lifetime, Judah will be saved, and Israel will live in safety. This is the name that he will be given: The LORD Our Righteousness.

<sup>7</sup>"That is why the days are coming," declares the LORD, "when peoples oaths will no longer be, The LORD brought the people of Israel out of Egypt. As the LORD lives.

<sup>8</sup>Instead, their oaths will be, The LORD brought the descendants of the nation of Israel out of the land of the north and all the lands where he had scattered them. As the LORD lives At that time they will live in their own land.

<sup>9</sup>"Say this about the prophets: I am deeply disturbed. All my bones tremble. I am like a drunk, like a person who has had too much wine, because of the LORD and his holy words.

<sup>10</sup>The land is filled with adulterers. The land mourns because of the curse. Pastures in the wilderness have dried up. The people are evil, and they use their strength to do the wrong things.

<sup>11</sup>The prophets and priests are godless. Even in my temple I've found them doing evil," declares the LORD.

<sup>12</sup>"That is why their own way will become like slippery paths in the dark. They will be chased away, and they will fall down in the dark. I will bring disaster on them. It is time for them to be punished," declares the LORD.

<sup>13</sup>"Say this about the prophets of Samaria: I saw something disgusting.

The prophets of Samaria prophesied by Baal and led my people Israel astray.

<sup>14</sup>"Say this about the prophets of Jerusalem: I see something horrible. The prophets of Jerusalem commit adultery and live a lie. They support those who do evil so that no one turns back from his wickedness. They are all like Sodom to me, and those who live in Jerusalem are like Gomorrah."

<sup>15</sup>This is what the LORD of Armies says about the prophets: I will give them wormwood to eat and poison to drink. The prophets of Jerusalem have spread godlessness throughout the land.

<sup>16</sup>This is what the LORD of Armies says: Don't listen to what the prophets are saying to you. They fill you with false hope. They speak about visions that they dreamed up. These visions are not from the LORD.

<sup>17</sup>They keep saying to those who despise me, "The LORD says, Everything will go well for you." They tell all who live by their own stubborn ways, "Nothing bad will happen to you."

<sup>18</sup>Who is in the LORDS inner circle and sees and hears his word? Who pays attention and listens to his word?

<sup>19</sup>The storm of the LORD will come with his anger. Like a windstorm, it will swirl down on the heads of the wicked.

<sup>20</sup>The anger of the LORD will not turn back until he has done everything he intends to do. In the last days you will understand this clearly.

<sup>21</sup>I didnt send these prophets, yet they ran with their message. I didnt speak to them, yet they prophesied.

<sup>22</sup>If they had been in my inner circle, they would have announced my words to my people. They would have turned back from their evil ways and the evil they have done.

<sup>23</sup>"I am a God who is near. I am also a God who is far away," declares the LORD.

<sup>24</sup>"No one can hide so that I cant see him," declares the LORD. "I fill heaven and earth!" declares the LORD.

<sup>25</sup>"Ive heard the prophets who speak lies in my name. They say, I had a dream! I had a dream!

<sup>26</sup> How long will these prophets continue to lie and deceive?

<sup>27</sup> They tell each other the dreams they had, because they want to make my people forget my name, as their ancestors forgot my name because of Baal.

<sup>28</sup> The prophet who has a dream should tell his dream. However, the person who has my word should honestly speak my word. What does grain have to do with straw?" asks the LORD.

<sup>29</sup> "Isn't my word like fire or like a hammer that shatters a rock?" asks the LORD.

<sup>30</sup> "I'm against the prophets who steal my words from each other," declares the LORD.

<sup>31</sup> "I'm against the prophets who speak their own thoughts and say that they speak for me.

<sup>32</sup> "I'm against those who prophesy dreams they made up," declares the LORD. "They tell the dreams they made up and lead my people astray with their lies and their wild talk. I didn't send them or command them to go. They don't help these people at all," declares the LORD.

<sup>33</sup>"When these people, the prophets, or the priests ask you, What revelation has the LORD burdened you with now? say to them, You are the burden! I will abandon you, declares the LORD.

<sup>34</sup>Suppose the prophets, the priests, or these people say, This is the LORDS revelation! I will punish them and their families.

<sup>35</sup>They should ask their neighbors and their relatives, What is the LORDS answer? and What did the LORD say?

<sup>36</sup>They should never again say, This is the LORDS revelation, because each persons word becomes the revelation. They will twist the words of the living God, the LORD of Armies, our God.

<sup>37</sup>"Jeremiah, say this to the prophets, What was the LORDS answer to you? and What did the LORD say?

<sup>38</sup>Suppose they say, This is the LORDS revelation! Then say, This is what the LORD says: Because you have said, "This is the LORDS revelation!" even though I commanded you not to repeat this saying,

<sup>39</sup>I will certainly forget you. I will throw you out of my presence and out of the city that I gave you and your ancestors.

<sup>40</sup>I will bring eternal disgrace and shame on you. It will never be forgotten."

**24**<sup>1</sup> King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon took Jehoiakin (son of King Jehoiakim of Judah), the princes of Judah, the skilled workers, and the builders from Jerusalem into captivity and brought them to Babylon. After this, the LORD showed me two baskets of figs set in front of the LORDS temple.

<sup>2</sup>One basket had very good figs, like figs that ripen first. The other basket had very bad figs. These figs were so bad that they couldnt be eaten.

<sup>3</sup>Then the LORD asked me, "What do you see, Jeremiah?" I answered, "Figs. Figs that are very good. I also see figs that are very bad, so bad that they cant be eaten."

<sup>4</sup>The LORD spoke his word to me,

<sup>5</sup>"This is what the LORD God of Israel says: The captives of Judah, whom I sent away from here to Babylon, are like these good figs. I will look kindly on them.

<sup>6</sup>I will watch over them for their own good, and I will bring them back to this land. I will build them up and not tear them down. I will plant them and not uproot them.

<sup>7</sup>I will give them the desire to know that I am the LORD. They will be my people, and I will be their God, because they will wholeheartedly come back to me.

<sup>8</sup>"But this is what the LORD says about the bad figs that are so bad that they can't be eaten. The LORD says, Like these bad figs, I will abandon King Zedekiah of Judah, his princes, the remaining few in Jerusalem who stayed behind in this land, and those who are living in Egypt.

<sup>9</sup>I will make them a horrifying sight to all the kingdoms of the earth. They will be a disgrace and an example. They will become something ridiculed and cursed wherever I scatter them.

<sup>10</sup>I will send wars, famines, and plagues until they disappear from the land that I gave to them and their ancestors."

**25**<sup>1</sup>The LORD spoke his word to Jeremiah about all the people of Judah when Jehoiakim, son of Josiah,

was in his fourth year as king. (This was the first year that Nebuchadnezzar was king of Babylon.)

<sup>2</sup>The prophet Jeremiah spoke to all the people of Judah and to everyone who lived in Jerusalem. He said,

<sup>3</sup>"For 23 years, from the time that Josiah, son of Amon, was in his thirteenth year as king of Judah until today, the LORD continued to speak his word to me. So I have spoken to you again and again, but you have not listened.

<sup>4</sup>"Even though the LORD has sent all his servants the prophets to you, you havent listened or paid attention to them.

<sup>5</sup>The prophets said, Turn from your evil ways and the evil you have done, and live in the land that the LORD permanently gave to you and your ancestors.

<sup>6</sup>Dont follow other gods to serve and worship them. Dont make me furious about the idols your hands have shaped. Then I wont harm you.

<sup>7</sup>But you havent listened to me, declares the LORD. You have made me furious about the idols your hands have

shaped and have brought harm upon yourselves.

<sup>8</sup>"This is what the LORD of Armies says: You did not listen to my words,  
<sup>9</sup>so I'm going to send for all the families from the north. I will also send for my servant King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon, declares the LORD. I will bring the families from the north to attack this land, its people, and all these surrounding nations. I'm going to destroy them and turn them into something terrible, something ridiculed, and something permanently ruined.

<sup>10</sup>I will take from them the sounds of joy and happiness, the sounds of brides and grooms, the sound of mills, and the light of lamps.

<sup>11</sup>This whole land will be ruined and become a wasteland. These nations will serve the king of Babylon for 70 years.

<sup>12</sup>"When the 70 years are over, I will punish the king of Babylon and that nation for their crimes, declares the LORD. I will turn Babylon into a permanent wasteland.

<sup>13</sup>I will bring on that land all the disasters I threatened to do to it,

everything that Jeremiah prophesied against all the nations, everything written in this book.

<sup>14</sup>Many nations and great kings will make slaves of the people of Babylon, and I will pay them back for what they have done."

<sup>15</sup>This is what the LORD God of Israel said to me: Take from my hand this cup filled with the wine of my fury, and make all the nations to whom I'm sending you drink from it.

<sup>16</sup>When they drink from it, they will stagger and go insane because of the wars that I'm going to send them.

<sup>17</sup>So I took the cup from the LORDS hand. I made all the nations to whom the LORD sent me drink from it:

<sup>18</sup>Jerusalem and the cities of Judah as well as its kings and officials. When they drank from it, they became wastelands and ruins, something ridiculed and cursed, until today.

<sup>19</sup>I also made these people drink from it: Pharaoh king of Egypt, his servants, officials, all his people,

<sup>20</sup>and all the foreign people living among them; all the kings of the land of

Uz; all the kings of Philistia, those from the cities of Ashkelon, Gaza, and Ekron, and the people left in Ashdod;

<sup>21</sup> Edom, Moab, and the people of Ammon;

<sup>22</sup> all the kings of Tyre and Sidon, and the kings on the seacoast;

<sup>23</sup> Dedan, Tema, Buz, and all who shave the hair on their foreheads;

<sup>24</sup> all the kings of Arabia, and all the kings of the foreign people living in the desert;

<sup>25</sup> all the kings of Zimri, all the kings of Elam, and all the kings of Media;

<sup>26</sup> all the kings of the north, near and far, one after another all the kingdoms of the earth. Last of all, the king of Sheshach will drink from the cup.

<sup>27</sup> The LORD said, "Say to them, This is what the LORD of Armies, the God of Israel, says: Drink, get drunk, vomit, fall down, and don't get up because of the wars that I'm going to send you.

<sup>28</sup> But if they refuse to take the cup from your hand and drink from it, say to them, This is what the LORD of Armies says: You must drink from it!

<sup>29</sup>I am going to bring disaster on the city that is named after me. Do you think you'll go unpunished? You will not go unpunished! I'm declaring war on all those who live on earth, declares the LORD of Armies.

<sup>30</sup>"That is why you will prophesy all these things to them and say, The LORD roars from above. He thunders from his holy dwelling place. He roars against his land. He shouts like those who stomp grapes. He shouts against all those who live on earth.

<sup>31</sup>The sound is echoing to the ends of the earth because the LORD has brought charges against the nations. He will judge all humans. He will kill the wicked, declares the LORD.

<sup>32</sup>"This is what the LORD of Armies says: Disaster is spreading from nation to nation. A great storm is brewing from the distant corners of the earth."

<sup>33</sup>On that day those killed by the LORD will stretch from one end of the earth to the other. They will not be mourned, taken away, or buried. They will become like manure on the ground.

<sup>34</sup>Mourn, you shepherds, and cry. Roll in the dust, you leaders of the flock. The time has come for you to be slaughtered. The time has come for you to be scattered, and you will break like fine pottery.

<sup>35</sup>There will be no place for the shepherds to flee, no escape for the leaders of the flock.

<sup>36</sup>The shepherds are crying and the leaders of the flock are mourning because the LORD is stripping their pasture.

<sup>37</sup>The peaceful pastures are destroyed by the LORDS burning anger.

<sup>38</sup>He has left his lair like a lion. Their land has been ruined because of the heat of the oppressor, because of the fury of his anger.

**26**<sup>1</sup>The LORD spoke his word when Judahs King Jehoiakim, son of Josiah, began to rule. He said,

<sup>2</sup>"This is what the LORD says: Stand in the courtyard of the LORDS temple, and speak to all the people who come from the cities of Judah to worship in the LORDS temple. Tell them everything that

I command you to tell them. Don't leave out a single word.

<sup>3</sup>Maybe they'll listen, and they'll turn from their evil ways. Then I'll change my plan about the disaster I intend to bring on them because of the evil they have done."

<sup>4</sup>The LORD added, "Also say to them, This is what the LORD says: Suppose you don't listen to me and don't follow my teachings that I set in front of you.

<sup>5</sup>Suppose you don't listen to the words of my servants the prophets, whom I sent to you again and again, even though you didn't listen.

<sup>6</sup>Then I will do to this temple what I did to Shiloh. I will turn this city into something that will be cursed by all the nations on earth."

<sup>7</sup>The priests, the prophets, and all the people heard Jeremiah speaking these things in the LORDS temple.

<sup>8</sup>But as soon as Jeremiah finished saying everything that the LORD had commanded him to say, the priests, the prophets, and all the people grabbed him and said, "You must die!

<sup>9</sup>Why do you prophesy in the LORDS name that this temple will be like Shiloh and this city will become a pile of rubble with no one living here?" Then all the people crowded around Jeremiah in the LORDS temple.

<sup>10</sup>When the officials of Judah heard about these things, they went from the kings palace to the LORDS temple. They sat at the entrance of New Gate to the LORDS temple.

<sup>11</sup>Then the priests and the prophets said to the officials and all the people, "This man is condemned to die because he prophesied against this city as you yourselves have heard."

<sup>12</sup>Then Jeremiah said to all the officials and all the people, "The LORD sent me to prophesy everything that you have heard me say against this temple and against this city.

<sup>13</sup>Now, change your ways and what you are doing, and listen to the LORD your God. Then the LORD will change his plan about the disaster that he intends to bring on you.

<sup>14</sup>"My life is in your hands. Do with me whatever you think is good and right.

<sup>15</sup>But know for certain that if you put me to death, you, this city, and the people living in it will be guilty of killing an innocent person. The LORD has certainly sent me to speak all these things to you."

<sup>16</sup>Then the officials and all the people said to the priests and prophets, "This man should not be condemned to die. He has spoken to us in the name of the LORD our God."

<sup>17</sup>Then some of the leaders in the land got up and said to the entire crowd,

<sup>18</sup>"Micah from Moresheth prophesied at the time of Judah's King Hezekiah and said to all the people of Judah, This is what the LORD of Armies says: Zion will be plowed like a field, Jerusalem will become a pile of rubble, and the temple mountain will become a worship site covered with trees.

<sup>19</sup>Did Judah's King Hezekiah and all the people of Judah put Micah to death? No! Hezekiah feared the LORD and sought the LORD'S favor. So the LORD changed his plan about the disaster he intended to bring on them. But we are about to bring a bigger disaster on ourselves."

<sup>20</sup>There was another man prophesying in the name of the LORD. His name was Uriah, son of Shemaiah, from Kiriath Jearim. He prophesied against this city and this land as Jeremiah did.

<sup>21</sup>When King Jehoiakim and all his personal troops and officials heard what Uriah said, the king wanted to put him to death. But Uriah heard about it and fled in fear to Egypt.

<sup>22</sup>King Jehoiakim sent soldiers to Egypt: Elnathan (son of Achbor) and other soldiers along with him.

<sup>23</sup>They brought Uriah from Egypt and took him to King Jehoiakim. The king executed Uriah and threw his body into the burial ground for the common people.

<sup>24</sup>Ahikam, son of Shaphan, supported Jeremiah. So Jeremiah was not handed over to the people to be put to death.

**27** <sup>1</sup>When Zedekiah, son of King Josiah of Judah, began to rule, the LORD spoke his word to Jeremiah.

<sup>2</sup>This is what the LORD said to me: Make leather straps and a wooden yoke, and strap the yoke on your neck.

<sup>3</sup>Then send messages to the kings of Edom, Moab, Ammon, Tyre, and Sidon, with messengers who have come to King Zedekiah of Judah in Jerusalem.

<sup>4</sup>Give them an order for their masters: "This is what the LORD of Armies, the God of Israel, says: Say this to your masters,

<sup>5</sup>I used my great strength and my powerful arm to make the earth along with the people and the animals on it. I give it to anyone I please.

<sup>6</sup>Now I have handed all these countries over to my servant King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon. I have even made wild animals serve him.

<sup>7</sup>All nations will serve him, his son, and his grandson until Babylon is defeated. Then many nations and great kings will make him their slave.

<sup>8</sup>"Suppose nations or kingdoms won't serve or surrender to King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon. I will punish those nations by wars, famines, and plagues, until I have put an end to them by Nebuchadnezzar's power, declares the LORD.

<sup>9</sup>Don't listen to prophets, mediums, interpreters of dreams, fortunetellers, or sorcerers who tell you that you'll never serve the king of Babylon.

<sup>10</sup>They are prophesying lies to you. They will cause you to be taken far from your lands. I'll scatter you, and you will die.

<sup>11</sup>But suppose a nation surrenders to the king of Babylon and serves him. I will let it stay in its own land. People will farm the land and live on it," declares the LORD.

<sup>12</sup>I spoke the same message to King Zedekiah of Judah, "Surrender to the king of Babylon, serve him and his people, and you will stay alive.

<sup>13</sup>Why should you and your people die in wars, famines, and plagues? The LORD has threatened the nations that don't serve the king of Babylon.

<sup>14</sup>Don't listen to the prophets who tell you that you'll never serve the king of Babylon. They are prophesying lies to you.

<sup>15</sup>I didn't send them, declares the LORD. They prophesy lies in my name.

So I will scatter you, and you and the prophets will die."

<sup>16</sup>I also spoke this message to the priests and all the people. "This is what the LORD said to me: Dont listen to the prophets who tell you that the utensils of the LORDS temple will be brought back from Babylon soon. They are prophesying lies to you.

<sup>17</sup>Dont listen to them. Instead, serve the king of Babylon, and live. Why should this city be turned into rubble?

<sup>18</sup>If they are prophets and the LORD is speaking to them, they should beg the LORD of Armies not to allow the utensils that are left in the LORDS temple, in the royal palace of Judah, and in Jerusalem to be taken away to Babylon.

<sup>19</sup>"Babylons King Nebuchadnezzar took Jehoiakin, son of King Jehoiakim of Judah, into captivity from Jerusalem to Babylon along with all the nobles of Judah and Jerusalem. But he didnt take the pillars, the bronze pool, the stands, and the rest of the utensils that are left in this city.

<sup>20</sup>(SEE 27: 19)

<sup>21</sup> This is what the LORD of Armies, the God of Israel, says about the utensils that are left in the LORDS temple, in the royal palace of Judah, and in Jerusalem:

<sup>22</sup> They will be taken to Babylon and stay there until I come for them, declares the LORD. I will take them from there and bring them back to this place."

**28**<sup>1</sup> In that same year, early in the rule of King Zedekiah of Judah, in the fifth month of his fourth year as king, the prophet Hananiah, son of Azzur, from Gibeon, spoke to me in the LORDS temple. He said to me in front of the priests and all the people,

<sup>2</sup> "This is what the LORD of Armies, the God of Israel, says: I will break the yoke of the king of Babylon.

<sup>3</sup> Within two years I will bring back all the utensils of the LORDS temple that King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon took from this place and carried off to Babylon.

<sup>4</sup> I will also bring back to this place Jehoiakin, son of King Jehoiakim of Judah, and all the captives of Judah who went to Babylon, declares the LORD.

So I will break the yoke of the king of Babylon."

<sup>5</sup>The prophet Jeremiah replied to the prophet Hananiah in front of the priests and all the people standing in the LORDS temple.

<sup>6</sup>He said, "Amen! May the LORD do this! May the LORD make your prophecy come true and bring back the utensils of the LORDS temple and all the captives from Babylon to this place.

<sup>7</sup>But now listen to this message that I am speaking to you and to all the people:

<sup>8</sup>Long ago, the prophets who preceded you and me prophesied wars, disasters, and plagues against many countries and great kingdoms.

<sup>9</sup>But the prophet who prophesied peace was recognized as a prophet that the LORD sent only if the message of the prophet came true."

<sup>10</sup>Then the prophet Hananiah took the yoke off the neck of the prophet Jeremiah and broke it.

<sup>11</sup>Haniah said in front of all the people, "This is what the LORD says: In the same way, I will break the yoke of

King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon off the neck of all the nations within two years." Then the prophet Jeremiah went on his way.

<sup>12</sup>After the prophet Hananiah broke the yoke off the neck of the prophet Jeremiah, the LORD spoke his word to Jeremiah. He said,

<sup>13</sup>"Tell Hananiah, This is what the LORD says: You have broken the wooden yoke, but I will replace it with an iron yoke.

<sup>14</sup>This is what the LORD of Armies, the God of Israel, says: I will put an iron yoke on the necks of all these nations so that they will serve King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon. They will serve him! I will even make wild animals serve him."

<sup>15</sup>Then Jeremiah told the prophet Hananiah, "Now listen, Hananiah, the LORD hasnt sent you. You have made these people believe a lie.

<sup>16</sup>This is what the LORD says: Im going to remove you from the face of the earth. You will die this year because you have encouraged rebellion against the LORD."

<sup>17</sup>So the prophet Hananiah died in the seventh month of that year.

**29**<sup>1</sup> The prophet Jeremiah sent a letter from Jerusalem to the rest of the leaders among the captives. He also sent it to the priests, the prophets, and all the people that Nebuchadnezzar took away as captives from Jerusalem to Babylon.

<sup>2</sup> (This was after King Jehoiakin and his mother, the court officials, the leaders of Judah and Jerusalem, the craftsmen, and metal workers left Jerusalem.)

<sup>3</sup> He sent the letter with Shaphans son Elasah and Hilkiahs son Gemariah, whom King Zedekiah of Judah had sent to King Nebuchadnezzar in Babylon. The letter said:

<sup>4</sup> This is what the LORD of Armies, the God of Israel, says to all those who were taken captive from Jerusalem to Babylon:

<sup>5</sup> Build houses, and live in them. Plant gardens, and eat what they produce.

<sup>6</sup> Get married, and have sons and daughters. Find wives for your sons, and let your daughters get married so that they can have sons and daughters. Grow in number there; dont decrease.

<sup>7</sup> Work for the good of the city where I've taken you as captives, and pray to the LORD for that city. When it prospers, you will also prosper.

<sup>8</sup> This is what the LORD of Armies, the God of Israel, says: Don't let the prophets or the mediums who are among you trick you. Don't even listen to your own dreams.

<sup>9</sup> These people are prophesying lies to you in my name. I didn't send them, declares the LORD.

<sup>10</sup> This is what the LORD says: When Babylons 70 years are over, I will come to you. I will keep my promise to you and bring you back to this place.

<sup>11</sup> I know the plans that I have for you, declares the LORD. They are plans for peace and not disaster, plans to give you a future filled with hope.

<sup>12</sup> Then you will call to me. You will come and pray to me, and I will hear you.

<sup>13</sup> When you look for me, you will find me. When you wholeheartedly seek me,

<sup>14</sup> I will let you find me, declares the LORD. I will bring you back from captivity. I will gather you from all the

nations and places where I've scattered you, declares the LORD. I will bring you back from the place where you are being held captive.

<sup>15</sup>You've said that the LORD has given you prophets in Babylon.

<sup>16</sup>But this is what the LORD says about the king who sits on David's throne and about all the people who live in this city, the people who are your relatives and who weren't taken away as captives:

<sup>17</sup>The LORD of Armies says: I'm going to send them wars, famines, and plagues. These people are like rotten figs to me, figs that are so bad that they can't be eaten.

<sup>18</sup>I will chase them with wars, famines, and plagues. I will make them a horrifying sight to all the kingdoms on the earth. They will become something cursed, ridiculed, and hissed at, and they will be a disgrace among all the nations where I scatter them.

<sup>19</sup>They didn't listen to me, declares the LORD. I sent them my servants the prophets again and again, but they refused to listen, declares the LORD.

<sup>20</sup> So listen to the word of the LORD, all you captives who were sent away from Jerusalem to Babylon.

<sup>21</sup> This is what the LORD of Armies, the God of Israel, says about Kolaiahs son Ahab and about Maaseiahs son Zedekiah, who prophesy lies to you in my name: I'm going to hand them over to King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon. I will kill them as you watch.

<sup>22</sup> Because of them, all the captives from Judah who are in Babylon will use this curse: May the LORD curse you as he cursed Zedekiah and Ahab, whom the king of Babylon burned to death.

<sup>23</sup> They have done shameful things in Israel. They committed adultery with their neighbors wives and spoke lies in my name. I didn't command them to do this. I know what they have done. I'm a witness, declares the LORD.

<sup>24</sup> The LORD says, "Say to Shemaiah from Nehelam,

<sup>25</sup> This is what the LORD of Armies, the God of Israel, says: You sent letters in your own name to all the people who are in Jerusalem, to the priest Zephaniah,

son of Maaseiah, and to all the priests. These letters said:

<sup>26</sup>The LORD made you priest instead of Jehoiada so that there would be officials for the LORDS temple. You should put any lunatic who acts like a prophet in prison and in shackles.

<sup>27</sup>Now, why havent you arrested Jeremiah from Anathoth? After all, he acts like a prophet among you.

<sup>28</sup>Thats why Jeremiah sent this message to us in Babylon: You will be captives a long time. Build houses, and live in them. Plant gardens, and eat what they produce."

<sup>29</sup>The priest Zephaniah read this letter to the prophet Jeremiah.

<sup>30</sup>Then the LORD spoke his word to Jeremiah. He said,

<sup>31</sup>"Send this message to all the captives: This is what the LORD says about Shemaiah from Nehelam: Shemaiah prophesied to you, but I didnt send him. He has made you believe a lie.

<sup>32</sup>The LORD says: I will punish Shemaiah from Nehelam. I will also punish his descendants. No one from his family will be left alive. He will not

see the blessings that I'm going to send my people, declares the LORD, because he has encouraged rebellion against the LORD."

**30**<sup>1</sup> The LORD spoke his word to Jeremiah. He said,

<sup>2</sup>"This is what the LORD God of Israel says: Write in a book everything that I tell you.

<sup>3</sup>"The days are coming," declares the LORD, "when I will bring my people Israel and Judah back from captivity. I will bring them back to the land that I gave their ancestors, and they will take possession of it."

<sup>4</sup>This is the message that the LORD spoke about Israel and Judah:

<sup>5</sup>"This is what the LORD says: "We hear cries of fear, cries of panic, not cries of peace.

<sup>6</sup>Ask now, and see: Can a man give birth to a child? Why, then, do I see every strong man holding his stomach in pain like a woman giving birth to a child? Why has every face turned pale?

<sup>7</sup>How terrible that day will be! There will be no other day like it. It will be a

time of calamity for the descendants of Jacob, but they will be rescued from it.

<sup>8</sup>"On that day," declares the LORD of Armies, "I will break the yokes off your necks and tear off your ropes. Foreigners will no longer make you serve them.

<sup>9</sup>You will serve the LORD your God and David your king. I will establish him for you.

<sup>10</sup>"Don't be afraid, my servant Jacob," declares the LORD. Don't be terrified, Israel. I'm going to rescue you from a faraway place. I'm going to rescue your descendants from where they are captives. The descendants of Jacob will again have peace and security, and no one will frighten them.

<sup>11</sup>I am with you, and I will rescue you," declares the LORD. "I will completely destroy all the nations where I scattered you, but I will not completely destroy you. I will correct you with justice. I won't let you go entirely unpunished.

<sup>12</sup>"This is what the LORD says: Your wound is incurable. Your injury is beyond healing.

<sup>13</sup>No one argues that you should be healed. No medicine will heal you.

<sup>14</sup>All your lovers have forgotten you, and they don't want you anymore. I've punished you as an enemy would. I've corrected you as a cruel person would. You are very wicked, and you have many sins.

<sup>15</sup>Why do you cry about your wound, your injury that can't be cured? I've done this to you. You are very wicked, and you have many sins.

<sup>16</sup>That is why everyone who devours you will be devoured, and all your enemies will be taken away as captives. Those who looted you will be looted. Those who stole from you in war will have things stolen from them.

<sup>17</sup>"I'll restore your health and heal your wounds," declares the LORD. "People call you an outcast: Zion, no one cares for you.

<sup>18</sup>"This is what the LORD says: I'm going to bring the captives back to Jacob's tents and show compassion on their homes. Cities will be built on the ruins, and fortified palaces will be built in their rightful place.

<sup>19</sup>The people who live there will sing songs of praise, and the sound of

laughter will be heard from there. I'll make them numerous, and their number won't decrease. I'll bring them honor, and they won't be considered unimportant.

<sup>20</sup>Their children will be like they were long ago. Their community will be established in my presence, and I will punish everyone who oppresses them.

<sup>21</sup>Their leader will be someone from their own people. Their ruler will come from among them. I'll bring him near, and he will come close to me. Who would dare to come near me?" asks the LORD.

<sup>22</sup>You will be my people, and I will be your God.

<sup>23</sup>The storm of the LORD will come with his anger. Like a driving wind, it will swirl down on the heads of the wicked.

<sup>24</sup>The LORD'S burning anger will not turn back until he has done everything he intends to do. In the last days you will understand this clearly.

**31** <sup>1</sup>"At that time," declares the LORD, "I will be the God of all the families of Israel, and they will be my people."

<sup>2</sup>This is what the LORD says: The people who survived the wars have

found favor in the desert. Israel went to find its rest.

<sup>3</sup>The LORD appeared to me in a faraway place and said, "I love you with an everlasting love. So I will continue to show you my kindness.

<sup>4</sup>Once again I will build you up, and you will be rebuilt, my dear people Israel. Once again you will take your tambourines, and you will go dancing with happy people.

<sup>5</sup>Once again you will plant vineyards on the mountains of Samaria. Those who plant them will enjoy the fruit.

<sup>6</sup>There will be a day when watchmen on the mountains of Ephraim will call out this message: Arise! Let's go to Zion, to the LORD our God."

<sup>7</sup>This is what the LORD says: Sing a happy song about Jacob. Sing joyfully for the leader of the nations. Shout, sing praise, and say, "O LORD, rescue your people, the remaining few from Israel."

<sup>8</sup>"I will bring them from the land of the north. I will gather them from the farthest parts of the earth. Blind people and lame people will return together

with pregnant women and those in labor. A large crowd will return here.

<sup>9</sup>They will cry as they return. They will pray as I bring them back. I will lead them beside streams on a level path where they will not stumble. I will be a Father to Israel, and Ephraim will be my firstborn.

<sup>10</sup>"You nations, listen to the word of the LORD. Tell it to the distant islands. Say, The one who scattered the people of Israel will gather them and watch over them as a shepherd watches over his flock.

<sup>11</sup>The LORD will free the descendants of Jacob and reclaim them from those who are stronger than they are.

<sup>12</sup>They will come and shout for joy on top of Mount Zion. They will stream to it to enjoy the LORDS blessings: fresh grain, new wine, and olive oil, lambs and calves. Their lives will be like wellwatered gardens, and they will never suffer again.

<sup>13</sup>Then young women will rejoice and dance along with young men and old men. I will turn their mourning into joy.

I will comfort them. I will give them joy in place of their sorrow.

<sup>14</sup>I will satisfy the priests with rich food. My people will be filled with my blessings," declares the LORD.

<sup>15</sup>This is what the LORD says: A sound is heard in Ramah, the sound of crying in bitter grief. Rachel is crying for her children. She refuses to be comforted, because they are dead.

<sup>16</sup>This is what the LORD says: Stop your crying, and wipe away your tears. You will be rewarded for your work, declares the LORD. You will return from the land of the enemy.

<sup>17</sup>Your future is filled with hope, declares the LORD. Your children will return to their own territory.

<sup>18</sup>"I have certainly heard Ephraim mourn and say, You disciplined me, and I was disciplined. I was like a young, untrained calf. Turn me, and I will be turned, because you are the LORD my God.

<sup>19</sup>After I was turned around, I changed the way I thought and acted. After I was taught a lesson, I hung my head in shame. I was so ashamed and

humiliated, because of all the stupid things I have done ever since I was young.

<sup>20</sup>Is Ephraim my dear son? Is he a pleasant child? Even though I have often spoken against him, I still think fondly of him. That is why my heart longs for him, and I will certainly have compassion on him," declares the LORD.

<sup>21</sup>Set up landmarks! Put up road signs! Remember the highway, the road on which you traveled. Come back, my dear people Israel, come back to your cities.

<sup>22</sup>How long will you wander around, you unfaithful people? The LORD will create something new on earth: A woman will protect a man.

<sup>23</sup>This is what the LORD of Armies, the God of Israel, says: When I have brought them back from captivity, they will once again use this saying in Judah and in its cities: "The LORD will bless you, home of righteousness, holy mountain.

<sup>24</sup>Judah and all its cities will live there together. Farmers and shepherds will also live there.

<sup>25</sup> I will give those who are weary all they need. I will refresh everyone who is filled with sorrow."

<sup>26</sup> At this, I woke up and looked around. My sleep had been pleasant.

<sup>27</sup> "The days are coming," declares the LORD, "when I will plant the nations of Israel and Judah with people and animals.

<sup>28</sup> Once I watched over them to uproot them, to tear them down, and to wreck, ruin, and hurt them. Now I will watch over them to build them up and to plant them," declares the LORD.

<sup>29</sup> "When those days come, people will no longer say, Fathers have eaten sour grapes, and their childrens teeth are set on edge.

<sup>30</sup> But each person will die for his own sin. Whoever eats sour grapes will have his own teeth set on edge.

<sup>31</sup> "The days are coming," declares the LORD, "when I will make a new promise to Israel and Judah.

<sup>32</sup> It will not be like the promise that I made to their ancestors when I took them by the hand and brought them out of Egypt. They rejected that promise,

although I was a husband to them," declares the LORD.

<sup>33</sup>"But this is the promise that I will make to Israel after those days," declares the LORD: "I will put my teachings inside them, and I will write those teachings on their hearts. I will be their God, and they will be my people.

<sup>34</sup>No longer will each person teach his neighbors or his relatives by saying, Know the LORD. All of them, from the least important to the most important, will know me," declares the LORD, "because I will forgive their wickedness and I will no longer hold their sins against them."

<sup>35</sup>The LORD provides the sun to be a light during the day. He orders the moon and stars to be lights during the night. He stirs up the sea so that its waves roar. His name is the LORD of Armies. This is what the LORD says:

<sup>36</sup>Only if these laws stop working, declares the LORD, will Israel's descendants stop being a nation in my presence.

<sup>37</sup>This is what the LORD says: Only if the heavens could be measured or

the foundations of the earth could be searched, would I ever reject all of Israel's descendants because of everything that they have done, declares the LORD.

<sup>38</sup>"The days are coming," declares the LORD, "when the city will be rebuilt for me from the Tower of Hananel to Corner Gate.

<sup>39</sup>A measuring line will stretch from there straight to the Hill of Gareb, and then it will turn to Goah.

<sup>40</sup>The whole valley, filled with its dead bodies and ashes, and the whole area to the Kidron Valley, as far as the corner of Horse Gate in the east, will be holy to the LORD. It will never be uprooted or torn down again."

**32**<sup>1</sup>The LORD spoke his word to Jeremiah during Zedekiah's tenth year as king of Judah. (This was Nebuchadnezzar's eighteenth year as king.)

<sup>2</sup>At that time the army of the king of Babylon was blockading Jerusalem. The prophet Jeremiah was locked up in the courtyard of the prison. This prison was in the palace of the king of Judah.

<sup>3</sup>When King Zedekiah of Judah locked up Jeremiah, Zedekiah asked him, "Why are you prophesying? You are saying, This is what the LORD says: I'm going to hand this city over to the king of Babylon, and he will capture it.

<sup>4</sup>King Zedekiah of Judah will not escape from the Babylonians. He will certainly be handed over to the king of Babylon. He will talk to Nebuchadnezzar in person and look him in the eye.

<sup>5</sup>Nebuchadnezzar will take Zedekiah to Babylon, and Zedekiah will stay there until I deal with him, declares the LORD. When you fight the Babylonians, you won't win."

<sup>6</sup>Jeremiah said, "The LORD spoke his word to me. He said,

<sup>7</sup>Jeremiah, your cousin Hanamel, son of Shallum, is going to come to you and say, "Buy my field that is in Anathoth, because as the closest relative it is your responsibility to buy it."

<sup>8</sup>"Then, as the LORD had said, my cousin Hanamel came to me in the courtyard of the prison. He said to me, Please buy my field that is in Anathoth in the territory of Benjamin. It is your

responsibility to purchase it, because the rights of the closest relative belong to you. Buy it for yourself. Then I knew that the LORD had spoken to me.

<sup>9</sup>"So I bought the field in Anathoth from my cousin Hanamel and gave him the money. The field cost seven ounces of silver.

<sup>10</sup>I signed the deed, sealed it, had people witness the signing of the deed, and paid out the silver.

<sup>11</sup>Then I took the sealed copy of the deed, containing the terms and conditions, as well as an unsealed copy.

<sup>12</sup>I gave the copies of the deeds to Baruch, son of Neriah and grandson of Mahseiah. I did this in the presence of my cousin Hanamel and the witnesses who had signed the deed and in the presence of all the Jews who were sitting in the courtyard of the prison.

<sup>13</sup>Then I gave Baruch these orders:

<sup>14</sup>This is what the LORD of Armies, the God of Israel, says: Take both of these documents, both the sealed and the unsealed copies of the deed. Put them in a clay jar so that they will last a long time.

<sup>15</sup>This is what the LORD of Armies, the God of Israel, says: My people will again buy houses, fields, and vineyards in this land.

<sup>16</sup>"After I had given the copies to Baruch, son of Neriah, I prayed to the LORD. I prayed,

<sup>17</sup>Almighty LORD, you made heaven and earth by your great strength and powerful arm. Nothing is too hard for you.

<sup>18</sup>You show mercy to thousands of generations. However, you punish children for the wickedness of their parents. You, God, are great and mighty. Your name is the LORD of Armies.

<sup>19</sup>You make wise plans and do mighty things. You see everything the descendants of Adam do. You reward them for the way they live and for what they do.

<sup>20</sup>You performed miraculous signs and amazing things in Egypt. To this day you are still doing them in Israel. You made a name for yourself that continues to this day.

<sup>21</sup>You brought your people from Egypt with miraculous signs and amazing

things, with a mighty hand and a powerful arm, and with great terror.

<sup>22</sup>You gave them the land that you swore with an oath to give their ancestors, the land flowing with milk and honey.

<sup>23</sup>They entered and took possession of it. However, they refused to obey you or to follow your teachings. They didn't do anything you commanded them to do, so you brought all this disaster on them.

<sup>24</sup>"See how the dirt ramps have been built up around the city to capture it! Because of wars, famines, and plagues, the city will be handed over to the Babylonians who are attacking it. What you have threatened to do has happened, as you can see.

<sup>25</sup>Yet you, Almighty LORD, told me to buy a field with money and get witnesses to confirm it, although the city was handed over to the Babylonians."

<sup>26</sup>The LORD spoke his word to Jeremiah. He said,

<sup>27</sup>"I am the LORD God of all humanity. Nothing is too hard for me.

<sup>28</sup>This is what the LORD says: I'm going to hand this city over to the Babylonians

and King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon. They will capture it.

<sup>29</sup>"The Babylonians who are attacking this city will break in, set this city on fire, and burn it down. They will burn down the houses of people who made me furious by going up to the roofs to burn incense to Baal and to pour out wine offerings to other gods.

<sup>30</sup>Ever since they were young, the people of Israel and Judah have done what I consider evil. The people of Israel have made me furious by what they've done," declares the LORD.

<sup>31</sup>"The people in this city have made me so angry and furious from the day they built it to this day. So now I must remove this city from my presence.

<sup>32</sup>"The people of Israel and Judah have made me furious because they are evil. The people, their kings and officials, their priests and prophets, and the Judeans and those who live in Jerusalem

<sup>33</sup>have turned their backs, not their faces to me. I taught them again and again, but they refused to listen and learn.

<sup>34</sup> They set up their detestable idols in the temple that is called by my name, and they dishonored it.

<sup>35</sup> In the valley of Ben Hinnom they built worship sites for Baal to sacrifice their sons and daughters to Molech. I didn't ask them to do this. It never entered my mind. I didn't make Judah sin.

<sup>36</sup> "You have said this about the city, Because of wars, famines, and plagues it will be handed over to the king of Babylon. Now this is what the LORD God of Israel says:

<sup>37</sup> I am going to gather the people from all the lands where I scattered them in my anger, fury, and terrifying wrath. I will bring them back to this place and make them live here securely.

<sup>38</sup> They will be my people, and I will be their God.

<sup>39</sup> I will give them the same attitude and the same purpose so that they will fear me as long as they live. This will be for their own good and for the good of their children.

<sup>40</sup> I will make an eternal promise to them that I will never stop blessing

them. I will make them fear me so that they will never turn away from me.

<sup>41</sup> I will enjoy blessing them. With all my heart and soul I will faithfully plant them in this land.

<sup>42</sup> "This is what the LORD says: As I brought all these disasters on these people, so I will bring on them all these blessings that I have promised them.

<sup>43</sup> You have said that this land is a wasteland, without people or animals living in it. You have also said that it has been handed over to the Babylonians. But people will once again buy fields in this land.

<sup>44</sup> They will buy fields for money, sign deeds, seal them, and have people witness the signing of the deeds. This will happen in the territory of Benjamin, in the region of Jerusalem, in the cities of Judah, in the cities on the mountains, in the hill country, and in the Negev because I will bring them back from their captivity," declares the LORD.

**33**<sup>1</sup> While Jeremiah was still being held in the courtyard of the prison, the LORD spoke his word to him a second time. The LORD said,

<sup>2</sup>"I made the earth, formed it, and set it in place. My name is the LORD. This is what the LORD says:

<sup>3</sup>Call to me, and I will answer you. I will tell you great and mysterious things that you do not know.

<sup>4</sup>The houses in this city and the palaces of the kings of Judah have been torn down to be used against the dirt ramps and weapons of the Babylonians. This is what the LORD God of Israel says about this:

<sup>5</sup>The people of Israel fought the Babylonians. Now their houses are filled with the bodies of their own people I killed in my anger and my fury. I will hide my face from this city because of its wickedness.

<sup>6</sup>"But I will heal this city and restore it to health. I will heal its people, and I will give them peace and security.

<sup>7</sup>I will restore Judah and Israel and rebuild them as they were before.

<sup>8</sup>I will cleanse them from all the sins that they have committed against me. I will forgive them for all the sins that they have committed against me and for rebelling against me.

<sup>9</sup>Then Jerusalem will be my source of joy, praise, and honor. All the nations on earth will hear about all the blessings that I will give to Jerusalem. They will be afraid and tremble because of all the prosperity that I will provide for it.

<sup>10</sup>"This is what the LORD says: You have said that this place is ruined and that no people or animals live in it. Its true! The cities of Judah and the streets of Jerusalem are deserted. No people or animals live there. But once again you will hear

<sup>11</sup>the sounds of joy and happiness and the sounds of brides and grooms. You will hear those who bring thank offerings to the LORDS temple say, Give thanks to the LORD of Armies because the LORD is good, because his mercy endures forever. I will restore the fortunes of the land to what they were before," says the LORD.

<sup>12</sup>"This is what the LORD of Armies says: In this deserted place, where no people or animals live, and in all its cities, there will once again be pastures where shepherds can rest their flocks.

<sup>13</sup>In the cities on the mountains, in the foothills, in the Negev, in the territory of Benjamin, in the area around Jerusalem, and in the cities of Judah, shepherds will once again count their sheep," says the LORD.

<sup>14</sup>"The days are coming," declares the LORD, "when I will keep the promise that I made to Israel and Judah.

<sup>15</sup>In those days and at that time, I will cause a righteous branch to spring up for David. He will do what is fair and right in the land.

<sup>16</sup>In those days Judah will be saved and Jerusalem will live securely. Jerusalem will be called The LORD Our Righteousness.

<sup>17</sup>"This is what the LORD says: David will never fail to have a descendant sitting on the throne of Israel.

<sup>18</sup>The Levitical priests will never fail to have a descendant in my presence to sacrifice burnt offerings, to burn grain offerings, and to prepare daily sacrifices."

<sup>19</sup>The LORD spoke his word to Jeremiah. He said,

<sup>20</sup>"This is what the LORD says: Suppose you could break my arrangement with day and night so that they wouldnt come at their proper time.

<sup>21</sup>Then my arrangement with my servant David could be broken, and he would not have a descendant to rule on his throne. The arrangement with my servants the Levitical priests could also be broken.

<sup>22</sup>I will multiply the descendants of my servant David and the Levites who serve me like the stars of heaven that cannot be counted and the sand on the seashore that cannot be measured."

<sup>23</sup>Then the LORD spoke his word to Jeremiah. He said,

<sup>24</sup>"Havent you noticed what these people have said? They have said that the LORD has rejected the two families he has chosen. They despise my people, and they no longer consider them a nation.

<sup>25</sup>"This is what the LORD says: Suppose I hadnt made an arrangement with day and night or made laws for heaven and earth.

<sup>26</sup>Then I would reject the descendants of Jacob and of my servant David. I would not let any of Davids descendants rule the descendants of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. However, I will restore their fortunes and love them."

**34**<sup>1</sup>The LORD spoke his word to Jeremiah when King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon, his entire army, and all the kingdoms and people that he ruled were attacking Jerusalem and all its cities. He said,

<sup>2</sup>"This is what the LORD God of Israel says: Go to King Zedekiah of Judah, and tell him, The LORD says: I'm going to hand this city over to the king of Babylon, and he will burn it down.

<sup>3</sup>You will not escape from him. You will certainly be captured and handed over to him. You will see the king of Babylon with your own eyes, and he will talk to you face to face. Then you will go to Babylon.

<sup>4</sup>"Listen to the word of the LORD, King Zedekiah of Judah. This is what the LORD says about you: You will not die in war.

<sup>5</sup>You will die peacefully. People will burn funeral fires for you as they did for your ancestors, the kings who lived before you. They will say, "Oh, master," as they mourn for you. I have spoken my word, declares the LORD."

<sup>6</sup>The prophet Jeremiah told all these things to King Zedekiah of Judah in Jerusalem.

<sup>7</sup>He did this when the army of the king of Babylon was attacking Jerusalem and the cities of Lachish and Azekah. These were the only fortified cities of Judah that were left.

<sup>8</sup>The LORD spoke his word to Jeremiah after King Zedekiah and all the people in Jerusalem promised to free their slaves.

<sup>9</sup>Everyone was supposed to free his Hebrew slaves, both male and female. No one was supposed to keep another Jew as a slave.

<sup>10</sup>All the officials and all the people agreed and promised to free their male and female slaves and not to keep them as slaves anymore. So they set them free.

<sup>11</sup>But afterwards, they changed their minds and took back the men and

women they had freed and made them their slaves again.

<sup>12</sup>The LORD spoke his word to Jeremiah. He said,

<sup>13</sup>"This is what the LORD God of Israel says: I put a condition on the promise I made to your ancestors when I brought them from Egypt, where they were slaves. I said,

<sup>14</sup>Every seven years each of you must free any Hebrews who sold themselves to you. When they have served you for six years, you must set them free. But your ancestors refused to obey me or listen to me.

<sup>15</sup>Recently, you changed and did what I consider right. You agreed to free your neighbors, and you made a promise in my presence, in the temple that is called by my name.

<sup>16</sup>Now you have changed again and dishonored me. You brought back the male and female slaves that you had set free to live their own lives. You have forced them to be your male and female slaves again.

<sup>17</sup>"This is what the LORD says: You didnt obey me. You havent freed your

relatives and neighbors. Now I am going to free you," declares the LORD. "I will free you to die in wars, plagues, and famines. I will make all the kingdoms of the world horrified at the thought of you.

<sup>18</sup>I will hand over the people who have rejected my promise. They have not kept the terms of the promise which they made in my presence when they cut a calf in two and passed between its pieces.

<sup>19</sup>I will hand over the officials of Judah and Jerusalem, the palace officials, the priests, and all the common people who passed between the pieces of the calf.

<sup>20</sup>I will hand them over to their enemies who want to kill them, and their corpses will be food for birds and wild animals.

<sup>21</sup>I will hand King Zedekiah of Judah and his officials over to their enemies who want to kill them and to the army of the king of Babylon, the army that has withdrawn from you.

<sup>22</sup>I am going to give a command," declares the LORD. "I will bring that army back to this city to attack it, capture it, and burn it down. I will destroy the cities of Judah so that no one will live there."

**35** <sup>1</sup>The LORD spoke his word to Jeremiah during the reign of Jehoiakim, son of King Josiah of Judah. He said,

<sup>2</sup>"Go to the family of Rechab and talk to them. Take them into one of the side rooms in the LORDS temple, and offer them a drink of wine."

<sup>3</sup>I took Jaazaniah, who was the son of Jeremiah and the grandson of Habazziniah, and I took Jaazaniahs brothers and all his sonsthe whole family of Rechab.

<sup>4</sup>I brought them into the LORDS temple, into the side room of the sons of Hanan. (He was Igdaliahs son, the man of God.) It was next to the room of the officials and above the side room of Maaseiah, Shallums son, the doorkeeper.

<sup>5</sup>Then I set cups and pitchers filled with wine in front of the family of Rechab. I said to them, "Drink some wine."

<sup>6</sup>They answered, "We dont drink wine, because our ancestor Jonadab, Rechabs son, gave us this order: You and your descendants must never drink wine."

<sup>7</sup>Never build any houses or plant any fields or vineyards. You must never have

any of these things. You must always live in tents so that you may live for a long time in the land where you are staying.

<sup>8</sup>We, along with our wives, sons, and daughters, have obeyed our ancestor Jonadab, Rechabs son, in everything he ordered us to do. We have never drunk wine,

<sup>9</sup>built houses to live in, or owned vineyards, pastures, or grainfields.

<sup>10</sup>We live in tents, and we have obeyed everything our ancestor Jonadab ordered us to do.

<sup>11</sup>But when King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon invaded this land, we said, Let's go to Jerusalem to escape the Babylonian and Aramean armies. That's why we are living in Jerusalem."

<sup>12</sup>Then the LORD spoke his word to Jeremiah. He said,

<sup>13</sup>"This is what the LORD of Armies, the God of Israel, says: Tell the people of Judah and those who live in Jerusalem, Wont you ever learn your lesson and obey my words? declares the LORD.

<sup>14</sup>Jonadab, Rechabs son, ordered his descendants not to drink wine. This order has been carried out. His

descendants have not drunk any wine to this day, because they have obeyed their ancestors order. I have spoken to you again and again, but you have refused to listen to me.

<sup>15</sup>I have sent all my servants the prophets to you again and again. They said, "Turn from your evil ways, do what is right, and dont follow other gods in order to serve them. Then you will live in the land that I gave you and your ancestors." However, you refused to listen to me or obey me.

<sup>16</sup>The descendants of Jonadab, Rechabs son, have carried out the orders of their ancestor, but you refuse to listen to me.

<sup>17</sup>"This is what the LORD God of Armies, the God of Israel, says: I am going to bring on Judah and on all those who live in Jerusalem all the disasters that I threatened. I have spoken to them, but they didnt listen. I called to them, but they didnt answer."

<sup>18</sup>Then Jeremiah said to the family of Rechab, "This is what the LORD of Armies, the God of Israel, says: You obeyed the order of your ancestor

Jonadab, followed all his instructions, and did exactly what he told you to do.

<sup>19</sup>So this is what the LORD of Armies, the God of Israel, says: A descendant of Jonadab, Rechabs son, will always serve me."

**36**<sup>1</sup>In the fourth year of the reign of Jehoiakim, son of King Josiah of Judah, the LORD spoke his word to Jeremiah. He said,

<sup>2</sup>"Take a scroll, and write on it everything that I have dictated to you about Israel, Judah, and all the other nations from the time I spoke to you during the reign of Josiah until today.

<sup>3</sup>Maybe the nation of Judah will hear about all the disasters that I plan to bring on them, and they will turn from their wicked ways. Then I will forgive their wickedness and their sins."

<sup>4</sup>Then Jeremiah called Baruch, son of Neriah. Jeremiah dictated everything that the LORD had told him, and Baruch wrote it all down on a scroll.

<sup>5</sup>Jeremiah told Baruch, "I'm no longer allowed to go to the LORDS temple.

<sup>6</sup>On a day of fasting, you must read from the scroll the LORDS message that

you wrote as I dictated. You must read it to the people in the LORDS temple. You must also read it to all the people of Judah when they come from their cities.

<sup>7</sup> Maybe their prayers will come into the LORDS presence, and they will turn from their evil ways. The LORD has threatened these people with his terrifying anger and fury."

<sup>8</sup> Baruch, son of Neriah, did as the prophet Jeremiah commanded him. In the LORDS temple he read from the scroll everything that the LORD had said.

<sup>9</sup> In the ninth month of the fifth year of the reign of Jehoiakim, son of King Josiah of Judah, a time for fasting was called. It was a time for all the people in Jerusalem and for everyone who was coming from any city in Judah to Jerusalem to fast in the LORDS presence.

<sup>10</sup> Then Baruch read the scroll containing the words of Jeremiah. Baruch read it to all the people in the LORDS temple in the room of the scribe Gemariah, son of Shaphan, in the upper courtyard at the entrance of New Gate of the LORDS temple.

<sup>11</sup> Micaiah, who was the son of Gemariah and the grandson of Shaphan, heard Baruch read from the scroll everything the LORD had said.

<sup>12</sup> Then he went down to the scribes room in the kings palace where all the scribes were sitting. The scribe Elishama, Delaiah (son of Shemaiah), Elnathan (son of Achbor), Gemariah (son of Shaphan), Zedekiah (son of Hananiah), and all the other officials were there.

<sup>13</sup> Micaiah told them everything he heard Baruch read from the scroll publicly.

<sup>14</sup> Then all the officials sent Jehudi, who was the son of Nethaniah, the grandson of Shelemiah, and the greatgrandson of Cush, to Baruch. Jehudi said to Baruch, "Bring the scroll that you read publicly, and come with me." Baruch, son of Neriah, took the scroll and went with him to see the officers.

<sup>15</sup> They said to Baruch, "Please sit down, and read it to us." So Baruch read it to them.

<sup>16</sup> When they heard everything, they turned to each other in terror. They

said to Baruch, "We must tell the king everything."

<sup>17</sup>Then they asked Baruch, "Please tell us how you wrote all this. Did Jeremiah dictate it to you?"

<sup>18</sup>Baruch answered, "He dictated everything to me, and I wrote it on the scroll in ink."

<sup>19</sup>The officials said to Baruch, "You and Jeremiah must hide. Dont let anyone know where you are."

<sup>20</sup>After they put the scroll in the side room of the scribe Elishama, they went to the king in the courtyard and told him everything.

<sup>21</sup>Then the king sent Jehudi to get the scroll. He took the scroll from the side room of the scribe Elishama. Jehudi read it to the king and all the officials standing by the king.

<sup>22</sup>It was the ninth month, and the king was in his winter house sitting in front of the fire in the fireplace.

<sup>23</sup>As Jehudi read three or four columns, the king would cut them off with a scribes knife and throw them into the fire in the fireplace. He did this until the whole scroll was burned up.

<sup>24</sup> The king and all his attendants didn't show any fear or tear their clothes in fear when they heard everything being read.

<sup>25</sup> Even when Elnathan, Delaiah, and Gemariah urged the king not to burn the scroll, he refused to listen to them.

<sup>26</sup> The king commanded Jerahmeel (the king's son), Seraiah (son of Azriel), and Shelemiah (son of Abdeel) to arrest the scribe Baruch and the prophet Jeremiah. But the LORD had hidden Baruch and Jeremiah.

<sup>27</sup> After the king burned up the scroll that Baruch had written and that Jeremiah had dictated, the LORD spoke his word to Jeremiah. He said,

<sup>28</sup> "Take another scroll, and write on it everything that was written on the scroll that King Jehoiakim of Judah burned.

<sup>29</sup> Say about King Jehoiakim of Judah, This is what the LORD says: You burned this scroll, and you asked Jeremiah, "Why did you write that the king of Babylon will certainly come to destroy this land and take away people and animals?"

<sup>30</sup>This is what the LORD says about King Jehoiakim of Judah: He will have no one to sit on Davids throne, and his own corpse will be thrown out and exposed to the heat of day and the cold of night.

<sup>31</sup>I will punish him, his descendants, and his attendants for their wickedness. They refused to listen. So I will bring on them, on those who live in Jerusalem, and on the people of Judah all the disasters that I have threatened."

<sup>32</sup>Then Jeremiah took another scroll and gave it to the scribe Baruch, son of Neriah. As Jeremiah dictated, Baruch wrote on it everything that was on the scroll that King Jehoiakim of Judah had burned. They added many similar messages.

**37**<sup>1</sup> King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon appointed Zedekiah, son of Josiah, to be king of Judah. Zedekiah succeeded Jehoiakin, son of Jehoiakim.

<sup>2</sup>But Zedekiah, his administrators, and the common people didnt listen to what the LORD had spoken through the prophet Jeremiah.

<sup>3</sup>King Zedekiah sent Jehucal (son of Shelemiah) and the priest Zephaniah

(son of Maaseiah) to the prophet Jeremiah. They asked him, "Please pray to the LORD our God for us."

<sup>4</sup>Jeremiah was still free to come and go among the people. The people of Jerusalem hadnt put him in prison yet.

<sup>5</sup>Pharaohs army had come from Egypt, and when the Babylonians who were blockading Jerusalem heard this news, they retreated from Jerusalem.

<sup>6</sup>The LORD spoke his word to the prophet Jeremiah. He said,

<sup>7</sup>"This is what the LORD God of Israel says: Say this to the king of Judah, who sent you to get advice from me: Pharaohs army has come out to help you. But it will go back to Egypt, its own land.

<sup>8</sup>Then the Babylonians will return. They will attack the city, capture it, and burn it down.

<sup>9</sup>"This is what the LORD says: Dont deceive yourselves by thinking that the Babylonians will leave you. They will not leave you.

<sup>10</sup>Even if you would defeat the entire Babylonian army so that they had only a few badly wounded men left in their

tents, they would get up and burn down this city."

<sup>11</sup>The Babylonian army had retreated from Jerusalem because Pharaohs army was coming.

<sup>12</sup>So Jeremiah wanted to leave Jerusalem and go to the territory of Benjamin to take possession of his property there among the people.

<sup>13</sup>But when he came to Benjamin Gate, the captain of the guard there, whose name was Irijah, son of Shelemiah and grandson of Hananiah, arrested the prophet Jeremiah. He said, "Youre deserting to the Babylonians!"

<sup>14</sup>Jeremiah answered, "Thats a lie! Im not deserting to the Babylonians." But Irijah wouldnt listen to him. Irijah arrested Jeremiah and took him to the officials.

<sup>15</sup>The officials were so angry with Jeremiah that they beat him and put him in prison in the scribe Jonathans house, which had been turned into a prison.

<sup>16</sup>Jeremiah went into a prison cell, and he stayed there a long time.

<sup>17</sup>Then King Zedekiah sent for Jeremiah, and the king asked him

privately in the palace, "Is there any message from the LORD?" Jeremiah answered, "Yes! There is a message from the LORD. You will be handed over to the king of Babylon."

<sup>18</sup>Then Jeremiah asked King Zedekiah, "What crime have I committed against you, your administrators, or these people? Why have you put me in prison?"

<sup>19</sup>Where are the prophets who told you that the king of Babylon wouldnt attack you and this land?

<sup>20</sup>But now, Your Majesty, please listen, and accept my plea for mercy. Dont return me to the scribe Jonathans house, or I will die there."

<sup>21</sup>King Zedekiah gave the command to have Jeremiah put in the courtyard of the prison. He gave him a loaf of bread every day from the bakers street until all the bread in the city was gone. So Jeremiah stayed in the courtyard of the prison.

**38**<sup>1</sup> Shephatiah (son of Mattan), Gedaliah (son of Pashhur), Jucal (son of Shelemiah), and Pashhur (son of Malchiah) heard that Jeremiah was speaking to all the people.

<sup>2</sup>They heard Jeremiah say, "This is what the LORD says: Those who stay in this city will die in wars, famines, or plagues. But those who surrender to the Babylonians will live. They will escape with their lives.

<sup>3</sup>"This is what the LORD says: This city will certainly be handed over to the army of the king of Babylon, and it will capture the city."

<sup>4</sup>Then the officials said to the king, "Have this man put to death. He discourages the soldiers who are left in this city and all the people by telling them such things. This man is not trying to help these people; hes trying to hurt them."

<sup>5</sup>King Zedekiah answered, "Hes in your hands. I wont do anything to stop you."

<sup>6</sup>So they took Jeremiah and threw him into the cistern of Malchiah, the kings son. It was in the courtyard of the prison. They used ropes to lower Jeremiah into the cistern. There was no water in the cistern, only mud, and Jeremiah sank in the mud.

<sup>7</sup>But an official in the royal palace, Ebed Melech from Sudan, heard that they had

put Jeremiah in the cistern. The king happened to be sitting at Benjamin Gate.

<sup>8</sup>Ebed Melech left the royal palace and spoke to the king at Benjamin Gate.

<sup>9</sup>"Your Majesty, everything that these men have done to the prophet Jeremiah is wrong. They have thrown him into the cistern, where he starved to death, because there is no more bread in the city."

<sup>10</sup>Then the king gave Ebed Melech from Sudan this command: "Take 30 men from here, and lift the prophet Jeremiah out of the cistern before he dies."

<sup>11</sup>So Ebed Melech took the men with him and went to the royal palace, to a room under the treasury. He took rags and torn clothes from there and lowered them with ropes to Jeremiah in the cistern.

<sup>12</sup>Ebed Melech from Sudan said to Jeremiah, "Put these rags and torn clothes under your arms to protect you from the ropes." Jeremiah did.

<sup>13</sup>They used the ropes to pull Jeremiah up and lift him out of the cistern. Then Jeremiah stayed in the courtyard of the prison.

<sup>14</sup> King Zedekiah sent for the prophet Jeremiah and brought him to the third entrance in the LORDS temple. "Im going to ask you a question," the king said to Jeremiah. "Dont hide anything from me."

<sup>15</sup> Jeremiah answered Zedekiah, "If I answer you, youll kill me. If I give you advice, you wont listen to me."

<sup>16</sup> So King Zedekiah secretly swore an oath to Jeremiah, "The LORD gave us life. As the LORD lives, I will not kill you or hand you over to these men who want to kill you."

<sup>17</sup> Jeremiah said to Zedekiah, "This is what the LORD God of Armies, the God of Israel, says: If you surrender to the officers of the king of Babylon, you will live, and this city will not be burned. You and your household will live.

<sup>18</sup> But if you dont surrender to the officers of the king of Babylon, this city will be handed over to the Babylonians. They will burn it down, and you will not escape from them."

<sup>19</sup> King Zedekiah answered Jeremiah, "Im afraid of the Jews who have deserted to the Babylonians. The Babylonians

may hand me over to them, and they will torture me."

<sup>20</sup>Jeremiah said, "You will not be handed over to them. Obey the LORD by doing what I'm telling you. Then everything will go well for you, and you will live.

<sup>21</sup>But if you refuse to surrender, this is what the LORD has shown me.

<sup>22</sup>All the women who are left in the palace of Judah's king will be brought out to the officers of the king of Babylon. These women will say: Your trusted friends have misled you and used you. Your feet are stuck in the mud, and your friends have deserted you.

<sup>23</sup>"All your wives and children will be brought to the Babylonians. You will not escape from them. You will be captured by the king of Babylon, and this city will be burned down."

<sup>24</sup>Zedekiah said to Jeremiah, "Don't let anyone know about this conversation, or you will die.

<sup>25</sup>The officials may find out that I've been talking with you. They may come to you and say, Tell us what you said to the king and what the king said to you.

Don't hide anything from us, or we'll kill you.

<sup>26</sup>If they come to you, say to them, I asked the king not to send me back to Jonathans house to die there."

<sup>27</sup>All the officials came to Jeremiah and questioned him. He told them exactly what the king had told him to say. So they stopped questioning him, because they hadn't heard his conversation with the king.

<sup>28</sup>Jeremiah stayed in the courtyard of the prison until the day Jerusalem was captured.

**39**<sup>1</sup>In the tenth month of Zedekiahs ninth year as king of Judah, King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon attacked Jerusalem with his entire army and blockaded it.

<sup>2</sup>On the ninth day of the fourth month of Zedekiahs eleventh year as king, they broke into the city.

<sup>3</sup>Then all the officers of the king of Babylon came in and sat in Middle Gate: Nergal (the quartermaster), Samgar Nebo (the chief officer), Nergal (the quartermaster and the chief

fortuneteller), and all the rest of the officers of the king of Babylon.

<sup>4</sup>When King Zedekiah of Judah and all the soldiers saw them, they fled. They left the city at night by way of the kings garden through the gate between the two walls, and they took the road to the plain of Jericho.

<sup>5</sup>The Babylonian army pursued them and caught up with Zedekiah in the plain of Jericho. They arrested him and brought him to Babylons King Nebuchadnezzar at Riblah in the territory of Hamath. The king of Babylon passed sentence on him.

<sup>6</sup>The king of Babylon slaughtered Zedekiahs sons as Zedekiah watched at Riblah. He also slaughtered all the leaders of Judah.

<sup>7</sup>Then he blinded Zedekiah, put him in bronze shackles, and took him to Babylon.

<sup>8</sup>The Babylonians burned down the royal palace and the peoples homes, and they tore down the walls of Jerusalem.

<sup>9</sup>Nebuzaradan, Babylons captain of the guard, captured the few people left in

the city, those who surrendered to him, and the rest of the people.

<sup>10</sup>But Nebuzaradan, the captain of the guard, left some poor people who had nothing in the land of Judah. At that time he gave them vineyards and farms.

<sup>11</sup>King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon gave Nebuzaradan an order concerning Jeremiah. He said,

<sup>12</sup>"Take him, and look after him. Don't harm him in any way, but do for him whatever he asks."

<sup>13</sup>Nebuzaradan (the captain of the guard), Nebushazban (the chief official), Nergal (the quartermaster and the chief fortuneteller), and all the other leaders of the king of Babylon sent for Jeremiah.

<sup>14</sup>They took Jeremiah out of the courtyard of the prison and handed him over to Gedaliah, son of Ahikam and grandson of Shaphan, to take him home. So he lived among the people.

<sup>15</sup>While Jeremiah was still confined in the courtyard of the prison, the LORD spoke his word to him. The LORD said,

<sup>16</sup>"Say to Ebed Melech from Sudan, This is what the LORD of Armies, the God of Israel, says: I'm going to carry out

my threat against this city by bringing disaster on it instead of prosperity. At that time these things will happen as you watch.

<sup>17</sup>But at that time I will rescue you, declares the LORD. You will not be handed over to those you fear.

<sup>18</sup>I will certainly rescue you. You will not die in war. You will escape with your life because you trusted me, declares the LORD."

**40**<sup>1</sup>The LORD spoke his word to Jeremiah after Nebuzaradan, the captain of the guard, let him go at Ramah. Nebuzaradan found Jeremiah in chains along with the captives of Jerusalem and Judah who were being taken to Babylon.

<sup>2</sup>The captain of the guard took Jeremiah aside and said to him, "The LORD your God threatened to bring this disaster on this place.

<sup>3</sup>He has carried out his threat. The LORD did as he promised because you Israelites have sinned against him and refused to obey him. That is why this has happened to you.

<sup>4</sup>Today I'm removing the chains from your hands. If you would like to come with me to Babylon, come, and I'll look after you. But if you don't want to come with me to Babylon, don't come. The whole land is yours. Go wherever you want.

<sup>5</sup>"If you wish to remain, then go back to Gedaliah, son of Ahikam and grandson of Shaphan, whom the king of Babylon appointed to govern the cities of Judah. Live among the people with him, or go anywhere you want." The captain of the guard gave Jeremiah some food and a present and let him go.

<sup>6</sup>Jeremiah went to Gedaliah, son of Ahikam, at Mizpah and lived with him among the people who were left in the land.

<sup>7</sup>All the army commanders and their men who were in the field heard that the king of Babylon had appointed Gedaliah, son of Ahikam, to govern the country and some of the country's poorest men, women, and children who had not been taken away to Babylon.

<sup>8</sup>These are the commanders who went with their men to Gedaliah at Mizpah:

Ishmael (son of Nethaniah), Johanan and Jonathan (sons of Kareah), Seraiah (son of Tanhumeth), the sons of Ephai from Netophah, and Jezaniah, who was the son of a man from Maacah.

<sup>9</sup>Gedaliah, son of Ahikam and grandson of Shaphan, swore an oath to them and their men. He said, "Don't be afraid to serve the Babylonians. Live in this country, serve the king of Babylon, and you will prosper.

<sup>10</sup>I'm going to live in Mizpah and represent you when the Babylonians come to us. Gather grapes, summer fruit, and olive oil, and put them in storage jars. Live in the cities you have taken over."

<sup>11</sup>Now, all the Jews who were in Moab, Ammon, Edom, and in all the other countries heard that the king of Babylon had left a few survivors in Judah and had appointed Gedaliah, son of Ahikam and grandson of Shaphan, to govern them.

<sup>12</sup>So all the Jews returned from all the places where they had been scattered. They came to Judah and to Gedaliah at Mizpah. They gathered a large harvest of grapes and summer fruit.

<sup>13</sup> Kareahs son Johanan and all the army commanders who were still in the country came to Gedaliah at Mizpah.

<sup>14</sup> They asked him, "Do you know that King Baalis of the Ammonites has sent Ishmael, Nethaniahs son, to kill you?" However, Gedaliah, son of Ahikam, didnt believe them.

<sup>15</sup> Then Johanan, Kareahs son, secretly asked Gedaliah at Mizpah, "Let me kill Ishmael, Nethaniahs son. No one will know about it. Why should he kill you? All the Jews who have gathered around you would scatter. What is left of Judah would disappear."

<sup>16</sup> Gedaliah, son of Ahikam, told Johanan, Kareahs son, "Dont do that! What you are saying about Ishmael is a lie."

**41** <sup>1</sup> In the seventh month Ishmael (son of Nethaniah and grandson of Elishama, a descendant of the royal family and of the kings officers) went with ten men to Gedaliah, son of Ahikam, at Mizpah. As they ate together at Mizpah,

<sup>2</sup> Ishmael, son of Nethaniah, and the ten men who were with him got up, drew

their swords, and killed Gedaliah, son of Ahikam and grandson of Shaphan. So they assassinated the man whom the king of Babylon had appointed to govern the land.

<sup>3</sup> Ishmael also killed all the Jews who were with Gedaliah at Mizpah as well as the Babylonian soldiers that he found there.

<sup>4</sup> The day after the murder of Gedaliah, before anyone knew about it,

<sup>5</sup> 80 men arrived from Shechem, Shiloh, and Samaria. Their beards were shaved off, their clothes were torn, and cuts were on their bodies. They brought grain offerings and incense to the LORDS temple.

<sup>6</sup> Ishmael, son of Nethaniah, left Mizpah to meet them, crying as he went. When he met them, he said to them, "Come to Gedaliah, son of Ahikam."

<sup>7</sup> When they came into the city, Ishmael, son of Nethaniah, and his men slaughtered them and threw them into a cistern.

<sup>8</sup> However, ten men from the group had said to Ishmael, "Dont kill us! We have wheat, barley, olive oil, and honey

hidden in the country." So he left them alone and didn't kill them along with the others.

<sup>9</sup>Now, the cistern where Ishmael threw all the bodies of the men he had killed was the same one that King Asa made as a part of his defense against King Baasha of Israel. Ishmael, son of Nethaniah, filled it with the bodies.

<sup>10</sup>Then Ishmael took captive the rest of the people who were at Mizpah. He captured the king's daughters and all the other people who had been left at Mizpah. They were the people whom Nebuzaradan, the captain of the guard, had put under the control of Gedaliah, son of Ahikam. Ishmael, son of Nethaniah, took them captive and left for Ammon.

<sup>11</sup>When Kareah's son Johanan and all the army commanders who were with him heard about all the crimes Ishmael, son of Nethaniah, had done,

<sup>12</sup>they took all their men and went to fight Ishmael. They caught up with him at the large pool in Gibeon.

<sup>13</sup>When all the people who were with Ishmael saw Kareah's son Johanan and

all the army commanders who were with him, they were glad.

<sup>14</sup>Then all the people Ishmael had taken captive at Mizpah turned and ran to Kareahs son Johanan.

<sup>15</sup>Ishmael and eight of his men escaped from Johanan and fled to Ammon.

<sup>16</sup>Then Kareahs son Johanan and all the army commanders who were with him brought back the rest of the people of Mizpah whom he had rescued from Ishmael, son of Nethaniah, after Ishmael had killed Gedaliah, son of Ahikam. Johanan brought back men, women, children, soldiers, and commanders from Gibeon.

<sup>17</sup>When they left Gibeon, they stayed near Bethlehem at Geruth Kimham on their way to Egypt.

<sup>18</sup>They were afraid of the Babylonians because Ishmael had killed Gedaliah whom the king of Babylon had appointed to govern the land.

**42**<sup>1</sup>Then all the army commanders along with Kareahs son Johanan and Hoshaihs son Jezaniah and all the people, from the least important to the

most important, came to the prophet Jeremiah.

<sup>2</sup>They said to him, "Please listen to our request, and pray to the LORD your God for all of us who are left here. As you can see, there are only a few of us left.

<sup>3</sup>Let the LORD your God tell us where we should go and what we should do."

<sup>4</sup>The prophet Jeremiah answered them, "I have listened to your request. I will pray to the LORD your God as you have requested, and I will tell you everything the LORD says. I wont keep anything from you."

<sup>5</sup>They said to Jeremiah, "May the LORD be a true and faithful witness against us if we dont do exactly what the LORD your God tells us to do.

<sup>6</sup>We will obey the LORD our God to whom we are sending you, whether its good or bad. Yes, we will obey the LORD our God so that everything will go well for us."

<sup>7</sup>After ten days the LORD spoke his word to Jeremiah.

<sup>8</sup>So Jeremiah called Kareahs son Johanan, all the army commanders who were with him, and all the people

from the least important to the most important.

<sup>9</sup>Jeremiah said to them, "You sent me to plead your case humbly to the LORD. This is what the LORD God of Israel says:

<sup>10</sup>Suppose you stay in this land. Then I will build you up and not tear you down. I will plant you and not uproot you. I will change my plans about the disaster I've brought on you.

<sup>11</sup>Dont be afraid of the king of Babylon, whom you now fear. Dont be afraid of him, declares the LORD. Im with you. I will save you and rescue you from his power.

<sup>12</sup>I will have compassion on you. I will make him have compassion on you and return you to your land.

<sup>13</sup>"But suppose you say, We wont stay in this land, and you disobey the LORD your God.

<sup>14</sup>Then you say, Well go to Egypt, where we wont have to see war, hear the sound of a rams horn, or be hungry. Well stay there.

<sup>15</sup>"Now, listen to the word of the LORD, you people who are left in Judah. This is what the LORD of Armies, the God of

Israel, says: Suppose you're determined to go to Egypt, and you go and live there.

<sup>16</sup>Then the wars you fear will catch up with you in Egypt. The famines you dread will follow you to Egypt, and you will die there.

<sup>17</sup>So all the people who decide to go and live in Egypt will die in wars, famines, and plagues. No one will survive or escape the disasters I will bring on them.

<sup>18</sup>"This is what the LORD of Armies, the God of Israel, says: As my anger and my fury were poured out on those who live in Jerusalem, so my fury will be poured out on you if you go to Egypt. You will become a curse word. You will become something ridiculed, cursed, and disgraced. You won't see this place again.

<sup>19</sup>"The LORD has told you people who are left in Judah not to go to Egypt. You need to know that I am warning you today.

<sup>20</sup>You only deceived yourselves when you sent me to the LORD your God and said, Pray to the LORD our God for us,

and tell us everything that the LORD our God says, and we will do it.

<sup>21</sup> I have told you today, but you won't obey anything the LORD your God sent me to tell you.

<sup>22</sup> But now, you need to know that you will die in wars, famines, or plagues in the place where you want to go and live."

**43** <sup>1</sup> So Jeremiah finished telling all the people the message from the LORD their God. He told them everything the LORD their God sent him to tell them.

<sup>2</sup> Azariah (son of Hoshaiah), Johanan (son of Kareah), and all the arrogant people said to Jeremiah, "You're lying! The LORD our God didn't send you to tell us that we must not go to live in Egypt.

<sup>3</sup> But Baruch, son of Neriah, has turned you against us in order to hand us over to the Babylonians. Then they will kill us or take us as captives to Babylon."

<sup>4</sup> So Johanan (son of Kareah), all the army commanders, and all the people didn't obey the LORD. They didn't stay in Judah.

<sup>5</sup>Johanan (son of Kareah) and all the army commanders took all the people who were left in Judah to Egypt. These were all the people who had come back to Judah from the places where they had been scattered.

<sup>6</sup>They took men, women, children, and the kings daughters. They took every person whom Nebuzaradan, the captain of the guard, had left with Gedaliah, son of Ahikam and grandson of Shaphan, including the prophet Jeremiah and Baruch, son of Neriah.

<sup>7</sup>They didnt listen to the LORD, so they went to Egypt. They went as far as Tahpanhes.

<sup>8</sup>Then the LORD spoke his word to Jeremiah in Tahpanhes. He said,

<sup>9</sup>"Take some large stones, and bury them under the brick pavement at the entrance to the Pharaohs palace in Tahpanhes. Do this while the people of Judah watch you.

<sup>10</sup>Say to them, This is what the LORD of Armies, the God of Israel, says: Im going to send for my servant King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon. I will set his throne over these stones that I buried,

and I will spread his royal canopy above them.

<sup>11</sup> He will defeat Egypt. He will bring death to those who are supposed to die. He will capture those who are supposed to be captured. He will kill in battle those who are supposed to be killed in battle.

<sup>12</sup> He will set fire to the temples of Egypt's gods. He will burn down the temples and take their gods captive. Nebuchadnezzar will put on Egypt as his coat as a shepherd puts on his coat. He will leave Egypt peacefully.

<sup>13</sup> At Beth Shemesh he will break the monuments in Egypt and burn down the temples of Egypt's gods."

**44** <sup>1</sup> The LORD spoke his word to Jeremiah about all the Jews living in Egypt at Migdol, Tahpanhes, Noph, and Pathros.

<sup>2</sup> This is what the LORD of Armies, the God of Israel, says: You have seen all the disasters I brought on Jerusalem and on all the cities of Judah. Today they are deserted ruins.

<sup>3</sup> It is because their people did evil, and they made me angry. They went to

burn incense and serve other gods that neither you nor your ancestors heard of.

<sup>4</sup>I have sent my servants the prophets to you again and again to tell you not to do these detestable things that I hate.

<sup>5</sup>But you wouldn't listen or pay attention. You wouldn't turn from your wicked ways and wouldn't stop burning incense as an offering to other gods.

<sup>6</sup>That is why my fury and anger were poured out and continued to burn in the cities of Judah and on the streets of Jerusalem. So they became the desolate ruin that they are today.

<sup>7</sup>Now, this is what the LORD God of Armies, the God of Israel, says: Why do you bring this terrible disaster on yourselves? Why do you keep destroying men, women, children, and babies from Judah until none are left?

<sup>8</sup>Why do you make me angry by burning incense to other gods in Egypt, where you have come to live. You will destroy yourselves and be cursed and ridiculed by all the nations on earth.

<sup>9</sup>Have you forgotten the wicked things done by your ancestors, by the kings of Judah and their wives, and by you and

your wives in Judah and on the streets of Jerusalem?

<sup>10</sup>You have not humbled yourselves even to this day. You havent feared me or lived your lives by my teachings or by my decrees that I gave your ancestors.

<sup>11</sup>This is what the LORD of Armies, the God of Israel, says: Im going to bring disaster on you and destroy all of Judah.

<sup>12</sup>I will take away from Judah those who are left, those who were determined to go to live in Egypt. They will die in Egypt. All of them, from the least important to the most important, will die in wars or be brought to an end by famines. They will become something cursed, ridiculed, and disgraced.

<sup>13</sup>I will punish those living in Egypt as I punished Jerusalem with wars, famines, and plagues.

<sup>14</sup>None of the people of Judah who went to live in Egypt will survive or return to Judah, where they long to return and live. Only a few refugees will return there.

<sup>15</sup>Then all the men who knew that their wives were burning incense to other gods, all the women who were standing

there, and all the people who lived at Pathros in Egypt answered Jeremiah.

They said,

<sup>16</sup>"We wont listen to the message that you have spoken to us in the LORDS name.

<sup>17</sup>We will do everything we said we would do. We will burn incense to the queen of heaven and pour out wine offerings to her as our ancestors, our kings, and our officials did in the cities of Judah and on the streets of Jerusalem. We had plenty to eat then, and we lived comfortably and saw no disaster.

<sup>18</sup>But since we stopped burning incense to the queen of heaven and pouring out wine offerings to her, we have had nothing but wars and famines."

<sup>19</sup>The women added, "When we burned incense to the queen of heaven, poured out wine offerings to her, and made cakes for her with her image on them, do you think our husbands didnt approve?"

<sup>20</sup>Then Jeremiah said to all the people, both men and women, to everyone who answered him,

<sup>21</sup>"Doesnt the LORD remember that you burned incense in the cities of Judah

and on the streets of Jerusalem along with your ancestors, your kings and your officials, and the people in the land?

<sup>22</sup>The LORD could no longer bear the wicked and detestable things you did. That is why your land has become something ruined, destroyed, and cursed. No one lives in that land today.

<sup>23</sup>You burned incense as offerings to other gods, sinned against the LORD, and wouldnt obey him. You didnt live by his teachings, decrees, or written instructions. That is why you have met with this disaster as it is today."

<sup>24</sup>Then Jeremiah said to all the people, including the women, "Listen to the word of the LORD, all you people of Judah who are in Egypt.

<sup>25</sup>This is what the LORD of Armies, the God of Israel, says: You and your wives made promises, and you have kept them. You said, We will certainly do what we vow. We will burn incense to the queen of heaven and pour out wine offerings to her. "So go ahead. Keep your vows, and do what you vow.

<sup>26</sup>But listen to the word of the LORD, all you people of Judah who live in Egypt.

I swear by my great name, says the LORD, that no one from Judah who lives anywhere in Egypt will ever again call on my name and take the oath, "As the Almighty LORD lives"

<sup>27</sup>I am going to watch over them. I am going to watch over them to bring disasters, not blessings. In Egypt the people from Judah will die in wars and famines until everyone is gone.

<sup>28</sup>Those who escape the wars will return to Judah from Egypt. Then all the people of Judah who went to live in Egypt will know whose words have come true, mine or theirs.

<sup>29</sup>I will give you this sign, declares the LORD. I will punish you in this place so that you will know that my threats of disaster will happen to you.

<sup>30</sup>This is what the LORD says: I'm going to hand Pharaoh Hophra, king of Egypt, over to his enemies and to those who want to kill him, just as I handed over King Zedekiah of Judah to King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon and to those who wanted to kill him."

**45**<sup>1</sup>This is the message that the prophet Jeremiah spoke to

Baruch, son of Neriah. Baruch wrote these things on a scroll as Jeremiah dictated them during the fourth year that Jehoiakim, son of Josiah, was king of Judah. Jeremiah said,

<sup>2</sup>"This is what the LORD God of Israel says to you, Baruch:

<sup>3</sup>You said, I'm so miserable! The LORD has added grief to my pain. I'm worn out from groaning. I can't find any rest.

<sup>4</sup>"Say this to Baruch, This is what the LORD says: I will tear down what I have built. I will uproot what I have planted throughout the earth.

<sup>5</sup>Are you looking for great things for yourself? Don't look for them, because I'm going to bring disaster on all people, declares the LORD. But wherever you go I will let you escape with your life."

**46**<sup>1</sup> The LORD spoke this message to the prophet Jeremiah about the nations.

<sup>2</sup>This is the message about Egypt, about the army of Pharaoh Neco, king of Egypt. King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon defeated his army at Carchemish along the Euphrates River during the fourth

year that Jehoiakim, son of Josiah, was king of Judah.

<sup>3</sup>"Get your large and small shields ready; advance into battle.

<sup>4</sup>Harness your horses. Mount up, you horsemen. Take your positions, and put on your helmets. Polish your spears. Put on your armor.

<sup>5</sup>"What do I see in them? They are terrified. They are retreating. Their warriors are defeated. They flee without looking back. Terror is all around them," declares the LORD.

<sup>6</sup>"The infantry can't flee. The warriors can't escape. They stumble and fall in the north by the Euphrates River.

<sup>7</sup>Who is this, rising like the Nile River, like streams that flow swiftly?

<sup>8</sup>Egypt is like the rising Nile River, like a river quickly overflowing its banks. Egypt says, I will rise; I will cover the earth. I will destroy cities and the people in them.

<sup>9</sup>Go into battle, you horsemen. Drive wildly, you chariot drivers. March into battle, you warriors, you warriors from Sudan and Put who carry shields, you

warriors from Lydia who use bows and arrows.

<sup>10</sup>That day belongs to the Almighty LORD of Armies. It is a day of vengeance when he will take revenge on his enemies. His sword will devour until it has had enough, and it will drink their blood until its full. The Almighty LORD of Armies will offer them as sacrifices in the north by the Euphrates River.

<sup>11</sup>Go to Gilead, and get medicine, dear people of Egypt. You have used many medicines without results; you cant be cured.

<sup>12</sup>The nations have heard of your shame; your cry fills the earth. One warrior will stumble over another, and both will fall together."

<sup>13</sup>The LORD spoke this message to the prophet Jeremiah about the coming of King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon, who will defeat Egypt.

<sup>14</sup>"Tell this in Egypt; announce this in Migdol. Make it known in Memphis and in Tahpanhes. Say, Take your positions, and get ready. Swords will kill those around you.

<sup>15</sup>Why should your soldiers be cut down? They cant stand because the LORD will push them down.

<sup>16</sup>They have repeatedly stumbled, and now they have fallen. They say to each other, Get up! Lets go back to our people, to the land where we were born, and escape our enemys sword.

<sup>17</sup>There they will cry, Pharaoh, king of Egypt, is a big windbag. He has missed his chance.

<sup>18</sup>"As I live," declares the king, whose name is the LORD of Armies, "someone who is like Mount Tabor among the mountains will come. Someone who is like Mount Carmel by the sea will come.

<sup>19</sup>Pack your bags, inhabitants of Egypt, because you will be taken away as captives. Memphis will become a dreary wasteland, a pile of rubble where no one lives.

<sup>20</sup>"Egypt is like a beautiful cow, but a horsefly from the north will attack it.

<sup>21</sup>Egypt's hired soldiers are like fattened calves. They will turn and run away together. They wont stand their ground. The day of destruction is coming. At that time they will be punished.

<sup>22</sup> Egypt will hiss like a snake as it slithers away. Its enemies will come with full force. They will attack it with axes like those who chop wood.

<sup>23</sup> They will cut down the forest," declares the LORD, "since Egypt cant be found. They are more numerous than locusts; they cant be counted.

<sup>24</sup> The people of Egypt will be put to shame. They will be handed over to the people from the north."

<sup>25</sup> The LORD of Armies, the God of Israel, says, "Im going to punish Amon, who is the god of Thebes. I will also punish Pharaoh, Egypt, its gods, its kings, and whoever trusts Pharaoh.

<sup>26</sup> Ill hand them over to those who want to kill them, to King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon and his officers. Afterward, they will live in peace as they did long ago," declares the LORD.

<sup>27</sup> "Dont be afraid, my servant Jacob. Dont be terrified, Israel. Im going to rescue you and your descendants from a faraway land, from the land where you are captives. Then Jacobs descendants will again have undisturbed peace, and no one will make them afraid.

<sup>28</sup>Don't be afraid, my servant Jacob," declares the LORD. "I am with you. I will completely destroy all the nations where I scattered you, but I will not completely destroy you. I will correct you with justice. I won't let you go entirely unpunished."

**47** <sup>1</sup>The LORD spoke this message to the prophet Jeremiah about the Philistines before Pharaoh defeated Gaza.

<sup>2</sup>This is what the LORD says: Water is rising in the north. It will become an overflowing river. It will overflow the land and everything in it, the cities and those who live in them. People will cry out and everyone who lives in the land will cry loudly.

<sup>3</sup>They will hear the sound of galloping war horses, the rattling of enemy chariots, and the rumbling of their wheels. Fathers who lack courage abandon their children.

<sup>4</sup>The time has come to destroy all the Philistines, to cut off from Tyre and Sidon any Philistine who might have escaped to get help. The LORD will destroy the

Philistines and anyone who is left from the island of Crete.

<sup>5</sup>Gaza will shave its head in mourning. Ashkelon will be destroyed. How long will you cut yourselves, you people left on the plains?

<sup>6</sup>You cry out, "Sword of the LORD, how long will you keep on fighting? Go back into your scabbard. Stay there and rest!"

<sup>7</sup>How can the sword of the LORD rest? The LORD has ordered it to attack Ashkelon and the coast. He has put it there.

**48**<sup>1</sup> This is what the LORD of Armies, the God of Israel, says about Moab: How horrible it will be for Nebo; it will be destroyed. Kiriathaim will be put to shame; it will be captured. Its stronghold will be put to shame and torn down.

<sup>2</sup>People will no longer praise Moab. The people in Heshbon will plan Moab's destruction. "Let's destroy that nation!" You will be silenced, city of Madmen. Death will come after you.

<sup>3</sup>People will cry out from Horonaim, "Looting and great destruction!"

<sup>4</sup> Moab will be broken. Its little ones will cry out.

<sup>5</sup> People go up the pass of Luhith, crying bitterly as they go. On the road down to Horonaim they have heard the distressful cry of destruction.

<sup>6</sup> "Run away! Run for your lives! Run like a wild donkey in the desert."

<sup>7</sup> Since you trust the things you do and your treasures, you will be captured. Chemosh will go into captivity with all its priests and officials.

<sup>8</sup> The destroyer will come to every city, and no city will escape. The valley will be destroyed, and the plain will be laid waste as the LORD has threatened.

<sup>9</sup> Put salt on Moab. It will be destroyed. Its cities will become deserted ruins.

<sup>10</sup> Cursed are those who neglect doing the LORDS work. Cursed are those who keep their swords from killing.

<sup>11</sup> "Moab has lived securely ever since it was young. Its people are like wine left to settle in a jar. They arent poured from one jar to another. They havent gone into captivity. That is why its flavor has remained the same, and its aroma hasnt changed.

<sup>12</sup>That is why the days are coming," declares the LORD, "when I will send people to pour Moab out of its jars and to smash its pitchers.

<sup>13</sup>Then Moab will be ashamed of Chemosh as the nation of Israel was ashamed when it trusted Bethel.

<sup>14</sup>"How can you say, We are soldiers and warriors?

<sup>15</sup>The enemy will attack Moab and destroy its cities. Its finest young men will be slaughtered," declares the king, whose name is the LORD of Armies.

<sup>16</sup>"Moab's destruction is coming near; disaster is coming quickly.

<sup>17</sup>Mourn over it, all of its neighbors and everyone who knows its fame. Say, Look at the strong staff, the beautiful rod, that is broken!

<sup>18</sup>"People of Dibon, come down from your place of honor and sit on the dry ground. The destroyers of Moab will attack you. They will destroy your fortresses.

<sup>19</sup>Stand by the road in Aroer, and watch. Ask those who are fleeing and those who are escaping what is happening.

<sup>20</sup>They will answer, Moab is disgraced; it is defeated. Shout loudly, and cry. Tell the news in Arnon that Moab is destroyed.

<sup>21</sup>"Judgment has come to all the cities on the plain: to Holon, Jahzah, Mephaath,

<sup>22</sup>Dibon, Nebo, Beth Diblathaim,

<sup>23</sup>Kiriathaim, Beth Gamul, Beth Meon,

<sup>24</sup>Kerioth, Bozrah, and on all the cities of Moab, far and near.

<sup>25</sup>"Moabs horn is cut off, and its arm is broken," declares the LORD.

<sup>26</sup>"Get the people of Moab drunk; they have spoken against the LORD. They will wallow in their own vomit, and people will laugh at them.

<sup>27</sup>People of Moab, didnt you laugh at the people of Israel? Were they caught among thieves? Whenever you talk about them you shake your heads in contempt.

<sup>28</sup>People of Moab, abandon your cities. Live among the cliffs. Be like doves that make their nests at the entrance of a cave.

<sup>29</sup>"We have heard about the arrogance of Moabs people. They are very arrogant.

They are very arrogant, conceited, and boastful.

<sup>30</sup>I know how arrogant they are," declares the LORD, "but it isn't right. They brag and don't do what they say.

<sup>31</sup>That is why I will weep for Moab and cry for all of Moab. I will moan for the people of Kir Hareseth.

<sup>32</sup>I will cry for you as Jazer cries. I will cry for you, grapevines of Sibmah. Your branches once spread as far as the sea, and they reached as far as the sea of Jazer. The destroyer will destroy your ripened fruits and your grapes.

<sup>33</sup>Joy and gladness have disappeared from the orchards and fields of Moab. I will stop the wine flowing from the winepresses. No one will stomp on grapes with shouts of joy. There will be shouts, but not shouts of joy.

<sup>34</sup>"The cry will be heard from Heshbon to Elealeh and Jahaz. It will be heard from Zoar to Horonaim and Eglath Shelishiyah. Even the streams of Nimrim will dry up.

<sup>35</sup>I will stop those in Moab who come to worship sites, those who bring offerings to their gods," declares the LORD.

<sup>36</sup>"That is why I moan for Moab like a flute. I sound like a flute for the people of Kir Hareseth. The wealth they gained has disappeared.

<sup>37</sup>"Every head is shaved, and every beard is cut off. There are gashes on every hand and sackcloth on every waist.

<sup>38</sup>People in Moab will mourn on every rooftop and in every street. There will be mourning everywhere, because I will break Moab like a jar that no one wants," declares the LORD.

<sup>39</sup>"They will cry, Look how Moab is defeated! Moab turns away in shame! Moab has become something ridiculed and something held in contempt by everyone around it.

<sup>40</sup>"This is what the LORD says: The enemy will swoop down like eagles and spread their wings over Moab.

<sup>41</sup>The cities will be taken, and the fortified places will be captured. On that day Moab's soldiers will be like women in childbirth.

<sup>42</sup>Moab will be destroyed as a nation, because it spoke against the LORD.

<sup>43</sup>Disasters, pits, and traps are in store for those who live in Moab," declares the LORD.

<sup>44</sup>"Whoever flees from a disaster will fall into a pit. Whoever climbs out of the pit will be caught in a trap. I will bring a year of punishment to Moab," declares the LORD.

<sup>45</sup>"Those who flee will stand exhausted in the shadow of Heshbon. A fire will come out of Heshbon and a flame from Sihon. It will burn the foreheads of the people of Moab and the skulls of those noisy people.

<sup>46</sup>How horrible it will be for you, Moab. You people of Chemosh will die. Your sons will be taken away into exile, and your daughters will be taken away into captivity.

<sup>47</sup>But I will restore Moab in the last days," declares the LORD. The judgment against Moab ends here.

**49**<sup>1</sup>This is what the LORD says about the people of Ammon: Doesn't Israel have any children? Doesn't it have any heirs? Why, then, has the god Milcom taken over the inheritance

of Gads descendants? Why do Milcoms people live in Gads cities?

<sup>2</sup>That is why the days are coming, declares the LORD, when I will sound the battle cry against Rabbah, where the people of Ammon live. It will become a pile of rubble. Its villages will be burned down. Then Israel will take possession of its inheritance, says the LORD.

<sup>3</sup>Cry loudly, Heshbon, because Ai is destroyed. Cry, people of Rabbah, put on your sackcloth, and mourn. Run back and forth between the walls. Milcom will be taken away into captivity with its priests and officials.

<sup>4</sup>Why do you brag about your valleys, your fertile valleys, you unfaithful people? You trust your treasures. You think, "Who would attack me?"

<sup>5</sup>I am going to bring terror on you from all around, declares the Almighty LORD of Armies. Everyone will be scattered. No one will gather the refugees.

<sup>6</sup>But afterward, I will return the captives of Ammon, declares the LORD.

<sup>7</sup>This is what the LORD of Armies says about Edom: Is there no longer any wisdom in Teman? Has wisdom

disappeared from your people? Has their wisdom vanished?

<sup>8</sup>Turn and run. Hide in deep caves, inhabitants of Dedan. When I punish them, I will bring disaster on the descendants of Esau.

<sup>9</sup>If people come to pick your grapes, wont they leave a few grapes behind? If thieves come during the night, wont they steal only until theyve had enough?

<sup>10</sup>Yet, I will strip the descendants of Esau. I will find their hiding places. They wont be able to hide. Their children and relatives will be destroyed. None of their neighbors will say,

<sup>11</sup>"Abandon your orphans, and I will keep them alive. Your widows can trust me."

<sup>12</sup>This is what the LORD says: If those who dont deserve to drink from the cup still drink from it, why should you go unpunished? You wont go unpunished. You must drink from it.

<sup>13</sup>I take an oath on myself, declares the LORD, that Bozrah will become a pile of rubble. It will become something horrifying, ridiculed, ruined, and cursed. All its cities will lie in ruins permanently.

<sup>14</sup>I heard a message from the LORD. A messenger was sent among the nations to say, "Assemble, and attack Edom. Get ready for battle."

<sup>15</sup>"Edom, I will make you the smallest of nations and despised among humanity.

<sup>16</sup>You have frightened other people. Your arrogance has deceived you. You live on rocky cliffs and occupy the highest places in the hills. Even though you build your nest as high as an eagle, I will bring you down from there," declares the LORD.

<sup>17</sup>"Then Edom will become something horrible. Everyone who passes by it will be horrified and hiss at all its wounds.

<sup>18</sup>Edom will be like Sodom, Gomorrah, and their neighboring cities when they were destroyed. No one will live there. No human will stay there," says the LORD.

<sup>19</sup>"I will suddenly chase them from their places like a lion coming out of the jungle along the Jordan River into pastureland. I will appoint over Edom whomever I choose. Who is like me? Who can challenge me? Is there any leader who can stand up to me?"

<sup>20</sup> Listen to the plans that the LORD is making against Edom and the things he intends to do to those who live in Teman. He will surely drag away the little ones of the flock. He will surely destroy the pasture because of the people who live in Teman.

<sup>21</sup> The earth will quake at the sound of their downfall. The sound of their crying will be heard at the Red Sea.

<sup>22</sup> The enemy will swoop down like eagles and spread their wings over Bozrah. On that day Edom's soldiers will be like women in childbirth.

<sup>23</sup> This is a message about Damascus. "Hamath and Arpad are worried because they heard the bad news. They melt in fear. They are troubled like a sea that can't be calmed.

<sup>24</sup> The people of Damascus are weak. They turn to flee, but panic grips them. Anguish and pain grip them like a woman in labor.

<sup>25</sup> Why isn't that famous, happy city abandoned?

<sup>26</sup> That is why its young men will die in the streets, and its soldiers will be

silenced that day," declares the LORD of Armies.

<sup>27</sup> "I will set fire to the walls of Damascus and burn down Benhadads palaces."

<sup>28</sup> This is about the tribe of Kedar and the kingdoms of Hazor that King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon defeated. This is what the LORD says: Get ready, attack Kedar, and loot the people from the east.

<sup>29</sup> Their tents and their flocks will be taken. Their tent curtains, utensils, and camels will be carried away. People will shout to them, "Terror is all around!"

<sup>30</sup> Run far away! Find a place to hide, inhabitants of Hazor, declares the LORD. King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon has made plans against you and intends to attack you.

<sup>31</sup> Get ready! Attack the nation living peacefully and securely, declares the LORD. It is a nation with no gates or bars. Its people live alone.

<sup>32</sup> Their camels will be taken as prizes. Their large herds will be taken as loot. I will scatter to the winds those who shave the hair on their foreheads. I will

bring disaster on them from every side, declares the LORD.

<sup>33</sup> Hazor will be a place where only jackals live. It will become a permanent wasteland. No one will live there. No human will stay there.

<sup>34</sup> Early in the rule of King Zedekiah of Judah, the LORD spoke his word to the prophet Jeremiah about Elam.

<sup>35</sup> This is what the LORD of Armies says: I'm going to break the bows of Elam's archers, the most important weapon of their strength.

<sup>36</sup> I'll bring the four winds from the four corners of heaven against Elam and scatter its people in every direction. There won't be a nation where Elam's refugees won't go.

<sup>37</sup> I'll defeat the people of Elam in the presence of their enemies, in the presence of those who want to kill them. I'll bring disaster with my burning anger, declares the LORD. I'll send armies after them until I put an end to them.

<sup>38</sup> I'll set my throne in Elam and destroy its king and officials, declares the LORD.

<sup>39</sup> But afterward, I'll return the captives of Elam, declares the LORD.

**50**<sup>1</sup> This is the message that the LORD spoke about Babylon and the land of the Babylonians through the prophet Jeremiah.

<sup>2</sup> "Announce this among the nations, and spread the news. Raise a flag, and announce it. Don't hide anything. Say, Babylon will be captured. Bel will be put to shame. Marduk will be filled with terror. Babylons statues will be put to shame. Its idols will be filled with terror.

<sup>3</sup> A nation from the north will attack Babylon and destroy its land so that no one will live in it. People and animals will run away.

<sup>4</sup> "In those days and at that time," declares the LORD, "the people of Israel and Judah will cry as they go together to seek the LORD their God.

<sup>5</sup> They will ask which road goes to Zion and turn in that direction. They will go there to make a permanent agreement with the LORD. It will not be forgotten.

<sup>6</sup> My people have been lost sheep. Their shepherds have led them astray. They wander around on the mountains. They go from mountains to hills. They have forgotten their resting place.

<sup>7</sup> Everyone who finds them eats them. Their enemies say, Were not guilty. They have sinned against the LORD, their true pasture. They have sinned against the LORD, the hope of their ancestors.

<sup>8</sup> "Run away from Babylon. Leave the land of the Babylonians. Be like the male goats that lead the flock.

<sup>9</sup> I am going to stir up an alliance of strong nations from the north and bring it against Babylon. Those nations will take up positions against Babylon. Babylon will be captured from the north. Its enemys arrows will be like skilled soldiers who dont come back emptyhanded.

<sup>10</sup> The Babylonians will become the prize. All who loot them will get everything they want," declares the LORD.

<sup>11</sup> "You are happy and excited. You have looted the people who belong to me. You dance around like calves on the grass and neigh like stallions.

<sup>12</sup> But your mother will be greatly ashamed. The woman who gave birth to you will be disgraced. Babylon, you will

be the least important nation. You will become a parched desert.

<sup>13</sup>No one will live in Babylon because of the LORDS anger. It will be completely abandoned. Everyone who passes by Babylon will be horrified and hiss at all its wounds.

<sup>14</sup>"Take up your positions around Babylon, all you archers with bows. Shoot at it; dont save any arrows, because the people of Babylon have sinned against the LORD.

<sup>15</sup>Shout a war cry against them on every side. Theyll surrender. Their towers will fall and their walls will be torn down. Since this is the LORDS vengeance, take revenge against them. Do to them what they did to others.

<sup>16</sup>Dont allow anyone in Babylon to plant or harvest. Everyone will turn to his own people and flee to his own homeland because of the enemies swords.

<sup>17</sup>"The people of Israel are like scattered sheep that lions have chased. The first to devour them was the king of Assyria. The last to gnaw at their bones was King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon.

<sup>18</sup>"This is what the LORD of Armies, the God of Israel, says: I am going to punish the king of Babylon and his land as I punished the king of Assyria.

<sup>19</sup>I will bring the people of Israel back to their pastures. They will eat on Mount Carmel and Mount Bashan. They will eat until they are full on the mountains of Ephraim and Gilead.

<sup>20</sup>In those days and at that time," declares the LORD, "people will look for Israel's crimes, but they will find none. They will look for Judah's sins, but none will be found. I will forgive the faithful few whom I have spared.

<sup>21</sup>"Attack the land of Merathaim and the people who live in Pekod. Claim them for me by killing them with a sword," declares the LORD. "Do everything I commanded you.

<sup>22</sup>The noise of battle and great destruction fills the land.

<sup>23</sup>The hammer of the whole earth is broken and shattered. See how desolate Babylon is of all the nations!

<sup>24</sup>I will set traps for you, Babylon. You will be caught, but you won't know it. You

will be found and captured because you have opposed the LORD.

<sup>25</sup>The LORD will open his armory and bring out the weapons of his fury, because the Almighty LORD of Armies has a job to do in the land of the Babylonians.

<sup>26</sup>Attack them from a distance, open their storehouses, pile up their corpses like piles of grain, claim them for me by destroying them, and don't leave anyone behind.

<sup>27</sup>Kill all their young bulls. Let them go to be slaughtered. How horrible it will be for them when their time has come, the time for them to be punished.

<sup>28</sup>Listen! Fugitives and refugees from Babylon are coming to Zion to tell about the vengeance of the LORD our God, the vengeance for his temple.

<sup>29</sup>"Call together the archers, the soldiers with bows, against Babylon. Set up blockades around it. Don't let anyone escape. Pay the people of Babylon back for what they have done. Do to them what they did to others. They have disobeyed the LORD, the Holy One of Israel.

<sup>30</sup>That is why their young men will die in the streets, and all their soldiers will be silenced that day," declares the LORD.

<sup>31</sup>"I'm against you, you arrogant city," declares the Almighty LORD of Armies. "Your day has come, the time when I will punish you.

<sup>32</sup>Those arrogant people will stumble and fall, and there will be no one to help them get up. I will light a fire in their cities that will burn up everything around them."

<sup>33</sup>This is what the LORD of Armies says: All the people of Israel and Judah are oppressed. All their enemies have captured them. They refuse to let them go.

<sup>34</sup>Their defender is strong. His name is the LORD of Armies. He will certainly take up their cause in order to bring rest to the land of Israel and unrest to the people who live in Babylon.

<sup>35</sup>"A sword will kill the Babylonians and everyone who lives in Babylon," declares the LORD. "A sword will kill their officials and their wise men.

<sup>36</sup>A sword will kill the false prophets. They will become fools. A sword will kill their soldiers and defeat them.

<sup>37</sup>A sword will kill their horses, their chariots, and all the foreigners within their ranks. They will become women. A sword will destroy their treasures, and they will be looted.

<sup>38</sup>A drought will diminish their water supply, and it will dry up. Babylon is a land of idols, statues that will go crazy with fear.

<sup>39</sup>That is why desert animals will live with hyenas. Desert owls will also live there. It will no longer be inhabited or lived in for generations.

<sup>40</sup>Babylon will be like Sodom, Gomorrah, and their neighboring cities when I, God, destroyed them. No one will live there. No human will stay there," declares the LORD.

<sup>41</sup>"People are going to come from the north. A great nation and many kings will rise from the ends of the earth.

<sup>42</sup>They will take hold of bows and spears. They will be cruel and have no compassion. They will sound like the sea when it roars. They will ride horses. They

are ready for war, ready to attack you, people of Babylon.

<sup>43</sup>The king of Babylon has heard reports about them, and he loses courage. Anguish will grip him as pain grips a woman in labor.

<sup>44</sup>I will suddenly chase them from their places like a lion coming out of the jungle along the Jordan River into pastureland. I will appoint over Babylon whomever I choose. Who is like me? Who can challenge me? Is there any leader who can stand up to me?

<sup>45</sup>Listen to the plans that the LORD is making against Babylon and the things he intends to do to the land of the Babylonians. He will surely drag away the little ones of the flock. He will surely destroy the pasture because of the Babylonians.

<sup>46</sup>The earth will quake at the news that Babylon has been captured. Its cry will be heard among the nations."

**51** <sup>1</sup>This is what the LORD says:  
I will stir up a destructive wind against Babylon and against the people who live in Leb Kamai.

<sup>2</sup>I will send people to winnow Babylon, to winnow it and strip its land bare. They will attack it from every direction on the day of trouble.

<sup>3</sup>Have the archers bend their bows. Have them put on their armor. Don't spare Babylons young men. Completely destroy its whole army.

<sup>4</sup>Babylons soldiers will fall down badly wounded in their streets. They will lie dead in their own land.

<sup>5</sup>Israel and Judah haven't been abandoned by their God, the LORD of Armies, although their land is guilty of abandoning the Holy One of Israel.

<sup>6</sup>Run away from Babylon! Run for your lives! You shouldn't die because of Babylons crimes. This is the time for the vengeance of the LORD. He will pay the people of Babylon back for what they have done.

<sup>7</sup>Babylon was a golden cup in the LORDS hand. It made the whole world drunk. The nations drank its wine. That is why the nations have gone insane.

<sup>8</sup>Babylon will suddenly fall and be shattered. Cry for it. Bring medicine for its pain. Maybe it can be healed.

<sup>9</sup>We wanted to heal Babylon, but it couldn't be healed. Let's abandon it and go to our own land. God has judged Babylon. Its judgment is complete.

<sup>10</sup>The LORD has brought about our victory. Let's announce in Zion what the LORD our God has done.

<sup>11</sup>Sharpen the arrows; fill the quivers. The LORD will stir up the spirit of the kings of the Medes because his plan is to destroy Babylon. The LORD will avenge his temple.

<sup>12</sup>Raise your battle flag in front of the walls of Babylon. Strengthen the guards. Station watchmen. Prepare ambushes. The LORD will carry out his plans against the people who live in Babylon.

<sup>13</sup>Babylon, you live beside many rivers and are rich with treasures, but your end has come. The thread of your life has been cut off.

<sup>14</sup>The LORD of Armies has taken an oath on himself: "I will certainly fill you with many enemy armies. They will swarm like locusts. People will shout their victory over you."

<sup>15</sup>The LORD made the earth by his power. He set up the world by his

wisdom. He stretched out heaven by his understanding.

<sup>16</sup>When he thunders, the water in the sky roars. He makes clouds rise from the ends of the earth. He sends lightning with the rain. He brings wind out of his storehouses.

<sup>17</sup>Everyone is stupid and ignorant. Metalsmiths are put to shame by their idols. Their statues are false gods.

<sup>18</sup>They cant breathe. They are worthless jokes. When they are punished, they will disappear.

<sup>19</sup>Jacobs God isnt like them. He made everything, and Israel is the tribe that belongs to him. His name is the LORD of Armies.

<sup>20</sup>"You are my war club and my weapon for battle. I will use you to crush nations. I will use you to destroy kingdoms.

<sup>21</sup> I will use you to crush horses and their riders. I will use you to crush chariots and their drivers.

<sup>22</sup>I will use you to crush men and women. I will use you to crush the old and the young. I will use you to crush young men and women.

<sup>23</sup> I will use you to crush shepherds and their flocks. I will use you to crush farmers and their oxen. I will use you to crush governors and officials.

<sup>24</sup> "In your presence I will pay back Babylon and all the people who live in Babylon for all the evil things that they did in Zion," declares the LORD.

<sup>25</sup> "I am against you, Babylon, you destructive mountain. You have destroyed the whole earth," declares the LORD. "I will use my power against you, roll you off the cliffs, and make you a scorched mountain.

<sup>26</sup> People won't find any stones in you to use as a cornerstone. They won't find any stones in you to use for a foundation. You will become permanent ruins," declares the LORD.

<sup>27</sup> Raise your battle flag throughout the world. Blow the rams horn among the nations. Prepare nations to attack Babylon. Tell the kingdoms of Ararat, Minni, and Ashkenaz to attack it. Appoint a commander to lead the attack. Bring up horses like a swarm of locusts.

<sup>28</sup> Prepare nations to attack Babylon. Prepare the king of the Medes, their

governors, all their deputies, and all the countries that they rule.

<sup>29</sup>The earth trembles and writhes in pain. The LORD carries out his plans against Babylon to make Babylon a wasteland so that no one will live there.

<sup>30</sup>The warriors of Babylon have stopped fighting. They stay in their fortified cities. Their strength has failed. They have become women. Their buildings are set on fire. The bars across their gates are broken.

<sup>31</sup>Runners run to meet runners. Messengers follow messengers. They inform the king of Babylon that his entire city is captured.

<sup>32</sup>The river crossings have been taken. The enemy has burned its marshes, and its soldiers are terrified.

<sup>33</sup>This is what the LORD of Armies, the God of Israel, says: The people of Babylon are like a threshing floor at the time it is trampled. Their harvest time will come soon.

<sup>34</sup>King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon has devoured us. He has thrown us into confusion. He has turned us into empty jars. He has swallowed us like a monster.

He has filled his belly with our delicacies.  
Then he spit us out.

<sup>35</sup>The people who live in Zion say,  
"May the violence done to us be done  
to Babylon." Jerusalem says, "May the  
people of Babylon be held responsible  
for our deaths."

<sup>36</sup>This is what the LORD says: I am  
going to take up your cause and get  
revenge for you. I will dry up Babylons  
sea and make its springs dry.

<sup>37</sup>Babylon will become piles of rubble. It  
will become a dwelling place for jackals,  
something horrible, and an object of  
contempt, where no one lives.

<sup>38</sup>Its people are like roaring lions and  
growling lion cubs.

<sup>39</sup>When they are excited, I will prepare  
a feast for them and make them drunk  
so that they will shout and laugh. They  
will fall into a deep sleep and never wake  
up again, declares the LORD.

<sup>40</sup>I will take them to be slaughtered  
like lambs, rams, and male goats.

<sup>41</sup>"Sheshach has been captured.  
Babylon, the city that the whole world  
praised, has been taken captive.

<sup>42</sup>What a horrifying sight Babylon will be to the nations! The sea will rise over Babylon, and its roaring waves will cover it.

<sup>43</sup>Its cities will be ruined. It will become a desert, a land where no one lives and where no human travels.

<sup>44</sup>I will punish Bel in Babylon. I will make Bel spit out everything that it has swallowed. Nations will no longer stream to Babylon, and its walls will fall.

<sup>45</sup>"Leave it, my people! Run for your lives! Run from the burning anger of the LORD.

<sup>46</sup>Dont lose courage or be afraid when rumors are heard in the land. One rumor comes one year; another rumor comes the next year. Rumors of violence are in the land. Rumors that one ruler will fight against another are in the land.

<sup>47</sup>That is why the days are coming when I will punish Babylons idols. The whole country will be put to shame, and all its soldiers will lie dead.

<sup>48</sup>Then heaven and earth and everything in them will rejoice over Babylon, because destroyers from the north will attack it," declares the LORD.

<sup>49</sup> Because the people of Babylon have killed many Israelites and because they have killed many people throughout the earth, Babylon must fall.

<sup>50</sup> You people who escaped from the sword, leave! Don't just stand there. Remember the LORD in a distant land, and think about Jerusalem.

<sup>51</sup> We have been put to shame, and we have been disgraced. Shame covers our faces, because foreigners have gone into the holy places of the LORDS temple.

<sup>52</sup> "That is why the days are coming," declares the LORD, "when I will punish their idols, and those who are wounded will moan everywhere in the land.

<sup>53</sup> The people of Babylon might go up to heaven. They might fortify their strongholds. But destroyers will still come from me against them," declares the LORD.

<sup>54</sup> Cries of agony are heard from Babylon. Sounds of terrible destruction are heard from the land of the Babylonians.

<sup>55</sup> The LORD will destroy Babylon. He will silence the loud noise coming from it. Waves of enemies will come roaring in

like raging water. The noise will be heard everywhere.

<sup>56</sup>A destroyer will attack Babylon, its soldiers will be captured, and their bows and arrows will be broken. "I, the LORD, am a God who punishes evil. I will certainly punish them.

<sup>57</sup>I will make their officials and wise men drunk, along with their governors, officers, and soldiers. They will fall into a deep sleep and never wake up," declares the king, whose name is the LORD of Armies.

<sup>58</sup>This is what the LORD of Armies says: The thick walls of Babylon will be leveled, and its high gates will be set on fire. People exhaust themselves for nothing. The nations wear themselves out only to have a fire.

<sup>59</sup>This is the message that the prophet Jeremiah gave to Seraiah, son of Neriah and grandson of Mahseiah, when Seraiah went to Babylon with King Zedekiah of Judah in the fourth year of Zedekiah's rule. (Seraiah was the quartermaster.)

<sup>60</sup>Jeremiah wrote on a scroll all the disasters that would happen to Babylon.

He wrote all these things that have been written about Babylon.

<sup>61</sup> Jeremiah said to Seraiah, "When you come to Babylon, see that you read all this.

<sup>62</sup> Then say, LORD, you have threatened to destroy this place so that no person or animal will live here, and it will become a permanent ruin.

<sup>63</sup> When you finish reading this scroll, tie a stone to it and throw it into the middle of the Euphrates River.

<sup>64</sup> Say, Babylon will sink like this scroll. It will never rise again because of the disasters that I will bring on it." The words of Jeremiah end here.

**52** <sup>1</sup> Zedekiah was 21 years old when he began to rule, and he ruled for 11 years in Jerusalem. His mother's name was Hamutal, daughter of Jeremiah from Libnah.

<sup>2</sup> Zedekiah did what the LORD considered evil, as Jehoiakim had done.

<sup>3</sup> The LORD became angry with Jerusalem and Judah and threw the people out of his sight. Zedekiah rebelled against the king of Babylon.

<sup>4</sup> On the tenth day of the tenth month of the ninth year of Zedekiah's reign, King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon attacked Jerusalem with his entire army. They set up camp and built dirt ramps around the city walls.

<sup>5</sup> The blockade of the city lasted until Zedekiah's eleventh year as king.

<sup>6</sup> On the ninth day of the fourth month, the famine in the city became so severe that the common people had no food.

<sup>7</sup> The enemy broke through the city walls, and all Judah's soldiers fled. They left the city at night through the gate between the two walls beside the king's garden. While the Babylonians were attacking the city from all sides, they took the road to the plain of Jericho.

<sup>8</sup> The Babylonian army pursued King Zedekiah and caught up with him in the plain of Jericho. His entire army had deserted him.

<sup>9</sup> The Babylonians captured the king and brought him to the king of Babylon at Riblah in Hamath, where the king of Babylon passed sentence on him.

<sup>10</sup> The king of Babylon slaughtered Zedekiah's sons as Zedekiah watched. He

also slaughtered all the officials of Judah at Riblah.

<sup>11</sup> Then he blinded Zedekiah and put him in bronze shackles. The king of Babylon took him to Babylon and put him in a prison, where he stayed until he died.

<sup>12</sup> On the tenth day of the fifth month of Nebuchadnezzar's nineteenth year as king of Babylon, Nebuzaradan, who was the captain of the guard and an officer of the king of Babylon, came to Jerusalem.

<sup>13</sup> He burned down the LORDS temple, the royal palace, and all the houses in Jerusalem. Every important building was burned down.

<sup>14</sup> The entire Babylonian army that was with the captain of the guard tore down the walls around Jerusalem.

<sup>15</sup> Nebuzaradan, the captain of the guard, captured the few people left in the city, those who surrendered to the king of Babylon, and the rest of the population.

<sup>16</sup> But Nebuzaradan, the captain of the guard, left some of the poorest people in the land to work in the vineyards and on the farms.

<sup>17</sup>The Babylonians broke apart the bronze pillars of the LORDS temple, the stands, and the bronze pool in the LORDS temple. They shipped all the bronze to Babylon.

<sup>18</sup>They took the pots, shovels, snuffers, bowls, dishes, and all the bronze utensils used in the temple service.

<sup>19</sup>The captain of the guard also took pans, incense burners, bowls, pots, lamp stands, dishes, and the bowls used for wine offerings. The captain of the guard took all of the trays and bowls that were made of gold or silver.

<sup>20</sup>The bronze from the 2 pillars, the pool, and the 12 bronze bulls under the stands that King Solomon had made for the LORDS temple couldnt be weighed.

<sup>21</sup>One pillar was 27 feet high and 18 feet in circumference. It was three inches thick and hollow.

<sup>22</sup>The capital that was on it was 7 feet high with a filigree and pomegranates around it. They were all made of bronze. The second pillar was the same. It also had pomegranates.

<sup>23</sup> There were 96 pomegranates on the sides. The total number of pomegranates on the surrounding filigree was 100.

<sup>24</sup> The captain of the guard took the chief priest Seraiah, the second priest Zephaniah, and the 3 doorkeepers.

<sup>25</sup> From the city he also took an army commander, 7 men who had access to the king whom he found in the city, the scribe who was in charge of the militia, and 60 common people whom he found in the city.

<sup>26</sup> Nebuzaradan, the captain of the guard, took them and brought them to the king of Babylon at Riblah.

<sup>27</sup> The king of Babylon executed them at Riblah in the territory of Hamath. So the people of Judah were captives as they left their land.

<sup>28</sup> These are the people Nebuchadnezzar took captive: In his seventh year as king, he took 3,023 Jews.

<sup>29</sup> In his eighteenth year, Nebuchadnezzar took 832 people from Jerusalem.

<sup>30</sup> In Nebuchadnezzar's twentythird year as king, Nebuzaradan, the captain of the

guard, took away 745 Jews. In all, 4,600 people were taken away.

<sup>31</sup> On the twentyfifth day of the twelfth month of the thirtyseventh year of the imprisonment of King Jehoiakin of Judah, King Evil Merodach of Babylon, in the first year of his reign, freed King Jehoiakin of Judah and released him from prison.

<sup>32</sup> He treated him well and gave him a special position higher than the other kings who were with him in Babylon.

<sup>33</sup> Jehoiakin no longer wore prison clothes, and he ate his meals in the kings presence as long as he lived.

<sup>34</sup> The king of Babylon gave him a daily food allowance as long as he lived.

# Lamentations

**1** <sup>1</sup> "Look how deserted Jerusalem is! Once the city was crowded with people. Once it was important among the nations. Now it is a widow. Once it was a princess among the provinces. Now it does forced labor.

<sup>2</sup> Jerusalem cries bitterly at night with tears running down its cheeks. Out of all those who love the city, no one offers it comfort. All of Jerusalem's friends have betrayed it and become its enemies.

<sup>3</sup> "Judah has been exiled after much suffering and harsh treatment. Its people live among the nations; they find no rest. Those who chased them caught up with them in places where there was no way out.

<sup>4</sup> "The roads to Zion are deserted. No one comes to the annual festivals. No one passes through any of its gates. Its priests are groaning. Its young women are made to suffer. Zion is bitter.

<sup>5</sup> Its opponents are now in control. Its enemies have no worries. The LORD

made Zion suffer for its many rebellious acts. Its children go ahead of their opponents into captivity.

<sup>6</sup>All splendor has abandoned the people of Zion. Its influential people were like deer that couldnt find any pasture. They ran without any strength ahead of the hunters.

<sup>7</sup>"Now, during its suffering and oppression, Jerusalem remembers all the treasures it had from ancient times, when its people fell into the power of their enemies with no one to help them. Their opponents looked on, and they laughed at Jerusalems downfall.

<sup>8</sup>Jerusalem has sinned so much that it has become a filthy thing. Everyone who used to honor it now despises it. Theyve seen it naked. Jerusalem groans and turns away.

<sup>9</sup>Jerusalems own filth covers its clothes. It gave no thought to its future. Its downfall was shocking. No one offers it comfort. O LORD, look at my suffering, because my enemies have triumphed.

<sup>10</sup>The enemies laid their hands on all of the citys treasures. Jerusalem has seen the nations enter the holy place. O

Lord, they are the same people you have forbidden to enter your congregation.

<sup>11</sup>All the people are groaning as they beg for bread. They trade their treasures for food to keep themselves alive. O LORD, look and see how despised I am!"

<sup>12</sup>"Doesnt this affect all of you who pass by? Look and see if theres any pain like the pain that the LORD has caused me, like the pain that he has made me suffer on the day of his fierce anger.

<sup>13</sup>He sent fire from above. He made it go deep into my bones. He spread a net for my feet. He made me turn back. He has left me devastated. He has made me sick all day long.

<sup>14</sup>My rebellious acts are a heavy burden for me. They were tied together by Gods own hands. They were tied around my neck. He has weakened me with them. The Lord has handed me over to people I cannot oppose.

<sup>15</sup>The Lord has treated all the warriors inside my walls with contempt. He called an army to defeat my young men. The LORD trampled the people of Judah in a winepress.

<sup>16</sup> I'm crying because of all these things. My eyes my eyes flow with tears. No one can give me the comfort I need to keep me alive. Everyone is too far away from me. My children are devastated because my enemies have won."

<sup>17</sup> Zion holds out its hands. No one offers it comfort. The LORD has given this order about Jacob: His own neighbors will become his opponents. Jerusalem has become a filthy thing among them.

<sup>18</sup> "The LORD is right in what he did, because I rebelled against his word. Please listen, all you people, and look at my pain. My young women and young men have gone into captivity.

<sup>19</sup> I called for those who love me, but they betrayed me. My priests and leaders breathed their last breath in the city, looking for food to keep themselves alive.

<sup>20</sup> "O LORD, see the distress I'm in! My stomach is churning. My heart is pounding because I've been very bitter. In the streets swords kill my children. Inside the houses it's like death.

<sup>21</sup> "All my enemies have heard that I am groaning. No one offers me comfort.

All my enemies have heard about my disaster. They are happy that you did it. You have allowed the day to come, the one that you had announced. Let my enemies be like me now.

<sup>22</sup>Recall all of their wickedness. Then deal with them as you have dealt with me because of all my rebellious acts. I groan so much and feel so sick at heart."

**2**<sup>1</sup>"Look how the Lord has covered the people of Zion with the cloud of his anger! He has thrown down Israels beauty from heaven to earth. He didnt even remember his footstool on the day of his anger.

<sup>2</sup>The Lord swallowed up all of Jacobs pastures without any pity. He tore down the fortified cities of Judah in his fury. He brought the kingdom of Judah and its leaders down to the ground in dishonor.

<sup>3</sup>In his burning anger he cut off all of Israels strength. He withdrew his right hand when they faced their enemy. He burned like a raging fire in the land of Jacob, destroying everything around him.

<sup>4</sup>Like an enemy he bent his bow. Like an opponent his right hand held the

arrow steady. He killed all the beautiful people. He poured out his fury like fire on the tent of Zions people.

<sup>5</sup>The Lord became an enemy. He swallowed up Israel. He swallowed up all of its palaces. He destroyed its strongholds. He made the people of Judah mourn and moan.

<sup>6</sup>He stripped his own booth as if it were a garden and destroyed his own festivals. The LORD wiped out the memory of festivals and days of worship in Zion. He expelled kings and priests because of his fierce anger.

<sup>7</sup>The Lord rejected his altar and disowned his holy place. He handed the walls of Zions palaces over to its enemies. The enemies made noise in the LORDS temple as though it were a festival day.

<sup>8</sup>The LORD planned to destroy the wall of Zions people. He marked it off with a line. He didnt take his hand away until he had swallowed it up. He made the towers and walls mourn. They are completely dejected.

<sup>9</sup>"Zions gates have sunk into the ground. The LORD destroyed and

shattered the bars across its gates. Its king and influential people are scattered among the nations. There is no longer any instruction from Moses Teachings. Its prophets can find no visions from the LORD.

<sup>10</sup>The respected leaders of Zions people sit silently on the ground. They throw dirt on their heads and put on sackcloth. The young women of Jerusalem bow their heads to the ground.

<sup>11</sup>My eyes are worn out with tears. My stomach is churning. My heart is poured out on the ground because of the destruction of my people. Little children and infants faint in the city streets.

<sup>12</sup>Theyre asking their mothers for some bread and wine as they faint like wounded people in the city streets. Their lives dwindle away in their mothers arms.

<sup>13</sup>"What example can I give you? What parallel can I show you, people of Jerusalem? What comparison can I make that will comfort you, beloved people of Zion? Your wounds are as deep as the sea. Who can heal you?

<sup>14</sup>Your prophets saw misleading visions about you. They painted a good picture of you. They didnt expose your guilt in order to make things better again. They gave you false prophecies that misled you.

<sup>15</sup>Everyone who walks along the road shakes a fist at you. They hiss and shake their heads at Jerusalems people: Is this the city they used to call absolutely beautiful, the joy of the whole world?

<sup>16</sup>All your enemies gawk at you. They hiss and grit their teeth. They say, Weve swallowed it up. Yes, this is the day weve been waiting for. At last we have seen it!

<sup>17</sup>The LORD has accomplished what he had planned to do. He carried out the threat he announced long ago. He tore you down without any pity, Jerusalem. He made your enemies gloat over you. He raised the weapons of your opponents.

<sup>18</sup>The hearts of Jerusalems people cried out to the LORD, the wall of Zions people. Let your tears run down like a river day and night. Dont let them stop. Dont let your eyes rest.

<sup>19</sup>Get up! Cry out at night, every hour on the hour. Pour your heart out like water in the presence of the LORD. Lift up your hands to him in prayer for the life of your little children who faint from hunger at every street corner."

<sup>20</sup>"O LORD, look and consider: Have you ever treated anyone like this? Should women eat their own children, the children they have nursed? Should priests and prophets be killed in the Lords holy place?

<sup>21</sup>Young and old lie on the ground in the streets. My young women and men are cut down by swords. You killed them on the day of your anger. You slaughtered them without any pity.

<sup>22</sup>You have invited those who terrorize me on every side, as though they were invited to a festival. No one escaped or survived on the day of the LORDS anger. My enemy has murdered the children I nursed and raised."

**3**<sup>1</sup>"I am the man who has experienced suffering under the rod of Gods fury.

<sup>2</sup>God has driven me away and made me walk in darkness instead of light.

<sup>3</sup> He beat me again and again all day long.

<sup>4</sup> He has made my flesh and my skin waste away. He has broken my bones.

<sup>5</sup> He has attacked me and surrounded me with bitterness and hardship.

<sup>6</sup> He has made me live in darkness, like those who died a long time ago.

<sup>7</sup> He has blocked me so that I can't get out. He has put heavy chains on me.

<sup>8</sup> Even when I cry and call for help, he shuts out my prayer.

<sup>9</sup> He has blocked my way with cut stones and made my paths crooked.

<sup>10</sup> He is like a bear waiting to ambush me, like a lion in hiding.

<sup>11</sup> He has forced me off the road I was taking, torn me to pieces, and left me with nothing.

<sup>12</sup> He has drawn his bow and made me the target for his arrows.

<sup>13</sup> He has shot the arrows from his quiver into my heart.

<sup>14</sup> I have become a laughingstock to all my people. All day long they make fun of me with their songs.

<sup>15</sup> He has filled me with bitterness. He has made me drink wormwood.

<sup>16</sup>He has ground my teeth with gravel.  
He has trampled me into the dust.

<sup>17</sup>"My soul has been kept from enjoying peace. I have forgotten what happiness is.

<sup>18</sup>I said, I've lost my strength to live and my hope in the LORD.

<sup>19</sup>Remember my suffering and my aimless wandering, the wormwood and poison.

<sup>20</sup>My soul continues to remember these things and is so discouraged.

<sup>21</sup>"The reason I can still find hope is that I keep this one thing in mind:

<sup>22</sup>the LORDS mercy. We were not completely wiped out. His compassion is never limited.

<sup>23</sup>It is new every morning. His faithfulness is great.

<sup>24</sup>My soul can say, The LORD is my lot in life. That is why I find hope in him.

<sup>25</sup>The LORD is good to those who wait for him, to anyone who seeks help from him.

<sup>26</sup>"It is good to continue to hope and wait silently for the LORD to save us.

<sup>27</sup>It is good for people to endure burdens when theyre young.

<sup>28</sup>They should sit alone and remain silent because the LORD has laid these burdens on them.

<sup>29</sup>They should put their mouths in the dust. Maybe a reason to hope exists.

<sup>30</sup>They should turn their cheeks to the one who strikes them and take their fill of insults.

<sup>31</sup>"The Lord will not reject such people forever.

<sup>32</sup>Even if he makes us suffer, he will have compassion in keeping with the richness of his mercy.

<sup>33</sup>He does not willingly bring suffering or grief to anyone,

<sup>34</sup>crush any prisoner on earth underfoot,

<sup>35</sup>deny people their rights in the presence of the Most High God,

<sup>36</sup>or deprive people of justice in court. The Lord isn't happy to see these things.

<sup>37</sup>Who was it who spoke and it came into being? It was the Lord who gave the order.

<sup>38</sup>Both good and bad come from the mouth of the Most High God.

<sup>39</sup> "Why should any living mortal (any person) complain about being punished for sin?

<sup>40</sup> Let us look closely at our ways and examine them and then return to the LORD.

<sup>41</sup> Let us raise our hearts and hands to God in heaven.

<sup>42</sup> "We have been disobedient and rebellious. You haven't forgiven us.

<sup>43</sup> You covered yourself with anger and pursued us. You killed without pity.

<sup>44</sup> You covered yourself with a cloud so that no prayer could get through it.

<sup>45</sup> You made us the scum and trash of the nations.

<sup>46</sup> All our enemies gawk at us.

<sup>47</sup> Panic and pitfalls have found us, so have devastation and destruction.

<sup>48</sup> "Streams of tears run down from my eyes over the ruin of my dear people.

<sup>49</sup> My eyes will keep flowing without stopping for a moment

<sup>50</sup> until the LORD looks down from heaven and sees.

<sup>51</sup> What I see with my eyes disturbs me deeply because of all the young women in my city.

<sup>52</sup>"Those who were my enemies for no reason hunted me like a bird.

<sup>53</sup>They threw me alive into a pit and threw rocks at me.

<sup>54</sup>Water flowed over my head. I thought I was finished.

<sup>55</sup>"I call your name from the deepest pit, O LORD.

<sup>56</sup>Listen to my cry for help. Don't close your ears when I cry out for relief.

<sup>57</sup>Be close at hand when I call to you. You told me not to be afraid.

<sup>58</sup>Plead my case for me, O LORD. Reclaim my life.

<sup>59</sup>Look at the wrong that has been done to me, O LORD. Give me a fair verdict.

<sup>60</sup>Look at all their malice, all their plots against me.

<sup>61</sup>Listen to their insults, all their plots against me.

<sup>62</sup>The words and thoughts of those who attack me are directed against me all day long.

<sup>63</sup>Look at them! Whether they are sitting or standing, they make fun of me in their songs.

<sup>64</sup> Pay them back, O LORD, for what they deserve, for what their own hands have done.

<sup>65</sup> Make them stubborn. Let your curse be on them.

<sup>66</sup> Pursue them in anger, and wipe them out from under the LORDS heaven."

**4**<sup>1</sup> "Look how the gold has become tarnished! The fine gold has changed! The sacred stones are scattered at every street corner.

<sup>2</sup> "Zions precious children, who are worth their weight in fine gold, are now treated like clay pots, like those made by a potters hands.

<sup>3</sup> Even jackals offer their breasts to nurse their young, but the women of my people are as cruel as wild ostriches.

<sup>4</sup> The tongues of nursing infants stick to the roofs of their mouths because of their thirst. Little children beg for bread, but no one will break off a piece for them.

<sup>5</sup> Those who used to eat delicacies are now destitute in the streets. Those who used to wear expensive clothes now pick through piles of garbage.

<sup>6</sup>The punishment for my peoples wickedness has been more severe than the punishment for the sins of Sodom. Sodom was destroyed instantly, without one human hand touching it.

<sup>7</sup>Zions princes were purer than snow, whiter than milk. Their bodies were more pink than coral. Their hair was like sapphires.

<sup>8</sup>Their faces are now blacker than soot. No one recognizes them on the streets. Their skin has shriveled on their bones. It has become as dry as bark.

<sup>9</sup>Those who were killed with swords are better off than those who are dying from starvation. Those who were stabbed bled to death. The others are dying because there is nothing in the fields to eat.

<sup>10</sup>The hands of loving mothers cooked their own children. The children were used for food by my people when they were being destroyed by a blockade.

<sup>11</sup>The LORDS fury has accomplished his purpose. He unleashed his burning anger. He started a fire in Zion that even burned its foundations.

<sup>12</sup>Neither the kings of the earth nor anyone living on earth could believe

that enemies or invaders would ever get through the gates of Jerusalem.

<sup>13</sup>They got through because of the sins of Jerusalem's prophets and the crimes of its priests, who spilled the blood of righteous people within it.

<sup>14</sup>My people staggered blindly through the streets. They were so contaminated with bloodstains that no one would touch their clothes.

<sup>15</sup>Get away! You're unclean, people yelled at them. Get away! Get away! Don't touch anyone. When they fled and wandered around, the people of the nations said, They can't stay here any longer.

<sup>16</sup>The LORD himself has scattered them. He will no longer look favorably on them. They no longer respected the priests, nor did they honor their older leaders."

<sup>17</sup>"We are still straining our eyes, trying in vain to find help. We waited and waited for a nation that didn't save us.

<sup>18</sup>The enemy kept tracking us down, so we couldn't even go out into the streets. Our end was near. Our time was up. Our end had come.

<sup>19</sup>Those who were hunting us were faster than eagles in the sky. They chased us in the mountains and ambushed us in the wilderness.

<sup>20</sup>The person the LORD anointed as king, who is the breath of our life, was caught in their pits. We had thought that we would live in our king's shadow among the nations."

<sup>21</sup>"Rejoice and be glad, people of Edom, inhabitants of the country of Uz. The cup of the LORDS' fury will be passed to you next. You'll get drunk and take off all your clothes.

<sup>22</sup>People of Zion, the punishment for your wickedness will end. The LORD will not let you remain in exile. People of Edom, he will punish you for your wickedness. He will expose your sins."

**5**<sup>1</sup>"Remember, O LORD, what has happened to us. Take a look at our disgrace!

<sup>2</sup>"The land we inherited has been turned over to strangers. Our homes have been turned over to foreigners.

<sup>3</sup>We are orphans without a father. Our mothers are like widows.

<sup>4</sup>We have to pay to drink our own water. We have to pay to chop our own wood.

<sup>5</sup>Our enemies are breathing down our necks. We are worn out and not permitted to rest.

<sup>6</sup>We had to beg Egypt and Assyria for food.

<sup>7</sup>Our ancestors sinned. Now they are gone, but we have to take the punishment for their wickedness.

<sup>8</sup>Slaves rule us. There is no one to rescue us from them.

<sup>9</sup>To get our food, we have to risk our lives in the heat of the desert.

<sup>10</sup>Our skin is as hot as an oven from the burning heat of starvation.

<sup>11</sup>Women in Zion are raped, so are the girls in the cities of Judah.

<sup>12</sup>Our leaders are hung by their hands. Our older leaders are shown no respect.

<sup>13</sup>Our young men work at the mill, and our boys stagger under loads of wood.

<sup>14</sup>Our older leaders have stopped meeting at the city gate, and our young men no longer play their music.

<sup>15</sup>There is no joy left in our hearts. Our dancing has turned into mourning.

<sup>16</sup>The crown has fallen from our head. Because we have sinned, it has been disastrous for us.

<sup>17</sup>This is why we feel sick. This is why our eyes see less and less.

<sup>18</sup>Foxes roam around on Mount Zion, which lies in ruins.

<sup>19</sup>"But you, O LORD, sit enthroned forever, and your reign continues throughout every generation.

<sup>20</sup>Why have you completely forgotten us? Why have you abandoned us for such a long time?

<sup>21</sup>O LORD, bring us back to you, and we'll come back. Give us back the life we had long ago,

<sup>22</sup>unless you have completely rejected us and are very angry with us."

# Ezekiel

**1** <sup>1</sup> On the fifth day of the fourth month in the thirtieth year, while I was living among the exiles by the Chebar River, the sky opened, and I saw visions from God.

<sup>2</sup> On the fifth day of the month, during the fifth year of the exile of King Jehoiakin,

<sup>3</sup> the LORD spoke his word to the priest Ezekiel, son of Buzi, in Babylon by the Chebar River. The power of the LORD came over Ezekiel.

<sup>4</sup> As I looked, I saw a storm coming from the north. There was an immense cloud with flashing lightning surrounded by a bright light. The middle of the lightning looked like glowing metal.

<sup>5</sup> In the center of the cloud I saw what looked like four living creatures. They were shaped like humans,

<sup>6</sup> but each of them had four faces and four wings.

<sup>7</sup> Their legs were straight, their feet were like those of calves, and they glittered like polished bronze.

<sup>8</sup> They had human hands under their wings on each of their four sides. All four of them had faces and wings.

<sup>9</sup> Their wings touched each other. The creatures went straight ahead, and they did not turn as they moved.

<sup>10</sup> Their faces looked like this: From the front, each creature had the face of a human. From the right, each one had the face of a lion. From the left, each one had the face of a bull. And from the back, each one had the face of an eagle.

<sup>11</sup> That is what their faces looked like. Their wings were spread out, pointing upward. Each creature had two wings with which they touched each other. The other two wings covered their bodies.

<sup>12</sup> Each of the creatures went straight ahead. They went wherever their spirit wanted to go, and they didn't turn as they moved.

<sup>13</sup> The living creatures looked like burning coals and torches. Fire moved back and forth between the living

creatures. The fire was bright, and lightning came out of the fire.

<sup>14</sup>The living creatures ran back and forth like lightning.

<sup>15</sup>As I looked at the living creatures, I saw a wheel on the ground beside each of them.

<sup>16</sup>This is how the wheels looked and how they were made: They looked like beryl. All four wheels looked the same. They looked like a wheel within a wheel.

<sup>17</sup>Whenever they moved, they moved in any of the four directions without turning as they moved.

<sup>18</sup>The rims of the wheels were large and frightening. They were covered with eyes.

<sup>19</sup>When the living creatures moved, the wheels moved with them. When the living creatures rose from the earth, the wheels rose.

<sup>20</sup>Wherever their spirit wanted to go, the creatures went. The wheels rose with them, because the spirit of the living creatures was in the wheels.

<sup>21</sup>So whenever the creatures moved, the wheels moved. Whenever the creatures stood still, the wheels stood

still. And whenever the creatures rose from the earth, the wheels rose with them, because the spirit of the living creatures was in the wheels.

<sup>22</sup>Something like a dome was spread over the heads of the living creatures. It looked like dazzling crystal.

<sup>23</sup>Under the dome, each creature had two wings that were stretched out straight, touching one another. Each creature had two wings that covered its body.

<sup>24</sup>When the creatures moved, I heard the sound of their wings. The sound was like the noise of rushing water, like the thunder of the Almighty, like the commotion in an army camp. When the creatures stood still, they lowered their wings.

<sup>25</sup>A voice came from above the dome over their heads as they stood still with their wings lowered.

<sup>26</sup>Above the dome over their heads was something that looked like a throne made of sapphire. On the throne was a figure that looked like a human.

<sup>27</sup>Then I saw what he looked like from the waist up. He looked like glowing

bronze with fire all around it. From the waist down, he looked like fire. A bright light surrounded him.

<sup>28</sup>The brightness all around him looked like a rainbow in the clouds. It was like the LORDS glory. When I saw it, I immediately bowed down, and I heard someone speaking.

**2**<sup>1</sup> He said to me, "Son of man, stand up, and I will speak to you."

<sup>2</sup>As he spoke to me, the Spirit entered me, stood me on my feet, and I heard him speaking to me.

<sup>3</sup>He said to me, "Son of man, I am sending you to the people of Israel. They are people from a nation that has rebelled against me. They and their ancestors have rebelled against me to this day.

<sup>4</sup>I am sending you to these defiant and stubborn children. Tell them, This is what the Almighty LORD says.

<sup>5</sup>Whether these rebellious people listen or not, they will realize that a prophet has been among them.

<sup>6</sup>Son of man, dont be afraid of them or the things they say. Dont be afraid, even though thorns and thistles are around

you and you live among scorpions. Dont let the things they say frighten you. Dont be terrified in their presence, even though they are rebellious people.

<sup>7</sup>Speak my words to them whether they listen or not, because they are rebellious.

<sup>8</sup>But you, son of man, listen to what I say. Dont be rebellious like those rebellious people. Open your mouth, and eat what I am giving to you."

<sup>9</sup>As I looked, I saw a hand stretched out toward me. In it was a scroll.

<sup>10</sup>He spread the scroll in front of me. There was writing on the front and back. There were funeral songs, songs of mourning, and horrible things written on it.

**3**<sup>1</sup>The LORD said to me, "Son of man, eat what you find. Eat this scroll. Then speak to the people of Israel."

<sup>2</sup>So I opened my mouth, and he gave me the scroll to eat.

<sup>3</sup>He said to me, "Son of man, eat this scroll Im giving you, and fill your stomach with it." So I ate it, and it tasted as sweet as honey in my mouth.

<sup>4</sup> He said to me, "Son of man, go to the people of Israel, and speak my words to them.

<sup>5</sup> I am not sending you to people whose language is hard to understand or difficult to speak. I am sending you to Israel.

<sup>6</sup> I am not sending you to nations whose language is hard to understand, difficult to speak, or whose words you cannot understand. If I send you to those nations, they will certainly listen to you.

<sup>7</sup> But the people of Israel will refuse to listen to you because they refuse to listen to me. All the people of Israel are very stubborn and hardheaded.

<sup>8</sup> Yet, I will make you as stubborn and as hardheaded as they are.

<sup>9</sup> I will make you as hard as a diamond, harder than stone. Don't be afraid of them. Don't be terrified in their presence, even though they are rebellious people."

<sup>10</sup> He also said to me, "Son of man, take to heart everything I have spoken to you, and listen closely.

<sup>11</sup> Go to the exiles, to your people. Whether they listen or not, tell them, This is what the Almighty LORD says."

<sup>12</sup>Then the Spirit lifted me, and behind me I heard a loud thundering voice say, "Blessed is the LORDS glory, which left this place."

<sup>13</sup>I also heard the noise of the wings of the living creatures touching one another and the noise of the wheels beside them as well as a loud rumbling.

<sup>14</sup>Then the Spirit lifted me and took me away. I went away feeling bitter and angry. The strong power of the LORD came over me.

<sup>15</sup>I went to Tel Abib, to the exiles who lived by the Chebar River. I sat there among them for seven days. I was stunned.

<sup>16</sup>After seven days the LORD spoke his word to me. He said,

<sup>17</sup>"Son of man, I have made you a watchman over the people of Israel. Listen to what I say, and warn them for me.

<sup>18</sup>Suppose I tell you that wicked people will surely die, but you dont warn them or speak out so that they can change their wicked ways in order to save their lives. Then these wicked people will die

because of their sin, but I will hold you responsible for their deaths.

<sup>19</sup>But suppose you warn the wicked people, and they don't turn from their wicked ways. Then they will die because of their sin, but you will save yourself.

<sup>20</sup>If righteous people turn from living the right way and do wrong, I will make them stumble, and they will die. If you don't warn them, they will die because of their sin, and the right things they did will not be remembered. I will hold you responsible for their deaths.

<sup>21</sup>But if you warn righteous people not to sin, and they don't sin, they will certainly live because they listened to the warning. You will save yourself."

<sup>22</sup>The power of the LORD came over me. He said, "Get up, and go to the plain. I will speak to you there."

<sup>23</sup>I got up and went to the plain. The LORD'S glory was standing there like the glory I saw by the Chebar River, and I immediately bowed down.

<sup>24</sup>Then the Spirit entered me and stood me on my feet. He talked to me. He said, "Go into your home, and shut yourself inside.

<sup>25</sup> People will tie you up with ropes, son of man, so that you can't go outside.

<sup>26</sup> I will make your tongue stick to the roof of your mouth so that you can't talk or criticize them, even though they are rebellious people.

<sup>27</sup> But when I speak to you, I will open your mouth. You will tell them, "This is what the Almighty LORD says. Some will listen, and some will refuse to listen. They are rebellious people."

**4**<sup>1</sup> The LORD said, "Son of man, take clay, put it in front of you, and draw a map of Jerusalem on it.

<sup>2</sup> Set up a blockade against it, build attack walls around it, put up dirt ramps around it, have troops ready to attack it, and place battering rams all around it.

<sup>3</sup> Then take an iron pan, and set it up as a wall between you and the city. Turn your face toward the city as if you were going to attack it, and then attack it. This is a sign for the people of Israel.

<sup>4</sup> "Then lie on your left side and take the punishment of the nation of Israel yourself. You will bear its punishment as many days as you lie on that side.

<sup>5</sup>I have assigned to you one day for each year its punishment will last. So for 390 days, you will bear the punishment for the sins of the nation of Israel.

<sup>6</sup>When you finish this, you will lie down again, this time on your right side. You will bear the punishment for the sins of the nation of Judah for 40 days, one day for each year I have assigned to you.

<sup>7</sup>Turn your face toward the blockaded Jerusalem. Shake your fist and prophesy against it.

<sup>8</sup>I will tie you up with ropes so that you will not be able to turn from one side to the other until you have finished attacking Jerusalem.

<sup>9</sup>"Then take wheat, barley, beans, lentils, millet, and winter wheat. Put them in a container, and use them to make bread for yourself. Eat it during the 390 days that you are lying on your side.

<sup>10</sup>The food that you eat should be weighed. Eat eight ounces of food every day at set times.

<sup>11</sup>Measure out twothirds of a quart of water, and drink it at set times.

<sup>12</sup>Eat the bread as you would eat barley loaves. Bake the bread in front of people, using human excrement for fuel."

<sup>13</sup>Then the LORD said, "In the same way, the people of Israel will eat unclean bread among the nations where I scatter them."

<sup>14</sup>I answered, "Almighty LORD, I have never dishonored myself. From the time I was young until now, I have never eaten an animal that died by itself or was killed by other wild animals. No unclean meat has ever entered my mouth."

<sup>15</sup>He said to me, "I will let you use cow manure in place of human excrement. Bake your bread over it."

<sup>16</sup>He also said to me, "Son of man, I am going to cut off the bread supply in Jerusalem. People will anxiously eat rationed bread and fearfully drink rationed water.

<sup>17</sup>They will be shocked at the sight of each other because of the lack of food and water. They will waste away because of their sin."

**5**<sup>1</sup>The LORD said, "Son of man, take a sharp blade, and use it as a barbers razor to shave your head and beard.

Take scales to weigh your hair and divide it into three even parts.

<sup>2</sup>When the blockade is over, burn onethird of your hair in a fire in the middle of the city. Take another third, and cut it up with a blade around the city. Then scatter the remaining third to the wind, and I will draw a sword and go after it.

<sup>3</sup>Take a few strands of hair, and wrap them in the hem of your clothes.

<sup>4</sup>Later, take some of them, and throw them in a fire and burn them up. From there a fire will spread throughout the whole nation of Israel.

<sup>5</sup>"This is what the Almighty LORD says: This is Jerusalem! I have placed it in the center of the nations with countries all around it.

<sup>6</sup>The people of Jerusalem have rebelled against my rules and my laws more than the surrounding nations. They have rejected my rules, and they dont live by my laws.

<sup>7</sup>"So this is what the Almighty LORD says: People of Jerusalem, you have caused more trouble than the nations around you. You havent lived by my laws

or obeyed my rules. You haven't even lived up to the standards of the nations around you.

<sup>8</sup>"So this is what the Almighty LORD says: I, too, am against you, and I will punish you in front of the nations.

<sup>9</sup>Because of all the detestable things that you do, I will do things to you that I have never done before and will never do again.

<sup>10</sup>That is why parents will eat their children, and children will eat their parents. I will punish you and scatter whoever is left to the wind.

<sup>11</sup>"As I live, declares the Almighty LORD, because you have dishonored my holy worship place with all your disgusting and detestable things, I will have you killed. I will not have compassion for you or feel sorry for you.

<sup>12</sup>One third of you will die in plagues and be devoured in famines. Another third will die in battles against those around you. I will scatter the remaining third to the wind, and I will pursue them with a sword.

<sup>13</sup>"I will unleash my anger. I will use my fury against you, and I will get revenge.

When my fury is unleashed against you, you will know that I, the LORD, spoke to you while I was angry.

<sup>14</sup>I will turn you into a wasteland and an object of ridicule among the nations around you and in the presence of everyone who passes by you.

<sup>15</sup>The nations that are around you will ridicule you and laugh at you. When I punish you because of my anger, fury, and fierce revenge, you will become something ridiculed and something horrible. I, the LORD, have spoken.

<sup>16</sup>When I shoot my destructive arrows of famine at you, I will shoot to kill you. I will bring more and more famines into your land, and I will cut off your food supply.

<sup>17</sup>I will send famines and wild animals against you, and they will rob you of your children. I will send plagues, violence, and wars to kill you. I, the LORD, have spoken."

**6**<sup>1</sup>The LORD spoke his word to me. He said,

<sup>2</sup>"Son of man, look toward the mountains of Israel, and prophesy against them.

<sup>3</sup>Say this, You mountains of Israel, listen to the word of the Almighty LORD! This is what the Almighty LORD says to the mountains and hills and to the ravines and valleys: I am going to attack you with a sword and destroy your worship sites.

<sup>4</sup>Your altars will be destroyed, and your incense burners will be smashed. I will kill people in front of your idols.

<sup>5</sup>I will lay the dead bodies of the people of Israel in front of your idols, and I will scatter their bones around your altars.

<sup>6</sup>Wherever people live, the cities will be ruined, and the worship sites will be wrecked. Your altars will be ruined and demolished. Your idols will be smashed and completely destroyed. Your incense burners will be cut down, and everything you have done will be wiped out.

<sup>7</sup>People will be killed, and they will fall among you. Then you will know that I am the LORD.

<sup>8</sup>"But I will let some people live. Some people will escape the battle among the nations and be scattered throughout the countries.

<sup>9</sup>Then those who escape will remember me among the nations where they are taken captive. I was hurt by their adulterous hearts, which turned away from me, and by their eyes, which lusted after idols. They will hate themselves for the evil and disgusting things that they have done.

<sup>10</sup>Then you will know that I am the LORD and that the disaster I promised was not an empty threat.

<sup>11</sup>"This is what the Almighty LORD says: Clap your hands, stomp your feet, and say, "Oh no!" because the people of Israel have done evil and disgusting things. So they will die in wars, famines, and plagues.

<sup>12</sup>Plagues will kill those who are far away. Those who are near will die in wars, and anyone who is left and has escaped will die in famines. This is how I will unleash my anger.

<sup>13</sup>Then you will know that I am the LORD. "Those who are killed will lie beside the idols around their altars. They will lie on every high hill, on all the mountaintops, and under every large tree and every leafy oak. These are the

places where they made offerings to their disgusting idols.

<sup>14</sup>I will use my power against them and destroy the land, from the desert to Diblah. Then they will know that I am the LORD."

**7**<sup>1</sup> The LORD spoke his word to me. He said,

<sup>2</sup>"Son of man, this is what the Almighty LORD says to the people in the land of Israel: The end is coming! The end is coming to the four corners of the earth.

<sup>3</sup>Now the end is coming for you. I will send my anger against you. I will judge you for the way you have lived, and I will punish you for all the detestable things that you have done.

<sup>4</sup>I will not have compassion for you or feel sorry for you. I will pay you back for the way you have lived and for the detestable things you have done. Then you will know that I am the LORD.

<sup>5</sup>"This is what the Almighty LORD says: One disaster after another is coming.

<sup>6</sup>The end is coming. The end is coming. It is stirring itself up against you. It is coming!

<sup>7</sup> Destruction is coming to you, inhabitants of the land. The time is coming. The day is near. There will be confusion. There will be no joy in the mountains.

<sup>8</sup> Soon I will pour out my fury on you and unleash my anger on you. I will judge you for the way you have lived, and I will punish you for all the detestable things that you have done.

<sup>9</sup> I will not have compassion or feel sorry. I will pay you back for the way you have lived and for the detestable things that you are still doing. Then you will know that I am the LORD and that I am the one attacking you.

<sup>10</sup> "The day is near! It is coming! Destruction is coming! Wrongdoing has blossomed. Arrogance has flourished.

<sup>11</sup> Violence has grown into a weapon for punishing wickedness. None of the people will be left. None of that crowd, none of their wealth, and nothing of value will be left.

<sup>12</sup> The time is coming. The day is near. Buyers will not rejoice, and sellers will not mourn, because my fury will be against the whole crowd.

<sup>13</sup>Sellers will not live long enough to buy back what they have sold. The visions against that crowd will not change. Because of their sins, none of the people will live.

<sup>14</sup>They have blown a rams horn, and everything is ready. But no one will go into battle, because my fury is against their whole crowd.

<sup>15</sup>"Outside are swords, and inside are plagues and famines. Whoever is in a field will die in battle. Whoever is in the city will be devoured by famines and plagues.

<sup>16</sup>Those who survive will escape to the mountains. They will moan like doves in the valleys. They will moan because of their sins.

<sup>17</sup>Every hand will hang limp, and every knee will be as weak as water.

<sup>18</sup>They will put on sackcloth, and horror will cover them. All their faces will be covered with shame, and every head will be shaved.

<sup>19</sup>They will throw their silver and gold into the streets like garbage. Their silver and gold wont be able to rescue them on the day of the LORDS anger. It will

no longer satisfy their hunger or fill their stomachs. Their silver and gold caused them to fall into sin.

<sup>20</sup>They were proud of their beautiful jewels and used them to make disgusting and detestable statues of false gods. That is why I will make their jewels disgusting.

<sup>21</sup>I will hand their jewels over to foreigners as loot and to the most evil people on earth as prizes. These foreigners will dishonor the people of Israel.

<sup>22</sup>I will turn my face away from the people of Israel, and foreigners will dishonor my treasured place. Robbers will go in and dishonor it.

<sup>23</sup>"Get the chains ready! The land is filled with murder, and the city is filled with violence.

<sup>24</sup>So I will send the most evil nation, and it will take possession of peoples houses. I will stop those who are strong from feeling proud, and their holy places will be dishonored.

<sup>25</sup>Anguish is coming. People will look for peace, but there will be none.

<sup>26</sup>One disaster will happen after another. One rumor will follow another. People will ask for a vision from a prophet. The teachings of priests and the advice of leaders will disappear.

<sup>27</sup>Kings will mourn, and princes will give up hope. The common people will lose their courage. I will give them what they deserve and judge them as they have judged others. Then they will know that I am the LORD."

**8**<sup>1</sup> On the fifth day of the sixth month in the sixth year, I was sitting in my home. Judah's leaders were sitting in front of me. The power of the Almighty LORD came over me.

<sup>2</sup>As I looked, I saw something that looked like a human. From the waist down its body looked like fire, and from the waist up its body looked like glowing metal.

<sup>3</sup>It stretched out what looked like a hand and grabbed me by the hair on my head. In these visions from God, the Spirit carried me between heaven and earth. He took me to Jerusalem, to the entrance to the north gate of the inner courtyard of the temple. That was where

an idol that stirs up Gods anger was located.

<sup>4</sup>There I saw the glory of Israels God as I did in the vision that I saw in the valley.

<sup>5</sup>God said to me, "Son of man, look toward the north." So I looked toward the north, and there in the entrance to the north gate beside the altar, I saw the idol that stirs up Gods anger.

<sup>6</sup>He asked me, "Son of man, do you see what the people of Israel are doing? The people of Israel are doing very disgusting things here, things that will force me to go far away from my holy place. But you will see even more disgusting things."

<sup>7</sup>Then he took me to the entrance of the courtyard. As I looked, I saw a hole in the wall.

<sup>8</sup>He said to me, "Son of man, dig through the wall." So I dug through the wall, and I saw a door.

<sup>9</sup>He said to me, "Go in, and see the wicked, disgusting things that the people of Israel are doing here."

<sup>10</sup>So I went in and looked. I saw that the walls were covered with drawings of every kind of crawling creature, every

kind of disgusting animal, and all the idols in the nation of Israel.

<sup>11</sup> In front of these drawings stood 70 of Israel's leaders. Jaazaniah, son of Shaphan, was standing with the leaders. Each of them was holding an incense burner in his hand, and a cloud of incense went up.

<sup>12</sup> God asked me, "Son of man, do you see what the leaders of the nation of Israel are doing in secret? Each of them is in the room where his god is, and each one of them is thinking, The LORD doesn't see me. The LORD has abandoned this land."

<sup>13</sup> Then he said to me, "You will see even more disgusting things that they are doing."

<sup>14</sup> He brought me to the entrance of the north gate of the LORDS temple. Women were sitting there and crying for the god Tammuz.

<sup>15</sup> He asked me, "Son of man, do you see this? You will see even more disgusting things than these."

<sup>16</sup> Then he brought me into the inner courtyard of the LORDS temple. There at the entrance to the LORDS temple,

between the entrance and the altar, were about 25 men who had their backs turned to the LORDS temple. They were facing east and worshiping the rising sun.

<sup>17</sup>He asked me, "Son of man, do you see this? Isnt it bad enough that the people of Judah have done these disgusting things that you have seen here? Yet, they also fill the land with violence and continue to provoke me even more. Look how they insult me in the worst possible way.

<sup>18</sup>So I will take action because Im angry, and I wont have compassion for them or feel sorry for them. Even if they shout in my ears, I wont listen to them."

**9**<sup>1</sup>Then I heard the LORD call out with a loud voice. He said, "Come here, those who are going to punish this city. Each of you should bring your weapon with you."

<sup>2</sup>So six men came from the upper north gate. Each one brought a deadly weapon with him. Among them was a person dressed in linen who was carrying paper and pen. The men came in and stood by the bronze altar.

<sup>3</sup>Then the glory of the God of Israel went up from the angels, where it had been, to the temple's entrance. The LORD called to the person dressed in linen who was carrying paper and pen.

<sup>4</sup>The LORD said to that person, "Go throughout the city of Jerusalem, and put a mark on the foreheads of those who sigh and groan about all the disgusting things that are being done in the city."

<sup>5</sup>Then he said to the others as I was listening, "Follow him throughout the city and kill. Don't have any compassion, and don't feel sorry.

<sup>6</sup>Kill old men, young men, old women, young women, and children. But don't come near anyone who has a mark on him. Start with my holy place." So they started with the old men in front of the temple.

<sup>7</sup>He said to them, "Dishonor the temple! Fill its courtyards with dead people, and then leave." So they went out and killed the people in the city.

<sup>8</sup>As they were killing people, I was left alone. So I immediately bowed down. I cried, "Almighty LORD, will you destroy

everyone who is left in Israel while you pour out your anger on Jerusalem?"

<sup>9</sup>He answered me, "The wickedness of the nations of Israel and Judah is terrible. The land is filled with murder, and the city is filled with wrongdoing. They think that the LORD has abandoned the land and that he doesn't see.

<sup>10</sup>But I will not have compassion or feel sorry. I will do to them what they have done to others."

<sup>11</sup>Then the person dressed in linen who was carrying paper and pen reported, "I did everything you commanded."

**10**<sup>1</sup>As I looked at the dome over the heads of the angels, I saw something that looked like a throne made of sapphire.

<sup>2</sup>The LORD said to the person dressed in linen, "Go between the wheels under the angels, and fill your hands with burning coals. Then scatter them over the city." So he went between the wheels as I watched.

<sup>3</sup>The angels were standing on the south side of the temple as the person went. A cloud filled the inner courtyard.

<sup>4</sup>The LORDS glory rose from the angels to the entrance of the temple, the cloud filled the temple, and the brightness of the LORDS glory filled the courtyard.

<sup>5</sup>The sound of the angels wings was heard as far as the outer courtyard. It was like the sound of the Almighty God when he speaks.

<sup>6</sup>After the LORD had commanded the person dressed in linen to take burning coals from between the wheels beside the angels, the person went in and stood beside one of the wheels.

<sup>7</sup>One of the angels reached into the fire that was between the angels and took out some coals. This angel put them in the hands of the person dressed in linen. The person took them and left.

<sup>8</sup>The angels appeared to have what looked like human hands under their wings.

<sup>9</sup>As I looked, I saw four wheels beside the angels, one wheel beside each of the angels. The wheels looked like beryl.

<sup>10</sup>All four wheels looked the same. Each was like a wheel within a wheel.

<sup>11</sup>Whenever the angels moved, they moved in any of the four directions

without turning as they moved. They always moved in the direction they faced without turning as they moved.

<sup>12</sup>Their entire bodies, their backs, hands, wings, and wheels were covered with eyes. Each of the angels had a wheel.

<sup>13</sup>I heard that the wheels were called the whirling wheels.

<sup>14</sup>Each of the angels had four faces. The first was the face of an angel, the second was the face of a human, the third was the face of a lion, and the fourth was the face of an eagle.

<sup>15</sup>The angels rose. These were the living creatures that I saw at the Chebar River.

<sup>16</sup>When the angels moved, the wheels moved beside them. When the angels lifted their wings to rise from the ground, the wheels didn't leave their side.

<sup>17</sup>When the angels stood still, the wheels stood still. When the angels rose, the wheels rose with them. The spirit of the living creatures was in the wheels.

<sup>18</sup>Then the glory of the LORD left the temple's entrance and stood over the angels.

<sup>19</sup>The angels lifted their wings and rose from the ground. I was watching them as they left with the wheels beside them. The angels stood at the door to the east gate of the LORDS temple, and the glory of the God of Israel was above them.

<sup>20</sup>These are the living creatures that I saw under the God of Israel at the Chebar River. I realized that they were angels.

<sup>21</sup>Each had four faces and four wings, and under their wings were what looked like human hands.

<sup>22</sup>Their faces looked exactly like the faces that I saw by the Chebar River. Each one went straight ahead.

**11** <sup>1</sup>Then the Spirit lifted me and took me to the east gate of the LORDS temple. (Its the gate that faces east.) Twentyfive men were at the entrance of the gate. I saw among them Azzurs son Jaazaniah and Benaiahs son Pelatiah. They were leaders of the people.

<sup>2</sup>Then the LORD said to me, "Son of man, these are the men who plan evil and give bad advice in this city.

<sup>3</sup>They say, Its almost time to rebuild homes. This city is a cooking pot, and were the meat.

<sup>4</sup>So prophesy against them. Prophesy, son of man."

<sup>5</sup>The LORDS Spirit came to me and told me to say, "This is what the LORD says: You are saying these things, nation of Israel. But I know whats going through your mind.

<sup>6</sup>You have killed many people in this city and have filled its streets with corpses.

<sup>7</sup>"So this is what the Almighty LORD says: The corpses that you put in the middle of the city are the meat, and the city is the cooking pot. I will force you out of the city.

<sup>8</sup>You are afraid of swords, so I will bring swords to attack you, declares the Almighty LORD.

<sup>9</sup>I will force you out of the city. I will hand you over to foreigners, and I will punish you.

<sup>10</sup>You will die in battle. I will judge you at Israels borders. Then you will know that I am the LORD.

<sup>11</sup> The city will not be your cooking pot, and you will not be the meat in it. I will judge you at Israel's borders.

<sup>12</sup> Then you will know that I am the LORD. You haven't lived by my laws, and you haven't obeyed my rules. You have followed the standards set by the nations around you."

<sup>13</sup> While I was prophesying, Benaiah's son Pelatiah died. I immediately bowed down and cried out, "Almighty LORD, will you completely destroy all the remaining people in Israel?"

<sup>14</sup> Then the LORD spoke his word to me. He said,

<sup>15</sup> "Son of man, the people who live in Jerusalem are talking about your own relatives and about the entire nation of Israel. The people who live in Jerusalem say, They are far away from the LORD. This land has been given to us as our own property.

<sup>16</sup> "So tell them, This is what the Almighty LORD says: Although I sent them far away among the nations and scattered them among the countries, I have been their sanctuary for a little

while among the countries where they've gone.

<sup>17</sup>"So tell them, This is what the Almighty LORD says: I will bring them together from the nations and gather them from the countries where I've scattered them. I will give them the land of Israel.

<sup>18</sup>They will come and remove all the disgusting and detestable things that are there.

<sup>19</sup>I will give them a single purpose and put a new spirit in them. I will remove their stubborn hearts and give them obedient hearts.

<sup>20</sup>Then they will live by my laws and obey my rules. They will be my people, and I will be their God.

<sup>21</sup>But as for those whose minds are set on following detestable and disgusting idols, I will pay them back for what they have done, declares the Almighty LORD."

<sup>22</sup>Then the angels raised their wings, with the wheels beside them. The glory of the God of Israel was above them.

<sup>23</sup>The LORDS glory left the middle of the city and stopped above the mountain east of the city.

<sup>24</sup>In this vision from Gods Spirit, the Spirit lifted me and brought me to the exiles in Babylonia. Then the vision I saw left me.

<sup>25</sup>I told the exiles everything the LORD had shown me.

**12**<sup>1</sup>The LORD spoke his word to me. He said,

<sup>2</sup>"Son of man, you are living among rebellious people. They have eyes, but they cant see. They have ears, but they cant hear because they are rebellious people.

<sup>3</sup>"Son of man, pack your bags as if you were going into exile. Let the people see you leave in the daylight. March like a captive from your place to another place as they watch. Maybe they will understand, even though they are rebellious people.

<sup>4</sup>Let them see you in the daylight. Bring out your bags as if you were going into exile. In the evening let them see you leave like a captive going into exile.

<sup>5</sup>Dig a hole through the wall of your house, and leave through it.

<sup>6</sup>Let them see you put your bags on your shoulders and carry them out in the

dark. Cover your face so that you wont see the land. Ive made you a sign to warn the nation of Israel."

<sup>7</sup>I did what I was ordered to do. During the day I brought out bags as if I were going into exile. In the evening I dug a hole through the wall. I brought out my bags in the dark. I let the people see me as I carried my bags on my shoulders.

<sup>8</sup>The next morning the LORD spoke his word to me. He said,

<sup>9</sup>"Son of man, didnt the rebellious nation of Israel ask you what you were doing?

<sup>10</sup>"Tell them, This is what the Almighty LORD says: This is the divine revelation about the prince from Jerusalem and about all the people of Israel who live there.

<sup>11</sup>"Tell them, I am your warning sign. What I have done will happen to you. You will go into exile and into captivity.

<sup>12</sup>The prince who is among you will put his bags on his shoulders in the dark and leave. People will dig holes in the wall to go through. The prince will cover his face so that he cannot see the land.

<sup>13</sup>I will spread my net over him, and he will be caught in my net. I will bring him to Babylon, the land of the Babylonians, but he will not see it. And that's where he'll die.

<sup>14</sup>I will scatter in every direction all those who are around him his staff and all his troops. I will pursue them with my sword.

<sup>15</sup>Then they will know that I am the LORD, because I will scatter them among the nations and force them into other countries.

<sup>16</sup>However, I will spare a few of them from wars, famines, and plagues. Wherever they go among the nations, they will realize that everything they did was disgusting. Then they will know that I am the LORD."

<sup>17</sup>The LORD spoke his word to me. He said,

<sup>18</sup>"Son of man, shake as you eat your food. Tremble and be worried as you drink your water.

<sup>19</sup>"Tell the people of this land, This is what the Almighty LORD says about the people who live in Jerusalem and in the land of Israel: They will be worried as

they eat their food and terrified as they drink their water. Their country will be stripped of everything because everyone who lives there is violent.

<sup>20</sup>The cities where people live will be destroyed, and the country will become a wasteland. Then they will know that I am the LORD."

<sup>21</sup>The LORD spoke his word to me. He said,

<sup>22</sup>"Son of man, what is this proverb you have in Israel: Days go by, and every vision comes to nothing?"

<sup>23</sup>"Tell the people, This is what the Almighty LORD says: I will put a stop to the use of this proverb. You will no longer quote it in Israel. Instead, tell them, The time is near when every vision will come true.

<sup>24</sup>There will no longer be any false visions or flattering fortunetelling to the people.

<sup>25</sup>I, the LORD, will speak. Everything that I say will happen without any more delay. I will say something, and it will happen during your lifetime, you rebellious people, declares the Almighty LORD."

<sup>26</sup>The LORD spoke his word to me. He said,

<sup>27</sup>"Son of man, the people of Israel are saying, The vision that Ezekiel sees wont happen for a long time. What he prophecies will happen in the distant future.

<sup>28</sup>"Tell them, This is what the Almighty LORD says: Everything that I say will no longer be delayed. Whatever I say will happen, declares the Almighty LORD."

**13**<sup>1</sup>The LORD spoke his word to me. He said,

<sup>2</sup>"Son of man, prophesy against the prophets of Israel. Tell those who make up their prophecies, Listen to the word of the LORD.

<sup>3</sup>"This is what the Almighty LORD says: How horrible it will be for the foolish prophets. They follow their own ideas, and they have seen nothing.

<sup>4</sup>Israel, your prophets are like foxes among the ruins of a city.

<sup>5</sup>They havent repaired the gaps in the wall or rebuilt the wall for the nation of Israel. So Israel will not be protected in battle on the day of the LORD.

<sup>6</sup>These foolish prophets see false visions, and their predictions dont come true. They say, "The LORD said this." But the LORD hasnt sent them. Then they hope that their message will come true.

<sup>7</sup>Prophets of Israel, havent you seen false visions and predicted things that dont come true? Dont you say, "The LORD said this," even though I havent said anything?

<sup>8</sup>"This is what the Almighty LORD says: Your predictions are false, and your visions are lies. That is why Im against you, declares the Almighty LORD.

<sup>9</sup>I will use my power against the prophets who see false visions and predict things that dont come true. They will not help my people make decisions or be recorded in the records of the nation of Israel. They wont even enter Israel. Then you will know that I am the LORD.

<sup>10</sup>"They have deceived my people by saying that everything is alright, but its not alright. When someone builds a flimsy wall, the prophets cover it up with paint.

<sup>11</sup> Tell those who cover up the wall with paint that their wall will fall down. Rain will pour down, hailstones will fall on it, and stormy winds will break it to pieces.

<sup>12</sup> When the wall falls down, people will ask them, "Where's the paint that you used to cover the wall?"

<sup>13</sup> "This is what the Almighty LORD says: In my fury I'll cause a storm to break out. In my anger rain will pour down, and hailstones will destroy the wall.

<sup>14</sup> I will tear down the wall that the prophets covered up with paint. I will level it and expose its foundation. When the wall falls, they will be destroyed by it. Then you will know that I am the LORD.

<sup>15</sup> I will unleash my fury on the wall and on those who covered it up with paint. "Then I will say to you, "The wall is gone, and so are those who painted it.

<sup>16</sup> The prophets of Israel who prophesied to Jerusalem are gone. Those who said that everything was alright, when it wasn't alright, are gone, declares the Almighty LORD."

<sup>17</sup>"Son of man, look at the women among your people who make up prophecies, and prophesy against them.

<sup>18</sup>"Tell them, This is what the Almighty LORD says: How horrible it will be for women who sew magic charms for peoples wrists and make magic veils of every size for peoples heads. You want to trap people. You want to control the lives of my people for your own profit.

<sup>19</sup>You dishonor me in front of my people for a few handfuls of barley and a few pieces of bread. You kill people who shouldnt die, and you spare the lives of people who shouldnt live. You lie to my people who are willing to listen.

<sup>20</sup>"This is what the Almighty LORD says: Im against the magic charms that you use to trap people like birds. I will tear them from your arms and free the people that you have trapped.

<sup>21</sup>I will tear off your magic veils and rescue my people from your power so that they will no longer be under your control. Then you will know that I am the LORD.

<sup>22</sup>You have discouraged righteous people with your lies, even though

I hadn't brought them any grief. You encouraged wicked people not to turn from their wicked ways to save their lives.

<sup>23</sup>That is why you will no longer see false visions or make predictions. I will rescue my people from your power. Then you will know that I am the LORD."

**14**<sup>1</sup> Some of Israel's leaders came to me and sat down in front of me.

<sup>2</sup>Then the LORD spoke his word to me. He said,

<sup>3</sup>"Son of man, these people are devoted to their idols, and they are allowing themselves to fall into sin. Should they be allowed to ask me for help?

<sup>4</sup>"So speak to them. Tell them, This is what the LORD says: Suppose an Israelite is devoted to idols and allows himself to fall into sin. Suppose he goes to a prophet to ask for my help. I, the LORD, will give that Israelite an answer, the answer that his many idols deserve.

<sup>5</sup>I will do this to recapture the hearts of the nation of Israel. They have deserted me because of their disgusting idols.

<sup>6</sup>"So tell the nation of Israel, This is what the Almighty LORD says: Change

the way you think and act! Turn away from your idols, and don't return to any of your disgusting things.

<sup>7</sup> Suppose an Israelite or a foreigner who lives in Israel deserts me by devoting himself to idols and by allowing himself to fall into sin. If he goes to a prophet to ask for my help, I, the LORD, will give him an answer.

<sup>8</sup> I will reject him, and I will make an example of him. I will exclude him from my people. Then you will know that I am the LORD.

<sup>9</sup> "If a prophet is tricked into giving a prophecy, it is I, the LORD, who tricked the prophet. I will use my power against you and destroy you from among my people Israel.

<sup>10</sup> Both of you will suffer for your sins. The prophet will be as guilty as you are when you ask for his help.

<sup>11</sup> Then the people of Israel will no longer wander away from me. They will no longer dishonor me with all their sins. Then they will be my people, and I will be their God, declares the Almighty LORD."

<sup>12</sup>The LORD spoke his word to me. He said,

<sup>13</sup>"Son of man, suppose a country sins against me by being unfaithful to me. I will use my power against it, cut off its food supply, send a famine to it, and destroy its people and animals.

<sup>14</sup>Even if these three men Noah, Daniel, and Job were in that country, they would, by their righteousness, rescue only themselves," declares the Almighty LORD.

<sup>15</sup>"Suppose I send wild animals through that country and they make it childless and turn it into such a wasteland that no one travels through it because of the animals.

<sup>16</sup>As I live, declares the Almighty LORD, not even Noah, Daniel, and Job could rescue their own sons or daughters. They could rescue only themselves. And the country would become a wasteland.

<sup>17</sup>"Suppose I bring a war against that country by saying, I will let a war go throughout this country. Suppose I destroy the people and the animals in it.

<sup>18</sup>As I live, declares the Almighty LORD, not even Noah, Daniel, and Job could

rescue their sons or daughters. They could rescue only themselves.

<sup>19</sup>"Suppose I send a plague into that country or pour out my fury on it by killing people and destroying animals.

<sup>20</sup>As I live, declares the Almighty LORD, not even Noah, Daniel, and Job could, by their righteousness, rescue their sons or daughters. They could rescue only themselves.

<sup>21</sup>"This is what the Almighty LORD says: I will surely send four terrible punishments against Jerusalem. I will send wars, famines, wild animals, and plagues. They will destroy people and animals.

<sup>22</sup>But some people will survive. Some of your sons and daughters will be brought out. When they come out to you, you will see how they live. Then you will be comforted after the disasters that I will bring on Jerusalem, after every disaster that I will bring against it.

<sup>23</sup>You will be comforted when you see how they live. Then you will know that everything I have done was done for a reason," declares the Almighty LORD.

**15**<sup>1</sup> The LORD spoke his word to me.  
He said,

<sup>2</sup> "Son of man, what good is the wood from a vine? Is it better than the wood from a tree in the forest?

<sup>3</sup> Do people use it to make something? Do they make a peg from it to hang things on?

<sup>4</sup> No! It is only thrown into the fire as fuel. The fire burns up both its ends and chars its middle. Then can it be used to make anything?

<sup>5</sup> When the vine was in perfect condition, it couldn't be made into anything. How can it be used to make anything after the fire has burned and charred it?

<sup>6</sup> "So this is what the Almighty LORD says: As a vine is taken from among the trees in the forest to be used to feed the fire, so I will take the people who live in Jerusalem to punish them.

<sup>7</sup> I will turn against the people of Jerusalem. Even though they have escaped one fire, another fire will burn them. Then they will know that I am the LORD, because I will turn against them.

<sup>8</sup>I will turn the country into a wasteland because they have been unfaithful," declares the Almighty LORD.

**16**<sup>1</sup>The LORD spoke his word to me. He said,

<sup>2</sup>"Son of man, make known to the people of Jerusalem the disgusting things they have done.

<sup>3</sup>Tell them, This is what the Almighty LORD says to the people of Jerusalem: Your birthplace and your ancestors were in the land of the Canaanites. Your father was an Amorite, and your mother was a Hittite.

<sup>4</sup>When you were born, your umbilical cord wasn't cut. You weren't washed with water to make you clean. You weren't rubbed with salt or wrapped in cloth.

<sup>5</sup>No one who saw you felt sorry enough for you to do any of these things. But you were thrown into an open field. You were rejected when you were born.

<sup>6</sup>"Then I went by you and saw you kicking around in your own blood. I said to you, "Live."

<sup>7</sup>I made you grow like a plant in the field. You grew up, matured, and became a young woman. Your breasts developed,

and your hair grew. Yet, you were naked and bare.

<sup>8</sup>"I went by you again and looked at you. You were old enough to make love to. So I spread my robe over you, and covered your naked body. I promised to love you, and I exchanged marriage vows with you. You became mine, declares the Almighty LORD.

<sup>9</sup>"Then I bathed you with water, and I washed off your blood. I poured olive oil over you.

<sup>10</sup>I put an embroidered dress on you and fine leather sandals on your feet. I dressed you in fine linen and covered you with silk.

<sup>11</sup>I gave you jewelry. I put bracelets on your wrists and a necklace around your neck.

<sup>12</sup>I put a ring in your nose, earrings on your ears, and a beautiful crown on your head.

<sup>13</sup>So you wore gold and silver jewelry. You were dressed in fine linen, silk, and embroidered clothes. Your food was flour, honey, and olive oil. You were very beautiful, and eventually you became a queen.

<sup>14</sup>You became famous in every nation because of your beauty. Your beauty was perfect because I gave you my glory, declares the Almighty LORD.

<sup>15</sup>"But you trusted your beauty, and you used your fame to become a prostitute. You had sex with everyone who walked by.

<sup>16</sup>You took some of your clothes and made your worship sites colorful. This is where you acted like a prostitute. Such things shouldn't happen. They shouldn't occur.

<sup>17</sup>You took your beautiful gold and silver jewelry that I had given you and made male idols for yourself. Then you committed adultery with them.

<sup>18</sup>You took off your embroidered clothes and covered the idols with them. You offered my olive oil and incense in their presence.

<sup>19</sup>You also offered them sweet and fragrant sacrifices. You gave flour, olive oil, and honey—all the food that I gave you to eat. This is what happened, declares the Almighty LORD.

<sup>20</sup>"You took your sons and daughters, who belonged to me, and you sacrificed

them as food to idols. Wasnt your prostitution enough?

<sup>21</sup> You slaughtered my children and presented them as burnt offerings to idols.

<sup>22</sup> With all the disgusting things that you did and all your acts of prostitution, you didnt remember the time when you were young. You didnt remember when you were naked and bare, kicking around in your own blood.

<sup>23</sup> "How horrible! How horrible it will be for you! declares the Almighty LORD. After all your wickedness,

<sup>24</sup> you built yourself platforms and illegal worship sites in every city square.

<sup>25</sup> You also built worship sites at the head of every street. You used your beauty to seduce people there. You offered your body to everyone who passed by. You increased your acts of prostitution.

<sup>26</sup> You had sex with your lustful neighbors, the Egyptians. You used your prostitution to make me angry.

<sup>27</sup> "So I used my power against you. I took away some of your land, and I handed you over to your greedy

enemies, the Philistines, who were ashamed of what you had done.

<sup>28</sup>"You had sex with the Assyrians because you werent satisfied. You still werent satisfied.

<sup>29</sup>So you increased your acts of prostitution to include the land of the merchants, the Babylonians. Even after that, you werent satisfied.

<sup>30</sup>"You have no will power! declares the Almighty LORD. You do everything a shameless prostitute does.

<sup>31</sup>You build your platforms at the head of every street and place your illegal worship sites in every square. Yet, you arent like other prostitutes, because you dont want to be paid.

<sup>32</sup>You are an adulterous wife who prefers strangers to her husband.

<sup>33</sup>All prostitutes get paid. But you give gifts to all your lovers and bribe them to come to you from all directions to have sex with you.

<sup>34</sup>You are a different kind of prostitute. No one goes after you for favors. You are the opposite. You pay them, and you dont accept payment.

<sup>35</sup>"Listen to the word of the LORD, you prostitute.

<sup>36</sup>This is what the Almighty LORD says: You exposed yourself and uncovered your naked body when you gave yourself to your lovers and to all your disgusting idols. You also killed your children and sacrificed their blood to these idols.

<sup>37</sup>That is why I will gather all your lovers with whom you found pleasure. I will have all those who love you and hate you gather around. I will uncover your body for them, and they will see you naked.

<sup>38</sup>I will punish you the same way that those who are guilty of prostitution and murder are punished. I will give you the death penalty in my fury and burning anger.

<sup>39</sup>I will hand you over to your lovers. They will destroy your platforms and tear down your illegal worship sites. They will tear off your clothes, take away your beautiful jewelry, and leave you naked and bare.

<sup>40</sup>They will also bring a mob against you. They will stone you and cut you into pieces with their swords.

<sup>41</sup> They will burn your houses and punish you in the presence of many women. I will put an end to your prostitution, and you will no longer pay others.

<sup>42</sup> Then I will rest from my fury against you, and I will stop being angry. I will be at peace. I will no longer be angry.

<sup>43</sup> "You didnt remember the time when you were young, and you made me very angry with all these things. So I will pay you back for what you have done, declares the Almighty LORD. Didnt you make wicked plans in addition to all your disgusting practices?

<sup>44</sup> "Everyone who uses proverbs will speak the following saying against you: Like mother, like daughter.

<sup>45</sup> You are your mothers daughter. She rejected her husband and her children. You are exactly like your sisters. They rejected their husbands and their children. Your mother was a Hittite, and your father was an Amorite.

<sup>46</sup> "Your older sister was Samaria. She and her daughters lived north of you. Your younger sister is Sodom. She lives south of you with her daughters.

<sup>47</sup> You didnt follow their ways. You didnt do the same disgusting things that they did. It only took you a little time to be more corrupt than they ever were.

<sup>48</sup> As I live, declares the Almighty LORD, your sister Sodom and her daughters never did what you and your daughters have done.

<sup>49</sup> This is what your sister Sodom has done wrong. She and her daughters were proud that they had plenty of food and had peace and security. They didnt help the poor and the needy.

<sup>50</sup> They were arrogant and did disgusting things in front of me. So I did away with them when I saw this.

<sup>51</sup> "Samaria didnt commit half the sins you did. You have done many more disgusting things than they ever did. Because of all the disgusting things that you have done, you make your sisters look innocent.

<sup>52</sup> You will have to suffer disgrace because you accused your sisters. Yet, your sins are more disgusting than theirs. They look like they are innocent compared to you. Be ashamed of yourself and suffer disgrace, because

you have made your sisters look like they are innocent.

<sup>53</sup>"I will restore the fortunes of Sodom and her daughters, and Samaria and her daughters. I will also restore your fortune along with theirs.

<sup>54</sup>You will have to suffer disgrace and be ashamed of everything you have done, including comforting them.

<sup>55</sup>When Sodom and her daughters and Samaria and her daughters return to what they once were, you and your daughters will return to what you once were.

<sup>56</sup>You didn't mention your sister Sodom when you were arrogant.

<sup>57</sup>You didn't mention her before your wickedness was revealed. Now the daughters of Aram and their neighbors despise you. The daughters of the Philistines also despise you. Those around you hate you.

<sup>58</sup>You must suffer because of all the crude and disgusting things you have done, declares the LORD.

<sup>59</sup>"This is what the Almighty LORD says: I will give you what you deserve.

You despised your marriage vows and rejected my promise.

<sup>60</sup>I will remember the promise that I made with you when you were young, and I will make it a promise that will last forever.

<sup>61</sup>Then you will remember what you have done. You will be ashamed when I return your older and younger sisters to you. I will give them to you as daughters, but not because of my promise with you.

<sup>62</sup>Then I will make my promise with you, and you will know that I am the LORD.

<sup>63</sup>You will remember and be ashamed. You will never again open your mouth because of your disgrace when I forgive you for everything you did, declares the Almighty LORD."

**17** <sup>1</sup>The LORD spoke his word to me. He said,

<sup>2</sup>"Son of man, tell this riddle. Give this illustration to the nation of Israel.

<sup>3</sup>Say, This is what the Almighty LORD says: A large eagle came to Lebanon. It had large wings with long, colorful feathers. It took hold of the top of a cedar tree.

<sup>4</sup>It broke off the highest twig and carried it to a country of merchants. It planted the twig in a city of merchants.

<sup>5</sup>"Then it took a seedling from that country and planted the seedling in fertile soil. The eagle planted the seedling like a willow where there was plenty of water.

<sup>6</sup>The plant sprouted and grew into a low vine that spread over the ground. Its branches turned upward toward the eagle, but its roots grew downward. So it became a vine, producing branches and growing shoots.

<sup>7</sup>"There was another large eagle with large wings and many feathers. Now, the vine stretched its roots toward this eagle and sent its branches toward the eagle so that the eagle could water it. The vine turned away from the garden where it was planted.

<sup>8</sup>It was planted in good soil beside plenty of water so that it could grow branches, bear fruit, and become a wonderful vine.

<sup>9</sup>"Tell the nation of Israel, This is what the Almighty LORD says: Will this vine live and grow? Wont the first eagle

uproot it and tear off its fruit? Then it will wither. All the leaves on its branches will wither. It wont take much strength or many people to pull the vine up by its roots.

<sup>10</sup>It might be planted again, but will it live and grow? It will wither completely when the east wind blows on it. It will certainly wither in the garden where it is growing."

<sup>11</sup>The LORD spoke his word to me. He said,

<sup>12</sup>"Ask these rebellious people, Dont you know what this means? Tell them, The king of Babylon came to Jerusalem and captured its king and its leaders. He brought them home with him to Babylon.

<sup>13</sup>Then he took someone from the royal family, made a treaty with him, and made him promise to be loyal. He took away the leading citizens from Judah

<sup>14</sup>so that it would remain a humiliated country and be unable to regain its power. The country could only survive by keeping the treaty.

<sup>15</sup>But the king of Judah rebelled against the king of Babylon by sending his messengers to Egypt to get horses and

many soldiers. Will the king of Judah succeed? Will anyone who does such things escape? He can't break a treaty and go unpunished.

<sup>16</sup>"As I live, declares the Almighty LORD, the king of Judah will die in Babylonia. He will die in the country of the king who appointed him king of Judah. The king of Judah broke his promise and his treaty with the king of Babylonia.

<sup>17</sup>Even with a large army and many people, Pharaoh will not be able to help him in battle when the Babylonians put up dirt ramps and set up blockades to kill many people.

<sup>18</sup>The king of Judah broke the promise and the treaty that he pledged to keep. He did all these things, and he can't go unpunished.

<sup>19</sup>"So this is what the Almighty LORD says: As I live, I will certainly punish you for rejecting my promise and hating my treaty.

<sup>20</sup>I will spread my net over you to catch you in my trap. I will take you to Babylonia and judge you there for rebelling against me.

<sup>21</sup> The best of your troops will die in battle. Anyone who remains will be scattered in every direction that the wind blows. Then you will know that I, the LORD, have spoken.

<sup>22</sup> "This is what the Almighty LORD says: I, too, will take hold of the top of a cedar tree. I will break off the highest twig and plant it on a high and lofty mountain.

<sup>23</sup> I will plant it on a high mountain in Israel. It will grow branches and produce fruit. It will become a magnificent cedar tree. Every kind of bird will nest in it and find a home in the shelter of its branches.

<sup>24</sup> Then all the trees in the field will know that I am the LORD. I cut down tall trees, and I make small trees grow tall. I dry up green trees, and I make dry trees grow. I, the LORD, have spoken, and I will do it."

**18**<sup>1</sup> The LORD spoke his word to me. He said,

<sup>2</sup> "What do you mean when you use this proverb about the land of Israel: Fathers have eaten sour grapes, and their childrens teeth are set on edge?"

<sup>3</sup>As I live, declares the Almighty LORD, you will no longer use this proverb in Israel.

<sup>4</sup>The life of every person belongs to me. Fathers and their children belong to me. The person who sins will die.

<sup>5</sup>"Suppose a righteous person does what is fair and right.

<sup>6</sup>He doesn't eat at the illegal mountain worship sites or look for help from the idols of the nation of Israel. He doesn't dishonor his neighbor's wife or have sexual intercourse with a woman while she is having her period.

<sup>7</sup>He doesn't oppress anyone. He returns what a borrower gives him as security for a loan. He doesn't rob anyone. He gives food to people who are hungry, and he gives clothes to those who are naked.

<sup>8</sup>He doesn't lend money for interest or make an excessive profit. He refuses to do evil things, and he judges everyone fairly.

<sup>9</sup>He lives by my rules and obeys my laws faithfully. This person is righteous. He will certainly live," declares the Almighty LORD.

<sup>10</sup>"But suppose this person has a son who robs and murders. The son does all the things

<sup>11</sup> that his father never did. He eats at the illegal mountain worship sites. He dishonors his neighbors wife.

<sup>12</sup>He oppresses the poor and needy. He robs. He doesnt return the security for a loan. He looks to idols for help. He does disgusting things.

<sup>13</sup>He lends money for interest and makes excessive profits. Will this person live? He will not live. He has done all these disgusting things. So he must die, and he will be responsible for his own death.

<sup>14</sup>"But suppose this person has a son. The son sees all the sins that his father does. He is afraid, so he doesnt do such things.

<sup>15</sup>He doesnt eat at the illegal mountain worship sites or look for help from the idols of the nation of Israel. He doesnt dishonor his neighbors wife.

<sup>16</sup>He doesnt oppress anyone. He doesnt keep the security for a loan. He doesnt rob anyone. He gives food to people who

are hungry, and he gives clothes to those who are naked.

<sup>17</sup> He refuses to hurt the poor. He doesn't charge interest or make excessive profits. He obeys my rules and lives by my laws. He won't die for his father's sins. He will certainly live.

<sup>18</sup> But his father has oppressed others, robbed his relative, and done what is wrong among his people. So the father will die because of his sin.

<sup>19</sup> "But you ask, Why isn't the son punished for his father's sin? It is because the son has done what is fair and right. He obeyed my rules and followed them. He will certainly live.

<sup>20</sup> The person who sins will die. A son will not be punished for his father's sins, and a father will not be punished for his son's sins. The righteousness of the righteous person will be his own, and the wickedness of the wicked person will be his own.

<sup>21</sup> "But suppose a wicked person turns away from all the sins that he has done. He obeys all my laws and does what is fair and right. He will certainly live. He will not die.

<sup>22</sup>All the rebellious things that he did will not be remembered. He will live because of the right things that he did.

<sup>23</sup>"I don't want wicked people to die," declares the Almighty LORD. "I want them to turn from their evil ways and live.

<sup>24</sup>"But suppose a righteous person turns away from doing right and he does evil things. He does all the disgusting things that the wicked person did. Will he live? All the right things that he has done will not be remembered because of his unfaithfulness and because of his sin. He will die because of them.

<sup>25</sup>"But you say, The LORD's way is unfair. Listen, nation of Israel, isn't my way fair? Isn't it your ways that are unfair?

<sup>26</sup>When a righteous person turns away from doing right and does evil things, he will die. He will die because of the evil things he has done.

<sup>27</sup>When a wicked person turns away from the wicked things that he has done and does what is fair and right, he will live.

<sup>28</sup>He realized what he was doing and turned away from all the rebellious

things that he had done. He will certainly live. He will not die.

<sup>29</sup>"But the nation of Israel says, The Lords way is unfair. Isnt my way fair, nation of Israel? Isnt it your ways that are unfair?"

<sup>30</sup>"That is why I will judge each of you by what you have done, people of Israel," declares the Almighty LORD. "Change the way you think and act. Turn away from all the rebellious things that you have done so that you will not fall into sin.

<sup>31</sup>Stop all the rebellious things that you are doing. Get yourselves new hearts and new spirits. Why do you want to die, nation of Israel?"

<sup>32</sup>I dont want anyone to die," declares the Almighty LORD. "Change the way you think and act!"

**19**<sup>1</sup> Sing a funeral song for the princes of Israel.

<sup>2</sup>Say: Your mother was like a lioness. She lay down among the lions. She fed many cubs.

<sup>3</sup>One of the cubs she raised became a young lion. He learned to tear apart the animals he hunted. He ate people.

<sup>4</sup>The nations heard about him, caught him in their pit, and brought him with hooks to Egypt.

<sup>5</sup>The lioness waited until she saw that there was no more hope. Then she took another one of her cubs and raised him into a young lion.

<sup>6</sup>He became a young lion, and he prowled among the lions. He learned to tear apart the animals he hunted. He ate people.

<sup>7</sup>He destroyed fortresses and turned cities into wastelands. The land and everyone living in it were terrified by the sound of his roar.

<sup>8</sup>The nations from every region came together against him. They spread their net over him and caught him in their pit.

<sup>9</sup>With hooks they put him in a cage and brought him to the king of Babylon. They put him in prison so that his roar wouldnt be heard anymore on the mountains of Israel.

<sup>10</sup>Your mother was like a grapevine that was planted near water. It had a lot of fruit and many branches because there was plenty of water.

<sup>11</sup> Its branches were strong. They were used to make scepters for kings. It grew to be tall with many branches around it, and everyone saw it because of its many branches.

<sup>12</sup> But in anger it was uprooted and thrown to the ground. The east wind dried up its fruit. Its strong branches broke off. They withered and were burned.

<sup>13</sup> Now it is planted in the desert, in a dry and waterless land.

<sup>14</sup> Fire has spread from the vines main branch. Fire has destroyed its fruit. It no longer has any strong branches that could be used as a kings scepter. This is a funeral song. It is to be used as a funeral song.

**20**<sup>1</sup> On the tenth day of the fifth month in the seventh year, some of the leaders of Israel came to ask for the LORDS help. They sat in front of me.

<sup>2</sup> Then the LORD spoke his word to me. He said,

<sup>3</sup> "Son of man, speak to the leaders of Israel. Tell them, This is what the Almighty LORD says: Are you coming to ask me for help? As I live, declares the

Almighty LORD, you will not be allowed to ask me for help.

<sup>4</sup>"Will you judge them? Will you judge them, son of man? Tell them about the disgusting things their ancestors did.

<sup>5</sup>Tell them, This is what the Almighty LORD says: When I chose Israel, I raised my hand and swore an oath to the descendants of Jacobs family. I made myself known to them in Egypt. I made a promise to them and said, "I am the LORD your God."

<sup>6</sup>At that time I promised to bring them out of Egypt to a land that I had chosen for them. This land is the most beautiful land, a land flowing with milk and honey.

<sup>7</sup>I said to them, "Get rid of the detestable idols that you look to for help. Dont dishonor yourselves with the disgusting idols of Egypt. I am the LORD your God."

<sup>8</sup>"But they rebelled against me and refused to listen to me. Not one of them got rid of the detestable idols that they looked to for help. They didnt abandon the disgusting idols of Egypt. So I was going to pour out my fury on them and unleash my anger on them in Egypt.

<sup>9</sup>But I acted so that my name would not be dishonored among the nations where they were living. While other nations were watching, I made myself known to them by bringing the Israelites out of Egypt.

<sup>10</sup>"So I brought the Israelites out of Egypt and led them into the desert.

<sup>11</sup>I gave them my laws and made my rules known to them. If people obey them they will live.

<sup>12</sup>I also gave them certain days to worship me as a sign between us so that they would know that I, the LORD, made them holy.

<sup>13</sup>"But the people of Israel rebelled against me in the desert. They didnt live by my laws, and they rejected my rules. If people obey them, they will live. They dishonored the days to worship me. So I was going to pour out my fury on them in the desert and completely wipe them out.

<sup>14</sup>But I acted so that my name would not be dishonored among the nations who had watched me bring the Israelites out of Egypt.

<sup>15</sup>I also swore an oath to them in the desert. I swore that I would not bring them into the land that I had promised to give them. This land is the most beautiful land, a land flowing with milk and honey.

<sup>16</sup>They rejected my rules, and they didn't live by my laws. They dishonored the days to worship me, because their hearts chased disgusting idols.

<sup>17</sup>But I had compassion on them. I didn't destroy them or completely wipe them out in the desert.

<sup>18</sup>I said to their children in the desert, "Don't live by the laws of your ancestors. Don't obey their rules or dishonor yourselves with their disgusting idols.

<sup>19</sup>I am the LORD your God. Live by my laws. Obey my rules and follow them.

<sup>20</sup>Set apart certain holy days to worship me. This will be a sign between me and you so that you will know that I am the LORD your God."

<sup>21</sup>"But they rebelled against me. They didn't live by my laws, and they didn't obey my rules and follow them. If people obey them, they will live. They dishonored the days to worship me. So I

was going to pour out my fury on them and unleash my anger on them in the desert.

<sup>22</sup>But I didnt use my power so that my name would not be dishonored among the nations who had watched me bring the Israelites out of Egypt.

<sup>23</sup>I raised my hand and swore an oath to them in the desert. I promised to scatter them among the nations and force them into other countries.

<sup>24</sup>They didnt follow my rules, and they rejected my laws. They dishonored the days to worship me, and they looked to their ancestors disgusting idols for help.

<sup>25</sup>I also allowed them to follow laws that were no good and rules by which they could not live.

<sup>26</sup>I let them dishonor themselves when they sacrificed all their firstborn sons as gifts to their false gods. I terrified them so that they would know that I am the LORD.

<sup>27</sup>"Speak to the nation of Israel, son of man. Tell them, This is what the Almighty LORD says: Your ancestors insulted me again because they were unfaithful to me.

<sup>28</sup>I brought them to the land that I promised to give them. When they saw any high hill or any leafy tree, they made sacrifices and brought offerings there to make me angry. There they offered their sacrifices and poured out their wine offerings.

<sup>29</sup>Then I asked them, "What is this worship site you're going to?" (So it is still called worship site today.)

<sup>30</sup>"Tell the nation of Israel, This is what the Almighty LORD says: Will you dishonor yourselves the way your ancestors did? Will you chase their detestable idols like a prostitute?

<sup>31</sup>You offer your children as sacrifices by burning them alive. You dishonor yourselves with all your disgusting idols to this day. Should you be allowed to ask me for help, nation of Israel? "As I live, declares the Almighty LORD, you won't be allowed to ask me for help.

<sup>32</sup>What you have in mind will never happen. You think that you want to be like other nations, like the different people in other countries. You want to serve wood and stone.

<sup>33</sup>"As I live, declares the Almighty LORD, I will rule you with a mighty hand and a powerful arm, and I will pour out my fury.

<sup>34</sup>I will bring you out from the nations and gather you from the countries where I have scattered you with my mighty hand and powerful arm. I will pour out my fury.

<sup>35</sup>I will bring you into the desert of the nations. There I will put you on trial face to face.

<sup>36</sup>I will put you on trial as I put your ancestors on trial in the desert of Egypt, declares the Almighty LORD.

<sup>37</sup>Then I will make you suffer punishment and make you keep the terms of the promise.

<sup>38</sup>I will get rid of rebels and those who do wrong against me. I will bring you out of the land where you are living. You will never enter Israel. Then you will know that I am the LORD.

<sup>39</sup>"Nation of Israel, this is what the Almighty LORD says: Serve your disgusting idols. But afterwards, you will listen to me. You will no longer dishonor

my holy name with your gifts and your disgusting idols.

<sup>40</sup>"The entire nation of Israel, everyone in the land, will worship me on my holy mountain, the high mountain of Israel, declares the Almighty LORD. There I will accept you. There I will look for your offerings, your best gifts, and all your holy gifts.

<sup>41</sup>When I bring you out from the nations and gather you from the countries where you have been scattered, I will accept you as if you were a pleasing sacrifice. Through you I will reveal myself as holy to the nations that are watching.

<sup>42</sup>Then you will know that I am the LORD, because I will bring you to the land of Israel, the land that I promised to give your ancestors.

<sup>43</sup>There you will remember the way you lived and everything you did to dishonor yourselves. You will be disgusted by every wrong thing that you did.

<sup>44</sup>Then you will know that I am the LORD, because I will deal with you for the sake of my name. I will not deal with you based on the evil and corrupt things

that you have done, nation of Israel, declares the Almighty LORD."

<sup>45</sup>The LORD spoke his word to me. He said,

<sup>46</sup>"Son of man, turn to the south, preach against the south, and prophesy against the forest in the Negev.

<sup>47</sup>Tell the forest in the Negev, Listen to the word of the LORD. This is what the Almighty LORD says: I am about to set fire to you to destroy all your green trees and all your dry trees. The blazing fire will not be put out. It will burn the whole land from the south to the north.

<sup>48</sup>Then everyone will know that I, the LORD, started the fire. It will never be put out."

<sup>49</sup>Then I said, "Oh no! Almighty LORD, no! The people already say that I'm only telling stories."

**21** <sup>1</sup>The LORD spoke his word to me. He said,

<sup>2</sup>"Son of man, turn to Jerusalem, preach against the holy places. Prophecy against the land of Israel.

<sup>3</sup>Tell the land of Israel, This is what the LORD says: I am against you. I will take my sword out of its scabbard and kill the

righteous people and the wicked people among you.

<sup>4</sup>Im going to kill the righteous people and the wicked people among you. That is why my sword will come out of its scabbard to be used against everyone from the south to the north.

<sup>5</sup>Then everyone will know that I, the LORD, have taken my sword from its scabbard, and I will not put it back again.

<sup>6</sup>"So, son of man, groan with a breaking heart and with bitter crying while the people watch you.

<sup>7</sup>When they ask you why you are groaning, say, News has come that will discourage everyone. Peoples hands will hang limp, their hearts will lose courage, and their knees will become as weak as water. Its coming! It will surely take place! declares the Almighty LORD."

<sup>8</sup>The LORD spoke his word to me. He said,

<sup>9</sup>"Son of man, prophesy. Tell them, This is what the Lord says: A sword, a sword is sharpened and polished,

<sup>10</sup>Its sharpened to kill and polished to flash like lightning. How can we rejoice?

My son has refused to be disciplined or punished.

<sup>11</sup>The sword has been handed over to be polished, to be placed in the hand. The sword is being sharpened and polished to be placed in the hands of killers.

<sup>12</sup>"Cry and mourn, son of man, because the sword will be used against my people and against all the princes of Israel. I will throw the princes and my people on the sword. So beat your breast, and grieve.

<sup>13</sup>Testing will surely come. What if you refuse to be disciplined again? Wont you be tested? declares the Almighty LORD.

<sup>14</sup>So prophesy, son of man. Clap your hands! Let the sword strike again and again. Its the sword for killing. Its the sword for killing many people. Its the sword that surrounds them.

<sup>15</sup>I have appointed my sword to slaughter people at all their gates so that their hearts will sink and many will die. Yes! Its ready to flash like lightning. Its polished to kill.

<sup>16</sup>Sword, cut to the right. Cut to the left or wherever your blade is turned.

<sup>17</sup> I will also clap my hands and rest from my fury. I, the LORD, have spoken."

<sup>18</sup> The LORD spoke his word to me. He said,

<sup>19</sup> "Son of man, mark two roads that the king of Babylon and his sword can take. Both of these roads should start from the same country. Make a sign, and put it where the roads start to fork toward the cities.

<sup>20</sup> Mark the road that the king and his sword can take to the Ammonite city of Rabbah, and mark the road that leads to Judah and the fortified city of Jerusalem.

<sup>21</sup> The king of Babylon will stop where the roads branch off, where there is a fork in the road. Then he will look for omens. He will shake some arrows, ask his household gods for help, and examine animal livers.

<sup>22</sup> The omens will indicate that he should go to the right, to Jerusalem. So he will set up his battering rams there, give the order to kill, raise a battle cry, aim the battering rams against the city gates, put up ramps, and set up blockades.

<sup>23</sup>The people wont believe this because they have made treaties with other nations. But the king of Babylon will remind them of their sins, and they will be captured.

<sup>24</sup>"This is what the Almighty LORD says: You make people remember how sinful you are because you openly do wrong. You show your sins in everything you do. So you will be taken captive.

<sup>25</sup>"You dishonest and wicked prince of Israel, the time for your final punishment has come.

<sup>26</sup>This is what the Almighty LORD says: Take off your turban, and get rid of your crown. Things are going to change. Those who are unimportant will become important, and those who are important will become unimportant.

<sup>27</sup>Ruins! Ruins! I will turn this place into ruins! It will not be restored until its rightful owner comes. Then I will give it to him.

<sup>28</sup>"Son of man, prophesy. Tell them, This is what the Almighty LORD says about the Ammonites and their insults: A sword, a sword is drawn ready to kill.

Its polished to destroy and flash like lightning.

<sup>29</sup> People see false visions about you and prophesy lies about you. The sword will be placed on the necks of dishonest, wicked people, for whom the time of final punishment has come.

<sup>30</sup> "Return your sword to its scabbard. In the place where you were created, in the land where you were born, there I will judge you.

<sup>31</sup> I will pour out my fury on you and breathe on you with my fiery anger. I will hand you over to cruel people who are skilled in destruction.

<sup>32</sup> You will be fuel for the fire. You will die in the land. You will no longer be remembered. I, the LORD, have spoken."

**22**<sup>1</sup> The LORD spoke his word to me. He said,

<sup>2</sup> "Will you judge, son of man? Will you judge the city of murderers? Then tell it about all the disgusting things that it has done.

<sup>3</sup> Tell it, This is what the Almighty LORD says: Jerusalem, you are the city that murders people who live in you. Your

time has come. You dishonor yourself with disgusting idols.

<sup>4</sup>You are guilty because of the people you have killed. You are dishonored because of the disgusting idols you have made. You have brought an end to your days, and you have come to the end of your years. That is why I will make you a disgrace to the nations and a joke in every land.

<sup>5</sup>Those near and those far away will mock you. Your name will be dishonored, and you will be filled with confusion.

<sup>6</sup>"See how all the princes of Israel who live in you have used their power to murder people.

<sup>7</sup>People in you hate their fathers and mothers. They oppress foreigners in you. They oppress orphans and widows in you.

<sup>8</sup>You have despised my holy things and dishonored the day to worship me.

<sup>9</sup>Some of your people slander. They want to kill people. People who live in you eat food sacrificed to idols at the worship sites on the hills, and they sin sexually.

<sup>10</sup>Men have sex with their fathers wives. They have sex with women when the women are having their periods and are unclean.

<sup>11</sup>Men do disgusting things with their neighbors wives. Some men sexually dishonor their daughtersinlaw. Other men who live in you have sex with their sisters, their fathers daughters.

<sup>12</sup>Other people take bribes to murder people. You collect interest and make excessive profits. You make profits by mistreating your neighbors. You have forgotten me, declares the Almighty LORD.

<sup>13</sup>"I will use my power against you because of the excessive profits you have made and the murders you have committed.

<sup>14</sup>Will you still be brave? Will you remain strong when I deal with you? I, the LORD, have spoken, and I will do it.

<sup>15</sup>I will scatter you among the nations and force you into other countries. I will put an end to your uncleanness.

<sup>16</sup>You will be dishonored in the sight of the nations. Then you will know that I am the LORD."

<sup>17</sup> Then the LORD spoke his word to me. He said,

<sup>18</sup> "Son of man, the people of Israel have become worthless to me. All of them are like copper, tin, iron, and lead in a smelting furnace. They are like the impurities left from silver.

<sup>19</sup> This is what the Almighty LORD says: All of you have become worthless. That is why I'm going to gather you in Jerusalem.

<sup>20</sup> People gather silver, copper, iron, lead, and tin together in a smelting furnace to melt them with a fiery blast. In the same way, in my anger and fury I will gather you and put you in the city. I will melt you there.

<sup>21</sup> Yes, I will gather you, breathe on you with my fiery anger, and melt you in the city.

<sup>22</sup> You will be melted in the city like silver that is melted in a furnace. Then you will know that I, the LORD, have poured out my fury on you."

<sup>23</sup> The LORD spoke his word to me. He said,

<sup>24</sup> "Son of man, tell the city, You are an unclean land that has not had rain during

the day of my anger. You have not been made clean.

<sup>25</sup>Your princes are like roaring lions who tear their prey into pieces. They eat people and take their treasures and precious belongings. They turn many women into widows.

<sup>26</sup>Your priests violate my teachings and dishonor my holy things. They don't distinguish between what is holy and what is unholy. They don't teach the difference between what is clean and what is unclean. They ignore the days to worship me. So I am dishonored among the people.

<sup>27</sup>Your leaders are like wolves that tear their prey into pieces. They murder and destroy people to make excessive profits.

<sup>28</sup>Your prophets cover up these things by seeing false visions and by prophesying lies. They say, "This is what the Almighty LORD says." Yet, the LORD hasn't spoken.

<sup>29</sup>The common people oppress and rob others. They do wrong to humble people and to poor people. They oppress foreigners for no reason.

<sup>30</sup>"I looked for someone among you who could build walls or stand in front of me by the gaps in the walls to defend the land and keep it from being destroyed. But I couldn't find anyone.

<sup>31</sup>So I will pour out my anger on you, and with my fiery anger I will consume you. This is because of all the things you have done," declares the Almighty LORD.

**23**<sup>1</sup> The LORD spoke his word to me. He said,

<sup>2</sup>"Son of man, there were once two women, daughters of the same mother.

<sup>3</sup>They became prostitutes in Egypt when they were young. There men fondled and caressed their breasts.

<sup>4</sup>"The older girl was named Oholah, and the younger girl was named Oholibah. I married them, and they gave birth to sons and daughters. Oholah represents Samaria, and Oholibah represents Jerusalem.

<sup>5</sup>Oholah acted like a prostitute, although she was my wife. She lusted after her Assyrian lovers who lived nearby.

<sup>6</sup>They were governors and commanders clothed in purple. They were all

handsome young men who rode on horses.

<sup>7</sup> She became a prostitute for all the important men in Assyria. She dishonored herself with the idols of all those with whom she fell in love.

<sup>8</sup> She continued the prostitution that she started in Egypt. When she was young, men went to bed with her, caressed her breasts, and treated her like a prostitute.

<sup>9</sup> "That is why I handed her over to her lovers, to the Assyrians whom she lusted after.

<sup>10</sup> They stripped her naked, took away her sons and daughters, and killed her with a sword. Women gossiped about how she was punished.

<sup>11</sup> "Even though her younger sister Oholibah saw this, Oholibah lusted after men more than her sister did. Oholibah's prostitution became worse than her sister's prostitution.

<sup>12</sup> She lusted after the Assyrians who were nearby. They were governors and commanders in full dress. They were mounted horsemen, all of them desirable young men.

<sup>13</sup>I saw that she was dishonoring herself. Both sisters acted the same way.

<sup>14</sup>Yet, she carried her prostitution even further. She saw pictures of men carved on walls. They were figures of Babylonian men, painted in bright red.

<sup>15</sup>The men had belts around their waists and flowing turbans on their heads. All of them looked like Babylonian officers who were born in Babylon.

<sup>16</sup>She fell in love with them at first sight and sent messengers to them in Babylonia.

<sup>17</sup>So these men came from Babylon, went to bed with her, and dishonored her with their lust. After they had dishonored her, she turned away from them in disgust.

<sup>18</sup>"She carried out her prostitution openly, and she lay around naked. I turned away from her in disgust as I had turned away from her sister.

<sup>19</sup>She remembered how she had been a prostitute in Egypt when she was young. So she took part in even more prostitution.

<sup>20</sup>She lusted after her lovers, whose genitals were like those of donkeys and whose semen was like that of horses.

<sup>21</sup>So she longed to do the sinful things she did when she was young in Egypt, when young men caressed and fondled her breasts.

<sup>22</sup>"Oholibah, this is what the Almighty LORD says: I'm going to stir up your lovers against you. They are the lovers you turned away from in disgust. I will bring them against you from every side.

<sup>23</sup>I will bring men from Babylon and from all Babylonia, men from Pekod, Shoa, and Koa, as well as all the Assyrians. They are desirable young men, governors and commanders, military officers and important men. All of them ride on horses.

<sup>24</sup>They will attack you from the north, with chariots and wagons and with a large number of troops. They will attack you from all around with small and large shields and with helmets. I have handed you over to them for punishment. They will punish you with their own kind of punishment.

<sup>25</sup>I will direct my burning anger against you so that they will deal with you in anger. They will cut off your nose and ears and kill everyone who remains. They will take your sons and your daughters and burn down whatever is left.

<sup>26</sup>They will rip off your clothes and take away your beautiful jewels.

<sup>27</sup>I will put a stop to your sinning and to your prostitution, which you began in Egypt. You won't desire these things anymore or remember Egypt anymore.

<sup>28</sup>"This is what the Almighty LORD says: I'm going to hand you over to those you hate and to those you turned away from in disgust.

<sup>29</sup>They will treat you hatefully and take away everything that you have worked for. They will leave you naked and bare. The shame of your prostitution will be revealed.

<sup>30</sup>Your sinning and your prostitution have done this to you, because you lusted after the nations and dishonored yourself with their idols.

<sup>31</sup> Youve acted the same way as your sister. That is why I will put her cup in your hand.

<sup>32</sup> This is what the Almighty LORD says: You will drink from your sisters cup, a cup that is deep and wide. You will be scorned and mocked, because this cup holds so much.

<sup>33</sup> The cup of your sister Samaria will be filled with drunkenness and sorrow.

<sup>34</sup> You will drink from it and drain it. You will break it into pieces and tear your breasts off your body. I have spoken, declares the Almighty LORD.

<sup>35</sup> "This is what the Almighty LORD says: You have forgotten me and turned your back on me. So you will be punished for your sinning and prostitution."

<sup>36</sup> The LORD said to me, "Son of man, will you judge Oholah and Oholibah and tell them about their disgusting practices?"

<sup>37</sup> They have committed adultery. Their hands are covered with blood. They commit adultery with their idols. They have sacrificed the children they gave birth to for me as burnt offerings to idols.

<sup>38</sup>They have also done this to me: They have polluted my holy places when they do these things and dishonored the days to worship me.

<sup>39</sup>When they sacrificed their children to their idols, they came into my holy place and dishonored it. That is what theyve done in my temple.

<sup>40</sup>"They even sent messengers to invite men to come from far away. When the men arrived, they washed themselves for the men, painted their eyes, and put on their jewels.

<sup>41</sup>They sat on their fine couches with tables in front of them. They put my incense and my olive oil on their tables.

<sup>42</sup>"I heard the noise from a carefree crowd. A large number of people came from the desert, and they put bracelets on the womens wrists and beautiful crowns on their heads.

<sup>43</sup>Then I said, She is worn out from her acts of adultery. Yet, men continued to have sex with her.

<sup>44</sup>Men slept with her. They slept with those sinful women, Oholah and Oholibah just as they slept with a prostitute.

<sup>45</sup> Righteous people will punish these women for adultery and for murder, because these women have committed adultery and their hands are covered with blood.

<sup>46</sup> "This is what the Almighty LORD says: Bring together a mob against the people of Samaria and Jerusalem. Hand them over to terror and looting.

<sup>47</sup> Then the mob will stone them and kill them with swords. The mob will kill their sons and daughters and burn their homes.

<sup>48</sup> So I will put a stop to the sinning in the land, and all the women will be warned not to sin as they do.

<sup>49</sup> They will be punished for their sins, and they will pay for their sin of idolatry. Then they will know that I am the Almighty LORD."

**24** <sup>1</sup> On the tenth day of the tenth month in the ninth year, the LORD spoke his word to me. He said,

<sup>2</sup> "Son of man, write down today's date. The king of Babylon has surrounded Jerusalem this very day.

<sup>3</sup> Tell these rebellious people a story. Tell them, This is what the Almighty

LORD says: Put the pot on the fire; put it on. Pour water in it.

<sup>4</sup>Cut the meat into pieces, all the best pieces, the thigh and shoulder. Fill the pot with the meatiest bones

<sup>5</sup>selected from the best sheep. Pile wood under the pot. Bring the mixture in the pot to a boil. Cook the bones that are in it well.

<sup>6</sup>"This is what the Almighty LORD says: How horrible it will be for that city of murderers, for that tarnished pot. Its tarnish will not come off. Empty the meat out of it piece by piece without choosing any particular piece.

<sup>7</sup>Blood is still in that city. The blood was poured on a bare rock. It wasn't poured on the ground where dust would cover it.

<sup>8</sup>In order to stir up my fury so that I would pay that city back, I put the blood of its victims on a bare rock. Now that blood can't be covered.

<sup>9</sup>"This is what the Almighty LORD says: How horrible it will be for that city of murderers. I, too, will pile the wood high.

<sup>10</sup>Pile it high, and light the fire. Cook the meat thoroughly, stir the mixture, and let the bones burn.

<sup>11</sup>Then set the empty pot on the coals so that it gets hot and its copper glows. Its impurities will melt away, and its tarnish will burn off.

<sup>12</sup>"I have worn myself out trying to clean this pot. Even the fire cant take away its thick tarnish.

<sup>13</sup>I tried to clean you of your filthy lust, but you wouldnt clean yourself from your filth. You will never be clean until I unleash my fury on you.

<sup>14</sup>I, the LORD, have spoken. It will happen, and I will do it. I will not ignore you, pity you, or change my plans. I will punish you because of the way you lived and because of everything you have done," declares the Almighty LORD.

<sup>15</sup>Then the LORD spoke his word to me. He said,

<sup>16</sup>"Son of man, with one blow Im going to take away from you the person you love the most. But you must not mourn, cry, or let tears run down your face.

<sup>17</sup>Groan silently. Dont grieve for the person who dies. Tie on your turban, and

put on your sandals. Dont cover your face or eat the food that mourners eat."

<sup>18</sup>So I spoke to the people in the morning, and in the evening my wife died. The next morning I did as I was ordered.

<sup>19</sup>The people asked me, "Tell us, what do these things that you are doing mean to us?"

<sup>20</sup>I told them, "The LORD spoke his word to me. He said,

<sup>21</sup>Tell the nation of Israel, "This is what the Almighty LORD says: Im going to dishonor my holy place. You brag that my holy place gives you strength. Its the thing you love the most. Its your hearts desire. So the sons and daughters that you left behind will die in battle.

<sup>22</sup>Then you must do as I did. Dont cover your faces or eat the food that mourners eat.

<sup>23</sup>Leave your turbans on your heads and your sandals on your feet. Dont grieve or cry! You will waste away because of your guilt and groan to one another.

<sup>24</sup> Ezekiel is a sign to you. You will do everything he has done. Then you will know that I am the Almighty LORD."

<sup>25</sup> "Son of man, on that day I will take their stronghold away from them. It makes them happy and proud. It is their hearts desire and the thing they love the most. I will also take away their sons and daughters.

<sup>26</sup> On that day a refugee will come to you to tell you the news.

<sup>27</sup> On that very day your mouth will be opened, and you will talk to the refugee. You will speak and not be silent anymore. You will be a sign to them. Then they will know that I am the LORD."

**25** <sup>1</sup> The LORD spoke his word to me. He said,

<sup>2</sup> "Son of man, turn to the Ammonites and prophesy against them.

<sup>3</sup> Tell the Ammonites, Listen to the word of the Almighty LORD. This is what the Almighty LORD says: You were glad when my holy place was dishonored, when the land of Israel was ruined, and when the nation of Judah went into exile.

<sup>4</sup> That is why I'm going to hand you over to the people in the east. They will

possess your land. They will set up their camps and pitch their tents among you. They will eat your crops and drink your milk.

<sup>5</sup>I will turn Rabbah into a pasture for camels, and I will turn Ammon into a resting place for sheep. Then you will know that I am the LORD.

<sup>6</sup>"This is what the Almighty LORD says: You clapped your hands and stomped your feet. You rejoiced and felt contempt for the land of Israel.

<sup>7</sup>That is why I will use my power against you and hand you over to the nations as loot. I will wipe you out from among the nations, make you disappear, and destroy you. Then you will know that I am the LORD.

<sup>8</sup>"This is what the Almighty LORD says: Moab and Seir said, "The nation of Judah is like all the other nations."

<sup>9</sup>That is why I'm going to open up the cities that protect Moab's borders. They are the beautiful cities of Beth Jeshimoth, Baal Meon, and Kiriathaim.

<sup>10</sup>I will hand the Moabites and the Ammonites over to the people in the

east. So the Ammonites will no longer be remembered among the nations.

<sup>11</sup> I will punish Moab. Then they will know that I am the LORD.

<sup>12</sup> "This is what the Almighty LORD says: Edom took revenge on the nation of Judah and became guilty because of it.

<sup>13</sup> So this is what the Almighty LORD says: I will use my power against Edom. I will wipe out people and animals. I will turn the land into ruins from Teman to Dedan. People will die in battle.

<sup>14</sup> I will use my people Israel to take revenge on Edom. My people will deal with Edom based on my anger and my fury. Then the Edomites will know my revenge, declares the Almighty LORD.

<sup>15</sup> "This is what the Almighty LORD says: The Philistines have taken revenge with spiteful hearts. They have tried to destroy their longtime enemies.

<sup>16</sup> So this is what the Almighty LORD says: I'm going to use my power against the Philistines, cut off the Cherethites, and destroy the people that are left on the coast.

<sup>17</sup>I will take fierce revenge on them and punish them with fury. I will take revenge on them. Then they will know that I am the LORD."

**26**<sup>1</sup> On the first day of the month in the eleventh year, the LORD spoke his word to me. He said,

<sup>2</sup>"Son of man, Tyre said this about Jerusalem: The city that was the gateway for the nations is destroyed, and its doors are swung open to me. I'll get rich now that its ruined.

<sup>3</sup>So this is what the Almighty LORD says: I am against you, Tyre. I will bring many nations against you as the waves on the sea rise.

<sup>4</sup>They will destroy the walls of Tyre and tear down its towers. Then I will sweep up the dust and turn Tyre into a bare rock.

<sup>5</sup>It will become a place by the sea where people spread their fishing nets. I have spoken, declares the Almighty LORD. It will become a prize for the nations.

<sup>6</sup>The people in the villages and on the mainland will die in battle. Then they will know that I am the LORD.

<sup>7</sup> "This is what the Almighty LORD says: From the north I'm going to bring King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon against you, Tyre. He is the greatest king. He will bring horses, chariots, war horses, many people, and many troops.

<sup>8</sup> He will destroy the villages on your mainland. He will set up blockades, put up dirt ramps, and raise his shields against you.

<sup>9</sup> He will direct his battering rams against your walls, and he will cut down your towers with his axes.

<sup>10</sup> He will have so many horses that their dust will cover you. The noise from the war horses, wagon wheels, and chariots will shake your walls when he enters your gates. He will enter as people enter a conquered city.

<sup>11</sup> With his horses hoofs he will trample all your streets. He will kill your people in battle, and your strong pillars will fall to the ground.

<sup>12</sup> His troops will loot your riches and take your goods as prizes. They will destroy your walls and tear down your delightful homes. They will throw your stones, wood, and soil into the water.

<sup>13</sup>"I will put a stop to your noisy songs, and the music from your harps will no longer be heard.

<sup>14</sup>I will turn you into bare rock. You will become a place to spread fishing nets. You will never be rebuilt. I, the LORD, have spoken, declares the Almighty LORD.

<sup>15</sup>"This is what the Almighty LORD says to Tyre: The people who live on the coast will shake with fear when they hear about your defeat. They will groan when your people are wounded and slaughtered.

<sup>16</sup>Then the princes from the coast will come down from their thrones. They will remove their robes and take off their embroidered clothes. Dressed in terror, they will sit on the ground. They will tremble constantly and be shocked at you.

<sup>17</sup>Then they will sing this funeral song for you: Tyre, you famous city, you have been destroyed. You have been shattered by the sea. You and your people ruled the sea. All your people terrified those who lived by the coast.

<sup>18</sup>Your defeat will make the people who live by the coast tremble. Your end will terrify the islands in the sea.

<sup>19</sup>"This is what the Almighty LORD says: I will turn your city into ruins like cities that have no one living in them. I will bring the deep ocean over you, and the Mediterranean Sea will cover you.

<sup>20</sup>I will bring you down with those who descend to the grave to join the people of long ago. I will make you live below the earth among the ancient ruins with those who go down to the grave. You will never return or take your place in the land of the living.

<sup>21</sup>I will turn you into a terror, and you will no longer exist. People will look for you, but they will never see you again," declares the Almighty LORD.

**27** <sup>1</sup>The LORD spoke his word to me. He said,

<sup>2</sup>"Son of man, sing a funeral song about Tyre.

<sup>3</sup>Tyre is the city at the entrance to the sea. It is the merchant to the nations. Say to Tyre, This is what the Almighty LORD says: Tyre, you used to brag about your perfect beauty.

<sup>4</sup>Your home is the sea. "Your builders made your beauty perfect.

<sup>5</sup>Your builders made all your boards from pine trees on Mount Hermon. They took cedar trees from Lebanon to make a mast for you.

<sup>6</sup>They made your oars from oaks in Bashan. They made your deck from pine trees on the shores of Cyprus. It had ivory set in it.

<sup>7</sup>Your sails were made out of fine embroidered linen from Egypt. They were like your flags. Your awnings were violet and purple. They came from the coasts of Elishah.

<sup>8</sup>"People from Sidon and Arvad used to row you. Your own skilled people were your sailors.

<sup>9</sup>Master shipbuilders from Gebal went inside you to caulk your seams. All the ships on the sea and their sailors docked alongside you to trade with you.

<sup>10</sup>People from Persia, Lud, and Put were soldiers in your army. They hung their shields and helmets inside you. Their victories made you look good.

<sup>11</sup>"People from Arvad and Helech were guards all around your walls. People

from Gammad guarded your towers. They hung their shields all around your walls, making your beauty perfect.

<sup>12</sup>"People from Tarshish traded with you because you were so very rich. They exchanged silver, iron, tin, and lead for your merchandise.

<sup>13</sup>People from Greece, Tubal, and Meshech traded with you. They exchanged slaves and bronze items for your goods.

<sup>14</sup>People from Beth Togarmah exchanged horses, war horses, and mules for your merchandise.

<sup>15</sup>People from Dedan traded goods with you. You traded with many people on the coasts, and they brought you ivory and ebony as payment.

<sup>16</sup>"People from Syria traded with you because you had so many products. They exchanged emeralds, purple cloth, richly woven cloth, linen, coral, and rubies for your merchandise.

<sup>17</sup>Judah and Israel traded with you. They exchanged wheat from Minnith, baked goods, honey, olive oil, and balsam for your goods.

<sup>18</sup> People from Damascus traded with you because you had so many products. They exchanged wine from Helbon and wool from Sahar.

<sup>19</sup> "Danites and Greeks from Uzal traded for your merchandise. They exchanged wrought iron, cassia, and sugar cane for your goods.

<sup>20</sup> Dedan traded saddle blankets with you.

<sup>21</sup> Arabia and all the officials of Kedar traded with you. They traded lambs, rams, and male goats.

<sup>22</sup> The merchants from Sheba and Raamah traded with you. They traded the finest spices, precious stones, and gold for your merchandise.

<sup>23</sup> Haran, Canneh, Eden, the merchants from Sheba, Assyria, and Kilmad traded with you.

<sup>24</sup> In your marketplace they traded for beautiful clothes, purple robes, embroidered cloth, and many multicolored rugs with woven and twisted cords.

<sup>25</sup> "Ships from Tarshish carried your goods. You were like a ship filled with heavy cargo in the sea.

<sup>26</sup>Your rowers took you out to the high seas, and an east wind wrecked you in the sea.

<sup>27</sup>Your wealth, your merchandise, and the goods you sell, your mariners and your sailors, your caulkers and your merchants, your soldiers and everyone else on board sank into the sea when your ship was wrecked.

<sup>28</sup>"When your sailors cried out, people on the shore trembled.

<sup>29</sup>All the rowers, the sailors, and all the mariners came down from their ships and stood on the shore.

<sup>30</sup>They cried loudly and bitterly over you. They put dust on their heads and covered themselves with ashes.

<sup>31</sup>They shaved their heads because of you and put on sackcloth. They cried over you with bitterness and with bitter mourning.

<sup>32</sup>They sang a funeral song for you with loud crying: "Who is like Tyre, the city destroyed in the sea?"

<sup>33</sup>Your merchandise was sent overseas. You filled many people with your great wealth and your goods. You made the kings of the earth rich.

<sup>34</sup> Now you are wrecked in the sea, at the bottom of the sea. Your goods and your whole crew sank with you.

<sup>35</sup> All those who live on the coasts are horrified because of you. Their kings are terribly afraid. Their faces show their fear.

<sup>36</sup> The merchants among the nations laugh at you. You have come to a terrible end, and you will never exist again."

**28**<sup>1</sup> The LORD spoke his word to me. He said,

<sup>2</sup> "Son of man, tell the ruler of Tyre, This is what the Almighty LORD says: In your arrogance you say, "I'm a god. I sit on God's throne in the sea." But you're only human and not a god, although you think you are a god.

<sup>3</sup> You think that you are wiser than Daniel and that no secret can be hidden from you.

<sup>4</sup> Because you are wise and understanding, you've made yourself rich. You saved gold and silver in your treasuries.

<sup>5</sup> Because of your great skill in trading, you've made yourself very wealthy. You

have become arrogant because of your wealth.

<sup>6</sup>"This is what the Almighty LORD says: You think you are wise like God.

<sup>7</sup>That is why I am going to bring foreigners against you, the most ruthless foreigners among the nations. They will draw their swords against your fine wisdom and dishonor your greatness.

<sup>8</sup>They will throw you into a pit, and you will die a violent death in the sea.

<sup>9</sup>You will no longer say that you are a god when you face those who kill you. You will be a human, not a god, in the hands of those who kill you.

<sup>10</sup>You will die at the hands of foreigners like a godless person. I have spoken," declares the LORD.

<sup>11</sup>The LORD spoke his word to me. He said,

<sup>12</sup>"Son of man, sing a funeral song for the ruler of Tyre. Tell him, This is what the Almighty LORD says: You were the perfect example, full of wisdom and perfect in beauty.

<sup>13</sup>You were in Eden, Gods garden. You were covered with every kind of precious stone: red quartz, topaz, crystal, beryl,

onyx, gray quartz, sapphire, turquoise, and emerald. Your settings and your sockets were made of gold when you were created.

<sup>14</sup>I appointed an angel to guard you. You were on Gods holy mountain. You walked among fiery stones.

<sup>15</sup>Your behavior was perfect from the time you were created, until evil was found in you.

<sup>16</sup>You traded far and wide. You learned to be violent, and you sinned. So I threw you down from Gods mountain in disgrace. The guardian angel forced you out from the fiery stones.

<sup>17</sup>You became too proud because of your beauty. You wasted your wisdom because of your greatness. So I threw you to the ground and left you in front of the kings so that they could see you.

<sup>18</sup>You dishonored your own holy places because of your many sins and dishonest trade. So I set fire to you to burn you up. I turned you into ashes on the ground in the presence of all who saw you.

<sup>19</sup>All the nations who knew you are horrified because of you. You have come

to a terrible end, and you will never exist again."

<sup>20</sup>The LORD spoke his word to me. He said,

<sup>21</sup>"Son of man, turn to Sidon and prophesy against it.

<sup>22</sup>Tell it, This is what the Almighty LORD says: I am against you, Sidon. I will show my greatness through you. Then people will know that I am the LORD, because I will punish you and show you how holy I am.

<sup>23</sup>I will send a plague against you and make blood flow in your streets. Your people will fall dead. People with swords will attack you from every side. Then they will know that I am the LORD.

<sup>24</sup>The nation of Israel will no longer be hurt by prickly thorns or sharp briars from everyone around them. Then they will know that I am the Almighty LORD.

<sup>25</sup>"This is what the Almighty LORD says: When I gather the people of Israel from the nations where they were scattered, I will show that I am holy as the nations watch. The people of Israel will live in their own land, the land I gave to my servant Jacob.

<sup>26</sup>They will live there in safety. They will build homes and plant vineyards. They will live in safety when I punish all the surrounding people who treat them with scorn. Then they will know that I am the LORD their God."

**29**<sup>1</sup> On the twelfth day of the tenth month in the tenth year, the LORD spoke his word to me. He said,

<sup>2</sup>"Son of man, turn to Pharaoh, king of Egypt, and prophesy against him and against all Egypt.

<sup>3</sup>Tell him, This is what the Almighty LORD says: I'm against you, Pharaoh, king of Egypt. You are like a monster crocodile lying in the Nile River. You say, "The Nile River is mine. I made it for myself."

<sup>4</sup>"I will put hooks in your jaws and make the fish in the Nile River stick to your scales. I will pull you out of your river with all the fish in the Nile sticking to your scales.

<sup>5</sup>I will leave you in the desert, you and all the fish from the Nile. You will fall in an open field. No one will pick you up or bury you. I will feed you to wild animals and birds.

<sup>6</sup>Then all those living in Egypt will know that I am the LORD. Egypt, you have become like a broken walking stick to the nation of Israel.

<sup>7</sup>When Israel grabbed you, you splintered and tore up their shoulders. When they leaned on you, you broke, and they wrenched their backs.

<sup>8</sup>"This is what the Almighty LORD says: I am going to attack you with a sword. I will kill people and animals.

<sup>9</sup>Egypt will become a wasteland and a pile of rubble. Then you will know that I am the LORD. You said, "The Nile River is mine. I made it."

<sup>10</sup>That is why I'm against you and the Nile River. I will turn Egypt into a pile of rubble. It will become a wasteland, from Migdol to Syene, all the way to the border of Sudan.

<sup>11</sup>No human or animal will walk through it, and no one will live there for 40 years.

<sup>12</sup>I will make Egypt the most desolate country in the world. For 40 years Egypt's cities will lie in ruins. They will be ruined more than any other city. I will scatter the Egyptians among the nations and force them into other countries.

<sup>13</sup>"This is what the Almighty LORD says: After 40 years I will gather the Egyptians from the nations where they have been scattered.

<sup>14</sup>I will bring back the Egyptian captives and return them to Pathros, the land they came from. There they will be a weak kingdom.

<sup>15</sup>They will be the weakest kingdom, and they will never rule the nations again. I will make them so weak that they will never rule the nations again.

<sup>16</sup>The nation of Israel will never trust Egypt again. The people of Israel will remember how wrong they were whenever they turned to Egypt for help. Then they will know that I am the Almighty LORD."

<sup>17</sup>On the first day of the first month in the twentyseventh year, the LORD spoke his word to me. He said,

<sup>18</sup>"Son of man, King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon made his army fight hard against Tyre. Every soldier's head was worn bald, and every soldier's shoulder was rubbed raw. Yet, he and his army got no reward for their hardfought battle against Tyre.

<sup>19</sup>This is what the Almighty LORD says: I'm going to give Egypt to King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon. He will carry off its wealth, take its prized possessions, and loot it. That will be the pay for his army.

<sup>20</sup>I have given him Egypt as pay for what he has done. Nebuchadnezzar and his army worked for me, declares the Almighty LORD.

<sup>21</sup>"On that day I will make the people of Israel strong again, and I will give you, Ezekiel, something to say among them. Then they will know that I am the LORD."

**30**<sup>1</sup>The LORD spoke his word to me. He said,

<sup>2</sup>"Son of man, prophesy. Say, This is what the Almighty LORD says: Cry for that day!

<sup>3</sup>The day is near. The day of the LORD is near. It will be a gloomy day, a time of trouble for the nations.

<sup>4</sup>There will be war in Egypt and anguish in Ethiopia. Many Egyptians will fall dead. People will take away Egypt's wealth, and its foundations will be torn down.

<sup>5</sup>Sudan, Put, Lud, all the Arabs, the Libyans, and people from the promised land will die in battle.

<sup>6</sup>"This is what the LORD says: All Egypts allies will die. Egypts strength will disappear. People will die in war from Migdol to Syene, declares the Almighty LORD.

<sup>7</sup>"Egypt will become the most desolate country in the world, and Egypts cities will lie in ruins. They will be ruined more than other cities.

<sup>8</sup>Then they will know that I am the LORD, because I will set fire to Egypt and all her defenders will be killed.

<sup>9</sup>On that day I will send messengers in ships to terrify those who live in safety in Sudan. The people of Sudan will be in anguish when Egypt is in trouble. That day is coming!

<sup>10</sup>"This is what the Almighty LORD says: I will use King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon to bring an end to Egypt.

<sup>11</sup>He and his troops, the most ruthless troops among the nations, will be brought to destroy the land. They will draw their swords to attack Egypt and fill the land with dead bodies.

<sup>12</sup>I will dry up the Nile River and sell the land to wicked people. I will have foreigners destroy the land and everything in it. I, the LORD, have spoken.

<sup>13</sup>"This is what the Almighty LORD says: I will destroy the statues and put an end to the idols in Memphis. A prince will never rise again in Egypt. I will spread fear throughout Egypt.

<sup>14</sup>I will destroy Pathros, set fire to Zoan, and bring punishment on Thebes.

<sup>15</sup>I will pour out my fury on Sin, Egypt's fortress, and I will kill many people in Thebes.

<sup>16</sup>I will set fire to Egypt. Sin will be in much pain. Thebes will be broken into pieces, and Memphis will be in trouble every day.

<sup>17</sup>The young men from Heliopolis and Bubastis will die in battle, and people from these cities will go into exile.

<sup>18</sup>At Tahpanhes the day will turn dark when I break Egypt's power. Egypt's strong army will be defeated. Clouds will cover Egypt, and people from its villages will go into exile.

<sup>19</sup>Then they will know that I am the LORD, because I will bring punishment on Egypt."

<sup>20</sup>On the seventh day of the first month in the eleventh year, the LORD spoke his word to me. He said,

<sup>21</sup>"Son of man, I have broken the arm of Pharaoh, king of Egypt. His arm isnt bandaged, so it cant heal and be strong enough to hold a sword.

<sup>22</sup>"This is what the Almighty LORD says: Im against Pharaoh, king of Egypt. I will break both his arms, the healthy one and the broken one. I will make the sword fall from his hand.

<sup>23</sup>I will scatter the Egyptians among the nations and force them into other countries.

<sup>24</sup>I will make the arms of the king of Babylon strong. I will put my sword in his hand, but I will break Pharaohs arms. Pharaoh will groan like a person who is dying.

<sup>25</sup>I will strengthen the arms of the king of Babylon, but Pharaohs arms will fall. Then they will know that I am the LORD, because I will put my sword in the hand

of the king of Babylon. He will strike Egypt with it.

<sup>26</sup>I will scatter the Egyptians among the nations and force them into other countries. Then they will know that I am the LORD."

**31** <sup>1</sup>On the first day of the third month in the eleventh year, the LORD spoke his word to me. He said,

<sup>2</sup>"Son of man, say to Pharaoh, king of Egypt, and his many people, Was there ever anyone as great as you?

<sup>3</sup>What about Assyria? It was a cedar in Lebanon with fine branches that shaded the forest. It was very tall. Its top was among the clouds.

<sup>4</sup>Water made the tree grow, and underground springs made it tall. Rivers flowed around the place where the tree was planted. Streams ran beside all the other trees around it.

<sup>5</sup>That is why it grew taller than all the other trees in the field. Its branches became large and long because of so much water.

<sup>6</sup>All the birds made their nests in its branches. All the wild animals gave birth

to their young under it. All the powerful nations lived in its shade.

<sup>7</sup> So the tree was big and beautiful with its long branches. Its roots reached down to many sources of water.

<sup>8</sup> The cedar trees in Gods garden couldnt compare to it. The pine trees couldnt equal its branches. The plane trees couldnt measure up to its branches. All the trees in Gods garden couldnt match its beauty.

<sup>9</sup> I was the one who made it beautiful with its many branches. This tree was the envy of all the trees in Eden, in Gods garden.

<sup>10</sup> "This is what the Almighty LORD says: The tree grew very tall, and its top reached the clouds. It became arrogant because it was so tall.

<sup>11</sup> So I handed it over to a mighty ruler among the nations, and he surely dealt with it. I forced it out because of its wickedness.

<sup>12</sup> Foreigners from the most ruthless nation cut it down and threw it away. Its branches fell on the mountains and in every valley. Its broken branches fell in every ravine in the land. All the nations

in the world came out from under its shade and left.

<sup>13</sup>All the birds perched on the fallen tree, and all the wild animals lived in its branches.

<sup>14</sup>Then all the other trees growing by the water were kept from becoming arrogant because of their height, and their tops were no longer allowed to reach the clouds. So no tree, even if it is wellwatered, will ever stand that tall. Every tree is going to die and go below the earth to join those who have died and gone down to the pit.

<sup>15</sup>"This is what the Almighty LORD says: When the tree went down to the grave, I made people mourn. I covered the underground springs and held back the rivers. The many water sources stopped flowing. I made Lebanon mourn for the tree, and all the trees in the field fainted as they grieved over it.

<sup>16</sup>I made the nations tremble in fear at the sound of the trees crash. I brought the tree down to the grave to join those who had gone down to the pit. Then all the trees in Eden, the choicest and best trees of Lebanon, and all the trees that

were wellwatered were comforted below the earth.

<sup>17</sup>They had gone down with the tree in the grave to join others killed in battle. All who lived in its shadow were scattered among the nations.

<sup>18</sup>"This tree is you, Pharaoh, and all your many people. No tree in Eden has ever been as honorable and as great as you. But you will be brought down below the earth with the trees of Eden. You will lie among the godless people who were killed in battle, declares the Almighty LORD."

**32**<sup>1</sup> On the first day of the twelfth month in the twelfth year, the LORD spoke his word to me. He said,

<sup>2</sup>"Son of man, sing a funeral song for Pharaoh, king of Egypt. Tell him, You think you are like a lion among the nations. Instead, you are like a crocodile in the water. You splash around in the water. You stir up the water with your feet. You make the streams muddy.

<sup>3</sup>"This is what the Almighty LORD says: When many nations gather together, I will spread my net over you, and they will haul you up in a net.

<sup>4</sup> I will throw you on the ground and toss you into an open field. I will make birds perch on you, and wild animals from all over the earth will feed on you.

<sup>5</sup> I will scatter your flesh on the hills and fill the valleys with your rotting corpse.

<sup>6</sup> I will drench the earth with your flowing blood all the way to the mountains. Ravines will be filled with your dead body.

<sup>7</sup> "When I put out your light, I will cover the sky and darken the stars. I will cover the sun with clouds, and the moon won't shine anymore.

<sup>8</sup> I will darken all the lights shining in the sky above you. I will bring darkness over your land, declares the Almighty LORD.

<sup>9</sup> "I will make many people troubled when I spread the news of your destruction among the nations to countries that you haven't heard of.

<sup>10</sup> Many people will be shocked by what I will do to you. Their kings will shudder when I swing my sword in their faces. When you die, all of them will tremble in fear for their own lives.

<sup>11</sup> "This is what the Almighty LORD says: The sword of the king of Babylon will attack you.

<sup>12</sup> I will cut down your people with the swords of warriors. All of them will be the most ruthless warriors among the nations. They will shatter the pride of Egypt and destroy its many people.

<sup>13</sup> I will also destroy all the animals beside its many water sources. The feet of humans and the hoofs of animals won't stir up the water anymore.

<sup>14</sup> Then I will make its water clear and make its streams flow like oil, declares the Almighty LORD.

<sup>15</sup> I will turn Egypt into a wasteland. I will take everything in the land, and I will kill all the people who live there. Then they will know that I am the LORD.

<sup>16</sup> "This is a funeral song. The people from the nations will sing this song. They will sing it as they mourn for Egypt and its many people," declares the Almighty LORD.

<sup>17</sup> On the fifteenth day of the month in the twelfth year, the LORD spoke his word to me. He said,

<sup>18</sup>"Son of man, cry for the many people of Egypt. Bring them down along with the other mighty nations. Send them down below the earth to be with those who have gone down to the pit.

<sup>19</sup>"Tell them, Are you more beautiful than anyone else? Go down and join the godless people.

<sup>20</sup>"The Egyptians will lie among those who were killed in battle. A sword has been drawn. Drag Egypt and all its people away.

<sup>21</sup>The mightiest warriors will say to Pharaoh from the grave, You and your defenders have come down, and you now lie with the godless people who were killed in battle.

<sup>22</sup>"Assyria is there with its whole army, and the graves of its soldiers are all around it. All of its soldiers are dead. They have been killed in battle.

<sup>23</sup>Their graves are in the deepest parts of the pit. Assyria's army lies around its grave. All of its soldiers are dead. They have been killed in battle. They once terrified people in the land of the living.

<sup>24</sup>"Elam is there with all its soldiers, and the graves of its soldiers are all

around it. All of its soldiers are dead. They have been killed in battle. They went down below the earth as godless people. They once terrified people in the land of the living. Now they suffer disgrace with those who have gone down to the pit.

<sup>25</sup> A bed has been made for Elam among the dead. The graves of its soldiers are all around it. The soldiers were godless people. They were killed in battle because they terrified others in the land of the living. Now they suffer disgrace with those who have gone down to the pit. They lie among the dead.

<sup>26</sup> "Meshech and Tubal are there with all their soldiers, and the graves of their soldiers are all around them. Their soldiers were all godless people. They were killed in battle because they terrified others in the land of the living.

<sup>27</sup> They don't lie with the godless warriors who died and went down to the grave with their weapons of war. Their swords were placed under their heads. Their shields were placed on their bones because they terrified others in the land of the living.

<sup>28</sup>"You Egyptians will be crushed with the godless people, and you will lie with those who were killed in battle.

<sup>29</sup>"Edom is there with its kings and its princes. They used to be powerful, but now they lie with those who were killed in battle. They lie there with the godless people and with those who have gone down to the pit.

<sup>30</sup>"All the rulers from the north and all the people from Sidon are there. They, too, went down with the dead. They are disgraced because they terrified people with their power. They were godless people. Now they lie with those who were killed in battle. They suffer disgrace with those who went down to the pit.

<sup>31</sup>"Pharaoh and his army will see these things and be comforted over all the soldiers who have been killed in battle, declares the Almighty LORD.

<sup>32</sup>"I terrified people in the land of the living. Pharaoh and all his soldiers will be laid among the godless people who were killed in battle," declares the Almighty LORD.

**33**<sup>1</sup> The LORD spoke his word to me. He said,

<sup>2</sup>"Son of man, speak to your people. Tell them, Suppose I bring war on this country, and the people of this country choose one of their men and make him their watchman.

<sup>3</sup>If he sees the enemy coming to attack the country, he will blow his horn to warn the people.

<sup>4</sup>If the people hear the horn and ignore the warning and the enemy comes and takes them, they will be responsible for their own deaths.

<sup>5</sup>They heard the sound of the horn but ignored its warning. So they are responsible for their own deaths. If they had taken the warning, they would have saved themselves.

<sup>6</sup>"But if the watchman sees the enemy coming and doesn't blow his horn to warn the people and the enemy comes and kills someone, that watchman must die because of his sin. I will hold him responsible for their deaths.

<sup>7</sup>"Son of man, I have appointed you as a watchman for the people of Israel. Listen to what I say, and warn them for me.

<sup>8</sup>Suppose I say to a wicked person, You wicked person, you will certainly die, and you say nothing to warn him to change his ways. That wicked person will die because of his sin, and I will hold you responsible for his death.

<sup>9</sup>But if you warn a wicked person to turn from his ways and he doesn't turn from them, then he will die because of his sin. However, you will save yourself.

<sup>10</sup>"Son of man, say to the people of Israel, You have said this, "Our wickedness and our sins weigh us down, and we are rotting away because of them. How can we live?"

<sup>11</sup>"Tell them, As I live, declares the Almighty LORD, I don't want wicked people to die. Rather, I want them to turn from their ways and live. Change the way you think and act! Turn from your wicked ways! Do you want to die, people of Israel?"

<sup>12</sup>"Son of man, say to your people, The right things that a righteous person has done will not save him when he rebels. The wicked things that a wicked person has done will not make him stumble when he turns from his wickedness. The

righteous person will not live when he sins.

<sup>13</sup>I may promise the righteous person that he will certainly live. But if he trusts in the right things that he has done and he does evil, none of the right things that he has done will be remembered. He will die because of the evil things he has done.

<sup>14</sup>I may warn the wicked person that he will certainly die. But suppose he turns from his sin and does what is fair and right.

<sup>15</sup>He returns the security for a loan, pays back everything he stole, lives by the rules of life, and does nothing evil. Then he will certainly live. He will not die.

<sup>16</sup>None of the sins that he has done will be remembered. He has done what is fair and right. He will certainly live.

<sup>17</sup>"But your people say, The Lords way is unfair. Yet, their ways are unfair.

<sup>18</sup>If the righteous person turns from the right things that he has done and does evil, he will die because of it.

<sup>19</sup>If the wicked person turns from his wickedness and does what is fair and right, he will live because of it.

<sup>20</sup>Yet, the people of Israel say, The Lords way is unfair. I will judge each of you by your own ways, people of Israel."

<sup>21</sup>On the fifth day of the tenth month in the twelfth year of our captivity, a refugee from Jerusalem came to me. He said, "The city has been captured."

<sup>22</sup>The evening before the refugee arrived, the power of the LORD came over me. On the morning the refugee arrived, the LORD made me speak. So I spoke, and I was no longer quiet.

<sup>23</sup>The LORD spoke his word to me. He said,

<sup>24</sup>"Son of man, those who live in the ruined cities in Israel are saying, Abraham was only one person, and he was given the land. But we are many. Certainly the land has been given to us.

<sup>25</sup>So tell them, This is what the Almighty LORD says: You eat meat with blood in it. You look to your idols for help. You murder people. Should the land be given to you?

<sup>26</sup>You rely on your swords. You do disgusting things. You dishonor your neighbors wife. Should the land be given to you?

<sup>27</sup>"Tell them, This is what the Almighty LORD says: As I live, whoever is in the ruined cities will be killed in battle. Whoever is in the open field will become food for wild animals. Whoever is in fortified places and caves will die from plagues.

<sup>28</sup>I will turn the land into a barren wasteland. People will no longer brag about its power. The mountains of Israel will become so ruined that no one will travel through them.

<sup>29</sup>Then people will know that I am the LORD, when I make the land a barren wasteland because of all the disgusting things that they have done.

<sup>30</sup>"Son of man, your people are talking about you by the walls and in the doorways of their homes. They are saying to each other, Lets go and hear the word that has come from the LORD.

<sup>31</sup>Then they come to you, as if they are still my people, and they sit down in front of you. They listen to what you say,

but they dont do it. They say that they love me, but in their hearts they chase dishonest profits.

<sup>32</sup>To them you are nothing more than a singer with a beautiful voice who sings love songs or a musician who plays an instrument. They listen to your words, but they dont do them.

<sup>33</sup>When all your words come true and they certainly will come true these people will know that a prophet has been among them."

**34**<sup>1</sup> The LORD spoke his word to me. He said,

<sup>2</sup>"Son of man, prophesy against the shepherds of Israel. Prophecy to these shepherds. Tell them, This is what the Almighty LORD says: How horrible it will be for the shepherds of Israel who have been taking care of only themselves. Shouldnt shepherds take care of the sheep?

<sup>3</sup>You eat the best parts of the sheep, dress in the wool, and butcher the finest sheep. Yet, you dont take care of the sheep.

<sup>4</sup>You have not strengthened those that were weak, healed those that were sick,

or bandaged those that were injured. You have not brought back those that strayed away or looked for those that were lost. You have ruled them harshly and violently.

<sup>5</sup> So they were scattered because there was no shepherd. When they were scattered, they became food for every wild animal.

<sup>6</sup> My sheep wandered over all the mountains and on every high hill. They were scattered throughout the whole earth. No one searched or looked for them.

<sup>7</sup> "So, you shepherds, listen to the word of the LORD.

<sup>8</sup> As I live, declares the Almighty LORD, because there is no shepherd, my sheep have become prey. My sheep have become food for every wild animal. My shepherds haven't searched for my sheep. They have taken care of only themselves, not my sheep.

<sup>9</sup> So, you shepherds, listen to the word of the LORD.

<sup>10</sup> This is what the Almighty LORD says: I am against the shepherds. I will demand that they hand over my sheep.

I won't let them take care of my sheep anymore, and they will no longer take care of only themselves. I will rescue my sheep from their mouths, and my sheep will no longer be their food.

<sup>11</sup>"This is what the Almighty LORD says: I will search for my sheep myself, and I will look after them.

<sup>12</sup>As a shepherd looks after his flock when he is with his scattered sheep, so I will look after my sheep. I will rescue them on a cloudy and gloomy day from every place where they have been scattered.

<sup>13</sup>I will bring them out from the nations, gather them from the countries, and bring them to their own land. I will take care of them on the mountains of Israel, by the streams, and in all the inhabited places of the land.

<sup>14</sup>I will feed them in good pasture, and they will graze on the mountains of Israel. They will rest on the good land where they graze, and they will feed on the best pastures in the mountains of Israel.

<sup>15</sup>I will take care of my sheep and lead them to rest, declares the Almighty LORD.

<sup>16</sup>I will look for those that are lost, bring back those that have strayed away, bandage those that are injured, and strengthen those that are sick. I will destroy those that are fat and strong. I will take care of my sheep fairly.

<sup>17</sup>"As for you, my sheep, this is what the Almighty LORD says: I will judge disputes between one sheep and another, between rams and male goats.

<sup>18</sup>Isn't it enough for you to feed on the good pasture? Must you trample the rest of the pasture with your feet? You drink clean water. Must you muddy the rest of the water with your feet?

<sup>19</sup>Must my sheep eat what your feet have trampled and drink what your feet have muddied?

<sup>20</sup>"So this is what the Almighty LORD says to them: I will judge disputes between the fat sheep and the skinny sheep.

<sup>21</sup>You fat sheep push the skinny sheep with your sides and shoulders, and you

knock down all the sick sheep with your horns. You have scattered them all over.

<sup>22</sup> So I will rescue my sheep, and they will no longer be prey. I will judge between one sheep and another.

<sup>23</sup> Then I will place one shepherd over them, my servant David, and he will take care of them. He will take care of them and be their shepherd.

<sup>24</sup> I, the LORD, will be their God, and my servant David will be their prince. I, the LORD, have spoken.

<sup>25</sup> "I will promise them peace. I will remove the wild animals from the land so that my sheep can live safely in the wilderness and sleep in the woods.

<sup>26</sup> I will bless them and the places around my hill. I will send rain at the right time. These showers will be a blessing to them.

<sup>27</sup> Then the trees in the field will produce fruit, the land will yield crops, and my sheep will live safely in their land. Then they will know that I am the LORD, because I will break off the bars on their yokes and rescue them from the people who made them slaves.

<sup>28</sup>They will no longer be prey to the nations, and the wild animals will no longer eat them. They will live safely, and no one will frighten them.

<sup>29</sup>I will give them a place that is known for its good crops. They will no longer experience hunger in the land, and they will no longer suffer the insults of other nations.

<sup>30</sup>Then they will know that I, the LORD their God, am with them and that they, the people of Israel, are my people, declares the Almighty LORD.

<sup>31</sup>You, my sheep, are the sheep in my pasture. You are mortal, and I am your God, declares the Almighty LORD."

**35**<sup>1</sup>The LORD spoke his word to me. He said,

<sup>2</sup>"Son of man, turn to Mount Seir, and prophesy against it.

<sup>3</sup>Tell it, This is what the Almighty LORD says: I'm against you, Mount Seir. I will use my power against you, and you will become a wasteland.

<sup>4</sup>I will turn your cities into ruins, and you will become a wasteland. Then you will know that I am the LORD.

<sup>5</sup>"You have always been an enemy of Israel. You deserted the people of Israel in battle when they were in trouble during their final punishment.

<sup>6</sup>That is why, as I live, declares the Almighty LORD, I will let you be murdered. Murderers will pursue you. Since you don't hate murdering people, murder will pursue you.

<sup>7</sup>I will turn Mount Seir into a barren wasteland, and I will destroy everyone who comes or goes from there.

<sup>8</sup>I will fill your mountains with those who have been killed. Those killed in battle will fall on your hills and in your valleys and ravines.

<sup>9</sup>I will turn you into a permanent wasteland. Your cities will not be lived in. Then you will know that I am the LORD.

<sup>10</sup>"You said, "These two nations, Israel and Judah, along with their land, belong to us. We will take possession of them." But the LORD was there.

<sup>11</sup>That is why, as I live, declares the Almighty LORD, I will do to you what you did to them. When you were angry and jealous, you acted hatefully toward them.

<sup>12</sup>Then you will know that I, the LORD, heard all the insults that you spoke about the mountains of Israel. You said, "They have been deserted and handed over to us to use up."

<sup>13</sup>You bragged and continually talked against me. I heard you.

<sup>14</sup>"This is what the Almighty LORD says: The whole earth will be glad when I turn you into a wasteland.

<sup>15</sup>You were happy when the land of Israel became a wasteland. I will do the same thing to you. You will become a wasteland, Mount Seir, and so will all of Edom. Then you will know that I am the LORD."

**36** <sup>1</sup>The LORD said, "Son of man, prophesy to the mountains of Israel. Tell them, Mountains of Israel, listen to the word of the LORD.

<sup>2</sup>This is what the Almighty LORD says: Your enemies said this about you, "Aha! The ancient worship sites now belong to us."

<sup>3</sup>"So prophesy. Say, This is what the Almighty LORD says: Your enemies turned you into ruins and crushed you from every side. You became the

possession of the rest of the nations, and people began to talk and gossip about you.

<sup>4</sup>"Mountains of Israel, listen to the word of the Almighty LORD. This is what the Almighty LORD says to the mountains and hills, to the ravines and valleys, and to the empty ruins and abandoned cities that have become prey and are mocked by the rest of the surrounding nations:

<sup>5</sup>In my fiery anger I have spoken against the rest of the nations and against all of Edom. The Edomites have taken possession of my land with wholehearted joy and with complete scorn. They forced out the people and took their land.

<sup>6</sup>"So prophesy about Israel. Tell the mountains and hills and the ravines and valleys, This is what the Almighty LORD says: I am speaking in my anger and fury because you have been insulted by the nations.

<sup>7</sup>So this is what the Almighty LORD says: I raise my hand and swear that the nations which surround you will be insulted.

<sup>8</sup>"But you, mountains of Israel, will grow branches and bear fruit for my people Israel. My people will come home soon.

<sup>9</sup>I am for you. I will turn to you, and you will be plowed and planted.

<sup>10</sup>I will increase the number of people who live on you. All the people of Israel, all of them, will live on you. The cities will be inhabited, and the ruins will be rebuilt.

<sup>11</sup>I will increase the number of people and animals that live on you. They will grow and become many. I will let people live on you as in the past, and I will make you better off than ever before. Then you will know that I am the LORD.

<sup>12</sup>I will bring people, my people Israel, to you. They will take possession of you, and you will be their inheritance. You will no longer take their children away from them.

<sup>13</sup>"This is what the Almighty LORD says: People say that you devour your people and take the children away from your nation.

<sup>14</sup> So you will no longer devour your people or take the children away from your nation, declares the Almighty LORD.

<sup>15</sup> I will no longer let you hear the insults from the nations. You will no longer suffer the disgrace of the people. You will never again take the children away from your own nation, declares the Almighty LORD."

<sup>16</sup> The LORD spoke his word to me. He said,

<sup>17</sup> "Son of man, when the people of Israel lived in their land, they dishonored it by the way they lived and by everything they did. Their ways were as unclean as a womans menstrual period.

<sup>18</sup> So I poured out my fury on them because they poured out blood on the land and they dishonored the land with their idols.

<sup>19</sup> I forced them into other nations, and they became scattered among the nations. I judged them based on the way that they lived and based on everything that they had done.

<sup>20</sup> But wherever they went among the nations, they dishonored my holy name. People said about them, These are the

LORDS people, yet they had to leave his land.

<sup>21</sup> I became concerned about my holy name because my people dishonored it among the nations wherever they went.

<sup>22</sup> "So tell the people of Israel, This is what the Almighty LORD says: I am about to do something, people of Israel. I will not do this for your sake but for the sake of my holy name, which you have dishonored among the nations wherever you have gone.

<sup>23</sup> I will reveal the holiness of my great name, which has been dishonored by the nations, the name that you have dishonored among them. Then the nations will know that I am the LORD, because I will reveal my holiness among you as they watch, declares the Almighty LORD.

<sup>24</sup> "I will take you from the nations and gather you from every country. I will bring you back to your own land.

<sup>25</sup> I will sprinkle clean water on you and make you clean instead of unclean. Then I will cleanse you from all your idols.

<sup>26</sup> I will give you a new heart and put a new spirit in you. I will remove your

stubborn hearts and give you obedient hearts.

<sup>27</sup> I will put my Spirit in you. I will enable you to live by my laws, and you will obey my rules.

<sup>28</sup> Then you will live in the land that I gave your ancestors. You will be my people, and I will be your God.

<sup>29</sup> I will rescue you from all your uncleanness. I will make the grain grow so that you will never again have famines.

<sup>30</sup> I will make fruit grow on the trees and crops grow in the fields so that you will no longer suffer disgrace among the nations because of famines.

<sup>31</sup> Then you will remember your evil ways and the bad things that you did, and you will hate yourselves for all these wicked and disgusting things.

<sup>32</sup> I want you to know that I'm not doing this for your sake, declares the Almighty LORD. Be ashamed and disgraced because of your ways, people of Israel.

<sup>33</sup> "This is what the Almighty LORD says: On the day that I cleanse you from all your wickedness, I will cause your

cities to be lived in again, and your ruins will be rebuilt.

<sup>34</sup>The wasteland will be plowed. It will no longer remain empty for everyone passing by to see.

<sup>35</sup>People will say, "This wasteland has become like the garden of Eden. The cities were destroyed. They were empty and ruined, but now they are fortified and have people living in them."

<sup>36</sup>The surrounding nations that are left will know that I, the LORD, have rebuilt the ruined places and planted crops in the land that was empty. I, the LORD, have spoken, and I will do it.

<sup>37</sup>"This is what the Almighty LORD says: I will also let the people of Israel ask me to make them as numerous as sheep.

<sup>38</sup>They will be like the sheep for sacrifices, like the sheep in Jerusalem during the appointed festivals. Their ruined cities will be filled with flocks of people. Then they will know that I am the LORD."

**37** <sup>1</sup>The power of the LORD came over me. The LORD brought me out by his Spirit and put me down in the

middle of a valley. The valley was filled with bones.

<sup>2</sup>He led me all around them. I saw that there were very many bones at the bottom of the valley, and they were very dry.

<sup>3</sup>Then he asked me, "Son of man, can these bones live?" I answered, "Only you know, Almighty LORD."

<sup>4</sup>Then he said to me, "Prophecy to these bones. Tell them, Dry bones, listen to the word of the LORD.

<sup>5</sup>This is what the Almighty LORD says to these bones: I will cause breath to enter you, and you will live.

<sup>6</sup>I will put ligaments on you, place muscles on you, and cover you with skin. I will put breath in you, and you will live. Then you will know that I am the LORD."

<sup>7</sup>So I prophesied as I was commanded. While I was prophesying, suddenly there was a rattling noise, and the bones came together, one bone attaching itself to another.

<sup>8</sup>As I looked, I saw that ligaments were on them, muscles were on them, and skin covered them. Yet, there was no breath in them.

<sup>9</sup>Then the LORD said to me, "Prophecy to the breath! Prophecy, son of man. Tell the breath, This is what the Almighty LORD says: Come from the four winds, Breath, and breathe on these people who were killed so that they will live."

<sup>10</sup>So I prophesied as he commanded me, and the breath entered them. Then they came to life and stood on their feet. There were enough of them to form a very large army.

<sup>11</sup>The LORD also said to me, "Son of man, all the people of Israel are like these bones. The people say, Our bones are dry, and our hope has vanished. We are completely destroyed.

<sup>12</sup>So prophesy. Tell them, This is what the Almighty LORD says: My people, I will open your graves and take you out of them. I will bring you to Israel.

<sup>13</sup>Then, my people, you will know that I am the LORD, because I will open your graves and bring you out of your graves.

<sup>14</sup>I will put my Spirit in you, and you will live. I will place you in your own land. Then you will know that I, the LORD, have spoken, and I have done it, declares the LORD."

<sup>15</sup>The LORD spoke his word to me again. He said,

<sup>16</sup>"Son of man, take a stick and write on it: For Judah and for the Israelites who are associated with it. Then take another stick and write on it, The stick of Ephraim, for Joseph and for all the people of Israel associated with it.

<sup>17</sup>Then join both sticks together so that they will be one in your hand. Your people will say to you,

<sup>18</sup>Tell us what you mean by this.

<sup>19</sup>Then say to them, This is what the Almighty LORD says: I will take Josephs stick, which is in Ephraims hand, and the tribes of Israel associated with it, and I will put them with Judahs stick. I will make them into one stick. They will be one in my hand.

<sup>20</sup>When you hold the sticks in your hand, let the people see them.

<sup>21</sup>"Then tell them, This is what the Almighty LORD says: I will take the Israelites out of the nations where theyve gone. I will gather them from everywhere and bring them to their own land.

<sup>22</sup>I will form them into one nation in the land on the mountains of Israel. One king will rule all of them. They will no longer be two nations or be divided into two kingdoms.

<sup>23</sup>They will no longer dishonor themselves with their idols, with their detestable things, or with their rebellious acts. I will forgive them for all the times they turned away from me and sinned. I will cleanse them so that they will be my people, and I will be their God.

<sup>24</sup>"My servant David will be their king, and all of them will have one shepherd. They will live by my rules, and they will obey my laws.

<sup>25</sup>They will live in the land that I gave my servant Jacob, the land where their ancestors lived. They, their children, and their grandchildren will live in it permanently. My servant David will always be their prince.

<sup>26</sup>I will promise them peace. This promise will last forever. I will establish them, make them increase in number, and put my holy place among them permanently.

<sup>27</sup> My dwelling place will be with them. I will be their God, and they will be my people.

<sup>28</sup> Then the nations will know that I, the LORD, have set Israel apart as holy, because my holy place will be among them permanently."

**38** <sup>1</sup> The LORD spoke his word to me. He said,

<sup>2</sup> "Son of man, turn to Gog from the land of Magog. He is the chief prince of the nations of Meshech and Tubal. Prophecy against him.

<sup>3</sup> Tell him, This is what the Almighty LORD says: I am against you, Gog, chief prince of Meshech and Tubal.

<sup>4</sup> I will turn you around and put hooks in your jaws. I will lead you out with all your military forces, with horses and riders. Your soldiers will be fully armed. They will carry large and small shields and be able to use swords.

<sup>5</sup> Persia, Sudan, and Put will be with you. They, too, will have shields and helmets.

<sup>6</sup> Gomer will come with all its troops and with the nation of Togarmah from

the far north. There will be many armies with you.

<sup>7</sup>"Be prepared! Be prepared, you and all the soldiers assembled around you. You will be their leader.

<sup>8</sup>After a long time you will be called to service. In the years to come, you will attack a land that has been rebuilt after a war. Its people have been gathered from many nations and brought to the mountains of Israel, mountains that have been ruined for a long time. These people were brought there from the nations, and all of them live there safely.

<sup>9</sup>You will attack like a storm and cover the land like a cloud. Your troops and the many armies will be with you.

<sup>10</sup>"This is what the Almighty LORD says: At that time ideas will enter your head, and you will make wicked plans.

<sup>11</sup>You will say, "I'll attack a land with unwallled villages. I will attack peaceful people who live safely. All of them live without walls, locks, or gates.

<sup>12</sup>I will come to rob them and loot them. I will use my power against the ruins that people are living in again. I will use it against the people who were

gathered from the nations. These people have cattle and property, and they live in the world."

<sup>13</sup>"Sheba, Dedan, the merchants from Tarshish, and all their villages will ask you, "Did you come to rob these people of their possessions? Did you assemble all these soldiers to carry away large amounts of silver and gold and to take cattle and property?"

<sup>14</sup>"So prophesy, son of man. Tell Gog, This is what the Almighty LORD says: At that time my people Israel will live safely, and you will know it.

<sup>15</sup>You will come from your place in the far north and many armies will be with you. All of you will ride on horses. You will be a large crowd and a mighty army.

<sup>16</sup>You will attack my people Israel like a cloud that covers the land. In the days to come, I will let you attack my land so that nations will know me. I will use you for my holy purpose as they watch.

<sup>17</sup>"This is what the Almighty LORD says: You are the one I spoke about long ago through my servants the prophets of Israel. They prophesied in those days that I would bring you to attack them.

<sup>18</sup>On the day that Gog attacks the land of Israel, I will be filled with burning anger, declares the Almighty LORD.

<sup>19</sup>In my fiery anger I tell you this. On that day there will be a large earthquake in the land of Israel.

<sup>20</sup>Fish, birds, wild animals, everything that crawls on the ground, and every person on earth will tremble in my presence. The mountains will be torn down, the cliffs will crumble, and every wall will fall to the ground.

<sup>21</sup>I will declare war against Gog on all my mountains, declares the Almighty LORD. Each person will use his sword against his relative.

<sup>22</sup>I will punish Gog with plagues and death. I will send rainstorms, large hailstones, fire, and burning sulfur on his troops and on the many armies with him.

<sup>23</sup>I will show my greatness and my holiness. I will reveal myself to many nations. Then they will know that I am the LORD."

**39**<sup>1</sup>The LORD said, "Son of man, prophesy against Gog. Tell it, This is what the Almighty LORD says: I am

against you, Gog, the chief prince of Meshech and Tubal.

<sup>2</sup>I will turn you around and lead you. I will bring you from the far north and have you attack the mountains of Israel.

<sup>3</sup>Then I will knock the bow out of your left hand and make you drop the arrows in your right hand.

<sup>4</sup>You will die on the mountains of Israel with your troops and the armies that are with you. I will let you become food for every bird of prey and for every wild animal.

<sup>5</sup>You will die in the open field because I said so, declares the Almighty LORD.

<sup>6</sup>I will send fire on Magog and on those who live safely on the coasts. Then they will know that I am the LORD.

<sup>7</sup>I will make my holy name known among my people Israel, and I will never let them dishonor my holy name again. Then the nations will know that I am the LORD, the Holy One in Israel.

<sup>8</sup>"Its coming! It will happen! declares the Almighty LORD. This is the day I have spoken about.

<sup>9</sup>Those living in the cities of Israel will go out. They will set fire to weapons

and burn them. They will burn small and large shields, bows and arrows, and war clubs and spears. They will burn them for seven years.

<sup>10</sup>They will not need to get wood from the field or cut down trees in the woods. They will make fires with the weapons. They will loot those who looted them, and they will grab things back from those who grabbed their things, declares the Almighty LORD.

<sup>11</sup>"When that day comes, I will give Gog a burial place in Israel. It will be in Travelers Valley, east of the Dead Sea. It will block those who travel through the valley. Gog and his whole army will be buried there. So it will be called the valley of Gogs troops.

<sup>12</sup>The people of Israel will be burying them there for seven months to make the land clean.

<sup>13</sup>All the common people will be burying them. The people of Israel will be honored on the day of my victory, declares the Almighty LORD.

<sup>14</sup>"People will be chosen to go through the land and make it clean. With the help of others they will bury the dead soldiers

that are still on the ground. At the end of seven months they will begin their search.

<sup>15</sup>Whenever they go through the land and see a human bone, they will set up a marker beside it until the grave diggers have buried that bone in the valley of Gogs troops.

<sup>16</sup>(A city named Hamonah will also be there.) In this way they will cleanse the land.

<sup>17</sup>"Son of man, this is what the Almighty LORD says: Tell every kind of bird and every wild animal, Assemble, and come together from all around for the sacrifice that I'm preparing for you. It will be a huge feast on the mountains of Israel. You can eat meat and drink blood there.

<sup>18</sup>You can eat the meat of warriors and drink the blood of the princes of the earth. All of them will be killed like rams, lambs, goats, bulls and all the best animals of Bashan.

<sup>19</sup>You can eat the best meat until you are full and drink blood until you are drunk at the sacrifice that I am preparing for you.

<sup>20</sup>At my table you will be filled with horses and riders, warriors, and soldiers of every kind, declares the Almighty LORD.

<sup>21</sup>"I will show my greatness among the nations. All the nations will see how I will turn my power against them to punish them.

<sup>22</sup>From that day on, the people of Israel will know that I am the LORD their God.

<sup>23</sup>Then the nations will know that the people of Israel went into captivity because they did wrong and rebelled against me. So I hid my face from them and handed them over to their enemies. They were killed in battle.

<sup>24</sup>I paid them back for their uncleanness and their sins, and I hid my face from them.

<sup>25</sup>"So this is what the Almighty LORD says: Now I will bring back Jacobs captives and have compassion for the whole nation of Israel. I will stand up for my holy name.

<sup>26</sup>When they live safely in a land where no one will frighten them, they will forget their shame and all the unfaithful things they have done against me.

<sup>27</sup> I will bring them back from the other nations and gather them from the countries of their enemies. Many nations will see that I am holy.

<sup>28</sup> Then my people will know that I am the LORD their God. I sent them into captivity among the nations, and I brought them back again to their land. I left none of them behind.

<sup>29</sup> I will no longer hide my face from them, because I will pour out my Spirit on the nation of Israel, declares the Almighty LORD."

**40**<sup>1</sup> It was the tenth day of the month in the beginning of the twentyfifth year of our captivity and fourteen years after Jerusalem was captured. At that time the LORDS power came over me, and he brought me to Jerusalem.

<sup>2</sup> In visions, God brought me to Israel and set me down on a very high mountain. On the south side of the mountain were some buildings that looked like those in a city.

<sup>3</sup> He brought me closer. I saw a man who looked like he was covered with bronze. The man was holding a linen

tape measure and a measuring stick, and he stood in a gateway.

<sup>4</sup>He said to me, "Son of man, look with your eyes, and listen with your ears. Pay close attention to everything I'm going to show you. You were brought here to be shown these things. Tell the nation of Israel everything that you see."

<sup>5</sup>I saw a wall that surrounded the temple. The man had a measuring stick that was 10 feet long. He measured the wall. It was 10 feet thick and 10 feet high.

<sup>6</sup>Then the man went to the gateway that faced east. He went up its steps and measured the entrance to the gateway. It was 10 feet wide.

<sup>7</sup>There were also guardrooms. Each guardroom was 10 feet long and 10 feet wide. The space between the guardrooms was 9 feet thick. And the entrance to the gateway by the entrance hall of the temple was 10 feet wide.

<sup>8</sup>He also measured the entrance hall of the gateway.

<sup>9</sup>It extended 14 feet from the temple. Its recessed walls were 3 feet thick. The gateway's entrance hall faced the temple.

<sup>10</sup>Now, there were three guardrooms on each side of the eastern gateway. All three rooms on each side were the same size, and the recessed walls on each side were the same size.

<sup>11</sup>Then the man measured the width of the entrance to the gateway. It was 17 feet wide, and the gateway was 23 feet long.

<sup>12</sup>There was a barrier about 21 inches in front of each guardroom. The guardrooms were 10 feet square.

<sup>13</sup>He measured the gateway from the top of one guardroom to the top of the opposite guardroom. It was 44 feet wide from one door to the opposite door.

<sup>14</sup>He also measured the entrance hall. It was 35 feet wide. In front of the entrance hall to the gateway was a courtyard on all sides.

<sup>15</sup>The total length of the gateway from the front of the outer part to the front of the inner part of the entrance hall was 87 feet.

<sup>16</sup>The guardrooms and recessed walls inside the gateway had small windows all around. The entrance hall also had windows all around on the inside.

Pictures of palm trees were carved on the recessed walls.

<sup>17</sup>Then the man brought me into the outer courtyard. I saw rooms there and pavement all around the courtyard. There were 30 rooms along the edge of the pavement.

<sup>18</sup>The pavement in the lower courtyard ran alongside the gateways. It was as wide as it was long.

<sup>19</sup>The man measured the distance from the inside of the lower gateway to the outside of the inner courtyard. It was 175 feet from east to north.

<sup>20</sup>Then the man measured the length and width of the gateway, leading to the outer courtyard. This was the gateway that faced north.

<sup>21</sup>Its three guardrooms, its recessed walls, and its entrance hall were the same size as those in the east gateway. The gateway was 87 feet long and 44 feet wide.

<sup>22</sup>Its windows, recessed walls, and palm tree pictures were the same size as those in the east gateway. Seven steps went up to it and led to its entrance hall.

<sup>23</sup>The inner courtyard had a gateway opposite the north gate just like the east gateway. The man measured the distance from one gate to the other gate. It was 175 feet.

<sup>24</sup>Then the man led me to the south side, and I saw a gateway that faced south. He measured its recessed walls and its entrance hall. They were the same size as those of the other gateways.

<sup>25</sup>The gateway and its entrance hall had windows on all sides like the windows in the other gateways. It was 87 feet long and 44 feet wide.

<sup>26</sup>Seven steps went up to it and led to its entrance hall. Pictures of palm trees were carved on the recessed walls, one picture on each side.

<sup>27</sup>The inner courtyard had a gateway facing south. The man measured the distance from the gateway on the south side to its opposite gateway. It was 175 feet.

<sup>28</sup>Then the man brought me to the inner courtyard through the south gateway. He measured the south gateway. It was the same size as the others.

<sup>29</sup> Its guardrooms, recessed walls, and entrance hall were the same size as the other gateways. The guardrooms and the entrance hall had windows all around. The gateway was 87 feet long and 44 feet wide.

<sup>30</sup> There were entrance halls all around the inner courtyard. They were all 44 feet long and 9 feet wide.

<sup>31</sup> The entrance halls faced the outer courtyard. Pictures of palm trees were carved on the recessed walls, and eight steps led up to each gateway.

<sup>32</sup> Then the man brought me to the east side of the inner courtyard. He measured the gateway. It was the same size as the others.

<sup>33</sup> Its guardrooms, recessed walls, and entrance halls were the same size as those of the other gateways. Its guardrooms and entrance hall had windows all around. The gateway was 87 feet long and 44 feet wide.

<sup>34</sup> Its entrance hall faced the outer courtyard. Pictures of palm trees were carved on the recessed walls, and eight steps led up to the gateway.

<sup>35</sup> Then the man brought me to the north gateway. He measured it. It was the same size as the others.

<sup>36</sup> Its guardrooms, recessed walls, and entrance hall had windows all around. The gateway was 87 feet long and 44 feet wide.

<sup>37</sup> Its recessed walls faced the outer courtyard. Pictures of palm trees were carved on the recessed walls, and eight steps led up to the gateway.

<sup>38</sup> There was a room with a door that opened toward the entrance hall of the gateway. This is the room where the priests washed the animals for the burnt offerings.

<sup>39</sup> In the entrance hall of the gateway there were two tables on each side of the room. On these tables the animals were slaughtered for burnt offerings, offerings for sin, and guilt offerings.

<sup>40</sup> On each side of the entrance to the north gateway there were two tables, and on the other side of the entrance hall of the gateway there were two tables.

<sup>41</sup> So there were four tables on each side of the gateway, eight tables in all, on which they slaughtered animals.

<sup>42</sup>There were four tables made of cut stone for burnt offerings. They were 3 feet long, 3 feet wide, and 21 inches high. On these tables the priests laid the utensils that were used to slaughter animals for burnt offerings and sacrifices.

<sup>43</sup>Doublepronged hooks, three inches long, were attached to the wall all around the room, and the tables were for the meat of the animals.

<sup>44</sup>Outside the gateways to the inner courtyard were the rooms for the singers in the inner courtyards. One room was at the side of the north gateway. It faced south. The other room was at the side of the south gateway. It faced north.

<sup>45</sup>The man said to me, "This room that faces south is for the priests who serve in the temple.

<sup>46</sup>The room that faces north is for the priests who serve at the altar. These priests are Zadoks descendants. They are the only Levites who are able to come near the LORD and serve him."

<sup>47</sup>The man measured the courtyard. It was a perfect square 175 feet long and 175 feet wide. And the altar was in front of the temple.

<sup>48</sup>Then the man brought me to the entrance hall of the temple and measured its recessed walls. They were 9 feet on each side. The gateway was 24 feet wide, and the walls on each side were 5 feet wide.

<sup>49</sup>The entrance hall was 35 feet long and 21 feet wide. Steps led up to it. Pillars stood by the recessed walls, one on each side of the entrance hall.

**41** <sup>1</sup>Then the man brought me into the holy place in the temple and measured the recessed walls. They were 10 feet wide on each side.

<sup>2</sup>The entrance was 17 feet wide, and on each side of the entrance the walls were 9 feet wide. Then he measured the length of the holy place. It was 70 feet long and 35 feet wide.

<sup>3</sup>Then the man went inside and measured the passageway. It was 3 feet thick. The entrance was 10 feet high and 12 feet wide.

<sup>4</sup>Then he measured the room at the end of the holy place. It was 35 feet long and 35 feet wide. The man said to me, "This is the most holy place."

<sup>5</sup>Next, the man measured the temple wall. It was 10 feet wide. The width of each side room around the temple was 7 feet.

<sup>6</sup>The rooms were arranged on three different stories. There were 30 rooms on each story. These rooms had supports all the way around the temple wall, but these supports were not fastened to the temple wall.

<sup>7</sup>The side rooms grew wider all the way around as they went up, story after story. The surrounding structure went from story to story all around the temple. The structure grew wider as it went higher. A stairway went from the first story through the second story to the third story.

<sup>8</sup>I also saw a raised base all around the temple. This base was the foundation for the side rooms. It measured the full length of the measuring rod, 10 feet.

<sup>9</sup>The outer wall of the side rooms was 9 feet thick. There was an open area between the side rooms connected to the temple

<sup>10</sup>and the priests rooms. It was 35 feet wide and went all around the temple.

<sup>11</sup> The doors in the side rooms were entrances into the open area. There was one door to the north and another to the south. The base of the open area was 9 feet wide all the way around.

<sup>12</sup> At the far end of the open area, on the west side of the temple, was a building 122 feet wide. The wall of the building was 9 feet thick all the way around, and it was 157 feet long.

<sup>13</sup> Then the man measured the temple. It was 175 feet long. This included the open area with the building and its walls. All together it was 175 feet long.

<sup>14</sup> The eastern side of the temple, including the open area, was also 175 feet wide.

<sup>15</sup> He also measured the length of the building facing the courtyard on the west side along with its corridors on both sides. It was 175 feet long. The holy place and the most holy place were paneled.

<sup>16</sup> The doorposts, the small windows, and the corridors of all three stories were paneled. The walls, from the floor up to the windows, were paneled.

<sup>17</sup>In the space above the door to the most holy place and on the walls all around it,

<sup>18</sup>there were pictures of angels and palm trees. Palm trees were positioned between each of the angels, and each angel had two faces:

<sup>19</sup>the face of a man, which was turned toward a palm tree on one side, and the face of a lion, which was turned toward a palm tree on the other side. These pictures were carved all around the temple.

<sup>20</sup>Pictures of angels and palm trees were carved on the walls from the floor to the space above the door.

<sup>21</sup>The doorframes in the holy place were square. In front of the most holy place was something similar.

<sup>22</sup>There was a wooden altar, 5 feet high and 3 feet wide. Its corners, its base, and its sides were made of wood. Then the man told me, "This is the table that is in the presence of the LORD."

<sup>23</sup>The holy place and the most holy place had two doors.

<sup>24</sup>Each of the doors were double doors that swung open.

<sup>25</sup> Pictures of angels and palm trees were carved on the doors of the holy place as on the walls. There was a wooden roof hanging over the outer entrance hall.

<sup>26</sup> There were small windows and palm trees on both sides of the entrance hall, on the side rooms of the temple, and on the roofs.

**42** <sup>1</sup> Then the man led me out toward the north to the outer courtyard. He brought me to the side rooms opposite both the open area and the northern building.

<sup>2</sup> The building that faced north was 175 feet long and 87 feet wide.

<sup>3</sup> Opposite the inner courtyard was an area that was 35 feet wide, and opposite the pavement of the outer courtyard were corridors facing corridors on all three stories.

<sup>4</sup> In front of the side rooms was a walkway, 17 feet wide and 175 feet long. The doors of these side rooms faced north.

<sup>5</sup> The side rooms on the third story were narrower than those on the first or second stories of the building because

the corridors took space away from them.

<sup>6</sup>The rooms were in three stories. They didn't have pillars like the pillars in the courtyards. That is why the rooms on the third story were set farther back than those on the first and second stories.

<sup>7</sup>There was a wall which ran parallel to the side rooms and the outer courtyard. It ran alongside the side rooms for 87 feet.

<sup>8</sup>The row of rooms in the outer courtyard was 87 feet long. The rooms that faced the temple were 175 feet long.

<sup>9</sup>These lower side rooms had an entrance on the east side. A person was able to enter the outer courtyard through them.

<sup>10</sup>There were side rooms parallel to the wall of the courtyard on the south side. They faced the open area and the building.

<sup>11</sup>There was a walkway in front of them like the one that was in front of the side rooms on the north side. These side rooms were as long and as wide as

the northern rooms. They had the same exits, dimensions, and doors.

<sup>12</sup>The doors to the south rooms were the same as the doors to the north rooms. There was a doorway at the other end of the walkway that was parallel to the corresponding wall that ran eastward. People entered through that doorway.

<sup>13</sup>Then the man said to me, "The northern and southern side rooms that face the open area are holy rooms. These rooms are where the priests who come near the LORD eat the holiest offerings. Because these rooms are holy, the priests keep the holiest offerings there: the grain offerings, the offerings for sin, and the guilt offerings.

<sup>14</sup>Once the priests enter the holy place, they must not go out of the holy place into the outer courtyard until they leave behind the clothes that they wore as they served. These clothes are holy. The priests must put on other clothes. Then they can go into the area that is for the people."

<sup>15</sup>When the man had finished measuring the inner part of the temple

area, he led me out through the east gate. Then he measured all the way around the outer area.

<sup>16</sup>He measured the east side with a measuring stick. It was 875 feet long according to the measuring stick.

<sup>17</sup>He measured the north side. It was 875 feet long according to the measuring stick.

<sup>18</sup>He measured the south side. It was 875 feet long according to the measuring stick.

<sup>19</sup>He came around to the west side and measured it. It was 875 feet long according to the measuring stick.

<sup>20</sup>So he measured all four sides. There was a wall all around it. The wall was 875 feet long and 875 feet wide. It separated what was holy from what was unholy.

**43**<sup>1</sup>Then the man took me to the east gate.

<sup>2</sup>I saw the glory of the God of Israel coming from the east. His voice was like the sound of rushing water, and the earth was shining because of his glory.

<sup>3</sup>This vision was like the one I saw when he came to destroy Jerusalem and

like the one I saw by the Chebar River. I immediately bowed down.

<sup>4</sup>The LORDS glory came into the temple through the east gate.

<sup>5</sup>The Spirit lifted me and brought me into the inner courtyard. I saw the LORDS glory fill the temple.

<sup>6</sup>I heard someone speaking to me from inside the temple while the man was standing beside me.

<sup>7</sup>The voice said to me, "Son of man, this is the place where my throne is and the place where my feet rest. This is where I will live among the Israelites forever. Then the people of Israel and their kings will no longer dishonor my holy name by acting like prostitutes, nor will they dishonor it with the dead bodies of their kings.

<sup>8</sup>They put their doorway by my doorway and their doorposts by my doorposts. Only a wall separated me from them. They dishonored my holy name because of the disgusting things that they have done. So I destroyed them in my anger.

<sup>9</sup>Now they must stop acting like prostitutes and take the dead bodies of

their kings far away from me. Then I will live among them forever.

<sup>10</sup>"Son of man, describe this temple to the people of Israel. Then they will be ashamed because of their sins. Let them study the plans.

<sup>11</sup>Suppose they are ashamed of everything that they have done. Then show them the design of the temple, its arrangements, its exits and entrances its entire design. Tell them about all its rules and regulations. Then write these things down for them so that they can remember its design and follow all its rules.

<sup>12</sup>"This is a regulation of the temple: The whole area all the way around the top of the mountain is most holy. Yes, this is a regulation of the temple."

<sup>13</sup>These are the measurements of the altar, using royal measurements. (The royal measuring stick was 21 inches long.) The base of the altar was 21 inches high and 21 inches wide. All around the edge of the altar was a rim measuring 9 inches wide. This was the height of the altar:

<sup>14</sup>From the base on the ground to the lower ledge it was 3 feet high, and from the lower ledge to the upper ledge it was 7 feet high and 21 inches wide.

<sup>15</sup>The place where the sacrifices were burned was 7 feet high. There were four horns above it.

<sup>16</sup>It was square, 21 feet wide and 21 feet long.

<sup>17</sup>The upper ledge was also square. It was 24 feet long and 24 feet wide. It had a rim all the way around that was 10 inches wide. Its base was 21 inches. The steps to the altar faced east.

<sup>18</sup>Then the man said to me, "Son of man, this is what the Almighty LORD says: These are the rules for sacrificing burnt offerings and for sprinkling blood on the altar after the altar is built.

<sup>19</sup>Give a young bull to the priests as an offering for sin. These priests are Zadoks descendants, men from the tribe of Levi, who can come near me and serve me.

<sup>20</sup>Take some of the bulls blood, and put it on the altars four horns, on the four corners of the ledge, and on the rim all the way around the altar. When you do

this, you will remove sin from the altar and make peace with the LORD.

<sup>21</sup> Then take a young bull as an offering for sin, and burn it in the place appointed near the temple, outside the holy place.

<sup>22</sup> "On the second day bring a male goat that has no defects as an offering for sin. Remove sin from the altar as you did with the young bull.

<sup>23</sup> When you finish removing sin, offer a young bull and a ram that have no defects.

<sup>24</sup> Offer them to the LORD. The priests must throw salt on them and offer them as burnt offerings to the LORD.

<sup>25</sup> Every day for seven days you must sacrifice a goat, a young bull, and a ram from the flock as an offering for sin. They must be animals that have no defects.

<sup>26</sup> For seven days the priests should make peace with the LORD at the altar, purify it, and consecrate it.

<sup>27</sup> When those days are over, on the eighth day, the priests must sacrifice burnt offerings and fellowship offerings on the altar. Then I will accept them, declares the Almighty LORD."

**44**<sup>1</sup> Then the man took me back to the outer east gate of the holy place, and the gate was shut.

<sup>2</sup> The LORD said to me, "This gate will stay shut and will not be opened. No one may enter through it because the LORD God of Israel entered through it. It must be kept shut.

<sup>3</sup> Only the prince may sit there and eat food in the presence of the LORD. He will enter through the entrance hall of the gateway and leave the same way."

<sup>4</sup> The man brought me through the north gate in front of the temple. When I looked, I saw the LORDS glory fill the LORDS temple. I immediately bowed down.

<sup>5</sup> The LORD said to me, "Son of man, pay close attention. Look, and listen to everything I'm going to tell you. Listen to all the rules and regulations for the LORDS temple. Pay close attention to everyone who enters the temple and leaves from the holy place.

<sup>6</sup> Tell the rebellious people of Israel, This is what the Almighty LORD says: I've had enough of all the disgusting things that you have done, people of Israel.

<sup>7</sup>You brought godless foreigners into my holy place. You dishonored my temple when you offered fat and blood to me. You rejected my promise so that you could do all your disgusting things.

<sup>8</sup>You didnt take care of my holy things. You put foreigners in charge of my temple.

<sup>9</sup>So this is what the Almighty LORD says: Any godless foreigner who lives among the Israelites may not enter my holy place.

<sup>10</sup>"Some Levites went far away from me when Israel wandered off to follow their idols. They must be punished for their sins.

<sup>11</sup>They could have served in my holy place. They could have guarded the gates of the temple. They could have served in the temple by slaughtering the animals for the burnt offerings and the sacrifices for the people. They could have stood in front of the people and served them.

<sup>12</sup>But they served the people by standing in front of their idols and by making Israel fall into sin. So I raised my hand and swore that they would

be punished for their sins, declares the LORD.

<sup>13</sup>They must not come near me and serve me as priests. They must not come near any of my holy things or my most holy things. They must suffer disgrace because of the disgusting things that they have done.

<sup>14</sup>I will assign them all of the less important work in the temple.

<sup>15</sup>"But the priests who are Levites and descendants of Zadok took care of my holy place when the Israelites wandered away from me. They may come near me and serve me, and they may stand in my presence. They may bring fat and blood to me, declares the Almighty LORD.

<sup>16</sup>They may enter my holy place, come near my table to serve me, and take care of everything I gave them.

<sup>17</sup>When they enter the gateways to the inner courtyard, they must wear linen clothes. They must have no wool on them while they serve in the gateways to the inner courtyard and in the temple.

<sup>18</sup>They must wear linen turbans on their heads and linen undergarments.

They must not wear anything that makes them sweat.

<sup>19</sup>When they go out among the people in the outer courtyard, they must take off the clothes that they wore as they served. They must leave their clothes in the side rooms of the holy place and put on other clothes so that they do not transfer the holiness from their clothes to the people.

<sup>20</sup>"They must not shave their heads or let their hair grow long. They must keep the hair on their heads trimmed.

<sup>21</sup>None of the priests may drink wine when they enter the inner courtyard.

<sup>22</sup>They must not marry widows or women who have been divorced. They may marry only virgins from the nation of Israel or widows of priests.

<sup>23</sup>They must teach my people the difference between what is holy and what is unholy. They must show the people how to tell the difference between what is clean and what is unclean.

<sup>24</sup>In all disputes the priests must act as judges and make decisions based on my laws. They must obey my rules and

my regulations at all my festivals. They must observe holy days to worship me.

<sup>25</sup>"A priest must not make himself unclean by going near a dead body. But a priest may become unclean if the dead person is his father, mother, son, daughter, brother, or unmarried sister.

<sup>26</sup>After a priest is made clean, he must wait seven days.

<sup>27</sup>When he enters the inner courtyard of the holy place to serve in the holy place, he must bring his offering for sin, declares the Almighty LORD.

<sup>28</sup>"The priests will have no inheritance. I am their inheritance. Don't give them any possessions in Israel. The priests belong to me.

<sup>29</sup>They will eat grain offerings, offerings for sin, and guilt offerings. Everything in Israel that is devoted to the LORD will belong to them.

<sup>30</sup>The priests should have the best of all the first ripened fruits. The best of every gift from all your contributions must go to the priests. The best of your dough must go to the priests. This will cause a blessing to rest on your home.

<sup>31</sup> The priests must never eat any bird or animal that has died naturally or was killed by other wild animals.

**45** <sup>1</sup> "Divide the land by drawing lots for the property you will inherit. Set aside an area 43,750 feet long and 35,000 feet wide for the LORD. The entire area will be holy.

<sup>2</sup> An area of 875 feet square will be for the holy place with an open area 87 feet wide.

<sup>3</sup> Measure off an area 43,750 feet long and 17,500 feet wide. The holy place, that is, the most holy place, will be in this area.

<sup>4</sup> This holy part of the land will belong to the priests who serve in the holy place, the priests who come near to serve the LORD. They will use this place for their homes, and it will be the location for the holy place.

<sup>5</sup> An area 43,750 feet long and 17,500 feet wide will belong to the Levites who serve in the temple. It will be given to them so that they have cities to live in.

<sup>6</sup> "You must designate an area 8,750 feet wide and 43,750 feet long as the city's property. It will be located

alongside the holy area. It will belong to all the people of Israel.

<sup>7</sup>"The prince will have all the land on both sides of the holy area and on both sides of the property belonging to the city. From the western boundary of the holy area, his land will extend to the Mediterranean Sea. From the eastern boundary of the holy area, his land will extend to the eastern border of the country. His territory will be as large as the territory of one of the tribes.

<sup>8</sup>This land will belong to the prince in Israel. Then my princes will no longer oppress my people. They will give land to each tribe of the nation of Israel.

<sup>9</sup>"This is what the Almighty LORD says: I've had enough of you, you princes of Israel. Stop your violence and looting, and do what is fair and right. Stop evicting my people, declares the Almighty LORD.

<sup>10</sup>You must have honest scales and honest dry and liquid measures.

<sup>11</sup>The dry and liquid measures must always be the same: The ephah and the bath should hold the same as onetenth

of a homer. The homer must be the standard measure.

<sup>12</sup>One shekel must weigh 20 gerahs. One mina must weigh 60 shekels.

<sup>13</sup>"This is the contribution you must give to the LORD: seventeen percent of your wheat and seventeen percent of your barley.

<sup>14</sup>You must give one percent of your olive oil using the standard measure.

<sup>15</sup>You must take one sheep out of every 200 from the wellwatered pastures of Israel. You must sacrifice them with grain offerings, burnt offerings, and fellowship offerings to make peace with the LORD, declares the Almighty LORD.

<sup>16</sup>All the common people must give this contribution to the prince in Israel.

<sup>17</sup>Then the prince is responsible to provide burnt offerings, grain offerings, and wine offerings at the annual festivals, the New Moon Festivals, the weekly days of worship, and all the other appointed festivals of the nation of Israel. He must prepare offerings for sin, grain offerings, burnt offerings, and fellowship offerings to make peace with the LORD for the nation of Israel.

<sup>18</sup>"This is what the Almighty LORD says: On the first day of the first month, take a young bull that has no defects and remove sin from the holy place.

<sup>19</sup>The priest must take some blood from the offering for sin and put it on the doorposts of the temple, on the four corners of the ledge of the altar, and on the doorposts of the gateways of the inner courtyard.

<sup>20</sup>You must do the same on the seventh day of the month for everyone who unintentionally does something wrong and is unaware of it. So you must make peace with the LORD for the temple.

<sup>21</sup>"On the fourteenth day of the first month, you will celebrate the Passover, a festival lasting seven days when unleavened bread is eaten.

<sup>22</sup>At that time the prince must prepare for himself and for all the common people a young bull as an offering for sin.

<sup>23</sup>Every day during the seven days of the festival, he must prepare burnt offerings for the LORD: seven young bulls that have no defects, seven rams

that have no defects, and one male goat as an offering for sin.

<sup>24</sup>He must also give as a grain offering a halfbushel for each young bull and a halfbushel for each ram. He must also give one gallon of olive oil for every halfbushel of grain.

<sup>25</sup>On the fifteenth day of the seventh month, at the Festival of Booths, he must do the same as on those seven days. He must prepare the same offerings for sin, burnt offerings, grain offerings, and olive oil.

**46** <sup>1</sup>"This is what the Almighty LORD says: The east gate of the inner courtyard must be closed during the six working days, but it must be opened on the weekly day of worship. It must also be opened on the New Moon Festival.

<sup>2</sup>The prince must enter from the outside through the entrance hall of the gateway. He must stand by the doorposts of the gateway. Then the priests must prepare the prince's burnt offerings and fellowship offerings. He must worship at the entrance of the gateway and then leave. The gate must not be closed until evening.

<sup>3</sup>The common people must worship at the door of the gateway in the presence of the LORD on the weekly days of worship and on New Moon Festivals.

<sup>4</sup>The prince must offer to the LORD six lambs that have no defects and one ram that has no defects as a burnt offering on the day of worship.

<sup>5</sup>The grain offering that is to be brought with the ram must be a halfbushel, and the grain offering that is to be brought with the lambs must be whatever the prince can bring. One gallon of olive oil must be brought with each halfbushel of grain.

<sup>6</sup>On the first day of the month, the burnt offering must be one young bull, six lambs, and one ram all animals that have no defects.

<sup>7</sup>With each young bull and each ram the offering must include a halfbushel of grain, and with each lamb the offering must be whatever the prince wants to bring. One gallon of olive oil must be offered with each halfbushel of grain.

<sup>8</sup>When the prince enters, he must enter through the entrance hall of the gateway. He must enter and leave the same way.

<sup>9</sup>"The people will enter the LORDS presence at the time of the appointed festivals. Those entering through the north gate to worship must leave through the south gate. Those entering through the south gate must leave through the north gate. They must not leave through the same gate they entered. They must leave through the opposite gate.

<sup>10</sup>The prince must be among them. When they enter, he must enter. When they leave, he must leave.

<sup>11</sup>"On festival days and at appointed festivals, a grain offering of a halfbushel must be brought with each young bull, and a halfbushel must be brought with each ram. But with the lambs, the prince may bring whatever he wants to bring. One gallon of olive oil must be brought with each halfbushel of grain.

<sup>12</sup>When the prince prepares a freewill burnt offering, either a burnt offering or a fellowship offering to the LORD, the east gate must be opened for him. He must sacrifice burnt offerings and fellowship offerings as he does on the day of worship. When he leaves, the gate must be shut after him.

<sup>13</sup>"Prepare a yearold lamb that has no defects every day as a burnt offering to the LORD. Do this every morning.

<sup>14</sup>Also, prepare a grain offering with it every morning: threeandathird quarts of grain and oneandathird quarts of olive oil to moisten the flour. It will be a grain offering dedicated to the LORD. These rules are to be followed always.

<sup>15</sup>Prepare the lamb, the grain offering, and the olive oil every morning as a daily burnt offering.

<sup>16</sup>"This is what the Almighty LORD says: Suppose the prince offers one of his sons a gift from his property. The gift will belong to his descendants because it is their inheritance.

<sup>17</sup>But suppose the prince offers a gift from his property to one of his servants. The gift will belong to the servant only until the year of freedom. Then the gift will go back to the prince. Only his sons can inherit his property.

<sup>18</sup>The prince must not take any of the peoples property. He must not force them to give up their property. He must give his own property as an inheritance

to his sons so that none of my people will be separated from their property."

<sup>19</sup>The man brought me through a passage beside the gateway to the side rooms that faced north. These rooms were reserved for the priests. He showed me a place on the west side of the rooms.

<sup>20</sup>He said to me, "This is the place where the priests must boil the meat for the guilt offering and the offering for sin. This is the place where they must bake grain offerings so that they don't have to bring the offerings into the outer courtyard. This way they won't transfer holiness to the people."

<sup>21</sup>Then the man led me to the outer courtyard and took me past the four corners of the courtyard. I saw that in each corner of the courtyard there was a smaller courtyard.

<sup>22</sup>The smaller courtyards that were in each of the four corners of the courtyard were 60 feet long and 45 feet wide. All four of the smaller courtyards in the corners of the courtyard were the same size.

<sup>23</sup> Around each of the four courtyards were stone walls, and these walls were equipped with fireplaces.

<sup>24</sup> Then the man said to me, "These are the kitchens where the temple servants must boil the peoples sacrifices."

**47** <sup>1</sup> Then the man took me back to the door of the temple. I saw water flowing from under the entrance of the temple toward the east. (The temple faced east.) The water was flowing under the south side of the temple, south of the altar.

<sup>2</sup> Then he led me through the north gate and around to the outer east gate. The water was flowing down the south side of the gate.

<sup>3</sup> With a measuring line in his hand, the man went eastward. He measured off 1,500 feet and led me through the water. The water came up to my ankles.

<sup>4</sup> Then he measured off another 1,500 feet and led me through the water. The water came up to my knees. He measured off another 1,500 feet and led me through the water. The water came up to my waist.

<sup>5</sup>Then he measured another 1,500 feet. But the water had risen so much that it became a river which I couldnt cross. The river was too deep to cross except by swimming.

<sup>6</sup>Then he asked me, "Son of man, do you see this?"

<sup>7</sup>Then the man led me back along the bank of the river. As I went back, I saw many trees on both sides of the river.

<sup>8</sup>Then the man said to me, "This water flows through the land to the east, down into the Jordan Valley, and into the Dead Sea. When the water flows into the Dead Sea, it will replace the salt water there with fresh water.

<sup>9</sup>Wherever the river flows, there will be many fish and animals. The river will make the water in the Dead Sea fresh. Wherever the river flows, it will bring life.

<sup>10</sup>From En Gedi to En Eglaim people will be standing on the shore of the sea with their fishing nets spread out. As many kinds of fish will be there as there are in the Mediterranean Sea.

<sup>11</sup> But the water in the swamps and marshes wont become fresh. It will remain salty.

<sup>12</sup> All kinds of fruit trees will grow on both sides of the river. Their leaves wont wither, and they wont fail to produce fruit. Each month they will produce fresh fruit because this water flows from the holy place. The fruit will be good food, and the leaves will be used for healing."

<sup>13</sup> This is what the Almighty LORD says: These are the borders of the land that is to be divided among the 12 tribes of Israel. Joseph gets two parts.

<sup>14</sup> Divide the land equally. I raised my hand and swore that I would give the land to your ancestors. So this land will be your inheritance.

<sup>15</sup> This is the northern border for the land: On the north side the border will run from the Mediterranean Sea all the way to Hethlon and Hamath Pass. It will run through the city of Zedad and through

<sup>16</sup> Berothah and Sibraim, which are between the borders of Damascus and Hamath. It will run to Hazer Hatticon, which is on the border of Hauran.

<sup>17</sup> So the border will run from the Mediterranean Sea to Hazar Enon on the border of Damascus. The border of Hamath will lie to the north. This is the north side.

<sup>18</sup> On the east side the border will run between Hauran and Damascus. The Jordan River will serve as the border between Gilead and the land of Israel. The border will continue from the Dead Sea down to Tamar. This is the east side.

<sup>19</sup> On the south side the border will run from Tamar to the oasis at Meribah in Kadesh along the ravine to the Mediterranean Sea. This is the southern border.

<sup>20</sup> On the west side the Mediterranean Sea is the border up to a point opposite Hamath Pass. This is the west side.

<sup>21</sup> Divide this land among yourselves for each of the tribes of Israel.

<sup>22</sup> Divide it by drawing lots. This land will be for you. It will also be for the foreign residents who live among you and have given birth to children while they lived with you. Think of them as Israelites. They will draw lots with you

for their inheritance among the tribes of Israel.

<sup>23</sup>Foreign residents will receive their share of the inheritance with the people of the tribe among whom they are living, declares the Almighty LORD.

**48**<sup>1</sup>These are the names of the tribes. Beginning at the northern border, Dan will have one part of the land. It will extend from the road to Hethlon to Hamath Pass and Hazar Enon, on the northern border of Damascus near Hamath, from the eastern border to the western border.

<sup>2</sup>Asher will have one part of the land and border Dan on the south. It will extend from the eastern border to the western border.

<sup>3</sup>Naphtali will have one part of the land and border Asher on the south. It will extend from the eastern border to the western border.

<sup>4</sup>Manasseh will have one part of the land and border Naphtali on the south. It will extend from the eastern border to the western border.

<sup>5</sup>Ephraim will have one part of the land and border Manasseh on the south. It

will extend from the eastern border to the western border.

<sup>6</sup>Reuben will have one part of the land and border Ephraim on the south. It will extend from the eastern border to the western border.

<sup>7</sup>Judah will have one part of the land and border Reuben on the south. It will extend from the eastern border to the western border.

<sup>8</sup>The land that you set aside as a special gift for the LORD will border Judah on the south. It will be 43,750 feet wide, and it will be as long as one of the sections of the tribes. It will extend from the eastern border to the western border, and the holy place will be in the middle of it.

<sup>9</sup>This special land that you set aside for the LORD will be 43,750 feet long and 17,500 feet wide.

<sup>10</sup>This holy area will belong to the priests. On the north side it will be 43,750 feet long. On the west side it will be 17,500 feet wide. On the east side it will be 17,500 feet wide. On the south side it will be 43,750 feet long. The

LORDS holy place will be in the middle of it.

<sup>11</sup> This land that has been set apart will belong to the priests who are descendants of Zadok. They took care of my holy place. They didnt wander away with the Israelites as the Levites did.

<sup>12</sup> So they will have a special portion from the land. It will be the holiest part of land, next to the land belonging to the Levites.

<sup>13</sup> Alongside the land belonging to the priests will be the land belonging to the Levites. It will be 43,750 feet long and 17,500 feet wide.

<sup>14</sup> They must not sell any of it or trade any of it. They must not let others have the best part of the land, because the land is the LORDS and it is holy.

<sup>15</sup> A strip of land, 8,750 feet wide by 43,750 feet long, will be left for cities, homes, and pastures. The city will be in the middle of it.

<sup>16</sup> These will be the measurements for the city: On the north side it will be 7,875 feet long. On the south side it will be 7,875 feet long. On the east side it

will be 7,875 feet wide. And on the west side it will be 7,875 feet wide.

<sup>17</sup>The city's pastureland will be 4,375 feet on the north, 4,375 feet on the south, 4,375 feet on the east, and 4,375 feet on the west.

<sup>18</sup>The rest of the land borders the holy area and runs lengthwise. This land will be 17,500 feet on its east side and 17,500 feet on its west side. It will be used to provide food for the city workers.

<sup>19</sup>City workers from all the tribes in Israel will farm it.

<sup>20</sup>The whole area will be 43,750 feet square. You must give this land as a special gift to the LORD along with the city property.

<sup>21</sup>Whatever is left on the east side and west side of the holy area and the city property will belong to the prince. This land will extend eastward from the holy area to the eastern border, and it will extend westward to the western border. Both of these areas are as long as one of the sections of the tribes. These areas belong to the prince, and the holy area with the holy place of the temple will be between them.

<sup>22</sup> So the Levites property and the citys property will be between the princes part of the land. What is between Judahs and Benjamins boundaries will belong to the prince.

<sup>23</sup> This is what the rest of the tribes will receive: Benjamin will have one part of the land. It will extend from the eastern border to the western border.

<sup>24</sup> Simeon will have one part of the land and border Benjamin on the south. It will extend from the eastern border to the western border.

<sup>25</sup> Issachar will have one part of the land and border Simeon on the south. It will extend from the eastern border to the western border.

<sup>26</sup> Zebulun will have one part of the land and border Issachar on the south. It will extend from the eastern border to the western border.

<sup>27</sup> Gad will have one part of the land and border Zebulun on the south. It will extend from the eastern border to the western border.

<sup>28</sup> The southern border of Gad will run south from Tamar to the oasis at Meribah

in Kadesh, and it will run along the Brook of Egypt to the Mediterranean Sea.

<sup>29</sup>This is the land you will divide as your inheritance among the tribes of Israel, and these are their areas, declares the Almighty LORD.

<sup>30</sup>These will be the exits for the city: The north side will be 7,875 feet long.

<sup>31</sup>The gates of the city will be named after the tribes of Israel. The three gates on the north side will be Reuben Gate, Judah Gate, and Levi Gate.

<sup>32</sup>The east side will be 7,875 feet long. The three gates on the east side will be Joseph Gate, Benjamin Gate, and Dan Gate.

<sup>33</sup>The south side will be 7,875 feet long. The three gates on the south side will be Simeon Gate, Issachar Gate, and Zebulun Gate.

<sup>34</sup>The west side will be 7,875 feet long. The three gates on the west side will be Gad Gate, Asher Gate, and Naphtali Gate.

<sup>35</sup>The city will measure about 31,500 feet all the way around. From then on the city's name will be: The LORD Is There.

# Daniel

**1** <sup>1</sup>In the third year of the reign of King Jehoiakim of Judah, King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon came to Jerusalem and attacked it.

<sup>2</sup>The Lord handed King Jehoiakim of Judah and some utensils from Gods temple over to Nebuchadnezzar. Nebuchadnezzar took the utensils to the temple of his god in Babylonia and put them in the temple treasury.

<sup>3</sup>The king told Ashpenaz, the chief of staff, to bring some of the Israelites, the royal family, and the nobility.

<sup>4</sup>They were to be young men who were healthy, goodlooking, knowledgeable in all subjects, wellinformed, intelligent, and able to serve in the kings palace. They were to be taught the language and literature of the Babylonians.

<sup>5</sup>The king arranged for them to get a daily allowance of the kings rich food and wine. They were to be trained for three

years. After that, they were to serve the king.

<sup>6</sup>Among these young men were some Judeans: Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah.

<sup>7</sup>The chief of staff gave them Babylonian names: To Daniel he gave the name Belteshazzar. To Hananiah he gave the name Shadrach. To Mishael he gave the name Meshach. And to Azariah he gave the name Abednego.

<sup>8</sup>Daniel made up his mind not to harm himself by eating the king's rich food and drinking the king's wine. So he asked the chief of staff for permission not to harm himself in this way.

<sup>9</sup>God made the chief of staff kind and compassionate toward Daniel.

<sup>10</sup>The chief of staff told Daniel, "I'm afraid of my master, the king. The king determined what you should eat and drink. If he sees that you look worse than the other young men your age, he would have my head cut off."

<sup>11</sup>The chief of staff put a supervisor in charge of Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah. Daniel said to the supervisor,

<sup>12</sup>"Please test us for ten days. Give us only vegetables to eat and water to drink.

<sup>13</sup>Then compare us to the young men who are eating the kings rich food. Decide how to treat us on the basis of how we look."

<sup>14</sup>The supervisor listened to them about this matter and tested them for ten days.

<sup>15</sup>After ten days they looked healthier and stronger than the young men who had been eating the kings rich food.

<sup>16</sup>So the supervisor took away the kings rich food and wine and gave them vegetables.

<sup>17</sup>God gave these four men knowledge, wisdom, and the ability to understand all kinds of literature. Daniel could also understand all kinds of visions and dreams.

<sup>18</sup>At the end of the threeyear training period, the chief of staff brought all the young men to Nebuchadnezzar.

<sup>19</sup>The king talked to them and found no one like Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah among all of them. So these four men served the king.

<sup>20</sup>Whenever the king asked them about things that required wisdom and insight, he found that they knew ten times more than all the magicians and psychics in his whole kingdom.

<sup>21</sup>Daniel served the royal palace until the first year of King Cyrus of Persia.

**2**<sup>1</sup>During the second year of Nebuchadnezzars reign, he had some dreams. He was troubled, but he stayed asleep.

<sup>2</sup>The king sent for the magicians, psychics, sorcerers, and astrologers so that they could tell him what he had dreamed. So they came to the king.

<sup>3</sup>The king said to them, "I had a dream, and Im troubled by it. I want to know what the dream was."

<sup>4</sup>The astrologers spoke to the king in Aramaic, "Your Majesty, may you live forever! Tell us the dream, and well interpret it for you."

<sup>5</sup>The king answered the astrologers, "I meant what I said! If you dont tell me the dream and its meaning, you will be torn limb from limb, and your houses will be turned into piles of rubble.

<sup>6</sup>But if you tell me the dream and its meaning, I will give you gifts, awards, and high honors. Now tell me the dream and its meaning."

<sup>7</sup>Once more they said, "Your Majesty, tell us the dream, and we'll tell you its meaning."

<sup>8</sup>The king replied, "I'm sure you're trying to buy some time because you know that I meant what I said."

<sup>9</sup>If you don't tell me the dream, you'll all receive the same punishment. You have agreed among yourselves to make up a phony explanation to give me, hoping that things will change. So tell me the dream. Then I'll know that you can explain its meaning to me."

<sup>10</sup>The astrologers answered the king, "No one on earth can tell the king what he asks. No other king, no matter how great and powerful, has ever asked such a thing of any magician, psychic, or astrologer."

<sup>11</sup>What you ask is difficult, Your Majesty. No one can tell what you dreamed except the gods, and they don't live with humans."

<sup>12</sup>This made the king so angry and furious that he gave an order to destroy all the wise advisers in Babylon.

<sup>13</sup>So a decree was issued that the wise advisers were to be killed, and some men were sent to find Daniel and his friends and kill them.

<sup>14</sup>While Arioch, the captain of the royal guard, was leaving to kill the wise advisers in Babylon, Daniel spoke to him using shrewd judgment.

<sup>15</sup>He asked Arioch, the royal official, "Why is the king's decree so harsh?" So Arioch explained everything to Daniel.

<sup>16</sup>Daniel went and asked the king to give him some time so that he could explain the dream's meaning.

<sup>17</sup>Then Daniel went home and told his friends Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah about this matter.

<sup>18</sup>He told them to ask the God of heaven to be merciful and to explain this secret to them so that they would not be destroyed with the rest of the wise advisers in Babylon.

<sup>19</sup>The secret was revealed to Daniel in a vision during the night. So Daniel praised the God of heaven.

<sup>20</sup>He said, "Praise Gods name from everlasting to everlasting because he is wise and powerful.

<sup>21</sup>He changes times and periods of history. He removes kings and establishes them. He gives wisdom to those who are wise and knowledge to those who have insight.

<sup>22</sup>He reveals deeply hidden things. He knows what is in the dark, and light lives with him.

<sup>23</sup>God of my ancestors, I thank and praise you. You gave me wisdom and power. You told me the answer to our question. You told us what the king wants to know."

<sup>24</sup>Then Daniel went to Arioch, whom the king had appointed to destroy Babylons wise advisers. Daniel told him, "Dont destroy Babylons wise advisers. Take me to the king, and Ill explain the dreams meaning to him."

<sup>25</sup>Arioch immediately took Daniel to the king. He told the king, "Ive found one of the captives from Judah who can explain the dreams meaning to you, Your Majesty."

<sup>26</sup>The king asked Daniel (who had been renamed Belteshazzar), "Can you tell me the dream I had and its meaning?"

<sup>27</sup>Daniel answered the king, "No wise adviser, psychic, magician, or fortuneteller can tell the king this secret.

<sup>28</sup>But there is a God in heaven who reveals secrets. He will tell King Nebuchadnezzar what is going to happen in the days to come. This is your dream, the vision you had while you were asleep:

<sup>29</sup>Your Majesty, while you were lying in bed, thoughts about what would happen in the future came to you. The one who reveals secrets told you what is going to happen.

<sup>30</sup>This secret wasn't revealed to me because I'm wiser than anyone else. It was revealed so that you could be told the meaning and so that you would know your innermost thoughts.

<sup>31</sup>"Your Majesty, you had a vision. You saw a large statue. This statue was very bright. It stood in front of you, and it looked terrifying.

<sup>32</sup>The head of this statue was made of fine gold. Its chest and arms were made

of silver. Its stomach and hips were made of bronze.

<sup>33</sup> Its legs were made of iron. Its feet were made partly of iron and partly of clay.

<sup>34</sup> While you were watching, a stone was cut out, but not by humans. It struck the statues iron and clay feet and smashed them.

<sup>35</sup> Then all at once, the iron, clay, bronze, silver, and gold were smashed. They became like husks on a threshing floor in summer. The wind carried them away, and not a trace of them could be found. But the stone that struck the statue became a large mountain which filled the whole world.

<sup>36</sup> This is the dream. Now we'll tell you its meaning.

<sup>37</sup> "Your Majesty, you are the greatest king. The God of heaven has given you a kingdom. He has given you power, strength, and honor.

<sup>38</sup> He has given you control over people, wild animals, and birds, wherever they live. He has made you ruler of them all. You are the head of gold.

<sup>39</sup> Another kingdom, inferior to yours, will rise to power after you. Then there will be a third kingdom, a kingdom of bronze, that will rule the whole world.

<sup>40</sup> There will also be a fourth kingdom. It will be as strong as iron. (Iron smashes and shatters everything.) As iron crushes things, this fourth kingdom will smash and crush all the other kingdoms.

<sup>41</sup> You also saw the feet and toes. They were partly potters clay and partly iron. This means that there will be a divided kingdom which has some of the firmness of iron. As you saw, iron was mixed with clay.

<sup>42</sup> The toes were partly iron and partly clay. Part of the kingdom will be strong, and part will be brittle.

<sup>43</sup> As you saw, iron was mixed with clay. So the two parts of the kingdom will mix by intermarrying, but they will not hold together any more than iron can mix with clay.

<sup>44</sup> "At the time of those kings, the God of heaven will establish a kingdom that will never be destroyed. No other people will be permitted to rule it. It will smash

all the other kingdoms and put an end to them. But it will be established forever.

<sup>45</sup>This is the stone that you saw cut out from a mountain, but not by humans. It smashed the iron, bronze, clay, silver, and gold. The great God has told you what will happen in the future, Your Majesty. The dream is true, and you can trust that this is its meaning."

<sup>46</sup>King Nebuchadnezzar immediately bowed down on the ground in front of Daniel. He ordered that gifts and offerings be given to Daniel.

<sup>47</sup>The king said to Daniel, "Your God is truly the greatest of gods, the Lord over kings. He can reveal secrets because you were able to reveal this secret."

<sup>48</sup>Then the king promoted Daniel and gave him many wonderful gifts. Nebuchadnezzar made Daniel governor of the whole province of Babylon and head of all Babylons wise advisers.

<sup>49</sup>With the kings permission, Daniel appointed Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego to govern the province of Babylon. But Daniel stayed at the kings court.

**3**<sup>1</sup> King Nebuchadnezzar made a gold statue 90 feet high and 9 feet wide. He set it up in a recessed area in the wall in the province of Babylon.

<sup>2</sup> King Nebuchadnezzar sent messengers to assemble the satraps, governors, mayors, military advisers, treasurers, judges, officers, and all the other provincial officials to dedicate the statue he had set up.

<sup>3</sup> Then the satraps, governors, mayors, military advisers, treasurers, judges, officers, and all the other provincial officials assembled to dedicate the statue King Nebuchadnezzar had set up. They stood in front of the statue.

<sup>4</sup> The herald called out loudly, "People of every province, nation, and language!

<sup>5</sup> When you hear the sound of rams horns, flutes, lyres, harps, and threestringed harps playing at the same time with all other kinds of instruments, bow down and worship the gold statue that King Nebuchadnezzar has set up.

<sup>6</sup> Whoever doesn't bow down and worship will immediately be thrown into a blazing furnace."

<sup>7</sup>As soon as they heard the sound of rams horns, flutes, lyres, harps, and threestringed harps with all other kinds of instruments, all the people from every province, nation, and language bowed down and worshiped the gold statue King Nebuchadnezzar had set up.

<sup>8</sup>After that happened, some astrologers came forward and brought charges against the Jews.

<sup>9</sup>They addressed King Nebuchadnezzar, "Your Majesty, may you live forever!

<sup>10</sup>Your Majesty, you gave an order that everyone who hears the sound of rams horns, flutes, lyres, harps, and threestringed harps playing at the same time with all other kinds of instruments should bow down and worship the gold statue.

<sup>11</sup>Your order said that whoever doesnt bow down and worship will be thrown into a blazing furnace.

<sup>12</sup>There are certain Jews whom you appointed to govern the province of Babylon: Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego. These men didnt obey your order, Your Majesty. They dont honor

your gods or worship the statue that you set up."

<sup>13</sup>Then, in a fit of rage and anger, Nebuchadnezzar summoned Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego. Immediately, they were brought to the king.

<sup>14</sup>Nebuchadnezzar asked them, "Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, is it true that you don't honor my gods or worship the gold statue that I set up?"

<sup>15</sup>When you hear the sound of the rams horns, flutes, lyres, harps, and threestringed harps playing at the same time with all other kinds of instruments, will you bow down and worship the gold statue I made? If you don't worship it, you will immediately be thrown into a blazing furnace. What god can save you from my power then?"

<sup>16</sup>Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego answered King Nebuchadnezzar, "We don't need to answer your last question.

<sup>17</sup>If our God, whom we honor, can save us from a blazing furnace and from your power, he will, Your Majesty.

<sup>18</sup>But if he doesn't, you should know, Your Majesty, we'll never honor your gods

or worship the gold statue that you set up."

<sup>19</sup> Nebuchadnezzar was so filled with anger toward Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego that his face turned red. He ordered that the furnace should be heated seven times hotter than normal.

<sup>20</sup> He told some soldiers from his army to tie up Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego so that they could be thrown into the blazing furnace.

<sup>21</sup> Then the three men were thrown into the blazing furnace. They were wearing their clothes, hats, and other clothing.

<sup>22</sup> The king's order was so urgent and the furnace was so extremely hot that the men who carried Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego were killed by the flames from the fire.

<sup>23</sup> So these three men—Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego—fell into the blazing furnace. They were still tied up.

<sup>24</sup> Then Nebuchadnezzar was startled. He sprang to his feet. He asked his advisers, "Didn't we throw three men into the fire?" "That's true, Your Majesty," they answered.

<sup>25</sup>The king replied, "But look, I see four men. They're untied, walking in the middle of the fire, and unharmed. The fourth one looks like a son of the gods."

<sup>26</sup>Then Nebuchadnezzar went to the door of the blazing furnace and said, "Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednegoservants of the Most High Godcome out here." Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego came out of the fire.

<sup>27</sup>The kings satraps, governors, mayors, and advisers gathered around the three men. They saw that the fire had not harmed their bodies. The hair on their heads wasn't singed, their clothes weren't burned, and they didn't smell of smoke.

<sup>28</sup>Nebuchadnezzar said, "Praise the God of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego. He sent his angel and saved his servants, who trusted him. They disobeyed the king and risked their lives so that they would not have to honor or worship any god except their own God.

<sup>29</sup>So I order that people from every province, nation, or language who say anything slanderous about the God of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego will

be torn limb from limb. Their houses will be turned into piles of rubble. No other god can rescue like this."

<sup>30</sup>Then the king promoted Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego to higher positions in the province of Babylon.

**4**<sup>1</sup>From King Nebuchadnezzar. To the people of every province, nation, and language in the world. I wish you peace and prosperity.

<sup>2</sup>I am pleased to write to you about the miraculous signs and amazing things the Most High God did for me.

<sup>3</sup>His miraculous signs are impressive. He uses his power to do amazing things. His kingdom is an eternal kingdom. His power lasts from one generation to the next.

<sup>4</sup>I, Nebuchadnezzar, was living comfortably at home. I was prosperous while living in my palace.

<sup>5</sup>I had a dream that terrified me. The visions I had while I was asleep frightened me.

<sup>6</sup>So I ordered all the wise advisers in Babylon to be brought to me to tell me the dreams meaning.

<sup>7</sup>The magicians, psychics, astrologers, and fortunetellers came to me. I told them the dream, but they couldnt tell me its meaning.

<sup>8</sup>Finally, Daniel came to me. (He had been renamed Belteshazzar after my god Bel.) The spirit of the holy gods is in him. I told him the dream:

<sup>9</sup>"Belteshazzar, head of the magicians, I know the spirit of the holy gods is in you. No secret is too hard for you to uncover. Tell me the meaning of the visions I had in my dream.

<sup>10</sup>These are the visions I had while I was asleep: I was looking, and I saw an oak tree in the middle of the earth. It was very tall.

<sup>11</sup>The tree grew, and it became strong enough and tall enough to reach the sky. It could be seen everywhere on earth.

<sup>12</sup>It had beautiful leaves and plenty of fruit, enough to feed everyone. Wild animals found shade under it. Birds came to live in its branches. It fed every living creature.

<sup>13</sup>"I was seeing these visions as I was asleep. I saw a guardian, a holy being, come down from heaven.

<sup>14</sup>He shouted loudly, Cut down the oak tree! Cut off its branches! Strip off its leaves! Scatter its fruit! Make the animals under it run away, and make the birds fly from its branches.

<sup>15</sup>But leave the stump and its roots in the ground. Secure it with an iron and bronze chain in the grass in the field. Let it get wet with the dew from the sky. And let it get its share of the plants on the ground with the animals.

<sup>16</sup>Let its human mind be changed, and give it the mind of an animal. Let it remain like this for seven time periods.

<sup>17</sup>The guardians have announced this decision. The holy ones have announced this so that every living creature will know that the Most High has power over human kingdoms. He gives them to whomever he wishes. He can place the lowest of people in charge of them."

<sup>18</sup>I said, "This is the dream I, King Nebuchadnezzar, had. Now you, Belteshazzar, tell me its meaning because the wise advisers in my kingdom cant tell it to me. However, you can, because the spirit of the holy gods is in you."

<sup>19</sup>Then Daniel (who had been renamed Belteshazzar) was momentarily stunned. What he was thinking frightened him. I told him, "Belteshazzar, don't let the dream and its meaning frighten you." Belteshazzar answered, "Sir, I wish that the dream were about those who hate you and its meaning were about your enemies.

<sup>20</sup>You saw an oak tree grow and become strong enough and tall enough to reach the sky. It could be seen everywhere on earth.

<sup>21</sup>It had beautiful leaves and plenty of fruit, enough to feed everyone. Wild animals lived under it, and birds made their homes in its branches.

<sup>22</sup>You are that tree, Your Majesty. You grew and became strong and mighty until you reached the sky. Your power reaches the most distant part of the world.

<sup>23</sup>You saw a guardian, a holy being, come down from heaven. He said, Cut down the oak tree! Destroy it! But leave the stump and its roots in the ground. Secure it with an iron and bronze chain in the grass in the field. Let it get wet

with the dew from the sky. Let it get its share of the plants on the ground with the wild animals for seven time periods.

<sup>24</sup>"This is the meaning, Your Majesty. The Most High has decided to apply it to you, Your Majesty.

<sup>25</sup>You will be forced away from people and live with the wild animals. You will eat grass like cattle. The dew from the sky will make you wet. And seven time periods will pass until you realize that the Most High has power over human kingdoms and that he gives them to whomever he wishes.

<sup>26</sup>Since I said that the stump and the trees roots were to be left, your kingdom will be restored to you as soon as you realize that heaven rules.

<sup>27</sup>"That is why, Your Majesty, my best advice is that you stop sinning, and do what is right. Stop committing the same errors, and have pity on the poor. Maybe you can prolong your prosperity."

<sup>28</sup>All this happened to King Nebuchadnezzar.

<sup>29</sup>Twelve months later, he was walking around the royal palace in Babylon.

<sup>30</sup>The king thought, "Look how great Babylon is! I built the royal palace by my own impressive power and for my glorious honor."

<sup>31</sup>Before the words came out of his mouth, a voice said from heaven, "King Nebuchadnezzar, listen to this: The kingdom has been taken from you.

<sup>32</sup>You will be forced away from people and live with the wild animals. You will eat grass like cattle. And seven time periods will pass until you realize that the Most High has power over human kingdoms and that he gives them to whomever he wishes."

<sup>33</sup>Just then the prediction about Nebuchadnezzar came true. He was forced away from people and ate grass like cattle. Dew from the sky made his body wet until his hair grew as long as eagles feathers and his nails grew as long as birds claws.

<sup>34</sup>At the end of the seven time periods, I, Nebuchadnezzar, looked up to heaven, and my mind came back to me. I thanked the Most High, and I praised and honored the one who lives forever, because his power lasts forever and his

kingdom lasts from one generation to the next.

<sup>35</sup> Everyone who lives on earth is nothing compared to him. He does whatever he wishes with the army of heaven and with those who live on earth. There is no one who can oppose him or ask him, "What are you doing?"

<sup>36</sup> Just then my mind came back to me. My royal honor and glory were also given back to me. My advisers and nobles wanted to meet with me again. I was given back my kingdom and made extraordinarily great.

<sup>37</sup> Now I, Nebuchadnezzar, will praise, honor, and give glory to the King of Heaven. Everything he does is true, his ways are right, and he can humiliate those who act arrogantly.

**5**<sup>1</sup> King Belshazzar threw a large banquet for 1,000 nobles and drank wine with them.

<sup>2</sup> As they were tasting the wine, Belshazzar ordered that the gold and silver utensils which his grandfather Nebuchadnezzar had taken from the temple in Jerusalem be brought to him.

He wanted to drink from them with his nobles, his wives, and his concubines.

<sup>3</sup>So the servants brought the gold utensils that had been taken from Gods temple in Jerusalem. The king, his nobles, wives, and concubines drank from them.

<sup>4</sup>They drank the wine and praised their gods made of gold, silver, bronze, iron, wood, or stone.

<sup>5</sup>Suddenly, the fingers of a persons hand appeared and wrote on the plaster wall opposite the lamp stand of the royal palace. The king watched as the hand wrote.

<sup>6</sup>Then the king turned pale, and his thoughts frightened him. His hip joints became loose, and his knees knocked against each other.

<sup>7</sup>The king screamed for the psychics, astrologers, and fortunetellers to be brought to him. He told these wise advisers of Babylon, "Whoever reads this writing and tells me its meaning will be dressed in purple, wear a gold chain on his neck, and become the thirddhighest ruler in the kingdom."

<sup>8</sup>All the kings wise advisers came, but they couldnt read the writing or tell the king its meaning.

<sup>9</sup>King Belshazzar was terrified, and his face turned pale. His nobles didnt know what to do.

<sup>10</sup>The discussion between the king and his nobles brought the queen herself into the banquet hall. The queen said, "Your Majesty, may you live forever! Dont let your thoughts frighten you, and dont turn pale.

<sup>11</sup>Theres a man in your kingdom who has the spirit of the holy gods. In the days of your grandfather, he was found to have insight, good judgment, and wisdom like the wisdom of the gods. Your grandfather, King Nebuchadnezzar, made him head of the magicians, psychics, astrologers, and fortunetellers.

<sup>12</sup>This Daniel (who had been renamed Belteshazzar) was found to have knowledge, judgment, and an extraordinary spirit. He has the ability to interpret dreams, solve riddles, and untangle problems. Now, call Daniel, and he will tell you what it means."

<sup>13</sup> So Daniel was taken to the king. The king asked him, "Are you Daniel, one of the captives that my grandfather brought from Judah?"

<sup>14</sup> I've heard that you have the spirit of the gods and that you have insight, good judgment, and extraordinary wisdom.

<sup>15</sup> The wise advisers and the psychics were brought to me to read this writing and tell me its meaning. But they couldn't tell me its meaning.

<sup>16</sup> I have heard that you can interpret such things and untangle problems. If you can read the writing and tell me its meaning, you will be dressed in purple, wear a gold chain on your neck, and become the third-highest ruler in the kingdom."

<sup>17</sup> Daniel told the king, "Keep your gifts. Give your gifts and awards to someone else. I'll still read the writing for you and tell you its meaning.

<sup>18</sup> "Your Majesty, the Most High God gave your grandfather Nebuchadnezzar a kingdom, might, honor, and glory.

<sup>19</sup> People from every province, nation, and language trembled and were terrified by him, because God gave him

power. Nebuchadnezzar killed whomever he wanted to kill, and he kept alive whomever he wanted to keep alive. He promoted whomever he wanted to promote, and he demoted whomever he wanted to demote.

<sup>20</sup> But when he became so arrogant and conceited that he became overconfident, he was removed from the royal throne. His honor was taken away from him.

<sup>21</sup> He was chased away from people, and his mind was changed into an animals mind. He lived with wild donkeys, ate grass like cattle, and his body became wet with dew from the sky. This happened until he realized that the Most High God has power over human kingdoms. God puts whomever he wishes in charge of them.

<sup>22</sup> "Belshazzar, you are one of Nebuchadnezzars successors. You didnt remain humble, even though you knew all this.

<sup>23</sup> But you made yourself greater than the Lord of heaven. You had the utensils from his temple brought to you. You, your nobles, wives, and concubines drank wine from them. You praised your

gods made of silver, gold, bronze, iron, wood, or stone. These gods cant see, hear, or know anything. You didnt honor God, who has power over your life and everything you do.

<sup>24</sup> So he sent the hand to write this inscription.

<sup>25</sup> This is what has been written: Numbered, Numbered, Weighed, and Divided.

<sup>26</sup> This is its meaning: Numbered God has numbered the days of your kingdom and will bring it to an end.

<sup>27</sup> Weighed you have been weighed on a scale and found to be too light.

<sup>28</sup> Divided your kingdom will be divided and given to the Medes and Persians."

<sup>29</sup> Then Belshazzar ordered that Daniel be dressed in purple and wear a gold chain on his neck. He made Daniel the third highest ruler in the kingdom.

<sup>30</sup> That night King Belshazzar of Babylon was killed.

<sup>31</sup> Darius the Mede took over the kingdom. He was 62 years old.

**6**<sup>1</sup> Darius decided it would be good to appoint 120 satraps to rule throughout the kingdom.

<sup>2</sup>Over these satraps were three officials. Daniel was one of these officials. The satraps were to report to these three officials so that the king wouldnt be cheated.

<sup>3</sup>This man, Daniel, distinguished himself among the other officials and satraps because there was an extraordinary spirit in him. The king thought about putting him in charge of the whole kingdom.

<sup>4</sup>So the other officials and satraps tried to find something to accuse Daniel of in his duties for the kingdom. But they couldnt find anything wrong because he was trustworthy. No error or fault could be found.

<sup>5</sup>These men said, "We wont find anything to accuse this man, Daniel, unless we find it in his religious practices."

<sup>6</sup>So these officials and satraps went to the king as a group. They said to him, "May King Darius live forever!

<sup>7</sup>All the officials, governors, satraps, advisers, and mayors agree that the king should make a statute and enforce a decree. The decree should state that

for the next 30 days whoever asks for anything from any god or person except you, Your Majesty, will be thrown into a lions den.

<sup>8</sup>Your Majesty, issue this decree, and sign it. According to the law of the Medes and Persians no one could change it or repeal it."

<sup>9</sup>So Darius signed the written decree.

<sup>10</sup>When Daniel learned that the document had been signed, he went to his house. An upper room in his house had windows that opened in the direction of Jerusalem. Three times each day he got down on his knees and prayed to his God. He had always praised God this way.

<sup>11</sup>One of those times the men came in as a group and found Daniel praying and pleading to his God.

<sup>12</sup>Then they went and spoke to the king about his decree. They asked, "Didn't you sign a decree which stated that for 30 days whoever asks for anything from any god or person except you, Your Majesty, will be thrown into a lions den?" The king answered, "That's true. According to

the law of the Medes and Persians the decree can't be repealed."

<sup>13</sup>They replied, "Your Majesty, Daniel, one of the captives from Judah, refuses to obey your order or the decree that you signed. He prays three times each day."

<sup>14</sup>The king was very displeased when he heard this. He tried every way he could think of to save Daniel. Until sundown he did everything he could to rescue him.

<sup>15</sup>Then Daniel's accusers gathered in front of the king. They said to him, "Remember, Your Majesty, the Medes and Persians have a law that no decree or statute the king makes can be changed."

<sup>16</sup>So the king gave the order, and Daniel was brought to him and thrown into the lions den. The king told Daniel, "May your God, whom you always worship, save you!"

<sup>17</sup>A stone was brought and placed over the opening of the den. The king put his seal on the stone, using his ring and the rings of his nobles, so that Daniel's situation could not be changed.

<sup>18</sup>Then the king went to his palace and spent the night without food or company. He couldnt get to sleep.

<sup>19</sup>At dawn, as soon as it was light, the king got up and quickly went to the lions den.

<sup>20</sup>As he came near the den where Daniel was, the king called to Daniel with anguish in his voice, "Daniel, servant of the living God! Was God, whom you always worship, able to save you from the lions?"

<sup>21</sup>Daniel said to the king, "Your Majesty, may you live forever!

<sup>22</sup>My God sent his angel and shut the lions mouths so that they couldnt hurt me. He did this because he considered me innocent. Your Majesty, I havent committed any crime."

<sup>23</sup>The king was overjoyed and had Daniel taken out of the den. When Daniel was taken out of the den, people saw that he was completely unharmed because he trusted his God.

<sup>24</sup>The king ordered those men who had brought charges against Daniel to be brought to him. They, their wives, and their children were thrown into the lions

den. Before they reached the bottom of the den, the lions attacked them and crushed all their bones.

<sup>25</sup>Then King Darius wrote to the people of every province, nation, and language all over the world: I wish you peace and prosperity.

<sup>26</sup>I decree that in every part of my kingdom people should tremble with terror in front of Daniels God, the living God who continues forever. His kingdom will never be destroyed. His power lasts to the end of time.

<sup>27</sup>He saves, rescues, and does miraculous signs and amazing things in heaven and on earth. He saved Daniel from the lions.

<sup>28</sup>This man, Daniel, prospered during the reign of Darius and the reign of Cyrus the Persian.

**7**<sup>1</sup>In Belshazzars first year as king of Babylon, Daniel had a dream. He saw a vision while he was asleep. He wrote down the main parts of the dream.

<sup>2</sup>In my visions at night I, Daniel, saw the four winds of heaven stirring up the Mediterranean Sea.

<sup>3</sup>Four large animals, each one different from the others, came out of the sea.

<sup>4</sup>The first animal was like a lion, but it had wings like an eagle. I watched until its wings were plucked off and it was lifted off the ground. It was made to stand on two feet like a human and was given a human mind.

<sup>5</sup>I saw a second animal. It looked like a bear. It was raised on one side and had three ribs in its mouth between its teeth. It was told, "Get up, and eat as much meat as you want."

<sup>6</sup>After this, I saw another animal. It looked like a leopard. On its back it had four wings, like the wings of a bird. The animal also had four heads. It was given power to rule.

<sup>7</sup>After this, I saw a fourth animal in my vision during the night. It was terrifying, dreadful, extraordinarily strong, and had large iron teeth. It devoured and crushed its victims and trampled whatever was left. It acted differently from all the other animals that I had seen before. It had ten horns.

<sup>8</sup>While I was thinking about the horns, another horn, a little horn, came up

among them. It uprooted three of the other horns. This horn had eyes like human eyes and a mouth that spoke impressive things.

<sup>9</sup>I watched until thrones were set up and the Ancient One, who has lived for endless years, sat down. His clothes were as white as snow and the hair on his head was like pure wool. His throne was fiery flames, and its wheels were burning fire.

<sup>10</sup>A river of fire flowed. It came from him. Thousands and thousands served him. Ten thousand times ten thousand were stationed in front of him. The court convened, and the books were opened.

<sup>11</sup>I continued to watch because of the impressive words that the horn was speaking. I watched until the animal was killed. Its body was destroyed and put into a raging fire.

<sup>12</sup>The power of the rest of the animals was taken away, but they were allowed to live for a period of time.

<sup>13</sup>In my visions during the night, I saw among the clouds in heaven someone like the Son of Man. He came to the

Ancient One, who has lived for endless years, and was presented to him.

<sup>14</sup>He was given power, honor, and a kingdom. People from every province, nation, and language were to serve him. His power is an eternal power that will not be taken away. His kingdom will never be destroyed.

<sup>15</sup>I, Daniel, was deeply troubled, and my visions frightened me.

<sup>16</sup>I went to someone who was standing there and asked him to tell me the truth about all this. So he told me what all this meant.

<sup>17</sup>He said, "These four large animals are four kingdoms that will rise to power on the earth.

<sup>18</sup>But the holy people of the Most High will take possession of the kingdom and keep it forever and ever."

<sup>19</sup>Then I wanted to know the truth about the fourth animal, which was so different from all the others. It was very terrifying and had iron teeth and bronze claws. It devoured and crushed its victims, and trampled whatever was left.

<sup>20</sup>I also wanted to know about the ten horns on its head and about the other horn that had come up and made three of the horns fall out. That horn had eyes and a mouth that spoke impressive things. It appeared to be bigger than the others.

<sup>21</sup>I saw that horn making war against the holy people and defeating them.

<sup>22</sup>It did this until the Ancient One, who has lived for endless years, came and judged in favor of the holy people of the Most High. The time came when the holy people took possession of the kingdom.

<sup>23</sup>He said, "The fourth animal will be the fourth of these kingdoms on earth. It will be different from all other kingdoms. It will devour, trample, and crush the whole world.

<sup>24</sup>The ten horns are ten kings that will rise to power from that kingdom. Another king will rise to power after them. He will be different from the kings who came before him, and he will humble three kings.

<sup>25</sup>He will speak against the Most High God, oppress the holy people of the Most High, and plan to change the appointed

times and laws. The holy people will be handed over to him for a time, times, and half of a time.

<sup>26</sup>But judgment will be handed down, his power will be taken away, and he will be completely and permanently destroyed.

<sup>27</sup>The kingdom, along with the power and greatness of all the kingdoms under heaven, will be given to the holy people of the Most High. Their kingdom is eternal. All other powers will serve and obey them."

<sup>28</sup>Here is the end of the matter. I, Daniel, was terrified by my thoughts, and I turned pale. I kept this to myself.

**8**<sup>1</sup>In Belshazzars third year as king, I, Daniel, saw a vision. This vision came after the one I saw earlier.

<sup>2</sup>In my vision I saw myself in the fortress of Susa in the province of Elam. In my vision I saw myself at Ulai Gate.

<sup>3</sup>I looked up and saw a single ram standing beside the gate. The ram had two long horns, one longer than the other, though the longer one had grown up later.

<sup>4</sup>I saw the ram charging west, north, and south. No other animal could stand in front of it, and no one could escape from its power. It did anything it pleased and continued to grow.

<sup>5</sup>As I was watching closely, I saw a male goat coming from the west. It crossed the whole earth without touching it. This goat had a prominent horn between its eyes.

<sup>6</sup>The goat was coming toward the twohorned ram that I had seen standing beside the gate. It furiously ran at the ram.

<sup>7</sup>I saw it come closer to the ram. The goat was extremely angry with the ram, so it attacked the ram. It broke both of the rams horns. The ram didnt have the strength to stand up against the goat. So the ram was thrown down on the ground and trampled. No one could rescue the ram from the goats power.

<sup>8</sup>The male goat became very important. But when the goat became powerful, his large horn broke off. In its place grew four horns. They corresponded to the four winds of heaven.

<sup>9</sup>Out of one of the horns came a small horn. It gained power over the south, the east, and the beautiful land.

<sup>10</sup>It continued to gain power until it reached the army of heaven. It threw some of the army of heaven, the stars, down on the ground and trampled them.

<sup>11</sup>Then it attacked the commander of the army so that it took the daily burnt offering from him and wrecked his holy place.

<sup>12</sup>In its rebelliousness it was given an army to put a stop to the daily burnt offering. It threw truth on the ground. The horn was successful in everything it did.

<sup>13</sup>Then I heard a holy one speaking. Another holy one said to the one who was speaking, "How long will the things in this vision the daily burnt offering, the destructive rebellion, the surrender of the holy place, and the trampling of the army take place?"

<sup>14</sup>He told me, "For 2,300 evenings and mornings. Then the holy place will be made acceptable to God."

<sup>15</sup>Now as I, Daniel, watched the vision and tried to understand it, I saw

someone who looked like a man standing in front of me.

<sup>16</sup>I heard a man in Ulai Gate call loudly, "Gabriel, explain the vision to this man."

<sup>17</sup>Gabriel came up beside me, and when he came, I was terrified and immediately knelt down. He said to me, "Son of man, understand that the vision is about the end times."

<sup>18</sup>As he spoke to me, I fainted facedown on the ground, but he touched me and made me stand up.

<sup>19</sup>He said, "I will tell you what will happen in the last days, the time of God's anger, because the end time has been determined.

<sup>20</sup>"The twohorned ram that you saw represents the kingdoms of Media and Persia.

<sup>21</sup>The hairy male goat is the kingdom of Greece, and the large horn between its eyes is its first king.

<sup>22</sup>The horn broke off, and four horns replaced it. Four kingdoms will come out of that nation, but they won't be as strong as the first king was.

<sup>23</sup>"In the last days of those kingdoms, when rebellions are finished, a

sternlooking king who understands mysterious things will rise to power.

<sup>24</sup>He will become very strong, but not by his own strength. He will cause astounding destruction and will be successful in everything he does. He will destroy those who are powerful along with some holy people.

<sup>25</sup>He will cleverly use his power to deceive others successfully. He will consider himself to be great and destroy many people when they dont expect it. He will oppose the Commander of Commanders, but he will be defeated, though not by any human power.

<sup>26</sup>The vision about the 2,300 evenings and mornings that was explained to you is true. Seal the vision, because it is about things that will happen in the distant future."

<sup>27</sup>I, Daniel, was exhausted and sick for days. Then I got up and worked for the king. The vision horrified me because I couldnt understand it.

**9**<sup>1</sup>Xerxes son Darius, who was a Mede by birth, was made ruler of the kingdom of Babylon.

<sup>2</sup>In the first year of his reign, I, Daniel, learned from the Scriptures the number of years that Jerusalem would remain in ruins. The LORD had told the prophet Jeremiah that Jerusalem would remain in ruins for 70 years.

<sup>3</sup>So I turned to the Lord God and looked to him for help. I prayed, pleaded, and fasted in sackcloth and ashes.

<sup>4</sup>I prayed to the LORD my God. I confessed and said, "Lord, you are great and deserve respect as the only God. You keep your promise and show mercy to those who love you and obey your commandments.

<sup>5</sup>We have sinned, done wrong, acted wickedly, rebelled, and turned away from your commandments and laws.

<sup>6</sup>We havent listened to your servants the prophets, who spoke in your name to our kings, leaders, ancestors, and all the common people.

<sup>7</sup>You, Lord, are righteous. But we the men of Judah, the citizens of Jerusalem, and all the Israelites whom you scattered in countries near and far are still ashamed because we have been unfaithful to you.

<sup>8</sup>We, our kings, leaders, and ancestors are ashamed because we have sinned against you, LORD.

<sup>9</sup>"But you, Lord our God, are compassionate and forgiving, although we have rebelled against you.

<sup>10</sup>We never listened to you or lived by the teachings you gave us through your servants the prophets.

<sup>11</sup>All Israel has ignored your teachings and refused to listen to you. So you brought on us the curses you swore in an oath, the curses written in the Teachings of your servant Moses. We sinned against you.

<sup>12</sup>So you did what you said you would do to us and our rulers by bringing a great disaster on us. Nowhere in the world has anything ever happened like what has happened to Jerusalem.

<sup>13</sup>This entire disaster happened to us, exactly as it was written in Moses Teachings. LORD our God, we never tried to gain your favor by turning from our wrongs and dedicating ourselves to your truth.

<sup>14</sup>So you were prepared to bring this disaster on us. LORD our God, you are

righteous in everything you do. But we never listened to you.

<sup>15</sup>"Lord our God, you brought your people out of Egypt with your strong hand and made yourself famous even today. We have sinned and done evil things.

<sup>16</sup>Lord, since you are very righteous, turn your anger and fury away from your city, Jerusalem, your holy mountain. Jerusalem and your people are insulted by everyone around us because of our sins and the wicked things our ancestors did.

<sup>17</sup>"Our God, listen to my prayer and request. For your own sake, Lord, look favorably on your holy place, which is lying in ruins.

<sup>18</sup>Open your ears and listen, my God. Open your eyes and look at our ruins and at the city called by your name. We are not requesting this from you because we are righteous, but because you are very compassionate.

<sup>19</sup>Listen to us, Lord. Forgive us, Lord. Pay attention, and act. Don't delay! Do this for your sake, my God, because your

city and your people are called by your name."

<sup>20</sup>I continued to pray, confessing my sins and the sins of my people Israel. I humbly placed my request about my Gods holy mountain in front of the LORD my God.

<sup>21</sup>While I was praying, the man Gabriel, whom I had seen in the first vision, came to me about the time of the evening sacrifice. He was exhausted.

<sup>22</sup>He informed me, "Daniel, this time I have come to give you insight.

<sup>23</sup>As soon as you began to make your request, a reply was sent. I have come to give you the reply because you are highly respected. So study the message, and understand the vision.

<sup>24</sup>"Seventy sets of seven time periods have been assigned for your people and your holy city. These time periods will serve to bring an end to rebellion, to stop sin, to forgive wrongs, to usher in everlasting righteousness, to put a seal on a prophets vision, and to anoint the Most Holy One.

<sup>25</sup>Learn, then, and understand that from the time the command is given to

restore and rebuild Jerusalem until the anointed prince comes, seven sets of seven time periods and sixtytwo sets of seven time periods will pass. Jerusalem will be restored and rebuilt with a city square and a moat during the troubles of those times.

<sup>26</sup> But after the sixtytwo sets of seven time periods, the Anointed One will be cut off and have nothing. The city and the holy place will be destroyed with the prince who is to come. His end will come with a flood until the end of the destructive war that has been determined.

<sup>27</sup> He will confirm his promise with many for one set of seven time periods. In the middle of the seven time periods, he will stop the sacrifices and food offerings. This will happen along with disgusting things that cause destruction until those time periods come to an end. It has been determined that this will happen to those who destroy the city."

**10**<sup>1</sup> In Cyrus third year as king of Persia, a message was revealed to Daniel (who had been renamed Belteshazzar). The message was true. It

was about a great war. Daniel understood the message because he was given insight during the vision.

<sup>2</sup>During those days I, Daniel, mourned for three whole weeks.

<sup>3</sup>I didnt eat any goodtasting food. No meat or wine entered my mouth. I didnt wash myself until the entire three weeks were over.

<sup>4</sup>On the twentyfourth day of the first month, I was by the great Tigris River.

<sup>5</sup>When I looked up, I saw a man dressed in linen, and he had a belt made of gold from Uphaz around his waist.

<sup>6</sup>His body was like beryl. His face looked like lightning. His eyes were like flaming torches. His arms and legs looked like polished bronze. When he spoke, his voice sounded like the roar of a crowd.

<sup>7</sup>I, Daniel, was the only one who saw the vision. The men with me didnt see the vision. Yet, they started to tremble violently, and they quickly hid themselves.

<sup>8</sup>So I was left alone to see this grand vision. I had no strength left in me.

My face turned deathly pale, and I was helpless.

<sup>9</sup>I heard the man speak, and as I listened to his words, I fainted facedown on the ground.

<sup>10</sup>Then a hand touched me and made my hands and knees shake.

<sup>11</sup>The man said to me, "Daniel, you are highly respected. Pay attention to my words. Stand up, because I've been sent to you." When he said this to me, I stood up, trembling.

<sup>12</sup>He told me, "Don't be afraid, Daniel. God has heard everything that you said ever since the first day you decided to humble yourself in front of your God so that you could learn to understand things. I have come in response to your prayer.

<sup>13</sup>The commander of the Persian kingdom opposed me for 21 days. But then Michael, one of the chief commanders, came to help me because I was left alone with the kings of Persia.

<sup>14</sup>I have come to explain to you what will happen to your people in the last days, because the vision is about times still to come."

<sup>15</sup>When he said this to me, I bowed down with my face touching the ground and was silent.

<sup>16</sup>Then someone who looked like a human touched my lips. I opened my mouth and began to talk. I said to the person standing in front of me, "Sir, because of this vision, pain has overwhelmed me, and I'm helpless.

<sup>17</sup>How can I talk to you, sir? I have no strength left, and the wind has been knocked out of me."

<sup>18</sup>Again, the person who looked like a human touched me, and I became stronger.

<sup>19</sup>He said, "Don't be afraid. You are highly respected. Everything is alright! Be strong! Be strong!" As he talked to me, I became stronger. I said, "Sir, tell me what you came to say. You have strengthened me."

<sup>20</sup>He asked, "Do you know why I have come to you? Now I will return to fight the commander of Persia. When I go, the commander of Greece will come.

<sup>21</sup>However, I will tell you what is inscribed in the true writings. No one will support me when I fight these

commanders except your commander, Michael.

**11** <sup>1</sup> During Darius the Medes first year as king, I strengthened and defended Michael."

<sup>2</sup> The person who looked like a human continued, "What I am about to tell you is the truth. Three more kings will rule Persia. Then there will be a fourth, who will become much richer than all the others. As he becomes strong through his wealth, he will turn everyone against the kingdom of Greece.

<sup>3</sup> "Then a warrior king will come. He will rule a vast empire and do as he pleases.

<sup>4</sup> But as soon as he is established, his kingdom will be broken into pieces and divided in the directions of the four winds of heaven. The empire will not be given to his descendants. It will no longer be like his empire, since it will be uprooted and given to others.

<sup>5</sup> "The southern king will be strong, but one of his officers will become stronger than he is and rule a vast empire.

<sup>6</sup> After a few years the southern and northern kings will make an alliance. The southern king's daughter will go to the

northern king to make peace. She wont hold on to her power, and the alliance wont last. She, those who came with her, and the one who fathered and protected her will be given away.

<sup>7</sup>"At that time a shoot will grow from her roots to replace her father. He will attack the northern army, enter the stronghold of the northern king, fight against them, and be victorious.

<sup>8</sup>He will take the metal statues of their gods and their precious utensils of silver and gold back to Egypt. He will rule for more years than the northern king.

<sup>9</sup>He will invade the southern kingdom and return to his own country.

<sup>10</sup>"Then his sons will prepare for war. They will assemble a large number of forces so that they can overwhelm the enemy and pass through its land. They will return and wage war all the way to the stronghold.

<sup>11</sup>The southern king will be outraged. He will go to fight the northern king, who will raise a large army that will fall into the southern kings hands.

<sup>12</sup>When that army is captured, the southern king will become conceited.

Although he will dominate tens of thousands of people, he will not always be strong.

<sup>13</sup>"The northern king will return and raise an army larger than the first one. After a few years he will invade with a large army and a lot of equipment.

<sup>14</sup>In those times many people will rebel against the southern king, and violent men from your own people will rebel in keeping with this vision, but they will be defeated.

<sup>15</sup>Then the northern king will come, build dirt attack ramps, and capture a fortified city. The southern forces will not be able to withstand him. Even their best troops will not be strong enough.

<sup>16</sup>The invader will do as he pleases, and no one will be able to withstand his attack. He will rise to power in the beautiful land and it will be completely under his control.

<sup>17</sup>"Then the northern king will decide to invade with the power of his entire kingdom, and some decent men will invade with him. He will give the southern king his daughter as a wife in

order to destroy the southern kingdom. But this will not succeed or help him.

<sup>18</sup>Then he will turn his attention to the coastlands and capture many of them. But a commander will silence the insults that the northern king makes and even insult him.

<sup>19</sup>He will turn back toward the fortresses in his own country, but he will stumble, fall, and disappear.

<sup>20</sup>"Another king will take his place. He will have a cruel official go out in royal splendor. But in a few days the king will be destroyed, although not in anger or war.

<sup>21</sup>"A contemptible person will take his place. He will not be given royal splendor. He will invade when people are feeling secure, and he will seize the kingdom using false promises.

<sup>22</sup>He will overwhelm large forces and defeat them, including the prince of the promise.

<sup>23</sup>After an alliance has been made with him, he will act deceitfully and rise to power with only a few people.

<sup>24</sup>When people feel secure, he will invade the richest parts of the provinces

and do something that none of his predecessors ever did. He will distribute loot and wealth to his followers. He will invent new ways of attacking fortifications. But this will last only for a little while.

<sup>25</sup>"With a large army he will summon his power and courage against the southern king, who will prepare for war with a large, strong army. But the southern king wont be able to withstand him because of the schemes devised against him.

<sup>26</sup>People who eat the kings rich food will ruin him. His army will be overwhelmed, and many will die in battle.

<sup>27</sup>The two kings will both plan to do evil. They will sit at the same table and tell lies. But they will not succeed, because the end must wait until the appointed time.

<sup>28</sup>The northern king will return to his country with a lot of wealth. He will be determined to fight against the holy promise. He will take action and return to his own country.

<sup>29</sup>"At the appointed time he will again invade the south, but this time will be different from the first.

<sup>30</sup>Ships will come from the west to attack him, and he will be discouraged and turn back. Angry at the holy promise, he will return, take action, and favor those who abandon the holy promise.

<sup>31</sup>His forces will dishonor the holy place (the fortress), take away the daily burnt offering, and set up the disgusting thing that causes destruction.

<sup>32</sup>With flattery he will corrupt those who abandon the promise. But the people who know their God will be strong and take action.

<sup>33</sup>"People who are wise will help many to understand. But for some time they will be defeated by swords and flames. They will be captured and looted.

<sup>34</sup>As they are being defeated, they will get a little help, but many who are not sincere will join them.

<sup>35</sup>Some of the wise people will be defeated in order to refine, purify, and make them white until the end times. But the appointed time is still to come.

<sup>36</sup>"The king will do as he pleases. He will highly honor himself above every god. He will say amazing things against the God of gods. He will succeed until Gods anger is over, because what has been decided must be done.

<sup>37</sup>He will have no interest in the gods of his ancestors or desire for women. He will have no interest in any god, because he will make himself greater than anyone else.

<sup>38</sup>Instead, he will honor the god of fortresses. With gold, silver, precious stones, and other expensive things he will honor a god his ancestors never heard of.

<sup>39</sup>With the help of a foreign god, he will deal with strong fortresses. He will give high honors to those who acknowledge him, make them rulers over many people, and distribute land for a price.

<sup>40</sup>"In the end times the southern king will attack him. The northern king will rush at him like a storm with chariots, horses, and many ships. He will invade countries, overwhelm them, and pass through their land.

<sup>41</sup> He will invade the beautiful land, and tens of thousands will be defeated. But Edom, Moab, and the leaders of the Ammonites will escape from his power.

<sup>42</sup> He will use his power against many countries. Even Egypt will not escape.

<sup>43</sup> He will control gold and silver treasures and all Egypt's treasuries. Libya and Sudan will surrender to him.

<sup>44</sup> But news from the east and the north will frighten him. He will leave very angry to destroy and exterminate many.

<sup>45</sup> He will pitch his royal tents between the seas at a beautiful holy mountain. When he comes to his end, there will be no one to help him."

**12**<sup>1</sup> The person who looked like a human continued, "At that time Michael, the great commander, will stand up on behalf of the descendants of your people. It will be a time of trouble unlike any that has existed from the time there have been nations until that time. But at that time your people, everyone written in the book, will be rescued.

<sup>2</sup> Many sleeping in the ground will wake up. Some will wake up to live forever,

but others will wake up to be ashamed and disgraced forever.

<sup>3</sup>Those who are wise will shine like the brightness on the horizon. Those who lead many people to righteousness will shine like the stars forever and ever.

<sup>4</sup>"But you, Daniel, keep these words secret, and seal the book until the end times. Many will travel everywhere, and knowledge will grow."

<sup>5</sup>When I, Daniel, looked up, I saw two men standing there. One man stood on one side of the river, and the other one stood on the other side.

<sup>6</sup>One of them asked the man dressed in linen clothes who was above the river, "How long will it be until these miracles are over?"

<sup>7</sup>I heard the man dressed in linen clothes who was above the river. He raised his right hand and left hand to heaven and swore an oath by the one who lives forever. He said, "It will be for a time, times, and half of a time. When the power of the holy people has been completely shattered, then all these things will be finished."

<sup>8</sup>I heard him, but I did not understand. So I asked him, "Sir, how will these things end?"

<sup>9</sup>He replied, "Go, Daniel. These words are to be kept secret and sealed until the end times.

<sup>10</sup>Many will be purified, made white, and refined. But wicked people will do wicked things, and none of them will understand. Only wise people will understand.

<sup>11</sup>From the time the daily burnt offering is taken away and the disgusting thing that causes destruction is set up, there will be 1,290 days.

<sup>12</sup>Blessed are those who wait until they reach 1,335 days.

<sup>13</sup>But go on until the end. You will rest, and you will rise for your inheritance at the end of time."

# Hosea

**1** <sup>1</sup>The LORD spoke his word to Hosea, son of Beerī, when Uzziah, Jotham, Ahaz, and Hezekiah were kings of Judah and when Jeroboam, son of Joash, was king of Israel.

<sup>2</sup>When the LORD first spoke to Hosea, the LORD told him, "Marry a prostitute, and have children with that prostitute. The people in this land have acted like prostitutes and abandoned the LORD."

<sup>3</sup>So Hosea married Gomer, daughter of Diblaim. She became pregnant and had a son.

<sup>4</sup>The LORD told Hosea, "Name him Jezreel. In a little while I will punish Jehus family for the people they slaughtered at Jezreel. Then I will put an end to the kingdom of Israel.

<sup>5</sup>On that day I will break Israels bows and arrows in the valley of Jezreel."

<sup>6</sup>Gomer became pregnant again and had a daughter. The LORD told Hosea, "Name her Lo Ruhamah [Unloved]. I will

no longer love the nation of Israel. I will no longer forgive them.

<sup>7</sup>Yet, I will love the descendants of Judah. I will rescue them because I am the LORD their God. I won't use bows, swords, wars, horses, or horsemen to rescue them."

<sup>8</sup>After Gomer had weaned Lo Ruhamah, she became pregnant again and had a son.

<sup>9</sup>The LORD said, "Name him Lo Ammi [Not My People]. You are no longer my people, and I am no longer your God.,

<sup>10</sup>"Yet, the Israelites will become as numerous as the grains of sand on the seashore. No one will be able to measure them or count them. Wherever they were told, You are not my people, they will be told, You are the children of the living God.

<sup>11</sup>The people of Judah and Israel will be gathered together. They will appoint one leader for themselves, and they will grow in the land. The day of Jezreel will be a great day.

**2**<sup>1</sup>"So call your brothers Ammi [My People], and call your sisters Ruhamah [Loved].

<sup>2</sup>"Plead with your mother; plead with her. She no longer acts like my wife. She no longer treats me like her husband. Tell her to stop acting like a prostitute. Tell her to remove the lovers from between her breasts.

<sup>3</sup>If she refuses, I will strip her. I will leave her as naked as the day she was born. I will turn her into a dry and barren land, and she will die of thirst.

<sup>4</sup>I wont love her children, because they are children of a prostitute.

<sup>5</sup>Their mother acted like a prostitute. The woman who became pregnant with them did shameful things. She said, Ill chase after my lovers. They will give me food and water, wool and linen, olive oil and wine.

<sup>6</sup>"That is why I will block her way with thornbushes and build a wall so that she cant get through.

<sup>7</sup>She will run after her lovers, but she wont catch them. She will search for them, but she wont find them. Then she will say, Ill go back to my first husband. Things were better for me than they are now.

<sup>8</sup>"She doesn't believe that I gave her grain, new wine, and olive oil. I gave her plenty of silver and gold, but she used it to make statues of Baal.

<sup>9</sup>That is why I will take back my grain when it has ripened and my new wine when it's in season. I will take away the wool and the linen that I gave her to cover her naked body.

<sup>10</sup>I will show her naked body to her lovers, and no one will rescue her from my power.

<sup>11</sup>I will put an end to all her celebrations: her annual festivals, her New Moon Festivals, her weekly worship days, all her appointed festivals.

<sup>12</sup>I will destroy her grapevines and fig trees. She said that they were gifts from her lovers. I will turn her vineyards into a forest, and wild animals will devour them.

<sup>13</sup>I will punish her for all the times she burned incense as an offering to other gods, the Baals. She put on her rings and jewelry, and she chased after her lovers. She forgot me," declares the LORD.

<sup>14</sup>"That is why I'm going to win her back. I will lead her into the desert. I will speak tenderly to her.

<sup>15</sup>I will give her vineyards there. I will make the valley of Achor [Disaster] a door of hope. Then she will respond as she did when she was young, as she did when she came out of Egypt.

<sup>16</sup>"On that day she will call me her husband," declares the LORD. "She will no longer call me her master.

<sup>17</sup>I won't allow her to say the names of other gods called Baal. She will never again call out their names.

<sup>18</sup>"On that day I will make an arrangement with the wild animals, the birds, and the animals that crawl on the ground. I will destroy all the bows, swords, and weapons of war, so people can live safely.

<sup>19</sup>"Israel, I will make you my wife forever. I will be honest and faithful to you. I will show you my love and compassion.

<sup>20</sup>I will be true to you, my wife. Then you will know the LORD.

<sup>21</sup>"On that day I will answer your prayers," declares the LORD. "I will

speak to the sky, it will speak to the earth,

<sup>22</sup>and the earth will produce grain, new wine, and olive oil. You will produce many crops, Jezreel.

<sup>23</sup>I will plant my people in the land. Those who are not loved I will call my loved ones. Those who are not my people I will call my people. Then they will say, "You are our God!"

**3**<sup>1</sup>Then the LORD told me, "Love your wife again, even though she is loved by others and has committed adultery. Love her as I, the LORD, love the Israelites, even though they have turned to other gods and love to eat raisin cakes."

<sup>2</sup>So I bought her for 23 ounces of silver and 10 bushels of barley.

<sup>3</sup>Then I told her, "You must wait for me a long time. Don't be a prostitute or offer yourself to any man. I will wait for you."

<sup>4</sup>In the same way, the Israelites will wait a long time without kings or officials, without sacrifices or sacred stones, and without ephods or family idols.

<sup>5</sup>After that, the Israelites will turn and look to the LORD their God and David

their king. They will come trembling to the LORD for his blessings in the last days.

**4**<sup>1</sup> Listen to the word of the LORD, you Israelites. The LORD has brought these charges against those who live in the land: "There is no faith, no love, and no knowledge of God in the land.

<sup>2</sup> There is cursing, lying, murdering, stealing, and adultery. People break my laws, and there is one murder after another.

<sup>3</sup> That is why the land is drying up, and everyone who lives in it is passing away. Wild animals, birds, and fish are dying.

<sup>4</sup> "No one should accuse other people or bring charges against them. My case is against you priests.

<sup>5</sup> During the day you stumble, and during the night the prophets stumble with you. So I will destroy your mother, the nation of Israel.

<sup>6</sup> I will destroy my people because they are ignorant. You have refused to learn, so I will refuse to let you be my priests. You have forgotten the teachings of your God, so I will forget your children.

<sup>7</sup>The more priests there are, the more they sin against me. So I will turn their glory into shame.

<sup>8</sup>They feed on the sins of my people, and they want them to do wicked things.

<sup>9</sup>So the priests will be punished like the people. I will punish them for their wicked ways and pay them back for what they have done.

<sup>10</sup>"They will eat, but they'll never be full. They will have sex with prostitutes, but they'll never have children. They have abandoned the LORD.

<sup>11</sup>Prostitutes, old wine, and new wine have robbed them of their senses.

<sup>12</sup>My people ask their wooden idols for help. A piece of wood tells them what to do. A spirit of prostitution leads them astray. They commit adultery by giving themselves to other gods.

<sup>13</sup>They offer sacrifices on mountaintops, and they burn incense on the hills under oaks, poplars, and other trees. They think that these trees provide good shade. "That is why your daughters become prostitutes, and your daughters-in-law commit adultery.

<sup>14</sup>Yet, I will not punish your daughters when they become prostitutes or your daughters-in-law when they commit adultery. The men go to prostitutes and offer sacrifices with temple prostitutes. These foolish people will be trampled.

<sup>15</sup>"Israel, you act like a prostitute. Don't let Judah become guilty too. Don't go to Gilgal. Don't go to Beth Aven. Don't take the oath, As the LORD lives.

<sup>16</sup>"The people of Israel are as stubborn as a bull. How can the LORD feed them like lambs in an open pasture?

<sup>17</sup>The people of Ephraim have chosen to worship idols. Leave them alone!

<sup>18</sup>When they're done drinking their wine, they continue to have sex with the prostitutes. Their rulers dearly love to act shamefully.

<sup>19</sup>The wind will carry them away in its wings, and their sacrifices will bring them shame.

**5**<sup>1</sup>"Listen to this, you priests! Pay attention, nation of Israel! Open your ears, royal family! This is my decision about you. You set traps at Mizpah and spread out nets on Mount Tabor.

<sup>2</sup>You are deeply involved in sin. So I will punish all of you.

<sup>3</sup>I know Ephraim, and Israel isn't a stranger to me. Now, Ephraim, you are acting like a prostitute, and Israel is unclean.

<sup>4</sup>"The wicked things that the people have done keep them from returning to their God. They have a spirit of prostitution, and they don't know the LORD.

<sup>5</sup>The people of Israel's arrogance testifies against them. Israel and Ephraim stumble because of their sins, and Judah stumbles with them.

<sup>6</sup>They go with their sheep and their cattle to search for the LORD, but they can't find him. He has left them.

<sup>7</sup>They have been unfaithful to the LORD, because their children do not belong to him. Now their New Moon Festivals will devour them and their fields.

<sup>8</sup>"Blow the rams horn in Gibeah. Blow the trumpet in Ramah. Sound the alarm at Beth Aven, you descendants of Benjamin.

<sup>9</sup>Ephraim will become a wasteland when the time for punishment comes. I will make the truth known among the tribes of Israel.

<sup>10</sup>The leaders of Judah are like those who move boundary markers. I will pour my fury on them like water.

<sup>11</sup>Ephraim is oppressedcrushed by punishment, because its people are determined to chase idols.

<sup>12</sup>I will destroy Ephraim as a moth destroys clothing. I will destroy the nation of Judah as rot destroys wood.

<sup>13</sup>"When Ephraim saw that he was sick and when Judah saw his own wounds, Ephraim went to Assyria to ask the great king for help. But the king couldnt cure them or heal their wounds.

<sup>14</sup>I will be like a lion to Ephraim and like a young lion to the nation of Judah. I will carry them off, and no one will rescue them.

<sup>15</sup>I will go back to my place until they admit that they are guilty. Then they will search for me. In their distress they will eagerly look for me."

**6**<sup>1</sup>Lets return to the LORD. Even though he has torn us to pieces,

he will heal us. Even though he has wounded us, he will bandage our wounds.

<sup>2</sup>After two days he will revive us. On the third day he will raise us so that we may live in his presence.

<sup>3</sup>Lets learn about the LORD. Lets get to know the LORD. He will come to us as sure as the morning comes. He will come to us like the autumn rains and the spring rains that water the ground.

<sup>4</sup>"What should I do with you, Ephraim? What should I do with you, Judah? Your love is like fog in the morning. It disappears as quickly as the morning dew.

<sup>5</sup>That is why I cut you down by sending the prophets. I killed you with the words from my mouth. My judgments shined on you like light.

<sup>6</sup>I want your loyalty, not your sacrifices. I want you to know me, not to give me burnt offerings.

<sup>7</sup>"Like Adam, you rejected the promise. You were unfaithful to me.

<sup>8</sup>Gilead is a city filled with troublemakers. It is stained with bloody footprints.

<sup>9</sup>The priests are like gangs of robbers who lie in ambush for a person. They murder on the road to Shechem.

Certainly, they have committed a crime.

<sup>10</sup>"I have seen horrible things in the nation of Israel. Ephraim is acting like a prostitute, and Israel is unclean.

<sup>11</sup>"Yet, Judah, I have set a harvest time for you when I bring my people back from captivity.

**7**<sup>1</sup>"Whenever I want to heal Israel, all I can see is Ephraim's sin and Samaria's wickedness. People cheat each other. They break into houses and steal. They rob people in the streets.

<sup>2</sup>They don't realize that I remember all the evil things they've done. Now their sins surround them. Their sins are in my presence.

<sup>3</sup>"They make kings happy with the wicked things they do. They make officials happy with the lies they tell.

<sup>4</sup>They all commit adultery. They are like a heated oven, an oven so hot that a baker doesn't have to fan its flames when he makes bread.

<sup>5</sup>On the day of the kings celebration, the officials become drunk from wine, and the king joins mockers.

<sup>6</sup>They become hot like an oven while they lie in ambush. All night long their anger smolders, but in the morning it burns like a raging fire.

<sup>7</sup>They are all as hot as an oven. They consume their judges like a fire. All their kings die in battle, and none of them calls to me.

<sup>8</sup>"Ephraim mixes with other nations. Ephraim, you are like a halfbaked loaf of bread.

<sup>9</sup>Foreigners are using up your strength, but you dont realize it. You have become a grayhaired, old man, but you dont realize it.

<sup>10</sup>Israel, your arrogance testifies against you, but even after all this, you dont turn to the LORD your God or look to him for help.

<sup>11</sup>Ephraim, you are like a silly, senseless dove. You call for Egypt and run to Assyria for help.

<sup>12</sup>When you go, I will spread my net over you. I will snatch you out of the air

like a bird. I will punish you for all the evil things you have done.

<sup>13</sup>"How horrible it will be for these people. They have run away from me. They must be destroyed because they've rebelled against me. I want to reclaim them, but they tell lies about me.

<sup>14</sup>They don't pray to me sincerely, even though they cry in their beds and make cuts on their bodies while praying for grain and new wine. They have turned against me.

<sup>15</sup>I trained them and made them strong. Yet, they plan evil against me.

<sup>16</sup>They don't return to the Most High. They are like a defective bow. Their officials will die in battle because they curse. The people in Egypt will ridicule them for this.

**8**<sup>1</sup>"Sound the alarm on the ram's horn. The enemy swoops down on the LORDS temple like an eagle. The people of Israel have rejected my promise and rebelled against my teachings.

<sup>2</sup>They cry out to me, We acknowledge you as our God.

<sup>3</sup>However, they have rejected what is good. The enemy will persecute them.

<sup>4</sup>"They chose their own kings, kings I didnt approve. They chose their own princes, princes I didnt know. They chose to make idols with their own silver and gold. Because of this, they will be destroyed.

<sup>5</sup>Get rid of your calfshaped idol, Samaria. My anger burns against these people. How long will they remain unclean?

<sup>6</sup>Samarias calfshaped idol was made in Israel. Skilled workers made it. It is not a god. It will be smashed to pieces.

<sup>7</sup>"The people of Israel plant the wind, but they harvest a storm. A field of grain that doesnt ripen will never produce any grain. Even if it did produce grain, foreigners would eat it all.

<sup>8</sup>Israel will be swallowed up. It has already mixed in with the other nations. It has become worthless.

<sup>9</sup>"The people of Israel went to Assyria. They were like wild donkeys wandering off alone. The people of Ephraim sold themselves to their lovers.

<sup>10</sup>Even though they sold themselves among the nations, I will gather them

now. They will suffer for a while under the burdens of kings and princes.

<sup>11</sup> "The more altars that the people of Ephraim build to make offerings to pay for their sins, the more places they have for sinning.

<sup>12</sup> I have written many things for them in my teachings, but they consider these things strange and foreign.

<sup>13</sup> They offer sacrifices to me and eat the meat of sacrifices, but I, the LORD, do not accept these sacrifices. Now I will remember their wickedness and punish them because of their sins. They will go back to Egypt.

<sup>14</sup> The people of Israel have built palaces, and they have forgotten their maker. The people of Judah have built many fortified cities. I will send a fire on their cities and burn down their palaces."

**9**<sup>1</sup> Israel, don't rejoice. Don't celebrate as other nations do. You have been unfaithful to your God. You have sold sex on every threshing floor.

<sup>2</sup> There won't be enough grain to feed people. There won't be enough wine to go around.

<sup>3</sup>The people of Ephraim wont stay in the LORDS land. They will return to Egypt, and they will eat unclean food in Assyria.

<sup>4</sup>They wont pour wine offerings to the LORD, and their sacrifices wont please him. Their sacrifices will be like the food that mourners eat. All who eat this food will be unclean. Their food will only satisfy their hunger. It will not be brought as an offering to the LORDS temple.

<sup>5</sup>What will they do on the day of an appointed festival or on the LORDS festival days?

<sup>6</sup>Even if they escape without being destroyed, Egypt will capture them and Memphis will bury them. Weeds will grow over their silver treasures. Thorns will grow over their tents.

<sup>7</sup>The time for them to be punished will come. The time for them to pay for their sins will come. When this happens, Israel will know it. They think that prophets are fools and that spiritual people are crazy. They have sinned a lot, and they are very hostile.

<sup>8</sup>Prophets are Gods watchmen over Ephraim. Yet, traps are set on every prophets path, and people are hostile in the temple of their God.

<sup>9</sup>People have deeply corrupted themselves as they once did at Gibeah. God will remember their wickedness and punish them because of their sins.

<sup>10</sup>The LORD said, "When I found Israel, it was like finding grapes in the desert. When I saw your ancestors, it was like seeing the first figs of the harvest. But they went to Baal Peor and worshiped shameful idols. They became as disgusting as the things they worshiped.

<sup>11</sup>"Ephraims glory will fly away like a bird. There will be no more pregnancies, births, or babies.

<sup>12</sup>Even if they bring up children, I will take those children away before they grow up. Yes, how horrible it will be for them when I leave them.

<sup>13</sup>I have seen Ephraim, like Tyre, planted in a pleasant place. But the people of Ephraim will bring out their children to be killed."

<sup>14</sup>LORD, give them what they deserve. Make the women miscarry, or else make them unable to nurse their babies.

<sup>15</sup>"All Ephraim's wickedness began in Gilgal; I hated the people there. I will force them out of my temple because of their wickedness, and I won't love them anymore. All their officials are rebellious.

<sup>16</sup>"The people of Ephraim are like sick plants. Their roots are dried up. They have no fruit. Even if they were to have children, I would kill their dear children."

<sup>17</sup>My God will reject them because they refused to listen to him. They will wander among the nations.

**10**<sup>1</sup>The people of Israel are like vines that used to produce fruit. The more fruit they produced, the more altars they built. The more their land produced, the more stone markers they set up to honor other gods.

<sup>2</sup>They are hypocrites. Now they must take their punishment. God will tear down their altars and destroy their stone markers.

<sup>3</sup>So they'll say, "We have no king because we didn't fear the LORD. Even if

we had a king, he couldnt do anything for us."

<sup>4</sup>They say many things. They lie when they take oaths, and they make promises they dont intend to keep. Thats why lawsuits spring up like poisonous weeds in the furrows of a field.

<sup>5</sup>Those who live in Samaria fear the calfshaped idol at Beth Aven. The people will mourn over it. The priests will cry loudly because its glory will be taken away into captivity.

<sup>6</sup>The thing itself will be carried to Assyria as a present to the great king. Ephraim will be disgraced. Israel will be ashamed because of its plans.

<sup>7</sup>The king of Samaria will be carried away like a piece of wood on water.

<sup>8</sup>The illegal worship sites of Aven will be destroyed. Israel sins there. Thorns and weeds will grow over those altars. People will say to the mountains, "Cover us!" and to the hills, "Fall on us!"

<sup>9</sup>Israel, you have sinned ever since the incident at Gibeah. You never change. War will overtake the wicked people in Gibeah.

<sup>10</sup>"I will punish them when I'm ready. Armies will gather to attack them. They will be punished for their many sins.

<sup>11</sup>"Ephraim is like a trained calf that loves to thresh grain. I will put a yoke on its beautiful neck. I will harness Ephraim. Judah must plow. Jacob must break up the ground.

<sup>12</sup>"Break new ground. Plant righteousness, and harvest the fruit that your loyalty will produce for me." It's time to seek the LORD! When he comes, he will rain righteousness on you.

<sup>13</sup>You have planted wickedness and harvested evil. You have eaten the fruit that your lies produced. You have trusted your own power and your many warriors.

<sup>14</sup>So your army will hear the noise of battle. All your fortresses will be destroyed like the time Shalman destroyed Beth Arbel in battle. Mothers and their children were smashed to death.

<sup>15</sup>This is what will happen to you, Bethel, because you have done many wicked things. At daybreak, the king of Israel will be completely destroyed.

**11** <sup>1</sup> "When Israel was a child, I loved him, and I called my son out of Egypt.

<sup>2</sup> The more I called them, the farther they went away. They sacrificed to other gods the Baals, and they burned incense to idols.

<sup>3</sup> I was the one who taught the people of Ephraim to walk. I took them by the hand. But they didn't realize that I had healed them.

<sup>4</sup> I led them with cords of human kindness, with ropes of love. I removed the yokes from their necks. I bent down and fed them.

<sup>5</sup> "They will not return to Egypt. Instead, Assyria will rule them because they have refused to return to me.

<sup>6</sup> War will sweep through their cities, demolish their city gates, and put an end to their plans.

<sup>7</sup> My people are determined to turn away from me. Even if they call to the Most High, he will not pardon them.

<sup>8</sup> "How can I give you up, Ephraim? How can I hand you over, Israel? How can I make you like Admah? How can I

treat you like Zeboim? I have changed my mind. I am deeply moved.

<sup>9</sup>I will not act on my burning anger. I will not destroy Ephraim again. I am God, not a human. I am the Holy One among you, and I will not come to you in anger.

<sup>10</sup>"My people will follow me when I roar like a lion. When I roar, my children will come trembling from the west.

<sup>11</sup>They will come trembling like birds from Egypt and like doves from Assyria. I will settle them in their own homes," declares the LORD.

<sup>12</sup>"Ephraim surrounds me with lies. The nation of Israel surrounds me with deceit." Judah rebels against God, against the Holy One who is faithful.

**12**<sup>1</sup>The people of Ephraim try to catch the wind and try to chase the east wind all day. They are very violent and destructive. They make treaties with Assyria and take olive oil to Egypt.

<sup>2</sup>The LORD brings charges against Judah and punishes Jacob because of the way their people act. He will pay them back for what they have done.

<sup>3</sup>Their ancestor Jacob held on to his brothers heel while the two of them were in their mothers womb. When Jacob became a man, he struggled with God.

<sup>4</sup>He struggled with the Messenger and won. Jacob cried and pleaded with him. Jacob found him at Bethel, and he talked with him there.

<sup>5</sup>The LORD is the God of Armies. The LORD is the name by which he is remembered.

<sup>6</sup>Return to your God. Be loyal and fair, and always wait with hope for your God.

<sup>7</sup>The LORD says, "The merchants use dishonest scales. They love to cheat people.

<sup>8</sup>The people of Ephraim say, Weve made a fortune. With all this wealth, no one will find us guilty of any sin.

<sup>9</sup>I am the LORD your God. I brought you out of Egypt. I will make you live in tents again as you did during your appointed festivals.

<sup>10</sup>I spoke to the prophets and gave them many visions. I taught lessons through the prophets."

<sup>11</sup> The people of Gilead are evil. They are worthless. They sacrifice bulls in Gilgal. But their altars will become like piles of rubble beside a plowed field.

<sup>12</sup> Jacob fled to the country of Syria. Israel worked to get a wife; he took care of sheep to pay for her.

<sup>13</sup> The LORD used a prophet to bring the people of Israel out of Egypt. He used a prophet to take care of them.

<sup>14</sup> The people of Ephraim made the LORD bitter. He will hold them guilty of murder. The Lord will pay them back for their insults.

**13**<sup>1</sup> When the tribe of Ephraim spoke, people trembled. The people of Ephraim were important in Israel. Then they became guilty of worshiping Baal, so they must die.

<sup>2</sup> They keep on sinning more and more. They make idols from silver for themselves. These idols are skillfully made. All of them are the work of craftsmen. People say this about the Israelites: "They offer human sacrifices and kiss calfshaped idols."

<sup>3</sup> That is why they will be like fog in the morning and like morning dew that

disappears quickly. They will be like straw blown away from threshing floors. They will be like smoke rising from chimneys.

<sup>4</sup>"I am the LORD your God. I brought you out of Egypt. You have known no god besides me. There is no savior except me.

<sup>5</sup>I took care of you in the desert, in a dry land.

<sup>6</sup>When I fed you, you were full. When you were full, you became arrogant. That is why you forgot me.

<sup>7</sup>So I will be like a lion. Like a leopard I will wait by the road to ambush you.

<sup>8</sup>Like a bear that has lost her cubs, I will attack you. I will rip you open. Like a lion I will devour you. Like a wild animal I will tear you apart.

<sup>9</sup>You are destroying yourself, Israel. You are against me, your helper.

<sup>10</sup>"Where, now, is your king, the one who is supposed to save you? Where in all your cities are your judges? You said, Give us kings and officials!

<sup>11</sup>I gave you a king when I was angry, and I took him away when I was furious.

<sup>12</sup>"Ephraim's wickedness is on record. The record of the people's sins is safely stored away.

<sup>13</sup>They have the opportunity to live again, but they are not smart enough to take it. They are like a baby who is about to be born but won't come out of its mother's womb.

<sup>14</sup>"I want to free them from the power of the grave. I want to reclaim them from death. Death, I want to be a plague to you. Grave, I want to destroy you. I won't even think of changing my plans."

<sup>15</sup>The people of Ephraim have become important among their relatives. However, the LORDS scorching wind will come from the east. It will blow out of the desert. Then their springs will run dry, and their wells will dry up. The wind will destroy every precious thing in their storehouses.

<sup>16</sup>The people of Samaria are guilty as charged because they rebelled against their God. They will be killed in war, their children will be smashed to death, and their pregnant women will be ripped open.

**14**<sup>1</sup> Israel, return to the LORD your God. You have stumbled because of your sins.

<sup>2</sup>Return to the LORD, and say these things to him: "Forgive all our sins, and kindly receive us. Then we will praise you with our lips.

<sup>3</sup>Assyria cannot save us. We won't ride on horses anymore. We will never again say that the things our hands have made are our gods. You love orphans."

<sup>4</sup>The LORD says, "I will cure them of their unfaithfulness. I will love them freely. I will no longer be angry with them.

<sup>5</sup>I will be like dew to the people of Israel. They will blossom like flowers. They will be firmly rooted like cedars from Lebanon.

<sup>6</sup>They will be like growing branches. They will be beautiful like olive trees. They will be fragrant like cedars from Lebanon.

<sup>7</sup>They will live again in God's shadow. They will grow like grain. They will blossom like grapevines. They will be as famous as the wines from Lebanon.

<sup>8</sup>"The people of Ephraim will have nothing more to do with idols. I will answer them and take care of them. I am like a growing pine tree. Their fruit comes from me."

<sup>9</sup>Wise people will understand these things. A person with insight will recognize them. The LORDS ways are right. Righteous people live by them. Rebellious people stumble over them.

# Joel

**1** <sup>1</sup> This is what the LORD said to Joel, son of Pethuel.

<sup>2</sup> Listen to this, you leaders! Open your ears, all inhabitants of this land! Nothing like this has ever happened in your lifetime or in your ancestors lifetime.

<sup>3</sup> Tell your children about it. Have your children tell their children. Have your grandchildren tell their children.

<sup>4</sup> What young locusts leave, mature locusts will eat. What mature locusts leave, adult locusts will eat. What adult locusts leave, grasshoppers will eat.

<sup>5</sup> Wake up and cry, you drunks! Cry loudly, you wine drinkers! New wine has been taken away from you.

<sup>6</sup> A strong nation attacked my land. It has too many soldiers to count. They have teeth like lions. They have fangs like grown lions.

<sup>7</sup> They destroyed my grapevines. They ruined my fig trees. They stripped off what they could eat, threw the rest away, and left the branches bare.

<sup>8</sup>Cry loudly like a young woman who is dressed in sackcloth, mourning for the man she was going to marry.

<sup>9</sup>Grain offerings and wine offerings are no longer brought to the LORDS temple. The priests, the LORDS servants, mourn.

<sup>10</sup>Israels fields are ruined, and the ground is dried up. The grain has been destroyed. The new wine has dried up. The olive oil has run out.

<sup>11</sup>Be sad, you farmers! Cry loudly, you grape growers! Mourn for the wheat and the barley. The harvest is destroyed in the field.

<sup>12</sup>The grapevines are dried up. The fig trees are withered. The pomegranate, palm, and apricot trees, as well as all the trees in the orchards, have died. Yes, the joy of these people has died too.

<sup>13</sup>Put on your sackcloth and mourn, you priests. Cry loudly, you servants of the altar. Spend the night in sackcloth, you servants of my God. Grain offerings and wine offerings are withheld from your Gods temple.

<sup>14</sup>Schedule a time to fast! Call for an assembly! Gather the leaders and everyone who lives in the land. Bring

them to the temple of the LORD your God, and cry to the LORD for help.

<sup>15</sup>This will be a terrible day! The day of the LORD is near, and it will come like destruction from the Almighty.

<sup>16</sup>Food disappears right before our eyes. Happiness and rejoicing disappear from our Gods temple.

<sup>17</sup>Seeds shrivel up in their shells. Storehouses are destroyed. Barns are ruined. The grain has dried up.

<sup>18</sup>The animals groan. Herds of cattle wander around confused. There's no pasture for them. Even flocks of sheep are suffering.

<sup>19</sup>O LORD, I cry to you for help! Fire has burned up the open pastures. Flames have burned up all the trees in the orchards.

<sup>20</sup>Even wild animals long for you. Streams run dry. Fire has burned up the open pastures.

**2**<sup>1</sup> Blow the rams horn in Zion. Sound the alarm on my holy mountain. Everyone who lives in the land should tremble, because the day of the LORD is coming. Certainly, it is near.

<sup>2</sup>It is a day of darkness and gloom, a day of clouds and overcast skies. A large and mighty army will spread over the mountains like the dawn. Nothing like this has ever happened. Nothing like this will ever happen again.

<sup>3</sup>In front of this army a fire burns. Behind it flames are blazing. In front of it the land is like the garden of Eden. Behind it the land is like a barren desert. Nothing escapes it!

<sup>4</sup>The soldiers look like horses. They run like war horses.

<sup>5</sup>As they leap on mountaintops, they sound like rattling chariots, like crackling fire burning up straw, and like a mighty army prepared for battle.

<sup>6</sup>People are terrified in their presence. Every face turns pale.

<sup>7</sup>They run like warriors. They climb walls like soldiers. They march straight ahead. They do not leave their places.

<sup>8</sup>They do not crowd one another. They keep in their own lines. Even when they break through the defenses, they do not break their ranks.

<sup>9</sup>They rush into the city. They run along the wall. They climb into houses. They enter through windows like thieves.

<sup>10</sup>The earth quakes in their presence, and the sky shakes. The sun and the moon turn dark, and the stars no longer shine.

<sup>11</sup>The LORD shouts out orders to his army. His forces are very large. The troops that carry out his commands are mighty. The day of the LORD is extremely terrifying. Who can endure it?

<sup>12</sup>"But even now," declares the LORD, "return to me with all your heart with fasting, crying, and mourning."

<sup>13</sup>Tear your hearts, not your clothes. Return to the LORD your God. He is merciful and compassionate, patient, and always ready to forgive and to change his plans about disaster.

<sup>14</sup>Who knows? He may reconsider and change his plan and leave a blessing for you. Then you could give grain offerings and wine offerings to the LORD your God.

<sup>15</sup>Blow the rams horn in Zion. Schedule a time to fast. Call for an assembly.

<sup>16</sup>Gather the people. Prepare them for a holy meeting. Assemble the leaders. Gather the children, even the nursing infants. Grooms leave their rooms. Brides leave their chambers.

<sup>17</sup>The priests who serve the LORD cry between the altar and the entrance to the temple. They say, "Spare your people, O LORD. Don't let the people who belong to you become a disgrace. Don't let the nations ridicule them. Why should people ask, Where is their God?"

<sup>18</sup>Then the LORD became concerned about his land, and he had pity on his people.

<sup>19</sup>The LORD said to his people, "I am going to send grain, new wine, and olive oil to you. You will be satisfied with them. I will no longer make you a disgrace among the nations.

<sup>20</sup>"I will keep the northern army far from you, and I will force it into a dry and barren land. The soldiers in front will be forced into the eastern sea. The soldiers in back will be forced into the western sea. A foul odor will rise from the dead bodies. They will stink." He has done great things!

<sup>21</sup> Land, do not be afraid. Be glad and rejoice. The LORD has done great things!

<sup>22</sup> Wild animals, do not be afraid. The pastures in the wilderness have turned green. The trees have produced their fruit. There are plenty of figs and grapes.

<sup>23</sup> People of Zion, be glad and find joy in the LORD your God. The LORD has given you the Teacher of Righteousness. He has sent the autumn rain and the spring rain as before.

<sup>24</sup> The threshing floors will be filled with grain. The vats will overflow with new wine and olive oil.

<sup>25</sup> "Then I will repay you for the years that the mature locusts, the adult locusts, the grasshoppers, and the young locusts ate your crops. (They are the large army that I sent against you.)

<sup>26</sup> You will have plenty to eat, and you will be full. You will praise the name of the LORD your God, who has performed miracles for you. My people will never be ashamed again.

<sup>27</sup> You will know that I am in Israel. I am the LORD your God, and there is no other. My people will never be ashamed again.

<sup>28</sup>"After this, I will pour my Spirit on everyone. Your sons and daughters will prophesy. Your old men will dream dreams. Your young men will see visions.

<sup>29</sup>In those days I will pour my Spirit on servants, on both men and women.

<sup>30</sup>I will work miracles in the sky and on the earth: blood, fire, and clouds of smoke.

<sup>31</sup>The sun will become dark, and the moon will become as red as blood before the terrifying day of the LORD comes."

<sup>32</sup>Then whoever calls on the name of the LORD will be saved. Those who escape will be on Mount Zion and in Jerusalem. Among the survivors will be those whom the LORD calls, as the LORD has promised.

**3**<sup>1</sup>"In those days and at that time, I will bring back the captives of Judah and Jerusalem.

<sup>2</sup>I will gather all the nations. I will bring them down to the valley of Jehoshaphat. I will judge them there. They scattered the Israelites, the people who belong to me, among the nations. They divided my land.

<sup>3</sup>They threw dice for my people. They traded boys for prostitutes. They sold girls so that they could buy wine to drink.

<sup>4</sup>"Now what do you have against me, Tyre and Sidon and all the regions of Philistia? Are you paying me back for something I have done? If you are paying me back, I will quickly pay you back for what you have done.

<sup>5</sup>You took my silver and my gold. You brought my finest treasures to your temples.

<sup>6</sup>You sold the people of Judah and Jerusalem to the Greeks. That way you could send them far away from their land.

<sup>7</sup>I am going to make them leave the place where you sold them. I will pay you back for what you have done.

<sup>8</sup>I will sell your sons and daughters to the people of Judah. They will sell them to the people of Sheba, a nation that is far away." The LORD has spoken.

<sup>9</sup>Announce this among the nations: Prepare yourselves for war. Wake up the warriors. Have all the warriors come near and attack.

<sup>10</sup> Hammer your plowblades into swords and your pruning shears into spears. Weaklings should say that they are warriors.

<sup>11</sup> Hurry from every direction, and gather there, all you nations. O LORD, bring your soldiers.

<sup>12</sup> Wake up, you nations. Come to the valley of Jehoshaphat. There I will sit to judge all the surrounding nations.

<sup>13</sup> Cut them down like grain. The harvest is ripe. Stomp on them as you would stomp on grapes. The winepress is full. The vats overflow. The nations are very wicked.

<sup>14</sup> There are many, many people in the valley of decision. The day of the LORD is near in the valley of decision.

<sup>15</sup> The sun and the moon will turn dark. The stars will no longer shine.

<sup>16</sup> The LORD will roar from Zion, and his voice will thunder from Jerusalem. The sky and the earth will shake. The LORD will be a refuge for his people. He will be a stronghold for the people of Israel.

<sup>17</sup> "You will know that I am the LORD your God. I live on my holy mountain,

Zion. Jerusalem will be holy. Foreigners will never invade it again.

<sup>18</sup>On that day new wine will cover the mountains. Milk will flow on the hills. Water will flow in all the brooks of Judah. A spring will flow from the LORDS temple. It will water the valley of Shittim.

<sup>19</sup>Egypt will become a wasteland. Edom will become a barren desert. This is because the nations were cruel to Judah. They murdered innocent people in their land.

<sup>20</sup>People will always live in Judah. People will live in Jerusalem from now on.

<sup>21</sup>I will punish those who murder." The LORD lives in Zion!

# Amos

**1** <sup>1</sup> These are the words of Amos, one of the sheep farmers from Tekoa. He saw a vision about Israel during the reigns of Judah's King Uzziah and Israel's King Jeroboam, son of Joash. This happened two years before the earthquake.

<sup>2</sup> He said: The LORD roars from Zion, and his voice thunders from Jerusalem. The pastures of the shepherds are turning brown, and the top of Mount Carmel is dried up.

<sup>3</sup> This is what the LORD says: Because Damascus has committed three crimes, and now a fourth crime, I will not change my plans. The Arameans have crushed the people of Gilead with ironspiked threshing sledges.

<sup>4</sup> I will send a fire on the house of Hazael and burn down the palaces of Ben Hadad.

<sup>5</sup> I will break the bars on the gates of Damascus. I will cut off those living in Aven Valley and the one who holds the

scepter in Beth Eden. The people of Aram will go into captivity at Kir. The LORD has said this.

<sup>6</sup>This is what the LORD says: Because Gaza has committed three crimes, and now a fourth crime, I will not change my plans. The Philistines have taken all the people captive in order to hand them over to the Edomites.

<sup>7</sup>I will send a fire on the walls of Gaza and burn down its palaces.

<sup>8</sup>I will cut off those living in Ashdod and the one who holds the scepter in Ashkelon. I will turn my power against Ekron. The rest of the Philistines will die. The Almighty LORD has said this.

<sup>9</sup>This is what the LORD says: Because Tyre has committed three crimes, and now a fourth crime, I will not change my plans. The Tyrians have handed all the people over to the Edomites. The Tyrians didnt remember their treaty with their relatives.

<sup>10</sup>I will send a fire on the walls of Tyre and burn down its palaces.

<sup>11</sup>This is what the LORD says: Because Edom has committed three crimes, and now a fourth crime, I will not change

my plans. The Edomites pursued their relatives with swords. They refused to show any compassion to them. Their anger was unstoppable. They refused to control their fury.

<sup>12</sup>I will send a fire on Teman and burn down the palaces of Bozrah.

<sup>13</sup>This is what the LORD says: Because Ammon has committed three crimes, and now a fourth crime, I will not change my plans. The Ammonites enlarged their territory by ripping open pregnant women in Gilead.

<sup>14</sup>I will set fire to the walls of Rabbah and burn down its palaces while troops are shouting on the day of battle and winds are howling on the day of the storm.

<sup>15</sup>Their king will go into captivity along with his officials. The LORD has said this.

**2**<sup>1</sup>This is what the LORD says: Because Moab has committed three crimes, and now a fourth crime, I will not change my plans. The Moabites have cremated Edom's king.

<sup>2</sup>I will send a fire on Moab and burn down the palaces of Kerioth. Moab will die during the noise of battle while

troops are shouting and rams horns are blowing.

<sup>3</sup>I will take their judges away from them. I will kill all their officials at the same time. The LORD has said this.

<sup>4</sup>This is what the LORD says: Because Judah has committed three crimes, and now a fourth crime, I will not change my plans. The people of Judah have rejected the LORDS Teachings and havent kept his laws. They have been led astray by false teachings, the same ones their ancestors followed.

<sup>5</sup>I will send a fire on Judah and burn down the palaces of Jerusalem.

<sup>6</sup>This is what the LORD says: Because Israel has committed three crimes, and now a fourth crime, I will not change my plans. The people of Israel sell the righteous for money and the needy for a pair of sandals.

<sup>7</sup>They stomp the heads of the poor into the dust. They push the humble out of the way. Father and son sleep with the same woman. They dishonor my holy name.

<sup>8</sup>Beside every altar, they spread themselves out on clothes taken as

security. In the temples of their gods, they drink the wine that they bought with fines.

<sup>9</sup>I destroyed the Amorites in front of them, although the Amorites were as tall as cedars and as strong as oaks. I destroyed their fruit above the ground and their roots below it.

<sup>10</sup>I brought you out of Egypt. I led you through the desert for 40 years so that you could take possession of the land of the Amorites.

<sup>11</sup>I also sent you prophets from among your children and Nazirites from among your youths. Isn't that so, people of Israel? The LORD has declared this.

<sup>12</sup>You made the Nazirites drink wine. You commanded the prophets to stop prophesying.

<sup>13</sup>I am going to crush you as an overloaded wagon crushes a person.

<sup>14</sup>Runners will not be able to escape. Strong men will find that their strength is useless. Soldiers will not be able to save themselves.

<sup>15</sup>Archers will not stand their ground. Fast runners will not be able to escape.

Horsemen will not be able to save themselves.

<sup>16</sup> Brave soldiers will run away naked that day. The LORD has declared this.

**3**<sup>1</sup> Listen to this message which I, the LORD, have spoken against you Israelites, against your whole family that I brought out of Egypt.

<sup>2</sup> Out of all the families on earth, I have known no one else but you. That is why I am going to punish you for all your sins.

<sup>3</sup> Do two people ever walk together without meeting first?

<sup>4</sup> Does a lion roar in the forest if it has no prey? Does a young lion growl in its den unless it has caught something?

<sup>5</sup> Does a bird land in a trap on the ground if there's no bait in it? Does a trap spring up from the ground unless it has caught something?

<sup>6</sup> If a ram's horn sounds an alarm in a city, won't the people be alarmed? If there is a disaster in a city, hasn't the LORD done it?

<sup>7</sup> Certainly, the Almighty LORD doesn't do anything unless he first reveals his secret to his servants the prophets.

<sup>8</sup>The lion has roared. Who isn't afraid? The Almighty LORD has spoken. Who can keep from prophesying?

<sup>9</sup>Announce in the palaces of Ashdod and in the palaces of Egypt, "Gather together on the mountains of Samaria. See the widespread confusion and oppression in Samaria."

<sup>10</sup>Those who collect profits in their palaces through violent and destructive acts don't know how to do what is right, declares the LORD.

<sup>11</sup>This is what the Almighty LORD says: An enemy will surround your land, strip you of your defenses, and loot your palaces.

<sup>12</sup>This is what the LORD says: As a shepherd rescues two legs or a piece of an ear out of a lion's mouth, so the Israelites living in Samaria will be rescued, having only a corner of a bed or a piece of a couch.

<sup>13</sup>Listen, and testify against the descendants of Jacob, declares the Almighty LORD, the God of Armies.

<sup>14</sup>On the day I punish Israel for its disobedience, I will also destroy the

altars at Bethel. The horns of the altar will be cut off and will fall to the ground.

<sup>15</sup>I will tear down winter houses as well as summer houses. Houses decorated with ivory will be destroyed. Mansions will be demolished, declares the LORD.

**4**<sup>1</sup> Listen to this message, you cows of Bashan who live on Mount Samaria. You women oppress the poor and abuse the needy. You say to your husbands, "Get some wine! Lets drink!"

<sup>2</sup>The Almighty LORD has taken an oath on his holiness: Surely, the time is going to come when you will be taken away on hooks, and the rest of you on fishhooks.

<sup>3</sup>Each of you will leave the city through breaks in the wall, one woman ahead of another. You will be thrown into a garbage dump. The LORD declares this.

<sup>4</sup>Go to Bethel and sin. Go to Gilgal and sin even more. Bring your sacrifices every morning. Bring a tenth of your income every three days.

<sup>5</sup>Burn bread as a thank offering. Brag and boast about your freewill offerings. This is what you people of Israel love to do. The Almighty LORD declares this.

<sup>6</sup>I left you with nothing to eat in any of your cities. I left you with no food in your entire land. And you still didnt return to me, declares the LORD.

<sup>7</sup>I stopped the rain from falling three months before the harvest. I sent rain on one city and not on another. One field had rain. Another field had none and dried up.

<sup>8</sup>So people from two or three cities staggered as they walked to another city in order to get a drink of water. But they couldnt get enough. And you still didnt return to me, declares the LORD.

<sup>9</sup>I struck your crops with blight and mildew. Locusts repeatedly devoured your gardens, vineyards, fig trees, and olive trees. And you still didnt return to me, declares the LORD.

<sup>10</sup>I sent plagues on you as I did to Egypt. With swords I killed your best young men along with your captured horses. I made the stench from your camps fill your noses. And you still didnt return to me, declares the LORD.

<sup>11</sup>I destroyed some of you as I destroyed Sodom and Gomorrah. You were like a burning log snatched from

a fire. And you still didnt return to me, declares the LORD.

<sup>12</sup>This is what I will do to you, Israel. Prepare to meet your God. This is what I will do to you, Israel!

<sup>13</sup>God forms the mountains and creates the wind. He reveals his thoughts to humans. He makes dawn and dusk appear. He walks on the high places of the earth. His name is the LORD God of Armies.

**5**<sup>1</sup> Listen to this message, this funeral song that I sing about you, nation of Israel:

<sup>2</sup>The people of Israel have fallen, never to rise again. They lie abandoned in their own land. There is no one to help them.

<sup>3</sup>This is what the Almighty LORD says: The city that sends 1,000 troops off to war will have only 100 left. The one that sends 100 troops off to war will have only 10 left for the nation of Israel.

<sup>4</sup>This is what the LORD says to the nation of Israel: Search for me and live!

<sup>5</sup>But dont search for me at Bethel. Dont go to Gilgal. Dont travel to Beersheba. Gilgal will certainly go into exile. Bethel will come to nothing.

<sup>6</sup>Search for the LORD and live! If you don't, he will spread like a fire through the house of Joseph and burn it down. Bethel will have no one to put it out.

<sup>7</sup>You, Israel, turn justice into poison and throw righteousness on the ground.

<sup>8</sup>God made the constellations Pleiades and Orion. He turns deep darkness into dawn. He turns day into night. He calls for water from the sea to pour it over the face of the earth. His name is the LORD.

<sup>9</sup>He destroys strongholds and ruins fortresses.

<sup>10</sup>Israel, you hate anyone who speaks out against injustice. You are disgusted by anyone who speaks the truth.

<sup>11</sup>You trample on the poor and take their wheat from them for taxes. That is why you build houses from handcut stones, but you will not live in them. You plant beautiful vineyards, but you will not drink their wine.

<sup>12</sup>I know that your crimes are numerous and your sins are many. You oppress the righteous by taking bribes. You deny the needy access to the courts.

<sup>13</sup>That is why a wise person remains silent at such times, because those times are so evil.

<sup>14</sup>Search for good instead of evil so that you may live. Then the LORD God of Armies will be with you, as you have said.

<sup>15</sup>Hate evil and love good. Then you will be able to have justice in your courts. Maybe the LORD God of Armies will have pity on the faithful few of Joseph.

<sup>16</sup>This is what the LORD, the Almighty God of Armies, says: There will be loud crying in every city square, and people will say in every street, "Oh, no!" They will call on farmers to mourn and on professional mourners to cry loudly.

<sup>17</sup>There will be loud crying in every vineyard, because I will pass through your land with death. The LORD has said this.

<sup>18</sup>How horrible it will be for those who long for the day of the LORD! Why do you long for that day? The day of the LORD is one of darkness and not light.

<sup>19</sup>It is like a person who flees from a lion only to be attacked by a bear. It is like a person who goes home and puts

his hand on the wall only to be bitten by a snake.

<sup>20</sup>The day of the LORD brings darkness and not light. It is pitch black, with no light.

<sup>21</sup>I hate your festivals; I despise them. I'm not pleased with your religious assemblies.

<sup>22</sup>Even though you bring me burnt offerings and grain offerings, I won't accept them. I won't even look at the fellowship offerings of your choicest animals.

<sup>23</sup>Spare me the sound of your songs. I won't listen to the music of your harps.

<sup>24</sup>But let justice flow like a river and righteousness like an everflowing stream.

<sup>25</sup>Did you bring me sacrifices and grain offerings in the desert for 40 years, nation of Israel?

<sup>26</sup>You carried along the statues of the god Sikkuth as your king and the star Kiyun, the gods you made for yourselves.

<sup>27</sup>I will send you into exile beyond Damascus, says the LORD, whose name is the God of Armies.

**6**<sup>1</sup> How horrible it will be for those who are at ease in Zion, for those who feel secure on the mountain of Samaria, and for the heads of the leading nations, to whom the nation of Israel comes.

<sup>2</sup> Go to Calneh and look. Go from there to the great city of Hamath. Then go to Gath, the city of the Philistines. Are you better than these kingdoms? Is their territory larger than yours?

<sup>3</sup> How horrible it will be for those who think that a day of disaster is far away. They bring the reign of violence closer.

<sup>4</sup> How horrible it will be for those who sleep on ivory beds. They sprawl out on their couches and eat lambs from their flocks and calves from their stalls.

<sup>5</sup> How horrible it will be for those who make up songs as they strum a harp. Like David, they write all kinds of songs for themselves.

<sup>6</sup> How horrible it will be for those who drink wine by the jugful. They rub the finest oils all over themselves and are not sorry for the ruin of the descendants of Joseph.

<sup>7</sup> That is why they will now be the first to go into exile. The celebrating of those

sprawled around the banquet table will stop.

<sup>8</sup>The Almighty LORD has sworn an oath on himself. The LORD God of Armies declares: I am disgusted with Jacobs pride, and I hate his palaces. So I will hand over the city and everything in it.

<sup>9</sup>If ten people are left in one house, they will die.

<sup>10</sup>If a relative or a mortician comes to take the dead bodies out of the house and asks someone who is inside the house, "Is there anyone else with you?" that person will answer, "No." "Hush," he will add. "We shouldnt mention the name of the LORD!"

<sup>11</sup>The LORD is going to give the command to level big houses and flatten little houses.

<sup>12</sup>Do horses run on rocks? Does a farmer plow the sea with oxen? Yet, you have turned justice into something deadly and what is righteous into poison.

<sup>13</sup>How horrible it will be for those who rejoice over Lo Debar and who say, "We were strong enough to capture Karnaim by ourselves."

<sup>14</sup>I am going to lead a nation to attack you, nation of Israel, declares the LORD God of the Armies of the Nations. They will oppress you from the border of Hamath to the valley of Arabah.

**7**<sup>1</sup>This is what the Almighty LORD showed me: He was preparing swarms of locusts when the second crop was being harvested. It was the harvest that followed the harvest for the king.

<sup>2</sup>When the locusts had finished eating every plant in the land, I said, "Almighty LORD, please forgive us! How can the descendants of Jacob survive? There are so few of them."

<sup>3</sup>The LORD changed his plans about this. "This wont happen," the LORD said.

<sup>4</sup>This is what the Almighty LORD showed me: The Almighty LORD was calling for judgment by fire. The fire dried up the ocean and burned up the land.

<sup>5</sup>Then I said, "Almighty LORD, please stop! How can the descendants of Jacob survive? There are so few of them."

<sup>6</sup>The LORD changed his plans about this. "This wont happen either," the Almighty LORD said.

<sup>7</sup>This is what he showed me: The Lord was standing by a wall built with the use of a plumb line, and he had a plumb line in his hand.

<sup>8</sup>He asked me, "What do you see, Amos?" I answered, "A plumb line." Then the Lord said, "I'm going to hold a plumb line in the middle of my people Israel. I will no longer overlook what they have done.

<sup>9</sup>The worship sites of Isaac will be destroyed, and the holy places of Israel will be in ruins. I will attack Jeroboam's heirs with my sword."

<sup>10</sup>Then Amaziah, the priest at Bethel, sent a message to King Jeroboam of Israel. It read, "Amos is plotting against you among the people of Israel. The country isn't able to endure everything he is saying.

<sup>11</sup>Amos says that Jeroboam will be killed with a sword and that Israel cannot avoid being taken from its land into exile."

<sup>12</sup>Then Amaziah said to Amos, "You seer, run away to Judah! Eat there, and prophesy there!

<sup>13</sup>But dont ever prophesy again in Bethel, because this is the kings holy place and the kings palace."

<sup>14</sup>Amos responded, "Im not a prophet, and Im not a disciple of the prophets. I am a rancher and a grower of figs.

<sup>15</sup>But the LORD took me away from herding the flock and said to me, Prophecy to my people Israel.

<sup>16</sup>"Now listen to the word of the LORD: You said, Stop prophesying against Israel, and stop preaching against the descendants of Isaac.

<sup>17</sup>"However, this is what the LORD says: Your wife will become a prostitute in the city, and your sons and daughters will be killed with swords. Your land will be surveyed and divided up, and you will die in an unclean land. Israel cannot avoid being taken from its land into exile."

**8**<sup>1</sup>This is what the Almighty LORD showed me: a basket of ripe summer fruit.

<sup>2</sup>He asked, "What do you see, Amos?" "A basket of ripe summer fruit," I answered. Then the LORD said to me,

"My people Israel are now ripe. I will no longer overlook what they have done.

<sup>3</sup>On that day the songs of the temple will become loud cries," declares the Almighty LORD. "There will be dead bodies scattered everywhere. Hush!"

<sup>4</sup>Listen to this, those who trample on the needy and ruin those who are oppressed in the world.

<sup>5</sup>You say to yourselves, "When will the New Moon Festival be over so that we can sell more grain? When will the day of worship be over so that we can sell more wheat? We can shrink the size of the bushel baskets, increase the cost, and cheat with dishonest scales.

<sup>6</sup>We can buy the poor with money and the needy for a pair of sandals. We can sell the husks mixed in with the wheat."

<sup>7</sup>The LORD has sworn an oath by Jacobs pride: "I will never forget anything that they have done."

<sup>8</sup>The land will tremble because of this. Everyone who lives in it will mourn. The entire land will rise like the Nile, be tossed about, and then sink like Egypt's river.

<sup>9</sup>On that day, declares the Almighty LORD, I will make the sun go down at noon and darken the earth in broad daylight.

<sup>10</sup>I will turn your festivals into funerals and all your songs into funeral songs. I will put sackcloth around everyones waist and shave everyones head. I will make that day seem like a funeral for an only child, and its end will be bitter.

<sup>11</sup>The days are going to come, declares the Almighty LORD, when I will send a famine throughout the land. It wont be an ordinary famine or drought. Instead, there will be a famine of hearing the words of the LORD.

<sup>12</sup>People will wander from sea to sea and roam from the north to the east, searching for the word of the LORD. But they wont find it.

<sup>13</sup>On that day beautiful young women and strong young men will faint because of their thirst.

<sup>14</sup>How horrible it will be for those who swear by Ashimah, the idol of Samaria, and say, "I solemnly swear, Dan, as your god lives" "I solemnly swear as long as

there is a road to Beersheba" Those who say this will fall and never get up again.

**9**<sup>1</sup> I saw the Lord standing by the altar, and he said: Strike the tops of the pillars so that the foundations shake.

Cut off everyones head. I will kill with a sword all who are left. None of them will be able to get away. None of them will be able to escape.

<sup>2</sup>Even if they dig their way into Sheol, my hand will take them from there. Even if they go up to heaven, I will bring them down from there.

<sup>3</sup>Even if they hide on top of Mount Carmel, I will look for them and take them from there. Even if they hide from me at the bottom of the sea, I will command a sea snake to bite them.

<sup>4</sup>Even if they go into exile ahead of their enemies, I will command a sword to kill them. I will keep my eyes on them so that I can bring disaster on them and not help them.

<sup>5</sup>The Almighty LORD of Armies touches the earth. It quakes, and all who live on it mourn. All of it rises like the Nile and sinks like Egypts river.

<sup>6</sup>The one who builds stairs up to heaven and sets their foundation on the earth, the one who calls for the water in the sea and pours it over the face of the earth His name is the LORD.

<sup>7</sup>You people of Israel are like the people from Sudan, says the LORD. Didn't I bring Israel from Egypt? Didn't I bring the Philistines from Crete and the Arameans from Kir?

<sup>8</sup>I, the Almighty LORD, have my eyes on this sinful kingdom. I will wipe it off the face of the earth. But I won't totally destroy the descendants of Jacob, declares the LORD.

<sup>9</sup>I'm going to give the order. I will sift the nation of Israel out of all the nations as if I were using a sieve. Not one pebble will fall to the ground.

<sup>10</sup>All the sinners among my people are thinking, "Destruction will not catch up to us or run into us." In spite of this, they will be killed with swords.

<sup>11</sup>On that day I will set up David's fallen tent. I will repair the holes in it. I will restore its ruined places. I will rebuild them as they were a long time ago.

<sup>12</sup>They will capture the few survivors of Edom and all the other nations that were under my authority, declares the LORD, who will do these things.

<sup>13</sup>The days are going to come, declares the LORD, when the one who plows will catch up to the one who harvests, and the one who stomps on grapes will catch up to the one who plants. New wine will drip from the mountains and flow from all the hills.

<sup>14</sup>I will restore my people Israel. They will rebuild the ruined cities and live in them. They will plant vineyards and drink the wine from them. They will plant gardens and eat their fruit.

<sup>15</sup>I will plant the people of Israel in their land, and they won't be uprooted again from the land that I gave them, says the LORD your God.

# Obadiah

**1** <sup>1</sup> This is the vision of Obadiah. This is what the Almighty LORD says about Edom: We have heard a message from the LORD. A messenger was sent among the nations to say, "Get ready! Let's go to war against Edom."

<sup>2</sup> "Edom, I will make you the smallest of nations. Others will despise you.

<sup>3</sup> Your arrogance has deceived you. You live on rocky cliffs. You make your home up high. You say to yourself, No one can bring me down to earth.

<sup>4</sup> Even though you fly high like an eagle and build your nest among the stars, I will bring you down from there," declares the LORD.

<sup>5</sup> "If thieves or looters come to you during the night, won't they steal only until they've had enough? You will be ruined! If people come to pick your grapes, won't they leave a few grapes behind?"

<sup>6</sup>But you, Esau, will lose everything. Even your hidden treasures will be looted.

<sup>7</sup>All your allies will force you to leave your land. The people who are at peace with you will deceive you. Those who eat food with you will set traps for you, and you won't even know about it.

<sup>8</sup>"On that day I will destroy the wise people in Edom and take wisdom away from Esau's mountain," declares the LORD.

<sup>9</sup>"Teman, your warriors will be terrified. Everyone on Esau's mountain will be slaughtered.

<sup>10</sup>"Because of the violence you did to Jacob, your relative, you will be covered with shame. You will be destroyed forever.

<sup>11</sup>While you stood there doing nothing, strangers carried off Jacob's wealth. Foreigners entered his gates and threw dice for Jerusalem. You acted like one of them.

<sup>12</sup>Don't gloat over your relatives' misfortune or be happy when the people of Judah are destroyed. Don't brag so much when they're in distress.

<sup>13</sup> Don't march through the gates of my people when disaster strikes or gloat over their misery when disaster strikes. Don't take their wealth when disaster strikes.

<sup>14</sup> Don't stand at the crossroads to kill their refugees. Don't hand over their survivors when they're in distress.

<sup>15</sup> "The day of the LORD is near for all nations. Edom, you will be treated as you have treated others. You will get back what you have given.

<sup>16</sup> As you, Israel, drank on my holy mountain, so all nations will drink in turn. They will drink and guzzle down everything in it. They will be like those who have never existed.

<sup>17</sup> "But refugees will live on Mount Zion. It will be holy. The descendants of Jacob will get back their possessions.

<sup>18</sup> The descendants of Jacob will be like a fire. The descendants of Joseph will be like a flame. But the descendants of Esau will be like straw. They will be burned and destroyed. There will be no one left among the descendants of Esau." The LORD has spoken.

<sup>19</sup>"People from the Negev will take possession of Esau's mountain. People from the foothills will take possession of Philistia. They will take possession of the lands of Ephraim and Samaria, and the descendants of Benjamin will take possession of Gilead.

<sup>20</sup>Exiles from Israel will take possession of Canaan. They will possess land as far as Zarephath. Exiles from Jerusalem who are in Sepharad will take possession of the cities in the Negev.

<sup>21</sup>Those who are victorious will come from Mount Zion to rule Esau's mountain. The kingdom will belong to the LORD."

# Jonah

**1** <sup>1</sup> The LORD spoke his word to Jonah, son of Amittai. He said,

<sup>2</sup> "Leave at once for the important city, Nineveh. Announce to the people that I can no longer overlook the wicked things they have done."

<sup>3</sup> Jonah immediately tried to run away from the LORD by going to Tarshish. He went to Joppa and found a ship going to Tarshish. He paid for the trip and went on board. He wanted to go to Tarshish to get away from the LORD.

<sup>4</sup> The LORD sent a violent wind over the sea. The storm was so powerful that the ship was in danger of breaking up.

<sup>5</sup> The sailors were afraid, and they cried to their gods for help. They began to throw the cargo overboard to lighten the ship's load. Now, Jonah had gone below deck and was lying there sound asleep.

<sup>6</sup> The captain of the ship went to him and asked, "How can you sleep? Get up, and pray to your God. Maybe he will notice us, and we won't die."

<sup>7</sup>Then the sailors said to each other, "Let's throw dice to find out who is responsible for bringing this disaster on us." So they threw dice, and the dice indicated that Jonah was responsible.

<sup>8</sup>They asked him, "Tell us, why has this disaster happened to us? What do you do for a living? Where do you come from? What country are you from? What nationality are you?"

<sup>9</sup>Jonah answered them, "I'm a Hebrew. I worship the LORD, the God of heaven. He is the God who made the sea and the land."

<sup>10</sup>Then the men were terrified. They knew that he was running away from the LORD, because he had told them. They asked Jonah, "Why have you done this?"

<sup>11</sup>The storm was getting worse. So they asked Jonah, "What should we do with you to calm the sea?"

<sup>12</sup>He told them, "Throw me overboard. Then the sea will become calm. I know that I'm responsible for this violent storm."

<sup>13</sup>Instead, the men tried to row harder to get the ship back to shore, but they

couldnt do it. The storm was getting worse.

<sup>14</sup>So they cried to the LORD for help: "Please, LORD, dont let us die for taking this mans life. Dont hold us responsible for the death of an innocent man, because you, LORD, do whatever you want."

<sup>15</sup>Then they took Jonah and threw him overboard, and the sea became calm.

<sup>16</sup>The men were terrified of the LORD. They offered sacrifices and made vows to the LORD.

<sup>17</sup>The LORD sent a big fish to swallow Jonah. Jonah was inside the fish for three days and three nights.

**2**<sup>1</sup>From inside the fish Jonah prayed to the LORD his God.

<sup>2</sup>Jonah prayed: "I called to the LORD in my distress, and he answered me. From the depths of my watery grave I cried for help, and you heard my cry.

<sup>3</sup>You threw me into the deep, into the depths of the sea, and water surrounded me. All the whitecaps on your waves have swept over me.

<sup>4</sup>"Then I thought, I have been banished from your sight. Will I ever see your holy temple again?"

<sup>5</sup>"Water surrounded me, threatening my life. The deep sea covered me completely. Seaweed was wrapped around my head.

<sup>6</sup>I sank to the foot of the mountains. I sank to the bottom, where bars held me forever. But you brought me back from the pit, O LORD, my God.

<sup>7</sup>"As my life was slipping away, I remembered the LORD. My prayer came to you in your holy temple.

<sup>8</sup>Those who hold on to worthless idols abandon their loyalty to you.

<sup>9</sup>But I will sacrifice to you with songs of thanksgiving. I will keep my vow. Victory belongs to the LORD!"

<sup>10</sup>Then the LORD spoke to the fish, and it spit Jonah out onto the shore.

**3**<sup>1</sup> Then the LORD spoke his word to Jonah a second time. He said,

<sup>2</sup>"Leave at once for the important city, Nineveh. Announce to the people the message I have given you."

<sup>3</sup>Jonah immediately went to Nineveh as the LORD told him. Nineveh was a

very large city. It took three days to walk through it.

<sup>4</sup>Jonah entered the city and walked for about a day. Then he said, "In forty days Nineveh will be destroyed."

<sup>5</sup>The people of Nineveh believed God. They decided to fast, and everyone, from the most important to the least important, dressed in sackcloth.

<sup>6</sup>When the news reached the king of Nineveh, he got up from his throne, took off his robe, put on sackcloth, and sat in ashes.

<sup>7</sup>Then he made this announcement and sent it throughout the city: "This is an order from the king and his nobles: No one is to eat or drink anything. This includes all people, animals, cattle, and sheep.

<sup>8</sup>Every person and animal must put on sackcloth. Cry loudly to God for help. Turn from your wicked ways and your acts of violence.

<sup>9</sup>Who knows? God may reconsider his plans and turn from his burning anger so that we won't die."

<sup>10</sup>God saw what they did. He saw that they turned from their wicked ways. So

God reconsidered his threat to destroy them, and he didnt do it.

**4**<sup>1</sup> Jonah was very upset about this, and he became angry.

<sup>2</sup> So he prayed to the LORD, "LORD, isnt this what I said would happen when I was still in my own country? Thats why I tried to run to Tarshish in the first place. I knew that you are a merciful and compassionate God, patient, and always ready to forgive and to reconsider your threats of destruction.

<sup>3</sup> So now, LORD, take my life. Id rather be dead than alive."

<sup>4</sup> The LORD asked, "What right do you have to be angry?"

<sup>5</sup> Jonah left the city and sat down east of it. He made himself a shelter there. He sat in its shade and waited to see what would happen to the city.

<sup>6</sup> The LORD God made a plant grow up beside Jonah to give him shade and make him more comfortable. Jonah was very happy with the plant.

<sup>7</sup> At dawn the next day, God sent a worm to attack the plant so that it withered.

<sup>8</sup>When the sun rose, God made a hot east wind blow. The sun beat down on Jonah's head so that he was about to faint. He wanted to die. So he said, "I'd rather be dead than alive."

<sup>9</sup>Then God asked Jonah, "What right do you have to be angry over this plant?" Jonah answered, "I have every right to be angry so angry that I want to die."

<sup>10</sup>The LORD replied, "This plant grew up overnight and died overnight. You didn't plant it or make it grow. Yet, you feel sorry for this plant."

<sup>11</sup>Shouldn't I feel sorry for this important city, Nineveh? It has more than 120,000 people in it as well as many animals. These people couldn't tell their right hand from their left."

# Micah

**1** <sup>1</sup>The LORD spoke his word to Micah, who was from Moresheth, when Jotham, Ahaz, and Hezekiah were kings of Judah. This is the vision that Micah saw about Samaria and Jerusalem.

<sup>2</sup>Listen, all you people! Pay attention, earth and all who are on it. The Almighty LORD will be a witness against you. The Lord will be a witness from his holy temple.

<sup>3</sup>The LORD is going to come from his place. He is going to come down and step on the worship places of the earth.

<sup>4</sup>Mountains will melt under him like wax near a fire. Valleys will split apart like water pouring down a steep hill.

<sup>5</sup>All this is because of Jacobs crime and Israels sin. What is Jacobs crime? Isnt it Samaria? What is Judahs worship place? Isnt it Jerusalem?

<sup>6</sup>So I will turn Samaria into a pile of rubble, a place for planting vineyards. I will roll its stones down into a valley and expose its foundations.

<sup>7</sup>All its idols will be smashed to pieces. All its wages for being a prostitute will be burned. All its statues will be turned into a pile of rubble. Samaria collected its wages for being a prostitute. That money will again pay for prostitutes.

<sup>8</sup>I will mourn and cry because of this. I will walk around barefoot and naked. I will cry like a jackal and mourn like an ostrich.

<sup>9</sup>Samarias wounds are incurable. The news about Samaria will come to Judah. It will reach the gates of my people in Jerusalem.

<sup>10</sup>Dont report it in Gath. Dont cry there. Roll in the dust of Beth Leaphrah.

<sup>11</sup>Pass by, naked and ashamed, inhabitants of Shaphir. Dont come out, inhabitants of Zaanan. Beth Ezel is in mourning. It will take its support away from you.

<sup>12</sup>Wait anxiously for good, inhabitants of Maroth. From the LORD disaster will come on the gates of Jerusalem.

<sup>13</sup>Harness the horses to the chariots, inhabitants of Lachish. You were the first to lead the people of Zion into sin. The rebellious acts of Israel are found in you.

<sup>14</sup>That is why you will give farewell gifts to Moresheth Gath. The town of Achzib will betray the kings of Israel.

<sup>15</sup>I will again bring a conqueror against the inhabitants of Mareshah. The glory of Israel will come to Adullam.

<sup>16</sup>Shave your head in mourning for the children you love. Make yourselves as bald as vultures because your children will be taken from you into exile.

**2**<sup>1</sup>How horrible it will be for those who invent trouble and work out plans for disaster while in bed. When the morning dawns, they carry out their plans because they are able to.

<sup>2</sup>They desire other peoples fields, so they seize them. They desire peoples houses, so they take them. They cheat a man and his family, a man and his inheritance.

<sup>3</sup>So this is what the LORD says: I'm planning a disaster to punish your family. You wont be able to rescue yourselves. You will no longer be able to walk proudly. This will be a time of disaster.

<sup>4</sup>When that day comes, people will make fun of you. They will sing this sad song about you: "We are completely

ruined. The LORD gives our peoples possessions to others. He takes them from us. He divides our fields among our captors."

<sup>5</sup>That is why none of you in the LORDS assembly will draw lots to divide your property.

<sup>6</sup>Your prophets say, "Dont prophesy! Dont prophesy such things! Disgrace will never overtake us."

<sup>7</sup>Should the descendants of Jacob be asked: Has the Spirit of the LORD become impatient with you? Has he done these things? Are his words good for those who live honestly?

<sup>8</sup>Recently, my people have turned into enemies. You take coats from those who pass by without a care as they return from war.

<sup>9</sup>You force the women among my people out of their pleasant homes and take my glory away from their children forever.

<sup>10</sup>Get up, and go away! This is not a place to rest! It will be destroyed, completely destroyed, because it offends me.

<sup>11</sup> Liars and frauds may go around and say, "We will preach to you about wine and liquor." They would be just the type of preacher you want.

<sup>12</sup> I will surely gather all of you, Jacob. I will surely bring together the few people left in Israel. I will gather them together like sheep in a pen, like a flock in its pasture. They will make a lot of noise because there will be so many people.

<sup>13</sup> The LORD will open the way and lead them. They will break out, go through the gate, and leave. Their king will travel in front of them. The LORD will lead the people.

**3**<sup>1</sup> Then I said: Listen, you leaders of Jacob, you rulers of the nation of Israel. You should know justice.

<sup>2</sup> You hate good and love evil. You strip the skin off my people and the flesh off their bones.

<sup>3</sup> You eat my peoples flesh. You strip off their skin. You break their bones to pieces. You chop them up like meat for a pot, like stew meat for a kettle.

<sup>4</sup> Then you will cry to the LORD, but he will not answer you. He will hide his face

from you at that time because you have done evil things.

<sup>5</sup>This is what the LORD says about the prophets who mislead my people: When they have something to eat, they say, "All is well!" But they declare a holy war against those who don't feed them.

<sup>6</sup>That is why you will have nights without visions. You will have darkness without revelations. The sun will set on the prophets, and the day will turn dark for them.

<sup>7</sup>Seers will be put to shame. Those who practice witchcraft will be disgraced. All of them will cover their faces, because God won't answer them.

<sup>8</sup>But I am filled with the power of the LORD'S Spirit, with justice, and with strength. So I will tell the descendants of Jacob about their crimes and the nation of Israel about its sins.

<sup>9</sup>Listen to this, you leaders of the descendants of Jacob, you rulers of the nation of Israel. You despise justice and pervert everything that is right.

<sup>10</sup>You build Zion on bloodshed and Jerusalem on wickedness.

<sup>11</sup>Your leaders exchange justice for bribes. Your priests teach for a price. Your prophets tell the future for money. But they rely on the LORD when they say, "After all, the LORD is with us. Nothing bad will happen to us."

<sup>12</sup>Because of you, Zion will be plowed like a field, Jerusalem will become a pile of rubble, and the temple mountain will become a worship site covered with trees.

**4**<sup>1</sup>In the last days the mountain of the LORDS house will be established as the highest of the mountains and raised above the hills. People will stream to it.

<sup>2</sup>Then many nations will come and say, "Let's go to the mountain of the LORD, to the house of the God of Jacob. He will teach us his ways so that we may live by them." The teachings will go out from Zion. The word of the LORD will go out from Jerusalem.

<sup>3</sup>Then he will judge disputes between many people and settle arguments between many nations far and wide. They will hammer their swords into plowblades and their spears into pruning shears. Nations will never fight against

each other, and they will never train for war again.

<sup>4</sup>They will sit under their grapevines and their fig trees, and no one will make them afraid. The LORD of Armies has spoken.

<sup>5</sup>All the nations live by the names of their gods, but we will live by the name of the LORD our God forever.

<sup>6</sup>"When that day comes," declares the LORD, "I will gather those who are lame. I will bring together those who are scattered and those whom I have injured.

<sup>7</sup>I will change those who are lame into a faithful people. I will change those who are forced away into a strong nation." The LORD will rule them on Mount Zion now and forever.

<sup>8</sup>You, Jerusalem, watchtower of the flock, stronghold of the people of Zion, your former government will come back to you. The kingdom will return to the people of Jerusalem.

<sup>9</sup>Now why are you crying so loudly? Don't you have a king? Has your counselor died? Pain grips you like a woman in labor.

<sup>10</sup>Daughter of Zion, writhe in pain and groan like a woman in labor. Now you will leave the city, live in the open fields, and go to Babylon. There you will be rescued. There the LORD will reclaim you from your enemies.

<sup>11</sup>But now many nations gather against you. They say, "Let's dishonor Zion and gloat over it."

<sup>12</sup>They don't know the thoughts of the LORD or understand his plan. He will bring them together like cut grain on the threshing floor.

<sup>13</sup>Get up and thresh, people of Zion. I will make your horns as hard as iron and your hoofs as hard as bronze. You will smash many nations into small pieces. You will claim their loot for the LORD, their wealth for the Lord of the whole earth.

**5**<sup>1</sup>Now, gather your troops, you city of troops. We are under attack. Enemies will strike the judge of Israel on the cheek with a stick.

<sup>2</sup>You, Bethlehem Ephrathah, are too small to be included among Judah's cities. Yet, from you Israel's future ruler

will come for me. His origins go back to the distant past, to days long ago.

<sup>3</sup>That is why the LORD will abandon Israel until the time a mother has a child. Then the rest of the LORDS people will return to the people of Israel.

<sup>4</sup>The child will become the shepherd of his flock. He will lead them with the strength of the LORD, with the majestic name of the LORD his God. They will live in safety because his greatness will reach the ends of the earth.

<sup>5</sup>This man will be their peace. When the Assyrians invade our land and trample our palaces, we will attack them with seven shepherds and eight leaders.

<sup>6</sup>They will rule Assyria with their swords and the country of Nimrod with drawn swords. They will rescue us from the Assyrians when they come into our land and walk within our territory.

<sup>7</sup>Then the few people left from Jacob will be among many people like dew from the LORD, like showers on the grass. They do not put their hope in humans or wait for mortals.

<sup>8</sup>The few people left from Jacob will be among the nations, among many people.

They will be like a lion among animals in the forest, like a young lion among flocks of sheep. When a lion hunts, it tramples its victims and tears them to pieces, and there is no one to rescue them.

<sup>9</sup>You will use your power against your opponents, and all your enemies will be destroyed.

<sup>10</sup>"When that day comes," declares the LORD, "I will destroy your horses and demolish your chariots.

<sup>11</sup>I will destroy the cities in your land and tear down all your fortresses.

<sup>12</sup>I will destroy your sorcerers, and you will have no more fortunetellers.

<sup>13</sup>I will destroy your idols and your sacred monuments. You will no longer worship what your hands have made.

<sup>14</sup>I will pull out your poles dedicated to the goddess Asherah. I will wipe out your cities.

<sup>15</sup>I will take revenge with great anger on the nations that do not obey me."

**6**<sup>1</sup> Now listen to what the LORD is saying, "Stand up! Plead your case in front of the mountains, and let the hills listen to your request.

<sup>2</sup> Listen to the LORDS lawsuit, you mountains. Listen, you strong foundations of the earth. The LORD has filed a lawsuit against his people. He is arguing his case against Israel.

<sup>3</sup> "My people, what have I done to you? How have I tried your patience? Answer me!

<sup>4</sup> I brought you out of Egypt and freed you from slavery. I sent Moses, Aaron, and Miriam to lead you.

<sup>5</sup> My people, remember what King Balak of Moab planned to do to you and how Balaam, son of Beor, responded to him. Remember your journey from Shittim to Gilgal so that you may know the victories of the LORD."

<sup>6</sup> What should I bring when I come into the LORDS presence, when I bow in front of the God of heaven? Should I bring him yearold calves as burnt offerings?

<sup>7</sup> Will the LORD be pleased with thousands of rams or with endless streams of olive oil? Should I give him my firstborn child because of my rebellious acts? Should I give him my young child for my sin?

<sup>8</sup>You mortals, the LORD has told you what is good. This is what the LORD requires from you: to do what is right, to love mercy, and to live humbly with your God.

<sup>9</sup>The voice of the LORD calls out to the city. (The fear of your name is wisdom.) "Listen, you tribe assembled in the city.

<sup>10</sup>I have cursed all the wicked people who use their money for evil and use inaccurate weights and measures.

<sup>11</sup>I cannot tolerate dishonest scales and bags filled with inaccurate weights.

<sup>12</sup>The rich people in the city are violent. Those who live in the city speak lies, and their tongues speak deceitfully.

<sup>13</sup>I have begun to strike you with heavy blows and to ruin you because of your sins.

<sup>14</sup>You will eat, but you wont be full. So you will always be hungry. You will put things away, but you wont save them. Anything you save I will destroy.

<sup>15</sup>You will plant, but you wont harvest. You will crush olives, but you wont rub the oil on your skin. You will make new wine, but you wont drink it.

<sup>16</sup>You have kept Omris laws and all the practices of the descendants of Ahab, and you have followed their advice. That is why I will ruin you. Your people will be ridiculed. You will bear the disgrace of my people."

**7** <sup>1</sup>Poor me! I am like those gathering summer fruit, like those picking grapes. But there aren't any grapes to eat or any ripened figs that I crave.

<sup>2</sup>Faithful people are gone from the earth, and no one is decent. All people lie in ambush to commit murder. They trap each other with nets.

<sup>3</sup>Their hands are skilled in doing evil. Officials ask for gifts. Judges accept bribes. Powerful people dictate what they want. So they scheme together.

<sup>4</sup>The best of them is like a briar. The most decent person is sharper than thornbushes. The day you thought you would be punished has come. Now is the time you will be confused.

<sup>5</sup>Don't trust your neighbors. Don't have confidence in your friends. Keep your mouth shut even when a woman is lying in your arms.

<sup>6</sup>A son treats his father with contempt.  
A daughter rebels against her mother.  
A daughter-in-law rebels against her  
mother-in-law. Peoples enemies are the  
members of their own families.

<sup>7</sup>I will look to the LORD. I will wait for  
God to save me. I will wait for my God  
to listen to me.

<sup>8</sup>Don't laugh at me, my enemies.  
Although I've fallen, I will get up.  
Although I sit in the dark, the LORD is  
my light.

<sup>9</sup>I have sinned against the LORD. So  
I will endure his fury until he takes up  
my cause and wins my case. He will  
bring me into the light, and I will see his  
victory.

<sup>10</sup>Then my enemies will see this, and  
they will be covered with shame, because  
they asked me, "Where is the LORD your  
God?" Now I look at them. They are  
trampled like mud in the streets.

<sup>11</sup>The day for rebuilding your walls and  
extending your borders is coming.

<sup>12</sup>When that day comes, your people  
will come to you from Assyria and  
the cities of Egypt, from Egypt to the

Euphrates River, from sea to sea, and from mountain to mountain.

<sup>13</sup>The earth will become a wasteland for those who live on it because of what the people living there have done.

<sup>14</sup>With your shepherds staff, take care of your people, the sheep that belong to you. They live alone in the woods, in fertile pastures. Let them feed in Bashan and Gilead like before.

<sup>15</sup>Let us see miracles like the time you came out of Egypt.

<sup>16</sup>Nations will see this and be ashamed in spite of all their strength. They will put their hands over their mouths. Their ears will become deaf.

<sup>17</sup>They will lick dust like snakes, like animals that crawl on the ground. They will come out of their hiding places trembling. They will turn away from your presence in fear, O LORD our God. They will be afraid of you.

<sup>18</sup>Who is a God like you? You forgive sin and overlook the rebellion of your faithful people. You will not be angry forever, because you would rather show mercy.

<sup>19</sup>You will again have compassion on us. You will overcome our wrongdoing. You will throw all our sins into the deep sea.

<sup>20</sup>You will be faithful to Jacob. You will have mercy on Abraham as you swore by an oath to our ancestors long ago.

# Nahum

**1** <sup>1</sup>This is a revelation from the LORD about Nineveh. This book contains the vision of Nahum from Elkosh.

<sup>2</sup>God does not tolerate rivals. The LORD takes revenge. The LORD takes revenge and is full of anger. The LORD takes revenge against his enemies and holds a grudge against his foes.

<sup>3</sup>The LORD is patient and has great strength. The LORD will never let the guilty go unpunished. Raging winds and storms mark his path, and clouds are the dust from his feet.

<sup>4</sup>He yells at the sea and makes it dry. He dries up all the rivers. Bashan and Carmel wither. The flowers of Lebanon wither.

<sup>5</sup>The mountains quake because of him. The hills melt. The earth draws back in his presence. The world and all who live in it draw back as well.

<sup>6</sup>Who can stand in the presence of his rage? Who can oppose his burning

anger? He pours out his rage like fire and smashes the rocky cliffs.

<sup>7</sup>The LORD is good. He is a fortress in the day of trouble. He knows those who seek shelter in him.

<sup>8</sup>He will put an end to Nineveh with a devastating flood. He will pursue his enemies with darkness.

<sup>9</sup>What do you think about the LORD? He is the one who will bring Nineveh to an end. This trouble will never happen again.

<sup>10</sup>The people of Nineveh will be like tangled thorns and like people drunk on their own drink. They will be completely burned up like very dry straw.

<sup>11</sup>From you, Nineveh, a person who plans evil against the LORD sets out. His advice is wicked.

<sup>12</sup>This is what the LORD says: Though the people of Nineveh are physically fit and many in number, they will be cut down and die. Though I have humbled you, Judah, I will not humble you again.

<sup>13</sup>But now I will break Nineveh's yoke off of you and tear its chains from you.

<sup>14</sup>The LORD has given this command about you, Nineveh: You will no longer

have descendants to carry on your name. I will remove the wooden and metal idols from the temple of your gods. I will prepare your grave because you are worthless.

<sup>15</sup>There on the mountains are the feet of a messenger who announces the good news: "All is well!" Celebrate your festivals, Judah! Keep your vows! This wickedness will never pass your way again. It will be completely removed.

**2**<sup>1</sup>The one who will scatter you is coming to attack you. Guard your fortress! Keep a lookout on the road! Prepare for battle! Be very courageous!

<sup>2</sup>The LORD will restore Jacobs glory like Israels glory, although enemies have looted it and have destroyed its vines.

<sup>3</sup>The shields of his warriors are painted red. His soldiers have red uniforms. The metal on his chariots flashes fiery red, so do the spears when they are waved on the day he prepares for battle.

<sup>4</sup>Chariots are racing madly through the streets, rushing this way and that in the city squares. They look like torches, like lightning, as they dart about.

<sup>5</sup> He remembers his best fighting men. They stumble over themselves as they march. They hurry to Nineveh's wall. The shield has been set up for the battering ram.

<sup>6</sup> The gates of the rivers are opened, and the palace melts away.

<sup>7</sup> The LORD has determined: "It will be stripped. It will be carried away. Its young women will be mourning like doves as they beat their breasts."

<sup>8</sup> Nineveh was like a pool of water from its first day on. But now its people are fleeing. "Stop! Stop!" But no one turns around.

<sup>9</sup> Steal the silver! Steal the gold! There is no end to what is stored here everything a person could ever want.

<sup>10</sup> Nineveh is destroyed, deserted, demolished. Hearts are melting. Knees are knocking. Every stomach becomes upset. Every face turns pale.

<sup>11</sup> Where is the lion's den, that feeding place for young lions? Where are the lion, the lioness, and the lion cub who moved about with no one to terrify them?

<sup>12</sup>The lion tore its prey to pieces to feed its cubs. It strangled the prey for its mates. It used to fill its caves with torn carcasses and its dens with torn flesh.

<sup>13</sup>"I am against you, Nineveh," declares the LORD of Armies. "I will send your chariots up in smoke, and a sword will kill your young lions. I will remove your prey from the earth, and no one will ever hear the voice of your messengers again."

**3**<sup>1</sup>How horrible it will be for that city of bloody violence! It is completely full of lies and stolen goods never without victims.

<sup>2</sup>The sound of the whip! The sound of rattling wheels! Horses gallop! Chariots bounce along!

<sup>3</sup>Horses charge! Swords flash! Spears glitter! Many are killed! Dead bodies pile up! There is no end to the corpses! People trip over corpses

<sup>4</sup>because of Nineveh's constant prostitution, this very charming mistress of evil magic. She used to sell nations her prostitution and people her evil magic."

<sup>5</sup>"I am against you, Nineveh," declares the LORD of Armies. "I will lift up your dress over your face. I will show nations your naked body and kingdoms your disgrace.

<sup>6</sup>I will throw filth on you. I will make you look like a fool. I will make you a sight to be seen.

<sup>7</sup>Everyone who sees you will run from you, saying, Nineveh has been violently destroyed! Who will feel sorry for her? Where can I find anyone to comfort you?"

<sup>8</sup>Are you better than Noamon, which sits by the streams of the Nile with water surrounding her? The sea was her defense. The water was her wall.

<sup>9</sup>Sudan and Egypt were her endless strength. Put and the Lybians were her help.

<sup>10</sup>Even she went into captivity and was exiled. Even her little children were smashed to death at every street corner. Soldiers tossed dice for her important men, and all her best men were bound in chains.

<sup>11</sup>Even you, Nineveh, will stagger like a drunk. You will disappear. Even you will

look for a fortress to escape from the enemy.

<sup>12</sup>All your defenses will be like fig trees with the earliest figs. When shaken, the figs fall into the mouth of the eater.

<sup>13</sup>Look at your soldiers; they're women! The gates of your country are wide open to your enemies. Fire has destroyed the bars of your gates.

<sup>14</sup>Store water for the siege! Strengthen your defenses! Step into the claypits and trample the clay! Grab the brick mold!

<sup>15</sup>Fire will consume you there. A sword will cut you down. It will consume you like locusts. Multiply like locusts! Multiply like hungry locusts!

<sup>16</sup>You have produced more businessmen than there are stars in the sky. They are like locusts that attack and then fly away.

<sup>17</sup>Your officers are like locusts, and your scribes are like swarms of locusts that settle on the fences when it is cold. The sun rises, and they scatter in every direction. No one knows where they've gone.

<sup>18</sup>Your shepherds, king of Assyria, have fallen into a deep sleep. Your best

fighting men are at rest. Your people are scattered on the mountains, and there is no one to gather them.

<sup>19</sup>There is no relief for your collapse. Your wound is fatal. All who hear the news about you will clap their hands. Who hasnt suffered from your endless evil?

# Habakkuk

**1** <sup>1</sup>The divine revelation that the prophet Habakkuk saw.

<sup>2</sup>How long, O LORD, am I to cry for help, but you will not listen? I cry out to you, "Theres violence!" yet you will not come to the rescue.

<sup>3</sup>Why do you make me see wrongdoing? And why do you watch wickedness? Destruction and violence are in front of me. Quarrels and disputes arise.

<sup>4</sup>That is why your teaching is numbed, and justice is never carried out. Wicked people surround righteous people so that when justice is carried out, its perverted.

<sup>5</sup>Look among the nations and watch. Be amazed and astonished. I am going to do something in your days that you would not believe even if it were reported to you.

<sup>6</sup>I am going to send the Babylonians, that fierce and reckless nation. They will march throughout the earth to take possession of lands that dont belong to them.

<sup>7</sup>They will be terrifying and fearsome. They will carry out their own kind of justice and honor.

<sup>8</sup>Their horses will be faster than leopards and quicker than wolves in the evening. Their riders will gallop along proudly. Their riders will come from far away. They will fly like an eagle that swoops down for its prey.

<sup>9</sup>They will all come for violence. Every face will be directed forward. They will gather prisoners like sand.

<sup>10</sup>They will make fun of kings and treat rulers as a joke. They will laugh at every fortified city and build a dirt ramp to capture it.

<sup>11</sup>They will move quickly and pass through like the wind. So they will be guilty, because their own strength is their god.

<sup>12</sup>Didn't you exist before time began, O LORD, my God, my Holy One? We will not die! O LORD, you have appointed the Babylonians to bring judgment. O Rock, you have destined them to correct us.

<sup>13</sup>Your eyes are too pure to look at evil. You can't watch wickedness. Why do you keep watching treacherous people?

Why are you silent when wicked people swallow those who are more righteous than they are?

<sup>14</sup>You make all people like the fish in the sea, like schools of sea life that have no ruler.

<sup>15</sup>The Babylonians pull them all up with fishhooks, drag them away in nets, and gather them in dragnets. So they rejoice and are happy.

<sup>16</sup>That is why they sacrifice to their nets and burn incense to their dragnets. They are rich and well fed because of them.

<sup>17</sup>Will they keep on emptying their nets and always kill nations without mercy?

**2**<sup>1</sup>I will stand at my guard post. I will station myself on the wall. I will watch to see what he will say to me and what answer I will get to my complaint.

<sup>2</sup>Then the LORD answered me, "Write the vision. Make it clear on tablets so that anyone can read it quickly.

<sup>3</sup>The vision will still happen at the appointed time. It hurries toward its goal. It wont be a lie. If its delayed, wait for it. It will certainly happen. It wont be late.

<sup>4</sup>"Look at the proud person. He is not right in himself. But the righteous person will live because of his faithfulness.

<sup>5</sup>Also because wine is treacherous he is arrogant and never rests. He has a large appetite like the grave. He is like death never satisfied. He gathers all the nations to himself. He collects all the people to himself.

<sup>6</sup>Wont all of them ridicule him, directing clever sayings and riddles at him, like: "How horrible it will be for the one who makes himself rich with what is not his own and makes himself wealthy on loans. How long will this go on?"

<sup>7</sup>Wont your creditors suddenly rise up and those who are going to shake you wake up? Then you will become their prize.

<sup>8</sup>You have looted many nations. All the rest of the people will loot you because of the slaughter and violence done to lands, cities, and all their inhabitants.

<sup>9</sup>"How horrible it will be for the one who uses violence to get things for his own household in order to set his nest up high and save himself from disaster.

<sup>10</sup>You have planned disgrace for your household by cutting off many people and forfeiting your own life.

<sup>11</sup>A stone in the wall will cry out. A beam in the roof will answer it.

<sup>12</sup>"How horrible it will be for the one who builds a city by slaughter and founds a town by crime.

<sup>13</sup>Isnt it from the LORD of Armies that people grow tired only to feed the flames and nations exhaust themselves for nothing?

<sup>14</sup>But the earth will be filled with the knowledge of the LORDS glory like the water covers the sea.

<sup>15</sup>"How horrible it will be for the one who makes his neighbor drink from the bowl of Gods rage, making him drunk in order to stare at his nakedness.

<sup>16</sup>You are filled with disgrace rather than glory. Drink! Yes you! And expose yourself as godless. The cup in the LORDS right hand will come around to you, and disgrace will cover your glory.

<sup>17</sup>The violence done to Lebanon will overwhelm you, and the destruction done to the animals will terrify you because of the slaughter and violence

done to lands, cities, and all their inhabitants.

<sup>18</sup>"What benefit is there in a carved idol when its maker has carved it? What benefit is there in a molded statue, a teacher of lies, when its maker has molded it? The one who formed it trusts himself to make worthless idols that cannot speak.

<sup>19</sup>How horrible it will be for the one who says to a piece of wood, "Wake up!" and to a stone that cannot talk, "Get up!" Can that thing teach anyone? Just look at it! Its covered with gold and silver, but theres absolutely no life in it."

<sup>20</sup>The LORD is in his holy temple. All the earth should be silent in his presence.

**3**<sup>1</sup> A prayer of the prophet Habakkuk; according to shigionoth.

<sup>2</sup>LORD, I have heard the report about you. LORD, I fear your work. In the course of the years, renew it. In the course of the years, reveal it. In all this chaos, remember to be merciful.

<sup>3</sup>God comes from Teman. The Holy One comes from Mount Paran. Selah His splendor covers the heavens. His praise fills the earth.

<sup>4</sup> His brightness is like the sunlight. Rays of light stream from his hand. That is where his power is hidden.

<sup>5</sup> Diseases go ahead of him. Plagues follow after him.

<sup>6</sup> He stands and shakes the earth. He casts a glance and startles the nations. The oldest mountains break apart. The ancient hills sink. The ancient paths belong to him.

<sup>7</sup> I see trouble in the tents of Cushan. I see trembling in the tents of Midian.

<sup>8</sup> The LORD is not angry with the rivers, is he? If you are angry with the rivers, if you are furious with the sea, why do you ride your horses, your chariots of salvation?

<sup>9</sup> You get your bow ready for action, for the arrows you promised. Selah You split the land with rivers.

<sup>10</sup> The mountains look at you. They writhe in pain. Floodwaters pass by. The deep ocean roars. Its waves rise up high.

<sup>11</sup> The sun and the moon stand still. They scatter at the light of your arrows, at the bright lightning of your spear.

<sup>12</sup> You march through the earth with fury. You trample the nations in anger.

<sup>13</sup>You go out to save your people, to save your anointed. You crush the leader of the wicked household, stripping him bare from head to toe. Selah

<sup>14</sup>You pierce the leader of his gang with his own arrows. His soldiers come like a violent storm to scatter me. They are arrogant like those who secretly eat up the poor.

<sup>15</sup>You march with your horses into the sea, into the mighty raging waters.

<sup>16</sup>I have heard, so there's trembling within me. At the report my lips quivered. A rotten feeling has entered me. I tremble where I stand. I wait for the day of trouble to come to the people who will attack us.

<sup>17</sup>Even if the fig tree does not bloom and the vines have no grapes, even if the olive tree fails to produce and the fields yield no food, even if the sheep pen is empty and the stalls have no cattle

<sup>18</sup>even then, I will be happy with the LORD. I will truly find joy in God, who saves me.

<sup>19</sup>The LORD Almighty is my strength. He makes my feet like those of a deer. He makes me walk on the mountains.

For the choir director; on stringed instruments.

# Zephaniah

**1** <sup>1</sup>This is the word that the LORD spoke to Zephaniah, who was the son of Cushi, the grandson of Gedaliah, and the greatgrandson of Amariah, son of Hezekiah. The LORD spoke his word in the days of Judah's King Josiah, son of Amon.

<sup>2</sup>"I will gather everything on the face of the earth and put an end to it," declares the LORD.

<sup>3</sup>"I will put an end to humans and animals. I will put an end to the birds in the sky, the fish in the sea, and the sins that make people fall, together with the sinners. I will remove all people from the face of the earth," declares the LORD.

<sup>4</sup>"I will use my power against Judah and against those who live in Jerusalem. I will remove the faithful few of Baal from this place and the names of the pagan priests along with my priests.

<sup>5</sup>I will remove those who worship all the stars in the sky on their rooftops and those who worship by swearing loyalty

to the LORD while also swearing loyalty to the god Milcom.

<sup>6</sup>I will remove those who have turned away from following the LORD and those who no longer seek the LORD or ask him for help."

<sup>7</sup>Be silent in the presence of the Almighty LORD, because the day of the LORD is near. The LORD has prepared a sacrifice. He has invited his special guests.

<sup>8</sup>"On the day of the LORDS sacrifice I will punish the officials, the kings sons, and all who dress in foreign clothing.

<sup>9</sup>On that day I will punish all who jump over the doorway and all who fill their masters house with violence and deception.

<sup>10</sup>On that day a loud cry will come from Fish Gate, a howling from the Second Part of the city, and a loud crashing sound from the hills," declares the LORD.

<sup>11</sup>"Howl, inhabitants of the Mortar, because all the merchants will be destroyed and all who handle money will be killed.

<sup>12</sup>"At that time I will search Jerusalem with lamps and punish those who are

satisfied with their hardened lifestyle, who think that the LORD won't do anything good or bad.

<sup>13</sup>Their wealth will be looted. Their homes will be demolished. They will build houses, but they won't live in them. They will plant vineyards, but they won't drink their wine."

<sup>14</sup>The frightening day of the LORD is near. It is near and coming very quickly. Listen! Warriors will cry out bitterly on the day of the LORD.

<sup>15</sup>That day will be a day of overflowing fury, a day of trouble and distress, a day of devastation and desolation, a day of darkness and gloom, a day of clouds and overcast skies,

<sup>16</sup>a day of rams horns and battle cries against the fortified cities and against the high corner towers.

<sup>17</sup>"I will bring such distress on humans that they will walk like they are blind, because they have sinned against the LORD." Their blood will be poured out like dust and their intestines like manure.

<sup>18</sup>Their silver and their gold will not be able to rescue them on the day of the LORDS overflowing fury. The whole earth

will be consumed by his fiery anger, because he will put an end, a frightening end, to those who live on earth.

**2**<sup>1</sup> Gather yourselves together! Yes, gather together, you shameless nation,

<sup>2</sup> before the decree is carried out and the day passes like windblown husks, before the LORDS burning anger comes to you, before the day of the LORDS anger comes to you.

<sup>3</sup> Search for the LORD, all you humble people in the land who carry out his justice. Search for what is right. Search for humility. Maybe you will find shelter on the day of the LORDS anger.

<sup>4</sup> Gaza will be deserted, and Ashkelon will be destroyed. Ashdod will be driven out at noon, and Ekron will be torn out by the roots.

<sup>5</sup> How horrible it will be for those who live on the seacoast, for the nation from Crete. The word of the LORD is against you, Canaan, the land of the Philistines: "I will destroy you so that no one will be living there."

<sup>6</sup>The seacoast will become pastureland with meadows for shepherds and fenced-off places for sheep.

<sup>7</sup>The coast will belong to the faithful few from the nation of Judah. There they will graze their sheep. In the evening they will lie down in the houses of Ashkelon. The LORD their God will take care of them and will restore their fortunes.

<sup>8</sup>"I have heard the insults from Moab and the mockery from Ammon. They insulted my people and bragged about their territory.

<sup>9</sup>Therefore, I solemnly swear, as I live," declares the LORD of Armies, the God of Israel, "Moab will become like Sodom, and Ammon will become like Gomorrah: a place of weeds, salt pits, and ruins forever. The faithful few of my people will loot them, and those who are left in my nation will take possession of them."

<sup>10</sup>This is what they will get for their sinful pride, because they insulted the people who belong to the LORD of Armies and made themselves greater than them.

<sup>11</sup>The LORD will terrify them, because he will make all the gods of the earth

waste away. So every person from every coast and nation will bow to him.

<sup>12</sup>"Even you, the people from Sudan, you will also die by my sword."

<sup>13</sup>The LORD will use his power against the north and destroy Assyria. He will turn Nineveh into a deserted ruin, a dried up wasteland like the desert.

<sup>14</sup>Flocks will lie down in it along with animals of every kind. Even pelicans and herons will nest on top of its columns. Listen! A bird will sing in a window. The doorway will be in ruins, because the LORD will expose the cedar beams.

<sup>15</sup>Is this the arrogant city? Is this the city that used to live securely, the city that used to think to itself, "I'm the only one, and no one else exists but me"? What a wasteland it is now, a resting place for wild animals! All who pass by it will hiss and make an obscene gesture.

**3**<sup>1</sup>How horrible it will be for that rebellious and corrupt place, the city of violence.

<sup>2</sup>It obeys no one. It does not accept correction. It does not trust the LORD. It does not draw close to its God.

<sup>3</sup>Its officials are like roaring lions. Its judges are like wolves in the evening. They leave nothing to gnaw on for the morning.

<sup>4</sup>Its prophets are reckless and unfaithful. Its priests contaminate what is holy. They violate the teachings.

<sup>5</sup>The righteous LORD is in that city. He does no wrong. He brings his judgment to light every morning. He does not fail. But those who are perverted are shameless.

<sup>6</sup>"I will cut off the nations. Their towers will be destroyed. I will demolish their streets. No one will walk through them. Their cities will be completely destroyed. Not a single person will be left. No one will be living there.

<sup>7</sup>I said to my people, You will fear me. You will accept correction! Then their homeland would not be wiped out even though I have punished them. Still, they continued to be corrupt in everything they did."

<sup>8</sup>The LORD declares, "Just wait! One day I will stand up as a witness. I have decided to gather nations, to bring kingdoms together, and to pour my rage,

my burning anger, on them. The whole land will be consumed by my fiery fury.

<sup>9</sup>"Then I will give all people pure lips to worship the LORD and to serve him with one purpose.

<sup>10</sup>From beyond the rivers of Sudan my worshipers, my scattered people, will bring my offering.

<sup>11</sup>On that day you will no longer be ashamed of all your rebellious acts against me. Then I will remove your arrogance and never again will you act proud on my holy mountain.

<sup>12</sup>So with you I will leave a faithful few, a humble and poor people. They will seek refuge in the name of the LORD.

<sup>13</sup>The faithful few in Israel will not do wrong, tell lies, or use their tongues to deceive others. They will graze their sheep and lie down, and there will be no one to terrify them."

<sup>14</sup>Sing happily, people of Zion! Shout loudly, Israel! Celebrate and rejoice with all your heart, people of Jerusalem.

<sup>15</sup>The LORD has reversed the judgments against you. He has forced out your enemies. The king of Israel, the

LORD, is with you. You will never fear disaster again.

<sup>16</sup>On that day Jerusalem will be told, "Do not be afraid, Zion! Do not lose courage!"

<sup>17</sup>The LORD your God is with you. He is a hero who saves you. He happily rejoices over you, renews you with his love, and celebrates over you with shouts of joy.

<sup>18</sup>"I will gather those among you who are troubled because of the festivals. They bear a burden of disgrace.

<sup>19</sup>At that time I will deal with all who have overpowered you. I will rescue those who are lame. I will gather those who have been scattered. I will make them praised and famous in all the world, though they had been ashamed.

<sup>20</sup>At that time I will bring you home. Yes, at that time I will gather you together. I will make you famous and praised among all the people of the earth when I restore your fortunes right before your eyes," says the LORD.

# Haggai

**1** <sup>1</sup> On the first day of the sixth month in Darius second year as king, the LORD spoke his word through the prophet Haggai to Zerubbabel (who was the son of Shealtiel and was governor of Judah) and to the chief priest Joshua (who was the son of Jehozadak). He said,

<sup>2</sup> "This is what the LORD of Armies says: These people say its not the right time to rebuild the house of the LORD."

<sup>3</sup> Then the LORD spoke his word through the prophet Haggai. He said,

<sup>4</sup> "Is it time for you to live in your paneled houses while this house lies in ruins?"

<sup>5</sup> Now, this is what the LORD of Armies says: Carefully consider your ways!

<sup>6</sup> You planted a lot, but you harvested little. You eat, but youre never full. You drink, but youre still thirsty. You wear clothing, but you never have enough to keep you warm. You spend money as fast as you earn it.

<sup>7</sup>This is what the LORD of Armies says: Carefully consider your ways!

<sup>8</sup>"Go to the mountains, get lumber, and build the house. I will be pleased with it, and I will be honored," declares the LORD.

<sup>9</sup>"You expected a lot, but you received a little. When you bring something home, I blow it away. Why?" declares the LORD of Armies. "Its because my house lies in ruins while each of you is busy working on your own house.

<sup>10</sup>It is because of you that the sky has withheld its dew and the earth has withheld its produce.

<sup>11</sup>I called for a drought on the land, the hills, and on the grain, the new wine, the olive oil, and whatever the ground produces, on humans and animals, and on all your hard work."

<sup>12</sup>Then Zerubbabel (who was the son of Shealtiel), the chief priest Joshua (who was the son of Jehozadak), and the faithful few who returned from Babylon obeyed the LORD their God. They also obeyed the words of the prophet Haggai because the LORD their God had sent

him and because the people feared the LORD.

<sup>13</sup>Then Haggai, the messenger of the LORD who had received the LORDS message, said to the people, "I am with you, declares the LORD."

<sup>14</sup>The LORD inspired them to rebuild his house. So Zerubbabel (who was the son of Shealtiel and was governor of Judah), the chief priest Joshua (who was the son of Jehozadak), and the faithful few who returned from Babylon began working on the house of the LORD of Armies, their God.

<sup>15</sup>They began on the twentyfourth day of the sixth month in Darius second year as king.

**2**<sup>1</sup>On the twentyfirst day of the seventh month, the LORD spoke his word through the prophet Haggai. He said,

<sup>2</sup>"Now, speak to Zerubbabel (who is the son of Shealtiel and is governor of Judah), the chief priest Joshua (who is the son of Jehozadak), and the faithful few who returned from Babylon.

<sup>3</sup>Ask them, Is there anyone among the faithful few who saw this house in its

former glory? How does it look to you now? Doesn't it seem like nothing to you?

<sup>4</sup>"But now, Zerubbabel, be strong," declares the LORD. "Chief Priest Joshua (son of Jehozadak), be strong. Everyone in the land, be strong," declares the LORD. "Work, because I am with you," declares the LORD of Armies.

<sup>5</sup>"This is the promise I made to you when you came out of Egypt. My Spirit remains with you. Don't be afraid.

<sup>6</sup>"This is what the LORD of Armies says: Once again, in a little while, I am going to shake the sky and the earth, the sea and the dry land.

<sup>7</sup>I will shake all the nations, and the one whom all the nations desire will come. Then I will fill this house with glory, says the LORD of Armies.

<sup>8</sup>The silver is mine, and the gold is mine, declares the LORD of Armies.

<sup>9</sup>This new house will be more glorious than the former, declares the LORD of Armies. And in this place I will give them peace, declares the LORD of Armies."

<sup>10</sup>On the twentyfourth day of the ninth month in Darius second year as king,

the LORD spoke his word to the prophet Haggai. He said,

<sup>11</sup>"This is what the LORD of Armies says: Ask the priests for a decision.

<sup>12</sup>Suppose a person carries meat set aside for a holy purpose and he folds it up in his clothes. If his clothes touch bread, boiled food, wine, oil, or any kind of food, does that make the food holy?" The priests answered, "No."

<sup>13</sup>Haggai asked, "Suppose a person becomes unclean by touching a corpse. If he touches any of these things, does that make them unclean?" The priests answered, "That makes them unclean."

<sup>14</sup>Then Haggai answered, "In the same way, I have decided that these people are unclean, and so is this nation, declares the LORD. So is everything they do. Whatever offering they bring is unclean.

<sup>15</sup>"And from now on, carefully consider this. Consider how things were before one stone was laid on another in the temple of the LORD.

<sup>16</sup>When anyone came to a pile of grain to get 20 measures, there would be only 10. And when anyone came to a wine vat

to draw out 50 measures, there would be only 20 in it.

<sup>17</sup>I infested all your work with blight and mildew and struck it with hail. But you didnt come back to me, declares the LORD.

<sup>18</sup>Carefully consider from now on, from the twentyfourth day of the ninth month, from the day when the foundation of the house of the LORD was laid. Carefully consider:

<sup>19</sup>Is there any seed left in the barn? The vine, the fig tree, the pomegranate, and the olive tree still havent produced. But from now on I will bless you."

<sup>20</sup>The LORD spoke his word to Haggai a second time on the twentyfourth day of the month. He said,

<sup>21</sup>"Say to Zerubbabel (governor of Judah), I am going to shake the heavens and the earth.

<sup>22</sup>I will overthrow the thrones of kingdoms and destroy the power of nations. I will overthrow chariots and their riders, and the horses will fall along with their riders. They will kill one another with swords.

<sup>23</sup>On that day, declares the LORD of Armies, I will take you, my servant Zerubbabel (son of Shealtiel), declares the LORD. I will make you like a signet ring, because I have chosen you, declares the LORD of Armies."

# Zechariah

**1** <sup>1</sup>In the eighth month of Darius second year as king, the LORD spoke his word to the prophet Zechariah, who was the son of Berechiah and the grandson of Iddo. He said,

<sup>2</sup>"The LORD was very angry with your ancestors.

<sup>3</sup>Tell the people, This is what the LORD of Armies says: Return to me, declares the LORD of Armies, and I will return to you, says the LORD of Armies.

<sup>4</sup>Dont be like your ancestors, who heard the earlier prophets preach to them, This is what the LORD of Armies says: Turn from your evil ways and your evil deeds. But they didnt listen or pay attention to me, declares the LORD.

<sup>5</sup>Your ancestors where are they now? And the prophets are they still alive?

<sup>6</sup>Didnt my warnings and my laws, which Ive commanded my servants the prophets to preach, finally catch up with your ancestors? Then your ancestors turned away from their sins and said,

The LORD of Armies has done to us what he had planned to do. He has dealt with us as our ways and deeds deserve."

<sup>7</sup>On the twentyfourth day of the eleventh month (the month of Shebat) in Darius second year as king, the LORD spoke his word to the prophet Zechariah, who was the son of Berechiah and the grandson of Iddo.

<sup>8</sup>During that night I saw a man riding on a red horse. He was standing among the myrtle trees in a ravine. Behind him were red, chestnut, and white horses.

<sup>9</sup>"What do these horses mean, sir?" I asked. The angel who was speaking with me answered, "I will show you what they mean."

<sup>10</sup>The man standing among the myrtle trees explained, "They're the horses the LORD has sent to patrol the earth."

<sup>11</sup>Then they reported to the Messenger of the LORD standing among the myrtle trees, "We have patrolled the earth. The whole world is at rest and in peace."

<sup>12</sup>Then the Messenger of the LORD said, "LORD of Armies, how much longer until you show compassion to Jerusalem

and the cities of Judah? You've been angry with them for 70 years."

<sup>13</sup>The LORD responded to the angel who was speaking with me, using kind and comforting words.

<sup>14</sup>The angel who was speaking with me said, "Announce: This is what the LORD of Armies says: I'm very jealous about Jerusalem and Zion,

<sup>15</sup>and I'm very angry with the nations who think they are at ease. I was only a little angry, but they made things worse.

<sup>16</sup>This is what the LORD of Armies says: I have returned to Jerusalem with compassion. My house will be rebuilt in it, declares the LORD of Armies. A measuring line will be used to rebuild Jerusalem.

<sup>17</sup>"Announce again: This is what the LORD of Armies says: My cities will overflow with prosperity once more. The LORD will again comfort Zion and will again choose Jerusalem."

<sup>18</sup>I looked up and saw four animal horns.

<sup>19</sup>So I asked the angel who was speaking with me, "What do these horns mean?" He said to me, "These are the

horns of the nations that scattered Judah, Israel, and Jerusalem."

<sup>20</sup>Then the LORD showed me four craftsmen.

<sup>21</sup>I asked, "What are they going to do?" He answered, "Those horns scattered Judah so widely that no one could lift up his head. But the craftsmen have come to terrify them, to throw down the horns of the nations. The nations raised their horns to scatter the land of Judah."

**2**<sup>1</sup>I looked up and saw a man with a measuring line in his hand.

<sup>2</sup>I asked him, "Where are you going?" He answered, "I am going to measure Jerusalem to see how wide and how long it is."

<sup>3</sup>Then the angel who was speaking with me left. Another angel came out to meet him

<sup>4</sup>and said to him, "Run, and say to that young man, Jerusalem will be inhabited like an unwalled village because it will have so many people and animals in it.

<sup>5</sup>I will be a wall of fire around it, declares the LORD. I will be the glory within it.

<sup>6</sup>"Hurry, hurry! Flee from the land of the north, declares the LORD. I've scattered you to the four winds of heaven.

<sup>7</sup>Hurry, Zion! Escape, you inhabitants of Babylon!

<sup>8</sup>This is what the LORD of Armies says: Afterwards, the Glory sent me to the nations who looted you. Whoever touches you touches the apple of his eye.

<sup>9</sup>I'm going to shake my fist at the nations, and their own slaves will loot them. Then you will know that the LORD of Armies has sent me.

<sup>10</sup>Sing for joy and rejoice, people of Zion. I'm going to come and live among you, declares the LORD.

<sup>11</sup>On that day many nations will join the LORD and become my people. I will live among you. Then you will know that the LORD of Armies has sent me to you.

<sup>12</sup>The LORD will claim Judah as his own in the holy land and will again choose Jerusalem.

<sup>13</sup>"Everyone be silent in the presence of the LORD. He is waking up and setting out from his holy dwelling place."

**3**<sup>1</sup> Then he showed me Joshua, the chief priest, standing in front of the Messenger of the LORD. Satan the Accuser was standing at Joshuas right side to accuse him.

<sup>2</sup>The LORD said to Satan, "I, the LORD, silence you, Satan! I, the LORD, who has chosen Jerusalem, silence you! Isnt this man like a burning log snatched from a fire?"

<sup>3</sup>Joshua was wearing filthy clothes and was standing in front of the Messenger.

<sup>4</sup>The Messenger said to those who were standing in front of him, "Remove Joshuas filthy clothes." Then he said to Joshua, "See, I have taken your sin away from you, and I will dress you in fine clothing."

<sup>5</sup>So I said, "Put a clean turban on his head." They put a clean turban on his head and dressed him while the Messenger of the LORD was standing there.

<sup>6</sup>The Messenger of the LORD advised Joshua,

<sup>7</sup>"This is what the LORD of Armies says: If you live according to my ways and follow my requirements, you will

govern my temple and watch over my courtyards. Then I will give you free access to walk among those standing here.

<sup>8</sup>"Listen, Chief Priest Joshua and your friends sitting with you. These men are a sign of things to come: I'm going to bring my servant, the Branch.

<sup>9</sup>"Look at the stone I have set in front of Joshua. That one stone has seven eyes. I am engraving an inscription on it," declares the LORD of Armies. "I will remove this land's sin in a single day.

<sup>10</sup>"On that day," declares the LORD of Armies, "each of you will invite your neighbor to sit under your vine and fig tree."

**4**<sup>1</sup> The angel who was speaking with me returned and woke me up as one might wake up someone who is sleeping.

<sup>2</sup> He asked me, "What do you see?" I answered, "I see a solid gold lamp stand with a bowl on top and seven lamps on it. There are seven spouts for each lamp that is on top of it.

<sup>3</sup> There are also two olive trees beside it, one on the right of the bowl and the other on its left."

<sup>4</sup>I asked the angel who was speaking with me, "What do these things mean, sir?"

<sup>5</sup>Then the angel asked me, "Dont you know what they mean?" "No, sir," I answered.

<sup>6</sup>Then he replied, "This is the word the LORD spoke to Zerubbabel: You wont succeed by might or by power, but by my Spirit, says the LORD of Armies.

<sup>7</sup>What a high mountain you are! In front of Zerubbabel you will become a plain. He will bring out the topmost stone with shouts of Blessings, blessings on it!"

<sup>8</sup>Then the LORD spoke his word to me. He said,

<sup>9</sup>"Zerubbabels hands have laid the foundation of this house, and his hands will finish it. Then you will know that the LORD of Armies has sent me to you.

<sup>10</sup>Who despised the day when little things began to happen? They will be delighted when they see the plumb line in Zerubbabels hand. (These seven eyes of the LORD roam over all the earth.)"

<sup>11</sup> I asked the angel, "What do these two olive trees at the right and the left of the lamp stand mean?"

<sup>12</sup> Again I asked him, "What is the meaning of the two branches from the olive trees next to the two golden pipes that are pouring out gold?"

<sup>13</sup> He asked me, "Don't you know what these things mean?" "No, sir," I answered.

<sup>14</sup> So he said, "These are the two anointed ones who are standing beside the Lord of the whole earth."

**5**<sup>1</sup> I looked up again and saw a flying scroll.

<sup>2</sup> The angel asked me, "What do you see?" "I see a flying scroll," I answered. "It's 30 feet long and 15 feet wide."

<sup>3</sup> Then he said to me, "This is a curse that will go out all over the earth. The one side of the scroll says that every thief will be forced away. The other side of the scroll says that everyone who takes an oath will be forced away.

<sup>4</sup> I will send out a curse, declares the LORD of Armies, and it will enter the houses of thieves and the houses of those who take oaths in my name. It

will stay in their houses and destroy the timber and stone."

<sup>5</sup>The angel who was speaking with me came forward. He said, "Look up, and see what's coming."

<sup>6</sup>"What is it?" I asked. "A basket is coming," he said. Then he added, "This is what the peoples sins look like all over the earth."

<sup>7</sup>A lead cover on the basket was raised, and a woman was sitting in the basket.

<sup>8</sup>The angel said, "This is wickedness," and he pushed her back into the basket and forced the lead cover down on top of it.

<sup>9</sup>I looked up and saw two women coming forward with wind in their wings. They had wings like those of a stork. They carried the basket into the sky.

<sup>10</sup>I asked the angel who was speaking with me, "Where are they taking the basket?"

<sup>11</sup>He answered me, "They are going to build a house for it in Shinar [Babylonia]. When the house is ready, they will set the basket there on a stand."

**6**<sup>1</sup>I looked up again and saw four chariots going out from between the

two mountains. They were mountains of bronze.

<sup>2</sup>The first chariot had red horses. The second had black horses.

<sup>3</sup>The third had white horses. And the fourth had strong, spotted horses.

<sup>4</sup>I asked the angel who was speaking with me, "What do these horses mean, sir?"

<sup>5</sup>The angel answered, "They are the four spirits of heaven. They are going out after standing in the presence of the Lord of the whole earth.

<sup>6</sup>The chariot with the black horses is going toward the north, and the white horses are following them. The spotted ones are going toward the south."

<sup>7</sup>When these strong horses went out, they were eager to patrol the earth. He said, "Go, patrol the earth!" And they patrolled the earth.

<sup>8</sup>Then he called out to me, "Look! Those who went to the north have made my Spirit rest in the north."

<sup>9</sup>The LORD spoke his word to me. He said,

<sup>10</sup>"Take an offering from the exiles Heldai, Tobijah, and Jedaiah, who have

arrived from Babylon. This same day go to the house of Josiah, son of Zephaniah.

<sup>11</sup> Take the silver and gold, make a crown, and put it on the head of Chief Priest Joshua, son of Jehozadak.

<sup>12</sup> Then say to him, This is what the LORD of Armies says: Here is the man whose name is Branch. He will branch out from where he is, and he will rebuild the LORDS temple.

<sup>13</sup> He will rebuild the LORDS temple and receive royal honor. He will sit and rule from his throne. He will be a priest on his throne. There will be a peaceful understanding between them.

<sup>14</sup> The crown will be a reminder to Helem, Tobijah, Jedaiah, and Hen (son of Zephaniah) in the LORDS temple.

<sup>15</sup> Those who are far away will come and rebuild the LORDS temple. Then you will know the LORD of Armies has sent me to you. This will happen if you obey the LORD your God completely."

**7**<sup>1</sup> On the fourth day of the ninth month (the month of Chislev) in Darius fourth year as king, the LORD spoke his word to Zechariah.

<sup>2</sup>Now, the people from Bethel sent Sharezer and Regem Melech with their men to ask the LORD for a blessing.

<sup>3</sup>They asked the priests from the house of the LORD of Armies as well as the prophets, "Should we mourn and fast in the fifth month as we have done for so many years?"

<sup>4</sup>Then the LORD of Armies spoke his word to me. He said,

<sup>5</sup>"Tell all the people of the land and the priests, When you fasted and mourned in the fifth and seventh months these past 70 years, did you really do it for me?

<sup>6</sup>When you ate and drank, didnt you do it to benefit yourselves?

<sup>7</sup>Arent these the same words that the LORD announced through the earlier prophets, when Jerusalem and its surrounding cities were inhabited and undisturbed and the Negev and the foothills were still inhabited?"

<sup>8</sup>Then the LORD spoke his word to Zechariah. He said,

<sup>9</sup>"This is what the LORD of Armies says: Administer real justice, and be compassionate and kind to each other.

<sup>10</sup> Dont oppress widows, orphans, foreigners, and poor people. And dont even think of doing evil to each other.

<sup>11</sup> "But people refused to pay attention. They shrugged their shoulders at me and shut their ears so that they couldnt hear.

<sup>12</sup> They made their hearts as hard as flint so that they couldnt hear the LORDS teachings, the words that the LORD of Armies had sent by his Spirit through the earlier prophets. So the LORD of Armies became very angry.

<sup>13</sup> "When I called, they wouldnt listen. So now when they call, I wont listen, says the LORD of Armies.

<sup>14</sup> I used a windstorm to scatter them among all the nations, nations they hadnt even heard of. They left behind a land so ruined that no one is able to travel through it. They have turned a pleasant land into a wasteland."

**8**<sup>1</sup> The LORD of Armies spoke his word.  
<sup>2</sup> This is what the LORD of Armies says: I am very jealous about Zion. I am fiercely possessive of it.

<sup>3</sup> This is what the LORD says: I will return to Zion and live in Jerusalem. Jerusalem will be called the City of Truth.

The mountain of the LORD of Armies will be called the holy mountain.

<sup>4</sup>This is what the LORD of Armies says: Old men and old women will again sit in the streets of Jerusalem. Each will have a cane in hand because of old age.

<sup>5</sup>The city will be filled with boys and girls playing in the streets.

<sup>6</sup>This is what the LORD of Armies says: It may seem impossible to the few remaining people in those days, but will it seem impossible to me? declares the LORD of Armies.

<sup>7</sup>This is what the LORD of Armies says: I am going to save my people from the land where the sun rises and from the land where the sun sets.

<sup>8</sup>I will bring them back, and they will live in Jerusalem. They will be my people, and I will be their God, who is faithful and just.

<sup>9</sup>This is what the LORD of Armies says: Be strong so that the temple might be rebuilt, you people who are presently listening to the words from the mouths of the prophets who spoke when the foundation for the house of the LORD of Armies was laid.

<sup>10</sup> Before that time there was no money to hire any person or animal. No one who traveled was safe from the enemy. I turned every person against his neighbor.

<sup>11</sup> But now I wont deal with the few remaining people as I did in earlier times, declares the LORD of Armies.

<sup>12</sup> Seeds will thrive in peacetime. Vines will produce their grapes. The land will yield its crops. The sky will produce its dew. I will give the few remaining people all these things as an inheritance.

<sup>13</sup> Just as you, people of Judah and people of Israel, have been a curse among the nations, so I will now save you, and you will become a blessing. Dont be afraid. Let your hands work hard.

<sup>14</sup> This is what the LORD of Armies says: When your ancestors made me angry, I made plans to destroy you, declares the LORD of Armies, and I didnt change my plans.

<sup>15</sup> So now I have again made plans, but this time to do good to Jerusalem and the people of Judah. Dont be afraid.

<sup>16</sup>You must do these things: Speak the truth to each other. Give correct and fair verdicts for peace in your courts.

<sup>17</sup>Dont even think of doing evil to each other. Dont enjoy false testimony. I hate all these things, declares the LORD.

<sup>18</sup>The LORD of Armies spoke his word to me again.

<sup>19</sup>This is what the LORD of Armies says: The fast in the fourth month, the fast in the fifth month, the fast in the seventh month, and the fast in the tenth month will become joyful and glad occasions as well as happy festivals for the nation of Judah. So love truth and peace.

<sup>20</sup>This is what the LORD of Armies says: People and citizens from many cities are going to come.

<sup>21</sup>The citizens of one city will come to another city, saying, "Lets make a habit of going to ask the LORD for a blessing and to seek the LORD of Armies. Im also going."

<sup>22</sup>Many people and powerful nations will come to seek the LORD of Armies in Jerusalem and to ask the LORD for a blessing.

<sup>23</sup>This is what the LORD of Armies says: In those days ten people from every language found among the nations will take hold of the clothes of a Jew. They will say, "Let us go with you because we have heard that God is with you."

**9**<sup>1</sup>This is the divine revelation. The word of the LORD is against the land of Hadrach and will rest on Damascus

<sup>2</sup>and also Hamath, which borders on it, and Tyre and Sidon, though they are very wise. (The eyes of humanity and of all the tribes of Israel are on the LORD.)

<sup>3</sup>Tyre built itself a fortress. It piled up silver like dust and gold like mud in the streets.

<sup>4</sup>The Lord will take away its possessions. He will throw its wealth into the sea and burn the city down.

<sup>5</sup>Ashkelon will see this and be afraid. Gaza will also be in great pain, also Ekron, because its hope will fade. Gaza will lose its king. Ashkelon will no longer be lived in.

<sup>6</sup>A mixed race will live in Ashdod, and I will cut off the Philistines arrogance.

<sup>7</sup>I will remove the blood from their mouths and the disgusting things from

between their teeth. Then only a few of them will be left for our God like a tribe in Judah, and Ekron will be like a Jebusite.

<sup>8</sup>I will camp in front of my house as a guard against those who come and go. No oppressors will pass through them, because I have seen it with my own eyes.

<sup>9</sup>Rejoice with all your heart, people of Zion! Shout in triumph, people of Jerusalem! Look! Your King is coming to you: He is righteous and victorious. He is humble and rides on a donkey, on a colt, a young pack animal.

<sup>10</sup>He will make sure there are no chariots in Ephraim or war horses in Jerusalem. There will be no battle bows. He will announce peace to the nations. He will rule from sea to sea and from the Euphrates River to the ends of the earth.

<sup>11</sup>I will set your captives free from the waterless pit because of the blood that sealed my promise to you.

<sup>12</sup>Return to your fortress, you captives who have hope. Today I tell you that I will return to you double blessings.

<sup>13</sup>I will bend Judah as my bow and draw my bow with Ephraim as its arrow. I will stir up your people, Zion, against your people, Greece, and I will use you like a warriors sword.

<sup>14</sup>The LORD will appear over them, and his arrow will go out like lightning. The Almighty LORD will blow the rams horn and will march in the storms from the south.

<sup>15</sup>The LORD of Armies will defend them. They will destroy and trample the stones used in slings. They will drink and shout as if they were drunk. They will be filled like a sacrificial bowl used for sprinkling the corners of the altar.

<sup>16</sup>On that day the LORD their God will rescue them as the flock of his people. They will certainly sparkle in his land like jewels in a crown.

<sup>17</sup>They will be beautiful and lovely. Young men will prosper on grain, and young women will prosper on new wine.

**10**<sup>1</sup>Ask the LORD for rain in the springtime. The LORD makes thunderstorms. He gives everyone rain showers for the plants in the field.

<sup>2</sup>The idols speak lies. The fortunetellers see false visions. They speak about false dreams. They give useless comfort. That is why people wander around like sheep. They are troubled because there is no shepherd.

<sup>3</sup>"My burning anger is directed against the shepherds. I will punish the male goats. The LORD of Armies takes care of his flock, the people of Judah. He makes them like his splendid war horse."

<sup>4</sup>From them will come a cornerstone, from them a tent peg, from them a battle bow, from them every leader.

<sup>5</sup>Together they will be like warriors who trample the enemy in the mud on the streets. They will fight because the LORD is with them. They will put to shame those who ride on horses.

<sup>6</sup>"I will strengthen the people of Judah. I will rescue Joseph's people. I will bring them back, because I have compassion for them. It will be as though I had never rejected them, because I am the LORD their God, and I will answer them.

<sup>7</sup>The people of Ephraim will be like mighty warriors. Their hearts will be glad as if they had some wine to drink. Their

sons will see it and be glad. Their hearts will find joy in the LORD.

<sup>8</sup>I will signal them with a whistle and gather them because I have reclaimed them. They will be as numerous as they have ever been.

<sup>9</sup>Although I have scattered them among the nations, they will remember me even in faraway places. They will live with their children and then return.

<sup>10</sup>I will bring them back from Egypt. I will gather them from Assyria. I will bring them to Gilead and to Lebanon, and there won't be enough room for them."

<sup>11</sup>The LORD will pass through a sea of distress, strike the waves in the sea, and dry up all the deep places of the Nile River. The pride of Assyria will be humiliated, and the scepter of Egypt will depart.

<sup>12</sup>"I will strengthen them in the LORD. They will live in his name," declares the LORD.

**11** <sup>1</sup>Open your doors, Lebanon, so that fire will be able to burn down your cedars.

<sup>2</sup>Cry, cypress trees, because the cedars have fallen and the stately trees have been destroyed. Cry, oak trees of Bashan, because your dense forest has fallen down.

<sup>3</sup>Listen! The shepherds are crying, because their rich pastures are destroyed. Listen! The young lions are roaring, because the lush banks of the Jordan are destroyed.

<sup>4</sup>This is what the LORD my God says: Take care of the sheep that are about to be slaughtered.

<sup>5</sup>Those who buy them will kill them and go unpunished. Those who sell them will say, "Praise the LORD! I've become rich!" Even their own shepherds will have no pity on them.

<sup>6</sup>The LORD declares, "I will no longer have pity on those who live in the land. I am going to hand the people over to their neighbors and their king, who will crush the land. And I won't rescue any of them from their power."

<sup>7</sup>So I became the shepherd of the sheep that were to be slaughtered and also of the oppressed sheep. I took two shepherd staffs and named one Favor

and the other Unity. And I took care of the sheep.

<sup>8</sup>I got rid of three shepherds in one month. I became impatient with the sheep, and they also became disgusted with me.

<sup>9</sup>So I said, "I won't be your shepherd. Let those that are dying die. Let those that are missing stay missing. And let those that are left devour each other."

<sup>10</sup>Then I took my staff called Favor and broke it in pieces, to break the promise that I had made to all the nations.

<sup>11</sup>So it was broken on that day, and the oppressed among the sheep who were watching me realized that it was the word of the LORD.

<sup>12</sup>Then I said to them, "If it's alright with you, pay me my wages. But if it's not, don't." And they paid me my wages—30 pieces of silver.

<sup>13</sup>The LORD told me, "Give it to the potter." So I took the 30 pieces of silver. Such a magnificent price was set by them! I gave the pieces of silver to the potter at the house of the LORD.

<sup>14</sup> Then I broke my second staff, called Unity, in pieces, to break off the brotherhood between Judah and Israel.

<sup>15</sup> Then the LORD said to me, "Use the equipment of a foolish shepherd again.

<sup>16</sup> I'm about to place a shepherd in the land. He will not take care of those that are dying. He will not search for the young. He will not heal those that have broken their legs or support those that can still stand. But he will eat the meat of the fat animals and tear off their hoofs.

<sup>17</sup> "How horrible it will be for the foolish shepherd who abandoned the sheep. A sword will strike his arm and his right eye. His arm will be completely withered. His right eye will be completely blind."

**12**<sup>1</sup> This is the prophetic revelation, the word of the LORD about Israel. The LORD who spread out the heavens, laid the foundation of the earth, and forms the spirit in a person says,

<sup>2</sup> "I'm going to make Jerusalem like a cup of wine that makes all the surrounding people stagger. They will attack Judah along with Jerusalem.

<sup>3</sup>On that day I will make Jerusalem a stone too heavy for all the nations to lift. All who try to lift it will be severely injured. All the nations in the world will gather to fight against Jerusalem."

<sup>4</sup>The LORD declares, "On that day I will strike every horse with panic and every rider with madness. I will watch over the people of Judah, but I will strike all the horses of the nations blind.

<sup>5</sup>Then the leaders of Judah will think to themselves, The people who live in Jerusalem are strong because of the LORD of Armies, their God.

<sup>6</sup>"On that day I will make the leaders of Judah like a fire on a pile of wood and like a burning torch among freshly cut straw. They will burn up all the surrounding nations to the right and to the left. But the people of Jerusalem will remain safe in Jerusalem.

<sup>7</sup>"The LORD will save Judahs tents first so that the honor of Davids family and the honor of those who live in Jerusalem will not be greater than the honor of Judah.

<sup>8</sup>On that day the LORD will defend those who live in Jerusalem so that even

those who stumble will be like David, and Davids family will be like God, like the Messenger of the LORD ahead of them.

<sup>9</sup>"On that day I will seek to destroy all the nations who attack Jerusalem.

<sup>10</sup>"I will pour out the Spirit of blessing and mercy on Davids family and on those who live in Jerusalem. They will look at me, whom they have stabbed. Then they will mourn for him as one mourns for an only son, and they will cry bitterly for him as one cries for a firstborn son.

<sup>11</sup>On that day the mourning in Jerusalem will be as intense as the mourning at Hadad Rimmon in the plain of Megiddo.

<sup>12</sup>The land will mourn, each family by itself: the family of David by itself, and the wives by themselves; the family of Nathan by itself, and the wives by themselves;

<sup>13</sup>the family of Levi by itself, and the wives by themselves; the family of Shimei by itself, and the wives by themselves.

<sup>14</sup>All the families that are left will mourn, each by itself, and the wives by themselves."

**13**<sup>1</sup> The LORD declares, "On that day a fountain will be opened for Davids family and for those who live in Jerusalem to wash away their sin and stain.

<sup>2</sup> "On that day," declares the LORD of Armies, "I will wipe away the names of the idols from the land. They will no longer be remembered. I will also remove the false prophets and the unclean spirit from the land.

<sup>3</sup> "If a man still prophesies, his father and his mother, who gave birth to him, will say, You dont deserve to live because you speak lies in the name of the LORD. Then his father and his mother, who gave birth to him, will stab him when he prophesies.

<sup>4</sup> "On that day every prophet will be ashamed of his vision when he prophesies. He wont deceive people by dressing like a prophet in a coat made of hair.

<sup>5</sup> He will say, I am not a prophet. Im a farmer. Ive owned this land since I was a child.

<sup>6</sup>"When someone asks him, What are these scars on your chest? he will answer, I was hurt at my friends house.

<sup>7</sup>"Arise, sword, against my shepherd, against the man who is my friend," declares the LORD of Armies. "Strike the shepherd, and the sheep will be scattered. Then I will turn my hand against the little ones."

<sup>8</sup>The LORD declares, "Throughout the land twothirds will be cut off and die. Yet, onethird will be left in it.

<sup>9</sup>I will bring this third of the people through the fire. I will refine them as silver is refined. I will test them as gold is tested. They will call on me, and I will answer them. I will say, They are my people. They will reply, The LORD is our God."

**14**<sup>1</sup> A day is going to come for the LORD when the loot you have taken will be divided among you.

<sup>2</sup>I will gather all the nations to Jerusalem for battle. The city will be captured, the houses looted, and the women raped. Half of the people in the city will go into exile, but the rest of the people wont be taken from the city.

<sup>3</sup>Then the LORD will go out and fight against those nations as he does when he fights a battle.

<sup>4</sup>On that day his feet will stand on the Mount of Olives, just east of Jerusalem. The Mount of Olives will be split in two, forming a very large valley from east to west. Half of the mountain will move toward the north, and the other half will move toward the south.

<sup>5</sup>Then you will flee to the valley of my mountains, because this valley between the mountains will go as far as Azel. You will flee as you did from the earthquake at the time of King Uzziah of Judah. The LORD my God will come, and all the holy ones will be with him.

<sup>6</sup>On that day there will be neither heat nor freezing cold.

<sup>7</sup>There will be one day known to the LORD with no difference between day and night. It will be light even in the evening.

<sup>8</sup>On that day living water will flow out from Jerusalem, half of it to the Dead Sea and the other half to the Mediterranean Sea. It will continue in summer and in winter.

<sup>9</sup>The LORD will be king over all the earth. On that day the LORD will be the only Lord and his name the only name.

<sup>10</sup>The whole earth will become like the plains from Geba to Rimmon, south of Jerusalem. Jerusalem will rise and remain on its site, from Benjamin Gate to the place of First Gate, Corner Gate, and from the Tower of Hananel to the kings winepresses.

<sup>11</sup>People will live there, and it will never be threatened with destruction. Jerusalem will live securely.

<sup>12</sup>This will be the plague the LORD will use to strike all the people from the nations that have gone to war against Jerusalem. Their flesh will rot while they are standing on their feet. Their eyes will rot in their sockets, and their tongues will rot in their mouths.

<sup>13</sup>On that day a largescale panic from the LORD will spread among them. One person will grab the hand of another, and one will attack the other.

<sup>14</sup>Judah will also fight in Jerusalem. The wealth of all the surrounding nations will be collected, a very large amount of gold, silver, and clothes.

<sup>15</sup>A similar plague will also affect horses, mules, camels, donkeys, and all other animals in those camps.

<sup>16</sup>Everyone who is left from all the nations that attacked Jerusalem will come every year to worship the king, the LORD of Armies, and to celebrate the Festival of Booths.

<sup>17</sup>If any of the families on the earth wont go to Jerusalem to worship the king, the LORD of Armies, then rain wont fall on them.

<sup>18</sup>If the people of Egypt wont go or enter Jerusalem, then rain wont fall on them. The plague the LORD uses to strike the nations will affect those who wont come to celebrate the Festival of Booths.

<sup>19</sup>This will be the punishment for Egypts sin and for the sin of all the nations that wont go to celebrate the Festival of Booths.

<sup>20</sup>On that day "Holy to the LORD" will be written on the bells of the horses. And the cooking pots in the house of the LORD will be like the bowls in front of the altar.

<sup>21</sup> Yes, every pot in Jerusalem and in Judah will be holy to the LORD of Armies. All who come to sacrifice will take some of them and cook in them. On that day there will no longer be any Canaanite in the house of the LORD of Armies.

# Malachi

**1** <sup>1</sup>This is a divine revelation. The LORD spoke his word to Israel through Malachi.

<sup>2</sup>"I loved you," says the LORD. "But you ask, How did you love us? "Wasnt Esau Jacobs brother?" declares the LORD. "I loved Jacob,

<sup>3</sup>but Esau I hated. I turned his mountains into a wasteland and left his inheritance to the jackals in the desert.

<sup>4</sup>"The descendants of Esau may say, We have been beaten down, but we will rebuild the ruins. "Yet, this is what the LORD of Armies says: They may rebuild, but I will tear it down. They will be called the Wicked Land and the people with whom the LORD is always angry.

<sup>5</sup>You will see these things with your own eyes and say, Even outside the borders of Israel the LORD is great.

<sup>6</sup>"This is what the LORD of Armies says: A son honors his father, and a servant honors his master. So if I am a father, where is my honor? If I am a master,

where is my respect? You priests despise my name. "But you ask, How have we despised your name?

<sup>7</sup>"You offer contaminated food on my altar. "But you ask, Then how have we contaminated you? "When you say that the LORDS table may be despised.

<sup>8</sup>When you bring a blind animal to sacrifice, isnt that wrong? When you bring a lame or a sick animal, isnt that wrong? Try offering it to your governor. Would he accept it from you? Would he welcome you?" asks the LORD of Armies.

<sup>9</sup>"Now try asking God to be kind to you. This is what you are doing! Will he welcome you?" asks the LORD of Armies.

<sup>10</sup>"I wish one of you would shut the doors to my house so that you could not light fires on my altar for no reason. I'm not pleased with you," says the LORD of Armies, "and I won't accept your offerings.

<sup>11</sup>"From the nations where the sun rises to the nations where the sun sets, my name will be great. Incense and pure offerings will be offered everywhere in my name, because my name will

be great among the nations," says the LORD of Armies.

<sup>12</sup>"But you dishonor it when you say that the LORD's table may be contaminated and that its food may be despised.

<sup>13</sup>"You say, Oh what a nuisance it is, and you sniff at it in disgust," says the LORD of Armies. "You bring stolen, lame, and sick animals. When you bring such offerings, should I accept them from you?" asks the LORD.

<sup>14</sup>"Cheaters are under a curse. They have male animals in their flocks that they vow to give as a sacrifice. But they sacrifice second-rate ones to the LORD instead. I am a great king," says the LORD of Armies. "Among the nations my name is respected.

**2**<sup>1</sup>"And now, you priests, this warning is for you.

<sup>2</sup>If you won't listen and if you won't consider giving honor to my name," says the LORD of Armies, "then I'll send a curse on you, and I'll curse the blessings you give. Yes, I've already cursed them because you don't carefully consider this.

<sup>3</sup>"I'm going to punish your descendants. I'm going to spread excrement on your faces, the excrement from your festival sacrifices. You will be discarded with it.

<sup>4</sup>Then you will know that I sent you this warning so that my promise to Levi will continue," says the LORD of Armies.

<sup>5</sup>"I promised Levi life and peace. I gave them to him so that he would respect me. He respected me and stood in awe of my name.

<sup>6</sup>The teaching that came from his mouth was true. Nothing unjust was found on his lips. He lived with me in peace and honesty and turned many people away from sin.

<sup>7</sup>"A priest's lips should preserve knowledge. Then, because he is the messenger for the LORD of Armies, people will seek instruction from his mouth.

<sup>8</sup>"But you have turned from the correct path and caused many to stumble over my teachings. You have corrupted the promise made to Levi," says the LORD of Armies.

<sup>9</sup>"So I have made you disgusting, and I have humiliated you in front of all the

people, because you have not followed my ways. You have been unfair when applying my teachings."

<sup>10</sup> Dont all of us have the same father? Hasnt the same God created us? Why are we unfaithful to each other? And why do we dishonor the promise given to our ancestors?

<sup>11</sup> Judah has been unfaithful! A disgusting thing has been done in Israel and Jerusalem. Judah has dishonored the holy place that the LORD loves and has married a woman who worships a foreign god.

<sup>12</sup> May the LORD exclude anyone who does this, whoever he may be. May he exclude them from Jacobs tents and from bringing offerings to the LORD of Armies.

<sup>13</sup> Here is another thing you do: You cover the LORDS altar with tears. You moan and groan because he no longer pays attention to your offerings or accepts them from you.

<sup>14</sup> But you ask, "Why arent our offerings accepted?" It is because the LORD is a witness between you and the wife of your youth, to whom you have been

unfaithful. Yet, she is your companion, the wife of your marriage vows.

<sup>15</sup> Didn't God make you one? Your flesh and spirit belong to him. And what does the same God look for but godly descendants? So be careful not to be unfaithful to the wife of your youth.

<sup>16</sup> "I hate divorce," says the LORD God of Israel. "I hate the person who covers himself with violence," says the LORD of Armies. "Be careful not to be unfaithful."

<sup>17</sup> You have tried the patience of the LORD with your words. But you ask, "How have we tried his patience?" When you say, "Everyone who does evil is considered good by the LORD. He is pleased with them," or "Where is the God of justice?"

**3**<sup>1</sup> "I'm going to send my messenger, and he will clear the way ahead of me. Then the Lord you are looking for will suddenly come to his temple. The messenger of the promise will come. He is the one you want," says the LORD of Armies.

<sup>2</sup> But who will be able to endure the day he comes? Who will be able to survive on

the day he appears? He is like a purifying fire and like a cleansing soap.

<sup>3</sup>He will act like a refiner and a purifier of silver. He will purify Levis sons and refine them like gold and silver. Then they will bring acceptable offerings to the LORD.

<sup>4</sup>The offerings from Judah and Jerusalem will be pleasing to the LORD as in the past, as in years long ago.

<sup>5</sup>"I will come to judge you. I will be quick to testify against sorcerers, adulterers, lying witnesses, and those who cheat workers out of their wages and oppress widows and orphans. I will also testify against those who deprive foreigners of their rights. None of them fear me," says the LORD of Armies.

<sup>6</sup>"I, the LORD, never change. That is why you descendants of Jacob havent been destroyed yet.

<sup>7</sup>Since the time of your ancestors you have turned away from my laws and have not followed them. Return to me, and I will return to you," says the LORD of Armies. "But you ask, How can we return?"

<sup>8</sup>"Can a person cheat God? Yet, you are cheating me! "But you ask, How are we cheating you? "When you dont bring a tenth of your income and other contributions.

<sup>9</sup>So a curse is on you because the whole nation is cheating me!

<sup>10</sup>"Bring onetenth of your income into the storehouse so that there may be food in my house. Test me in this way," says the LORD of Armies. "See if I wont open the windows of heaven for you and flood you with blessings.

<sup>11</sup>Then, for your sake, I will stop insects from eating your crops. They will not destroy the produce of your land. The vines in your fields will not lose their unripened grapes," says the LORD of Armies.

<sup>12</sup>"All nations will call you blessed because you will be a delightful land," says the LORD of Armies.

<sup>13</sup>"You have used harsh words against me," says the LORD. "You ask, How have we spoken against you?

<sup>14</sup>"You have said, Its pointless to serve God. What do we gain if we meet his

standards or if we walk around feeling sorry for what weve done?

<sup>15</sup>So now we call arrogant people blessed. Not only are evildoers encouraged, they even test God and get away with it."

<sup>16</sup>Then those who feared the LORD spoke to one another, and the LORD paid attention and listened. A book was written in his presence to be a reminder to those who feared the LORD and respected his name.

<sup>17</sup>"They will be mine," says the LORD of Armies. "On that day I will make them my special possession. I will spare them as a man spares his own son who serves him.

<sup>18</sup>Then you will again see the difference between righteous people and wicked people, between the one who serves God and the one who doesnt serve him.

**4**<sup>1</sup>"Certainly the day is coming! It will burn like a furnace. All arrogant people and all evildoers will be like straw. The day that is coming will burn them up completely," says the LORD of Armies. "It wont leave a single root or branch.

<sup>2</sup>"The Sun of Righteousness will rise with healing in his wings for you people who fear my name. You will go out and leap like calves let out of a stall.

<sup>3</sup>You will trample on wicked people, because on the day I act they will be ashes under the soles of your feet," says the LORD of Armies.

<sup>4</sup>"Remember the teachings of my servant Moses, the rules and regulations that I gave to him at Horeb for all Israel.

<sup>5</sup>"I'm going to send you the prophet Elijah before that very terrifying day of the LORD comes.

<sup>6</sup>He will change parents attitudes toward their children and childrens attitudes toward their parents. If not, I will come and reclaim my land by destroying you."

OLB Module Name: LEXHAM  
LEXHAM English Bible for OLB [with Titles and Footnotes]  
Please read enclosed file LEXHAM.DOC for more information.

---

---

The Lexham English Bible

---

W. Hall Harris III  
General Editor  
Copyright 2010 Logos Research Systems, Inc.  
All rights reserved.

---

You can give away the Lexham English Bible, but you can't sell it.  
Lexham is a registered trademark of Logos Bible Software.  
<http://logos.com>  
<http://lexhamenglishbible.com>

---

---

OLB Formats for Electronic Text: LEXHAM

||Titles| Scripture Text with Notes \\\*\\{NOTE: \_Footnote\_ Text and verse \\#refs 1:23\\  
\\}

Explanation of Formatting:

\_Idioms\_ are {Idioms} found in the Lexham's Bible text.  
[Added\_text] are [supplied] words and indicated with [italics].  
||Title| are the Lexham's Pericope ||Titles|, and kept as "variant" text.  
\*{NOTE: note} are the Lexham's in verse \*{NOTE: Footnotes}.  
\\#Vref 1:2\\ are the linked Verse Refs found in the {Footnotes}.

\*NOTE: {Footnote} and ||Title/variant| can each be toggled on/off using  
Keyboard Shortcuts, Right Mouse Click, WindowToolBar Icon, or Main Menu >  
View.

---

---

OLB Module Processing:  
by YLSA Team (Yayasan Lembaga SABDA)

and SABDA/OLB (SABDA adalah OnLineBible versi Indonesia)  
(Software Alkitab, Biblika, dan Alat-alat)

URLS: <http://ylsa.org> ; <http://sabda.net> ; <http://sabda.org>  
<http://alkitab.sabda.org>

Source of "Raw" Electronic Text (May 2010):  
<http://www.lexhamenglishbible.com/download/>

For further information/contact, please email: [sabda@ylsa.org](mailto:sabda@ylsa.org)

---

Module LEXHAM ==> LEXHAM English Bible for OLB [with Titles and Footnotes]  
Text Copyright (c) 2010 Logos Research Systems, Inc.  
Module Copyright (c) 2010 YLSA